



Middle Welsh *dihynnyon* ‘fragments, bits of meat’ and Breton *dienn*, Cornish *dehen* ‘cream’

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This paper argues for an interpretation of Middle Welsh *dihynnion* as ‘skimmings’, i.e. ‘scum and fat skimmed from the cooking-pot’, rather than the traditional ‘fragments, bits of meat’. With this interpretation, Middle Welsh *dihynnion* can be connected to the otherwise etymologically isolated Breton *dienn* and Cornish *dehen* ‘cream’. All three words are derived from a Proto-Brittonic compound verb **di-hynn-* ‘to skim, to scoop off’ which in turn ultimately stems from the Proto-Celtic verbal root **sem-* ‘to pour, to scoop’.

Keywords: Etymology, historical phonology, Middle Welsh, Modern Breton, Vannetais, Late Cornish, The Middle Welsh Laws.

1. Introduction¹

This paper will focus on two intersecting problems. First, the meaning of the Middle Welsh word *dihynnion*, only attested in the Laws of Hywel Dda, will be investigated. Second, a phonological reconstruction of the Breton and Cornish words for ‘cream’ will be undertaken. Special attention will be paid to the Breton dialectal material, which preserves phonological contrasts not recoverable from standard Breton. The Welsh, Cornish and Breton evidence, when combined, will allow us to reconstruct a Proto-Brittonic form with relatively precise semantics.

2. Middle Welsh *dihynnion*

The Middle Welsh noun *dihynnion* /dihønnjion/ appears to be attested only in the Laws of Hywel Dda. It is listed among the by-products which the cook gets to keep from the slaughter and cooking of animals at the court.

2.1. The Welsh-language texts

In the Iorwerth redaction of the Welsh laws we find the word twice, in very similar passages:

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a. *A hyt tra uo efar y kylch hynnv ef a dele bot svydwyr ydau: dryysavr a choc a svydvyr e byvt, a'r rey henny a delectr krwyn er anyueyllveyt a ladher udunt hvy, a'r cogeu a dehyant e guer a'r **dihennyon** a'r emyscar.* (Llyfr Iorwerth § 6; ed. Wiliam 1960: 5)

‘And as long as he [the captain of the household] is on that circuit [*kylch*], he is entitled to have officials, a doorkeeper and a cook and a food official; those are entitled to the skins of the animals slaughtered for them, and the cooks are entitled to the tallow and the broken meat [*dihynnion*] and the entrails.’ (Translation by Jenkins 1986: 11; words in brackets added for the present paper)

b. *Ef a dele krven e man escrybyl oll o'r a del e'r kegyn ac eu krven amdanadunt [...] Ef a dele e **dihennyon** a'r guer a'r emyscar* (Llyfr Iorwerth § 20; ed. Wiliam, 1960: 14)

‘He [the cook] is entitled to the skins of all the small animals which come to the kitchen with their skins on [...]. He is entitled to the broken fragments of meat [*dihynnion*], and the tallow, and the entrails.’ (Translation by Jenkins 1986: 26)

These passages describe how the cook is allowed to take the *dihynnion*, the *gwer* ‘animal fat, tallow, suet’ and the *ymyscar* ‘bowel(s), entrails’. In the Blegywryd redaction of the Welsh laws the word occurs in a similar passage:

c. *Amyscar yr holl annyueileit a ladher ynn y llys a geiff y coc, eithyr y callonneu. [...] Y coc a geiff crwynn y deueit a'r geifyr, a **dihynnion** y gallawr.* (Llyfr Blegywryd; ed. Williams & Powell 1942: 25)

‘The cook is to have the entrails of all the animals killed in the palace, excepting of the hearts. The cook is to have the skins of the sheep and of the goats, and the fragments [*dihynnion*] from the cauldron.’ (Translation by Owen 1841: 187)

Just like in the instances from the Iorwerth redaction, the Blegywryd redaction lists *dihynnion* with other by-products, here the entrails and the skins of sheep and goats.

As for the translation of *dihynnion*, Owen, in his edition of the Welsh laws, opted for ‘fragments’ (Owen 1841: 8, 23, 187) and Latin *fragmina* (Owen 1841: 779, 815). This was followed by e.g. Lewis (1913: 127) ‘bits, fragments’, Williams & Powell (1942: 249) ‘*gweddillion*’, ‘residue, remnants’, Jenkins (1986: 11, 26) ‘broken (fragments of) meat’ and the GPC (1010) ‘*darnau, tameidiau, gweddillion cig (a dynnir o grochan)*; fragments, pieces, bits of meat’. While this may seem plausible at first sight, there is reason to think that this translation is not entirely accurate. The Cyfnerth redaction of the Welsh laws — here exemplified by BM Harleian MS 4353 — does not use the word *dihynnion*, but contains a passage which incorporates many of the elements found in the Iorwerth and Blegywryd redactions:

d. *Coc bieu crbyn ydeueit ar geifyr ar gyn ar mynneu ar lloi. Ac amyscar ygarthec alather alather [sic] yny gegin. eithyr y refyr ar cledyf bisweil aa yr*

porthabr. *Y coc bieu ygber ar yscei or gegin eithyr gber yr eidon auo teir nos ar warthec ymaerty*. (Llyfr Cyfnerth, BM Harleian MS 4353, fol. 11b; ed. Wade-Evans 1909: 26)

‘A cook has the skins of the sheep and the goats and the lambs and the kids and the calves, and the entrails of the cattle which shall be killed in the kitchen except the rectum and the milt which go to the porter. The cook has the tallow and the skimming from the kitchen, except the tallow of the steer which shall be three nights with the cattle of the maer-house.’ (Translation by Wade-Evans 1909: 171)

As can be seen, instead of *gwer* ‘tallow’, *dihynnion* and *ymyscar* ‘entrails’ in the Iorwerth redaction, we find *gwer* ‘tallow’ and *yscei* in the Cyfnerth redaction, while *ymyscar* ‘entrails’ is listed with the skins. Given that *dihynnion* in the Iorwerth redaction and *yscei* in the Cyfnerth redaction seem to occupy the same “slot”, it is likely that they are roughly semantically equivalent and we may therefore tentatively assign the same meaning to the two words.² MW *yscei*, ModW *ysgai* is translated as e.g. *Spuma. adeps natans in superficie bullientis liquoris*, ‘foam, scum; fat floating on the surface of boiling liquid’ (Davies 1632: s.v. *ysgai*), ‘skimming’ (Owen 1841: 325; Wade-Evans 1909: 171) or ‘fat, lard, dripping, tallow’ (GPC 3831).³

This apparent parallelism between *dihynnion* and *yscei* may be what led Wiliam (1960: 151) to settle on a translation ‘dripping, stock’ for *dihynnion*. However, English ‘dripping’ refers to fats and juices that drip from a roast, yet it is specifically stated in example c. that the *dihynnion* is taken from a cooking-pot or cauldron (*a dihynnyon y gallawr*). The same description is encountered in the Latin versions of the Welsh Laws, which have *de caldario dihynnion* (example e. and f. below). I will therefore suggest a more precise glossing of *dihynnion*, in line with the parallel use of *yscei* ‘skimming’ in the Cyfnerth redaction and with the fact that *dihynnion* is taken from a cooking-pot, namely ‘skimings’, i.e. that which is skimmed from the cooking-pot, specifically the fat, scum and impurities that rise to the surface when meat is boiled.

2.2. The Latin texts of the Welsh Laws

The Latin texts of the Welsh Laws also use the Welsh word *dihynnion*. The attestations confirm the picture from Welsh-language redactions, that the skins of various slaughtered animal go to the cook, as do the *dihynnion*. Thus redaction A:

2 Thus also Williams (1922: 116), who argues that *yscei* replaced *dihynnion* when the latter fell out of use. Alternatively, as suggested by an anonymous peer reviewer, the replacement could also be due to a dialectal difference, with *dihynnyon* being a northern Welsh word and *yscei* a southern Welsh one.

3 GPC suspects that the meaning ‘scum, foam, froth’ is a dictionary invention. However, if the parallel between *yscei* and *dihynnion* and the etymological connection between the latter and *dienn/dehen* ‘cream’ are correct, then the translation is likely accurate.

*e. Coccus debet habere partem duorum virorum de pellibus ovium et agnorum et hedorum de curia occisorum.*⁴ *Ipse de caldario habebit **dihynnyon**.* (Latin Redaction A; Emanuel 1967: 118)

‘The cook is to have the portion of two men of the skins of sheep and lambs and kids slaughtered at the court. He shall have the *dihynnion* from the cooking-pot.’

The Latin redactions B and D present very similar versions, including the phrase *de caldario dihynnion* ‘the *dihynnion* from the cooking-pot’ (Emanuel 1967: 203, 330). The Latin redaction E⁵ presents much the same text, but includes additional elements:

*f. Coci est pelles ovium et caprarum [hedorum et vitulorum⁶] et de caldario **dihennion** et viscera omnium animalium preter corda [tuceta et magnum intestinum quae ad portarium pertinent⁷]* (Latin redaction E; ed. Emanuel 1967: 446)

‘To the cook belong the skins of sheep and goats [and kids and calves] and *dihynnion* from the cooking-pot and the innards of all animals except for the tripe [the *tuceta*⁸ and the large intestine which belong to the porter].’

As can be seen, this version closely matches the Welsh-language *Cyfnerth* redaction, example d. above, even if the elements occur in a somewhat different order. Most importantly, however, this redaction employs the word *dihynnion* where the *Cyfnerth* redaction uses *yscei* and *gwer*. This strengthens the case that the *Cyfnerth* redaction has replaced *dihynnion* with *yscei*.

The proposed meaning ‘skimmings’ is entirely in line with the etymology given by the GPC (1010), namely that *dihynnyon* is derived from **di-hinn-* ‘to scoop off’, a compound of **di-* ‘away, off, from’ and the verb **hinn-* ‘to pour, to scoop’.⁹ Comparative support for this philological interpretation will be provided by the Breton and Cornish words discussed in the following.

3. Breton and Cornish ‘cream’

A previously unnoticed cognate of *dihynnion* may be found in the Breton and Cornish words for ‘cream’. At first glance, such a connection might appear

4 For the meaning of *in/de curia occisorum*, see Stacey (2018: 110–111).

5 See Emanuel (1967: 419) for the exact sources (E1–E5) used in the edition.

6 Addition to E4.

7 Replacement of *corda* in E2 and E4.

8 Lat. *tūcētum/tuccētum* ‘a kind of sausage’, i.e. a part of the intestines used as food.

9 The variant *dichwynnyon* (Oxford Jesus College MS 57, p. 33, § 26; ed. Richards 1990) is most likely just an error (thus Loth 1928: 178), rather than an alternative derivative from **di-ʷ(o)-hinn-* as tentatively proposed by Williams (1922: 116).

far-fetched on account of the differing semantics. However, it becomes immediately understandable if the meaning of *dihynnyon* was ‘skimings’ as was argued above rather than ‘fragments, bits of meat’. The Breton and Cornish material will be reviewed below.

3.1. Western Breton *dienn*

Breton *dienn* masc. ‘cream’ is known from the Late Middle Breton period onwards. The first attestation appears to be *dyen* in the trilingual thesaurus *Nomenclator* from 1633 (65; ed. Le Menn 2000). This is followed by two attestations in Maunoir’s *Le Sacré Collège de Jesus* from 1659, both spelled *dien* (34, 142; ed. Le Menn 1996). These attestations may be uncontroversially phonemicized as /di.en/. It should be noted that we cannot take the final short /n/ as an indication of an etymological short *-n. This is because the attestations are sufficiently late for the merger of *-nn* and *-n* after unstressed vowels to have occurred, a change that appears to have taken place between the Classical and Late Middle Breton period.

The word is continued in the Modern Breton literary language, spelled *dienn*. In spite of the spelling, the final *-nn* just represents /-en/ synchronically and is presumably inferred from derivatives, such as the verb *diennañ* ‘to skim (milk)’ (GReg. 320: *dyenna*, participle *dyennet*), where the addition of a suffix meant that the penultimate stress came to fall on the *-enn-*. This allowed for the contrast between long *-*nn-* and short *-*n-* to be preserved (typically reflected in the length of the preceding vowel). The word is also well represented in spoken Breton, appearing in the western half of Breton-speaking Brittany (ALBB map 387: see fig. 1).

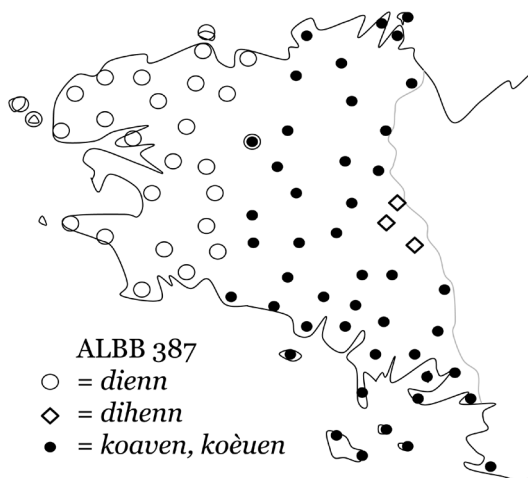


Figure 1

3.2. Eastern Breton *dihenn*

While almost the entire eastern part of Breton-speaking Brittany, including Vannetais, uses the etymologically unrelated *koaven/koèuen* as the normal word for cream, *dienn* is also found here.¹⁰ The earliest attestation of the Haut-Vannetais form appears to be in Pierre de Châlons' French-Breton manuscript dictionary from the early eighteenth century, *Dictionnaire François-Breton du diocese de Vannes*. Here we find *dien* alongside the usual Vannetais form *coüehuen* (Loth 1895: 99).¹¹ Grégoire's *Dictionnaire françois-celtique ou françois-breton* printed in 1732 gives a Vannetais *diheñ* (GReg. 232) alongside the verb *dihenneñ* 'to skim (milk)' (GReg. 320).

In modern spoken eastern Breton, the reflex of *dienn* is confined to a small area of northern Haut-Vannetais and north-eastern Cornouaillais.¹² On map 387 of the ALBB (cf. fig. 1) *dienn* is represented by three locations:¹³

Mûr-de-Bretagne (pt. 41): [di'hɛn]
 Cléguérec (pt. 61): [di'hɛn]
 Noyal-Pontivy (pt. 63): [di'hɛn]

These attestations are valuable, since they confirm a reconstruction with final *-nn*. Due to the final stress in this area, the opposition between **-en* and **-enn* in polysyllabic words is preserved. In the specific area in question, the opposition is shifted so that original **-en* gives a nasalized and usually somewhat diphthongized vowel [-ɛ̃n], [-ɛ̃ːn], while original **-enn* gives an oral monophthong [-ɛn].¹⁴ The

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- 10 For a brief discussion of the geographical distribution of the two words for 'cream', see Falchun (1981: 195, 516–517).
- 11 It quite possible that this particular attestation of *dien* is imported from LTK Breton. This would explain the missing *-h-*. We find several instances of what appears to be LTK words in de Châlons' MS dictionary, e.g. *ahan* 'from here', *anaoûn* 'souls of the dead', *coûnhât* 'to remember', *oaz* 'jealousy', *querheis* 'heron', *spezat*, *spezaden* 'gooseberry', *trederennerés* 'dowager'. The likely source of these words is Maunoir's *Le Sacré Collège de Jesus* (ed. Le Menn 1996), which contains the same words spelled in the exact same way.
- 12 Le Goff (1919: 28) gives a *gourdien* 'second skimming; cream from milk that has been skimmed twice' from the island of Groix. It is not entirely clear if this attests to the former spread of the Vannetais word far beyond the current area or if it was brought there by settlers from southern Cornouaille, who have otherwise clearly influenced the local dialect.
- 13 Le Goff (1919: 16) gives *dihien* ([diçɛn] vel sim.) from Bieuzy and Guern, with palatalization of intervocalic *-h-* between front vowels. Guilloux (1984: C–27) spells it *dhién* and adds Melrand to the locations. These attestations indicate that the word is current slightly further south than the ALBB might lead us to think.
- 14 Compare the reflexes of **diskinn* 'to descend' (ALBB 162), **luxedenn* 'lightning bolt' (ALBB 438) with non-nasal [-ɛn] (rarely [-ɛn]) as opposed to the reflexes of **halun* 'salt' (ALBB 327), **raden* 'fern' (ALBB 539) with nasalized and typically diphthongized [-ɛ̃n], [-ɛ̃ːn].

evidence from the ALBB is corroborated by the dialect description of the Breton of Malguénac, located just south of Cléguérec (Le Pipec 2000). Here we find /di'hen/ (ibid.: 80), which also clearly points to final **-enn* rather than **-en*.¹⁵

These attestations provide an additional piece of evidence for the reconstruction of the proto-form. As can be seen, the eastern Breton forms present a medial /h/ where Late Middle Breton and Modern Breton *dienn* has hiatus. The most likely explanation for this is that the *-h-* is an archaism. Middle Breton intervocalic *-h-* is usually lost in Modern Breton outside Vannetais.¹⁶ The resulting distribution is observable in the modern reflexes of e.g. MBret. *buhez* /byhed̥/ ‘life’ (ALBB 33), *bihan* /bihan/ ‘little, small’ (NALBB 43), *dehou* /dehoʷ/ ‘right’ (ALBB 147), where /h/ is largely confined to Bas-Vannetais and western and northern Haut-Vannetais, including the area where *dihenn* is attested. It should be admitted, however, that we do occasionally find unetymological medial *-h-* in Vannetais. In some instances the unetymological *-h-* seems to go back all the way to Proto-Breton, e.g. Vann. *kohann* ‘owl’ < **kouhann* (cf. MBret. *couhenn*; ALBB 359), in other instances it appears to be an innovation specific to Vannetais, e.g. Vann. *luhern* ‘fox’ < **lu.arn* (cf. MBret. *louarn*; ALBB 434). Nevertheless, it is still more likely than not that the *-h-* is etymological and we may therefore settle for a tentative Common Breton reconstruction **dihenn*.

3.3. Late Cornish *dehen*

The Cornish word for ‘cream’ is only known from a Late Cornish hapax, *dehen* ‘cream’, in the *Antiquities Historical and Monumental of the County of Cornwall* (Borlase 1769: 424¹⁷), taken from older, unpublished materials collected by William Gwavas. As can be seen, this attestation shows an intervocalic *-h-* matching the one found in eastern Breton. We may therefore conclude that the Proto-South-West-Brittonic form most likely also contained **-h-*. The Cornish attestation is less informative about other aspects of the reconstruction. Since Cornish, from very early on, appears to have lost the distinction between unstressed **-Vn* and **-Vnn*, *dehen* will not help us decide between the two. The correspondence between the consistent Breton /i/ in *di(h)enn* and the Late Cornish <e> in *dehen* may at first seem like a problem. However, this is easily accounted for by positing original **i*. There are numerous examples of lowering of *i* in this position already

15 In the Breton of Malguénac /-en/ [-en] (Le Pipec 2000: 51) comes from **-enn*, as in /amə'nən/ ‘butter’ < **amanenn* (ibid.: 82), /der'ʧen/ ‘oak tree’ < **derʧenn* (ibid.: 80), /mi'ren/ ‘lunch’ < **merenn* (ibid.: 80) and /-ε:n/ [-ɛ̃jn] (ibid.: 52) comes from **-en*, as in /ha'le:n/ ‘salt’ < **halun* (ibid.: 81), /mə'le:n/ ‘yellow’ < **melin* (ibid.: 82), /ra're:n/ ‘fern’ < **raden* (ibid.: 80).

16 The occasional Modern Breton spelling with <h> alongside hiatus in LTK texts (e.g. <bihan> next to <bian>) is probably due to orthographical conservatism.

17 *dehen* ‘cream of milk’ in the *Archæologia Cornu-Britannica* (Pryce 1790: [88]) is probably copied from Borlase and should not be counted as a second attestation.

in Middle Cornish,¹⁸ whereas Breton typically preserves the vowel as such. The Cornish form is therefore fully compatible with the Breton form.

3.4. South-West Brittonic Reconstruction

In light of the combined evidence consisting of Bret. *dienn*, Vann. *dihenn* and the single Late Cornish attestation of *dehen* we may reconstruct a SWBrit. **dihVnn* ‘cream’. The only remaining uncertainty concerns the vowel of the second syllable, which may go back to SWBrit. **i*, **e*, **ö*, **ø* (from PBrit. **i*, **e*, **e*, **ü*, **ö*, **ø*, cf. Schrijver 2011: 20).

4. Etymology and semantic reconstruction

The connection between the Breton and Cornish words for ‘cream’ has long been recognized,¹⁹ but no plausible further etymological connections appear to have been made. The one suggestion known to me is Henry’s (1900: 96) proposed derivation from the PIE root **d^heiǵ^h-* ‘to knead’ (LIV² 140–141). However, this etymology is semantically less than convincing and phonologically difficult; both the **-i-* and **-h-* in **dihVnn* would be irregular. Furthermore, the “ending” *-Vnn* can hardly be the (feminine) singulative suffix (as is most likely implied by Henry), since the word is masculine. Therefore, this proposal can be safely discarded and we may look for a new etymology.

Once the meaning ‘skimmings’ has been established for Middle Welsh *dihynnion* (cf. § 2), we are provided with a semantically straightforward cognate. The difference between Breton and Cornish ‘cream (of milk)’ and Welsh ‘skimmings (from a stew)’ is plausibly explained from a basic meaning ‘skimming; what is skimmed’, referring either to cream floating to the top of milk or to scum and fat floating to the top of a cooking-pot. The only formal difference lies in the fact that Breton and Cornish continue the singular and Welsh the plural.

Accordingly, based on Breton *di(h)enn*, LCorn. *dehen* ‘cream’ and MW *dihynnion* ‘skimmings’ we may reconstruct a Proto-Brittonic noun **dihinn*, pl. **-ion* ‘that which is skimmed’. The noun **dihinn* is in turn a deverbal formation based on a compound verb **di-hinn-* ‘to skim, to scoop off’.²⁰

18 Numerous Middle Cornish examples of <e> from **i* in this position are given by Williams (2006: 22–23).

19 See e.g. Williams (1865: 92), Loth (1895: 99), Ernault (1895–1896: 165), Delanoy (1995: 58), Deshayes (2003: 183, 2021: 190) and George (2020: 177).

20 It is unclear if Breton *diennañ* ‘to skim (cream off milk)’ is also a direct reflex of the verb **di-hinn-* or if it is derived from the noun *dienn* ‘cream’.

5. Middle Welsh *echdihenedic*

An additional reflex of the compound verb **di-hinn-* is most likely found in the Middle Welsh verbal adjective *echdihenedic* ‘drained’, i.e. ‘scooped off’. It is a *hapax* attested in the *Brut y Brenhinedd* from the Red Book of Hergest.²¹ Here we find *ar lan y tlyn echdihenedic* (Oxford Jesus Coll. MS 111, fol. 29v; Rhys & Gwenogvryn Evans 1890: 144), corresponding to Latin *super ripam exhausti stagni* ‘on the bank of the drained pool’ in the Latin *Historia Regum Britanniae* (Reeve & Wright 2007: 144–145). MW *echdihenedic* may be plausibly analyzed as a verbal adjective in *-edic* from *di-hynn-* ‘to scoop off, to skim’, compounded anew with *ech-* ‘out of’ (Williams 1922: 116).

6. Further etymology

The Proto-Brittonic verb **di-hinn-* ‘to skim, to scoop off’, reflected in the nominal derivatives *dihynnyon*, *di(h)enn* and *dehen*, goes back to an otherwise unattested compound of the Proto-Brittonic preverb **di-* < PCelt. **dī-* < PIE **dē/deh₁* ‘away from, off’ and the Proto-Brittonic verb **hinn-* ‘to pour, to scoop’. This verb is also found with the preverb **u-* in MW *gwehynnu* ‘to draw, to drain, to pour out’ and probably with **tu-u-* in OBret. *douhin[n]om* ‘a drawing of water’ (Williams 1922: 113–116; Fleuriet 1964: 151; Schumacher 2004: 570).

The verb **hinn-* appears to derive from a Proto-Celtic *de/o-* present **sen-de/o-* ‘pour, scoop’ (thus Schumacher 2004: 570). This *de/o-* present, if correctly analyzed as such, stands next to the more common thematic present **sem-e/o-*, which is reflected in Old Irish in various compound verbs (VKG 624; Schumacher 2004: 569–570) such as *do-essim** ‘to pour out, to shed, to spill’ (< **tu-exs-sem-e/o-*), *do-fuissim** ‘to pour out, to beget’ (< **tu-uds-sem-e/o-*). The corresponding verbal nouns in Old Irish are *teistiu* (< **tu-exs-san-tiōn-*) and *tuistiu* (< **tu-uds-san-tiōn-*), from a PIE (transp.) **sṃ-ti-Hon-* ‘scooping’ (Stüber 1998: 128; 2015: 537; Gordon 2012: 297–298). The Celtic verb ultimately derives from the Proto-Indo-European verbal root **sem(H)-*²² ‘to scoop, to draw (a liquid)’ (LIV² 531; IEW 901–902) further reflected in Lith. *sem(i)ù*, *sėmti* ‘to scoop, to draw (a liquid)’ and Lat. *sentīna* ‘bilgewater’, i.e. ‘(water) that is scooped’, from a thematic derivative **sṃ-ti-Hn-o-* of the noun **sṃ-ti-Hon-* (Stüber 1998: 537; de Vaan 2008: 554).

21 Variants from other manuscripts include *echtywenedic*, *gwehynedig*, *diwhynedig* (Williams 1922: 114).

22 The laryngeal is reconstructed to account for the acute tone of Lith. *sėmti* and — if this belongs here at all — the vocalization in Gr. ἄμῃ ‘shovel; pail’ < **sṃH-*. However, PCelt. **sen-de/o-*, **santijon-* and Lat. *sentīna* are more straightforwardly derived from a root **sem-* without a laryngeal (cf. Stüber 1998: 537; Fortson 2008: 61–62, fn. 26; Zair 2012: 164–165).

7. Conclusion

A review of the attestations of MW *dihynnion* has revealed that the most likely meaning of this is ‘skimmings (from the cooking pot)’, rather than ‘fragments, bits of meat’. Once this meaning has been established, a connection with MBret. *dyen*, ModBret. *dienn* and LCorn. *dehen* ‘cream’ becomes semantically plausible. The Middle Breton, Late Cornish and, in particular, Vannetais Breton evidence points to a Proto-South-West Brittonic reconstruction **dihVnn* ‘cream’ (i.e. ‘that which is skimmed’), which provides a perfect phonological match with the Welsh word. The reconstructable Proto-Brittonic noun **di-hunn* ‘skimming, that which is skimmed’ is in turn a deverbal derivative of a verb **di-hunn-* ‘to skim, to scoop off’.

Abbreviations

ALBB	<i>Atlas linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne</i> . P. Le Roux, 1924–1963.
GPC	<i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru</i> . R. J. Thomas, Gareth A. Bevan & Patrick J. Donovan, 1967–2002.
Gr.	Ancient Greek
GReg.	<i>Dictionnaire français-celtique ou français-breton</i> . P. F. Grégoire de Rostrenen, 1732.
IEW	<i>Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> . J. Pokorny, 1959.
Lat.	Latin
LCorn.	Late Cornish
Lith.	Lithuanian
LIV ²	<i>Lexikon der indogermanischen verben. Zweite, erweiterte und verbesserte Auflage bearbeitet von Martin Kümmel und Helmut Rix</i> . H. Rix et al., 2001.
LTk	Léonais, Trégorrois and Cornouaillais Breton
MBret.	Middle Breton
ModW	Modern Welsh
MW	Middle Welsh
NALBB	<i>Nouvel Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne. I–II</i> . J. Le Dù, 2001.
OBret.	Old Breton
PCelt.	Proto-Celtic
PIE	Proto-Indo-European
SWBrit.	South-West Brittonic
Vann.	Vannetais Breton
VKG	<i>Vergleichende Grammatik der keltischen Sprachen. I–II</i> . H. Pedersen, 1909–1913.

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