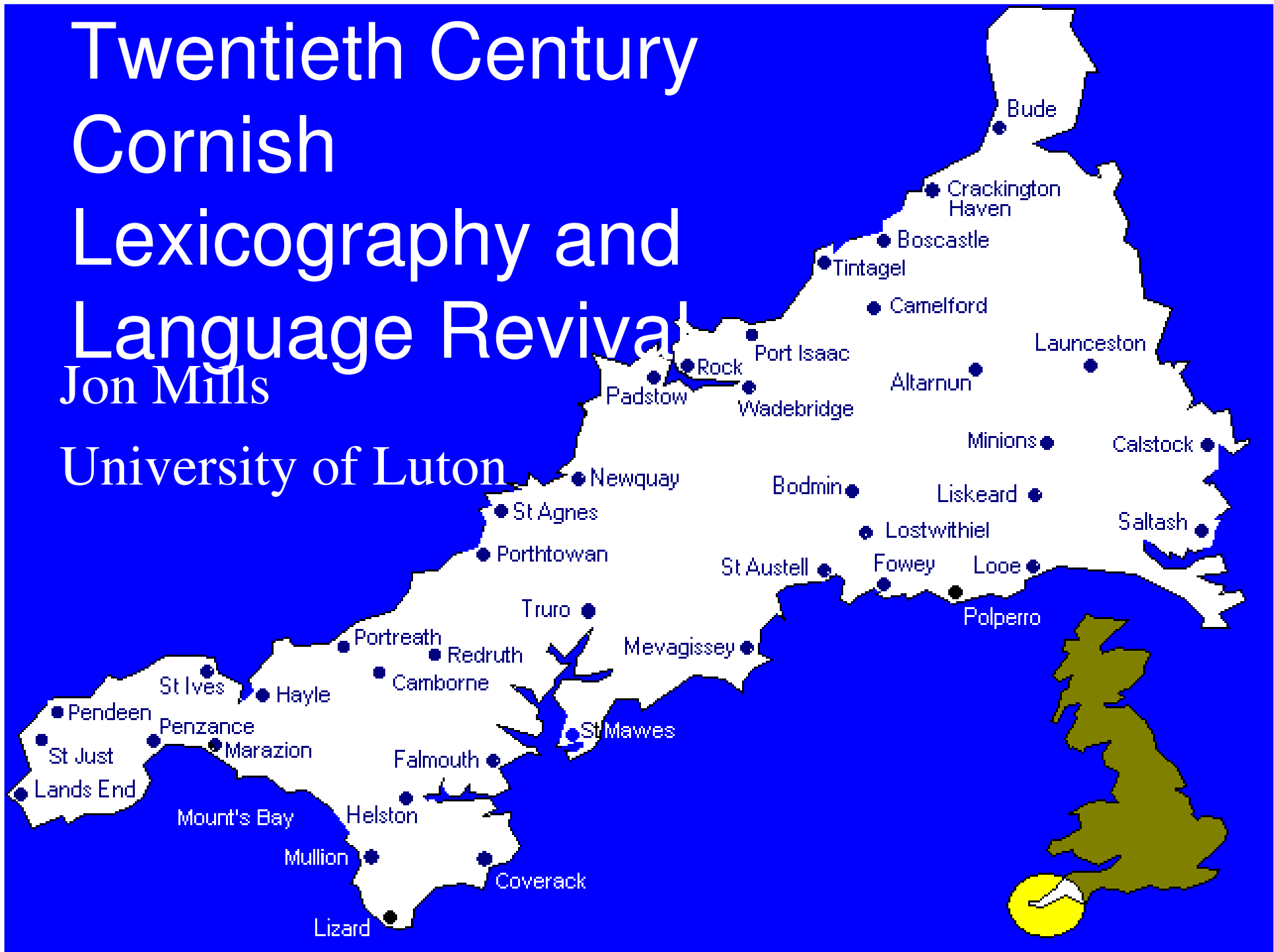


Twentieth Century Cornish Lexicography and Language Revival

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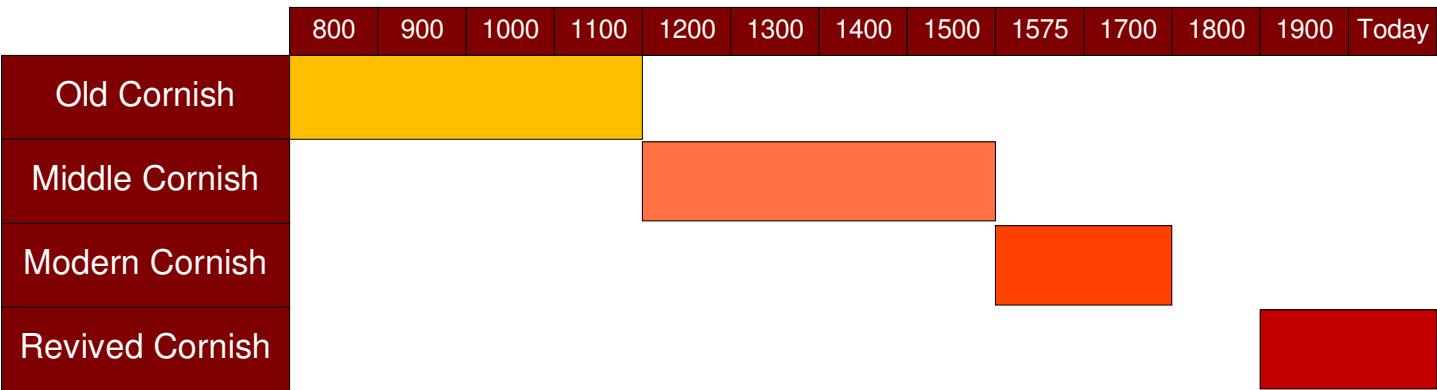
The Revival of Cornish



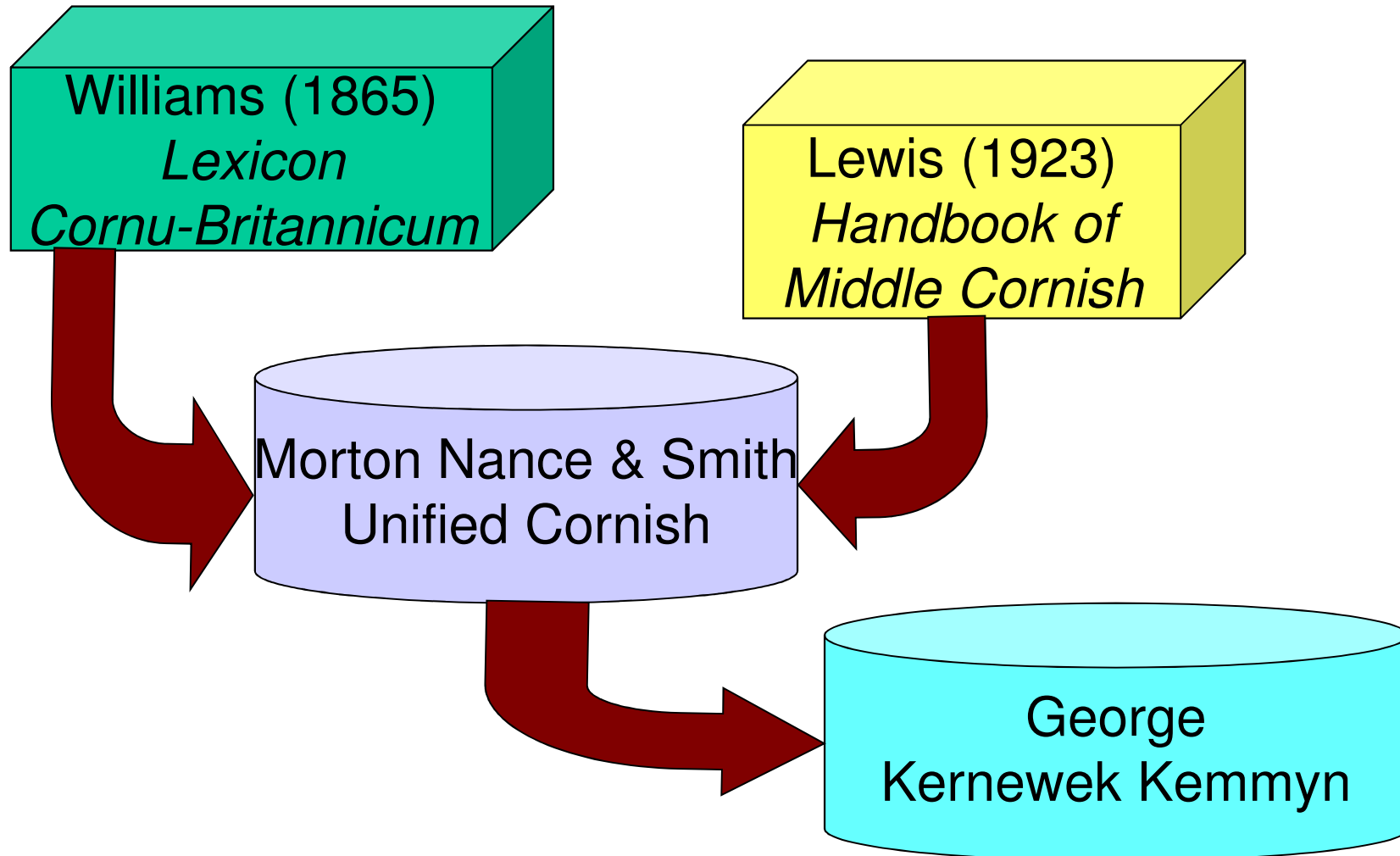
Henry Jenner (Gwas Myghal)

- 1901 Cowethas Kelto-Kernuak
- 1929 Unified spelling
- Today
 - Several hundred speakers
 - A very small number have been raised from birth as bilingual

The Corpus



Analogy with Welsh and Breton



The Major Dictionaries

1865 Williams' *Lexicon Cornu-Britannicum*.

1887 Jago *An English Cornish Dictionary*.

1934 Morton Nance & Smith *English-Cornish Dictionary*.

1938 Morton Nance *A New Cornish-English Dictionary*.

1952 Morton Nance *An English-Cornish Dictionary*.

1955 Morton Nance *A Cornish-English Dictionary*.

1991 Gendall *A Students Dictionary of Modern Cornish*.

1993 George *Gerlyver Kernewek Kemmyn*.

1997 Gendall *A Practical Dictionary of Modern Cornish*.

Standardisation

- The phonemic principle
 - Morton Nance (1934, 1938, 1952, 1955)
 - George (1993)
- Use of attested forms
 - Richard Gendall (1997)
 - a single preferred spelling for each lexeme from those spellings that are attested in the historical literature.

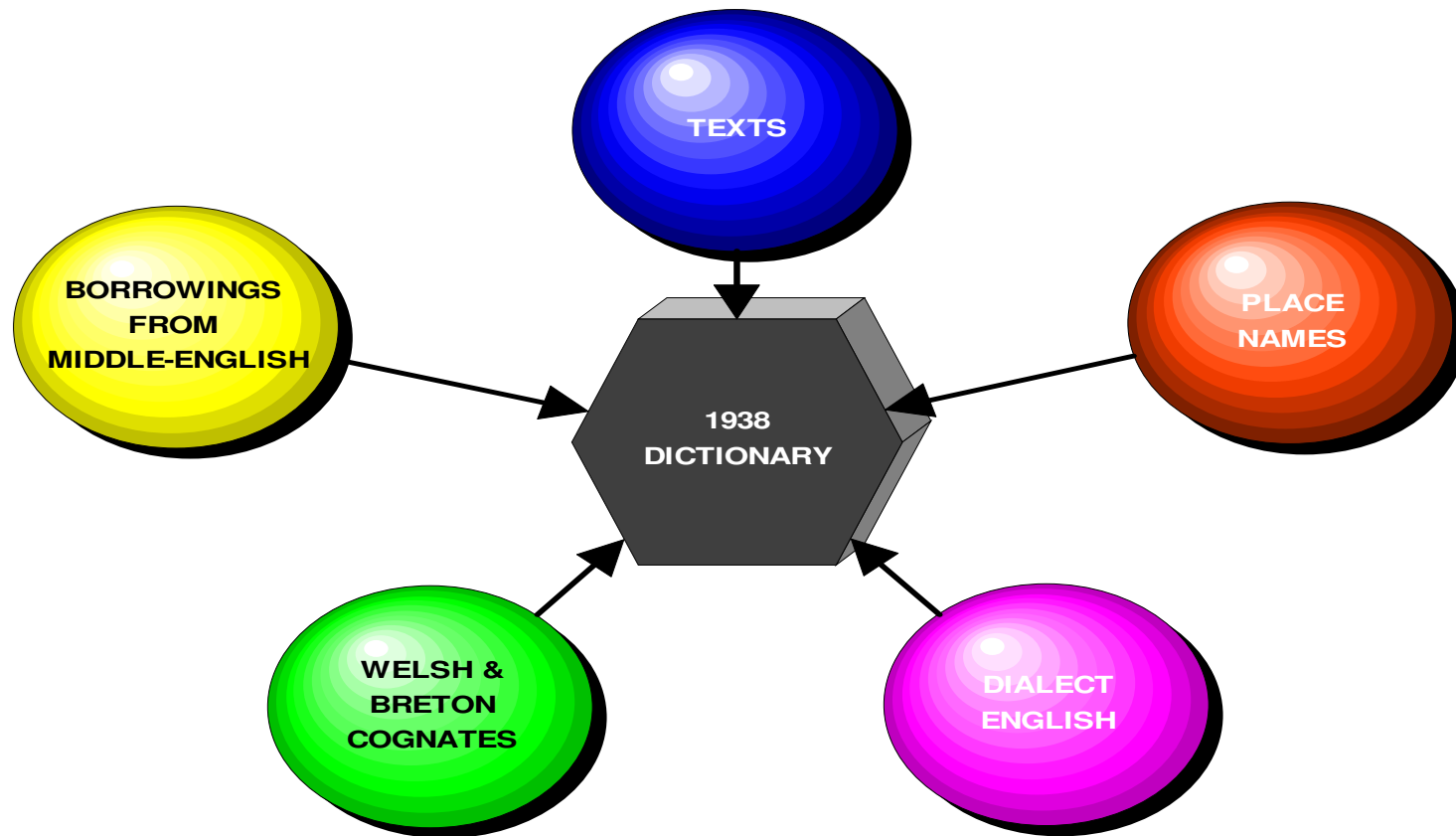
Unified Cornish

- 1929 *Cornish for All* (Morton Nance)
- 1934 *English Cornish Dictionary*

middle, n. *cre* ~~s~~ ; *perveth*.

- 1938 *Cornish - English Dictionary*

Sources for the 1938 dictionary



Microstructure in the 1938 dictionary

†**cry** ~~s~~, *m., pl. -yow*, shirt, shift, chemise; ***cry** ~~s~~ **spows**, *f.*
waistcoat, jacket, blouse, **c. oferyas**, cassock.

cry ~~s~~, *m., pl. -yow*, shake, shiver, quiver, quake; **crysyā**,
vb. to shake, etc.: **dorgrys**.

cry ~~s~~: see **cre** ~~s~~.

cre ~~s~~ (*creys, cry* ~~s~~, Late *creas*), *m.*, middle, centre, midst;
mid-section of buddle (D.); *adj.*, middle: *yn ewn-gres anodho*,
right in the middle of it: *Mor C.*, Mediterranean; *Kernewek-*
C., Middle Cornish; *Gew Graze, Kimyell Craze*, etc., place-
names.

Unified Cornish

- 1950 “Cornish Words Occurring in Tregear MS.”
- The 1952 Dictionary
- The 1955 Dictionary

cre~~s~~**s**, *m., adj.* middle, centre.

Neologisms

bicycle, n. * *margh horn*.

(Morton Nance & Smith 1934)

← Breton, marc'h-houarn

BICYCLE **dywro** ~~s~~ f **-ow dyw**, **ro** ~~s~~

(Snell & Morris 1981)

pennskol {1:N:0(*kows*)} FN university,
institution of higher education [C: PENN-<head>
SKOL]

(George 1993)

universyte (Ton 1504)

Ghost words

YLOW *n* music.

- ‘lew’ : *mist*
- ‘music’ / ‘muzzick’ : *mist*
- Welsh:
 - ‘eilio’ : *to compose*
 - ‘eilon’ : *music*
 - ‘alaw’ : *music*

Criticism of Unified Cornish

Our Institute takes the view that the so called Unified Spelling invented by Nance has never been explained, i.e. we have never had any real discussion of the principles on which it was based. We regard the dictionaries with their high proportion of words invented by the comparative method as suspect, because they don't give dated forms, and we feel that some of the lost words can probably be recovered from dated Middle Cornish place-names and may prove to be other than the forms invented for them by Nance. Lastly, following the work of the Leeds Survey of English Dialects, we suspect that the pronunciation currently used for modern Cornish (based on an ultimate form of Wessex Middle English) may be wrong and that the true phonetic range is still just recoverable from an area west of an isogloss that cuts off the Land's End and part of the south side of the Lizard.

Kernewek Kemmyn

- George's 1993 Dictionary

kres<centre> {8:MLP:4} AJ central MN centre [C:
IE *kr-su (lp)] {B kreiz; cf. W craidd}
kres<faith> {8:M:*} FN faith [U:] {MidB *cret*, W
cred}
kres<peace> {8:ML:*} MN peace [U]

Problems with Kernewek Kemmyn

- Unsound reconstruction of Cornish phonology
- English translation equivalents
- Many inaccuracies in the data given in the dictionary
- No consensus for a system which is demonstrably unsound

Modern Cornish

middle, (n.) crease (R), crees (NB), kreis (JB), creas (T), krêz (L), creys (2299, 973), **in the m.**, en crease (R), en kreis (JB), **in the m. of the country**, en creys an powe (2299), **into the m.**, tha greys (973),

middle, (a.) krêz (L), **m. finger**, bêz krêz (L)
craze (top).

(Gendall 1991)

CREASE (1) [kre:z] *m. & a.* **-sow** middle, centre, middlings; central; ridge-tile; **en c.**, in the middle; **en c. an pow**, inland, right in the country; **tha g. an beaze**, in(to) the centre of the world/earth; **an beaz c.**, the middle finger; *var. creis* [WR]

CREASE (2) [kri:s] *m.* creosote, carbolic acid [TR, < Gr kreas]

(Gendall 1997)