Taff's Well people and the well

South Wales Metro Depot and Control Centre

The trip started with a look at progress being made on the building of the new South Wales Metro Depot and control Centre adjacent to Taff's Well station. Some of the new tram trains have already been delivered to the depot and go out for testing at night.

The new tram trains will run on the lines up to Treherbert, Aberdare and Merthyr as well as the City Line around Cardiff and down to the Bay I think.

Untruth: Transport for Wale has been stung by criticism that the new trains have no toilets so are rectifying the situation by adding a toilet on a platform built onto the back each train and therefore outdoors. The 'outdoor toilets' may be draughty in winter but it will offer good views.

Christopher Monger

Wrote the screenplay 'The Englishman who Went up a Hill but Came down a Mountain' a 1995 film starring Hugh Grant and Tara Fitzgerald

The film, a whimsical romantic comedy, is based on a story told to Christopher Monger by his grandfather, and the writer's credit goes jointly to Christopher Monger, his father (Dr) Ifor David Monger, and grandfather Ivor Monger, though both the elder Mongers were long dead when the film was released in 1995. It is set in 1917 when an arrogant English surveyor arrives in Taff's Well (Ffynnon Taf) which is fictionalized as Ffynnon Garw (Rough Well).

In 1917, during World War I, two English cartographers, the pompous George Garrad and his junior, Reginald Anson arrive at the fictional Welsh village of Ffynnon Garw to measure its "mountain" – only to cause outrage when they conclude that it is only a hill because it is slightly short of the required height of 1,000 feet (305 m).

The villagers, aided and abetted by wily local, Morgan the Goat,[Note 1] and the Reverend Mr. Jones, who, after initially opposing the scheme, grasps its symbolism in restoring the community's war-damaged self-esteem, conspire to delay the cartographers' departure while they build an earth mound on top of the hill and make it high enough to be considered a mountain. The scene is set with Anson and Garrad the cartographers (who are to measure the mountain) arriving at the village, but everyone in town is at church (it being a Sunday). The only exception is Morgan the Goat who manages the local inn and is the only redhead in the village. Most of the men of the town are away at war and the film implies that the women are visiting the inn and having redheaded children. On the first day Anson and Garrad reach the top and do some preliminary measurements and come up with a height of 930 feet. Anson returns and reassures them that they have more accurate measurements to make the next day.

The next day, when they go to the mountain the entire village is milling around the mountain and eagerly anticipating the results. The cartographers after the measurements announce that the more accurate measurements indicate a height of 984 feet which is just 16 feet short of the 1,000 feet needed to qualify the "hill" as a mountain. The townsfolk are crestfallen and the town's minister announces a town hall meeting. In the meeting Morgan the Goat proposes that they raise the mountain by 20 feet and one of the leadership agrees saying that they have seen mountains with permanent structures atop them like tombs.

Morgan, the constable and the village elder return to the cartographers to persuade them to stay while they build a structure on the mountain but Anson the cartographer disagrees and says they have a tight schedule and they will be leaving in the morning.

The next morning, everyone rallies and starts digging earth from their backyards and transporting it to hill to add 20 or so feet to it. The first day they make a mound that is approximately 14 feet high. Meanwhile in town someone has sabotaged the car belonging to the cartographer and the minister, just to be sure, also punctures a tyre. The cartographers have to push the car to the mechanic who does not know anything about the car but deliberately fumbles around and breaks apart and then informs the cartographers that the part will be needed to be brought in from Cardiff.

When the cartographers try to catch a train from the local station, they are misinformed that the trains only carry coal by the station master who is colluding with the townspeople to keep them in the town. Morgan also enlists a local lady to entertain the two Englishmen.

At this point, it starts raining and the mud on the hill starts washing off down from 14 to 10 feet. Morgan declares an emergency and asks the mechanic to remove the tarpaulin covering the car belonging to the cartographers and to take it to the mountain to cover the works under construction. Meanwhile, in town, the two cartographers are entertained by the local lady.

The rain continues all night and all day from Thursday to Sunday. On Sunday, the minister of the church encourages the villagers to finish the work they started. Upon the suggestion of the Englishman Anson, they also cover the mound with sod before the last light. The minister then dies and is buried on the mountain.

After the burial, the townspeople convince Anson to stay the night at the top of the mountain and measure it at the break of dawn because their train leaves at around 8 a.m. Anson stays on the mountain with Betty who offers to keep him company, and they kiss.

When Anson descends from the mountain, he informs the people that the mountain is 1,002 feet high and announces his engagement to Betty. The end of the movie describes the mountain settling down to 997 feet and turning back into a hill from a mountain. The spirit of the Reverend buried on the mountain exhales "a hill" in a groan and all the people rally, in modern day Wales, with buckets and earth to raise the mountain again.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Englishman_who_Went_up_a_Hill_but_Came_down_a_Mountain

Christopher Monger was born on November 9, 1950, in Taff's Well, United Kingdom. He is a son of Ifor David Monger, who was a doctor, author and playwright. In addition, Ifor was an amateur photographer and filmmaker.

When Christopher was a child, he, together with his younger brother Antony and friend Alan Field, ran a newspaper — The Taff's Well Times, which operated for two years and earned them interviews on BBC and HTV television.

Also, in his early years, Monger attended a boarding school in Taunton, Somerset. Then, he continued his education at Chelsea School of Art (present-day Chelsea College of Arts) in London, where he earned the Bidduph Scholarship for painting.

After finishing his studies in London, Christopher came back to his native Wales, where he became a founding member of the Chapter Film Workshop — a full production facility that allowed local talent

to make films. In its first five years, the workshop produced eight feature films and over fifty shorts. It was there, that Christopher produced his first no-budget features, including the controversial "Voice Over" (1981).

Untruth:

Although the film wasn't made here the actors did visit here to research the event and stayed at the Taff's Well Inn. Hugh Grant claimed it was here that the first instance of his phone being bugged occurred but in actual fact it was the landlord holding a glass up to the wall in the next room.

The actor **David Jason** spent much time in Taff's Well when he was courting Myfanwy Talog who died early at the age of 50. It is said that the situation comedy Open All Hours upon Arthur's shop which is one of many buildings to have been dismantled and sent to the St Fagan's.

Rugby player **Bleddyn Williams** MBE (22 February 1923 – 6 July 2009), . He played in 22 internationals for Wales, captaining them five times, winning each time, and captained the British Lions in 1950 for some of their tour of Australia and New Zealand.

Sir Thomas Lewis (1881-1945) was a Welsh cardiologist. "father of clinical cardiac electrophysiology".

Sir Thomas Lewis, CBE, FRS, FRCP (26 December 1881 – 17 March 1945) was a Welsh cardiologist (although he personally disliked the term, preferring cardiovascular disease specialist He coined the term "clinical science".

Early life and education

Lewis was born in Taffs Well, Cardiff, Wales, the son of Henry Lewis, a mining engineer, and his wife Catherine Hannah (née Davies). He was educated at home by his mother, apart from a year at Clifton College,[12] which he left due to ill-health, and the final two years by a tutor. Already planning to become a doctor, at the age of sixteen he began a Bachelor of Science (BSc) course at University College, Cardiff, graduating three years later with first class honours. In 1902 he entered University College Hospital in London to train as a doctor, graduating MBBS with the gold medal in 1905. The same year he was awarded a Doctor of Science (DSc) degree from the University of Wales for his research work.

Career

He remained at UCH for the rest of his life, beginning as a house physician. From 1907 he also worked at the Royal Naval Hospital, Greenwich and the City of London Hospital and the same year he took his Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree. In 1911 he was appointed lecturer in

cardiac pathology at UCH and in 1913 was promoted to assistant physician in clinical work. He was elected Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians (FRCP) in 1913.

While still a house physician, Lewis began physiological research, carrying out fundamental research on the heart, the pulse and blood pressure. From 1906, he corresponded with the Dutch physiologist Willem Einthoven concerning the latter's invention of the string galvanometer and electrocardiography, and Lewis pioneered its use in clinical settings. Accordingly, Lewis is considered the "father of clinical cardiac electrophysiology". The first use of electrocardiography in clinical medicine was in 1908. In that year, Thomas Lewis and Arthur MacNalty (later the Chief Medical Officer of the United Kingdom) employed electrocardiography to diagnose heart block.[13] In 1909, with James MacKenzie, Lewis founded the journal Heart: A Journal for the Study of the Circulation, which he renamed Clinical Science in 1933. In 1913, he published the book Clinical Electrocardiography, the first treaty on electrocardiography. Lewis was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) in 1918.[1] He was promoted to full physician at UCH in 1919.

During the First World War, Lewis worked at the Military Heart Hospital in Hampstead and was appointed to the first full-time clinical research post in Britain, at the Medical Research Committee (later Medical Research Council). He directed a study of the condition known as "soldier's heart" and, having established it was not a cardiological problem, renamed it the "effort syndrome".[2] In 1918 he wrote the monograph The Soldier's Heart and the Effort Syndrome. He devised remedial exercises that allowed many soldiers suffering from the condition to return to duty and was appointed honorary consulting physician to the Ministry of Pensions in April 1919, and for this work he was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in January 1920 and was knighted in the 1921 Birthday Honours.

After the war, he established the clinical research department at UCH and continued his work on cardiac arrhythmia. In 1925 he switched his focus from cardiography to vascular reactions of the skin. In 1917 he had shown that capillaries had independent contractions and he now investigated the response of the skin to injury, leading to the 1927 monograph The Blood Vessels of the Human Skin and their Responses. He was awarded the Royal Society's Royal Medal in 1927 "for his researches on the vascular system, following upon his earlier work on the mammalian heart-beat." Next, he switched his focus to peripheral vascular disease, especially Raynaud's disease, and finally to the mechanism of pain, summarising his findings in Pain in 1942. His 1932 book Diseases of the Heart became a standard medical text. In 1930 he described the Hunting reaction, alternating vasodilation and vasoconstriction of peripheral capillaries in cold environments.

In 1930, he founded the Medical Research Society. He was awarded the Royal Society's Copley Medal in 1941 "for his clinical and experimental investigations upon the mammalian heart." He was only the second clinician to receive it, after Lord Lister in 1902. He served as vice-president of the Royal Society from 1943 to 1945.

Lewis suffered a myocardial infarction at the age of 45 and gave up his 70-cigarette-a-day habit, being one of the first to realise that smoking damaged the blood vessels. He died from coronary heart disease at his home at Loudwater, Hertfordshire on 17 March 1945, at age 63.

Einthoven acknowledged Lewis in his 1925 Nobel Prize acceptance speech:

…Thomas Lewis, who has played a great part in the development of electrocardiography deserves a special mention. It is my conviction that the general interest in ECG would certainly not have risen so high, nowadays, if we had had to do without his work, and I doubt whether without his valuable contributions I should have the privilege of standing before you today.

Born on December 26, 1881 in Cardiff, Wales

1902 – BSc University College, Cardiff,

1927 – Suffered first heart attack and gave up his '70 a day' habit recognizing before others did that 'smoking injures the blood vessels.'

1935 – Suffered a second heart attack and remarked '..another arrow from the same quiver my friend, and one of them will get me in the end'

Died on March 17, 1945 of myocardial infarction. Buried in Llangasty churchyard, Breconshire, Wales, overlooking Llangorse Lake, where he fished and studied nature as a young boy.

Untruth:

When Thomas Lewis was asked what inspired him to research electrical impulses and the heart he always said it was as a result of a walk here he went on in the fields around Taff's Well one summer afternoon with a young lady who he thought he had no special feeling for. On the walk he tripped and stumbled and grabbed an electric fence causing his heart to flutter. They were married six months later.

Taff's Well Spring

Taff's Well thermal spring is located in Taff's Well (Welsh: Ffynnon Taf) north of Cardiff, South Wales, UK (National Grid Reference ST 11925 83639) and an elevation of about 30 m. It is the only thermal spring in Wales. The spring emerges on the eastern bank of the River Taff and has been contained within a brick well structure and building. Access is via Taff's Well park, a public park, owned and maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taff Council.

The spring is enclosed inside a well and stone building constructed in the 19th century. The well built to contain the spring waters is brick lined and approximately 4 m deep. The building has an internal dimension of 5.3 × 3.9 m, and water fills this area. A brick built spiral staircase is incorporated in the inside of the well. There is one visible overflow pipe which emerges several meters to the west of the spring, on the bank of the River Taff.

A recent conceptual model considers that the water has journeyed from the limestone outcrops on the north crop of the coalfield over a period of at least five thousand years, but possibly ten thousand.

The site is not protected by any statutory legislation; it is however, a registered "Regionally Important Geological Site" or RIGS and a Grade II listed building site

History

The early history of Taff's Well spring is not documented, in fact the first recorded visit to the spring was in 1760 by the chemist D. W. Linden. Roman settlements and roads occur throughout the Taff Valley but there is no evidence that the Romans knew about, or used the spring.[5] An early writing[when?] states[attribution needed] it was sometimes called 'Ffynnon Dwym' or 'tepid well'. In 1799 flood waters are reported[by whom?] to have removed Roman masonry that once adjoined the well.[citation needed]

19th century dictionaries mention the reported medicinal properties of the water, especially for the cure of rheumatism and the waters are said to possess medicinal properties of very high order.[6] The spring reached its height of popularity during the mid to late 1800s, with visitors arriving in the village in large numbers hoping to cure their ailments.

The following excerpt is from Hall 1861. It is a description of people's beliefs in the healing powers of holy wells in the nineteenth century.

At all hours of the day and night there are ailing and decrepit persons, men, women, and children, waiting "a turn" to bathe. Women must bathe here as well as men, and when a bonnet is hung on the outside, it is a sign that the gentler sex have possession. As but two, or at most three can find room in the bath inside, it is obvious that persons seeking relief must wait sometimes for hours before they obtain right of entrance. Yet it would be very easy to produce larger accommodation; for as we have observed there are several other springs at hand,. That might be at little cost fitted up for bathers. These bathers however are of the poorer classes and although we believe a fee is paid by them to the farmer who owns the ground, there is little prospect of any better accommodation until some practically minded benevolent person interferes to promote the comfort and restore the health of humble visitors to the Well.

History: Taff's Well Etching prior to 1861

Hall concluded that the waters relieved and occasionally cured chronic disorders, citing a young man who came as a cripple and left after a fortnights bathing able "to run about the green meadow and enjoy life."

Another patient was described, an Irishman who was unable to move without the aid of crutches.

”But how” we inquired, “how is it that with such a number of holy wells in your own country you leave them and come to St. Taff to be cured?”

“Because I’m for justice to ould Ireland. Does your honour think that when I had the misfortune to take up with the rhumatis in this country, I’d go bothering my own saints to give me the cure? I’d scorn it ! hav’n’t they enough to do with their own blind and bochers, without bein’ put upon to do the work that belongs to St. Taff ? It was down in his mines I got it, and it's his duty to see me righted ; and so he will, with God's help someday. If the gorsoons would let me alone, I'd be a dale healthier meeself ; but aftermee dip in the well, when I come down here to go over mee bades, and say ‘God be wid ould times,’ and think of where mee heart lies bleedin,’ – of the pleasant places, the singing strames and singing birds, and one that is singing sweeter than either up there now ! [8]

The growing popularity of Taff's Well spring as a tourist destination was again reported in 1877 by the chemist J. W. Thomas who said ‘the well waters have long since obtained some celebrity, especially the well water as a curative agent for rheumatism.’ Thomas sensibly concludes ‘we do not feel encouraged by this story (which, by the way, we rather fancy we have heard before) to insist very much upon the curative properties of the Water of Taff's Well.’

During the 19th century a weir was constructed across the River Taff. This caused the widening of the River Taff which moved eastwards towards the spring with floodwaters often covering the spring.

The well building fell into disrepair at the beginning of World War I, and in 1929 the Taffs Well villagers decided to repair the well and it re-opened in 1930 complete with a small swimming pool. It was around this time that the famous travel writer H. V. Morton[10] visited the well dedicating several pages of his 1932 book to the well. A large flood in the 1950s caused the pool, and well, to fall into disuse once again. In 1978 the well's waters were used to rescue the village bowling greens from drought. It was not until the 1990s that a redevelopment of the area was undertaken by Rhondda Cynnon Taff Council.

Taff's Well spring is not currently used for water supply or recreational use. Rhondda Cynon Taff Council had plans to reinstate the spring and to utilise it as a tourist attraction but these have not been fully realised.

The Grey Lady of Taff's Well

Taff's Well is not considered to be a Holy Well, although there are many of these in Wales. The best-known myth or legend associated with the spring (apart from its healing properties) is that of the "Grey Lady":

A lady robed in grey frequently visited this well, and many people testified to having seen her in the twilight wandering along the banks of the river near the spring, or going on to the ferry under the Garth Mountain. Stories about this mysterious lady were handed down from father to son. The last was to the effect that about seventy or eighty years ago the woman in grey beckoned a man who had just been getting some of the water. He put his pitcher down and asked what he could do for her. She asked him to hold her tight by both hands until she requested him to release her. The man

did as he was bidden. He began to think it a long time before she bade him cease his grip, when a "stabbing pain" caught him in his side and with a sharp cry he loosed his hold. "Alas! I shall remain in bondage for another hundred years, and then I must get a woman with steady hands and better than yours to hold me." She vanished and was never seen again."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taff%27s_Well_Thermal_Spring