Making Wales possible: regional identity and the geographical imagination in *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain*

Nick Redfern, University of Central Lancashire

Mae'r tirlun yn chwarae rôl bwysig yn adeilladwraith a chynrychiolaeth hunaniaeth genedlaethol a rhanbarthol. Yn *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain*, cynrhychlir y tirlun Gymreig fel petai'n unigryw Gymreig ac eto'n rhan o'r genedl Brydeinig trwy gysylltu cynrhychiolaeth o gefn gwlad gyda rôl milwyr Gymreig yn y Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf, a chysylltu dwy agweddu wahanol ar y tirlun (Cymreig a Saesneg). Mae'r gynrhychiolaeth o hunaniaeth Gymreig a osodir yn y llfilm hon, fel y trafodir yr yr ethygl, yn hunaniaeth ranbarthol sy'n ymwrthod â biwrocratieith sy'n llechlediannau ac yn Seisniogeddiad, ond sydd eto wedi'i chynnwys o fewn cenedl y Deyrnas Unedig.

To us, the mountain is the bread of life, and is a holy sacrament. Our lives are woven into its essence. If we lose the mountains nothing will remain but 'snobbery' and 'chip' shops.¹

Introduction

For geographers and environmental scientists the term *landscape* refers to 'a portion of a natural and cultural environment – it is material',² which has an objective existence that can be empirically verified and analysed through the application of scientific methods to a delimited area. Landscape may also be described as a painterly way of looking at the world, emerging from the interaction between the individual observer and the material environment.³ For Denis Cosgrove, 'landscape is not merely the world we see, it is a construction, a composition of that world. Landscape is a way of seeing the world.'⁴ As a construction, landscape is a social and cultural product, 'a historically specific process, one in which social groups experience, reflect upon and structure the world around them.'⁵

Landscapes play a key role in the invention and imagining of nations, and landscape imagery has long been viewed as an integral component of national identity.⁶ For Colin Williams and Anthony D. Smith, nationalism is, above all else,
Making Wales possible

'a struggle for control of land; whatever else the nation may be, it is nothing if not a mode of constructing and interpreting social space'.


11 The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill But Came Down a Mountain (1995, dir. Christopher Monger, prod. Sarah Curtis, Miramax Films/Parallax Pictures). Cast: Hugh Grant (Reginald Anson), Colm Meaney (Morgan the Goat), Tara Fitzgerald (Miss Elizabeth), Ian McNeice (George Garrad), Kenneth Griffith (Reverend Jones), Ian Hart (Johnny Shell-shocked), Robert Pugh (Williams the Petroleum), Garfield Morgan (Davies the School), Dafydd Wyn Roberts (Tommy Two-Strokes).

12 Lowenthal, 'European and English landscapes as national symbols', p. 15.


This essay will address these themes through an examination of the construction of a Welsh identity through the articulation of landscape in The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain. The political appropriation of space is not restricted to the nation-state, and Lowenthal notes that other types of social groups make powerful claims to symbolic geographies: 'Such icons of identity are not confined to nation-states. They are just as critical to ethnic and other groups whose autonomy is partial or residual – Scots and Welsh, Basques and Bretons. And political subordination often makes such regional identity claims especially fervent.' Landscape in this film is articulated as being uniquely Welsh and, through an analogy with the battlefields of the First World War, as being part of a British landscape. The film also links the Welsh landscape with Britishness through its unification of two different approaches (Welsh and English) to the landscape. As a consequence, the Welsh identity posited in this film is constructed as a regional identity in opposition to an encroaching and anglicising bureaucracy, but as an identity that is contained within the nation-state of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Landscape and Welsh Identity

According to Gwyn A. Williams, 'Wales is impossible. A country called Wales exists only because the Welsh invented it. The Welsh exist only because they have invented themselves.' In the continuing process of inventing Wales the landscape has played a key role, and has done so largely in two phases: the
romanticization of the Welsh landscape in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century; and the politicization of the Welsh landscape in the twentieth century.

In the early eighteenth century the Welsh landscape was perceived as ‘horrific’ and ‘barbarous’. The most famous account of this period, Daniel Defoe’s *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, exemplifies this attitude. He describes the Welsh mountains as rising up ‘from the lowest valleys, to the highest summits which makes them look horrid and frightful’, while in Glamorganshire, he finds ‘a country looking so full of horror, that we thought to have given over the enterprise, and have left Wales out of our circuit’. The transformation in the perception of Wales, and in particular of the Welsh mountains, from ‘horror’ to ‘beauty’ came with the ‘volte face from rational to romantic in the intellectual climate of eighteenth century Britain’, in which a ‘country long ignored, thought to be all that was ugly, became the very standard of beauty for some fifty years’. The Welsh landscape was ‘discovered’ in the eighteenth century through tourism and landscape painting. In his *Account of a Journey into Wales*, originally published in the 1770s, Sir George Lyttleton described a vista from Powis Castle in terms very different to that of Defoe: ‘The vales and bottoms are large; and the mountains, that rise like a rampart around, add a magnificence and grandeur to the scene, without giving you any horror or dreadful ideas . . .’ For David M. Solkin, Lyttleton’s *Account* ‘endowed Welsh scenery with aesthetic respectability’ and from the 1770s there appeared a ‘cascade’ of topographical descriptions, along with a number of more poetic reflections on Wales, from tourists attracted by the wild, uncultivated, and sublime landscape. The respectability was further enhanced by the representations of Welsh scenery by such artists as Paul Sandby, Richard Wilson, and the latter’s pupil, Thomas Jones, who, inspired by the traditions of Italian landscape painting, identified the Welsh landscape with classical antiquity and ancient Britain.

For Pyrs Gruffydd the politics of identity in Wales, as it evolved in the twentieth century, was ‘fundamentally geographical in that it located Welshness within a particular rural environment. It also exhibited a profound territorial sense in its defence of national space’. In 1933, Plaid Cymru unveiled the *Triban* – a stylized representation of the Welsh mountains – as its symbol, placing the intimate relationship between a people and its land at the forefront of Welsh nationalism. A key discourse in the politicisation of the Welsh landscape was the notion of the *gwerin* – the ‘folk’ or ‘common people’ – and the countryside as ‘a civilising storehouse of Welsh cultural identity’. Geographers such as H. J. Fleure and George Stapledon provided an academic interpretation of rural value. Associating industrialisation with a materialism and an Englishness that eroded the ancient

18 Ibid.
19 See Zaring, ‘The romantic face of Wales’.
22 Ibid., 224.
culture of Wales, Plaid Cymru promoted the reconnection of the Welsh people with their ‘true’ cultural heritage through a move ‘back-to-the-land’ and the resettlement of industrial workers in farming colonies. The party’s chief agricultural spokesman, Moses Gruffydd, argued that this policy was ‘essential if the Welsh Nation is to live. The Welsh Nation is a nation with its roots in the country and the soil.’ Plaid Cymru’s policies represent an attempt to halt the Anglicisation of Welsh space, the appropriation of Welsh land by the English and its redefinition as an imperial landscape. The ‘despoilation of Welsh land and landscape became a potent symbol of political grievance’ and thus, in Welsh politics, ‘the defence and control of Welsh territory assumed a central and symbolic role’.

The most significant event in the estrangement of Wales from central government was the scandal of Tryweryn in the 1950s and 1960s, in which the Tryweryn valley near Bala – home to a Welsh-speaking community at the village of Capel Celyn – was drowned in order to construct a reservoir which would supply water to the English city of Liverpool. The government went ahead with the scheme in the face of public opposition in Wales, as well as political opposition from Welsh MPs. This episode contributed to a sense of powerlessness among the Welsh, particularly in view of the violence done to the landscape. In cinematic terms, the violence inflicted on the Welsh landscape by the English is best represented in the Academy Award-nominated film Hedd Wyn (Paul Turner, 1992). The life of Ellis Evans, whose bardic name is Hedd Wyn, is represented as being intimately linked to the landscape. Evans works on his family farm and is a member of the Welsh-speaking, culturally rich gwerin who are represented in contrast to the sophisticated English-speakers of the town. His poetry seems to emerge directly from the landscape itself and is spoken in the film by Arianrhod, the Celtic moon deity, which emphasises its naturalness. The repeated shots of Evans’s death on the battlefield at Pilkem Ridge stress a return to the land – a return for Evans to the natural – but also the destruction of Welsh culture within a British fighting force. Hedd Wyn also notes the suspicion towards Welshness by the English: having read one of Evans’s poems, an English officer, through his own ignorance of the Welsh language, accuses Evans of being a spy. The film draws an obvious contrast between the peaceful bounty of the farm and the barren battlefields of northern France, and we experience the difference between the two as we watch Evans’s horrified reaction to the English shelling of the landscape. Hedd Wyn, thus, interprets the relationship between the Welsh and the English in terms of the former’s reverence for the landscape and the latter’s utter destruction of it, and a mutual dislike that divides these two parts of the United Kingdom.

As discussed in the following section, The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain takes up these discourses of landscape and alienation
and presents the viewer with an optimistic and successful solution to the conflicts that arise between the Welsh and the English, and does so within a framework of Britishness. As such it shares with a number of films produced in the UK between 1992 and 2002, a positive outlook on the possibility of representing the regional within the national. In *Blue Juice* (Carl Prechezer, 1995), *Trainspotting* (Danny Boyle, 1996), and *Brassed Off* (Mark Herman, 1996) the alienation of the various regional communities in these films (the South West, Scotland, Yorkshire) can be overcome through the unification of the regional and the national, and in representing their regions these films make the case for the importance of the regional within the UK. These films challenge concepts of Britishness without rejecting their national identity; they all share an optimistic view on the value of regional cultures, a British national identity, and the possibility of negotiating a more sympathetic relationship between the regional and the national. The regional feel good factor manifests itself in these films in Renton’s ultimate escape from Edinburgh to London (*Trainspotting*); in the multiple happy endings for the surfers in the South West (*Blue Juice*); and in the victory for the Grimley Colliery band and the defiant pride of the miners (*Brassed Off*). It is also manifest in the Welsh community in *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain* as the film makes its case for recognition within the British nation through its landscape.

**The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain**

Like *Whisky Galore!* (Alexander Mackendrick, 1949) and *Local Hero* (Bryan Forbes, 1983), *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain* tells the story of a small and eccentric community on the periphery of the United Kingdom. The idyllic existence of the community is disturbed through the intervention of outside forces, and equilibrium must be restored through some accommodation. In *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill* the outsiders are George Garrad and Reginald Anson, two English cartographers for His Majesty’s Ordnance Survey, who are surveying the area during the First World War. A conflict with the villagers of Ffynnon Garw arises over the height of the local mountain (also called Ffynnon Garw), when it is revealed that at sixteen feet below the minimum height of a mountain (1,000 feet), Ffynnon Garw – celebrated as ‘the first mountain in Wales’ – is only a hill. This news comes as a devastating blow to the villagers who, already weary from the war, are greatly perturbed by the prospect of ‘losing’ the mountain to the English, and resolve to uphold the pride of the Welsh. By detaining the English cartographers with their eccentricities and charm, the villagers overcome the elements and their own local squabbles to transfer earth from the bottom of the mountain to the top, adding some twenty feet to the summit of Ffynnon Garw and transforming it into a bona fide mountain.

---

As is the case with Hedd Wyn, at the heart of The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill are a series of binary relationships. However, the film does not set these relationships up as oppositional to one another, and ultimately unites Welshness and Englishness under the umbrella of a wider British identity that is more than the sum of its parts (see Table 1).

Table 1: National and Regional Characteristics in The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Britishness</th>
<th>Englishness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welshness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective</td>
<td>Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>Scientific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Dispassionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>Empirical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This relationship between Welshness, Englishness, and Britishness is established in the opening title sequence of the film. This sequence is comprised of a number of shots of maps that reveal the location of the action on a series of territorial scales. These shots move from the local (Ffynnon Garw), to the regional (Wales), to the national (the United Kingdom), and finally to the international (Europe). Rather than relying on an understanding of social space as ‘a board or a backdrop across which social processes “move” and are “imprinted” or a set of fixed “containers” at particular scales for cultures and social processes’, the film establishes a more fluid relationship between different social scales that ‘involves a conception of “topological” space in which diverse scales are brought together through networks of “internal” and “external” ties in defining geographical variation in social phenomena’.29 This topological relationship is established in the way in which the eight shots of this sequence are combined. The differing scales of local, regional, national, and supranational are not separated from one another by sharp cuts, but are linked in a way that suggests their continuity: thus the first shot of Ffynnon Garw widens to reveal the village’s place in relation to the rest of Wales, and is succeeded by further camera movements and dissolves that establish Wales’s relationship to the UK, and the latter’s relationship to Europe as being fluid and interrelated rather than fixed and divisive.

29 John A. Agnew, ‘Representing space: space, scale and culture in social science’, In James Duncan and David Ley (eds), Place/Culture/Representation (London and New York, 1993), pp. 252, 263.
The film is organized as a story told by a grandfather to his grandson (as is made explicit in the film's prologue), and it is the grandfather as the narrator who, throughout the film, contextualizes and establishes the key role of the landscape in Welsh culture. The mountains are described as the source of Welshness: 'The Welsh were created by mountains. Where the mountains start, there starts Wales.' The mountains are celebrated as being uniquely Welsh, and are claimed as monuments to Welsh culture through comparison with the pyramids of Egypt and the Greek Temples. The mountains are also presented as being 'authentically' British: 'the Mountains have defeated every invader. This is where the Britons fled when they were invaded by the Romans, the Angles, the Saxons, the Vikings, the Normans.' In making such links, the narrator 'classifies' the landscape, and, like Richard Wilson, identifies the Welsh landscape with classical antiquity and ancient Britain.

The painterly approach to the Welsh landscape is represented by a shot from the point-of-view of Reverend Jones, who gazes on Ffynnon Garw from the window of his chapel. This shot does not reveal a wilderness but a landscape that is carefully composed. The window frame divides the view into three with Ffynnon Garw positioned centrally and flanked on both sides by the local flora. The use of windows to frame the landscape features throughout the film; for example, Morgan the Goat first shows the hill to Anson through the window of the pub. The painterly approach is also evident in the print of the hill on the wall of the schoolroom. The shot from Reverend Jones's point-of-view also establishes the Welsh view of the landscape as something spiritual and emotional. In his prayer to motivate the villagers to work on the Sabbath, the Reverend quotes from Psalm 99, verse 9 - 'Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy' - and describes the act of raising the hill to a mountain as a 'prayer made manifest in soil'. Reverend Jones's spiritual view represents one aspect of the villager's faith in the landscape. A second aspect is manifest in Morgan the Goat's Welsh pride which is supported by his intuitive belief that Ffynnon Garw is, indisputably, a mountain. As Morgan confidently asserts on meeting the English, 'That's a mountain, first mountain in Wales' and that it is of the required height to appear on a map ('Don't be twp, man. That's well over a thousand [feet]'). However, as Morgan has no means of establishing the veracity of such statements they are entirely subjective.

The painterly aspect of the Welsh character articulated by the film stands in stark contrast to the representation of the English, who, lacking the faith of the Welsh (both religious faith and faith that Ffynnon Garw is a mountain and 'no mistake'), depend on technology to experience the world around them. The English view of the landscape is scientific, empirical, and dispassionate, and is best illus-
trated in a point-of-view shot that represents Anson's vista through the engineer's transit. We see through the transit as it pans across the Welsh peaks and valleys. Again the landscape is not perceived as a wilderness, but where the Welsh point-of-view shot composes the landscape as an aesthetic experience, the view through the transit takes the environment to be the object of scientific analysis. Again the image is divided, this time into four by the scale of the transit and the iris cuts off the elevation being measured from the point of view of the environment, therefore indicating both the narrow-minded and arbitrary approach of the English bureaucracy. Garrad and Anson discuss the status of the knowledge derived from their empirical approach:

**GARRAD:** ... these figures are science, and what is science Mr. Anson?
**ANSON:** Oh yes, I always forget that one don't I.
**GARRAD:** Oh, come on . . .
**ANSON:** Um, science is dispassionate.
**GARRAD:** Exactly.

Englishness is here set against the classical and authentic landscape of the Britons, and is associated with an intruding, arbitrary, and modernising bureaucracy that has forsaken the spiritual and the sublime for the technological and the industrial.

These two perspectives on landscape are revealed to be flawed. The subjectivity of the Welsh is exposed as being unrealistic and unreliable. In anticipation of the historic measurement of Ffynnon Garw, the men of the village gather in the pub to place bets on the outcome that can only be described as wildly inaccurate, with bets ranging from a low of 1,278 feet to an overoptimistic 3,100 feet. The Welsh approach to landscape is thus founded upon a significant misconception: their belief that Ffynnon Garw is a mountain. The empirical method of the English exposes this delusion, thereby precipitating a crisis of identity among the villagers. As the narrator comments: 'If this isn't a mountain ... well, if this isn't a mountain then Anson might just as well redraw the boundary and put us all in England. God forbid!' The Welsh lack precise knowledge of their environment due to their lack of technological skill. In contrast to the English, motorized transport for the Welsh is limited to the motorcycle of Tommy Two-Strokes, his name indicating the limits of their technological sophistication. Although his name implies some sort of technical expertise, Williams the Petroleum is unable to repair Anson and Garrad's car (after Morgan and the Reverend Jones have sabotaged it) as he lacks the requisite knowledge. He tells Morgan the Goat that he has no experience of anything more complicated than a two-stroke engine and it seems he does not know the name of an engine part, though he attempts to disguise his ignorance behind the Welsh language.
Though the English measurement causes the villagers much consternation, contrasting their outrage with the dispassion of the scientific concept of landscape, the value of the scientific point-of-view is questionable. The association of Englishness with the scientific method renders such objectivity undesirable. As it is represented in the characters of Garrad and Davis the School, Englishness is to be defined as officious, arbitrary, insensitive and out-of-touch. Garrad is an unfit, overweight drunkard who has been retired from the army to the Ordnance Survey having driven many of his men to drink on account of his 'irksome personality'. He has an imperial worldview, and makes reference to his adventures in Abyssinia, Palestine, Aden and Sebastopol. He extends this mindset to Wales, which he refers to as 'foreign climes', the Welsh, who he describes as 'natives', and on one occasion simply states, 'God, I hate the Welsh'. Although he is one of the villagers, Davis the School is derided for being 'English'. When discussing the 'mountain' with Reverend Jones, his reasoned and analytical comparison with the Alps and the Himalayas, against which Flynnon Garw would be considered 'barely a hillock', recalls Defoe's unfavourable comparison of the Welsh mountains next to the Alps and the Andes. Defoe claimed that the mountains of Wales are 'even worse than those mountains abroad'.\(^{30}\) It is the schoolmaster who places the most accurate bet on the height of Flynnon Garw, and at 980 feet is the only one to go below the required minimum. However, his bet is rejected as being treacherous, and he is hounded out of the pub with Morgan's jibe—'Are you sure you haven't got any English blood in you?'—ringing in his ears. On finding the villagers digging up the rugby pitch for turf Davis challenges them, asking whether or not the council has been informed and if they have 'written permission'. Johnny Shell-shocked dismisses his officious attitude: 'Stop acting so English'. Significantly, it is only Garrad and the schoolmaster who do not participate in the task of raising the height of Flynnon Garw.

The association of English reliance upon technology is undermined at other points in the film. We first encounter Garrad and Anson as they enter the Welsh landscape in a motorcar, which, as it affords them speed and mobility, represents English technological superiority when compared to the lack of technological sophistication of the Welsh. However, the motorcar cuts off the cartographers from the environment they are entering into. They travel at such a great speed that they pay no attention to the countryside that surrounds them even though it is their task to be attentive to it in precise detail. Thus the motorcar in this early scene may be understood to symbolize the way in which the English are cut off from the landscape. Technology is also shown to be susceptible to failure, and to keep the English in the village the villagers sabotage the car: Morgan pours sugar into the petrol tank, the Reverend Jones stabs one of the tyres, and Williams the

\(^{30}\) Deloe, *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, p. 376.
Petroleum breaks an engine part with his hands. The (dubious) technological superiority of the motorcar is associated with a superior Englishness that the film ridicules. As the cartographers arrive in the village we see Miss Elizabeth departing in a chauffeur-driven car but it is later revealed that she is Betty from Cardiff, a serving maid at a country house. In this scene the car is associated with those who put on airs and graces to project a false image of superiority.

If these approaches to landscape are imperfect if taken individually, then they are successful when taken as a whole. That is to say that a Welsh or an English approach to landscape is flawed, but a British perspective is not. The empirical method of establishing the height of an elevation is called into question. By taking measurements from the top of Ffynnon Garw of the surrounding peaks and then calculating the mountain's height it is necessary to know the elevation of the other hills. Anson informs the villagers that these heights were established by an earlier expedition from the Ordnance Survey, again by the method of comparing their heights to those of surrounding hills. This prompts Thomas Twp and Thomas Twp Too to ask: 'But who measured the first hill?'. Although trained cartographers with precision equipment have measured it, the height of Ffynnon Garw remains open to doubt as the reasoning of the English is based on an unsound premise. However, such doubt can be eliminated through faith. Reverend Jones's intercedes in this debate, pointing out that it was God who measured the first hill. In doing so he rescues the English approach, not by dismissing the fallacy at the heart of the empirical method underlying the measurement of hills, but by cutting off all possible debate. As chapelgoers, the villagers accept the Reverend's intervention, while Anson smiles wanly but offers no answer. The empiricism of the English and metaphysics of the Welsh are thus combined in a British approach to the landscape.

The Welsh are initially sceptical of the cartographers' activities. Having been told of the intentions of the English, Morgan dismisses them, 'Making Maps. Daft Buggers' and the patrons of the pub all laugh at Thomas Twp and Thomas Twp Too's description of the use of the pedometer. As Williams the Petroleum comments: 'No wonder they bloody got it wrong!'. However, once Anson announces the result of the measurement it becomes essential that Ffynnon Garw be properly represented. Morgan changes his opinion on maps and, when Betty refers to it as 'just a map', he states: 'Maps are the undergarments of a country, they give shape to continents.' This represents a significant turnaround in Welsh opinion as it recognizes that subjective claims to 'mountainhood' count for nothing if not supported by empirical verification. The response of the villagers is driven by this change of position: they seek to have Ffynnon Garw recognized as a mountain not by promoting their own subjective and spiritual experience of the landscape,
but by transforming the landscape so that it conforms to the standards of the English. Welshness, in the absence of Englishness, is diminished; but united as Britishness these two modes of experience are mutually supportive.

The plan to raise the hill to a mountain is hatched at a meeting in the village hall. Reverend Jones proposes a petition to have Ffynnon Garw represented as the 'first mountain in Wales' on British maps, only for Morgan to reject this plan. Such a petition offends his sense of Welsh pride, and he proposes that if Ffynnon Garw needs to be 1,000 feet then adding a twenty-foot dump to the summit would raise it to the required height. Morgan's plan is made respectable by Reverend Jones's insistence that earth be taken from the villager's own gardens and that the mountain is built 'by toil, by sweat, by work, by sacrifice'. In other words, the mountain is to be raised by a 'return to the land' and this is reinforced by the arrival of miners to aid the villagers leaving their work in an industry that is associated with the exploitation of Welsh labour by the English. The Reverend Jones further enhances the 'ethics' of the villagers' decision in his sermon on the 'mountain', in which he declares Ffynnon Garw 'a prayer made manifest in soil' and a monument to future generations and to those serving in France. He blesses the work of raising the hill on the Sabbath so that 'our children's children will play where we are piling earth', and 'in memory of our loved ones who will not return from war'. Ffynnon Garw is here imagined as a monument to God and to Wales. The imagining of the mountain as a monument takes on an objective character as the ground is consecrated to receive the body of Reverend Jones. In his final moments, the guardian of local morality, Reverend Jones, turns to Morgan the Goat, the biggest sinner in the village, to ensure that his body is properly taken care of. If the film stresses how the English and Welsh can be united through their experience of the landscape, in the scenes in the village hall and on top of the 'mountain', it also seeks to show how local differences can be overcome.

The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill specifically links the Welsh effort to restore Ffynnon Garw to its reputation with the British war effort in 1917. The narrator states that the people of Wales during the war were 'exhausted by loss', and as this comment is accompanied by an image of bodies being recovered from a mineshaft the home front is linked to the battlefields of Europe. The loss of the mountain is as much a part of the destruction of the close community of the village as the war: 'How could we face those who survived if they returned to find no mountain? While they had fought the Germans, we had lost the mountain to the English. Our village had been ruined; and now they were taking our mountain, our Welshness.' The plan to raise the height of the hill which is hatched at the meeting in the village hall is made possible by Johnny Shell-shocked's association

31 Here the film echoes the life of Saint David, the patron saint of Wales, who is usually represented as standing on a hill, and links the landscape to both a Welsh sense of identity and to religious mythology.
of this labour with the war in France. Johnny links the transfer of earth to the summit of Ffynnnon Garw with digging trenches. He describes taking 'earth from here' and 'building hills there' and 'moving fields', which is staged in the villagers transporting soil from their own gardens and the turf from the rugby pitch to the top of Ffynnnon Garw. Caught in the storm on Ffynnnon Garw, Johnny Shell-shocked re-experiences the horror of trench warfare, though as he later overcomes his fear of the hill the film suggests that the landscape is blessed with restorative powers. The struggle for a Welsh identity in the face of an encroaching and anglicising bureaucracy is thus linked to the role Welsh soldiers play in the British Expeditionary Force, and that miners and other civilians play on the home front. The effort to have Ffynnnon Garw recognized as 'the first mountain in Wales' is a struggle to have Welsh culture properly represented and valued within the United Kingdom.

Though he is the Englishman of the film's title, Anson's Englishness is different to that of Garrad. His commitment to the dispassionate and scientific view is less than zealous. On reaching the summit of Ffynnnon Garw on the first survey Anson pauses to admire the landscape, while Garrad compares the climb to his imperial adventures in Abyssinia. Anson's impressions of the village stand in stark contrast to those of Garrad: he says that the village is a 'pleasant enough sort of a place', and, later confesses to Betty that it is the sort of place in which he could be very happy. Although his task is the scientific and empirical measurement of Ffynnnon Garw, Anson remains open to the aesthetic appeal of the landscape: informing the villagers that Ffynnnon Garw is only a hill, he draws attention to the fact that this is based on 'just a measurement, and in no way should detract from the beauty of or indeed your affection for the, um... hill'. Only Anson in the film has access to both points-of-view: he sees the landscape through the engineer's transit and, as the villagers begin the work of enlarging the mountain, he watches them from the window of his room at the pub. The difference between Garrad and Anson is one of experience. Anson's view has been shaped by his experience of modern warfare - he is described at the beginning of the film as 'just starting to enjoy life after being released from hospital', having been treated for shellshock. Garrad, as an old imperialist, has no such experience, and his military experience is derived from the Crimean War. The characterisation of Garrad as someone who is out of touch with the modern world (of 1917) further undermines his adherence to a scientific and dispassionate worldview; whereas Anson's experience of the horror of trench warfare makes him more open to the celebration of the landscape. This is evident in the scene where the empathetic Anson cares for the traumatized Johnny and dismisses Garrad's imperial history with the words 'Bugger Sebastopol'.
Anson comes to participate fully in the efforts of the villagers, and it is at his suggestion that turf is laid to protect the mound. In the absence of Garrad, who retreats to his room in a drunken stupor, Anson co-opts Betty to serve as his assistant in the final measurement of the hill, and thus the Welsh come to participate in the efforts of the English. Throughout the film Morgan challenges the commitment of various villagers to the cause, as he asks them: ‘Do you want me to have to tell people that it all failed because of you?’ As night closes in on the final day, Betty asks this question of Anson, challenging him to make a commitment to the life of the village. The Welsh, being open to the need for objective verification of their experience of the landscape, and the English (or at least those who can empathize with the Welsh) are thus finally united at the end of the film in the final effort to add height to the hill. This cultural union is staged as a romantic union between Betty and Anson, who, having spent the night on top of Ffynnon Garw in order to perform the second measurement, descend into the village with the news that the hill is now 1002 feet in height, and therefore a mountain, and that they are engaged.

In a coda to the narrative, the film shifts its focus to the present day, and also shifts its authorial voice from the narration of the grandfather to that of the grandson – specifically to that of the director, Christopher Monger. The film is an adaptation of Monger’s own novel, which in turn was based on his father’s telling of the story.\textsuperscript{32} The story of ‘the Englishman who went up a hill but came a mountain’ is thus a local legend that has been passed down from generation to generation, but it is intended to be more than a mere ‘shaggy dog story’. The film invites us to go and experience for ourselves the ‘first big hill’ (sic) north of Cardiff, shifting the status of the narrative from fiction to non-fiction. In this ‘documentary’ sequence, the grandson/director informs us that the mountain was remeasured for the production of the film but was found to be only 997 feet, again reducing it to a hill, but, in a re-enactment of the narrative of the villagers, this is set right by the addition of earth to the summit by a new generation. The film thus re-presents the (hi)story of the Welsh landscape textually and re-stages the same (hi)story in its circumstances of production, and in doing so plays an active part in the reproduction and transformation of a set of Welsh-English-British discourses about the landscape from generation to generation.\textsuperscript{33}

### Conclusion

In his valuable volume *Approaches to Landscape*, Richard Muir describes two closely related but different landscapes:

The one lying beneath our feet and extending to the far horizon is a *real* landscape; it is composed of rock, soil, vegetation and water, is home to an abundance of creatures,
and has objective past and present existences. The other is the *perceived* landscape, consisting of sensed and remembered accounts and hypotheses about the real landscape. It is, therefore, a selective impression of what the real landscape is like. The impression might be very close to reality, or it might contain some important misconceptions.\(^{34}\)

In *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain*, the dispassionate, scientific, and objective techniques employed by the English cartographers exposes the subjective construction of a Welsh landscape by the villagers as being founded on an ‘important misconception’. The Welsh response to this encroaching, Anglicising bureaucracy is unique: rather than adjust their perception to fit the scientific facts, they adjust reality. In raising the hill to a mountain, giving the perceived landscape material form and making it real, the villagers make Wales possible. In bringing the objective and subjective experiences of landscape of the English and the Welsh together, the two worldviews are united under the banner of Britishness. Thus, Wales is made possible not as an independent nation in opposition to England, but as a region that has parity with its eastern neighbour and that plays a full cultural role in the life of the British nation.

\(^{34}\) Richard Muir, *Approaches to Landscape* (Basingstoke, 1999), p. 115.