

Empire

How did a pirates' treasure hunt become an empire four times the size of Ancient Rome's?



Empire

Programme running: 5 x 60 mins Production: BBC HD available



This major five-part series tells the story of the British Empire in a new way, tracing not only the rise and fall of the Empire but also the complex effects of the Empire on the modern world – political, technological and social – and on Britain.

We travel to India, the Middle East, Canada, Africa, the Caribbean and the Far East in search of the extraordinary characters, burning ambitions and surprising principles which created an empire four times the size of Ancient Rome's.

A Taste for Power

Britain took and held power in many different ways in the Empire, from a calculated display of imperial pageantry to the cult of monarchy. Yet should any country be so obsessed with what Lawrence of Arabia called 'policing other men's muddles'?

Making Ourselves at Home

When you're conquering and settling in new countries, how do you create a feeling of 'home'? In

exchange, many of the millions affected by imperial expansion learned to see Britain as *their* home.

Playing the Game

The Empire saw the growth of a particular type of British hero – adventurer, gentleman, sportsman – and a British obsession: sport. The gospel of sport spread through the Empire's public schools, laying the foundations for almost all the major sports of today.

Making a Fortune

A pirates' treasure hunt grew into an informal empire based on trade - and slavery. It formed the basis of the modern global financial network.

Doing Good

The extraordinary story of how a desire for conquest became a mission to improve the rest of mankind. How did that mission become an unquestioning belief that Britain could – and should – rule the world?

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