

The Story of Wales

From the earliest known human burial in Western Europe to the emergence of a modern nation.



The Story of Wales

Programme running: 6 x 60 mins Production: Green Bay Media Ltd for BBC Wales HD available

The Makings of Wales

Beginning with The Red Lady of Paviland, the oldest human burial in Western Europe, this first episode explores Wales' pre-history. Visiting ancient stone tombs we discover cults of the dead and fertility rituals, and investigate legends of invading Celtic war-bands sweeping across Wales. What can an Iron Age sword placed in a lake and the Roman invasion tell us about lost communities?

Power Struggles

The Welsh are under attack from the Vikings and Saxons and show great political skill in building up trade and alliances and developing laws. The Norman invasion produces bitter ongoing conflict but also internationalises the country. The defeat of the last native Prince of Wales in 1282 is followed by a century of plague and famine. But the charismatic Owain Glyndwr leads a rebellion against the English Crown in a bid for independent statehood.

England and Wales

A fallen crown hanging from a thorn bush in a bloody battlefield is lifted by a Welshman, beginning the reign of the Tudors. Ambitious Welsh families are drawn to the palaces of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I in London, but Wales itself is left behind; even its language is downgraded. And some of the bitterest battles of the civil war between King and Parliament are looming on the horizon...

Furnace of Change

Beginning with the city known as Copperopolis, Welsh industry finds its feet in a market for metal. Money and education mean a growing class consciousness. A popular political radicalism quickly seeks a fair share of this new wealth, leading to rioters in the iron towns demanding higher wages. In the countryside, men disguised as women attack oppressive tollgates on roads. Wales is a dangerous place.



A New Beginning

In a fast changing world, Welsh culture seizes its moment and builds grand buildings and its first university. It's all funded by the 'black gold' of the booming coalfields which quickly draw in a new generation of migrants with a different language and culture. Welshman David Lloyd George leads Britain in World War I. Yet no sooner has the country found itself at the centre of the world's trade than the Depression causes an industrial crash with bitter social consequences.

Wales and Britain

Wales is fully engaged with building a British Welfare State and economy after World War II. But Welsh language campaigns from the 1960s onwards, followed by the final eclipse of a world of heavy industry in the Miners' Strike, lead to a new desire for more independence in the government of Wales. As powers shift from London to Cardiff, how well are the people of Wales being served?

Images: Knight © BBC Cymru Wales, Wales Millennium Centre © iStock

Distributed by The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, UK, MK7 6AA
To find out more, please contact our Sales Team on +44 (0) 1908 858077
email: omu-broadcast-media-sales@open.ac.uk or visit our website at:

www.oubms.com

