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Short History Of Wales (Illustrated)



Synopsis

This little book is meant for those who have never read any Welsh history before. It is not taken for granted that the reader knows either Latin or Welsh. A fuller outline may be read in *The Story of Wales*, in the "Story of the Nations" series; and a still fuller one in *The Welsh People of Rhys and Brynmor Jones*. Of fairly small and cheap books in various periods I may mention Rhys' *Celtic Britain*, Owen Rhoscomyl's *Flame Bearers of Welsh History*, Henry Owen's *Gerald the Welshman*, Bradley's *Owen Glendower*, Newell's *Welsh Church*, and Rees' *Protestant Non-conformity in Wales*. More elaborate and expensive books are Seebohm's *Village Community and Tribal System in Wales*, Clark's *Medieval Military Architecture*, Morris' *Welsh Wars of Edward I.*, Southall's *Wales and Her Language*. In writing local history, A. N. Palmer's *History of Wrexham* and companion volumes are models.

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Customer Reviews

If you are an American, read this book BEFORE you visit Wales - so it makes sense. Then - after your visit - read this book again so you will actually understand what you have seen and

experienced.

Owen Edwards has written a concise and interesting history of Wales sympathetic to the people and the culture. It is a good read.

A good short summary of the land and its background.

Five stars would have required more depth on the role of Wales within the UK during the 20th century. I would have liked to understand how the "troubles" in Ireland effected Wales, or the size in Scottish nationalism in the past 30 years.

Not a fan. In fairness, the author made clear from the start the book was a cursory overview of centuries. But I found the writing style to be offputting and even a bit condescending at times.

Glad I read this before going on a trip to Great Britain. Helped me understand the history and what I was seeing!

Great info

What an odd little book. It's from the 1920's, so first of all you'll have to excuse the casual racism (by which I mean the author is convinced that each race possess certain natural attributes, he doesn't go making racial slurs or anything like that or I'd give it a considerably lower rating...). Even more strangely, some Welsh names are anglicised (Owain Glyndwr becomes Owen Glendower, worse, Rhys becomes Rees which is just wrong on every conceivable level). As a short history, it's not a bad introduction, but sometimes it's a little TOO short - the chapter on Glyndwr, a Welsh hero of Arthurian status, is only 2-3 pages long - possibly because of the author's political bias (see below). The style of writing feels at many times as though it was written for a young audience : i.e., "Now I will tell you all about such-and-such.... I have told you lots about this, so now I will tell you of that...". The author also seems at once both patriotic to Wales but a loyal subject of the Empire and is at pains not to offend anyone, apparently a historian who's willing to let bygones be bygones. Maybe we could all learn something from this, but it does tend to make him walk on eggshells. For instance, in the chapter on Llewellyn the Last, he actually says that we shouldn't be bitter about the Conquest because both sides were at fault. I can't see any modern Welsh historian being nearly so

gracious. It certainly isn't at all like any modern history I've read - nowadays authors tend to have axes to grind and provide more interpretative accounts. In this case, if the author is applying any interpretation at all it is only to say that we could all just get along with each other if only we all shared a nice cup of tea. In short, it's quite odd, but curiously engaging. There are certainly worse histories being written. As to this being in Kindle format, I see no reason whatsoever to choose one of the far more expensive version (some are \$44 at the time of writing !) over this free edition. There is no table of contents or any fancy features but the book is too short to need them. Feels slightly unfair to give a free book by a long-dead author only 3/5, but I can't forgive the English spellings of Rhys...

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