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Patagonia: Croesi'r Paith / Crossing The Plain



Synopsis

They had been promised paradise. They discovered a desert. And after twenty backbreaking years, the Welsh settlers in Patagonia decided that enough was enough. An expedition force was sent forth west to find more fertile land in the foothills of the Andes: a 700-km, five-and-a-half-week journey on horseback. That selfsame journey was undertaken by Matthew Rhys 120 years later, and this book is the story of that journey. It is a photographic account of an unchanged yet ever changing landscape, of hardship and exhilaration, of commitment and camaraderie. Patagonia is also a celebration of that little corner of South America that is forever Wales.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Matthew Rhys, a native of Cardiff now living in Los Angeles, has appeared in more than 30 roles for film and television, including "The House of America," "The Edge of Love," and the television drama "Brothers and Sisters." In 1885, a group of Welsh settlers in Chubut, Argentina set out to explore the Andes and found and settled Cwm Hyfryd, "Pleasant Valley". They were members of the largest Welsh settlement in South America, founded twenty years earlier by the passengers of the Mimosa. Actor and author Matthew Rhys joined a group of the descendants of the original Cwm Hyfryd expedition to recreate their accomplishment, on horseback as they did themselves. Rhys has published a beautiful book of his photographs and commentary on this experience: *Patagonia: Croesi'r Paith/Crossing the Plain*, a photographic memoir of this journey by horse through the Patagonian landscape and some of its Welsh history. Although formatted as a beautiful coffee-table style book, *Patagonia* is about equal parts text and photographs, mainly black and white. It's

presented in English and Welsh, including an introduction in those languages and Spanish. Rhys has included some background history of Welsh immigration to Argentina and the story of the original journey, including a few wonderful historic photos of those early settlers and the Argentina of their time. Instead of a linear description of the trip, chapters focus on Rhys' companions and elements of his experience, with titles like "Lunch," about the routine of eating, resting and riding and "Knives," which gives some insight into the arrangement of the trip. Rhys describes the following encounter:"A number of farmers, and their wives and children, came out to greet us.

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