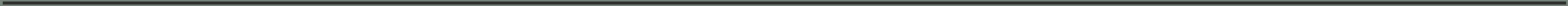
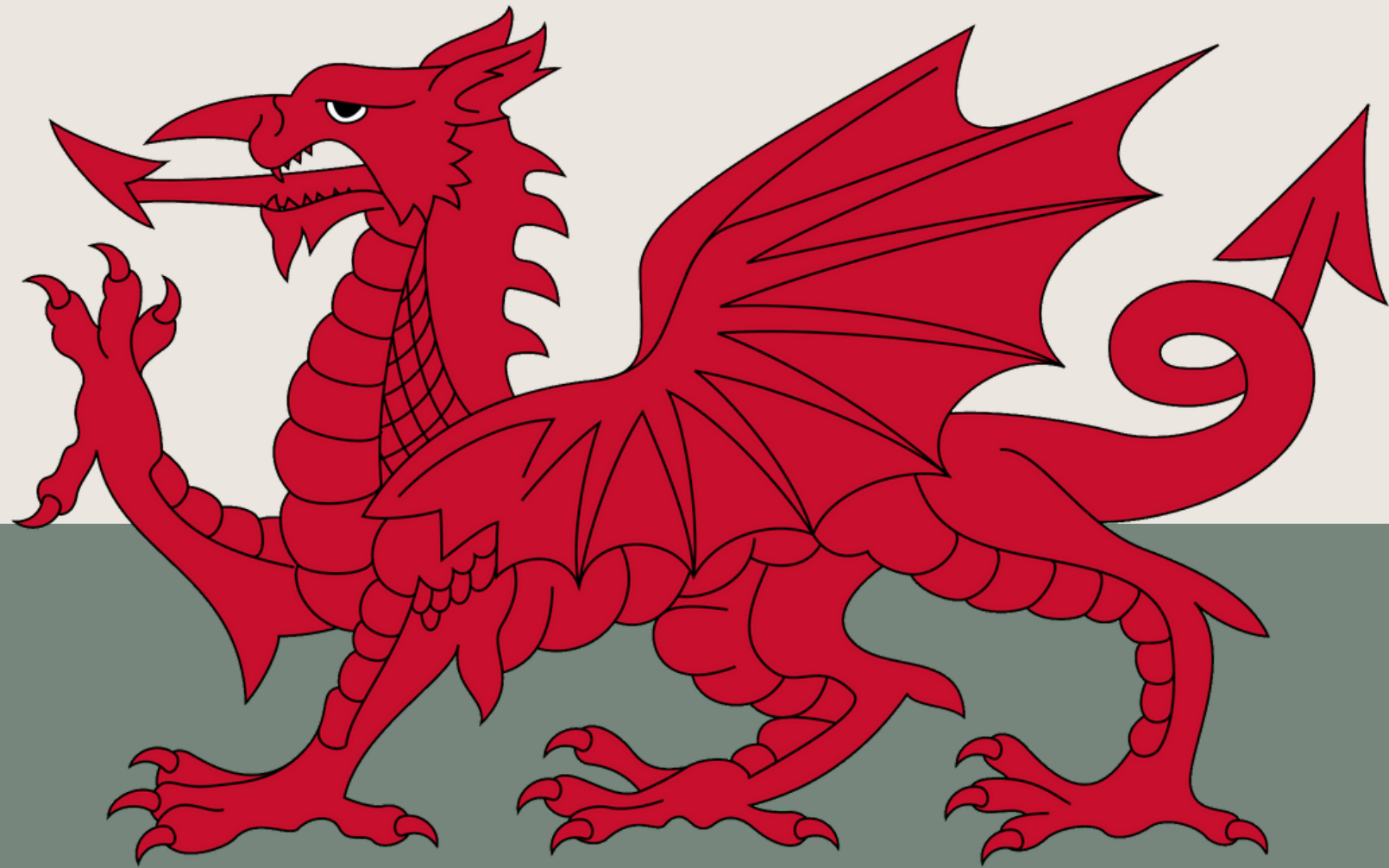


Wales
Cymru
País de Gales



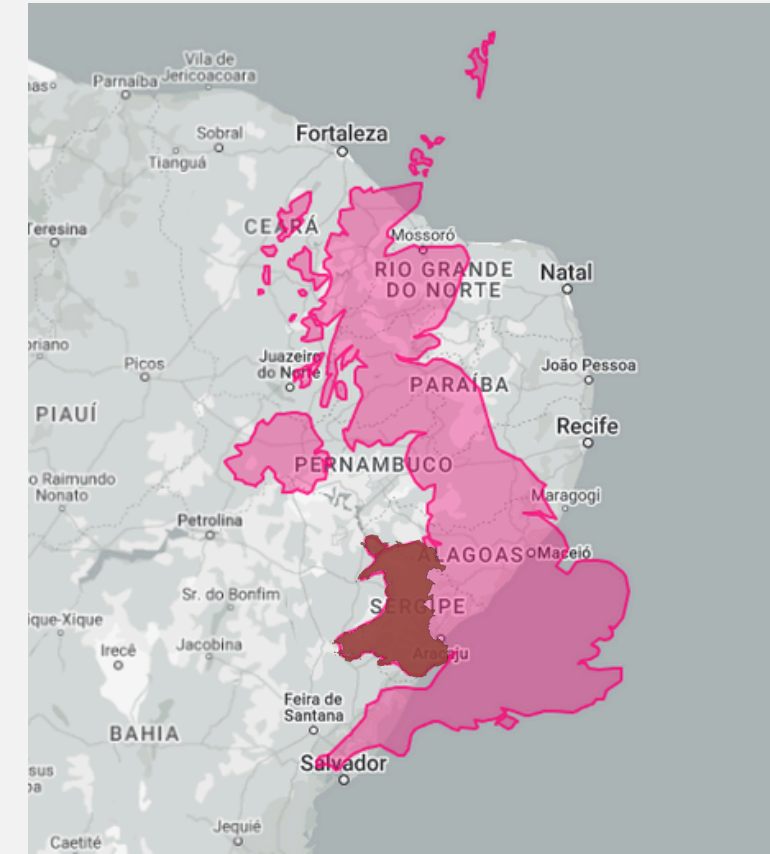
The Geography of Wales: An Overview

Wales is in the southwest of Great Britain, bordered by England to the east and the Atlantic Ocean and Irish Sea to the west. It has a rugged coastline, mountainous regions (especially in Snowdonia), and lush valleys.

The oft-quoted "size of Wales" is about 20,779 km², 1.136,116 km² smaller than Sergipe (21 915,116 km²).

Due to its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean and the prevailing westerly winds, Wales' climate is typically mild: cloudy, wet and windy.

The country's natural resources are mostly *water* and *wind*, *coal*, *ironstones crops*, *lead*, *silver*, *copper*, *slate*, and to a lesser extent *zinc*.



Wales' size
compared to
Sergipe's.
Source: The
True Size.



Penrhyn quarry is a slate quarry located near Bethesda, North Wales. Source: Wikipedia, between 1890 and 1905.





Aliquod Regionum huius tractus synonyma, prout Latine, Britannice & Anglicè etiamnum appellantur.

Cambria, L. Ceredigion, B. Cardigan, A.
Cambry, B. Wales, A.

Venedotia, L. Powys, L. Powys, B. Northwales, A.

Demetia, L. Dyffet, B. Deffenbart, B. Westwales, A. Sutwales, A.

ENGLIE PARS
olim
HOEGRIA
appellata

VERGIVIVM SIVE HIBERNICVM MARE
MOR WERIDH, Britannis,
THE YRISHE OCEANE, Anglis.

L. A. B. littere, vocabulis
adnotate, notant illud esse
Latinum, Anglicum, aut
Britannicum, quod est
incolarum.

Cum Privilegio

A 1574 version of
Humphrey Llwyd's
1573 map of Wales,
Cambriae Typus.



Map of Wales by
John Speed, 1610.

Wales' Drought Crisis and Natural Resources

Wales, famous for its green scenery and rainy climate, is now facing an extended **dry spell**. **Officials have classified the entire region as being in a state of "prolonged dry weather"**, sparking worries about water shortages and ecological impacts.

The country plays a vital role in supplying water to England through major rivers like the Severn and Dee. Its forests and parks, including Snowdonia, depend on consistent rainfall, but recent dry conditions have disrupted agriculture, energy production, and wildlife.

Scientists link this unusual weather to climate change, calling for better water management and conservation. Authorities are encouraging reduced usage, while experts push for stronger infrastructure to cope with future droughts.



Source: CNH Brasil, 2025

Mountains

Wales is a mountainous country on the western side of central southern Great Britain.

The mountains were shaped during the last ice age, the Devensian glaciation. The highest mountains in Wales are in the Snowdonia (Eryri) region, of which five are over 1,000 m (3,300 ft).



Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) at 1,085 m



Carnedd Llewelyn (Crib-y-Ddysgl)
at 1,065 m

Welsh lush valleys



Snowdonia National Park

The park features 14 peaks exceeding 3,000 feet, including Mount Snowdon (3,546 ft), accessible by railway. This dramatic landscape attracts four million annual visitors, steeped in Welsh mythology including Arthurian legends.

Boasting over 1,479 miles of trails, the park offers exceptional hiking, climbing, cycling and equestrian routes. The summit provides panoramic views extending from coastal areas to Bala Lake.



Source: Planet Ware, 2023.

Cardiff Castle & National Museum Cardiff

Among Wales' most picturesque castles, Cardiff Castle stands as a premier attraction with remarkably preserved sections dating back over 1,000 years. Exploring this historic site requires several hours, making it essential to allocate sufficient time in any Cardiff itinerary. Notable features include the State Apartments, medieval Banqueting Hall, and an ancient chapel, with guided and audio tours available for deeper insight.

Adjacent to the castle, the National Museum Cardiff offers free admission and exceptional collections spanning archaeology, zoology, botany, and art. The museum's art gallery showcases masterpieces by renowned artists, including Old Masters and prominent Welsh painters. Together, these landmarks provide a comprehensive cultural experience in the heart of the city.



Source: Planet Ware, 2023.

Welsh Cuisine: Eating Habits & Cultural Dishes

Cultural Dishes

Welsh cuisine is a distinct set of traditions and practices, both influenced by and influencing British food culture. Lamb, from Wales' extensive sheep farming, is a staple—featured in dishes like roast lamb with fresh mint sauce. Seafood is also prominent, especially in coastal regions with strong fishing traditions. The national vegetable, the leek, is widely used in Welsh cooking.

Curiosity: Welsh people demonstrate a growing concern for healthy eating (Source: Food and Nutrition - Public Health Network Cymru).

Source: World Food Guide, 2016.



Traditional Welsh Dishes

- ◆ **Tatws Pum Munud** (*Five-Minute Potatoes*): A stovetop stew with potatoes, vegetables, and bacon.
- ◆ **Tatws Popty** (*Oven Potatoes*): A baked stew with potatoes, vegetables, and meat.
- ◆ **Teisennau Tatws** (*Potato Cakes*): A potato-based side dish, not a main course.

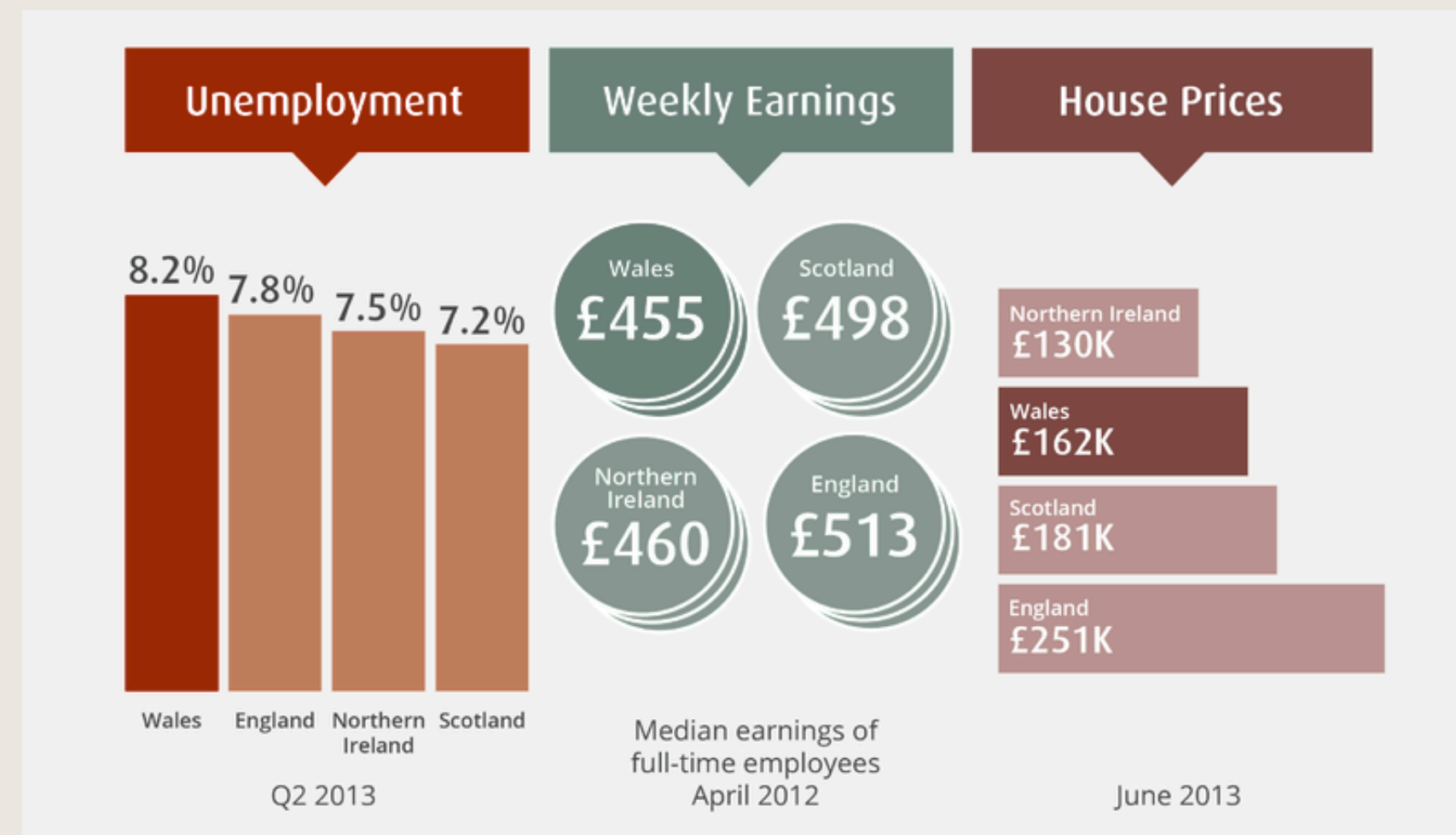
Economy

10

18th–19th Century: Agricultural economy → Industrial powerhouse (coal, steel).

20th Century: Decline of heavy industry → Post-industrial service-based economy.

1950s vs. 2020s: Wales' Gross Domestic Product was 2× Ireland's in the 1950s; now Ireland's economy is 4× larger.



History

In 1283, King Edward I of England conquered Wales after defeating *Llywelyn ap Gruffudd*, the last independent Welsh prince.

In 1284, the *Statute of Rhuddlan* formally annexed Wales to England:

- Welsh law (Cyfraith Hywel) was retained for civil cases but replaced by English law for criminal cases.
- In the Welsh Marches (border regions ruled by English lords), March law remained in force.

The Last Stand for Independence

- Owain Glyndŵr led a nationalist rebellion and was declared Prince of Wales in 1400.
- In 1404, he convened Wales' first Senedd (Parliament) in Machynlleth, seeking independence.
- The revolt was crushed by the English by 1412, and Wales remained under English rule.

“Erected at Westminster Abbey sometime during reign of Edward I, thought to be an image of the King”, between 1272 and 1307.



Source: Wikipedia, 2019.

Full Legal Integration

Under Henry VIII, the Laws in Wales Acts (1535 & 1542) abolished Welsh law entirely and fully unified Wales with England:

- Abolished the Principality of Wales and the Marcher Lordships, creating a formal border.
- Welsh people gained the same legal rights as the English (previously, penal laws had restricted them).
- Controversial measures:
 - Welsh members elected to parliament must be able to speak English
 - English would be the language of the courts.

Therefore, since 1536, English common law (a precedent-based system) has applied across England and Wales as a single jurisdiction.

Portrait of Henry VIII by Hans Holbein the Younger. 1537. Oil on panel, 28 cm × 20 cm.



Source: Wikipedia, 2011.

The Wales and Berwick Act (1746) – Legal Subordination

- Stipulated that all English laws would automatically apply to Wales unless explicitly exempted.
- This cemented Wales' complete legal integration with England.

The Rise of Welsh Political Identity (19th–20th Century)

Despite integration, Welsh-specific policies and nationalist movements began emerging:

- **1881:** *Welsh Sunday Closing Act* – First law exclusive to Wales (banned pub openings on Sundays).
- **1889/1896:** Education laws established Welsh schools and the Central Welsh Board (overseeing grammar schools).
- **1907:** Creation of a Welsh Department within the Board of Education.
- **1912/1919:** Welsh-specific government bodies for agriculture.

WALLIA PRINCIPATUS Vulgo WALES, Joan Blaeu (1596–1673).



Source: Wikipedia, 2015.

Contemporary Politics

Wales is one of the four constituent countries of the United Kingdom, with its own devolved government under the UK's unitary system.

Since the late 1990s, Wales (along with Scotland and Northern Ireland) has had limited self-government — with the head of government being the First Minister — though the ultimate authority remains with the UK Parliament.

The Senedd (Welsh Parliament) exercises devolved powers, but it is not sovereign — Westminster can modify or revoke its authority.

Executive power rests with the UK government (King-in-Council), while legislative power lies with the UK Parliament (King-in-Parliament).

Devolution in Wales was established by the:

- Government of Wales Act 1998 (created the Senedd)
- Government of Wales Act 2006 (expanded powers)
- Wales Acts 2014 & 2017 (further devolution)



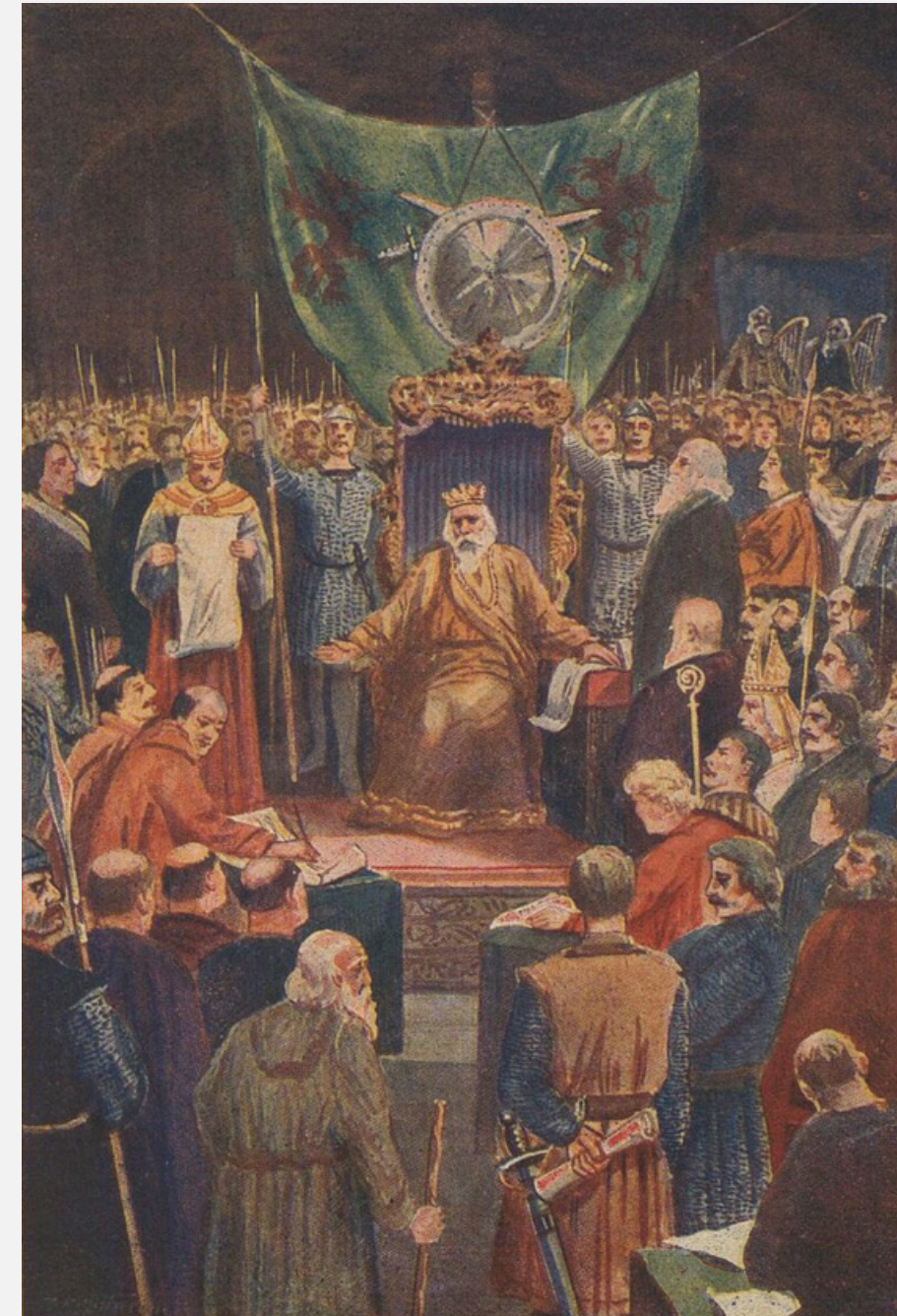
Welsh Royal Badge

Law Cymru *before* England

The Welsh legal tradition originates in "*Hywel Dda's Code*" (Welsh: *Cyfraith Hywel*), compiled around 930 during an assembly at Whitland under King *Hywel ap Cadell*, who ruled most of Wales between 942-950. This code formalized centuries-old Celtic customs and traditional laws.



Judge. [Illumination], mid-13th century. Ink and illuminations on parchment. In: *Laws of Hywel Dda* (Peniarth MS 28).



Modern depiction of Hywel Dda proclaiming the laws.

Peniarth 28 manuscript, the earliest of the surviving copy of the *Laws of Hywel Dda*, in Latin, second half of 13th century.



Source: Wikipedia, 2022.



Structure of Cyfraith Hywel

A. Laws of the Court

- Defined the roles, duties, and privileges of:
 - The king
 - Royal officers and court officials
- Focused on governance and administration of the royal household.

B. Laws of the Country

- Covered all other legal matters outside the court.
- Included sub-sections such as:
 - **Law of Women** (marriage, inheritance, dowries)
 - **Law of Contracts** (agreements, obligations)
 - **Land Inheritance** (equal division among sons, including illegitimate ones)

C. Justices' Test Book (in some versions)

- A specialized section split from the "Laws of the Country."
- Dealt with:
 - **Homicide** (compensation rather than execution)
 - **Theft** (punishments varied by circumstance)
 - **Valuation of Property** (wild/tame animals, goods)

Religiosity



According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), in 2021

- 1.4 million usual residents in Wales reported that they had “No religion” in 2021 (46.5% of the population, up from 32.1% in 2011).
- 43.6% of usual residents (1.4 million) described their religion as “Christian” in 2021. This religious affiliation had previously been selected by over half of residents in Wales in the 2011 Census (57.6%).
- For religious groups other than “Christian”, the local authorities with the highest concentrations of each religion tended to be urban areas, with Cardiff having the highest proportions of those identifying as “Muslim” (9.3%), “Hindu” (1.5%) and Sikh (0.4%), and the second highest proportion of those identifying as “Buddhist” (0.4%).

Folklore

Y Chwedlau

The Legends



Much of the Welsh mythology and history is preserved in medieval Welsh manuscripts.

Multiple scholars suggest that, akin to the Norse concept of Yggdrasil, the ancient Celts had World Tree that connected multiple realms of the world. The most sacred trees for the Celts are the *ash tree*, the *apple tree*, the *hazel*, the *elder*, the *yew*, and, most importantly, the *oak tree*.

Essentially, Welsh mythology often talks about two realms: *Elfydd* (our current world) and the *Annwn* or *Annwfn*, the realm of the Underworld — having *Gorsedd* ('mound') as the gateway to it. However, the concept of Otherworld(s) or Underworld(s) is not clear.

*A land of
feasting, music,
dancing, hunting
and game-playing.*

*It's boundaries
are easily crossed
(Miranda J.
Green)*

*Colors are
heightened,
music is more
wondrous
and the senses
are delighted
at every
turn.
(Sharon P.
MacLeod)*



The divine and the deities

There are divine connections between the myths of Ireland and those of Wales. However, these deities are displayed differently: while in Ireland the pagan pantheon is clearly displayed as gods, in the Welsh mythic tradition, “the beings that had once been gods within a pagan pantheon had been demoted and were treated not as divine but as heroes” (Green, 2023).

| (Proto-)Indo-European Types | Welsh Deities |
|---|--|
| Earth Mother (D ^h éǵhōm, "earth") | Dôn |
| Father (Dy ^é us, "daylight-sky-god") | Beli Mawr |
| Moon (Meh ¹ not, "moon") | Arianrhod |
| Sun (Seh ² ul, "sun") | Beli Mawr |
| First Man (Manu, "man") | Euron; Manawydan; Efnisien |
| Twin (Yemo, "twin") | Lleu; Brân; Nisien |
| Sea God | Llŷr; Dylan ail Don |
| Storm God | Peran ("thunder"); Mellt ("lightning") |
| Tree God | Gwydion ("born of trees") |



The Four Branches of the Mabinogi

Welsh Mythology Manuscripts

The Red Book of Hergest (*Llyfr Coch Hergest*):

- A large vellum manuscript written in Middle Welsh that dates back to shortly after 1382.
- It preserves a collection of Welsh prose and poetry, notably the tales of the *Mabinogion* and Gogynfeirdd poetry.

Book of Aneirin (*Llyfr Aneirin*):

- Late 13th century Welsh manuscript containing Old and Middle Welsh poetry attributed to the Northern Brythonic court poet and/or bard, Aneirin Gwawdrydd, who is believed to have lived between 5th and 7th centuries and in one of the *Cumbric* kingdoms of the *Hen Ogledd*, probably that of Gododdin at Edinburgh, present-day Scotland.

Book of Taliesin (*Llyfr Taliesin*):

- Welsh poetry manuscript dating back to the first half of the 14th century.
- Contains one of the oldest poems in Welsh by the renowned court bard Taliesin (hence the book's name; from the 6th century), who was also called *Taliesin Ben Beirdd* (Taliesin, Chief of Bards).

White Book of Rhydderch (*Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*):

- Mostly written in southwest Wales in the middle of the 14th century (c. 1350) it is the earliest collection of Welsh prose texts, though it also contains some examples of early Welsh poetry.



The English language in Cymru

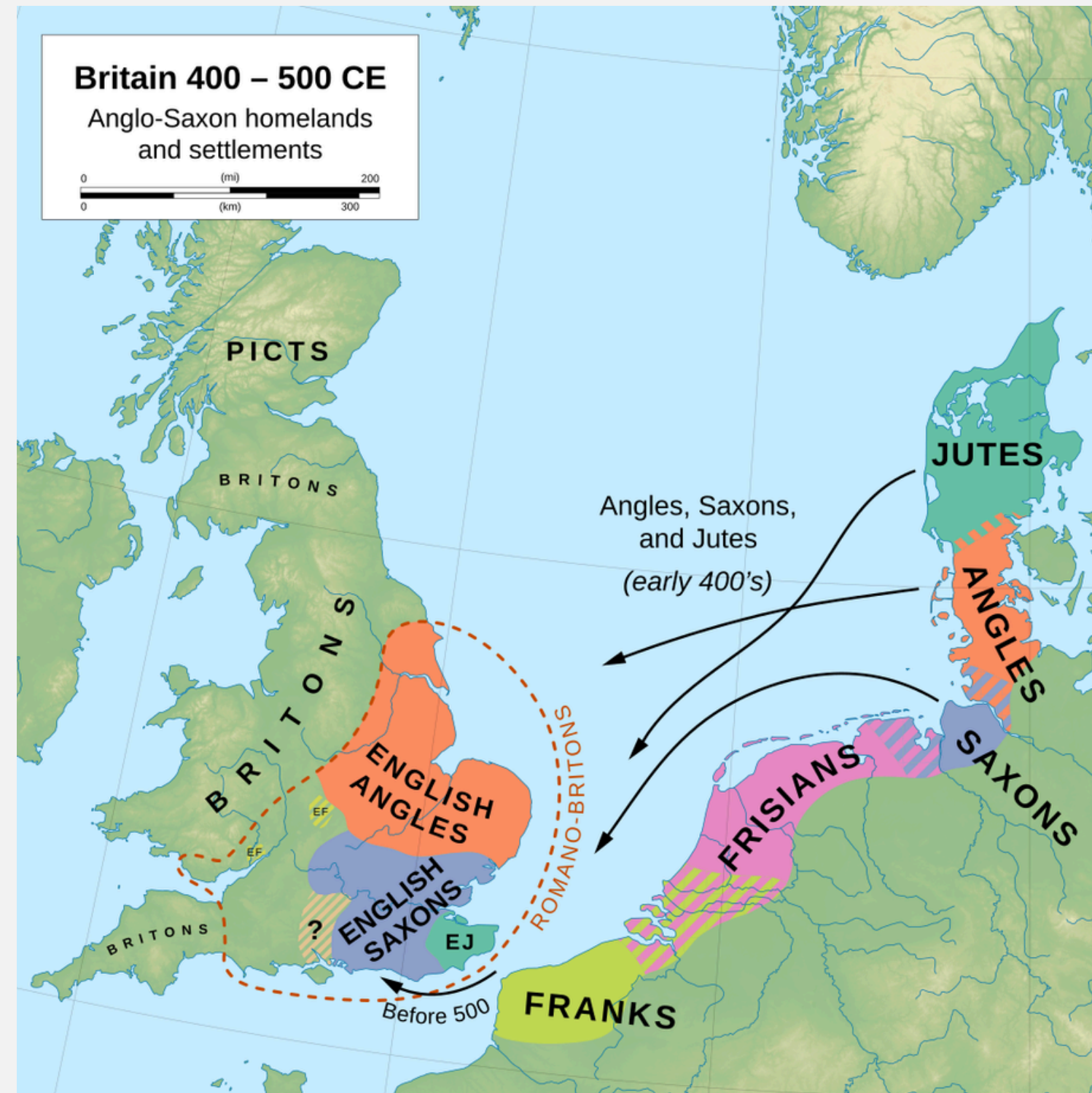
The language spoken across Britain at the time Anglo-Saxons arrived is now referred to as Common Brittonic (Cymraeg: *Brythoneg*), which later diverged into a number of Celtic languages.

Later, through invasions of Britain, the Celtic languages spoken in the region were replaced by Old English, though not completely.

The toponym of the river Thames, for example, has a Brittonic etymology. It stems from the Proto-Celtic word **tamēssa*, meaning 'dark' or 'dark water'.

| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| English | <i>Thames</i> |
| | |
| Latin | <i>Tamesis</i> |
| | |
| Brittonic | <i>Tamesas</i> |
| | |
| Proto-Celtic | <i>*tamēssa</i> |

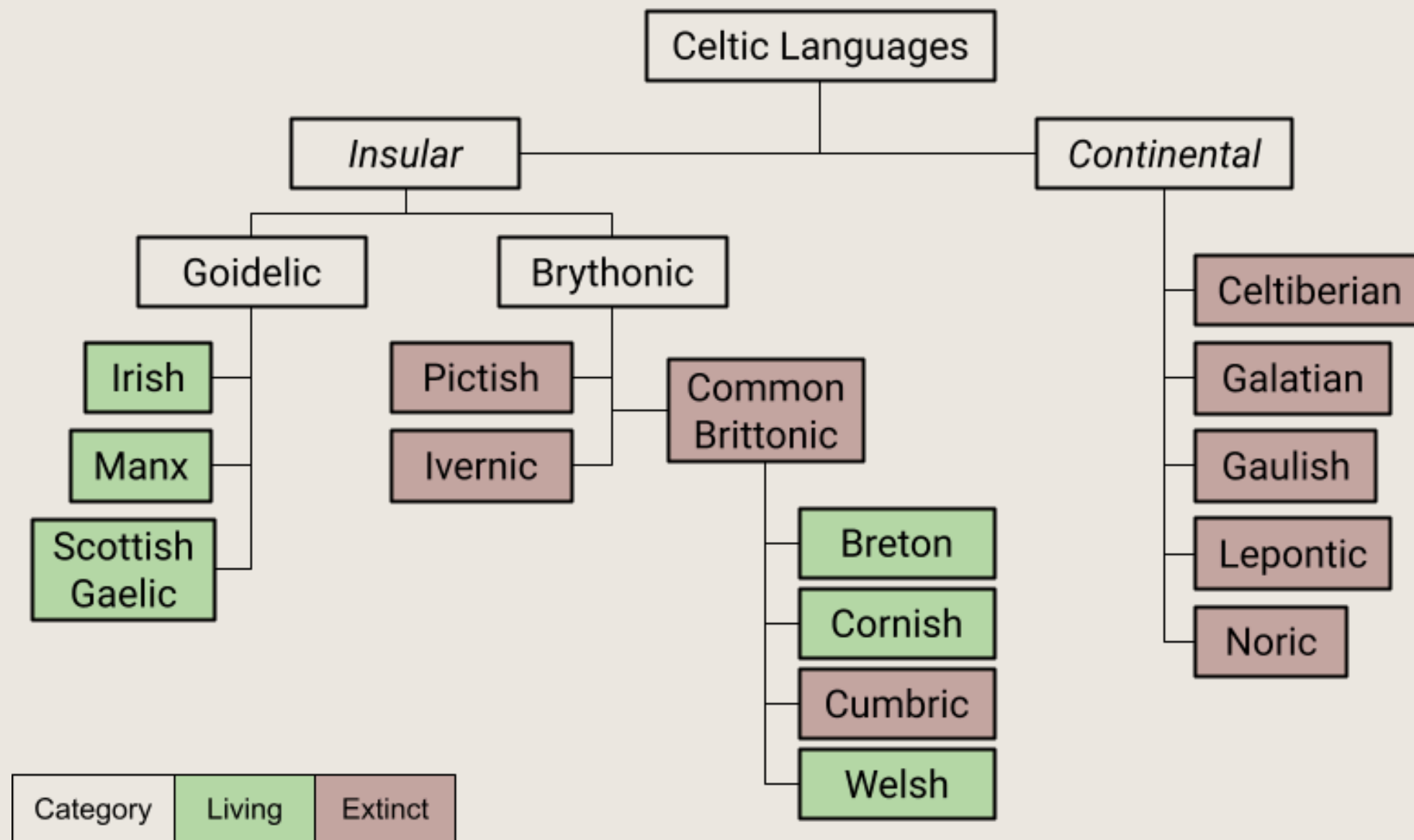
The English language in Cymru



Anglo-Saxon Homelands and Settlements.
Source: Wikimedia, 2020.

Celtic language tree

Celtic language tree by Eden Aviv.



Source: Wikimedia, 30 march 2023.

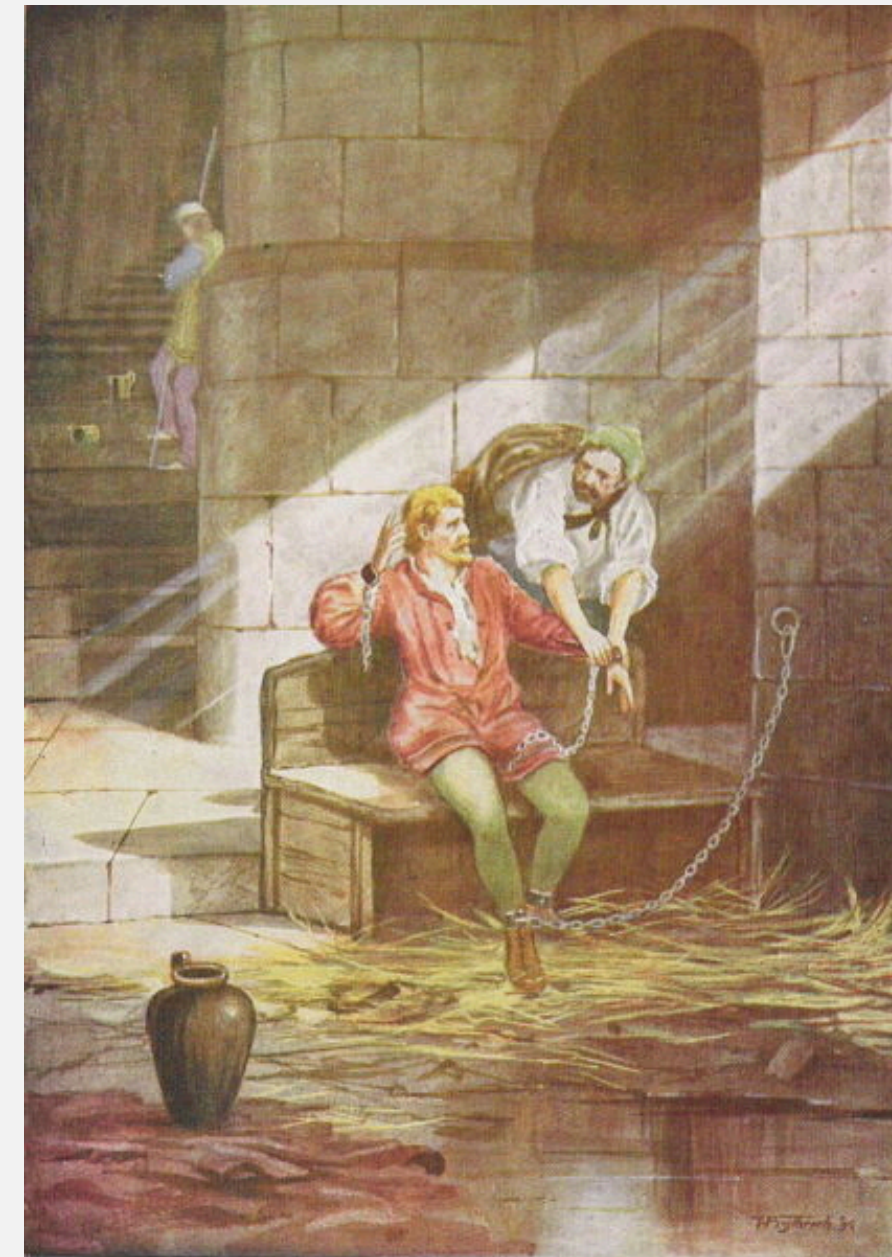


The English language in Cymru

“English spread rapidly throughout Wales as a result of the early Norman conquest of the principality” (1067–1081) (Crystal, p. 354, 2018). However, they regained power of the greater part of their country under the long reign of King Gruffudd ap Cynan (1055–1137) (Davies, 2007).

Gradually, as the English conquered the rest of Britain, as we’ve seen before, the Celtic languages were pushed to the west, with the remaining surviving Celtic languages being Cornish, Breton (in Brittany, France) and *Welsh*.

Illustration of Gruffydd ap Cynan, Prince of Gwynedd. The caption in Welsh is "Gruffudd ap Cynan yng ngharchar Hugh d'Avranches yng Nghaer", which translates to "Gruffydd ap Cynan escaping from Hugh d'Avranches, the Earl of Chester".



Source: Wikimedia, 30 march 2023.

The English language in Cymru

The Act(s) of 'Union' of 1536-1543, mentioned earlier, marked the instigation of an overt crusade by the English state to eradicate the Welsh language.

“1563 — An Act of Parliament requires that a copy of the English Bible and the Book of Common Prayer shall be placed alongside the Welsh versions in every church, so that people might ‘the sooner attain to the knowledge of the English tongue’” (Crystal, 2018, p. 354).

Romanesque archway to the main nave at Strata Florida (*Abaty Ystrad Fflur*), located at Pontrhydfendigaid, Ceredigion, Wales.



Source: Wikipedia, 2008.

Moreover, the dissolution of the monasteries during that period resulted in the closure of many centres of Welsh education, leading, consequently, to the decline of the Welsh language:

“Latin came to be replaced by English as the language of education, and the Tudor grammar schools set up in several Welsh towns taught through the medium of English.” (Crystal, 2018, p. 354)

The English language in Cymru

During the 18th and 20th centuries, many Welsh schools used physical punishment to discourage students from speaking Cymraeg (Welsh language). One of this corporal punishments included the *Welsh Not* (*Cwstom*, *Welsh Mark* or *Welsh lump*) — a token used by teachers to mark the children who were heard speaking the language.

“Welsh was not an institutionalised or official language, and simply wasn't considered a suitable medium for education during the Victorian heyday of the British Empire” reports BBC Wales.



A Welsh Not of 1852, found when Capel Penrhiw was dismantled. Now at St Fagans Museum. Source: Byline Cymru., 2024

The English language in Cymru

The ascendancy of English in Welsh territory was intensified even further during the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century, when many Welsh speakers emigrated to England to find work in mining and smelting industries which were manned by anglophones, and then later many English speakers immigrated to Wales to jobs in the mining and smelting industries of South Wales (Crystal, 2018, p. 354).

British Coalfields, 19th Century.



Source: Wikimedia, 2009.

Welsh consonants

The following consonants are pronounced the same way in Welsh as in English: *b, d, h, l, m, n, p, t*. Some letters are written as digraphs, meaning that two characters are used to represent one sound, e.g. *ff, ng, dd* – these are all considered single letters, and are pronounced differently to *f, n, g* and *d*.

c always hard, as in *cat*, and never soft, as in *mice*

ch an aspirated *c* sound, like the Scottish *loch*

dd a voiced *th*, as in the English *the*

f like an English *v*, as in *dove*

ff like an English *f*, as in *four*

g always hard, as in *glove*, never soft, as in *gem*

ng always hard, as in *finger*, never soft, as in *angel*

ll

Pronunciation

this digraph does not have an English equivalent sound, but is pronounced by pressing the tongue to the roof of the mouth and gently blowing air around the tongue to make an aspirated sound. The closest English equivalent would be something similar to the ‘cl’ in ‘clan’, although this is only loosely approximate

- r* always trilled, as in Spanish or Italian, or as pronounced in a Scottish accent
- s* always sibilant, as in *snow*, never voiced, as in *rose*
- rh* an aspirated *r*, best made by exhaling and trilling an *r* sound
- th* an unvoiced *th*, as in the English *think*, never as in *the*

Vowels

Vowels in Welsh have both short and long pronunciations, with short forms as follows.

a as in *cat*

e as in *met*

i as in *pig*

o as in *fog*

u as in *peek*

w as in *loot*

y as in *dull*

Diphthongs

Diphthongs are pairs of vowels which are pronounced as a single syllable.

ae, ai, au as in *eye*

aw as in *cow*



ei, eu, ey as in *pay*

ew *eh+ooh*, said quickly so that each sound glides into the other

iw, yw as in *stew*

oe, oi as in *oil*

ow as in *go*

wy *ooh+ee*, said quickly so that each sound glides into the other



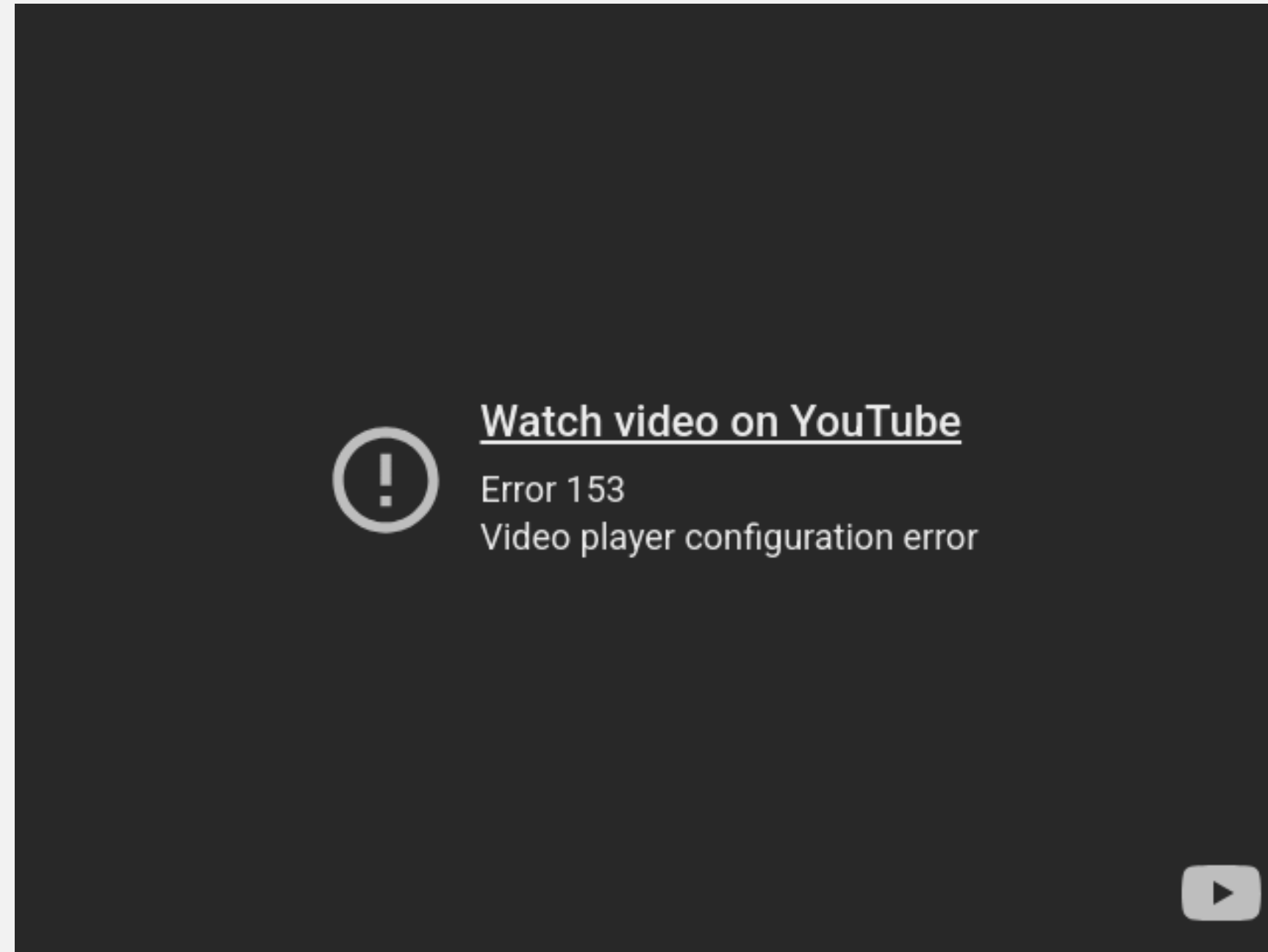
- A contrast is not made between /ʌ/ and /ə/: the two vowels of butter are identical, both /ə/, unlike RP /'bʌtə/.
- Consonants between vowels are often lengthened, as in money /'mənɪi/ and butter /'bətɪə/.
- There is no /z/ in Welsh, and in northern dialects several English word-pairs sound the same: pence / pens are both /pens/. Similarly, the lack of affricates in Welsh results in identity between such pairs as chin and gin: /dʒɪn/.

IPA Reader

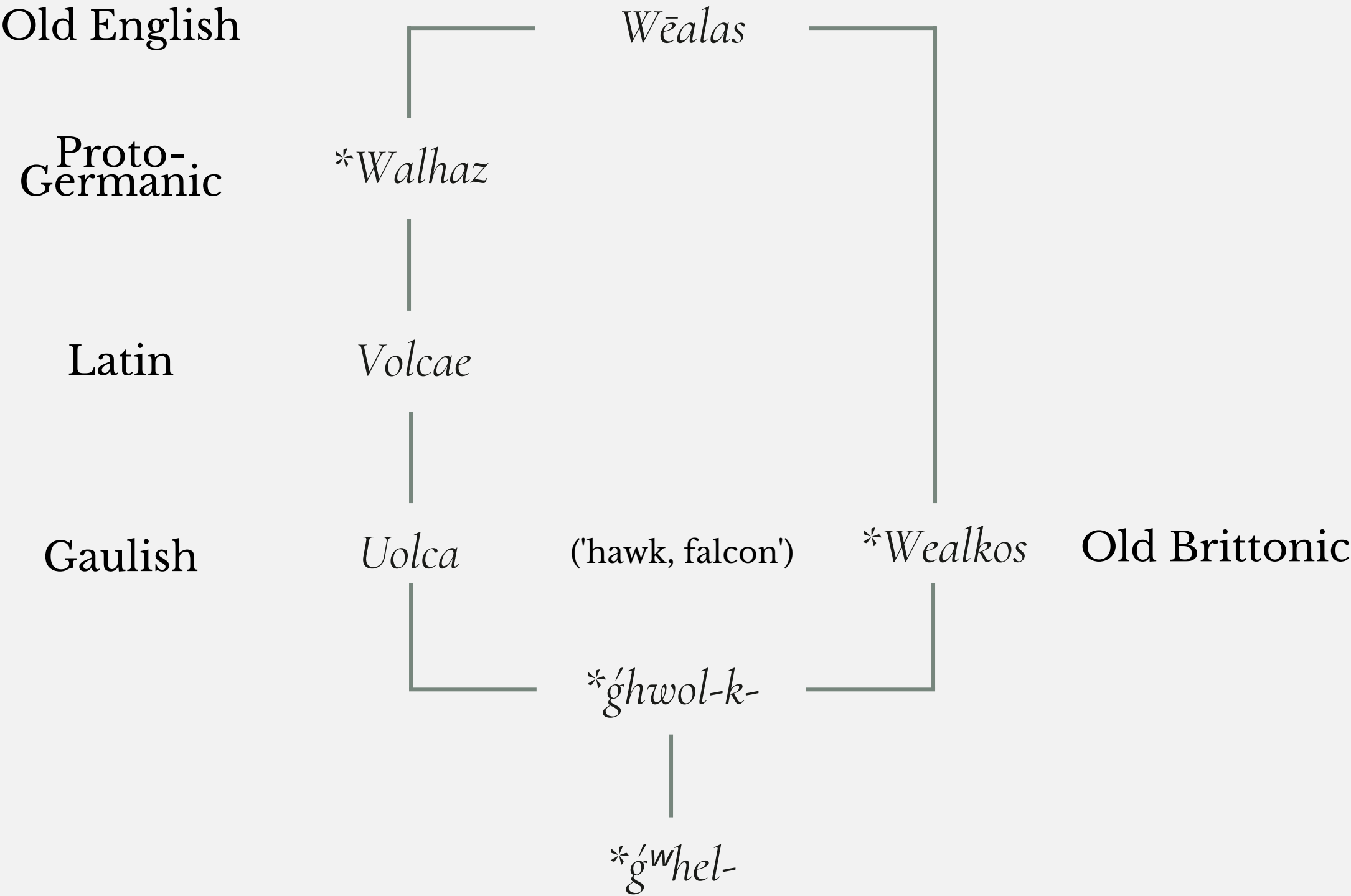
Read IPA notation

[ipa-reader.com /](http://ipa-reader.com/)

Welsh English accent



Why
Wales?
Welsh?



Welsh

used to
describe
Welsh
people
since the
Middle
Ages

Cymru

Cymry

Combrogî
(‘fellow-countrymen’)

Brythonic

Welsh
name for
the
Welsh

Cymraeg



[Watch video on YouTube](#)

Error 153

Video player configuration error



Welsh Traditional Dance



[Watch video on YouTube](#)

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Video player configuration error



Questions

- What are the similarities between the colonisation of the Americas to what England did to Wales? Do similarities exist in the first place?
- Why was the Welsh language discouraged in the past?
- Where is Wales located, and what is its climate like?
- Were Welsh people *integrated* or *invaded* by foreign peoples? The nomenclature employed to describe the event matters when one talks about their history? Did they accept quietly or did they fight for their land?

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