

Why do they speak Welsh in South America?

Exodus

Huw Edwards:

So why venture to this back of beyond that had resisted all previous attempts to colonise it? It was the idea of Michael D Jones. This extraordinary, seemingly outrageous idea began to form when Jones saw a problem which he felt was set to destroy the Wales he loved.

The Welsh coalfield was attracting thousands of English speakers to south Wales and Jones feared the native language and culture would quickly disappear. He believed the only way that Welshness could be preserved was by establishing a new little Wales in one of the most remote places upon earth, where no other language or culture would ever dilute it.

When the Argentinian government offered an isolated patch of land along the Chubut river, it seemed ideal and Jones set about persuading able Welsh-speaking people to swap everything for a new life in the wilderness.

For Michael D Jones the departure of the *Mimosa* in 1865 with 153 people on board was the realisation of his dream.