

INIQUITY



Iniquity tells the true story of Wales' first working class martyr, Dic Penderyn and the Merthyr Uprising of 1831. Penderyn (real name, Richard Lewis) was a 23 year old collier and family man who lived in the town of Merthyr during the height of the industrial revolution.

In 1831, during the recession within the iron trade, the working class communities of South Wales were plunged into slave-like conditions. Barely able to feed their families or keep a roof over their heads. Secret union meetings began forming throughout the valleys and were headed up by their megalomaniac leader, Lewsyn Yr Heliwr.

Lewsyn is a man hell-bent on waging war against the authorities to secure a fairer and more equal society. Richard becomes engrossed in his fellow worker's passion and determination to fight the Iron-Masters. Much to the dismay of his wife, Elizabeth and Brother-in-law, the Reverend Morgan Howells. Along with Richard's sister, Catherine they actively discourage his involvement with the union movement for fear of a backlash from the authorities.

But when a tragic and fatal accident down the mine befalls Richard's dear friend, Gwylim Bach, he finds himself thrust into action to join the movement!

On the 3rd of June 1831 Richard joins thousands of his fellow workers, lead by Lewsyn and descend into the town to discuss reform with their masters. The red flag is raised for the first time in global history as a means to signify the honest fight for worker's rights.

With the colliers requests fallen on deaf ears though, the British Army are called in and ordered to open fire on the mob. 24 workers were shot dead where they stood standing up for these basic human rights. But the people fought back and over-turned the soldiers. Rioting lasted for 3 days and nights. The event went down as a pivotal moment in Welsh history . . .

The Merthyr Uprising!

Word was soon sent from Westminster and the merciless Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne. The authorities demanded that an example be made to the working-class communities that further insurrection would not be tolerated.

Lewsyn and Richard were brought before the courts charged with treason. With Lewsyn deported to the penal colonies of Australia, Richard was left to be the scapegoat and face the gallows.

Testimony from 2 Special Constables by the names of Drew and Abbott bared witness to Richard having stabbed a soldier in the leg during the Uprising. Drew though is a man consumed with jealousy and vendetta against the 23 year old collier.

On the 13th of August 1831, outside Cardiff gaol, Richard faced the hangman's noose. As he searched in the crowd for his wife, he uttered his last words . . .

"Oh Lord, here is Iniquity!"

Some years after his wrongful execution 2 confessions were given. Firstly from the witness, Abbott, who confessed that he had committed perjury at the trial and lied under oath. The second from a collier many years later on his deathbed. That it was in fact he who had stabbed the soldier.

Still to the very day, Richard Lewis is considered a guilty man in the eyes of the law. Alongside the production a campaign is being carried to take to King Charles III to secure a Royal Prerogative of Mercy (Posthumous Pardon) on the name of Dic Penderyn.

Iniquity the film is adapted from the award winning stage play Iniquity (Camwedd) and is not only an opportunity to tell this story to the world and celebrate a pivotal moment in history. But the chance to create history in securing long-overdue justice on the name of an innocent man.