

Welsh Room



Inside the Hotel Pattee
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The stories that recount the struggle of immigrants attempting to relocate in the United States are often poignant. "My grandfather came from Wales when he was fourteen in 1914," Pam Jenkins says, "And he came by himself on the ship. He actually ended up in Minnesota and then settled outside of Perry on a farm. Like him, the Welsh, although they were farmers, often came to the Midwest as did the Czechoslovakians and others, as laborers. And so you don't see as strong a component of the Welsh in Iowa as you do the other major immigrant groups. But they brought with them their own traditions."

The Welsh also brought to America their love for music — especially singing — as well as poetry, drama, and art. And they brought their strong religious faith. There is a saying among the Welsh, "The first thing a Frenchman does in a new country is to build a trading post, an American builds a city, a German builds a beer hall, and a Welshman builds a church."

The Welsh Room in the Hotel Pattee is decorated in the style of a Welsh cottage. It is furnished in tweeds, and it contains an exquisite quilt miniature entitled "A Visit to Wales II," which was especially made for the room by Wisconsin quilter Diane Gaudynski. She writes, "Inspired by the vintage quilts of Wales, this miniature uses many quilting motifs found in large whole-cloth Welsh and English quilts as well as my own feathers and urns on the outer border." With a reputation for the use of dull "mud" colors, Ms. Gaudynski specializes in ornate, intricate machine quilting of traditional and original feather designs.

The room is accessorized with items beloved by the Welsh people — including antique "Gaudy" china pieces and a collection of books, including the poetry of Welsh poet Dylan Thomas. And to commemorate the tradition of Welsh mines and miners, whose industry has played such an essential role in Wales' economy (for good reason, the Welsh room connects with the Angus and Moran Room), there is a lamp fashioned of a brass coal miner's lamp. As a tribute to Pam Jenkins' grandfather and his courageous journey from Wales, the Welsh Room wing chair and ottoman are covered in the Jenkins of Wales Tartan, which was also used for the bed skirts.

Jen Jones, whose popular shop in Ceredigion, Wales, specializes in antique Welsh textiles, provided some unique items from the late Nineteenth Century for the room's decor. A pillow is fashioned from two antique Welsh skirts; three pillow shams are made of antique



Welsh blankets; and another similar blanket, but boldly striped, is folded at the foot of the bed.

The curtains in the Welsh room are designed from fabric with a unique traditional Welsh weave. This fabric is manufactured at the Trefriw Woolen Mills, which have been situated on the banks of the River Crafnant in Wales for more than 100 years. In the process of manufacturing woolens, the Trefriw

Above left: Welsh love spoons. Above right: Detail of the Welsh National Anthem, Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau, calligraphy and illumination by Darren Evans.

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