

HUGHES, JOHN (1814 - 1889), engineer and pioneer of iron-works in Russia

Name: John Hughes
Date of birth: 1814
Date of death: 1889
Child: Arthur Hughes
Gender: Male
Occupation: engineer and pioneer of iron-works in Russia
Area of activity: Business and Industry; Engineering, Construction, Naval Architecture and Surveying
Author: Annie Gwenllïan Jones

Born at Merthyr Tydfil. He received his early training in the Cyfarthfa iron-works. After experience in Ebbw Vale works and in Newport he was appointed general manager of the Millwall Docks iron-works, Thames, London. There he gained a reputation, which extended as far as Russia, for discovering improved methods of producing steel. Russia lacked railways, and her industries had not been developed; the country had also to import steel and iron from the Merthyr and Dowlais districts at great expense. To avoid this, she decided to develop her own industries and John Hughes was invited to establish works in Russia.

He was allowed to select any suitable site, but after journeyings throughout the length and breadth of the land, he decided to settle in the Donetsk basin, at a lonely spot on the Steppes; but some distance away were the great iron-ore mines of Krivirog and the port of Taganrog. John Hughes formed the New Russia Company in 1869 and within a few years a large town was built for the workmen, which was called Hughesoffka after his name. He induced a considerable number of iron-workers from Merthyr, Dowlais, Rhymney, and Middlesbrough to accompany him. The works flourished and became the centre of the great industrial district of the Don Basin.

In 1889 John Hughes died, and his work was carried on by his four sons, the second son, Arthur, supervising the works at Hughesoffka; it may be noted that he was married to Augusta James of Llanover by the poet-preacher, **William Thomas** (Islwyn, 1832 - 1878). In 1917, however, the Soviet Government took possession of industrial companies and so the New Russia Company came to an end and later the name Hughesoffka was changed to Stalino.

Author

Annie Gwenllïan Jones

Sources

Personal knowledge

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 3617E](#)

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [John Hughes](#)

Additional Links

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Published date: 1959

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