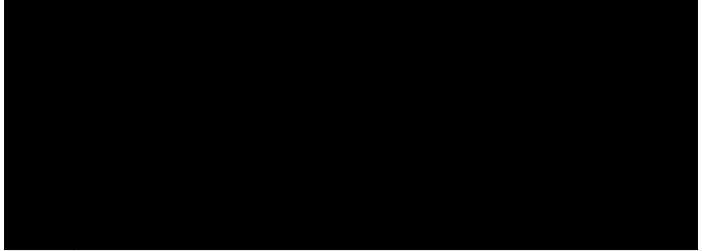
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ROBERTSON, HENRY (1816 - 1888), civil engineer and railway pioneer

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Name: Henry Robertson Date of birth: 1816 Date of death: 1888 Spouse: Elizabeth Robertson (née Dean) Parent: Duncan Robertson Gender: Male Occupation: civil engineer and railway pioneer Area of activity: Business and Industry; Engineering, Construction, Naval Architecture and Surveying Author: George Geoffrey Lerry

Born 11 January 1816 at Banff, Scotland, the youngest of the eight children of Duncan Robertson, an Inland Revenue officer. Winning a scholarship, Henry Robertson went to Aberdeen University where he graduated M.A. His father died about this time and the family moved to Glasgow. The son devoted himself to mining engineering, but afterwards decided to take up railway engineering. At a very early age he obtained a contract to build the overhead bridges on the Glasgow and Greenock Railway. Through the good offices of a Glasgow contractor, Robertson was sent to report on certain mineral properties at Brymbo, Denbighshire, in respect of which one of the Scottish banks had advanced considerable capital; Robertson first saw Wales in 1842, when he was 26 years of age. The bankers were so impressed by his report that they gave him support and so, in company with Robert Roy and other Scotsmen, he revived the Brymbo Iron Works and pits of John Wilkinson and gave new life to a decaying industrial area in Denbighshire. Robertson realised that if the iron-works and collieries were to be run successfully, a railway to the district was essential. He and his friends, therefore, promoted the North Wales Mineral Railway - the first of many measures which he was destined to pilot through Parliament; David Davies of Llan-dinam (1818 - 1890) said Robertson was the best parliamentary witness of his day. Leaving the Brymbo iron-works and pits to the care of W. H. and Charles Darby, Robertson concentrated on building the railways, chiefly with Thomas Brassey as contractor. Robertson was the engineer of the line from Ruabon to Llan-gollen, Corwen, Bala, etc. Side by side with these activities Robertson maintained an active interest in numerous commercial enterprises. He was an original partner in Beyer, Peacock and Co., owners of the largest locomotive works in the country, and he took a leading part in the conduct of several collieries and works in Denbighshire. He became the founder of the Brymbo Steel Works in 1884. He was Member of

Author

George Geoffrey Lerry

Sources

personal research

Further reading

NLW Archives: To the Electors of Merionethshire

NLW Archives: To the Electors of the County of Merioneth: [Mr. Robertson's amended Address; or what he really meant to say] Coflein: CROEGEN; CROGEN, LLANDDERFEL

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