

## MARTIN, Sir RICHARD (1843 - 1922), industrialist and public man

**Name:** Richard Martin

**Date of birth:** 1843

**Date of death:** 1922

**Gender:** Male

**Occupation:** industrialist and public man

**Area of activity:** Business and Industry; Public and Social Service, Civil Administration

**Author:** Hugh David Jones

Born in August 1843 at Pentre-mawr, Swansea. He was educated at the Copper Works School, Hafod, Swansea. After leaving school he was employed in the Millbrook iron works, Swansea. In 1867 he was appointed a clerk in the civil service in his native town, and in 1872 was transferred in the same capacity to Grimsby. In 1875 he returned to Swansea and started business on his own account. In 1879 he and others founded the Vale of Swansea zinc works at Llansamlet, and in 1881 the Birch Grove iron works, while, in 1884, he bought the Ynys-pen-llwch tin works. The zinc works are still operating and Martin was connected with them until his death.

He was a member and alderman of the town council from 1884 to 1910; he was mayor of the town in 1898-9, and chairman of the education committee for six years. He tried hard to get the University College of South Wales sited at Swansea, but the choice fell on Cardiff. He was, however, successful in getting for his town a technical school which, subsequently, became a technical college. Martin, with the help of [Sir Isambard Owen](#), then sought to have the technical college recognised as one of the constituent colleges of the University of Wales, but in this he was not successful. He urged upon the Haldane Commission on Welsh university education (1916-18) the necessity of having a university college at Swansea which would specialize in technical education; it was founded in 1920, and when the foundation stone was laid by king George V, Martin was knighted. Besides obtaining a university college for his town, he was also responsible for building the Normal College on the Glanmor estate. Moreover, he worked hard to get other improvements for the town, for which he foresaw a brilliant future. He died suddenly in London, 11 September 1922, and was buried at Ystum Llwynarth ('Oystermouth'), Swansea.

### Author

Hugh David Jones

### Sources

Personal knowledge

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Richard Martin](#)

### Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q20821191](#)

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