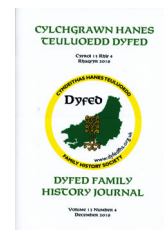


# Why were my Welsh Ancestors born in Russia?



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Discovering from a 1911 census in Blaenavon that widow Elizabeth Jones née Skyrme had two children born in Russia, I did a world-wide search on Familysearch.org. There I found birth references to Harriet Jones (born 15 May 1885) and sister Margaret Anna (born 20 July 1888) in a place called Hughesovka. Intrigued I searched for more information.

Hughesovka is modern day Donetsk in Ukraine. This settlement was founded by Welsh businessman John Hughes who set up a mining operation in 1870 and hired miners from the Merthyr Tydfil area where he was from. Over the next two decades the operation became quite large, mining both coal and iron ore and having eight blast furnaces. Glamorgan Archives have a large

collection of papers on Hughesovka which includes papers of the different families who lived there – you can download the

list of papers and photographs at <http://glamarchives.gov.uk/collection/>. If you want a different take on Hughesovka, how about a historical novel about it which is described as “where murderers, whores and illicit love affairs flourish”? The novel is *The Tsar's Dragons*, the first book of a trilogy by acclaimed Welsh author Catrin Collier.



**John James Hughes  
(1814 – 1889)**

***David J Skyrme (3924)***

***Email: [davidskyrme@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:davidskyrme@yahoo.co.uk)  
Website: [www.skyrme.info](http://www.skyrme.info)***