



How did a discovery in the Cleveland Hills impact Middlesbrough?

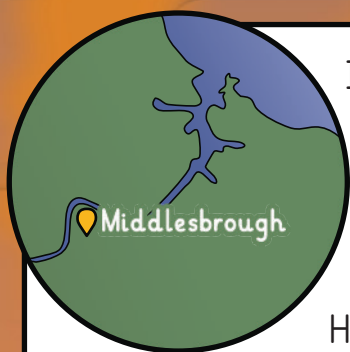
John Vaughan 1799 - 1868

John Vaughan was born in Worcester in 1799 and came from humble beginnings. His father was an ironworker who toiled to provide for his family. The good example he set gave John Vaughan the hardworking attitude required to become the great success that he did.



As a boy, Vaughan worked in a scrap mill and, as a man, worked in most of the different jobs associated with the iron trade. His place of work was the Dowlais Works in South Wales and due to his inquiring mind and a lot of hard work, he was promoted to the impressive position of workman while he was still a teen.

It was likely that there were very few people who knew as much about iron making as John Vaughan at that time. However, after missing out on a promotion to a position that he wanted, Vaughan quit the Dolwais Works in 1825. He took a job as manager of a small ironworks in Carlisle before becoming the manager of the Walker Ironworks, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The Walker Ironworks had one furnace which was the first specially built for the use of Cleveland Ironstone. The ironstone which was turned into iron came from mines near Whitby.



In 1839, John Vaughan decided on Middlesbrough as the location for his own ironworks. It was surrounded by hills that he felt sure would contain ironstone. Along with the newly deepened River Tees and readily available coal it was the perfect place to start his enterprise. It was founded with the help of his business partner Henry Bolckow. The men lived next door to one another and spent every possible hour together plotting and planning the Middlesbrough works.

At the time, Middlesbrough was a small village with around 2,000 inhabitants. It had two main sources of trade - the shipment of coal and a small pottery. Vaughan and Bolckow purchased land from Joseph Pease and started their modest works. Pease introduced the two men to local colliery (coal mine) owners and recommended them as likely to become good customers.

The early years - at least the first eight years - were full of difficulties and challenges but both men persevered to make their business a success. At first, the ironworks only turned finished iron into machinery and tools but later would go on to make its own iron.

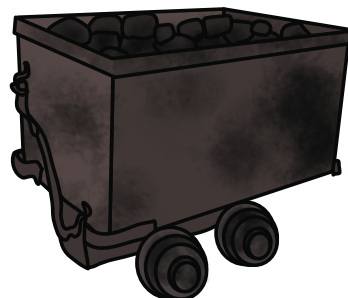




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In 1843, Vaughan and Bolckow produced the engines of the steamer English Rose, the first steamboat built in Stockton. Their Middlesbrough based ironworks was starting to gain a reputation for the quality of the iron that they cast.

The company received its ironstone from Whitby but was always on the lookout for better quality stone that would produce more iron. Vaughan and Bolckow bought a mine in Skinningrove in 1849 which produced a better yield of iron than the Whitby ironstone but Vaughan continued to look for a better supply.



Time was spent looking for places to mine in the Cleveland Hills. Evidence suggests that the Romans and monks had been aware of the presence of ironstone in the area and had worked it many years before.

However, many experiments with the ironstone uncovered there found it to be of low quality and not capable of producing enough iron to make it worth mining. This did not put Vaughan off though and he persisted with his search.



On the 8th of June 1850, Vaughan and John Marley, a mining engineer from Darlington, were scouring the hills when they found some small pieces of ironstone. They continued and found a small quarry where stone had been extracted to build a road and, nearby, a huge rock of ironstone that was nearly 5 metres thick. They were able to follow an outcrop of rock finding more evidence of ironstone.

Over the next couple of months, arrangements were made with the landowners to start a trial quarry near Eston. Vaughan told the landowners that the ironstone was probably of low quality so secured a very cheap price for mining on their land. That ironstone turned out to be a very high-quality seam.

The business grew rapidly as they opened more mines in the area and fired up blast furnaces in Middlesbrough. With Vaughan's technical skills and Bolckow's financial expertise, the partnership grew into Bolckow Vaughan & Co. Ltd, a steelmaking giant and the largest company in existence at the time.

The steel industry led to the rapid growth of the population of Middlesbrough. In 1851, the population was 3,397 but by 1891 the population was more than 80,000.

John Vaughan's influence on the town was so great that in 1855, he was appointed as Mayor of Middlesbrough. He died in 1868 having become one of Britain's wealthiest men and one of Middlesbrough's most important people.





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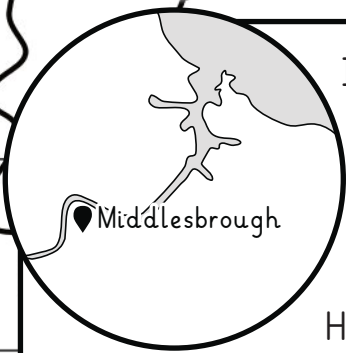
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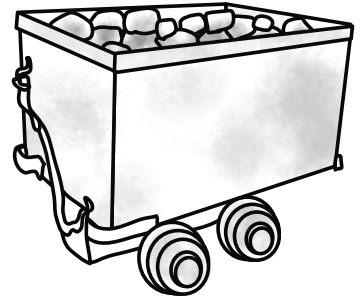




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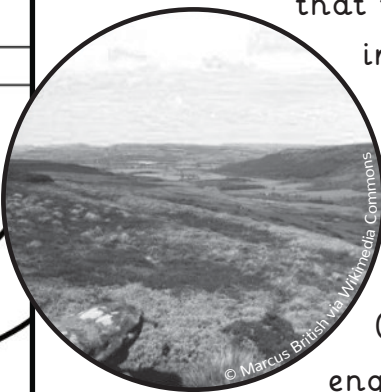
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Local History

Historic England and Teacher's Pet have come together to bring you a collection of free resources that you can use in your local history teaching.



Historic England



Teacher's Pet

Who are Teacher's Pet?

Teacher's Pet have been providing downloadable and playable educational content to early years and primary school teachers for over 14 years. We cover all areas of the curriculum and use a team of in-house teachers and designers to create engaging and memorable concepts, that the children will love.

Why local history?

At [Teacher's Pet](#) we want to empower primary school teachers by giving them the tools they need to deliver inspiring and thoughtful lessons about the local area and its history. We believe local history teaching has such an important part to play in a child's wellbeing – helping to give children a sense of pride in where they live.

Our Local History project is designed to provide teachers across the UK with everything they need to successfully carry out a full scheme of teaching about their local area, through key enquiry questions and source led activities.

Working with [Historic England](#) gives us access to archived maps and photos for resources and information from knowledgeable local historians, as well helping us to provide the content to you free of charge.

For more information about our Local History project or to find out more about Teacher's Pet Classroom Resources, please visit our website.