

David Thomas (1794-1882) was a pioneer of the iron industry in USA.



It began in the year 1838. David Thomas was 44, superintendent of the Ynisedwyn Iron Works in South Wales, a respected, comfortable Welsh ironmaster with a growing family. Then Erskine Hazard, an owner of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Co., came to Wales to upset his way of life. Hazard needed Thomas to come to America with his family, erect a blast furnace, "and generally give his best knowledge and services to the company" for five years.

Thomas demurred, but his wife insisted that her sons needed the opportunity that America offered, and by creating our first commercially successful anthracite-coal powered iron furnace in 1840, David Thomas and his sons started the nation's industrial revolution.

David Thomas was the first President of A.I.M.E.





On July 11, 1839, Thomas and his son, Samuel, 10, walked from Allentown to see where it was proposed to erect the new furnace. They paid a toll and crossed the Lehigh Canal on Biery's Bridge and proceeded to Biery's Port. In front of the stone hotel, they met with Frederick Biery, and he took them to see the land which he and his sons had sold to the Lehigh Crane Ironworks. Construction of the furnace began in August and the first run of iron was made the 4th of July 1840.

