

Adam FRUŻYŃSKI

FRYDERYK AUGUST HOLTZHAUSEN – THE FIRST CONSTRUCTOR OF STEAM ENGINES IN SILESIA

coal mining, steam engines, Silesia

The steam engine was a device that revolutionized the world in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. It was introduced to various fields of economy by a few prominent constructors who created these most complex machines at that time. Their work was extremely important as for many people the steam engine principle of operation was incomprehensible and in many cases caused social unrest. One of such constructors was Fryderyk August Holtzhausen, who came to Silesia from the Harz Mountains. After gaining suitable technical knowledge during the year-long stay in England, he started working in the silver and lead mine “Fryderyk” in Tarnowskie Góry. At the beginning, he supervised and repaired steam engines in the mine. Over time he began to construct new machines that were later installed in mines and smelters. A lot of these devices were the first of their kind in the industries mentioned. From 1808 Fryderyk August Holtzhausen supervised the construction and operation of all steam engines installed in Silesia. His constructions constituted a model to follow for steam engine manufacturers in other countries. He also created the machine building industry from scratch, examples of which were “Królewska Odlewnia Żelaza” in Gliwice and the steel mill “Mała Panew” in Ozimek.