

JOHN R. RICHARDS, one of the most successful coal drillers in the fields of western Pennsylvania and West Virginia, resides at Indiana, Indiana county, and is thoroughly interested in the progress of that region. He was born at Powelton, center Co., Pa., Oct. 1, 1872, and is of Welsh descent, being the only son of John J. Richards.

John J. Richards attended public school in his native county, and later went to the Palms business college at Philadelphia. He then went to work for the Berwind Coal Mining Company, being employed in the mines until he was seventeen years old, when he started drilling. This has since been his principal occupation. Following it continuously until 1893, he worked in the mines again for a few years, until 1897, when he returned to the drilling business. In the spring of 1898 he bought a one-fourth interest in a drilling business, his partners being William Pifer, H. Olson and T. G. Alabran, with whom he was associated until the spring of 1900, when he sold out to his partners and entered the business alone. He contracts to bore for coal, and has acquired an extensive patronage in the fields of this locality and West Virginia, being one of the best and most favorably known men in his line in those sections. As he has prospered, Mr. Richards has invested in other lines, being a stockholder in the Dugan Glass Company of Indiana and in the Indiana Lumber Supply Company. He has shown decided ability in the management of his affairs, and has built up a flourishing business by close application to his work and a thorough study of the most approved methods.

In 1904 Mr. Richards married Belle Swarts, of Indiana county, and they have four children, namely: Esther, John D., Robert M. and Thomas J. Mr. Richards is well known in fraternal circles, holding membership in Lodge No. 313, F. & A.M., of Indiana, in the Modern Woodmen and in the B.P.O. Elks, being a past exalted ruler of the last named organization.