



James Douglas (1837-1918)

1983 Inductee from Mining's Past

James Douglas was born in Quebec, Canada, in 1837. He studied medicine, but because of his interest in chemistry, he became involved in metallurgy with Thomas Henry Hunt. Douglas and Hunt are credited with developing the first commercial electrolytic copper refining process.

As a consultant to the Phelps, Dodge and Company, Douglas was sent to Arizona to investigate the property of the Detroit Copper Company in Morenci. Upon his return, he reported in favor of the Detroit Copper Company and Phelps Dodge agreed to finance the development of the Morenci Mine. At the same time, he presented the company an option to purchase the Atlanta claim in Bisbee. Two years later, the Copper Queen Mine was purchased, and on August 10, 1885, the Copper Queen Consolidated Mining Company was formed. From this beginning, Phelps Dodge moved from an import-export company to a major mining company. Douglas served as Manager and Director of the Copper Queen until the company changed its name to Phelps Dodge Corporation in 1917. He then became President and later, Chairman of the Board.