



## KS 3 History. Historical Theme – Emigration

### Resource 2: New emigrants and established families

In this worksheet, we are going to look at some historical records which give us some clues to the feelings of new emigrants and of families who have been settled in a different country for some time.

Before we look at the records, how do you think people might feel when they first emigrate to a different country? And how do you think they might feel after they have been settled there with their families for a long time?

Complete these sentences:

1. When people first emigrate, they might feel.....
2. After a family has been settled in a different country for a long time, they might feel.....

**Now let's look at the historical sources.** This is a view of the town and works of Hughesovka, as in was about 1912.



Hughesovka was in the Ukraine, which was then part of the Russian Empire. This view was taken from the 'steppe', or vast plains, which surround the town. In the 1870s, John Hughes, an engineer from Merthyr Tydfil, went to the Ukraine to set up a iron works and industrial complex on the empty steppe. The works grew to become the largest in the Russian Empire, and a thriving town developed around the works.

A lot of skilled workers from Wales and from the rest of Britain went to Hughesovka to work. Many of them took their families with them, and stayed there for many years. But in 1917, after the start of the Russian revolution, almost all the British families left Hughesovka and came back to the UK. The works and town were renamed Donetsk. It is still an important industrial centre.

### Source 1

A new emigrant, Lewis Roberts, went to Hughesovka in 1898. Soon after he arrived, he wrote a letter to an acquaintance, telling him about the long and difficult journey, his lodgings ('digs'), and his first impressions of Hughesovka. Here are some extracts from the letter:

"What a monotonous business it is, travelling through Russia. This is by far the worst portion of the journey.....I don't care for this place [his lodgings] very much, and am looking out for a fresh abode. It is needless me telling you that this is easier said than done"

"Have not yet started with this diabolical language yet, had arranged to take lessons with Falkert, but he finds now that he cannot take me, so am hunting for a tutor as well as digs.....Have come into contact with most of the British folks here, there are a few however that I don't know. I think that in time I shall get on all right, at any rate I hope so. It is a place where you have to make your own diversion."

Answer these questions:

1. List three things that Lewis Roberts is complaining about.
2. From this letter, what can you tell about the British community in Hughesovka?
3. How do you think he is feeling when he writes this letter?

### Source 2

Elizabeth Wiskin (known as Leeza) was born in Hughesovka in 1886. She came from a family which had been settled in Hughesovka for years. Her father, George Alfred Wiskin, had gone out to Russia with his parents and brothers and

sisters as a small child. Her mother was Russian. She died when Leeza was three, and Leeza went to live with Wiskin relatives.

When Leeza grew up, she taught at the English school in Hughesovka until she returned to England with many of the Wiskin family in 1917. After her return, Leeza married Josiah Thomas, a Welshman who had also lived in Hughesovka until 1917, and they later settled near Cardiff.

About 1950, Leeza recorded a radio talk for schools, describing her childhood in Russia. Here are some extracts from a transcript of the talk:

“I was born in Russia where the snow is deep and crisp all the winter....Today many of us have refrigerators in our kitchens but in Russia we stored blocks of ice in our cellars. I remember the rides I used to have on the great blocks of ice as horses dragged them through the snow to peoples' cellars.....

I enjoyed my childhood in Russia, even though I had to go to school as you do. We had several schools in Hughesovka, one was for English children, and here we learned Arithmetic and English but Russian and French as well. I was lucky, I could speak Russian from babyhood but I did have to learn English. I went to one of the Russian schools for years.

Our summer holidays lasted 3 months, and oh! the picnics I can remember. We rode out gaily in huge haycarts, our picnic lunch following, not in a basket but in another haycart....

Another picture which remains clearly in my mind is of the eggs we exchanged with our friends at Easter. We hard boiled dozens and coloured them all colours – red, blue, yellow and purple.”

Answer these questions:

1. Write three things that we can learn about life in Hughesovka from Leeza Wiskin's radio talk.
2. Why do think Leeza could speak Russian? Suggest two reasons.
3. From the radio talk and the picture, what impression do we get of the life of the British community settled in Hughesovka?
4. Do you think this impression of life in Hughesovka tells the whole story? Give your reasons.

## Summary

Fill in the gaps

Life in a new country can be difficult at first. New emigrants may have difficulty finding \_\_\_\_\_, and in learning the \_\_\_\_\_. But after a few years, families adapt to \_\_\_\_\_, learn the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the country, and \_\_\_\_\_ living there.