John Roebuck Encyclopedia Article

John Roebuck

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Contents

John Roebuck Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

John Roebuck.....3

John Roebuck

1718-1794

English inventor who developed the lead-chamber method of producing sulfuric acid and new ways of producing more malleable iron using a pit fire blasted with a forced draft of air. Sulfuric acid has become an important industrial chemical, used for storage batteries, papermaking, and many other industrial processes. Roebuck's method of iron-making not only helped lay the groundwork for later blast furnaces, but also helped turn brittle cast iron into more useful forms.