



Finishing slate at Honister in the early 1900s

Unlocking the past, understanding the present

Think of the Lake District and you'll probably think of nature at its most sublime. But this spectacular landscape is far from natural.

People have lived here for some 12,000 years. Their actions have shaped the landscape we see today, just as our actions will shape the landscapes of tomorrow.

They've left behind a wealth of evidence, from barely-visible hut circles to triumphs of Victorian engineering.

The six leaflets in this series help you explore this evidence. The maps and site details suggest where to go and what to look out for.

They're your key to unlocking the Lake District's past and understanding its present.

Wooden bobbins made at Stott Park Bobbin Mill



The Lake District National Park Authority

We are committed to achieving the Vision for the Lake District National Park:

Working together for a prosperous economy, vibrant communities and world class visitor experiences - and all sustaining the spectacular landscape.



Bobbin from Stott Park Bobbin Mill

This Vision was developed by organisations with an interest in the National Park.

Our role is to:

- help partner organisations work together through an agreed action plan
- carry out our part of the work identified in that action plan



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Front cover: Copper Mines Valley near Coniston, and slate worker at Honister around 1910

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Working the landscape

Discovering the Lake District's industrial past





Rusland Tannery

A hive of industry

Industry may not be the first thing you associate with the Lake District. But for centuries, people have used the area's natural resources – rocks, trees and water – to supply markets and boost local incomes.

Almost every valley once had its small quarry, mine, smelter or mill. Few survive as going concerns, but their remains have become part of today's landscape and archaeological heritage.

This leaflet introduces you to some of the most fascinating industrial sites. The fold-out map tells you more about these places and shows you where they are.

You may find Ordnance Survey Landranger maps 89, 90, 96 and 97 helpful.

Preserving the past

Though they've survived hundreds or thousands of years, archaeological sites can easily be damaged. Please help preserve the Lake District's heritage by leaving places exactly as you found them.

Rich resources

Long before the industrial revolution, people saw the value of the area's natural resources. The area's rocks are first-class building material, and are rich in minerals, especially copper, lead and iron.

The Romans quarried building stone and slate in the Lake District, possibly near **Honister Slate Mine**, and may also have mined iron ore and other metals.

Going deeper

In Elizabethan times, German experts were brought in to start commercial operations such as the **Coniston Copper Mines**.

The earliest mines were surface workings, but miners soon had to tunnel into the hillside to reach the mineral vein. Horizontal tunnels or 'adits' were linked by deep vertical shafts, created by hacking and hand-drilling, and later by blasting.

Location, location

In the Medieval period, iron was produced in small local smelters. But with new technology in the 1700s, blast furnaces like **Duddon Ironworks** were built close to woods and rivers, which provided charcoal and water power.

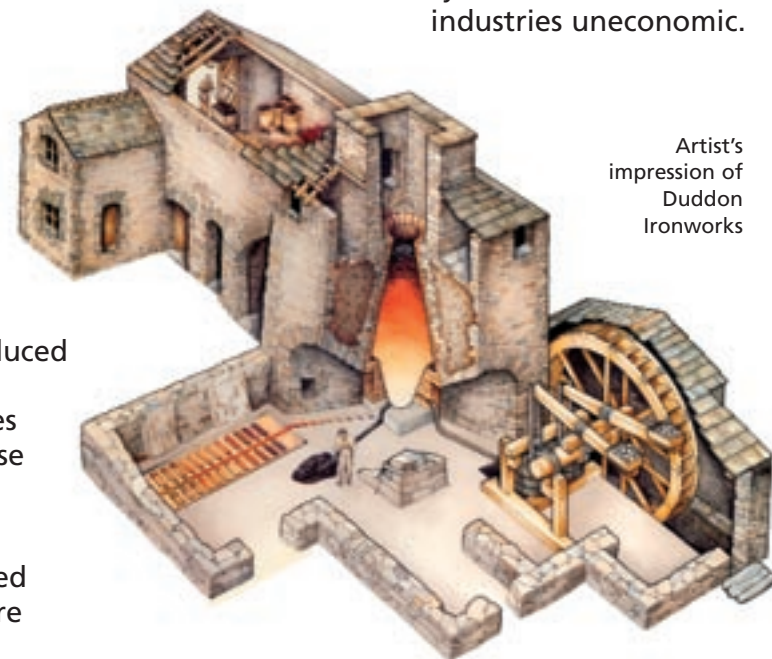
Transport was never easy in this rugged landscape. It made sense to process ore

on site if possible. Mines like **Force Crag** had their own washing, separating and crushing facilities, covering a huge area.

Supply and demand

Even in these remote valleys and fells, industries were closely linked to national demand. The 18th century's appetite for leather goods meant brisk business for **Rusland Tannery** and many others like it.

In the 19th century, new industries brought new opportunities. Lancashire's textile factories needed wooden reels and bobbins, which mills like **Stott Park** could supply. But eventually, changes at a national or world level made many of the Lake District's industries uneconomic.



Artist's impression of Duddon Ironworks

Warning: Old mines and industrial works can be extremely dangerous! Never go inside, except where the site has been made safe for visitors.

Mines, mills and quarries

A guide to some of the Lake District's most fascinating industrial sites.

1 Force Crag Mine

Lead was worked in this dramatic valley in Elizabethan times, but large-scale mining began in 1839. Zinc and barytes, originally by-products, were later the main focus. Ore was brought down from adits high up the fellside, to be processed in mills on the valley floor. One of these is still largely intact, and shows a century of development. Force Crag was the area's last working metal mine when it closed in 1991. Managed by the National Trust. Entry to buildings by bookable tour only. Contact 01768 774649 or email forcecragmine@nationaltrust.org.uk

Location: Grid ref NY199216. 7.5 kilometres (4.7 miles) south west of Keswick. Parking in Braithwaite, then 4 kilometres (2.5 miles) footpath up Coledale Valley.



2 Honister Slate Mine

Perched high on Honister Pass, this site may have produced slate in the Roman times. Industrial quarrying began around 1700 and underground mines were added in the 19th century. Slates were cut and finished on site, by hand until the 1890s. Many of the workers lived up here during the week. Today, it's both a working mine and a visitor attraction.

Location: Grid ref NY223135. Honister Pass, on the B5289, 6 kilometres (3.7 miles) south east of Buttermere. **Entry charge**



3 Coniston Copper Mines

This lovely valley is honeycombed with old copper mines. Begun around 1600, they eventually became the largest and most profitable in northern England. Some of the shafts were 335 metres (1,100 feet) deep. But output steadily declined, and the death blow came when world copper prices fell in the late 19th century. Find out more in Coniston's Ruskin Museum.

Location: Grid ref SD285992. 2.5 kilometres (1.6 miles) north west of Coniston, via footpath up Church Beck.



4 Duddon Ironworks

This is the oldest surviving site of its kind in northern England. It's a charcoal-fired iron furnace, built in 1736. A huge wheel, turned by water from the river, drove the bellows that pumped air into the blast furnace. Recent conservation work has helped save the original buildings, which include the towering furnace stack and storerooms for iron ore and charcoal. Managed by the Lake District National Park Authority.

Location: Grid ref SD197883. 2 kilometres (1.2 miles) north west of Broughton-in-Furness, just off A595. Limited parking.



5 Rusland Tannery

Tanning is the long, messy business of turning animal hides into leather. The main tannery building dates from the mid 18th century. You can see the tanning pits and two rebuilt 'beam stones' (work surfaces) where hides were scraped. The process needed water, lime and oak bark, which were all available nearby, as well as dog and chicken poo! Rusland produced heavy-duty leather for goods such as boots, straps and harness. Managed by the Lake District National Park Authority.

Location: Grid ref SD341887. 4 kilometres (2.5 miles) north west of Newby Bridge on minor road to Satterthwaite. Limited parking.



6 Stott Park Bobbin Mill

Built in 1835 but still intact, this mill made wooden bobbins for Lancashire's spinning and weaving industries. It was powered first by a water-wheel fed from a mill pond, then by steam power and finally by electricity. The original machinery has hardly changed. The mill closed in 1971 but is now run as a working museum, where you can see bobbins being made. Managed by English Heritage.

Location: Grid ref SD372884. 2.5 kilometres (1.6 miles) north of Newby Bridge on minor road off A590. **Entry charge.**



Map not to scale

Key to symbols

- Railway station (West Coast Line)
- Bus stop
- Car park
- Footpath
- Rough track
- Access for wheelchair users
- National Park boundary

For bus and train times please contact traveline on 0871 200 22 33

Find out more at:

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www.visitcumbria.com
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