

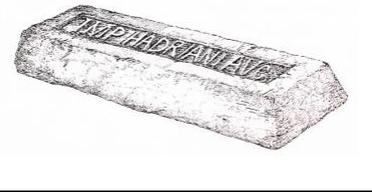
4B Timeline of Lead Working

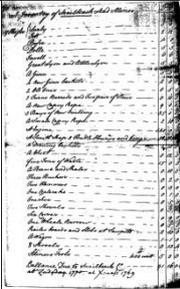
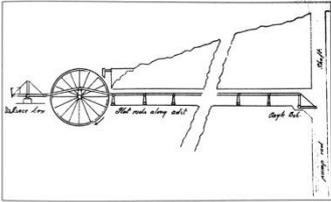
Snailbeach mine had an unusually long history. Its greatest days of continuously profitable working ran for over 100 years from 1782, and it was the single most profitable lead mine in the country for most of this period. Conditions, employment, working methods and social conditions changed throughout this time. To give pupils an impression of the long time involved, a horizontal wall chart might be made, relating events at Snailbeach to other events or periods of History studied.

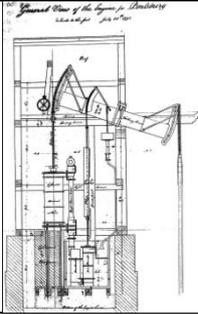
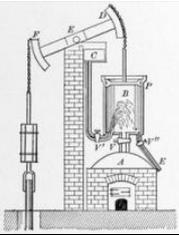
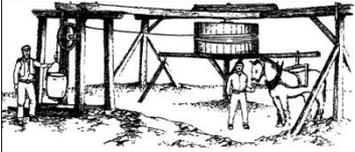
Besides using this timeline, the graphs showing the lead production at Snailbeach will show how the mine prospered or lost money at different times.

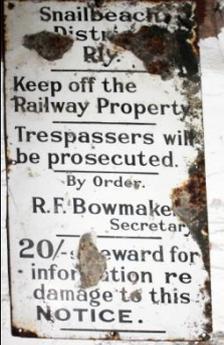
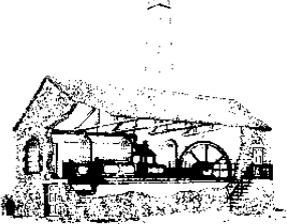
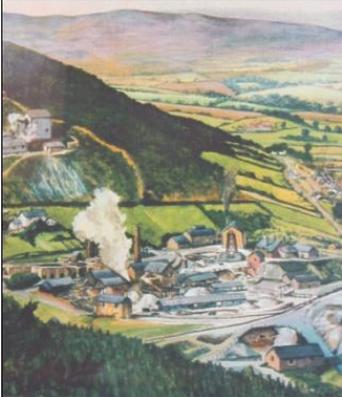
Most of the buildings now visible date from after the greatest days of the mine, and older buildings were often demolished when working changed. For example, there would have been a pumping engine on George's Shaft (Old Shaft) but this was removed after pumping was done from the New Engine Shaft. Mine buildings were seldom built to last, as no mine has a permanent future. Unusually, two features combined to preserve some record of this once great mine.

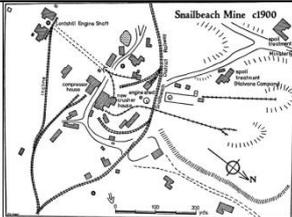
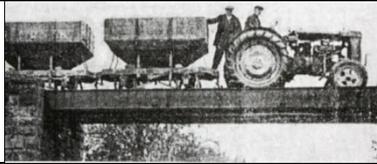
1. The final phase of building; Compressor House, Crusher Plant, Winding Engines, and Pumping Engine was on a grand scale.
2. Although lead mining ceased in 1910, some small scale mining of the Snailbeach Vein for Barytes continued for almost another half century. The machinery from the mine had been sold off or scrapped, but the unused buildings, unsuitable for any other use, simply decayed. The railway, still new when the mine made its first loss, struggled on under new owners.

DATE	SNAILBEACH EVENTS	
Bronze Age to Iron Age	Castle Ring Hill Fort one kilometre south of mineral vein at Snailbeach. First discovery and probable smelting of lead. Bole hearths on the Stiperstones could date back to this time.	
Roman Period- 46 – 410 A.D.	Roman occupation begins 46 A.D. Roman Army mine and smelt lead at Snailbeach. Lead Ingot produced in the time of Emperor Hadrian, about 120 A.D. Lead production declines after Hadrian's time	
Dark Ages	No known lead production	
1180	From the Shelve mines 60 cartloads of lead (worth £21) for the king's use, and 120 loads to Gloucester. Henry II was king of England	

1182	Lead worth £389 forwarded from Shrewsbury to Gloucester (about 1,110 cartloads) and 110 cartloads sent to Wiltshire	
1220	Tithes of lead go to Shrewsbury Abbey – the lead roof of the tower is ancient.	
1552	John Clifton held a mine in Hogstow Forest, possibly Snailbeach.	
1667-86	Derbyshire lead miners hold leases at Snailbeach. There is evidence of old lead smelters on the Stiperstones	
1761-66	Site leased by Thomas Powys, who sunk shafts	
1766-1772	A new partnership produced 505 tons of lead ore An inventory of 1769 survives	
1781	One significant date in the industrial revolution is the opening of Abraham Darby's Iron Bridge across the Severn on New Year's Day 1781. The industrial revolution would come to Snailbeach within two years of this.	
1782	Thomas Lovett of Chirk took a 21 year lease on lands belonging to Viscount Weymouth (later known as the Marquis of Bath, illustrated right)	
1783	The Snailbeach Company formed by Lovett with 10 shareholders to begin large scale working. Old Shaft (later called George's Shaft after the engine driver) begun.	
	Wagbeach Adit, a drainage tunnel over 1 kilometre long, was driven from the Hope Valley to drain the mines down to the 112 yard level (100 metres below the surface)	

1784	<p>Thomas Lovett's company leased land near Pontesford and sunk shafts to start the Nag's Head Colliery.</p> <p>Coal was needed for smelting and later for boilers on mine pumping engines</p> <p>Lead smelter built at Pontesford.</p>	
1793	<p>Beam Engine installed to pump water up Old Shaft to the drainage level</p>	
1797	<p>Mine reached a depth of 540 feet (165 metres)</p>	
By 1820	<p>Black Tom Shaft sunk 120 feet deep.</p> <p>Marquis of Bath had received £43,000 in royalties, so lead sales had totalled £301,000</p>	
1827	<p>Reports on the mine and smelt works. Ore dressing was still by hand using hammers, and the use of a horse-gin to drive a machine to break the ore was recommended.</p> <p>Captain Francis reports the mine to be "rich beyond most things I have been acquainted with in mining" – and this after 40 years of concentrated working</p>	
1827	<p>A new lower adit (horizontal tunnel) being driven from Minsterley to drain the mine to a greater depth. The Marquis of Bath had required the company to spend £2,500 in exploring this ground, so the adit served a dual purpose, though it never did reach the Snailbeach mine workings.</p>	
1832	<p>Chimneys built at the Pontesford smelter to take away fumes from lead works, with a 110 metre horizontal flue to collect lead that would otherwise be lost. (The fact that it caused dangerous poisoning was ignored!)</p>	
1845	<p>School for poor children at Minsterley, built with contributions from mine owners and the Marquis of Bath.</p>	
By 1848	<p>Engine Shaft sunk, with machines to pump water and wind ore up the shaft.</p> <p>Day Level driven to meet this shaft so that ore could be brought out of the shaft straight to the crusher house.</p>	
1850s	<p>Mine extended downwards to 900 feet deep and 2,500 tons of lead per year produced.</p>	

	Reservoir constructed	
1876	Crushing engine reconstructed and connected to jiggers	
1877	Snailbeach District Railway opened	
1881	Compressor House built to power rock drills and winches in the mine	
	Horse Gin on Black Tom Shaft replaced by a small steam engine	
1884	Price of lead falls. Company makes its first loss of £3,000 and goes into liquidation. Neighbouring mines; Tankerville, Pennerley and Bog close down, halving railway traffic.	
1885	New company formed to continue working Snailbeach on a smaller scale	
1887	Snailbeach District Railway opened to Pontesbury, to take smelted lead to customers and also bring coal to the mine and smelter.	

1895	Smelter closed down. Marquis of Bath waives his royalties in order to allow exploration to continue.	
1900	552 yard level driven east and west. 'Winzes', sloping underground shafts, made to search for more lead. Lead is still found, but it is 500 metres below the surface, and well below sea level.	
1900	Halvans Company work the waste heaps, and mine Barytes from Black Tom Shaft.	
1911	Mining is no longer economic. Pumping engine stopped and sold for scrap, and lower parts of mine flood	
1912	Snailbeach Lead Mine Company liquidated	
1923	Colonel Stephens takes over the Snailbeach Railway and provides additional second hand locomotives.	
1928	Charles Moore & Co take over from Halvans, and employed Joe Roberts to mine Barytes from Perkins Level & Paraffin Level	
1946	Snailbeach Railway locomotives failed by an inspector. Shropshire County Council leased the railway and a tractor was used to haul wagons.	
1955	Underground working ceased	
1959	Railway closed	