

## Lane End and Keldside Mines

Lane End (or Loanin mine) is located where the becks of Great Sleddale and Birkdale join to form the Swale. Little Moor Foot mine is situated near Hoggarths farm, and Keldside mine near to where Whitsundale beck joins the Swale. The ruins of Keldside smelt mill can be found a third of a mile nearer Keld and have been converted and used for farming purposes, with only the front masonry still standing.



*Ruins of Keldside Smelt Mill*

In 1700 a lease was granted for ground from Oxnop Gill to Keldside. Between 1751 and 1753 the Company of Mine Adventurers worked the mines and raised 88 tons; soon after George Tissington, Thomas and Ralph Parkes opened two mines at High and Low Birkdale (thought to be Lane End). The company spent £688 13s 7d but found little ore. In 1756 they built a horse whim to work pumps but this trial also failed. At Keldside shafts were sunk south of the river and large quantities of ore were raised. Levels were then driven from the riverside but proved unproductive.

In 1801 a partnership of ten men, including Thomas Butson, took a lease on the mines but they were drowned out. In 1825 Mr Jacques leased all the land west of Keld and a condition of the lease was that he install an engine for pumping all the mines to the west, which were unworkable due to flooding. Another condition of the lease stated that fifty men were to be employed, and so the Little Moor Foot and Keldside Mining Company was formed and worked the mines until 1829.

After 1829 the mines were leased to Mr Jackson, who raised 200 tons of lead from 1835 to 1838, and then to Mr Bradley from the Blakethwaite Company from Gunnerside Gill. An additional steam engine was installed in the Lane End shaft in 1828, it was said seventeen horses were required to move it up to the mine site. The north shaft had a waterwheel for pumping, but even with the steam engine and an additional waterwheel the mines were still flooded and unworkable due to being below the river level. The waterwheels were powered by water from Birkdale Tarn which had been enlarged and developed from a small naturally occurring tarn on the nearby moor.

In 1864 the lease was taken by the A.D. Company and in an attempt to drain all the Lane End mines, they started to drive the Sir George level from the riverside at Catrake Foss in Keld. However by 1867 only 112 fathoms had been cut, a further 76 fathoms were driven before the level was abandoned 1868.

The smelt mill was built between 1835 and 1839 and smelted lead from the other nearby mines, it closed in 1868 at the same time as the Sir George level was abandoned. The mill was maintained until 1897 when the roof was dismantled and the slates and timbers sold by auction. The waterwheel and crushing equipment were transferred to the Sir Francis mine in Gunnerside Gill. Stone from the Lane End mine buildings was used to build the present house at Hoggarths.

*(Source: Raistrick, A (1975): Lead Industry of Wensleydale & Swaledale: Vol 1: Moorland Publishing. Fawcett, E (circa 1939): Lead Mines in Swaledale MS, North Yorkshire County Records Office).*