


The Wildside of the Peak District

Ian D. Rotherham

Professor of Environmental Geography, Sheffield Hallam University

www.ukeconet.org

BLOG: <http://ianswalkonthewildside.wordpress.com/>

- 
- **Contact with wild nature frees the soul**
 - **Relieves us from the mundane**
 - **Re-charges the spirit**

Daniel Defoe's description of the Peak District moors in 1724

*'This, perhaps, is the most desolate, wild,
and abandoned country in all England.'*

These feelings applied to many upland areas and around Lancaster the hills were

*'... high and formidable only, but they had a kind of
inhospitable terror in them all barren and wild, of no
use or advantage to man or beast.'*

The Peak District – a remarkable landscape



Rich & diverse ecology





Bringing you close to nature.....





100 km

Pennines

Where we are.....



26/06/2015

Ian Rotherham, Sheffield Hallam University



PERCEPTIONS OF THE PEAK:

Charles Cotton in 1681 in the *Warden of the Peak*: described it as

'Environ'd round with nature's shames and ills, Black heath, wild rock, bleak crags and naked hills.'

This was at odds with the formal and with God's creation and was even linked to an abhorrence of the fall from grace of Mankind.

He described the Peak District hills as *'ignoble jet'*, *'impostumus boils'*, and the *'warts and pudenda of nature'*.



THE PEAT REEK: 1881 Edward Bradbury

On an excursion to Errwood noted a gritstone cottage with a filmy peat smoke among the ragged pine trees.

He goes on to describe peat burning in an old-fashioned fireplace with a three-legged iron pot, and a bottle of whisky on the table.

He likened the scene of the Snake Inn to something akin to Sutherlandshire.



He further stated that 2,000 acres of common land around Kinder had passed to private ownership, and that the poor of Hayfield had been robbed of their 40 acres of turbury at *Poor Man's Piece*.



Louis Jennings in the 1800s:

Described the northern Peak as

'very rarely traversed by human foot – a mass of stern and lonely hills, many of them with rounded tops, and beyond them again is a wild and trackless waste of moss and heath and bog, intersected by deep runnels of water, soft and spongy to the tread, and dotted over here and there with treacherous moss.

So strange, so wild, so desolate a region it would be hard to find elsewhere in England'

A photograph of a misty, mountainous landscape. The scene is dominated by a large, bare tree in the foreground, its intricate branches silhouetted against a thick, white mist. In the background, more trees and the outlines of mountains are visible, all shrouded in the same dense fog. The overall atmosphere is quiet and somewhat desolate.

Edward Browne in 1622 described the area as

'..... this strange, mountainous, misty, Moorish, rocky wild country'.

Human Impacts



Grazing & Livestock





Fuel:

Peat

Turf

Ling

Sedge

Bracken

Gorse / furze

Kindling

Birch coppice / brushwood

Rushes for lights

Building Materials:

Peat

Turf

Ling

Stone

Sphagnum moss

Bracken or fern

Rush

Clay

Birch poles

Other wood

Grazing:

Sheep

Cattle

Ponies / horses

Deer

Rabbits

Moss hay

Other foods and medicines gathered
etc.

Sport and Recreation

The earliest known sporting use - hunting grounds for the Crown & local landowners

- Peak Forest, deer parks & chases

Red deer, but presumably roe deer and wild boar pursued







1700s - deer chase declined – **THE ENCLOSURES.**

Lowland hunting moved towards pursuit of the fox [*THE UNSPEAKABLE IN PURSUIT OF THE INEDIBLE*], and with the advent of suitable firearms, the partridge.

In the uplands, the **RED GROUSE** became the main object of sporting interests



Duke of Rutland at a shoot





The Duke of Rutland's 11,533-acre Longshaw estate

3,633 brace of grouse were shot in 1893.

Major shooting lodge at Longshaw, smaller lodges (White Edge Lodge, Warren Lodge at Curbar, and Owler Bar).

To facilitate easy access the Duke built the Calver road in 1840, skirting the moors to avoid any adverse impact on the shoot.





Changed ecology..... and access??!







1900s - often bitter and sometimes violent disputes between some landowners, managers, rambles and access campaigners, and increasingly a vociferous nature conservation lobby.

The CRoW Act helped resolve many of the issues.

Today, sporting interests, forestry, farming, recreation, and conservation sit side-by-side in a still rather uneasy alliance.

G.H.B. Ward



Benny
Rothman

Ian Rotherham, Sheffield Hallam
University



Water Gathering Grounds & recreation

































Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6uXWcWtO7I>