

27th August 1990

Hilton And Warcop Mines

A bank holiday Monday provided the chance to visit this area on the Army's Warcop gun range when they were having a day off.

The party of 16 split into two groups. The larger headed for Hilton Mine, a big and complex lead mine which has yielded many fine specimens of yellow fluorite crystals and calcites over the years. The group explored mainly the more easily accessible areas from the Dow Scar High Level. No new ground to the Society was entered on this visit.

The smaller group of 7 set off up to Long Fell in the firing 'danger area'. The object was to examine the workings of barytes in the Melmerby Scar limestone at 1900 ft.

The four principal veins were worked during the First World War and again during the Second, by the Long Fell Mining Co. The workings are quite extensive but were stoped out to surface in many places from adit levels driven in under the summit escarpment. These had all collapsed at the portals, but access could be gained to short sections by abseiling down the surface stopes. Two or three ruined buildings still remain on the summit of Long Fell. Scores of large shells lie about the area. It is recorded that 28,000 tons of barytes were produced from these mines.

The group then walked across Swindale Edge to Amber Hill but little trace of mining could be found here but minerals were noticed in the rocks. Everyone then returned to Hilton Village and rounded the day off with a bar meal near Appleby.

PETER FLEMING