

M0003219: "A Pit-head at Broseley in Shropshire" / M0003219EB: Iron Works in Coalbrook Dale, Shropshire

Publication/Creation

02 November 1932

Persistent URL

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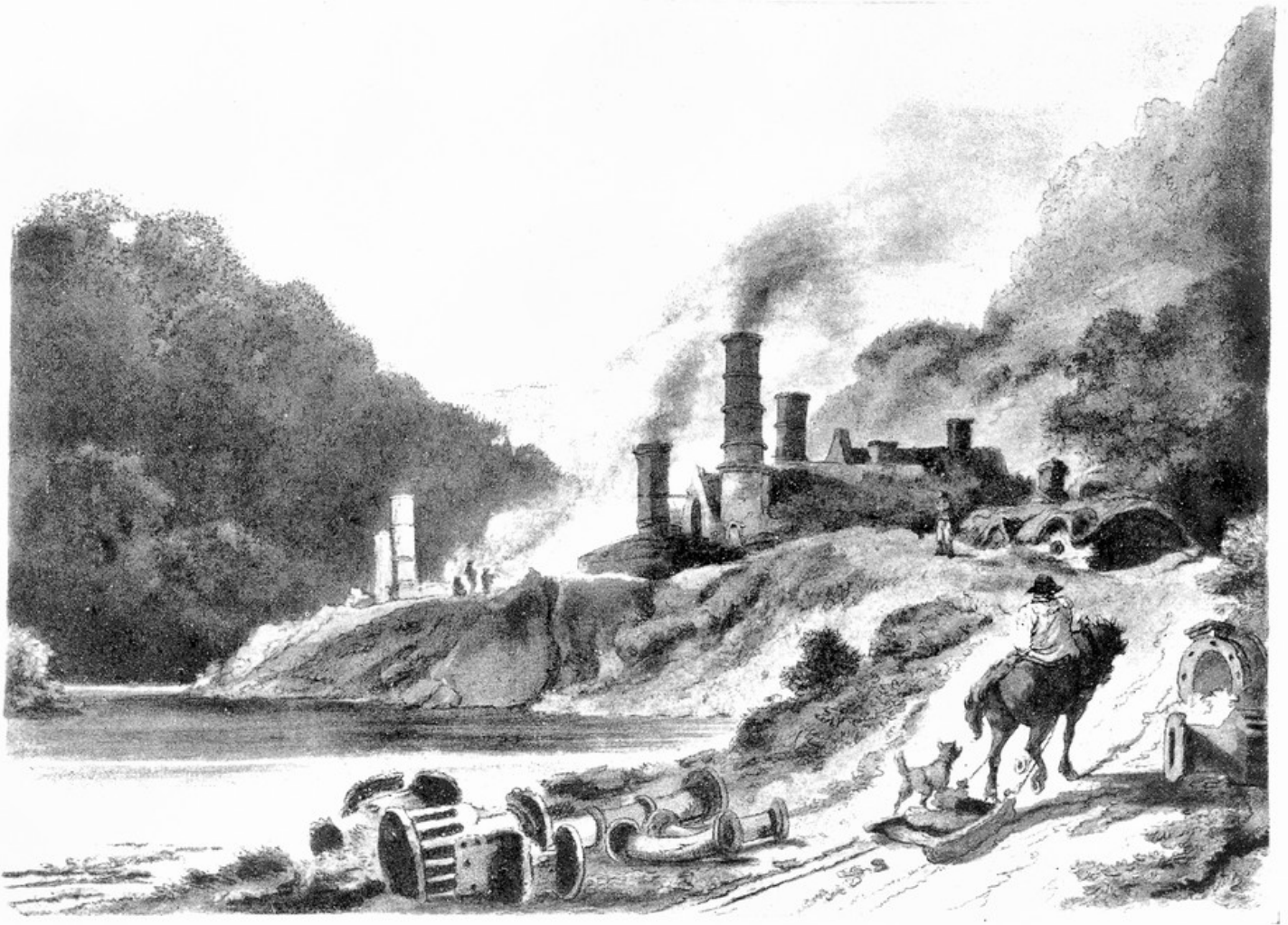


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A Pit-head at Broseley in Shropshire. From: *The King's Topography*, British Museum.

Coal was mined in Shropshire to a depth of about 500 feet. The waggon-way was made of wood and the rails of oak till cast iron replaced them from about 1767 onwards. Coal was raised by means of the two-horse gin, and the fire-engine was employed for pumping. Female labour was commonly employed underground as well as at the pit-head.



Iron Works in Coalbrook Dale in Shropshire. From: *The King's Topography*, British Museum.

The cradle of the modern iron industry was the foundry of Abraham Darby, where the successful application of coal, in the form of coke, was made by Darby senior in the first quarter of the century. The fuel difficulty consequent on timber exhaustion was overcome and a vast extension of the use of iron for all sorts of purposes was effected. Darby's methods were slowly adopted and the industry spread to South Wales, Scotland and elsewhere.