

OPEN CAST COAL

Property of the National Trust, the famous beauty spot Lyme Park is threatened with the possibility of open-cast mining. So far the Trust has held off the Ministry of Fuel, and Lyme Park may be saved from the desecration of the bulldozer.... Wentworth Woodhouse, historic seat of Lord FitzWilliam, was not so fortunate. Even some of the famous gardens near the house were sacrificed. Yorkshire miners themselves joined in the general protest, more than a year ago.

* At Wentworth today coal-digging is over and most of the ground has been levelled back. Everyone will sympathise with ~~the~~ Lord FitzWilliam for it will be many years, certainly not in his lifetime, before the place recovers its beauty. Some of the ground is already put to grass, but of that, farmers scornfully point out that it is of such poor quality as to be of no use for feeding either sheep or cattle. ~~They say the land will take more than a generation to recover.~~

* Latest open-cast site is Carrington Coppice, North Derbyshire, where no beauty spots or mansions reproach the Ministry of Fuel. Excavators of terrifying efficiency change the face of this part of England in very short time. By a well-planned system of slowly moving trucks, both excavating and loading proceed on continuous flow, conveyor belt lines. Eight hundred tons of topsoil are dug out ~~every hour.~~

(4 x)

7 dumped elsewhere every hour

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 Hearing the layer of coal they use a dragline grab, scooping up three tons a time. This amazing machine moves by itself, like a giant insect, to keep up with the work. Often exceeding two hundred thousand tons a week, the open-cast coal ^{output} is indispensable ^{to industry} in the opinion of the Ministry of Fuel.

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(cabin) At last they reach the coal itself; more than half a million tons of it is estimated to be here at Carrington Coppice. Beginning near the surface the seam falls to a depth of a hundred-and-eighty-feet. With no more than two-hundred men they dig twelve-thousand tons a week. In the average pit it would need close on three thousand men to mine as much.