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“The Metal mines of SW Shropshire”

Today Shropshire is considered a rural county, industry is small and clean and lives mainly in industrial estates around Shrewsbury, Telford and other towns. The iron, coal and ceramic industries of east Shropshire are well remembered and celebrated. With the exception of Snailbeach lead mine other mining activities are little known. Two areas of mineralisation south of Pontesbury and Minsterley had a significant number of lead mines (including Snailbeach) which, when lead mining became uneconomic in the late 19th century, exploited their zinc ore, calcite and barytes.

The barytes (now often barite) mining and processing industry is getting forgotten despite the Shropshire being the second most productive county in the country between the two world wars and Huglith Mine possibly being the most productive mine the country during that period. Major output ceased late in 1945 but small quantities were obtained whilst reworking mine spoil tips into the 1960s and possibly a little later.