

Limestone Landscapes 2 - The Uses of Limestone

Magnesian limestone and **dolomite** has a number of different uses to man. Thus in Hetton there are a number of **quarries** and holes in the ground from which limestone has been **extracted**. Even today men are still quarrying not far from the school and this activity changes what the landscape looks like. In the 18th and 19th centuries this meant leaving a big hole in the ground with cliffs tens of metres high. Today when the quarry is finished working in one part, the hole is filled in again and this is what has happened at Hetton. A big quarry has been filled up with the stone which came from the pit and was part of a pit heap. In this way the ground is **reclaimed** after it is covered with a layer of soil.

Copy the following headings into your book

Uses of Magnesian Limestone, sand and Dolomite

1. It has been used as a building stone. Although not the best stone to use on houses and other buildings, because over time it crumbles and breaks down. Many of the older houses and walls around the town are made using Magnesian limestone. This type of stone is often called **rubblestone**.

2. To make agricultural lime. Limestone in the past has been crushed and then coal added to it before it is burnt. This breaks down the limestone to a powder which is then spread over fields with an acidic soil and this improves the quality of the soil. Most villages had at least one lime kiln where the lime was made while in other places it was made in huge quantities. Moorsley had a lime kiln operating right up until the 1930s.

3. To make Lime Mortar. The same treatment in 2 above also makes a quantity of powdered lime which was used to make lime mortar, a type of cement which holds stones together. Today real cement is used as this lasts longer and is better at holding stones together.

4. Yellow Sand. The bands of yellow sand between the layers of limestone provide huge quantities of building sand which is mixed with cement to make concrete and building cement.

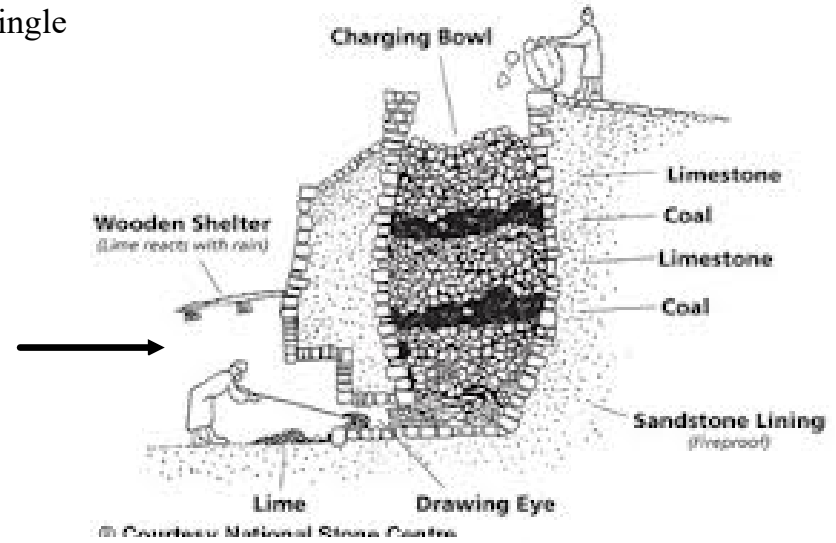
5. Dolomite has a variety of uses. Firstly after a simple crushing the dolomite stones are used in road and path making. When crushed very fine in an industrial setting it is used in the chemical industry where it is used in making toothpaste, cosmetic pastes, medicines and other chemicals.

Limestone landscapes 2 - Lime Kilns & Quarries



← This picture shows a single agricultural lime kiln

This picture shows how lime is made in a lime kiln



This photograph taken inside Eppleton Quarry shows the bands of limestone on top of the yellow sand. The yellow sand is being extracted after the limestone has been taken out.



In the background you can see both coal (black) from the heap and sand (yellow) from the quarry.

Once the limestone has been removed the old pit heap is pushed into the hole. Where the heap has been on fire the red stone is then extracted to be taken away for road building as well as any coal found mixed with the waste heap.