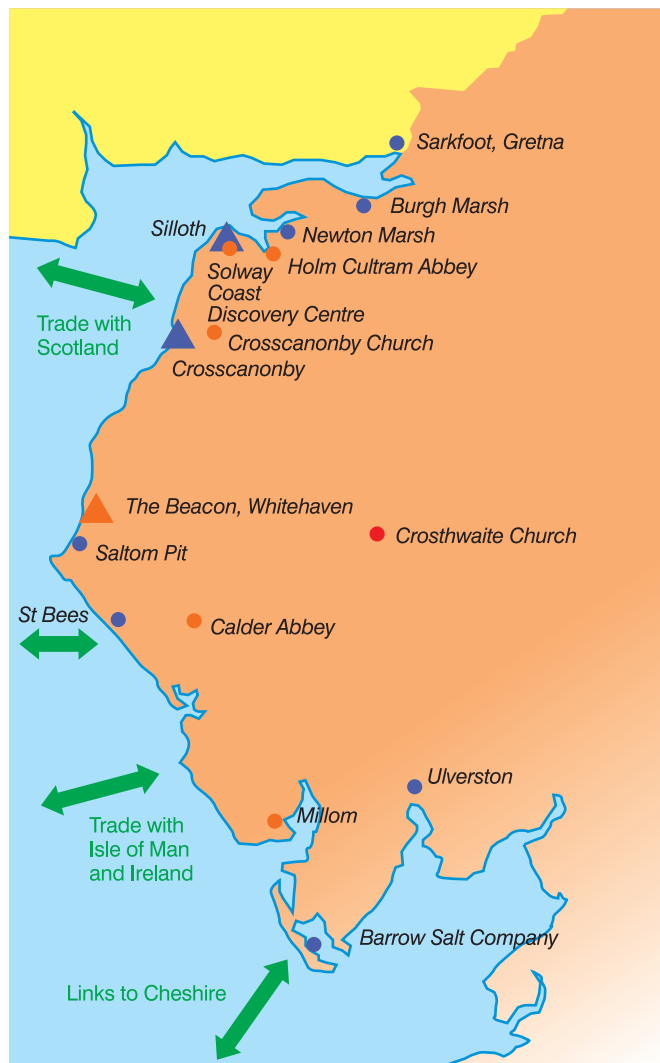


Cumbria - Sleeching, Salt Marshes and Dr Brownrigg



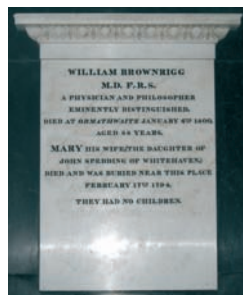
St Bees Priory was already using coal in the 13th century at its saltworks near Whitehaven (perhaps at Saltom), and a coal-fuelled panhouse salt industry developed on the West Cumberland coalfield from the 17th century, before being overwhelmed by competition from Cheshire in the later 18th century. In the 1850s, a saltworks at Sillioth attempted to revive the industry by refining Irish rock-salt from Carrickfergus using Cumberland coal as fuel.

Salt was required in large quantities throughout West Cumbria for the fishing industry. Salt pans stretched from the head of the Solway to Millom in the south.

Much of the agricultural landscape which can be seen today on the Solway Plain can be attributed to the works of the Cistercian Monks of Holm Cultram Abbey, Abbeytown. They founded their abbey in 1150 when Cumberland was in Scottish hands.

They made salt from the sea at many sites along the stretch of coastline, which would later become The Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Earthwork remains of a small sleeching site can be found near Newton Arlosh, beside the access track onto Newton Marsh. Interpretation about the birds on the Solway can also be found at the RSPB's Campfield Marsh Reserve.

William Brownrigg



www.whitehavenandwesternlakeland.co.uk/people/brownrigg.htm

William Brownrigg MD FRS (1711-1800) practised medicine at 24, Queen St, Whitehaven. In 1748 he wrote *The Art of Making Common Salt in Most Parts of the World with Several Improvements Proposed in the Art for the Use of the British Dominions*. His work changed how salt was made in open pans. He is buried at Crosthwaite Church, Keswick.

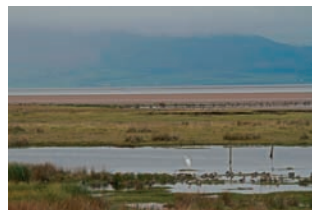
The Beacon, Whitehaven



www.thebeacon-whitehaven.co.uk/

The interactive Beacon is awash with the history of Whitehaven and Copeland, including the involvement in salt making by the Lowther family from the 1630s. Easy access to five floors, guided tours, gallery exhibitions, events and educational services.

Campfield Marsh, Bowness on Solway



www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/c/campfieldmarsh/

The reserve is made up of a mosaic of saltmarsh, peatbogs, farmland and wet grassland. Trails lead to a wheelchair accessible hide looking out over the marsh where lapwings, redshanks and snipe breed in the summer and thousands of swans, ducks and geese spend the winter.



The Discovery Centre, Sillioth



www.solwaycoastaonb.org.uk/

The Solway Coast Discovery Centre provides an informative look at the development of the Solway Coast over 10,000 years. Mini-cinema, gallery, exhibitions, information and shop.

Crosscanonby



www.visitcumbria.com/wc/crosscanonby.htm

The Crosscanonby salt pans were built in 1634 and probably closed in the late C18th. The site has unusual features. It is thought that seawater was piped from a wooden structure on the foreshore (visible at low tide) and pumped into two stone-lined circular tanks for storage and settling, before boiling in the coal-fuelled panhouse.

Tomb of John Smith, St John's Church Crosscanonby



www.visitcumbria.com/wc/crosscanonby-st-john-the-evangelists-church.htm

The tomb of John Smith, salt officer, can be seen at Crosscanonby Church. He is depicted working at his desk. The inscription by his wife records that he worked at Netherhall and Crosscanonby pans for 29 years and died at the age of 64 in 1730.

Bank End, Maryport Esplanade



To the north of Maryport are rock cut features in the foreshore at Bank End, the remains of the Netherhall Salt Works. Features like this are also found in County Antrim, Northern Ireland.

Photographs by
Judith Rogers, David Cranstone
and Andrew Fielding