
12 Pardshaw Crag

Theme: Rivers, seas and life

Location

12 Pardshaw — Carboniferous limestone. The crag is 300 metres northwest of the Quaker Meeting House [NY 103 256].

Description

To the southwest of Cockermouth is a small village called Pardshaw. It lies on the side of a limestone ridge, just south of a craggy hill. The crags offer a splendid view of the north-western fells.

335 million years ago, in the Carboniferous Period, this limestone was a mix of limey organic mud, shells and corals in a tropical sea. England was close to the Equator then, not 55 degrees north like now. Over aeons our tectonic plate has steadily moved across the globe. During that time the mud and shells were deeply buried and compressed into rock. Millions of years of Earth movements and erosion have now revealed them. While Carboniferous rocks like these today appear like a ring around the Lake District, millions of years ago they, and the younger rocks above them, completely covered all of the high fells.

Below Pardshaw Crag sits an historic meeting house of the Quakers; it is the place where John Dalton, the Eaglesfield man credited with developing atomic theory, went to school in the 1770's. But around 1650, years before the present meeting house was built, the founder of the Quakers, George Fox, preached to thousands of Friends from Pardshaw Crag. When you visit you can see what a wonderful natural pulpit it is. Limestone bedrock produces a very particular set of plants, including thyme and common rock-rose and grasses like sheep's fescue.

Photographs

(Photo 12-1) 12 View south towards the Lake District mountains from Pardshaw Crag.

(Photo 12-2) 12 Pardshaw Crag.



(Photo 12-1) View south towards the Lake District mountains from Pardshaw Crag.



(Photo 12-2) Pardshaw Crag.