

Charcoal Burning

Image: Charcoal burning in the Wyre Forest. The charcoal burner is building a clamp during the early stages before firing. [Image from: Bewdley Museum]

3. Charcoal Burning (1)

Before charcoal burning could take place there was a great deal of preparatory work:

- First, a hearth was prepared by clearing and levelling an area of ground about 22 feet square. Turf was removed carefully as it was used to cover the clamp during the firing.
- Secondly, a stake was hammered into the centre to provide a guide for building a chimney of logs, sloping inwards. Small pieces of wood were placed on the base of the hearth in a ring, leaving openings in places. Medium-sized wood followed and then larger pieces. One of the skills of the charcoal burner was to create a dome-shaped clamp, which would enable a slow burn to take place and produce good quality charcoal.