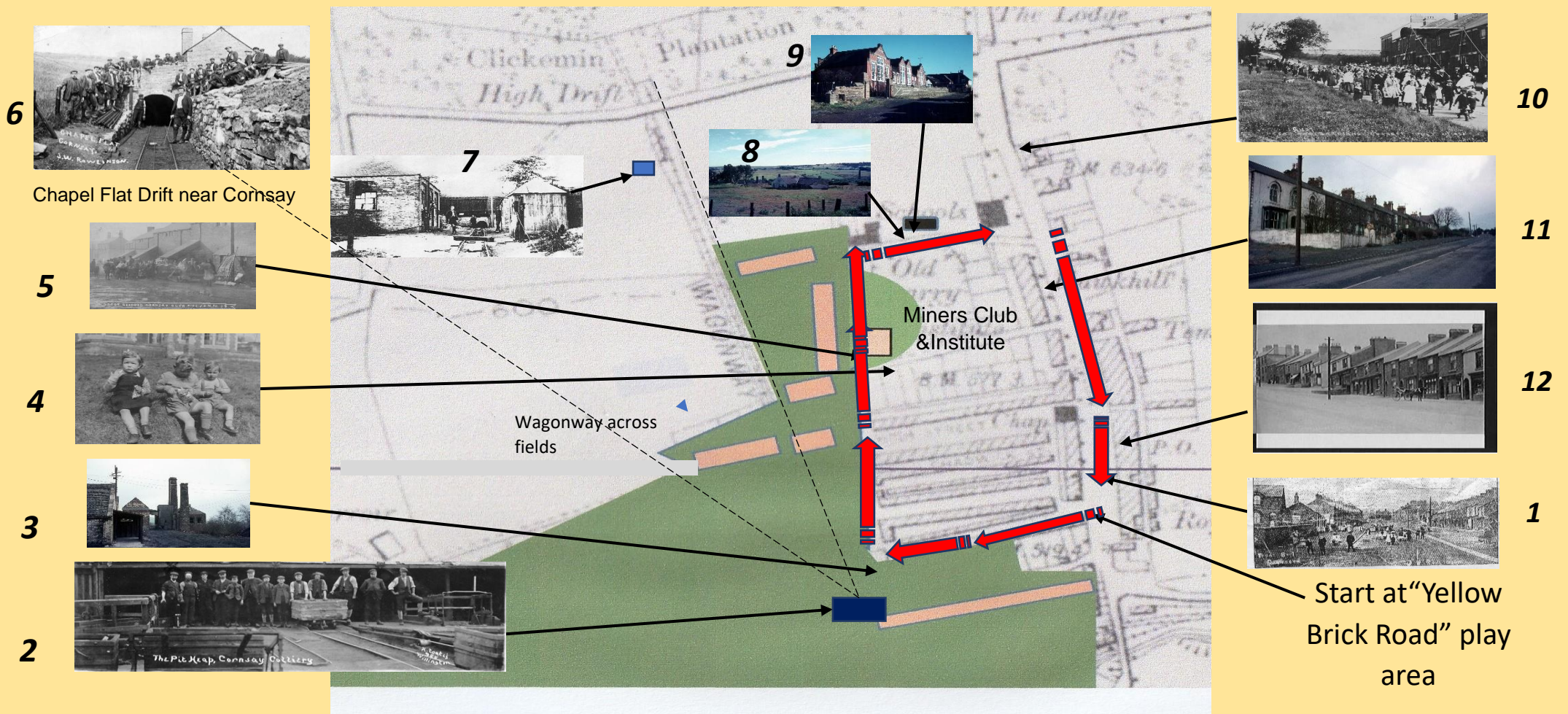


A Historic walk around Cornsay Colliery



A Short History of the Village

Where you are standing now was agricultural land when in 1868, Ferens and Love built street upon street of housing to accommodate a workforce who would work in their newly opened coal mine. There were four seams of coal worked by drifts (tunnels) into the hillsides. Men and boys as young as 14 years laboured along with tough little ponies in virtual darkness to fill and transport tubs of coal through workings deep underground. The tubs were coupled together into "sets" then pulled to the surface by a steam driven hauler. You can see the remains of the hauler building along the "Lodge Road". All of the tubs were directed to the "pit heap" where coal was sorted and tipped into railway wagons.

Some coal was distributed free to the miners but most was roasted in ovens to make coke for local steelworks. Another product of the mine was a very fine clay which was used to make bricks in two brickyards and salt-glazed sanitary pipes in the pipe-yard. This colliery in its various departments employed an average of 700 men and boys at its peak.

Ferens and Love also built schools for Catholics and non-Catholics, a Methodist Chapel and a Miners Institute. Here men could study in the Reading Room, play billiards, produce concerts and shows and play their brass instruments in the Band Room as well as enjoy alcoholic drinks in the bar. The original school was replaced by a Council School when it became unsafe due to mining subsidence

Colliery production ceased in 1955 but the brickworks continued until the early 70s. The village was condemned under Slum Clearance regulations and the Hamsteels Estate was built about 1 mile south west of Cornsay Colliery, in the early 1950s, to accommodate the majority of displaced families. By the early 70s, all of the village had been demolished except Commercial Street which you see behind you

Key to Photographs

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| 1 | The village in the early 1900s. Commercial Street on the right and Gillow Street on the left. At bottom left can be seen the end of Stable Street. The stables housed the pit ponies which were used to pull tubs of coal through the underground passages. Only Commercial Street still exists | 7 | Steam driven hauler which pulled the "sets" of tubs along the wagonways. The line went under the Lodge road and into the High Drift a few yards beyond the road. The remains of the hauler house can be seen from Lodge road. |
| 2 | The Pit Heap. All full tubs came here to be weighed and emptied on the tipplers. Note many of the workers are boys of 13yrs doing their first jobs in the colliery | 8 | View over the Miners Club and Institute from the site of the school |
| 3 | The Colliery Office on the left and brickworks to rear | 9 | The Junior School operated long after the village was demolished, serving pupils from the Hamsteels Estate and surrounding farms. |
| 4 | Children enjoying crisps in front of Miners Club and Institute | 10 | The top of Commercial Street. Peace celebrations after WW1 |
| 5 | The bottom of Union Square. Goods rescued from a fire in "the Club" | 11 | Hawkhills Terrace with the white Colliery Manager's House |
| 6 | One of a number of drifts driven into local hill-sides | 12 | The main shopping area in Commercial Street |