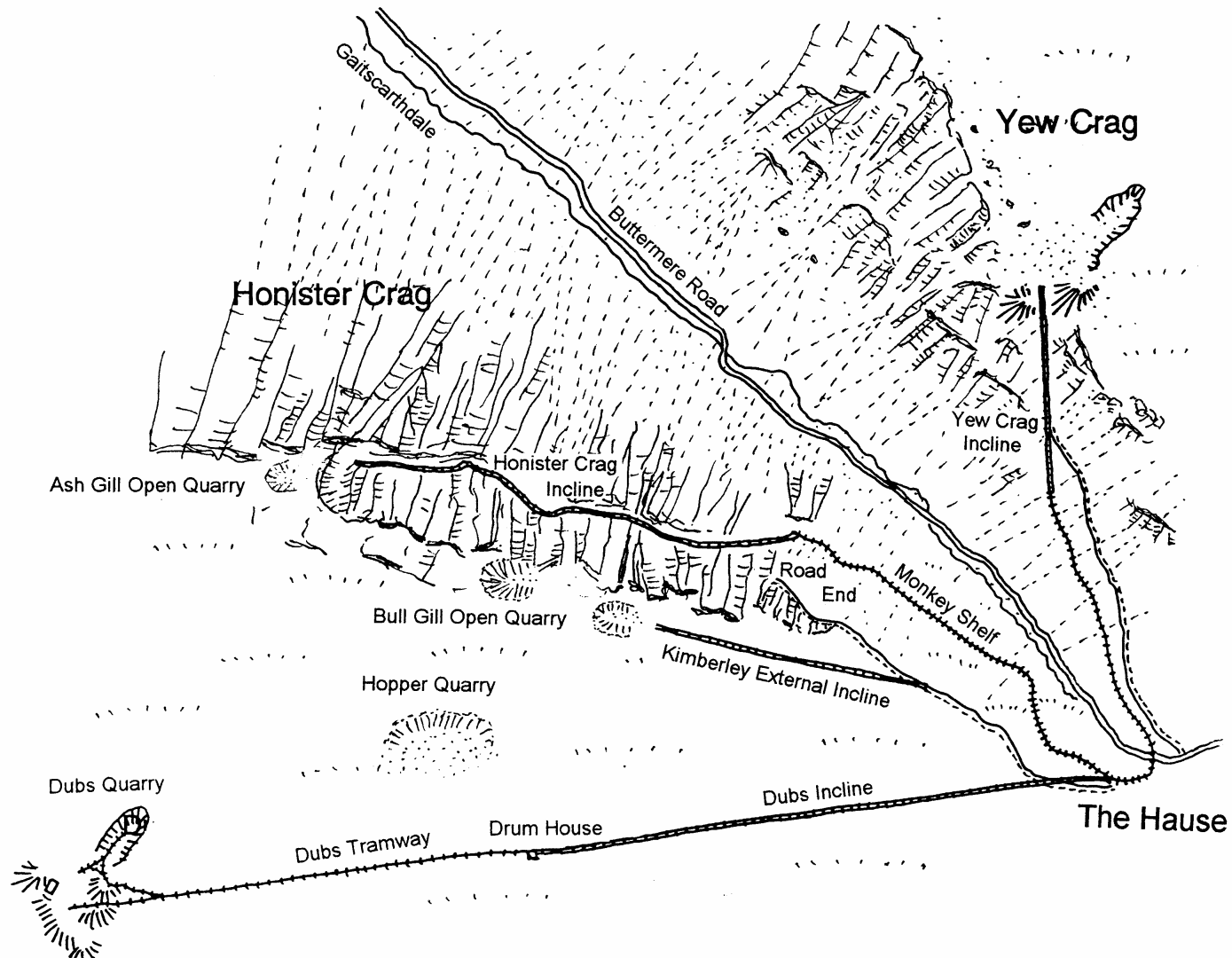


Honister's tramways and Incline Systems

Honister's former railways were unique. The Yew Crag incline was the first to be commissioned in 1879. It was designed to carry 'made slates' down to the summit of Honister Pass (The Hause). It survived the longest of all the Honister tramways, only being abandoned in 1962. During its life it was modified several times, including in 1926 when an electric winder was installed and the system improved to allow large slate blocks to be carried rather than much lighter loads of made slates.



In 1883 work started on another formidable project - the Honister Crag Railway. The plan was to construct a line from the summit of Honister Hause, across the fell side to the foot of Honister Crag and then diagonally up the Crag face to a point almost at the top. It took 13 years to complete this remarkable venture and the Honister Crag Railway operated for about 30 years.

Scene on the Honister Crag Railway. approx 1905



At the same time as the Honister Crag Railway was being constructed plans were also being laid to link Dubs Quarry above Wanscale to the summit of Honister Pass. At first it was planned to make the connection by driving a tunnel through the fell. Construction of the tunnel was started from both ends. The project was eventually abandoned because of technical difficulties despite the fact that both tunnels were well on the way to linking up. Work then started on an alternative plan - a third major tramway. It was completed in 1891. A team of four horses was used to pull trains of trucks from Dubs to the high point on the fell. From here a self activating system controlled the descent of the trucks down to Honister Hause.