

# PEAK SCAR

## PEAK SCAR

O.S. Sheet 527 884  
 Aspect North  
 Altitude 230m  
 Approach Time 2 minutes

Add CROW act reference

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Mod - Severe | 0 |
| HS - HVS     | 0 |
| E1 - E3      | 0 |
| E4 and above | 0 |
| Bouldering   | 0 |

### Situation and Character

Few climbing grounds can boast easier access than Peak Scar. This limestone crag lies adjacent to a minor road between the villages of Boltby and Hawnby in the North Yorks Moors National Park, with the climbs being reached by a short easy descent. The crag was formed in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century when a land slip created the steep sided limestone gorge. The climbing is often strenuous and some routes are quite exposed, though all can be protected with a basic selection of modern equipment. The crag's sheltered location and north facing aspect means the ground at its foot remains muddy for most of the year and supports a healthy growth of nettles in summer. Nevertheless the rock dries quickly, is better than it appears on first acquaintance and there is a good selection of climbs, mostly in the VS to HVS grades. Like most limestone crags, the blocky rock strata demands careful treatment in places, but it is reasonably clean and reliable. On a few routes, especially those at either end of the crag, vegetation can be a problem and climbers are encouraged to garden **lightly** as they climb.

**Note:** Following a fatal climbing accident at the crag, the landowner and the British Mountaineering Council have agreed the following access restrictions:-

Climbers will only visit the crag in small groups.

The crag shall not be used by Outdoor Training / Instructional Groups.

All abseiling activities are banned, with all climbers asked to walk back down to their gear.

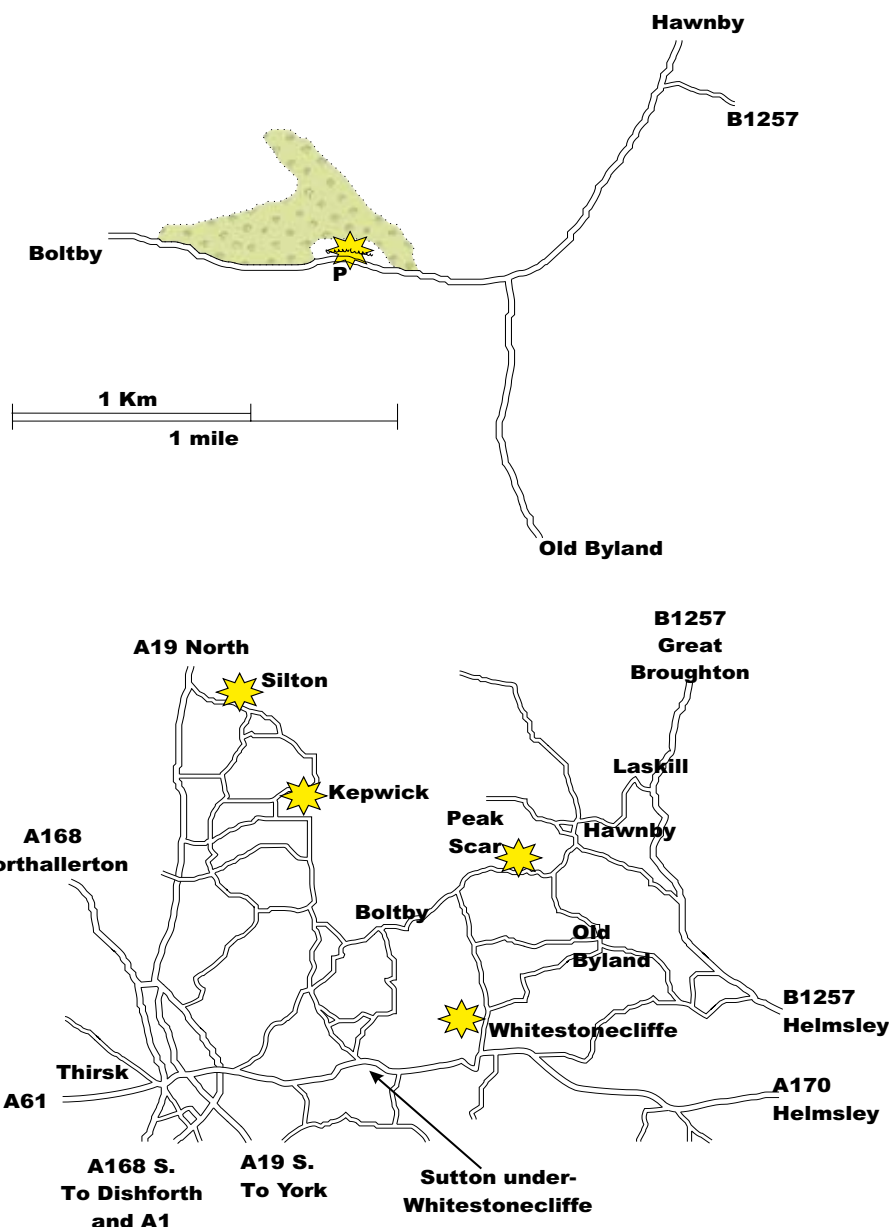
Failure to observe any of these restrictions could result in a total ban on climbing.

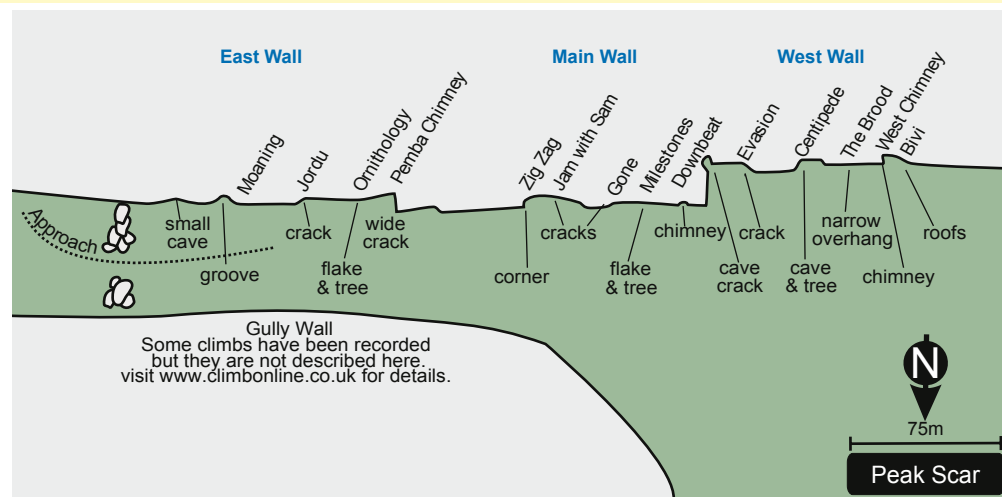
### History

Remarkably, the crag was only discovered in 1960 when members of the Cleveland Mountaineering Club happened to glimpse a wall of white rock from nearby Hawnby. An exploratory visit revealed the vast potential for many new but mainly difficult climbs. News of "Crag X" was quickly passed to the formidable team of Terry Sullivan and Vic Tosh. This pair began exploration in early 1961, and in that year added over thirty new routes including, *Jam with Sam*, *Milestones* and the classic *Frenesi*. 1961 also saw the publication of a new climbers' guide describing the crag. The guide generated great interest and it wasn't long before the young and talented Chris Woodall appeared on the scene and proceeded to repeat all the existing climbs before adding his own routes such as *Trad*, *Fifi*, and the testing *Astronaut*. The following year Woodall with Stewart Patterson climbed the huge roof of *Bivi* using two pegs. The same team later made a fine ascent of *Odds On* accompanied by Derrick Van Meerbeeck.

In the spring of 1964 Ken Jackson and Tony Marr climbed the very bold direct start to *Cosmonaut* only to see technical standards rise significantly during 1965 when Van Meerbeeck and Patterson climbed the first E1 on the crag with the difficult *Kant*. During 1968 members of the York M.C. produced a high level girdle, later extended by Tony Marr. Over the next few years numerous mediocre routes were climbed which do not warrant special mention. Even Derrick Van Meerbeeck's impressive ascent of *Milestones Super Direct* in 1972 failed to generate new activity and no further significant routes were climbed until John Redhead and Chris Shorter snatched the compelling line of *Close to the Edge* in 1976.

Interest returned in May 1978 when Tony Marr and John Chadwick made a free ascent of *Crackers*, one of the harder routes on the crag. Then a few days later Alan Taylor, Marr and Jackson found an easy solution to a steep part of the crag with *Shades of Grey*. Later that same year, John Redhead paid a flying visit and eliminated the four points of aid from *BBC* to produce one of the crag's hardest free climbs. To provide a fitting climax his visit, Redhead ended the day by climbing the spectacular





direct finish to The Edge. The next generation of climbers were also keen to leave their mark and in 1981 Kelvin Neal with Alan Moss found the delightful eliminate *Mother Bear*. The following year the same pair laid siege to *Bivi*, dispensing with the two aid pegs to produce the hardest pitch on the crag. In 1982 the very capable team of Steve Brown and Dave Paul made short work of the steep and formidable *The Brood*. New developments dried up again until 1993 when the evergreen Tony Marr and Mike Tooke searched for "leftovers" and came up with *Vulture*. The team of Kevin Gallagher, Roger Stapleton and Paul Tweddle proved that new climbs of a reasonable standard are still to be found if you keep your eyes open, and added the delightful Severe, *Upstart*.

The crag awaits a new generation willing to probe for those unclimbed gems!

### Access and Approaches

From the A19, leave at Thirsk and take the A170 Scarborough road out of the town. After about two miles take a left fork in the road to Boltby. Pass through the picturesque village of Boltby, follow road signs for Hawnby and after about two miles a woodland plantation appears on the left. Park on the verge by the wire fence at its far end. The approach from Middlesbrough is via the A172 to Stokesley and thence by the B1257 into Bilsdale, leaving that road by turning right to Laskill at a sharp left hand bend not long after passing The Sun Inn. Follow the signs to Hawnby and park on the right by the wire fence at the start of the plantation. Please read and conform with the BMC access notice restrictions and do heed the Police Warnings not to leave valuables in vehicles.

The first climb lies approximately 50m from the BMC access notice. Descend into the gorge, passing an initial short and dirty section of rock to where the crag juts out forming a corner, adjacent to where the path passes through a gap in a line of mossy boulders.

### The Climbs

The vegetated wall to the left of the corner contains several routes of dubious quality, the best being *Easy Corner* (Mod. 1962), which follows the main corner/crack and can be used as a useful descent route, and *White Wall* (Severe 1971) which climbs the wall and overhang 2m left of the corner.

### Far East Wall

The first listed climbs start to the right of the corner on the wall forming the front face and are described from left to right.

#### 1. Sidewinder 13m VD \*

Start 3m right of the arête at an obvious crack. Climb the crack to a ledge then exit up the continuation crack above. Enjoyable.

1961

#### 1a. Wol 5 3c

Start below a thin slightly left-leaning crack just to the left of *Jonas*. Follow this to a large ledge. Near the left end of the ledge, climb a short crack to a narrow ledge. Make an unprotected traverse right along the bulging wall for about 3 or 4m (feet on the narrow ledge and hands on fragile-looking horizontal flakes) to a wide crack/groove (right of a large tree and left of the top ledge of *Jonas* - this is the same groove as on the variation finish to *Jonas*). Climb this, finishing just right of the big tree.

*Simon Caldwell, Carmen Elphick, and Will Smith 25/4/2007*

#### 2. Jonas 13m HVD

Starts 3m right of *Sidewinder*. Follow a crack diagonally right to a large ledge. Pull up between two large and slightly overhanging blocks to a ledge. Continue up a large bracket on the right and finish directly above.

**The original finish is now overgrown and unstable. A much better variation (reducing the grade to VDiff) is: Follow a crack diagonally right to a large ledge. Pull up between two large and slightly overhanging blocks to a ledge. Head left along this ledge and follow the obvious groove up to a large tree. A bird nests behind the two large blocks so this route should probably be avoided during nesting season (Owls: March to June?).**

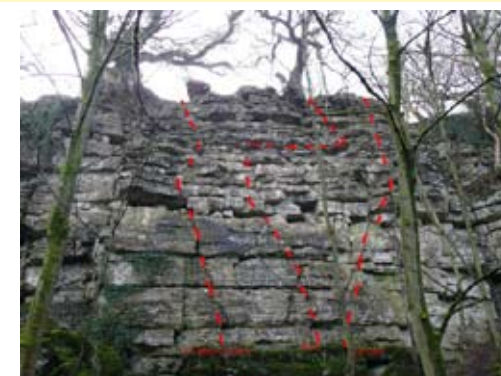
1961

#### 3. Webar 10m S

Start in a small corner about 3m right of *Jonas*. Climb the small corner and bulge, followed by a crack in the overhang on the right. Finish up a grassy gully.

*Andrew Webb, Tony Marr 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1974*

At the end of this wall is a scruffy corner with a small cave at its base; this is *Viper*, VD 1963. If you have climbed everything else the bottom section can be linked to the finish of *Webar*.



#### 4. Primo 16m VD

Start to the right of the cave just around the arête. Climb twin cracks to a ledge followed by a short wall to a cleft. Finish on the right near an oak tree.

1961

#### 5. Womble 16m VS 4c \*

Start 3m right of *Primo* beneath a large overhang. Climb the obvious corner, and then move diagonally right, following a crack over the roof and up the final wall to the top. Good.

*Andrew Webb, Tony Marr, Paul Marr 30/12/1973*

#### 6. Trundle 13m D

Start 3m right of *Womble* at the top of the slope. Climb up just right of a block forming a small corner. Gain the wall above and continue to the ledge. Escape up the wall to the left of a dirty gully.

**More earth than rock, what rock there is, is falling apart, and there's hardly any gear.**

*Tony Marr, April 1974*

#### 7. J.C.B. 15m VD

Start 3m right of *Trundle*. Follow a series of blocks leading leftwards to an obvious ledge. Finish up the crack and chimney above.

**Has entirely disappeared behind the vegetation.**

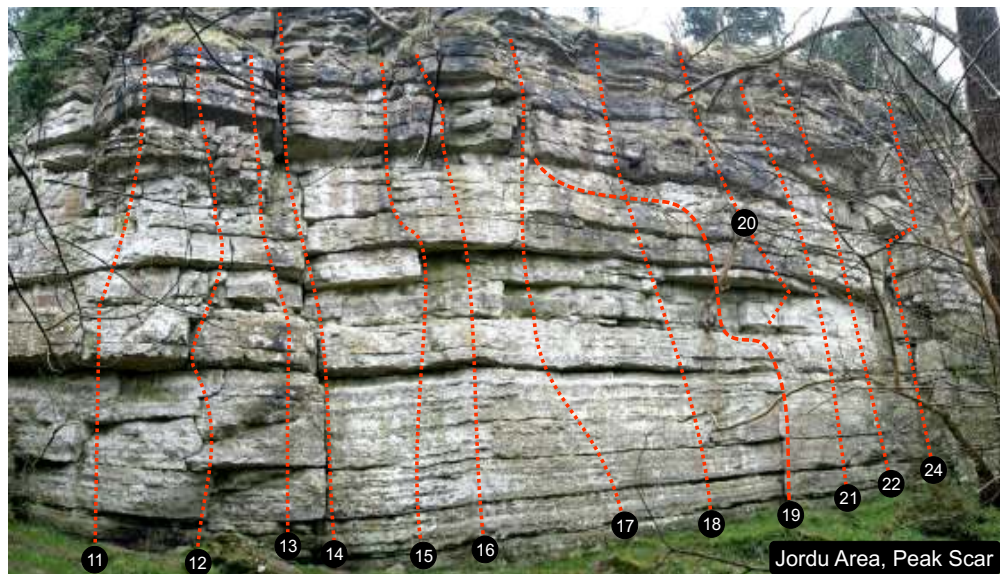
*Ken Jackson, Andrew Webb, Tony Marr 10<sup>th</sup> February 1974*

#### 8. Orinoco 15m S

Start 2m right of *J.C.B.* below a thin hanging crack. Climb the crack to a sentry box on the right. Surmount the block on the left, and then a high step leads to the final chimney.

**Has entirely disappeared behind the vegetation.**

*Ken Jackson, Andrew Webb, Tony Marr 24<sup>th</sup> February 1974*



### East Wall

Just beyond and slightly lower than the last climb is a large flake of rock forming a dummy wall. The next climb starts from the right end of the flake.

#### 9. Twilight 20m MVS 4b \*

Climb the nose of the flake then straight up a short crack to the good ledge at 5m. Follow the thin vertical crack above until forced left into a wider crack, which leads to a vegetated ledge. Escape up a short crack on the left.

*Ken Jackson, Tony Marr 21<sup>st</sup> December 1970. Tony had traversed out from Moanin' to peer behind the veil of ivy covering the climb and saw the possibility of a worthwhile route. He then spent the next few hours vigorously uncovering it. He was so fatigued by his efforts that he handed the lead to Jackson. The pair began the climb at dusk resulting in their finishing in almost total darkness, hence the name.*

#### 10. Moanin' 20m HS 4b \*\*

Shares the start of *Twilight* to the ledge at 5m. Step up using the thin vertical crack then traverse into the corner on the right. Follow the corner over the roof and finish steeply to the left of the tree.

*Terry Sullivan [solo] 1961. Sullivan had hoped to climb several new routes that day but unfortunately his partner had failed to turn up so he was at the crag alone, hence the whinging!*

#### 11. Kant 24m E1 5b

Start 1m right of the dummy wall. Follow the faint crack line over the first roof to the break. Continue directly to a thin crack leading through

the overhangs just right of *Moanin'*. Finish to the left of the tree. Bold and poorly protected.

*Derrick Van Meerbeeck, Stewart Patterson 1965.*

#### 12. Dat Der 22m VS 5a \*\*

Start 3m right of the dummy wall. Climb the thin crack leading through a V notch to the break. (A slightly harder start can be made just to the right, over the roof and directly to the break). Continue up through a groove to an overhung ledge. The crack in the final overhang provides a fitting climax. Sustained but well protected climbing.

*Terry Sullivan 1961. Second did not follow.*

#### 13. Mom's 22m VS 4c

An eliminate line with some suspect rock. Start 2m right of *Dat Der*. Pull over the right end of the overlap then climb the wall to the break. Continue directly up the left side of the steep arête between *Dat Der* and *Jordu*.

*Chris Woodall, A.N. Other 1963.*

#### 14. Jordu 25m S \*\*

The obvious crack line to the right of *Dat Der* is a superb climb and at the top of its grade. The route can be split into three short pitches, each with its own distinct crux.

*Vic Tosh, Terry Sullivan 1961. The classic VD of the crag gets a long overdue and more realistic grading. The climb has seen its fair share of epics and unusual ascent, one of the zaniest being Ken Jackson's... Ken arrived at the crag at dusk, he was alone and had forgotten his rock boots. Undeterred he proceeded to make a solo ascent wearing wellington boots and to light his way he climbed the route gripping a pen torch between his teeth!*

The next climb starts about two metres to the right of *Jordu* below a prominent hold...

#### 15. Fifi 25m HVS 5a \*

Climb the steep wall to the ledge via the good hold. Surmount the overhang at a short corner to a further good ledge. The final roof is climbed via a series of short vertical cracks followed by a scramble rightwards to the belay.

**Variation Finish HVS 5a:** From beneath the final roof, move right about 2m and climb a shallow chimney leading through the impressive prow of rock, to finish in the chimney of *Pianississimo*.

*Chris Woodall, Bob Cornwell 1962 using 2pts of aid. The same team eventually whittled the aid down to climb the route totally free in 1963.*

*Variation Finish: Les Brown, Tony Marr 1966.*

#### 16. Fortissimo 25m HVS 5a

Start 2m right of *Fifi*. Climb directly up the wall to the ledge. Pull around the overhang at its widest point to another ledge. Climb the short chimney (*Fifi Variation Finish*) for two metres then pull left and follow the leaning corner up the side of the impressive prow. Scramble rightwards to the belay.

*Johnny Adams, Les Brown 1966.*

### HEALTH WARNING!

The crack behind the central overhang from *Pianississimo* to *Kestrel* is widening! A risk assessment should be made before embarking on any of the routes in this area. Yours may be the last ascent (or it may be your last ascent!) The following three climbs are best avoided until nature takes its course.

#### 17. Pianississimo 25m VS 4c

Starts about 6 metres right of *Jordu* at a depression in the wall. Climb the left slanting fault to the ledge. Boldly pull around the overhang via the crack, and then continue straight up to the final chimney.

*Geoff Oliver and members of the Northumberland MC January 1961. Oliver reported his ascent and named the route Directissima. However, Maurice Wilson the guidebook editor thought the name had strong Germanic undertones and insisted it be renamed with its musical theme instead.*

#### 18. Akers 26m VS 4c

Starts 2m right of the last climb below a weakness in the mid height overhang. Climb the delicate wall to a ledge, and then follow the thin crack through the overhang on good holds to finish up the wider crack above.

*Ernie Shield, Bob Cornwell 24<sup>th</sup> June 1962.*

#### 19. Ornithology 30m S

Start below a prominent tree growing from a ledge at 5m. Follow the flake crack then move left to the tree. Climb the tree to pass the overhang then trend up diagonally leftwards to finish up the final chimney of *Pianississimo*.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961. Entertaining climbing requiring a few monkey skills! Sadly the tree may be dead having finally succumbed to years of assault by budding Tarzans.*

#### 20. Kestrel 26m HVS 4c

Follow the flake for *Ornithology* to the ledge. Step right and make a strenuous pull over the roof and up a shallow corner to a large ledge. Trend up leftwards for 3m then finish straight up to the top.

*Chris Woodall, Ian Sutherland 1964. A direct finish was added by Rick Graham and Ian Dunn in 1979.*

#### 21. Odds On 26m HVS 5a \*

Start 4m to the left of the big corner of *Pemba Chimney*. Climb straight up the wall to the first large ledge and continue directly over the roof by some strenuous moves to a second large ledge. From the left end of the ledge follow cracks and corners to the top. Exhilarating climbing with some bold moves.

**Variation Finish HS 4b \*** From the right end of the second large ledge, climb the overhang corner directly to the top. Good climbing.

*Chris Woodall, Stewart Patterson, Derrick Van Meerbeeck 1963. Bold climbing, the crux being unprotected in those days.*

*Variation Finish: Tony Marr, Mike Stellings 1963. Climbed a few days after the main ascent.*

**Note:** The variation finish to *Odds On* is the more natural finish for *Vulture* and vice versa, the choice is yours.

#### 22. Vulture 28m HVS 5a

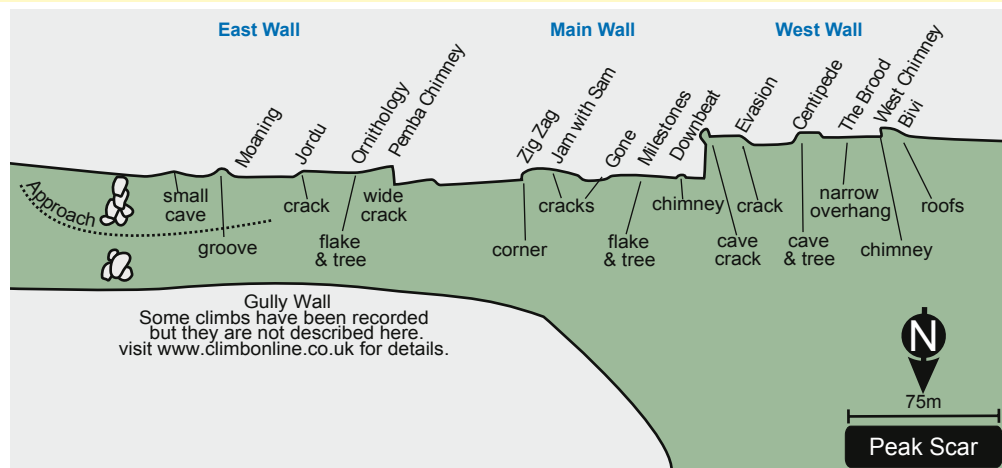
Start 2m left of *Pemba Chimney*. Climb a line of flakes directly up the wall to the large ledge. Pull straight over the overhang to a second large ledge. From the left end of the ledge climb a small corner leading to the large roof. Exit leftwards around the roof and finish up a corner.

*Tony Marr, Mike Tooke 21<sup>st</sup> March 1993.*

#### 23. Odds On Variant 26m HS 4b \*

An interesting eliminate utilising sections of three climbs to produce a worthwhile route. Follow *Vulture* to the first wall good ledge. Bypass the overhang by climbing the crack of *Pemba Chimney* and then stepping left to the second large ledge. Finish up the top corner of *Odds On Variation Finish*.

*1963.*



### 24. Pemba Chimney 27m VD

Follow the chimney in the corner to the first large ledge on the left. Make an awkward move up right through a gap into a wider chimney. Continue more easily up to the right with a corner to finish.

*Maurice Wilson 1961. The route was allegedly named after Wilson's porter in the "big hills".*

### 25. Concorde 27m VD

Starts just to the right of *Pemba Chimney*. Climb the crack to the first ledge at 3m, move around the corner onto the front of Main Wall then climb up to a higher ledge on the left; belay. Make a rising traverse across the wall on the right to finish up a wide crack/gully.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961.*

*A route called Concorde Direct (VS 4c 1965) has been climbed by starting up Concorde then continuing straight up the left side of the arête. The climbing is scrappy with loose rock, and not recommended.*

### Main Wall

This is the name given to the huge expanse of rock around the corner from *Pemba Chimney*. The next climb starts 7m right of the arête at a cracked wall. This is...

### 26. Main Wall Route 27m VS 4c

Climb the short wall to a ledge, continue directly up the concave wall and crack to a shared finish with *Concorde*. Interesting climbing but with some suspect rock.

*Roy Burrows, Peter Goodwin 1963.*

### 27. Weedy Wall 27m HVS 5a

Start 2m right of the last route at a short corner. Ascend the corner then step right. Climb a short crack, then an awkward bulge and continue to a

large grass ledge; belay. Step onto the downward tilted block and finish straight over the roof.

*Tony Marr, Eric Marr March 1964.*

### 28. Birdland Eliminate 29m HVS 5a

Start 4m right of *Weedy Wall* at a hanging crack/fault. Climb the fault to a ledge then follow a ramp leftwards until it is possible to step right and pull up by the tree onto a grass ledge; belay. Traverse easily right for 3m until beneath the final prominent roof. Climb straight up the wall and over the impressive roof to finish by a small tree. A contrived route but with some hard moves and a bold finish.

*Tony Ingram, Rick Graham 6th June 1971.*

**HEALTH WARNING!** The impressive overhanging buttress to the right has several excellent routes including, *Wings*, *B.B.C.* and *Crackers*. Unfortunately the fissure behind the buttress has widened over the last decade so the longevity of these climbs must be in doubt. It is recommended that a risk assessment be carried out before embarking on any of these routes.

The following two climbs are described by the original routes taken. However, many climbers find the routes to be more logical and enjoyable if the starts are swapped over; the choice is yours.

### 29. Wings 33m S \*\*

A climb with "character building" situations for aspirant severe leaders. Start at a rock platform 8m right of *Weedy Wall* and directly below the impressive overhanging buttress. Climb straight up a short wall on good flakes to a ledge. Traverse easily leftwards for about 3m before moving up and back right to a higher ledge. Stroll along this ledge to the right, crossing *Birdland*

and passing beneath the overhanging buttress to a large block; belay. Climb a short wall leading to a large roof which is bypassed by climbing a small chimney on the right to an overhung shelf. [Belay possible] Move out onto a tilted block on the front of the buttress for the final short wall and very exposed finish. Short pitches are recommended to prevent severe rope drag. *Members of the Northumberland MC 1961. This superb climb weaves its way through some very steep rock by a fine piece of route finding, and all at very reasonable standard.*

### 30. Birdland 30m HS 4b

Start just to the right of *Wings* at the rock platform. Climb a short right facing corner followed by a more difficult left facing corner to gain the good ledge on the left; belay. (the *Direct Finish* takes the corner above). Walk along the ledge to the left, then scramble up to another larger ledge. (Belay if required) Climb a left facing corner with an awkward exit then easier ground leads to the final corner/crack by a hawthorn bush.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961. The name is a Charlie "Bird" Parker jazz tune.*

### 31. Birdland Direct 25m MVS 4b \*\*

Follow *Birdland* ordinary route to the large ledge at 12m. Climb the steep corner directly to the top. Good positions and superb climbing.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961.*

### 32. Zig Zag 30m HVS 4c \*

Start 2m right of *Birdland* at a small blunt corner and just below the thin crack of *BBC*. Climb the corner to the overhang, and then hand traverse rightwards along the lip of the overhang for about 2m before pulling up into a niche. Move right to a small corner then go straight up the wall to a broad ledge ([junction with *Jam with Sam*). From the left end of the ledge, climb a short wall to finish straight over the final overhang. Sustained with some strenuous moves.

**Variation Start:** HVS 5a. \*\* Climb straight up the thin crack over two roofs to a ledge and belay. Trend rightwards across short walls to join the normal route at the broad ledge below the final overhang. A fine pitch and well worth seeking out.

*Ernie Shield, Malcolm Farrow Alt. Leads 2nd. July 1962. Variation Start: Stewart Patterson, Paul Tweddle 1963/4. A much sought after line succumbs to this talented team. The route proved to be doubly useful, serving as the start to *BBC* a few years later.*

### 33. BBC 33m E2 5c

Start as for *Zig Zag*. Climb straight up the thin crack over two roofs to a ledge. Move left until beneath a prominent crack in the front face of the overhanging buttress; belay. Climb the crack until forced left and up another thinner crack; further committing moves lead over the roof and to the left arête. Move right, then directly up the centre of the buttress to a superb, airy finish.

*1968. Originally climbed using 4 pegs for aid on the final buttress.*

*F.F.A. John Readhead 24th. September 1978. Second did not follow. Eye-witnesses to the ascent all agreed that it was an awesome performance by the "master", the route being climbed with incredible coolness, on-sight, and at the time with totally inadequate protection.*

### 34. Crackers 33m E1 5b \*\*

Start to the right of *B.B.C.* and 2m to the left of *Jam with Sam*. Climb the wall to a small corner, make a long reach around the bulge then gain the ledge above [junction with *Zig Zag*] and move up to a larger ledge on the left; belay. Trend up leftwards until beneath a large roof with a prominent block. Move past the block and around the corner to the left in a very exposed position. Finish straight up to the front of the buttress. Superb strenuous climbing.

*Stewart Patterson, Derrick Van Meerbeek 1967. Originally climbed with 1pt.aid on the first pitch. A super effort by this team who were responsible for several other fine routes around this time.*

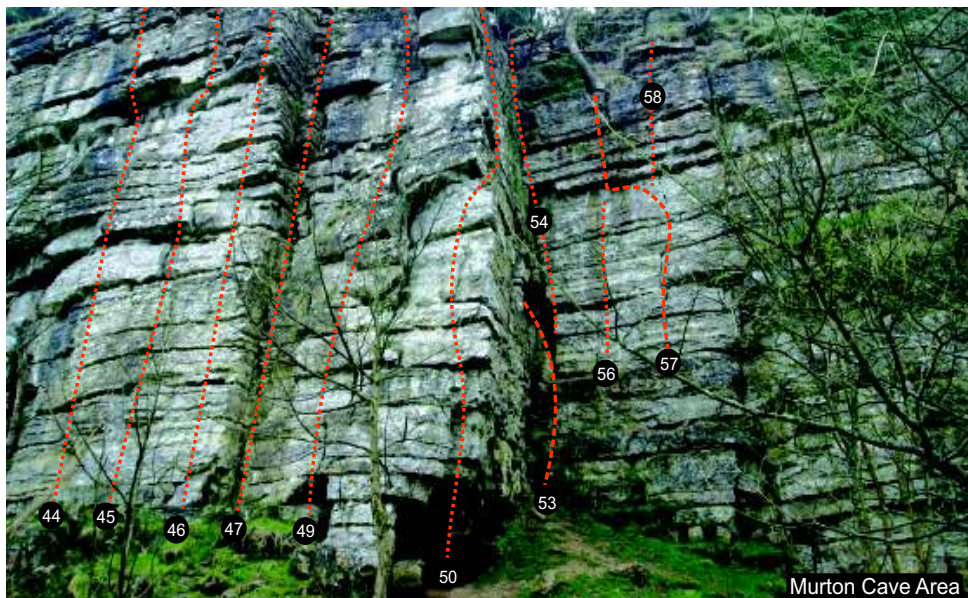
*F.F.A Tony Marr, John Chadwick 9th. May 1978. The coveted free ascent was high on Rick Graham's "must do" list; unfortunately it was also high on Tony Marr's. Coincidentally both parties arrived at the crag within minutes of each other on a spring evening. Rick made the first move and decided to climb Odds On as a warm up route. Tony being older and wiser (read more cunning) waited for such an opportunity and went straight to Crackers. By the time Rick realised Tony's real intentions it was too late, the climb was nearly over.*

Cleaving the face to the right is the soaring crack line of *Jam with Sam*; this is also the highest point of the crag.

### 35. Jam with Sam 30m VS 4b \*

Scramble to the large ledge beneath the impressive crack line. Follow the crack to a good ledge below the final steep corner. Belay. The final corner is fortunately not as hard as it looks. Good climbing but some blocks are not above suspicion!

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh March 1961. The first difficult route to be climbed at the crag.*



Murton Cave Area

**36. Perdido 30m VS 4c**

Starts just right of *Jam with Sam*. Climb the awkward corner just left of a small overhang for 6m to a good ledge on the right. Continue steeply up the wall and slightly left of some protruding rocks to a broad grassy ledge. Climb the wall above to the top.

**Variation Finish: VS 5a.** Trend leftwards from the good ledge at half height to finish at the same point as Dido.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961. Variation Finish: Climbed by members of the York M.C 1972.*

**37. Dido 30m HVS 5a**

Start as for *Perdido*. Climb the corner for 5m then go left to a short smooth wall. Climb a thin crack, pull over a small roof then follow a shallow depression running up the wall. Cross the break and finish via the crack in the final headwall. A strenuous pitch.

*Tony Marr, Paul Marr 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1976.*

**38. Headache Crack 30m VS 4c**

Takes the prominent curving crack 3m right of *Perdido*. Climb the crack to a good ledge. Continue straight over the jammed blocks and up to a broad grassy ledge. Finish up the small overhanging prow.

*Chris Woodall, Bob Cornwell 1962. Bob was still suffering the effects of over indulgence in the Hawnby Hotel the previous night, hence the name.*

A climb has been made over the projecting nose of rock just to the right of *Headache Crack*

*(Pardon, VS 4b Rick Graham, Neil Wilkinson 12<sup>th</sup> May 1972).* The sound of mind will only look and read on.

**HEALTH WARNING! There was a rock fall in the vicinity of *Gone* in 2002. Take care.**

**39. Gone 30m HS 4b \***

Start at the foot of the corner/groove behind the elm trees. Climb the crack/groove to a ledge, pull through the notch in the overhang and follow the corner to the top.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961. A block came away in Sullivan's hands and just kept go...ing, go...ing...Gone! The climb was originally much harder with the entry into the main groove being barred by a large strenuous overhang. During an early repeat, the leader Ian Sutherland, removed a small block from the roof, unfortunately this appears to have been the "key stone" as seconds later the overhang collapsed, striking him on the head and covering him in dry earth. Fortunately his injuries were minor and after a few choice expletives and a dust down, he proceeded to complete the climb via its new slim line overhang.*

The steep expanse of rock to the right of *Gone* is crossed by some of the best routes on the crag.

**40. Male Menopause 30m HVS 5a**

Ascend the wall just right of *Gone* to the ledge. Climb a crack in the roof immediately right of the groove of *Gone*, and then follow the steep arête directly to the top. Strenuous and with some suspect rock.

*Members of the York MC 1972.*

**41. Milestones Super Direct 30m HVS 5a \***  
Start 3m to the right of *Gone*. Climb the first wall up to the ledge, surmount the large roof where cracks form a V shape then continue directly up the impending wall to the top. One of the crag's more strenuous pitches.

*Derrick Van Meerbeeck, Stewart Patterson, Mike Hosted 1972. A fine addition, the team managing to combine the first free ascent of the "Direct" with a true "super direct" finish straight up the headwall. An earlier and slightly easier variation "Milestones Direct" HVS 4c, can be made by following Milestones Super Direct until just above the large roof, then trending right to finish up the final crack of Milestones. Chris Woodall, R. Thompson. 1962. 1pt. of aid was used on the overhang during the first ascent.*

**42. Milestones 30m HVS 4c \***

Start 5m right of *Gone* at the foot of a large flake sprouting a tree. Climb the flake, then continue up the groove through the impressive overhang; easier climbing follows to the sanctuary of a narrow ledge "The Sentry Box" (Belay available). Traverse back left to a large jammed block [one of the remaining Milestones], pull over the roof and up into a wide crack. Follow the crack to exit on the right. Sustained with some strenuous moves.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961. 1pt. of aid, the remains of which (wood wedge) are still in place. F.F.A. Chris Woodall, Bob Cornwell 1964.*

**43. Trad 30m HVS 5a \***

Begin just right of the flake of *Milestones*. Climb a series of shallow corners to a magnificent thread runner just beneath a step in the overhang; pull over the roof then straight up the wall to a narrow ledge "The Sentry Box". (Belay available) Leave the ledge at a small corner in the roof and pull onto the wall above, and then exit by a short crack to the left. Sustained.

*Trad Original Route: Chris Woodall, Bob Cornwell 1962.*

*Direct Start: Paul Ingham, Tony Marr, Ken Jackson 24<sup>th</sup> September 1978.*

*The climb described incorporates the best parts of Trad Original Route with its later Direct Start to create a more logical and independent route. Trad Original Route starts immediately left of *Frenesi*, climbing the wall for a few metres before trending leftwards to join the Direct Start at the step in the overhang.*

**44. Shades of Grey 30m VS 4c \***

Start 2m to the right of *Trad*. Pull over a small bulge then climb the most direct line possible to the top of the crag. Sustained at its grade with good positions.

*Alan Taylor, Ken Jackson alt. leads, Tony Marr. 14<sup>th</sup> May 1978. On the first ascent the pitch was split by taking a belay in the Sentry Box, purely to*

*satisfy the hilarious squabbling between Taylor and Jackson, who both wanted to lead.*

**45. Frenesi 30m VS 4c \*\*\***

Starts from the right end of the flat block. Surmount the bulge and follow a series of flakes to an overhanging ledge. Pull over the overhang at the thin crack, and then trend up leftwards to a narrow ledge "The Sentry Box". [Belay available]. From the right end of the ledge follow a thin crack over the awkward roof, then move right to escape up the wide crack. A superb climb and high in its grade.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961. The climb was originally very bold with the main protection being two pegs. The introduction of small nuts a few years later made the climb a much safer and enjoyable proposition. Possibly the best of over thirty routes climbed by this team.*

**46. Close to the Edge 30m HVS 5a**

The route starts 2m right of *Frenesi*. As the name suggests, climb directly up the wall forming the left side of the steep arête. Sustained climbing throughout.

*John Redhead, Chris Shorter 1976. Old diaries unearthed in 2001 allowed this first ascent to be correctly attributed. The route was previously recorded as Fringe Benefits and claimed by Kelvin Neal and Alan Moss in 1982.*

**47. Downbeat 22m VD \***

Follow the obvious corner/crack throughout. Interesting climbing and a popular introduction to the crag.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961.*

**48. Upstart 22m S**

Start at the right side of the recess shared with *Downbeat*. Climb the wall followed by the corner crack to a ledge. Move left and climb a prominent nose, then finish direct.

*Kevin Gallagher, Roger Stapleton, Paul Tweddle July 1994.*

**49. Walkin' 22m S**

Start 2m to the right of *Downbeat*. Climb the zigzag crack to a ledge; continue up the corner formed by the protruding rocks to a good ledge. Pull over a short wall to finish up the corner just left of the large overhang.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961. For those who may be wondering, Walkin' is once again jazz slang.*

**50. The Edge 24m HVS 4c**

This entertaining route starts from the alcove just around the corner from *Walkin'*. Climb gracefully (thru!) up the crack in the roof of the alcove to a ledge. Follow a short flake crack to the horizontal break then swing right around the

arête and up the wall to a grass ledge. Continue up the edge, cross an ivy-covered wall then move left onto the projecting nose for an airy finish.

#### Direct Finish E2 5c

Follow the normal route until it is possible to move left onto a good ledge below the final prominent nose of rock; belay. Climb boldly to and over the centre of the large nose to a spectacular finish.

*Ken Jackson, Mike Railton 1965*

*Direct Finish: John Redhead 24<sup>th</sup> September 1978.*

*Second did not follow. John was making the most of his flying visit having already made the first free ascent of BBC earlier in the day.*

#### 51. Frustration 22m VS 4c

Starts just right of *The Edge*. Climb the shattered overhanging crack over the bulge, and then follow disjointed cracks straight up the wall to a small ledge. Trend slightly left and climb the final wall (more ivy!). Note: An easier start can be made up the wall to the right of the crack before moving back left to join the normal route.

*Tony Marr, Ernie Shield May 1964. The pair had spent an entertaining morning at Whitestone Cliff where they had made the first ascent of the aptly named Throwback (pull on a hold then toss it over your shoulder). They thought the rock of Frustration to be of excellent quality in comparison!*

#### 52. Solitude 22m S \*

The meandering wide crack line just to the right of *Frustration* provides an enjoyable climb.

*Terry Sullivan (solo) 1961. Climbed on the same day as Moanin'. Sullivan's partner had failed to turn up so he was at the crag alone and not best pleased, hence the Moanin' and Solitude. The wall was originally shrouded in a curtain of dense ivy making the climb much harder than it is today. On the second ascent the leader Ian Sutherland, discovered the vegetation so difficult to negotiate that he found it necessary to use several points of aid to the clear the way before upward progress was possible. Of interest, during these cleaning activities he unearthed what appeared to be a bear trap wedged in a crack. Don't leave your honey sandwiches unattended just in case!*

#### 53. Murton Cave 17m D

This amusing climb also provides a useful means of descent. Start in the corner to the right of *Solitude*. Easy climbing leads into the mouth of the cave. Continue up the right wall of the cave to exit through a chimney.

1961.

**Caution:** The descent through Murton Cave is increasingly threatened by the erosion of the mud supporting the chockstones at the top. It is best avoided especially in wet /greasy conditions when the cave can be dangerously slippery.

#### 54. Cobweb 17m VD

Entertaining climbing up the outside of the cave. Follow *Murton Cave* route to the good ledge just right of the cave entrance. Climb the crack in the right wall; this leads into the main corner, which is followed to the top.

1961.

#### West Wall

The continuation of the crag to the right of *Murton Cave* is known as West Wall. Further good climbs have been made here but sadly many are loose and overgrown, therefore only the better routes are described in detail. The next four routes usually begin by climbing *Murton Cave* route for four metres to the good ledge on the right. Alternatively the scruffy lower wall can be ascended at various places to reach the same ledge.

#### 55. Mother Bear 18m HVS 5b

Start just to the right of *Cobweb*. Delicate climbing leads straight up the steep wall to a step in the overhang. Pull around the roof and continue directly up the wall to the top.

*Kelvin Neal, Alan Moss 1981.*

#### 56. Cosmonaut Direct 18m HVS 5a \*

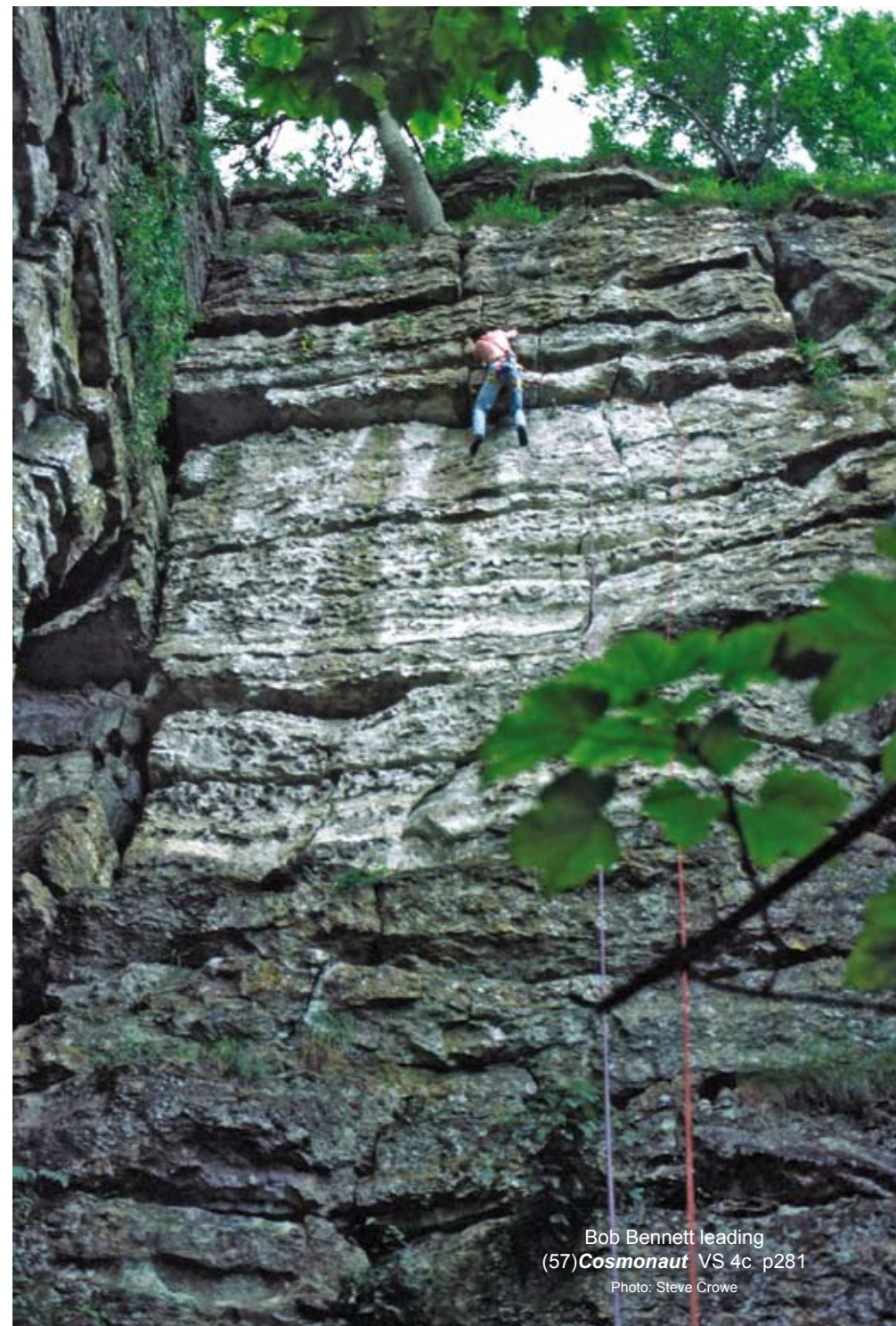
Start just left of a curving flake crack and directly below the tree. Climb a short vertical crack, continue over a small roof then follow a dark streak straight up the wall to the overhang. Step right then pull over the overhang to finish up the crack.

*Ken Jackson, Tony Marr 28<sup>th</sup> June 1964.*

#### 57. Cosmonaut 20m VS 4c \*

Start 2m right of *Cosmonaut Direct*. Climb a short crack onto the shelf then follow a series of thin cracks up the wall to the overhang. Traverse left until a crack leads over the roof and up to the tree. Sustained.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 12th April 1961. One of the boldest early routes, the only protection being a poor peg runner in the first wall, and a threaded sling below the final crack. The climb was named in tribute to the first man in space, Yuri Gagarin, who was orbiting the Earth on that very day. Ken Jackson remembers witnessing a spectacular incident involving the peg... "The leader, Mike Harvey had clipped into the peg and then used it to inspect the route ahead. The peg suddenly pulled out sending him spinning down the wall with the rope winding around his body. Harvey narrowly missed his horrified second as he flew past the ledge, then the tangled rope tightened and acted like a Yo-Yo, spinning him in the opposite direction and slowing his fall enough to deposit him gently in the mud, a little dizzy but miraculously unhurt."*



Bob Bennett leading  
(57) *Cosmonaut* VS 4c. p281

Photo: Steve Crowe

**58. Cosmonaut Variant 23m VS 5a**

Follow *Cosmonaut* to the overhang; but instead of traversing left climb directly over the roof and up steep rock to an overhung ledge. Move up right past a tree to finish up the small corner.

*Tony Marr, Peter Shawcross, Mike Tooke 24th Jan 1993.*

**59. Evasion 25m S**

Start from the top of the mud slope at the foot of the crack/corner. Climb directly up the crack line through a sentry box. Finish by a grassy scramble to the right.

**Variation Start: VS 4b.** Begin 4m to the right of the normal start at a crack in the bulging wall. Follow the crack directly to the grass ledge. Belay. Finish up the normal route.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961.*

*Variation Start: Ernie Shield, Bob Cornwell 3rd Sept 1962.*

About 9m to the right of *Evasion* and just left of a large tree is a shallow cave, which is the start of *Centipede*. (Severe, Ernie Shield, Bob Cornwell 8th September 1962) which follows the obvious crack line with a short detour left at half height to avoid some poised blocks. Although the climbing is actually very good, worth half a star, the top out is up 40 feet of vertical vegetation. The crack line can actually be followed throughout, taking the small overhang above the blocks, this is a lot harder (VS 4c/5a).

To the right is *Marsupial* (VS 4b. Ken Jackson, Tony Marr, Andrew Webb 24th February 1974); this climbs the large tree to bypass the overhang, it then rejoins the rock before trending first to the left then back diagonally right to finish up a crack.

**60. The Brood 22m E2 5b**

This climb takes a similar line to that of *Marsupial* but is made without the assistance of the tree. Start 2m right of the large tree, beneath the overhang. Climb the stepped wall, pull over the roof and move up the wall to a flake on the left. Continue directly up the wall between the trees to finish via a crack.

*Steve Brown, Dave Paul 1982.*

**61. Char Paray 20m E1 5b**

Start where a thin crack splits the large roof, 3m right of *The Brood*. Climb to the overhang and then follow the crack over the roof by some powerful moves and long reaches. Finish directly up the wall.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961. The route was originally called Inflation and used 2 pegs and a sling for aid. F.F.A Derrick Van Meerbeek, Stewart*

*Patterson, mid 1970s. An impressive and difficult ascent made without pre-inspection or cleaning.*

To the right the rocks reach their lowest point; this is also the start of *Deflation HS* (Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961). Start below and to the left of the narrow chimney. Climb to a ledge at 5m, traverse 5m right to the chimney and follow this to the top, with a brief diversion onto the right wall to avoid the grassy chockstone/tree.

To the right of *Deflation* lies a steep buttress with one climb, *Broken Wall HVS 5a*. (Stewart Patterson, Derrick Van Meerbeek 1964). Start from the lowest point and climb straight up the buttress 2m right of *Deflation* to a prominent grass ledge and belay. (Note: the bulge just beneath the ledge is bold and poorly protected) Finish over the overhang on the left.

Around the corner to the right is the cave of *West Chimney VD* (Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961). Scramble up to the mouth of the cave. Climb the wide crack in the left wall to a grass ledge and rejoin the chimney proper to finish.

**62. Bivi 23m E3 5c**

To the right of *West Chimney* is a massive overhang. Start from the ledge beneath the right side of the overhang. Climb the undercut crack/groove until stopped by the ceiling, pull left and up a thin crack, which is followed by further hard moves around the lip of the roof to a ledge and belay. Finish up the steep bulging wall on the right to the top.

*Chris Woodall, Stewart Patterson 1962, using two pegs for aid. The climb originally finished up West Chimney. On the first ascent, Stewart made good use of the bivouac facility by remaining in the comfort of his sleeping bag while belaying his leader, and with the added luxury of a constant "hot brew" close at hand.*

*Direct Finish: as described, added by Roy Burrows, Peter Goodwin, and Derrick Van Meerbeek 1962. F.F.A. Attributed to Kelvin Neal, Alan Moss 1982. The aid was reduced to one peg in 1970 by a team from the York MC, but the totally free ascent had to wait for Kelvin Neal to make full use of his enormous reach. The climb owes its name to the shelter it provided as a bivouac. During 1961/2 the crag was being visited most weekends by a keen group of climbers from Teesside. The group had an average age of about 16 years and they were either too young to drive or unable to afford their own transport, they therefore used to travel by bus. Leaving Teesside after work or school on Friday evenings, they would bus to Laskill Bank, and then walk the four miles to the crag. They stayed all weekend, sleeping in a cramped tin hut below the crag during the winter months but migrated to the spacious ledges under Bivi for the summer.*

**63. Astronaut 23m HVS 5a \***

Start just right of *Bivi*. Pull up a short awkward corner to gain the obvious overhanging corner crack. Climb the crack and the final chimney to the top. Awkward and strenuous.

*Chris Woodall, Bob Cornwell 1962. An excellent route that was a popular test piece for aspirant "hard men" in the 1960s.*

**64. Gemini 23m HVS 5a**

Surmount the overlap 2m right of *Astronaut* then move up rightwards into a corner. Climb a short hanging crack on the left and then pull up into the final chimney of *Astronaut* to finish.

*Tony Marr, Ken Jackson 14th May 1978.*

*West Wall Route* (MVS 4b Tony Marr, Ken Jackson September 1972) climbs an overlap and small slab 4m right of *Astronaut*. *Dis Here* (VS 4c Tony Marr, Eric Marr 1965) climbs the large (now ivy covered) flake 7m right of *Astronaut*. A few neglected routes have been climbed further to the right, (*Davy Jones's Locker* 1961 Mod; *Palmsun Chimney* 1961 Diff; and *Palmsun Wall* 1961 VD). Fortunately the undergrowth has finally engulfed these climbs, which do not warrant further attention.

**65. Mulligan Mania 133m HS 4b \*\***

Start as for *Twilight* at the foot of the dummy wall.

1. 20m 3c Climb the dummy wall to the ledge at 5m. Traverse easily right to reach *Jordu*.
2. 30m 4b Continue to the tree on Ornithology. Traverse easily into *Pemba Chimney*.
3. 17m 3b Cross the chimney and move around on to the front of the Main Wall to follow *Concorde* diagonally right to a grass ledge.
4. 23m 3a Walk along the ledge and finally descend to the narrow horizontal ledge shared by *Birdland* and *Wings*.
5. 15m 3a Traverse right below the huge canopy, and then climb up to the large platform in the corner of *Jam with Sam*

*The next three pitches are shared with the High Level Traverse.*

6. 10m 4a Move onto the exposed front face of the crag then across a good ledge leading to the corner of *Gone*.
7. 13m 4b Descend *Gone* for about 2m then traverse right beneath some jammed blocks to a narrow ledge (The Sentry Box).
8. 15m 4b Continue at the same level, across *Downbeat* and finish up the final corner of *Walkin'*.

*Terry Sullivan, Vic Tosh 1961. The route is popular as a wet weather "expedition" with much of the climbing remaining reasonably dry and sheltered.*

**66. High Level Traverse 251m VS 4c**

Interestingly climbing with good positions. The route originally started at the same place as *Mulligan Mania* and escaped at *Evasion* but since then the climb has been extended at both ends. The additional start begins about 5m from the extreme left end of the crag and adjacent to an ivy-shrouded corner.

1. 23m 4a Begin at the corner and cross the wall to a muddy ledge in a corner.
2. 20m 3c Traverse onto the front wall to gain the obvious ledge, which crosses *Sidewinder* and *Jonas*. Follow this to the next corner.
3. 12m 4a Continue at the same height across an awkward wall to join *Primo* at the cleft. Climb diagonally right to gain the nose of the overhanging prow. Traverse the prow and step down to join *Womble*.
4. 18m 4a Walk along the ledge leading to the sentry box on *Orinoco* and continue to join *Moanin'* just below the roof.
5. 12m 4b Traverse around the nose into *Jordu*.
6. 20m 4a Traverse rightwards at a constant level to a large ledge in a corner (*Odds On*).
7. 33m 4a Descend slightly to avoid a corner. Step up and cross a grass ledge to another corner. Traverse downwards to a grass ledge and continue at the same level to a large corner (*Birdland Direct*).
8. 13m 4c Traverse round the exposed nose and make a difficult move into an overhung shelf (junction with *Wings*). Continue rightwards to the large platform in to the corner of *Jam with Sam*. *The next three pitches are shared with Mulligan Mania*.
9. 10m 4a Move on to the exposed front of the crag and traverse to the corner of *Gone*.
10. 13m 4b Descend *Gone* for about 2m then traverse right beneath some jammed blocks to a narrow overhung ledge (The Sentry Box).
11. 27m 4b Traverse right at the same level for 15m to *The Edge*. Step up and traverse the wall to a small cave opening (*Murton Cave*).
12. 10m 4c Traverse the steep wall just above a small roof to a sentry box (*Evasion*).
13. 20m 4c Step down and cross ledges into *Centipede*. Continue at the same level to belay on the grass ledge on the corner (junction with *Deflation* and *West Chimney*).
14. 20m 4c Cross *West Chimney* and follow ledges rightwards above the roof of *Bivi*. Continue around the corner to finish up the awkward chimney of *Astronaut*.

*Pitches 1 to 4. Tony Marr, Paul Marr, Ken Jackson, Andrew Webb 6th January 1974. Pitches 4 to 12. Original High Level Traverse. Members of the York MC 1968. Pitches 13 and 14. Tony Marr, Rick Graham 5th September 1971.*

Note from Simon Caldwell 03 September 2008

High Level Traverse.

Pitch 1 always seems to be wet and muddy and we've not tried it yet.

Pitches 2-3 are just about climbable, but there's more vegetation than rock. Pitches 5-7 are excellent, as is:

Pitch 8 variation, 4c: Climb up for about a metre before traversing round the nose, and make a tricky pull up onto a large overhung ledge.

From the right end of this make a committing step over the void onto the bottom of a hanging flake/arete, and pull up onto this. Traverse right, ending by reversing the final traverse of Wings, and step down round the corner onto the large ledge just below the top of Wings.

Belay. Downclimb Wings for about 3 or 4m to pick up the normal pitch, continuing rightwards to the large platform in the corner of Jam with Sam. We haven't done the rest yet but pitches 13 and 14 looked from nearby routes to be unclimbably vegetated.

### Graded List

#### E3

Bivi 5c

#### E2

BBC 5c

The Edge Direct Finish 5c

The Brood 5c

#### E1

Char Paray 5b

Kant 5b

Crackers 5b \*\*

#### HVS

Mother Bear 5b

Astronaut 5a \*

Close to the Edge 5a

Milestone Super Direct 5a \*

Trad 5a \*

Male Menopause 5a

Fortissimo 5a

Birdland Eliminate 5a

Fifi Var. Finish 5a

Fifi 5a \*

Vulture 5a

Odds On 5a \*

Cosmonaut Direct 5a \*

Gemini 5a

Weedy Wall 5a

Dido 5a

Zig Zag Var. Start 5a \*\*

The Edge 4c

Milestone Direct 4c

Milestones 4c \*

Zig Zag 4c \*

Kestrel 4c

#### VS

Cosmonaut Variant 5a

Perdido Variation 5a

Frenesi 4c \*\*\*

Dat Der 4c \*\*

Pianississimo 4c

Cosmonaut 4c \*

Mom's 4c

High Level Traverse 4c

Main Wall Route 4c

Frustration 4c

Headache Crack 4c

Shades of Grey 4c \*

Perdido 4c

Jam with Sam 4b \*

Evasion Var. Start 4b

Womble 4b  
Twilight 4b \*  
Birdland Direct  
4b \*\*

#### HS

Odds on Variant  
4b \*

Odds on Var.

Finish 4b \*

Mulligan Mania 4b

Gone 4b \*

Moanin' 4b \*\*

Birdland 4b

#### S

Jordu \*\*

Walkin

Ornithology

Solitude \*

Wings \*\*

Upstart

Webar

Evasion

Orinoco

#### VD

Jonas

Sidewinder \*

Downbeat \*

Primo

Pemba Chimney

Concorde

Cobweb

J.C.B

#### D

Trundle

Murton Cave



About VD

Ascend the obvious line of (relatively) unvegetated rock on the other side of the ravine from all the other routes, opposite the 'dummy wall' of Moanin' and Twilight. Start beneath a small overhang, to the right of the dirty corner. Pull over this, and follow the steep wall of blocks above. From the small cave/niche near the top, pull up right to an earthy ledge, and finish up the easier nose above.