



*New Tredegar
climbs*

Martin Crocker

New Tredegar climbs

Published privately and available solely on the website www.martincrockerclimbing.com

©Martin Crocker, 2021

Free Guidebook

It's a pleasure to be in a position to make this guidebook available without my pocketing any of your cash. All I ask is that you make a donation to one of the regional Mountain Rescue Teams (MRTs). They are all volunteers and on call 24/7. You might need them one day (but hopefully not). The choice of which MRT(s) you support is up to you; here's how to do it:



Brecon Mountain Rescue Team

Donations for Brecon Mountain Rescue Team can be made online through localgiving; i.e.: <https://localgiving.org/brecon-mountain-rescue-team>



Longtown Mountain Rescue Team

Donations for Longtown Mountain Rescue Team can be made online through JustGiving i.e.: <https://www.justgiving.com/longtownmrt>

Or: <https://www.facebook.com/fund/longtownmrt/>



Central Beacons Mountain Rescue Team

Donations for Central Brecon Mountain Rescue Team can be made online through JustGiving i.e.: <https://www.justgiving.com/centralbeaconsmrt>



Western Beacons Mountain Rescue Team

Donations for Western Brecon Mountain Rescue Team can be made online through JustGiving i.e.: <https://www.justgiving.com/westernbeacons>

Print at Will

This mini-guidebook have been designed to be printed in A5 format on both sides of A4 paper. Good luck with that. And enjoy.

Copyright

A significant voluntary effort has gone into preparing this topo and making it freely available for personal climbing use. The publication of its contents either as hard copy or via the internet without the author's consent is prohibited. However, I appreciate that much information is shared on the internet these days, and I have no objection to basic details being referenced in any not-for-personal-profit (non-commercial) website. If in any doubt, just ask me.

Grading

E grades coupled with UK technical grades are used for the leads and solos. V grades (in combination with UK tech grades) are used for the bouldering, but please feel free to convert to Font grades. No attempt has been made to V-grade anything less than 4c.

Rescue

In the unfortunate event of an accident requiring assistance ring **999** or 112, ask for **Police**, and then state you need **Mountain Rescue**.

Access


The crags are located on Access Land. Further information may be available on the BMC's Regional Access Database (www.thebmc.co.uk/rad). For access issues please contact the BMC's Wales Access and Conservation Officer or local volunteer access representative (www.thebmc.co.uk).

Guidebook Disclaimer

You climb entirely at your own risk in line with the BMC Participation Statement (see below); this guidebook has been published strictly on that basis. The author and any other party connected with this guidebook cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions or be held liable for any personal or third party injuries or damage, however caused. The inclusion of climbs in this guidebook does not assume any right of access to them; please refer any access queries to the BMC.

BMC Participation Statement

Climbing, hillwalking, and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept those risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

		CRAG CODE www.thebmc.co.uk
Access	Check the Regional Access Database [RAD] on www.thebmc.co.uk for the latest access information	
Parking	Park carefully – avoid gateways and driveways	
Footpaths	Keep to established paths – leave gates as you find them	
Risk	Climbing can be dangerous – accept the risks and be aware of other people around you	
Respect	Groups and individuals – respect the rock, local climbing ethics and other people	
Wildlife	Do not disturb livestock, wildlife or cliff vegetation; respect seasonal bird nesting restrictions	
Dogs	Keep dogs under control at all times; don't let your dog chase sheep or disturb wildlife	
Litter	'Leave no trace' – take all litter home with you	
Toilets	Don't make a mess – bury your waste	
Economy	Do everything you can to support the rural economy – shop locally	
BMC Participation Statement — Climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.		

Caution: fixed gear

Fixed gear is virtually non-existent on the crags; the few pegs that are in place here need to be treated with the utmost caution and backed up.

New Tredegar Quarries and Outcrops

Introduction

This isn't a full guidebook. It's primarily a means of making available assumed-first-ascent descriptions of the climbs, solos, and boulder problems on the New Tredegar quarries and outcrops. Nonetheless – even with topos prepared 12 years after the action – the notes should be useable on the crag. The routes and problems date from between 2008 and 2013, some achieved in the company of John Harwood. We had planned to return to the quarries to finish-up, but it never happened and – given our combined age of around 198 – it's highly unlikely to happen now. Some of the routes, but more particularly the problems, may have been climbed before; details can be amended to suit.

Ethic

We've climbed all the routes bolt-free, including in the quarries. That's the way we had intended to continue. It would be sweet if others could follow through in this style; but – in any event – please do not bolt existing routes. The outcrops are unquarried 'natural' sandstone and no place for bolts.

Approach

Find your way to New Tredegar and turn right (if coming from the south) off the A4069 and then turn first left into Tredegar Road. Follow the road uphill to some decent parking on the left just as the houses end and before the road (now Powell's Terrace) descends. On foot now, leave the road and take the footpath straight ahead, which contours across the hillside beneath the quarries and outcrops all the way to the quarry of Abertysswg (sport routes, if your trad' mind does a runner).

POISON IVY TOWER

At the far northern end of the crag-line (and next to the right-hand end of the vast Abertysswg quarry) is a square buttress: as fine a sandstone outcrop you get in these parts (provided it has availed itself of its ivy, if only with helping hands).

1 **Ivy Stepper** 9m E3 6a (12.4.2009)

Curiously entangled with fertile ivy which often gets the upper hand (as it had done once again, in 2013). Using small finger-holds step from a niche in the centre of the face onto the little ivy-root shelf on the left – bold. Take a vague crack (good wire) past an ivy-filled hole to the top.
FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood

2 ***Poison Ivy** 9m E4 5c (12.4.2009)

A blank-looking face is riddled with finger-edges: wonderful! Climb up just right of the niche and make sustained pump moves (peg) up the leaning wall to good breaks and the top.
FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood

3 ****Lick it, Grip it, Stick it** 9m E4/5 6a (3.10.2009)

Superb: the blunt arête is as good as many classic grit arêtes. There is gear above half-height but the crux is to get there and the ground is very sloping. Pull onto a ledge and using small crimps make a long thin move up the arête to reach a short flake. Continue straight up to an easy finish.
FA Martin Crocker (solo, after top-roping)

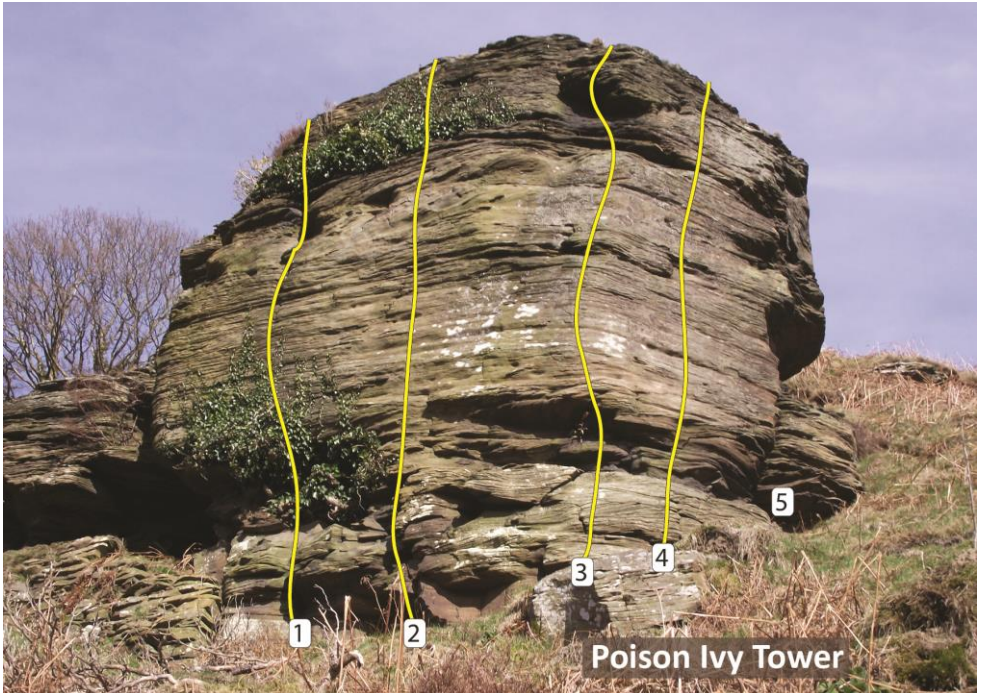
4 **Rexploitation** 8m E3/4 5c (3.10.2009)

Climb straight up the middle of the face between the arête and the wide crack further right. Again, the crux is to reach a small flake at half-height (wire possible). Exit direct.
FA Martin Crocker (solo, after top-roping)

5 ***Second-hand Stonehenge** 7m HVS 4c (3.10.2009)

Climb the wide crack to its close, inject the crag with gear; then step left to a steep finish.

FA Martin Crocker (solo, after top-roping)



Sixty metres right of Poison Ivy Tower, and at a slightly higher level, is a series of outcrops culminating in a relatively tall slab.

Towards the left, and right of a large tree, is a 5-metre high wall with the following trivia:

6 4b The left arête; avoiding a loose block that could otherwise block the Rhydney River.

7 4c The wall, centre-left; exiting left under the destroyer-block.

8 V0 (5a) The wall, centre-right, topping out using a rock sunk in the ground.

There follows a more substantial crag, with a veg-infested groove two-thirds along. There are two wide cracks low down left of the groove.

9 **Avoid Cracks** 7m VS 4c (3.10.2009)

Climb the wall right of the left crack and bear slightly left above overhangs to exit into a niche.

FA Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

10 **A Bit of Rib** 9m VS 4c (3.10.2009)

Quite good. Climb the steep wall left of the right crack, and continue on large holds, stepping right to finish up a broad rib.

FA Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

11 Rhymney Judy 7m HS 4a (3.10.2009)

The wall right of the veg-groove.

FA Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

After a small tower (4a) comes 'the relatively tall slab'.

12 Relatively Tall 10m E1 5a (3.10.2009)

But not short on interest. Climb the left edge of the slab into a wide break (large cam possible).

Finish up the sharp arête – exposed.

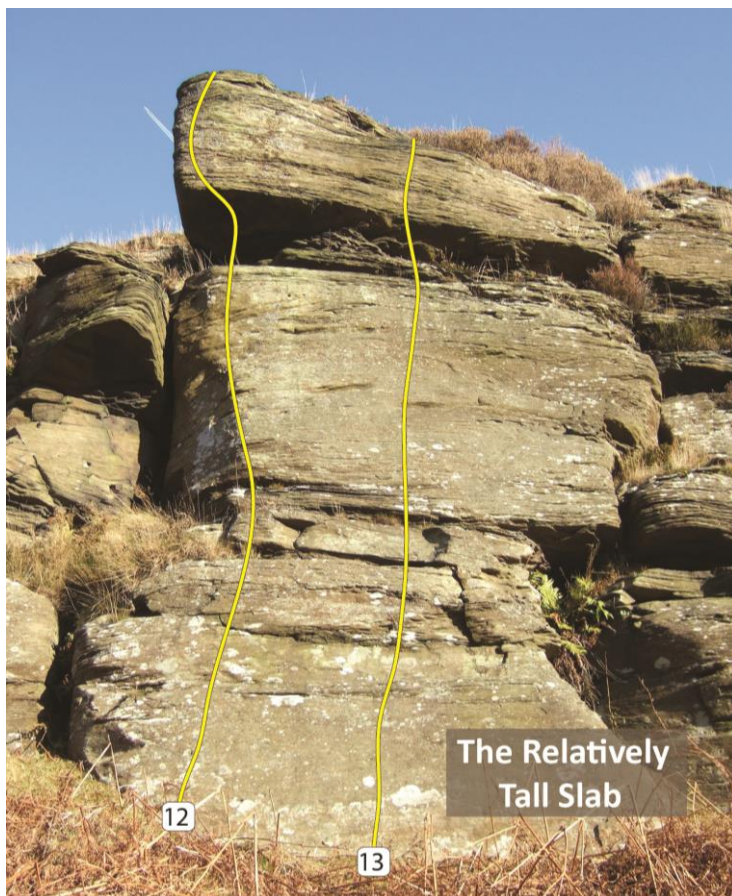
FA Martin Crocker (solo, after top-roping)

13 *Relatively Short 9.5m E4 6a (3.10.2009)

An engaging solo. Start easily, and then make a surprisingly thin and bold sequence up the centre of the slab to the wide break. Finish up the short wall.

FA Martin Crocker (solo, after top-roping)

One hundred metres to the right is the North Wall of the high-level 'bouldering tier'.



CENTRAL QUARRY

The left-hand end of the quarry comprises unstable dross. Approx. 60 metres left of the large tree in the centre of the quarry is a broken right-facing corner; the buttress to its left boasts a fine arête. The next two routes reach the large ledge above the arête: there are only poor belays here, best to pre-fix a rope on good belays 10 metres back from the cliff-edge (or continue, scrambling, to them).

14 *Howling with Mr Whippy 12m E3 6a (20.3.2011)

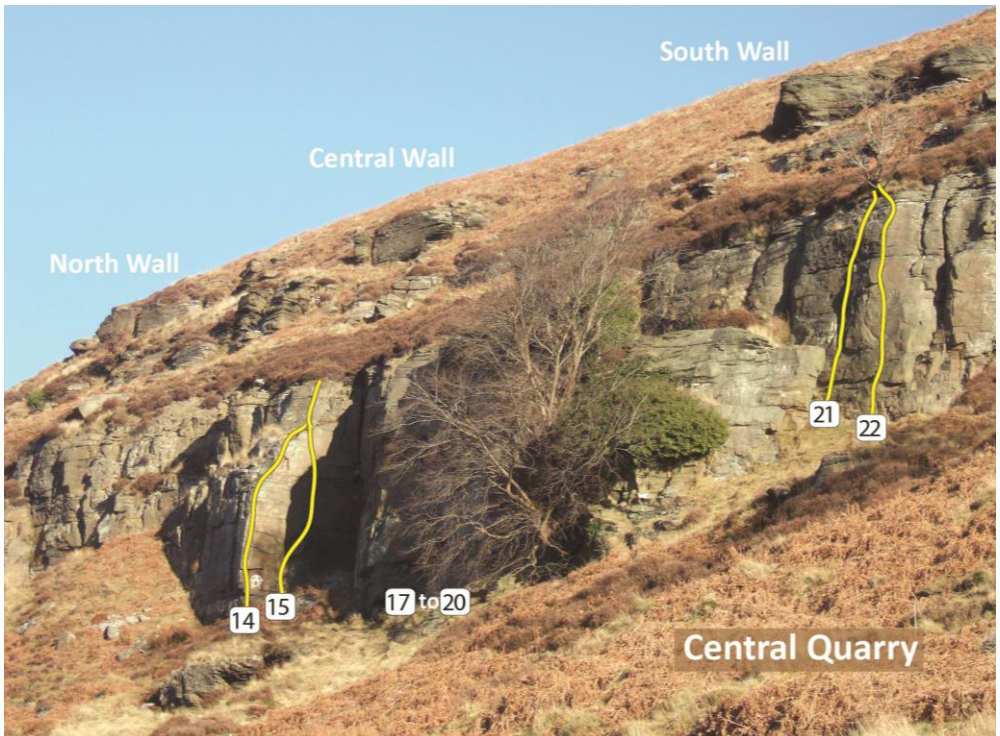
Gritstone-beau-esque. Take the arête on its right-hand side all the way to the ledge. Crux at 5 metres; in view of the bad landing you should persevere to get the overhead wire runner in first.
FA Martin Crocker (unseconded)

15 For Every Kick, a 'F...!' 12m E2 5c (20.3.2011)

Local four-letter footie fun. The sheer wall between the arête and the corner; so well protected it can't be E3 – or can it? Climb a curving groove right of the arête onto a small sharp ledge. Proceed up thin cracks, until a finger-jam in a pod slightly right gains a mantel onto the belay ledge.
FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood

16 Prepared by the Hand of His Eminence 12m E1 5a (20.3.2011)

A characterful trad' sandstone crack – don't you just love 'em. Take care with quivering flakes on the right wall (or better, don't touch them at all). Climb the crack 5 metres right of the corner, topping out without any real problems. Belays in outcrops 10 metres back.
FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood



The following cluster of routes take the clean and solid slabby wall left of the large tree; they are quite crowded but no more so than if a bolt gun had got there first. All retreat by abseil from a tree at 10 metres. The routes were soloed, but (given there is gear, well, on three of them) an estimate of lead-grades has been made, but they are not to be taken literally.

17 Baby-Banker Bouncer 9m Severe (3.8.2013)

Take the left-to right ramp to a vegetated ledge atop the slab; then move up a crack to the abseil tree.
FA Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

18 *Winners, Losers 8m E2 5a (3.8.2013)

Start immediately left of a vertical hairline crack and pull up to the left-hand of a deep break at 2 metres. Climb straight up the tapering bare slab on positive edges and, without whining about the lack of gear, execute a sloping mantel exit (try to avoid a whimpering early escape onto *Baby-Banker Bouncer* on the left).

FA Martin Crocker (solo, after top-roping)

19 Greedy-Grubby Bonus-Culture Vultures 8m E2 £Xm+ (3.8.2013)

Move up to the right-hand end of the deep break at 2 metres and make a hard reach for a good pocket (cam placement to bail you out of any trouble). Pull up right onto a huge sharp jug; then saunter left to pull up onto the veg ledge, using a hawthorn to reach your target come what may.

FA Martin Crocker (solo, after top-roping)

20 Financial Spineless Authority 8m E2 5c (3.8.2013)

Start at the right-hand end of the slab, and climb up to a little finger-slot. A strong move straight up over a little overhang gains slopers; then there's a huge sharp jug above. Saunter left to the top, via the useful hawthorn. Don't expect much, if any, protection.

FA Martin Crocker (solo, after top-roping)

The next two routes climb the pillar 10 metres right of the large tree, at a higher level and right of a gully fronted by two flat-topped blocks. A huge bolt in the base of the cliff (not RT's) confirms your location (it's too low for a runner, unless the slope beneath collapses). Both terminate at an obliging tree at the cliff edge (sling and maillon *in-situ*, but they'll be past their sell-by dates now).

21 'What are you Doing?' 12m E1 5a (20.3.2011)

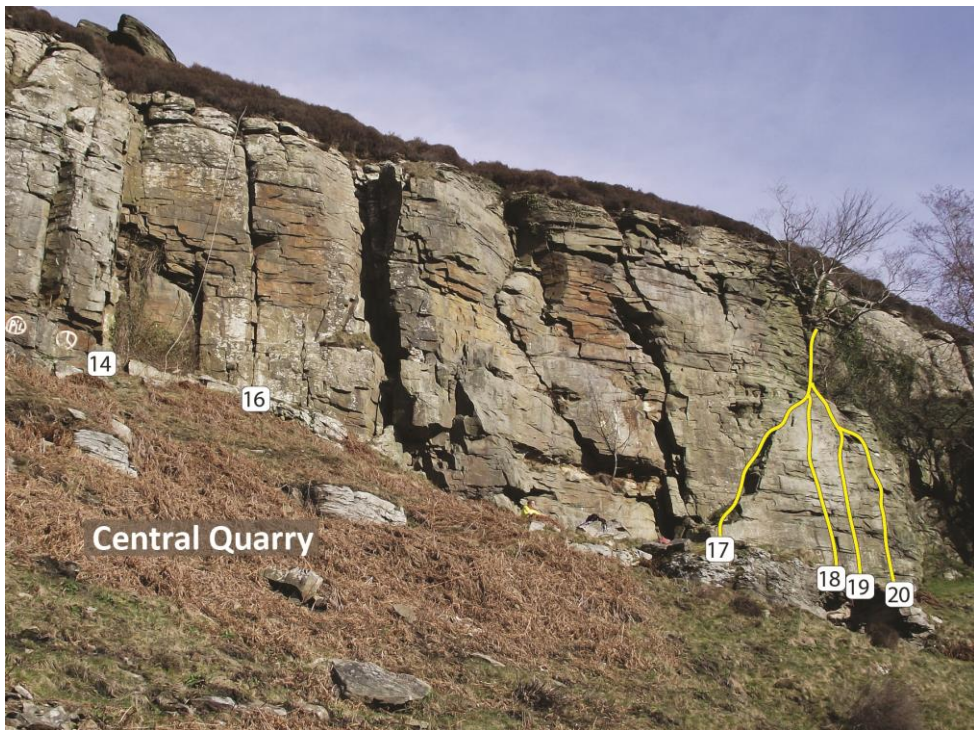
Asks an inquisitive local ragamuffin, who wants to know how to get into climbing. 'Not by doing this', one replies. From the gully climb a shallow groove to a sloping hand-ledge (crucial small cams in break above; no other gear). Pull up direct onto the ledge, and bear slightly right to the tree.

FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood

22 *Grand Slam 12m E3 6a (20.3.2011)

Close your mind to the vibrating flake and you'll see a star. Start at the bolt. Climb direct with a stretch to clip a peg and a longer one to gain a finger-hold just above it. Use crimps to the right, before a jug above sees you hanging onto the sharp (and really rather large) flake. Good medium cams in the break above protect a nice finish up the arête.

FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood



Central Quarry

SOUTH QUARRY

The first quarry reached upon your approach from the south. The first route climbs the majestic orange tower tastefully graffitied with '4Skin'.

23 **SkinFull** 10m E3 5b (12.4.2009)

Climb the centre of the tower to an interesting and strenuous rock-up right onto the nose. Spaced, good cams protect.

FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood

The next five routes take the fine wall in the centre of the quarry, under a large oak tree. The defining feature is a scoop at two-thirds height traversed by a horizontal break.

24 **Quarter Sentry-Box** 8m E1 5a (12.4.2009)

Step off a pointed flake (nice landing!) and up the sentry box to the break. Pull up and exit right above the scoop. A left-hand start just right of the silver birch tree is possible (4c).

FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood

25 ***The Scoop** 7m E2 5b (12.4.2009)

Climb up the left rib of the scoop and exit direct. Small cam and wires in the break protect.

FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood

26 ***Blade** 7m E3 6a (12.4.2009)

Climb the right rib of the scoop, rock up left into it (straight past a peg runner), and exit on the left as for *The Scoop*.

FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood

27 **Drips** 7m E2 5b (12.4.2009)

Start under the oak tree. Take a crack and using finger-holds to its left work up around the left side of the tree. Vital 1/2 cams in the break.

FA Martin Crocker, John Harwood

28 **Have a Break** 12m E2 6a (12.4.2009)

Follow the break from left-to-right (or *vice versa!*) either finishing up *Drips* or across *NT Yoof*. Well-protected, and – if you're on your tod – not too high to solo.

FA Martin Crocker (solo)

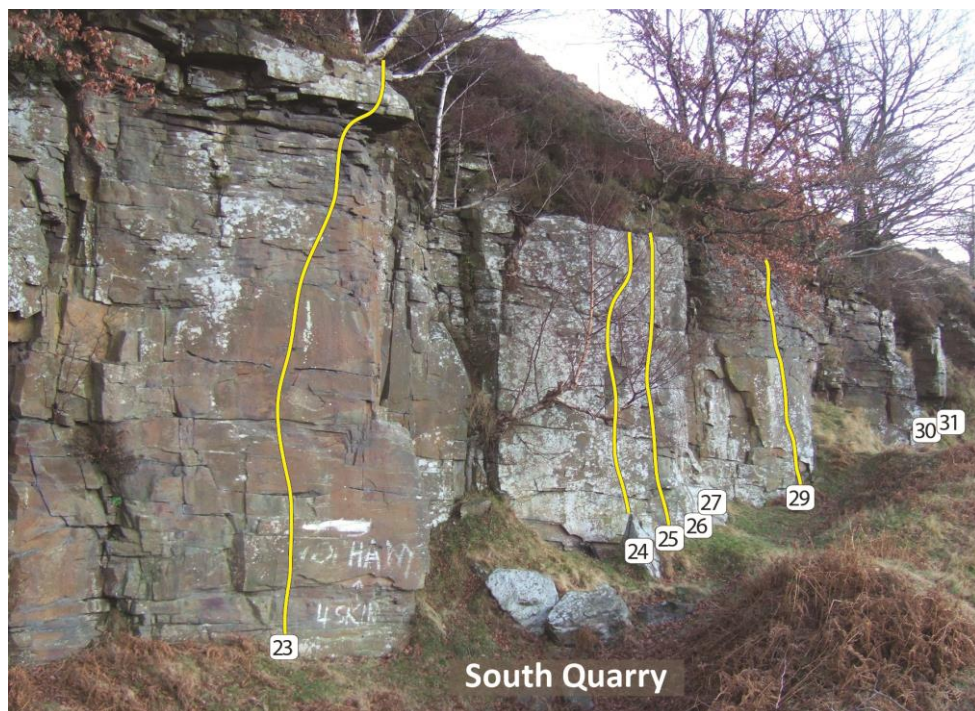
29 **NT Yoof** 7m E2 5a/b (12.4.2009)

Climb the centre of the next wall on the obvious line, passing some good breaks for cams. A harder (V4) start up the blank wall just right is a good problem in its own right.

FA Martin Crocker (on-sight), John Harwood

Finally, there is a small undercut buttress extreme right; it hosts two boulder problems:

30 **Hooked** (V3), the left arête; and 31 **Fingers Bored** (V4) the roof on – yes you've got it – flat finger-edges.

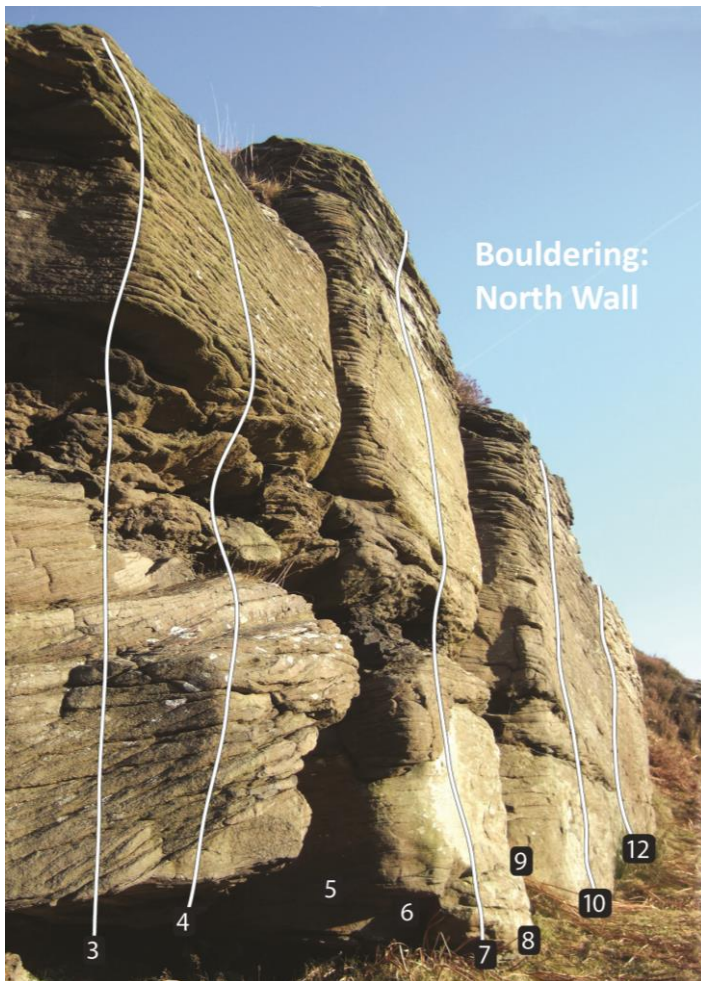


UPPER TIER BOULDERING OUTCROPS

This is why you're here, probably. A line of intermittent (unquarried) sandstone outcrops contours the hillside from above Central Quarry to the edge of the northern (Abertysswg) quarry. They face WSW and are quick-drying. Their fine rock quality puts the quarries below to shame ('you shameful SEWales quarries'). A mat isn't essential, but by all means bring one along.

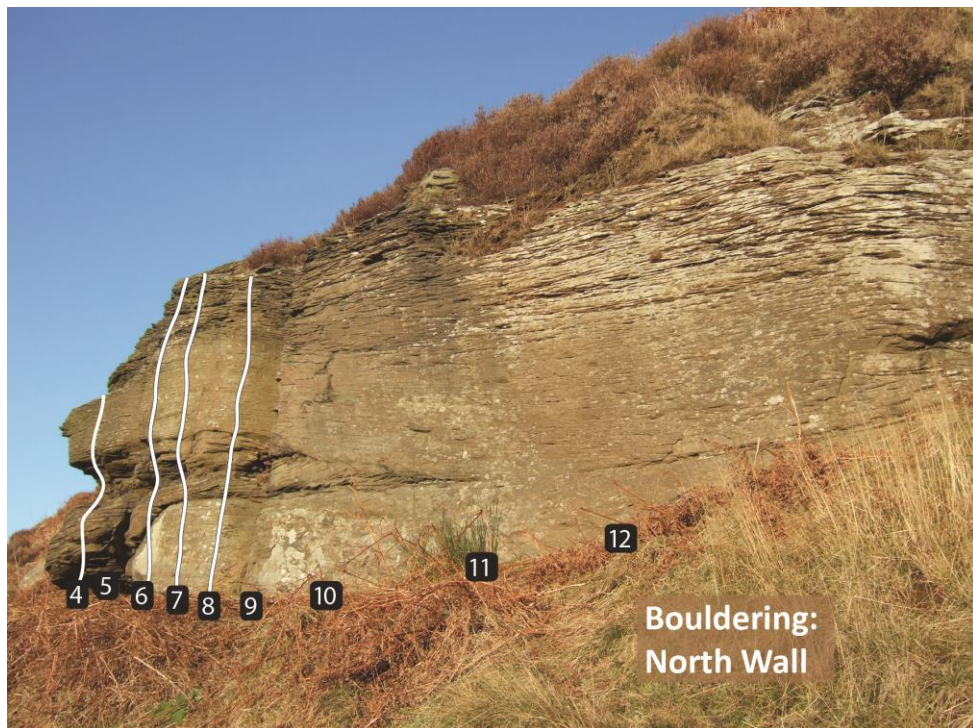
North Wall

The northernmost wall is 4 to 5 metres high; there's a lavishly flat grassy terrace beneath.



- 1 5a Little slab left of corner, pulling out right onto tilted summit block.
- 2 4c Right wall of corner.
- 3 4b Right arête of corner.
- 4 V0 (5a) Mantel onto the undercut ledge.
- 5 3c A hand-crack.
- 6 V0+ (5b) The eliminate left arête of the tower.
- 7 ****New (Tredegar) Romantics V3 (6a)** The centre of the tower from right hand in a low pocket in a vertical seam.
- 8 ***Ice Cream Van Surreal V3 (6a)** The right arête of the tower via an interesting crimp move.
- 9 3c Descent Groove.
- 10 V0 (5a) Left end of long low wall.
- 11 V1 (5c) Wall just right.
- 12 ***Chiming Colonel Bogy V3 (6a)** Hard crank up wall 2m right of 9.

- 13 ***High on the Dorkmetre V4 (6b)** Fingernail-edge crimping right to left along the low wall.



Central Wall

This one's 2 to 5 metres high and also has a comforting flat grassy terrace beneath. You could just lounge about and watch the match below.

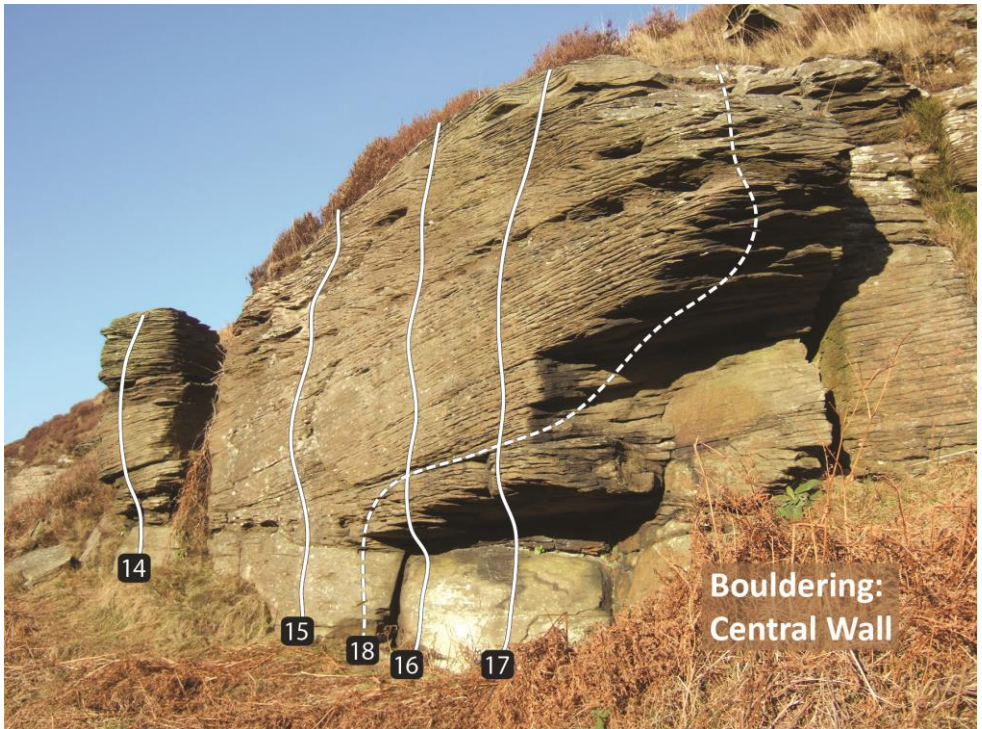
14 **Babbage's Mechanical Computer** 4a Tiny tower at left-hand end.

15 **ENIAC** 4c Obvious zig-zag line up the left side of the face.

16 ***Transistor** V3 (6b) Hard rock-up over left side of low roof; then wall direct.

17 **Altair** V0 (5a) Roof and wall at right-hand end.

18 **ARPANET** V2 (5c/6a) A sit-start left-to-right traverse of the underside of the roof, evolving into an awkward mantel over the undercut prow. There is potential to make it harder by eliminating the use of the side-walls.



South Wall

This one soars to a dizzy height of 6 metres, so watch it! Though grassy underfoot, the flat landing sites are limited and you entertain the risk of cavorting down the hillside and over the 20-metre high quarry below. You might like to bring along someone with a good catch, therefore.

19 5a The retaining wall left of the deep groove.

20 4c The right wall of the groove, mantelling out right onto arête – exposed.

21 ***Phillip's Town** E1 5c The bulging prow on its left-hand side – exposed.

22 ***Pengam Pie** E2 5c The bulging prow on its right-hand side, using holds at the top of the previous route to exit – exposed.

23 **Terraformers of Mount Unpleasant** V0+ (5b) Gain the obvious pocket right of the prow and (to avoid a lichenous and frightening top-out) traverse horizontally right to rock-up on a ledge.

24 **Spotters of Sebastopol** E2 6a Make a long move to gain a pocket at 4m. Pull out direct – exposed. (Or to keep E-grades at bay, rock up onto the ledge to the right).

FAs on bouldering tier: Martin Crocker (on-sight solos without a mat), 2.11.2008. Others had probably climbed here before; if so, flood the descriptions with names.

