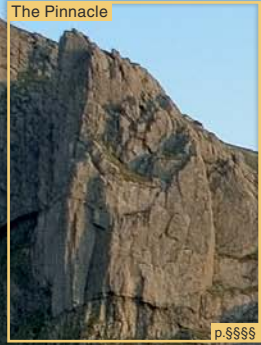
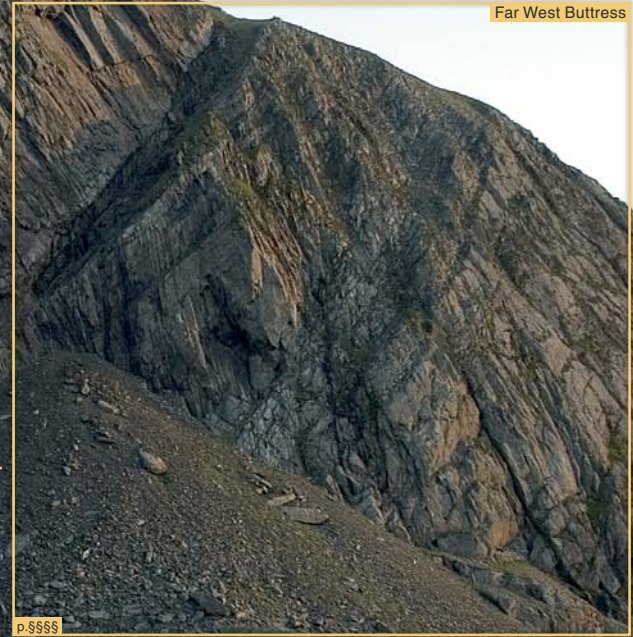


Clogwyn Du'r Arddu



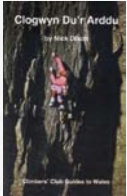
East Buttress

The Boulder
p. \$\$\$\$



Other Guides

There is a single guidebook dedicated to Cloggy - **Clogwyn Du'r Arddu** published by the Climbers' Club in 2004.



Cloggy is an amazing place, a grand cathedral for climbers to make pilgrimage and follow in the footsteps of the founding fathers. The rock is never quite dry enough, and never quite clean enough to make the routes feel easy. But, on a day when the weather is just good enough to allow ascents to be made, it feels like you have taken a gamble and won. This is truly a crag for those searching out mountain adventure, and when planning ascents of any of the routes here, one would be well advised to be operating comfortably at the chosen standard.

Approach

Park in Llanberis at the large carpark opposite the railway. Walk back along the road following signs for Snowdon Footpath, turning right into Victoria terrace at a mini-roundabout. Follow the road up a steep lane to reach the Snowdon summit path (Llanberis Path) on the left. Follow this path for 3.5km passing the Halfway House Cafe. Where the main path dog-legs left up a stoney stairway, a subsidiary path contours straight on and bends rightwards to beneath the impressive cliffs. Follow this path to reach the desired buttress.

Conditions

The main crag faces north and only gets evening sun in summertime although routes up on The Pinnacle get morning sun if you can get up that far early enough. Cloggy is slow to dry, catches any wind going and has a dusting of lichen that refuses to loosen its grip even in midsummer. Don't let this put you off though; it's all part of the charm. If you get perfect conditions and climb here on the warmest and driest days of the year, then you'll have one of the most fantastic mountain experiences of your climbing career which you can finish off with a dip in Llyn Du'r Arddu, which will always cool you off. A day to bore you friends with for years to come!



Typical summer conditions for Cloggy - perfect sunny days yet you may still be climbing in a fleece on these dark walls. Here Dani Arnold, of Eiger speed-solo fame, belayed by Martin Chester and Martin Doyle, on pitch 2 of *Great Wall* (E4 6a) - page *SSS* - on the East Buttress. Photo: Tom Ripley



Pinnacle Arete - page 55

The Pinnacle

Descend by scrambling up to the Eastern Terrace

The Green Gallery

70m

1 Sunset Crack VS 5a

Good climbing up the prominent crack in a corner on the left-hand side of the wall.

1) 4b, 42m. Scramble up to a grassy ledge below the crack. Move up into the crack from the left (possible belay below a manky thread as for *Lithrig*) and then swarm up it to a belay on the left below a steep section.

2) 5a, 20m. Make a hard move to gain the chimney on the lip of the overhang. Some traditional thrutching up this leads to easier climbing above. Belay on the Green Gallery and escape right.

FA. A.Cox 24.6.1937

2 Lithrig E1 5c

A great, historical classic that traditionally involves a tension traverse on pitch 2. The route is HVS if done this way and many prefer to use the original method as Joe Brown himself believes this retains the "original spirit of adventure".

1) 4a, 25m. Follow *Sunset Crack* to a stance below the corner by a manky thread.

2) 5c (5a), 20m. Delicately foot traverse a slopy ledge right to a groove. Move up the groove which leads up to a ledge on the rib. Traverse right below the overlap into a corner then pull up and right through the roof. Follow the good holds above and right to a spike. Descend slightly and, either make a technical traverse across right, or, using tension off the spike, pull yourself across to a belay ledge with wires.

3) 4c, 15m. Move up and right to gain and follow a crack. Make hard moves up to gain the base of a corner to a possible belay, although it is common to link this into the next pitch.

4) 4c, 18m. Climb the corner to a ledge on the right and then move left into a crack. This leads to a belay on a ledge just below the Green Gallery.

5) 4a, 5m. Climb up the short wall/crack to reach the terrace.

Either escape off rightwards, or head up to climb *Pinnacle Arete*.

FA. J.Brown, J.Allen 14.6.1952. FFA. C.Phillips 1967

3 Serth E2 5cA good line up the left-hand side of the *Lithrig* wall.

1) 4a, 25m. Follow *Sunset Crack* to a stance below the corner by a manky thread.

2) 5c, 20m. Climb *Lithrig* as far as the traverse right then move up left to gain a groove in the arete. Sustained climbing up this leads with some difficulty to a ledge and a belay a little higher.

3) 5b, 18m. Drop down to a ledge then move right across the wall to a break. Gain and climb the groove above.

4) 4a, 12m. Cracks and flakes on the right lead to the top.

FA. B.Ingle, P.Crew (3pts) 7.10.1963. FFA. C.Phillips 1968

4 Pigott's Climb HVS 5aThe original route of the East Buttress. It follows a series of huge stepped-corners. Start to the right of the main crack/corner of *Sunset Crack* at a stepped left-facing groove leading up to the base of the main part of the cliff.

1) 4b, 18m. Climb leftwards over ledges and follow a corner to a grassy ledge.

2) 5a, 15m. The rib on the right leads to a break-line that leads right to below a short steep corner. Tricky moves up this gain The Conservatory - a large grassy ledge.

3) 4a, 25m. Climb the corner past a ledge on the right and enter the chimney above - generally easy but steep and intimidating - to belay on the large pillar.

4) 5a, 25m. The stepped corner on the right leads with difficulty to the top. An impressive pitch for its time.

FA. A.Pigott and party 1927

East Buttress - Pigott's Climb

It may be upstaged by its near-neighbour, but the area left of Great Wall has a series of worthy routes taking strong lines up corners, cracks and grooves at reasonable grades. *Lithrig* in particular is a stunning route and even better if combined with *Pinnacle Arete* (see page 55).

Descent - From the Green Gallery above the walls, scramble up and right to reach the Eastern Terrace and scramble down this. Alternatively, move left with care and finish up one of the routes on the Pinnacle.

5 Chimney Route VS 4c

A good route if it is dry, otherwise it is a bit of a slimy nightmare. Start below a greasy chimney.

1) 4a, 15m. Climb the chimney or the right wall which, although often drier, is much harder. Belay on a ledge on the right.

2) 4c, 15m. The narrower slot is now easier but this is only short lived; you will eventually be forced to the right where accommodating holds lead you back to the chimney and a belay.

3) 4a, 12m. Fairly straightforward climbing leads up until the right wall slabs off. Follow this to a belay.

4) 4c, 20m. Move down and right and step round the rib into a groove. Climb up this to a large flake. Move right to the steep wall and climb this on good holds in a mind-blowing position to reach the terrace. Either escape left and then back right, or continue on in the chimney theme with...

5) 4b, 30m. **The Continuation Chimney**. Climb the chimney above to the top.

FA. C.Kirkus, J.Menlove 3.8.1931

6 Diglyph HVS 5b

A good route that allows some of the aura of the Great Wall to be experienced at an amenable grade. Start just left of the base of the impressive Great Wall, below the chimney.

1) 4a, 15m. As for *Chimney Route*.

2) 5b, 20m. Move right to a crack and climb this to a small ledge in a short corner. Continue on past a steep section (peg) and continue to a ledge. Belay on the right.

3) 4c, 25m. Climb up to the wide groove above which leads to a large flake. Escape out right onto a steep wall to gain the terrace.

FA. J.Brown, M.Sorrell 24.6.1951

7 Daurigol E3 6a

A superb test-piece up the grooves on the left of the Great Wall. Start below the left edge of the Great Wall. Surprisingly awkward.

1) 5b, 20m. Climb a groove left of a pinnacle then step back right and climb up to some breaks. Move right then up to a stance below a groove.

2) 6a, 15m. Climb up to the lower groove on the right. Follow this to where holds lead left to a hanging groove. Hard moves lead left to the sustained upper groove. Continue to join *Diglyph*.

3) 4c, 25m. As for *Diglyph*.

FA. B.Ingle, M.Boysen (3pts) 28.4.1962

East Buttress - Great Wall




One of the finest walls in the UK - this is the showpiece of the crag, a place of myths and legends, controversy and epics, triumphs and failures. The routes are all magnificent challenges and a visit is a must for every aspiring trad climber. This has been a proving ground for generations of climbers.

Descent - Routes on the left require a scramble up and left before cutting back right to reach the Eastern Terrace descent. Routes on the right bely on the Eastern Terrace.

8 Great Wall     **E4 6a**

One of the UK's milestone routes for any aspiring hard climber which traces a majestic line up this stunning wall with initially technical climbing giving way to easier, but bolder moves higher up. Start on a grassy terrace below the high groove of *Daurigol* and to the right of some thin cracks that lead up the left-hand side of the Great Wall.

- 1) 6a, 25m. Climb up to a small overlap below a line of cracks. Climb these up and rightwards with difficulty until a reach gains a crack. Pull up into a depression to belay.
 - 2) 5c, 35m. Climb up the crack and then a corner above (becoming thin on gear) to a left-facing groove and overlap. A memorable long move to a good hold leads quickly to a long ledge. Traverse right along this and back left to easier ground.
- FA. P.Crew 27.5.1962. FFA. J.Allen, C.Addy 28.6.1975

9 Womb Bits    **E5 6b**

A searingly-thin direct line to the first belay of *Great Wall*. It is very similar to many of the great E5 slabs on slate, but with even more worrying protection. Start about 7m right of *Great Wall* and climb up to gain a vertical crack at 8m. Make increasingly worrying moves up to the left-hand end of an overlap. Move up again and eventually step left onto the *Great Wall* belay. Continue up *Great Wall* pitch 2.

FA. J.Redhead, D.Towse 23.7.1984

10 A Midsummer' Night's Dream     **E6 6a**




A long and challenging route with three big pitches up the Great Wall. Like *Right Wall* and *Lord*, the route is considered easier when someone has done the hard work and chalked it up for you. Start on a small grassy ledge halfway between *Great Wall* and *November*.

- 1) 6a, 26m. Trend up and left making your way towards ledges and a peg. Move up and slightly right to a wire looped over an old bolt. Move up and slightly left to a peg hidden in a flake/groove on the left (easy to miss). A hard laybacking type move and reach lead over a bulge to where a line of holds lead leftwards to just above the belay of *Great Wall*, step down and belay.
 - 2) 6a, 23m. Follow *Great Wall* up the groove for about 10m, to a move left onto a tiny ledge on the wall. A thin and technical wall above leads to holds that track left to the belay on *Daurigol*.
 - 3) 6a, 28m. Easy climbing leads up and left towards *Chimney Route* - stop just before this. Head up to the steep arete - a side-runner to the right protects the initial steep section. A powerful series of moves up this leads to an easing in both angle and difficulty. Collapse onto the ledge above knowing you have just completed one of the best E6s in the country.
- FA. E.Drummond (5pts) 1973. FFA. P.Whillance, D.Armstrong 28.7.1977 and 28.5.1978 - pitches climbed in separate years.

11 Indian Face     **E9 6c**




Indian Face has established itself as the route of the 1980s. Seven repeats in the quarter of a century since it was first climbed and no on-sight ascent, despite routes with bigger E-grades receiving more attention. We haven't really included this route so that you should actually go and climb it, more to show you where it goes. If you are keen to make an ascent then we suggest you track down one of the previous ascensionists to get their beta.

FA. J.Dawes 4.10.1986

12 November    **E3 5c**




A magnificent, long crack-line that defines the right-hand edge of the Great Wall. It is good as described here, but *Jelly Roll* is probably better, and is a bit easier. Start on the grassy terrace below the crack that bounds the Great Wall on its right.

- 1) 5a, 25m. **The Drainpipe Crack** is often wet. This leads to a stance on the ramp on the right. Big cams can help with the unnerving start and provide benefit beyond.
 - 2) 5c, 38m. Move back left in to the crack and continue up the increasingly-steep crack to a grassy ledge.
 - 3) 5a, 20m. Climb the corner (tricky) then easier cracks to the Eastern Terrace.
- FA. J.Brown, J.Smith 3.5.1957. FFA. A.McHardy 1970

13 Jelly Roll    **E2 5b**

A sensational airy line up the grooves above *Indian Face*. Brilliant climbing at an unlikely grade for the situation.

- 1) 5a, 25m. As for *November*.
 - 2) 5a, 18m. Continue up *November* until the crack closes up, then swing left and up to a ledge below a groove.
 - 3) 5b, 35m. Climb the amazing well-protected groove above on big holds with oodles of exposure. At the top overhang, move left. Belay or continue up easy ground to the Eastern Terrace.
- FA. R.Evans, C.Rogers 170.9.1971

14 Vember    **E1 5b**

The original line using the *November* crack to start and one of the landmark routes of the Brown-Whillans era on Cloggy.

- 1) 5a, 28m. As for *November* and continue up the ramp to belay directly below the chimney crack.
 - 2) 5b, 30m. Gain the chimney crack. Follow this in a determined fashion past several challenges to reach a grassy ledge.
 - 3) 4b, 12m. Climb the wall then easier ground to the Eastern Terrace.
- FA. J.Brown, D.Whillans 13.10.1951

15 Curving Crack   **VS 4c**

One of the older climbs up the huge curving groove on the right side of the buttress. Something of a traditional thrutch, where crimping ability is never required - wall rats will have a humbling experience. Start on the right-hand side of the pedestal.

- 1) 4c, 10m. Climb the huge flake to the top of the pedestal via laybacks or jamming.
 - 2) 4c, 20m. Swing left on a jug into the corner-chimney. Thrutch up the crack with a variety of off-width techniques past a steeper more awkward section. Belay on a ledge out left as for *Vember*.
 - 3) 4c, 35m. Move back into the corner and bridge wildly up, moving back into the depths to arrange protection. Follow this until the right wall starts to form a slab. Move up this before finally gaining the fantastically-exposed arete. Finish up this on good holds to a grassy ledge and belay. Scramble out to finish.
- FA. C.Kirkus and party 19.6.1932





East Buttress - The Corner

On any other cliff, the walls and corners on the right-hand side of East Buttress would probably be the main attraction. Here they play second fiddle to the Great Wall, but only just.

Descent - Head down the Eastern Terrace.



16 The Troach E2 5b

A magnificent bold wall-climb giving open and exposed climbing on good holds with spaced protection.

- 1) 4c, 10m. Climb the large flake onto the pedestal and belay, as for *Curving Crack*.
- 2) 5b, 45m. Move out right passing a narrow corner, then head up via a hard move to a small quartz ledge. Move up and left gaining a small groove and follow it for 13m past an old peg. Move right and head up with difficult to an overlap and more ageing ironmongery. Go right to gain better holds and a short groove leading to a large flake. Traditionally the belay is here, but continuing up left onto the arete makes for a better pitch and a more comfortable belay.
- 3) 5a, 12m. Finish easily up the arete as for *Curving Crack*.

FA. H.Banner, R.Wilson 4.10.1959. FFA. R.Evans 1967

17 Pedestal Crack HVS 5a

The middle of the three long corners on this side of the buttress. Good climbing, but often wet. Starting up the first pitch of *Scorpio* makes the route a worthwhile VS. Start by scrambling up to a belay below the large corner.

- 1) 5a, 20m. Climb the crack and belay on the pedestal on the right.
- 2) 4c, 15m. Move back left into the crack and climb it to a stance in the developing corner.
- 3) 4b, 25m. Continue more easily up the corner/crack to the top and a belay on the Eastern Terrace.

FA. C.Kirkus, G.MacPhee 3.8.1931

18 Scorpio E2 5b

A winding route which tackles the impressive wall between *Pedestal Crack* and *The Corner*. Great sustained climbing leading to a thrilling climax high on the wall. Start by scrambling up to below *Pedestal Crack* and start just right of this at a rib.

- 1) 4b, 20m. Climb the rib for 8m until you can head right into an easy groove. Follow this up and left to a stance on the top of the pedestal.
- 2) 5b, 40m. Move right along a ramp/ledge to a groove then climb this to a hand-traverse. Move right along this then up to a ledge. Climb upwards steadily until a move right gains a blind flake. Sprint up this to finish.

FA. N.Soper, P.Crew 27.5.1961. FFA. T.Herley 1968

19 Silhouette E2 5c

A great direct version to *Scorpio*, sharing its middle section. Pitch 2 is long, so take a large rack. Hard for the grade.

- 1) 4b, 20m. As for *Scorpio* but move right to a stance below the wall.
- 2) 5c, 45m. Climb a thin crack to reach the groove of *Scorpio* (possible belay). Follow *Scorpio* to a peg, then take the crack on the left to an overlap. A long move round this leads to another easier crack, follow this to the top.

FA. R.Edwards, N.Metcalf 23.5.1975

20 The Corner HVS 5b

'Cloggy Corner' is comparable to *Cenotaph Corner* in quality and is only slightly easier. It is often wet but can usually still be done since the jams are all sinkers. Start below the rightmost of the three major corners.

- 1) 4c, 30m. Scramble up slightly awkward ground, past grassy ledges to a belay on sloping rock below the corner. This point can also be reached from *Scorpio* pitch 1.
- 2) 5b, 35m. Climb the corner, fairly directly, with one slight detour onto the left wall at around 6m.

FA. J.Brown, J.Allen, D.Belshaw 20.6.1952



Calum Muskett makes the 6th ascent of *Indian Face* (E9 6c) - page \$\$\$ - during a hectic week in July 2013 when the route saw three repeats in as many days despite having received only 4 ascents in the preceding 27 years. Photo: Mark Reeves



21 Shrike Top 150 SF E2 5c

A superbly-positioned route with massive exposure from the first move. It is steep, well protected and has plenty of rests. Start about 12m right of the abseil, where a pinnacle rests against the overhangs.

- 1) 5c, 18m. Climb up the left side of the pinnacle and traverse left below a steepening for 3m to reach a thin crack. Tricky moves up this lead to a stance on ledges above.
- 2) 5b, 28m. Follow the groove above and pull round the overhang with interest to good holds on the left. These now lead out leftwards towards the arete. Climb up for a few metres before a delicate traverse leads back to the main crack. The crack is short and steep but thankfully blessed with huge holds and spike runners. At its top there is a ledge, traverse out left again to the arete. Climb up before making a few tricky moves back right. A couple of steep and intimidating moves on buckets lead to the top.

FA. J.Brown, H.Smith, J.Smith 25.10.1958

22 The Axe Top 150 SF E4 6a

The amazing arete gives a magnificent 35m pitch for which the word 'exposed' is nowhere near descriptive enough. Start right of *Shrike*, just right of an arete, by a flake/crack that leads to an overhang. Climb the flake/crack up to the roof and make a hard pull over this. Swing leftwards to a flake, then climb up the thin flake and wall to the arete above. Follow the arete to a good spike on the right, move up and regain the true arete again by the overhang. This leads fairly directly all the way to the top. Sensational.

FA. P.Littlejohn, C.King 6.7.1979

23 Octo SF E1 5b

A great corner-climb, and as well-positioned as you would expect for this wall. The approach scramble across steep grass needs some care. It is best reached from below by routes in the Lithrig Area (see page \$\$\$). Start below the prominent left-facing corner.

- 1) 4b, 15m. Climb the right-hand crack to a stance in the chimney.
- 2) 5b, 20m. Move up to an overhang, heave around this with difficulty, then another pokey section leads back into the crack above. A brutal fight up this on rattly jams leads to easier climbing up to the grassy ledge on the right. Scramble off easily right to escape.

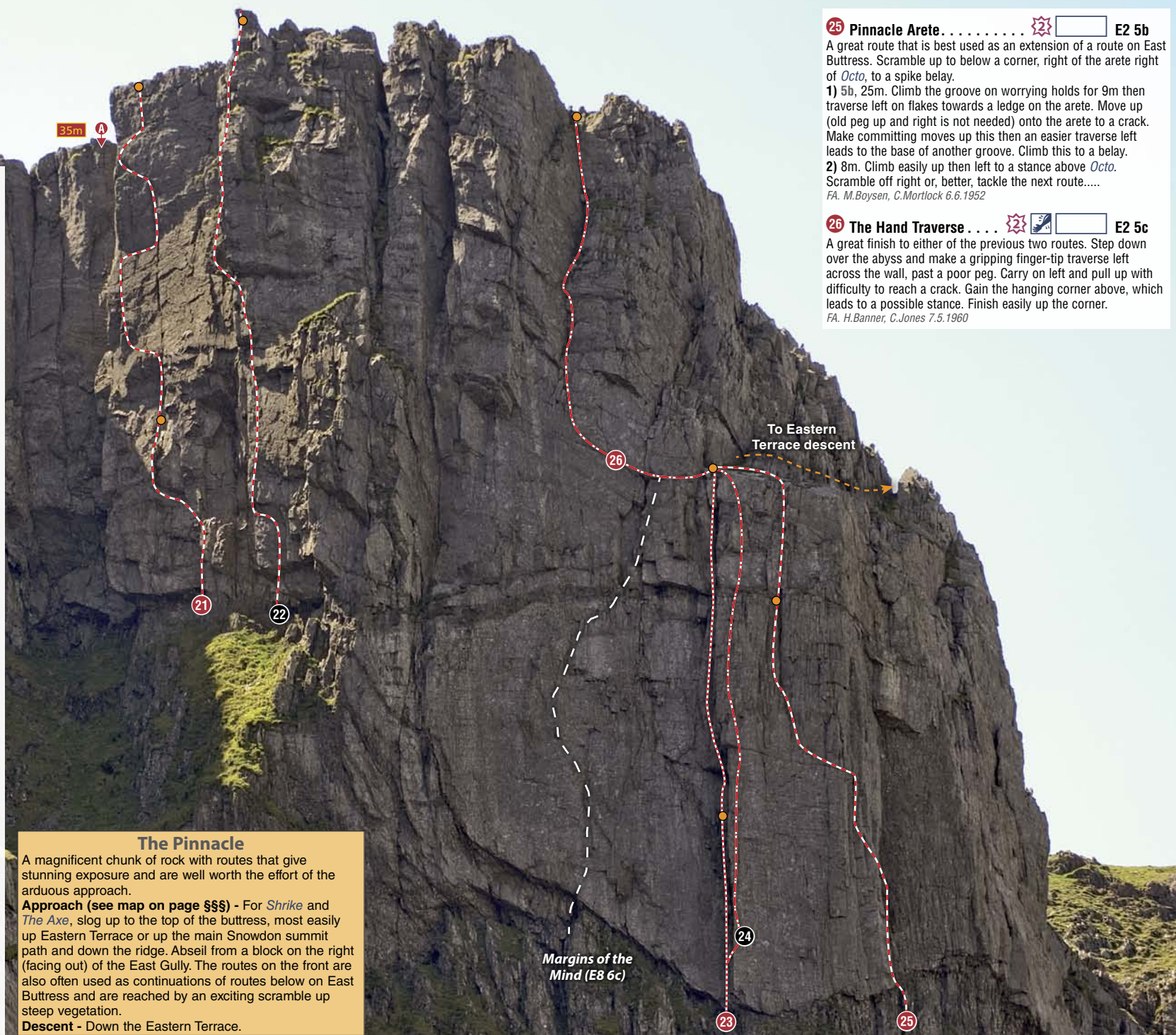
FA. J.Brown, S.Sorrell, D.Belshaw 15.6.1952

24 Authentic Desire SF E7 6b

The compelling arête right of *Octo* provides a stimulating lead. Many RPs protect. From the belay of *Octo*, move up to the base of the corner. Step out right to a good hold left of the arete. Then climb the left side of the arete for several metres to a delicate move around the arete which leads to better holds and a rest. Climb directly up the arete, past a further difficult move, to easier ground and gear in the break beneath the roof. Overcome the roof and climb the easy wall above.

FA. J.Redhead 24.9.1986

35m



The Pinnacle
A magnificent chunk of rock with routes that give stunning exposure and are well worth the effort of the arduous approach.
Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - For *Shrike* and *The Axe*, slog up to the top of the buttress, most easily up Eastern Terrace or up the main Snowdon summit path and down the ridge. Abseil from a block on the right (facing out) of the East Gully. The routes on the front are also often used as continuations of routes below on East Buttress and are reached by an exciting scramble up steep vegetation.
Descent - Down the Eastern Terrace.

25 Pinnacle Arete SF E2 5b

A great route that is best used as an extension of a route on East Buttress. Scramble up to below a corner, right of the arete right of *Octo*, to a spike belay.

- 1) 5b, 25m. Climb the groove on worrying holds for 9m then traverse left on flakes towards a ledge on the arete. Move up (old peg up and right is not needed) onto the arete to a crack. Make committing moves up this then an easier traverse left leads to the base of another groove. Climb this to a belay.
- 2) 8m. Climb easily up then left to a stance above *Octo*. Scramble off right or, better, tackle the next route.....

FA. M.Boysen, C.Mortlock 6.6.1952

26 The Hand Traverse SF E2 5c

A great finish to either of the previous two routes. Step down over the abyss and make a gripping finger-tip traverse left across the wall, past a poor peg. Carry on left and pull up with difficulty to reach a crack. Gain the hanging corner above, which leads to a possible stance. Finish easily up the corner.

FA. H.Banner, C.Jones 7.5.1960



Descent

Eastern
Terrace
descent

The Boulder

The West Buttress is bounded on its left-hand side by a smooth wall of rock. This has a series of superb, bold and delicate routes. To the right of this the interwoven slabs of the main West Buttress begin.

Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - Head up on to the Eastern Terrace and then scramble down the grassy rake below the cliff.

Descent - Down the Eastern Terrace.

1 Left Edge E1 5a

The 'easy' introduction to this slab follows the left edge as you would expect from the name. It gives amenable climbing with spacey protection. Start by a break below the left arete of the slab.

- 1) 4c, 15m. Step onto the slab and balance tentatively up to gain a small stance (peg).
- 2) 5a, 35m. Move up and left to a ledge around the arete and continue past a hard section to another ledge. Pull back right onto the front face of the Boulder and head up to a short groove which leads to grassy ledges. Scramble off above - best to stay roped up and take care when it is wet.

FA. R.Moseley 17.4.1954

2 The Boulder E1 5a

A bit harder than its left-hand companion, it features a superb, bold and exposed traverse across the face.

- 1) 4c, 15m. As for *Left Edge*.
- 2) 5a, 30m. A committing move gains the gently-rising traverse line which leads delicately rightwards for about 10m. A further heart-in-mouth move gains another slightly higher traverse in a similar vein. A final move up gains a stance just left of the corner.
- 3) 5a, 15m. Move up and right into the corner of *The Black Cleft* then pull up left and around the overhang above to a belay.
- 4) 40m. The slabby gully leads to the top.

FA. J.Brown 28.10.1951

3 The Boldest. E4 5c

The best of the bunch takes a direct line up the Boulder. Often considered an E4 climber's *Indian Face*, the route features thin and technical climbing with spaced protection. A good rack of micro wires will be of use. Start towards the bottom of the ramp, just left of a groove that heads up the lowest right-hand part of the Boulder.

- 1) 5c, 40m. Traverse right across grassy ledges to reach a corner. Climb this to a hollow spike. From this go up and right and then back left to beneath an overhang. Traverse left under this and climb through it on its left side. Above continue left and then back right to reach a worrying flake, stuff this with small cams, before heading up and slightly leftwards to reach *The Boulder* traverse line with relief, climb up a few feet to a good nut belay.
- 2) 5c, 30m. Another bold pitch. Climb direct to a shallow groove. This gives some tricky moves before easier ground leads to the top. Belay well back with care.

FA. (P1) P.Crewe, B.Ingle 21.9.1963. FA. (P2) C.Phillips, P.Minks 1969

The next two routes start at the base of the huge wet corner on the right of the Boulder.

4 The Black Cleft E2 5c

Horrific and slippery climbing up the compellingly-obvious line - you have to really want to climb this one. The corner is usually wet in a summer drought, and really wet at other times so expect to get filthy. In winter it can offer a great winter route - VII.7 mixed with thin ice on the first pitch.

- 1) 15m. Climb the right-hand edge of a pillar, left of the main corner and usually the driest option, and belay on the top.
- 2) 5c, 20m. Move into the corner and start swimming upwards to an optional stance.
- 3) 5c, 20m. Continue in the same damp line past some hanging gardens and a small overhang. Continue up then step left to a belay and junction with *The Boulder*.

4) and 5) As for *The Boulder*.

FA. J.Brown, D.Whillans 4.5.1952

5 Longland's Climb. VS 4c

A fine old classic that takes an intricate line up the slender slab on this side of the West Buttress. The first route to breach the imposing West Buttress. Start at the foot of *The Black Cleft*.

- 1) 20m. Scramble across easy ground to a block and traverse right to a ledge below the narrow slabby corner.
- 2) 4a, 25m. Climb the slabby corner to a belay in the base of the widening chimney-crack.
- 3) 4b, 12m. Climb up the chimney and slab above either on the left (easier) or by pulling out right and traversing back above (better) to a belay on the right.
- 4) 35m. Easy climbing leads up the slab to a crevassed ledge on the right.
- 5) 4c, 25m. From the right end of the ledge, pull up steeply over the overhang on good but space holds. Then move right into and up a chimney. This leads to easier ground and the top.

FA. J.Longland and party 5.1928

West Buttress - White Slab

This complex set of slabs and walls in the centre of the West Buttress has some of the finest slab climbs around. Great exposure is offered on the routes which weave up above steep undercut starts.

Approach (see map on page 555) - *Sheaf* is reached by scrambling down to the base of the Eastern Terrace. *West Buttress Eliminate* and *White Slab* are gained from the base of the crag. The *Great Slab* is reached by scrambling up the Western Terrace.

Descent - Down the Eastern Terrace.



6 Sheaf  VS 4c

A complex line that weaves up the West Buttress at a relatively friendly grade. Start at the base of the Eastern Terrace, just above a wet and grassy crack.

- 1) 4c, 20m. Climb a crack to a small stance under the rib of *White Slab*. This can also be reached from the base of *Longland's*.
- 2) 4c, 12m. Move right, then pull round onto the slab. Move right again, then descend with difficulty (Linnell's Leap). To a belay at the bottom right of the slab.
- 3) 30m. Move down slightly and scramble rightwards then up grassy ledges and climb the short slab to a belay in a corner.
- 4) 4b, 20m. Climb the slab to the arete and pull round to a big shared belay on *White Slab*.
- 5) 4c, 20m. Move right then up the groove to an overhang. Swing round this to another groove and follow it to a small ledge and belay in the corner above.
- 6) 4c, 20m. Stride right across the corner, then pull round onto a narrow slab. Climb this more easily to a stance.
- 7) 30m. More broken scrambling up grassy ledges leads past one more possible stance to the top.

FA. J.Campbell, A.Cox 17.10.1945

7 West Buttress Eliminate

.....  E3 5c

This superb climb takes the most direct line on this side of the West Buttress - 'eliminate' in name but certainly not 'eliminate' in nature. Start below a red groove.

- 1) 5c, 35m. A serious pitch. Climb the groove for a short distance until you can move across the steep right wall on good, but spaced holds and up to ledges. Head up to a large block and climb the groove above with difficulty over a bulge to the base of the *White Slab*.
- 2) 5b, 40m. Climb the groove on the right-hand side of the slab to a shared belay on a flake.
- 3) 5b, 40m. **Walsh's Groove**. An amazing pitch up the main groove, requiring sustained back-and-foot techniques. Belay at the top of the slab on a ledge over to the left on *White Slab*.
- 4) 4a, 12m. Climb easily up behind the belay to a crevassed stance on the right. This is pitch 6 of *White Slab*.
- 5) 5a, 30m. Either finish as for *White Slab* pitch 7, or step left and follow the slab to the top. This is **Longland's Direct Finish**.

FA. B.Ingle, P.Crew 3.6.1962

8 White Slab  E2 5c

One of the great Welsh Classics, with the other of Cloggy's great lasso/pendulums. Start about 30m right of the base of Eastern Terrace, where a small broken pinnacle leans against an overhang.

- 1) 5b, 25m. Climb up and off the pinnacle and make an delicate traverse across the lip of the overhangs to a groove. Move left again into an often-wet groove and follow this to a ledge and flake belay. Quite a serious pitch so place all the limited runners you can find, your second will need them! It is possible to leave a sling on a low spike to back-roped the second.
- 2) 4b, 20m. Climb the groove and slab to the base of the main upper slab.
- 3) 5a, 30m. Move up the slab briefly and then make a diagonal traverse with difficulty to the arete (Linnell's Leap in reverse). Climb the arete to a spike, move right and take a thin crack up to a flake. Head left round the rib to a groove and move up to a belay.

White Slab continued...

- 4) 5c, 15m. Pull up and right round the arete, from here there are several options. The original is to lasso a small spike over in the groove - you'll need good eye sight and the precision aim of a cowboy plus about 12m of rope. You can then either pendulum across or free climb the thin traverse (this is also possible without the spike lassoed of course). A third option, which requires bravery and an extra E point, is climbing the extremely bold blunt rib direct at E3 5c before moving right to the belay.
- 5) 5a, 35m. Climb the edge of the slab, detour right then back left and up to a ledge.
- 6) 4a, 12m. Climb easily up behind the belay to a crevassed stance on the right.
- 7) 4c, 30m. Pitch 5 of *Longland's*. Pull up steeply then move right to a chimney. This leads to easier ground and the top.

FA. R.Moseley, J.Smith (1pt) 19.4.1956

9 Great-Bow Combination . . .  HVS 5a

A brilliant combination of pitches taking the best line up this side of the buttress. Rope up and scramble up for about 40m, as far as the first way through the overhang, by a reddish slab.

- 1) 4c, 45m. Move up and left to spikes and blocks. Climb onto the slab and arrange gear on the right. Step down and left to the base a long groove. Follow this, on good holds, to a move left to a good ledge on the arete. Traverse left to a block belay.
- 2) 4a, 25m. Move right across exposed ledges to gain the rib. Climb this in a spectacular situation to a stance.
- 3) 5a, 35m. There are two options: hard or bold. The harder one is a low traverse to make a difficult pull up to gain the diagonal break. Option 2 is to go high, which is scarier, and foot traverse the break. Continue to a crack which leads to a ledge on the left edge of the slab.
- 4) 4b, 25m. Steady climbing up a thin crack in the slab edge to another well-positioned stance.
- 5) 35m. Pull right back onto *Great Slab* and climb the rib past a possible belay to the top.

FA. (Great) C.Kirkus, G.Macphee 15.6.1930

FA. (Bow) J.Edwards, J.Cooper 9.1941

10 Great Slab  VS 4c

Another of the great Cloggy mountaineering routes, with only one technically demanding section up an often-damp corner. Other than that most of the climbing is straightforward. Start as for *Great-Bow Combination*.

- 1) 4c, 45m. As for *Great-Bow Combination*.
- 2) 4a, 12m. Follow *Great-Bow Combination* for 12m metres to the first easing on the rib with a prominent diagonal break just above. Step right onto the slab, passing a flake/spike. Carry on traversing right to the corner and climb the grassy gully to a belay below a groove.
- 3) 4c, 45m. Climb the groove past an often-wet section, crux, and continue up to gain the corner/groove on the left. Follow this to the first grassy moustache and then take a diagonal line leftwards across slabby rock to a belay in the middle of the *Great Slab*.
- 4) 4c, 45m. Carry on in the same vein, moving diagonally left to hit the arete and savour the exposure. There are several possible belays here, the best one is higher up.
- 5) 15m. Climb the easy but sensational arete to the top and scramble out.

FA. C.Kirkus, G.Macphee 15.6.1930



Bloody Slab

Although rather isolated, and with a more challenging approach, *Bloody Slab* is a good route.

Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - Scramble up the exciting Western Terrace - care needed with loose rock. It is not recommended as a descent.

Descent - Head to the top and walk left to the Eastern Terrace descent.

11 Bloody Slab E3 5b

The best route on the right-hand side of the West Buttress tackles the clean red slab. Start by scrambling high up the Western Terrace to a point below the right edge of the slab, just before a large boulder.

- 1) 5b, 30m. Pull up, then traverse up leftwards to a flake at 15m. Move up over a bulge, then continue up leftwards along a flake to a small overhang. Pull round this on the left and belay in a shallow corner (peg).
- 2) 5b, 25m. Traverse left and head up to a tiny ledge, then move down and left to reach a grassy gully. Follow this to a stance.
- 3) 35m. The rib above leads to easier ground and the top.

FA. J.Streetly 10.6.1952



Descent

80m

Far West Buttress

Although not of the same calibre as routes on the rest of Cloggy, the Far West Buttress has a popular offering at a friendly grade. The slab can pretty much be climbed anywhere at around S/HS.

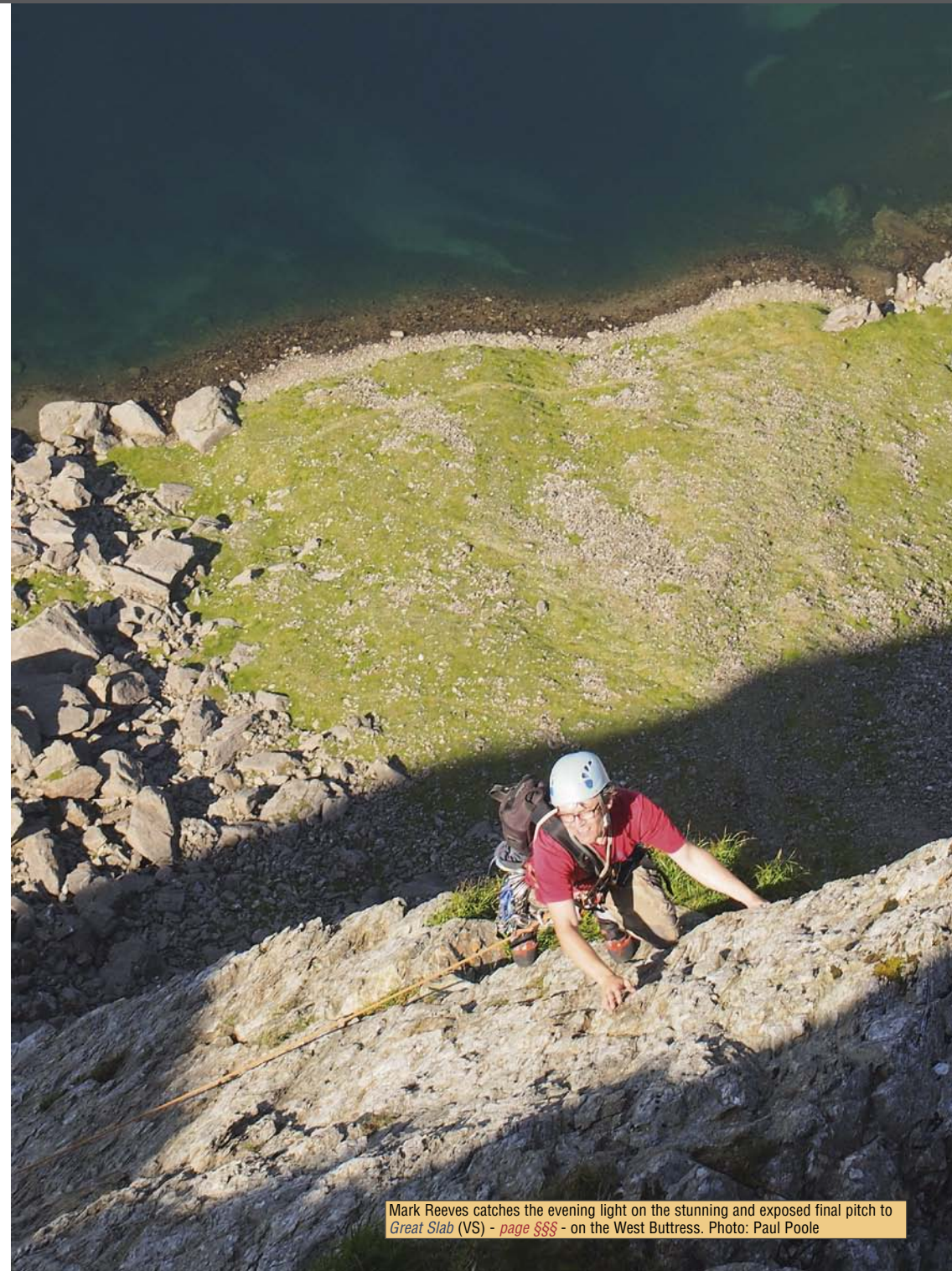
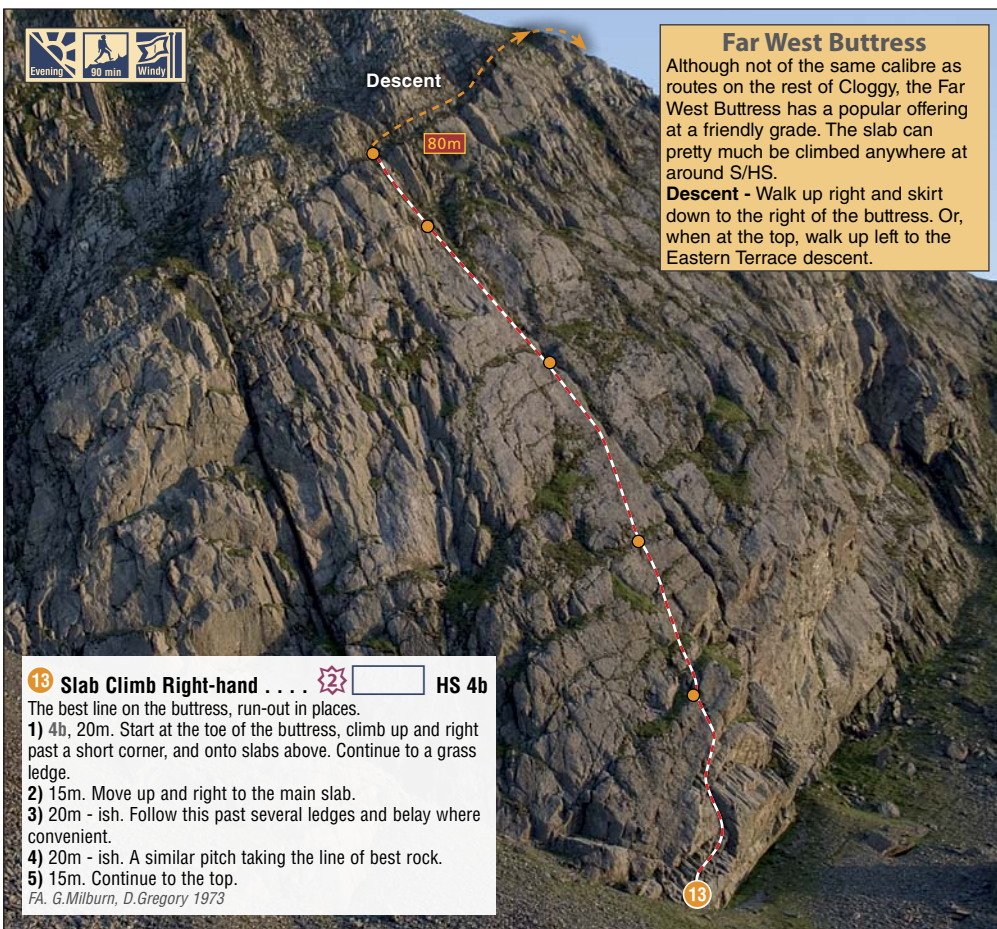
Descent - Walk up right and skirt down to the right of the buttress. Or, when at the top, walk up left to the Eastern Terrace descent.

13 Slab Climb Right-hand HS 4b

The best line on the buttress, run-out in places.

- 1) 4b, 20m. Start at the toe of the buttress, climb up and right past a short corner, and onto slabs above. Continue to a grass ledge.
- 2) 15m. Move up and right to the main slab.
- 3) 20m - ish. Follow this past several ledges and belay where convenient.
- 4) 20m - ish. A similar pitch taking the line of best rock.
- 5) 15m. Continue to the top.

FA. G.Milburn, D.Gregory 1973



Mark Reeves catches the evening light on the stunning and exposed final pitch to *Great Slab* (VS) - page \$\$\$ - on the West Buttress. Photo: Paul Poole

Lliwedd and Gwynant Valley



The tricky final pitch of *Avalanche/Red Wall/Longland's Continuation (S 4b)* - page \$\$\$ - on Lliwedd. Photo: Mark Reeves

Mod to S	-	4	1	-
HS to HVS	-	5	1	-
E1 to E3	-	-	-	-
E4 and up	-	-	-	-

The long, rambling nature of Lliwedd means that it is possible to climb almost anywhere and the route descriptions and lines are easy to misinterpret as the whole cliff is heavily featured with grooves, aretes and ledges. The best advice is just go, climb up, and have fun! Lliwedd isn't about chasing grades, it's about reaching the summit, soaking up the view, probably getting lost and heading back to the Vaynol for a good pint of Robinsons. Also described in this chapter is the short and pleasant slabby venue of Craig Aderyn.

Approach

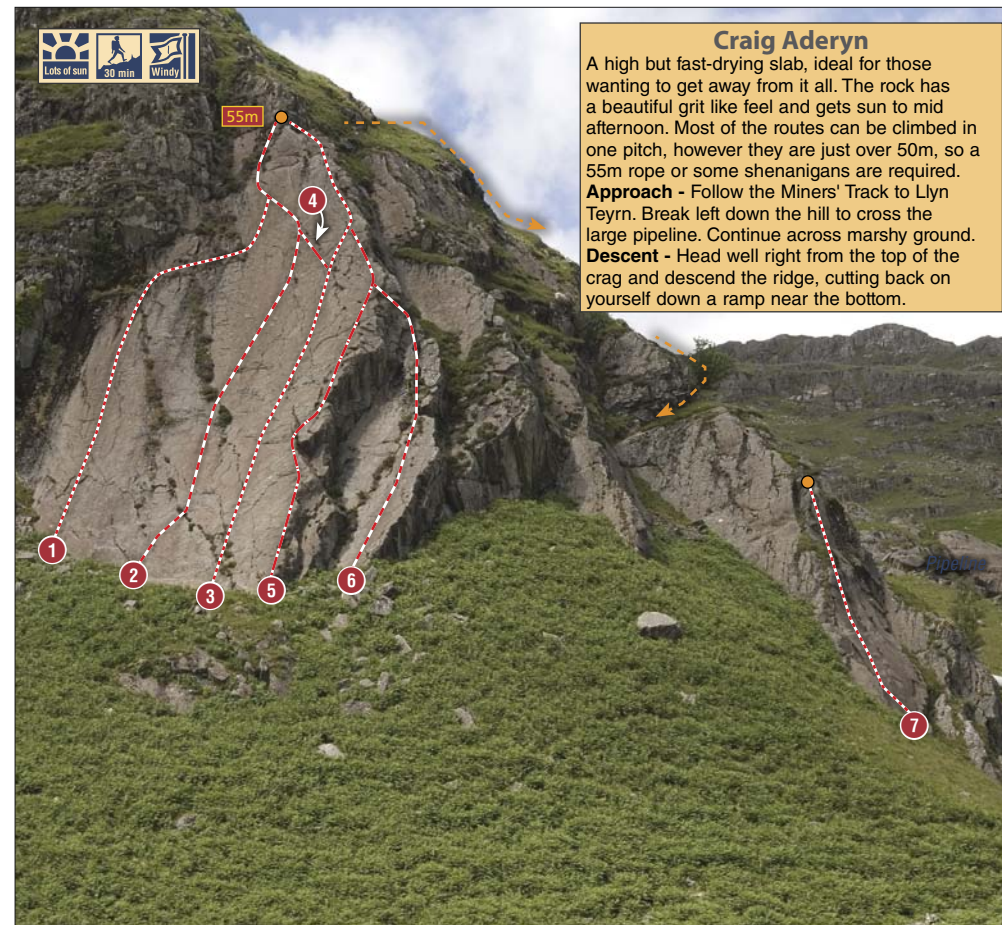
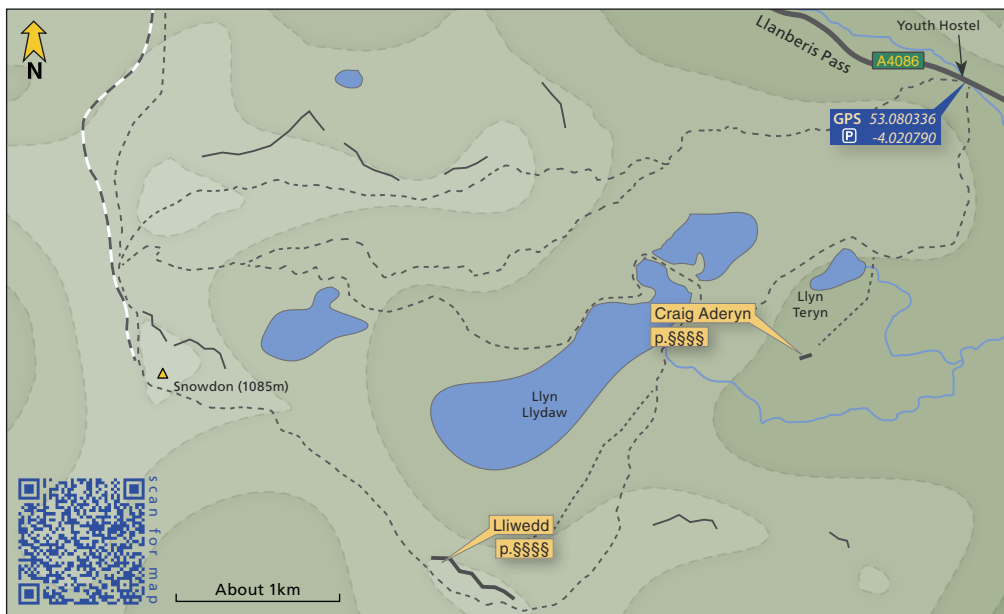
The approach for Lliwedd takes you up into the highest mountains of Snowdonia. The summit of the crag is a great view point and from there many teams continue up to the top of Snowdon. Park at Pen y Pass carpark at the top of the Llanberis Pass if you are an early bird who can afford the expensive parking charge. Or use the Park and Ride bus from Nant Peris. **Lliwedd** - From Pen y Pass, follow the Miners' Track for about 20 minutes to Llyn Llydaw where the main track heads right over a causeway. Follow the smaller left-hand branch along the left-hand side of the lake to where it forks near a green 'valve house'. Keep right here and head uphill towards Lliwedd. At the first flattening at a small plateau, contour across and up to the crag which is still over 1km away. **Craig Aderyn** - From Pen y Pass, follow the Miners' Track to the first small lake on the left. Drop down to the stream that flows out of this and walk down below the small crag on the right towards a pipeline. Cross the pipeline and wander across the plateau. Craig Aderyn faces away from you on the right side of the plateau.

Conditions

Lliwedd takes a lot of drainage, is very high up in the mountains and only gets early morning sun. The routes take a couple of days to dry out and, due to the nature of the rock, wet ascents are not really recommended. As with all high crags, good mountain gear is essential.

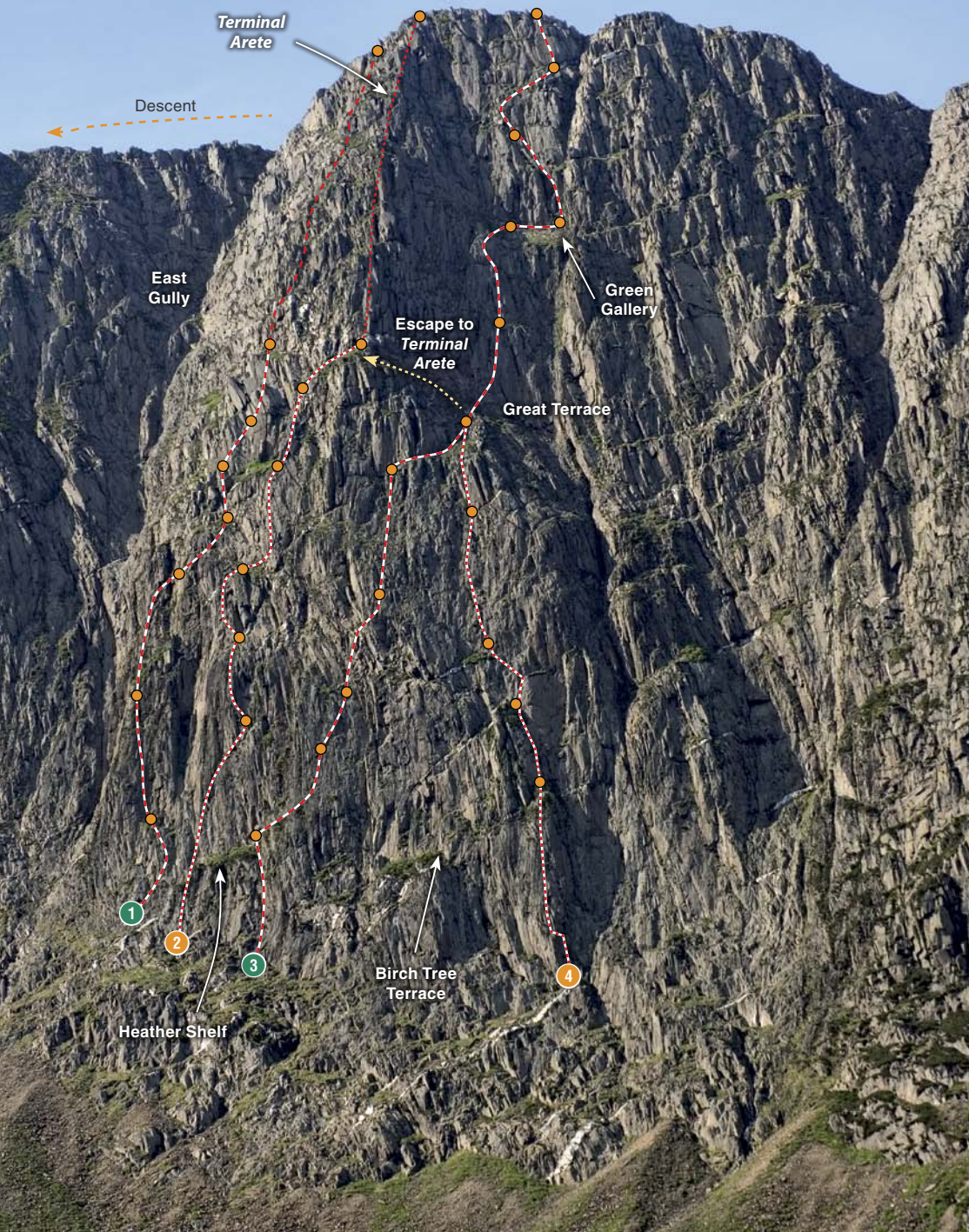
Other Guides

There is an old guidebook for **Lliwedd** published by the Climbers' Club in 1998. Craig Aderyn is included in the **Llanberis** guidebook published by the Climbers' Club in 2009.



Craig Aderyn
A high but fast-drying slab, ideal for those wanting to get away from it all. The rock has a beautiful grit like feel and gets sun to mid afternoon. Most of the routes can be climbed in one pitch, however they are just over 50m, so a 55m rope or some shenanigans are required. **Approach** - Follow the Miners' Track to Llyn Teyrn. Break left down the hill to cross the large pipeline. Continue across marshy ground. **Descent** - Head well right from the top of the crag and descend the ridge, cutting back on yourself down a ramp near the bottom.

- 1 Treasury Climb** VS 4c
More overgrown than the rest of the routes here, but still worthwhile. Climb the left-hand side of the slab to the top of the lower diagonal heathery rake. Move up to a ledge and traverse right to the end of the heather and regain the clean slab to join *Via Media* to the top.
FA. F.Graham 7.10.1924
- 2 Via Media** VS 5a
A fine route. Start below the centre of the wall, move up and right to a small rake, then head straight up to near the right-hand end of the higher heather rake. Continue more or less directly up to reach a crack and head up and left to join a higher, more defined crack and follow this left to the top of the slab. Move up to belay on ledge.
FA. F.Graham, M.Guinness 24.8.1925
- 3 Jacob's Ladder** VDiff
Start 3m left of the arete and continue up the slab parallel to this. Eventually you join the arete near its top, follow it left to belay on the ledge at the top.
FA. F.Graham 7.10.1924
- 4 Jacob's Media** HS 4a
A fine slab pitch linking two existing routes to give the best climb on the crag. Climb *Jacob's Ladder* then, at two thirds height, follow a crack back left to join *Via Media*.
- 5 Arete Climb** Diff
An enjoyable outing up the right arete. Follow the arete, passing a possible belay at 30m.
FA. S.W.Herford 1913
- 6 Subsidiary Slab** Mod
A pleasant scramble up the smaller set-back slab. A belay is possible at the top of the first slab.
- 7 Bowling for Columbine** HVS 5b
A short route without much gear, up a slab. The crux is thankfully near the bottom and it is reasonably escapable.
FA M.Reeves 2010



Descent - Turn left along the ridge back towards Pen Y Pass, follow the path down to a col and then over a small rise. After a short while the path heads steeply down left towards Llyn Llydaw. Scramble down to where the path becomes more defined and reverse the approach to Pen Y Pass.

1 Horned Crag Route VDiff

One of the first routes climbed on the cliff, and a real mountaineering adventure. Start below and left of Heather Shelf.

- 1) 20m. Scramble up to the left-hand end of Heather Shelf. Traverse leftwards to the second rib and climb it to belay beneath the big corner.
- 2) 27m. Climb the corner until it is possible to step left onto the prow. Follow this to a big vegetated ledge.
- 3) 30m. Climb the broader rib above to another, larger heather-covered ledge.
- 4) 30m. Climb the wall rightwards to reach the vague chimney on its right-hand side. Ascend this, and follow a quartz band rightwards to a ledge.
- 5) 23m. Scramble up to belay on the left end of the grassy ledge, beneath the Horns - a prominent clean buttress of rock.
- 6) 20m. The groove in the centre of the wall leads to another, steeper groove. Climb this until a hard move rightwards leads to the base of the slab below the Horns.
- 7) 8m. Climb the polished slab. From here 100m of exposed scrambling leads to the summit, it is best to break this into 25m pitches, unless you feel happy enough to move together or solo 400m off the ground.

FA. J.Thompson, O.Eckenstein 9.1905

2 Paradise HS 4a

A sustained outing leading to the classic scramble of *Terminal Arete*. Start just left of the main central section of Heather Shelf.

- 1) 4a, 40m. Scramble up to Heather Shelf and a rock spike at its left-hand end. Follow the groove, forking right at its junction, to reach a ledge. A quartz band on the right leads to a stance below a grass ledge.
- 2) 4a, 23m. A short groove up and left bypasses an overhang. Climb to the ledge above and belay below a prominent V-groove.
- 3) 4a, 25m. Step out leftwards and climb the slab until moves back right lead to another ledge above the last belay.
- 4) 30m. Traverse rightwards to below an arete that is above a quartz wall. Climb up this to a stance level with the grassy ledge on the left.
- 5) 30m. Follow the arete, flecked with ribbons of quartz, to a spike belay.
- 6) 35m. Easy climbing leads up and rightwards to a stance above the left-hand tip of the Great Terrace, below the...

Terminal Arete

7), 8), 9) and 10) 120m. From here, you continue up the arete in 4 long pitches. The climbing is Diff or less, but it is recommended that you remain roped up unless you feel confident and experienced enough to move together.

FA. H.Jones, R.Backwell 23.9.1909

3 Avalanche/Red Wall/Longland's Continuation S 4b

A route that is steeped in history, and the classic of the buttress, but it is frequently the scene of benightments! Start below the right-hand end of Heather Shelf. *Photo on page \$\$\$.*

- 1) 20m. Follow the groove to Heather Shelf.
- 2) 30m. Climb diagonally rightwards rounding two ribs. Just round the second, climb upwards to belay 4m left of a prominent spike, level with a dog-leg in the corner to the right.
- 3) 15m. Climb up to belay left of a quartz band.
- 4) 25m. Move right and climb the quartz band. The groove above is tricky and leads to moves rightwards to some ledges. Move onto the right-hand side of the rib to the right and climb it to a spike belay.
- 5) 33m. A vegetated groove up and right leads to a tall, thin plank-like block.
- 6) 33m. Scramble up rightwards to reach the Great Terrace - a large grassy shelf - and belay to the right of this below and left of a red wall with 'RW' etched in the base.

WARNING! - If time is running out you can easily escape left onto *Terminal Arete*, or face possible benightment as you are still six pitches from the top and three of them are harder than those below, with the crux being the final one!

- 7) 4a, 24m. (The start of **Red Wall**). Move rightwards to a grassy groove. Climb this to a hard move right onto a rib leading to some good ledges. Belay at the bottom of a deep groove pointing towards the top of *Terminal Arete*.
- 8) 4a, 30m. Climb up a rib, passing a pinnacle on the right to a ledge. Climb the short wall via a tricky few moves to the Green Gallery.
- 9) 10m. Walk right to belay about 10m left of the huge gully.
- 10) 25m. (The start of **Longland's Continuation**). Climb the left arete of a steep face to a hollow. A jammed block leads rightwards to a slab. Climb the slab, trending rightwards after 6m and pass another slab to belay in a grassy slot.
- 11) 30m. Follow a rib on the right to belay beneath a steep slab.
- 12) 4b, 15m. The final pitch is the crux slab! The chances are you will have developed a crowd of onlookers descending Lliwedd, if you make it look good or are soloing it you may even get a standing ovation! The slab can be climbed direct or by trending left at half-height.

FA. J.Thompson, E.Reynolds 9.1907. FA. (Longland's) J.Longland 1929

4 The Sword/Route 2 VS 4c

A fine, open route leading to Great Terrace, from where a choice of finishes is available. After a hard first pitch, the rest is only VDiff. Start by heading up to the base of the crag and scrambling right along a quartz break to a short groove to the right of rib.

- 1) 4c, 55m. Climb the corner to an overlap, then move leftwards to a ledge. Climb the rib above directly, past 'the Quartz Babe' to belay 5m after the Babe's tip.
- 2) 20m. Continue easily to a bollard belay.
- 3) 14m. Climb up and right from the top of the tallest block to some big holds, then move easily back left to belay on a ledge beneath a groove.
- 4) 40m. Follow the groove, passing a possible belay at 12m, before moving right into another groove that leads, eventually, to a small ledge.
- 5) 30m. Easy climbing leads to the Great Terrace. From here, pick a finish up *Terminal Arete*, or *Avalanche/Red Wall*.

FA. (The Sword) J.Edwards, J.Buzzard, F.Champion 8.1938

FA. (Route 2) J.Thompson, O.Eckstein 1904

Clogwyn y Wenallt is a low-lying venue in the Gwynant Valley below Snowdon. The crag has pristine rock, a beautiful open aspect and gorgeous views over the lake. You can get pumped on the top pitch of *Oxine* and cool off by taking a dip in the lake!

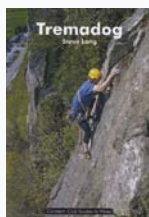
Mod to S	-	-	-	-
HS to HVS	-	-	-	1
E1 to E3	-	-	2	1
E4 and up	-	-	1	-

Approach

The crag is found halfway down the Gwynant valley, at the head of Llyn Gwynant. From Pen y Pass, head away from Llanberis and turn right at the Pen y Grwyd T-junction. At the bottom of the hill lies the big lake (Llyn Gwynant) and a superb campsite on your right. Park at the campsite (paid) or in a layby by the lake and walk back to the campsite. Go to the back right-hand corner of the campsite and cross a small bridge over the river. Turn left and follow the path downstream for 100m until a vague track heads steeply up to the base of the cliff on your right.

Conditions

Clogwyn y Wenallt gets morning sun and dries quickly. It can be very warm in summer and can also get a few midges as it lies close to the lake.



Other Guides

The crag is covered in the Tremadog guide published by the Climbers' Club in 2010.



Having made some committing moves out of the groove, Bridget Collier tackles the headwall of *Oxine* (VS) - page \$\$\$ - direct on some massive holds. Photo: Mark Glaister



Descent - Walk off to the left and follow a small path back to the base of the crag.



- 1 Ferdinand** **E2 5b**
 A classic Joe Brown jamming-crack. Steep, powerful and intimidating! Start by walking up the left-hand side of the crag until level with the base of the route. Traverse in along a terrace to a flat spot beneath the steep corner and crack. Leave the ledge via a boulder problem and climb the corner for a few metres until a hard move right gains the crack. Let the battle commence.
 FA. J.Brown, C.Jones 7.2.1959
- 2 Oxine** **VS 4c**
 A great combination of the first pitch of a VS called *Oxo* and the steep and thrilling top pitch of *Bovine*.
1) 4b, 30m. Start 10m left of the wall that touches the crag. Climb up a few metres and traverse right to a small ledge. Continue rightwards, passing a pinnacle to reach a small flat wall, pass this and gain the ledge on the right. Good belay.
2) 4c, 28m. This is what you came for. Steep, exposed climbing on holds the size of buckets. Climb the groove above the ledge for 2m, make a hard move right to huge holds and blast-off directly up the wall.
 FA. (*Oxo*) J.Lees, G.Roberts, W.Trench 12.4.1953
 FA. (*Bovine*) C.Davies, B.Wright, D.McKelvey 19.5.1957
- 3 Bovero** **E2 5b**
 Another combination this time *Bovine* and *Torero*.
1) 5a, 28m. Start beneath a groove 5m left of the stone wall, midway between *Oxine* and the wall. Climb the wall to the pinnacle on *Oxine*, blast up the groove above to the good ledge on the left.
2) 5b, 30m. Boulder off the ledge on to the flake above and gain a scoop. Step right to a flake, and continue to easier ground. Hop left in to the groove and climb this to the top.
 FA. (*Torero*) J.Brown, D.Whillans (1pt) 5.1959
- 4 The Poacher** **E5 6b**
 One for the hard boys and girls.
1) 5a, 28m. As for *Bovero*.
2) 5c, 15m. From the right-hand end of the ledge, climb a groove to an awkward stance.
3) 6b, 15m. The bulging wall above leads past a peg to a groove and the top.
 FA. P.Burke, G.Kent (1pt) 4.1.1978. FFA. R.Fawcett 1980
- 5 The Death Wish** **E2 5c**
 A great, harder alternative to *Oxine*.
1) 4b, 30m. As for *Oxine*.
2) 5c, 26m. Climb the groove as for *Oxine* and where that route moves right, break left to a thin flake. Follow this to gain cracks which are climbed to the top.
 FA. M.Crook, S.McCartney 6.1977

Another crag worth seeking out in the Gwynant Valley is the oddity of Clogwyn y Bustach. Although only having a couple of routes that see much traffic, both are fairly unique. One starts and finishes at the base of the crag and the other disappears into the depths of the mountain.

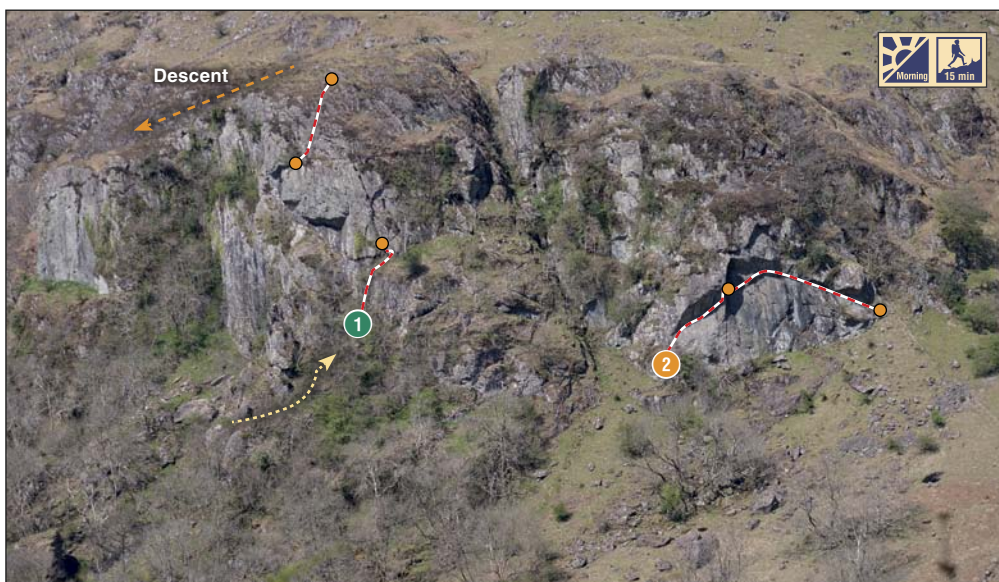
Mod to S	-	-	-	1
HS to HVS	-	-	1	-
E1 to E3	-	-	-	-
E4 and up	-	-	-	-

Approach See map on page 555

From the Wenallt approach (page 555) head over the bridge at the back of the campsite and turn right. Walk along the base of the valley for about 10 minutes until the left-hand crag becomes visible on the hillside above you. *Gallop Step* buttress is a little further along.

Conditions

Whilst *Lockwood's Chimney* is a classic wet day or indeed night option as the tunnel offers respite from the rain, it is still best enjoyed in the dry. *Gallop Step* can seep after prolonged wet spells.



1 Lockwood's Chimney ^{Top 1} 150 VDiff

A route of great character and fairly unique in that most of the climbing takes place inside the cliff! It is traditional to climb it on a wet day with a large team for added entertainment. Start by scrambling up to the base of the crag, to the right of a streaked wall, by a prominent rock arch.

- 20m. Move up and right to a short wall and find a crack. Climb this to a ledge and move right to a tree at the base of the chimney.
- 8m. Back-and-foot frantically to gain the ledge/path in the chimney on the right.
- 20m. Walk along the base of the chimney to where the pathway ends. Climb up the chimney again to exit back into the daylight at a large ledge.
- 15m. An exposed and polished final slab leads to a belay on the top of the crag.

FA. A.Lockwood 1908

2 Gallop Step HVS 5a

Another unique route that begins and ends on the ground below the crag. It follows a line of weakness below an arching roof line. Start by scrambling up to a grassy ledge level with, and left of, the start of the route and traverse across to belay at the start of the break-line.

- 5a, 22m. Move up and right to gain the break-line below the roof and traverse rightwards along this on good holds to the arete. Arrange good gear here and make the crux pull round the arete and across the short steep wall to belay in the corner.
- 4c, 32m. Follow the break-line right across the wall, heading slightly up, before making the long descent to the far end of the crag. Care is needed with some rock and remember to protect the second who will feel like they are leading this pitch.

FA. J.Disley, D.Morin 8.1.1956



Mark Reeves starting off along the great traverse of *Gallop Step* (HVS 5a) - [this page](#). This arching line starts and finishes at the base of the crag via two long pitches. Photo: Mark Reeves Collection

Ogwen



Other Guides

The comprehensive guidebook for this area is **Ogwen** published by the Climbers' Club in 2010.



Bridget Collier midway up the classic *Direct Route* (HS 4b) - *page 555* - on Glyder Fach with the Ogwen Valley and Tryfan in the background. Photo: Mark Glaister

Mod to S	-	13	7	3
HS to HVS	-	2	5	1
E1 to E3	-	-	3	-
E4 and up	-	-	-	1

Tryfan is one of the most iconic mountains in Snowdonia and a home to many classic routes which continue to attract novice and expert alike. Whether it be your first lead on Little Tryfan or the Milestone Buttress, or a big easy Alpine day on *Grooved Arete*, these are routes you will enjoy and remember for years to come.

The routes covered in this chapter are on opposite sides of the main bulk of Tryfan. The lowest crag of Little Tryfan faces west and is quick and easy to get to offering an excellent beginners' slab for practicing multi-pitch leading.

The massive East Face presents a majestic but rambling hillside which is clearly visible as you come up the valley from Capel Curig. The routes start from high up on the Heather Terrace which is quite a hike to start the day with and already half-way up the mountain. Above the pitches tend to tag together quality sections of rock with the odd scramble and ledge walk, but most top-out pretty much on the summit of Tryfan giving a real mountain peak experience.

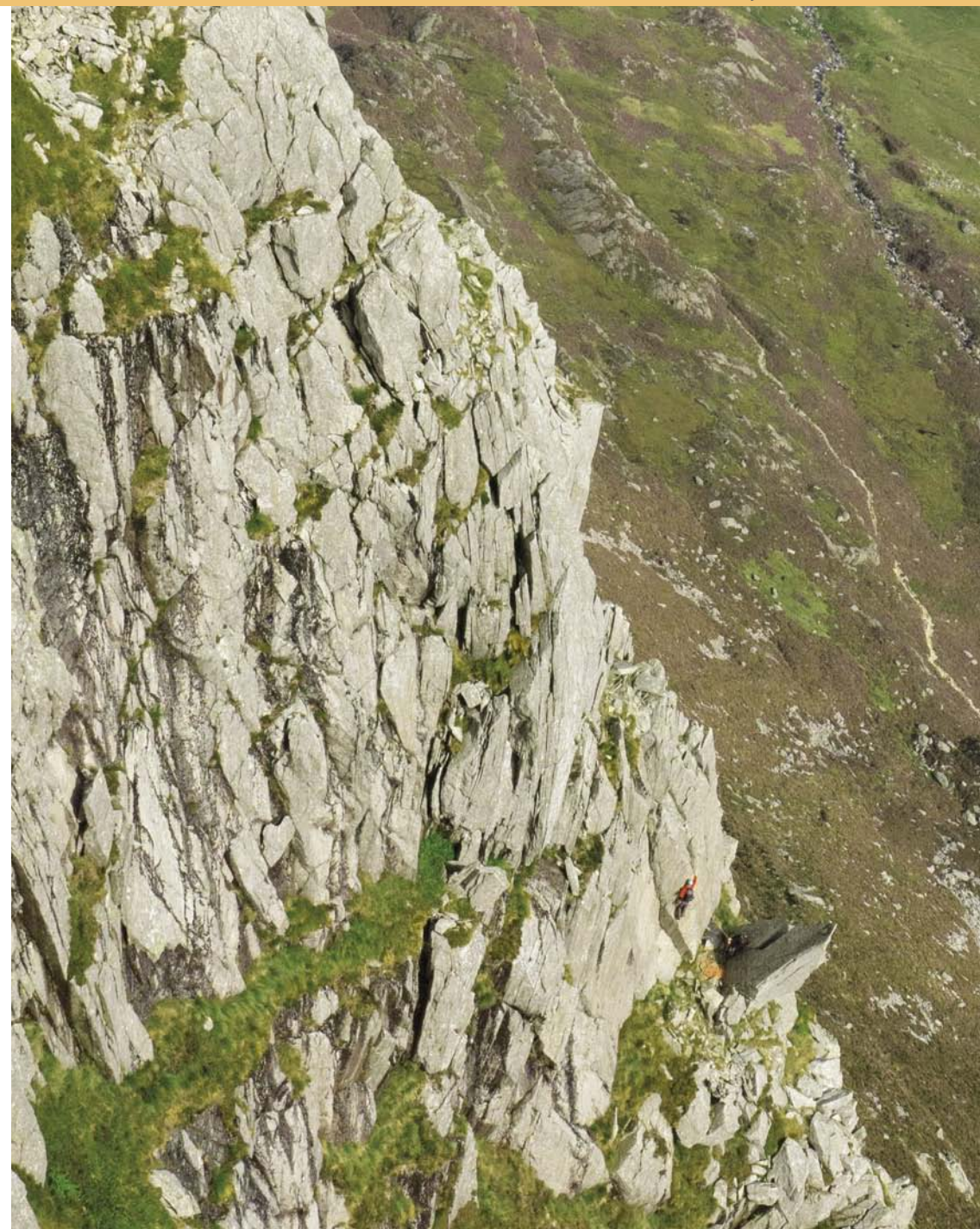
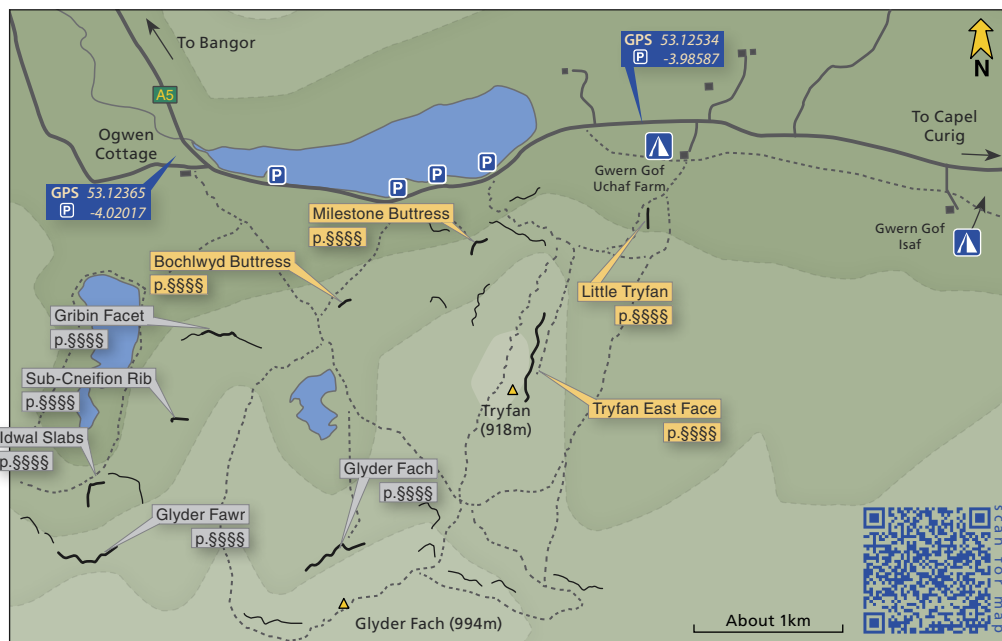
On the other side of the mountain is Milestone Buttress with some classic easy routes plus a few in the mid-grades. For slightly harder routes you can head to the Bochlwyd Buttress, where the rock is steeper and more demanding.

Approach

Tryfan looms over the A5 south of Bethesda, and northwest from Capel Curig. There are plentiful parking spots by the road but these can fill on busy weekends if you don't get there soon enough. The approaches from the parking spots are described on the route pages.

Conditions

In general the rock quality is excellent and the routes covered here tend to be well-travelled and clear of vegetation. All the buttresses dry reasonably quickly after rain, especially Milestone and Little Tryfan. Dependent on the time of year you can seek sun or shade as many of the crags get morning or afternoon sun. When the bad weather comes in though, Tryfan has little to offer.



A climber embarking on the Yellow Slab pitch of *Overlapping Ridge Route* (VDiff) - page \$\$\$ - on Tryfan. Photo: Mark Glaister



1 Little Tryfan Arete Diff

A classic scramble/climb up the left arete.

- 1) 26m. Large holds lead to the ridge which is followed to a comfortable belay.
- 2) 26m. The ridge is followed to the top.

2 Crack 1 Diff

The wide crack has good gear and stances.

- 1) 25m. A line of flakes and cracks leads to a good niche-belay.
- 2) 12m. Follow the crack right of the arete.
- 3) 12m. Continue in the same line to the top.

3 Crack 2 Diff

A popular and well protected route.

- 1) 38m. A diagonal crack leads to the large triangular niche. Follow the wide crack above to a small, square belay.
- 2) 12m. As for Crack 1.

4 Crack 3 Diff

The hardest of the three crack routes.

- 1) 25m. A left-trending flakes gain the straight crack. Follow this to a small belay.
- 2) 27m. Follow the right-hand crack to the ledge. Belay here or a little higher.



5 Slab 1 VDiff

Start beneath the white 'boil' at 23m.

- 1) 25m. Climb cracks then the slab past the left side of the boil to belay as for Crack 3.
- 2) 27m. Take the left of the two cracks above to rejoin Crack 3 near the top.

6 Slab 2 S 4a

A great route up the blank-looking slab. A HS eliminate is possible by climbing direct over the 'boil'.

- 1) 4a, 28m. Head almost directly up the slab past the right side of the 'boil'.
- 2) 4a, 23m. Continue up the slab above on fine incut holds.

7 Crack 4 Diff

The wide ragged-crack gives a fine pitch.

- 1) 30m. Follow the wide crack past a large flake to a good belay on the slab.
- 2) 20m. Either climb rightwards to the chimney or go direct to the ledge.

10 Stepped Crack Diff

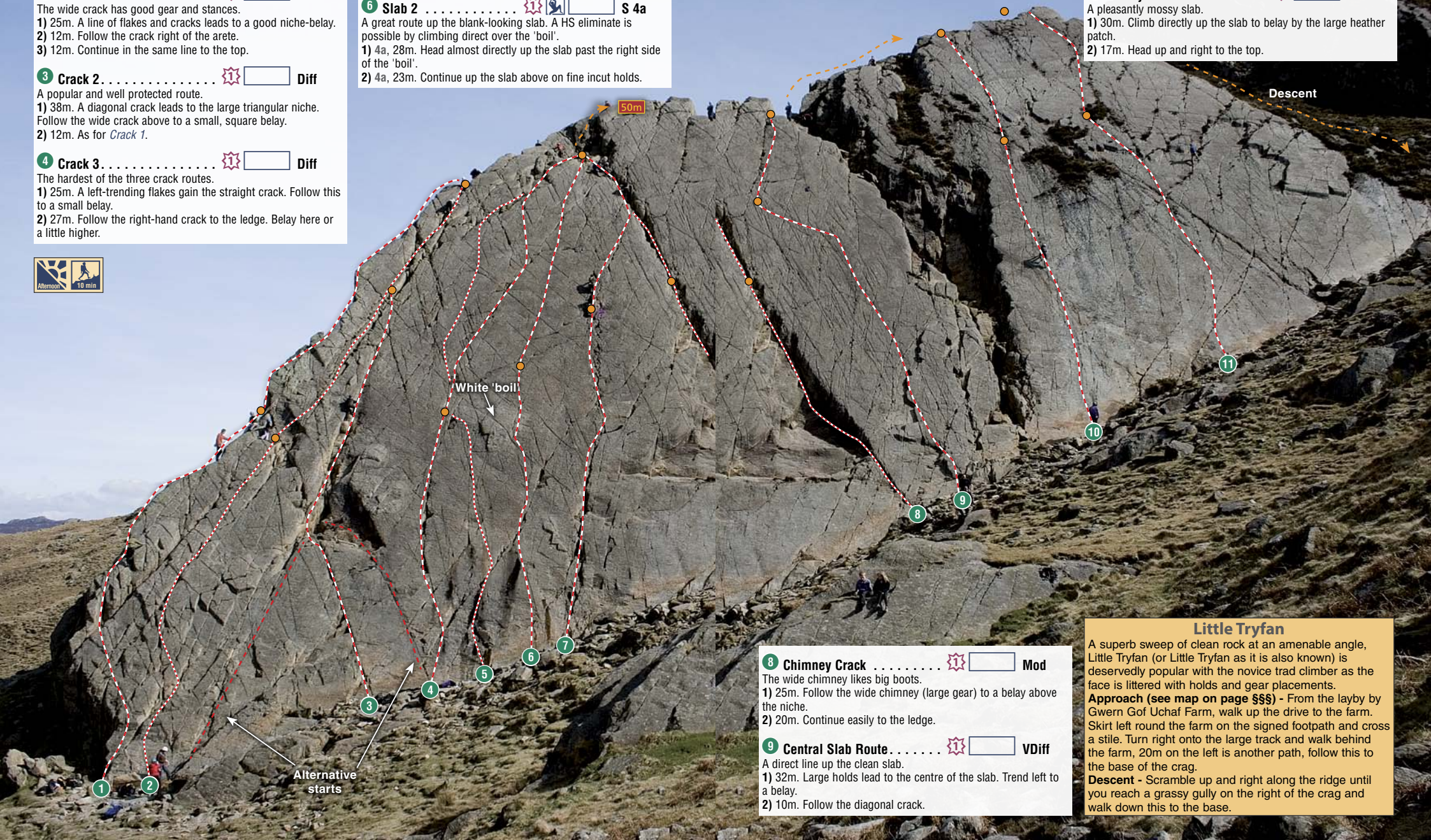
Start just right of the large gash.

- 1) 30m. A long and delightful pitch 5m right of the arete to a belay above the heather.
- 2) 16m. Climb easily to the top.

11 Mossy Slab HVD

A pleasantly mossy slab.

- 1) 30m. Climb directly up the slab to belay by the large heather patch.
- 2) 17m. Head up and right to the top.



8 Chimney Crack Mod

The wide chimney likes big boots.

- 1) 25m. Follow the wide chimney (large gear) to a belay above the niche.
- 2) 20m. Continue easily to the ledge.

9 Central Slab Route VDiff

A direct line up the clean slab.

- 1) 32m. Large holds lead to the centre of the slab. Trend left to a belay.
- 2) 10m. Follow the diagonal crack.

Little Tryfan
A superb sweep of clean rock at an amenable angle, Little Tryfan (or Little Tryfan as it is also known) is deservedly popular with the novice trad climber as the face is littered with holds and gear placements.
Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - From the layby by Gwern Gof Uchaf Farm, walk up the drive to the farm. Skirt left round the farm on the signed footpath and cross a stile. Turn right onto the large track and walk behind the farm, 20m on the left is another path, follow this to the base of the crag.
Descent - Scramble up and right along the ridge until you reach a grassy gully on the right of the crag and walk down this to the base.



East Face

The left side of the East Face of Tryfan is home to many long and historical routes.

Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - All routes are approached from the Heather Terrace, a long ledge with a good path that runs along the base of the cliffs. Heather Terrace is reached by parking at the layby by Gwern Gof Uchaf Farm. Walk up the driveway to the farm, skirt left round this and turn right onto the track behind and immediate left onto a path that leads past the base of Little Tryfan. Follow the path up to a fence line and turn right to follow the path up to a steep gully. Head up this then turn left along a smaller path. This will bring you onto Heather Terrace below the East Face. The routes are a reasonable distance along this and can be hard to identify on first acquaintance.

Descent - The easiest descent from the summit of the mountain is via the South Ridge. It is also possible to scramble down (Grade 1) North Gully then Little Gully (shown on next page). South Gully can be descended but requires a couple of abseils from precariously positioned belays and is not recommended. The famous North Ridge also makes a possible descent.

To the South Ridge



Thompson's Chimney

Easier finish

Yellow Slab

The Pinnacle

The Gash

South Gully
(a scramble)

Heather Terrace

1 Gashed Crag VDiff

A great, long route up the striking ridge passing the overhang of the Gash.

- 1) 45m. Start 35m left of South Gully, just above a widening in the terrace. Follow a small groove to an overlap at 9m. Turn this rightwards and climb easier ground up and right to ledges beneath the ridge proper and the left-hand end of the Gash.
- 2) 18m. Follow the ribbed wall up to the large sloping ledge of the Gash, a feature that looks like a giant took a swing with an axe at the crag. Belay on the far right beneath the chimney.
- 3) 20m. Follow the awkward chimney. On the final move, your foot will slip several times before you finally get enough purchase to escape. Climb the wall above leftwards to the ridge.
- 4) 38m. Follow the exposed and rough ridge (various belays possible).
- 5) 38m. Continue up the ridge to reach a good ledge below the final tower.
- 6) 17m. Several alternatives can be found here, most feel hard. Climb the groove past a tricky roof.

FA. H.Buckle, G.Barlow 9.1902

The next route starts high up South Gully.

2 Munich Climb HVS 5a

An adventurous mountain route high on the side wall of South Gully that is no pushover. The route is gained by scrambling up or abseiling down South Gully to reach a large grassy ledge to the left of a rock rib.

- 1) 4c, 30m. From the ledge, step down and follow the right-most groove to reach a steep narrow slab (possible belay). Climb the slab to a hard move to reach the right-hand edge. Belay with care.
- 2) 5a, 18m. From the right-hand block, boldly gain the nose on the left. Continue left to gain Teufel's Crack. Follow this to a belay on a grassy rake.
- 3) 15m. Easily up the rake to belay behind the large block.
- 4) 4b, 38m. Climb a vague groove right of the block. Move left to a crack and follow this to a ledge. Gain a steep crack on the right to reach the top.

FA. H. Teufel, H. Sedlmayr, J. Jenkins (2pts) 1.7.1936

3 Overlapping Ridge Route VDiff

One of Wales' most classic routes. Also known as **First Pinnacle Rib**. A wonderful, direct voyage up the ridge. The Yellow Slab on pitch 4 has a short 4b technical crux, but it can be skirted round to the right.

- 1) 10m. Start 10m right of South Gully ("FPR" is scratched on the rock) where a square block leans against the crag. Climb a slab underneath steep rock, exit right. Climb a groove on the right to belay on the ridge.
- 2) 40m. Follow the easy ridge on the left direct.
- 3) 40m. Continue up the ridge to the pinnacle. Belay behind the pinnacle.
- 4) 4b, 15m. The infamous Yellow Slab! Climb the polished slab to a groove on the right. Follow this to a stance. You can avoid this pitch on the right if needed.
- 5) to 7) Finish as for *Pinnacle Rib Route* in three pitches.

FA. E. Steeple, G. Barlow, A. Doughty 9.1914

4 Pinnacle Rib Route VDiff

Another classic outing up the long ridge 40m right of South Gully. Often called **Second Pinnacle Rib** ("FPR" is scratched on the rock here too!).

- 1) 25m. Climb a groove just right of the rib that marks the right-hand side of the large grassy bay to belay on blocks.
- 2) 30m. Climb the steep rib above.
- 3) 30m. Climb rock steps to a large stance.
- 4) 12m. Continue up the rounded arete above, then traverse left to a stance above the Yellow Slab on the previous route.
- 5) 35m. Follow the curving rib to easier ground and a belay beneath the final wall.
- 6) 20m. Walk rightwards for 20m and belay.
- 7) 25m. Either climb straight up **Thompson's Chimney (S)** a rite of passage for many traditional climbers, or head right and take an alternative route onto easier ground.

FA. J. Thompson, H. Hughes 1894



Samuel James-Louwerse making the 'Knight's Move' on *Grooved Arete* (HVD) - [this page](#) - on Tryfan. This slab was the original crux of the route in the days of big nailed boots but modern rock shoes have tamed it. Photo: Alan James

Descent - The easiest descent from the summit of the mountain is via the South Ridge. It is also possible to scramble down (Grade 1) North Gully then Little Gully (shown on next page). South Gully can be descended but requires a couple of abseils from a precariously positioned belays and is not recommended. The famous North Ridge also makes a possible descent.



5 North Buttress Diff

This is a scramble with a tricky initial pitch. Start left of *Grooved Arete*, and to the right of North Gully, below a polished corner.

- 1) 20m. Scurry up the corner to a break and traverse right to a block belay on the arete.
- 2) 30m. Head up and right behind the block and then back left into a groove directly above the stance. Move left onto a rib and head up following the left side of the rib to a grassy ledge.
- 3) 30m. The route becomes more indistinct here and you can climb up in a variety of places but generally trending up and left to a large terrace. Most people escape left along the terrace and into North Gully and make their way to the summit.

6 Belle Vue Bastion VS 4c

Great rock, exhilarating moves and breath-taking exposure. Gain the right-hand end of the large terrace halfway up North Gully either by a scramble or by *North Buttress*. Belay just right of a large block.

- 1) 4c, 25m. Climb up right and go round the arete on the right. Climb a slab to a small ledge then follow the slab above. Continue up the curving groove to a large ledge.
- 2) 4b, 40m. Head right onto the nose and enjoy the air beneath your feet. Climb straight up to easier ground leading to the top.

FA. I.Waller, C.Palmer 7.6.1927

7 Grooved Arete HVD 4a

One of the best and most popular routes of its grade in the UK. Start beneath the well-worn corner with the letters 'GA' scratched on the rock on its right-hand side.

- 1) 4a, 30m. Climb the tricky polished corner then make a move rightwards onto a slab. Climb this and continue up a crack, or the wall to the left, to the top of the rib.
- 2) 12m. Walk/scramble easily up left to the base of a long groove with a roof at half-height.
- 3) 50m. Climb cracks on the right-hand side of the groove past the roof, then step left into the smaller continuation groove which leads to a ledge. Belay on the next ledge a little higher.
- 4) 30m. Scramble up right to a path and walk along this to the base of a rib and the letters 'GA' on the rock again.
- 5) 4a, 50m. Start on the right of the rib and climb up and leftwards to gain the groove above. Follow this until a step left gains a steeper continuation-groove. Climb this with increasing difficulty until a move leftwards gains The Haven - a good ledge, block belay well back.
- 6) 20m. The infamous Knight's Move pitch. How's your chess? Climb the crack behind the belay to reach the chessboard slab above. Exit this slab by the top right corner, step round the arete to find a comfortable stance.
- 7) 20m. Romp up the corner above the belay to reach a good stance. An escape rightwards from here is easy if the weather is bad or darkness is closing in.
- 8) 25m. Head a little way right and climb the steep rock to a rib. Follow this to an ever-easing finish.

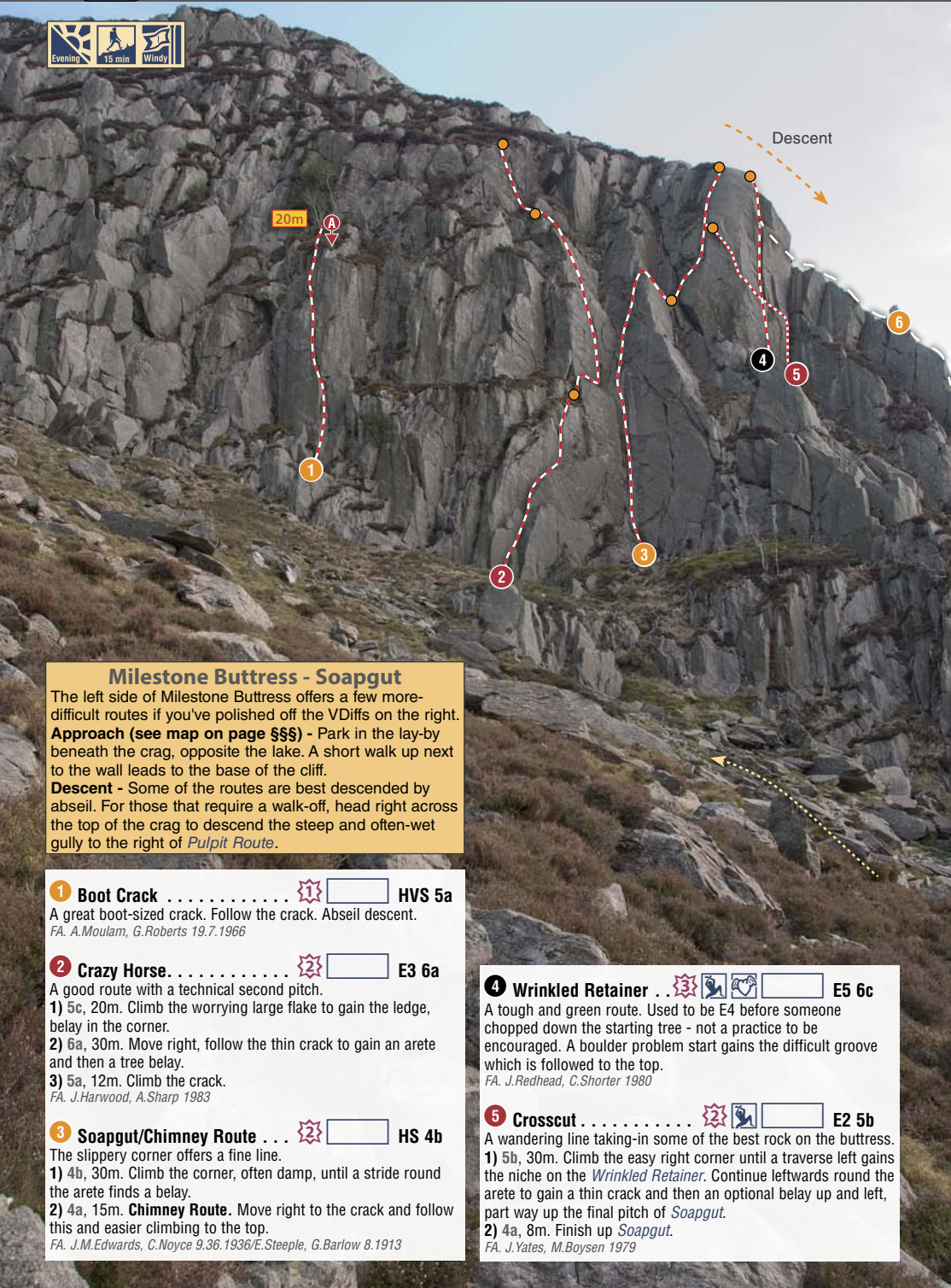
FA. E.Steeple, G.Barlow, A.Doughty, H.Bowron, A.Woodhead 4.1911

Scramble descent

North Gully

Heather Terrace





Milestone Buttress - Soapgut

The left side of Milestone Buttress offers a few more-difficult routes if you've polished off the VDiffs on the right. **Approach** (see map on page \$\$\$) - Park in the lay-by beneath the crag, opposite the lake. A short walk up next to the wall leads to the base of the cliff. **Descent** - Some of the routes are best descended by abseil. For those that require a walk-off, head right across the top of the crag to descend the steep and often-wet gully to the right of *Pulpit Route*.

1 Boot Crack **HVS 5a**

A great boot-sized crack. Follow the crack. Abseil descent.
FA. A.Moulam, G.Roberts 19.7.1966

2 Crazy Horse **E3 6a**

A good route with a technical second pitch.
1) 5c, 20m. Climb the worrying large flake to gain the ledge, belay in the corner.
2) 6a, 30m. Move right, follow the thin crack to gain an arete and then a tree belay.
3) 5a, 12m. Climb the crack.
FA. J.Harwood, A.Sharp 1983

3 Soapgut/Chimney Route . . . **HS 4b**

The slippery corner offers a fine line.
1) 4b, 30m. Climb the corner, often damp, until a stride round the arete finds a belay.
2) 4a, 15m. Chimney Route. Move right to the crack and follow this and easier climbing to the top.
FA. J.M.Edwards, C.Noyle 9.36.1936/E.Steeple, G.Barlow 8.1913

4 Wrinkled Retainer . . **E5 6c**

A tough and green route. Used to be E4 before someone chopped down the starting tree - not a practice to be encouraged. A boulder problem start gains the difficult groove which is followed to the top.
FA. J.Redhead, C.Shorter 1980

5 Crosscut **E2 5b**

A wandering line taking-in some of the best rock on the buttress.
1) 5b, 30m. Climb the easy right corner until a traverse left gains the niche on the *Wrinkled Retainer*. Continue leftwards round the arete to gain a thin crack and then an optional belay up and left, part way up the final pitch of *Soapgut*.
2) 4a, 8m. Finish up *Soapgut*.
FA. J.Yates, M.Boysen 1979




Ian Wilson on the extremely-exposed final pitch of *Super Direct* - (HVS 5a) - page \$\$\$ - on Milestone Buttress Photo: Jack Geldard

**Milestone Buttress - Direct Route**

The right-hand side of Milestone Buttress gets afternoon sunshine and a lot of climbing traffic.

Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - Park in the lay-by beneath the crag and follow the path up to where it meets the *Soappgut* wall (previous page). Cross the stile on the right and traverse across to below the crag.

Descent - The steep and often-wet gully just right of *Pulpit Route* is the most common descent. Care is needed in the upper reaches, as a slip could prove very serious. There is often a fixed abseil sling around a good thread at the top if you'd prefer to abseil.

6 Super Direct    **HVS 5a**



Fantastic slab moves on some of the best mountain rock in Wales.

1) 4c, 32m. Climb the polished ramp right to reach the overlap. Climb leftwards below this to gain the perfect crack in the rounded rib. Follow this to the ledge.

2) 4c, 30m. Climb a short wall to gain a slab, make a reach to gain a hold that leads onto the airy arete. Climb this to gain the large bay.

3) 5a, 22m. A difficult and committing pitch. Traverse left across flaky crimps to gain the niche and follow a crack to the top.

FA. G.Barlow, H.Priestley-Smith 1910. FA. (P3) J.M.Edwards 1941

7 Direct Route    **VDiff**

A classic outing, described here with a more direct start up the crack. The original start climbs the diagonal corner on the left.

1) 32m. Start at the polished finger-crack in the centre of the slab. Follow this to gain the diagonal overlap which is followed rightwards to a niche. Move left through the overlap to gain the slab on the left and make a tricky manoeuvre through the overlap and onto the large ledge.

2) 30m. Climb the groove behind the flake, stepping left at a steepening and continuing up the groove to a "leg width" crack. Surmount this amusing obstacle to a niche. Continue up the fault to a huge block, and hand traverse leftwards below this, striding wildly across a chasm at its end into a large bay. Move up to the back left of the bay and belay below a large chimney

3) 12m. The crux chimney! Squirm up the chimney at the back of the bay. Some holds on the right wall might be useful. An alternative, easier finish climbs the wall on the right.

FA. G.Barlow, H.Priestley-Smith 1910

8 Rowan Route.   **Diff**

Another fantastic and amenable classic with solid belays and expansive ledges.

1) 22m. Follow the rib just right of the gully or, if you would like more gear, the slab just right of this, to gain a large ledge with blocks and spikes.

2) 9m. Move right over blocks to a smooth open groove. Climb to a ledge.

3) 9m. Tackle the groove with the aid of the rib to gain a shelf and traverse left to another good ledge and belay.

4) 32m. Climb slabby rock to gain a chimney above. Follow the chimney to a slab (possible belay), then scramble up and left to easier ground.

FA. H.Jones, K.Orton, Mrs Orton 1.1910

9 Pulpit Route/Ivy Chimney   **VDiff**

Just left of the descent gully lies this interesting and varied route. Another good one for those with limited multi-pitch experience or those who enjoy comfortable belay ledges.

1) 28m. Climb the slab left of the rib on large holds to reach a small ledge. Climb up through a crack to get stood on the towering block on the left, the Pulpit and belay.

2) 28m. Move left onto the slab with hands in a break. Make a tricky step up to gain the slab above and traverse up and left to a steep groove. A puzzling move gains the slot/slab which is follow to a good belay on a flatter area of rock.

3) 12m. Scramble rightwards. You can descend by abseiling from a massive spike into the gully, or by descending a groove by the spike and then scrambling right along a blocky ledge into the gully. If you wish to keep climbing then continue along the ledge to beneath the gaping chimney and belay as for **Ivy Chimney**.

4) 15m. A steep few moves guard the entrance to the chimney. Walk back and exit right up a steep section and through a hole. Belay on a perched block.

5) 10m. Climb up the exposed rib on the right to the top.

FA. G.Barlow, E.Barlow 7.1911





Descent

40m

**Bochlwyd Buttress**

A lovely little crag that gets evening sun and dries quickly. **Approach** (see map on page \$\$\$) - Park at Ogwen Cottage and take the main path towards Cwm Idwal. After about 400m the path dog-legs right. Head straight on along a small path to where the ground steepens. The crag is easily seen as you approach and a short boulder-hop across a stream leads to the base. **Descent** - The best descent from the crag is to follow the easy path down the right (looking in) side of the crag.

1 Wall Climb  **HS 4b**

A great introduction to the harder routes on the buttress, but tough for the grade.

- 1) 4b, 22m. Climb the initial easy slab to gain the left-leading ramp. Make an airy step left and then climb steeper rock to a good niche-belay.
- 2) 4b, 22m. Climb steeply up and right (often damp) watching for some suspect holds, to gain the upper slab and a delightful finish.

FA. F.Hicks, C.Cooper, W.Woosnam Jones 26.9.1929

2 Bochlwyd Eliminate    **HVS 5a**


A technical climb on great rock. A long, sustained pitch. Start as for *Wall Climb* to a break where that route strides left. Move up and right along the break to gain a standing position on the narrow ledge at its end. Weave up the wall fairly directly (many options exist) keeping an eye out for the sometimes hard-to-find protection.

FA. R.James, R.Barbier 6.1962

3 The Wrack    **E2 5b**

A tough, but superbly satisfying route that requires a degree of determination. An easy start leads to the steep and bold groove. Climb this to an undercut crack. Jam right round this and follow the vertical crack to a ledge. Follow the groove above to finish on the upper slab. Super climbing and great rock.

FA. T.F.Allen, W.Hunford 28.8.1963


4 Chimney Climb  **S**

A steep and traditional outing.

- 1) 15m. Climb the steep chimney and the face of the block on the left to gain the ledge (awkward). An alternative start on the left is possible.

- 2) 25m. Squirm up the chimney to the top.


FA. F.Aldous, A.Adams, O.Thorneycroft 8.1909

5 Two Pitch Route  **S**

The central line gives a worthwhile outing.

- 1) 25m. Climb directly up the wall right of the chimney. A step left gains a shallow corner that is followed to a stance.
- 2) 20m. Move left over broken ground to climb the left wall via the easiest route.

FA. C.Kirkus, R.Frost 1935

6 Five Pitch Route  **S 4b**

Best climbed in one or two pitches, belaying after pitch 3.


- 1) 7m. The easy lower slab.
- 2) 4b, 9m. Step up into the niche and exit left to belay by a good crack. Direct here is harder.
- 3) 9m. Climb up and right to a good ledge.
- 4) 10m. Zig leftwards along the ledge to a weakening, then zig back right to a ledge.
- 5) 10m. Climb straight up through the bulge to gain the easy upper slab.

FA. C.Kirkus, R.Frost 1935

7 Marble Slab  **HS 4b**

A great route with a hard, well-protected crux. Climb the cracked wall to the right of the slab of rock at the base of the crag to the overlap. Pull through this to gain a single crack in the upper headwall. Make tough moves past this to easier climbing above and a ledge. 'Beached-whale' off the ledge via a weakness to an easier finish up the final slab.

FA. C.Kirkus, C.Brennand 21.7.1935

8 Arete and Slab  **Diff**

The easiest route on the crag has great positions and varied climbing.

- 1) 18m. Climb the steep cracked arete on juggy holds to a ledge.
- 2) 8m. Step left and follow good holds onto the next ledge.
- 3) 12m. Follow the upper wall of *Marble Slab*.

FA. C.Palmer, D.MacDonald 27.3.1927



A fine set of mountain crags with some great old classics. In particular *Direct Route*, climbed in 1907, will send shivers down your spine when you start to wonder what on earth the first ascensionist used to protect the crack other than courage.

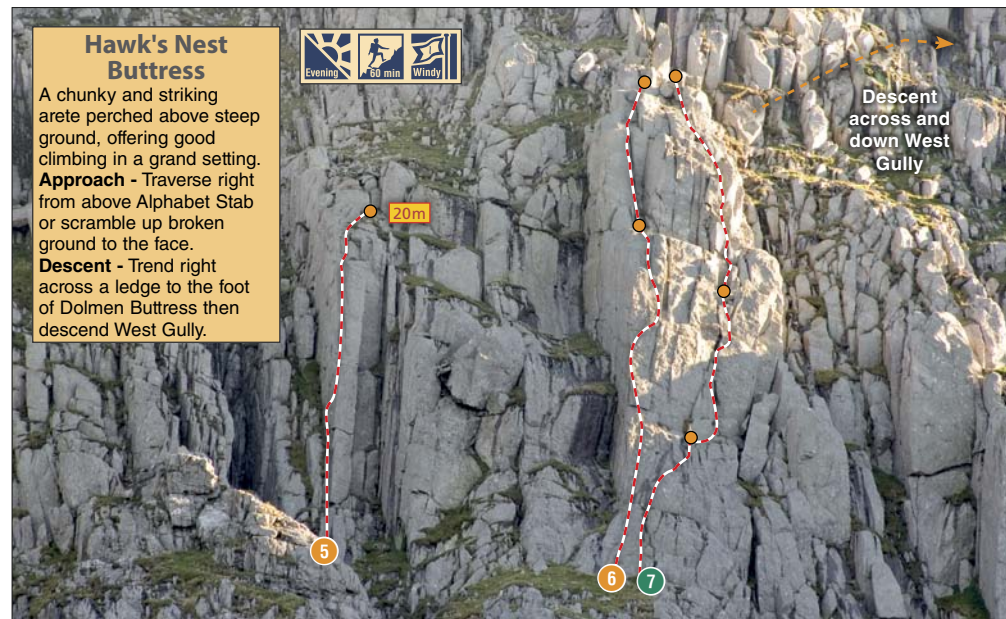
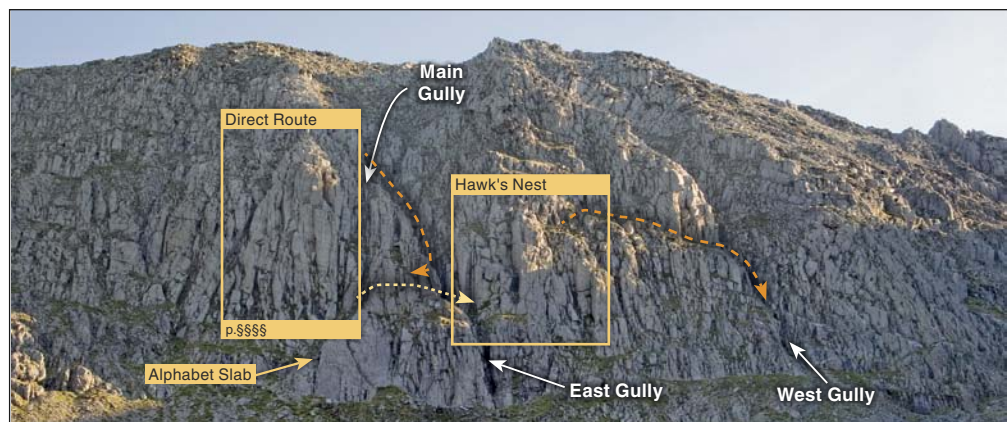
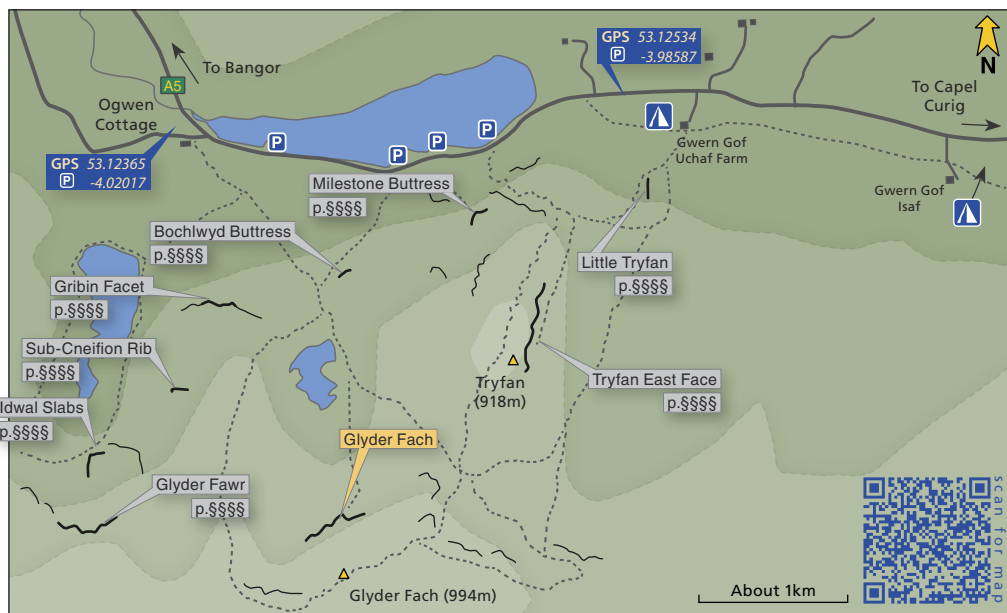
Approach

From parking (paid) at Ogwen Cottage on the A5 south of Bethesda, take the main path up the side of the cafe. Cross the bridge and, after about 200m where the main path turns right, head straight on towards a waterfall. Follow the path up the side of this to Llyn Bochlywd. Take the path on the left of the lake then break out rightwards to below the buttress before the path starts climbing steeply.

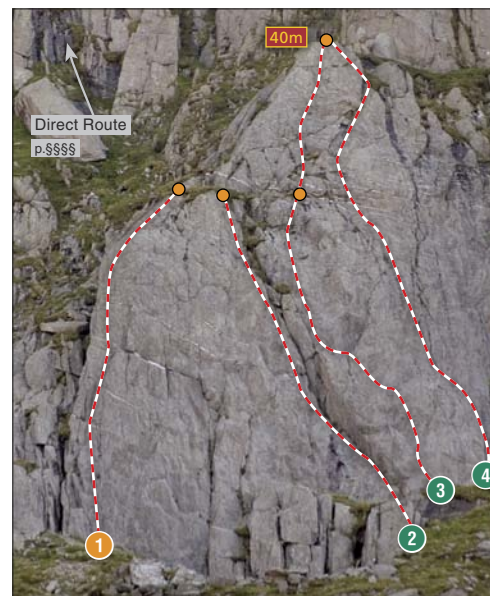
Conditions

Another great crag for the hotter summer months where a few days of dry weather will get rid of most of the dampness save for a few places. At other times it is exposed and likely to be cold.

Mod to S	1	3	2	-
HS to HVS	-	1	2	3
E1 to E3	-	-	-	-
E4 and up	-	-	1	-



Hawk's Nest Buttress
A chunky and striking arete perched above steep ground, offering good climbing in a grand setting.
Approach - Traverse right from above Alphabet Slab or scramble up broken ground to the face.
Descent - Trend right across a ledge to the foot of Dolmen Buttress then descend West Gully.



Alphabet Slab - This clean slab has a few good routes that are worth doing to access the routes higher up.

- 1 Alpha** VS 4b
The left edge of the slab is bold.
FA. S.Herford, J.Laycock 8.1913
- 2 Beta** Mod
The central weakness.

- 3 Gamma** S 4a
1) 30m. Trend left up the slab following the line of weakness past a scoop and up a crack to a stance. Not well protected.
2) 4a, 12m. Finish up the tricky wall above.
FA. C.Kirkus, G.Macphee 31.5.1936
- 4 Delta** Diff
Climb the right-hand slab fairly directly.
The rest of the routes are reached by scrambling across rightwards to Hawk's Nest Buttress.
- 5 Get Close** HVS 5a
Climb the left-hand side-wall via a crack, until the elegant hanging groove in the rib can be reached. Climb this to finish.
FA. L.Hardy, C.Parkin 1989
- 6 Hawk's Nest Arete** VS 4c
Fine climbing based on the dramatic square-cut arete.
1) 4c, 20m. Steady climbing leads to a large flake perched on the arete. Harder and bolder moves reach the sanctuary of a small ledge. Shuffle right to a shallow chimney-slot and move up this to a flake that leads out left onto the wall and a good ledge just above.
2) 14m. The slabby crack leads to the top.
FA. P.Nock, H.Harrison 1940
- 7 Hawk's Nest Buttress** S 4b
The original route of the buttress trends left to right to find the easiest line. Steady climbing although the crucial mantelshelf is a bit of a stopper.
1) 10m. Trend right up slabby rock to a spike belay.
2) 4b, 10m. Move round right then climb the slot to a jammed block before making a hard mantelshelf out right. Belay in the recess just a little higher.
3) 14m. Climb easy rock then the chimney behind the tower of blocks and flakes to reach open ground and the top.
FA. G.Abraham, A.Abraham, A.Thompson 1905



East Gully descent -
recommended

Main Gully
descent
- not
recommended

The Winter
Finish

The Veranda

Gibson's
Chimney
(VS 4c)

Alphabet Slab
p.SSSS

The Capstan

1 Slab Climb VDiff

A neat excursion spiralling up the left-hand side of the face. The route has long been popular with beginners. It is described with the *Spiral Variant* which avoids the tricky slab on the direct version of Pitch 2 and 3. Start just left of the block of the Capstan, below a broken rib.

- 1) 15m. Up the rib then move across left to a stance below a chimney with twin 'horns'.
- 2) 10m. Gain the chimney on the left awkwardly then up and exit leftwards to a stance.
- 3) 10m. Climb to a ledge then up the tricky crack on the right to a belay.
- 4) 12m. Move right 3m to a slab and up to the jammed flake of the Arch and a junction with the *The Direct Route* just before its famous hand traverse.
- 5) 14m. Up the groove on the left on huge flakes to a leftwards exit to an airy stance.
- 6) 12m. Finish up the rib to reach the top.

FA. K.Ward, H.Gibson 1907

2 Direct Route VS 4c

A classic outing, varied and interesting with a devious but logical line. Very popular and it only has a couple of hard sections - the hand traverse on P4 and the final pitch. Start directly above the large conspicuous block of the Capstan.

- 1) 4a, 28m. Climb up the rib and cross over left beneath some blocks. Climb up through these rightwards to a grassy ledge with a huge bollard.
- 2) 4a, 20m. Climb the corner on the left then move delicately leftwards out across the face before striding round the arete to the jammed flake of the Arch. Belay further left.
- 3) 4b, 20m. Gain a ledge on the right then move up and swing across the hand-traverse to ledges above Gibson's Chimney. Continue to a good stance on the ledge of the Veranda.
- 4) 8m. Move the belay to the right-hand end of the Veranda to below the final corner.
- 4a) VDiff, 18m. **The Winter Finish.** A variant ending. Move left along the flakes and up the corner to the top.
- 5) 4c, 20m. Climb up right behind the large spike, then move back left to below the wide awkward Coffin Chimney and superb groove of Final Crack. Do battle with these and wonder at the pioneers who did it back in 1907!

FA. K.Ward, H.Gibson 1907

3 Kaya E7 6b

A wild route in an impressive position taking the huge arete. For those climbing at this level, the steep crack just round to the left is the equally amazing **Glyder Crack**, which goes at **E6 6b**. The route has some pegs but reaching the first is really committing. Start from the belay on top of pitch 1 of *Direct Route*, left of the arete. Climb up and rightwards passing a rather disappointing micro-wire placement. Make a desperate reach for the first peg. Climb the arete with a detour onto the right-hand face at the first overlap. Move up to a break and follow it rightwards before heading back left to another gripper-clipper for a peg. Technical climbing leads to a flake up and left. The arete and wall are followed to the top where you can collapse onto the spacious ledge - the Veranda.

FA. N.Craigne 1988. FA (Direct Finish) J.Dawes 1988



Direct Route

A fine bastion of Chamoni-style rock, with a great selection of lower and middle grade routes. The main draw is the five-pitch classic of *Direct Route* which is likely to be busy when conditions are good.

Approach (see map on page 555) - Do a route on Alphabet Slab or walk up the gully just to the left to The Capstan.

Descent - Scramble right (looking in) over the top of the buttress and above the wide and loose Main Gully. Continue into East Gully and descend this.

4 Lot's Wife VS 4c

A good route taking a great line up the cracked right-hand face of the grand pillar. Start 3m right of the large Capstan block.

- 1) 26m. Climb the rib and crack to belay just below the overhangs.
- 2) 4c, 30m. Climb over the small roof and up the groove (crux) then move left onto the rib and left again to access the crack. Follow this past a small ledge, move right and take the slanting groove to the Veranda. You can finish up *Direct Route* here or follow **The Left-Hand Crack** as described below.
- 3) 8m. Move left along the ledge until below twin cracks.
- 4) 5a, 15m. Take the initial crack to where it splits then follow the left-hand one to the top.

FA. C.Kirkus, A.Robinson 1931

5 Lot's Groove HVS 5b

A great pitch up the steep, shallow groove overlooking the gully.

- 1) 26m. As for *Lot's Wife*.
- 2) 5a, 30m. Move out right to reach the groove. Climb up this - sustained and exposed but excellent and with good protection throughout. Either finish up *Direct Route*, *Lot's Wife* or tackle **The Right-Hand Crack** as described below.
- 3) 8m. Move left to belay below the twin cracks.
- 4) 5b, 15m. Move up the crack to where it splits and climb the right-hand crack.

FA. C.Kirkus, A.Robinson 25.6.1929

6 Chasm Route. VDiff

The character building rifts on the right can be climbed in as many as six short pitches. Start 3m right of the large 'Capstan' block.

- 1) 30m. Climb the rib and crack as for *Lot's Wife* then move right into the base of the mighty rift below the overhangs.
- 2) 18m. Up the chasm until an exit right is possible. Head left over blocks back to the gully.
- 3) 15m. A crack on the left leads to flakes. Go behind these then back right into the gully.
- 4) 20m. Do battle with the jaws of the Vertical Vice then finish up the corner above.
- 4a) 25m. If the Vertical Vice shuts you down a devious escape can be made. Move up into the slot on the left. Tunnel in along the passage to where the chasm turns a corner. Head round this and chimney up the easier slot to be reborn on the top of the crag.

FA. J.Thompson, H.Jones, L.Noan 1910

	No star	1	2	3
Mod to S	1	-	6	4
HS to HVS	-	3	10	5
E1 to E3	-	-	4	2
E4 and up	-	1	1	1

Cwm Idwal is home to many great routes on several slabby crags. The jewels in the crown are the Idwal Slabs with its set of ever-popular routes that attract attention throughout the year. Also of interest in a similar theme is *Sub-Cneifion Rib*. Above these are the amazing *Cneifion Arete* and the Upper Cliff of Glyder Fawr. If you are all slabbed out then there is some steeper rock guarding the gateway to the Cwm on Gribin Facet. The final buttress covered is an altogether different proposition - the lonely soul-searching leads of the aptly-named Suicide Wall will give those who think there is only easy climbing in Cwm Idwal something to think about.

Approach

From parking (paid) at Ogwen Cottage on the A5 south of Bethesda, follow the main path up the side of the cafe. After about 1km you reach Llyn Idwal. Gribin Facet is best reached from here as the direct approach is very boggy. Sub Cneifion Rib is situated above the Llyn and is reached by following the path left of the Llyn, towards the slabs. After you pass through a gate in a wall a narrow path ascends steeply at first, easing towards the 'Rib' itself, and beyond into Cwm Cneifion. The Idwal Slabs and Suicide Wall are situated next to the path that leads along the left side of Llyn Idwal.

Conditions

Being in the mountains, the area is exposed to any bad weather. It is known as an area for a 'wet day route' or two. Most of the crags get some afternoon sun although this is often short-lived in spring and autumn when the sun quickly dips behind the high horizon. Most of the buttresses can feature damp patches after rain, although the slabs themselves tend to dry quickly.



A team of three climbers enjoying a sunny and deserted *Ordinary Route* (Diff) - page \$\$\$\$ - on the Idwal Slabs. Photo: Mark Glaister

**Gribin Facet**

A nice crag which is easily reached but still has a mountain atmosphere. It can stay damp after rain, especially the steep crack routes on the left. The crag is notorious for sandbagging grades so leaders beware, although we have re-assessed some of the routes here.

Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - Take the main path from Ogwen Cottage to Llyn Idwal. Head back up a grassy ridge to reach the crag. Avoid the temptation to walk up before this as the area below the crag is very boggy.

Descent - For routes on the left and centre there is a gully that leads down through the middle of the cliff. This is reasonable until a final steep step where inexperienced climbers and the nervous will opt for a short abseil from a well-used block. For routes on the right, follow the top of crag down and right into a gully to just above the drystone wall where you can traverse back below the crag.

**1 Insidious Slit** **E4 6a**

Start by a steep slab that leads up to triple overlaps. Move up the slabs and step left into the crack where it curves left. Head straight up a groove to the first overlap. Move right around this and up the steeper wall to the next overlap. Fight the pump and gain the exit groove on the left. Continue up to eventually reach easier ground and a belay just below the top.

FA. J.Redhead, K.Robertson 1979

2 Yob Route **HVS 5a**

A nice route although quite tough, just remember it used to get VS. Start by a left-trending ramp.

1) 5a, 40m. Head left up the ramp and into a thin groove. Move left into a deeper more defined groove and follow this to a steep slab on the right. Reach the cracks and psyche up for the exciting finale, a tricky layback to reach jugs and an easing of the climbing. Continue up to a belay just below the top.

2) 8m. As for *Slab Climb*.

FA. K.Britton, R.Beasley (3pts) 21.8.1957

3 Llyn **VS 4c**

The deep groove is compelling. Start just right of *Yob Route*.

1) 4c, 40m. Head up rightwards to gain the steepening crack that leads to a V-groove. A bit of a tussle up this gains the groove by the right rib. Move up to regain the crack in the back of the slot and fight up to the top. Continue more easily to belay on *Slab Climb*.

2) 8m. As for *Slab Climb*.

FA C.Palmer, J.Edwards 13.7.1931

4 Diadem **HVS 5a**

A sustained and desperate affair and not to be confused with the wide weeping crack just to the right, which is **Sweet Sorrow** and even harder. Start by a flake/crack that leads up and left.

1) 5a, 28m. Trend up and left to near the top of the flake crack and make a move up to gain the left end of a heather-covered ledge. Move right to below a crack and climb up it using pockets and layaways to where the crack steepens. Make some tricky moves up this before pulling out onto the right arete for a short distance, and move back left into the crack. Follow this to a ledge on *Slab Climb*.

2) 8m. As for *Slab Climb*.

FA. M.Crook, D.Farrant 1979

5 Slab Climb **Diff**

A pleasant excursion up a hanging slab which has some good exposure considering the size of route. Start below a gully that leads up to the base of the recessed slab.

1) 22m. Move up for 2m and then delicately traverse left to reach a corner, and possible belay. Climb the slab on the left to reach a ledge and belay.

2) 12m. Continue up the slab on the left keeping as close to the edge as you dare. Belay below a steepening and some quartz bands.

3) 8m. Stay on the left edge of the slab and continue up to the top.

FA. J.Laycock, S.Herford 5.1912

7 Zig-Zag **HS 4b**

A good route that requires large hexes or cams. Start just right of *Monolith Crack*.

1) 4b, 15m. Ascend the square corner to a sloping ledge. Move along this to its right-hand end and a groove with a wide crack. Without large gear a bold move is required to gain the slab above. Head up the slab to belay below twin cracks.

2) 4a, 15m. The right-hand crack provides another challenge until easier ground leads to the top.

FA. S.Herford, J.Laycock, W.Milligan, R.Hodgkinson 5.1912

8 Flake Crack **VS 4c**

A better of a route if you like things a little bit traditional. The wobbly flake prompted Kirkus to say "The prospect of finding a sheltered chimney transformed into an overhanging face by the sudden departure of one of the walls is alarming!". Start below the flake and use *Herford's Crack* to gain a ledge. Move up and left to gain the thinner left-hand crack at a polished ledge/jug. Move up into the slot, past a thread, and chimney up the far side. Make a mind-bending step onto the tip of the pinnacle without pushing too hard as the whole thing moves slightly. A step onto the wall leads to the top.

FA. O.Thorncroft 4.1909

6 Monolith Crack **HS ?!**

Practically ungradable, it will be impossible for the claustrophobic. Start below a deep slot that runs up and left across the cliff in steps.

1) 9m. Move up behind the monolith and squirm away until you can escape out of the top and belay.

2) 9m. Ascend the chimney, which is no pushover, to belay on a ledge below the final slot.

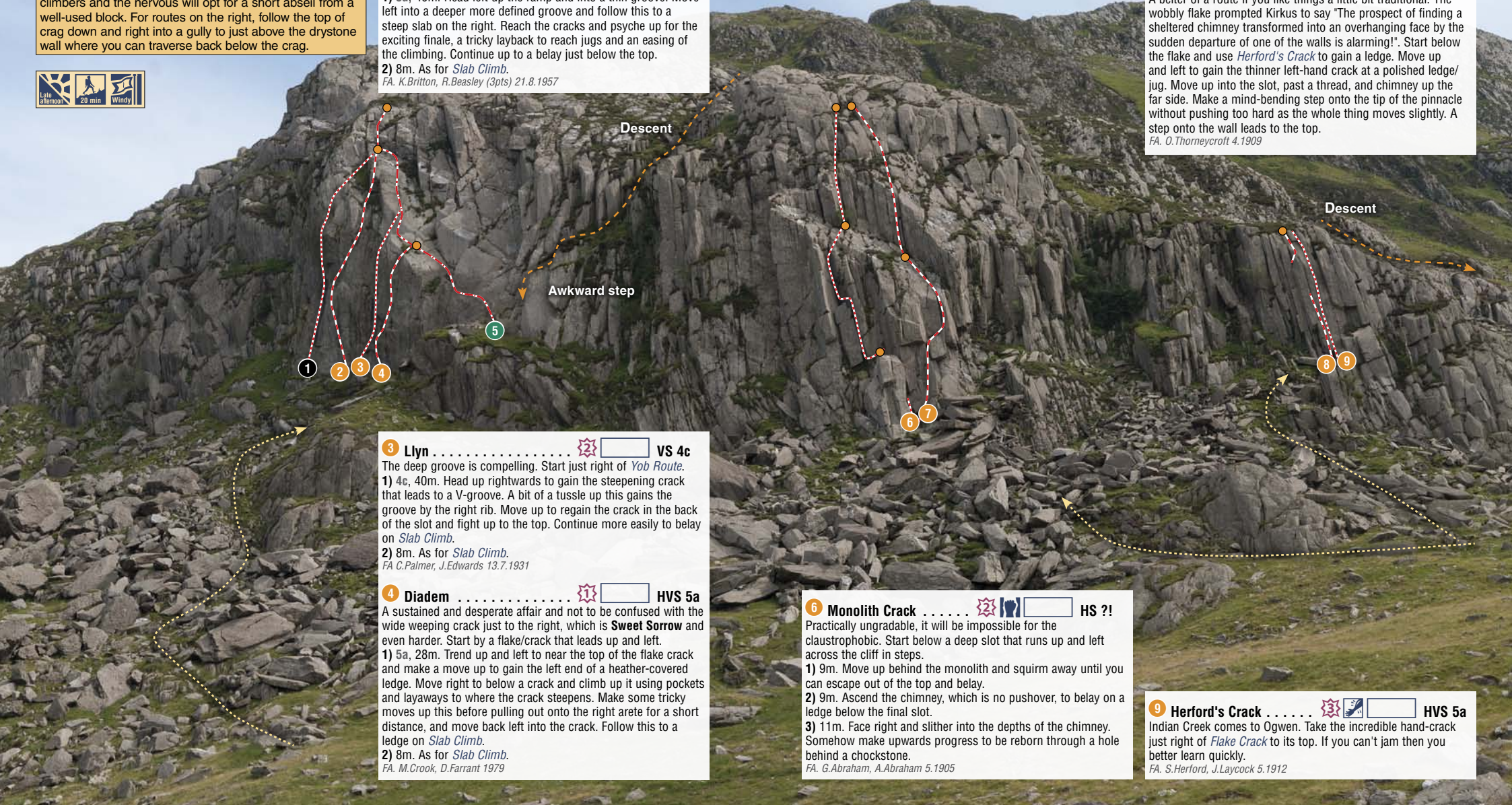
3) 11m. Face right and slither into the depths of the chimney. Somehow make upwards progress to be reborn through a hole behind a chockstone.

FA. G.Abraham, A.Abraham 5.1905

9 Herford's Crack **HVS 5a**

Indian Creek comes to Ogwen. Take the incredible hand-crack just right of *Flake Crack* to its top. If you can't jam then you better learn quickly.

FA. S.Herford, J.Laycock 5.1912





Sub-Cneifion Rib

A beautiful feature that has much less to go at than Idwal Slabs, but what it has is just as good.

Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - Take the main path from Ogwen Cottage to Llyn Idwal. Walk left along the Llyn. Just past a gate through a drystone wall, a path leads up and across the hillside to the base of the rib.

Descent - Walk/scramble down the right-hand (looking in) side of the rib.

1 Scimitar Crack VS 4c

A short but perfectly formed route tucked away on the left side of the buttress.

1) 4c, 25m. Follow the small rightward-facing groove until it runs out. Karate-chop your way up the excellent jamming crack above.

2) 20m. Scramble up and right to join *Sub Cneifion Rib* on its second pitch or escape by scrambling left.

FA. M.Creasey 1980



2 Sub Cneifion Rib VDiff

An immaculate trip following the beautiful barrel on perfect rock. Large belay ledges and easy escape options make this route feel less committing than its Idwal Slab neighbours. The line seeks out the best rock on the buttress.

1) 30m. A 3-star pitch in its own right. Start below the pointed boulder and follow the groove, crack, then slab, to the bulge. Pass this on the left (tricky) and finish up the slab to a large belay ledge.

2) 35m. Wander left easily to reach the next true section of climbing. Take the broad rib direct via a crack to reach the rounded top.

3) 25m. Scramble rightwards to belay below the small roof in the right arete of the rib.

4) 35m. A fitting finale. Rock around the nose to a scoop. Head up and left on the front of the pillar then finish up the crack. An easier finish can be had to the right.

FA. J.M.Edwards 12.7.1931

It is easy to get to Cwm Cneifion and the base of Cneifion Arete by traversing the hillside along a path.



Cneifion Arete

More of a scramble than a climb, but it is spectacular nonetheless, and an excellent companion to the *Sub-Cneifion Rib*. It is not really possible to descend easily to the base so best to take all your kit with you.

Approach - Take the main path from Ogwen Cottage to Llyn Idwal. Walk left along the Llyn and, just past a gate through a drystone wall, a path leads up and across the hillside to the base of the rib. The path now continues up steeper more broken terrain, to the right of the rib, before breaking rightwards again just below its top, into the base of Cwm Cneifion. A scree path leads up left to the Arete.

Descent - From the top, gain the path and follow down Y Gribin to a T-Junction. Walk rightwards around Llyn Bochlywd to its outflow, and follow the major footpath downhill next to this, all the way back to Ogwen Cottage.



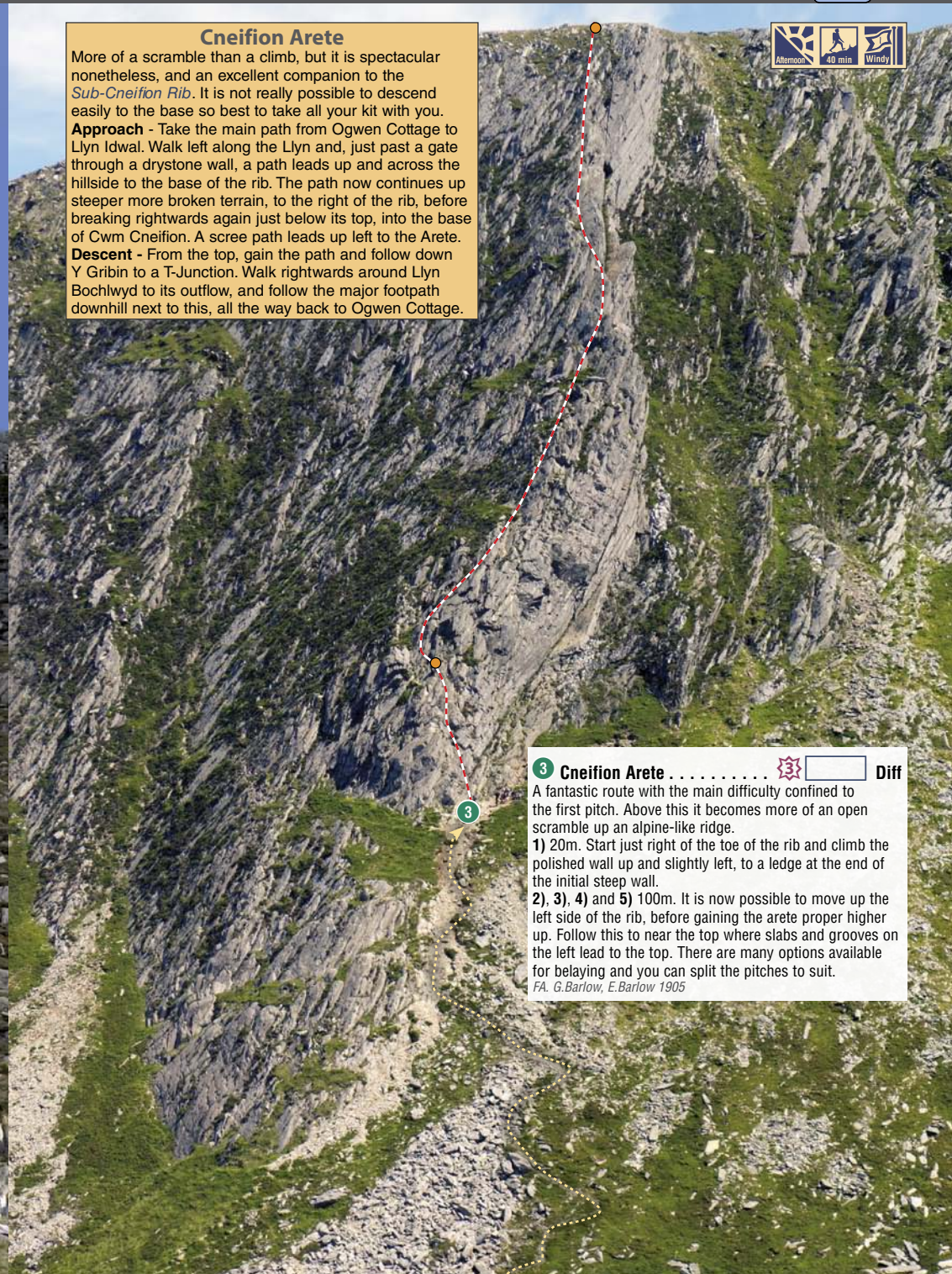
3 Cneifion Arete Diff

A fantastic route with the main difficulty confined to the first pitch. Above this it becomes more of an open scramble up an alpine-like ridge.

1) 20m. Start just right of the toe of the rib and climb the polished wall up and slightly left, to a ledge at the end of the initial steep wall.

2), 3), 4) and 5) 100m. It is now possible to move up the left side of the rib, before gaining the arete proper higher up. Follow this to near the top where slabs and grooves on the left lead to the top. There are many options available for belaying and you can split the pitches to suit.

FA. G.Barlow, E.Barlow 1905





Suicide Wall

An amazing wall with some excellent Extreme routes. The crag sees little in the way of sun and is best kept for warm summer days during dry spells as the routes can seep.

Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - Follow the approach to Idwal Slabs. At the base of the slabs head up the descent path on the left until below the wall.

Descent - See topo to the right. This is also the final tricky section of the main Idwal Slabs descent. There is an abseil point often in place at the top of Suicide Wall 1, but this is on a questionable block... beware!

1 Suicide Wall Route 1 E2 5c

A harrowing lead to this day, one can only imagine the horror of the first ascent in 1945! Start below and slightly left of the grassy ledge. Climb up the wall past some gear. This runs out quite quickly but the climbing soon eases as you move up and right towards the grassy ledge. Shuffle to the right-hand end of the ledge where an alarming move leads to the first gear in a long time. Now move up and right on improving holds, with only just adequate protection, to a slab. Follow this to a ledge and carry on up to the top.

FA. C.Preston, R.Morsley, J.Haines 7.10.1945

2 Capital Punishment E4 5c

A fantastic route which is both technical and bold in places. Start as for *Suicide Wall Route 2*, below a crescent-shaped ledge and move up to it. Take the slab/groove on the left, until you can make a delicate move out onto the arete and arrange some thin gear. Move back right across the groove and onto the steep wall, passing a thread. Power up this wall to gain a ledge, then move left along the ledge to a slabbier rib out left and delicately climb this to another smaller ledge and carry onto the top.

FA. M.Boysen, D.Alcock (1pt) 11.9.1971. FFA. M.Berzins 7.1976

Tricky section which is often abseiled



3 Suicide Wall Route 2 E2 5b

Another excellent outing on this amazing wall. Start below a crescent-shaped ledge.

1) 5b, 28m. Climb up to the crescent-shaped ledge then move right along this to a blunt rib. Head round this to gain some flakes that take you further right. A few steep and awkward moves lead up onto a ledge and belay.

2) 5a, 17m. Move up the diagonal groove and follow it onto the slab above and continue to the top.

FA. P.Crew, B.Ingle 22.9.1963

4 Penal Servitude E4 5c

Another challenging route, start just to the right of *Capital Punishment* at a thin ramp-line that leads up and left to the crescent-shaped ledge. Climb the ramp-line, which is thin on gear and technically the crux, to a ledge. A tiny crack leads up the sustained wall above but it soon disappears. Make bold and committing moves on generally-positive holds to reach the right-hand end of a ledge. Move right round the rib and up slabbier ground to the top.

FA. B.Wayman, T.Jepson 8.1977



Suicide Wall

p. SSSS

Continuation Wall

p. SSSS

Descent via 'The Easy Way' - see next page

\$ AJ Note: Line for Ordinary Route needs checking. Dave Evans says straight up where ours wiggles left at the top.

Idwal Slabs

Long and classic low-grade routes only a short stroll from the road - no wonder the place is popular! That popularity is well-founded though since there isn't a better destination in the country to learn multi-pitch climbing in a mountain environment. The only slight drawback is the descent which, for some people, might be slightly harder than getting to the top in the first place!

Approach (see map on page SSS) - Take the main path from Ogwen Cottage to Llyn Idwal and continue around the left-hand side of the lake towards the slabs which are straight ahead of you.

Descent - See next page for details.

1 Tennis Shoe ^{Top} L50 [] HS 4b

A superb route, perched above the steep East Wall. Great positions and rock, though a bit polished in places. Start left of the main slab at a smaller slab tucked in against its edge.

- 1) 4a, 30m. Climb the subsidiary slab, on polished holds, to stance on the ledge at its top.
 - 2) 16m. Move right up a scoop onto the main slab and climb its edge to a good ledge.
 - 3) 15m. Continue up the slab to a large flake. Belay here or just left in the open gully.
 - 4) 35m. Climb up the gully then transfer to the rib on the left. Climb this on its left edge to a ledge.
 - 5) 40m. Easier climbing leads to a grass terrace. Walk left to below the final rock tower.
 - 6) 4b, 15m. Climb up past a scoop (delicate and slippery) to gain the slab above. Pull for glory over the perched block to finish! There is an oft-climbed easier alternative to the right.
- FA. N. Odell 8.1919. Climbed in his pumps!

2 Tennis Shoe Direct Start [] HVS 4c

A great alternative if you are up to it though, as the grade suggests, it is delicate and bold with virtually no gear. Climb the scoop until it steepens then balance out right to gain and climb the slab. Finish up the original or solo right to *Ordinary Route*.

3 Ordinary Route [] Diff

The easiest route here gives a memorable trip up the trench in the slab and 'goes' in all weather.

- 1) 45m. Follow the well-worn boot-crack to a massive wedged block. Climb over this to a good ledge on the left and a belay.
- 2) 45m. Take the left-hand groove for a few metres until a delicate traverse leads back right to a rightwards-trending line of weakness. Follow this until it cuts back left and belay on one of the numerous small ledges.
- 3) 25m. Follow the polished crack to the large ledge and various belays.
- 4) 25m. Head left for 8m then back right to the terrace below the upper walls. You can climb direct here which is slightly harder.

FA. T. Rose, C. Moss 23.8.1897

4 Charity [] HVD

Another long-time classic with the sheen to prove how well loved it has been. The first pitch is hideous in anything but dry conditions.

- 1) 38m. Climb the slippery scoop and at its top exit right. Quartz spangled rock leads left then right to a terrace.
- 2) 26m. Climb the groove and slab to more quartz rock. Up this leftwards to a stance.
- 3) 16m. Climb the groove rightwards up the white highway to a stance in a corner.
- 4) 30m. Skip up the corner, which can be quite tricky in the wet. Wander up to the quartz region and continue on to belay on the ledges above the slabs. Added points for finding the heart belay.

FA. D. Pye, I. Richards, T. Picton 1916

5 Central Rib [] HS 4a

A neat variation start to the routes to either side.

6 Hope ^{Top} L50 [] VDiff

The most 'classic' of the classics here and the second most popular route in Wales according to UKC Logbooks. Of course 'classic' often also means polished and, in this case, the polish makes the route a good bit harder in the wet.

- 1) 45m. A quartz slab leads to ledges and an A-shaped niche in the overlap. Pull through this. More slab work then leads to a stance.
- 2) 25m. The glossy twin-cracks allow for skiddy progress (good runners) to a flake. Step left onto the slab and climb the featured rock to belay in the corner.
- 3) 20m. More neat climbing on nice crinkly holds leads to a stance in the groove.
- 4) 28m. Climb the groove and sidestep the bulge leftwards, to reach ledgy ground.
- 5) 42m. Continue up the groove until things rear up and climb the polished step to ledges and escape left to a belay ledge.

FA. E. Daniells, I. Richards, T. Roxburgh, R. Henderson 14.8.1915

See over the page for *Faith* - the third route in the trio of saintly slab routes.

Topo on next page has another view of the slab routes



Faith and Rowan Tree Slabs

The West Wall of the Idwal Slabs is home to a couple of superb and tough challenges. The thin crack of *Demetreus* is not to be missed, and the open delicacy of *Rowan Tree Slabs* is also excellent. The much milder offering of *Faith* is also described here. **Approach (see map on page \$\$\$)** - The two hard routes are approached up the lower slabs.

7 Faith VDiff

The right-hand of the trio of saintly routes is often damp, though it is well worthwhile even in these conditions. Start under the right-hand sheet of slab where its undercut base ends.

- 1) 35m. Step up then trend left up the edge of the slab before heading direct to a big stance. Hard-won gear.
- 2) 30m. Follow the quartz rails out left to a crack and head up this to belay.
- 3) 16m. An easy groove and slab on the left lead to a stance under the steep west wall.
- 4) 28m. Climb leftwards onto the next sheet of slab then tiptoe up its left edge to a stance. A neat pitch.
- 5) 42m. More broken ground leads up then left to reach a polished step. Move up this and step left onto the large terrace below the upper walls. This pitch is shared with *Hope*. Escape left along the 'Easy Way' or continue on upwards via a route on the Continuation Wall (next page).

FA. D.Pye, I.Richards, T.Picton 1916

8 Demetreus E3 6a

Reached by climbing *Faith* (or *Hope*) this fine 25m pitch gives fantastic and gripping climbing up a clean tower of perfect rock. The thin crack/seam is the prominent line in the middle of the wall. Gain it from the right, climb it until it runs out and then keep pedaling!

FA. D.Beetlestone, G.Gibson 8.1979

9 Rowan Tree Slabs E2 5c

Absorbing climbing up the steep side wall that rises above the main slabs. It is reached by the first pitch of *Faith*.

- 1) 5c, 32m. Wander up to the steeper face and access a tiny quartz ledge. Teeter along this leftwards then climb the slab leftwards - bold and hard - past a porthole, with more hard moves to the sanctuary of a ledge.
- 2) 5b, 14m. Move left to a groove in the arete, which is followed to a small ledge. Finish up the wall.

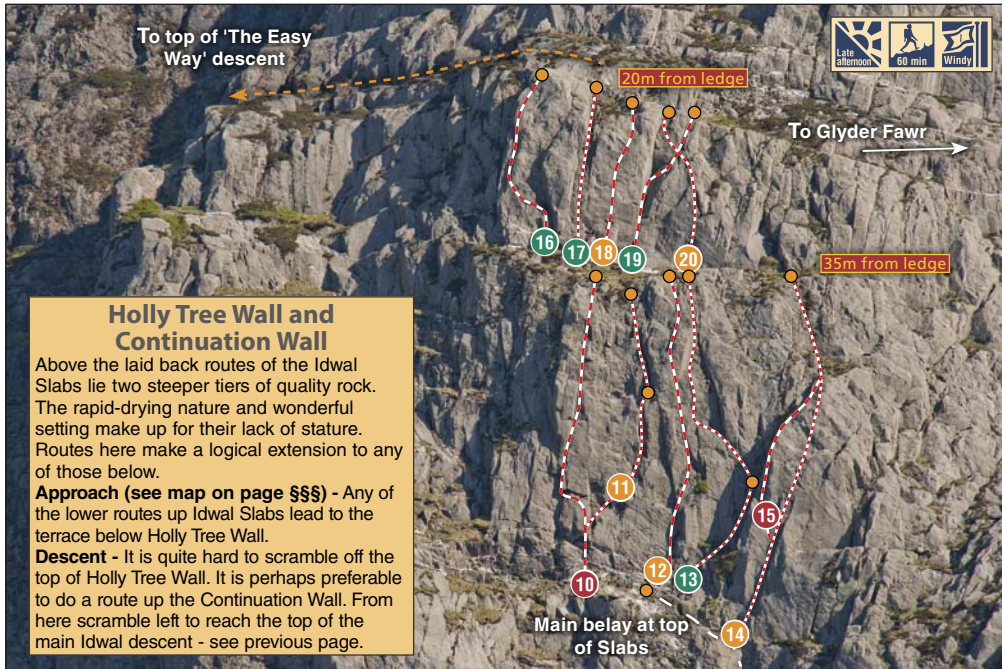
FA. J.O'Neill 1963. Much of it had been climbed by F.Hicks in 1929.

The Easy Way Descent

'The Easy Way' is a series of ledges and scrambling sections leading to a 20m down-climb, or abseil, into the gully at the top left corner of the slabs. You actually need to go upwards almost as far as you have already climbed before you can start descending. Follow the polish, arrows scratched in to the rock and other climbers to a final scramble up a crack in a brown slab. It is advisable to stay roped together for this section. Walk around left from here. Once above the steep descent, an abseil from a convenient block leads to the path below. For those confident enough to scramble this section, the easier down-climb is reached by traversing further left (looking in) before you start descending. Take great care here since it is polished and slippery, especially when wet, which is often.

Also see **Suicide Wall** topo on page \$\$\$.





Holly Tree Wall and Continuation Wall
 Above the laid back routes of the Idwal Slabs lie two steeper tiers of quality rock. The rapid-drying nature and wonderful setting make up for their lack of stature. Routes here make a logical extension to any of those below.
Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - Any of the lower routes up Idwal Slabs lead to the terrace below Holly Tree Wall.
Descent - It is quite hard to scramble off the top of Holly Tree Wall. It is perhaps preferable to do a route up the Continuation Wall. From here scramble left to reach the top of the main Idwal descent - see previous page.

10 Rampart Corner **E1 5c**
 A good pitch up the shallow groove cleaving the cleanest piece of rock here. Climb the groove then traverse left and pull through the roof to gain the soaring shallow corner. This gives interesting and sustained climbing with good gear throughout.
 FA. H.Banner, R.Wilson 13.9.1977

11 Original Route **VS 5a**
 A top-notch lead for 1918 and a great route.
 1) 5a, 25m. Boulder into the groove in the centre of the face then follow the slab rightwards to access a narrow chimney-crack. Struggle up this to a ledge.
 2) 4b, 10m. Continue up the surprisingly awkward crack.
 FA. I.Richards, C.Holland, D.Pilley 20.5.1918

12 Piton Route **VS 4c**
 A fine open climb with good positions. An escape into *Lazarus* is possible. Climb into the short groove and exit right to polished ledges (possible stance). Continue up the crack past another ledge to a finish through a small bulge.
 FA. F.Hicks, W.Woosnam-Jones 1929

13 Lazarus **S 4a**
 The easiest line hereabouts and a logical continuation to *Tennis Shoe* which finishes 50m to the left. Start from the large ledges at the top of the Slab routes.
 1) 4a, 12m. Traverse up and right into the deep gully. Three mini-mantels up the gully lead to a stance where it widens.
 2) 4a, 28m. Traverse left along sloping ledges towards a jutting nose of rock. Climb past a V-groove to reach the faint groove to its left, just right of the nose. Follow this to the ledge.

14 Javelin Buttress **VS 4c**
 Start down and right of the large ledges at the top of the Slabs, below a groove right of *Lazarus*. Climb the groove that splits the buttress and a scoop to a thread. Layback and mantel onto the upper slab and wander up this - easing all the time.
 FA. F.Graham, C.Jerram 11.4.1925

15 Javelin Blade **E1 5b**
 A super route which is well worth the effort required to get to the start. Now follow *Javelin Buttress* to the thread, and spare a moment to remember that this was the last runner on the first ascent! Then move left towards the arete and climb the shallow groove of 'the blade', pulling out onto its right arete proving both bold and precarious - to easier ground.
 FA. J.Longland, C.Williams 1930

The Continuation Wall is the highest and final wall above the Slabs.

16 The Arete **VDiff**
 Start up the groove then trend left to the well-positioned edge.
 FA. F.Hicks, C.Warren, A.Spence 23.6.1929

17 The Upper Staircase **Diff**
 The awkward big-boot groove.

18 Continuation Crack **HVS 5a**
 The crack in the face - neat.

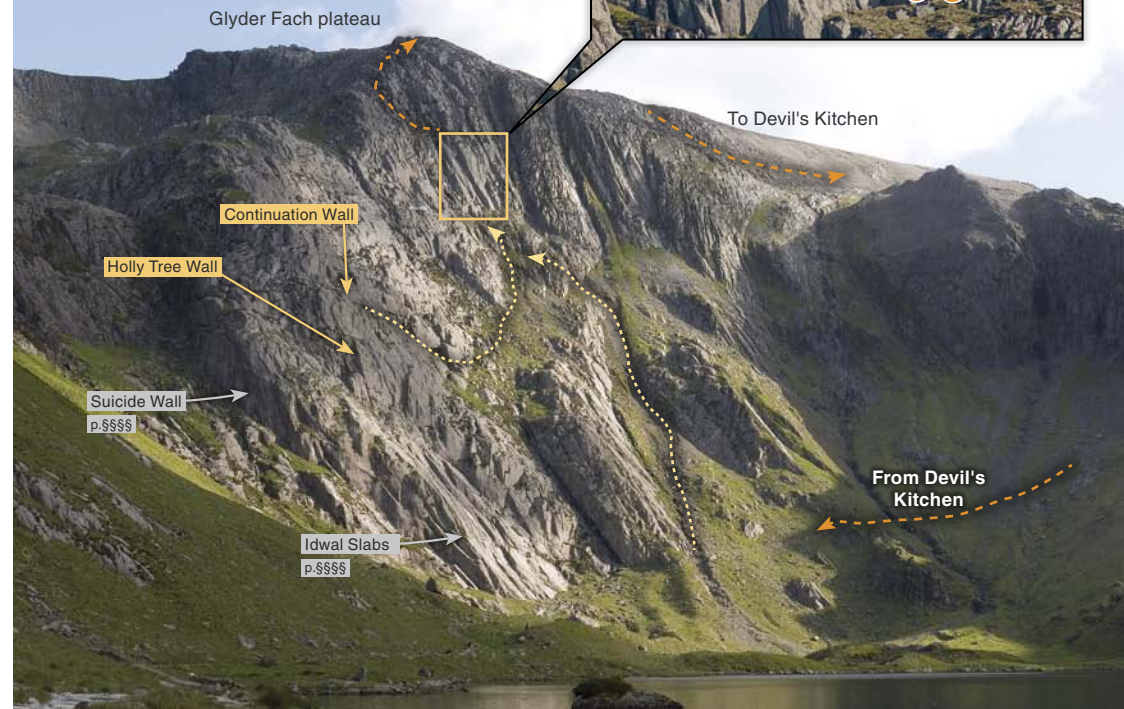
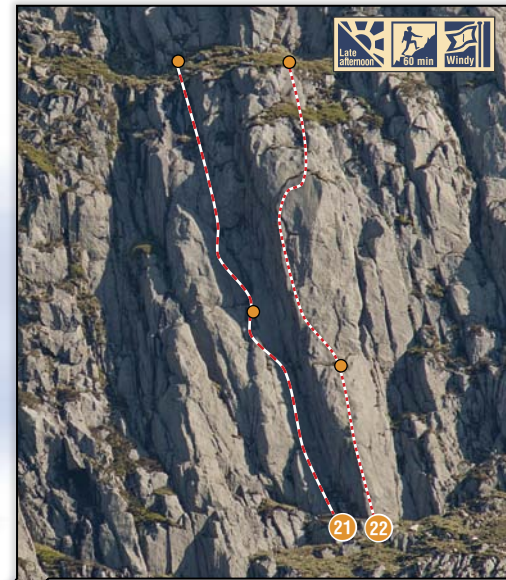
19 Groove Above **S 4b**
 A stopper move guards the main groove. Gain the groove with difficulty, head up it to bulges then escape right.
 FA. T.Knowles, H.Poolle 11.12.1926

20 Diagonal Route **VS 5a**
 Climb twin cracks then cross *Groove Above* to finish up the arete.

Glyder Fawr
 A fine sheet of bubbly grey rock set high on the flanks of Glyder Fawr. The routes described here make logical extensions to route combos on the slabs and upper walls to give a route of alpine stature.
Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - From above Continuation Wall, traverse rightwards to a gully and head up to the base of the slabs. Alternatively, if you want to hike up, then walk below Idwal Slabs and follow the path for another 150m to where a narrow scree slope leads up a gully. Follow this and head left at its top to the base of the cliff.
Descent - The least complicated descent is to scramble up left to the ridge and follow this to the Glyder Fach plateau and descend via the Devil's Kitchen path over to the right - map and compass needed in poor visibility. Alternatively gain the ridge and follow a faint path down via a few scrambling sections to where it flattens out in Cwm Cneifion. A faint path leads down out of the Cwm towards the end of Llyn Idwal.

21 Grey Slab **VS 4b**
 Delicate, sustained and excellent. The route is not well protected and is prone to seepage on the initial crack and upper crux - care required if at all damp, especially on the upper part of P2.
 1) 4a, 35m. Start up the main corner for 20m then trend left across the bubbly slab to a rib. Balance up this to a small stance and high belay under the overlap.
 2) 4b, 40m. Climb through the bulge then move left and head up the vague rib on good holds to the overlap high above. Jig left and right through this and finish up the final slab, carefully avoiding any wetness.
 FA. J.M.Edwards, F.Reade 2.7.1932

22 Grey Arete **HVS 5a**
 Great rock and superb situations plus delicate climbing up the rib that is the central feature here.
 1) 4c, 30m. Climb the groove in the arete and the slab on the right to a good ledge and belays.
 2) 5a, 45m. Balance up the bold arete to a ledge (possible stance) then climb the tricky crack that splits the arete and finish up the short wall above.
 FA. R.James, P.Benson 16.8.1959



There are two excellent isolated buttresses near Ogwen where, in complete contrast to the hustle and bustle of the bigger crags, you are almost guaranteed solitude.

Carneedd y Filiast has two beautifully situated slabs with a set of fine easier routes on clean rock. A steep approach walk adds to the day. The rock here is well worth taking a closer look at.

Braich Ty Du is closer to the road and has a great mini-ridge route. It can be climbed quickly by an experienced party wanting alpine practice or savoured by those not versed in these skills.

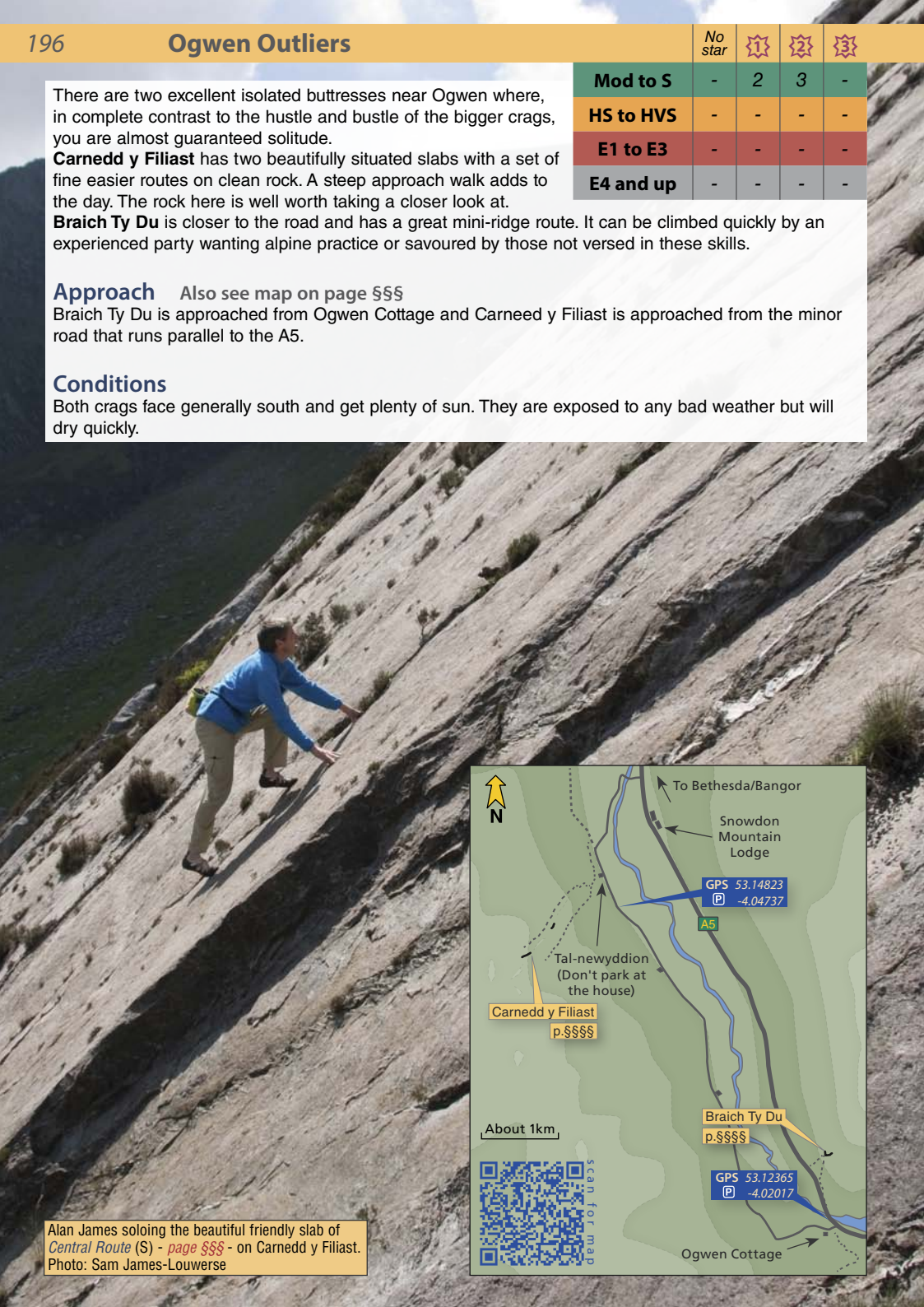
Approach Also see map on page \$\$\$

Braich Ty Du is approached from Ogwen Cottage and Carneedd y Filiast is approached from the minor road that runs parallel to the A5.

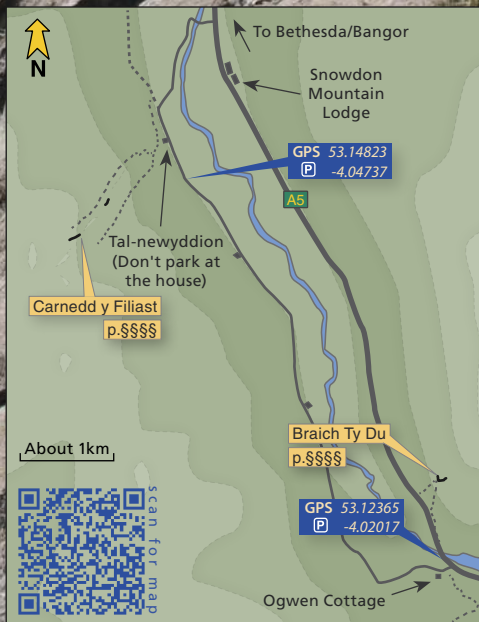
Conditions




Both crags face generally south and get plenty of sun. They are exposed to any bad weather but will dry quickly.

Mod to S	-	2	3	-
HS to HVS	-	-	-	-
E1 to E3	-	-	-	-
E4 and up	-	-	-	-



Alan James soloing the beautiful friendly slab of Central Route (S) - page \$\$\$ - on Carneedd y Filiast. Photo: Sam James-Louwerse

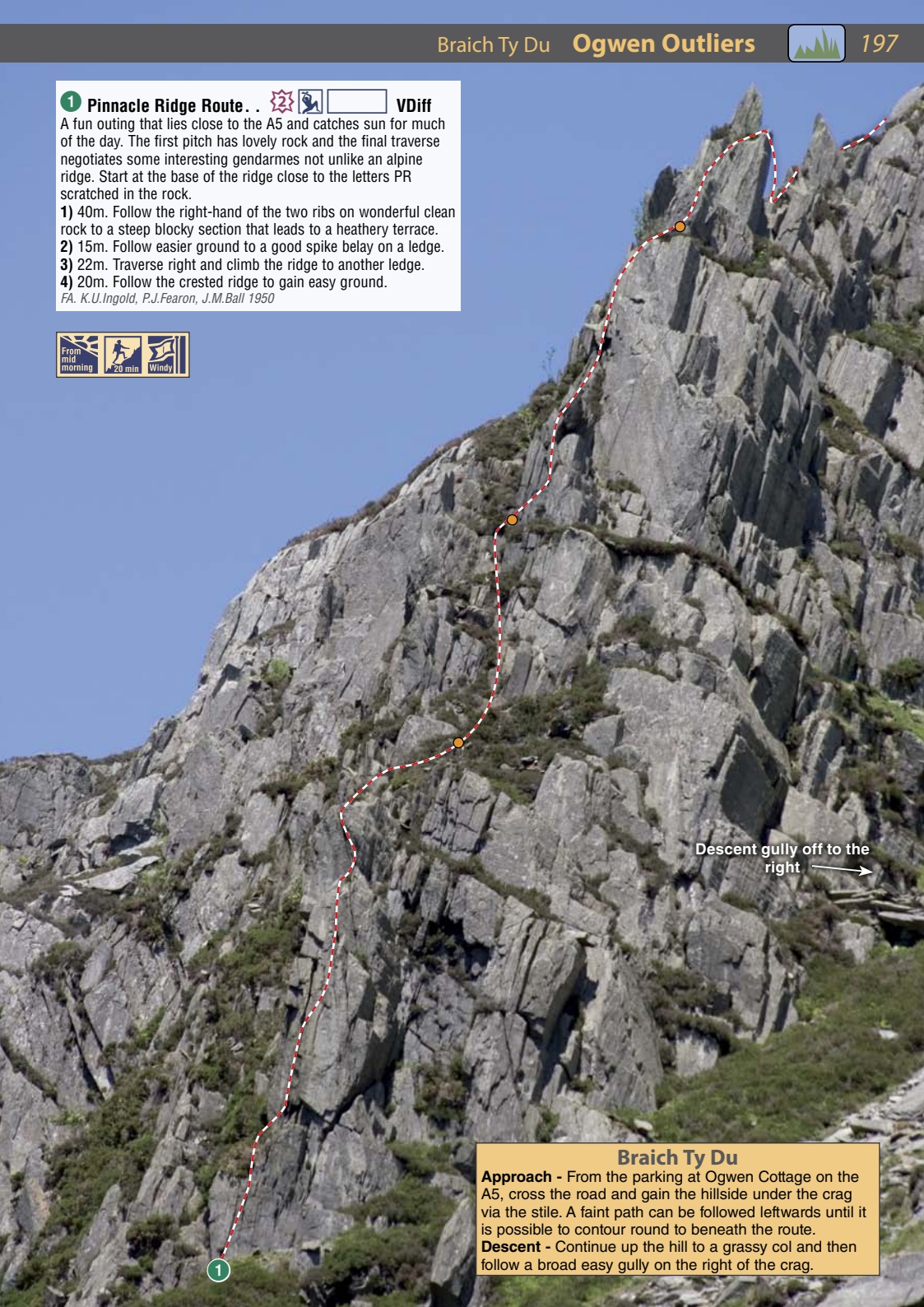


1 Pinnacle Ridge Route .    **VDiff**

A fun outing that lies close to the A5 and catches sun for much of the day. The first pitch has lovely rock and the final traverse negotiates some interesting gendarmes not unlike an alpine ridge. Start at the base of the ridge close to the letters PR scratched in the rock.

- 1) 40m. Follow the right-hand of the two ribs on wonderful clean rock to a steep blocky section that leads to a heathery terrace.
- 2) 15m. Follow easier ground to a good spike belay on a ledge.
- 3) 22m. Traverse right and climb the ridge to another ledge.
- 4) 20m. Follow the crested ridge to gain easy ground.

FA. K.U.Ingold, P.J.Fearon, J.M.Ball 1950



Braich Ty Du

Approach - From the parking at Ogwen Cottage on the A5, cross the road and gain the hillside under the crag via the stile. A faint path can be followed leftwards until it is possible to contour round to beneath the route.

Descent - Continue up the hill to a grassy col and then follow a broad easy gully on the right of the crag.



Carnedd y Filiast

These remote slabs have some great easy routes, plus peace and quiet is almost guaranteed. It is easily possible to climb Left Edge then descend rightwards down the ridge to the bottom of the Red Slab and do the other routes.

Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - Park near the house at Tal-newyddion (don't park at the house). Walk north (away from Ogwen) down the road past the house and gain the field (boggy) on the left. Skirt back around behind the house to the wall and follow a steep path up the hillside into the cwm. There is no access to this path from directly behind the house. Make your way up to the slabs which are on the hillside above and to your right.

Descent - Walk rightwards down the broad ridge. For the last route of the day you can climb with your sacks and descend the ridge back to the house and road.



1 Waved Slab **Mod**

This beautiful slab can be climbed virtually anywhere at an easy standard but there are few runners or belay ledges. Doing it in one long 60m pitch can help.



2 Left Edge **VDiff**

A fine route in a magnificent position. The stances are small and the gear is not always where you want it but the slab is easy-angled and the climbing is generally very straightforward.

- 1) 30m. Start at the left toe of the protruding buttress to the right of the clean *Waved Slab*. Follow the edge fairly directly to a *small* stance.
- 2) 45m. The same line leads to an even *smaller* stance by three large blocks.
- 3) 30m. Continue to the *smallest* stance just before the slab bends back left.
- 4) 45m. More good slab climbing leads to a bigger ledge at the top. Exit right at this point or continue via another pitch upwards to reach easy ground and the ridge above.

3 Central Route **S**

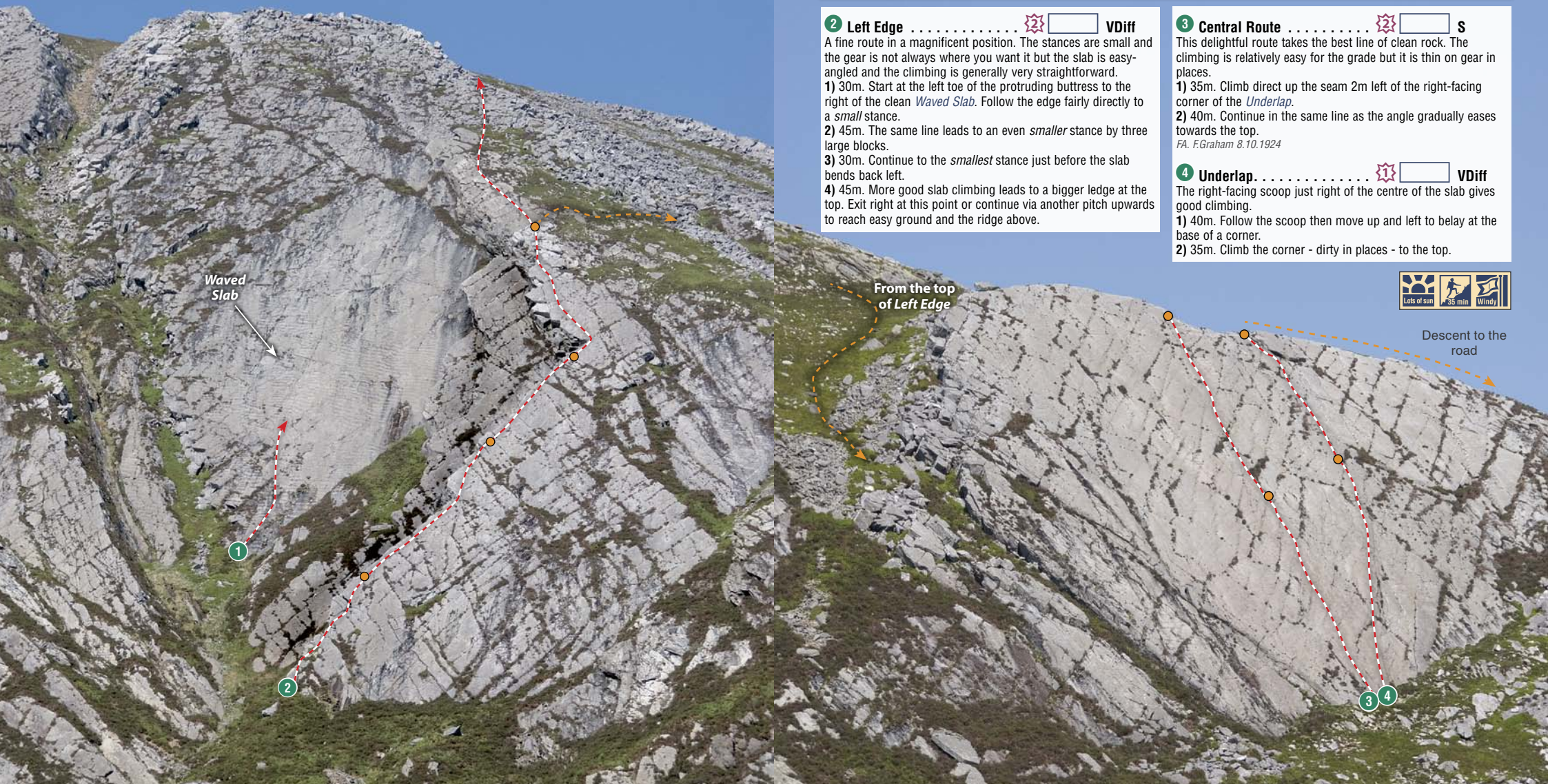
This delightful route takes the best line of clean rock. The climbing is relatively easy for the grade but it is thin on gear in places.

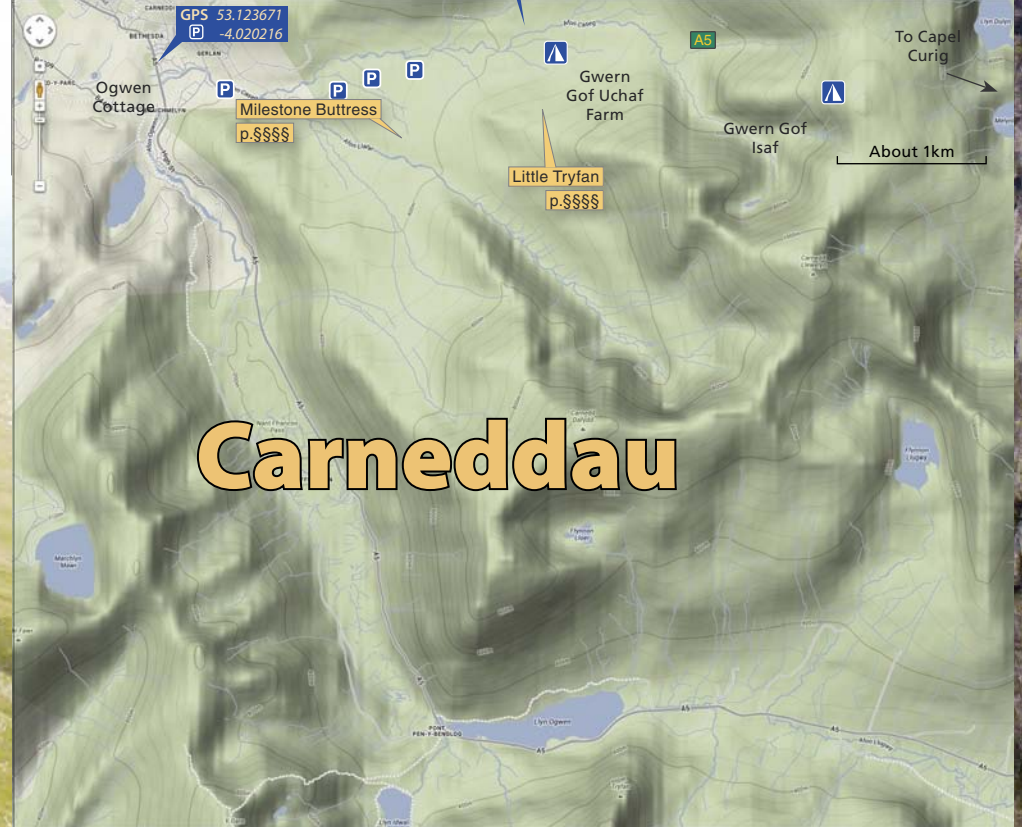
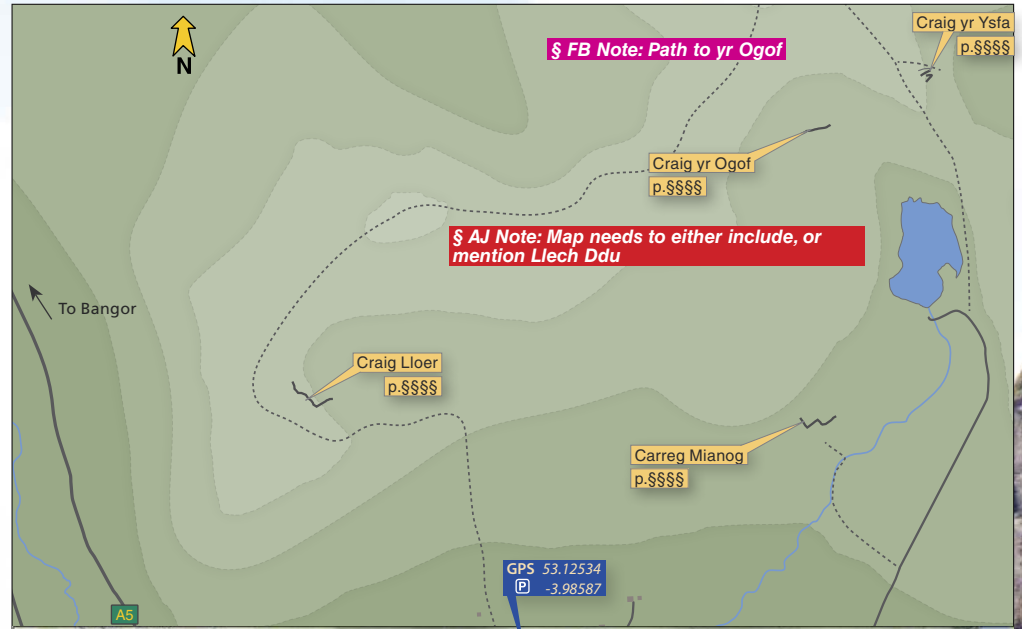
- 1) 35m. Climb direct up the seam 2m left of the right-facing corner of the *Underlap*.
 - 2) 40m. Continue in the same line as the angle gradually eases towards the top.
- FA. F.Graham 8.10.1924*

4 Underlap **VDiff**

The right-facing scoop just right of the centre of the slab gives good climbing.

- 1) 40m. Follow the scoop then move up and left to belay at the base of a corner.
- 2) 35m. Climb the corner - dirty in places - to the top.





Carneddau

Moving out along the traverse of the famous gully wall climb *Mur y Niwl* (VS 4c) - page \$\$\$ - on Craig yr Ysfa, whilst on the right climbers tackle the equally well-known *Amphitheatre Buttress* (VDiff) - page \$\$\$ - Photo: Mark Glaister

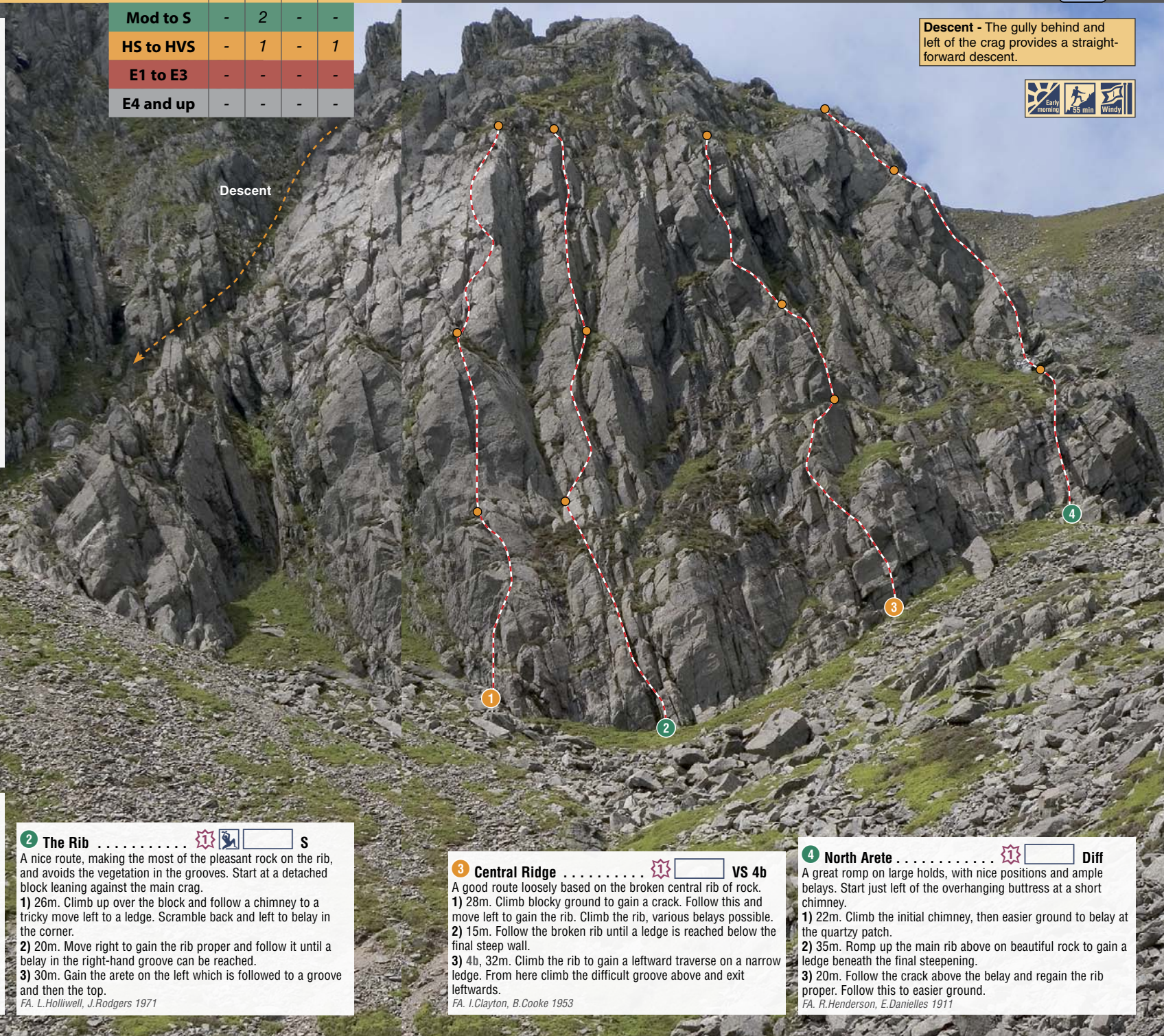
This beautiful little crag is a great place to head if you want to escape the crowds of Ogwen since you are almost guaranteed to have the place to yourself. The routes are a little adventurous and may be slightly dirty compared to other routes in the area.

Approach See map on page 555
From just east of Llyn Ogwen, take the track up towards Glan Dena and carry on to the path just before the farm, which is signed and waymarked heading up towards Cwm Lloer following the stream. It is often boggy so boots are recommended. When in the cwm, head up and back left towards the base of the cliff.

Conditions
An isolated mountain crag which only sees the sun in the morning and can be damp. It catches the wind and is best on warm summer days.

Mod to S	-	2	-	-
HS to HVS	-	1	-	1
E1 to E3	-	-	-	-
E4 and up	-	-	-	-

Descent - The gully behind and left of the crag provides a straight-forward descent.



1 Kirkus's Route VS 5a
The fine central offwidth provides a mighty struggle on an unsung Welsh gem.
1) 4a, 25m. 5m left of the lowest point of the buttress is a chimney. Follow this past a small ledge to gain a slabby groove on the right. Climb this and move left to belay on a grassy ledge.
2) 5a, 20m. Gain the offwidth-crack which looms above and fight up it using the chockstones for protection and holds - a big cam might be useful but is a little unsporting. Belay at the top of the crack.
3) 4a, 25m. Move right to the rib and climb this until a stride left gains a square-cut groove. Follow this to a belay on easier ground. Scramble off.
FA. C.Kirkus 11.7.1928.

2 The Rib S
A nice route, making the most of the pleasant rock on the rib, and avoids the vegetation in the grooves. Start at a detached block leaning against the main crag.
1) 26m. Climb up over the block and follow a chimney to a tricky move left to a ledge. Scramble back and left to belay in the corner.
2) 20m. Move right to gain the rib proper and follow it until a belay in the right-hand groove can be reached.
3) 30m. Gain the arete on the left which is followed to a groove and then the top.
FA. L.Holliwel, J.Rodgers 1971

3 Central Ridge VS 4b
A good route loosely based on the broken central rib of rock.
1) 28m. Climb blocky ground to gain a crack. Follow this and move left to gain the rib. Climb the rib, various belays possible.
2) 15m. Follow the broken rib until a ledge is reached below the final steep wall.
3) 4b, 32m. Climb the rib to gain a leftward traverse on a narrow ledge. From here climb the difficult groove above and exit leftwards.
FA. I.Clayton, B.Cooke 1953

4 North Arete Diff
A great romp on large holds, with nice positions and ample belays. Start just left of the overhanging buttress at a short chimney.
1) 22m. Climb the initial chimney, then easier ground to belay at the quartz patch.
2) 35m. Romp up the main rib above on beautiful rock to gain a ledge beneath the final steepening.
3) 20m. Follow the crack above the belay and regain the rib proper. Follow this to easier ground.
FA. R.Henderson, E.Danielles 1911

Mod to S	-	-	-	-
HS to HVS	2	3	-	1
E1 to E3	-	1	-	-
E4 and up	-	-	-	-



Carreg Mianog is a sunny, quick-drying crag that can provide a superb quiet day out with stunning views of the Ogwen Valley and Tryfan. It has a pioneering feel.

Approach See map on page \$\$\$
Park at the base of a gated tarmac road that runs straight up the hill or in Gwern Gof Isaf Farm if there is no room (see map page \$\$\$). Under no circumstance use or block the private road. Head up the road to a water conduit that traverses the hillside. Follow this left to a footbridge by a stream. Cross this and head up the boulder strewn hillside to reach the base of the crag.

Conditions
An open and exposed crag that gets a lot of sun and dry quickly. It suffers from little seepage but is exposed to any bad mountain weather.

1 Zip Wall 1 HS 4b
On the far left of the crag a series of thin cracks and ledges lead to the fine crack in the upper headwall.
FA. E.Moss, H.Standing, J.Mathews 1944

2 Zip Groove 2 VS 4b
Pleasant groove climbing on good rock. Follow the technical groove just left of the arete to a good rest and a step right. Bridge the upper groove to gain a ledge and a junction with *Zip Wall*. Finish as for this route.

3 Cracked Arete 3 VS 4c
A fine arete, and the best route on the crag. An airy start leads past a good hold on the arete. Continue with interest and exposure to gain a ledge. Step right and finish up the fine corner, heading right at the top.
FA. A.Ferguson, R.Williams 1945

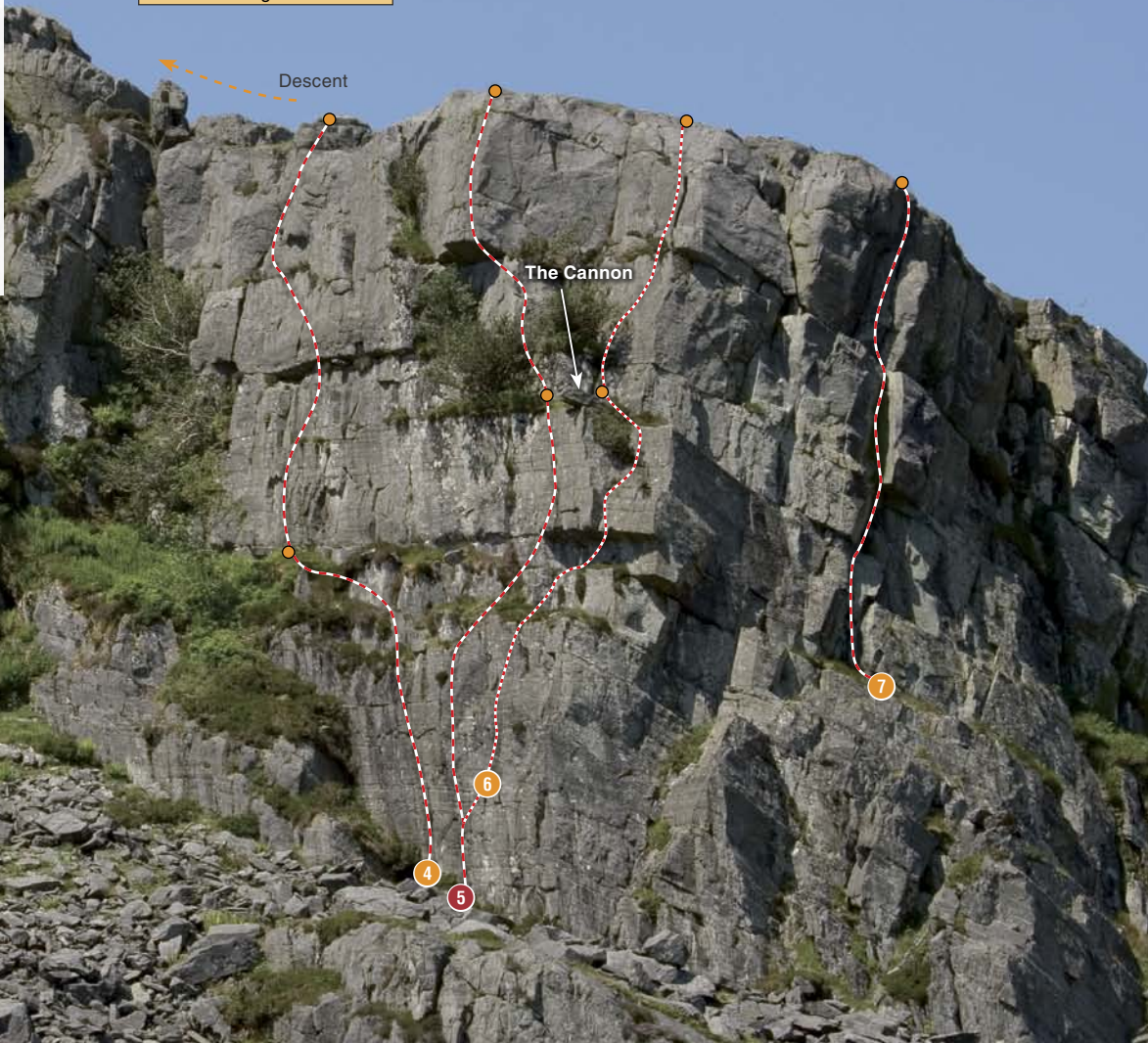
4 Pectoral Wall HVS 5a
A worthwhile route.
1) 4c, 16m. An awkward and mossy first wall leads past a crack to a ledge on the left.
2) 5a, 16m. Climb up through the small roof and head left to a crack. Follow this to finish.
FA. J.Whittle, D.Peers 1971

5 Temper 1 E2 5c
Atmospheric pulling in the upper roof.
1) 5b, 22m. An eliminate first wall leads past ledges to tough moves to gain the 'cannon'.
2) 5c, 12m. The superb hanging arete above the roof is gained directly via a hard pull.
FA. C.Goodey 1962

Descent - Head down the left side of the crag to the base.

6 Biceps Wall 1 VS 5a
A fine, varied route on great rock.
1) 5a, 22m. A tough start leads in to a niche at 6m. Follow ledges easily to reach a roof-crack on the right. Power round this to a ledge on the sticking out 'cannon'.
2) 4c, 12m. Follow the wall above on crimps and a rightward trending line of slopers.
FA. D.Haworth, G.Horridge 1948

7 Knee Cap VS 4c
A steep groove best climbed in one pitch. Climb the steep green groove past ledges to reach the final crack.
FA. R.James, R.Roberts 1959



This is third of the small quiet crags in the Carneddau mountains overlooking Ogwen and Tryfan. A neglected crag that offers some good low E-grade routes.


Approach See map on page 555
Park at the base of a gated tarmac road that runs straight up the hill or in Gwern Gof Isaf Farm if there is no room. Under no circumstance use or block the private road. Head up the road to the Llyn. Walk round this to a small valley leading up to a cwm northwest of the Llyn. The crag is at the back of the cwm.









Conditions
The crag gets plenty of morning sun but is high and exposed. The vegetated nature of the ledges means that many routes are liable to seepage in all but dry conditions. This damp nature means that the rock can be a bit grubby.

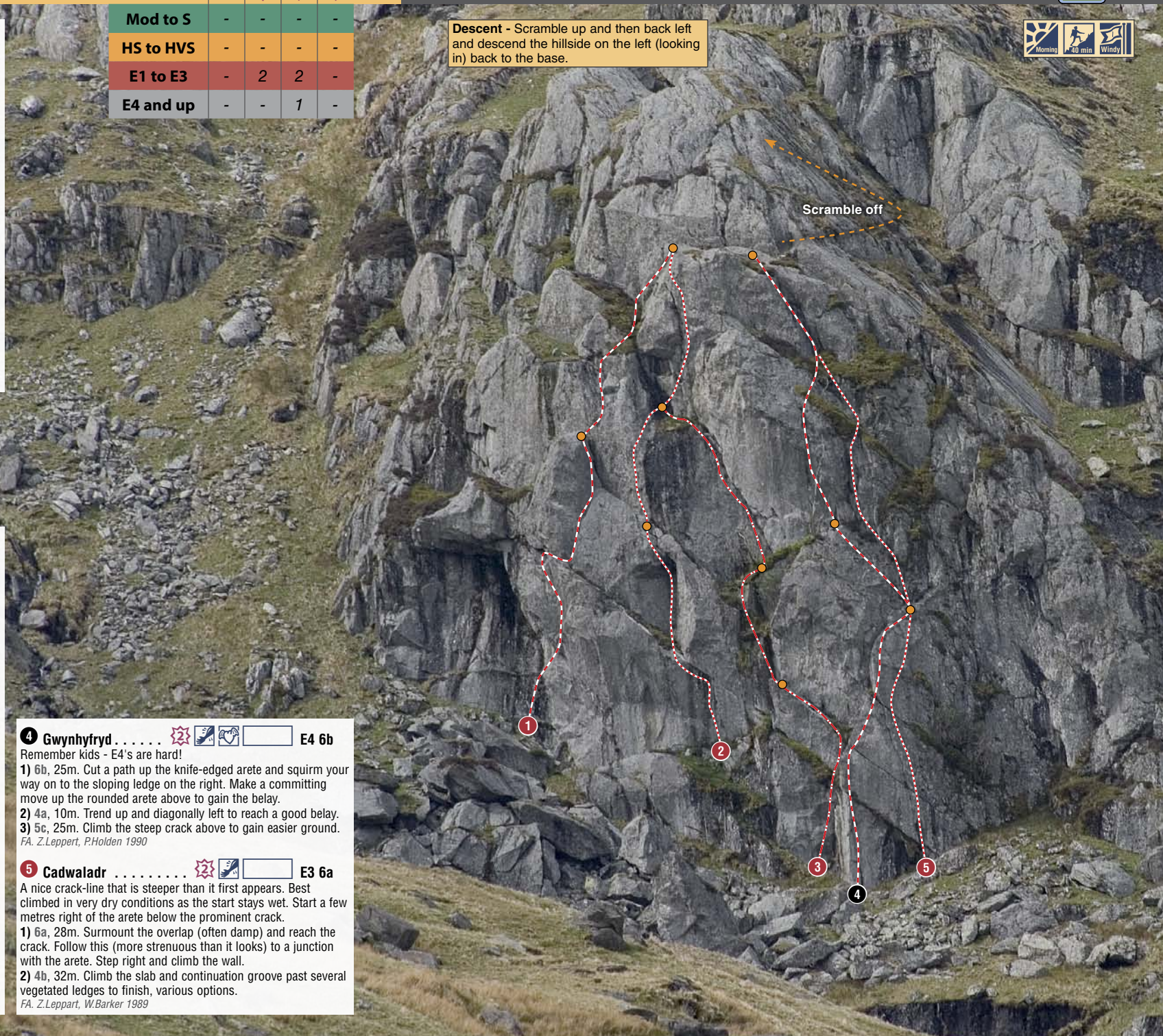
Mod to S	-	-	-	-
HS to HVS	-	-	-	-
E1 to E3	-	2	2	-
E4 and up	-	-	1	-

Descent - Scramble up and then back left and descend the hillside on the left (looking in) back to the base.



- 1 Pentangle**    **E2 5c**
This strenuous route tackles the pod-shaped groove to the right of the oft-damp chimney.
1) 5c, 30m. Tackle the steep break to gain access to the pod on the right. Climb the pod to an overhang, then make a swing right to gain a good crack that leads to the top of the large flake.
2) 4a, 20m. Step right and climb a short steep wall and a mossy slab to gain the large bilberry-covered ledge. Head up and right on to easy ground to finish.
FA. Z.Leppert, M.Kellas 1988
- 2 Broadsword**    **E2 5c**
The best route on the crag and a great adventure. Start at the perched block on the low ledge down and right of the hanging quartz-ramp.
1) 5b, 25m. Climb the wall to gain a hand-traverse leftwards on to the sloping quartz-ramp. Climb the corner above and surmount the capping overhang to gain a belay.
2) 5c, 12m. Climb the delicate pocketed arete above the belay.
3) 5b, 12m. Power up the steep crack above to reach the ledge.
FA. Z.Leppert, M.Kellas 1988
- 3 Gawain Direct**    **E2 5c**
A good route and well worth seeking out.
1) 5c, 18m. Climb the overhanging corner, passing a heathery ledge, to gain the quartz ramp. Follow this leftwards to belay near the mossy groove.
2) 5a, 14m. Climb the mossy groove and then zig-zag up grassy ground to reach a belay beneath the prominent leaning corner.
3) 5c, 18m. Follow the diagonal corner above to a good ledge.
4) 5b, 12m. As for pitch 3 of *Broadsword*.
FA. D.Alcock, C.Davies (2pts) 1969

- 4 Gwynhyfryd**     **E4 6b**
Remember kids - E4's are hard!
1) 6b, 25m. Cut a path up the knife-edged arete and squirm your way on to the sloping ledge on the right. Make a committing move up the rounded arete above to gain the belay.
2) 4a, 10m. Trend up and diagonally left to reach a good belay.
3) 5c, 25m. Climb the steep crack above to gain easier ground.
FA. Z.Leppert, P.Holden 1990
- 5 Cadwaladr**     **E3 6a**
A nice crack-line that is steeper than it first appears. Best climbed in very dry conditions as the start stays wet. Start a few metres right of the arete below the prominent crack.
1) 6a, 28m. Surmount the overlap (often damp) and reach the crack. Follow this (more strenuous than it looks) to a junction with the arete. Step right and climb the wall.
2) 4b, 32m. Climb the slab and continuation groove past several vegetated ledges to finish, various options.
FA. Z.Leppert, W.Barker 1989



Mod to S	-	-	-	2
HS to HVS	-	1	1	1
E1 to E3	-	3	1	2
E4 and up	-	1	1	-

Craig yr Ysfa is an excellent mountain crag, which unlike many in this area, gets a reasonable amount of sun. There are several fine routes across the grades here but the best are *Amphitheatre Buttress*, *Mur Y Niwl* and *Aura*. There is nothing quite like ascending the great *Amphitheatre Buttress* at dawn as the sun rises on your back.

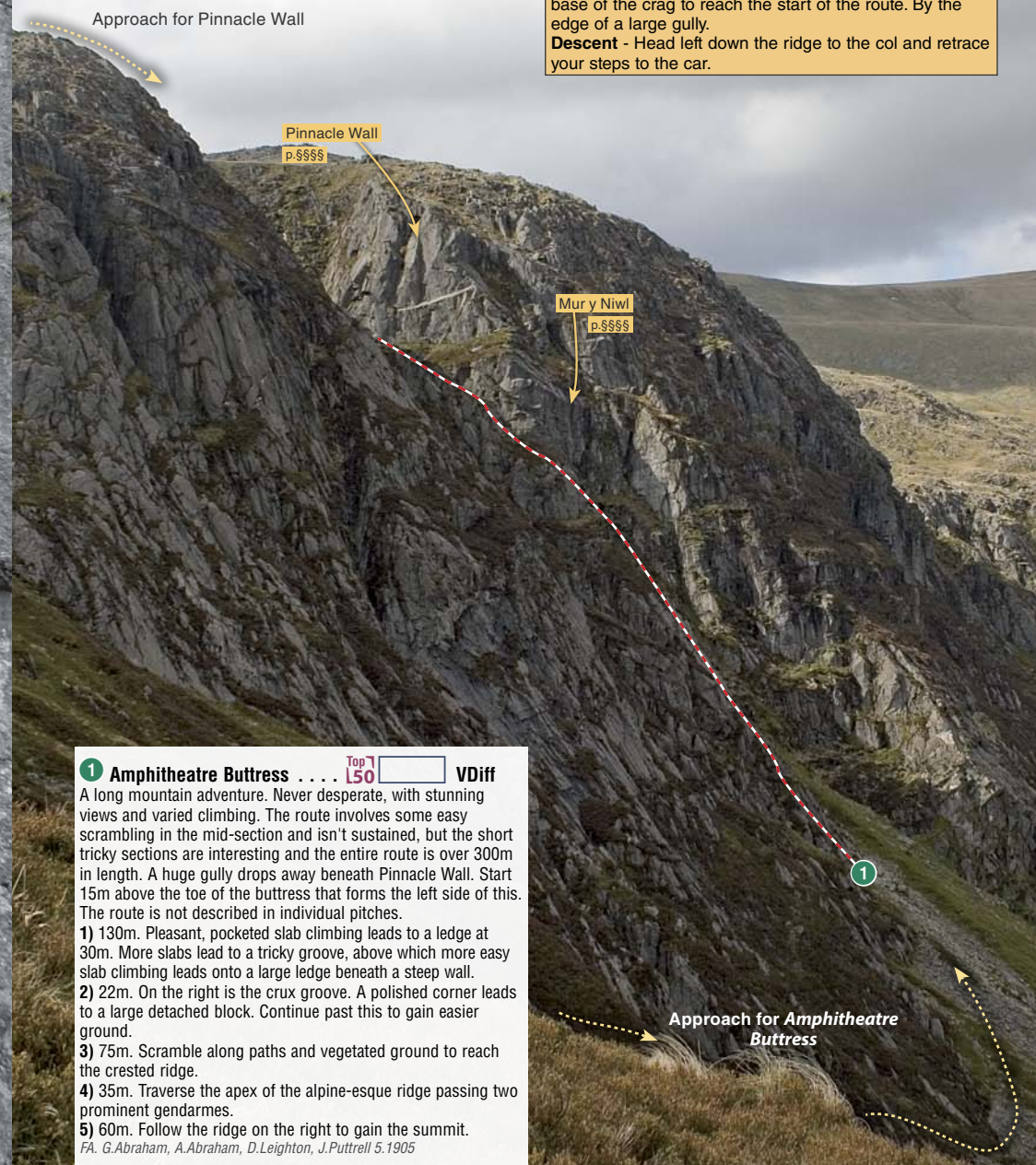
Approach See map on page §§§ Park at the base of a gated tarmac road that runs straight up the hill or in Gwern Gof Isaf Farm if there is no room (see map page §§§). Under no circumstance use or block the private road. Head up the road to near the Llyn. Where the road turns left, head straight on and pick up a path that heads up to a col. Amphitheatre Buttress is accessed from the col, the other routes from further left.



Conditions The crag gets a lot of sun throughout the morning and early afternoon. It can seep after rain and is exposed to the wind.

Moving up to the thin crack on the upper section of *Aura* (E2 5b) - page §§§ - on the gully wall of Craig yr Ysfa. Photo: Mark Glaister



Amphitheatre Buttress
A three-star mountaineering classic. Leave no gear at the base since you walk back from the summit.
Approach - See intro notes opposite page. From the col, descend the other side leftwards (looking down) and follow a vague path down the heathery slope. The path zig-zags downhill further than you think, and takes a gully on the left near the base of the crag. Contour around the base of the crag to reach the start of the route. By the edge of a large gully.
Descent - Head left down the ridge to the col and retrace your steps to the car.



1 Amphitheatre Buttress  
A long mountain adventure. Never desperate, with stunning views and varied climbing. The route involves some easy scrambling in the mid-section and isn't sustained, but the short tricky sections are interesting and the entire route is over 300m in length. A huge gully drops away beneath Pinnacle Wall. Start 15m above the toe of the buttress that forms the left side of this. The route is not described in individual pitches.
1) 130m. Pleasant, pocketed slab climbing leads to a ledge at 30m. More slabs lead to a tricky groove, above which more easy slab climbing leads onto a large ledge beneath a steep wall.
2) 22m. On the right is the crux groove. A polished corner leads to a large detached block. Continue past this to gain easier ground.
3) 75m. Scramble along paths and vegetated ground to reach the crested ridge.
4) 35m. Traverse the apex of the alpine-esque ridge passing two prominent gendarmes.
5) 60m. Follow the ridge on the right to gain the summit.
FA. G.Abraham, A.Abraham, D.Leighton, J.Puttrell 5.1905



Pinnacle Wall

The upper wall of Craig y Ysfa is home to some superb and atmospheric mountain-routes.

Approach (see map on page §§§) - From the col reached on the approach), head leftwards up towards the summit following the main walkers path. The crag can be accessed via abseil (recommended) or down the main gully via a loose hair-raising scramble.

1 Gettysburg HVS 5b

A good route with some steep sections and varied climbing. Start on the left of the upper ledge.

1) 5b, 25m. Climb the tricky slab until a step right gains a semi-rest in a niche under the first prominent overhang. Pull through the overhang to gain another, smaller overhang. Strenuous moves round this into a corner lead to yet another overhang which is exited left to a stance.

2) 4c, 20m. Blast up the steep wall behind the belay, then trend right and finish over blocky ground.

FA. C. Jones, A. Moulam, R. Conway 1969

2 The Grimmett VS 4c

A classic steep VS adventure that gives a great outing with acres of exposure.

1) 4c, 25m. Follow the prominent corner to a steepening. Climb steeply leftward to gain another corner which is climbed to a technical move left into a narrow corner. Bridge up this to gain the grassy ledge. Belay on the right.

2) 4b, 20m. Traverse up and left to gain an arete. Swing round this and climb the steep wall to access a wide crack which leads to the top.

FA. A. Cox, R. Beaumont 24.7.1938

3 Excalibur E2 5b

A worthwhile route with an energizing swing around the lower arete providing the meat.

1) 5b, 30m. Follow *The Grimmett* until you are above the second overhang. Move right past a small overlap to gain the arete, swing boldly round this to gain a sloping ledge. Climb more easily up to a grassy belay.

2) 5a, 12m. Climb directly behind the stance to gain and climb a groove in the centre of the wall.

FA. M. Crook 1980

4 Spiral Scratch E2 5b

A pleasant outing up the inviting pillar of clean rock that hangs just right of *The Grimmett*. Although the technical grade is low for an E2, the route is not one to be underestimated.

1) 5b, 30m. Start as for the previous two routes. At 4m, break right to gain an arete. Climb this and gain the centre of the pillar which is followed, passing a diagonal crack, to the belay.

2) 4c, 15m. Follow the clean arete on the right to reach a good ledge and easy ground.

FA. G. Gibson, A. Hudson, A. Popp 1983

5 Pinnaclessima E2 5c

A fantastic route, the best on the wall. Start below the left-hand end of the quartz pavement where easy rock leads up to a left-facing corner.

1) 5b, 15m. Power up the left-facing corner to reach a belay on the right, just above the quartz ledge.

2) 5c, 35m. Stem up the technical corner (small wires) to gain a wide crack. Climb this to a horizontal break 3m below the tip of the pinnacle. Monkey left to finish up *Pinnacle Wall*.

FA. C. Jones, R. Jones (2pts) 8.1969

6 The Haunted E5 6a

The hardest route here by far. Start just left of *Pinnacle Wall*.

1) 5c, 15m. Climb the wall more or less direct with a heart-in-mouth moment to reach the quartz ledge. Move left to belay as for *Pinnaclessima* in the corner.

2) 6a, 35m. Move right and climb the right rib of the corner with some difficulty to the small overlap. Step over this and gain the flake which takes you rightwards. Where the flake ends, a micro break leads you left to a peg below thin cracks. These provide both the physical and mental crux of the route.

FA. G. Gibson, A. Popp 1983

7 Pinnacle Wall S 4a

A classic route that weaves an unlikely line up this fine cliff. Start below the right end of the quartz pavement where an easy grassy ramp leads up and right.

1) 15m. Climb the grassy ramp to a stance.

2) 25m. Climb up 3m to gain the quartz ledge. Saunter along this to belay under the groove at its left-hand end.

3) 4a, 35m. Climb the groove for 10m then trend right along a crack to reach the tip of the pinnacle. Step left and climb the slab above to finish.



FA. C. Kirkus (solo) 21.6.1931

**1 Plumbagin**   **E1 5b**

A fine, if somewhat baffling route.

- 1) 5a, 18m. Climb the V-chimney to its end. Pull up to a horizontal crack, then scuttle right onto the ledge. Care is required to create a sound belay, small wires useful.
- 2) 5b, 32m. Move right and gain the groove above with some bamboozling manoeuvres. Follow this to gain Bilberry Ledge.

FA. J.Clements, D.Potts 1965

2 Aura   **E2 5b**

The finest route on the crag. Start in a small damp gully.

- 1) 5b, 45m. Climb straight up to a small triangular overlap. Move over this and climb diagonally left to reach a crack. Trend back right to the base of the long slanting crack. Make a tough move to gain the crack proper and follow it to a ledge.
- 2) 12m. Scramble onto Bilberry Ledge.

FA. R.Carrington, A.Rouse, B.Hall 5.1975

3 Mur y Niwl   **VS 4c**

Another stunning classic with sustained difficulties and breath-taking exposure at the grade. Care is needed to protect the second adequately on the devious and exposed crux pitch.

- 1) 4b, 12m. Climb up to the left side of the large grassy ledge. Walk along the ledge and belay beneath the flakes and corner.
- 2) 4c, 32m. Climb the wall above the belay to gain the base of the large corner system. Follow this until a hand-traverse line leads rightwards along the highest of two parallel ledges to a tough step-down. Follow an easing diagonal line rightwards to an awkward semi-hanging stance.
- 3) 4c, 18m. Drop down rightwards from the stance and head right again under the roof to reach a ledge. Climb up and left, past an arete, to gain a grassy stance.
- 4) 4c, 22m. Climb the groove above to gain the short cracked wall. Climb the crack.

FA. A.Moulam, J.Churchill 26.4.1952



4 Amadeus   **E4 6a**

A reasonable route if it is dry and clean, otherwise it can be a horror show. Start as for *Agrippa*.

- 1) 4a, 18m. Follow *Agrippa* to the first good ledge down and right of the overhang.
- 2) 6a, 30m. Move left and gain a smaller ledge. From here move left again into the base of a crack to the left of the overhang. Power up this and into the prominent V-groove. Follow the groove direct to the stance on *Mur y Niwl*.
- 3) and 4) As for *Mur y Niwl*.

FA. G.Gibson, P.Gibson 1980

Mur y Niwl
The centre-piece of the crag!
Approach (see map on page \$\$\$) - See approach notes on previous page. Either scramble down the steep, loose gully with great care, or abseil down Pinnacle Wall and then down the left side of the lower wall.
Descent - No descent is usually necessary, just continue upwards on one of the Pinnacle Wall Routes, or go left to the gully if time is short to scramble out upwards.

**5 Agrippa**   **E1 5a**

A tough and well-named proposition where technique and nerve will stand you in good stead.

- 1) 5a, 30m. Nip up the leftward slanting groove to gain the ledge. Climb diagonally right to gain another ledge. From the right-hand side of this, climb the wall above to belay on the next ledge.
- 2) 5a, 18m. Climb straight up the wall above on good holds and step left above the overlap into the groove. Climb this, then traverse right to the ledge.
- 3) 5a, 25m. Drop down 2m and traverse right to a ledge on the nose of the buttress. Climb rightwards and then head diagonally left past sloping ledges to a grassy terrace.
- 4) 4c, 40m. Move left on the ledge to climb a steep wall into a groove. This leads to long easy slabs which are followed to the Bilberry Ledge.

FA. J.Wharton, D.Isles (aid) 1959

This vast and intimidating crag has several major routes that are as good as anything else of their grade in the whole of North Wales. The altitude, north-facing aspect and long walk-in have meant that the routes see fewer ascents than they deserve and the crag is not often in condition, but in stable summer high pressure weather (when other crags like Cloggy are also 'in') a visit to Llech Ddu will be amply rewarded.

Mod to S	-	-	-	-
HS to HV5	-	-	-	-
E1 to E3	-	-	-	2
E4 and up	-	-	-	1

Approach See map on page 555

The crag is best approached from Bethesda and requires a long walk more familiar to winter climbers after some action on the Black Ladders. From a staggered crossroads at the southern (Ogwen) end of Bethesda, turn up Braichmelyn Road. The road goes up steeply for about 1km to a junction. Turn right and carry on through the village of Gerlan. Park carefully - places are limited so please don't upset the locals. Walk along the road over the Afon Caseg and take the right fork. Walk up the road to some houses and head over a stile by the last house on the left and follow a waymarked path along the side of Afon Llafar. The path soon becomes more defined and heads into a beautiful valley. As you round a grassy rib the crag appears. Head up through the boulders and to the crag.

Conditions

As mentioned, Llech Ddu requires a long spell of hot and dry weather to come into condition. It gets almost no sun, is high and exposed, is wet for much of the time and dirty for even longer.

1 The Great Corner 3 E2 5b

An amazing route that avoids the main corner high up and instead steps out to the wild arete.

1) 4c, 40m. Climb the prominent groove for 12m. Move left and make an awkward diagonal traverse right to gain easier ground by a big rockover. Move up to belay.

2) 4b, 35m. Climb the slab by the corner crack to a steepening. The right wall relents to a slab. Belay at the top of the slab.

3) 4a, 35m. Climb the flake on the left to a grass terrace. Traverse this to the base of The Great Corner.

4) 5a, 40m. Climb the corner with increasing difficulty to a peg on the right. Carry on up to a rest and just above is a belay and stance just below an overhang.

5) 5b, 30m. Make a memorable traverse out left to the arete and step down a couple of metres. Move left into the closest of two grooves. Climb this to pass an overhang before continuing up to a second steepening. Move over this and into another groove which is followed to the top.

FA. J.Clements, D.Potts 1965

2 The Groove Top 150 5 E1 5b

A stunning route with many challenging pitches. Start below a steep groove, directly below the imposing 'Great Arete'.

1) 5b, 25m. Ascend the groove to a ledge, make committing moves up the main groove to a hard section at about 2/3 height over a bulge. Gain the grassy terrace and belay below the next groove.

2) 5b, 20m. Head up the groove, enter the slick chimney section and exit to a slopy ledge. At the bulge, move onto the bubbled wall on the right and belay on a slopy ledge. Wire up high and peg on the right.

The Groove continued...

3) 5a, 18m. Move down and left to a spike-jug and traverse left to gain another groove on the left. Climb this for 10m to a semi-hanging belay on a good spike and wires.

4) 5a, 35m. Ascend the innocuous-looking groove to a grass ledge at its top.

5) 4c, 20m. Move up and right on the tremendously exposed wall and follow a flake up and right to a grass bay and belay below a crevasse.

6) 4a, 40m. Walk left to the rib and climb it. Caution needed with loose rock. Above the ground gets a bit more broken and you can carry on over several steps to belay in a broad grassy gully. Scramble out to a flattening and traverse off right.

FA. J.Anthoine, I.Campbell 1961

3 The Great Arete 3 E5 6a

A stunning and totally mind-blowing line taking the groove in the steep arete. Start as for *The Groove*.

1) and 2) As for *The Groove*.

3) 6a, 40m. Move left and go up to a peg. Go up again and slightly left to a hole. Some scary bridging up the groove leads to the first overhang. Move right around this into a crack, peg. Carry on up the still-sustained groove on the right past another roof and go up to a peg. Climb the tapering groove to where you can move right to good holds where the angle relents. Head up for a few more metres to a sorry collection of pegs and traverse right to a better belay.

4) 4c, 22m. Move back left to the arete and follow it in a splendid position to the belay below the crevasse on *The Groove*.

5) 4a, 40m. As for *The Groove*.

FA. B.Campbell-Kelly, E.Drummond (4pts) 1969

Descent - Scramble up and right to a path that descends easily down to the base of the cliff.

