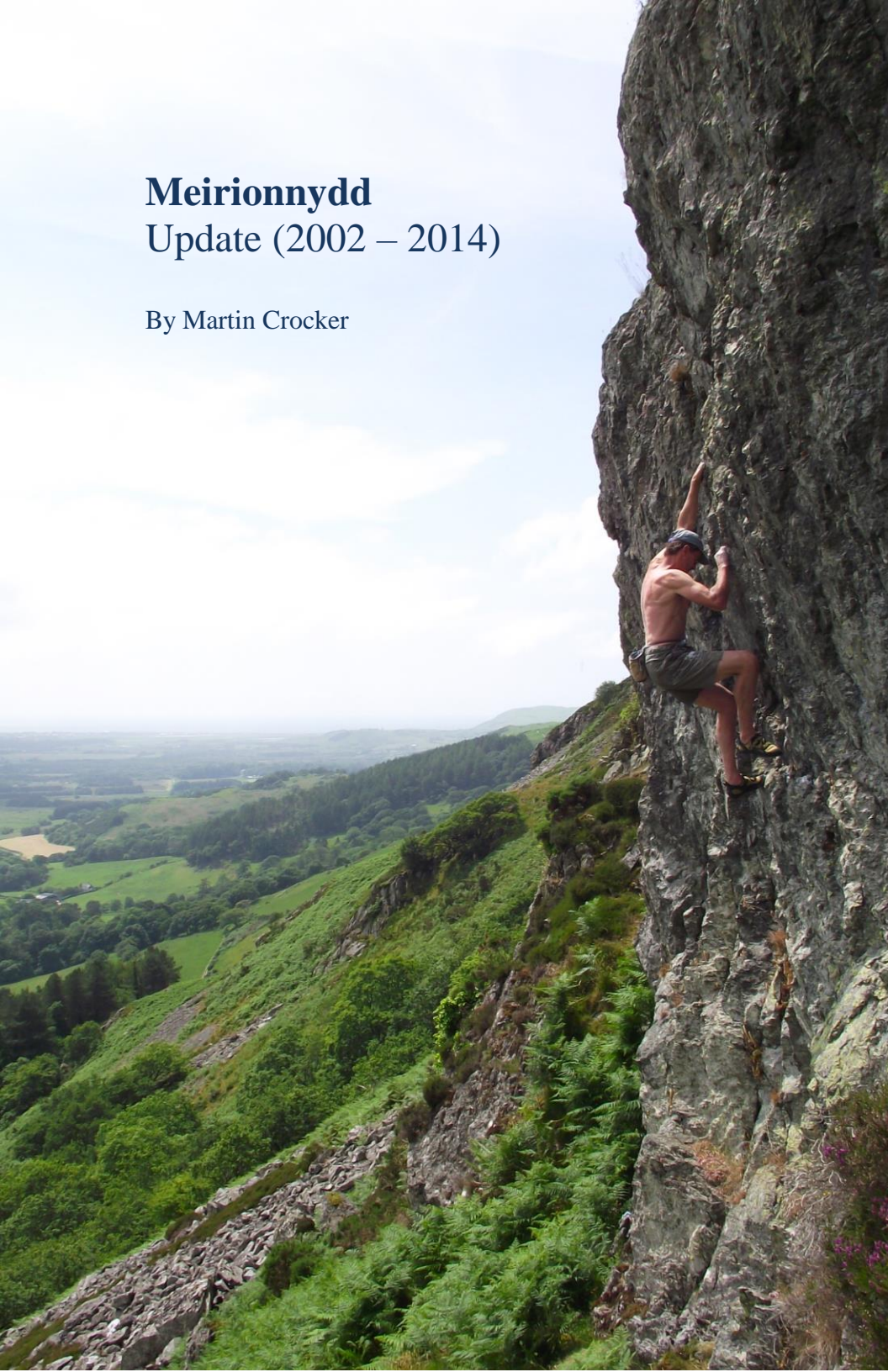


Meirionnydd Update (2002 – 2014)

By Martin Crocker



Meirionnydd (parts of) out-of-date Update 2002 - 2014

Update June 2004 and summer 2014; by Martin Crocker (with contributions* from Terry Taylor)

Cover pic: *Viva Suarez!* (E5 5c), first ascent. Pic: Jonathan Crocker

1. Y Rhinogau

1.1 Outlying Crag

Llanbedr School Crag*

Turn left just before the school and park in a lay-by 30 metres along this small road on the left side. Walk up the road to where a path leads off right through the forest below the cliffs. After passing through a wooden gate the first cliff is visible up on your left. It has a good ledge running along its length about a quarter of the way up. First routes start at the left end of the ledge below a square leaning wall.

Wicked Witch of The West 12m HVS 5b (31.3.2002)

Climb up on jugs just right of the reddish rock scar to a good horizontal crack. Poise on a good jug up left before a very long reach up and right to a finger-ledge allows the finishing jugs to be gained.

FA: TT

Handle and Grapple 12m HVS 5a (31.3.2002)

Two metres further along the ledge is a vertical finger crack leading slightly rightwards to a stepped groove. Traverse back up and leftwards to the top point of *Wicked...*

FA: TT

Trail of Crumbs 12m E2 5b (31.3.2002)

At its right end the ledge widens to a good platform below the very steep leaning wall. Start just left of a short roof and hang a horizontal break. Steep, scary moves up the leaning wall above gain another good horizontal break above which easier climbing leads direct to the clean top.

FA: TT

LLANBEDR SCHOOL CRAGS RIGHT-HAND (2002 Guidebook page 358)

This section and its routes are re-described A south-facing quartzite crag nestling in oak woodland: Rhinogau's most accessible. Hardly breath-taking to look at, the climbing is better than expected and the rock is clean.

Park as described above (and in the guidebook). Walk along the Cwm Bychan road for 150 metres; then take the small road on the left, and the footpath left again. Sixty metres along the path, break right and trend leftwards up the slope to the cliff.

Near the left-hand end of the crag is a dark wall with an overlap climbed by the first route.

Prehensile Tension 18m E3 6a (5.4.2002)

The dark wall has an overlap at 5 metres above which a thin seam leads vertically up its centre. Gain the overlap directly below the seam, arrange excellent small wires then make exquisite moves up the seam to where it widens. The large ledge above brings respite, then saunter up the remaining 10 metres of *Sucking*...

FA: TT

Sucking a Holly 18 metres HVS 5b (5.4.2002)

The crack in the right end of the dark wall 2 metres right of above is best approached from the right on good clean rock. Well-protected steep crack climbing leads to the large ledge. Continue much more easily directly up the 10-metre broken slab to trees.

FA: TT

In the centre of the crag (right of the 'dark wall') is a broken muddy groove with a huge oak tree at its base.

***Water on the Knee** 20m E1 5a (7.8.05)

Open and pleasant climbing, but with very spaced gear. Start immediately right of the oak tree. Pass a flake and climb straight up to land on a small slab (good wire placement). Trend right with a long reach for a narrow ledge. Step right and climb an arête via a crack (which you'll later be worried to find represents the left edge of a tall but hopefully tied-in block). Finish over a small bulge.

FA: MJC, JH

***Corknee Oak** 20m HVS 4c (7.8.05)

A good climb with reasonable gear up the staggered corner in the centre of the crag. Follow the corner, which passes left of an oak tree, to its top. Step left and pull straight up the headwall on good holds.

FA: MJC, JH

Next right is a tree filled gully and then a big open groove.

Absentee Landlords 18m VS 4c (5.4.2002)

Start at the base of the groove on a quartz wall which leads to a good crack. Pull up right onto easier angled rock then traverse up and leftwards to a crack just left of a blunt arete. The crack leads directly up to a hanging ledge above which the belay is found 3 metres back from the top.

FA: TT

What Volcano's That? 20m E1 5b (7.8.05)

Well protected. Start below an overhang at 8m, right of the prow climbed by *Prowler*. Climb the left rib of a groove, and establish yourself on a slab under the overhang. Surmount the overhang at its widest point to ledges. Continue straight up the bulging wall to the top.

FA: MJC (on sight), JH

1.2 Craggs of the Northern Rhinogs

Craig Fawr* OS Ref. 672353 (page 284)

Born to be Del 15m HVS 5b (20.6.2002)

The cleaned leftward-rising groove to the right of *Purple Reigns* is steady and safe until the thin crack in the steeper part of the slab just right of *Purple*....Thin moves lead deliriously upwards.

FA: TT (belayer had no boots!) Re-claimed in 2003 but at a grade of VS 4c.

Foel Penolau* OS Ref. 662 348 (page 285)

The northwest face left of *Dehydration*

The Last Nut on Earth 10m E3/4 5c (14.7.2002)

The wall 4 metres left of the pink scoop of *Dehydration* has stepped ledges leading to a flake on the left. Use the blind flake to gain the top where one good wire protects the top out.

FA: TT

Don't Poop on my Parade 10m HVS 5b (14.7.2002)

A few metres further left is a good arête with a crack in its left side and a rightwards rising crack in the wall forming its right side. Start steeply below the arête to gain the left end of a ledge. Pull rightwards into the crack and follow it rightwards to a good finish

FA: TT (solo)

A Fut Above the Rest 10m E2 6a (14.7.2002)

Start as for *Don't*...to the left end of the ledge then go up leftwards via the crack in the left side of the arête. A small ledge at the top right of the crack is wicked to pull onto before finishing on very clean sloping rock.

FA: TT

Clip

LEVEL THREE

Swansong 16m S 4b (21.10.03)

Start at the left end of the crag a metre right of a small pillar. Climb to a blocky overhang. Pull into the corner on the right, and continue to finish in the hanging groove to the right.

FA: Mark Hendry, Pete Whyley

Flight of the Merlin 16m S 4a (21.10.03)

Starting 3 metres left of *Zero Gravity*, ascend the cracked wall and follow an obvious groove to a niche. Exit through a V-notch (4c), or more easily via the curving crack to the right.

FA: PW, MH

1.3 Roman Steps Area

Clogwyn Spot

A good steep isolated buttress sits on the northern banks of the gorge of Ysgor y Gwyn where the gorge enters the forest above the car park of Cwm Bychan. The first feature is a bay facing the car park. To the right is a right facing corner, and right again is a compact leaning face.

Bare-assed Bay 18m VS 5a (9.7.2002)

This is the west facing bay at the left of the crag. Stroll directly up into the bay; then face the challenge of the centre of the wall. Above the wall cracks up and right lead with some more difficulty to the top.

FA: TT, D Owen

***The Rush** 20m E5 6a (13.7.2002)

The right-facing corner above the well-jammed flake leans a lot more than first appearances suggest. Start on a good platform below and left of the flake. Stepping on the flake is the next problem; then the corner starts (microcams to a blade peg (!)) before pulling dramatically out left to a good jug. Power straight up above this (cam 2 and 3) before rocking up right (crux) to excellent layaways. Finish directly more easily.

FA: TT

****Too Much of a Rush** 20m E5 6b (31.5.05)

A brilliant route with inventive moves on the leaning face right of *The Rush*. Pull straight up above the left end of a short ramp and mantel onto a narrow ledge. With protection from RPs and a poor peg, layback the sharp edge on the right to a break. Enter the hanging corner on the left (vital Rock 3) and 'get funky'. Finish up bulging rock.

FA: MJC, unseeded

***Put the Breaks On** 20m E5 6a (30.5.2005)

Photogenically ideal: the slim corner in the right-hand arête of the face. Take a short corner to ledges. Move up into the corner – placement-specific wires. Stretch for a break, and then pull left to oak trees and easy ground.

FA: MJC, unseeded

The next two routes take the slim white pillar 15 metres up and right of the main face.

***Jamming with Ben** 15m E1 5b (31.5.05)

A good steep climb. Start at a purple-stained slab and corner left of the white pillar. Climb the slab and take the trickier-than-it-looks crack to the top.

FA: MJC, unseeded

Brother Rico 15m E3 5c (31.5.05)

Climb a scruffy corner onto the left-hand end of a heather ledge. Follow the finger-crack above to its close; then precariously bridge left onto a good foothold on the white pillar. A tentative move gains good finishing holds.

FA: MJC, unseeded

Still on the northern banks of the gorge there is a smaller white wall further east.

Bareback Ride 8m HS 4b (13.7.2002)

Just left of the centre of this white wall is a good crack with an easy start and a hard finish.
FA: TT, D Owen.

Us Animal Extremes 8m E2 6a (13.7.2002)

The centre of the wall is steep and well protected with a hard sequence to top out on good, clean, sloping rock.
FA: TT

Clogwyn Spot

Forest-Edge Crag (please translate to Welsh)

From the left end of the scree slope beneath Clogwyn Spot an intermittent edge descends leftwards along the edge of a silver birch wood. The routes are described from right to left as approached. A stone wall abuts the right end of the crag and runs uphill towards Clogwyn Spot.

Twenty metres from the wall is a small purple pillar. The bulging grey scoop to the right of the pillar is the entertaining (unless you fall off) **Son of Spot** 6 metres E1 5c (22.7.2003), while the **Purple Pillar** itself is 5a/b (both MJC on-sight solo).

Twenty metres left again is the daddy version of the Purple Pillar.

Purplest Pillar 6m E3 5b (22.7.2003)

Follow the arête of the pillar and get duped.
FA: MJC, on-sight solo

Further left is a smooth slab behind a large silver birch and left again an arete above an oak tree.

***Not a Teddybear's Picnic** 10m E4 6b (22.7.2003)

One sketchy move above a bold start. From the tree trend slightly rightwards up finger edges to a break. Follow the thin crack, with a useful pocket high right and not much else. Finish between boulders.
FA: MJC, with Soloist, after top-roping.

Oak-in-Fold 8m E3 5b (22.7.2003)

Climb the left side of the arête; then switch sides delicately and continue up to a niche. Step right to exit. A scary escape from half-height may be possible down the tree.
FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

Mur Cyddiedig

Rita's Rib 8m HS 4a (22.7.2003)

Her rib right of her groove.
FA: MJC, on-sight reverse-solo in mistake for her groove.

Two-Towered Buttress

Rib's are It 6m VD (22.7.2003)

The rib at the left end of the crag.

FA: MJC, on-sight reverse solo

Poor Rameses 12 metres E4 6a (22.7.2003)

A testing eliminate. Start at the rightward-slanting crack (of *Why Does it....*).

Move left below an oblong roof and then climb up and right into a short left-facing corner.

Move up a rib and (with hard-to-spot microwires in the hairline crack slightly left) climb the leaning headwall swinging left at the top.

FA: MJC, with Soloist.

Rhinog Fawr West (Page 325)

LEFT (*CELTIC TIGER*) CRAG

Surly Miser 6m E15c/6a (3.4.05)

From a boulder under the heather-topped pedestal, follow a foot-ramp before a tentative stretch gains the ledge.

FA: MJC, solo

War Wounds 10m E3/4 6a (3.4.05)

From the ledge of *Scarred for Life* take a purple streak and mantel direct onto a narrow ledge. Make off-balance moves up thin cracks above to the top.

FA: MJC, solo, with long sling clipped into a micro-wire

RIGHT (BUBBLES BURST) CRAG

Phantom Raspberry Blower 6m E2 5c/6a (3.4.05)

Start from the raised heather ledge of *Bubble Bursts*. Make light-fingered moves up the centre of the wall. No gear, but a good landing.

FA: MJC, solo

SIX-METRE WALL (NR RHINO FAWR WEST)

A steep highball wall above and left of *Celtic Tiger* and 45m left of the path.

Put Up or Shut Up 6m E2 5c (5.5.05)

The sometimes wet flake left of centre; rocky landing.

*****Turn Back Time** 6m E3 6b (5.5.05)

Vanquish the compact flake-line right of centre using thin holds on the left to negotiate the crux. Superb (or at least it was when it wasn't a wall of moss and lichen).

***Wet Blanket** 6m E2 6a (5.5.05)

Using the arête layback onto a small lintel at 2 metres, and mantel out.

FAs: MJC, solo

Carreg y Shrek

The next two routes take lines either side of *The Incredible Bounce of Marrow*.

Depends on the Legs 10m E4 6a (16.7.2002)

Escapable above the crux, yet testing. Start right of the stepped corner, on top of a pedestal block (the landing!).

Move up to the right-hand end of a small roof. Use slopers on the rib up to the left to make a hard, unprotected rockover. A jug and a wedged block in the groove above a second roof make for a more comfortable finish.

FA: MJC, solo, after top roping

***Boneshaker** 10m E1 5b (16.7.2002)

An enjoyable and well-protected romp on good holds. Climb straight up to reach a nicely sculptured crack right of *Incredible Bounce*.... Lay the crack, and pull up using two jammed, if not shaky, flakes to the top.

FA: MJC, solo, after top roping

The Opposing Nose (a.k.a. 'beauty spot')

A small south-facing crag of perfect clean and quick-drying grit conveniently situated next to the Roman Steps. It is located 250 metres east of Y Grisau, 30 metres above and left of the Steps, and is characterised by a left-facing corner and a buttress with an undercut arête to the right.

The Darling Slot 7m E4 6b (17.7.2002)

Do battle with the wide slot in the wall left of the corner, and continue warring up the strenuous face to a mantel exit slightly left.

FA: MJC, TT

Love and Other Catastrophes 6m VS 5a (17.7.2002)

The corner: 'over once it gets going'.

FA: TT, MJC

*****Sophia** 9m E5 6a (17.7.2002)

A beautiful arête, with a perfect degree of commitment. Hang the projecting jug on the arête to place intrinsically blind – but vital – wires in a thin vertical crack to the right. Power up the arête to gain good holds in the crack at a higher level. One tentative move gains a flake just below the top.

FA: MJC, TT

Real-Life Footage 8m HVS 5a (17.7.2002)

Pull onto a flat ledge beneath the groove in the front of the buttress. Climb the groove to the top.

FA: TT, MJC

The right side-wall of the buttress forms an east-facing slab overlooking a rectangular bay.

Pulses to Feel 6m E2 6a (17.7.2002)

Precariously layback the left arête of the smooth slab; microwires in a seam protect OK.

FA: MJC, TT

***Bisect Her** 6m E2 6a (17.7.2002)

Climb the very thin slab between the two central incipient seams, trending ever so very slightly leftwards on minimal holds to the top.

FA: MJC, TT

Wham Bam thank you Lamb 6m VS 5a (17.7.2002)

A ten-second thrill up the thin crack in the steep wall behind the rectangular bay. Treat the block in the heather at the top with respect.

FA: MJC, solo

Rhinog Fawr South Face* OS Ref. 659289

Below the subsidiary south buttress, terraces of rock fall away down the hill (sic). Several levels below the cairn on the top is a larger complex with a large pinnacle at its base. The face behind the easy angled pinnacle has a good vertical crack.

This Penguin's got Hair 15m S (4.5 2002)

The crack leads directly to a broken terrace. Up and left is a shorter wider crack to the top.

FA: TT, solo

Strolling on the Sky 18m S (4.5.2002)

Left of the pinnacle is a leaning compact face with a wide corner-crack forming its right side. Jam up this to the large ledge on the left above the leaning face. The compact slabby wall above is taken directly up its centre.

FA: TT, solo

1.4 The Western Valleys

Moelfre* OS Ref. 624 254 (page 341)

Below the Barrel-shaped buttress is a prominent prow with a crack splitting its right hand side.

Arson Fire 10m E1 5b (26.6.2002)

The crack is hard to start then it eases as it widens before leading back up and rightwards. Great position.

FA: TT

Moelfre Cwm OS Ref 632 249

Just to the right of the brow of the initial rise on the 'Short, Steep Way' to Craig Bodlyn is a white pillar at the back of the broad, northeastern cwm of Moelfre. One of the three routes, in particular, is worthy of interrupting your walk, despite the crag appearing small and slight.

****Dreamweek** 15m E4 6a (19.7.2002)

Steep and exhilarating climbing up the left arête of the pillar; exposed and committing. From a heather-filled gully, pull up onto the arête on good holds. Climb to a small undercut roof (good cams), move left beneath it, and then make a very long reach up the right-hand side of the arête to a good finishing hold.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

The Eternal Caravan of the Fish and Chips 12m E2 5b (19.7.2002)

Fairly steady but needing care to protect. Follow a hairline crack in the centre of the front face of the pillar to a bulge. A quartz-lined crack now takes over and good holds lead to the top.

FA: MJC, solo (*dedicated to my son's predilection that week*).

And finally:

Past It, My Ass 6m E1 5b (19.7.2002)

A steep face route 30 metres left of the top of the pillar: keep left of the central, grass-filled crack.

FA: MJC, solo in a rain shower (*grim*)

Cwm Nantcol* OS Ref. 652279

A 10-metre high vertical wall 500 metres east of *Colonel Jones's* wall that is characterised by vertical cracks and seams. Unbelievably clean, it is quick drying and with a southeasterly aspect. A ledge 3 metres up runs beneath the left half of the wall. A word of warning: beware the body-swallowing crevasse a short way back from the top.

Red Dirt Girl 12m VS 5a (24.4.2002)

Immediately right of the white left arête (unclimbed) is a crack rising from the ledge. A boulder problem gains the ledge. Take the crack until a swing left gains a higher ledge. Walk to the corner at the back of the ledge and finish up this. This avoids the challenge of the top arête right of the corner (top-roped at unprotectable 6b).

FA: N. Clacher. T.T

***Micro-brain** 12m E5 6b (21.7.2003)

Hard, with a committing finish. The most prominent feature in the wall left of *Radical Souls* is a leftward-leading overlap/groove which inconveniently blanks out. From the ledge move up to the overlap and follow it before long moves diagonally left gain a small undercut in an overhang. From here blast for the top before strength ebbs.

FA: MJC, with Soloist after top-roping.

***Radical souls** 12m E1 5b (24.4.2002)

A fine climb which takes the crack with a huge flake block at the top. Start just left of a dark corner in the lower wall and climb up to the ledge. Move up a thin crack into the wider crack above. Jam up and pass to the right of the block to reach the top.

FA: TT, N Clacher

***?** 12m E5 6a/E4 6b (?/21.7.2003)

The vertical seam right of *Radical Souls*; testing and tricky to find the best-fitting wires. Climb past a good break to a narrow overlap (cams). High-intensity cranking above and you'll soon be hanging bigger holds in the crack. Footholds are now scarce as you make for the top.

FA: awaits confirmation; possibly TT before

Amnesty for Beginners 10m HVS 5a (21.4.2002)

The crack above a sapling and vegetated ledge. Reach it via an open groove below.

FA: TT, solo

***NO Talking to the Second** 10m HVS 5b (21.4.2002)

The next vertical crack along is a bit fiercer and steeper, although well protected. Go up easy stepped ledges and follow the increasingly difficult crack to a fun finish.

FA: TT

Above a stone wall is a body-wide chimney – yet to inflict the squeeze on anyone.

***Time for an Upgrade** 10m E2 5b (21.4.2002)

The thin wriggling crack 2 metres right of the chimney. Start on the ground behind the wall (some will step off the wall) and climb up on flat holds, some of which feel a little hollow, to the crack. Positive layaways seem only to hinder footwork on the final bulge.

FA: TT

My Solar Twin 10m VS 5a (21.4.2002)

The leftward-curving crack in the right end of the wall. From a ledge layback to the top.

FA: TT, solo

Behind the wall, 150 metres up the hill, is a buttress with ominous blade-shaped boulders beneath. Initial excitement is soon quelled. In the centre is a blade-arête.

Toys in the Attic 12m HVS 5b (24.4.2002)

The crack left of the arête is hard to enter, resists a bit; then falls over for an easy finish.

FA: N Clacher, TT

Another 30 metres further up the hill a good short slab can be seen. The slab has two routes.

Finding my Religion 6m HVS 5a (24.4.2002)

The thin seam in the left of the perfect white slab rises slightly leftwards. Lovely rock.

FA: TT, solo

Seconds Out 6m HVS 5a (24.4.2002)

The more committing, but equally clean, right-hand seam.

FA: TT, solo

Gosforth Sue 6m HVS 5c (24.4.2002)

Just around the corner right of the slab is a slim tower with a funny pod in its centre. Pop into the pod, bomber gear, then execute great moves into and out of it.

FA: N Clacher, TT

Fridd OS Ref: 614302

A beautiful south-facing crag boasting clean and coarse grit and a few gems. Open and sunny, with an easy walk-in, it's an all-year round venue that (unfortunately) escaped discovery until after the 2002 guidebook was published. In fact its discovery became a foregone conclusion when Terry Taylor was invited to climb with rival Martin Crocker on Carreg Fawr. Neither had spotted Fridd before, but there on the opposite side of the valley, lit up by the sun, both could see it clearly. It looked brilliant, yet little was said between them. True to form – with Crocker safely back in Bristol Taylor inevitably and immediately devoured the crag with much relish. And can you blame him!?

There are two approaches; possibly the most straightforward is the first.

1. Park at a sharp bend in the minor road at OS Ref. 621307, which breaks left (north) from Pont Cwm-yr-Afon in the Artro valley. Follow the R-o-W due west past a small crag in the trees (Oak Tree Buttress) until, just after turning a stile, the crag can be seen ahead and to the right. Two hundred metres right of the crag is the huge Fridd Boulder.

2. Leave Llanfair on the road signposted 'Cwm Bychan 6 miles'. After 1.7 miles there is a right turn signed 'Cwm Bychan'. A further 0.8 miles on there is a track leading right to Fridd farm. Park; then walk south through the centre of a ruin, go over a stile on the right; then take a track down hill through a gap in the wall. Continue to a hill with a single stunted tree and contour down its south side heading west. Pass a small crag, go through a gap in a wall; turn sharp left on a path and find that the crag is just to the right.

MAIN CRAG

The routes are described from left to right; all (all but one TT route were repeated shortly after the first ascents).

TT, the *Tin Tin* of Twyn 7m E2/3 6a (8.8.05)

Climb the sharp arête at the extreme left-hand end of the crag via a shallow groove in its right-hand side (which contains a good RP placement).

FA: MJC, with Soloist (This could be the same line as *Room to Gnome*: 10m E2 5b, FA: TT)

More Black than Blue 10m HVS 5a (2005)

The V-groove is entered with a big step, after which calf-busting bridging leads to a finish on the right (exit as for the next route). The route I didn't repeat.

FA: TT

Right of the V-groove is a series of walls bounded on the left by an angular arête with a line of white-crystalline pockets up its right-hand side.

****Decisions and Revisions** 10m E3 5c (2005)

The arête: superb and not too serious. Follow the arête direct with a testing layaway move at the top. A wire twisted in one of the pockets is the only gear. The second ascensionist reckoned E4 5c/6a for the on-sight.

FA: TT

It's Undone!? 10m E2 5c (8.8.05)

Climb coarse-grained rock to reach an obvious hand-ledge in the right wall of a concave groove (bold). Follow the crack above to easy ground.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

May Contain Traces of Stone 10m E2 5b (2005)

Right of the concave groove is a reddish wall with a thin crack in its upper right-hand side. Climb curious scoops to join the crack, which leads to stepped ledges.

FA: TT

***Russian Patience** 10m E2 5b (2005)

Take disconnected flakes in the steep wall right of the previous route; tasty and protectable.
FA: TT

Broken corners now intervene before another arête stands proud; right of the arête is a second set of steep walls.

Fast Rock 10m E2 5c (2005)

Make committing moves rightwards over an overhang to start the arête, which leads a lot more easily to the top.
FA: TT

Missionary Impossible 10m E1 5b (2005)

Climb the crack in the middle of the wall right of *Fast Rock*. (If we're talking about the same route, the second ascensionist reckoned VS 4c.)
FA: TT

Sex Among the Molluscs 10m E3/4 6a (2005)

'A challenge in aesthetic kinetics' according to Dr T. In the right-hand side of the wall, just left of a dirty corner, is a thin crack. Follow the crack awkwardly to jugs on easy ground. The second ascensionist thought E2 5c.
FA: TT

Right of the corner is a sheer rectangular wall with a vertical seam (two pegs) right of centre, the line for *Stretchalongathong*.

On the Rack 10m E2 5c (2005)

The crack running up the left-hand edge of the wall: a joy if your fingers fit (otherwise....). Pull rightwards out of the top of the crack and stroll up ledges.
FA: TT

****Stretchalongathong** 10m E4 6a (2005)

The plum of the crag, worth a perambulation to pluck. Gain the seam (and two pegs) via finger-ledges on the left. From an undercut flake, make hard committing moves to a flake on the right. One rock-up and you're on easy ground. Desperate; the second ascensionist reckoned E5 6b.
FA: TT

At the right-hand end of the crag, down and left of an oak tree, is a square wall bounded on its left by a V-groove.

Together Apart 6m E4 6b (8.8.05)

The grade depends how you climb this route. The first ascent was soloed after top-roping at E4, but it would be possible to use side-runner protection in the groove to the left reducing the grade to E2 or E3. Make difficult eliminate moves up the right arête of the V-groove, until serious moves up its right-hand side lead to the top.
FA: MJC, solo. Unbeknown to MJC, TT approached the upper arête via the V-groove:
Separation Anxiety, E3 5c (2005)

Children and Dog in Tow 6m E1 5c (2005)

The right-hand side of the final wall using a series of layaways; there is a wire runner, but soloing the route (E2) feels right.

FA: TT

A stream cascades over the crag-line, a little distance left of a huge keeled boulder. There is one route on a small wall that starts from within a sheepfold left of the stream.

Embraced by the Stone 6m HS 4c (2005)

A hard start up the slabby wall gains a crack and positive holds leading to the top. The second ascensionist reckoned Severe.

FA: TT

FRIDD BOULDER

The huge boulder 200 metres east of the main crag is defined by a humungous arête which (in 2005) is unclimbed (looks about E8, or V8 with multiple mats: the falls are into boulders).

On the back (NW) face is a lichenous grey wall (VS 4b) the right arête of which is **Dr Bunk Off** 5m HVS 4c (9.8.05).

I See You Terry, Ripping that Grass 6m E2 6a (9.8.05)

Starting in the centre of the face climb to a finger-jug (microwire above) and make a hard step up left. Go straight up and pull over on the jug on the right.

FA: MJC, solo

****Stuff of Kauk** 7m E4 6a (9.8.05)

A brilliant micro-route; highly protectable. Follow the crack in the left-hand side of the keeled arête, using the arête at one point and making a hard move to a rock-spike. One more steep move before finishing jugs greet.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

OAK TREE BUTTRESS OS Ref: 304618

This is the fine south-facing buttress behind a large oak tree three hundred metres along the path to Carreg Fridd, from the parking spot at the hairpin. It overlooks a marshy area with immovable herd of goats with very long horns. The routes are described from right to left.

The Pendulum, the Pits 12m HVS 4c (9.8.05)

The major crack system in the right-hand side of the buttress. Step right from the tree and climb to the right of a pendulous block to gain its top. Carry on up the interesting crack which widens and eases with height.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

***Style Broaker** 12m E5 6a (9.8.05)

The finger-crack in the sheer central face; graded for an ascent that doesn't resort in any way to the oak tree close behind. Clamber up the left-hand side of the pendulous block until possible to span left to the tail of the finger-crack. Shallow jams, with little for the feet, lead into a hard sequence to move up and left into an easier scoop.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

Bottom Biting Fly Swarm 10m (9.8.05)

Move up rock-spikes to a fist crack in the left-hand side of the butters. Step right into a wider crack, which leads to the top.

FA: MJC, Jonathan Crocker

Carreg Fawr OS Ref. 627 293

Routes described right to left (as far as I can remember as per the guidebook).

***The Miracle of Muscle** 12m E3 6a (24.7.2002)

The fine vertical crack just left of the wide blocky crack of *Sylvester* is a delight in crimp layaways and leads directly and strenuously to the top.

FA: TT

***Named Retrospectively** 12m E4 6a/b (8.7.07)

Climb the finger-crack left of *Sylvester*, stepping left to a flake ledge on the arête. A hard sequence up the arête (microwires) gains a ledge and a still testing finish.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

A narrow chimney/gully intersects the crag left of the tower of *Sylvester*. In the right wall of the gully is a 6-metre wall topped by a glacis, the home for four solos above bad landings.

Near and Fawr 6m E4 6a (8.7.07)

Move up and right into a sharp undercut. Reach good holds in the scoop above and rock over to escape.

There's Gear! 6m HVS 5a (8.7.07)

Take the groove and crack past a square chockstone.

E9 Avoidance 6m E4 5c/6a (8.7.07)

Make a move up a short groove in the centre of the wall, swing right and lever onto a ledge (on *There's Gear!*). Mantel onto the glacis left of the crack.

House of Shattered Glass 6m E4 5c (8.7.07)

From a narrow block ledge climb up into a small scoop on layaways. Terrible landing.

FAs: MJC, solo, after top-roping

Left of the narrow gully are two corners each with an arête on their right-hand side.

Stick it to me 20m E3 5c (21.8.2002)

The left-hand arête; quality climbing, though the gear is not. Pop up right onto the left end of a grassy ramp. Follow the arête direct to a big ledge with blocks. Above, much easier stepped ledges lead directly to the top.

FA: TT

Trouble with Lickin' 15m E2 5b (21.8.2002)

An interesting climb up the centre of the wall left of *Stick it to Me*. Pull directly onto a clean ledge. Take the slight groove and wall above, tricky gear (but all there if you look), until a pull rightwards from a good flake leads to a ledge at two-thirds height ledge. A slim corner and flake lead easily to the top.

FA: TT, D Owen.

The next two routes take lines left of the next gully along.

***A Moment Gloopy** 20m E4 6a (29.5.05)

An exhilarating top arête. Climb an easy groove right of a corner and trend right on ledges (sling on tree to the right). Using a layaway left of a crucial small cam slot above a small roof, make a long lock for finger-edges. Swing left onto the arête and climb it to easy ground.

FA: MJC, TT

The Human Trampoline 20m E1 5a (29.5.05)

Poorly protected. Start below a corner 20 metres left of the gully. Climb the corner for 7 metres; then follow flat holds diagonally right to the top of the arête of **Gloopy*.

FA: TT, MJC

The remaining batch of climbs takes the south-facing wall at the left-hand end of the crag. For those routes that end on the big sloping ledge, scramble off down to the left.

***Fawr from the Maddening Crowd** 20m E2 5b (29.5.2005)

Excellent strenuous climbing to finish. Climb the corner-crack under the south-facing wall until it is possible to reach left to plant a sling on a spike (first gear). Take the shallow groove and crack, using holds on the right at a bulge, and continue steeply on the left to the top.

FA: MJC, TT

***Remember Nothing** 18m E3 6a (7.4.05)

A fine route with two contrasting sections. Start below an overhanging crack. Climb the crack, pulling out onto a big blocky ledge. Take an incipient crack up the headwall (dicky Rock 1 over the bulge), and make a hard move over an overhang before flat holds lead to the top.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

Rip-Snorthing Grunt Groove 9m E4 6a/b (29.5.05)

The compelling and repelling V-groove to the sloping ledge, probably with a lot of noise.

FA: MJC, TT

***Crucifer** 9m E6 6b (29.5.05)

A super-intense arête. Start under the hanging arête left of *Remember Nothing*. Make a committing spring right from the ledge with a gorse bush onto the left wall of the arête. A balancy clip (peg) precedes desperate moves to gain jugs and the big sloping ledge.

FA: MJC (after top- roping), TT

Memory Loss 10m E3 5b (7.4.05)

Mantel up left onto a ledge with a gorse bush. Climb the wall above via a very slight groove to a good rail and jugs to the left. Finish right of a projecting capstone. (Small-wire protection looks feasible.)

FA; MJC, solo

Carreg Abermawr Gigfran**CHARACTER**

A superbly situated crag of fine, solid and clean quartzite in a sunny location overlooking Barmouth. The first five routes are located on a 12m south-facing, leaning wall, and are described from right to left.

APPROACH

Park your car on the brow of the Fford Mynach road on the northern outskirts of Barmouth, off the A496 Harlech road. Walk up a short T junction off this road, and take the public footpath on the left. Follow the path, past a sharp right turn, to a col, after 1km. A short path on the right leads to a large cairn on a minor hill overlooking Barmouth. The crag is located 200m south of the cairn, and is reached by a scramble to either side.

Vatican Weeping 10m. E4 6a/b (8.4.2005)

Boulder up onto a shelf in the right-hand side of the wall. Make hard moves up the leaning wall (peg) to a jug right of a sitting block (don't touch). Continue to the right of the block over a bulge to the top.

***Pope John Paul II** 12m E2 5c (8.4.2005)

Climb the sinuous crack that looks to be a hand-crack, but isn't! Tough.

****Santo Subito** 12m E4 6a (8.4.2005)

Brilliant; the thin central crack reached via a short-lived crack on the right.

***Greed, the Destroyer** 12m E4 6a (8.4.2005)

Step left from a block into an intermittent crack-line. Follow it strenuously and finish up a flake on the left.

Illusion of Democracy 12m E3 5c (8.4.2005)

Start at a tree near the left end of the wall. Climb right of the tree past an inverted fang to a rock-spike. Step left and follow a shallow groove past a smaller spike onto the arête.

First Ascents: MJC, with Soloist, last route on-sight.

Under the left spur of the cliff is a 5m pinnacle, the summit of which is attainable at Moderate standard. Around the spur, above and left of the pinnacle, is a 6-7m wall. There is a collapsed stone and corrugated shelter at the cliff base.

The next three routes were on-sight soloed on their first ascents; protection looks available for the leads, and speculative lead grades are given.

Our Funeral 7m E1 5b (8.4.2005)

Start 5m right of the shelter, between two trees. Climb the grey scooped wall, trending left to exit at a short vertical crack.

'More Media than People' 7m E1 5b (8.4.2005)

Follow the fine groove 2m right of the shelter, and behind a tree. A tricky exit.

Degenerative Society 6m VS 5a (8.4.2005)

Climb the short groove above the shelter. Reverse down the tree.

FAs: MJC, on-sight solo

Craig y Merched

NORTH WALL

The following two routes may have been John Sumner's last contributions to the area; details were sent to me by his wife, Jill in April 2004.

The next route starts 15m left of, and slightly down from *A Good Spoonful*.

Napoleonic Legacy 18m VS 4b (16.4.2003)

The fine arête with three small overhangs; good protection. Move up and right beneath an overlap, and then steeply back left to a ledge left of the arête. Climb a groove, surmount an overhang; then continue up the arête to the top passing over a huge wedged block.

FA: John Sumner, R Short

Pack Rat 21m E1 5c/6a (12.4.2003)

A route dominated by one move over a bulge. Start as for *Magic Mushroom* and climb the mossy corner before stepping right to a holly bush. Step right above the bush, to a crack in the bulge, good gear. Using a fragile spike, climb the bulge on the left; and then proceed more easily to the top.

FA: John and Jill Sumner

RHINO'S BUTTRESS

Rhino's Bum 18m VS 4b (16.5.2004)

Climb the centre of the rounded buttress 5m left of *Naked Dissent*, and continue up the tapering slab to the top.

FA: Nick Eaton, Tim Gledhill

Pachyderm Slab 15m S 4a (16.5.2004)

Climb the slabby wall immediately left of the arête of *Horn of Plenty* and right of a heathery crack.

FA: Tim Gledhill, Nick Eaton

2. Bala Area

Cregiau Llyn Gwern

(Note that some of the existing route descriptions have been re-written.)

Belays for the following four routes are on a choice of two boulders 15 metres back from the cliff-top.

Launch 2002 15m E4 6a (15.6.2002)

The undercut arête which forms the left edge of a steep south-facing leaning wall. Unusual, with a blind crucial wire placement (E5 if you don't find it!).

Clamber up onto a ledge beneath the arête. Stretch for a good finger-hold on its right side (blind Rock 4), before making some flexible moves up the arête onto a slab above. Finish up an easy groove.

FA: MJC, JH (*date of guidebook launch (first printrun)*)

***Being Anita** 18m E2 5c (14.2.2001)

Climb the easy yet vegetated ramp rightwards for 5 metres. Gain the base of the leftward-slanting crack in the leaning wall and follow it strenuously onto a rib. Finish easily straight above.

Existing route (TT)

***Face in the Clouds** 18m E3 5c (14.2.2001)

A committing climb taking on the left-facing groove in the leaning wall. Follow *Being Anita* to a hand-ledge right of the crack, under the groove. Make a powerful move up the groove and climb using holds on the left wall to exit.

Existing route (TT)

The Ramp 18m VD

Climb the vegetated ramp rightwards (old peg runner) to a fine finishing crack.

FA: Unknown

The next two routes start below the centre of the leaning wall, six metres down and right of the start of the easy ramp.

Iron of Mystery 18m E3 5c (15.6.2002)

Move up to a questionably jammed block in a crack. Pull over an overhang and climb a slab onto the ramp (old peg runner). Undercut right; then pull into a narrow groove in the leaning wall. Strenuously follow the groove, exiting equally strenuously on the left: all quite bold.

FA: MJC, JH

A Friendly Farmer 15m E1 5b (15.6.2002)

Move up to the jammed block of the previous route and then climb diagonally right onto a ledge on a rib. Climb direct to a small undercut in an overhang. Ignoring escape to the left, pull straight over onto a slab which leads quickly to the top.

FA: MJC, JH

***Stepping on Diamonds** 18m E3 5c (15.6.2002)

An excellent climb on fine rock up the diamond-shaped rib underlying the left-to-right ramp. Bounce up heather to a rowan tree right of the corner beneath the rib. Stride left onto a projecting foothold at the base of the diamond. Make a hard move up from a break to get established on the rib. Pull past a bulge and finish up a slab.

FA: MJC, JH

Craig y Llestri OS Ref. 839 300

A new venue 'discovered' independently by its two contributors.

From the A494 Dolgellau to Bala road, 500 metres northwest of Llanuwchllyn, turn into a minor road signposted Trawsfynydd. Follow this road for 2 kilometres to a telephone box, and take a left turn over a bridge to a T-junction immediately. Turn right, and drive along the road which soon enters forestry. Park at a forestry track on the left, 250 metres after entering the forest.

Take the track through the forest, which zig zags, then bears left before emerging at the other side of the forest at a gate and stile. Contour leftwards immediately and enter a small stony cwm. Gain height while contouring the cwm, cross a fence and gain the hill-top. A little way further on the top of a broad heather gully will be found; there are climbs to either side. Towards the left-hand end of the crag is a 7-metre rectangular block/pinnacle.

***Let's Kiss this Thing Goodbye** 12m E3 5c (2.6.2002)

Start below the white groove 2 metres left of the pinnacle. Pass a flat spike in the groove (microwire up right). Pull up directly (critical cam), continuing straight to the top. Belay at the back of the terrace. Fun and strenuous.

FA: TT

***Sooner or Later** 12m E5 6a (2.6.2002)

The right edge of the leaning wall gives perfect climbing with excellent but spaced holds. Start in the recess just right of the edge and step left onto the edge. Pass directly up to the horizontal break, wonderful pocket above. The deep, vertical pocket 2 metres above this is a sinker once gained, and after pulling up rightwards the heathery top is touched. Pre-placed lower-off rope a good idea.

FA: TT

Roughly in the centre of the crag, and at its highest point, is a distinct arête, formed (as closer inspection will reveal) by a tall, semi-detached pillar. Left of this is a white slab.

Tears for the Second 18m E15b (20.6.2002)

The white quartz slab left of the tall narrow tower right of centre. Start 4 metres left of corner up vague white prominence which rises rightwards to the good crack. From top of the crack, pull up rightwards onto the face. Continue direct just left of the bird-defiled niche past a thin section to better holds and the top. Belay well back.

FA: TT, D Owen

***No Fingerprints** 25m E2 5c (29.7.2002)

The arête. Climb straight up the steep lower section on quartz pockets, to a huge, lady's fingernail flake (one hidden wire in a pocket slightly left on this difficult section). Now follow the crest of the arête on good, spaced holds with little protection to a ledge on top. Finish up a blocky rib.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

***Der SudFuhrer** 20m E4 5c (29.7.2002)

Not unlike its Scottish namesake, and despite its scrappy outlook, the quartz-pocketed rock is an absolute treat to climb on. Right of the arête is a slim quartz-veneered face, with a rather sorry tree at half-height. Climb the centre of the lower face, trending right (small wire in narrow corner), and then back left and up with a long reach to a pocket in a flake (*in-situ*-thread). Gain the narrow ledge with sorrowful tree above. Continue direct to a good break 2 metres below the top, and struggle out with handfuls of heather.

FA: MJC, with Soloist (*for the record: the sorry tree was found decapitated and there were chalk marks on some of the holds, but it eventually became clear that the route had not been led.*).

Right of the quartz wall is the broad heather gully of the approach, and on its right-hand (northern) margin a short slabby, south-facing wall rising up the hillside. There are three routes towards its right end, left of a grooved arête.

Build Up To Bigger Things 7m E4 5c (29.7.2002)

Precisely climb the smooth, eliminate slab left of a vertical crack left of the arête. No gear.

Cracked It 8m VS 5a (29.7.2002)

The crack: very safe indeed.

Groove and Madder 8m HVS 5a (29.7.2002)

Undercling a roof to gain entry to the shallow groove left of the arête. Climb the groove on improving holds.

FAs: MJC, solo

3. Yr Aran

3.1. Craig Cywarch

TAP Y GRAIG

****Truth Burglar** 38m E3 (15.9.2002)

A superb route on an equally superb piece of rock. This takes the line of greatest technical interest up the *Quartzberg* buttress. The best approach, in common with *Quartzberg*, is to make a 55-metre abseil from good belays in a small outcrop below a level grassy platform above the buttress. Belay in a recess 8 metres above a large rowan below a short angular rib. 1 18m. 5c. Climb the rib to an overhang. Follow layaways around the left side of the overhang and make tricky moves up a slight groove to better holds. Step right; then continue direct up overhanging rock before a swing up and to the left gains a niche and belay just above, at the foot of the main slab.

2 20m. 5b. Climb straight up the smooth slab (left of the slanting crack of *Quartzberg*), past some slots, to a slanting break beneath an overlap. Step right, and surmount the overlap, using a good, though hard-to-find fingerhold over the lip. Skip up easier rock above to the top.

FA: MJC, DS

The following two routes are on a small buttress containing a distinct orange corner, up and to the left of the start of *Sweet Baby James* (and passed on the descent from the Tap y Graig routes). Descent is by scrambling off to the right.

***Orange Corner Boring** 15m E5 6a (15.9.2002)

Looks about E2....it isn't! Climb the left wall of the corner on finger-flakes to an overhanging section of the corner (assorted cams in big undercut). Make fearsome moves (6b if you're less than 6') up the corner to easier ground.

It'll Be Alright - On Sight 15m E3 6a (15.9.2002)

Looks about HVS....it isn't! Climb straight up the crack 5 metres right of the corner, with a surprisingly hard move to leave a flake on its right. Trend leftwards on easier ground to belays. (Probably easier if a move right towards the right arête is made at the crux.)

FAs: MJC, DS (second route on-sight)

FENESTR Y GRAIG

***Magic, for Fritz** 70m E4 (2005)

A sustained and testing face, reached via Pitch 1 of *Powder Monkey*.

1. 35m. 5b. Pitch 1 *Powder Monkey*

2. 35m. 6a. Climb the corner of *Powder Monkey* (twin pegs) to a ledge. From a peg, climb diagonally left across an overhanging wall and make a very hard move to reach a hand-ledge: hidden jug above. Climb direct up the face to intersect *Plankwalk* close to the end of its traverse. Take a hairline crack in the headwall into a left-facing groove, and belay on the terrace above.

FA: MJC, JH

The *Plankwalk* block is in a very dangerous condition (2005).

3.2 Aran Benllyn

THE CITADEL

***Modernising Aran's Society** 25 metres E2 5c (28.7.2002)

Enjoyable technical face climbing up the left-hand side of the wall. Use the established abseil point to gain a large heather-ledge 6 metres above the left-hand side of the ledge system beneath the wall. Climb an easy short right-facing corner to a grassy ledge. Move up a short crack to a shelf. Climb straight up the steepening face above, keeping left of *681 Troop*, to reach a huge terrace. Belay; then scramble rightwards to the top.

FA: MJC, DS

The next route takes probably the only worthwhile line up the 'unclimbed' crag to the right of and below The Citadel described in the guidebook. Approach it either via a 25-metre walk right from the foot of the abseil to The Citadel routes; or by an abseil direct over the crag, following a scramble across from the cairn above The Citadel. The route starts from a slanting heather ledge 6 metres up.

***Beyond the Call of Duty** 30 metres E5 6a (28.7.2002)

A very committing and strenuous finale on the blunt arête of the crag. Climb an open groove without difficulty to a sloping ledge beneath the roof under the arête. Carefully work in RPs into a thin crack left of the arête; then power up and right past a good finger slot into a slight groove. Six metres of scrambling lead to the terrace on top.

FA: MJC, JH *Harwood had driven 3 hours and then walked 3 hours to get here with a brand new pair of artificial hips. He followed the route, turned around, and made the 6-hour journey home. Now that's what I call dedication.*

Craig y Geifr

***The Highlander**

A well protected yet surprisingly strenuous climb; high in the grade. Climb the striking rightward-slanting crack at the left-hand end of the crag, just to the right of a stone wall. *Existing route re-described*

****Lowlander** 18m E5 6a (16.6.2002)

An impressive face-climb on the broad, smooth rib at the left-hand end of the crag, immediately right of *The Highlander*. The climbing is very bold up to the diagonal seam. Climb an open groove in the rib past a pocket slightly right (tiny rock spike), step up over a bulge, and then move left to the base of a diagonal seam. Follow the seam rightwards (microwires initially) until an easier rib can be joined to finish.

FA: MJC, JH

An Extra Leg 21m E4 6a (16.6.2002)

The wall left of the left-hand crack (*Jake*). Harder than it looks. Move up to a hand-ledge at three metres; then make a very hard sequence on crimps immediately right of a leaning crack (vital Rock 5) to easier ground above a bulge. Take the obvious line up the centre of the wall to finish up slabs.

FA: MJC, JH

****Jake**

A thoroughly enjoyable crack-line, and a giveaway at the grade. Climb the left-land of the three cracks to finish on low-angle slabs. Good holds but very steep.

Existing route re-described

4. Arennig Fawr

Bryn y Dyfrgi

SOUTH FACE

***The Break of Night** 20m E3 6a (13.9.2002)

An engaging and very varied climb up the right arête of the face, which is also well-protected. Start 2 metres right of the step-up in the terrace. Climb a flake and positive finger-pockets in the face above onto a slab. From a big block, surmount the roof, and follow an improving crack just left of the arête to a large ledge. Some interesting moves up the final arête lead to the top.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

EAST FACE, LOWER TIER

At the left-hand end of the wall is a 5-metre face with two boulder problems:

5c: strenuous pocket-pulling in line with a crack.

6a: long, hard cranks between pockets right of the crack.

The wall beneath the tree overhanging the top has two cracking highball bouldering routes, the E-grades of which may belie the sheer effort required (the French grades are nearer the mark). Looking retrospectively (2020), I guess the modern approach to these routes would be to boulder them above multiple mats. I'll leave it to others to convert my grades to bouldering grades.

Eye to Eye 6m E3 6b (F7a+) (27.7.2002)

Intense: connect two pockets in the wall right of *Leather Boots*, and reach a large hold in a niche below the cliff edge.

FA: MJC, solo after some top-rope practice

Drip-dodger 6m E4 6b (F7a+) (27.7.2002)

Fierce opening moves on the orange wall ultimately gain a large side-hold slightly left. Bound up pockets and jugs to the tree. Seepage will almost always restrict the range of useable holds.

FA: MJC, solo after bouldering it out (*and in very soggy conditions: innovative means of steering the water away from the holds had to be deployed!*).

Pilgrimage 8m E4 6a (F7a) (18.7.2002)

A good route starting up the next, short-lived, crack right of *Third Time Lucky*. Climb the crack with continuous difficulty until better holds at 6 metres can be grabbed. Move up and right to exit up the next route.

FA: MJC, JH

The next four climbs take awesomely fingery lines up the acutely leaning right-hand side of the wall. There is very limited gear on offer. On the first two routes the gear seemed impossible to place on lead, so these two were led pinkpoint, with pre-placed gear. Gear was placed on lead on the other two.

***Sport without Bolts** 8m E6 6b (F7b+) (18.7.2002)

Sequency, with a rejecting crux at 6 metres. Start a metre left of a prominent green streak running up to a crack in a roof overlying the wall. Boulder up to good fingerholds (hero-looped half-inch angle at 5 metres – removed), and reach left for a good pocket (stacked peg slightly left – removed). Now climb direct (good RP 3 to the left) with a very hard move for a poor open pocket; and then step left to exit via a large foothold on *Chorus of Stone*.

FA: MJC (pink-point, flashed), JH *Note: with an extension on the RP, the route could be done without the pegs.*

****55, 46** 12m E6 6b (F7c) (18.7.2002)

Brilliant, with some despicable moves. Climb the green streak to a slight groove (twisted Rock 5 placement above). Make a hard move for a positive slot up to the right (medium cam – if carefully placed there is just enough room for your hand too). Long locks above gain deep pockets, and then all that remains is a final burst up the crack splitting the roof.

FA: MJC (pinkpoint, after one fall), JH

***Don't You Ever Try To Put Me Down** 15m E6 6c (F7c+) (29.7.2002)

Awesomely powerful climbing on holds that could be larger. The first gear (a peg) can only be clipped when 6 metres up: you may wish to bring along a crash-mat.

Starting 2 metres right of the green streak, gain the obvious layaway; somehow reach a large open pocket above, and then another up to the left: good hold here, why not clip that peg now? One more move and the break beneath the capping roof can be reached. Traverse left along the break to the exit crack of 55 46.

FA: MJC, *solo after bouldering out first 6 metres; clipped long sling in peg to 'protect' move to break. This followed a failed Soloist attempt on 27.7.2002 when the rope got caught around bracken, and in any case the weight of the system was pulling me back too much. A subsequent 'f... the rope' solo attempt surprisingly got me past the crux, yet no further, ending in a 6-metre deck-out, raw fingers, and much cussing!!! Even so, on the successful day, it took me 45 minutes to get off the ground. A warming end to a three-day 'wilderness weekend'.*

Wall for Anger 7m E4 6b (F7b) (14.9.2002)

Protectable (on lead), which is just as well given the landing. Some wet holds the norm. Step off a boulder below the right-hand end of the wall, and take pockets between the two seams, and then use a layaway in the left-hand seam to grasp better pockets below the right-hand end of the roof. A rock up onto a wet ledge ends the attack.

FA: MJC, *with Soloist and just enough light for one all-out attempt.*

SOOTHSAYER WALL

Fate 12m E5 6a (13.9.2002)

A bold venture onto the headwall between *Soothsayer* and *50 Dead Men*. Follow *Soothsayer* to a point 1.5 metres short of the vertical crack. Stretch rightwards for a jug on the wall; then make those committing moves for a pocket up to the right. A short crack provides welcome wire placements, and the top is at hand.

FA: MJC, with Soloist after top roping – dangerous stuff

Fiend Two, Direct Start

Layback the arête to the spikes of the original: probably E3 5c.

FA: MJC, with Soloist, 13.9.2002

The Dotted Line 6m E1 5c (13.9.2002)

Boulder up the wall 2 metres right of the corner to the left of *Dorothy's Wall* past a hard-to-use finger pocket.

FA: MJC, solo

Simdde Ddu

EAST FACE

Treacle 15m E1 5a (14.9.2002)

Climb the unprotected centre of the clean slab traversed by *Brimstone*. Eliminate, but reaches the quality.

FA: MJC, solo

Twenty metres right of the *Gravity Depravity* block is a scruffy corner with an elegant right-hand arête.

***Don't Walk on By** 9m E5 5c (14.9.2002)

Not to be missed if passing. Follow the sustained arête direct, and then by using some pockets immediately to its right. There is a solitary small RP placement near the top which would take the grade down to E4.

FA: MJC, solo after top roping.

5. Dolgellau Area**Cwm pen llydan**

CRAG ONE

Casualty Kid 10m E4 6a (24.7.2003)

Headpoint grade; great climbing. From the centre of the starting block of *Head in the Thundercloud*, reach a fingerhold on the lip of the overhang, stretch for another and then snatch for a better one to the right. A few locks up the black wall gets it sorted. Exit as for *Thundercloud*.

FA; MJC, solo after top-roping

Machieavellian Man 15m E3 5c (24.7.2003)

From 2 metres up the grotty groove, swing right onto a juggy hand-ledge which houses a spike (slingshot - questionable spike). Use the left side of the spike to start a series of moves up a very shallow left-facing groove; good spike above. Finish up a technical rib.

FA: MJC, with Soloist. The top rib was borrowed from *Monolithic Man* – Terry won't mind!

Monolithic Man 15m E2 5b (30.10.98)

A bold start, though with a soft landing when the bracken is in full bloom. Make a long reach up a leaning wall 2 metres right of the grotty groove to a ledge which houses a spike of questionable stability. Pull up, trying not to use the spike, and continue to a break. Climb the shield above and exit with an interesting step right onto a slab.

(Re-described, and route separated out to incorporate new top section.)

CRAG TWO (B)

Fifty metres left of Crag Two is another crag above boulders, the right-hand side of which is split by a terrace at 3 metres which broadens and rises to the right.

Tywyn the Line 12m HVS 5a (20.7.2002)

Gain the left end of the terrace. Use jammed blocks above, to reach a long fin-edge and follow this, with a step left into an obvious crack at one point, to the top.

FA: MJC, solo

Death Solo 12m E5 5c (20.7.2002)

Gain the left end of the terrace. Step right, and climb the front of the leaning pillar face, with some long and committing moves to larger holds towards the top of a slight groove. Some gear may be possible on the lead (E4?).

FA: MJC, solo after top-roping

Tumbling...Nice 5m XS 6a (20.7.2002)

Up and to the right of the pillar face, above steep ground, is a hanging rib. Stretch for a finger-jam for the right hand and then launch for a jug on the lip. The haul over, and a dizzy view between your legs, is not the usual finish for a boulder problem.

FA: MJC, solo after top-roping

Rhobell Fawr*: behind Aran Hall on Dolgellau to Bala road.

The left edge of the main crag is bounded by a small gully with a tree in the buttress just right. Above the next gully along is a reddish, easy-angled pleasant slab. The routes are described from left to right.

When the Cat's Away 12m VD (14.9.2002)

The centre of the slab with a hard start and some long reaches.

FA: P. Jenkinson solo

Next right is the buttress with the tree and then the leftwards trending ramp to the headwall of E2 5c. The excellent crack in the left wall of the corner to the right is:

Don't Forget your Jim-Jams 18m HVS 5a (14.9.2002)

Up the easy ramp to a narrow niche below the crack. Go directly up on the most perfect hand-jams.

FA: P. Jenkinson, T.T.

Two metres right is a compelling corner-crack.

***Kindergarden Corner** 18m HVS 5b (14.9.2002)

Starts in the wide cleft at the base of the corner on the right then up the stepped slab to the corner. Wonderful positive bridging leads strenuously to the top.

FA: TT, P.Jenkinson.

Next right is a huge shield of rock, mostly detached from the face, which is bounded on the right by an undercut arête.

***Ass with no Visa** 18m E4 5c (21.5.2004)

The left arête of the shield; bold. Reach a small triangular niche, step left and use small holds to gain a flat hand-ledge (spike runner, if not soloing). Follow the arête more easily to ledges atop the shield. Continue up the blunt rib above on positive holds.

FA: MJC, solo, after top roping

***Weapons of Ass Destruction** 18m E2 5c (14.9.2002)

The centre of the shield. Go up easily to the niche below the face (cams) and make a powerful move to gain a layaway edge in the wall's centre. Pass a weak *in-situ* thread and reach good holds above. Finish easily rightwards.

FA: TT, P.Jenkinson.

Right of this is a low white wall capped by a leaning dark face. Next right is the 'VS slab' as described in the guide. Ten metres further right is a tall narrow slab bounded on its right by a deep cleft.

****The Fever Trail** 12m E5 6a (2.9.2002)

A mirror image of *King of Rumpy* up in Llanberis Pass, this is a bold, unprotectable slab with the crux saved for the top. Step up from the left toe of the slab and make committing moves up and right to a slight easing in angle. Pad directly up to a small overlap where a good pocket aids a reach to a higher, smaller pocket. Teeter up right to finish – and don't look down.

FA: TT, solo, after top-roping

***The Edge: The Truth** 12m E7 6b (21.5.2004)

The right-hand arête of the slab taken on its left side all the way: the truest line up the arête! The 6b moves are at 10 metres, and you are unlikely to be able to crawl let alone walk away in the event of a fall into the boulders. Start a metre right of *The Fever Trail*. Undercut up onto a small foot-ledge; then step right onto the arête. Follow the arête to pause beneath a jutting overhang. Balance high for a rounded crimp for the left hand; hold it, then power up the arête to the top.

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

Sentenced to The Edge 12m E5 6a (5.10.2002) is a hybrid means of climbing the arête. Start up the right-hand side of the arête, but at the jutting overhang bridge up the squeeze chimney to the right. FA: TT, solo, after top-roping which he 'squeezed in between morning and afternoon surgery'

Squeeze and Wheeze 12m E3 5c (21.5.2004)

Surprisingly good fun, and there are even big cam placements at the top. Do as you must with the squeeze chimney. Exit panting.

FA: MJC, solo

Mission Impracticable 10m E4 6a (21.5.2004)

An attentive belayer should make this safe enough. Climb a groove 5 metres right of *Squeeze* to a couple of good wire placements. Step left onto a steep wall, and pull round a bulge on pockets. A quick step up a slab will see a jug to hand.

FA: MJC, with Soloist, after top-roping. *There were cleaning signs on the slab, though the presence of a large loose block and soil in cracks in the initial groove suggests this had not been led before.*

Fronwydd*

A peculiar crag in the forest above the hamlet on the Dolgellau to Bala road. The left side is very overhanging whilst the right side is vertical and has two routes. A right-facing corner marks the extreme right side. Just left of this is a good, steep, narrow buttress.

Ravenland 15m E1 5b (5. 2002)

Start at the toe of the buttress just left of the right facing corner. Up to inset slab below small roof then step left into a short crack. Pull up onto the ledge and finish more easily rightwards.

FA: TT

Ravenshand 15m E4 6a (5.2002)

A pre-placed Rock 4 in the ledge is the only gear in the first 10 metres. The steep right-facing corner-groove at the right of the crag leads steeply and boldly up to a leaning wall. From a precarious point below the wall make a long stretch to the ledge above and a hard rockover. The ledge then inclines steeply up rightwards to a short crack in a corner above which good jugs lead to the top.

FA: TT

6. Dinas Mawddy area

The Quarry (Minllyn)***Entering the Neutral Zone** 27m F7b (E5 6b) (27.9.2002)

At last (!) a companion route to *Zone of Totality*, making the quarry a worthwhile visit. The perfect, clean, almost featureless slab left of the original route now has 8 stainless steel bolts to a 3-bolt lower off (shared). A phenomenally hard start leads to steady friction and edging up the diagonal crack to its end. A brief touch of *The Zone of Totality* and its wild moves past a letterbox slot and then plough on direct to the top.

FA: TT

7. Cadair Idris

7.1 Craig Cau

EAST GULLY WALLS

***Cry to Help** 30m E5 6a (28.9.2002)

Pocket-pulling with an audience: so make it look good! This climbs the front of the pillar right of ‘*Missing Friends*’. Start below the left arête of the pillar, 6 metres up and left of *Missing Friends*. Move up onto a grass ledge at 3 metres. Climb a pocketed bulge on the left to reach a flake in the arête. Climb the arête with a tricky move on pockets to gain a rest up to the right on *Missing Friends*, beneath the pocketed headwall. Lace a slanting crack with gear; then take the centre of the headwall on pockets (possible hand-placed ½-inch angle) with a crucial, bold move on a mono to better pockets (good wire in one of them), which lead slightly rightwards to an exit at the top right-hand corner of the headwall. Finish up Pitch 2 of *Missing Friends*, or climb the rib above (VD, or scramble up the gully on the right).

FA: MJC, with Soloist. *I was too far gone to work out whether a woman up on the ridge who shouted ‘Martin’ was trying to tell me something.*

Spotlight’s on You 20m E2 5b (28.9.2002)

The arête left of *Thumb Wall*. Climb the initial wall to the base of the arête. Follow the arête direct on almost-always-good holds, and finish as for *Thumb Wall* slightly right.

FA: MJC, with Soloist

IDRIS CORNER CRAG

*****Be Come One** 35m E7 6c (29.9.2002)

This is the ‘one’ – the second arête, on a plumb line. Above a hard, highly committing and long crux run-out stretches a 25 metre-wilderness of insecurity, where all but one piece of kit holds a fraction of body weight. Start from a ledge 4 metres under a huge spike and 6 metres below the base of the arête (also the best starting place for the route’s predecessor, *Across the Hellespont*).

Climb to the spike. Swing right and move up to a bulge under the arête (three unsatisfactory pegs here now, displaced to minimise the impact in the event of a fall from the crux section...*Across the Hellespont* to this point). Above is a slim hanging groove. A fiendish sequence of moves up this is followed by some off-balance footwork to get established on the arête. Move up to stand on a welcome inset foothold. Continue past a small bulge (reasonable small cam, and sky/bathook above); then follow the arête on its left-hand side with the occasional crap small wire or RP (yet easing difficulties) to a short mossy groove (junction with *Across*...) which leads to the top.

FA: MJC, after top-roping crux section, DS. *Weird, but it depressed me that my peaceful weekend on the mountain had been interrupted by this fated thing. Picturing the consequences of a fall, the route felt bleak, cold, and unwelcoming in the gloom that evening. Images of my kids kept breaking into my preparations, and – for the first time ever – I think, I seriously questioned the validity of what I’d forced myself to embark upon.*

*****Legacy** 25m E6 6b (17.6.2014)

Beautiful face climbing straight up the wall left of *Idris Corner*, probably high in the grades. Note that the first four pegs (including the two on *Brass Butterfly*) range in depth from an inch to a quarter inch; the pegs on the crux however are decent placements. Start 2 metres left of the foot of the corner; peg, and small cams in corner. Climb the initial wall 4m left of the corner to a break; bomber wires, and hidden peg under a right-pointing flake. Climb boldly up the face above to a jug and a tall right-facing layaway (peg, long clip): so far as for *Brass Butterfly* which now traverses left. Carry on direct (micro-thread) and then on small holds to a good finger-hold (very short peg, and sawn-off peg). Balance up right onto the hold and take a shake; two pegs above. Now for the crux; from a finger-pocket initiate a complex and crimpy sequence, left slightly, to a sloper under a short arête. Pull up the arête and onto the ledge; nut belays immediately.

FA: MJC (first attempt; top-roped first), Luke Jerrard

The following bunch of mini-solo routes occupy the short walls in the region of *Long Hot Mid-summer's Night*; failure on any of the first three could well lead to a 60-metre fall over the cliffs under the sloping slippery grassy terrace beneath. The first two take the immaculate little pocketed face diagonally right of the top of *Artrageous*. There is a stringy rowan tree above the wall.

Johnny Remember Me 6m E3 5b (9.7.2014)

Climb the left-hand arête of the wall; sustained. Scramble back down to the left.

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

***Ghost Riders in the Sky** 7m E4 5c (9.7.2014)

The centre of the face. Step up right onto narrow foot-ledges. Use small pockets and some sharp layaways to stretch for a finger-rail. More pockets above bring the anguish to a close.

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

Telstar 12m E2 5a (9.7.2014)

Above the right-hand end of the sloping grassy terrace (the right-hand descent from the finishes of the *Idris Corner Crag* routes) is a slabby white face left of dark lichenous streaks. Climb delicately up the well-textured slab to a bulge. Probe for a jug above; then rock-up right onto a rib. Escape right onto heather-ledges (which lead to the platform under the *Sounds of the Sixties* buttress).

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

The next two snippets have a less traumatic outlook; they take on the insignificant brown slab and rib that forms the right wall of the chimney right of *Long Hot Summer's Night*.

Pyschobilly 7m E1 5a (9.7.2014)

Climb the inevitably mossy blind crack left of the rib; one good runner at two-thirds height. From quartz holds trend right onto heather-ledges.

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

Juke Box Jury 7m HVS 5a (9.7.2014)

Hit or miss? Climb the left-hand side of the clean rib; again one good runner at two-thirds height.

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

CRACK OF CAU AREA

***In the Hands of the PSC 75m E3 5c (10.7.2014)**

A big route up the buttress right of *Crack of Cau*. Interesting and sustained, if a little escapable in places. Start as for *Touchstone*.

1 12m. 5a. Pitch 1 *Touchstone*. Climb the chimney, awkward to start past a sharp spike to ledges. Traverse left for 3 metres to flake and nut belays.

2 30m. 5c. Traverse back right and climb cracks to a jammed pointed spike (with a good thread runner beneath); *Touchstone* now swings right. Continue up the groove with increasing difficulty (peg, spike runner off line out right), until strenuous climbing (small cams in vertical slots on left wall) enables a swing right on a large flake to ledges. Climb the right-hand side of the rib; trend left and rock up leftwards over a little overhang. Move up to a good stance on a flat grassy ledge; spike and cam belays.

3 15m 5c. Climb the rib to a bulge. Pull up left to a crack (peg); exposed. Make a move up before stepping right across the lip of the overhang, taking cracks and a groove rightwards to a grassy stance on the arête (peg and spike; cams behind) – junction with *Touchstone* (a little way up its Pitch 4). Now either climb (or abseil) down to the right onto a gentle grassy rake that leads to the base of the crag; or follow *Touchstone* to the top i.e.:

4. 18m. 4c. Climb easily up a slab into a cave created by a sharp flange of rock dividing the gully. Chimney up onto the flange; then take the easier gully to a large ledge and flake belay. Scramble up the gully to the top.

FA: MJC, DS

Idris Corner Crag Potential (2002)

- (a) the superb slabby wall right of *Be Come One* is Great Wall-like in texture and frugality; I top-roped a line up it at 6c to link in with *Suicidal Wall*; one piece of gear (low) only. E9?
- (b) vast uncompromising wall right of *Idris Corner*. Unclimbable? Who knows?

7.2 Dysynni Valley

Craig yr Aderyn

***Darkness E6 6b (12.4.2004)**

Effectively a direct finish to *The Dark Road*, prolonging the outright stress right to the top. After stepping into the right-hand side of the niche of *Diamond Eliminate* (Pitch 2); climb up right onto a flake on the hanging arête. Make a very difficult rock-up; then climb direct to the exit of *Pink Panther*.

FA: MJC, Terror, JH.

Llanllwyda

MAIN CRAG

Don't Blame it on the Crows 10m E1 5b (18.6.2014)

The right-hand arête of the east face. Start at a small rowan, and layback the left-hand side of the arête to easier climbing at half height. No gear – hence the E1 grade.

FA: MJC, solo

Craig Tyn Y Cornel East

This is the standalone bulging south-facing wall 400 metres east of the main crag, reached by contouring east on a convenient sheep track which starts from the scree right of the main crag.

Viva Suarez! 15m E5 5c (19.6.2014)

A jug-fest; well not quite – there are a couple of hard long moves and (in common with the routes to the left) a fall would be *terryfying* and highly unwise. It blasts up the steep wall in the right-hand side of the face. Start on a grassy pedestal 3m right of *Golden Years* under a shallow slight yellow groove. Gain twin finger-jugs at 4m and stretch for an open pocket. Deeper pockets above lead to a bulge. Ignore the large and weak flakes above and left, and instead span diagonally right across the bulge for a hidden (well, just great!) finger-flake. Pull round the bulge on jugs and exit onto heather. Well done.

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

Golden Years and *Skeletal Family* both E3 5b. *Golden Years* climbs a leaning, slightly orangey wall mostly on pockets, and this is just right of the obvious juggy rightward-slanting gangway which was/is unclimbed.

Spring: E2; the ‘good’ crack is part of a huge detached hanging flake – scared me to death, what with Jonathan beneath.

8. Moors Northeast of Ffestiniog

Carreg y Foel Gron

MAIN CLIFF

HVS 4c, E1 5b No further details (and I can’t remember now) Both FAs: TT, MJC

*Manic 205 20m E4 5c (11.7.07)

The fine frontal arête of the pinnacle; an unprotected start above killer boulders. Start 2m left of *Chimney Sweep* on a flat boulder. Climb a little rib (with a small slot at head height) and crank blindly up and left onto the right-angled arête. Follow the left-hand side of the arête on surprising holds to easier ground and the top of the pinnacle.

FA: MJC, TAT

E2 5c *Ditto* no further details.

Left of *Sickle Cell*.

FA: TT, MJC

UPPER TIER

Indecision Collision 15m E3 5b (10.7.2007)

The inset arête left of *Sweet Summer Evening*. The grade assumes you are leading and you’re carrying cams. Climb a dirty corner and then step up left onto a ledge under the arête. Take the left-hand side of the arête on good, albeit spaced, pockets to the top.

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

Prescription in Herdoo 10m E4 6a (10.7.2007)

The west-facing wall left of *Sweet Summer Evening*: a deadly start above a backbreaker of a boulder. Make a move up the dirty corner; then follow a shallow finger-rail right before a few powerful moves on pockets gain a flake hold. Continue much more easily on pockets.

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

Dangermoose 6m HVS 4c (10.7.07)

Take the slight blunt rib left of *Perygl*.

FA: MJC, solo, after top-roping

9. Lledr Valley

Carreg Alltrem

****A Simple Matter** 30 metres E6 6b (22.5.2004)

The stunning leaning arête right of the Lavaredo face. Start at the top of the gully, as for *Green Wall*. Step up onto the ramp, and then launch up the broken rib to gain hollow-feeling flakes on its right-hand side. Spring up left to pass a short overhanging section. Now follow the arête, passing good wire placements in a horizontal break, with a couple of powerful moves up the very edge at the top. Scramble up the slab to finish.

FA: MJC, DS (there was a rusted stuck wire in the horizontal break that looked as though it had been there for a good 10 years; removed before ascent.)

Notes

Most of Terry Taylor's and Norman Clacher's routes on Arennig were repeated by 2004. They include *Naomi* and *Point of Snow Return*, both being really bold but *Naomi* being way hard too: definitely E6 and an understated effort by TT. Also repeated TT's *The Dark Road* on Craig yr Aderyn, which is very dangerous indeed. And *The Fever Trail* – which is superb. On *Son Watching* (E6) on Moelfre, Terry's repeat found a low wire placement, but I understand that this doesn't protect the friction climbing at the top.

Legend

MJC = Martin Crocker

TT = Terry Taylor

DS = Don Sargeant

JH = John Harwood

D Owen = Del Owen (Terry's partner)

Some guidebook corrections (noted in 2002)

Photo-diagram page 137: *Ghostrace* should be groove to the right.

Page 138: RP3 should be Rock 3.

Colour plate opposite Page 145: is *The Colour Turtle*

Photo-diagram opposite Page 385: line 3 is *Uncensored* (not *Millenium Bug*, which is crack to the left).