

Welsh Grit Selected Area Guides

Craig y Merched

An Interim Guide to Climbing By Dave Williams

"Craig y Merched is a Welsh gritstone climbing mecca."



Steve Culverhouse in a fine position on
Rhino's Corner (VS 5a), a three star classic
© DAVE WILLIAMS

This 2019 Interim Guide is a comprehensive update of the previous Climbers' Club Meirionnydd (2002) guidebook and may be used in conjunction with it



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The Rhinogydd

The **Rhinogydd** are a range of mountains located in Central Snowdonia, south of the Afon Dwyryd, east of Harlech, west of the A470 and north of the Afon Mawddach. *Rhinogydd* is the Welsh plural form of *Rhinog*, which means 'threshold'. It is thought that the use of Rhinogydd derives from the names of two of the higher peaks in the range, namely **Rhinog Fawr** and **Rhinog Fach**.

The Rhinogydd are notably rocky towards the central and northern end of the range, especially around Rhinog Fawr, Rhinog Fach and Moel Ysgyfarnogod. This area is littered with boulders, outcrops and large cliffs, all composed of perfect gritstone. The southern end of the range around Y Llethr and Diffwys has a softer, more rounded character, but this does not mean that there is an absence of climbable rock.

Steep Stone's Rhinogydd series of Interim Climbing and Bouldering Guides

For the rock climber, the Rhinogydd is arguably one of Wales' greatest yet least-known treasures.

Work is ongoing on **Steep Stone's** new **Welsh Grit** guidebook, which will detail the very best of over 1800 single and multi-pitch climbs and boulder problems. The previous Climbers' Club *Meirionnydd* 2002 guidebook unfortunately did the area few favours. Poorly written and edited in part and somewhat lacking in inspiration, its overly complex and consequently confusing description of the area and its climbing effectively did little to motivate any real interest. As a result, a whole generation of climbers may now be unaware, or at least unsure, of the Rhinogydd's climbing potential.

Steep Stone's *Welsh Grit* aims to right this wrong. While work on the new guide steadily progresses, Steep Stone will also produce a short series of definitive interim guidebooks with the aim of encouraging climbers to take a serious look at what the Rhinogydd has to offer. Building on the success of **Steep Stone's** 2018 **Central Wales - Elenydd** guidebook, these well-researched, free-to-download PDF interim guides will provide easy to follow access notes, together with accurate route descriptions and photo-topos.

The Welsh Grit Selected Area Interim Guide Series

Cefn Cam
Craig y Beudy
Carreg yr Ogof
Craig y Merched
Craig y Fotty
Craig y Ffridd
Cwm Nantcol Lower Craggs
Rhinog Fach and Cwm Hywel

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A note on the use of Approach Grades **AG**

The Rhinogydd are different and here you'll rarely find the close-cropped grass of the rest of Snowdonia. This is predominantly a rough, scruffy terrain with boulders and heather. As a result, a Rhinogydd mile is about as long as a Scottish one. Covering ground can sometimes take ages due to the Rhinogydd's "Three Amigos" of heather, bilberry bushes and boulders - with an added soupçon of bracken when in season. Rhinogydd devotees will know exactly what to expect, but the first time or occasional visitor may be caught unawares.

As a guide, the approaches to crags have been very subjectively 'graded' from 0-3 according to the ease of walking, or indeed, the lack thereof....

AG0 'A walk in the park'

AG1 Relatively easy going, reasonable paths

AG2 Hard going on mostly pathless terrain

AG3 Extremely difficult, pathless terrain

Cwm Mynach *Valley of the Monks*

Cwm Mynach is a little-known, secluded valley on the southern edge of the wild and beautiful Rhinogydd mountain range. Often described as Snowdonia's best kept secret, the rugged, rocky valley is a hidden gem, encompassing a myriad of diverse habitats – rock faces, boulder fields, moorland, ancient oak woodland, legions of conifer and is an area populated by reptiles, raptors, pine marten, feral goats and roe deer.

**Cwm Mynach**

Cwm Mynach's star attraction is **Craig y Merched**. Comprised of a number of individual buttresses, this is an idyllic and well-positioned Rhinog gritstone venue. (In addition, there is also a great deal of good climbing to be found on many other outcrops elsewhere in the valley. However, description of climbing on these crags is beyond the scope of this interim, fully definitive, crag-specific guide).

Craig y Merched's climbing is found on numerous buttresses which are widely scattered both above and below the tree-line at the head of the valley. The majority of the crags have a spectacular outlook, the upland heather wilderness and distant lofty peaks affording a stark contrast with the heavily wooded, verdant valley beneath.

The crags, virtually all of which face south-west and dry quickly, vary in height from about 8 to 25 metres. The rock is a rough, hard Ordovician gritstone of generally first class quality which is absolutely superb for climbing. Protection is, on the whole, good with cams of all sizes being especially useful. There are many starred routes to choose from, but most non-starred climbs here are also worthwhile. Poor climbs are specifically described as such.

Craig y Merched's very popular Rhino's Buttress, with climbers on Yr Anweledig S. The lead climber is approaching the 'rhino's head'
© DAVE WILLIAMS



However, there are a few slight drawbacks to climbing here. The first is that paths are few in number, (the BMC Cymru managed Rhino's Buttress permissive path being the notable exception), so the approaches to many of the crags involve negotiating the Rhinogydd's 'three amigos' of heather, bilberry bushes and hidden boulders, (plus a *soupçon* of added bracken in summer). The second 'fly in the ointment' is literally just that; the infamous Rhinog midge. As in other such areas, these may be prevalent in warm, still conditions, particularly at lower levels and after dusk. Best come prepared, just in case, with suitable potions at the ready. Also be aware that this is a habitat favoured by ticks and adders, so a certain vigilance is advised.

Despite these minor negatives, for climbers prepared to forgo the crowded, eroded and polished honeypots and explore a little off the beaten track, this is truly a Welsh gritstone climbing mecca, fully epitomising all that is great and good about climbing in the Rhinogydd.

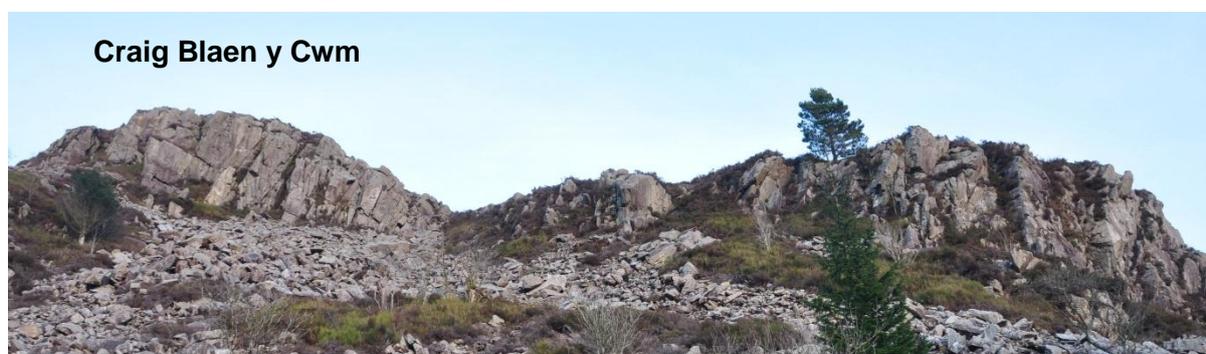
Crags are described from West to East and North to South. Climbs are described from left to right throughout.

Craig Blaen y Cwm Valley Head Crag

OS Ref SH 686 233

Overview:	A nicely positioned little outcrop, with good rock, which is worth a visit. The absence of queues is a given....
Altitude:	330 metres
Approach:	AG1: Straightforward walking, by Rhinogydd standards, on an easy-to-follow forestry track and a reasonable public footpath
Approach time:	50-60 minutes
Aspect:	West/ south west facing
Drying:	Generally very quick to dry with minimal seepage
Winter sun:	Yes
Summer sun:	Yes
Access Land:	Yes
Grade Range:	D – E3

Craig Blaen y Cwm comprises two small, well-positioned buttresses which offer good climbing on clean rock with a sunny aspect. Easily approached, this little outcrop is one of the most easily accessible of Cwm Mynach's valley head crags.



Approach: Cwm Mynach is accessed from the A496 Dolgellau to Barmouth road by turning off onto a narrow minor road opposite the toll bridge road over the Mawddach Estuary at Pont Borthwnog (OS Ref SH 689 191). Park just short of the narrow stone bridge (OS Ref SH 683 209), where a Coed Cadw forestry road heads off rightwards through a locked gate. Ensure to park courteously and considerately here and do not block any gates, as access may be required at all times. (If required, there is more off-road parking available a short distance back along the road). Follow the forestry road uphill for about 2½ kilometres to a point where a signed public footpath crosses the road. (OS Ref SH 685 230) Take the path on the right and follow this north westwards as it weaves through the trees for 200 meters to a gap in the left-hand drystone wall (OS Ref SH 68559 23244). Continue along the path until well clear of the trees; the crag is now above and on the right and is approached directly by scrambling up the block scree.

There are two separate buttresses, the smaller left-hand one is no more than 10 meters high while the larger but more broken right-hand buttress reaches 14 meters. As is commonplace in the Rhinogydd, both buttresses sit above an extensive block field.

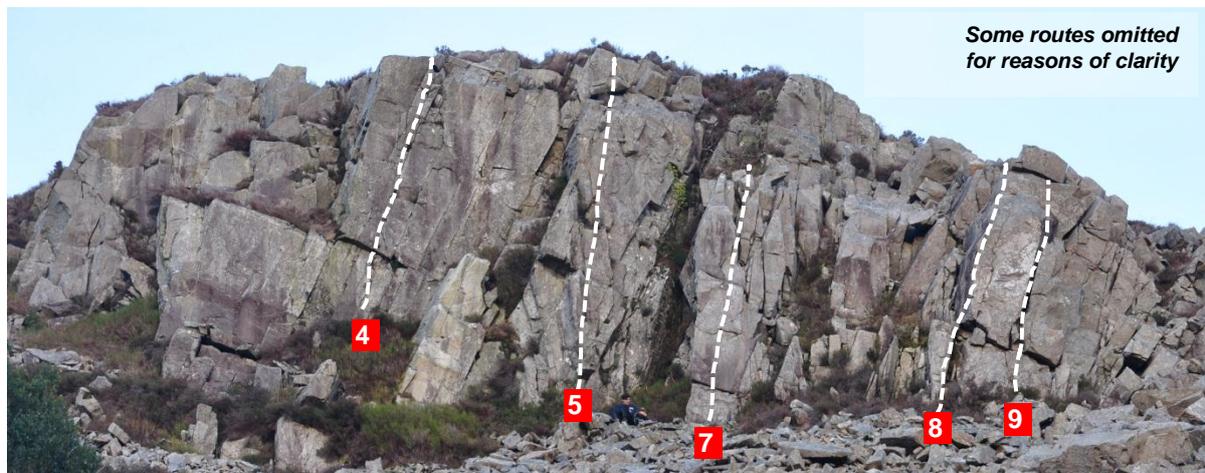
Left Buttress

The left buttress has a steep central face, to the left of which is a separate short slabby area while to its right are a couple of small towers or pinnacles. Climbs are described from left to right, with the obvious wide crack of *Safe Word* marking the end of the climbing. The first three climbs are located on a small slabby area on the very left hand side (not shown on the phototop but easy to locate).

1. The New King 7m VD

A direct line up the middle of the short slab.

FA T Taylor, I Kerle, M Hughes, A Taylor 23.7.13

**2. Meg and Belle** 7m D

The more straightforward straight crack just to the right.

FA T Taylor, M Hughes 23.7.13

3. Scraps 8m VD

Start up the short groove and make a long stretch to good holds. Finish easily up the arête.

FA D Kerr, S Finch, D Williams 15.4.16

4. The Divide 10m E3 5c †

The main central face has a parallel crack which leads to a wedged block at the top. The crack is very deceptive as it looks relatively easy!

FA T Taylor 20.7.13

The alluring thin crack just right is an open project. It has seen much airtime and remains unclimbed. The next route climbs the tower-like feature to the right of the central face.

5. The Cageing Society 10m VS 4c ★

From a start on the tower's right side, steep, sustained moves lead, with increasing interest, to the top. Good, well-protected climbing and possibly the best route on the crag.

FA T Taylor, M Hughes, I Kerle, A Taylor 23.7.13

6. Short Story 7m S 4a

The neat cracked arête forming the left edge of the narrow wall next right. Well-protected.

FA T Taylor, A Taylor, I Kerle 23.7.13

7. Isabella 7m HVS 5a †

The more challenging centre of the wall just right lacks independence and difficulties are easily avoided. Finish up the short groove.

FA T Taylor, I Kerle 23.7.13

There is a short but steep arête a few metres to the right.

8 Stand Well Back 9m E2 5c ★

Climb the arête, initially on its right hand side, via some good, technical moves. At the start, purists will studiously avoid contact with the short pillar on the left at this grade.

FA D Kerr, S Finch, D Williams 15.4.16

9 Safe Word 9m VS 4c ★

The impending wide offwidth crack and narrow pillar just to the right, finishing direct via the slab. Suitors will need very large cams (eg. Camalots 5 & 6) to avoid a good spanking.
FA D Kerr, S Finch, D Williams 15.4.16

Right Buttress

Separated from the Left Buttress by much broken ground, the far more vegetated and less-appealing looking Right Buttress has two towers; the paler coloured right hand one being both cleaner and more continuous. To date, only one route has been recorded here but there is some potential for further development.

10. Izzy 14m E3 5c †

The narrow right-hand tower has an obvious, discontinuous crack up its centre. From directly below, climb the blocks to the crack then continue direct to a good finger/cam slot. From here, trend up and left before topping out just left of the capping blocks.
FA T Taylor 21.5.14

Craig y Merched *Crag of the Maidens*

Craig y Merched, Cwm Mynach's "jewel in the crown", is the collective name for a varied group of generally south west facing gritstone walls and buttresses which overlook the head of the Mynach valley. Virtually all of Craig y Merched's climbing is found on buttresses above the tree-line. There is a lot of good rock here, literally a case of 'craggs as far as the eye can see'. The craggs above the tree-line dry quickly and have a sunny aspect. As a consequence, climbing is possible here throughout the year.

Orientation: This may be a somewhat confusing area for the first time visitor, particularly as Craig y Merched is divided into Lower and Upper sections – the latter hidden from the valley floor. A substantial stone wall, again hidden from the valley, runs from North to South through Craig y Merched. This wall conveniently separates **Upper** and **Lower Craig y Merched**. All craggs located below the wall are collectively called Lower Craig y Merched, while those above the wall are collectively known as Upper Craig y Merched.

Lower Craig y Merched is further split into three separate, natural tiers: **Rhino's Buttress** is on the upper tier, **North Walls** and **Three Pillar Crag** are on the central tier while **Lower**

Buttress is on the lowest tier. The Upper Craig y Merched crags are all located in a hanging valley hidden just above Rhino's Buttress. Rhino's Buttress is the gateway for accessing almost all Lower Craig y Merched crags as well as being the key waypoint on the approach to Upper Craig y Merched. The BMC Cymru maintained and waymarked path to Rhino's Buttress is in recognition of this fact.



If heading directly to **North Walls** or **Three Pillar Crag**, it is possible to strike off leftwards across pathless terrain above **Lower Buttress**. However, it is much better to do this at a higher level from below **Rhino's Buttress**. (See access notes on page 9).

Lower Craig y Merched

<i>Overview:</i>	Craig y Merched's flagship crags, mostly very well positioned, with superb rock and featuring a number of Rhinogydd classics
<i>Altitude:</i>	320-350 metres (crag dependent)
<i>Approach:</i>	AG1 : Straightforward walking, by Rhinogydd standards, on an easy-to-follow forestry track and a reasonable, waymarked path
<i>Approach time:</i>	50-60 minutes
<i>Aspect:</i>	South/ south west facing
<i>Drying:</i>	Generally very quick to dry, with minimal seepage, although cracks can retain moisture after prolonged wet weather
<i>Winter sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Summer sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Access Land:</i>	Yes
<i>Grade Range:</i>	VD – E3

Approach: As for Craig Blaen y Cwm (page 5) to the parking spot just short of the narrow, gated stone bridge (OS Ref SH 683 209), where a Coed Cadw forestry road heads off rightwards. Ensure to park courteously and considerately and do not block any gates as access may be required at all times. (If required, there is more off-road parking available a short distance back along the road). Follow the gently rising forestry road for about 2 kilometers to reach a staggered cross-road (OS Ref SH 687 229).

Now take a smaller and less well-used forest track which strikes off to the right. Follow this track for about 100 metres until it turns right to rise gently uphill and take the signed and waymarked permissive footpath leftwards through trees. Continue on the initially steep path through an area of dense scrubby growth towards a stone wall and stile. Beyond the wall,

marker posts continue to indicate the line of the path as it generally skirts the left side of a more open area until it finally peters out on reaching the block scree at the foot of **Rhino's Buttress**. Allow about 50-60 minutes from the parking area. (The Coed Cadw forestry road is also eminently suitable for a mountain bike approach. There are plenty of suitable spots in the wood for stashing a bike before tackling the final footpath).

North Walls

SH 689 233

To the left of and slightly down from **Three Pillar Crag**, are three reasonably clean walls. These are the **North Walls**, which form a natural extension to Three Pillar Crag. While not as impressive as Three Pillar Crag, all three walls may be accessed in a couple of minutes through a small stand of conifer trees from the base of Three Pillar Crag. The first of these walls, on the far left, has an undercut base with a sharp overhanging arête to its right. It also has large blocks beneath it. The central - and highest wall - is separated from it by a gully occupied by an ephemeral stream while a vegetated gully delineates its right-hand side. The right hand wall is permanently shaded by the aforementioned conifer trees and is consequently quite sombre in comparison to the others. Some ingenuity is required to find belays at the top of some of the routes here.

Approach: Approach the crag from **Rhino's Buttress**, over the top of **Lower Buttress**, avoiding the common mistake of trying to drop down too soon. From the end of the Rhino's Buttress path, bear left and traverse northwards beneath the crag on a discernible although overgrown path before turning left to a stand of mature larch trees. Enter the trees and descend easily to block scree beneath an impressive crag. This is **Three Pillar Crag**. North Walls are a couple of minutes to the left of Three Pillar Crag, so continue traversing across scree before quickly passing through conifer trees to reach a more open area.

Left Wall



1. Napoleonic Legacy 18m VS 4b †

The fine, well-protected arête with three small overhangs suffers from a surfeit of heather due to a lack of traffic. Start 4 metres right of an ash tree and 15 metres left of and slightly down from the block at the start of *A Good Spoonful*. 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 and then continue up the arête to the top passing over a huge wedged block.

FA JA Sumner, R Short 16.4.03

2. A Good Spoon Full 9m E1 5c

From the top of a large block on the right, step onto the wall and climb directly up to an old peg. Difficult moves lead up to finishing jugs. Quite bold climbing.

FA JA Sumner, JP Sumner, CA Sumner, SR Sumner 4.11.90

Central Wall

The central wall is the highest of the three and has a fine crack-line running up its centre.

3. The Gadgie 18m E2 5b

The left edge of the wall is low in the grade but is sparsely protected. (As it is not often climbed; the first few metres are normally dirty and a light brushing may be required.) Climb boldly up the wall to the overlap, undercut up, and make steep moves, using layaways and a small pocket, to better holds in a horizontal break. An awkward move above the break gains the fine slabby arête, which is climbed to the top.

FA CW Little, E Little 6.5.91

4. The King of Sunset Town 18m HVS 5a

Some may find the obvious crackline in the centre of the wall to be tough at the grade. From the top of a block just right of centre of the wall, make some awkward moves up and slightly rightwards to jugs; then follow these back leftwards to the base of the vegetated crack.

There are difficult moves to start the crack, then more jugs before an awkward finish. (If dirty, it may be advantageous to clean the crack line before an ascent.)

FA JA Sumner, KD Sumner 21.10.90



Right Wall

Right of the vegetated gully is a short compact wall with conifer trees very close to its base. The first climb, unlike the others which are less inspirational, sees quite a bit of traffic. Descend by following the sloping ledge down to the right. There is no photo-topo for this wall, but all the climbs follow strong, natural features and are consequently easy to locate.

5. Andy's Initiation 15m VD 

A popular little route which climbs the left arête of the wall. Climb to the top of a large layback flake, move up, then right to the arête, and climb its left side to ledges (good thread belay on the highest ledge above).

FA JA Sumner, A Tomkins 11.8.91

6. The Three Mosquitoes 15m HS 4b

Start at a groove at the left end of the wall about 2 metres left of a central groove. Climb directly up the groove, which gets easier near the top.

FA F Filzek solo 7.8.91

7. Midge Attack 18m E1 5b

Climb the central groove and continue direct to the highest part of the wall.

FA T Taylor, E Green 7.8.91

8. Rhythm of the Drones 15m E1 5b †

Overcome a difficult bulge two metres right of the central groove, and follow a thin crack to the top.

FA T Taylor, F Filzek 7.8.91

Three Pillar Crag

Other than Rhino's Buttress, this is probably the best crag hereabouts, with some great lines and rock with plenty of good jugs and edges although belays at its top require some ingenuity and small wires. Approach as for North Walls.

The first two climbs start from a heathery ledge which rises up and left from the small rock pillar at the base of the crag. Accessing the ledge is both awkward and unprotected.

1. Call Me Wemage 15m VS 4b

Above a heather terrace up and left of the start of *Alien* are two cracks with a vegetated groove just to their right. Two metres left of the cracks is a short groove. Climb delicately up into this groove; step left, then up left again to a ledge. Move up to a small line of overhangs, and traverse left beneath these on good handholds to an edge. Climb the edge and the slab above to the top.

FA JA Sumner, JP Sumner 21.9.91

2. Pas de Chat 15m HS 4b

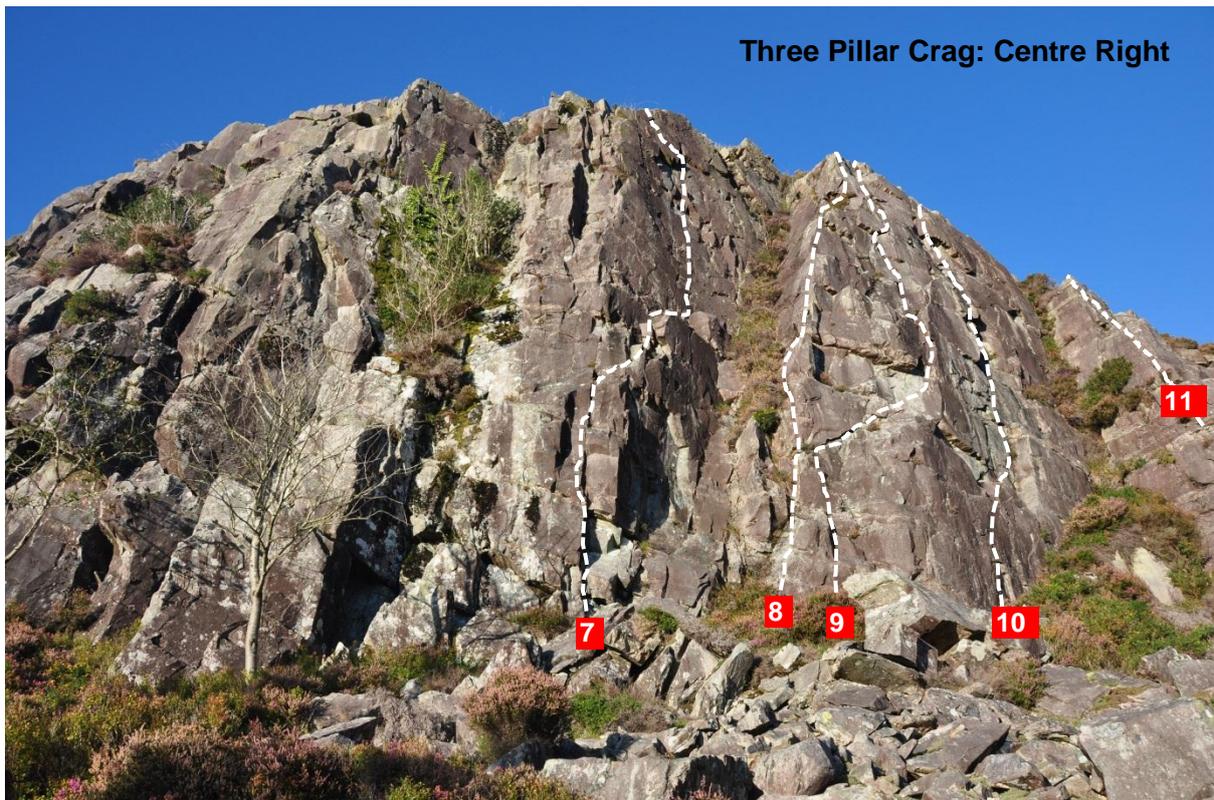
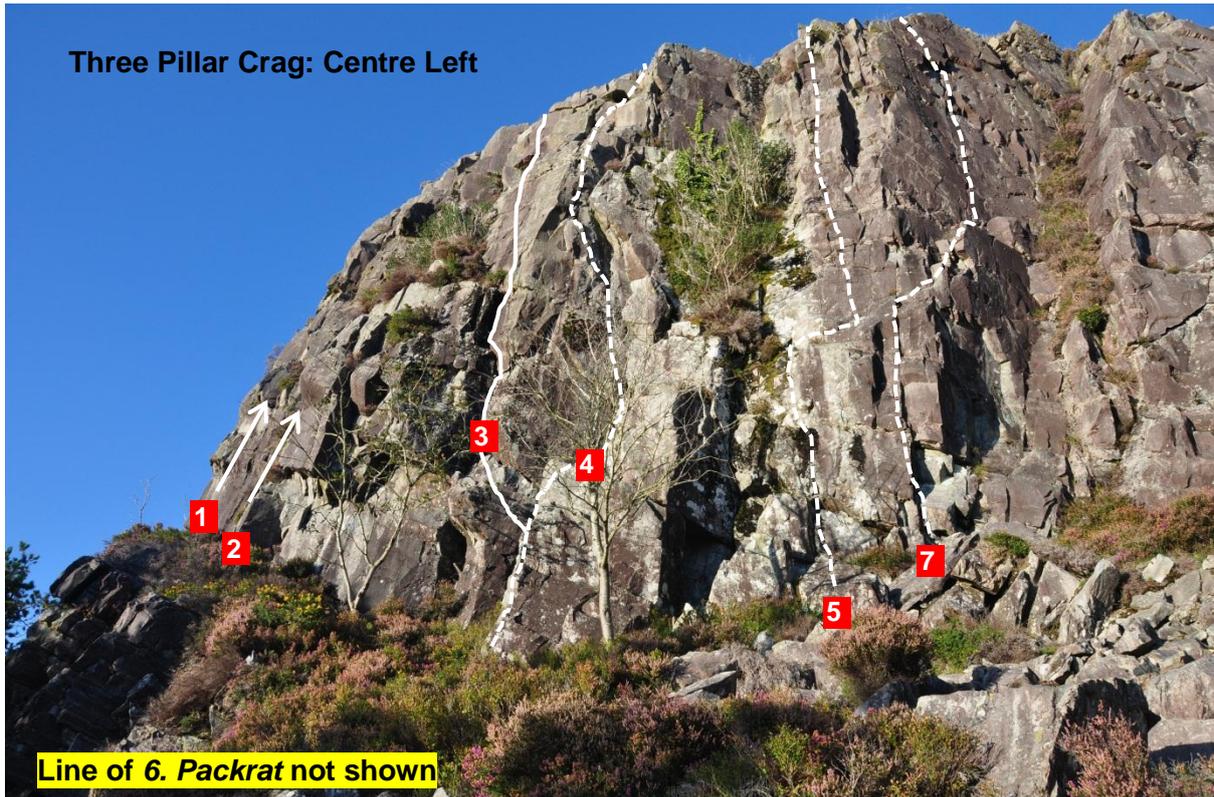
Start at the two cracks with a vegetated groove just to their right. Climb the cracks; then step left and go up to a groove just left of a pointed overhang. Climb the groove; then move diagonally right to a block belay.

FA JA Sumner, CA Sumner, SR Sumner, JP Sumner 21.9.91

3. Colonel Chinstrap 21m E1 5c 

This climbs the left arête of *Alien*. Start under the rotting, strange tree-stump below *Alien*. Gain the top of the huge block on the left, below a shallow corner leading up to the arête, and climb the dirty corner to just below a vegetated ramp coming down from the left. Step right and climb the crack just left of the arête to an old peg. Continue directly above the peg to a ledge and climb the slabby scoop on the left to the top.

FA JA Sumner, A George, JP Sumner 24.8.91



4. Alien 21m HVS 5a 

A good sustained route, despite a rather contrived start, which climbs the obvious curving corner-line under an overhang above the strange tree-stump. Climb easily up the corner to a large block, move onto the steep left wall on curious pocket holds and use a dubious creaky

flake to gain a positive layback edge above the overhang. Move up to a ledge and continue up to a very thin spike before finishing up the technical slab above.

FA JA Sumner, A George 16.3.91

5. Magic Mushroom 21m E1 5b

A very worthwhile climb which follows a classic line, giving intricate and delicate climbing with just enough protection. High in the grade. Look for the obvious niche two-thirds of the way up the central pillar and start at a mossy corner about 2½ metres below and to its left. Climb the corner, traverse right across a slab until below the niche, and move delicately and directly up the wall to it. Then pull straight over a bulge to the top of the crag.

FA JA Sumner, A George 9.3.91

6. Pack Rat 21m E1 5c/6a †

A route totally dominated by one desperate 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 and some good gear. Using a fragile spike, climb the bulge on the left and proceed more easily to the top.

FA JA Sumner, JP Sumner 12.4.03 [*This was John Sumner's final contribution to the area before his death in 2004.*]



Dave Rumney on the crux of *The Haw Lantern* E3

© JIM JONES

To the right, taking an uncompromising line up the steep pillar face, is a Rhinogydd classic at the grade.

7. The Haw Lantern 21m E3 5c

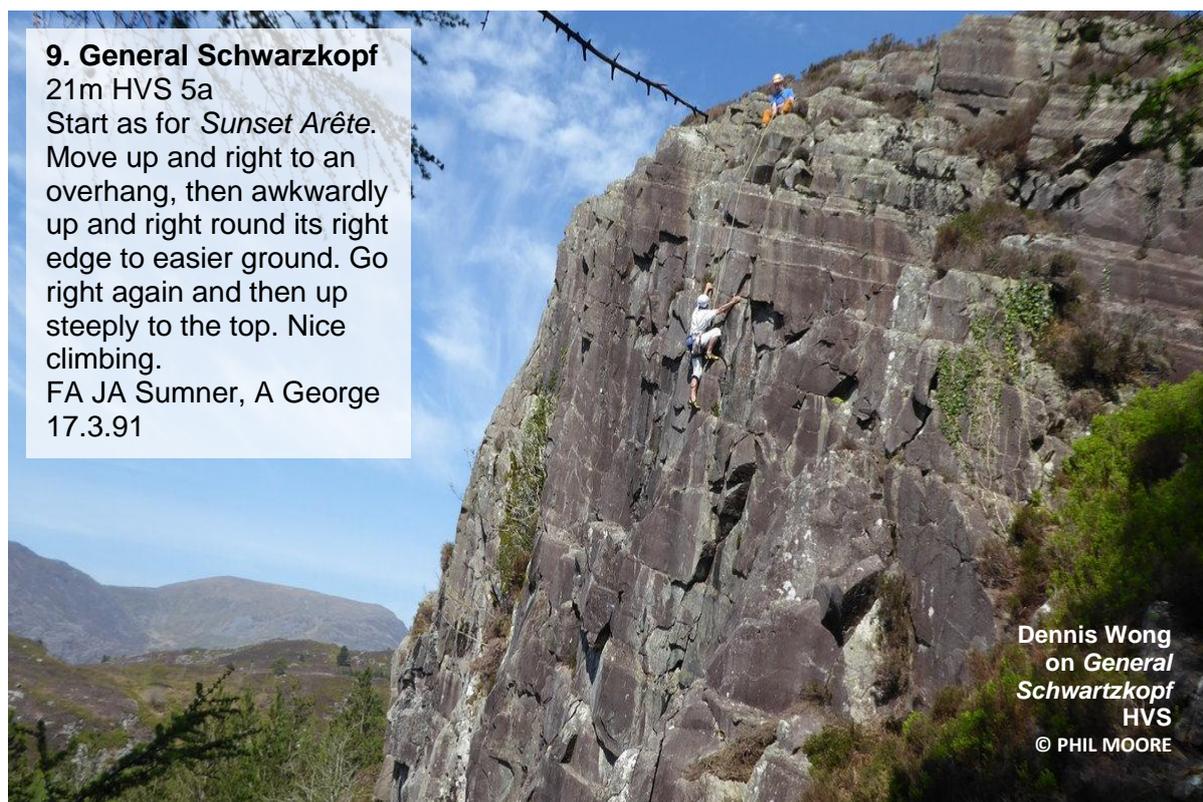
An excellent pitch with superb climbing, which is not to be underestimated, as the lower section is sketchy and the finish is both sustained and tricky. Start below a weakness in the steep wall directly below the niche of *Magic Mushroom*. Make difficult moves to the remains of an old peg at 6 metres, then boldly climb up and right to ledges beneath a steep wall. Climb the centre of the wall to a good cam slot, gain a good hold in the small overhang above and, with some urgency, make some fine moves up and left to the top before strength gives out.

FA JA Sumner, A George 10.3.91

8. Sunset Arête 21m S

Quite a popular climb despite spaced gear. An obvious rightward-slanting arête has a narrow slab on its left. Gain the arête from the left, go up a short groove, and then climb the arête, using the slab on the left, to a final little wall, which is taken on the right to the top.

FA JA Sumner, E Fairbrother, R Fairbrother 17.11.90



9. General Schwarzkopf
 21m HVS 5a
 Start as for *Sunset Arête*.
 Move up and right to an overhang, then awkwardly up and right round its right edge to easier ground. Go right again and then up steeply to the top. Nice climbing.
 FA JA Sumner, A George
 17.3.91

Dennis Wong
 on *General Schwarzkopf*
 HVS
 © PHIL MOORE

10. Bleating about the Bush 18m VS 4c ★

A popular climb with steep, juggy, well-protected and satisfying climbing. Start beneath the dark niche in the wall. Climb directly up to the niche (good nut protection) and pull out to gain the last section of *General Schwarzkopf*.

FA T Taylor, F Filzek 7.8.91

11. Right Away 18m VD †

This climbs the arête to the right of *Bleating about the Bush*. Very artificial as the right side of the arête is out of bounds, otherwise the grade drops to Difficult. Once at top of arête, move left to finish above *Bleating about the Bush*.

FA S Muncaster 15.6.10

Rhino's Buttress

Up and right of **Three Pillar Crag**, this superbly positioned crag, characterised by a series of slabby sections dissected by roofs, has a distinctive rock feature on its right-hand end in the shape of a rhino's head.

This buttress is one of the best crags in Cwm Mynach and is very popular despite the relatively long approach. Probably the second most visited crag in all of the Rhinogydd after Llechau'r Garn (Barmouth Slabs), Rhino's Buttress has received much attention and is, consequently, somewhat overdeveloped. Despite this, it features a number of 'must-do' Rhinogydd classics.

Descent: Either by means of a path down the gully of the left-hand side of the crag, or by means of a straightforward but initially exposed scramble down and right from the top of *Velvet Revolutions/Rhino's Corner*. This leads over the top of *Perfect Stone* into the broad gully on the crag's right-hand side.

Left of both the main crag and the main descent gully there is a small, steep and very blocky outcrop. Two micro-routes here provide some traditional-type 'fun', with potential for more routes of a similar ilk.

1. Three Bags Full 6m S

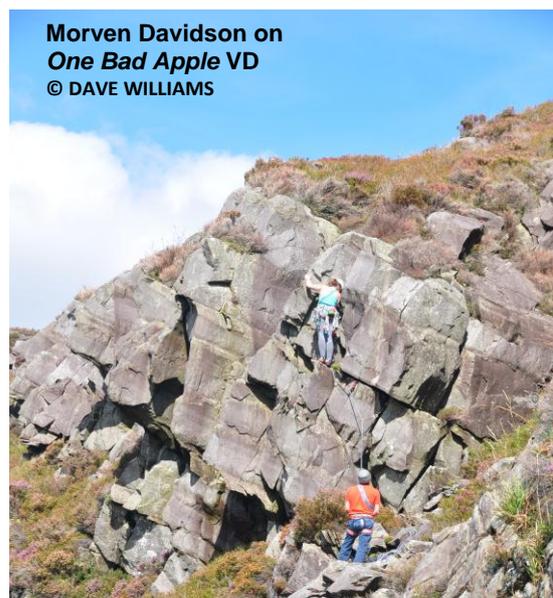
Layback, chimney and generally thrutch up the twin leftward trending cracks before swinging onto the left arête for an easy finish.

FA D Kerr, D Williams 27.3.17

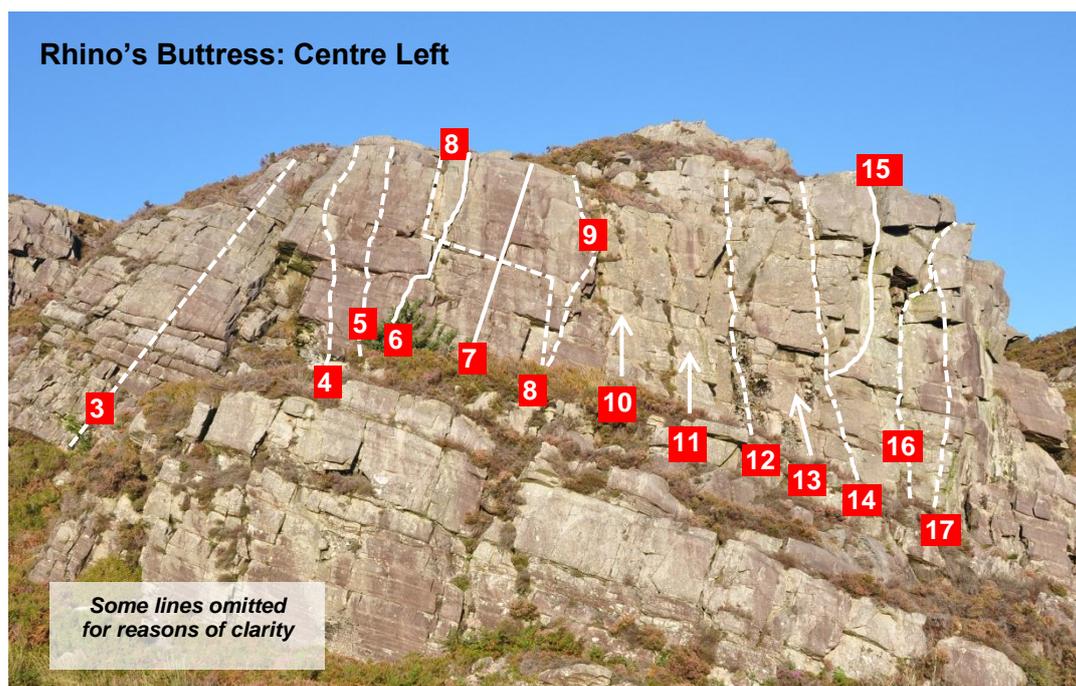
2. One Bad Apple 6m VD

The right hand crack past a protruding block. Finish up the wide crack.

FA D Kerr, D Williams 27.3.17



Rhino's Buttress Main Crag



To the right of the descent gully, the main buttress' left-hand side features a trio of bold slab routes which seek out difficulty and are generally lacking in line. Inexplicably popular despite poor protection, all three require some steadiness.

3. Rhino's Bum 20m HVS 5a

By far the easiest of the trio, with spaced protection. Start left of the small ash tree, 5 metres left of *Naked Dissent*. Climb steeply through bulges between the breaks and continue up the elegant tapering slab to the top.

FA N Eaton, T Gledhill 16.5.04



Dave Rumney on
Naked Dissent E2
© JIM JONES

4. **Naked Dissent** 18m E2 5c

Start at the left end of the buttress, at some slabs below an overlap. Climb directly up to the overlap at 6 metres (first runner) and pass this by reaching a tiny pod above. Then take the left-trending break to finish up the blunt arête.

FA T Taylor, F Filzek 4.7.91

5. **Alchemist's Stone** 18m E2 5c

Start a little to the right of *Naked Dissent*, and 1½ metres left of a ledged crack, and climb direct to an overlap. Pull up and left to a second overlap and reach a horizontal break; move leftwards, and then go directly up the final wall.

FA T Taylor, F Filzek, R Hudson 4.7.91

6. **Sunshine Supernan** 18m E1 5c

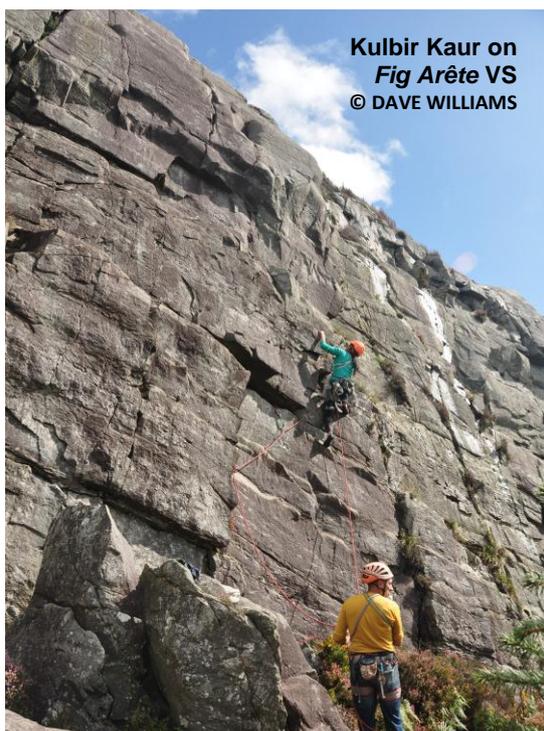
Difficult, well-protected and extremely eliminate this, nevertheless, has some good moves. Start just right of *Alchemist's Stone* at a very thin diagonal crack. Steep and difficult moves lead past the obvious flake hold to the ledge of *Zig Zag*. Follow the awkward flared crack through a small overlap just to the right of *Zig Zag's* top corner to finish.

FA C Little, E Little 27.10.08

7. **The Flourish of Strumpets** 12m E1 5c

Start right of the central crackline below a very thin crack in the top wall. Climb directly up via ledges to below the thin crack and a good cam placement. Pull up this with difficulty to the top. A very popular, very clean little route.

FA T Taylor, F Filzek 4.7.91



Kulbir Kaur on
Fig Arête VS
© DAVE WILLIAMS

8. **Zig Zag** 15m HS 4a

The obvious zigzag line left of *Horn of Plenty* is very popular in spite of being somewhat disjointed. Climb the wall to the right of the groove. Step left to gain the arête and then the ledge. Traverse awkwardly left along the ledge (crossing *The Flourish of Strumpets*) to a shallow corner, which leads directly to the top.

FA S Keir, P Benson 24.8.91

9. **Fig Arête** 14m VS 4c

The clean hanging arête just right of the start of *Zig Zag* is good and is high in the grade if climbed with a strict, "blinkers-on" approach, avoiding any temptation to step round to the right. A couple of awkward, mid-height moves above spaced protection feel bold, although there is a hidden micro-cam placement to aim for.

FA J Martin, C Sullivan 9.7.05

To the right are a collection of routes which find various ways up a distinctly less attractive area of rock.

10. Dixon of Dock Green 14m HS 4b

The slabby wall, just right of the scruffy hanging corner to the right of the start of *Zig Zag*. Step left into the corner to finish.

FA C Little, E Little 27.10.08

11. Pachyderm Slab 15m HS 4b

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

FA T Gledhill, N Eaton 16.5.04

12. Horn of Plenty 14m VS 4b

The obvious right-facing corner in the centre of the crag was once a starred route. It is still worthwhile but is quite vegetated. A natural gutter, it best attempted when completely dry. Climb directly up the corner to its top, mainly by following its left arête. Protection requires some ingenuity.

FA JA Sumner, E Fairbrother, R Fairbrother 4.5.91

13. Rhino Hunting 15m HVS 5a †

A poor route which climbs directly up the initially dirty wall between *Horn of Plenty* and *Endangered Species*.

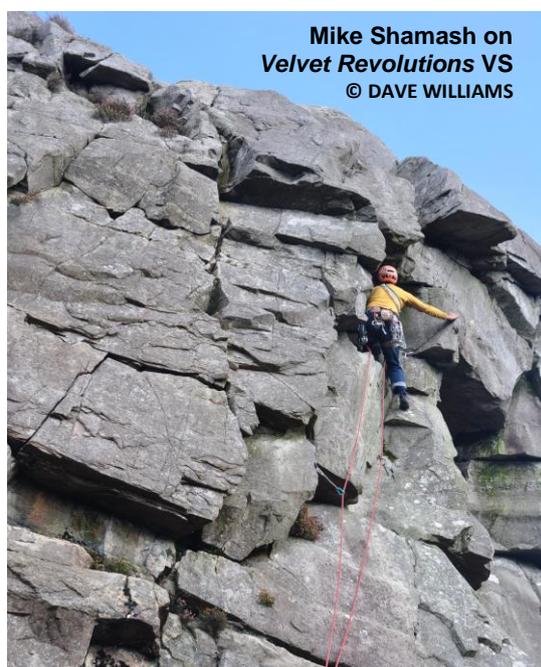
FA J Martin, C Sullivan 9.7.05

Next come a trio of excellent pitches on superb rock, all of which have two to three star quality climbing.

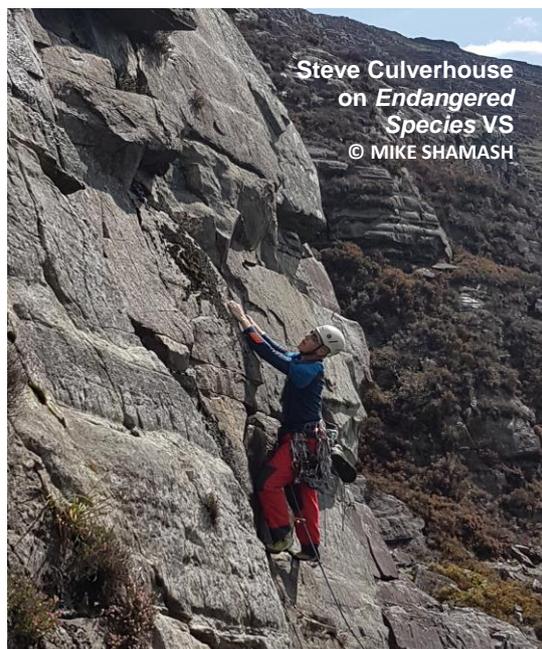
14. Endangered Species 18m VS 4c ★★

An interesting, worthwhile and quite well-protected route which climbs the ragged, left-slanting crack through the small overlaps in the slabby wall. Climb the sustained crack all the way, with the crux in the middle - although the finishing moves are not without interest either.

FA JA Sumner, E Fairbrother, R Fairbrother 4.5.91



Mike Shamash on
Velvet Revolutions VS
© DAVE WILLIAMS



Steve Culverhouse
on *Endangered
Species VS*
© MIKE SHAMASH

15. Velvet Revolutions 18m VS 4c ★★

Another sustained, well-protected route which gives very good climbing. Start as for *Endangered Species*. Climb the crack for 6 metres, and then move right along a good foot-ledge. Make some delicate moves up the slab into the corner below a slot in the roofs. Awkward, steep moves up and right gain the slot (good thread); an exciting and well-positioned finish.

FA JA Sumner, KD Sumner, R Martin 20.4.91

To the right is the main feature of the crag, an obvious corner topped by roofs.

16. Rhino's Corner 18m VS 5a 

Two or three stars? VS or HVS? The debate will doubtless continue.... What is certain though is that this classic pitch is, arguably, the best route on Craig y Merched, giving excellent and varied climbing close to the upper limit of the grade.

A scruffy start, with baffling, difficult moves over a little overlap, leads to pleasant climbing up to the roof. The way on is obvious and fortune now favours the brave, as stepping out right and up and then right again to finish, is equally exposed, intimidating and exciting. Thankfully it can be very well protected and, once committed, it is also easier than it looks.

FA JA Sumner, P Benson 20.4.91



Steve Culverhouse & Morven Davidson on *Rhino's Corner* VS, a Rhinogydd classic.
© DAVE WILLIAMS



Rhino's Buttress: Right

Some lines omitted for reasons of clarity

**17. The Tusk** 18m

HVS 5b ★

The clean, steep, right arête of *Rhino's Corner* is worthwhile and very photogenic. Start 2 metres right of the corner. Get easily onto the top of a huge block, step left (thread) and make a difficult move up to gain a groove. Climb the groove to the arête, then the arête direct over a bulge, using good side pulls, to the final move of *Rhino's Corner*.

FA JA Sumner, JP Sumner 4.8.91

Sean Roberts
on *The Tusk*
HVS
© JIM JONES

18. Hanging Ten on the Nose 12m E2 5b †

Start 2 metres right of *Tusk*. Climb the blank looking wall past a series of thin breaks and ledges to a large ledge. Reach left for the nostril shaped holes on the nose and climb the arête to an airy and exciting finish.

FA R Goodlad 29.6.03

19. The Midgy Revolution 9m HVS 5b †

This is essentially an easier variation on the previous route but with little independent climbing. Start beneath the large rhino shaped block on the right hand face of *Rhino's Buttress*. Ascend the obvious groove to the left of a blank looking wall to an overhanging protrusion and surmount this with difficulty. The deep rightward slanting crack gradually eases to the top.

FA L Straughan 12.6.10

20. Sling the Toe Nail on the Rhino 8m E1 4c †

This takes the steep wall right of *The Midgy Revolution* following faint shallow crack lines. Bold climbing.

FA D Scott, S Muncaster 15.6.10

To the right, above and left of an oak tree, is a small, clean, hanging slab above a small roof.



21. Yr Anweledig 8m S ★

The easiest route on Rhino's Buttress is short yet worthwhile. Scramble up to start under the left side of the obvious roof. Move up past hollow blocks and make an awkward move to gain the immaculate, undercut slab. Climb this, well-protected and with excellent holds, to a finish on the left.

FA D Williams, solo 7.7.14

Further right, behind the oak tree, there is small cleft capped by a protruding fin of rock.

22. Plenty of Horn 8m VS 4c †

Start by the cleft and climb up to gain the dirty yet well-protected crack which is followed to the top.

FA R Goodlad 29.6.03

To the right is a clean slabby wall.

23. Perfect Stone 6m E1 5b

A neat little eliminate with a bold start. Pull thinly and precariously through the undercut at the centre-left hand side of the slabby wall. Move slightly right and then back left to finish via the short groove. A much easier start can be made by climbing diagonally leftwards from the right edge of the wall, but this is missing the point.

FA D Kerr, D Williams 27.3.17

Lower Buttress

Located some distance below Rhino's Buttress, (and best accessed by traversing left through trees from the lower part of the waymarked path to Rhino's Buttress), the lowest

crag to be encountered is also the largest, featuring the longest climbs on Lower Craig y Merched. Unfortunately, it is a very vegetated crag and also has a mid-height break. Both vegetation in general and a shaded outlook in particular combine to retain moisture and so it has never been a popular venue despite having potential for further routes. (There is no photo-topo for this crag).

1. Brief Encounter 24m E2 5c †

Beneath the Lower Tier are two stone walls and just before the left-hand one there is a roof above a grass ramp. Scramble up to the grass ramp. Climb direct to a large block at the right-hand end of the roof. With long reaches, pull through the roof to good holds and finish easily up to heather and a belay on boulders.

FA T Taylor, DRM Bailey 30.8.91

2. Helical Spiral 30m E1 5b

Roughly half-way along the Lower Tier is a steep leftward ramp-line running through the most continuous piece of rock on the lower part of the buttress. Start beneath this, at a short V-groove with overhangs above. A sustained climb.

1. 15m. 5b. Bridge above the V-groove to reach a large, dubious flake hold, then step left and move up to a good cam. Make a difficult move up and left to a sloping ledge in a corner, and go straight up from the corner to a heather ledge under a wall. Nut belays.

2. 15m. 5b. Walk left along the heather ledge to a chimney. Climb this and move left to a huge jammed square block. Move up, then left again to make a gymnastic move up through a break to a good hold and then climb easily to the top. Good spike belay.

FA JA Sumner, A Tomkins 11.8.91

3. This Jug ain't Big Enough for the Both of Us 36m E1 5b †

The groove and capped corner 8 metres right of *Helical Spiral*.

1. 21m. 5b. Climb the groove directly on good holds to a bridging-position below the roof. Pull through with long reaches for good holds and continue up to the right. Belay well back.

2. 15m. 5b. As for *Helical Spiral* pitch 2.

FA R Hudson, T Taylor (AL) 30.6.93

Upper Craig y Merched

<i>Overview:</i>	A collection of nicely positioned but inexplicably rarely visited outcrops, with good rock and many hidden 'gems'. Again, the absence of queues is a given....
<i>Altitude:</i>	370-460 metres (crag dependent)
<i>Approach:</i>	AG1 : Straightforward walking, by Rhinogydd standards, on an easy-to-follow forestry track and a reasonable footpath as far as Rhino's Buttress. Then AG2 beyond the stile above Rhino's Buttress
<i>Approach time:</i>	80-90 minutes (crag dependent)
<i>Aspect:</i>	West/ south west facing
<i>Drying:</i>	Generally quick to dry but with localised seepage after prolonged wet weather
<i>Winter sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Summer sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Access Land:</i>	Yes
<i>Grade Range:</i>	S – E3

Higher up the west-facing slopes of Y Garn, above Lower Craig y Merched, a vast number of rocky outcrops, buttresses and walls are scattered widely above the broadly level floor of a wide, boggy, bowl-shaped hanging valley. While much of the exposed rock is of insufficient

height, or is simply too broken to be of interest the climber, a number of the more discrete and substantial walls and buttresses have been developed for climbing. In comparison to Lower Craig y Merched, Upper Craig y Merched is far less visited. However, the rock is excellent and its collection of contrasting crags is well worth a visit. Those prepared to make the additional effort will not be disappointed.



Approach: As for the **Lower Craig y Merched** crags to **Rhino's Buttress**, then gain the top of the buttress by traversing beneath it and continuing up the descent gully path, initially over scree, on the left side of the crag. This quickly leads to a stone wall which is the demarcation line between Upper and Lower Craig y Merched. A few metres to the right is a stile. (Ascending the broad depression to the right of Rhino's Buttress will actually lead almost directly to the stile, but the lack of any sort of path means that this not recommended.)

Orientation: From the stile, virtually the whole of **Upper Craig y Merched** comes into view beyond a large, flat boggy hanging valley area. So far, six outcrops have been developed for climbing here. On the very far left (north) is the imposing **Craig Llyn Bach y Forwyn**. Some distance to its right, and partially hidden in a shallow depression, is **Carreg y Gors**, a steep little wall which is also the lowest of the buttresses. About 250 metres further south is the obvious **Central Wall**, which has some good quality routes. Higher and to the right, on the left side of a grassy gully, is the diminutive **Gully Wall**. Right again, beyond an area of steep, loose and, as yet, unclimbed rock, is **Craig y Gwalch**. Finally, much further right again and broadly level with the top of **Central Wall**, is **Craig y Lleuad**, a very small but worthy addition to Upper Craig y Merched's range of crags.

From the stile, after a short distance to the right (south), the keen-eyed (or lucky!) may find a reasonable sheep-goat path which undulates and weaves across the heathery bog to Upper Craig y Merched's **Central Wall**. For all other crags, there is no option but to approach directly over largely pathless terrain. All crags can be reached within 20-30 minutes from the stile, with some approaches being more straightforward than others.



Craig Llyn Bach y Forwyn *Small Lake of the Maiden Crag* OS Ref SH 691 234

<i>Altitude:</i>	390 metres
<i>Approach time:</i>	80 minutes from the valley; 15 minutes from the top of Rhino's Buttress
<i>Aspect:</i>	South west facing
<i>Drying:</i>	Very quick to dry but with seepage after prolonged wet weather
<i>Winter sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Summer sun:</i>	Yes

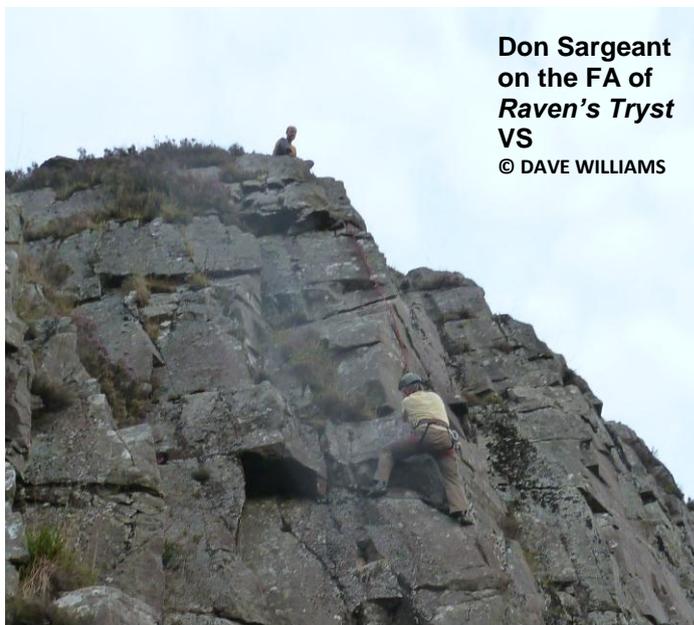
Craig Llyn Bach y Forwyn has a good collection of ribs and walls reaching up to 20 meters in height. A steep heathery gully splits the crag into two separate buttresses. Despite some

potentially interesting-looking lines, there are no climbs on the left buttress as the rock is hollow and potentially unstable. Thankfully, the right hand buttress has much better quality rock. The main attraction here is *Raven's Tryst*, arguably the best VS on the whole of Upper Craig y Merched, which is well worth seeking out. The best descent is to the right of the cliff.

Approach: From the stile over the wall above **Rhino's Buttress**, cross the wall and follow it northwards until the wall turns west and descends. There is no path. The crag can now be seen to the north east across flat boggy ground. Approach the crag by initially skirting the boggy ground on a good sheep path on the left until virtually opposite the crag, then cross directly to it.



The left side of the right buttress is bounded by a fine looking tower.



Don Sargeant
on the FA of
Raven's Tryst
VS
© DAVE WILLIAMS

1. Raven's Tryst 20m VS 4b 
A superb climb which weaves an intricate way up the tower, giving the best route on the cliff. Start in a groove at the foot of the tower and climb steeply up before stepping right onto its front face. Blanker sections above are avoided by deftly moving alternatively to the left and right on often hidden but surprisingly good holds.
FA M Davies, D Williams, D Sargeant, 14.9.14

Right of the tower is a vegetated shallow gully.

2. Infinite Monkey Cage 20m E2 5b 
Start just right of the gully and climb boldly to a good ledge. Continue straight up, moving slightly left at one point, to a sudden easing near to the top. Good, steady climbing, but protection is both very spaced and hard to find.
FA T Taylor, C Taylor 16.7.13

3. The Son 20 meters E3 5c †

Essentially this is just a much harder and bolder variation on *Infinite Monkey Cage*. Start as for that route to the ledge, then step right and take the slim, difficult groove above via technical pinches to a much easier finish.

FA T Taylor 16.7.13

4. Unclean 20 meters HS †

This is the easiest way up this section, but is very aptly named, especially in its upper half. Start right of *The Son* and go up a wide crack which gains the right hand limit of the good ledge. From here move right to below the dirty groove which is followed to the top.

FA T Taylor, C Taylor 16.7.13

Further across, on the right-hand side of the buttress, past some broken and lichenous rock, is a cleaner, small square wall.

5. The Talk 9m E1 5b †

From below the centre of the wall pull up left to the diagonal crack and follow it to the top.

FA T Taylor 16.7.13

6. Inside the Brain 9m E2 5b †

Start down and right of the centre of the wall and take the rising crack up and right to a difficult finish.

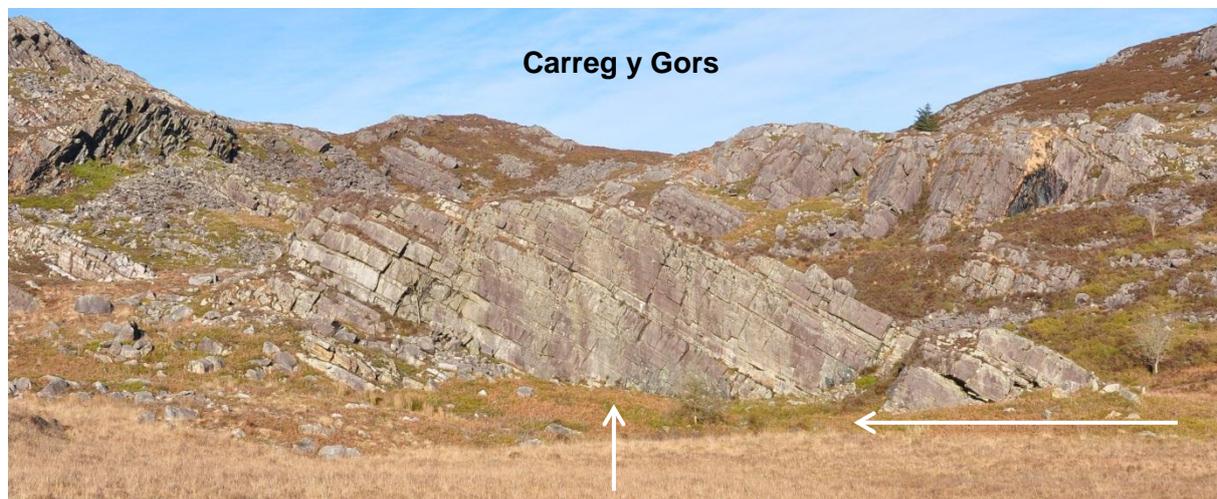
FA T Taylor 16.7.13

Carreg y Gors *Marsh Rock*

OS Ref SH 693 233

<i>Altitude:</i>	370 metres
<i>Approach time:</i>	70 minutes
<i>Aspect:</i>	South west facing
<i>Drying:</i>	Very quick to dry with minimal seepage
<i>Winter sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Summer sun:</i>	Yes

This is the grey whaleback wall located some 250 metres north of Upper Craig y Merched's **Central Wall**. Best approached from Central Wall, or directly by heading due East from the stile above Rhino's Buttress, where the initially hidden crag comes into view after a few minutes' walking.

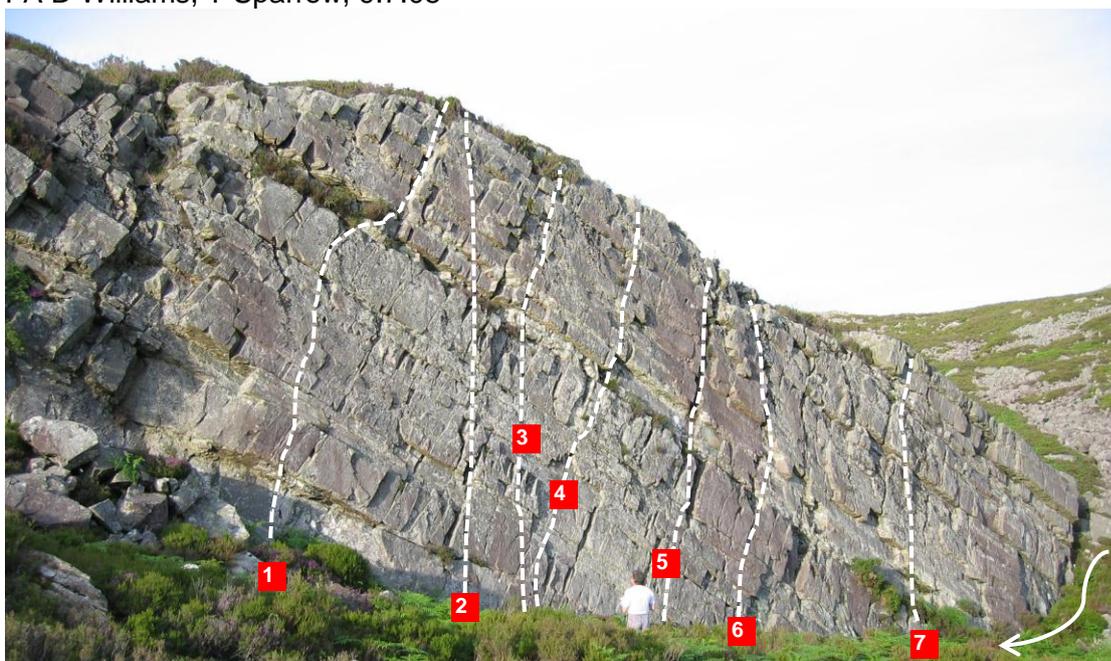


Though modest in height, the wall is steep and compact in places, leading to some bold climbing, with cams providing the main means of protection. Unfortunately, rock quality here is not quite as good as on other nearby cliffs. To date, all the recorded climbing is found to the right of the ash tree. Descend easily to the right.

1. Behind Blue Eyes 10m VS 4c †

Pull over the small overhang at the left-hand cliff base and climb directly up the wall to just below the heather break. Step right and climb the shallow left-facing corner to the top. Hidden tape and cam belay well back and low down to the right. Nice climbing.

FA D Williams, T Sparrow, 9.7.05



2. Erektion by Prescription 12m HVS 5a

Start 2 metres right of *The Sad Man behind Blue Eyes* and go direct to an overlap. Climb over this and continue slightly leftwards past good gear to the top.

FA T Taylor 23.5.04

3. The Irony of Ecstasy/Y Cymro Olaf 10m HVS 5a 🌟

The most worthwhile route on the cliff is a hybrid, combining the best sections of two routes which forged slightly different paths up the same section of rock. Start by a small cairn 2 metres right of the previous route. Climb directly up the wall to the heather break; pull over the overlap 1 metre right of the deep heather crack and climb the wall directly to an exciting little finish. Belay as for the previous route.

FA T Taylor 23.5.04 (*Irony of Ecstasy*)

FA T Sparrow, D Williams, 9.7.05 (*Y Cymro Olaf*)

4. Bits in the Brain 12m HVS 5a †

A wide jagged crack in the top of the wall is next right. Start at a line that runs just right of the final crack and continue directly up to finish just right of the wide crack. Belay as for the previous route.

FA T Taylor 23.5.04

5. A Question of Exclusion 12m HVS 5a †

This route climbs a vague line of weakness up the centre of the steep wall with poor protection initially. Start 1 metre right of *Bits in the Brain*. Ascend diagonally right to reach

the heather break, climb the overlap below two protruding blocks and move past the blocks on spaced holds to finish. Belay as for the previous route.

FA T Taylor 23.5.04

6. Sundew 10m HVS 5a †

Start 5 metres right of *A Question of Exclusion* directly below the right hand of two cracks in the upper wall. Climb directly up the wall to the base of the right hand crack and climb it, with some committing moves, to the top. Belay as for the previous route.

FA T Sparrow, D Williams, 9.7.05 [*The voracious sundew by the start is, sadly, long gone.*]

7. Seconds Away 9m HS 4a †

The final line takes the centre of the section of wall just right of the last crack on the right hand side.

FA T Taylor 23.5.04

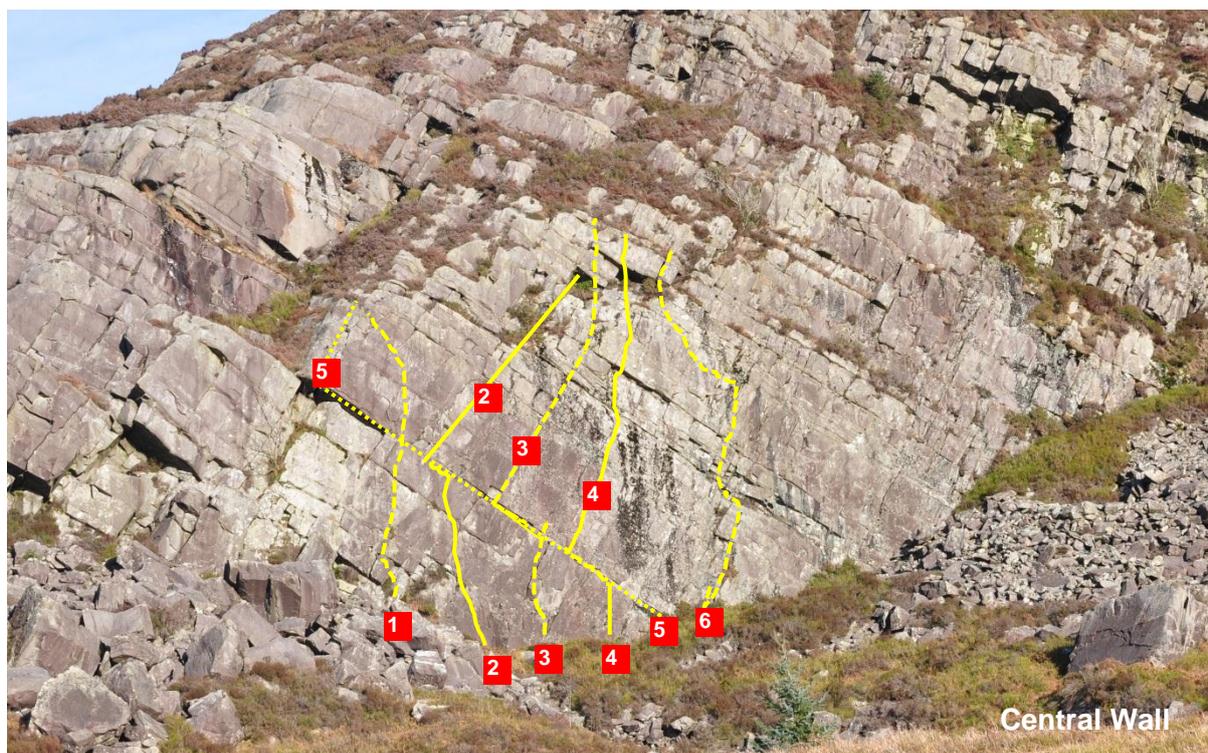
Central Wall*

OS Ref.: SH 694 232

(* Formerly "Upper Craig y Merched")

<i>Altitude:</i>	400 metres
<i>Approach time:</i>	80 minutes
<i>Aspect:</i>	South west facing
<i>Drying:</i>	Very quick to dry, but with some seepage in places after prolonged rain
<i>Winter sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Summer sun:</i>	Yes

Named "Upper Craig y Merched" in the CC *Meirionnydd* 2002 guidebook, this fine little wall is about 15 metres high and has excellent rock. Despite criss-crossing each other, all the climbs here follow well-defined, natural features. This, combined with detailed descriptions and the crag's modest height, should hopefully not lead to any route-finding difficulties. For all climbs, scramble off left and descend well to the left of the crag.



1. Chandrapur 14m HVS 5b ★

From a small overhang on the left-hand side of the crag, climb up to a slight niche beneath an overlap and go directly over to the large diagonal break. Climb the fine-looking wall above to its highest point. Small wires needed for protection.

FA JA Sumner, A George 22.9.96

2. Stockholm Express 15m HVS 5a

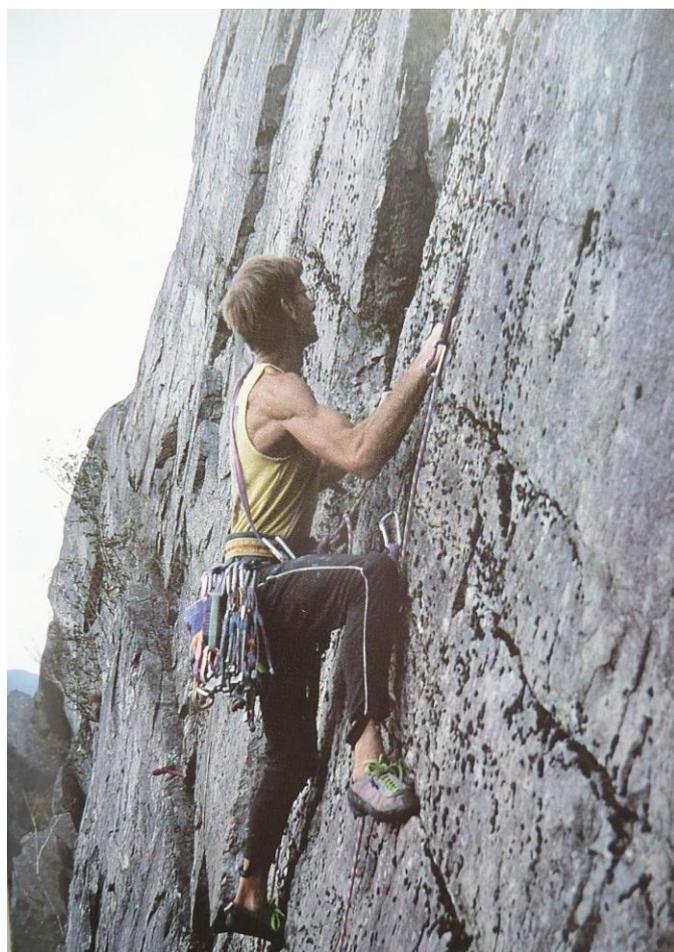
Sustained climbing. (An in situ tape originally was used for protection in the diagonal break. This has long gone.) From the lowest point of the wall, climb diagonally up left in the large diagonal break. Gain a spike on the wall above and then climb a small rightward-leaning overlap. Move back left to gain the top.

FA JA Sumner, A George 22.9.96

3. Faltenbalg Connection 15m E1 5b ★

From the lowest point of the wall, move up to a huge flake. Gain its top; then step left along the break and get established in the base of the obvious rightward-leaning overlap. Climb this and the wall above, trending left to a niche just beneath the top. Go easily out left and up vegetation to belays.

FA JA Sumner, A George 22.9.96



John Sumner, Mid Wales climbing pioneer, on the FA of Vermillion Wash E1 in 1997.

THIS ICONIC PHOTOGRAPH WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN CC MEIRIONNYDD
© ALEX GEORGE/CLIMBERS' CLUB (2002)

4. Vermilion Wash 18m E1 5b ★

A line of paler-coloured rock just right of the flake on *Faltenbalg Connection* runs up to the inverted-V overhang at the top of the crag. Previously protected by a piton, the first part of the climb is now uncomfortably bold. Climb up to a small slanting overlap and make delicate moves up and right to a small sloping ledge. Move slightly back left to gain a groove under the overhang, and pull over rightwards via a crack.

FA JA Sumner, JP Sumner 17.5.97

5. Burnt Umber 23m HVS 5b ★

This climbs the obvious lower diagonal fault-line running across the crag from right to left. Most of the climbing is at 4b/c but the final, well-protected pull over the finishing overhang is much harder. Climb the fault-line to its finish under an overhang and pull out rightwards with difficulty.

FA JA Sumner, JP Sumner 17.5.97

6. Quad Booster 18m E2 5b ★

Climb up to a recess beneath overhangs. Pull directly out of the recess (good cam cracks), move up and step left to immediately below the centre of the headwall. Climb this to the top. FA JA Sumner, A George 22.9.96

Rock quality now deteriorates to the right and, as yet, there are no climbs on this part of Central Wall.

Gully Wall

OS Ref SH 694 231

<i>Altitude:</i>	440 metres
<i>Approach time:</i>	65 minutes
<i>Aspect:</i>	South west facing
<i>Drying:</i>	Very quick to dry with minimal seepage
<i>Winter sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Summer sun:</i>	Yes

This small, clean wall is located half way up the left side of the obvious grassy gully, up and right of **Central Wall**. To date, only one route has been climbed here. Approach directly by scrambling up the grassy gully. Descend easily on the right.



1. Must be the Beans 10m VS 4b ★

The slabby wall has an obvious central slanting crack line which is climbed to a steep finish over blocks. FA S Finch, D Williams 2.7.14

Right again, there are some spectacularly discordant overhangs. Steepness, allied with concerns over rock quality and stability has, to date, precluded any serious exploration here.

Further right and up again, there is a far more amenable looking, triangular buttress.

Craig y Gwalch *Peregrine's Crag*

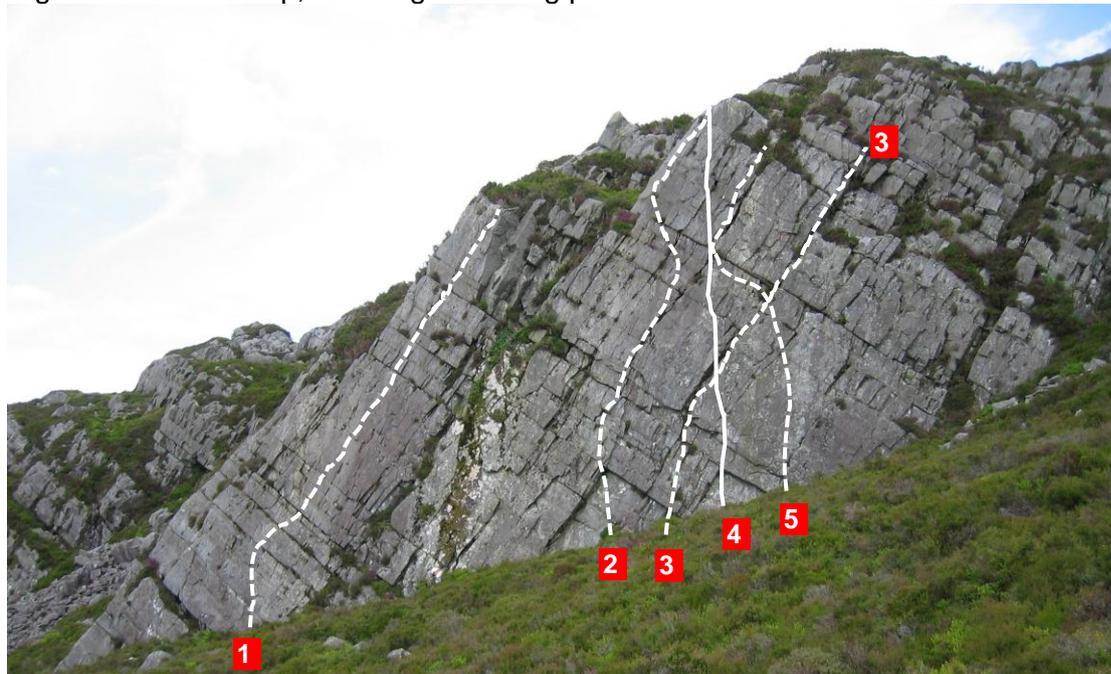
OS Ref SH 695 230

<i>Altitude:</i>	460 metres
<i>Approach time:</i>	90 minutes
<i>Aspect:</i>	South west facing
<i>Drying:</i>	Very quick to dry but with some seepage after prolonged wet weather
<i>Winter sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Summer sun:</i>	Yes

This triangular buttress is located further up the hillside to the right of **Gully Wall** and is the very highest buttress on the hillside. It is a favourite haunt of peregrines although, to date, none seem to nest on the cliff itself. Apply common sense if birds of prey are present and appear seriously alarmed by your presence. If you suspect that there are peregrines nesting on the crag, then simply climb elsewhere.

Approach as for **Central Wall**, then continue directly southwards up the hillside for about 300 metres. There is a good sheep path to follow initially, but unfortunately this disappears once the boulders and heather are reached. A line to the right of the two conifers appears to offer the 'best' approach, although this is all rather relative. At least be thankful that it's not that far to go. Routes are described from left to right and descent is possible on either side of the buttress.

Craig y Gwalch's left arête provides a most enjoyable and well-positioned easy scramble. Right of this is a steep, left to right slanting pillar-like feature at the left side of the cliff.



1. Aderyn Piwis 25m HVS 5a ★ †

This worthwhile route starts on the right hand side of the pillar. Climb up and right to the highest of three slanting breaks and then make an ascending traverse rightwards to a compact section of grey rock. Climb this just right of centre, then move left. Thin cracks in the final steep wall provide a fine little finale.

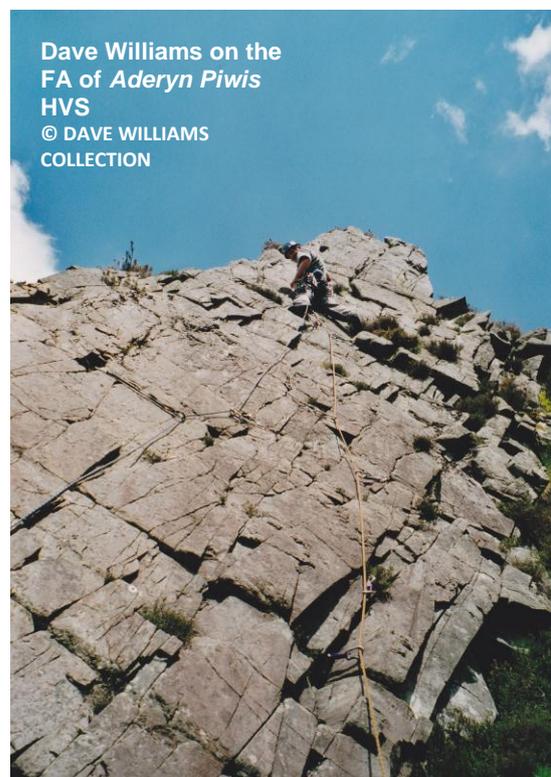
FA D Williams, T Sparrow, 26.6.05

To the right is a grassy gully and an area of poor rock. Right again, there is a central rightwards-trending crack.

2. The Masked Swooper 20m VS 4b

This route climbs the very centre of the steep blocky wall to finish via the short blank looking hanging groove at the very highest point of the cliff. Start by the left hand of two small triangular overlaps at the base of the central part of the cliff. Pull through just right of the apex of the overlap and continue directly to the left hand shoulder of the wall. An enjoyable right-trending groove finally leads to the top.

FA T Taylor 19.9.04



Dave Williams on the
FA of Aderyn Piwis
HVS
© DAVE WILLIAMS
COLLECTION

3. Mighty Midge 15m VS 4c †

This takes the wall between the small overlaps to gain the crack, which is then followed up and rightwards. Good to begin with but, unfortunately, the upper part of the route doesn't climb one of the crag's best features.

FA R Goodlad and party, 2002

4. Bandit 15m VS 4c †

Pull through just right of the apex of the right hand overlap to a small hand ledge. Continue direct with interest to the top with the last few metres providing the challenge.

FA T Taylor 19.9.04

5. Goats do Groan 20m HVS 5b †

This worthwhile route accepts the challenge of the steep upper wall at the centre of the cliff with good rock and protection throughout. Start just right of the second small inverted-V overlap. Pull steeply up to a narrow ledge. Move diagonally up and left for 5 metres to the base of the rightwards leaning crack. Climb this awkwardly to the top.

FA T Sparrow, D Williams, 9.7.05

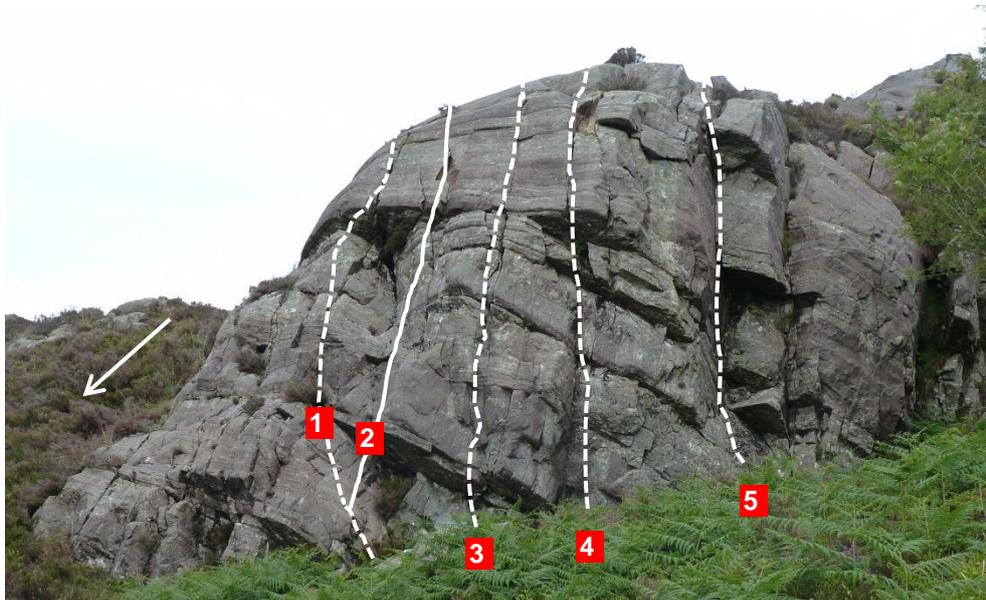
Level with this face and about 150 metres to the south is a small dome of broken rock with one minor line up the centre. This is **Dimwit** 8m VS 4b † (FA T Taylor 19.9.04)

Craig y Lleuad *Moon or Satellite Crag*

OS Ref SH 694 227

<i>Altitude:</i>	450 metres
<i>Approach time:</i>	70-80 minutes from the parking
<i>Aspect:</i>	South west facing
<i>Drying:</i>	Very quick to dry with minimal seepage
<i>Winter sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Summer sun:</i>	Yes

Craig y Lleuad, located on the hillside below and well to the right of **Craig y Gwalch**, is a nice little outcrop with a very sunny aspect, excellent, clean rock and quality climbing; a great spot to while away a few hours. Approach initially as for **Central Wall**, then make a direct rising traverse from the hanging valley floor across scree and heather to the crag. Belays are plentiful at the top and there is an easy descent on the left.



1. Llo'r Lleuad 9m S 4a †

Climb the slabby ramp and rib on the left of the crag to the wide crack in the upper wall which is followed to the top.

FA D Williams, S Finch 2.7.14

2. Après Slaw 9m S 4a ★ †

Start as for *Llo'r Lleuad*. Pull right into the open, groove and climb the right wall to the mother of all jugs above the overlap; finish directly. Nice climbing.

FA S Finch, D Williams 2.7.14

3. The Flat Earth Society! 9m HVS 5b ★ †

Start 1 metre right of *Après Slaw* and directly below a fine crack. Difficult, bold starting moves lead to better holds and gear. Move up past dubious blocks and follow the crack to the top.

FA S Finch, D Williams 2.7.14

4. Kann al Loar 9m HVS 5b ★ †

Start 1 metre right of *The Flat Earth Society!* Climb the groove to the cracked roof. A difficult move over the roof leads to the finger crack above. Enjoyable and well protected.

FA D Williams, S Finch 2.7.14 [*"Kann al Loar" is "full moon" in Breton.*]

5. We are Made of Star Stuff 8m E2 5c ★ †

The steep, stepped corner on the right of the crag is strenuous, very sustained but well-protected.

FA S Finch, D Williams 2.7.14

In Memoriam

John Anderson Sumner, 13 March 1936 - 10 February 2004

*"As an exploratory climber in his chosen domain of mid-Wales,
he remained without compare".*

[Colin Wells, The Independent, 2004]

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*Dave Williams
Steep Stone Climbing
September 2019*