

Aid Crag - Right Hand Buttresses



Further right is a small buttress consisting of a slab topped by a rib which has a clean crack just left.

12. THOMPSON'S RIB

7m E1 *
A small but perfectly formed gem with many contrasting styles of move.
(5b) Climb the slab, pull up to the foot of the short rib which is then followed to the top.

(5c) To the right of the broken crack on the left of the buttress is rib with a shallow scoop to its left. Technical moves gain the rib.



Two shotmarks are useful for gaining the middle break. Traverse the break right for 1m. Use the remains of a broken flake to reach a number of crimps up and left. Gain the top, keeping a cool head a fair distance above the gear.
FA Simon Litchfield and Matt Dowson (21st May 2011).

13. MADGE 7m 5

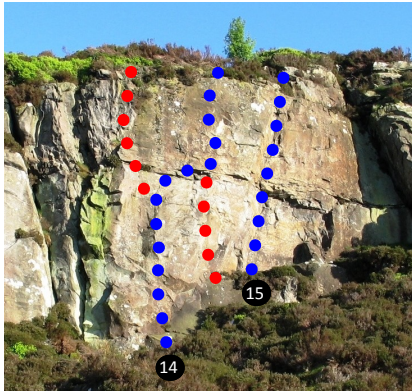
The crack to the right of *Thompsons Rib*. A poor route.
FA Steve Madgewick, Steve Nagy (Summer 2001)

-This route supercedes and encompasses the best parts of the following two routes:

On the right of the crag (and the first main buttress if approaching from the A68) is a higher quarried area, with a light sandy looking face with a thin crack on its right hand side.

AID AND ABET, E2 5c: Start as for *Legal Aid* but finish directly up (and is spoiled by) the rubble above the middle break

LEGALITY, E2 5c, the true direct start to the upper half of *Legal Aid* that starts 1m left of *Guilty*. A fair route, but the start of *Legal Aid* has the better start.

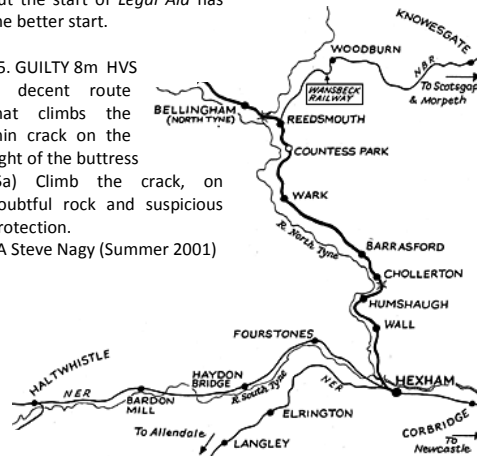


14. LEGAL AID 9m E3**

A devious route that encompasses the finest climbing on the right hand buttress with some technical bouldery moves .

15. GUILTY 8m HVS

A decent route that climbs the thin crack on the right of the buttress
(5a) Climb the crack, on doubtful rock and suspicious protection.
FA Steve Nagy (Summer 2001)



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Aid Crag Climbing Guide

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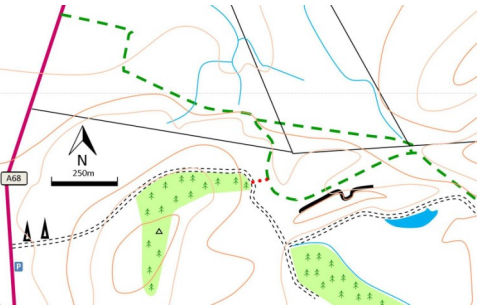
Aid Crag

By Simon Litchfield

The Climbing

General

A collection of small and somewhat rambling buttresses dwarfed both in size and quality by the neighbouring Northumbrian gem: Great Wanney. With a fair amount of poor, loose and dirty routes it is easy to overlook the crag. However, intermingled are a collection of good routes, which, given the ease of access from the A68 (5 mins by bike), can provide alternative entertainment on a summers evening.



Approach

The crag is best approached from the A68, just south of Ridsdale / West Woodburn. Park in the Fourlaws layby, where a couple of telephone / radio masts are visible. Follow the well made forestry track east through a gate for approx 1km. Where the track bends sharply right and the crag is visible take a small path off left (straight on), crossing a small pipe / stream and turning right towards the crag. This path runs beneath the whole crag. An alternative approach can be made when approaching the Wanneys from the north, by keeping to the forestry track which swings round above the crag.

Situation and Character

Facing north northwest the crag catches the glow of the warm evening summer sun and offers good views over

Ridsdale and back towards Great Wanney. The crag is a bit dirty and loose in places, but there are some nice routes on good rock. *Thompson's Rib* is worthy of a star, *Cabbala*, *Cosmic Egg* and *Ankh* are strangely classic, *Guilty* and *Legal Aid* are steeper and on better rock than expected, and the steep overhanging arête of *Ambulance on Standby / ICU* proves to be the outstanding line. Some of the other routes more rambling and not all are included as there are many lines of a similar nature and grade.

Rock: Ottercops Sandstones Carboniferous, Dinantian (Lower Limestone Group)

Access issues:

Peregrines usually nest here and their breeding season is between March and July. They make themselves known with a mewling call - so please keep away if you see them.

History:

The 1950 NMC guidebook included many routes at Aid Crag, suggesting that it was one of the first crags to be explored. This popularity may have been owing to the fact that before its closure to passengers in 1956 climbers would usually take the North Tyne Railway (also known by some as 'The Beer Line') to Bellingham and walk to Great Wanney, passing Aid Crag en route. In the 1960's Gordon Thompson and friends added half a dozen routes. A few more were added by S Nagy, J Dalrymple and S. Madgwick in 2001 and possibly the best two, in the quarry were added by Simon Litchfield in Sept 2009 before returning after two years to put *Legal Aid* to rest. Many further lines have been climbed, however, this guide has selected climbs most likely to attract ascents and is thus not definitive.



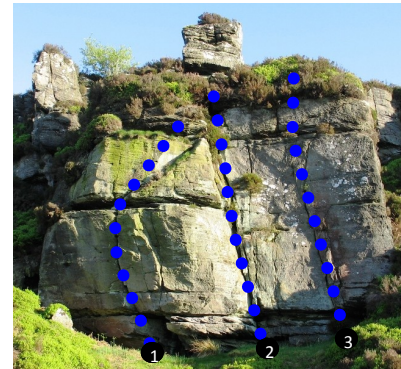
“ The peregrine is a large and powerful falcon renowned for its swift and agile flight when chasing prey. It has long, broad, pointed wings and a relatively short tail. It is blue-grey above, with a blackish top of the head and an obvious black 'moustache' that contrasts with its white face. Its breast is finely spotted. Peregrines have suffered illegal killing from gamekeepers and landowners, and been a target for egg collectors, but better legal protection and control of pesticides (which indirectly poisoned birds) have helped the population to recover considerably from a low in the 1960s. ”



Above: Aid Crag from the Fourlaws approach.

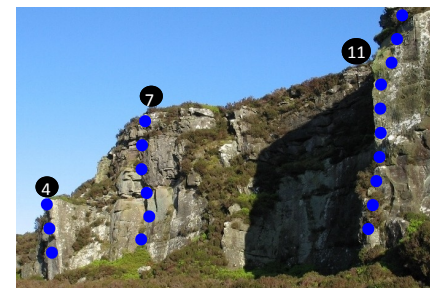
Cover: Rounding off a great evening on *Hypotenuse*

The climbs are described from left to right. Starting at a small buttress with three cracks.



- 1. CABBALA 9m VS (4c) The left hand crack has a kink right.
- 2. COSMIC EGG 8m MS The central main crack.
- 3. ANKH 8m VS (5a) The thin right hand crack.

The following routes are on the prominent arête on the east side of the quarry



- 4. AMBULANCE ON STANDBY 9m E3 * Good, unprotected climbing up the left hand side of the overhung arête. One of the best routes of the crag. (6a). Start below the arête and climb to a ledge. From the ledge step left round the arête and commit to hard and insecure initial moves. Higher up the climbing eases but is bereft of gear. FA Simon Litchfield and Karl Wood (29 September 2009)
- 5. ICU 9m HVS Delicate climbing up the right side of the arête on good rock. (5b) Start as for *Ambulance on Standby*. From the ledge ascend the right side of the arête, with surprisingly delicate moves at towards the top. FA Simon Litchfield and Karl Wood (20 September 2009)



To the right of the prow is a broken looking wall with a number of cracklines.

- 6. QUAKER 11m D A route up the wall on the east side of the quarry
- 7. SHAKER 11m S (4b) The overhanging crack just to the right with poor protection and loose rock.
- 8. FAKER 12m MVS (4c) Start beneath a small overhang in the central wall (arrow in rock). From a niche move right and up to a ledge. Continue up and right to a bulging wall and finish up left.

There are a number of lines right of *Faker*, but all are poor. On the right bay

- 9. JUST A LITTLE GREEN 10m E2 (5c) The green wall on the right hand side of the quarry. Better than it looks. FA Gordon Thompson (1970ish)
- 10. SICK, SICK, SICK (THE BEAST) 10m E1 (5a) The unstable looking flake right of Green Wall is as unstable as it looks. FA Gordon Thompson (1960ish)
- 11. HYPOTENUSE 14m VD * The long buttress bounding the quarry on the right. A good climb. Go up the short arête, work across a wall to the right and finish up the crack.

The next buttress contains a recess. This can be climbed by the left crack or up the narrow wall, both Mild Very Severe.

Further along is a buttress with two easy chimneys. The wall at the right end is Very Difficult.

The next buttress has an overhang atop it. The bulging left wall is Severe and the right end past the overhang is Very Difficult.

