

The Wilton complex of quarries (from 1 through to 4) overlooks Egerton, to the north of Bolton and is reached in minutes from a collection convenient parking places.

Wilton 1 is arguably the finest cliff in Lancashire with well over 200 routes, many of which are hard or very hard.

Although the thin cracks, with which the place abounds, were originally climbed with aid, the area was never the popular practice-ground that the eastern Peak became. Because of this many of the cracks are in near-pristine condition, making them worthy of the attention of any visiting thin-crack meister. Scattered amongst the hard routes is a reasonable selection of more moderate fare that give the chance to look at the harder routes and imagine - maybe one day! Those who find Wilton 1 a bit intimidating should enjoy Wilton 2 and 3 where the setting and the spread of grades are a little more amenable as is the angle of much of the rock.

### Mod to S

1

1

1

-

### HS to HVS

1

10

10

1

### E1 to E3

2

1

4

7

### E4 and up

3

3

11

5

## Access

Wilton 1 is now owned by the BMC and there are no access issues here.

## Approach

Also see map on page 289

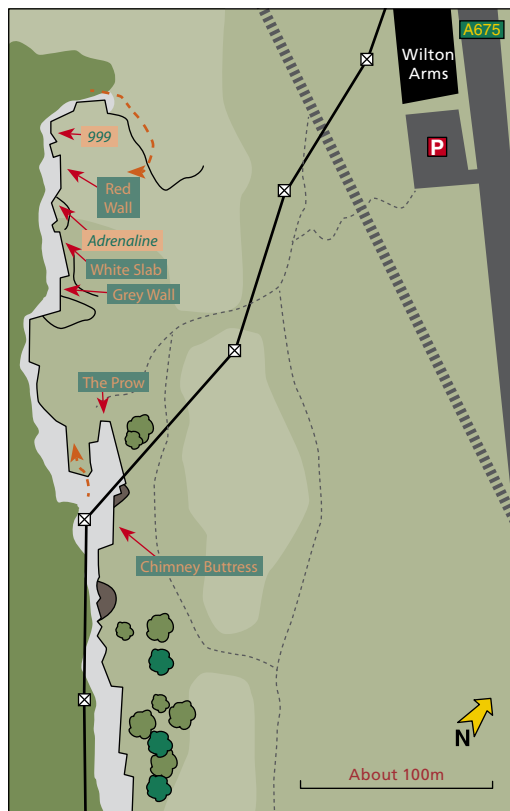
There is dedicated parking just down the slope from the Wilton Arms (the Wilting Arms would surely be more appropriate). Steps lead through the bushes in the left-hand corner of this to a wide quarry track that loops right then left to arrive opposite the conspicuous fin of rock that is The Prow. More direct approaches are steeper and save only seconds.

To the left of The Prow the quarry descends into the overgrown depths of The Allotment and to its right the steep walls of The Pit Face. These are home to 60 or so routes, many of which are worth seeking out - see the definitive Lancashire guide. From the approach path minor tracks lead up and right to the White Slabs and Grey Walls, home to many fine climbs and rarely busy.

## Conditions

The cliff faces the morning sun and, although in the shade after midday, is sheltered from the prevailing westerly winds. The place is inclined to be green in the winter, or after rain, but if the day turns sour then the sunny delights of Anglezarke or the bouldering of Brownstones are not too far away. The exception to the rule is the west face of The Prow that gets the afternoon sun (until it sets below the quarry rim) and is almost always in climbable condition.

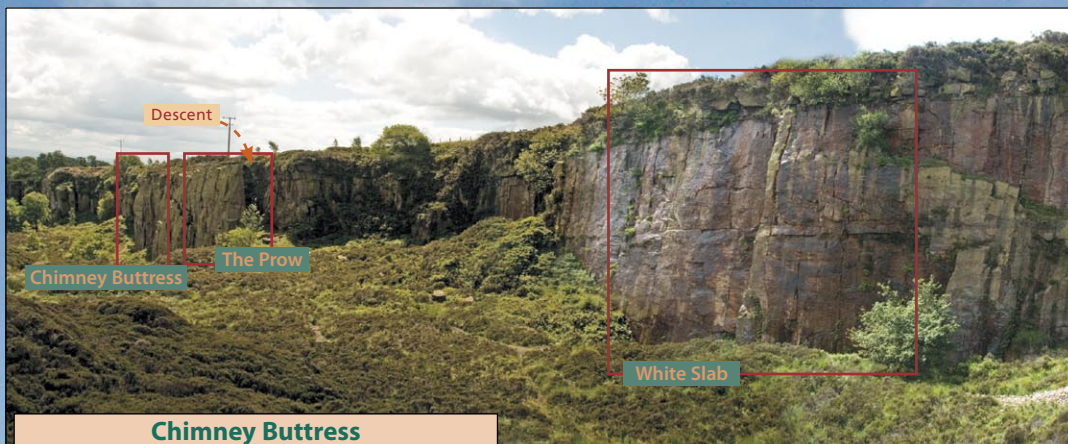
On rare hot summer days the quarry makes an ideal shady retreat.





Geoff Mann on the superb and technical *Master Spy Direct* (E4) - page 314 - at Wilton 1. Photo: Nick Verney





### Chimney Buttress

This popular piece of rock on the left side of the quarry is split by the shallow cleft of *Wombat Chimney*. All the routes here are steep, pumpy and worth doing; the crack climbs are well-protected, though the gear is often hard-won. In contrast the face climbs tend to be bold and harrowing with gear in the breaks and the odd peg.

#### 1 Paradox. . . . .

E2 5b

12m. A fine varied pitch up the south-facing side wall, with an interesting start followed by steep finger jamming to a teetering exit. Start up the slanting crack until a short traverse right leads to easy ground. Well-protected where you need it.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1968

#### 2 Parasite. . . . .

E5 6b

16m. The left arete of the front face is technical and bold. Various old bits of metal provide the protection.

FA. Jerry Peel/Hank Pasquill 1980

#### 3 Leucocyte Left-hand . . .

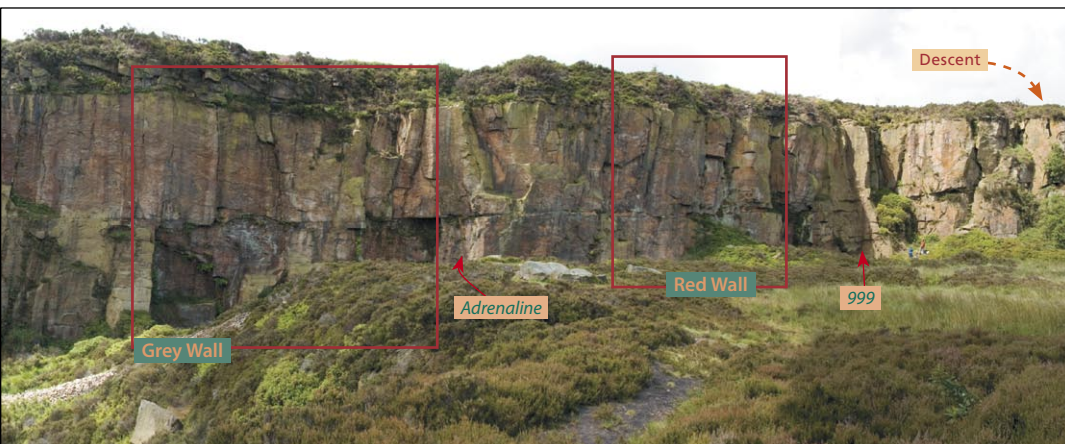
E3 5c

16m. Climb past an iron ring to a good ledge out right then step left and enter the steep hanging crack. Finish more easily.

FA. Ray Evans 1964







#### 4 Leucocyte Right-hand . . . . .

VS 4c

16m. From a ledge on the *Leucocyte Left-hand* climb the groove then the continuation crack past an old peg. Easy ground remains.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1967

#### 5 The Hacker . . . . .

E4 6b

16m. Climb the wall past twin overlaps then finish up the bold and technical wall above.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1973

#### 6 Central Route . . . . .

E1 5b

16m. A great route which is not as pumpy as it looks but requires sustained effort right to the end. It follows the continuous crack-line past a ledge at 6m. Take care with a couple of rattling holds.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1967

#### 7 Max . . . . .

E3 5c

18m. Climb straight up the wall to the overlap (poor rest in a niche) then follow the thin, pumpy crack above. The start is serious; the hard moves near the top can be protected.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1968

#### 8 Wombat Chimney . . . . .

E2 5b

18m. The narrow hanging fissure is accessed via a steep crack. Take a rest before the chimney then struggle up it to a dirty but well-protected exit.

FA. Ray Evans 1966

#### 9 The Soot Monkey . . . . .

E6 6c

18m. Climb the thin wall to a peg then continue right and left boldly to the break. Climb the wall above via a little diversion to the arete of *Wombat*.

FA. Paul Pritchard 1985

#### 10 Toxic Bilberries . . . . .

E8 7a

18m. Bold, powerful, technical and pushy climbing up the face to the left of *Loopy*. There is a long run-out start and a then a crucial section protected by skyhook runners.

FA. Gareth Parry 1998

#### 11 Loopy . . . . .

E4 6a

14m. An intimidating pitch, strenuous then delicate and always bold. Climb cracks to the hanging blocks, pull into the groove on the left then balance up the scooped slab. The direct finish up the groove is harder and safer but less good.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1968 and 1970

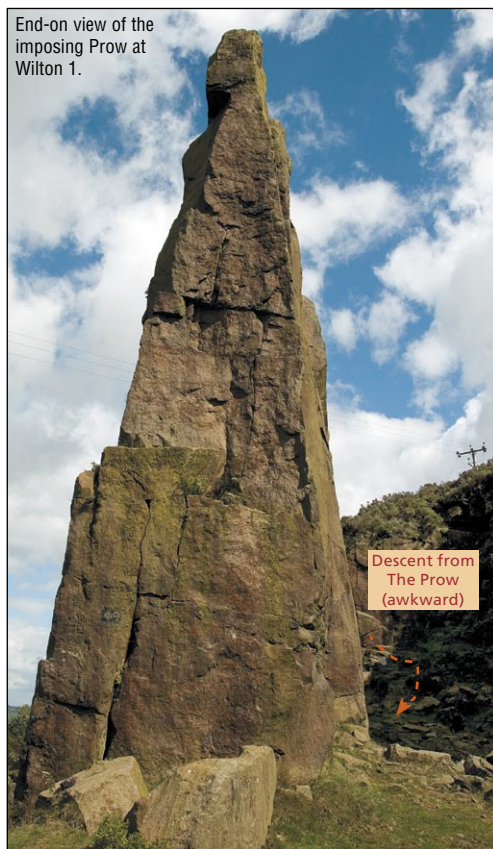
#### 12 The Corner . . . . .

VS 4c

14m. The main angle between the buttresses gives a worthwhile pitch that would benefit from a bit more traffic.

FA. Ray Evans 1965

End-on view of the imposing Prow at Wilton 1.





# 1 Peanuts . . . . .



E1 5a

16m. Climb across the right wall to ledges around the arete and make a tricky mantel to bigger ledges on the right. Step back left and climb the wall to finish left or right of the final prow.

FA. Ray Evans 1964

# 2 Horrock's Route . . . . .



VS 4c

14m. Start below a groove and climb right and up to reach a ledge. Take the groove behind to easy ground.

**Horrock's Route Direct - E1 5b**, follows the groove direct and the crack above to the top.

FA. Ken Powell 1964. FA. John Hartley (The Direct) 1983

# 3 Fingernail . . . . .



VS 4c

18m. Climb a crack to the left of the prominent hook then trend left (possible belay). Step out right and traverse the face to a shallow groove, which leads to the top on positive holds.

FA. Mick Pooler 1962

# 4 Orange Peel . . . . .



VS 4c

18m. From under the hook stride right (tricky to avoid the tempting metal-work) then climb straight up to rejoin *Fingernail*.

FA. Ray Evans 1964

# 5 Flingie Bunt . . . . .



VS 4c

20m. Layback the pointed flake then climb straight up the wall to *Eastern Terrace*. Move left along ledges then step back right to enter and climb the upper groove.

FA. Ray Evans 1964

# 6 Spider Crack . . . . .



HVS 5a

18m. Layback round the roof then climb the wall to ledges. Take the wide crack in the wall just to the right to finish.

FA. Ken Powell 1963

# 7 Jubilee Climb . . . . .



E1 5c

18m. Climb straight up the wall just to the right of *Spider Crack*. Step left and tackle the thin crack in the upper wall. The route feels like two boulder problems separated by a terrace.

FA. Ian Lonsdale 1977

# 8 Lazy Friday . . . . .



E4 5c

18m. The wall left of *Cameo* has bold climbing but if you can crimp then you might find it OK! It may need a clean and a side-runner in *Spider Crack* is probably no bad idea. A tiny nubbin can be tied-off, and who knows - it might even hold a fall!

FA. Jerry Peel 1977

# 9 Cameo . . . . .



E1 5a

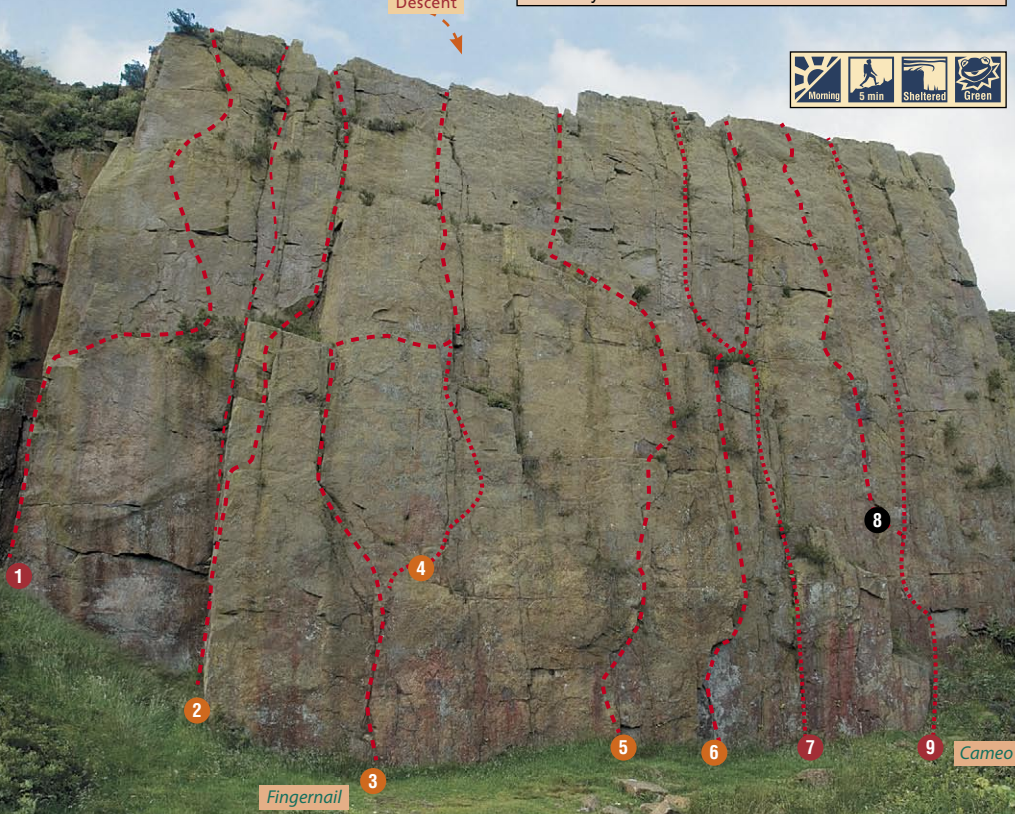
18m. The seam left of the arete gives superb steep wall climbing, although the gear (small wires) is a little spaced. One for a steady leader but not really too hard for E1.

FA. Ray Evans 1964

## The Prow - Outside Face

The outer face of The Prow has a couple of popular lower grade climbs and some bold routes at a higher grade plus the classic *Cameo*. The rock always looks green but is usually in a climbable state.

Descent











## The Prow - Inside Face

The sunniest piece of rock in the quarry has a small collection of excellent routes and is the most popular bit of rock here. The routes tend to be strenuous and bold in places, and the rock is exceptionally clean. Belaying on top of The Prow requires a little care (there are various fixed bits of iron work) as does the exposed escape along its crest - all very Culm Coast-ish!

### 1 Christeena . . . . .

VS 5a

**14m.** Climb the narrow front of the Prow to a ledge. Move up to a good hold on the left arete and use this to swing (low) or teeter (high) round the edge and across into the groove. Climb this pleasantly to the top.

FA. Mick Pooler 1962

### 2 Christine Arete . . . . .

E4 5c

**14m.** Bold and fingery climbing up the left-hand arete of the face. No side-runners at this grade. Wires in the upper left-hand crack of Dawn knock the grade down to a still scary E3 5c.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1967

### 3 Dawn . . . . .

HVS 5b

**14m.** A steep crack climb which is high in the grade. Jam your way up to a sit-down rest on a sloping ledge. Continue up the draining upper crack past some small wire runners.

Following the left-hand crack throughout is E2 5c.

FA. Graham Kilner 1961. FFA. Mick Pooler 1963

### 4 Innominate . . . . .

E4 6b

**14m.** A bouldery start (a side-runner brings it down to E3) leads to a break. Follow the upper break to gain the thin crack left of the upper section of Ann.

FFA. Hank Pasquill early 1980s

### 5 Eliminate . . . . .

VS 4c

**18m.** An indirect line but with good climbing. Climb the groove then make a tricky traverse right along the narrow undercut ledges to *Rambling Route*. Finish up its left arete.

FA. Rowland Edwards 1963

### 6 Ann . . . . .

E1 5b

**14m.** Two good sections split by a big ledge. Climb the thin once-pegged crack to ledges. Power up the twin cracks in the groove to finish. Ignoring the left-hand crack is a touch harder and also more strenuous.

FA. Les Ainsworth 1967

### 7 Cheat . . . . .

E3 5b

**14m.** Steady climbing with a bold feel. Gear in the midway break gives protection that is just about adequate. Climb the reachy lower wall via a thin crack to ledges then attack the upper face by a line of (small) chipped holds. The route is substantially harder for the short. *Photo on page 309.*

FA. Hank Pasquill 1967





# 8 Rambling Route



VDiff

**14m.** Pleasant. Bridge up the chimney to the big sloping ledge then take the jamming crack in the groove above to finish. There are useful holds in the juggy flake that forms the left arete too.

FA. Graham Kilner 1961

# 9 Bird Chimney



S 4a

**12m.** The chimney/groove is normally quitted leftwards where it narrows. The birds have long since flown.

FA. Graham Kilner 1961

# 10 Flywalk



VS 4c

**12m.** Climb strenuously across small ledges to a jammed finger-nipping block. Finish awkwardly through the small roof. **A Direct Start** is V1 (5c).

FA. Graham Kilner 1961

# 11 Flytrap



VS 5a

**8m.** The short-lived groove above the start of *Flywalk* gives a short safe struggle to a shelving rightward exit.

FA. Hank Pasquill late 1960s

# 12 Veteran Cosmic Rocker

E4 6c

**6m.** The hanging arete on its right-hand side by some seriously powerful pinch-gripping. The left-hand side is a grade or so easier.

FA. Mark Leach 1984

# 13 Scimitar

VDiff

**6m.** The curving crack leads strenuously into the grubby groove.

FA. Graham Kilner 1961

The polished shelving ledges in the back of the bay are **Max's Dilemma, Mod.** This provides the easiest way down though beginners might be a little fazed. The alternatives are another awkward climb down just over to the right, or the long walk round the northern end of the quarry.



The vague remains of the painted number 49 at the foot of *Christeena* (VS) on the front of The Prow at Wilton 1. It is currently number 95 in the BMC Guide which shows how pointless writing numbers on the rock is.







### 1 Manglewurzle Rib . . . . . HVS 5a

26m. Step right into the crack and climb it to the base of the groove (possible stance) then step out right and climb the rib and crack to the top. Currently quite clean without a turnip in sight!

FA. Ray Evans 1964

### 2 Isle of White . . . . . E4 6a

24m. Bold and absorbing - a great route when dry and clean! Climb straight up the face to the horizontal break, fill it with gear then trend slightly rightwards up the wall, passing an overlap with difficulty, to a finish through the blocky overhangs on the right.

FA. Ian Lonsdale 1977. Hank Pasquill (the start) 1978

### 3 White Slabs Bunt . . . . . E3 6a

26m. A devious classic - the name refers to a back flip in aerobatics and is not Cockney rhyming slang! Clipping and passing the second peg is desperate for the short! Climb round the overlap to the main horizontal break, step right then climb straight up the wall into a shallow groove. Finish through the blocky overhanging groove capping the face. Straightening out the loop is *White Lightning* E5 6b.

FA. Hank Pasquill (2 pegs) 1967. FFA. Hank Pasquill 1971

### 4 Remembrance Corner . . . . . VS 4c

22m. What a line, possibly the best in the quarry - pity about the fernage though! Getting it done early in the season is the best bet.

FA. Roland Edwards 1964

### 5 Sobeit . . . . . E3 5c

24m. The first crack in the jutting wall gives a fine outing. Climb the thin crack to a tall slot then pass this to easier rock and an exit leftwards as for *Western Terrace* (the long diagonal ledge system) or move right to the tree lower-off.

FA. Ian Lonsdale 1977

### 6 Supercrack . . . . . E3 5c

24m. A super climb when clean and then the match of anything at Millstone. Well protected and sustained rather than overly technical. Climb the fingery lower wall to the big break then step left and power up the fine continuation crack until respite arrives on the *Western Terrace*. Escape off left or lower-off from the tree.

FA. Ken Powell 1964. FFA. Ian Lonsdale late 1970s

*Running across the wall is the stepped ledge of Western Terrace, S 4a - it is a poor route. Rising above its right-hand end is Grey Wall with its series of searing finger cracks. These are listed briefly here.*

### 7 Spike . . . . . E4 6a

24m. The right trending crack gives good climbing past two pegs and a pair of small recesses to a final taxing sequence near the top.

FAA. Al Pearce 1979

### 8 Run Wild, Run Free E6 6b

20m. Climb boldly rightwards to the base of the crack then gallop up it by fierce climbing with an especially pushy central section.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1969. FFA. Mark Leach 1985

### 9 Ego Trip . . . . . E5 6b

12m. Up to it? Step right to access the parallel cracks then follow them with escalating difficulty to mid-height and an easier finish.

FA. Ken Powell c 1964. FFA. John Monks 1983

### 10 K.P. . . . . E6 6b

20m. From the ledges on *Frightful Fred* climb through the blocky slot (you must be nuts!) in the roof then attack the soaring crack.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1969. FFA. Geoff Mann 1978

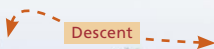
### 11 Jossor . . . . . E5 6a

18m. The last finger-crack is another good one. From *Frightful Fred* climb the shallow groove and crack past a couple of small overhangs to finish direct or, slightly more easily, out left.

FA. Jim Fogg 1969. FFA. Dave Knighton 1978

## White Slab

The tallest face in the quarry, and white when it is dry which is fairly infrequently. Under the right conditions *White Slabs Bunt* and *Supercrack* are a couple of classy E3s that are worth the trip from afar - just pick a dry spell.



Run Wild,  
Run Free





**12 Frightful Fred** . . . . .



**VS 4c**

**26m.** Wandering, though with good and bold climbing. Take the chimney to ledges and a peg belay on the right (8m). Climb up and right then mantelshelf onto a higher ledge by a groove. From a peg gain the higher ledge on the right then continue up and right until an exit leftwards can be made. A right-hand exit is harder.

FA. Ray Evans 1963

**13 Adrenaline** . . . . .



**E4 6a**

**24m.** Despite a poor start the upper groove offers superb unrelenting climbing; just keep pushing on and the holds and runners keep arriving. Protection is good once you reach the crack, though the easy bottom wall and grotty cave are worrying!

FA. Jim Fogg 1969. FFA. Hank Pasquill 1981

**14 Chocolate Girl** . . . . .



**E7 6c**

**26m.** This arduous outing takes the lower of a pair of thin cracks in the pillar right of *Adrenaline*. Climb to the cave then exit right to gain the base of the withering crack. Power up this, sustained, fingery and technical, (four peg runners). A semi-rest is reached in the groove of *Adrenaline*. Finish up this much more easily.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1969. FFA. Gareth Parry 1996

**15 Gigantic** . . . . .



**E8 6c**

**16m.** The right-hand crack was neglected by the aid climbers, leaving it pristine and thin! Climb a flaky crack in the right-hand wall of the groove and a blocky overhang (possible stance out right). Swing around the arete to gain the crack-line and follow it desperately to a final hideous sequence which allows the last couple of moves on *Adrenaline* to be reached - phew!

FA. Ken Powell 1964. FFA. Dave Pegg 1990



**Grey Wall / Adrenaline**

The tall right-hand end of the Grey Wall rises from behind a heap of grassed-over quarry spoil. All the routes start indifferently but things improve dramatically on the better rock above the mid-height break. Here are as fine a set of hard finger-cracks as you will find anywhere - though the emphasis is on the word 'hard'.





# 1 Knuckleduster . . . . .

HVS 5a

26m. A long climb with some poor rock on pitch 1. Climb a flaky crack left of the arete to an overhang and above this a stance. Balance up the exposed arete on the left then teeter back into the main groove and finish up this (4c). The crack and groove to the right offer a tougher though safer option - **The First Finish**, HVS 5b. FA. (pitch 2) Ray Evans 1964. FA. (pitch 1) Ray Evans 1966 FA. (The First Finish) Mark Kemball 1982

# 2 Blackout . . . . .

VS 4c

26m. Another wandering and intimidating classic on which care is required to protect the second adequately. Climb to the top of the pillar then the groove above until its is possible (essential?) to head left to the first of a series of ledges. Move left to a peg belay. Move up and left to more ledges then follow these back right to an exposed and grotty exit. FA. Dave Brodigan 1963

# 3 Master Spy . . . . .

E4 6a

20m. A pumpy Wilton classic, powerful and devious, though with good gear throughout. Rope work can be a little problematical. From **Blackout** climb strenuously to the seagull-shaped roof then compose yourself before launching right along this to a bridged rest at its far end. Just when you thought it was all over you find that the final short crack takes no prisoners.

# 4 Master Spy Direct . . . . .

E4 6a

20m. Starting up **Counter Intelligence** and finishing up **Master Spy** gives a superb three star combination. *Photo on page 305.* FA. Paul Clarke mid 1980s

# 5 Counter Intelligence

E5 6b

18m. Climb the long and sustained crack that falls from the right-hand edge of the seagull-shaped roof to reach a bridged rest on its right. Pull leftwards onto the hanging face then make a daunting and crucial mantel/rock-over way out in space to reach the final thin crack. FA. John Hartley 1982

# 6 Wipe Out . . . . .

E2 5b

18m. Another great route at a (slightly) more amenable grade. The next long crack-line gives excellent climbing with sustained and well-protected moves and a more difficult (or at least more pumpy) section to reach the top. FA. Les Ainsworth 1966

# 7 Black Mamba . . . . .

E4 6b

16m. A bold outing up the steep face to the right of the continuous crack-line of **Wipe Out**. Climb the wall on good slots to the break (peg) and then a little higher to a bolt. Pass this with difficulty leftwards to reach easier ground in the green groove. FA. Dave Cronshaw (2 points) 1971. FFA. Dougie Hall 1982

# 8 Shaggy Dog . . . . .

E4 5c

14m. Bold and serious, and that ain't no lie. Climb the lower section of the soary and horribly wide **Kettle Crack**, **E2 5c** then launch left at a peg before climbing the intimidating wall; it doesn't ease as rapidly as you might have been hoping for. FA. Hank Pasquill 1982



## Red Wall

A neglected part of the quarry but with some quality rock. As is often the case the best routes tend to be in the higher grades although the intimidating VS classic of **Blackout** is excellent and well worth seeking out.





### 9 Knock Out ..... VS 4c

**16m.** Climb awkwardly onto the slab and trend left, passing the metal boomerang to a stance on the arete. Step back right and follow the thin crack just right of the arete and the pleasant groove directly above.

FA. Ray Evans 1966

### 10 Great Slab ..... VS 4c

**28m.** Wandering but worthwhile. Start under the centre of the slab, mantel awkwardly onto its base and traverse up and left to a stance on the arete (**4b**). Traverse right along the sandy break and climb **999** to a small roof. Head right again to finish up the exposed arete. Care with rope work is needed on this pitch.

FA. Ken Powell 1963. FA. (the finish) Les Ainsworth 1966

### 11 Virgin's Dilemma ..... HVS 5a

**20m.** A rare thing indeed, a Wilton slab - what else? High in the grade; thought by some to be better and bolder than *Cameo*. Climb the centre of the lower slab to the sandy break then continue up its centre to enter the shallow open groove splitting the upper face. Follow this by sustained moves.

FA. Hank Pasquill 1967

### 999

The last section of the cliff has a small selection of worthwhile routes on good rock. They don't see much traffic except for **999**. It is the best lower grade route in the quarry following an excellent natural line, with good protection and (don't tell anyone) is a bit of a soft touch!

### 12 999 ..... Top 150 HS 4b

**18m.** The long clean groove that bounds the slab gives a fine piece of climbing, sustained and well-protected with a great line.

Photo on page 288.

FA. Ken Powell 1963

### 13 Left Edge ..... HVS 4c

**14m.** From the grass on the right (reached by a grotty scramble) step left and balance up the fine and poorly-protected arete. Short but well-positioned and worthwhile.

FA. Ray Evans 1964

Descent - - - - - ➔

