

A GUIDE TO:

CORRIG
DOWARCH

BY R.E. LAMBE

PRODUCED BY
THE MOUNTAIN CLUB

PRICE 3/-



F.W.



Frontispiece:—

John Sumner
on the Second
Pitch of “Stygian
Wall”

CRAIG COWARCH

by

R.E. LAMBE

———ooo000ooo———.

A Guide to the Rock Climbs on

the Craggs of Craig Cowarch.

———ooo000ooo———

With a Foreword by

ERIC BYNE.

The Mountain Club

STAFFORD

1958.

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ILLUSTRATIONS.

John Sumner on the second pitch
of Stygian Wall

Frontispiece.

The Approaches to the Cowarch
Valley

Opposite page 6.

The Main Features of Craig Cowarch

Opposite page 7.

Photograph of Craig Cowarch
showing the major ascents.

Opposite index to climbs

'FOREWORD'

The production of this guide to Cowarch, by the Mountain Club, marks a stage in the progress of this organization. It is a privilege to be able to set the seal on a new climbing area, especially so when this area lies in Wales.

Since the beginning of the century, climbers have wandered up the beautiful valley of Cowarch, gazed at the tremendous crag at its head and after a few desultory sorties, passed on in search of more accommodating playgrounds.

It was left to R.E.Lambe, with his "Eye of Faith" to realize the vast possibilities that existed for the rock climber, and to point out that the great size and breadth of the precipice deluded one into thinking the crag was just a mass of broken rock unsuitable for climbing. Only by familiarity and repeated exploration can one discover that the broken masses of crag are in many cases imposing cliffs in their own right, well worthy of ranking alongside many of the more popular crags in the Snowdonia area.

It was left to R.E.Lambe and his Mountain Club companions to discover this, and to follow this up by the production of many fine rock climbs of all standards. The pioneering ascent of "Stygian Wall" was a highlight - a taste of things to come, and one might add - still more things as yet undiscovered. Because of the vastness of the crag, climbers here are confronted with the type of exploration usually associated with Scottish mountains.

There is grass, and heather - but these are but the clothing of the rock, and a natural factor. Beneath this clothing lie many routes-and so Cowarch is not the place for the lazy climber, but rather for the mountaineer who is prepared to work for his pleasure, leaving behind him a sense of satisfaction at having accomplished something well worth doing.

This guide therefore is not only a descriptive list of the climbs now in existence - it is far more than that - being a record of innumerable hours of endeavor and courage on what was unknown crag.

I have no doubt that climbers in the future will recognise the debt of gratitude which they will owe to R. E. Lambe and his contemporaries who have taken part in the initial explorations and to the Mountain Club in general for opening up this area and for publishing the first rock climbing guide to this “Crag of the Future “.

ERIC BYNE.

CRAIG COWARCH

It is only during the last few years that news has started filtering through to the climbing world that considerable possibilities exist practically untouched in the Arans. This has quite often met with what is probably well-merited scepticism the only available information in print — other than brief mentions in Club Journals is contained in Hackett Smith's *Climbing in the British Isles, (Wales and Ireland)* published in 1895, This section was covered by Owen Glynne Jones as the recognised authority on the area, and he sums up the Arans in the following words:-

“Climbers are often asked, “Where can a man start practicing rock work? The Arans are first rate for this. Whatever the difficulty on the mountain a few minutes traversing will generally take one out of it, if direct ascent or descent be considered undesirable. The mountain face is so broken up that we have no gullies or arêtes separated by impossible walls from the easy parts of the mountain. In short, from the enthusiastic shin - scraper's point of view the architecture of the Aran face is defective”.

All this is undoubtedly true of the east face of the Arans proper - both Mawddwy and Benllyn - except that there is an area of clean rock high up on Benllyn which might repay exploration. However, it is only necessary to move a couple of miles southwards and a much different prospect opens up O.G J's words could hardly be applied

to Craig Cowarch and it seems strange that such an inveterate explorer should have been unaware of the crag's existence. Its North Gully at least ought to have attracted him.

It seems though that this must have been the case and for more than half a century the possibilities have been almost completely neglected. This is now being rectified with ever - increasing momentum and it seems appropriate that the highest massif in Wales outside Eryri should now prove to contain a climbing ground which may eventually attain equal status with others many years its senior.

HISTORICAL.

Climbing began on Craig Cowarch in 1907, when a party of members of the Rucksack Club held their Easter meet there, having been persuaded to do so by C.H.Pickstone who had spent his boyhood in the valley or at least at Aber Cowarch at its foot. They naturally concentrated on the gullies, and the three dividing the main buttresses were climbed. A direct ascent of the South Buttress was not successful and various other possibilities which were tried did not yield either.

The same club returned in 1915, a year in which C.H.Pickstone was their President, again at Easter, but the end of the meet found nothing new achieved and on this occasion the North Gully, though attempted, remained inviolate. Writing in the following year's Rucksack Club Journal, Pickstone says:

“In view of the meticulous accuracy with which every potty little ‘crack’ in Cumberland has been exploited - “with variations” - it is inexplicable why this fine crag remains neglected”.

In spite of this “Cri de Coeur” however, he does not seem to have been able to arouse any more enthusiasm amongst his fellows and there is no record of anyone climbing in the area during the next thirty five years.

1950 found P.R.J.Harding accompanied by N.L. Horsfield exploring the possibilities of the area, but the only thing which can be definitely established is that they climbed the short side of the fine pinnacle which lies well to the South of the main buttresses and called it the SHARK'S FIN from its distinct resemblance to such an object, On a later occasion they tried to force a route up the North Buttress, but were unsuccessful.

Horsfield having left the country, Harding continued his exploration with D. Kay, and in 1952 they succeeded in making a route up the North Buttress. The line now seems to have been lost however. Kay climbed the pinnacle by its long frontal arete and visited the crag on various occasions, but emigrated to Australia and left no record of his other doings.

At about the time that Peter Harding's visits tailed off I first discovered the crag for myself and began visiting the area with fellow members of The Mountain Club. Some exploration was done, but progress was slow until the Club took over TYN-Y-TWLL, a farmhouse at the head of the valley at the beginning of 1955. It is from this time that most of the existing routes have been done and many more people from numerous clubs have visited the valley and climbed there, but with at least two dozen members already having participated in first ascents, The Mountain Club can certainly claim to be taking a leading part in developing the rock - climbing possibilities of the area.

R. E. LAMBE.

POSITION AND APPROACHES.

The crags stand at the head of Cwm Cowarch some three miles practically due North of Dinas Mawddy. The hill rising behind the crags bears no name on the Ordnance Survey map despite its bulk and eminence of 2,557 ft. (Nat. Grid Ref. 51-1.837195). A surprising feature of the summit is LLYN-Y - FIGN, quite a sizeable pool only 50 ft. below the cairn, surely the highest in Wales? On a clear day one can verify from this point that Wales is truly “a land of mountains”; there are not likely to be many finer viewpoints in the Principality.

If one is reliant on public transport, the business of reaching Cowarch can prove awkward. Approaching from the Midlands it is best to leave the train at Cemmaes Road in the Dovey Valley and, with luck, catch a bus to Dinas Mawddy. The nearest approach by rail is to Drws-y-Nant station on the line from Bala to Dolgelly. From here a three mile walk over the 1,900 ft. pass to the south of the Arans will bring one beneath the North face.

Those travelling by road will inevitably find their own way so no more need be said other than a word of warning about the turning into the valley at Aber Cowarch. It is sharp, narrow and immediately followed by a very steep rise. Cars may be parked anywhere on

Fawnog Fawr, the common land at the head of the valley; care is necessary to avoid marshy patches. The sketch map opposite this page shows the main features of the approaches to Cwm Cowarch.

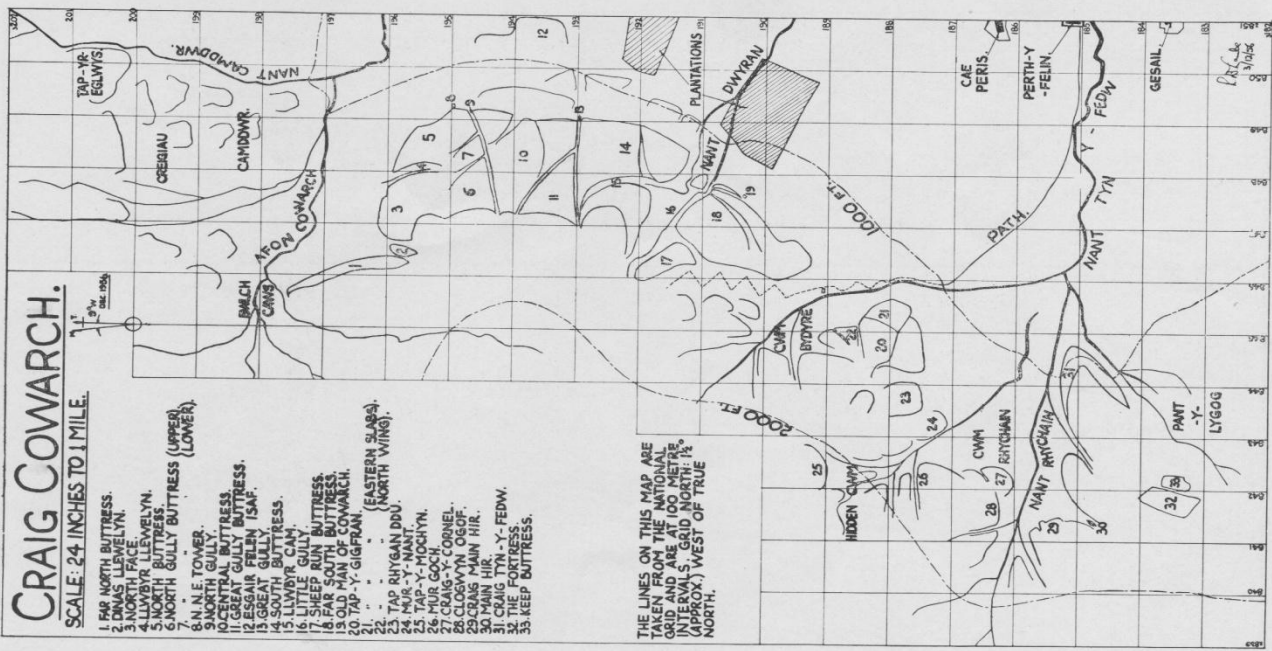
Camping is allowed anywhere on the common and on some farmland, but bitter experience prompts the warning not to leave any food in tents to leave tent doors open. Cache it up a tree or, better, leave it at the farm or in a car; the dogs forage in packs and have ripped tents apart and ravaged rucksacks in their search for food. An open tent with no scent of food about seems to be safe.

Care should be taken not to trespass when approaching the crags as complaints have already been made on this score.

CRAIG COWARCH.

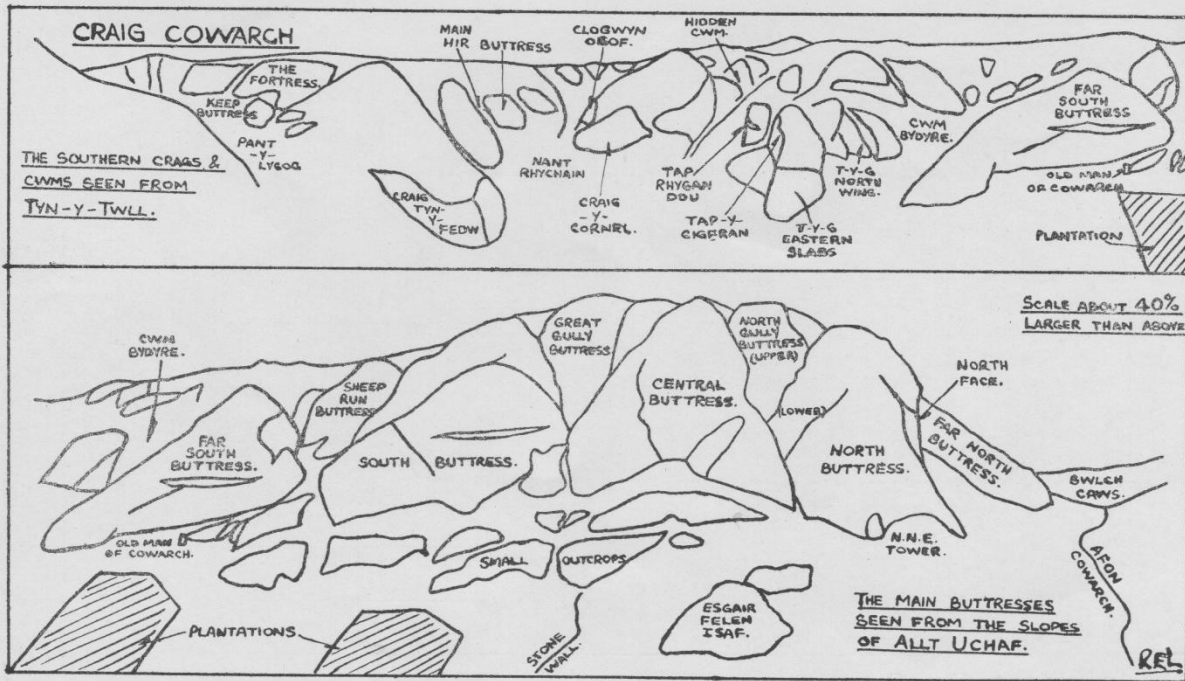
SCALE: 24 INCHES TO 1 MILE.

1. FAP NORTH BUTTRESS.
2. DMAS LLEWELYN.
3. NORTH FACE.
4. LLWBYR LLEWELYN.
5. NORTH BUTTRESS.
6. NORTH GULLY BUTTRESS (UPPER).
7. NORTH GULLY BUTTRESS (LOWER).
8. N. E. TOWER.
9. NORTH GULLY.
10. CENTRAL BUTTRESS.
11. GREAT GULLY BUTTRESS.
12. EGANIR FELIN ISAF.
13. SOUTH BUTTRESS.
14. SOUTH BUTTRESS.
15. LLWBYR CAM.
16. LITTLE GULLY.
17. SHEEP RUN BUTTRESS.
18. SHEEP RUN BUTTRESS.
19. SOUTH BUTTRESS.
20. TAP - Y - GIGFAN.
21. (EASTERN SLABA).
22. TAP RHYGAN DDU.
23. TAP - Y - MOCHYN.
24. TAP - Y - MOCHYN.
25. TAP - Y - MOCHYN.
26. MUR GOCH.
27. CRAIG - Y - CORNEL.
28. CLOGWYN OGOF.
29. CRAIG MAIN HR.
30. CRAIG TYN - Y - FEDW.
31. CRAIG TYN - Y - FEDW.
32. THE FORTRESS.
33. KEEP BUTTRESS.



THE LINES ON THIS MAP ARE TAKEN FROM THE NATIONAL GRID AND ARE AT 100 METRE INTERVALS, GRID NORTH: 1 1/2° (APPROX.) WEST OF TRUE NORTH.

The Approaches to Cwm Cowarch.
 This area is covered by Sheet 116
 of the One-inch Ordnance Survey maps.



Main Feature of the butresses and faces of Craig Cowarch

(Opposite Page 7)

TOPOGRAPHICAL.

CRAIG COWARCH is not a single rock face, but consists of many separate buttresses and faces which have a frontage of about a mile and a half on the map. This bare statement gives no indication of the ramifications of the crag however, as there are cwms which run up behind the main buttresses and contain faces worthy of exploration in their own right. The maximum height of the rocks is reached at the northern end, where the South, Central and North Buttresses stretch some 700-800 ft. from top to bottom but due to their configuration the longest routes possible would seem to be not more than 500 ft.

The crags face mainly S.E. and N.E and will be described starting from South to North (left to right when facing them) each Cwm being dealt with as it is reached in this progression. Local names have been adhered to where available and known or indicated where not used. Many crags and features have not been named previously and I have been presumptuous enough to try and repair this omission in several cases. The main crags and cwms are shown in the diagram opposite this page.

At the extreme southern end of the crags there is a lot of rock on the western side of PANT-Y-LYGOG, a hanging valley with its floor at 1600-1700ft. The slab which looks impressive from the main valley is seen to be degenerate and unattractive on closer acquaintance, but an area of rock to its right has been christened THE FORTRESS from a superficial resemblance when viewed from the floor of the cwm. The general angle is that of slab, mostly very grassy, with small overhanging walls breaking the general line. There seem to be two towers Left and Right, with a small steeper buttress, lower down, KEEP BUTTRESS. This, as is general, is well blessed with vegetation but where the rock shows through it is clean and sound. On descending from the cwm CRAIG-TYN-Y-FEDW is passed. This has faces to the East and North, the rib of Clubs at its lowest point being its most prominent feature. The rock on the North is unpleasant, taking much drainage, but contains at least one definite line, a steep corner crack.

On rounding the corner and turning West one enters NANT RHYCHAIN; a steep scramble on large scree ensues and then in the second gully on the left (s) a fine pinnacle is seen. This has been given various names, but perhaps it's best to keep the one in local usage MAIN HIR or LONG STONE. On the right of the gully is a very steep

little buttress - CRAIG MAIN HIR. Higher in the cwm is a certain amount more rock, but not of good quality or considerable size. Right at its head is a small compact crag, but not of sufficient size to merit a special visit. Directly opposite CRAIG MAIN HIR and at about the same level is a line of good rock, CLOGWYN OGOF, named from the small cave in its centre. The crag starts on the left as a steep gully wall.

Lower than this and leading round to face East once more is a face of lesser angle - CRAIG-Y-CORNEL with a gully running behind it. The face then extends more scrappily, to the entrance to HIDDEN CWM which is guarded by a right hand wall - MUR-Y-NANT - which rises straight from the stream. Entering the cwm by the left hand bank, a deep gully runs up on the left, flanked by a steep wall broken by ledges and corners. A reddish tint to the rock explains the name MUR GOCH. The cwm contains much rock, broken up into many smallish buttresses and faces by a profusion of gullies. The only one so far named is TAP-Y-MOCHYN which lies high up on the right. Below this and running down to join MUR-Y-NANT is a line of heavily vegetated slabs.

On emerging from HIDDEN CWM immediately to the North is TAP-RHYGAN-DDU, a very impressive tower of rock, with a massive horizontal gash running across it.

So far it is inviolate and behind it is more steep rock so far unexplored.

By now one's eye will have been taken by one of the show pieces of Cowarch - TAP-Y-GIGFRAN (Crag of the Carrion Crow) standing just below TAP RHYGAN DDU. This attains a height of some 300ft. from the scree on its main face, which faces SOUTH, the lower half being heavily vegetated mixed slab and wall, the upper part being excessively steep with an obvious crack line beneath an overhang as its most obvious feature; PURGE takes this crack. Running down towards the East is a wide expanse of well heathered slabs of fairly easy angle, these merge with the main buttress to give steeper and cleaner rock higher up. The line of the ridge running up from the top of TAP-Y-GIGFRAN is broken by a notch known locally as BWLCH CARREG-Y-ROW. In the next cwm to the North, CWM BYDYRE, TAP-Y-GIGFRAN throws down another spur, christened, somewhat unimaginatively, the North Wing. This is split by a large square gully which gives an easy line of descent.

The opposite side of the cwm contains many smallish outcrops of clean firm rock which should give good scrambling and the higher reaches have some larger faces, but with no obvious lines on them. The main feature of the cwm is the fairly well marked zig zag path which leads behind Far South Buttress and gives

the easiest line of ascent or descent in the whole frontage of the crags.

Far South Buttress has a profusion of vegetation, trees, creepers and heather at its Southern end, but asserts itself more strongly as a rock face as one moves farther North. Indeed, much of the rock hereabouts may only prove possible with the use of much ironmongery. A large grassy ledge runs across the buttress at about 50 ft. and is called LLAIN-Y-COED. At the foot of the Northern end of the buttress is a small squarish obelisk, some 25 ft. high - THE OLD MAN OF COWARCH; when viewed from the North the resemblance to a human face is remarkable.

The first of the gullies which divide the main crags is now reached. - Little Gully - which is an easy line of ascent as the pitches are avoidable. At the head of the gully, behind Far South Buttress is a fierce looking wall - Sheep Run Buttress - recognizable from the narrow track beaten out beneath it by the four-footed denizens of the crags.

On the other side of Little Gully rises South Buttress which is crossed by a wide rake rising out of Little Gully - LLWBYR CAM or Winding Path. Beneath this the buttress is divided into two fairly distinct sections by the line of Diagonal Arete. This commences some

80 -100 ft. from the ground but its general line is continued downwards by the cave and crack pitch of Central Route. On the right of this somewhat arbitrary line the buttress consists of a series of steep walls with large heather ledges between. At about 100 ft. is a very wide one with the unaccountable title of GWELY PLIS MFJLEN or Bed of the Yellow Policeman. On the left of Diagonal Arete the general angle of the rock seems to relent slightly, but the size and number of the ledges on it is much reduced to compensate for this minor favour.

Above the rake the rocks are much broken and provide general scrambling and occasional small steep wall.

Dividing SOUTH and CENTRAL BUTTRESSES is Great Gully which itself divides after some 200 ft. enclosing an area of rock about which nothing is known at present, GREAT GULLY BUTTRESS. CENTRAL BUTTRESS or ESGAIR FELEN is disappointing as the angle is too easy and heather has the upper hand. Only by the foot of GREAT GULLY does the rock steepen and offer possibilities.

A few hundred feet below CENTRAL BUTTRESS is a small easily angled outcrop which offers short possibilities for after supper climbs, and has been named ESGAIR FELEN ISAF. Bounding CENTRAL BUTTRESS on the right is NORTH GULLY which makes a notable incision in the mountainside. It is escapable via two branches on the right and these enclose the UPPER and LOWER NORTH GULLY BUTTRESSES.

There are considerable areas of steep rock on all these gully walls.

The eastern facing front of NORTH BUTTRESS is heavily clothed with heather and offers very little scope except for a short steep tower at its foot, N.N.E. TOWER. As the corner is rounded however, a decided change occurs and the rocks are seen to have a steep rib and groove structure, High up are the rocks which form the nose of NORTH BUTTRESS as seen when approaching the crag along the valley. The face is bounded by the groove of STYX on the left while on the right a conspicuous gangway slants upwards beneath a green wall.

Farther North the rib and slab structure predominates, ACHERON, taking the first and best defined rib, and then steeper rock once more until the buttress is terminated by LLWBYR LLEWELYN running steeply downwards from right to left. This break forms a relatively easy line of ascent, but due to a large rock fall it is better to take the less obvious upper ledge to avoid awkward slabs which have had their covering stripped from them by falling rocks.

Now comes the NORTH FACE, very steep and marked with much quartz. Prominent on the left is a deep horrid groove, reached by a shallow gully. HOPSIT takes the groove and opposite its foot, to the right is a false tower beneath a quartz wall; FIRST VISIT ascends the left hand side of the tower.

The base level of the rocks keeps moving higher up the hillside and the final rocks of the NORTH FACE actually finish by facing almost due West, looking out over a wide gully which contains a massive detached piece of rock known as DINAS LLEWELYN due to a mistake in the location of DINAS LLEWELYN during an early exploration. The long line of crag running from the other side of the gully down to the stream, the infant AFON COWARCH, is FAR NORTH BUTTRESS, for want of a better name, and is the termination of the crags of Cowarch proper. There are many small scattered outcrops on the hillside opposite however, and these are known collectively as CREIGIAU CAMDDWR from their parent hill. A small rock wall at the top of the slope sports the ideal title of TAP-Y R-EGLWYS and the pass between Cowarch and Camddwr is known as BWLCH CAWS.

STANDARDS.

Lack of time and opportunity have precluded me from climbing all of the routes, so no guarantee of uniformity of standard can be given. Also some routes have not yet been repeated and even on some of the more popular ones there remains some vegetation and the occasional loose rock. However, the standards of the climbs are almost entirely due to the severity of the rock, which usually occurs as a combination of steepness and paucity of holds. An occasional mild or hard qualifies a standard, but mostly they are given bare. This allows for a wide variation in the V.S. category, but this is very often the case.

Vibrams will be found best on most of the routes, but bad weather can make an unusually big difference and nails may be found more comforting in such conditions. Rubbers are regular wear for the harder climbs. Pitons have been used on several routes, both for direct aid and security and it is useful to have one or two available to use when natural belays are lacking, a not infrequent occurrence on these cliffs.

THE CLIMBS.

There is a surprising lack of definite climbing features on the larger crags and due to this the lines taken by some of the routes tend to be somewhat tenuous. This need not interfere with one's enjoyment of them however, as they are usually non- artificial, not striving for difficulty for its own sake. Where an obvious line offers it has usually been followed as in the case of Purge, Acheron or Hopsit, but some less obvious routes are of surprising quality. Buzzards Balcony and Stygian Wall are examples of this type.

Much of the rock is extremely steep and this is not always obvious until one is actually on it. At present many of the routes involve handling quantities of vegetable matter of doubtful security and some of the climbing tends to be dangerous on this account, but intensive gardening should eventually rectify this state of affairs.

Due to the late date at which climbing has started here, the general standard is high; the larger and steeper faces having attracted attention first. Perhaps this is natural as a verdant growth covers the more broken and lesser angled crags, but when cleared away good clean rock is often revealed. It is in these places that there is scope for the lower standard routes which the crag needs to give it a more general appeal.

One completely mechanized route already exists (PURGE) and more will undoubtedly follow, as there are large areas of rock where free climbing is unlikely to yield many dividends.

The climbs are described from left to right when facing the rock, each crag being dealt with in order as it was mentioned in the topographical description.

The practice, now becoming fashionable, of giving details of the first party after the description has been followed.

An index to the climbs and to the standards is given at the end of this Guide Book. In conjunction with the index is a photograph of the main Crag on which some of the major ascents have been marked.

OVERLAPPING SLABS -UPPER CWM. *

“S AND D”- 260ft. Hard Diff. Start at the foot of the rib, a few feet left of the lowest point of the buttress.

- (1) 80ft. Start a little to the left of the foot of the slab at a flake belay. Take a zigzag line up the lower towards the right, to a small belay just below a small ledge. A runner could be fixed after about 30ft.
- (2) 80ft. Up the rib. Keep to the right-hand edge of the slab on the arete overlooking the “Choss Shoot” Rock needs care. No belay on top - traverse 40ft left to a shattered pinnacle.
- (3) 50ft. From the pinnacle climb almost straight up for 50ft to a belay on a ledge.
- (4) 50ft. A wide crack leads a further 50ft to a block belay at the top of the crag.

First Ascent-G.A.MARTIN. T.W.GOODWIN. A.B.KNOX.

Miss M. ANDREW S. 31st May 1958.

* Also called PANT-Y-LYGOG.

OVERLAPPING SLABS - UPPER CWM *

SOLO CRACK - 40ft. Severe.

(1) Start in the gully, about 15ft left of the pinnacle at the foot of pitch 3 of U5 and D Follow the line of the crack to the ledge. Finish up pitch 4 of “S and D” or traverse off left.

First Ascent - A.B.KNOX. 2nd March 1958.

* Also called PANT-Y-LYGOG.

KEEP BUTTRESS.

PORTCULLIS - 80ft. Severe. On the L.H. side, the buttress starts with quartz slabs.

START: - At L.H. edge, where slabs steepen into a wall.

(1) 50ft. In obvious line is taken rightwards to a vegetable groove, which is avoided by climbing the stoop wall on the right. Awkward. Belay on tree. Move 10ft. left to good belay.

(2) 30ft. The first part of the wall overhangs and is “muscled up” on large holds until an awkward move to the left is made into a corner. Then trend to the right to a finish on a heather ledge. Piton belay.

The ledge is wide and stretches right across the buttress; a steep wall rises behind, but ways off can be made to right or left.

First Ascent . A.B.KNOX. R.E.LAMBE. K.H.HIGGENS.

4th November. 1956.

CRAIG TYN-Y-FEDW.

CLUBS. Mild Severe. 105 ft. The obvious line up the nose of the buttress.

Start - At the lowest point of the buttress, 10 ft. to the left of the wall.

- (1) 80 ft. Up the slab to an overhanging block, traverse right, then up to a large ledge. A very enjoyable pitch.
- (2) 25ft. The steep wall above is climbed by traversing to the right before ascending.

First ascent - R.J.R.VEREKER. . J.D.NICHOLSON.

27th November 1955.

MAIN HIR.

This fine pinnacle suffers from being set in a steep gully, which does not allow it to be seen to advantage except from directly across Cwm Rhycain, from where it resembles the dorsal fin of a shark. It is possibly about 100ft. along its sloping frontal arete but the gully detracts from its character by making the back face only some 20ft. high. The western side slopes at a fair angle, but is practically devoid of holds, whereas the vertical eastern face is well supplied.

Starting at the back the routes are:-

KURZWEG. 20ft. Difficult.

From the narrow rock connecting the back of the pinnacle with the gully bed, ascend direct up large ledges (somewhat unstable) keeping a little to the right. First Ascent - P.R.J.HARDING. N.L.HORSFIELD. 1950.

The eastern side gives:-

STEILWEG. 60ft. Severe.

Start a short distance down the gully and descend diagonally to the right to a quartz bulge and a ledge some 6" wide above it. From the ledge make a delicate movement to the right and pull onto a bilberry ledge on the front edge of the pinnacle. Move round to the other face and by means of a layback movement effect a lodgment of the sharp edge, which is followed to the top.

First Ascent:- R.E.LAMBE. R.C.L.CLARKE.

13th June 1953.

LANGWEG. 100 ft. V.S.?

Direct up the frontal arete of the pinnacle from its lowest point.

First Ascent D. Kay. 1951.

There is a possible line for a route on the western side and this has been named GLATTWEG.

A belay can be contrived around the top of the pinnacle and also an abseil for the descent, or KURZWEG is easier in reverse.

CRAIG MAIN HIR.

The nearest crag to Main Hir and which takes its name from it, Craig Main Hir, is some 100 feet high and is very steep, especially so on its right hand wall which has a gentle outward inclination over most of its height. Nevertheless it is up this wall that the only route at present makes its way. The corner and slabs on the left of the wall offer a possible route and another line farther left again, probably involving a stomach traverse, is likely to prove easier.

THE WALL.

VERY SEVERE.

70 ft. An obvious traversing line up the overhanging right hand wall of the buttress.

START:- On right hand wall

(1) 70ft. Traverse to the left on the step-like blocks until a small stance is reached, the shallow groove running up to the left is climbed to a very small ledge, piton. Then a rising traverse right is made to another piton, continue traversing right to a ledge and belay (strenuous). Both pitons remain.

WAY OFF: From the stance reached follow a narrow ledge to the right. First Ascent - J.A. SUMNER, 10TH JULY, 1955.

A. continuation (30ft) to the top of the buttress has been made on a top rope.

R.J.VEREKER. 1956.

MUR GOCH

KNOCKDOWN.

290ft. Very Difficult. (Hard)

In Hidden Cwm on the left at a point where the gully forks.

START: 15ft. to the right at the lowest point of the buttress.

Marked by a cairn.

(1) 100ft. Climb the flakes, and the slab above, to the left of the overhang, then step across to the right and pull onto the arete. Go straight up the arete on good holds to a small heathery ledge. Trend right for 15 ft. up vegetation to reach a small ledge below a corner. Belay on small inserted chock stone.

Small heather ledge revealed large pinnacle. (hand written)

(2) 70ft. Climb the slab on the left of the corner to regain the arete at a small ledge, then go straight up to another small ledge (flake for runner). Continue up the arete for 10 ft. step round the corner to the left and ascend the slab above to a heather terrace. Belay round a large block up on the left.

(3) 60ft. Surmount the belay block and go straight up the rib above for 20 ft. followed by 40 ft of scrambling to a tree. Belay on the tree or a block above it.

(4) 60ft. Up the rib behind the tree, then scrambling leads to a large grass ledge. Belay below the ledge.

First Ascent A.B. KNOX. J.P.DOWNES. (Alternate leads).

26th May. 1957.

MURGOCH.

WAYS OFF.

Walk 30 ft. to the right, scramble up 15ft. then either:

- (1) Climb up to the top of the crags and descend by the usual routes - or
- (2) Traverse horizontally to the right on grass ledges to the top of the gully. Descend the gully, traversing left, and reach the opposite side of gully. Go down and arrive below the foot of the climb.

TAP-Y-MOCHYN.

The narrow rib on the right of PIGSTY is probably the most distinctive feature of this crag and a short distance to its left a heather filled gully leads upwards with steep mossy slabs on its right. These merge with the top pitch of PIGSTY, The wall above the grass ledge of PIGSTY is bounded by a very deep chimney with more mossy slabs to its right. The chimney could be reached in a fairly straight line by starting to the right of the rib.

The crag here reaches its maximum height, some 100ft, but loses height quickly as one moves to the right where more fairly clean slabs are encountered.

PIGSTY.

SEVERE (Mild).

80ft.

START: To the left of a literally knife-edged rib at nearly the lowest point of the crag. A cracked corner goes up steeply for about 30ft.

(1) 30ft. Climb the corner by jamming in the crack with the aid from chock-stones, the left foot using holds on the face, or a rib on the left of the corner may be climbed for some 10ft. to join the crack line. Belay at top of corner. Scramble up a grass ledge to foot of next wall. Belay on a prominent spike.

Tap-Y-Mochyn.

(2) 40ft, Move around corner on the left (exposed), and up the slab, near right hand edge, to two blocks. Surmount the larger block and climb the vertical wall above with the aid of good holds in a high crack.

First Ascent - J. P. DOWNS A.B. KNOX. R.E. LAMBE 4th March, 1956.

VAN WALL.

110ft. Very Severe.

The route makes its way up a prominent arete some 20ft. to the right of PIGSTY.

START: At the right of the foot of the arete.

(1) 70ft. Up a steep wall on the right of the rib, on good holds, for 20ft. Cross the arete and climb its left wall for 30ft. (Thread runner at loft.) Continue up 20ft. of vertical heather to a spike belay on the wall above.

(2) 40ft. Straight up above the belay, following the rib. Steep rock with small but good holds. A little strenuous,

First Ascent - J.P. DOWNES. A.B, KNOX. (Alternate leads). 1st September, 1957.

MUR-Y-NANT.

HIDDEN CWM.

BARBICAN.

70ft. Hard V. Diff.

This climb is on a MOATED SLAB. (The wall on the right as one enters Hidden Cwm).

START: About 100ft. up the gully from the entrance of the cwm, on a heap of boulders in the bed of the stream. There is a waterfall above and another below this heap of boulders.

(1) Continue in the same line for 10ft. to another small grass ledge 10ft. higher. From here trend left up more broken rock to where the angle eases and a small belay spike will be found about 15ft. above.

WAY OFF: Go up a few feet and then traverse left for 50ft. to where a grassy rake leads down to the bed of the gully. Cross the gully and traverse around the nose to join the path at the foot of Knockdown.

First Ascent - A.B. KNOX. 1.6.58.

TAP RHYGAN DDU.

SHADY SAUNTER.

200ft. Severe.

The horizontal gash which is the chief feature of this crag is roofed by a large overhang or rather, a series of them. The route is a tour of the overhangs for those who wish to take a close look at them. Pitons necessary for belays. Some loose rock may be encountered.

START: _At wet patch of wall to the right of the lowest point of the buttress, under an overhanging wall. No belay,

(1) Traverse round corner to the left, go along ledge and up to below an overhanging wall. Piton belay,

(2) Climb up around the corner to the left to a ledge below another overhang. Blocks on ledge are loose, piton advisable,

(3) The crux, climb the steep corner to the left, pull round onto a ledge. No belay, but a piton may be inserted in the overhanging wall above.

First Ascent - A.B. KNOX. J.P. DOWNES. L.S. GALPIN 23rd June, 1957.

TAP-Y-GIGFRAN.

The South face of this buttress is its most impressive, but due to a defect in its architecture, only offers climbs of about half its height of some 300ft. A wide grass terrace running upwards from right to left is the cause of this as the nature of the rock beneath is not attractive and is avoided in preference for the steeper and cleaner rock above,

Two large overhangs characterize the left hand side of the face and BUZZARDS BALCONY, a very fine route, finds a very route between them, the balcony runs from the top of the first pitch to the right to bisect the vertical wall up which PURGE forces its way.

BUZZARDS BALCONY

SEVERE 150FT

The route takes a course between the two main overhangs.

START: Start at the extreme left hand end of the grass terrace which runs across the crag, Approach from the left.

- (1) 45ft. Up the line of weakness to the right following some small grass ledges, to a good grass ledge with a fine position.
- (2) 20ft. The steep groove behind the stance is climbed to a large ledge on the left.
- (3) 50ft. Climb onto the end of the projecting rock on the right, then make a long stride onto the moss covered slab which runs up to the right to a small tree, Stance and. belay just above the tree.

(4) 30ft, Climb the wall on the right to the top of the crag.

First Ascent - C.F. WILLIAMS. J.A. SUMNER. (Alternate leads).

4th June, 1955.

PURGE

A.2,120ft.

A very direct route up the vertical South face, taking the overhanging crack above the balcony.

START: Scramble up the messy slabs beneath the wall to a large block on the sloping terrace, some 20ft. to the right of the start of BUZZARD'S BALCONY. Start right of the block,

(1) 60ft. Ascend directly on etriers for about 10ft, then diagonally right up the crack below the overhang until the top of a large block can be reached. Pull up and step round to the right onto the side of the block and traverse onto a small ledge. Climb straight up on etriers for 20ft. to the balcony, Piton belay.

(2) 60ft. Up the corner crack on etriers once more, with an awkward block to negotiate at about half way. This pitch may be broken on a sloping ledge above the block.

Tap-Y-Gigfran.

About a dozen pegs required for each pitch, some are in place on Pitch 1. Some wedges will also be found useful.

First Ascent - Pitch 1. D.G. CHISHOLM. A.B. KNOX, 10. 6. 56.

Pitch 2. J.A.SUMNER. DC.CHISHOLM. 1.4.56

First Complete Ascent – J.A. SUMNER. D.M.ADCODK. JULY 1956.

The way off for routes finishing on the summit of TAP-Y-GIGFRAN is down an easy gully to the steep grass between T.-Y.-G. and TAP RHYGAN DDU. Contour this to the right for some distance before descending.

EASTERN SLABS:

From the summit of TAP-Y- GIGFRAN a wide sweep of heavily vegetated slab runs down to the East, the angle, quite high at first, easing nearer the bottom At the left hand edge a wall drops away to slabs of similar angle leading upwards to the grass terrace across the South Face, It is possible to escape rightwards without much difficulty on most of the lower section.

INCAPABILITY.

200ft. Difficult.

START: About 20ft. left of CABABILITY, taking the slab side of a prominent nose to a ledge.

After gaining the ledge via the slab, a slight move left and up a bulge leads to the long line of easily inclined edge of the Eastern Slabs.

Tap-Y-Gigfran.

The route follows this arete running parallel with Capability to start of Jack-O-Diamonds.

First Ascent. E. BYNE. C.W. ASHBURY. 13 June 1953.

CAPABILITY.

Capability terminates on a grass terrace where a way off can be found to the right. Jack-O-Diamonds is a continuation from this point and terminates at the top of Tap-Y-Gigfran. Belays are scarce throughout.

START: Immediately to the left of the overhanging wall at the foot of the Eastern Slabs of Tap-Y-Gigfran,

(2) 60ft, Climb 10ft. to heather ledge above overhang and thence directly up the slabs to a spike belay.

(2) 100ft. Directly up the slabs. An inconspicuous but effective belay can be found on a slab above a good stance,

(3) 40ft. Continue up to a grass ledge with a large inverted spike belay.

From this point broken ground leads to a large grass terrace,

First Ascent - (Alternate Leads). M. H. JAHN. R.E. KENDAL. 22nd. September, 1956.

Tap-Y-Gigfran.

Eastern Slabs. Cont'd.

JACK-O-DIAMONDS.

360 ft. Very Difficult. Hard.

START: In the middle of the grass terrace beneath the obvious slabs (Termination of Capability) 150 ft. rope advisable.

- (1) 60 ft. Climb a short slab to ledge beneath a steeper slab, an overhanging block has to be negotiated halfway up, followed by further slabwork to a ledge with good block belay and sitting stance,
- (2) 50 ft. Up the obvious slab, keeping to the right, to a ledge beneath a corner where an iron spike belay can be found.
- (3) 60 ft. Traverse to the right, and back above the belay. Continue up the slab to a small ledge on the left hand wall where a spike belay will be found.
- (4) 130 ft. Traverse 10 feet to the left from the slab above the belay and continue up to a large heather ledge. Belay on left.
- (5) 50 ft. Slightly to the left climb the slabs to finish on the grass terrace. A large isolated block above the South face provides a good belay.

First Ascent - M.H, JAHN. R.E, KENDAL (Alternate Leads). 22nd. September. 1956.

Tap-Y-Gigfran.

NORTH WING

This solid little buttress is of steep slab angle and cut off from its parent crag by a wide shallow gully. On the left a large leaning tower gives a wide crack between it and the slab and SIFTA takes advantage of this. On the right of SQUARE GULLY the crag changes to a series of short steep walls with wide ledges between. Two routes are believed to have been done hereabouts, but no details have been recorded and also one higher up, DIRTY KNAVE, which has not been accurately located.

SIFTA.

120 ft. Very Difficult.

(1) 100ft. Up the corner for 75 ft. then traverse left to edge. Up edge to small tree. Stance.

(2) 20 ft. Easy slabs lead to top,

First Ascent - J.A. SUMNER. D.G. CHISHOLM. W.J.K. FINLAY. R.E. LAMBE. 3rd April, 1956.

Tap-Y-Gigfran.

CEREBOS.

125ft. Severe.

The route makes a direct line for the obvious weakness in the steep slabs.

START: At centre of the slabs.

(1) 25 ft. Up the steep slab to a small but good ledge Chock stone belay in the crack above.

(2) 50 ft. Easily up to a small overhang just above and to the right of the chock stone belay. Climb the overhang using good holds in the crack on the left which slants up to the right. An obvious line is then followed to a pinnacle on the right. Stance and belay just beyond the pinnacle.

(3) 50 ft. Traverse back left round a corner (just above the pinnacle) on to an exposed wall; after traversing left for a few feet the wall can be climbed to a steep heather finish.

First Ascent - J.A. SUMNER. A, MILLS. 4th December 1955.

Tap-Y-Gigfran.

GARDEN PATH.

100 ft. Difficult.

The climb takes a rather circuitous route to reach the arete about 50 ft. above the start.

START: At the right hand edge of the buttress.

- (1) 20 ft. Climb a series of steps on the left hand wall of the gully, (Square Gully) until it is possible to traverse into the gully bed.
- (2) 60 ft. Climb the gully wall to a large grass ledge and then gain the arete. An exposed move on the arete, then move rightwards to a heather ledge with a huge block belay.
- (3) 20 ft. A crack up the right hand side of the slab overlooking the front of the buttress leads to a tree with a squarish corner behind, Climb this to finish.

First Ascent - R.E. LAMBE. V. LEESE. 4th December 1955.

SQUARE GULLY lies immediately to the right of GARDEN PATH and gives a convenient and easy line of descent from the North Wing climbs. The only difficulty is at the bottom where it is usual to use Pitch 1 of Garden Path. Or the whole of Garden Path can be descended.

FAR SOUTH BUTTRESS.

BLACK WALL.

200 ft Very Severe on the second pitch, otherwise Severe.

The lower tier of Far South Buttress has a prominent overhang in the centre with a vertical black band of rock running upwards at the right hand end. The climb ascends this black band.

START: At junction of an easily angled slab and a steep wall.

(1) 30 ft. Ascend a small black slab for 15 ft. then the black right hand wall to a large stance with an unstable belay round a small tree.

(2) 60 ft. Over the chock stone in the back corner of the stance and then awkwardly up and to the left to a small ledge below a quartz corner, The corner is avoided by a delicate traverse to the left for about 15 ft. with an ascent to the large grass rake using a small tree. Stance and belay on the rake.

(3) 50 ft. Traverse 20 feet right and climb an arete, still on the black rock, to another good belay and stance.

(4) 60 ft. Climb a short black wall ahead and follow up a slab and grass to a stance by a large tree.

First Ascent - Pitches 1 & 2. W.J. FINLAY. A.B. KNOX.

31st March, 1956.

Pitches 1 - 4. W.J.K. FINLAY. R.E. LAMBE.

3rd April, 1956.

FAR SOUTH BUTTRESS.

JUNGLE.

190ft. Severe (Hard).

START: Above and to the left of the Old Man of Cowarch is a steep wall. The climb starts at the left hand end and is marked by a small cairn.

(1) 90 ft. From the cairn the wall is climbed bearing right to a shallow groove, The groove is climbed and at the top an exit is made on the right, Diagonally right again until extremely steep grass can be ascended to a stance and tree belay.

(2) 100 ft. The steep grassy corner behind the belay is climbed until it is possible to attain the right wall at some cracked blocks, A 10 ft. traverse to the right leads to steep slabs which are surmounted by an awkward mantelshelf, A few feet of easy climbing then leads to the large grass terrace, which divides the crag. Belay on block 40 ft. to the right. From here the upper crag rises in a short steep wall which would give an extra pitch, but beyond the crag deteriorates.

First Ascent - D.T. ROSCOE, MISS A.B. WILBY-NEWTON,

26th May. 1956.

The Old Man of Cowarch can be ascended easily on the left hand side - over the left (true right) ear. A route goes up a crack at the front and rightwards over THE NOSE 25 FT. V. Diff.

R.E. LAMBE, JUNE 1953. A route may be possible up the right cheek.

FAR SOUTH BUTTRESS.

The bottom and only serious pitch of LITTLE GULLY now lies immediately to the right. This is about 80 feet high generally a waterfall and not very attractive on this account. It was first climbed at Easter 1907 by A.E. BRAMEY, P.S. MINOR and C.H. PICKSTONE.

SOUTH BUTTRESS.

OREAD.

34 ft. Very Severe.

The left half of the buttress below the terrace (Llwybyr Cam) is a large triangular slab. The route works its way up this, near the left edge.

START: At the lowest point of the left-hand edge of the slab is an easy angled rib starting by a tree. Start on the left wall of the rib,

- (1) 25 ft. Step across the wall to the edge, and, up vegetation to a stance, Block belay.
- (2) 25 ft. Up the steep corner behind the belay to a stance, etc. below a small overhang.
- (3) 30 ft. The overhang is climbed by a diagonal crack, awkward; up a little, piton for runner (remaining), then traverse the slab to the right on grassy holds to a small belay.
- (4) 110 ft. Up the wall above the belay. Running belay at 15 ft. Then traverse delicately to the right into a groove, and climb this to a small grass ledge. The groove is awkward at one point. Continue to a small overhang and traverse left towards a tree. It is better to keep high until a short descent can be made on to the grass ledge by the tree. Splice belay above.
- (5) 30 ft. Step left and round the arete, slightly loose at one point then climb the arete to steep bilberry. Scramble up this to another tree.

SOUTH BUTTRESS.

OREAD(Cont'd.)

(6) 120 ft. Stride on to a rock ledge on the right and traverse right to the foot of a prominent buttress; up a slightly overhanging corner on the right until one can step round on to the face; up this till it relents, then scramble up grass to a belay. A short scramble leads to the terrace across the upper part of the buttress.

First Ascent – E. MARSHALL. K. A. WRIGHT. B. SIMPSON.

26th September. 1953.

OREAD. (VARIATION).

225 ft. Very Severe.

It seems better to avoid the original first pitch which is unpleasant. Start about 15 ft. higher, below the steep corner of Pitch 2. Cairn. The original route is then followed until the small grass ledge after some 60 ft. of Pitch 4 (New Pitch 3) is reached. Peg belay.

(4) 50 ft. Straight up avoiding the traverse and move left to an obvious break in the overhanging wall. Up this for a few moves then sidle left. Finish up to the tree.

(5) 60 ft. Up bilberry to the rock, move left, then straight up, runner on small tree in crack, then diagonally right to finish. This avoids the traverse to the first tree, done originally, and. also the original 5th Pitch which looks unpleasant. The variant is also more direct.

First Ascent - A.J.J. MOULAM. R.E. LAMBE. 1st April, 1956.

Another variation has been made.

From the piton of Pitch 3 climb up slightly right to a piton (remaining) beneath the overhang (runner). After a difficult traverse right for a few feet it is possible to breach the overhang to a good stance. 40ft,

Straight up to another small overhang which is overcome without much difficulty. A mossy slab above is traversed left to the bilberry patch and tree of Pitch 4 of the previous variation. 40 ft.

First Ascent - J. McCUTCHAN. R.J.R. VEREIKER,

22nd September 1956

SOUTH BUTTRESS.

BLUEBELL BABYLON.

230 ft. Very Severe.

Takes a line of good rock climbing up the centre of the left hand triangle of the buttress, Finishes up a prominent final tower.

START: - Near the centre of the base of the triangle is a large boulder. Cairn.

- (1) 60 ft. Up diagonally right by some mantelshelves. On to a ledge by a gorse bush, From its left end gain a nice little slab and follow it right, to a bluebell ledge Step up to another one, then over onto a ledge with a good thread belay.
- (2) 35 ft. Diagonally left over the overhanging wall (good holds). A delicate slab right to a doubtful spike belay,
- (3) 15 ft. Straight up and delicately left into a corner. Small thread belay.
- (4) 60 ft. A fine pitch - round onto the left hand rib, Up it and gain a ledge on the steep wall by a mantelshelf climb a few feet up the steep left wall, traverse left and then up and back right on sloping ledges to a grassy groove and up it to a small stance and belay.
- (5) 60 ft. The final tower is above. Up to its right edge to a tiny tree. Gain the face of the tower, steep. Up a little and move left again, below grass to the edge. Over the large perched blocks to a fine finish.

FIRST ASCENT: A.J.J. MOULAM. R.E. LAMBE. 27TH May. 1956.

SOUTH BUTTRESS.

From where the routes on this half of the buttress finish a continuation can be made up broken quartz scarred rocks to the summit of the buttress. Or to descend, cross easy slabs to a corner running downwards into Little Gully.

SOUTH BUTTRESS.

DIAGONAL ARETE.

180 ft. Difficult.

A prominent feature of the South Buttress is a shallow gully which runs diagonally upwards from right to left. It starts about 100 ft. up the cliff, its line beneath this height being continued by the chimney aid cave of Pitch 4 of CENTRAL ROUTE. The route follows the left hand edge of the gully and is artificial in that the gully may be reached from almost any point.

START: At the lowest point of gully. This has only been reached so far via Pitches 1 to 4 of CENTRAL ROUTE (V. Diff.). A belay may be unearthed in the gully bed.

- (1) 60 ft. From the gully bed gain the arete and follow it until an easy traverse can be made to the right to a small tree, Belay.
- (2). 70 ft. Back onto the arete with a fine drop on the left aid up to a large squarish block. Belay over block,
- (3). 50 ft. Straight ahead, more scrappily now, until grass is reached and a belay found on a boulder.

FIRST ASCENT: R.E. LAMBE. S.H. G. TAILOR. (Alternate leads). 17th May, 1953.

SOUTH BUTTRESS.

DIAGONAL ARETE.

Variation Start:

Severe.

START: About 30 ft. left and 15 ft. above the ordinary start,

A steep mossy slab sweeps down from the arete, The route starts at about the centre, Peg belay.

(1) 50 ft. Two shallow grooves trending leftwards are followed until a more definite hold is reached where the angle steepens. From here progress is made to the right, an awkward mantelshelf movement being required to attain a ledge running across the wall from the arete. This is followed and a belay taken on the tree at the top of Pitch 1 of the ordinary route.

FIRST ASCENT. R. O. L. CLARKE. R.E. LAMBE 11th June, 1953

SOUTH BUTTRESS.

CENTRAL ROUTE.

225 ft. Severe

The route makes its way up three steep walls to a wide heather ledge (GWELYHLIS MELEN) running across the Buttress.

START: At about the centre of the South Buttress is a large pinnacle which has broken into blocks and fallen against a steep wall.

- (1) 20 ft. Gain the top of the pinnacle by means of the crack on the right.
- (2) 30 ft. Make a delicate traverse to the right to a doubtful belay with restricted stance at foot of a crack slanting up to the left.
- (3) 25 ft. Move right, and climb the corner to the cave above. Belay at the back of the cave.
- (4) 30 ft. Leave the cave by climbing the left wall and then jamming up the crack above, Over the heathery edge, move right and stance in a small chasm. The next wall is 20 - 30 ft. back and is characterized by several small overhangs.

SOUTH BUTRESS.

CENTRAL ROUTRE (Cont'd)

(5) 50 ft. Continue up an obvious break to the right of the overhangs, Awkward up to and over a bulge, then delicate slabs are followed, first right, then left to a belay where the rock steepens again,

(6) 20 ft. Move right and then up, finishing on heather again. Belay on the wall farther back.

(7) 50 ft. Climb slightly to the left and then straight up on small holds. Move right and over heathery edge. Belay at foot of next wall.

From here a way off can be made by moving right to where the ledge is terminated by GREAT GULLY. By keeping fairly close to the gully the top of the buttress can be reached without undue difficulty. A direct finish up the upper walls would probably increase the standard.

FIRST ASCENT: R.E. LAMBE. MISS M.A DUNN. 30th August, 1952.

SOUTH BUTTRESS.

THUNG

300 ft. Severe.

At rowan trees directly above centre of second plantation.

- (1) 45 ft. Climb rowan tree and then hazel tree and follow heather terrace. 30 ft. right. Belay,
- (2) 45 ft. Up steep wall to heather ledge Belay,
- (3) 50 ft. Bear right up over heather, to foot of buttress with shallow chimney on right. Climb this, finishing left on arete. Scrappy finish on heather ledge, Belay.
- (4) 85 ft. Climb lichen covered wall above, awkward finish again on heather ledge. Belay.
- (5) 75 ft. Climb rocks above, bearing diagonally left until one reaches broad rake which runs diagonally right (LLWBYR CAM.) across South Buttress. Belay.

FIRST ASCENT: G.F.WILLIAMS. D.M. GILBERT, A.MILLS.

5th. August, 1956.

GREAT GULLY.

There is no record of a recent ascent of this gully, so the Rucksack Club Journal for 1908 is quoted: - "No serious difficulties, the angle being easy and the pitches small."

FIRST ASCENT: EASTER 1907. No party named.

ESGAIR FELEN ISAF.

Below the main crags of Central Buttress (Esgair Felen) is a small subsidiary buttress some 150 ft. high, much broken and vegetated - this is ESGAIR FELEN ISAF.

FIRST ANNIVERSARY.

105 ft. MODERATE

START: At extreme right hand end of crag. Belay on small ash tree.

- (1) 30 ft. Climb right hand edge, first right then left to large ledge and block belays.
- (2) 60 ft. Straight up rib to another ledge. Thread belay on ground to right.
- (3) 15 ft. The steep corner ahead. Belay about 30 ft.

FIRST ASCENT: R.E. LAMBE Mrs. R.E LAMBE. 2nd April 1956,

The same applies to North Gully as to Great Gully and the following description is culled from the first ascent account in the same Journal

NORTH GULLY.

About 800 ft.

The gully between Central and North buttresses, there is a choice of routes at the foot, but after the second pitch no deviation is possible.

(1) 20 ft. A cave ascended by its left wall leads to an amphitheatre. A gentle slope leads to:

(2) 25 ft. Another cave, climbed by the wet and hold less chimney between the left wall of the gully and a chock stone.

Now 100 ft. of easy scrambling to:-

(3) A double cave. On the right the wall overhangs and is impossible and with no through route available the left wall must again be used. Up a grassy chimney and stride across into the first cave. The direct ascent of the upper cave was too difficult and the leader was again forced left to a small platform whence an arm pull finished the pitch.

The gully now narrows and steepens considerably.

(4.) 120 ft. A wet gutter - not really difficult.

NORTH GULLY. (Cont'd.)

(5) 45ft. The Tombstone pitch. The walls of the gully close in at the top to within 3 ft. of one another. The left wall was ascended to a tiny ledge just below the chock stone, then a traverse into the centre enabled the leader to finish the pitch direct.

(6) 25 ft. The most difficult pitch as the rock is undercut at the bottom.

FIRST ASCENT - S.HOUGHTON. G.T.EWEN and others. EASTER 1907.

NORTH GULLY BUTTRESS (UPPER).

RELAXATION.

105 ft. Very Difficult

Towards the top the second branch of North Gully is a smooth slab on the right edge of the Buttress

START: At the foot of the slab.

(1) 45 ft. Up the slab, fairly delicate over a little bulge at 25 ft. Stance on a poor heather ledge, belay on doubtful block.

(2) 60 ft. Climb over the belay, up the wall for a few feet, then step onto the red wall on the left. A few delicate feet and the edge on the right can be gained and followed, as a slab, to two perched blocks and the edge of the gully.

FIRST ASCENT A.J.J.MOULAM. R.E.LAMBE. MAY 26th, 1956.

Above and beyond the finish of RELAXATION is a steep wall.

(Shadow Wall).

LIGHT AND SHADE.

Difficult.

The obvious corner on the right of Shadow Wall.

(1) Straight up the corner.

FIRST ASCENT: D.M .ADCOCK. JUNE 1955.

NORTH BUTTRESS.

SOUTH FACE CRACK.

80 ft. Severe.

A short distance to the right of the foot of North Gully rises a distinct fairly clean rock tower. This is the North East Tower. It is plainly seen from the path which runs beneath the North Buttress.

START: On the South face, the crack near the left-hand edge.

(1) 45 ft. Follow the crack and the left hand edge of the tower to a stance immediately below the final wall.

(2) 35 ft. The final wall is climbed direct just left of centre, coming up over the highest point of the tower,

FIRST ASCENT - B.C.ROACH. W.DREW. 8TH JULY, 1956.

NORTH BUTTRESS.

STYX.

210ft. Very Severe.

The route follows the obvious slabby groove beneath the steep rocks up which STYGIAN WALL zig-zags.

START: As for STYGIAN WALL.

- (1) 50 ft. Pitch (1) of STYGIAN WALL.
- (2) 50 ft. From the tree at the top of Pitch (1) move to gain a second slab in the same diagonal line. Stance and small belay at foot of a short wall.
- (3) 35 ft. Climb the short wall and so gain the third large slab which is ascended on the left edge until a traverse to the right can be made. Stance and belay.
- (4) 55 ft. Continue up on the same line until the slab finishes on a short arete leading to the vertical groove with thread belay and stance,
- (5) 20 ft. Climb the left wall to easy ground above.

FIRST ASCENT - D.M. ADCOCK. G.F. WILLIAMS. 23rd September. 1956.

NORTH BUTTRESS.

STYGIAN WALL.

270 ft. Very Severe.

START: Scramble up about 200 ft very steep heather and rock to two ash trees, which are immediately beneath an overhanging wall. The trees are situated higher up on the slope than any other except for one at the top of the first pitch.

- (1) 50 ft. The white slab which goes up to the left under the overhanging wall is climbed to an ash tree.
- (2) 60 ft. Climb the crack which is immediately behind the tree for 6 ft., then a slightly ascending traverse to the right can be made across the wall to its right hand edge. A fine pitch. Stance and belay round the corner.
- (3) 30 ft. The right angled groove which goes up to the left is climbed to a stance and belay. Stance is directly above the start of Pitch 2.
- (4) 10 ft. The broken wall behind the stance is climbed to a small but good stance.

NORTH BUTTRESS.

STYGIAN WALL. (Cont'd.)

(5) 90 ft. Pull onto the left wail of the stance, then traverse back over the second man to a steep gangway running round to the right. Care should be taken in handling the rock. The gangway is climbed until a steep groove is seen on the left. The groove can be climbed with the aid of a piton. From the top of the groove a traverse right is made to a crack, The crack is climbed for 8 ft. until a horizontal traverse is made across the right wall beneath some hanging blocks to a grass rake round the corner. Stance and belay at the top of the grass.

(6) 30 ft. The wall on the left is climbed for 15 ft. when steep heather and rock is reached.

FIRST ASCENT: D.M. ADCOCK. J. A. SUMNER. (Alternate leads). 9th July, 1955.

VARIATION FINISH.

(6) 50 ft. The wall on the right is climbed for 30 ft. when a steep heather is reached and a good flake belay at 50 ft.

FIRST ASCENT: D.M. ADCOCK. S.H.G.TAYLOR. 28th AUGUST, 1955.

NORTH BUTTRESS.

ACHERON

460 ft. Very Severe.

START: At the foot of the grassy couloirs left of the most prominent rib of the buttress.

- (1) 60 ft. Scramble up the grass to a belay on the edge of the rib, where the rock begins.
- (2) 65 ft. Another 30 ft. up the groove, to a little slab, now get onto the rib on the right and traverse it to a grass caterpillar. Up this to a ledge and two rather poor belays.
- (3) 90 ft. The slab in the groove on the left leads to an overhang corner, (Piton high up on left). When it becomes unclimbable traverse the right wall on good footholds. This leads to a delicate nose and at the top of it a narrow grass ledge. Traverse it right and then up to a good belay and poor stances.
- (4) 50 ft. Go up the grass and get onto the slab. Traverse it left and go onto the left edge of the wall. Up it steeply to a poor ledge and belays.

NORTH BUTTRESS.

ACHERON. (Cont'd.)

(5) 15 ft. Down the corner round on the left into the gully onto a good ledge and broad belay.

(6) 60 ft. On the right is a line of sloping stairs, up these to an overhang and then a semi-hand traverse to a good stance and belay on the rib crest.

(7) 90 ft. The chimney above and subsequent groove. All this is hard to a little ash tree.

(8) 30 ft. Above is an overhanging wall. Climb its right edge to the slope above. A long way to a belay after a moss overhang.

A good climb, varied and inescapable.

FIRST ASCENT: A.J.J. MOULAM, R.E. LAMBE. MAY 26TH, 1956

Escape is possible from base of 6 by traversing 10 ft diagonally right to ivy wall. Then round corner on left over shattered blocks. Then right again to stance with good belays. Abseil down to oak tree then up and left to large birch tree, these are at the base of STYX. (hand written)

NORTH BUTTRESS.

MIDLANDER.

270 ft. Very Severe

START: 50 ft. to the right of Acheron is an obvious wet mossy slab.

- (1) 120 ft. Up mossy slab, in right-hand. corner to a large tree,
- (2) 50 ft. Up to the right of the tree over sloping ledges to a cave; stance, belay etc.
- (3) 100 ft. Horizontally right from caves round corner and. hard rising traverse to the right (rubbers recommended) to grass ledges.

Walk off to right to finish (high angle).

FIRST ASCENT: P.M. BIVEN. H.T.H. PECK. 17TH JUNE 1956.

NORTH FACE

HOPE STREET.

120 ft. Very Difficult.

An exposed route up the rocks to the left of HOPSIT.

START: At the highest point on the grass on the left.

(1) 60 ft. Climb 20 ft. up shattered blocks, swing round onto a slab and. traverse 20 ft. to the bottom of a wide crack with loose blocks Belay 20 ft. up crack

(2) 60 ft. Carry on up crack tending to left at top.

FIRST ASCENT: A. B. AFFORD. E. GRIFFIN. 22nd OCTOBER, 1955.

NORTH FACE.

HOPSIT.

300 ft. Severe. (Hard).

On the left hand. side of the North Face is an obvious grassy corner starting from the bed of the wide gully just right of the avalanche scar.

START: About 250 ft. up the gully, the corner is immediately a steep.

(1) 30 ft. Up the groove, step left and back right into the bed above the bulge. More grass and a piton belay (remaining).

(2) 60 ft. Straight up the groove, interesting and steep, to a wide rake on the left. Piton belay,

The natural continuation on the left seems likely to disappoint, so for excitement take the right wall.

(3) 15 ft. Either with extreme difficulty or etriers to the tree on the right.

(4) 75 ft. Traverse right along the grass above the steep wall, From the corner mount a rickety pedestal, then move steeply round to the right on the heather. About 20 ft. higher, approached slightly from the left are two chock stone belays in a steep crack,

(5) 90 ft. Round left, up steep grass and then a grassy groove goes up to the right to a little col and easy ground. Belay 15 ft. over to the right.

(6) 20 ft. Up the tricky chimney on the right.

FIRST ASCENT - A.J.J.MOULAM. R.E. LAMBE 31ST MARCH, 1956.

NORTH FACE.

FIRST VISIT.

120 ft Very Severe

START: As for HOPSIT.

- (1) 25 ft. Traverse diagonally across steep vegetation to the left hand end of a large grass ledge. Belay,
- (2) 30 ft. Traverse to end of ledge to an overhanging corner. Belay.
- (3) 40 ft Over some ivy and avoid the overhanging corner by a slab on the right and then traverse back into the crack. straight up the right wall until it overhangs The traverse left to a grass ledge requires a piton (remaining) and is extremely severe for a few feet. Chock stone belay.
- (4) 25 ft. Straight up the chimney which overhangs at the start, Scramble off right over vegetation.

FIRST ASCENT; H. SMITH. C.T. JONES. K. J. CLARKE.

22nd. OCTOBER, 1955.

NORTH FACE.

CERAMIC CHIMNEY.

80 ft. Very Difficult.

The chimney is high up in the final rocks of the North Face which, as previously noted, face almost due West.

Climb to just below Dinas Llewellyn. Traverse over steep grass to an obvious chimney just inside the skyline.

(1) 40 ft. Climb the chimney to a good stance and belay.

(2) 40 ft. Work diagonally right on good holds until one emerges from beneath the overhang 20 ft. of easy rock follows to a ledge.

The route, though only V-Diff. is extremely exposed and the approach route covers about 300 ft. of almost vertical grass and heather

FIRST ASCENT - T.GOODWIN. G-.MARTIN With November, 1957.

FAR NORTH BUTTRESS.

BUBBLE WALL.

80 ft, Severe. (Hard).

The wall at the top of Far North Buttress, on a level with Dinas Llewellyn,

- (1) 35 ft. Up the wall to a small stance and belay.
- (2) 45 ft Traverse right and slightly upwards until steep grass can be gained on the edge.

FIRST ASCENT - J.A. SUMNER. D.M. ADCOCK 27th May, 1956.

FAR NORTH BUTTRESS.

RONKLEBOOT CHIMNEY.

45 ft. Difficult.

START: A large ledge called the RONKLEBOOT WAY, runs horizontally across the Far North Buttress, This ledge can be attained from either end, the left-hand end from below and the right-hand end from the top of the crag. Near the right-hand end of the ledge is a large boulder with a small bay almost behind it. The route goes up the right-hand corner of this bay.

(1) 30 ft. Step up on large holds and step across the corner to the right, Go up on some large jammed rocks, straight up the chimney and get out on the right. Belay.

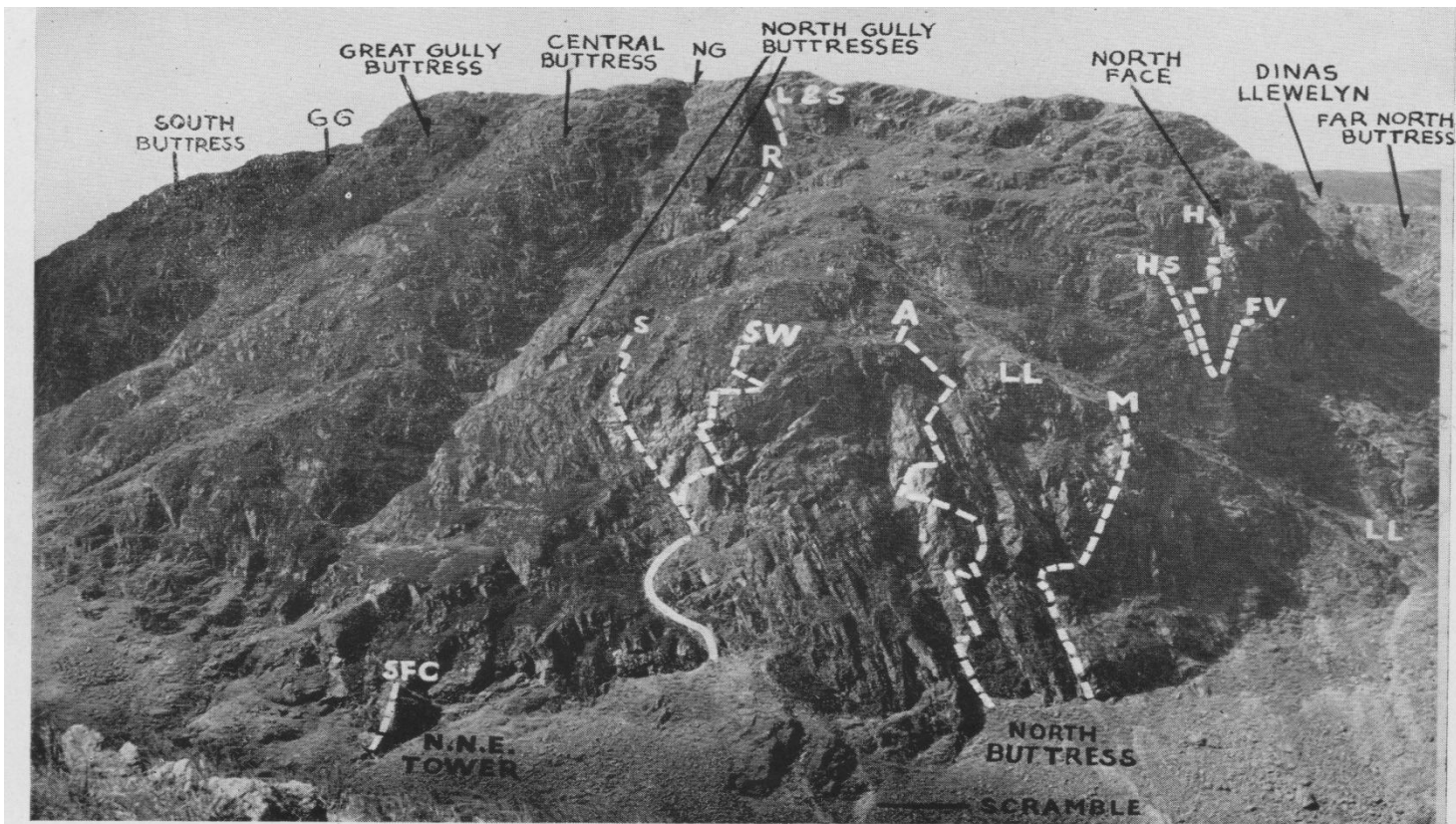
(2) 15 ft. Step left across the top of the chimney and ascend on good rock to the top of the crag.

FIRST ASCENT - G. MARTIN. T. GOODWIN, J. DOWNES, N. SMYTH, B. KNOX. 1st MARCH, 1958.

This poor inoffensive route was beaten into submission very promptly by a very strong party who gave it no quarter, after being repulsed by a couple of other lines on the same crag, which were found too steep (i.e. overhanging).

CREIGIAU CAMDDWR.

The numerous small outcrops spread over the hillside opposite the North Face can be strung together after the fashion of Bessyboot in Borrowdale to give an interesting and unusual approach to the ascent of Aran Mawddy.



Photograph by — R. E. KENDAL

(Opposite — Index to Climbs)

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