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EDEN VALLEY

These crags will be included in the next FRCC Eastern Craggs guide (due 2008)

Minor Craggs North

by Stewart Wilson



**FELL and ROCK
CLIMBING CLUB**
of the
English Lake District

The Gelt Boulder(OS Sheet 86, GR 563 555)

A fine little boulder enjoying something of an international reputation on account of its somewhat erroneous inclusion in a guidebook to European climbing.

The *Geltstone* is situated on the side of the River Gelt about seven miles south-east of Brampton in Cumbria . The boulder is about six metres high and is composed of a fine-grained Quartzite. The climbing is steep, sometimes slightly overhanging and the holds are small, so strong fingers are essential to make the best of it. Even if you can't get up the routes its worth a visit, as just downstream is an excellent swimming pool for all the family in the clean water of the Gelt.

Another reason for trying is the perfection of the landing pad. Give it a whirl, but remember, midges can be a problem on still evenings and of course the visiting hordes of Euroclimbers looking for this 'super-boulder' could lead to some overcrowding.

From Brampton on the A69 Carlisle to Newcastle road, follow signs for Castle Carrock. The B6413 leads after about six miles to Castle Carrock and signs lead past the two pubs and uphill to Geltsdale. Park cars on the obvious right-hand bend at Jockey Shield Cottages. A track leads downhill and crosses the river at Hynam Bridge. Turn right and walk under small crags beside the river until the derelict cottage of High Hynam is reached and the main path goes uphill. Continue on a small path by the river and after a couple of minutes a fine little swimming pool with a waterfall is passed. Continue upstream for a couple of hundred metres and the boulder will be found abutting against the path. No access problems exist and the place is popular with walkers and picnickers even though the land is privately owned. Please respect this privilege and observe the usual courtesies. **Dogs must be left at home or access problems will occur.**

There are three faces: *The River Face*, *The Upstream Face* and *The Main Face*.

The River Face has a couple of longer routes on loose rock of VD standard.

The Upstream Face is a narrow face that can be climbed anywhere at up to 5c. The best problem is just left of the arete.

The Main Face contains the following.

The arete is very fine 5b/c.

The wall just right of the arete 5b/c and superb.

The section between the wall right of the arete and the crack has problems from 5a-5b whilst the crack and the wall to the right are 4c.

Several traverses can be made, and, by eliminating holds, some desperate problems can be worked out.

1970s	Gelt Boulder	The boulder was first climbed on by Stew Wilson in the 1970s and the main problems date back to this time.
Middle Gelt Quarries (OS Sheet 85, GR 527 586)		
<p>Gelt Woods is a famous beauty spot accessed from the A69 just West of Brampton. The valley between Low Gelt Bridge and Middle Gelt Bridge is an excellent and spectacular walk. Huge faces of sandstone, up to thirty metres high, dominate the scene. The quarries are numerous, but the best lie where paths coming from Unity Farm and Capon Tree to the north of the valley, meet the main valley path. Many climbs have been made on these faces of compact but soft rock, but these have depended entirely on aid from pegs and bolts. Lines of rotting ironmongery can still be seen on the vertical and overhanging faces. A wall of constantly overhanging rock about 15m high lies just off the main path to the right of the path leading to Unity Farm. This has provided steep, bouldering up to now. The rock is soft and dirty, but with a little work it may become a useful bouldering venue.</p>		
St. Constantine's Cells Crag (OS Sheet 86, GR 467 534)		
<p>Situated in the popular Wetheral Woods, these crags lie to the right of, and below, these hewn-out cells - three in number, which are thought to date back to the days of the Border Reivers, or even earlier. They are sometimes called the Wetheral Safeguards. The crags are reached by parking in Wetheral village and descending the steep hill past the church to the river bank. A good footpath follows the river bank in an upstream direction for about half a mile to reach the caves.</p> <p>The crag just downstream of the cells has two climbs: a chimney/corner on the right (VS 4c) and Lammas Tide (HVS 5a) the deepening grooveline on the left. The rock is soft and the climbs are serious.</p> <p>The buttress below and upstream of the cells has a number of top-rope problems - all difficult, on soft but compact rock. The crag has probably reverted back to nature. There are many ancient inscriptions hereabouts including one of Roman origin: "Maximus scripsit." On the walls leading down to the cells are some fine inscriptions made by William Mounsey, one in Bardic Welsh and another which is his name spelt backwards except that he uses the Latinised form of William. Mounsey was a scholar and traveller and was also responsible for similar inscriptions on the Faces Section at Armathwaite.</p>		
Great Corby Quarry (OS Sheet 86, GR 477 545)		
<p>A scruffy little sandstone quarry located on Great Corby Common, and reached in less than a minute, by going through the school playground in Great Corby. Limited bouldering on soft rock.</p>		
Low Holm Gill (OS Sheet 86, GR 510 499)		
<p>Sandstone crags on a spur of land dividing the valley of Chapelwell Beck just north of Low Holm. The crag is reached via a track from the village of Hornsby. Several easier routes have been done on the slabs to the right of the main crag, whilst a steep crack in an isolated buttress across the stream has also been climbed (VS).</p>		

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