

[Back to Eden Valley Guide Index](#)

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O.S. Sheet 85

G.R. 336 405

NORTH CUMBRIA LIMESTONE

Park Head Quarry

by Stewart Wilson



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

This crag will be included in the next FRCC Eastern Craggs guide (due 2008)

NB: CLIMBING IS BANNED AT PARK HEAD QUARRY

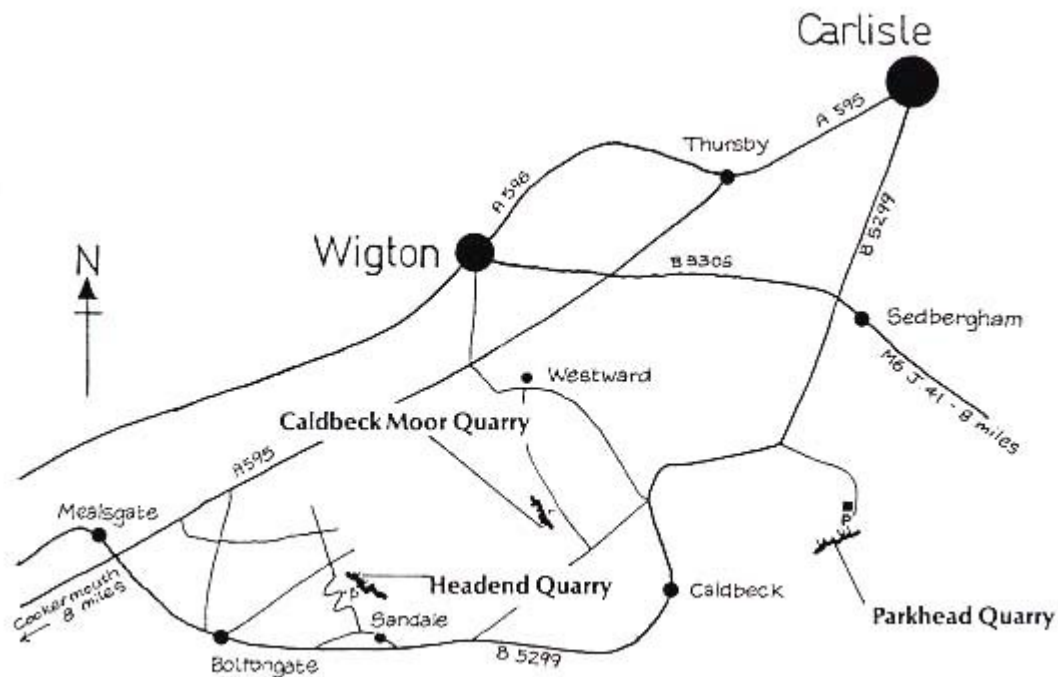
"Chris Bonington is the only person to climb the length of the crag backwards and forwards six times without falling off...."

"Who told you that..?"

"Chris Bonington did....."

Park Head Quarry is a south-facing outcrop of quarried limestone in a truly delightful setting, perched on the side of a hill overlooking the valley of the River Caldew, with fine views towards the Caldbeck Fells.

The rock rises out of a meadow, whose soft grass provides perfect landings. It is a warm friendly place, ideal for an odd hours quiet bouldering. The rock is generally perfect, although the top of the crag is loose. Climbers not hell-bent on tearing tendons on the steep walls and traverses will need to take care when finishing the pleasant, middle-grade, micro-routes.



Approaches & Access

Park Head Quarry is easily reached from either Carlisle or Penrith. From Carlisle, follow the B 5299 passing through the villages of Dalston and Welton. One and a half kilometres south-west of Welton is a

cross roads by the String of Horses Inn at Goose Green. Cross the B 5305 and continue past the inn and up the steep hill of Warnell Brow for just over one kilometre. At a sharp right-hand bend in the main road, a signposted minor road on the left leads in one kilometre to Parkhead. From Junction 41 on the M6, just North of Penrith, follow the B 5305 passing through the village of Sebergham. Two kilometres beyond Sebergham is the Goose Green crossroads. Turn left onto the B 5299 at this junction and follow the route described.

Unfortunately the owner of *Park Head Quarry* has banned climbing here and efforts to resolve this have not met with success. There is therefore a complete **BAN ON CLIMBING AT PARK HEAD QUARRY**. This information is recorded for historical purposes and so that it is not lost should climbing be allowed here again.

The crag is approached from its right-hand end. A lime-kiln marks the right-hand end of the obvious *Long Wall*. The short wall 15 metres left of the *Long Wall* is called *Short Wall*. Left again are five walls separated by two aretes and two corners. This is *Five Walls Area*.

Because the quarry is so small in extent it has been decided to start describing the climbs from the left hand end, from left to right, a logical trend, sometimes followed in modern guidebooks.

Five Walls Area is found about 100 metres left of the limekiln and consist of five walls, set at right-angles to one another and separated by two aretes and two corners.

Five Walls Area - First Wall

First Wall is the extreme left-hand wall, about 20 metres long. A low, striated erratic boulder forms a convenient seat and marker.

1. Ash Groove 4a

Start below a very shallow groove, 2 metres left of the boulder.

Climb the groove past an ash sapling to finish at a stout hawthorn. Lower off or down climb or get prickled.

2. The Rib 4c

Start one metre left of the boulder at the foot of a vague rib.

Climb the rib to the top and reverse or make a dirty, precarious 5a mantelshelf to finish.

3. The Graduate 5b *

Start at the same point as *The Rib*.

Climb the fine, steep wall one metre right of the rib. Good.

4. Tutu 5a *

Start 2 metres right of *The Rib* just right of the large hawthorn at the top of the crag. Climb the wall just left of a very thin, vertical crack. Pass the horizontal break and move slightly right then finish direct.

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Five Walls Area - Second Wall

Second Wall is the steep wall at right-angles to the *First Wall*. A large ash grows above it. It ends at a fine arete on the right.

5. Parson's Wall 5b/c *

Steep and awkward. Start below the large ash.

Climb the wall with the crux near the top.

6. Boyle's Law 5c *

Excellent, sustained climbing.

Start just left of the arete and climb the wall without using the arete.

7. Sod's Law 5b *

Traverse *Second Wall* from left to right or right to left about one metre from the ground. There's always a

"soft" landing.

8. Park Head Arete 4b *

Climb the extremely pleasant arete. The finish is a wee bit loose!

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Five Walls Area - Third Wall

Third Wall is the clean steep wall right of the arete.

9. Gnorman 5b *

Start two metres right of the arete. Climb the concave wall via a vague scoop.

10. A Shoulder To Cry On 5b

Start two metres right of *Gnorman* at a very slight rib.
Climb the slight rib and ensuing wall to a loose finish.

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Five Walls Area - Fourth Wall

Fourth Wall is scruffy. It is at right angles to *Third Wall*, and ends at a stepped arete on the right.

Five Walls Area - Fifth Wall

Fifth Wall is the wall that extends right from the stepped arete.

11. Twinkle 4a

Start a metre right of the stepped arete.
Climb the wall on small holds to a ledge and a loose finish.

12. Rippler 3c

Start at some stalactite-type incrustations.
Climb the steep wall using these. Step left and finish up a loose groove.

13. Chunker 4c

Start 3 metres left of the large ash growing at the top.
Climb the wall direct.

14. Howler 3b

Climb the wall via a jammed block to finish at the large ash.

15. The Girdle 3c

Traverse the *Fifth Wall* from left to right finishing at the large ash.

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Short Wall

Short Wall is about 40 metres to the right of *Fifth Wall*. It consists of a long, low wall of very compact rock about 4m high. It provides numerous short problems from 4c-6a and a very good traverse 5c-6a depending on the level.

Long Wall

Long Wall is fifteen metres right of the *Short Wall*. It consists of a very steep, left-hand buttress split by a fine crack. To the right the face is in the form of a long, fairly steep wall terminating at an old limekiln. This long stretch of rock is most useful as a stamina-training traverse. All of the vertical lines have been climbed but those in the middle section and right-hand end fail to produce sound finishes and so are not described.

16. Nook Crack 5a

Start more or less in the centre of the left-hand buttress below a fine, finger crack. Climb this.

Six metres right of *Nook Crack*, three cracks finish at a grass ledge.

17. Sceugh Crack 4b

Climb the left-hand, widest crack.

18. Night Hawk 4b

Climb the twin cracks above a stump, just right of *Sceugh Crack*.

19. Rowan Crack 3c

Climb the wide briar-choked off-width crack just right of *Night Hawk*.

20. Cracker Packer Wall 4b

Climb the steep, clean wall just right of the briar-choked crack.

21. Right Wall Girdle 5a/b

Fifty metres of strenuous climbing. Start at the foot of the left-hand buttress of the *Long Wall* left of *Nook Crack*. Crossing this left wall is the technical crux. Finish at the lime kiln.

Rating for continuous traverses without stepping off:

| Times | Rating |
|--------|---|
| 1 | A poor effort, you should consider packing in climbing. |
| 2 | Standard for average club beginners meet. |
| 3 | Practice more in secret and learn to lie. |
| 4 - 6 | A bit more like it. Keep practising. |
| 6 - 10 | A reasonable effort. Try using a Walkman or employ the local "drone" to talk you through the boredom. |
| 10+ | A quality performance, but your nose must get in the way. |

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Park Head Quarry FIRST ASCENTS

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 1970s & 1980s | Everyone has climbed at Parkhead. The traverses are legendary. Botterill, Whillance and Lamb climbed anything that looked worth doing, way back in the Eighties. Ron Kenyon, Stew Wilson and disciples added Gnorman whilst Stew unearthed Tutu whilst preparing this guide. A Shoulder To Cry On was the work of the inimitable Karl Lunt. |
| 1987 Sep 26 | A Shoulder To Cry On Karl Lunt (solo) |

[Back to Eden Valley Guide Index](#)

[Back to New Routes Index](#)