

Water Crag

Water Crag is a north west facing series of large boulders located high on Arkengarthdale Moor. Often visited by walkers who climb the nearby Rogan's Seat, the crag gives some interest to a remote moorland setting. The rock is a fine quality gritstone and similar to that of Healaugh further south. The boulders themselves reach a height of 5 metres with good landings throughout and include pocketed walls with easy angled slabs and some steeper additions. As it is over 600 metres above sea level it is best visited on a calm day and ideally a sunny one as the surrounding hills can keep hold of any low cloud and any significant snow is slow to melt. With this and the limited daylight hours throughout the winter months it is best visited from March through to October. Although known about for some time, which is evident by the amount of graffiti on top of the buttresses, there were no known details of climbing until October 2016 when the first problems were cleaned and recorded. A brush is advised to clean some scrittle. The venue enjoys fantastic views, on a good day the Cumbrian fells and even the Galloway Mountains are clearly visible. All problems developed by Steven Phelps unless specified.



Approach: Parking can be found at William Gill about 2.5 miles east of The Tan Hill Inn or 5.5 miles west of the village of Lanthwaite, there's space for one car just left of the track entering the gill but there's more parking either side of the road just east. Follow the track south west, you'll need to negotiate 3 fords as you move up through the valley, though in summer the river is low. After about 30 minutes the track turns into a small path, cross the stream near the top which brings you out at abandoned mine works, the crag can be seen to the south. Head off across the moor for about 20 minutes following several white shooting posts which seem to take a fairly dry route towards the crag, these may or may not be in place. The moor is subject to closures throughout the year and it is probably best keeping dogs on a lead on the walk in.

All problems are described from left to right. The first are located on the obvious large buttress on the left.

Water Buttress

1. **Water Boy 4+** SDS Climb direct over the small overhang just left of the main buttress.
2. **Watercress 2** Climb the wall in the small gully on the main buttress. Often green.
3. **Dew Rib 4** The vague rib without use of the grassy ledge to the left.
4. **Halloween H2O 4*** The bulging wall past a good pocket.
5. **Water Arête 5+**** SDS The left side of the arête making a stiff pull to start. From standing is **3+**.
6. **Water Arête Right Side 5** SDS The right side of the arête. From standing is **3+**.
7. **Water Board 3+** Climb just right of the arête without using it.
8. **Water Works 3*** The centre of the wall on good holds.
9. **Water Aid 3*** The line just right of centre on formed holds.
10. **Waters Edge 4** Climb up trending rightwards using the arête to reach the top.
11. **The Deep Edge 5+**** SDS The leaning arête on its right side. Rock around leftwards at the top. From standing is **5**.
12. **Sacred Cycles 6a+*** SDS The sidewall on flakes, pockets and edges. Mantel direct to finish.

To the right is a moderate corner crack and easy slab. The next problem described climbs the small triangular block just right.

13. **Whaw Games 6b*** SDS From the flake rail, throw your heel up and rock over following the sloping left edge of the slab.



Steven Phelps on **Water Works 3+***



Water Buttress



Sinner Slab

Just below this buttress is a short easy angled slab.

Sinner Slab

1. **Left Side 2** Climb the left side of the slab to reach about halfway up the arête.
2. **Mr Mole 3** The centre of the slab following a line of fragile flakes.
3. **Sinner 4+*** The right side of the slab without the right edge.
4. **Sinner Variation 4+** Once positioned on the slab of the original, move rightwards to follow the right edge.

Just right are two more boulders. The first makes use of the lower block, the second includes a short west facing slab.

Alcove Boulders

5. **Low Lier 5+** SDS Pull onto the low block with a deep pocket above the lip. Make a dive for a hidden edge around the corner. Reach the top and make a difficult mantel direct.
6. **Gill's Traverse 3** SDS Make a rising traverse rightwards on the next block. Finish up Gill's Arête.
7. **Gill's Slab 6a+*** SDS Use the curved crimp edge to rockover and reach for the top. A northern Dales Pie's the Limit.
8. **Gill's Arête 2** The left side of the arête without use of the lower block.

Back up to the main edge and the small left buttress of the obvious alcove.

The Wedge

1. **Thin End of the Wedge 4** SDS From the ledge, reach out leftwards and climb the narrow left wall.
2. **Tethers End 4+*** SDS Start from the ledge again. Climb the rib above.
3. **Journeys End 3** From a right hand layaway, climb the centre of the wall.
4. **Wedge Wall 3** Climb the line just to the right.



The Wedge



Undercut Boulder

The next Boulder holds some fine steep problems.

Undercut Boulder

5. Rack and Ruin 6b* SDS From low holds, make careful moves up to a sloper on the arête. Finish on improving holds.

6. Broken Ties 6b*** SDS Start from holds close together just right of the arête. Make a long move for a right hand sloping crimp edge, then to a left hand slot. Pop for a sloper and finish on improving holds again.

7. Scuppered 4 From the block, climb the centre of the wall with a long reach for the top using a hollow sounding flake. A variation starting from the next problem and moving leftwards to join the flake is **Scuppered Variation 6c****.

8. Cherry Wall 6c*** Start from crouching hanging the ledge below the overhanging wall. Reach out to a sloper, sort your feet out and move up the wall direct to finish using a left hand flake.

9. Man's Best Friend 6c+* A squeezed in eliminate. Hang the ledge underneath again. Reach out to a better first hold on the wall near the prow. Move up the wall to gain a right hand hold on the prow just before the break. Finish on good holds.

Martin Parker May 2017

10. Vega Prow 6b*** Start from the ledge again. Reach out to climb the hanging prow direct using holds on both sides. Can be done rocking onto holds on the right side only at a slightly easier grade.

11. Hanging Groove 4+ Hang the ledge. Reach out and follow the flake in the groove.

12. Due Process 4* The vague rib making an awkward start using a thin flake and an awkward finish using sloping holds.

13. Punchard Wall 3* Climb the centre of the west wall on knobs.

14. The Perfectly Sewn Squirrel Pouch 6c+** SDS Start from the boulder in the gap. Pull up following the blunt rib without using the ledge or platform on either side. Slightly easier for the tall.

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15. Platform Scoop 6a SDS Climb the scooped wall on good holds. From standing is **2**.

16. Platform Arête 3 The short arête on its left side.

17. Platform Arête Right Side 3+ The right side of the arête.

18. Grim Wall 4+ The centre of the left wall. Pull on to a long reach for the top.

19. Reaper 5 SDS The left side of the right edge/arête at the end of the corridor.



Undercut Boulder



Back Yard



Martin Parker finishing **Cherry Wall 6c*****



Steven Phelps on **Vega Prow 6b*****

Back Yard

20. **Back Hander 3** The centre of the opposite wall is less grim.
21. **Notcher 3** The wall to the right making a reach for a notch at the top.
22. **Hard Luck Left Side 5+** SDS The left side of the arête with a cramped start.
23. **Hard Luck 5+*** SDS The steep sharp arête mainly on its right side. There may be a hard problem to the right.
24. **Tough Luck 6b+*** SDS Start with your right hand in the pocket. Pull onto the wall and aim for a crimp edge above. Finish using the sloping break out left to pop for the top.

About 10m right are the next problems starting on the front wall.

Ghost Buttress

1. **Mystified 3** The left edge of the boulder up ledges. Often green.
 2. **Ghost Groove 5+*** The groove using holds on either side.
 3. **Giving Up the Ghost 5*** Up the centre of the wall in the line of the streak. Involves a tricky mantel at half height.
 4. **Ghost Eliminate 5** An eliminate up the crack and with use of the holes.
 5. **Spirit Arête 4**** The left side of the arête using the holes. The sitting start is 5.
 6. **Spirit Arête Right 4+*** The right side of the arête to a tricky mantel.
 7. **Fright Night 6a*** Start from a right hand flake. Climb just right of the arête to another mantel finish.
 8. **Dark Eyes 5** Start just right and climb the scooped wall.
 9. **Ghost Protocol 4+** Climb direct up to and over the capping stone.
 10. **Voices 6a** SDS The right edge/arête of the wall with a cramped start. From standing is 3.
 11. **Pikelet Man 4** The left arête of the next block on its right side using the large ledge.
 12. **Wham Bar 5*** Use a left hand sloper and a right hand pinch to reach a juggy rail. Finish direct.
 13. **The Rib 6c**** SDS Make awkward moves up the obvious blunt rib using a left hand crozzle and a far right hand side pocket to start. Move up past the sloping break to a long reach for the top with help from an elusive right hand pocket.
- Martin Parker May 2017
14. **Potcakes 4+** SDS The centre of the sidewall from the boulders.
 15. **Toast in the Machine 4+** SDS The left side of the arête.

The next problems are on the obvious flake boulder.

Flake Boulder

1. **Consumer 4+** SDS Start at the smaller flake 1m left of the big one. Climb direct on good holds.
2. **The Flake 3+** SDS The big flake finishing at its highest point.
3. **Flake Arête 3** Follow the sloping arête.

Now back up to the main edge with a particularly good wall.



Ghost Butress

Tan Hill Boulders

4. Lyrid Prow 5+ SDS This problem takes the small prow. Finish moving round leftwards.

5. Lyrid Dyno 6a SDS Dive for the top from the crimp edge on the side wall.

6. Syncopate 2 The opposite wall in the gully with use of the right edge/arête.

7. Tan Hill Arête 6a+** Start with a wide pinch on the arête and the obvious right hand edge. Move up past the pocket to the good pinch and a small crimp edge which should bring a finish. From standing is also good at **5**.

8. The Dogs Paw Print 7a* SDS Start from the arête. Make difficult moves to get the pocket with your left hand and pass the break in the wall above. Mantel to finish. From standing pulling up with the high break is **5+**.

Sit start added by Martin Parker May 2017

9. No One on Earth 6b SDS Make a difficult move to get off the floor from the flake to any of the pockets. Finish direct.

10. Block and Tan 6c* Make a right to left traverse following the sloping break starting from the dirty scoop and finishing up The Dog's Paw Print. Sustained!

Paul Clarke May 2017



Martin Parker on **Tan Hill Arête 6a+****



Flake Boulder



Tan Hill Boulders

The next problems are on several small edge slabs which seem to stay rather green.

Edge Slabs

1. **Just Breathe 2** Climb the left side of the blunt arête.
2. **Exhale 2+** The right side of the arête using a ledge.
3. **Function 3+** Climb up the slab and overhang on its left side.
4. **The Flow 3** The centre following a juggy fault.
5. **Grot Slab 3** The right side on fairly good but dirty holds.
6. **Dribs 4+** Without the foot ledge on the left, climb direct to an awkward mantel finish.
7. **Drabs 1** The short slab starting just right of centre. Much easier climbed on its right side.
8. **Make Way 3** The short right side wall..
9. **Green Wall 5** The left side of the rib using holds on the wall.
10. **Green Rib 2** The blunt rib direct.
11. **Green Slab 2** The green slab climbing slightly rightwards.



Edge Slabs



The Cube

Flex Arête

12. **Flex Arête 5*** SDS Climb the leaning arête just below the edge to a mantel finish.

About 10m below is an obvious cube block which holds some good short problems with some cramped sit starts.

The Cube

1. **Geometric 6a+** Pull onto the wall with the flake to a good high edge near the arête. Finish direct. Morpho!
2. **Cube Arête Left Side 5*** SDS The left side of the arête is short but sweet. From standing is **4+**.
3. **Cube Arête Right Side 5+** SDS The right side of the arête. Careful with the creaky flake at the start. From standing is **5**.
4. **Cube Slab 6b*** SDS Start just right of the arête. Make a cramped start using crimps and side crimps to a good flake hold which allows the top to be reached.
5. **3rd Dimension 6b** SDS Start using the small foot block, a far left hand side pull and the right arête. Make a difficult pull off the ground and with good footwork, aim for a shallow pocket on the right of the groove. Make a long reach for the top.

Back up to the main edge to some pinnacles which hold the next problems.

Tilted Block

1. **Tilt 2** The narrow wall.
- Paul Clarke May 2017
2. **Small Town Girl 5+** Climb the arête direct to an awkward top out.
 3. **Tilting at Windmills 4+** The right arête to another awkward finish.
- Paul Clarke May 2017

Scoop Block

4. **Scoop of the Day 6a+*** Using two side crimps, pop for the top.
- Paul Clarke May 2017
5. **Ledge Hammer 5+** Pull onto the rib using the ledge to a knobby crimp edge on the right wall. Now pop for the top.
 6. **Wallflower 4** The centre of the sidewall on elusive holds.
- Paul Clarke May 2017

Onto the next problems which start on the sidewall of the next block.



Paul Clarke latching the top of **Scoop of the Day 6a+***

Sloper Block

7. **Fancy Free 3** The centre of the sidewall on decent but green holds.
8. **Side Affection 5+** The right side of the wall with a long reach to a high crimp edge. Finish direct. Better than it looks!
9. **Flat Earther 5*** Follow the left side of the arête with use of holds on the wall to start. Finish as for the last problem.
10. **No Way Back 5+**** The right side of the arête requires a positive approach.
11. **Cosmology 5*** The vague rib. Step onto a ledge and make long reaches between good holds to a nervy exit rightwards.
12. **The Big Empty 6a*** Reach up to the sloping shelf. Pull up to reach juggy flakes which allow another nervy finish.
13. **Orbiter 5** Pull onto the leaning rib using the hole to a delicate finish.
14. **Enceladus 5** Climb up the right side of the block to finish up the groove.

There's a possibility for more development on the boulders just to the right. The last problems described are about 100m across the moor on a decent sized boulder near the fence.

Far Block

1. **Far Fetched 5+** Start beneath the left side of the roof. Undercut out to a horizontal flake. Make a delicate finish.
 2. **Faren Right 5+** Start beneath the right side of the roof. Undercut through the overhang past a good edge near the top.
- Paul Clarke May 2017
3. **Withiness 5** SDS Climb direct from the boss up a faint groove on the left side of the west wall.
 4. **Far Flung 6a** SDS Start from the small cave. From a left hand head height hold and a low right hand pocket, make a stiff pull direct past sloping edges. Keep off the boss.
 5. **Far and Away 4+** SDS Climb the far right side of the short wall on the platform.
 6. **Far Flake 2** SDS A short 'one move wonder' flake on the uphill face.



Paul Clarke on **Faren Right 5+**