

Halton Heights Natural Edges

Climbs – 90ish

Altitude 340m

Faces South

Other condition info:

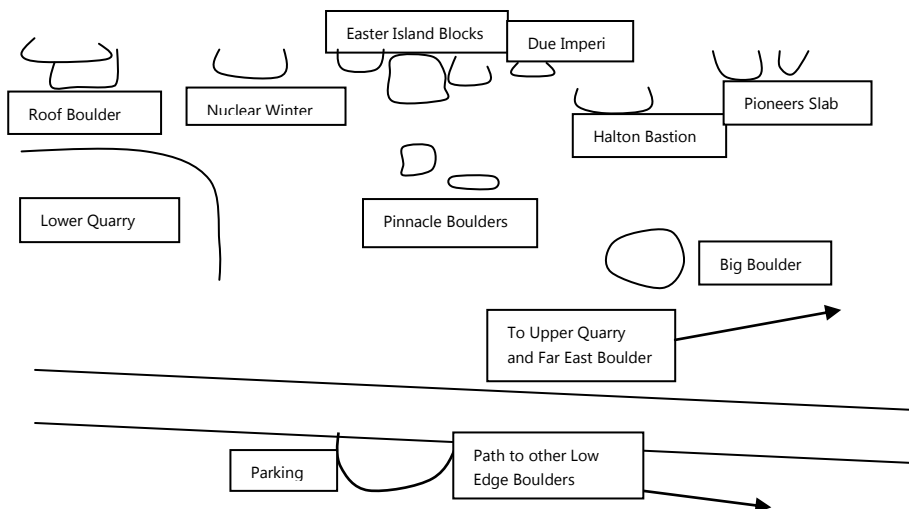
Nice low grade bouldering venue that is good all year round but especially autumn, winter and spring. Little seepage, lovely views and the haunting whistle of the nearby Embsay steam train. The bouldering described here is on the natural edges around the lower and upper quarries above the road and also on the natural edge below the road. The bouldering in the lower and upper quarry is described on a separate topo.



Parking and approach info:

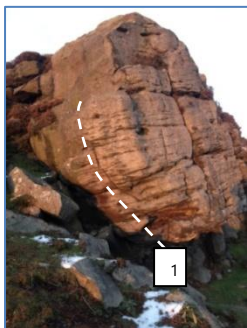
See Volume 2 of the Yorkshire Gritstone Guide for approach and parking – on road above Eastby – by the obvious cattle grid. The crags are easily accessible, on access land and a maximum of 10 minutes from the parking. Keep dogs on a lead and leave Fido at home during the lambing and nesting season.

Crag Layout – Western Section



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Halton Bastion



A magnificent chunk of top quality grit. The problems are best done as sit-start boulder problems as the finishes of 5-7 converge to finish at around Severe – you really need to top out once. For standing, any start and the central finish gives

Halton Bastion S.

1 Bastion Wall Sit 6a+

Start in pit and climb the wall left of arête on small incut and pocket.

2 Omnitrix Sit 5

Swing left from the buckets up the hanging arête.

3 Bastion Left Sit 5

The wall left of the crack from the huge buckets.

4 Bastion Crack 3+

The traditional crack.

5 Muscleman Sit 5

Use the crack to pull onto the wall.

6 Adventure Time Sit 5

The middle of the face. Hang the lip below the central hole.

7 Flanker Sit 5

Pull over using the right hand hole and the arête.

8 Menace Sit 5+

Tussle up the hanging arête over the gully from the main block. Resist the temptation to use the main block.



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9 Does For Sit 3+

L-R Lowish traverse – keep going until it peters out. Marred by underlying plinths and blocks but does for a warm-up.

10 Pointless Hanging Around

Sit 6a

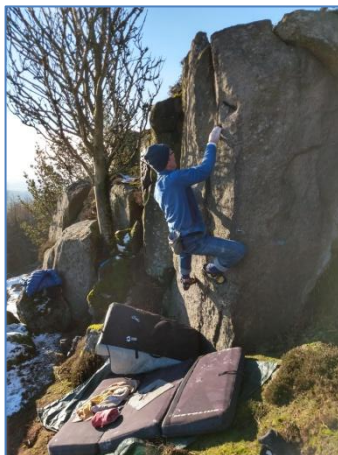
Start as 9, traverse lip L-R with hands and feet above lip using holds just above lip, finish up Flanker.

11 Higher Lower Sit 6a

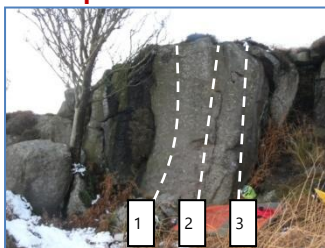
The next little boulder on. Go from the hueco to the arête or higher?

3 Split Bunter Sit 6a+*

A slightly more generous version using the arête with the split black bunter pebble. Finish straight up or take the high jam to the right.

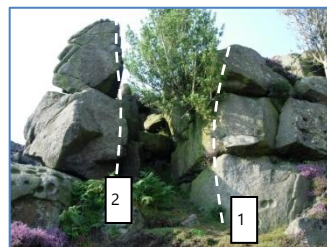


Due Imperi Block



Just right of the Easter Island block. Three good problems based on the same edge and obvious pockets.

Easter Island Blocks



A series of nice golden oldies can be found around the Easter Island pinnacle.

1 Big Rock Sit 6a+*

Start left of the low block with a crouching start on the low sloper. Gain the crimp on 2 and make a big rockover left to the large pocket just right of the crack, finish direct - no crack.

2 Due Imperi Sit 6b

A tough start up the right side of the face without the right arête.

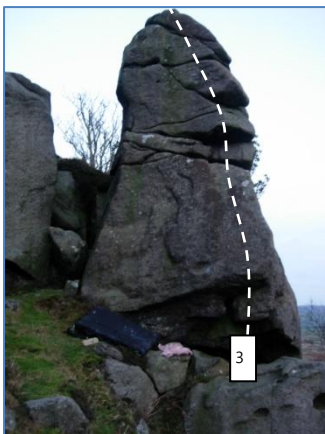
1 The Lip 4+ (VS,5a)*

The blunt arête past the strange lip feature.

2 Little Yellow Idol 4 (VS,5a)

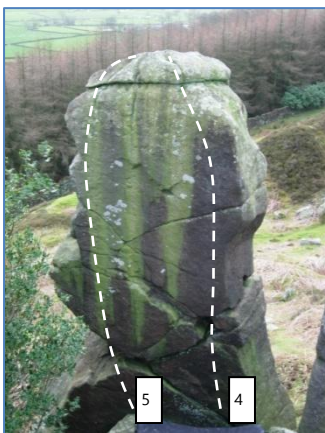
The eastern arête of the pinnacle on its left hand side.

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3 One Eyed God Sit 5

Layback the left side of the arête without the crack to the right.



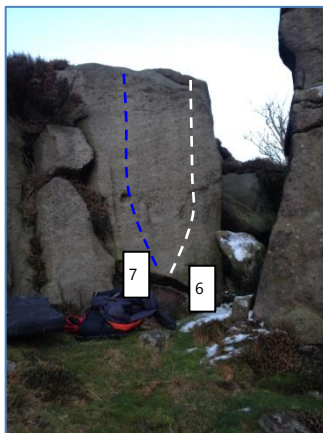
Back of the Easter Island pinnacle.

4 Hidden Arête 5

Left hand side of right arête – solid landing.

5 Mad Carew 4+

Right hand side of left arête above the interesting drop.



Boulders to the left of the pinnacle give some nice problems.

6 Charlie's Arête 6a*

The excellent arête to a slopy finish. No block to right.

7 Waterfall's Wall 6a

Balancy wall to a slopy finish, uses crack to left mid height at this grade.

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8 Scooped Arête 5+

Blinkered quality.

9 Afterthought Wall 4+

The wall and arête is better than it looks.

Pinnacle Boulders

Below the Easter Island pinnacle are two quarried boulders that give some worthwhile problems.

1 Blasted Arête Left Sit 6a

Left side of left arête soon eases.

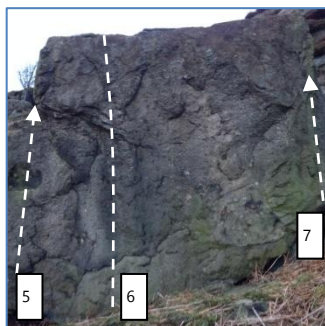
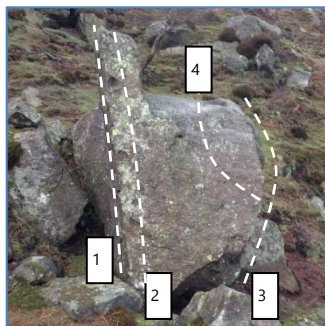
2 Blasted Arête Right 2+

3 Blasted Block Sit 6a+*

Right side of right arête with no block for feet - good.

4 Blasted Slab Sit 6a+

Start as 3 but rock onto slab.



5 Creaky Arête Sit 4

Left arête on right side.

6 Creaky Flake Wall Sit 6a*

The nice wall utilising the creaky flake. Uses a sharp hold near left arête at this grade. May not last long.

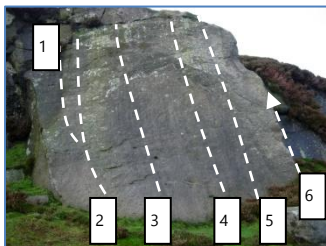
7 Creak On Sit 4

Right arête using flakes.

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Pioneers Slab

Up to the left of Halton Bastion is a really good quarried slab which is quick drying. The problems probably date back to the early pioneers.



1 Carbide Left 3+

Slab with big holds on left.

2 Carbide Slab 4

Slab, no big holds on left.

3 Speleologists Slab 5

Slab direct with no big holds on 2.

4 Craven Caver 4+

The blunt rib.

5 Pioneers Slab 5+*

Thin crack and delicate slab with no holds on 4.

6 Cavers Arête 3+

Worthwhile right arête.

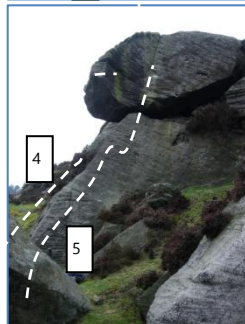
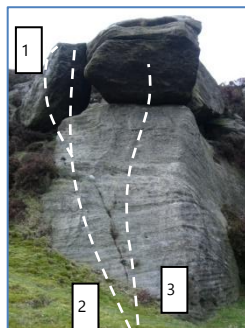


7 Pioneer's Arête 3+

Blunt arête on boulder to the right.

Roof Boulder

Above the lower quarry to the left of Nuclear Winter is a good block with an obvious capping boulder.



1 Roof Bypass 3

Slab skirting left around the roof.

2 Roof Left 4

Slab and left side of roof direct.

3 Roof Right 4

Left side of slaby arête and right side of roof direct.

4 The Fin 4

Right side of slaby arête with easy finish up the hanging fin.

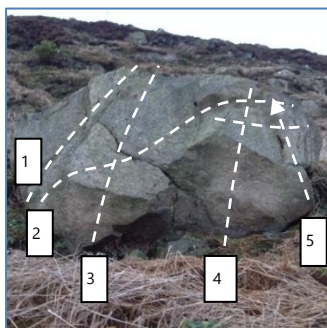
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5 Fin Slab 5*

Wall just right of arête (no arête)
then step right without touching
the ground and climb the
hanging slab - good.

Big Boulder

*Half way up the slope from the
road is an obvious large boulder.
Mainly poor but with a couple of
reasonable problems.*



1 Big Boulder Balance 4

Scoop with no hands, lots of
variations.

2 Big Boulder Traverse Sit 4+/6a
Left – right traverse using the
obvious large hold at the right
end of the boulder. Finish up the
right arete. Eliminating the large
hold at the right end of the
boulder is 6a.

3 Rod Sit 4+

Awkward start. Following the
crack in from the right is F3.


4 Jane 5

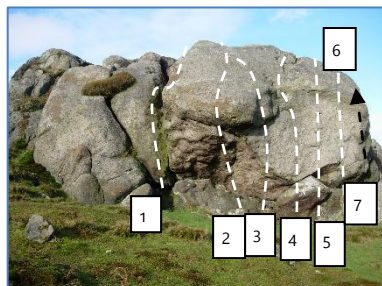
Undercut wall and slab finishing
right.

5 Freddy 4

The right arete starting on a
sidepull.

Far East Boulder

*Above the road well to the east of
the main group and about 100m
East of the upper quarry  an
obvious lump of solid rough
gritstone which offers a selection
of good problems.*



There are a couple of reasonable
F3 to F4 problems on the boulder
to left of the two cracks.

1 Rough Nose Left 5*

Contrived but good with a nice
finish. Start in the flared corner L
of the block and use the crack
and a pocket to bridge into the
corner (the low blocks to the left
are out), reach R to the arete and
rock onto the lowest part of the
nose then finish up the right side
of the left arete.

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2 **Rough Nose Direct** 7a ish*

The powerful nose direct from standing is well worn. The line will punish bad skin. Appeared on the old Yorkshiregrit website but unable to ascertain original name.

3 **Rough Nose Right** 6a+*

Gain pocketed slab direct by rocking onto the low block from the L using a thin edge and pebbles then finish leftwards to join 2. Traversing in from big pocket on 5 is 5*.

4 **The Rough Runnel** 6a+*

Gain the big square jug above the low block direct using a left facing flake on the face and the low block and then finish direct up the prominent runnel.

5 **The Halton Stonker** 3+**

Stonking wall using the big pockets.

6 **Rough Arete** 4+

Left hand side of blunt right arete via the big hold.

7 **Rough Slab** 3+

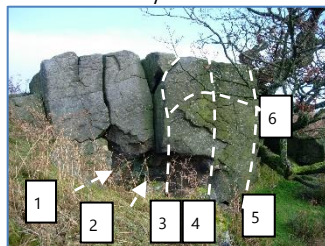
Slab and blunt arete on the east face of the boulder.

Low Crag

This is the obvious rather broken crag below the road. It is ideal for an evening visit and comes into condition in winter very quickly as it faces south and is not prone to seepage. The boulders are described from west (left) to east (right).

Oaky Doke Block

The first block with the big oak tree is a cellar dweller's delight with a lot of scope for eliminates.



1 **Double Cracks** Sit 2

The big cracks at the left end of the block. Same grade if you just use the left crack.

2 **Suffering and Pain** Sit 5

Jam the big crack from a sit start.

3 **No Oak** Sit 6b*

The left arete of the main block on its right side from a sit start without using the big crimps on 4. Start using a jam in the downward facing part of 2 and gain a key sidepull then slap up the arete.

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4 Oaky Doke 3/Sit 6a+*

Up the middle of the short rippled wall. The sit start without using the low block is better at 6a+.

5 Oak Arete 4+/Sit 6a

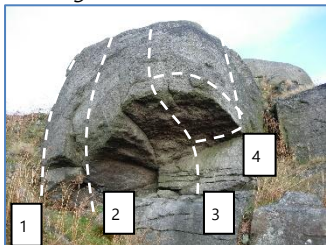
The right arete from standing. Again better with a sit start and no low block at 6a.

6 Oakenshield Sit 6a+

Use the sit start to 3 to gain the high crimp on 4 and then traverse right and finish up 5.

Badgers Arse

This block offers a good collection of problems with very rough but solid rock. The rock texture gives the block its name.



1 Rough As 4+/Sit 5+

The left wall. Finish trending right along the ripple.

2 Gritter 4+/Sit 5+*

The wall above the cutaway on pockets. The sit start uses the crack to give a nice sequence.

3 Skin and Belief 6b/Sit 7a**

The undercut nose direct. The standing start begins hanging the obvious crimp on the lip. For **Total Skin and Belief** the sit

start, begin under roof with hands in the horizontal back crack and feet off the base plinth. Span out to the lip and gain the standing start crimp.

4 Right Exit 4+

Contort from under the prow or start on the lip - no difference in grade. The side wall goes easily.

Grit Your Teeth 6b+ *

Start SDS as for #2 and (avoiding the low block) gain the crimp on #3. Pull over to the rib and onto the wall moving up left of the slot.

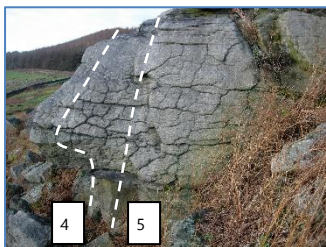
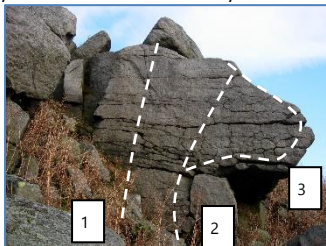
The small block to the right between Badgers Arse and Happy Days has two nice rounded arêtes that both go at about 5 from a sit start. The right arete can be done on either side at the same grade.



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Happy Days

A small distance further right and difficult to see from the path above the edge is a well featured nose. Many variations on the problems described are possible.



1 Cunningham Sit 5+
Reachy wall via break.

2 Fonzie 4/Sit 5+*

From the crack at the base of the wall head right into the scoop. The sit start is 5+, starting in the cave is easier at 5.



3 Henry Winkler Sit 5+

Sit start as for Fonzie but swing along the lower rail and butch up on to the nose.

4 Ralph Sit 6a

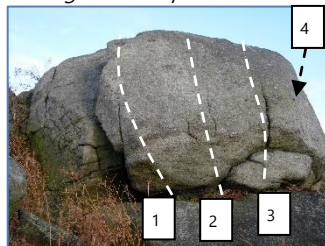
Hanging slab starting sat at the left side of the cutaway. Starting from the Fonzie sit start and moving right is 6a+. Following the break leftwards to finish up Cunningham from the Ralph start is 6a.

5 Chachi 3

The pleasant right wall via the breaks.

Midget Mountain

Up the slope close to the top of the edge is a compact block.



1 Cuddly Rabbit 4 The left edge of the slab.

2 Pure Slab 5+ The middle of the slab.

3 Blue Hippo 5 The scoop and pocket.

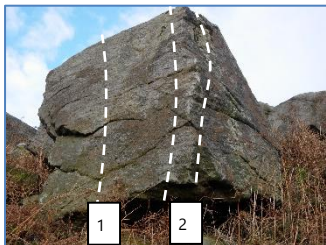
4 4+/Sit 5

The face of the boulder round to the right, 5 from sitting.

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Low Block

An isolated block below Happy Days which gives a few pleasant lines.



1 Low Block Slab Sit 6a

The nice slab using the pocket. Sit start using the flake.

2 Low Block Arete 3

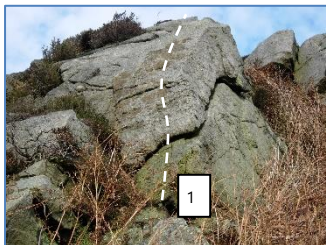
Either side of the arete.

Between Happy Days and Brexit

Isolated blocks between Happy Days and the Brexit block offer a few entertaining lines.

1 Big Flake Arete 3

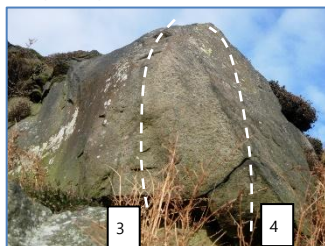
The natural arete via the big detached flake.



2 The Gamekeeper 4*

The right hand side of the natural arete gives one of the best low grade lines on the crag.

The quarried arete to the right on its left side is 2. Just right is a compact quarried nose.



3 Quarried Nose Direct Sit 4+ or 6a

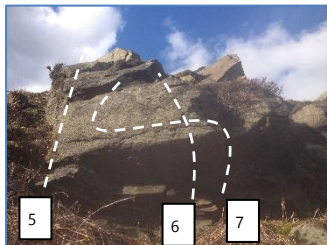
The angular quarried arete from a sit start using a small crimp to the left. 4+ using the square hold to the right or 6a omitting this and just pinching the arete.

4 Quarried Nose Right Sit 4

The right face from a sit start.

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Further right is a prominent undercut nose.



5 The Halton Rambler 3 (VD)

The left side of the benign slab from the block to the very top.

6 Halton Nose Sit 6b*

The right side of the nose using the big square hold under the roof and feet on the back wall to start.

7 Nose and Slab Sit 5+

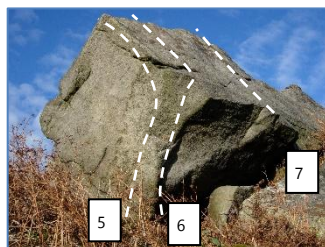
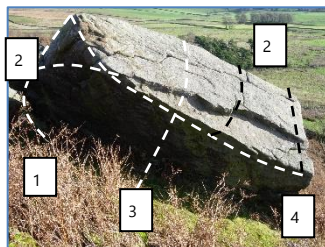
Sit start right of the nose, reach the lip and traverse left feet high on the slab under the roof., bridge out at the left end of the undercut and rock onto slab.

Brexit Block

Further right and visible from the path on top of the edge is a prominent low block offering some nice traverses and short problems.

1 David Sit 4

From a sit start follow good holds to the top of the pinnacle.



2 The Post Truth Shuffle Sit 6a*

Start as for David but immediately head right across the roof, reverse ToTG and rockover onto the slab to the right of Nigel using two small pockets and the square sidepull. Continuing around the arete to the Boris finish is 5+.

3 Nigel Sit 5

Rockover the centre of the overhanging wall.

4 Traverse of The Gobs Sit 5*

Very satisfying. Start sat at the right arete then yomp left along the lip to finish up David. Brexiteers may like to try the **Up Yours Delors Variation** which uses only handholds and footholds on or just above the lip at 6a+.

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4a Oven Ready 6b+*

From the obvious low sit by Boris climb the front wall without recourse to the arêtes until the deal is sealed.....

5 Boris 4/ Sit 5+*

A tricky customer. From a sit start follow the blunt nose and arete rocking left. 4 from standing.

6 Hard Brexit 6a*

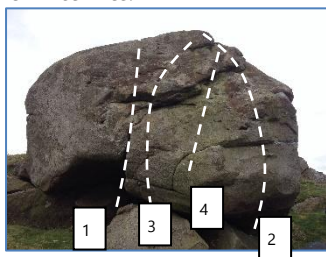
The right side of the Boris arete from standing has a poor landing.

7 The Honourable Member for the Early 20th Century 4+

The slab using a low square edge to the left of and avoiding the block to the right.

End of the World

The prominent final block at the eastern end of the edge offers a few nice lines.



1 Knee Bar Slab Sit 6a

Make a contrived start sat below the short crack with right foot on top of block only. Make a cool Knee Bar to gain the line of pockets and follow these to the top of the slab, no flake.

2 Final Countdown 4/Sit 5*

Sit start at the bottom right of the boulders south face on crimps and aim for the flakes. 4 from standing.

3 Armageddon Sit 6a*

The East face and arete, starting low on the left and climbing into Domsday, no bloc for feet.

4 Domsday 4+

The east face of the boulder using the left arete.

History

Unrecorded bouldering has probably taken place here for many years. Bastion Crack and the lines on Pioneers Slab probably predate the 1970s. Early explorers such as Sidney Waterfall (who climbed UK 5b at Crookrise) and Charley Viano may well have bouldered on this part of the crag. There was also some local guy called Ron Fawcett who lived within walking distance of the place. The boulders lack potential for very hard lines but Rough Nose Direct on the Far East Boulder, the hardest problem on the crag, was probably first climbed by Dave Sutcliffe in the 2000s.

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The problems on Halton Bastion and the Due Imperi Block were recorded in 2014. Malcolm Townsley recorded most of the remainder of the problems on the upper crag in 2015 and 2016. Bryn Hoyle and Dave Prince documented the main circuit on the low edge in June 2016 with John Hunt adding some harder problems in September 2016 and Malcolm Townsley adding some fillers in and documenting the remaining problems on the Far East Boulder in 2018. The hardest problem on the Low edge, Total Skin and Belief, was climbed by John Hunt in September 2016.