

Bottoms Quarry, Tintwistle

by Paul Durkin

OS ref SK029973 alt. 180m

This gem of a quarry should be added to everybody's list of favourite places. It overlooks Bottoms Reservoir, the lowermost of five within the Woodhead Pass. The quarry comprises generally sound fine grained gritstone some 200m in length characterised by sharp edges and crack lines. The climbs vary in height from 5m to 15m. The majority of the rock gets lots of sun and is quick to dry out.

Conditions and aspect: Lots of sun throughout most of the day with only two faces losing the sun in the late morning – good for those roasting hot afternoons. The quarry faces south south east, and suffers only slight seepage. **Routes and bouldering:** 38 routes from Mod to E2, predominantly VS. No specific boulder problems but with a crash mat the smaller routes could be treated as such. Belays at the top of the routes are generally good providing cams are carried. **Parking and approach:** Vehicular access is from the A628(T) opposite Chapel Brow, Tintwistle. A tarmac road leads down the hill until after some 450m the quarry gate can be seen on the left - parking for 4 cars in a wide gateway on the right 15m past the quarry gate. Please be considerate as this gate provides access for a local angling club. Two minutes from car to the first climb. **Access:** The quarry is owned by United Utilities and you may be asked to leave – there is no agreement in place for climbers.



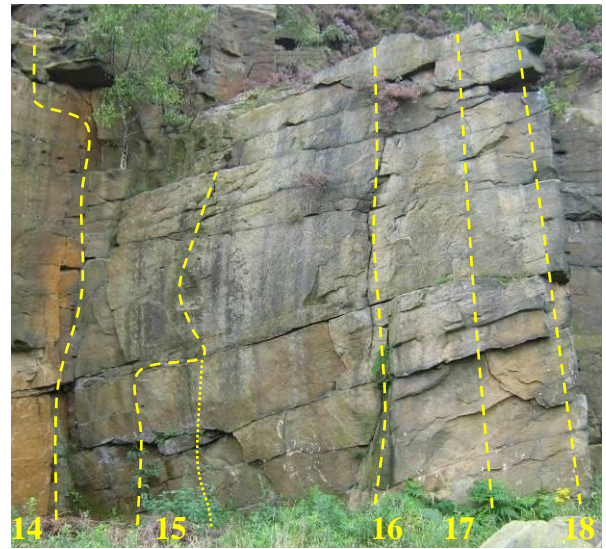
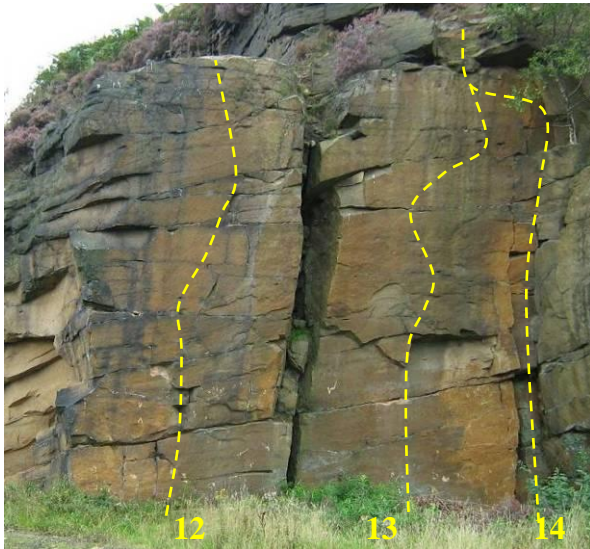
1. **Tottering Tower** VS 5a 2008
9m The left side of the arête through the aptly named top section. Tree belay 4m back.
2. **Bashful** VS 4c 2008
5m Start beneath the recess, directly to the top – better than it looks.
3. **Grumpy** VS 5a 2008
5m The middle of the wall very pleasantly to the top.
4. **Sneezy** VS 4c 2008
5m Start below the right slanting overhanging groove without deviation to the top.
5. **Sleepy** VS 4c 1960s
5m Start 2m right below a crack at 2/3rds height and head straight up.
6. **Doc** VS 4c 2008
5m At the right end of the black wall climb the left side of the arête.

The pocketed roof to the right provides entertainment for the gymnasts.

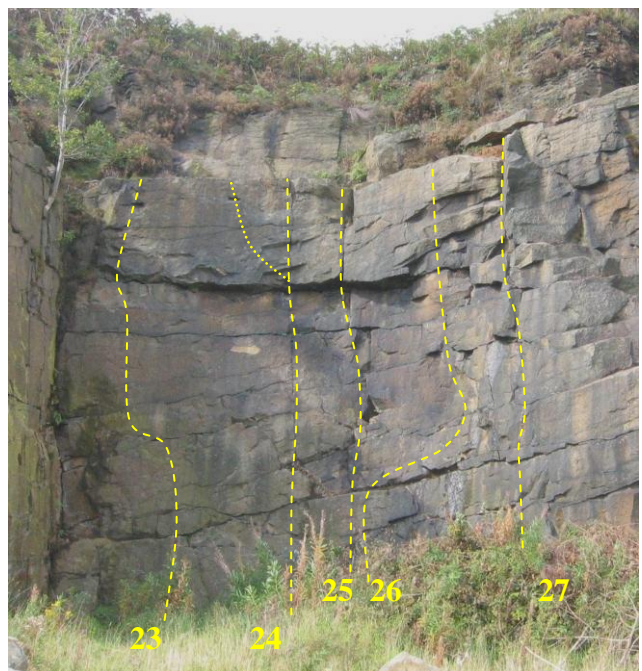
The five routes to the right of the descent route have little or no protection and are probably best soloed.



7. **Black Edge left Hand** Mod 1960s
5m The easy ledges immediately on the right to join the top part of the descent route.
8. **Black Edge** VS 5a 1960s
5m The overhanging arête immediately on the right of the descent route past an ancient iron hook.
9. **Yellow Wall** E1 5b 1960s
5m A quality problem - pull through the overhang on sharp pockets to good holds.
10. **Yellow Wall Right-hand** VS 4c 2008
7m Just right and 1m left of the right arête, pull through a slight groove in the overhanging wall.
11. **Quality Street** VS 4c * 1960s
7m The arête on its left side pleasantly to the top.
12. **Uranus** E2 5c * 2008
7m The centre of the steep wall, gain a sharp flake on the right before boldly launching either up, or, left via a small flake to gain the top.
13. **The Third Half** E2 6a 2008
8m The wall 5m right has only been top roped. Pass the 'tooth' to gain small edges then a l-o-n-g reach up and left. Move right to a pocket and finish between the overhanging blocks. Strenuous and sustained, easier for the long armed!
14. **Wren's Corner** VS 4c 2008
8m The corner just right - finish at the ledge on the right at HS, or, continue up and left to finish in an exciting airy position between two overhanging blocks.
15. **Battle of the Bulge** E2 5b * 2008
6m Start just right of the corner, move up and right before gaining a good hold, poor pockets and better holds above. For the tall the bottom section can be taken direct, reducing the route's strenuousness.
16. **Satisfaction Guaranteed** S 4b * 2007
7m The obvious crack 3m from the right arête just left of a large block.
17. **Betwixt and Between** VS 5a 2008
7m Between the crack and the arête climb the centre of the block and the wall above without recourse to the LH crack other than for protection. Give yourself an E1 tick without the protection.
18. **Waterloo Sunset** HS, 4b * 2007
7m Climb the arête pleasantly on its left side to the large ledge.

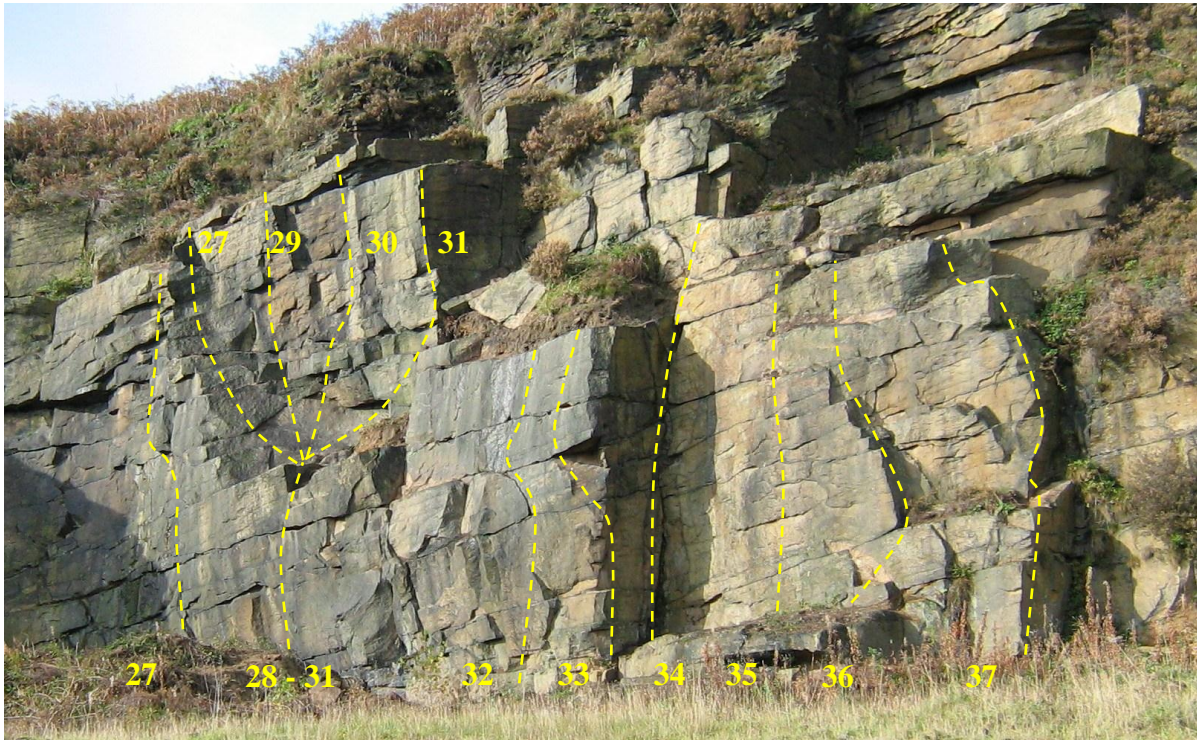


- 19. **Spike Arête** HVS 5b * 2008
7m Climb directly up the wall just right of the arête passing between two spikes to better holds.
- 20. **Autumn Almanac** VS 4c 2007
7m Starting 2m right of the arête climb the cracks and head for the notch in the top.
- 21. **Lola** VS 5a 2007
7m Start below and between two square holes, climb the cracks straight up and left.
- 22. **Ranger's Return** VS, 4c 2008
7m The wall 1m left of the corner heading for an oak tree near the top of the route.



- 23. **Parta the Strata** E1 5b * 2008
8m Attain a position on the detached(?) block, up to the break and then a pocket via the short arête.
- 24. **Letterbox Crack** HVS 5b 1995
8m Two metres right, pleasantly up the slab to the crack in the headwall. Go leftwards via a large pocket. Alternatively and slightly easier, make a tricky move up the crack to a good hold and the top.
- 25. **Postman's Craic** VS 4c 2008
8m Easy ledges beneath, and heading for, a niche at the top. A challenging finish for VS leaders.

26. **Magic Bramble** HVS 5a 2008
8m From the RH side of the ledge straight up and through the overlaps left of the corner.
27. **Sunny Delight** HVS 4c 2008
8m Good crack climbing up to the small left facing corner – sparse protection, better than it looks.



The next four routes start from the same ledge – gained at a square notch at S, continued above by:

28. **Hearts** S 2008
8m From the ledge go left on easy steps.
29. **Clubs** HS 4b 2008
8m The left side of the wall above gaining a pocket just before the top.
30. **Diamonds** VS 5a 2008
8m The white streak through the overhang and steep wall above. The short need not apply!
31. **Spades** S 4b 2008
8m Pleasantly up the right arête on good holds.
32. **Pinwheel** VS 4c 2008
6m The wall up to the curving flake and the crack above.
33. **Catherine Wheel** HVS 5b * 2008
6m The arête with a spike and pulley wheel on its left side - surprisingly strenuous.
34. **Aperitif** VS 4c 2008
7m The corner to the right.
35. **Entrée** HVS 5b 2008
6m The middle of the wall to the top.
36. **Simple Fare** D 2008
6m From the right end of the stone platform move easily up good ledges.
37. **Just Desert** D 2008
6m The arête via ledges.

At the far end of the quarry is a large 15m high section. The blocks over Damocles' Boulder are quite scary - notwithstanding this, the route was led to give one of the most enjoyable routes in the quarry.

38. Damocles' Boulders VS 5a * 2008

15m The corner until a move right to the arête can be made continuing easily up the blocks above.



First Ascents

- 1960s **Sleepy, Black Edge, Yellow Wall, Quality Street** Malcolm Baxter solo
- 1995 Feb **Letterbox Crack** Malcolm Baxter, Matthew Rhodes
- 2007 Oct **Lola** Paul Durkin, Malcolm Baxter, Matthew Rhodes
- Waterloo Sunset** Matthew Rhodes solo
- Autumn Almanac** Malcolm Baxter, Paul Durkin
- Satisfaction Guaranteed** Malcolm Baxter, Paul Durkin, Matthew Rhodes
- 2008 May **Uranus, Spike Arête** Paul Durkin, Malcolm Baxter
- 2008 June **Catherine Wheel** Paul Durkin, Malcolm Baxter
- Letterbox Crack** Malcolm Baxter, Paul Durkin Direct finish
- Rangers Return** Malcolm Baxter, Paul Durkin. *Named for a Park Ranger who asked what we were doing and 'did we know we shouldn't be there!'.*
- 2008 June **Betwixt and Between** Paul Durkin, Malcolm Baxter
- The Third Half** Rick Adderton top roped
- Yellow Wall Right-hand** Ian Johnson solo
- 2008 July **Parta the Strata** Malcolm Baxter, Paul Durkin *Malc led 90% of the route before expiring at a red herring finish involving a horrendous energy sapping under-cling. His second then led the route, climbing the finish just 0.5m left of Malc's titanic struggles after discovering a hitherto obscured small hold on the arête.*
- 2008 Aug **Sneezy, Doc, Tottering Tower, Magic Bramble** Paul Durkin, Malcolm Baxter. *Magic Bramble - named for the seemingly everlasting root pulled from a crack while cleaning.*
- Wrens Corner, Postman's Craic** Malcolm Baxter, Paul Durkin
- Bashful** Malcolm Baxter, Paul Durkin and Simon Royston
- Grumpy** Paul Durkin, Malcolm Baxter and Simon Royston
- Simple Fare** Malcolm Baxter solo
- 2008 Sept **Sunny Delight, Aperitif, Battle of the Bulge** Paul Durkin, Malcolm Baxter
- Pinwheel** Malcolm Baxter, Paul Durkin
- Entrée** Paul Durkin solo
- Just Desert** Malcolm Baxter solo
- 2008 Oct **Damocles' Boulders** Paul Durkin, Malcolm Baxter
- Diamonds** Malcolm Baxter, Paul Durkin
- Hearts** Malcolm Baxter solo
- Clubs, Spades** Paul Durkin solo