

WINTERBOURNE DOWN

Approach time: 15 mins

Aspect: North and West

As the river passes through Winterbourne Down and circumvents Bury Hill and its Iron Age Fort, some excellent natural buttresses of the best Frome sandstone are found on the rivers edge in very tranquil woodlands known locally as 'The Dingle'. Although they generally face north they are reasonably steep, take little seepage and so tend to stay in good condition for most of the year.

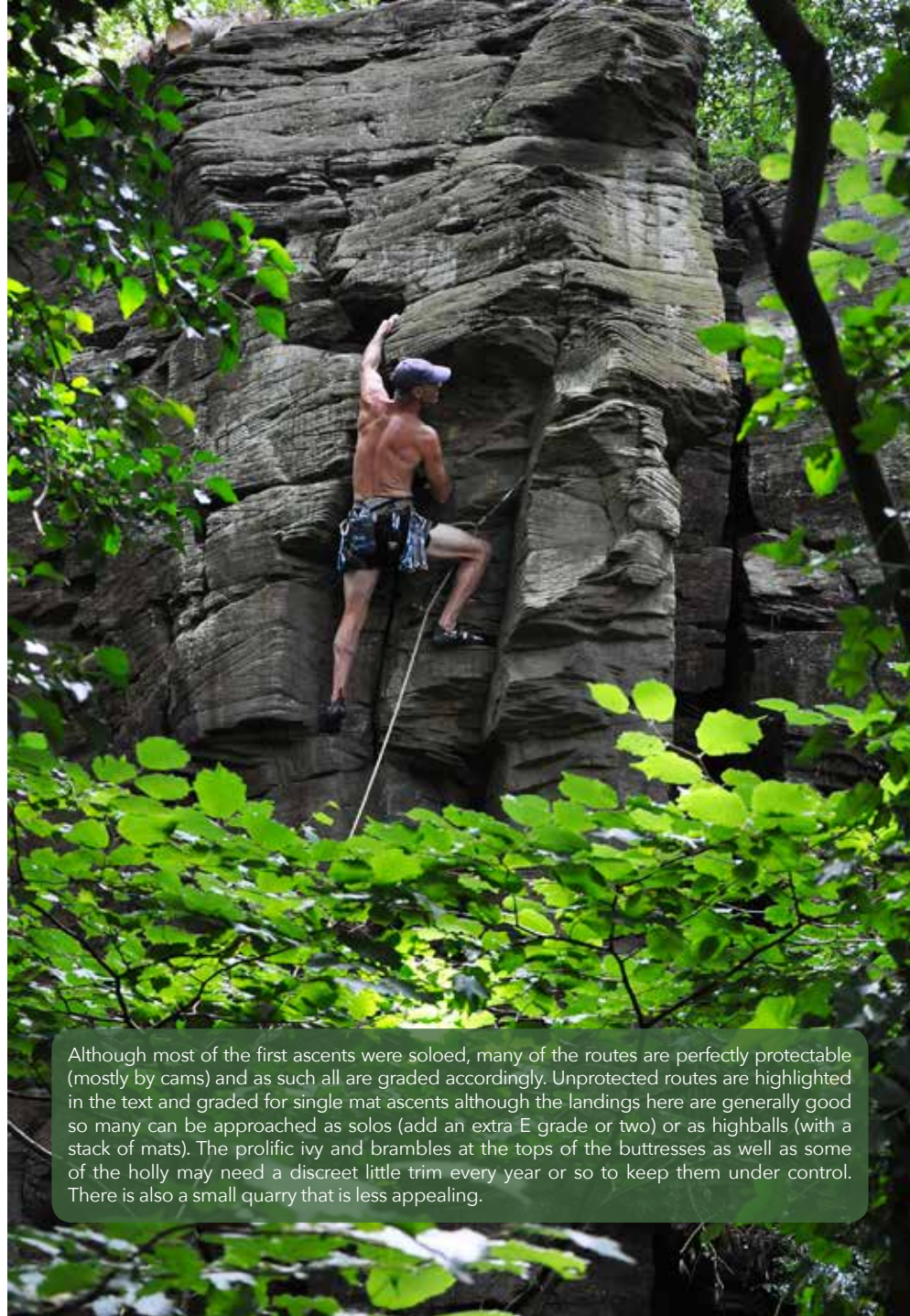


Perfect for feet cooling.

Unfortunately they also face directly into the peaceful south facing gardens and living rooms of residents on the other side of the river. **SENSITIVE ACCESS: The woodland is PRIVATE LAND and there is no formal agreement to climb here so it is imperative that only small, very discreet groups visit the crag and keep it free from litter and excessive chalk marks. Keep the power screams, profanities and general noise down and don't give the residents a reason to complain to the landowner.** Fortunately during the summer the foliage provides a reasonable visual screen if not a sonic one.

Park on Worrells Lane just next to the junction with Mill Lane or in the small parking area just over the bridge. From the parking area follow the wide public footpath eastwards beside the river. After 5 minutes a footbridge is reached, the public footpath crosses here but ignore this and continue along a less defined path. This is not a public right of way and can sometimes become a bit of an obstacle course of fallen trees. A further 5 minutes beyond the footbridge a small quarry is reached, this is Bluebell Quarry. A short distance further on, past a few small quarried walls and as the path becomes increasingly less distinct, the Riverside Edge is reached. The path terminates here (there is absolutely no access to the nearby lane from here).

*Paul Robertson on the good but hidden jug on **Release The Bats** (HVS).*



Although most of the first ascents were soloed, many of the routes are perfectly protectable (mostly by cams) and as such all are graded accordingly. Unprotected routes are highlighted in the text and graded for single mat ascents although the landings here are generally good so many can be approached as solos (add an extra E grade or two) or as highballs (with a stack of mats). The prolific ivy and brambles at the tops of the buttresses as well as some of the holly may need a discreet little trim every year or so to keep them under control. There is also a small quarry that is less appealing.

The Riverside Edge

The edge consists of seven dwarf buttresses of excellent rock, ranging from 5 to 10 metres in height. Described left to right.

Scoop Buttress

The first buttress right next to the river is 5 metres in height and gives some short problems. The top outs constitute the crux on the easier problems and can feel quite scary. On the far left is a gully.

First Arête f5+

The right arête of the gully. A sit start problem up the gully wall is **Gully Problem f5+**.
O Keynes 24.11.16

Kingfisher Crack f4+

The obvious wide crack.
O Keynes 24.11.16

The River Touched Me f5

The wall right of the crack.
M Davies 28.11.16

Kingfisher's Arête f5

The blunt left arête of the scoop.
O Keynes 24.11.16

Scoop de Disgrace f6A

The left side of the scoop avoiding the arête.
M J Crocker (solo) 20.3.99

Scoopy Doo f6C+

The centre of the scoop without the jugs on the right.
O Keynes 5.12.16

Disgrace de Scoop f5+

The right side of the scoop following the diagonal crack leftwards.
M J Crocker (solo) 20.3.99

Lip Traverse f6C+

Traverse (left to right) the lip of the scoop without use of the large foot ledge.

Chicken Wall f4+

The juggy wall to the right of the right arête with a crux top out.
M S Davies 23.7.14



Mark Davies on **Chicken Wall** (f4+).



Spring Onion Buttress

The next buttress is a little bit more substantial and hosts the three hardest routes at the crag. It's left wall overhangs by several metres.

1. Down By The Riverside E4 5c ★★

10m A spicy but protectable traverse - steep, airy and very pumpy. From the corner, climb up and right past a cam slot to gain a handrail below the roof. Follow this with escalating commitment all the way round to the right side of the arête and finish up this (as for *Spring Onion*).

M J Crocker (solo) 20.3.99

2. Ain't Gonna Study War No More

E5/6 6a ★

8m The leaning wall taken direct gives a super steep and serious route - the hardest route at the crag. Start at the arête and take the steep wall slightly leftwards past the cam slot on good spaced holds pulling directly through the roof to a small holly.

G X Percival, P Robertson 29.7.14



Guy Percival on **Down By The Riverside** (E4).

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3. Spring Onion Direct E4 6a (f6B) ★★

8m Boulder up the left side of the arête (small cam on right), then power through the very steep but protectable overhang on its left side.

R Stanfield 5.12.16

The original **Spring Onion E3 5c (f6A) ★** (*M J Crocker (solo) 20.3.99*) finishes less steeply on the right as for *Down by The Riverside*.

To the right there are two cracks. The wide, earthy left hand one is: **Wide Earthy Crack HS 4b 7m** whilst the right hand one is:

4. Bart The Tart HVS 5b (f5) ★

7m The steep, well protectable hand crack has one particularly hard move at half height - dead simple if you can jam!

D Brooks (solo) 1985

5. Flake Variation E1 5c (f5+) ★

7m Start right of the crack and make hard moves direct to gain a high flake crack. Finish direct on good flat holds. Protectable but really hard to stop and place anything.

D Brooks (solo) 1985

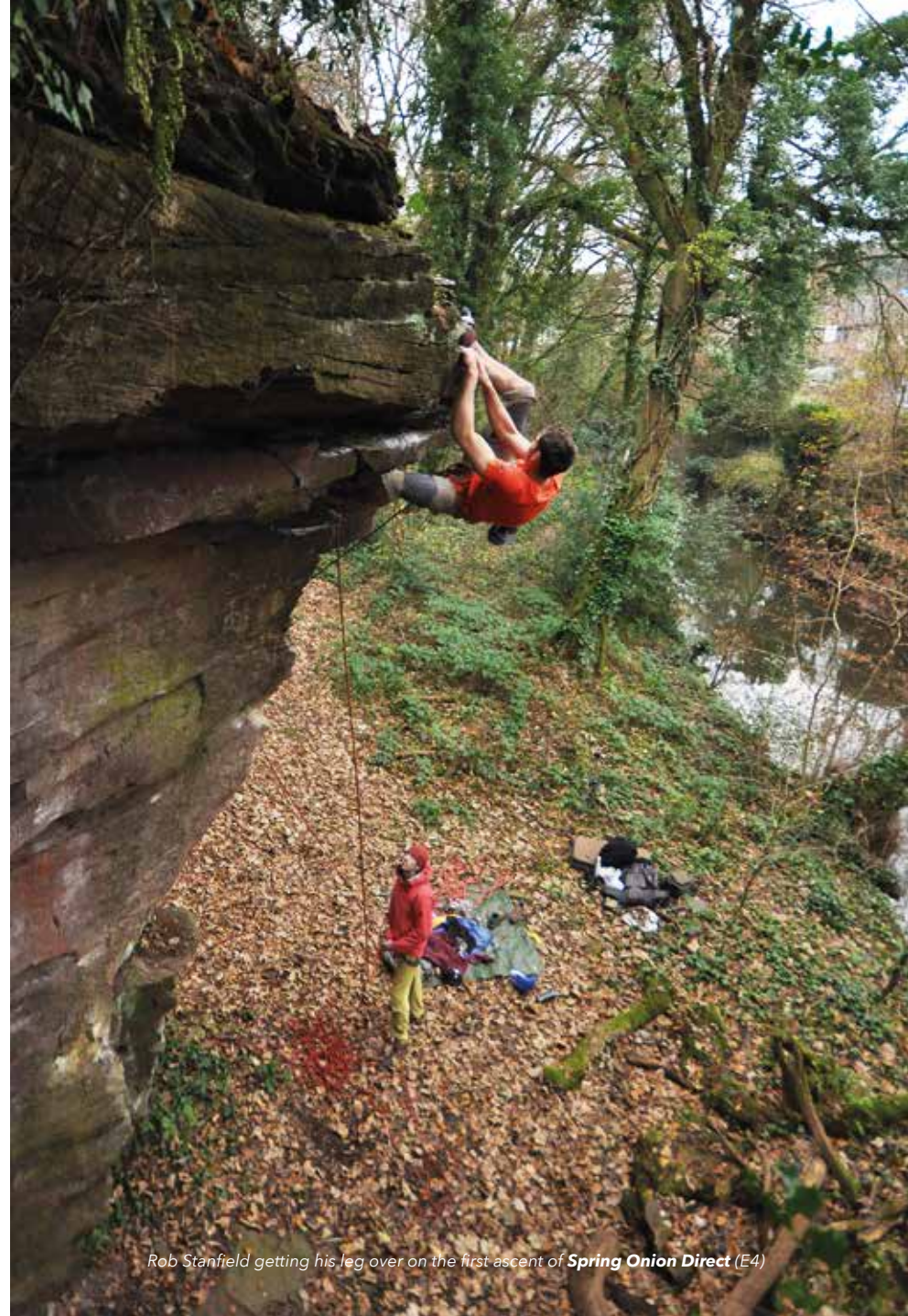
6. Quite Easy For Dwarfs E2 6a (f6A) ★

7m A short but hard problem up the right hand wall. Gain the ramp with difficulty and stretch for a big man made hold (slot for rafter?). Swing left to top out. From the ramp swinging left into *Flake Variation* to finish gives a great f6A combination.

P Hughes (solo) 1985



Guy Percival on **Flake Variation** (E1/ f5+)



Rob Stanfield getting his leg over on the first ascent of **Spring Onion Direct** (E4)



Scary Tune Buttress

The next buttress has a broad central stepped rib and a distinct left arête.

7. Tickle Me Up The Dingle VS 4c

8m The scruffy corner left of the arête.

M S Davies (solo) 23.7.14

8. A Scary Tune E1 5b (f5) ★★

9m A perfect little gritstonesque arête, more positive than it looks. Balance up to mid-height and a good cam just right, then continue balancing to the easier stepped finish, all with much pleasure.

D Brooks (solo) 1985

9. St Huck E3 5c (f5+) ★

9m Straight up the centre of the face. The crux is reaching the break (cam) at two thirds height. Finish up and left or direct.

D Brooks (solo) 1985

10. Waddy's Rabbit HS 4b

9m The twin cracked corner.

D Brooks (solo) 1985

11. Forest Air S 4b (f3+)

9m The stepped rib with a mild boulder problem start. The two variations are VD on the left side and HS 4b on the right side.

D Brooks (solo) 1985

The corner chimney is HS 4b.

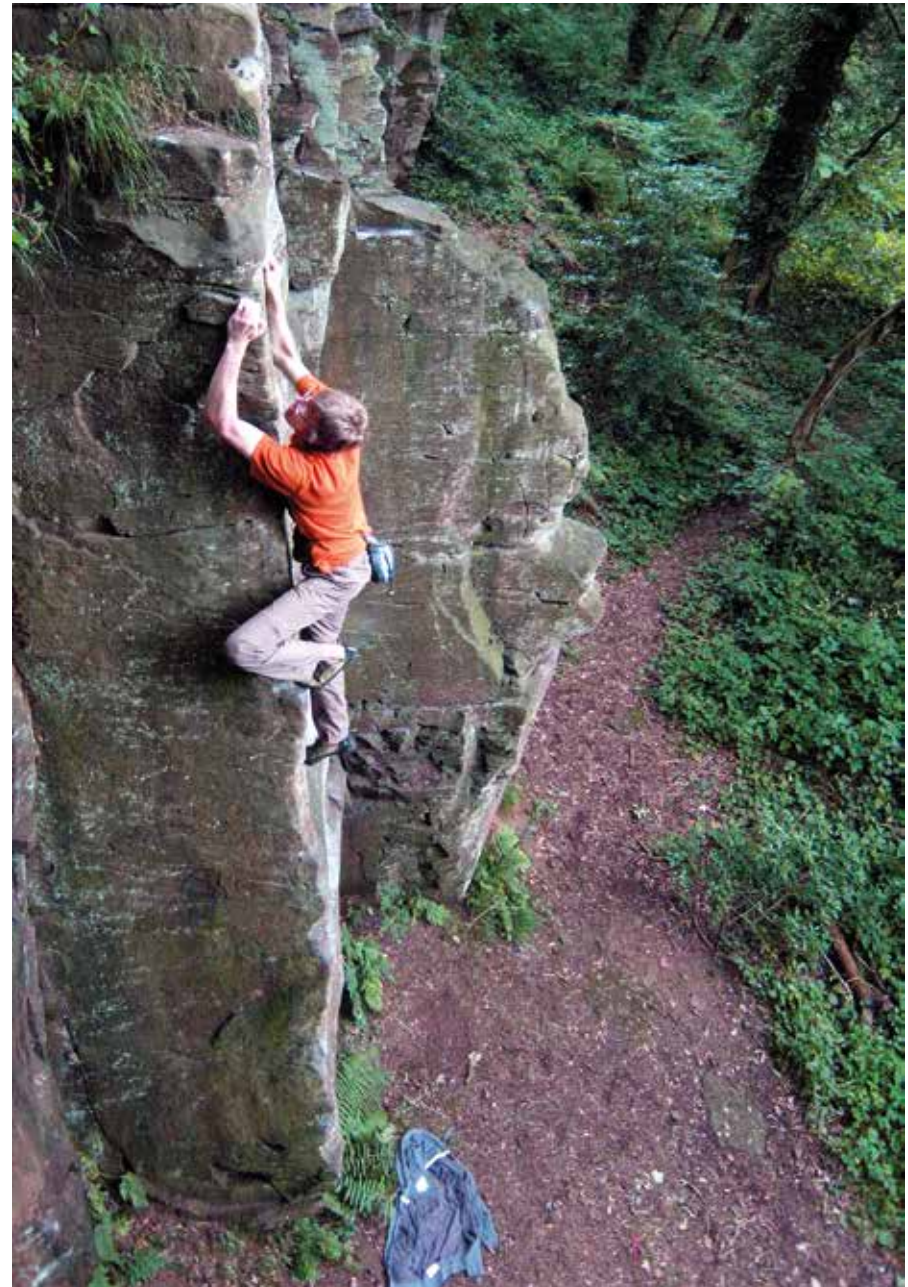
12. 6a Problem E3 5b (f5)

9m Not 6a!! Climb direct up the steep red face and left edge of the arête. Unprotectable and sustained but escapable near the top.

P Hughes, D Brooks (both solo) 1985

13. No Problem HS 4b

9m Up the groove and the right side of the arête.



Jack Bradbrook on A Scary Tune (E1/ f5)

Winch-a-ma-Bob Buttress

To the right is the largest but also easiest angled buttress at the crag.

14. Winch-a-ma-Bob VD ★

12m A good low grade outing on good rock but with an earthy exit. Climb an obvious crack and slab above to a ledge left of a holly. Traverse left along the ledge and finish up another crack.

M S Davies (solo) 23.7.14 (lower section climbed before)

15. Buckshee Mondays E1 5b

11m Boulder up the wall right of the crack onto the slab. Continue straight up the headwall with a tricky and fairly bold mantelshelf top out (big cam placement deep in the break).

R Stanfield, M S Davies 5.12.16

The initial wall of *Buckshee Mondays* was originally climbed as **5b Problem (f5)** (*P Hughes D Brooks (both solo) 1985*) finishing down the start of *Winch-a-ma-Bob*.

Pigbag Buttress

The fine rectangular buttress immediately right is the jewel in Winterbourne's (and probably Frome valley's) crown, like a tiny chunk of imported Stanage. An enticing, gently overhanging red wall with 5 routes making the most of its appealing perky pennant holds.

16. And The Native Hipsters E1 5a

11m Bridge up the obvious V-groove for four metres, then move right onto the face to climb a disjointed crack to a small capping roof. Traverse right under the roof and pull out at its end.

M S Davies, J Bradbrook 16.7.14

17. Pigbag E1 5a/b ★★

10m The centre of the steep clean wall is hard to resist and rightly so - positive and pumpy, no hard moves but all quite satisfyingly uphill. Gain ledges just left of centre then crank right to the obvious cam slot. Continue cranking through the bulge to gain the upper flake out right and a careful finish.

P Hughes (solo) 1985



18. A Certain Ratio E2 5b ★★

10m A fine climb just right, slightly escapable but distinctly elegant and enjoyable. Boulder through the niche to gain the cam slot of *Pigbag* direct, then continue up the rib to gain the neat slab and finishing mantle. Take plenty of cams as the slots keep coming.

M S Davies, O Keynes 28.11.16

19. Release The Bats HVS 5a ★★

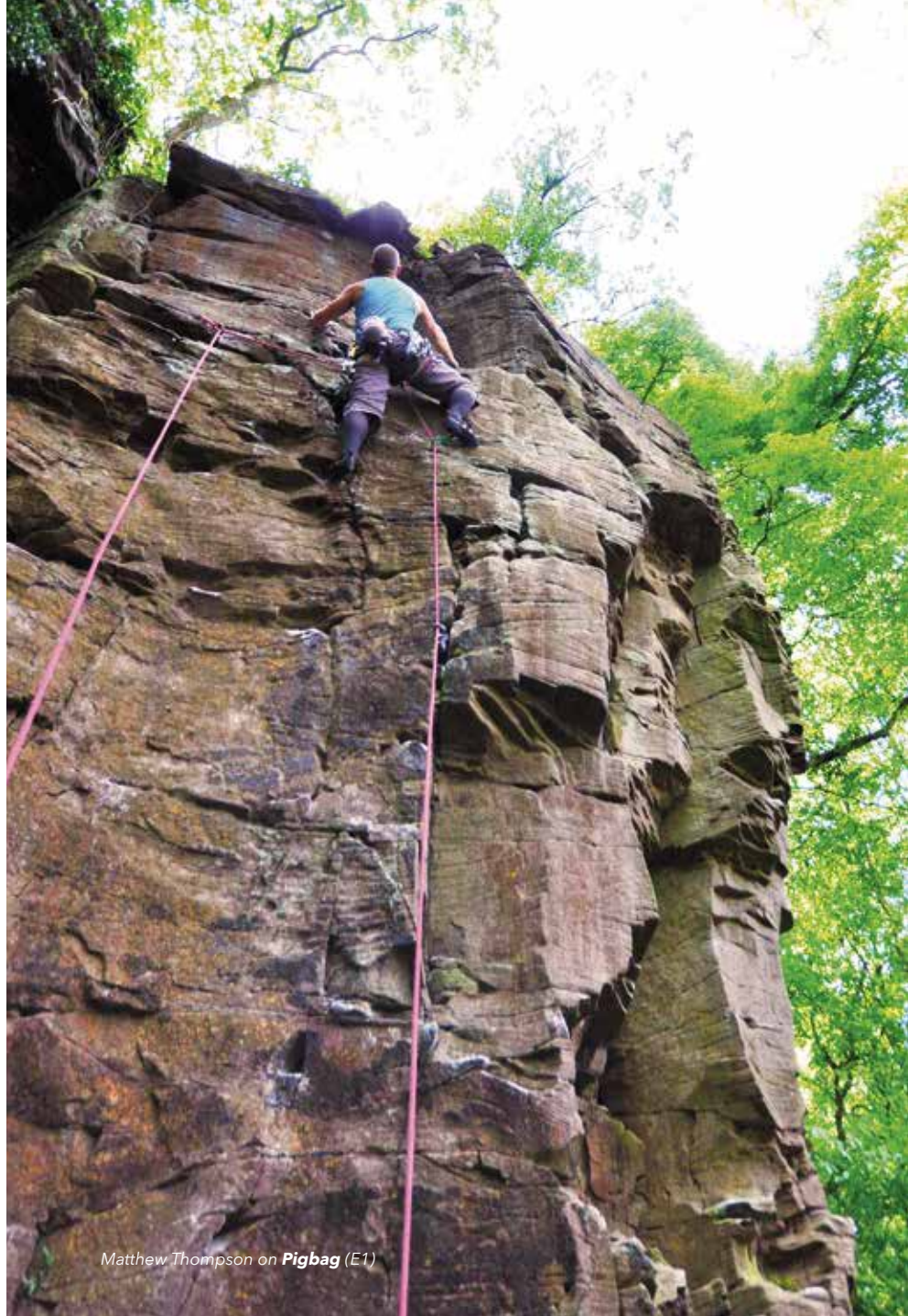
10m Another great little route with good protection on the steep bits and a delicately airy finish. High in the grade. Start just left of the arête. Climb into a niche and bridge up past good wire placements to a small roof. Reach up left above the roof for a good but hidden jug and use this to swing right onto the arête. A few bold balancey moves up the arête gives a really nice finish.

P Hughes (solo) 1985

20. Feed The Ducks E2 5b ★

10m The arête climbed direct is a little eliminate to start but again very worthwhile with good climbing. Gain the nose direct and a crucial finger crack round to the right (offset wire useful). Continue straight through the bulge via varied features and funky postures to finish on *Release The Bats*.

M J Crocker (solo) 20.3.99



Matthew Thompson on Pigbag (E1)



Push Button Buttress

Right again is a big jagged prow. The next three routes start by clambering up leftwards onto a ledge in a corner.

21. Another Fix S 4a

7m From the ledge, climb the column in the corner on the left. Trickier than it looks.

G X Percival (solo) 19.6.01

22. Don't Blink HVS 5b

7m From the ledge move up to a good pocket (small cam and/or medium wire) and make a couple of hard moves slightly rightwards up the wall right of the corner.

M S Davies (solo) 30.7.14

23. Feed The Habit E2 5c ★

8m From the ledge move up to place the small cam and/or medium wire in the high pocket, then step back down to the ledge. Using a triangular pocket span up and rightwards with difficulty for flat holds and then make another hard move up left to a good hold and cam slot. Another hard move gains the top and careful mantle finish.

G X Percival (solo) 19.6.01

24. Push Button Control E1 5c ★

8m The overhanging prow gives powerful and protectable climbing on big holds although a few of them are hollow and rattling. From directly underneath the prow power through an initial roof with difficulty (crux) then easier but steep climbing leads to the top past several wire cracks.

P Hughes (solo) 1985

The right side of the buttress is even steeper.

25. Thunder's a'Coming E2 5b

8m Starting on the right, move up to a good slot (cam) then stride left and climb the right side of the prow steeply but on big holds.

M J Crocker (solo) 1.8.01

26. Spanish Plume HVS 5b

6m Start as for *Thunder's a'Coming* but take a direct line to the top avoiding the easy ramp to the right.

M S Davies (solo) 22.7.14

Perfect Crime Buttress

To the right is a nice final little wall. The top out is ivy covered and sloping so a pre placed rope at the top is quite a good idea!



27. Sandstone Junkie VS 4c

6m Start just right of the gully and take a direct line on big flat holds. A cam slot at $\frac{3}{4}$ height protects the crux. Finish rightwards.

G X Percival (solo) 19.6.01

28. The Perfect Crime HVS 5a

6m Straight up the centre of the face past a good small cam slot in an oval pocket at $\frac{2}{3}$ height.

D Brooks (solo) 1985

29. Last Minute Derision HVS 5b

6m An eliminate up the right side of the face avoiding using the big holds on the arête. Good micro wires protect. Finish leftwards. The arête itself can be climbed at severe.

M S Davies (solo) 18.7.14



Mark Davies is committing The Perfect Crime (HVS)

Mark Davies on **The Pits** (f5+)

Bluebell Quarry

Just under a hundred metres downstream is Bluebell Quarry. Compared to The Riverside Edge the quarry is disappointing - the rock here can be fragile in places although the routes are not totally without interest.

Just before the quarry is reached there are a few small walls with a handful of boulder problems. In the obvious pit there is a 4 metre high wall.

The Pit

Pit Rib (SS) f6A+

The rib on the left edge of the wall.
M S Davies 25.6.14 / O Keynes 5.12.16

Pit Wall Left (SS) f5

Start on a low flat hold on the left and follow the crimps rightwards up the left edge of the wall.
M S Davies 7.12.16

The Pits f5+

The centre of the wall is good and has a tricky start, even more so if a sit start on the

low crimps left of centre is made, bumping the grade up to **f6B**.

M S Davies 25.6.14. Sit start O Keynes 5.12.16

Pit Wall Right f4

The easy line on the right edge of the wall.
M S Davies 7.12.16

Up and right of the pit is another small wall mostly covered in moss and ivy.

Soggy Bottom (SS) f6A

Take the clean section of wall on good holds, topping out to the right of a sapling.

C Bonner 3.12.16



Chris Bonner on the FA of **Soggy Bottom** (f6A)
photo: Chris Bonner



The first route in the quarry proper takes the left edge of the short clean wall on the left.

30. Lucky Slimz S

9m Climb the wall to a big ledge, step right and climb the shorter wall to the top.

C Bonner 3.12.16

31. Ip Man E1 5c

9m Start in the centre of the wall below a slot. Climb past the slot and make a difficult mantle onto a small ledge (crux). Gain the big ledge then amble up the easy wall behind.

B Mullan, M S Davies 25.6.14

32. Foxglove Crack HS 4c

9m The staggered crack just right via a small ledge has a tricky start.

R S King, J King, P Johnson 1984

33. Bobby's Climb HVS 5a

8m Climb the right facing corner then pull leftwards through the overhang. Step back right to gain the crack to finish.

R S King, J King, P Johnson 1984

34. The Anxiety of Progress E3 5c

8m Start 2 metres right of *Bobby's Climb*. Move up to the right side of the overhang and make powerful moves rightwards through it to gain a scoop. Move up and right to a horizontal slot (small cam and/or sideways rock 4) then using small crimps up

left, rock up leftwards onto a big foothold and then straight up to a blocky finish.

M S Davies, B Mullan 25.6.14

35. The Bluebell Line E1 5a/b

8m Start 2 metres right of the grubby corner. Move up and right on big flat holds to gain a peg under a small overhang. Climb direct via a small arête. Pumpy with long reaches between big sloping holds.

M S Davies, B Mullan 25.6.14

(top roped R S King, J King, P Johnson 1984).

36. The Playout (aka Golden Bluebell E3 5c

8m Start below the roof bounded on the right by the sharp arête. Climb up to the roof using the thin crack (good medium wires) then attack the upper wall with good holds coming after a few strenuous pulls, Finish easily up the groove on the left.

G X Percival 27.7.14 (top roped R S King, J King, P Johnson 1984).

37. Three Witches HS 4b

8m The cracked wall just right of the arête.

O Keynes, M S Davies 30.11.16

There are several little walls in the quarry that give some bouldering. The most obvious is a small wall and arête high up on the right. The wall is **Five Metre Wall** and can be climbed several ways at **f4**, topping out rightwards. The arête is **Five Metre Arête** which is **f4** on it's left side and **f3** on it's right.

BURY HILL WEST**Approach time: 1-10 mins****Aspect: Mainly West**

On the west side of Bury Hill just above and due south of the car parking spot are a few scattered bluffs and a quarry. They don't really add up to much but they are in a nice elevated position and catch some sun later on in the day during the winter and spring. A short distance up the track to the main riverside buttresses a few morsels of good rock can be seen on the skyline.

1. Glad Eye VS 4c

6m The centre of the left-hand morsel. A wire slot protects the awkward crux moves up left onto the slab. Top out by the tree

M S Davies, G X Percival 6.7.14

2. Frome Goggles (SS) f5+

The small roof/nose 10 metres to the right.

M S Davies 2015

On the corner directly above the parking spot are the remains of a quarry. One small leaning, graffiti covered wall gives a few problems with one worth a description.

3. Why'd You Only Call Me When You're High? (SS) f6A+

The centre of the wall with a dyno for the top

A Holder 18.6.16

A few small bits of rock continue southwards along the edge of the hill and after 75 metres there is a nice little overhanging bluff, known as **The Cellar**. It's great for just pottering about up to about 5b (f5) and a really nice spot on a sunny winter's afternoon.

Camp Quarry

At the south west end of Bury Hill and cut into the west side of the Iron Age Fort is a quarry that is now home to a paddock and stables. Many years ago the quarry was very deep and filled with sandstone stained water. Known locally as Redpool it was a favourite spot for youths to go diving and swimming. A handful of routes have been recorded in the southernmost section of the

quarry (that is separate from the paddock) accessed from the public footpath that leaves the road a short distance south from the parking spot and crosses the hill behind the quarry.

The quarry and paddock are obviously private land and there is currently no agreement to climb here. The following information is included as an historic record only.

At the back of the paddock is a perfectly formed micro arête.

4. Triumphant Angel f6B+ ★

A superb one off. Climb from a sidepull and a small hold to a sloping top out. Harder for the short.

R Bath 22.7.08

A small, hidden slab of good rock on the far right gives a clutch of excellent solos.

5. Brecher's Brook E1 5c

6m Take the shortest section of slab starting just to the right of a steep earthy slope. Climb through the tree to finish or dismount onto the slope on the left.

G X Percival 1.12.14

6. Horseplay E3 6b ★

7m Climb through the centre of the low wide roof making a desperate stretch right for jugs just out of reach. Finish easily. The crux move is about f6c.

G X Percival 1.12.14

7. The Horse Whisperer E5 6b ★

8m Climb through the right side of the roof on small holds then tackle the slab above which is initially still thin.

G X Percival 1.12.14

8. Shush E2 5b ★

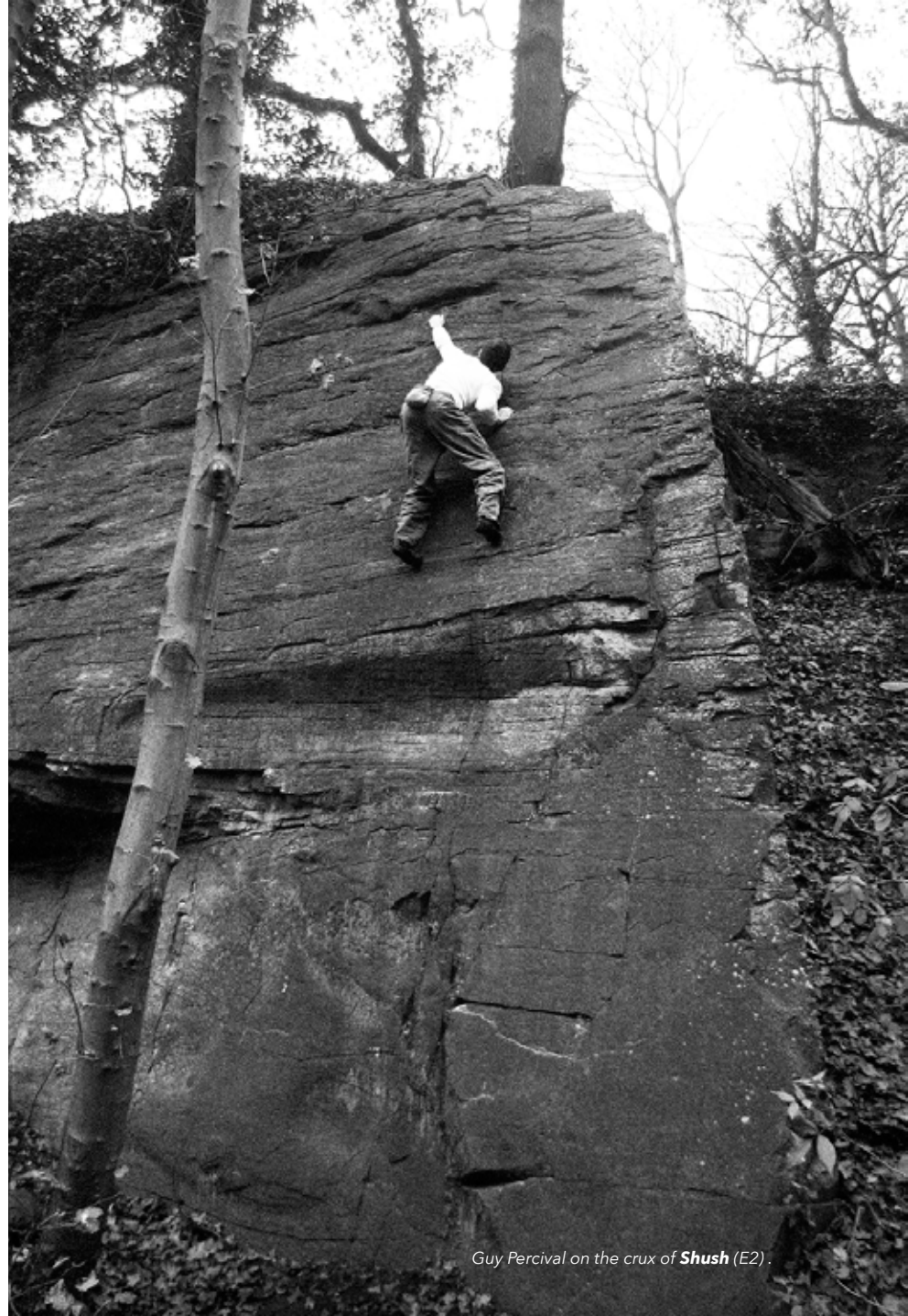
8m A direct line between the right end of the roof and the arête, started by following a thin crack. The crux is at mid height.

M S Davies, G X Percival 1.12.14

9. Hidden Arête HS 4a ★

8m The excellent arête.

R Bath 22.7.08



Guy Percival on the crux of **Shush** (E2).