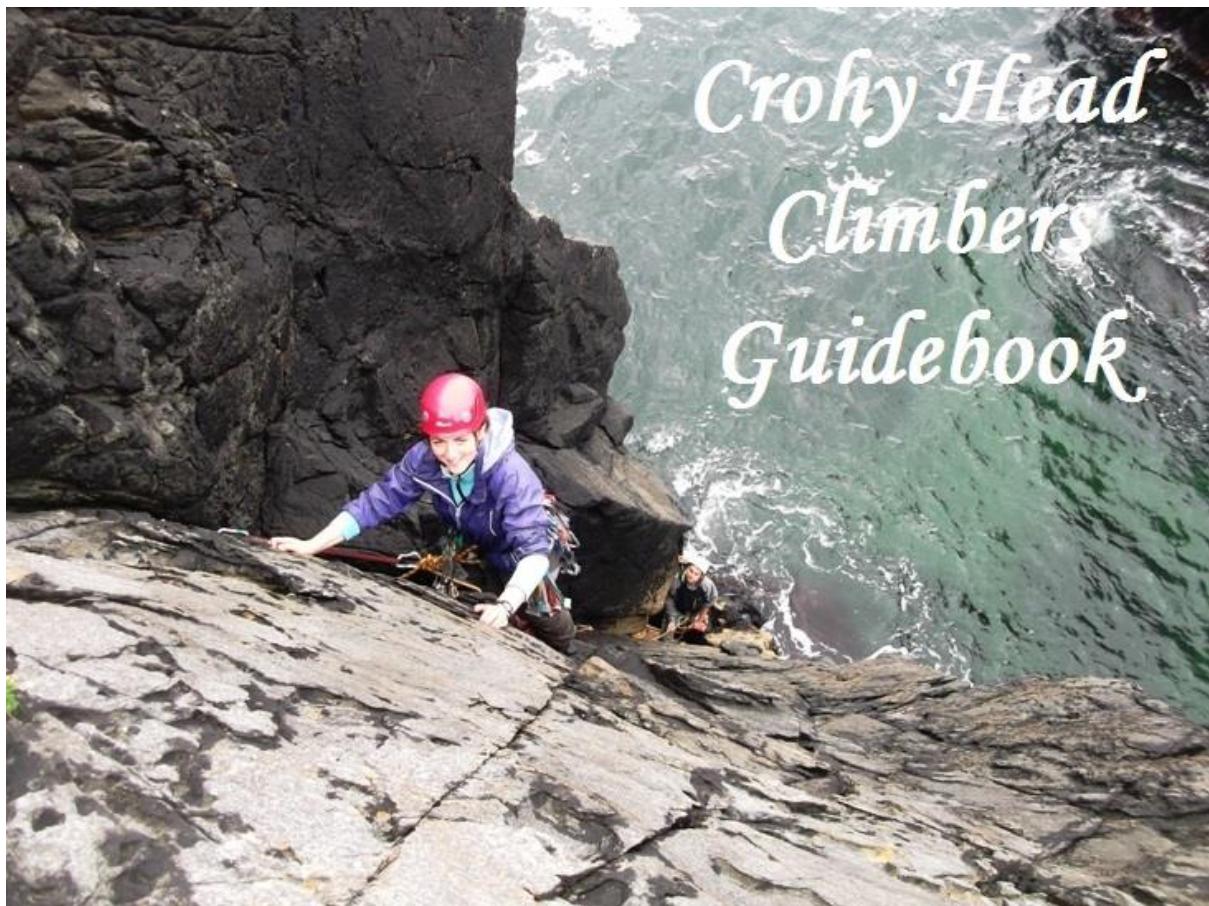


A Climbers Guide to  
**Crohy Head**

By  
**Iain miller & Hugh Boyle**



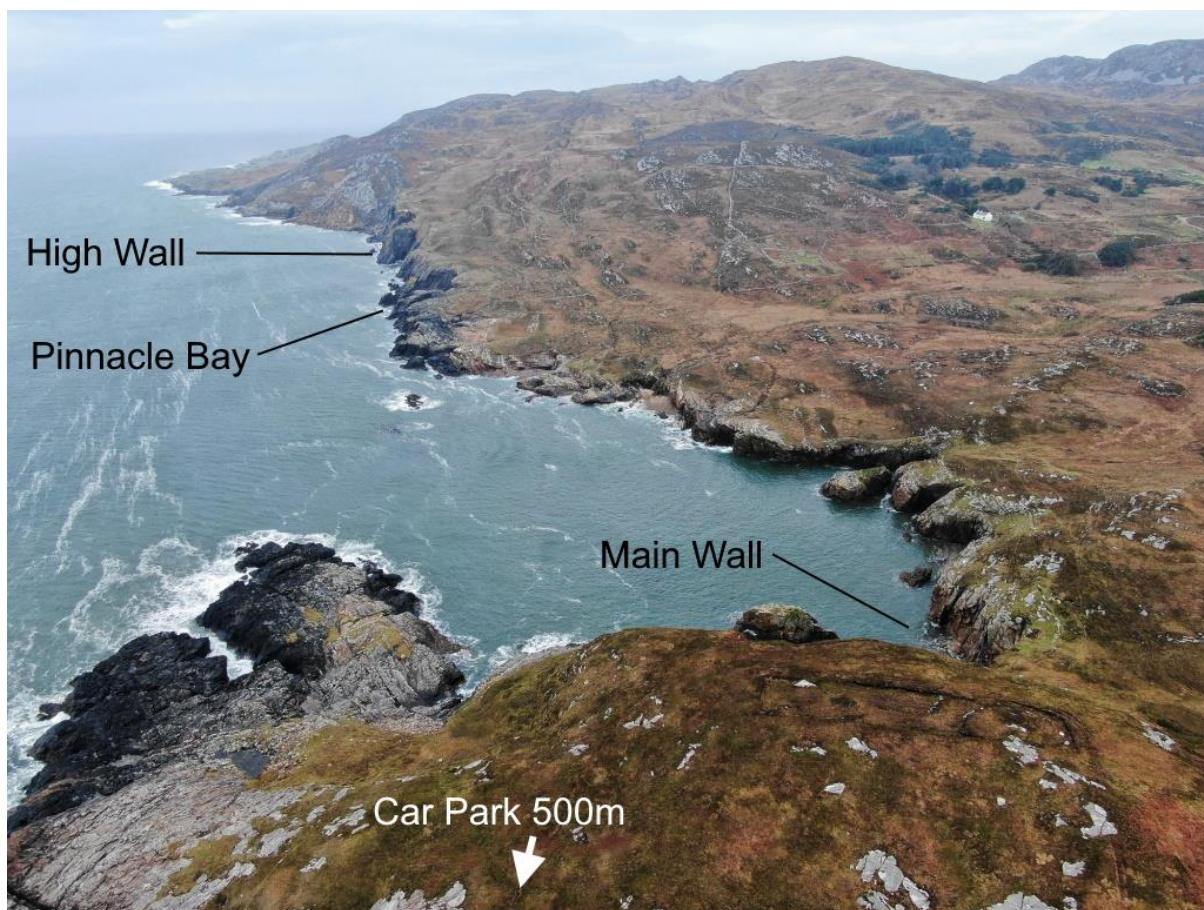
## Crohy Head South

These sea cliffs are found on the lonely stretch of coast running down the west coast of the Mullaghmullan peninsula approx 5km to the south of Crohy Head. There are three main climbing areas on this exposed coastline with the main face being approx 600m from the carpark and providing an excellent selection of corner cracks and face climbing. This main face is tidal and has a nautical approach two hours either side of high tide. Another 500m further along the coast there is a 100m long, 15m high slab of rock. The bays at either end of this 100m slab, a collection of excellent routes have been recorded.

This stretch of coast is very exposed to south west through to north west Atlantic sea motion and any swell over 2m between these directions makes this location dangerous and unclimbable. The nearest alternative climbing locations are [Cruit Island](#), [Owey Island](#), [Gweedore](#) and [Gola Island](#).

Directions: From Dunglow main street take the coast road out of the town towards Maghery Village. This road is to the left of the Bank of Ireland as you approach the main street from the roundabout on the N56 Crolly to Glenties road and is poorly signposted. Once on this road follow it for 2.5KM and take the road at the T junction sign posted for Meenacross, follow this road for approx 5KM until you come to a crossroads. Turn left here and follow the coast for approx 2KM to a small jetty at the end of the road

[Crohy Head South car park google Maps pin](#) Map ref: B742052



Crohy Head South Map

## The Main Wall

From the small car park at the pier, walk along the coast for about ten minutes (about 500m) until the coast sweeps back into a large sheltered bay, the main crag sits at the back corner of this bay. Walk round the bay and descend by the steep steps down the black rock just before the second smaller bay.

### Google Maps pin for the Main Wall

The Gourmet S 4a 18m

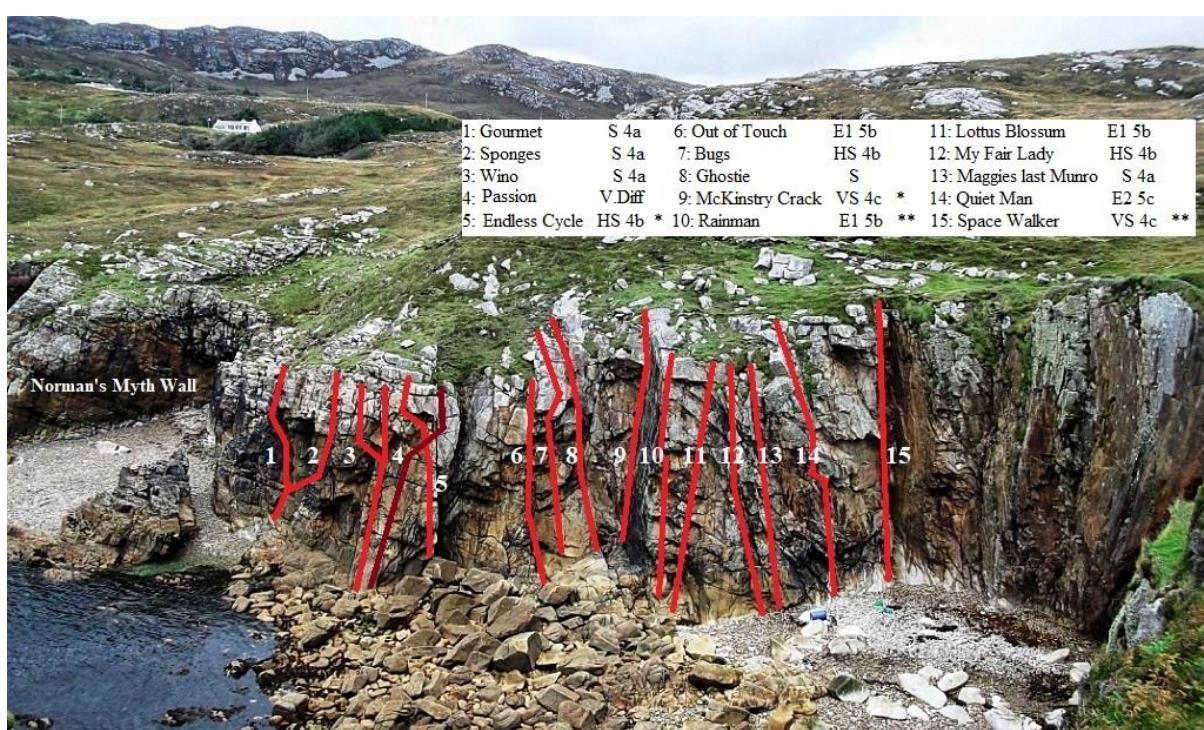
Start at the foot of the descent steps, about 2m right of the quartz vein. Climb easily up below the roof to the niche. Climb up right-hand side of roof and slabs to the top.

*D. Howard, H. Williamson*

Sponges S 4a 18m

Start as for The Gourmet, move right after 2m and up the left side of the undercut nose of rock to the right. Gain the nose and climb the wall above to the top.

*D. Stelfox, W. Brown-Kerr 28/07/84*



Main Wall topo

Wino S 4a 18m

Start about 4m right of The Gourmet, right of the undercut nose. Follow a broad groove/crackline with the option of finishing on the left or straight up.

*J. Kerr, L. Marshall April 76*

Passion V.Diff 18m

Start at the foot of the slabby wall, capped by an overhang, to the right of Wino. Climb the wall moving right under the roof to finish up a ramp on the right of the roof.

*M. Field and Party*

Endless Cycle HS 4b 18m \*

Start on the large boulder 3m right of Passion and directly below a large jutting roof. Climb up and turn the roof on the left. Go directly up and where Passion goes right, go left under the juggy block, and finish up a superb juggy overhang.

*I. Rea, M. Rea 01/10/89*

Out of Touch E1 5b 15m

Start 1.5m left of Bugs. Climb straight up to a double stepped roof. Turn this on the right on small holds and undercuts, and go up slightly left under another roof. Make a long step and reach left to turn this and finish straight up.

*I. Rea, M. Rea 01/10/89*

Bugs HS 4b 15m

Route follows the left-hand crack of the wall, with the crux at the second overlap.

*A. McQuoid, R. Armstrong 1976*

Ghostie S 18m

The route follows the right-hand of the two cracks

*M. Oakley, M. Field*

McKinstry's Crack VS 4c 18m \*

This route follows the obvious corner bounded on the right by a smooth black wall. Follow the corner through two overlaps to the top. Climbing is sustained throughout but protection is excellent. Crux is first overlap.

*A. McKinstry, P. McGuckin April 76 (HS +A1) FFA D Stelfox 09/03/85*

Littoral Manoeuvres E2 5b 18m \*

A steep and sustained line on the large face between 'McKinstry's Crack' and 'Rainman', it has a definite crux in the lower part but interest never wains.

*P. Cooper, A. Tees 04/08/08*

Rainman E1 5b 18m \*\*

At the foot of the arete, right of McKinstry's Crack pull up right onto a slab. Up this onto an orange niche. Step out left and climb the black wall and arete to the top.

*I. Rea, M. Rea 28/03/89*

Lotus Blossom E1 5b 20m

Start in the alcove down and immediately right of Rainman. Layback up and continue over a series of bulges. The crux is moving right at the biggest bulge. Finish trending right.

*I. Rea, M. Rea 28/03/89*

My Fair Lady HS 4b 20m

Start right of McKinstry's Crack is a broad buttress curving round to form a corner at the back wall of the cove (Space Walker). Approximately in the centre of the buttress is a groove crack line with a bulge at half height. Rather dirty towards the top.

*A. McKinstry April 76*

Maggie's Last Munro S 4a 12m

One metre right of "My Fair Lady" smear up to reach a rough rib and continue on poorish gear to a large block, and finish (probably) as for the above.

*Alan & Andrew Tees 15/04/04*

Quiet Earth E2 5c 20m

Start 3m left of Space Walker below a small roof a metre or so above the ground. Go over the roof and climb a left-facing groove to a roof. Undercut rightwards for 1.5m and pull over a roof to gain a good resting spot on a foothold and projecting block. Climb delicately leftwards across a slab and finish up the left arete.

*I. Rea, M. Rea 01/10/89*

Space Walker VS 4c 25m \*\*

The obvious broad corner at the junction between the last buttress and the rotten back wall. Often wet as it is a natural drainage line. Again the route is rather dirty towards the top.

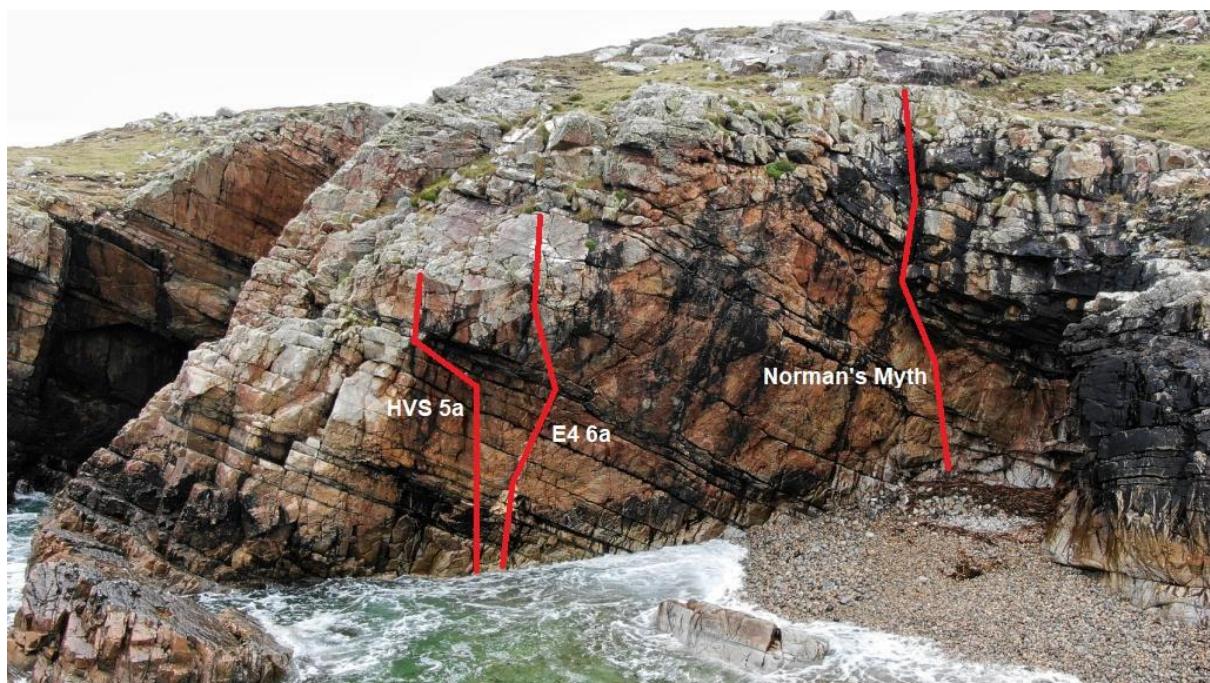
*A. McKinstry Sept 76 FFA H. Boyle, M. Sweeney 2003*

The next routes are described from left to right looking at the crag and start with 'Norman's Myth' which is to the left of the descent steps.

Norman's Myth HVS (A1) 15m

Start at the overhanging crack/corner left of the cave, using aid to get over the roof.

*A. Saunders, N. Smyth 13/02/77*



At the sea ward end of the steep wall left of Norman's Myth lives the following two routes.

The Corner HVS 5a 10m

Climb direct up to the centre of the black roof exit stage left

Un Named E4 6a 10m

Climb the steep wall immediately right of the roof

*R. Fenlon*

Jaws S 10m

On the left-hand side of the short wall below the descent steps. Up left-hand side of the wall. Move left across lowest edge of the cave lip to impending wall. Continue to traverse left, then up to the top.

*D. Howard, N. Parker*

North Side of Main Crag, beyond descent steps and left of the cave is a long steep wall. Around the seaward side of this is a huge easy angled slab, with a dirty corner at its left-hand side. The next two routes are on this slab and many variations are possible.

Rambler Diff 24m

Follow a line up the left-hand side of the slabs about 5m out from the left-hand corner.

Rockhopper Diff 23m

Up broken rock at the right-hand side to gain edge of slab. Follow right-hand side of slab to the top.

### **Red Wall Area**

North of the Main Wall Area a rock tower with a reddish coloured seaward face can be found. Routes are left to right.

Ripple HS 4b 15m

The arete left of Sunshine Corner, starting at it's base, beginning gymnastically over a bulge but easing off with a left-trending finish at the top.

*I Rea, M Rea 28/03/89*

Sunshine Corner V.Diff 15m \*

Route follows the obvious deep corner to the left of Retreat. Move right at the top to avoid some loose rock.

*A. McKinstry, P. Mangkin*

Muscles to Start S 12m

Start 3m right of Sunshine Corner at a slight bulge follow the crack that trends left to the top.

Retreat V.Diff 15m

One of the many variations possible up wall left of Red Wall. This one follows an obvious corner line about 4m left.

*A. McKinstry*

Red Wall S 12m \*

Left of the slab is a dark overhanging corner, with some possibilities, and left again a tower of rock with a reddish coloured seaward face. Route climbs the obvious line up the front of the tower.

*M. Field, M. Oakley*

### **Pinnacle Wall Area**

Approx 500 meters North of the Main Crag, as the ground begins to rise towards the dominating headland, at the southern end of a 100 meter long slab, there is a black wall with a pinnacle attached. Pinnacle Wall is the North West facing steep wall of excellent black rock, to which the pinnacle is connected.

#### **Google Map pin Pinnacle Wall Area**

Access is gained by heading towards and then past the top of Pinnacle Wall a descent ramp on the seaward side of the pinnacle.

The following two routes are on the landward facing wall of the pinnacle.

Johnny's Crack Diff 14m \*

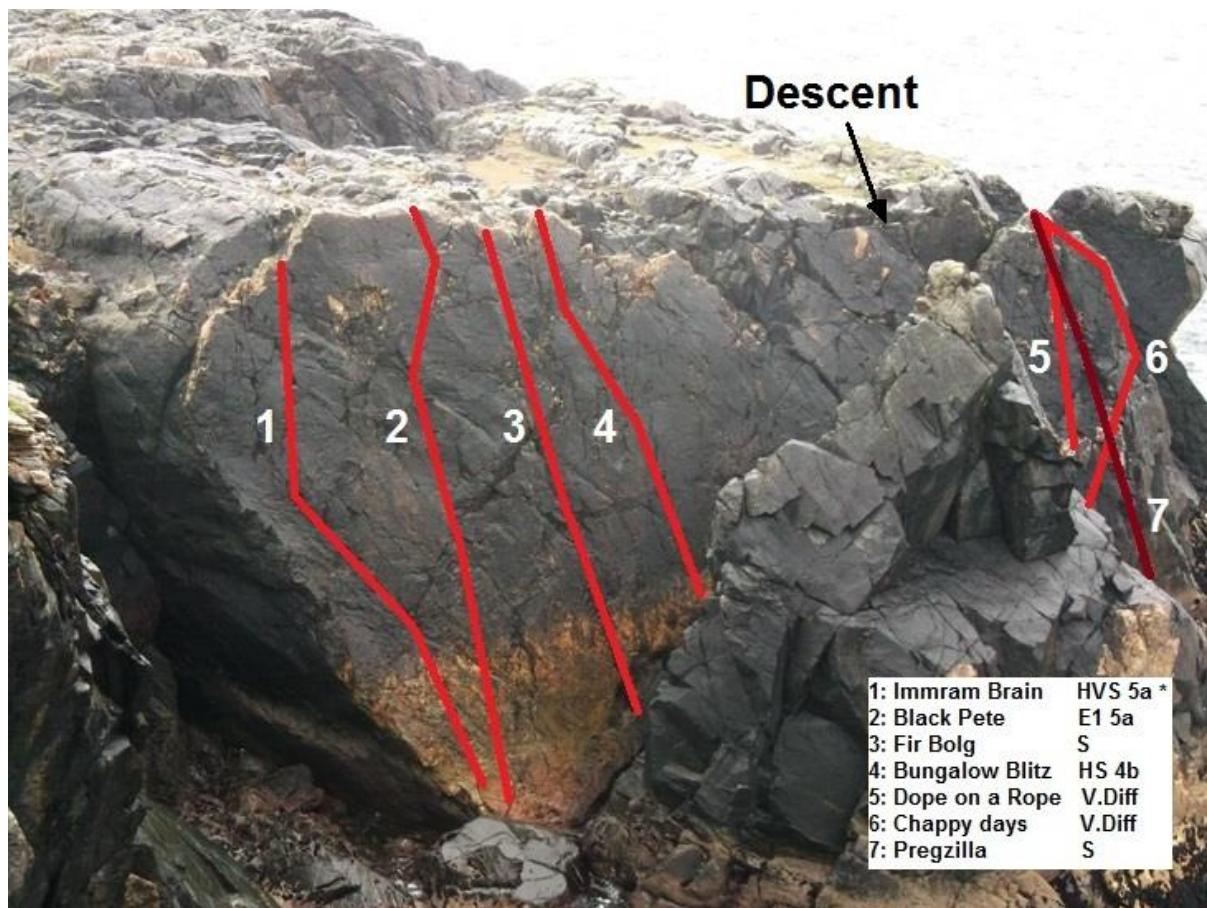
The wide crack on the left of the pinnacle (facing it). Climb the wide crack to a ledge on the ridge and follow this to the top and belay on summit.

*J Sweeney, M Sweeney*

Pinniclis S 12m

The thin crack up the centre of the pinnacle starting from the ramp and passing a ledge to summit.

*H. Boyle 01/04/94*



The next four routes are on the Pinnacle Wall, starting with 'Immram Brain' at the leftmost edge of the face.

Immram Brain HVS 5a 20m \*

This follows the curving left-hand arete of the wall. Start as for Fir Bolg for 3m to a good hand hold, swing across blank wall to reach a good side hold. Continue left to left trending flake and then climb thin cracks that follow the arete out over space. Well protected.

*H. Boyle 01/09/94*

Black Pete E1 5a 17m

The wall between 'Fir Bolg' and 'Immram Brain', gear can be a bit spaced.

*P. Cooper, A. Tees 04/08/08*

Fir Bolg S 16m

This takes the central crack up the wall. Start 3m left of Bungalow Blitz. Climb crack on good holds to a small corner to top.

*H. Boyle, M. Sweeney 01/09/94*

Bungalow Blitz HS 4b 14m

Right hand side of Pinnacle Wall. Approx where the ramp ends, there is a small sloping ledge. Gain the ledge and move left to gain left trending cracks which are climbed to better holds to top.

*H. Boyle, J. Sweeney 01/09/93*

The next climbs are on the seaward side of the descent groove.

Dope on a Rope V.Diff 10m

Start 1 m left of Chappy. Climb shield flake and directly to top on excellent holds.

*H. Boyle, J. Sweeney M. Sweeney 01/09/93*

Chappy Days V.Diff 10m

Start on the wall to the right of the descent groove. Climb the rightward trending quartz ledges to the arete which is followed to the top.

*H. Boyle, J. Sweeney, M. Sweeney 01/09/93*

Pregzilla S 10m

Starts on the ledge to the right of Chappy Days. Start near the right side of the wall, climb obvious line trending left to the top.

*H. Boyle, J. Boyle 01/07/94*

At the sea ward end of the large tidal ledge below "Pregzilla," round the corner and facing out to sea is an excellent slab of rock. The following two routes climb the most obvious features on this slab.

Centre Slab V. Diff 10m

Climb the centre of the slab on excellent holds.

*I. Miller 22/08/13*

The Quest of the Yogi V. Diff 10m \*

Climb the huge left facing corner at the right hand end of the slab.

*L. O'Connor, A. McGinley 12/08/13*

The next routes are in the first zawn approx 20m to the South of the Pinnacle Wall Area, find the Pinnacle Wall area first and this zawn is right behind you. The first four routes are found on the south facing wall and are accessed by scrambling down the quartz vein at the seaward end of the wall.

Handy Man VS 4b/4c 10m

Starting at the point of the triangular wall, step up onto waist height foothold and climb direct up the wall to the shallow corner and deep crack at the top of the wall. Micro wire runners and a tricky couple of moves low down.

*I. Miller, L. O'Connor, A. McGinley 22/08/13*

The Grimace S 4b 10m

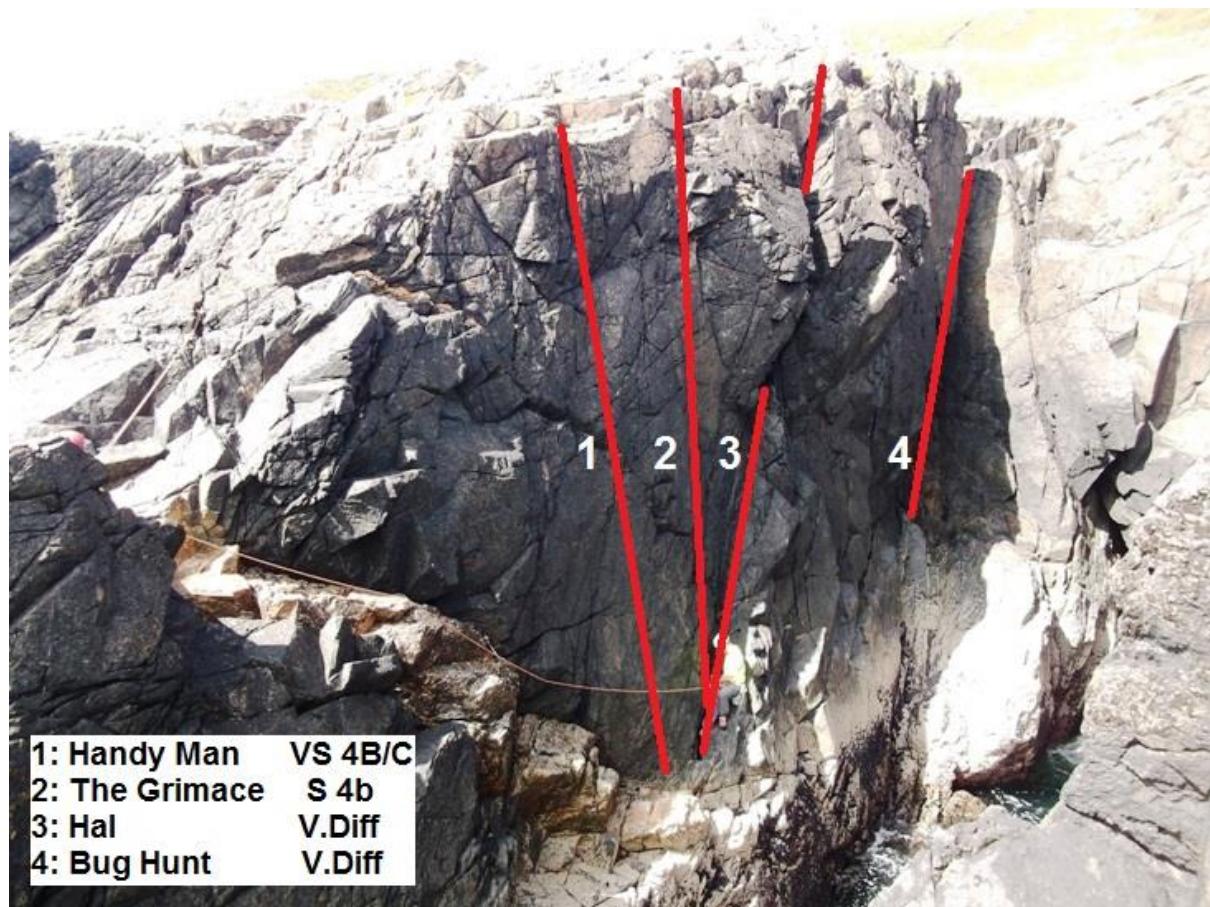
Starting at the base of "Hal," climb direct to and up the left facing corner at the top of the crag

*I. Miller, A. McGinley 05/08/13*

Hal V.Diff 10m

Climb the right trending fault/chimney running through the overhang in the centre of the South facing wall.

*H Boyle 01/09/93*



Bug Hunt V. Diff 10m

At the back of the zawn climb the wide corner chimney.

*A. McGinley, I. Miller 05/08/13*

Route 1 S 10m

This route takes a pillar on the east 5m from the back of the zawn. Climb the pillar on good holds.

*S. Brogan 01/04/94*

Flat Calm S 10m

Climb the hanging vertical crack just right of Route 1 using the excellent selection of oddly angled holds either side of it.

*I. Miller, P. Coffield 30/05/17*

Route 2 Diff 10m

Approx 4m out to sea from Route 1 climb the vertical quartz vein and up the open book corner.

*I. Miller 07/08/13*

Route 3 MS 10m

Approx 3m out to sea from the quartz vein climb the vertical arête on superb holds.

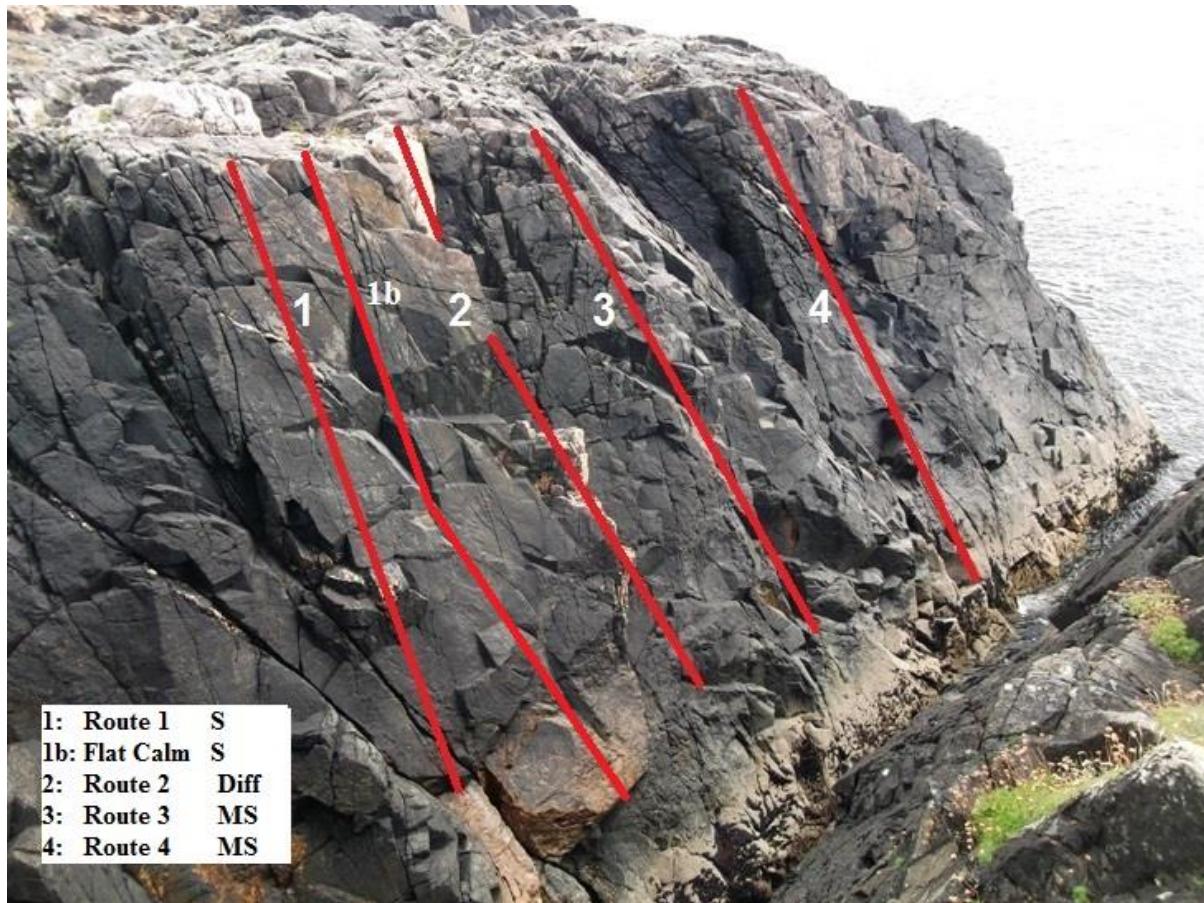
*I. Miller 07/08/13*

The next feature on the wall is a wide left trending ramp which is climbed at about Mod and provides access to the high water line at this end of the cliff.

Route 4 MS 10m

On the sea ward side of the access ramp, starting immediately below the odd sticking out collection of jugs climb the wall direct.

*I. Miller 07/08/13*



**The North facing wall of the Zawn 1**

About 100m back towards the Main Wall, from Pinnacle Wall Area, are 2 narrow zawns. Between these Zawns is an obvious white band of rock. Access via abseil.

Leprous Lips V.Diff 12m

Abseil down the left side of this promontory to a yellow ledge at the lip of the left zawn (as you face the sea). Climb back up, overcoming an overhang, with an eroded lip, easily on big jugs.

*A. Tees, P. Cooper 04/08/08*

To the North West of Pinnacle Wall Area is an obvious slab extending for approximately 100M. This ends in a shallow bay, where the next climbs are to be found. Access via abseil.

The following routes climb the slab in the centre of this bay, abseil from the large block a few meters back from the slab summit.

#### **Google Maps pin for Vision Master Slab**

Vision Master S 20m

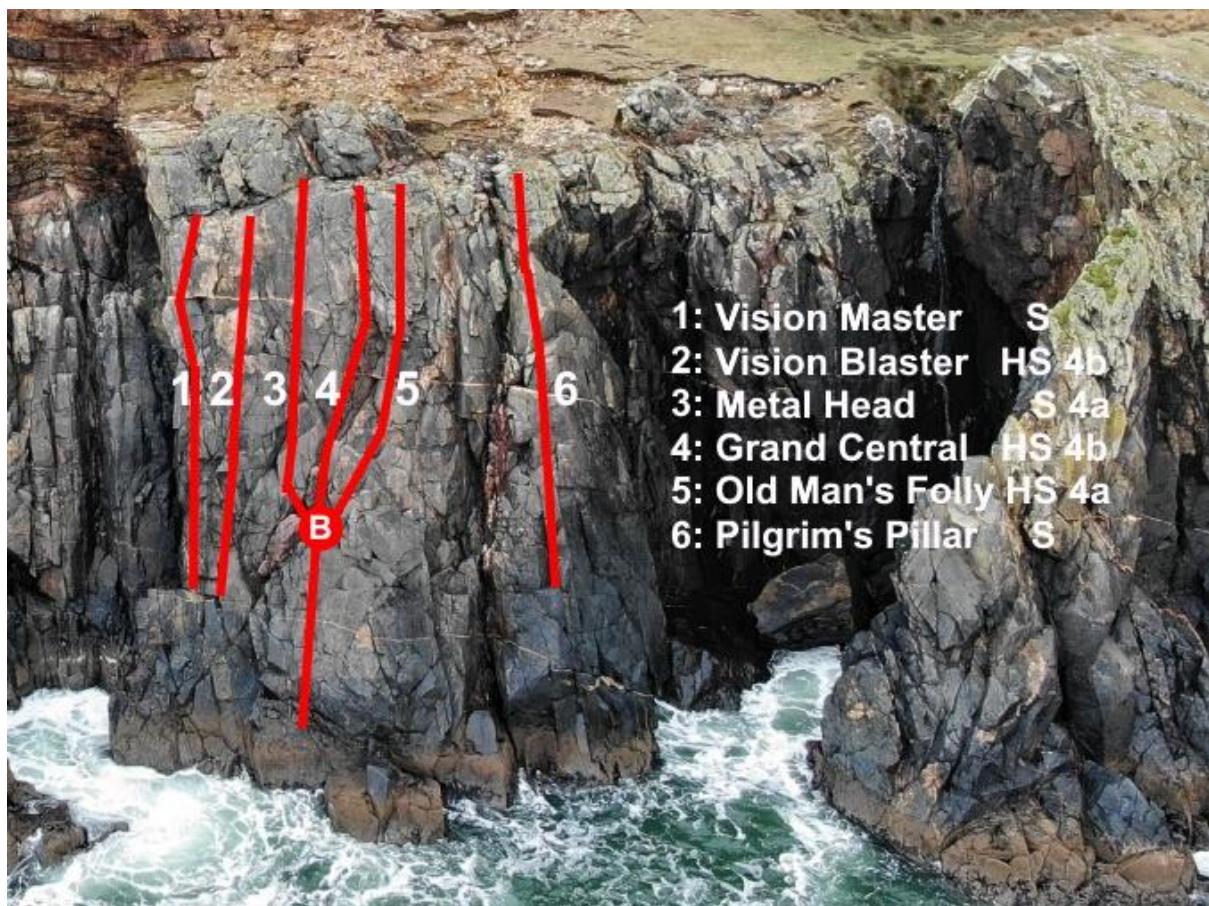
This takes the left hand side of the prominent slab in the centre of the bay. From the ledge at the base of the recessed slab climb a line near the edge of the main slab then trend rightwards.

*S. Brogan, H. Boyle 01/04/94*

Vision Blaster HS 4b 18m

Approx. 2m right of "Vision Master," climb the thin grooves and fluting in the base of a gearless slab, continue direct up the centre of the slab and up the thin groove above to the summit.

*I. Miller, A. McGinley 18/08/13*



Metal Head S 4a 20m

Climb the groove line to the left of "Grand Central," easy big holds to the left end of the half way ledge. Continue up the thin groove above to finish up the vertical quartz vein.

*I. Miller, L. O'Connor, A. McGinley 12/08/13*

Grand Central HS 4b 20m

Abseil to the flat topped tidal spur at the base of the centre of the slab. Climb the arête with excellent rock, gear and moves to the large ledge, from the ledge climb the iron ore groove directly above to the summit.

*I. Miller, L. O'Connor, A. McGinley 12/08/13*

Old Man's Folly HS 4a 10m

From the half way ledge climb the grey pillar between "Grand Central" and "Gully of the Damned." Tiny gear essential.

*I. Miller, D. O' Connor 17/03/14*

Next right is "The Gully of the Damned," this is grovelled up at about V. Diff and is not recommended. At the right hand end of this slab is full crag height pillar which marks the start of a large recess in the cliff with a waterfall at the back.

#### Pilgrim's Pillar S 22m

Climb the right hand edge of the slabby face up the centre of the tapering pillar. The lower section of "Gully of the Damned" provides a series of excellent belay platforms at various heights dependant on tide and swell heights.

*I. Miller, A. McGinley 18/08/13*

At the far end of this bay beyond the 100m long slabby wall is a large and slightly dominating 40m high slabby wall. Access is by abseil down the face from the line of large rock spikes found just north of the wall's summit dome. The rock is excellent throughout on the routes on this wall.

#### Google Maps pin for the High Slab

##### Five Pints Ago S 4a 30m \*\*

Running up the left edge of the main face is a huge slightly right trending corner that terminates at the left facing corner high on the face. (shared with Central route) From sea level climb the huge left facing corner to the left facing corner ledge. Continue directly up from the middle of the ledge up blocky holds and up the thin seam in the slab above to the summit.

*H. Boyle, C. McDevitt 24/07/94*

##### Central Route V. Diff 30m

Starting at the perfect wee niche at the centre point of the wall's high water mark, climb the slightly left trending orange arête to the left facing corner. Climb the corner and continue direct to the summit.

*I. Miller, A. McGinley, L. O'Connor 07/08/13*

##### Fall of the Mc Ginley VS 4c 30m

Right of the Central Route left trending ramp, climb the right facing corner and up through the steep recess above. Finish up pitch 2 of Serpentine Ridge

*I. Miller, F. Nic Fhionnlaoich 03/12/19*

##### Alone at the Wheel S 4a 30m

Climb up the centre of the high hanging slab on huge holds and finish up as for Fall of the Mc Ginley  
*I. Miller 03/12/19*

##### Serpentine Ridge S 4a 42m

This route climbs the south ridge of the main face, access as per above and an easy sea level traverse to base of ridge. This route climbs the ridged skyline of the main face, easily seen as you walk in across the cliff tops from the car parking.

Pitch 1: 30m Start in the recess just above the high tide line climb the pillar up onto the ridge through the steepening. Belay on ledge below the head wall

Pitch 2: 12m Contemplate the direct very airy finish before traversing left and up the groove to the summit.

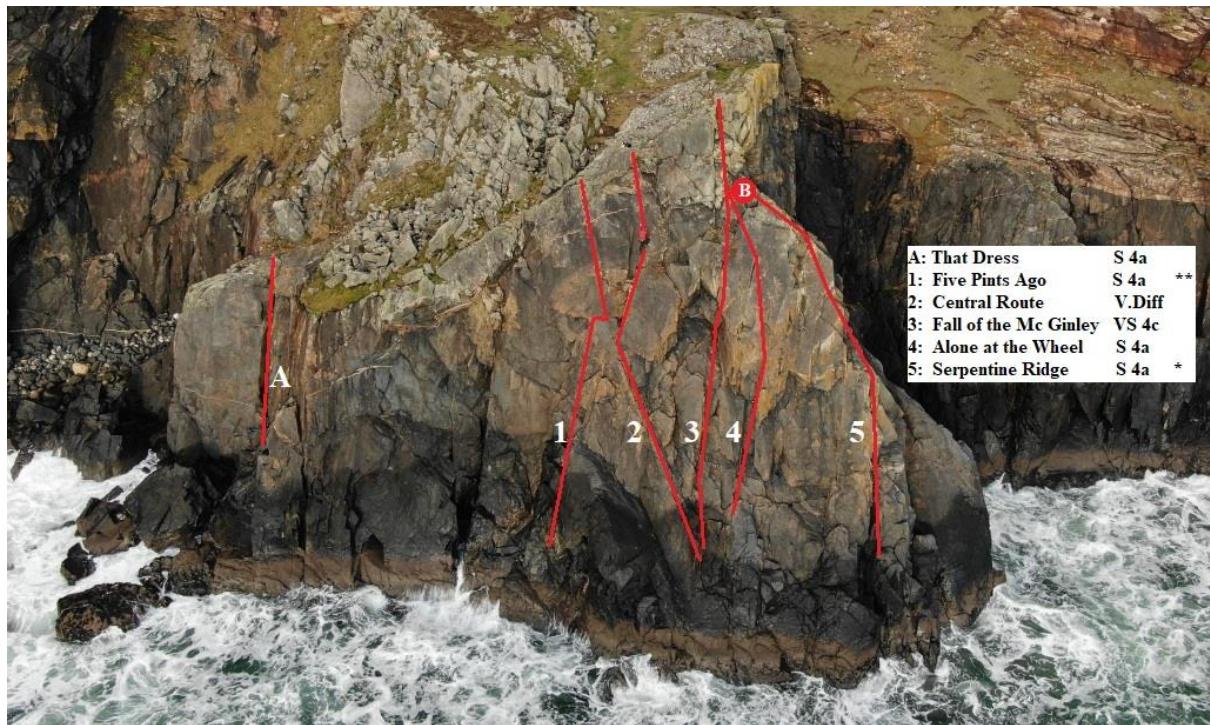
*I. Miller, D. O' Connor 17/03/14*

From 'Five Pints Ago' continue rightwards via a narrow walkway, abseil access.

##### That Dress S 10m

On the wall with a large boulder leaning against it. This takes the obvious groove on the right-hand side (facing the wall) of the wall.

*C. McDevitt, H. Boyle 24/07/94*



## Bristi Sea Stack

Take the coastal road out of Maghery Village for just under 2km to a small parking place in a large layby. Follow the signed trail down to the cliff tops overlooking Bristi Stack. Descend down to the wide gully to the storm beach looking out to the stack.

This stack outstanding wee Arch stack provides an excellent day out.

### Climbing Bristi Sea Stack Film

**Google Maps pin to Bristi Sea Stack** Grid Ref B708075

Arch Stack S 4a 25m

Climb the southern edge sea ward face by the overhung right facing groove and follow the shallow corner up the centre of the slab to a wee niche below a head wrecking steepness. Step right above BIG AIR and climb the steep right facing corner to the salvation of the summit. If you are alone at this point your mind will be in tatters! :-)

*I. Miller 09/06/11*

North Route VS 4c 25m

Climb the left facing corner at the Northern edge of the sea ward face step right at the top of the corner onto a sub summit ledge. Pull onto the summit at the wee vegetated niche.

*I. Miller, W. Schuessler 19/06/12*

Ned Gaffney's Perch S 29m

This route takes the landward face of the stack, starting on the large tidal ledge at the southern side. Climb the steep crack trending right to join the vegetated ramp to the summit.

*I. Miller, N. Gaffney 21/06/13*

There are several other much smaller stacks in this bay which have all been climbed by their easiest routes to their summits.



**Standing on the summit of Bristi Stack**



**Sun Set through Bristi Stack**

**Disclaimer**

This guidebook is intended for information purposes only, it is not an instruction manual. This free guidebook is for the use of experienced outdoor climbers to make their own judgement calls as to what is and where is safe to climb on any given day.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within this guidebook at the time of writing, it alas cannot be guaranteed to be completely accurate. Many of the routes, locations and even some of the islands in these guidebooks are seldom visited, with a considerable amount of the routes having only ever been climbed once before.

The west coast and islands of Donegal are very exposed to the Atlantic Ocean swells brought by the ever present trade winds. A good working knowledge of such nautical matters is essential to ensure safe practice whilst visiting and climbing on remote and very exposed sea cliffs and stacks.

Rock climbing is an activity with a very real danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities must employ appropriate levels of mountaineering / rock climbing guile and common sense. Participants must take personal responsibilities for their actions and involvement in these activities at all times.

In Ireland all land is owned by someone, the inclusion of a location in this book does not mean we have the right of access or the right to climb there. Please respect the rights of the landowner and we can continue to visit these beautiful places.