

PIARERE

By Pete Manning

Introduction

Piarere is situated in the Waikato between Cambridge and Titau, near the junction of SH.1 and SH.29. The crag consists of two parallel cliffs, one each side of SH.29. It has been described as the most British-like crag, located as it is on open farmland adjacent to a highway a few minutes from a tea-room and even a pub not to far away.

The rock is Ignimbrite and although generally friable in places gives pleasant climbing mainly in cracks and chimneys. Cracks tend to have rounded edges and widen towards the top. The main cliff faces north and is an ideal place to climb in winter. Nowadays Piarere is eclipsed by the quality crags at Wharepapa. There is still potential for new routes at Piarere.

Access

Permission to climb must be obtained from the landowners. Remember if you find a gate open leave it open, if you find it shut, close it after you and check that it is properly shut. When you have finished climbing please call in and tell the farmer you are leaving. Take all rubbish with you.

Most of the climbs at Piarere are on the Southern Cliff, located on land owned either in full or in partnership by Frank Healy. His farm house is alongside SH.29 some 4 km east (towards Tauranga) from its junction with SH/1, approx. 400m past the Hinuera Quarry entrance, on a bend, on the southern (cliff side) of the highway. There is a safe parking on the corner. Do not drive onto the farm.

After Mr Healy's permission has been obtained, walk down the race to the old milking sheds, turning left follow the race down to the second hedgerow. From here head down to the rock following the hedge. At the rock turn left again and 50m or so will bring you to "The Spring".

All the climbs are described either from the left of or from the right of The Spring. The reason for this is that the Spring is in the middle of the crag, the best climbs are situated nearby and it's somewhere cool and damp to leave your beer.

Climbs to the left of *Late Night* are on Maori land currently leased to Mr Duncan who can be contacted by phone on Hinuere 791.



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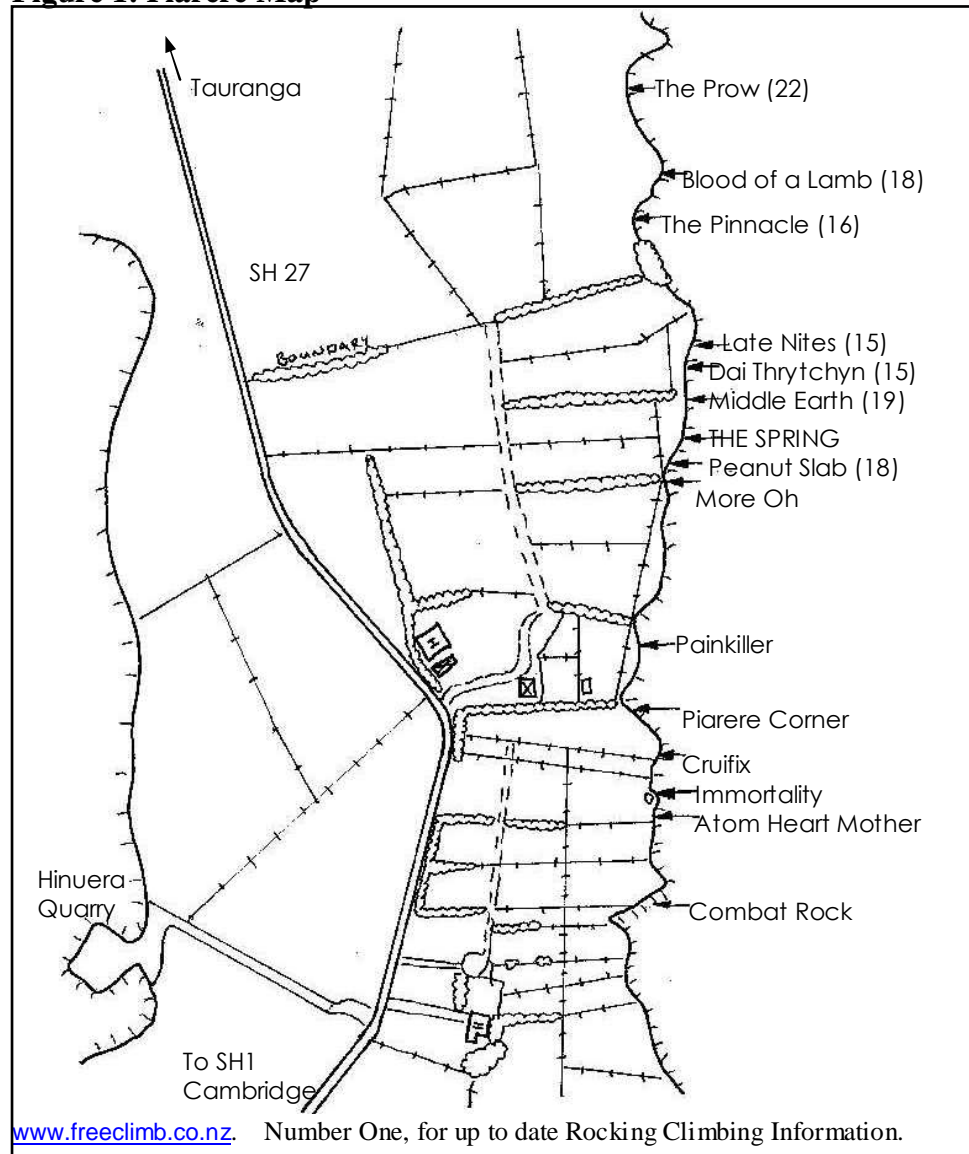
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Rock Climbing Information

There are only 3 climbs to date on the smaller northern cliff, and permission must be sought from Mr Vosper whose farmhouse is the first on the left past the quarry when coming from SH1.

Figure 1: Piarere Map



Southern Cliff (main cliff)

Climbs to the Right of The Spring

Peanut Slab (18) 15m

20 m right of "The Spring". Start from the large ledge around on the right (a direct start to the climb would be very hard indeed). Sports two fixed pegs and two naked bolts and one fixed thread runner. There is also a sling placement high on the climb. A little dirty now a days.
Dave Garrity, Bryce Martin 25-9-83

More Oh (16) 20m

Climb the slab and corner using the wiggly crack for pro. Wide all the way to the crux near the top, with an airy finish. A little over grown.
Dave Garrity, Bryce Martin, 11-9-83

20m right is a hedgeline. Some 70m right of this, Two thirds of the way to the next fence, is a right facing corner with an obvious horizontal break on the left wall;

* **Fancy Free (18) 10m**

Starting from the sloping ledge at the base, climb the crack, which runs from knifeblade to #4 Friend. There is a fixed peg at the crux. A nice climb on good rock.
Bryce Martin, Phil Roberts 9/3/85

Aids Climbing (21) 20m

The crack line 5m right of *Fancy Free*. The crux is where the crack turns into a right hand horizontal break, climb straight up past a peg and a bolt. Three bolts and a peg plus the crack takes wires and smallish friends.
Jim Walseth, Joe Kippax

20m right is another fence line 200m to the right and behind a small stand of gums and poplars lines.

* **Tree Crack (15) 10m**

A hand crack which gets its name from a tree growing out of it a third of the way up. Immediately right in the back of a groove is a right-facing corner:

Undecided (16) 12m

A varied finger to fist crack, with lots of pocks on the walls. A classic Piarere corner. Soft rock and green, what more could you want.
Heiz Jakob, John Carter, Phil Clifton 5-7-80.

The chimney immediately to the right has been climbed believe it or not.

The Green Slime Climb (10) 10m

A groaty chimney.
Rick McGregor 28-7-74.

10m right is another hedge, and a 50m right of this (directly opposite a swimming pool beside the house, though some distance away) is a descent gully. Immediately to the right is a wall with two thin cracks.

* **Ruiseart (22) 12m**

Climb the right hand crack. The overhang at half height provides the crux. Finish (what else) up to a large gum tree.

Rick McGregor 6-7-80.

Some 30m right is a large chimney with a 4m high block at its base. The buttress on the left has a honeycombed appearance.

Bill's Climb (16) 15m

Climb up on the left to a ledge, and continue up the chimney. The buttress on the left has a honeycombed appearance.

Bill Atkison, Rick McGregor 10-11-74

30m right (behind the barn) and behind a prominent buttress is another chimney.

Grub's Chimney (14) 12m

Entered from the right past a pittosporum. The crux is at the top, getting onto the ledge at the top of the buttress. Protectionless and decent is by jumping off.

Len Gillman (solo) 28-7-74

Fatlip (16) 12m

Jam the crack curving leftwards at the top.

John Carter, Phil Clifton, Heinz Jakob 5-7-80

* **Painkiller (19) 15m**

A thin crack widening above. Tape you hands for this sharp little problem.

Piarere Revisited (16) 12m

Left of *Painkiller*, and left of the next fence is an obvious chimney, left of this is another chimney with a horizontal break and hand crack leading to the top. Climb the chimney, hand traverse right, then finish up the hand crack.

Grant Pearson, Jim Napier 29-3-91

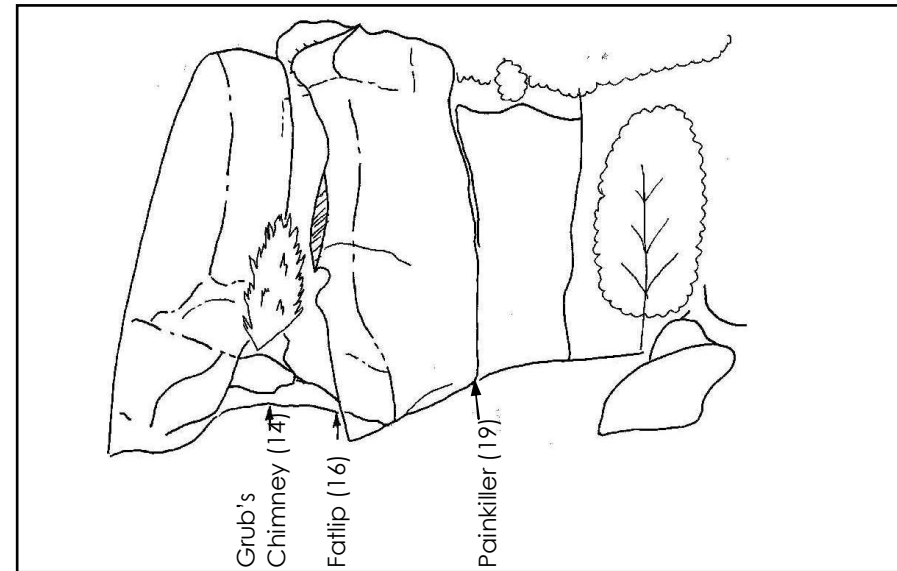
50m right is a hedge row, immediately right is a buttress with a chimney system inside it. If you are climbing the lines in this area you can gain access to the area by turning left at the old cow shed and barn then after the first hedge row cross the paddock to the lines of Piarere Corner and The Crucifix.

Junction Crack (16) 15m

Been described as a excellent route if you are into chimneys.

Rick McGregor, Bryce Martin 7-12-75

Figure 2 : Grub Chimney



3m right is an obvious right facing corner:

* **Brinderwin (20) 15m**

Climb the fist crack from the low shelf. There used to be a horizontal tree near the top but Robbie McBirney showing off bouncing on it one day dislodged it and along with all his pro hit the deck.

Rick McGregor, Robbie McBirney, Len Gillman 17-8-75

15m to the right is an overhanging left facing corner with pine tree roots reaching into the upper crack.

* **Piarere Corner (19) 15m**

The hard overhanging start leads to easier climbing. Finishes at a large pine tree. A classic climb.

Robbie McBirney, Cliff Smith 1974.

* **Edwardian Ploy (21) 15m**

A good climb just right of *Piarere Corner*. Sports 2 fixed pegs with the crux unfortunately just below the first one.

Bryce Martin, Phil Roberts 9-385.

Some 15m right is "The Crucifix".

Unknown Route (??) 15m

Climb the left facing corner past 2 pegs then continue up crack above, typical Piarere finish corner

* **The Crucifix (20) 20m**

A cross shaped formation . A narrow U-groove with a finger to hand crack in the back. A nice climb.

Rick Mc Gregor, Bryce Martin 25-6-83.

10m right is a crack with a cockstone

Senility Beckons (18) 15m

A fist crack, rapidly closing off then reopening to hands with a cockstone to negotiate at the top of a short pillar-box chimney. A companion climb to Bryce's route *Childhoods End* at Whanganui and a personal statement.

Bryce Martin, Rick McGregor 25-06-83

20m right is another fenceline, then another 40m across some boggy ground and past the powerlines is a free standing pillar. On the front of this is one of the best climbs at Piarere.

* **Immortality (19) 12m**

A fine face line up a steep groove in the middle of the pillar. Well protected by three bolts , but little run out above the last bolt. Abseil/belay off.

Phils Roberts , Bryce Martin 24-5-85

* **Bambi Meets Godzilla (18) 12m**

This one take the reddish arete to the left of the *Immortality*. There's 3 bolts , and fixed anchors on the pillar top. (see *Immortality*)

Joe Kippax , Dan Hawthorn, Bryce Martin 28-5-89.

10m right is a steep black and yellow wall with two crack/groove. The right hand decimetre wide crack/groove is:

Atom Heart other (19) 15

A few slab moves to start, then into the crack. A tube is useful to protect some committing moves at half height, and wires at the top. You need to go some distance back at the top for a decent belay.

Rick McGregor, Bryce Martin, Peter Newton 4-4-76.

Stingbeans And Spyrogyra (17) 15m

To quote Grant "this is a fun varied climb on solid rock". Jam through the bulge to ledges and layback /bridge the crack/corner above, stepping right and up at the top". Go some distance back at the top into the larger scrub for a good belay.

Grant Davidson, Graeme Aimer, Bev Smith June 1982

Some 100m to the right is another fence, and 20m to the right across a boggy ground and a wee creek is an orange steep slab. This is;

Combat Rock (16) 6m

Avoid the creek at the floor of the slab. Start on the right and climb delicately up the slab past one bolt a 2/3 height . Its easier to start on the left and traverse right below the bolt. If you fall clipping the bolt the landing is soft, but don't drown!

Grant Pearson, Shane Mahon 8/ 11/ 88

That's it. Now race back to The Spring for a brew before launching into the 21 climbs on the eastern side.

Climbs to the Left of the Spring

The obvious chimney system above. The spring remains unclimbed . It could offer good caving , I mean climbing, but watch for the possible loose rock. Immediately left of The Spring is the fine boulder problem;

Power Without The Glory (24) V3

Climbs the roof crack from near the left hand side of the fence.

Bryce Martin (solo) 15-7-83

Immediately left is the unmistakable line that is:

* **Gateway (18) 22m**

The Huge massive crack is not as easy or as straightforward as it looks. Don't be put off by the top section as it is pleasant back and footing. A good climb , worth doing.

John Goulstone, Bryce Martin 14-8-83.

8m left is a steep straight, hand crack:

* **Forward Play (19) 20m**

Tight hands, then the obligatory offwidth /chimney section near the top. Previously attempted by Gillman and Martin in 1980. This climb still sees occasional failures, however the crux is low down.

Bryce Martin , Dave Garrity 15-7-83

4m left and slightly higher is:

Earth Closet (19) 15m

Fingerlock to the roof, jam above. Easy bridging at the top avoids the chimney. The crux is pulling over the roof.

Bryce Martin, Dave Garrity 30-7-83

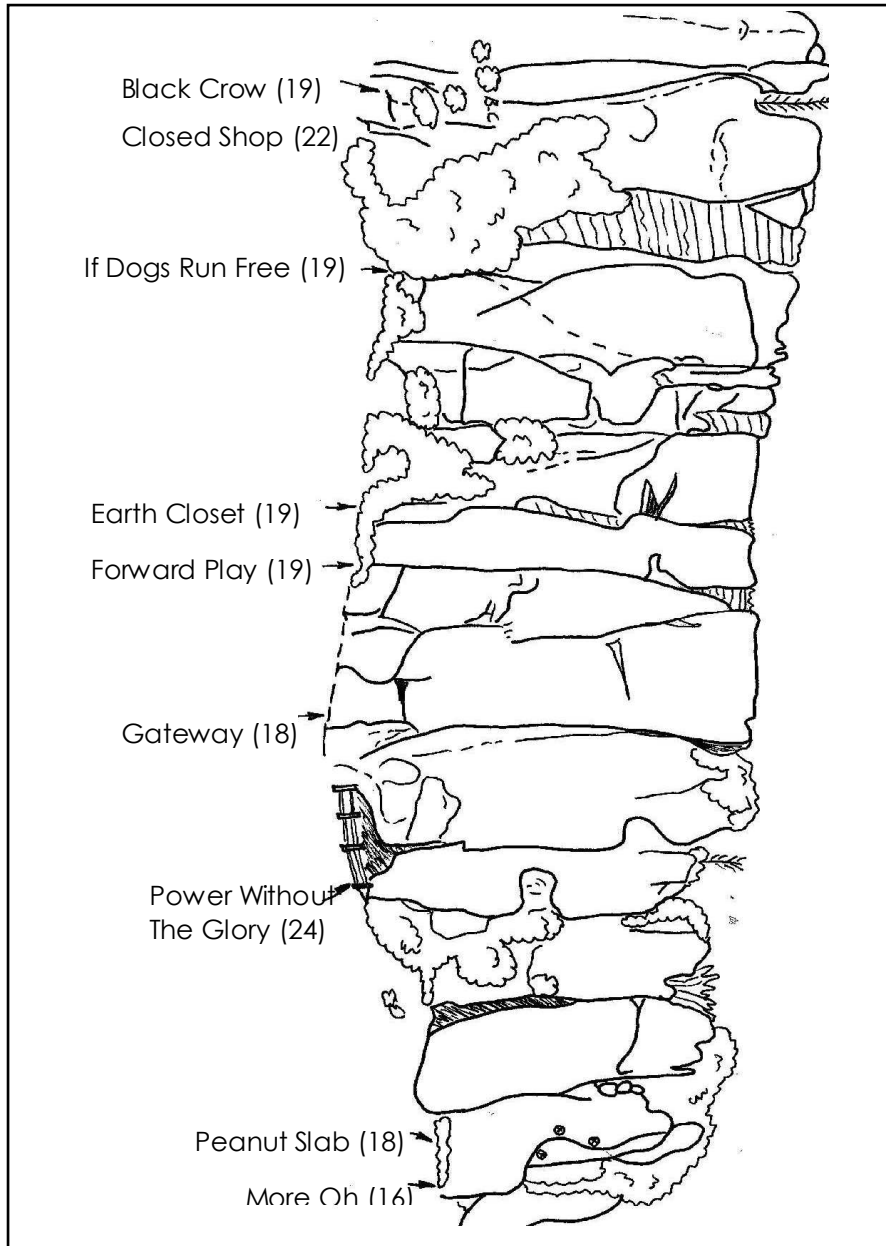
8m left and up a little way on the right-hand side of the gut is:

* **If Dogs Run Free (19) 20m**

Back and knee fingerlock/jam to the roof, which is the crux. The interest however is provided by the hand traverse out right on good fingerlocks (there is a #5 or #6 Rock placement halfway). At the end of the traverse right on the top of the crag is a 2 ½ fried placement "If dogs run free, why not we"- Bob Dylan.

Bryce Martin, John Pawson 11-9-83.

Figure 3: The Spring Topo



Directly opposite on the left side of the gut is a deep right-facing corner:

* **Closed Shop (22) 15m**

Layback and stem off fingerlocks to the roof. Jam around an up the exit crack (crux) to the top. The rock, like the climbing, improves the higher one gets. Unlike most Piarere climbs this finish is not offwidth. A classy climb.
Bryce Martin, John Pawson 7-8-83.

4m left and at the same level are the twin cracks of:

Black Crow (19) 15m

Jam the right hand of the two cracks till it's possible to bridge across to the left. The crux is the overhanging tight hand section in the middle. The chimney at the top is almost OK.

10m left behind a small clump of cabbage trees is the crack system of:

Escapee From Suburbia (18) 12m

Jam, bridge and wheeze to the ledge. Jamming the curving crack system at the top is the crux. Nice moves.

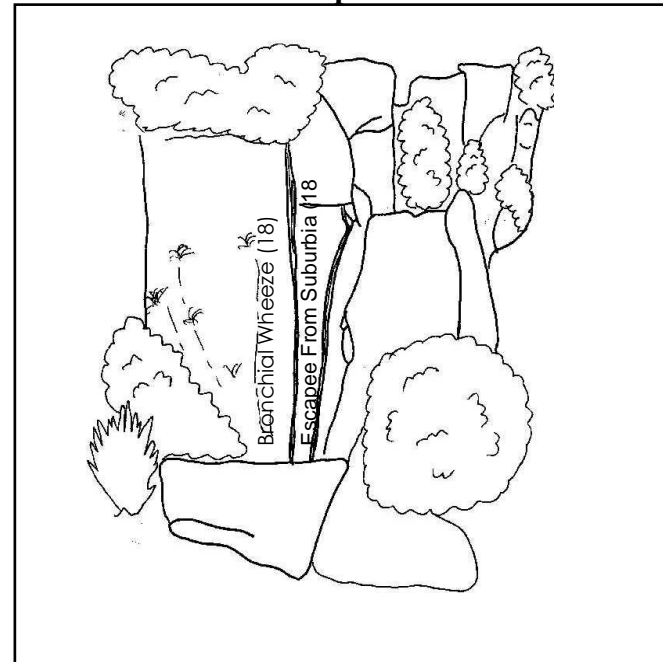
John Pawson, Bryce Martin 15-7-83

Bronchial Wheeze (18) 12m

A hard start, then easy but deep jamming to the top.

Bryce Martin, Dave Garrity 30-7-83.

Figure 4: Bronchial Weeze Topo



10m left, and immediately left of a large rib with a hole through it near the top is:

When The Wind Blows (17) 10m

Tight hands and bridging near the top, all on good rock.
Bryce Martin, Dave Garrity 30-7-83.

Some 25m left and before the fence is an inset box like groove with an overhang top. The orangey prominent left facing corner is:

Middle Earth (19) 12m

Strenuous face moves lead to fingerlocks then to earthy jams. The crux is the overhanging offwidth at the top. The bolts were added sometime later by someone believing they were preparing a new route. Twit!

Bryce Martin, John Pawson 7-8-83

5m left is a fence/hedgerow. 50m left again is:

Short Crack (16) 10m

A short climb with a long description. The description is the crux. A crack of about knee and shoulder width in a corner. Climb this for some 3m to a large grassy ledge leading off to the right. A wider chimney leads up from here behind a stout pinnacle detached from the main face. Climb this to a spike, then left along a sharp level rib a metre or so and awkwardly up the crack/chimney to the top of the four boulder in a row (?). Descend down the same crack but at the back.

Rick McGregor (solo) 10-11-74.

Yo Gotta Say Yes (to another excess) (10) 10m

The chimney 1m right of the "Ice Cream Jimmie"
Dave Smith (solo) 2-5-87

A little to the left is a right facing corner:

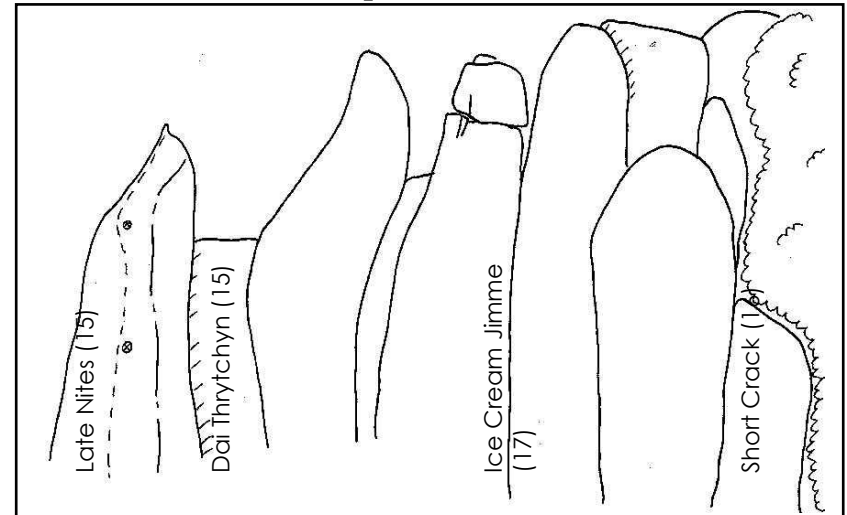
Ice Cream Jimmie (17) 12m

Jam and bridge the corner. The crack widens to offwidth in the top section. Take care with the loose flake which forms one wall of the crack at mid height.

Phil Clifton, Heinz Jakob 6-7-80

7m left is a short steep right-facing corner with a thorn bush at the base:

Figure 5: Ice Cream Jimmie Topo



* Dai Thrytchyn (15) 8m

Climb the hand crack. This route finishes on a small grassy knoll. Descent by jumping off the ledge on the other side into a gully full of dead leaves.

Robbie McBimey, Cliff Smith 1974

Immediately left and just around the corner, before the ditch, is a pretty slab on the side of a boulder:

* Late Nites (15) 10m

Climb up the middle of the slab past one bolt, step left at the second bolt. A pleasant route for beginners. Either climb down the back of the boulder to a ledge and then jump into the leafy gully, or wait at the top to be rescued by a fireman.

John Pawsons, Bryce Martin 14-8-83.

10m left is a stream, and 50m left again is a hedge row. 10m or so further left is an obvious leaning pinnacle.

The Pinnacle (16) 10m

Climbed by the slab on the back. There is an abseil bolt in place but I suggest you back it up as it's been there along time.

Robbie McBimey, Cliff Smith 1974.

50m left again is an obvious right facing corner broken at half height by a large ledge on the right hand side. Thorn bush at base

* Blood of a Lamb (18) 20m

A nice clean corner that just begs to be climbed. Layback and bridge to the ledge on good rock, then jam to the top.

Dave Garrity, Bryce Martin 25-9-83

300m left of the Pinnacle and wall worth the walk is

* **The Prow (22) 20m**

Hidden in the grove of a mahoe trees but impossible to miss. *(However I have yet to find it..Cliff)*
A tight handcrack running up the middle of the Prow. – a narrow protruding arete. There is a small cabbage tree at the top of the climb. The rock is soft in the middle of the climb but it is easy jamming country. The crux is the top vertical section which is on reasonably good rock.
Bryce Martin, John Pawson 14-8-83.

Overcammed (17) 15m

The second crack to the right of *The Prow*. Some jamming, some Offwidth. A poor line broken by large ledges.

John Goulstone, Bryce Martin 14-8-83.

50m left of the Prow is

Visions of Rolling Doughnuts (17) 10m

An S-shaped hand to fist crack in the middle of a steep wall with a small roof at third height. From the ledge, fist jams lead through the roof (crux). The crack above widens and the curves as the face leans back. Tape up your arm, this bites!

Dave Garrity, Pete Manning 6-5-84.

Northern Cliff

Having obtained permission from Mr Vosper, follow the fenceline behind his house up to the crag. Behind a tree a thin crack leads to a roof, this is:

Death or Glory (20) 20m

Better than it looks. An excellent climb on solid rock. Climb the thin crack (crux) to the roof. Traverse round the roof crack and finish up the crack in the wall above.

Grant Davidson 19-5-82.

Speed (17) 20m

Right of "Death or Glory" behind a cabbage tree. A prominent left slanting hand crack can be seen. Climb this to the top.

Graeme Aimer, Bev Smith, Grant Davidson June 1982.

Corridors of Power (22) 20m

Along left of "Death or Glory", an offwidth crack climbs up through a roof obvious from the road. Many attempts have been made to lead this to date all have failed, through poor pain tolerance, after a high point a meter or so above the roof. All aspiring offwidth experts – here is your chance. Takes 5" 6" 7"..tubes (I dare you!!..)

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