

A
CLIMBING GUIDE
FOR THE
'MONKS



ALONG THE NIPMUCK TRAIL IN CONNECTICUT

By Robert John Perzel

Disclaimer

This guide is not a product of someone's ego but a product of peoples confusion. Many people do not know the ratings, where the routes go, or even know that these cliffs exist near by.

Some of the routes I have personally named. These are marked with an *.

If you like to correct anything in this booklet, you may send a post card with a description or picture to:

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The 'MONKS is a name I have given three groups of cliffs that are found near the Nipmuck Trail in Northeastern Connecticut which have excellent rock climbing characteristics. The three areas described in this book are: Wolf Rock, 50 Footer and the Pot Hole.

These cliffs are near Storrs, Connecticut where the University of Connecticut is located. For students, the cliffs are very close. These areas are all different in their special way. Wolf Rock is good for beginners, but Pot Hole is great for bouldering and also has more skill involvement. After the tiring warm up approach up to 50 Footer, you still have to climb 5.9 and above at an over hanging angle. It works the upper body quite well.

Here is a small tip on the weather and rock conditions: After a storm Pot Hole stays wet for a day or two because it is well shaded. Wolf Rock, however, dries well on its upper section but on the lower section it stays damp due to the shade. Also the lower section gets a lot of sand washed down on it. 50 Footer stays pretty dry, most of the time, except for the black water streaks.

To cool off from a hot summers day, you can bathe in the Fenton River, which is across from the 50 Footer parking area. To get to the bathing area, drive to the large dirt pull out across from the large dirt road that is between 50 Footer parking and the Fenton river bridge.

Map Symbols



Overhang



Ledge



Water Streak

Yosemite Decimal System

1st class	Walking
2nd class	Hiking
3rd class	Steep Hiking
4th class	Scrambling, ropes are optional
5th class	Vertical, ropes are necessary for safety

Free climbing begins :

5.0-5.4 beginner

5.5-5.6 intermediate

5.8-5.10 advance

5.11-5.14 expert

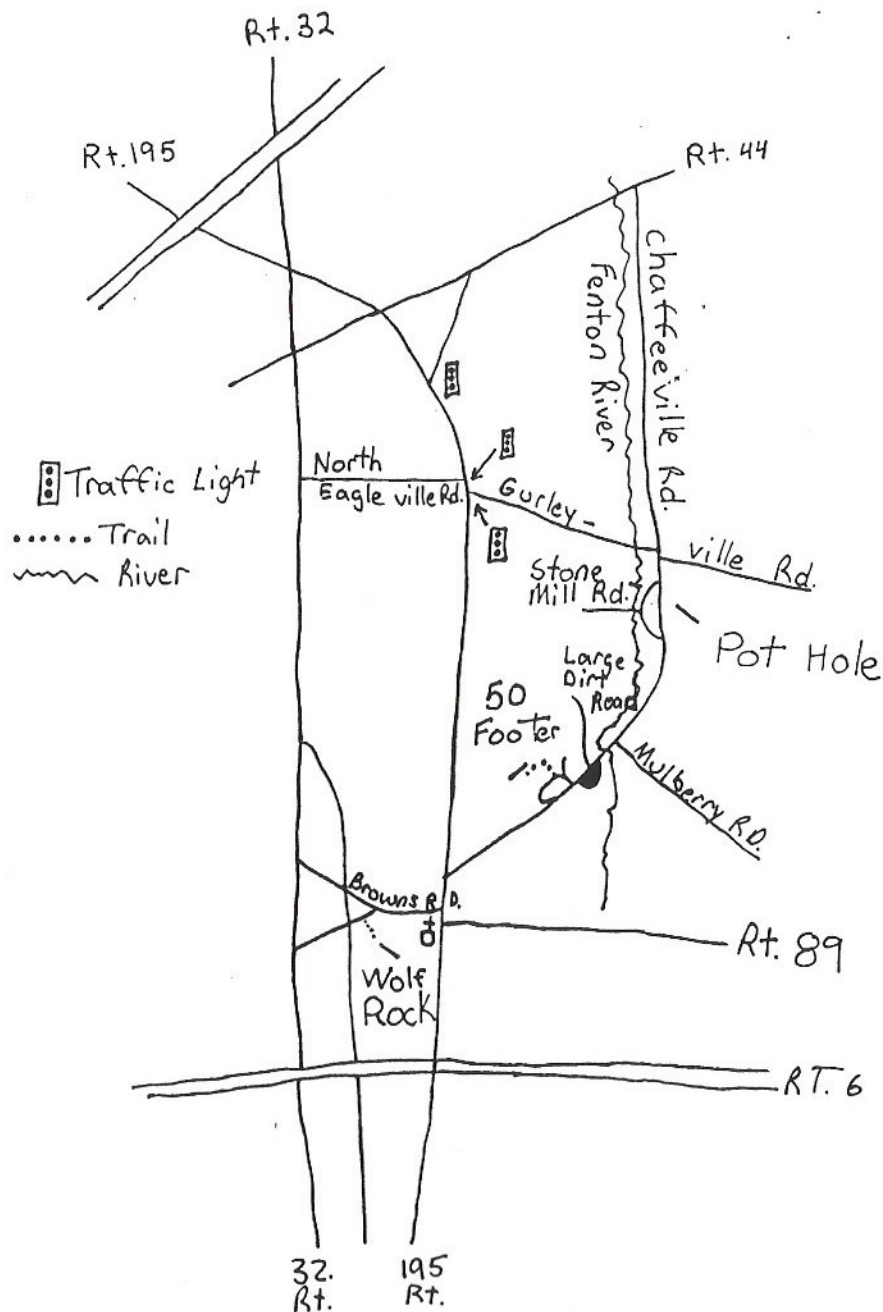
6th class Aid Climbing: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 (equipment is used to advance up the rock)

WOLF ROCK

Directions

From Interstate 84 - Take Exit 68 onto Route 195 South and follow it to Mansfield Center. About 100 feet before Route 89, take a right onto the steep Browns Road. Follow Browns Road until it forks - take the left onto Crane Road. About a tenth of a mile, on the right, the Nipmuck Trail crosses the road. Park on the right side of the road and take the Nipmuck Trail from the left side of the road. Hike the trail for about five minutes. When you get to the top of Wolf Rock there will be an obvious overlook.

From Willimantic - Take Route 195 north from Willimantic to Mansfield Center. Take the next left after the stop light at Route 195 and Route 89 (Brown's Road). Follow Browns Road until it forks - take the left onto Crane Road. About a tenth of a mile, on the right, the Nipmuck Trail crosses the road. Park on the right side of the road and take the Nipmuck Trail from the left side of the road. Hike the trail for about five minutes. When you get to the top of Wolf Rock there will be an obvious overlook.



Wolf Rock

Wolf Rock consists of two cliffs; an upper and a lower section. Also a large bolder can be scaled for its challenge. The upper section is well exposed to the sun. Most of these routes range from 5.0 to 5.5 in difficulty. Be on the look out for wasps' nests in the pockets to the left of the 4th Class Gully.

The lower section is more difficult than the upper section. Here the routes range from 5.0 to 5.9. When the rain comes it washes down sand and makes the cliff dirty.

1. *Lady Bug, 5.0

Start at the five foot high, right facing corner on the left end of the upper section. Climb straight to the top finishing ten feet to the left of the biggest eye bolt that you will ever see.

2. *Blanket Party 5.5-5.6

This climb does not start in any specific place. You can climb anywhere in-between Lady Bug and Star Fire (crack). Making up your own route will be the challenge.

3. *Star Fire 5.0 FF

Climb the crack directly to the left of the 4th class gully. Beware of wasps!

4. *The Tiger Kitty 5.5 FF

Start at the base of the 4th class gully and stay on the outside corner which forms its left side.

5. 4th class gully... an easy way to the top.

6. Toe Crack 5.3 F

This climb follows the cracks at the left end of the prominent horizontal overhang. Above, go straight up the thin crack with the tree in it. A toe stand and a mantle may come in handy.

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7. *Crystal Dilemma 5.5

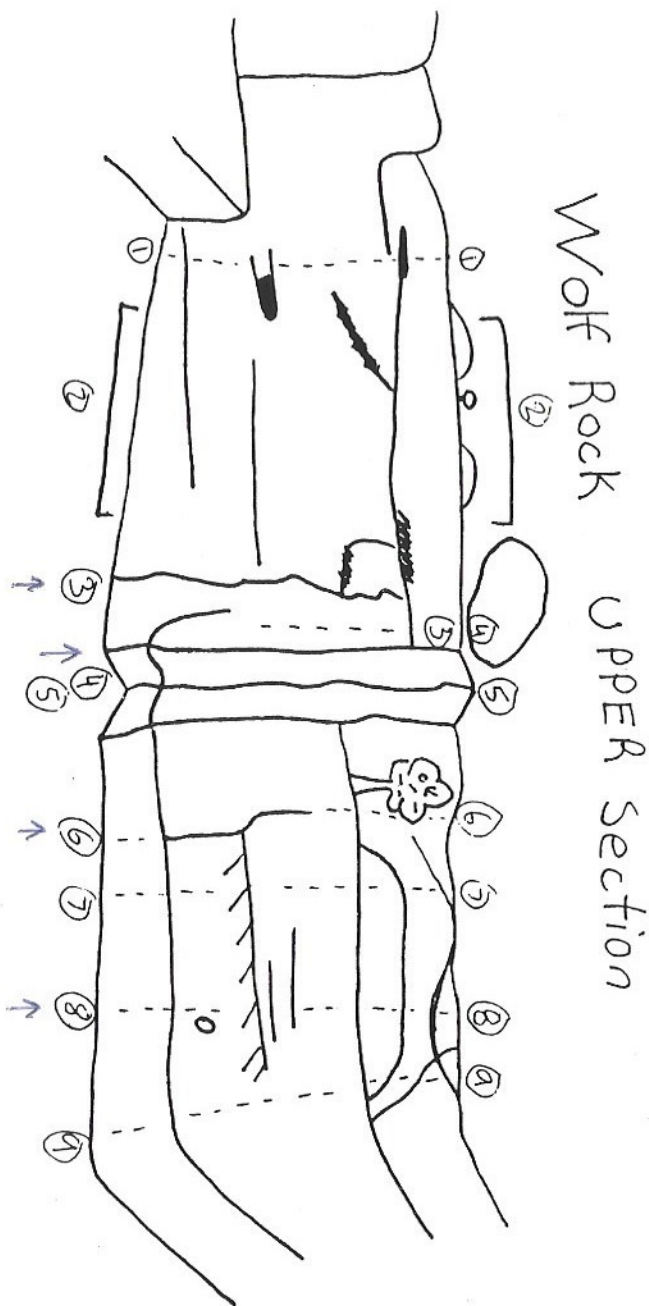
Start 4 feet right of Toe Crack and make a direct line over the overhang to the top. A pocket over the overhang is what you can aim for.

8. *Jokers are Wild 5.5 F

Start 8 feet to the right of Toe Crack and under a big pocket. Climb up to pockets and keep going straight over the overhang to the top.

9. *Parental Vision Obscured 5.5

Start directly below the right end of the horizontal overhang and climb over to finish up the slab above.



Lower Section

1. **Bolder Problem 5.8** ✓

The climb begins on the far left end of the cliff. Climb the small overhang onto a large block.

2. **Roof Direct 5.9** ✓

Start directly under the right facing corner. Climb up to the right facing corner and continue to the overhang. From here on, only use holds above the roof and not on the wall to the right (off limits).

3. ***Pebble Beach 5.0** ↙

Start eight feet to the right of Roof Direct. Climb the chimney and exit left onto a ledge. Climb the inside corner to the overhang. Then up and around the overhang to gain the top.

4. ***The Whale 5.5** ✓

Ascend the small chimney and exit out right. Follow the crack system to the top.

5. ***Eraser Head 5.7 / 5.9 start** ✓

Climb a direct line to the top on the face to the right of the small chimney. Bottom holds are sloping and sandy.

6. **Lil' Abner 5.8** ✓✓

Climb the crack directly to the left of the big tree. Do not use the tree.

7. **Reachy 5.8+** ✓✓✓

Ascend the face directly next to Lil' Abner's big tree.

8. ***The Monkey 5.8**

Climb the face to the right of Reachy but not too close to Mossy Crack.

9. Mossy Crack 5.7 ✓✓

The first crack to the right of Lil' Abner.

10. Cave Corner 5.7

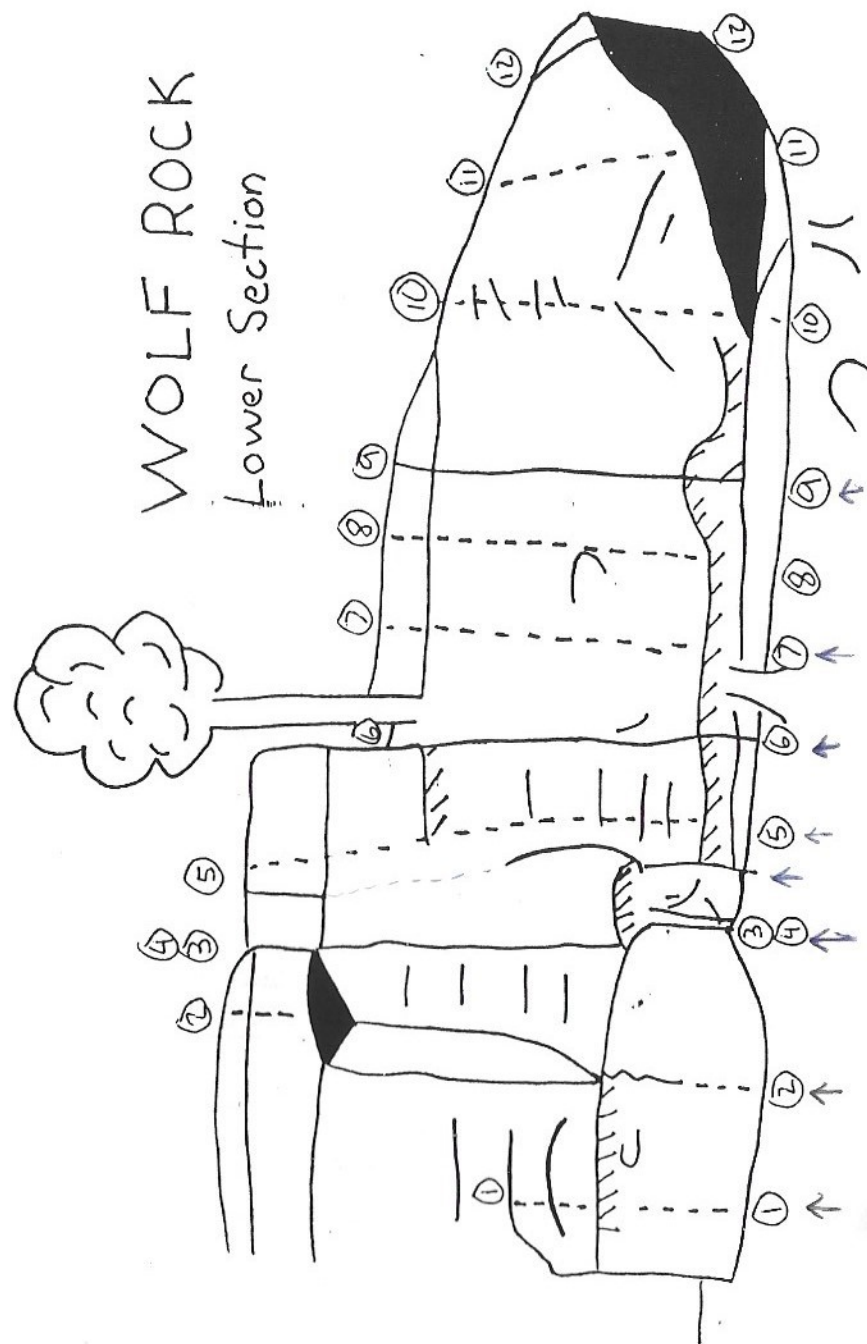
Start the climb where a tree is close to a water mark and the left side of the cave. Climb a straight line to the top.

11. Black Racer 5.6

A big ledge with an overhanging roof goes left from the cave at this end of the face. This short climb begins where that ledge starts and goes up the face next to the corner.

12. Cave Man

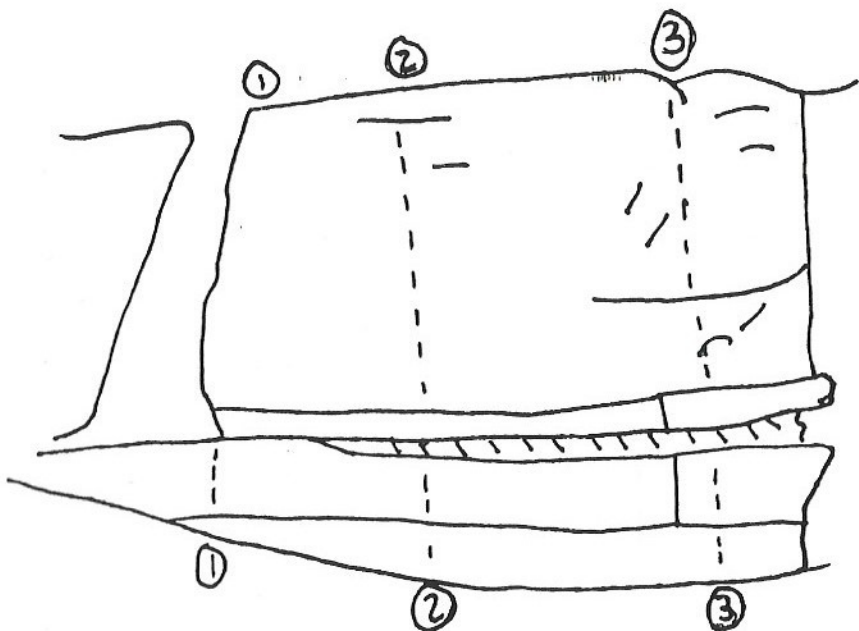
Stand in the cave's mouth to the right of the block. Start with the good bucket over the lip and go.



The Block

About 100 feet further down from the upper section on the Nipmuck Trail. The block is about 15 feet tall.

1. Climb the left side Arete to the top.
2. Climb the face 4 feet to the right of the Arete.
3. Climb good holds 15 feet to the right of the Arete.



50 Footer and Pot Hole

Directions

From Route 84- Take Exit 68. Follow Route 195 south, in approximately 5 minutes you will pass over Rt. 32, keep traveling down Route 195 until you pass over Rt. 44. After Route 44 you will want to take a left at the third traffic light onto Gurleyville Rd. Follow Gurleyville until you get to an awkward 4-way stop. Take a right onto Chaffeeville Rd. Pot Hole is less than 1/2 a mile on Chaffeeville Rd. Parking for Pot Hole is on Stone Mill Rd. just before Pot Hole. Walk up to Chaffeeville Rd. and follow the guard rail down 500 feet. The cliffs are visible on the left side of the road.

50 Footer- (read above first) Stay on Chaffeeville Rd. and continue driving past Pot Hole for 2.6 miles. Just before the Fenton River you will pass Mullbury Rd. on your left. From Mullbury Rd. go .2 miles. On the right side of the road will be a small dirt road you want to take. About 50 feet on the dirt road go left and park next to the Nipmuck Trail (blue markers) which goes up a steep hill on your right.

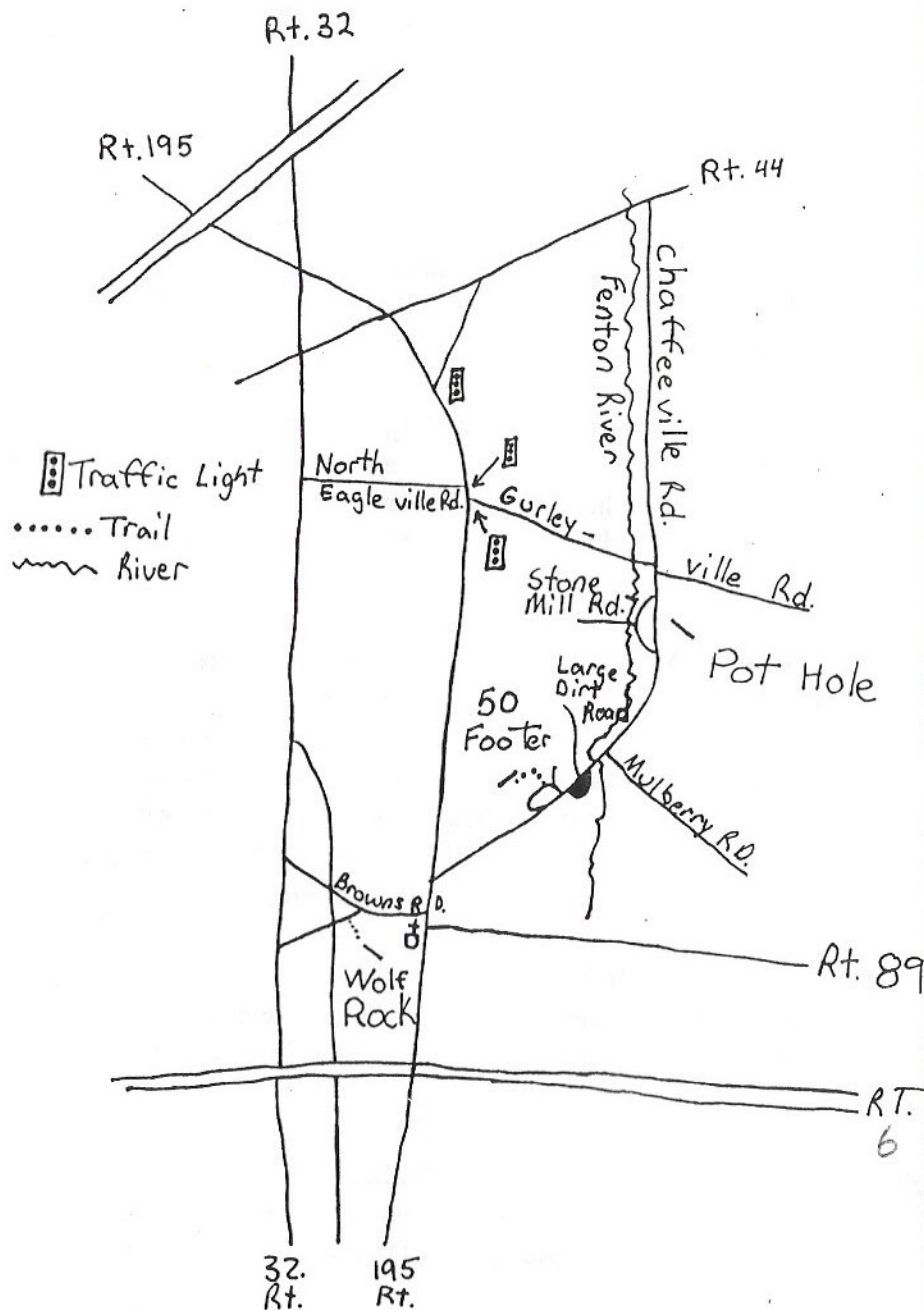
On foot, follow the blue blazed trail up a steep hill (do not follow the blue blazed dirt road up). The trail levels off next to a moss covered cliff. Do not worry this is not the cliff, yours is the next overhanging cliff on the trail (about 300 feet away from the moss covered cliff).

From Willimantic (or the south)- Follow Route 195 north past Route 89. After Route 89, about half a mile, take Chaffeeville Road on your right. Drive for about 2 to 3 miles until you reach where the Nipmuck Trail crosses Chaffeeville Road. Go .2 miles from the crossing, take a left onto a small dirt road.

If you have gone too far, try this: You will drive past the Fenton river, turn around on Mulberry Road, which is on your right. Go back .2 miles from Mulberry Road, and turn right on a small dirt road. About 50 feet on the dirt road go left and park next to the Nipmuck Trail (blue markers) which goes up a steep hill on your right.

On foot, follow the blue blazed trail up a steep hill (do not follow the blue blazed dirt road up). The trail levels off next to a moss covered cliff. Do not worry this is not the cliff, yours is the next overhanging cliff on the trail (about 300 feet away from the moss covered cliff).

Pot Hole- (read above first) Stay on Chaffeeville Rd. and drive past the Fenton River. About 1.8 miles after 50 Footer parking, you will drive past Stone Mill Rd. on your left. On your right, about another .2 miles you will pass Pot Hole. Take your next left onto Stone Mill Rd. Park on the right side of the road. Walk up to Chaffeeville Rd. and follow the guard rail down 500 feet. The cliffs are visible on the left side of the road.



Pot Hole

Pot Hole has the easiest approach of all three of the cliffs listed in this guide. It is directly off the road. This cliff is sharp and almost reaches a vertical plain. A lot of the holds are small and tweeky. Take great care of your fingers here or you will be punished.

The small grist mill that is near the Fenton River is open to viewing at certain hours on Saturday and Sunday. It's recommended to see, check it out.

Pot Hole was named after the huge hole that was created long ago from a river. It is located 75 feet across from the right end of the cliffs where the last few climbs are. The left end of the cliff near the road is called the Dish. There are many little bouldering lines here.

The big traverse 5.10 - The entire cliff can be traversed in both directions. Start at the Dish and work your way to the main section of climbs. When you get to Triple Trunk or where the small black streak is, climb up to ramp and then continue traversing right about ten feet above the ground until you get to a good resting ledge. Down climb to an under-cling. Traverse the rest of the cliff about two feet off the ground.

1. *Pot Holder 5.0

Start on the left end of the cliff where there is a large rounded block. Climb either side of block and follow the ramp to the right and then to the top.

2. *Pasteurized and Homogenized 5.9- A

Starts 3 feet to the right of Pot Holders. Climb face up to the ramp and finish up on Triple Trunk. Do not use right corner at the bottom.

3. Triple Stump 5.5 A

Start where the rock arches over to the left and has a black streak sinking into the ground. Climb up to the large ramp and inside the corner to the top.

4. *Tear Drop 5.9

6 feet to the right of Triple Stump. Climb up to the small ledge and stay on the direct line to the top.

5. Step Lightly 5.9

Directly left of the tree is a climb with several sloping holds. Climb up 8 feet and move slightly up. Finish up the ramp at the top.

6. Tickling Your Wildest Fantasy 5.10a

To the right of the big tree is an under-cling. Begin here, move up to the small ledge and go directly straight up. Good foot work and small holds will help you gain the top.

7. *Lightning Crack 5.8 A

Start below the long small crack and to the left of a small white crystal (also 8 feet to the right of Tickling Your Wildest Fantasy). Climb up to the small ledge below the long small crack. Finish on hair line crack to the top.

8. *Flip Off the Handle 5.7 A

15 feet to the right of lightning crack. Climb the small crack to the pine tree. From here continue to face climb to the top.

9. *A Bulging Dilemma 5.8 A

The bulge to the right of a thin crack that leads to a tree. Climb over the bulge to the ledge and keep on climbing straight to the top. To make the climb more interesting do not use the cracks on the upper part of the climb.

10. *Crinkle Monster 5.7 A

Start in the corner next to a large oak tree (also 8 feet to the right of Bulging Dilemma). Climb up the corner to the small crack. From the crack, traverse left to the large ledge. Then climb up the very small left-facing corner to an undercling. Crank your self around left on the under-cling to the top.

11. *Rib Chamber 5.8- A

Same start as the Crinkle Monster. Climb straight up to the small rib shaped rock and continue up to under-cling. Work your self around left on the under-cling to the top.

12. *Sesame Seed Street 5.10b

Start 3 feet right of Crinkle Monster. Climb straight up face that parallels small crack on the left. Pass over the large crack and continue to face climb to the top.

13. *Dream On 5.11

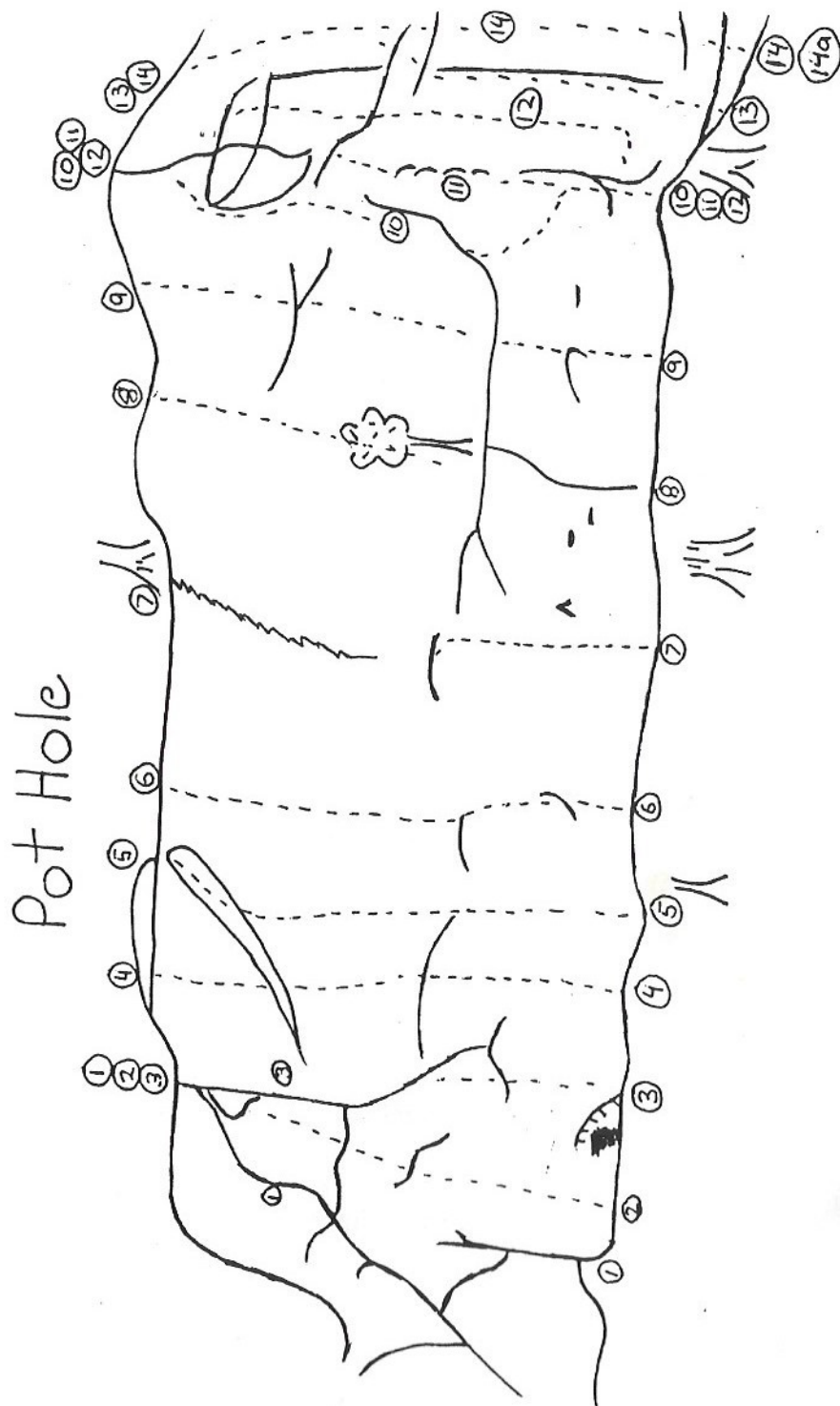
Directly to the right of the big tree. Start at the under-cling and move up to a small crimper. From the crimper reach up right to a good hold. Then move left slightly and climb to the crack. Finish any way desired.

14. *Slab Direct 5.2

8 feet right of Dream On. Climb the waist high overhang and continue up to the top for an easy finish.

14a. *Transformer 5.10

At the waist high overhang, sit down and make the overhang move from the ground (5.10 reach problem).



50 Footer

50 Footer is not quite 50 feet, it is about 25-35 feet. Do not underestimate its difficulty from its height. The cliff overhangs enough to make it disgustingly hard for advanced climbers.

This cliff consists of big holds and lots of slopers. The overhanging cliff makes it a pump for the upper body. The easiest climb is 5.9. Some of the harder climbs feel impossible, like the Shield Direct, Waging War On All Thieves, and The Razor, which are the harder routes on the cliff.

The black water streaks are usually wet for a while after storm. However, during a storm the rest of the cliff is generally dry, so, if it starts raining keep cranking.

1. Lefty 5.9

4 feet right from the right-facing corner on the left end of the cliff. Start on slopers and climb past two mini roofs. Continue climbing straight to the top.

2. Burn Out 5.9

The first route done here. Steep and difficult but the easiest climb here. Start in good hand pockets, as you get higher work your way right and head to for big flake near the top for a rest. Finish 10 feet to the left.

2a 5.9

Climb burn out for 15 feet. Before you get to the big horizontal crack below flake angle up left and go for the top.

3. Hang Time 5.9

Start at the obvious flake and climb past the second flake above, to the top.

4. RPEF 5.10 b

Same start as Malevolent Eye. Climb up to the first crack. Stay just to the left of the black streak (horrendous sloper). Keep going for the top. Do not use either of the flakes on Hang Time.

5. Malevolent Eye 5.10a

Start 3 feet right of the flake and under the black streak. Climb up to the first crack. Then traverse 5 feet to the right, over the streak. Now continue straight to the top on the right side of the steak.

5a. Razor 5.11c

Start on positive holds to the right of Malevolent Eye and just to the left of Chocolate Party. Climb straight up for 10 feet to a very small hold and then traverse over to the horizontal crack to the right of the black streak. Finish up on the end Malevolent Eye.

6. Chocolate Party 5.10b

10 feet to the right of Malevolent Eye. Climb the huge brown streak to the top (neat little door handle hold half way).

7. Nose Tweezers 5.10c

8 feet to the right of Chocolate Party and 14 feet right of Malevolent Eye. Climb up to the first crack and continue straight to the top.

8. The Shield 5.10a

Start in the same spot as Nose Tweezers. Climb up to the first crack and then traverse right so that you are grabbing the top of the shield type looking rock. From here take the direct line to the top.

8a. The Shield Direct 5.11a

The start is located under the shield type looking rock. Climb a straight line through the shield to the top.

9. Waging War On all Thieves 5.11a

4 feet right of the Shield Direct. Climb up to the obvious bucket and then attempt the endless blank looking wall above (hint: pocket).

10. Surprise Party 5.11b

Start to the left of American Mouse. Do not use any holds on American Mouse or Waging War On all Thieves. Climb on pockets directly to the left of American Mouse up to a pinch. After the pinch, the holdless wall is your demise.

11. American Mouse 5.10 b

10 feet right of the Shield Direct. Start in between the rock that sticks out of the ground like a plate on its side and the first ramp. Climb buckets for 10 feet until you reach the blank wall. Then traverse right for 4 feet to a very nice bucket. From the bucket climb straight to the top.

11a. American Cat 5.10 c

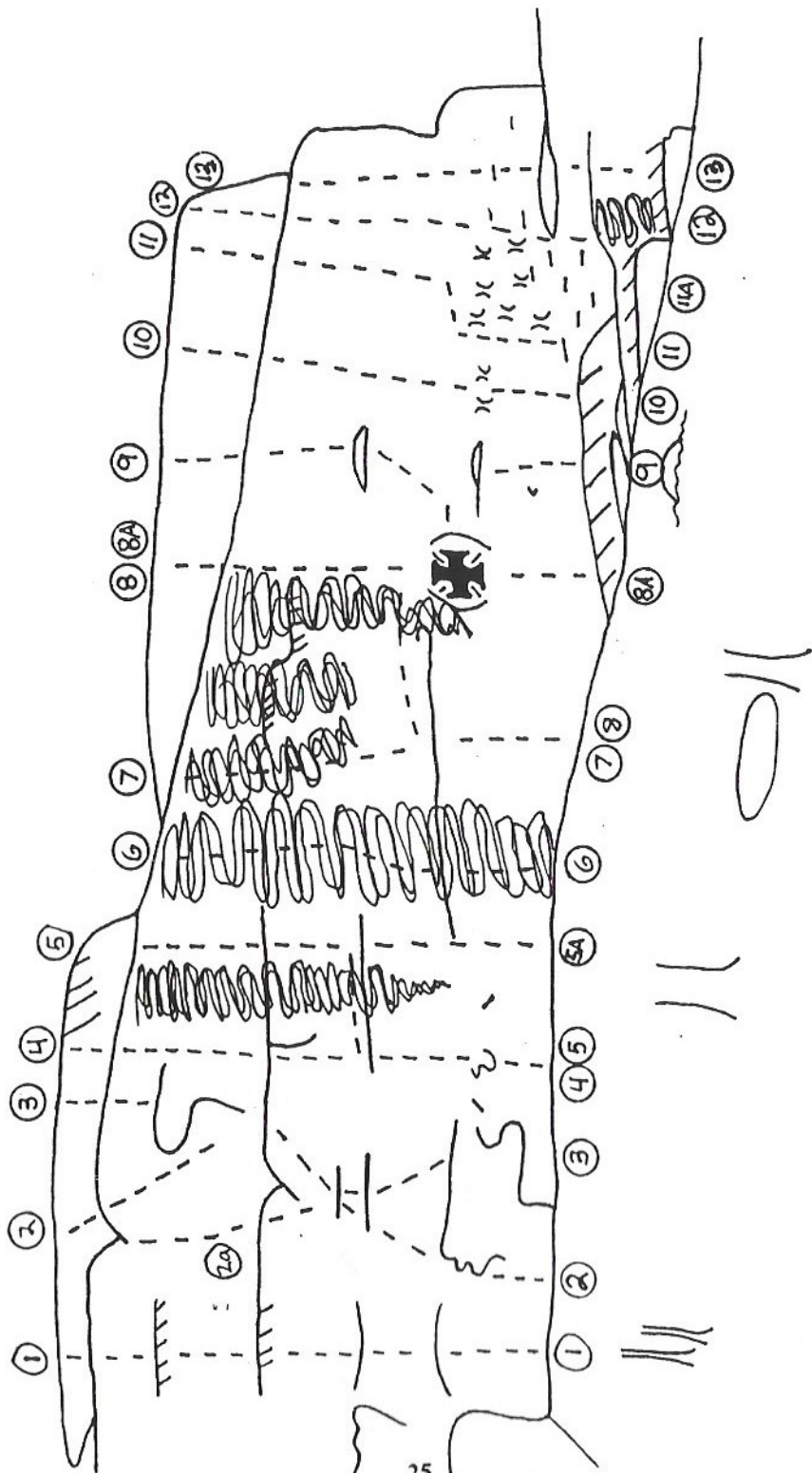
Start on the right end of the ramp. Climb a straight line to the bucket before the mammoth reach on American Mouse. Finish up on American Mouse.

12. Birdie Party 5.10 a

Start on the second ramp to the left of the short black streak. Climb up to big bucket. From here keep going straight for the top.

13. The Flying Spatula 5.10 b

Start on the second ramp to the right of the short black streak. Climb up to the small cave and continue straight to the top.



Notes

Surprise Party is also called Disneyland

↓ ↓ Try this gripping stuff! ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

Razor - Don't use the big crack, only use the sloper next to it!

waging war on all Thieves - Don't use

The three finger pocket, only use the sloper to the right of it.

Hang Time - Try not using the top hold on the first long reach but find another way to the next hold instead.

The Dog - Start at the base of RPEF. Only use the first hold on RPEF. Don't use any other holds on RPEF or Hang Time. Climb straight up in between Hang Time and RPEF!



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