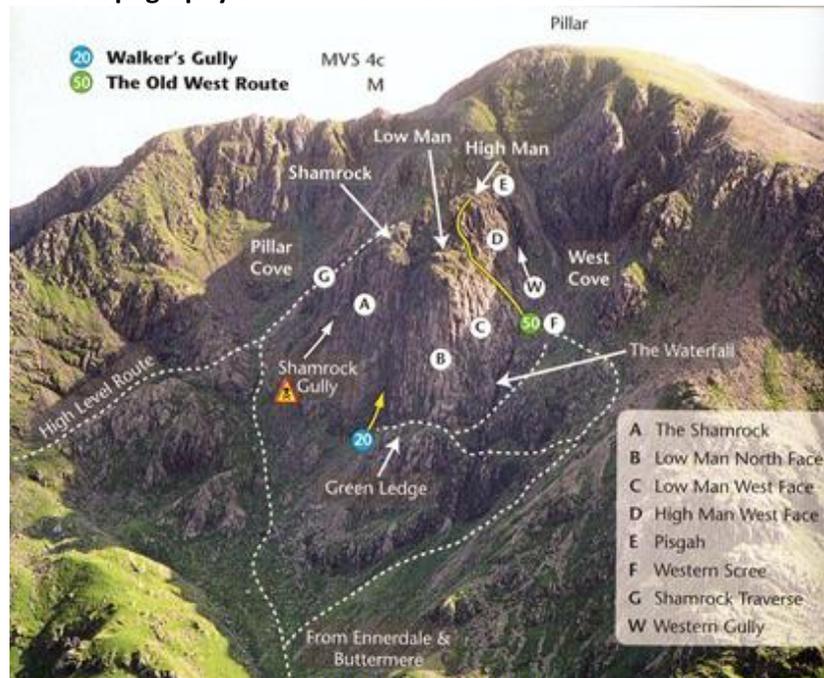


## The topography of Pillar Rock – as relevant to West Face climbs



The West Face of The Rock faces down Ennerdale thus enjoying wonderful afternoon and evening sun. This face is most easily (i.e safely) reached without going to the base of the front face of the crags (N Face of Low Man and Shamrock). The Rock has two summits; the lower is called Low Man while the upper and true summit is called High Man, the final section of The Old West Route is an easy scramble between the two top. High Man is separated from the fellside by a cleft known as Jordan Gap. Two gullies descend from the gap; the East Jordan Gully is easy while the steep and imposing West Jordan Gully is not! A small, squat tower known as **Pisgah** sits between **Jordan Gap** and the main tourist path up Pillar fell, it is easily by-passed on its east side. The West Face is split by an easy diagonal rake line, The Old West Route. The West Face of Low Man lies below and left of this ramp while the West Face of High Man lies above and to its right. The descent from High Man involves 50m of easy scrambling (or a 25m abseil for those with no sense of tradition

### Warning

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## Lakeland Revival 2017



**Gems: Appian Way & Rib and Slab, 155m (plus scrambling) HS \*\*\***

### Pillar Rock, Ennerdale

#### Introduction

**Pillar Rock** (NY 172 125) (*aka The Rock*) is a large, complex and remote mountain crag composed of superb rough rock and looking out over the wilds of upper Ennerdale. There is no easy or short approach, you will need to expend considerable energy just getting to the bottom of your route; in return you will be rewarded with superb climbing in a fabulous location. Good all round mountain skills are a pre-requisite for climbing here if you are to get to the crag, find your way around and up it and get off its top before nightfall. Don't forget your map, compass, sac you can climb with, comfy rock shoes and sandwiches; a day on Pillar is always full on!

#### Usual approaches

There are three usual approaches, up Ennerdale, from Wasdale or from Buttermere; all take at least 2 hours. It is assumed that you can use a map and compass!

1 **Cycle (or walk) up Ennerdale** from Bowness Knott car park (NY 109 153) (leave no valuables in the car) until you cross a bridge over the river in the valley bottom (at NY 176 132) almost directly below The Rock. A steep pull leads from the forest road to below the N Face. To access the W Face slog up the laborious scree slopes bounding the right side of The Rock until you can head left to the foot of the face.

2 **From Gatesgarth Farm in Buttermere** (NY 194 150) walk over Scarth Gap Pass (NY 189 133), descend diagonally right to reach the valley floor below The Rock and a junction with the Ennerdale approach.

3 **From Wasdale Head** (NY 186 088) follow the path to Black Sail Pass (NY 192 114), turn left and follow the Pillar fell path passing a small knoll (Looking Stead), just beyond this a small cairn on the right (NY 184 117) marks the start of the superb High level Route which contours across the hillside to a prominent cairn (Robinson's Cairn) and a superb view of the crag. Continue up the High Level Route to the col separating the top of The Rock from the fell-side behind.

**Pillar Rock is a complex crag read all the access notes carefully before heading to the crag**

### Finding Appian Way

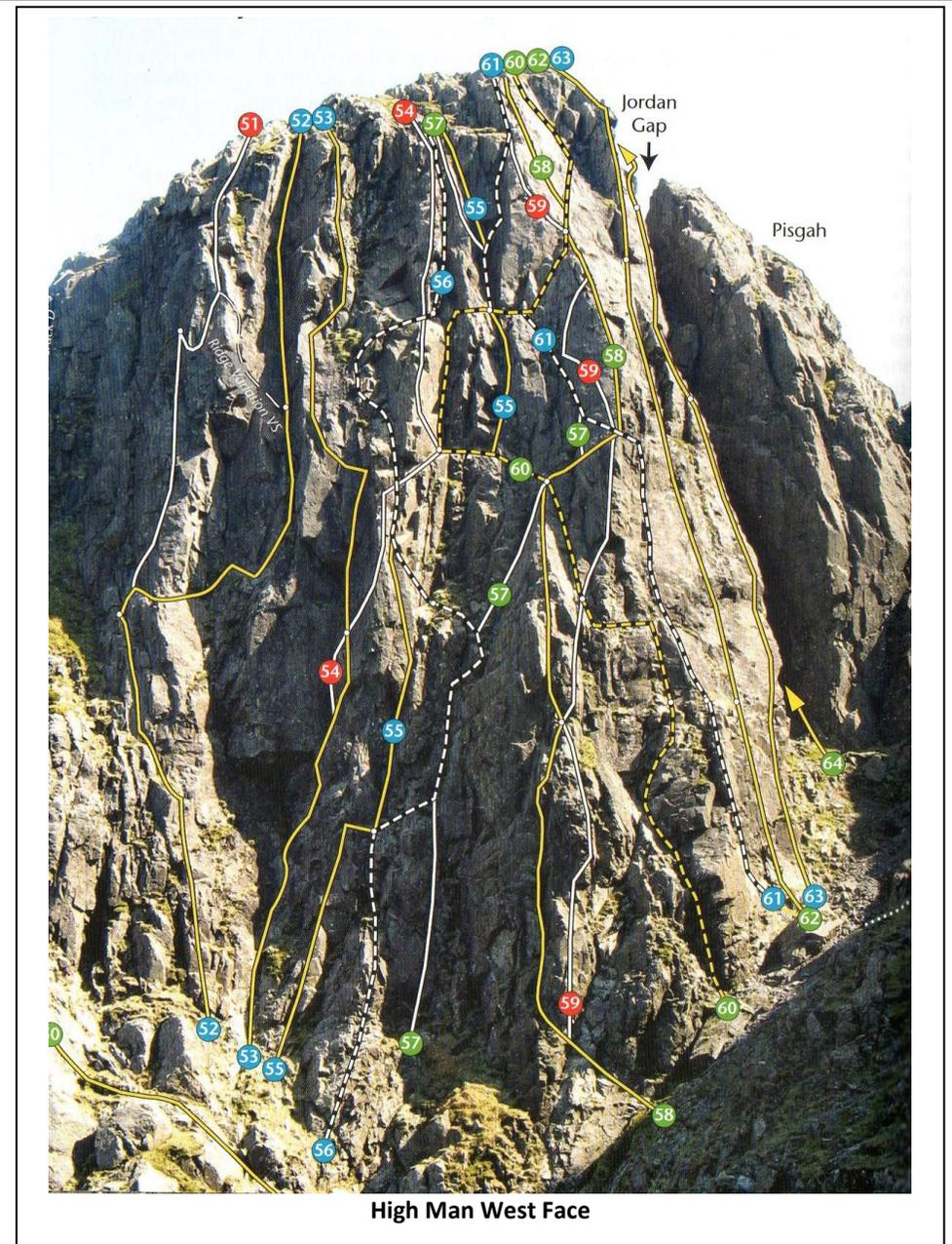
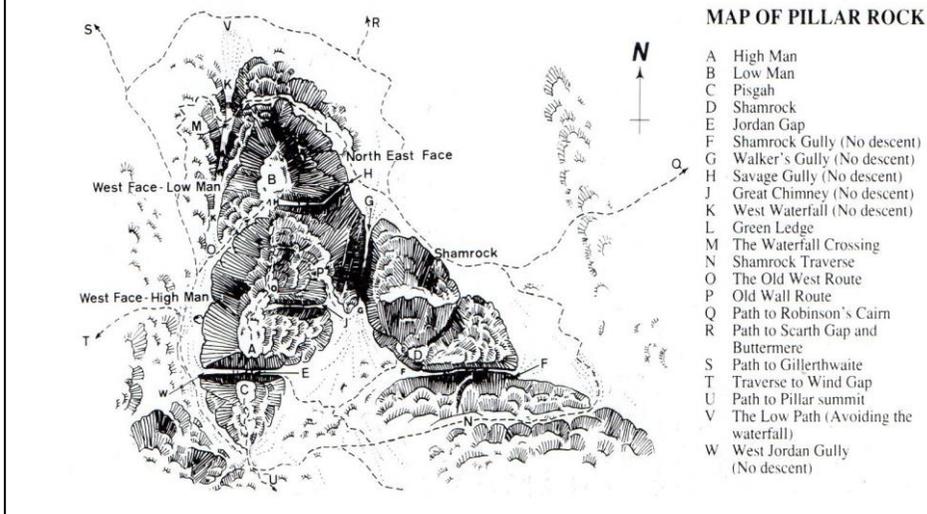
If you have approached The Rock from Ennerdale you will arrive on the scree below the *W Face* and finding the start *West Wall Traverse* and hence of the route should be fairly straightforward.

If you used the Wasdale approach you will be on the col between The Rock and the main fellside. To access the *West Face* descend the scree slopes leading West from the South side **Pisgah** (See map below). **Do not try to descend West Jordan Gully** (route 64 on photo-diagram) that falls from **Jordan Gap** which is on the N side of **Pisgah**. An advantage of this approach is the option to leave rucksacks at the top of the scree descent.

### Getting to Rib and Slab Climb.

From Low Man descend the easy and well-marked rake that descends across the West Face to reach the scree below the *W Face of High Man*. If necessary the upper summit (High Man) can be reached by an easy scramble up the final section of *The Old West Route*.

High Man is a true summit; the descent involves 50m of easy scrambling (or a 25m abseil for those with no sense of tradition).



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The lower part of the *West Face of Low Man* rises from a stream/gully and is vegetated and damp, there are no routes on it and it is a place best avoided. Thankfully, starting from the waterfall a line of ledges leads across the base of the main face, *West Wall Traverse*; crossing these requires care.

### The Appian Way

65m

HS

\*\*\*

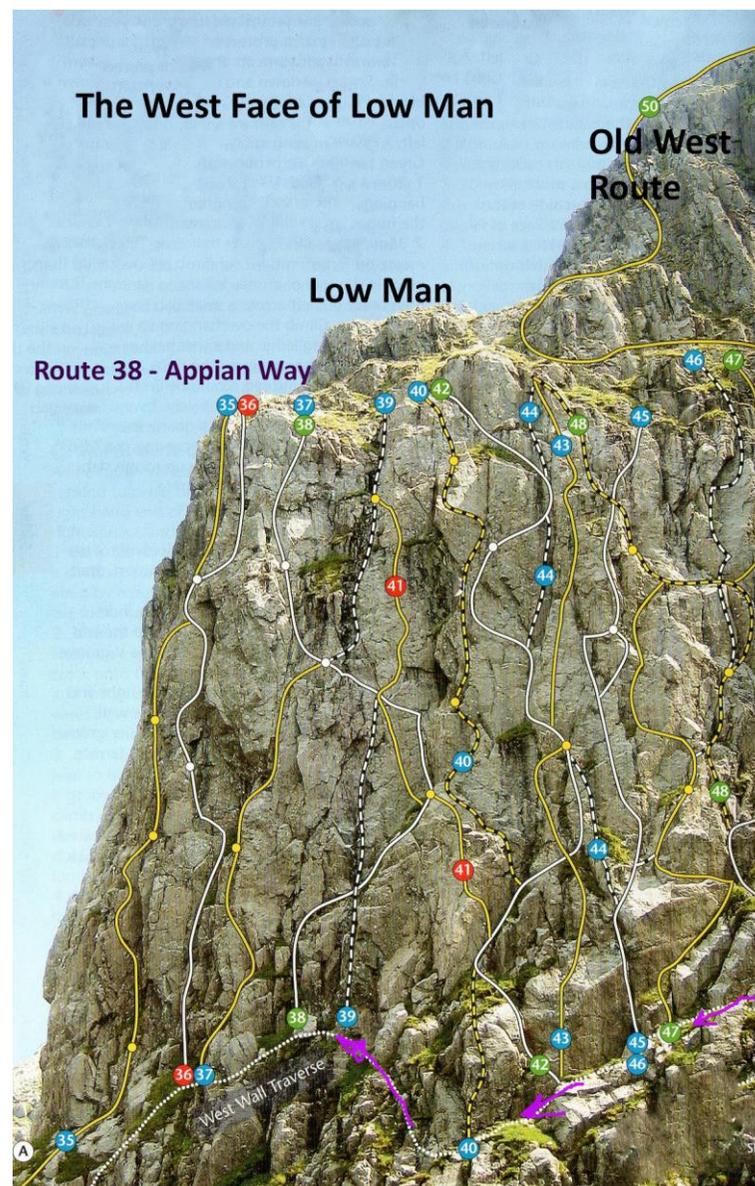
HEW Pritchard, HM Kelly - Jul 1923

A very pleasant and exposed route with delicate wall climbing and good situations. Follow the *West Wall Traverse* leftwards for some 70m, to a huge block on a grass ledge.

1. 20m Avoid the mossy groove by climbing up grassy rock on the left for 3m and then traversing to the right across the top of the groove to gain a grassy corner-ramp which is followed to its top.
2. 15m Climb the thin corner-crack and, from its top, traverse delicately left across the imposing wall to a worrying spike on the skyline. (Wires left of the base of the spike backed up using a crack on the left.)
3. 12m Move left and ascend a series of steep ledges straight ahead (bold) to a grassy terrace and a large block leaning against the wall (thread).
4. 18m Left of the block climb the slightly overhanging right-hand branch of an 8m crack followed by slabs.

From here reverse the easy lower section of *The Old West Route* (Route 50 on the photodiagrams) – the easy and well-marked scramble leading down to below the West face of High Man. *Rib and Slab Climb* starts towards the right side of this face.

If pressed for time and you came from Wasdale the upper summit (High Man) can be reached by an easy scramble up the final section of *The Old West Route*.



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**In case you missed the description of how to get from the top of *Appian Way* to the bottom of *Rib and Slab* it is repeated here.**

From the top of Low Man reverse the easy lower section of *The Old West Route* (Route 50 on photo-diagrams) – the easy and well-marked rake leading across and down the *West Face* to below the *West Face of High Man*. *Rib and Slab* starts on the right side of this face.

**58. Rib and Slab Climb**                      **90m**                      **HS**                      **\* \* \***

CF Holland, HM Kelly, CG Crawford -Jul 1919

One of the best climbs of its grade in the Lakes and an extremely enjoyable way to the summit of Pillar Rock. Start just above the start of a right-slanting intrusion of pale rock, 2m below a large embedded block (the start of the superb VD *New West Climb* – Route 60 on the photo diagram).

1. 1 26m Traverse left along a foot-ledge and continue leftwards to a steep rib with a groove. Climb this to break out left at a small ledge. Climb the slab right of the groove, or the rib on its right, to a ledge. A bold pitch.
2. 2 20m The groove above is hard to start (crux) but the difficulties soon ease. Climb the steep rib on the left of a groove (*New West Climb*) to a stance at the top.
3. 3 20m Traverse right and upwards, crossing a groove, onto a superb rough slab; climb it, rising rightwards to a rib which is followed to a belay beside a "pile of blocks" (shared with *New West Climb*).
4. 4 24m Follow the well-marked crack (*New West Climb*) for about 3m then traverse leftwards via a block. Climb the blistered slab and rib above directly to the summit of High Man.

Having enjoyed a well-earned rest and leisurely lunch take care descending from the top into Jordan Gap..

**GETTING TO THE TOP IS ONLY HALF THE STORY!**

**Getting down from the top of Low Man**

The best descent from Low Man is to reverse the easy lower section of *The Old West Route* (Route 50 on photo-diagrams) – the easy and well-marked scramble leading down to below the *West Face of High Man*. This is useful if you have seriously underestimated the time needed to get to and climb *Appian Way* and feel there is insufficient time to complete the full expedition.

**Getting down from the top of High Man**

The normal descent is to reverse the well-marked and classic easy climb called *Slab and Notch* (50m M \*\*\* 1863). If in doubt ROPE UP! Alternatively abseil down the short wall into the gap behind *The Rock*, beware of the deep and steep gully (*West Jordan Gully*) on the west side of the gap.

***Slab and Notch (in descent):***

From the summit move 10m north to find an obvious cleft and chimney splitting the East Face. Descend the chimney easily for a few metres, move left (facing in) onto a stepped slab. Down-climb to a good ledge leading left (facing in) to a short steep broken arête. Descend the arête for 5m to another ledge. From the ledge move left (facing in) to the Notch and descend either of the steep grooves beyond to gain the Slab. Traverse the Slab leftwards (facing in) and climb up its left edge slightly, then descend to an easy gully (*East Jordan Gully*) and thence join the main path up Pillar Fell (*Shamrock Traverse* – an obvious diagonal ramp marked G on the general topography photograph).

**Returning to base**

If you walked in from Wasdale Head the easiest way back is to continue up the path to the summit of Pillar Mountain and then follow the walkers' path down to Black Sail Pass and on to the pub for a well-earned drink.

To return to Ennerdale either walk down *Shamrock Traverse* until you can head directly down to below *The Rock*, or descend the scree slopes below the *West Face* (be careful to avoid starting down the steep and loose *West Jordan Gully*), both ways join the path from the valley. For those returning to Buttermere the walk up to Scarth Gap Pass isn't as bad as you might think – honest.

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