

Rock of Evil:
Climbing at Devil
Rock



A book of topos, occult knowledge,
and restaurant reviews by Satan,
Carl Johnston and David Smart

Rock of Evil:
Climbing at Devil
Rock

by
The Prince of
Darkness
and his Minions
(Carl Johnston and
David Smart)

Johnston
Smart

The Devil rejoices in the rugged, the rough and the barren no less than in the smooth and the fertile. All things equally exalt him. He represents the finding of ecstasy in all phenomenon, however naturally repugnant; he transcends all limitations; he is Pan, he is All... Essential to this symbolism are the surroundings- barren places, especially high places...In every symbol of the Devil there is the allusion to the highest things, and the most remote.

Aleister Crowley, Satanist, Alchemist, and Climbing Guidebook Writer, 1944.

Copyright, Carl Johnston and David Smart, Toronto: 1997. Imprint limited to 200 signed and numbered copies.

First Warning: Mega Therion says "Those who neglect warnings, and profane the Sanctuary of Nature, have no other than themselves to blame for the formidable and irremediable disasters which infallibly destroy them." Devil Rock is for expert experienced outdoor climbers only, and this book is not a safety manual. Devil Rock is big enough and remote enough to qualify as a very serious cliff. The authors take no responsibility for errors resulting from the use of this book. We do, however, share with you Master Therion's prayer for climbing success, addressed to the satanic goatshead of the club logo:

Hear me sure-footed goat,
For thee have I worshipped ever
With stains and sorrows and scars,
With Joyful, joyful Endeavour.
Hear me, O lilywhite goat
Crisp as a thicket of thorns,
With a collar of gold for thy
throat, a scarlet bow for thy horns.



A . . A . .

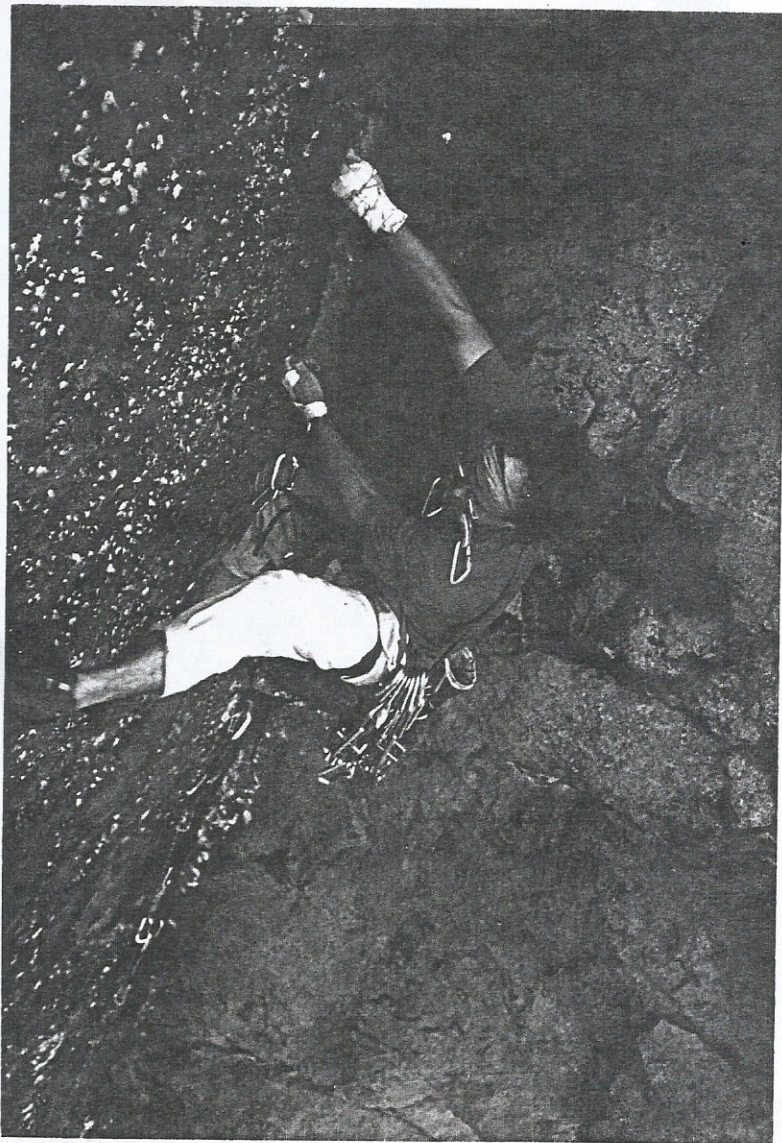
Publication in Class B.

Imprimatur

N. Fra: A . . A . .

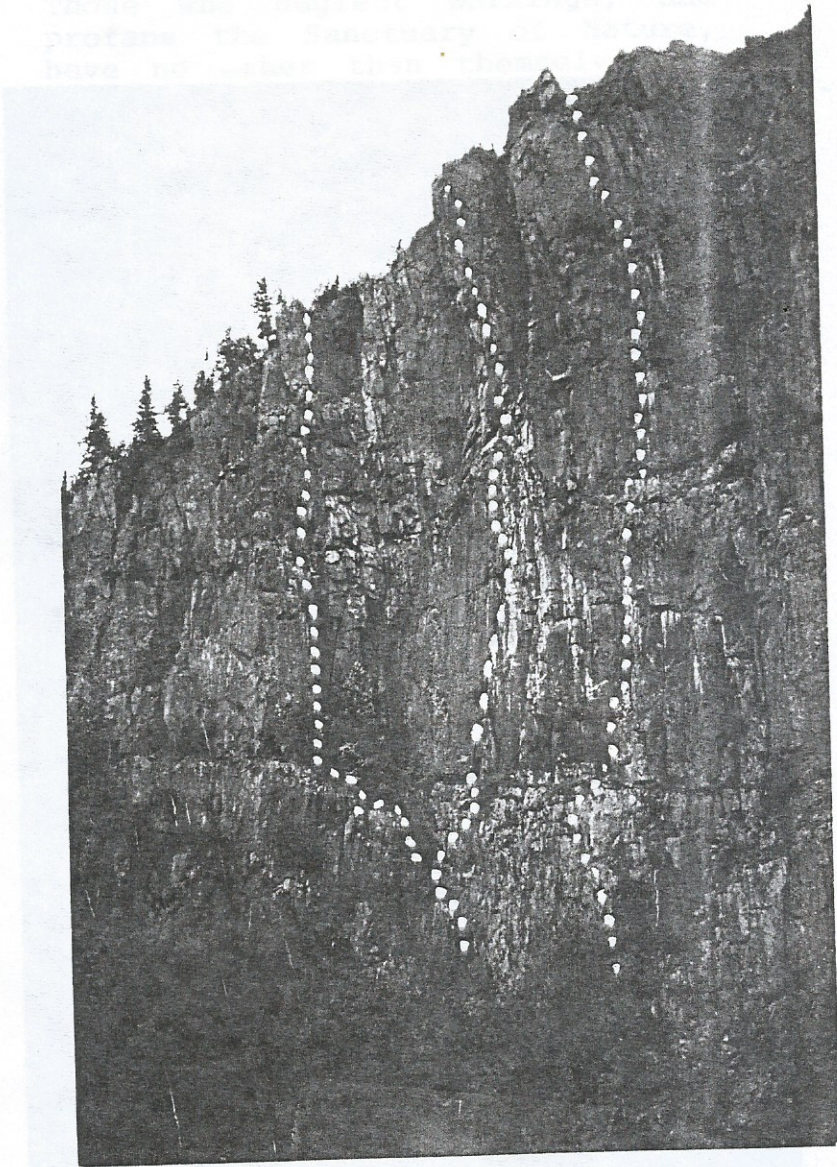
O.M. $7^{\circ} = 4^{\square}$ R.R. et A.C.

I.A. $5^{\circ} = 6^{\square}$ R.R. et A.C.



Dave Smart ruining a quickdraw on
the strenuous fourth pitch of Bombay
Sapphire. (Photo: Noreen Holmes)

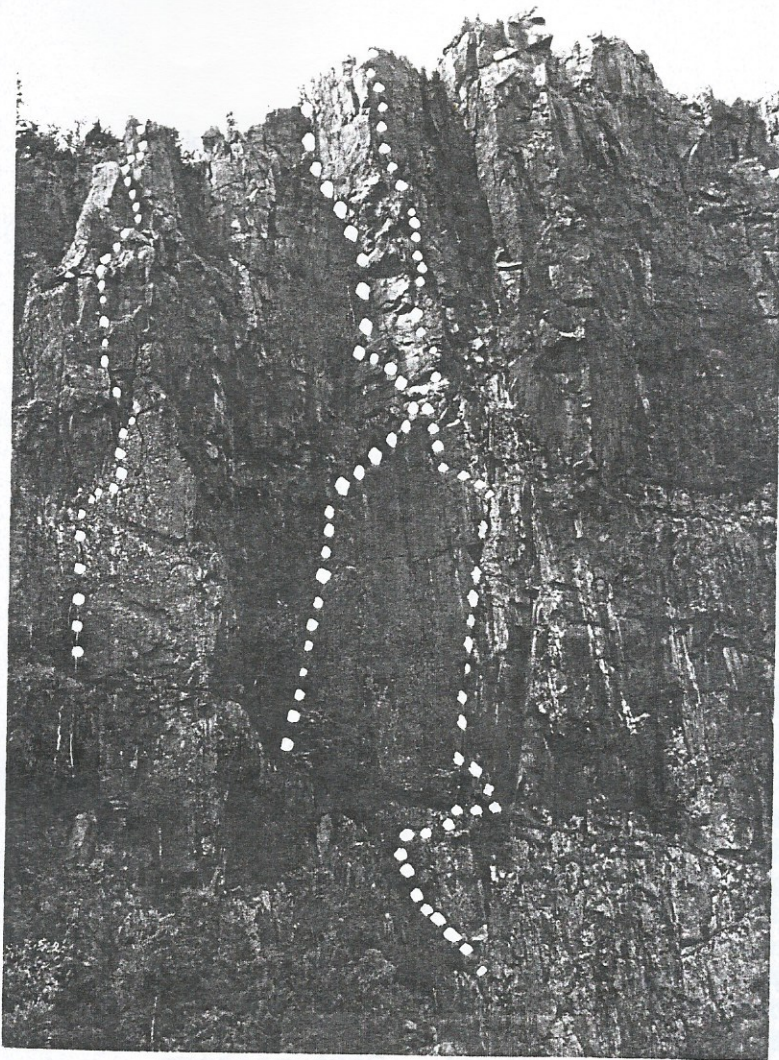
First warning: Keys Theiler said
There are several openings, and
profane the sanctuary
have no other than this



The South Buttress and the North
Face of the Finger of God

Left to right:

- 1) Samson I 5.106
- 2) Carmina Burana II 5.11b A0
- 3) Play Rough with Me II 5.10a A.1



The South Buttress and the East Face
of the Finger of God

Left to Right:

- 1) *Delilah I* 5.9
- 2) *Bombay Sapphire II* 5.11b
- 3) *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* 5.8
A.3. Starts on *Bombay Sapphire*,
and moves right to *Carmina*
Burana.
- 4) *Carmina Burana II* 5.11b A0

Devil Rock

Introduction

In all honesty, we're not sure which is worse: the gruelling and incessant pounding of so many days smashing belay bolts into Precambrian granite, or the gruelling and incessant pounding of a morning-after-the first-ascent hangover earned in a miner's town where bars outnumber people. Whichever, one thing is for sure: the vertigo of 120m of sheer, relentless, shield granite is worth the "landigo" of those post-victory mornings at Devil Rock.

Pull out an Ontario Road Map and you'll find Lake Timiskaming lying like a moat along the Ontario/Quebec Border, 150km north of North Bay. A "big water" lake, Timiskaming is 4km across and more than 75km long. Access to the lake is limited to only a few points, with a large percentage of both shorelines punctuated by granitic cliffs and steep, rocky woodlands. Fortunately for climbers, the best climbing objective also has the easiest access.

Devil Rock lies on the Lake's west shore, just a few kilometres south of the region formed by the Tri-Towns of Haileybury, Cobalt and New Liskeard, which have a large francophone population. Of these,

Skinned Lizard is the most well developed, offering everything from supermarkets, restaurants, a movie theatre with free matinees, and a contractor's supplier that sold Hilti bolts cheaper than Many Equipment Companies in Toronto. With the mining boom largely dried up, tourism is important to the area, and climbers will make a contribution to the growth of this industry.

Or so went the thinking, anyway, that brought a small army of climbers again and again to Devil Rock during the 1996 season. Prior reconnaissance by Dave "Moses" Smart, led to the area's first climb, a rope solo of the five pitch Leather Goddesses of Phobos (II 5.8 A.3). By the time of Moses' return in '94 with Philip "Mayday" May, it was clear that a cobalt mine of potential new routes existed. And so it was that in the summer of '96 Moses returned, bringing his people to this new land of milk and honey, and they saw that it was good, very good.

Sliced and scoured by glacial action, the Precambrian walls of Devil Rock, teeter 150m above lake Timiskaming. Approach is from the top, and although it is possible to walk to the base, most routes are accessed by several rappels. This is because in many places, the first 20m of the cliff consists of

fractured and vegetated 5.5 rock. The substance of the climbs is 3-5 pitches of vertical to overhanging granite above this intermittent band. Everything from text-book splitter finger cracks to sustained laybacking, offwidth and chimney climbing can be found here. So far, the only face climbing that has been done has been to link crack systems. Belays are usually bolted, and generally, protection is excellent.

The first mostly free route fell in July, during a ground-up assault. Crying out for you to Play Rough with Me (5.10a, A1), this route follows a prominent line up the crack to the right of the Mulroney face buttress. While the second pitch awaits a free ascent, the last two pitches, accessible by a 50m rappel to "Miner's Home Ledge" offer superb 5.10a crack climbing. Bring a rubber suit to scum, wedge, and convulse yourself up the final chimney on the fourth pitch. Here, with good protection in a crack to the side, wriggle past the "tumour" wedged halfway up and top out right underneath the lookout to the amazement of the locals.

Bombay Sapphire (II 5.11b) named after the cause of many of the fore-mentioned hangovers, must rank as one of the best crack routes around. Cort "Everest" Mc Elroy and Dave Smart made the first ascent in a one day return trip from Toronto. A

beautiful thin crack on the first pitch which spat out Cort a few times before he succeeded on the first ascent comprises the crux, and the impressive hand-crack/layback on the fourth pitch is only marginally easier.

The current crown-jewel of Devil Rock, however, is Carmina Burana (II 5.11b A0 or 5.12b). Like its namesake opus by Karl Orff, this climb seemed at once beautiful, oppressive, intense, and sickeningly exposed. It follows a powerful finger crack across an overhanging wall to a hanging stance. An adventure bolted face leads to a thin crack only free climbed on top-rope, but two aid moves deposit one on easier ground above. An overhanging and exposed offwidth with excellent protection lead to a small ledge perched on the arete. The final arching layback crack leads to a lunge for the arete and the top. This four pitch route was climbed by me and Dave Smart. In Dave's opinion this route is similar in quality and difficulty to The Prow on Whitehorse ledge in New Hampshire.

A variety of short leads and top-rope routes from 5.6-5.12b have been done; so far, all of these are cracks. No route has yet seen a repeat, and the majority of rock remains to be climbed. The pinnacle-"the Finger of God"- will provide

multi-pitch routes in the more moderate 5.7-5.9 range, but work on them was literally halted by the first snowstorm of the season.

Meaning no offence to those among us who exclusively sport-climb, we should point out that Devil Rock is as specifically suited to trad climbing as White Bluff is to sport climbing. A single bolt can take several bits and up to 5 hours to drill by hand, so putting up a sport route could take you a long...long...long...time.

That being said, Devil Rock is sure to be acknowledged in the future as Satan's choice for rock routes. Devil Rock will torment even the most crusty of trad climbers, and will surely have you on your knees pleading for a quick end to the suffering. (Only 15m of crack left to go.....Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha.....)

LOGISTICS

CLIMBING

The central buttresses of Devil Rock can be reached by following Hwy 567 south out of the hamlet of North Cobalt- look for a sign for the Timiskaming Mission at the turn-off from Hwy 11b. Three or four kms down Hwy 567 you will see the Bucke Park campground sign on the left with its tempting, but ultimately disappointing offer of "Devil Rock

Information." Another 2km further down on the left is the Devil Rock trailhead. Park and hike for 10 min. along the trail to the Devil Rock Lookout. A guard rail may be visible here or at the bottom of the cliff, depending on whether it is the town engineers or the locals who are currently winning the battle.

The cliff breaks into a few convenient areas for reference. The Practice Tiers are the small south facing cliffs at the north end. There are actually other cliffs to the north of these, but they have not yet been visited. The forbidding cliff between here and the Lookout Buttress is the North Wall. The Lookout (!) Buttress is bounded on the north by the north-facing wall on which The Cleaning Lady is situated and on the south by the south end of a slab which ends at a giant ledge below the lookout. The Mulronee Face (once known as "the Devil's Face," before the mystic prophecy was fulfilled), with the long, impressive crack system of Play Rough With Me to its right, marks the start of the ought-to-be-fabled South Buttress, with its long, hard free routes. The Pinnacle to the south of this is entitled "The Finger of God," and here, long moderate routes will be completed in the near future.

Descent

Access to most routes is via rappel from the top. All the long routes, can, however, be tackled from the bottom. This is an interesting adventure to try once, but you probably won't want to do it often, since the first pitch of the routes on the South Buttress is usually on shattered rock. Familiarize yourself with the descent in case you have to retreat. It goes down a break in the rocks at the far end of the practice tier, and continues down slopes, and under a south-facing wall with a hand-crack in it. It then traverses through alder and brush to the big talus field. From here, walk down to and along the shore and over a third-class bit, and then a fourth class bit until below the south Buttress. Do not try to go straight up or straight down, and avoid the small cliff bands.

Gear, Weather, Risks

There is some poison ivy in the talus, but little on the top or on the routes. On the whole the temperature is ideal for summer climbing, from sometime in June, through to the end of September. When it is unthinkable to rock-climb further south, Devil Rock cultists enjoy moderate breezes from the Lake and a more northern latitude. Weather can quickly change however, especially in the autumn: we've gone from t-shirts in the sun to snow squalls in a half an hour. Even in

the summer, small thunder storms can rapidly move in off the lake and engulf the cliff in minutes. The nature of the routes is such that it is often not easy to get off straight away. Formulate an escape plan and familiarize yourself with the descent route. Also, you should bring a headlamp and rain gear, just in case it rains or get dark before you are able to reach the road. Although the routes are usually only a handful of pitches in length they are often overhanging and strenuous, and changeovers at hanging belays can take a lot of time. Don't underestimate the time that it takes to do the full-length climbs.

The rock is generally good, but most of the routes have only been done once, and so the odd hold is apt to break. Place lots of protection. Tape is useful for the preventing injuries to the hands on the often overhanging cracks. Numerous SLCDs, cordelettes, a belay seat at hanging stances, a water bottle, a small plastic whisk to brush off holds, and possibly a hard-hat are useful. An extra rope is necessary.

An additional risk is the possibility of locals throwing rocks off the top of the cliff while you are climbing. Generally speaking, the routes are too overhanging for this to pose a danger, but they have always stopped when we shouted up at them. Luckily, after several

generations of trundling, there isn't much at the top of the cliff to throw off any more. The debris at the base, however, provides an archaeological survey of life in the Tri-Towns.

Please be kind to boaters at the base, and be careful not to dislodge anything while they are below. The best response to their queries is the McElroy Strategem: ask them the same questions about boating; "Hey are you guys nuts?"; "Aren't you afraid of the water?"; "Do you have to belong to a club to ride in that thing!"; "Are you from Toronto?"; "Did you ride in that thing all the way from Town, or did you walk part of the way?" This soon has the boaters in stitches and can lead to party invitations. In any case, access to the cliff may well depend on our ability to make a good impression on other recreationalists in the region.

Fishing by using loose stones cast from the top of the cliff to slay innocent fish basking in the shallows below the talus field is forbidden by the MNR (If anyone knows the whereabouts of Aqueel Zaman, please contact the MNR immediately).

SLEEPING

Shield Country is rough: try camping out in the bush if you like, but at

\$9 a night, Bucke Park is a more humane alternative. Climbers can tent at the communal site at road's end, near the creek and walking trail (This trail, posted as a route to Devil Rock, is not recommended unless you like long moonlight strolls, Noreen).

Bucke Park \$9/ Tent, showers, limited food, beach, water (don't drink the lake water) no phones. Say Hi! to Stan, nude climbers not appreciated.

EATING- This is a drinking town, not an eating town baby!

North Cobalt

Birtchies: Best food going in Cobalt/Haileybury, open early and close to Bucke Park.

Various other places in Haileybury

Skinned Lizard

Norm's Forum: Go Hab's! And Breakfast too! Shrine to local hockey greats.

Pat and Mario's: At Hotel by lakeshore. Yuppie food service, reminiscent of apres climbing circa 1985. Reliable, but expensive.

La Brochette: Not our favourite place. Close to P and M's. Convenient hours.

Var. Franchises: North of the Lizard
on Hwy 11b near Hwy 11.

DRINKING

Cobalt

Miner's Home Tavern: A mean little
bar with no draft, throbbing lights,
Karaoke.

The Hotel: Don't even think about
it.

Haileybury

Unknown: In an old theatre on the
moribund main drag, red velvet,
tropical paintings: Twin Peaks
Ontario.

Skinned Lizard

Sam's: On the main strip, "new"
country. Comfortable bar with live
c+w. Sam, the affable publican may
regale you with tales of his
travels.

Doc's: Climbers' favourite. Pool
Tables, draft, whisky, etc.. Blues
Night, Disco Night, Rock Night, Folk
Night, Karaoke Night, etc...

Bad Weather Ideas

The local area is actually a haven
of interesting if rather off-beat
activities.

Timiskaming Mission: Nothing to See

Silver Trail: Follow the path of the mining trade past "the glory hole" and other mineral industry sites. Also, for a levity, look at the miserable little cliff the locals developed instead when they could have climbed at Devil Rock.

Cobalt Military Museum, Cobalt Mining Museum, Cobalt Fire Fighting Museum: You're in the Museum Capital of the North! Visit 'em all; walking distance from the LCBO.

Highway Bookshop: Incredible bookshop for used and new books, also their own publications on the history of the area. Huge Selection! Pixel Board! Great Prices! Hang Around for Hours! They sometimes sponsor vintage film showings in Cobalt.

Pete's Dam: Peaceful park near New Liskeard with bridges with benches suitable for sleeping off hangovers.

Free Matinees: Theatre in Skinned Lizard.

April Wine: Bands from the seventies don't die, they tour Northern Ontario. Frequent concerts at the College in Skinned Lizard are attended by large, enthusiastic groups of students.

CLIMBING EQUIPMENT

Skinned Lizard: In addition to bolting gear (but not hangers), inexpensive and fun facsimiles of many climbing items can be procured in the hardware stores and contractors' suppliers in New Liskeard. At the Home Hardware the proprietor has helped us customize some items for specialized use.

Finally: Make sure you tell everyone that you're there to climb and spend lots of money.

(unofficial announcement)



"I WAS CRAZY WITH MY CHOPPER!.. .

Until I discovered the Access
Committee."

The authors support the work of the Access
Committee of the Alpine Club of Canada and you
should too. Contact:

John Wylie
Access Committee Chair
Toronto Section, Alpine Club of
Canada
23 Finchurch Dr.
Willowdale, ON
M2R 1K8

North Cobalt
Area

New Liskeard

North Cobalt

Cobalt, Latchford
North Bay
Hwy 11

118

Haleybury

567

Lake
Temiskaming

Bucke Park

Climbers
Camp Here
at Trailhead

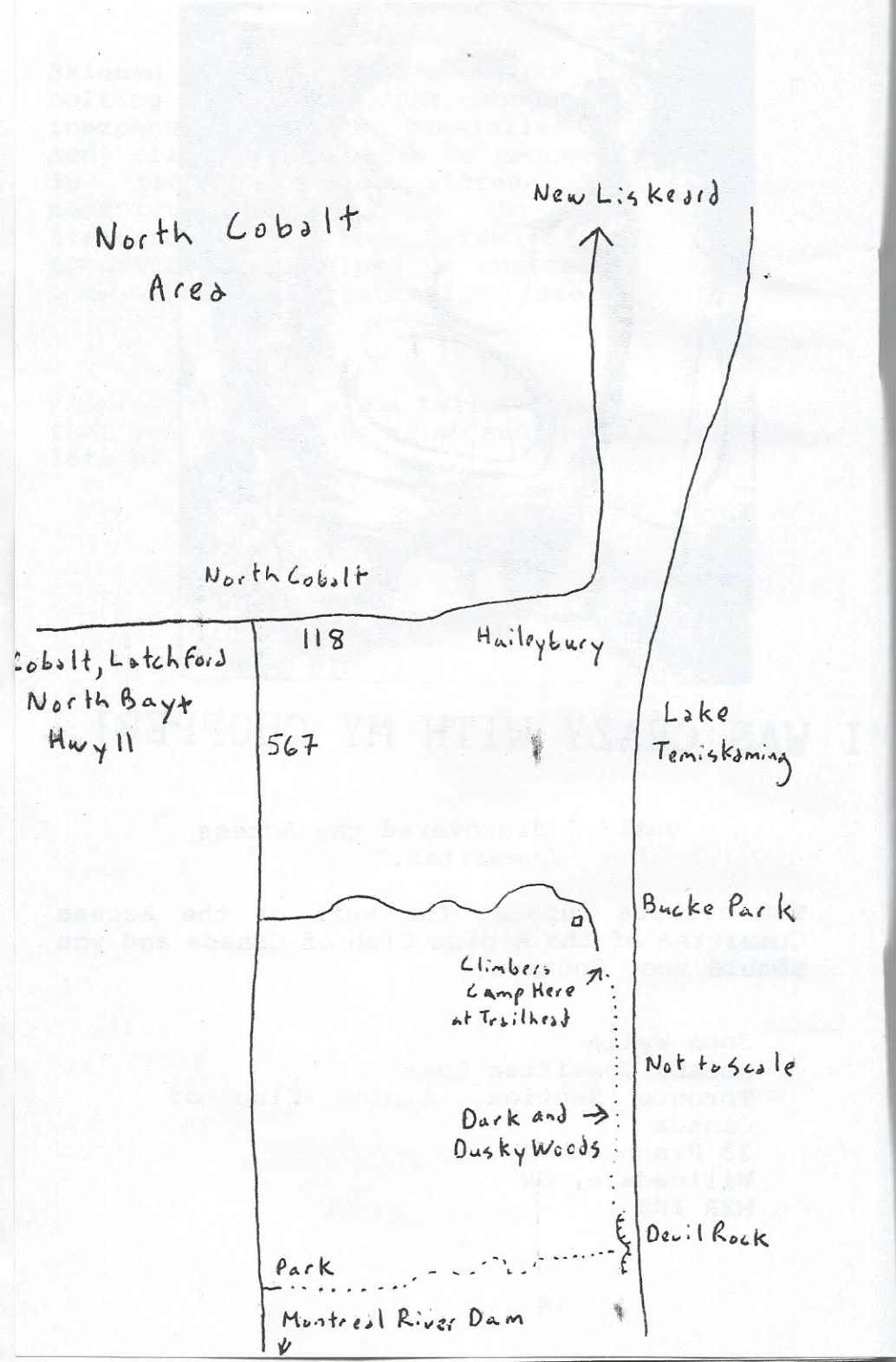
Not to scale

Dark and
Dusky Woods

Devil Rock

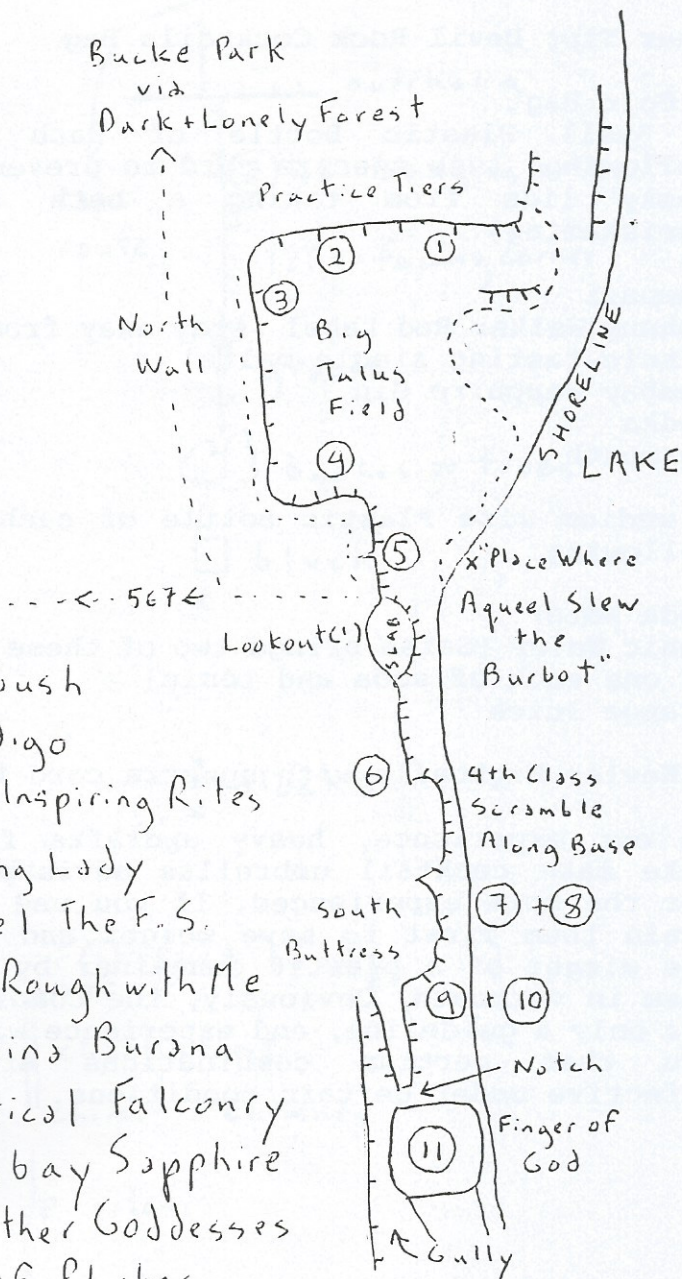
Park

Montreal River Dam



DEVIL ROCK

Bucke Park
via
Dark + Lonely Forest



- ① Nanabush
- ② Wendigo
- ③ Awe-Inspiring Rites
- ④ Cleaning Lady
- ⑤ Aqueel The F.S.
- ⑥ Play Rough with Me
- ⑦ Carmina Burana
- ⑧ Practical Falconry
- ⑨ Bombay Sapphire
- ⑩ Leather Goddesses of Phobos
- ⑪ The Finger of God

Gear Tip: Devil Rock Cocktails Bag

I Bolt Bag

1 Small Plastic Bottle of Each of the Following, (use spectra cord to prevent those pesky lids from taking a bath in Lake Temiskaming):

Campari

Johnny Walker Red Label (stay away from trendy ethnic tasting single malts)

Bombay Sapphire Gin

Vodka

Vermouth

I medium size Plastic Bottle of each of the following:

Soda Water

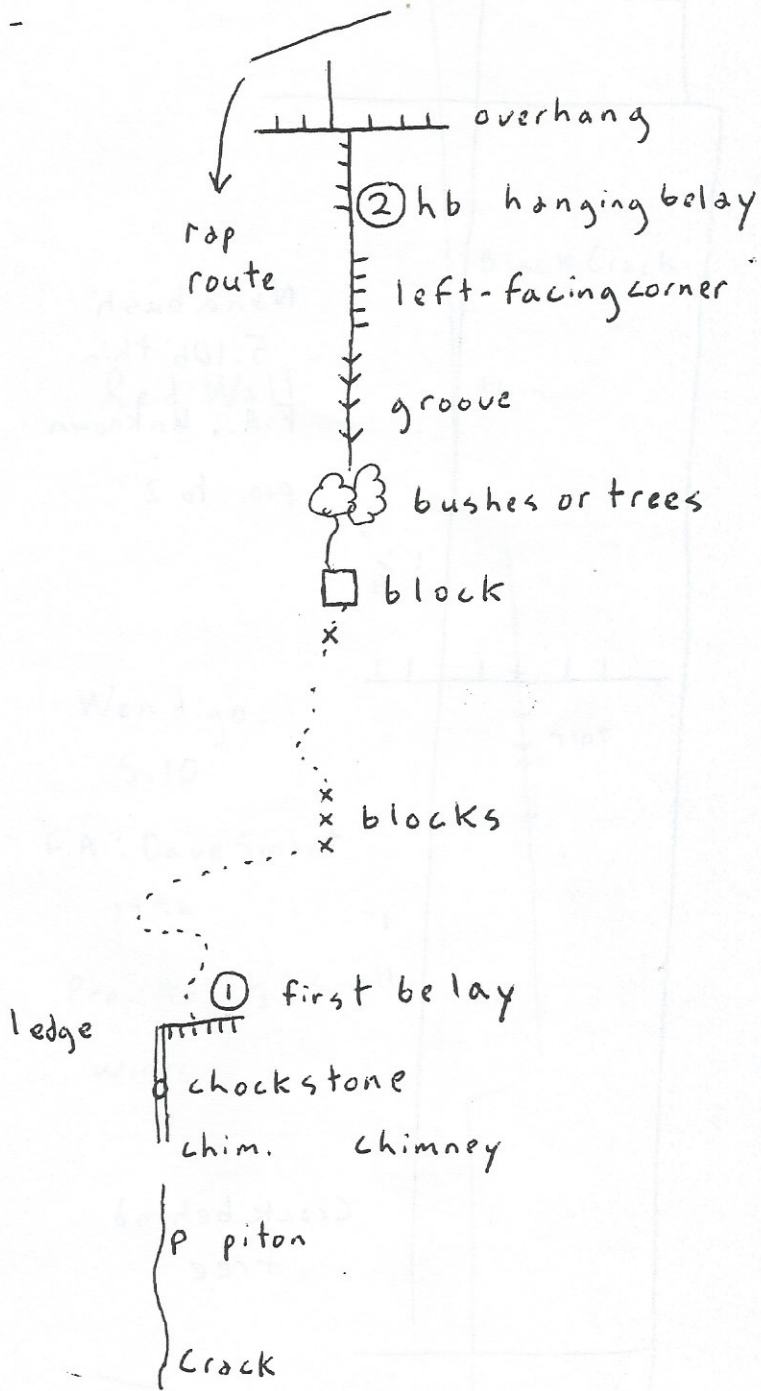
Tonic Water (Satan brings two of these instead of one each of soda and tonic)

Orange Juice

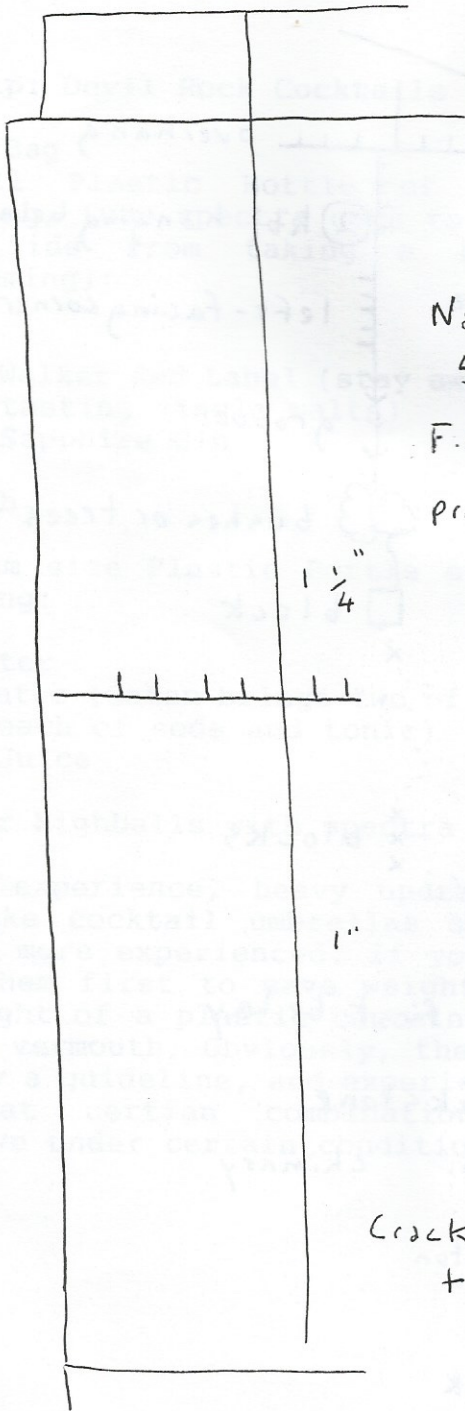
2 Kevlar Highballs with spectra cord tethers

In our experience, heavy updrafts from the Lake make cocktail umbrellas advisable only for the more experienced. If you use olives, drain them first to save weight and save on the weight of a plastic container by storing them in vermouth. Obviously, the combinations are only a guideline, and experience will show you that certain combinations are more effective under certain conditions.

Key to Topos



Rap 10m to Base



Nonabush

5.10b thin

F.A.: Unknown

pro.: to 2"

1 1/4"

1"

Crack behind
tree

Rap 10m to base

Red Wall

Black Crack

thin

Wendigo

5.10

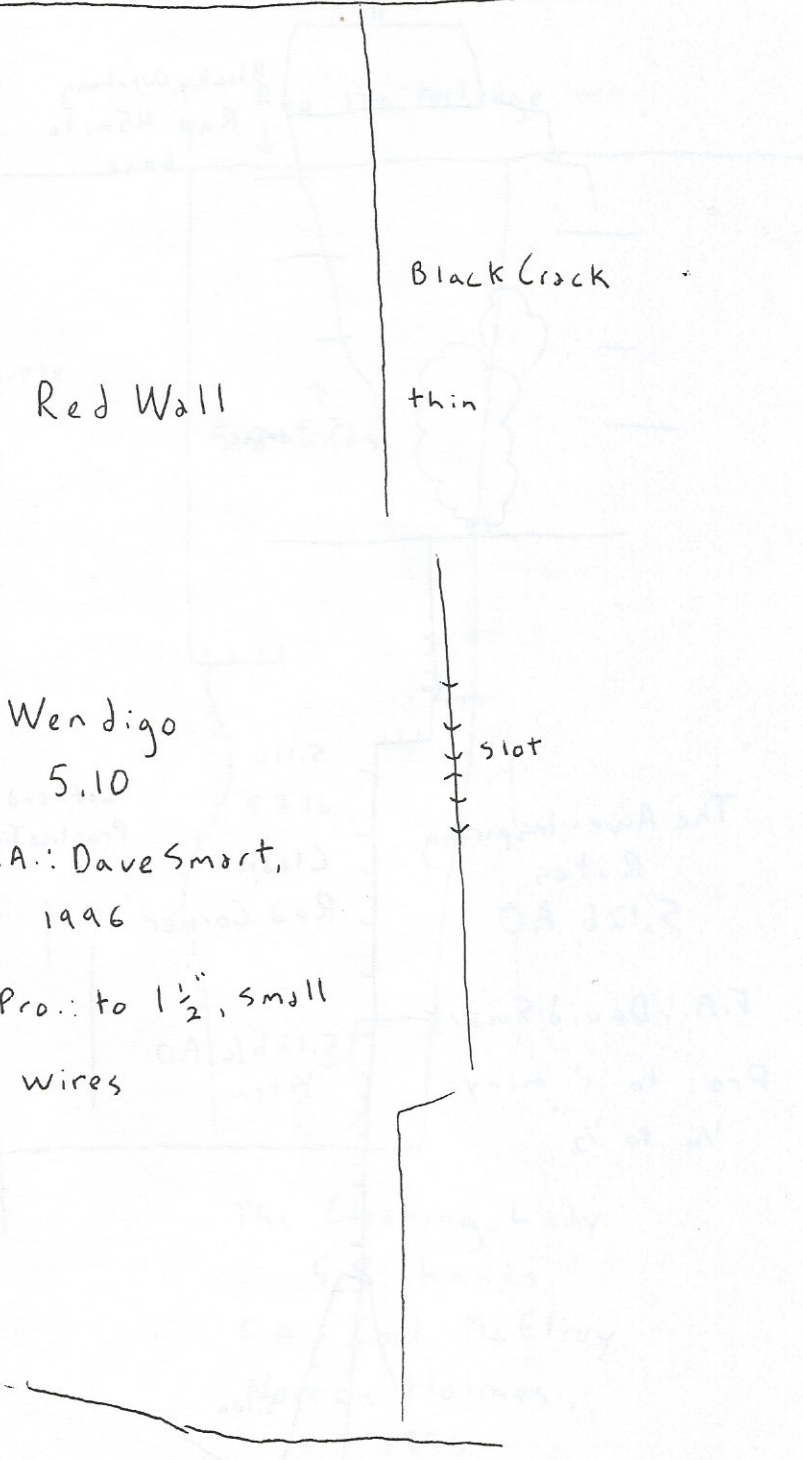
F.A.: Dave Smart,

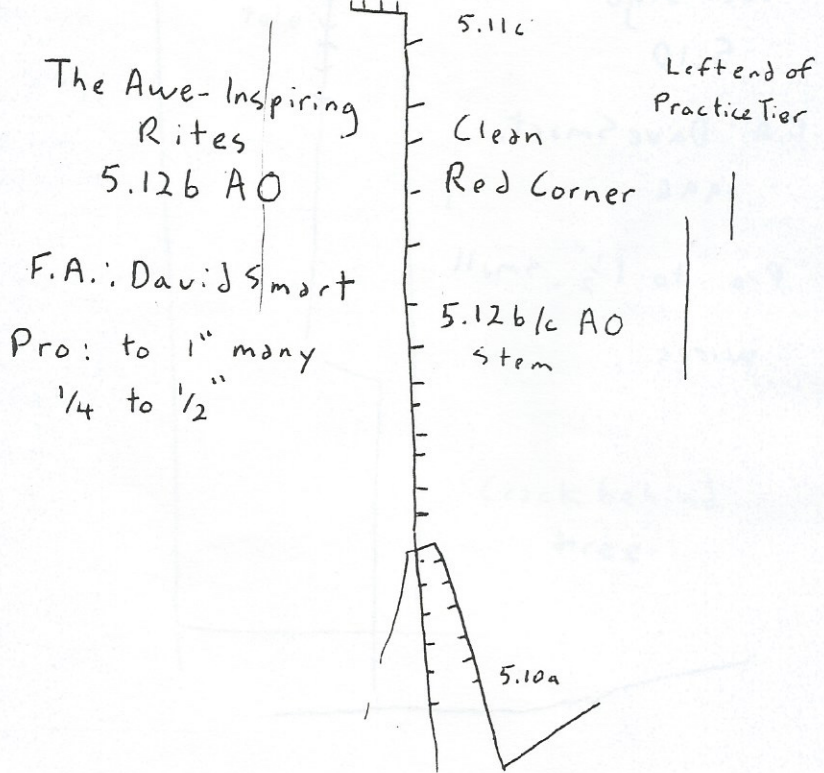
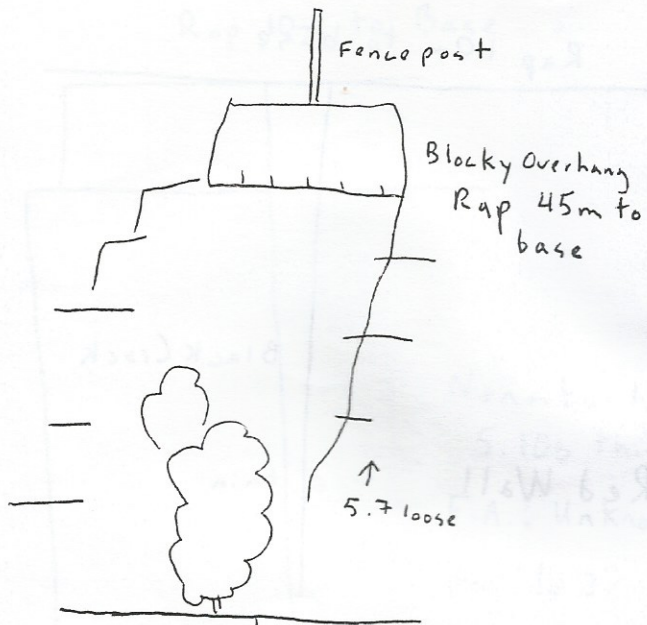
1996

Pro.: to $1\frac{1}{2}$ " small

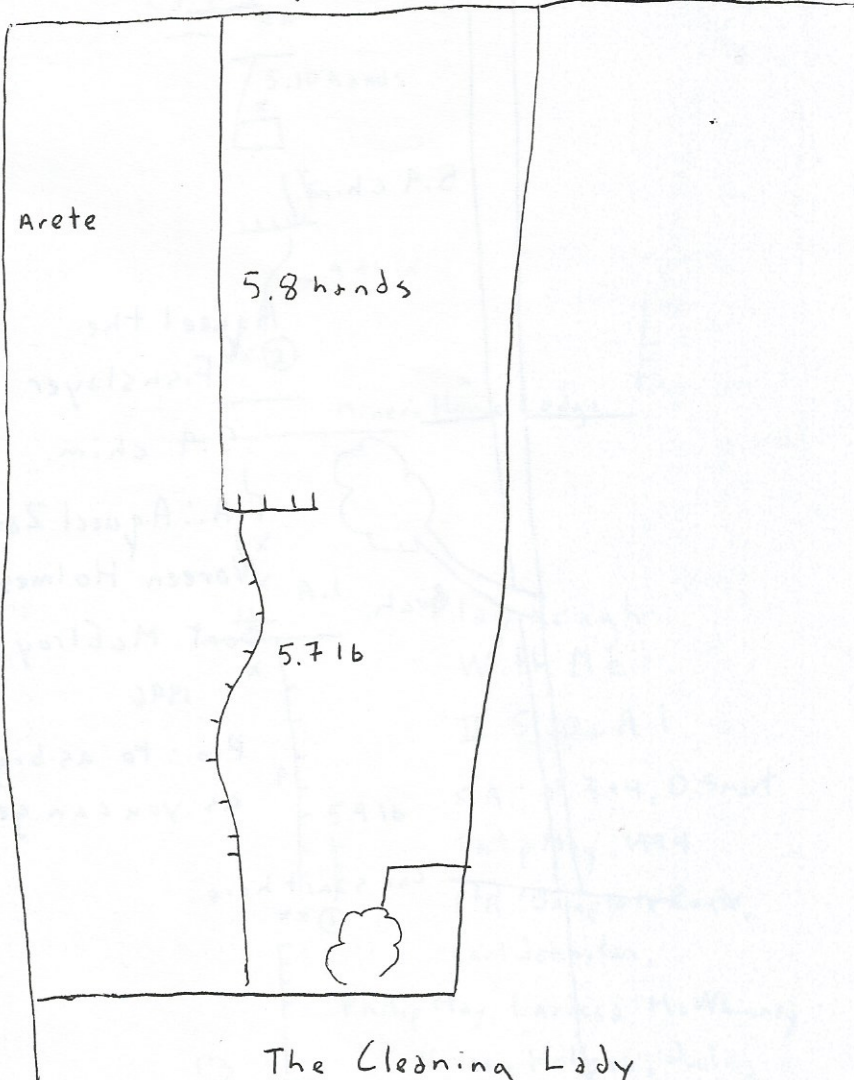
wires

slot





Rap 15m to ledge



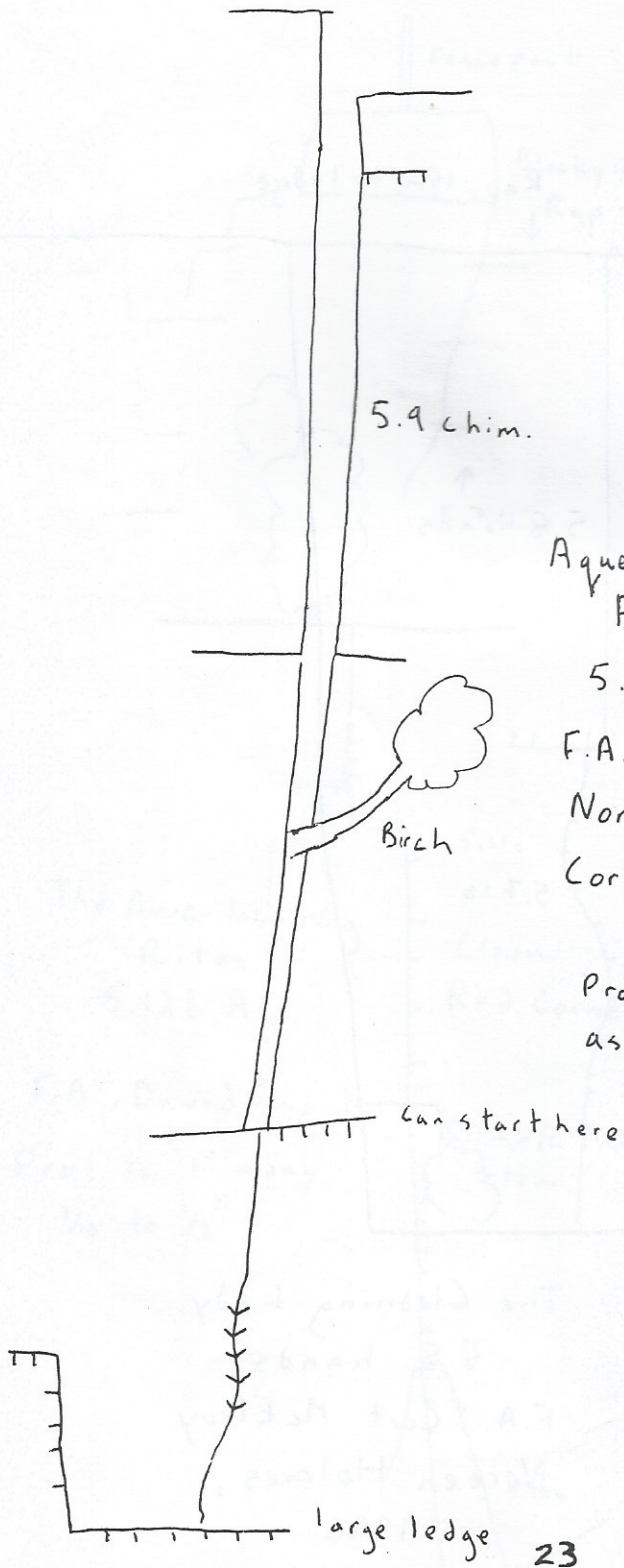
The Cleaning Lady

5.8 hands

F.A.: Cort McElroy

Noreen Holmes,

1996



5.9 chim.

Aqueel the Fishslayer

5.9 chim.

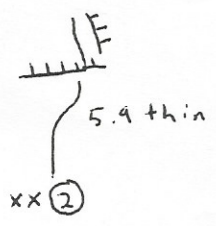
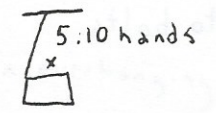
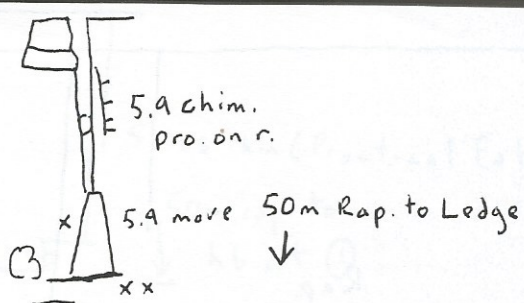
F.A.: Aqueel Zaman
Noreen Holmes,
Cort McElroy,
1996

Pro.: to as big
as you can get

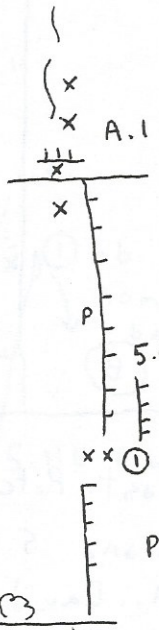
Birch

can start here

large ledge



Miner's Home Ledge



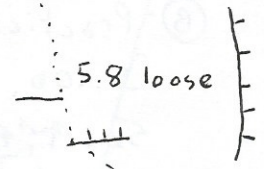
Play Rough
With Me

II 5.10a A.1

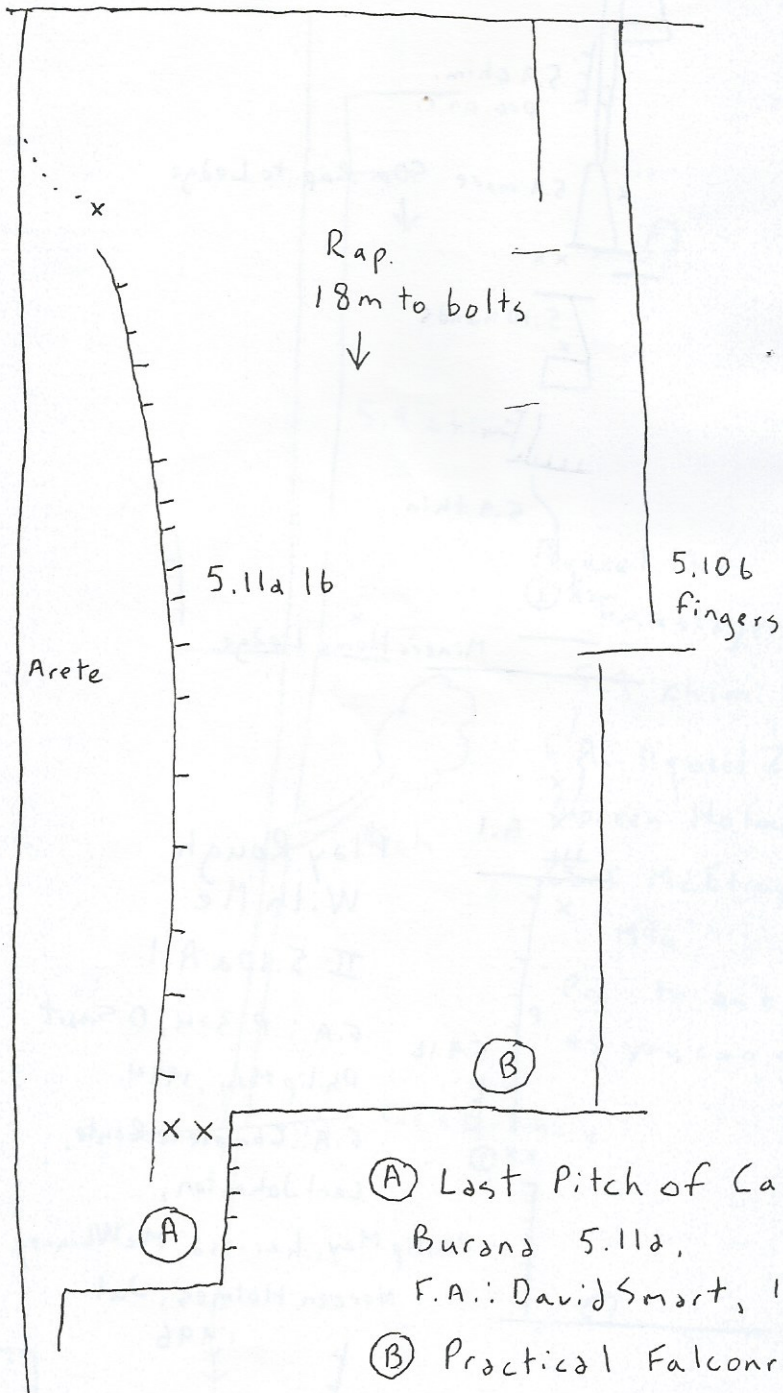
F.A.: P. 3+4, D. Smart
Philip May, 1994

F.A.: Complete Route,
Carl Johnston,

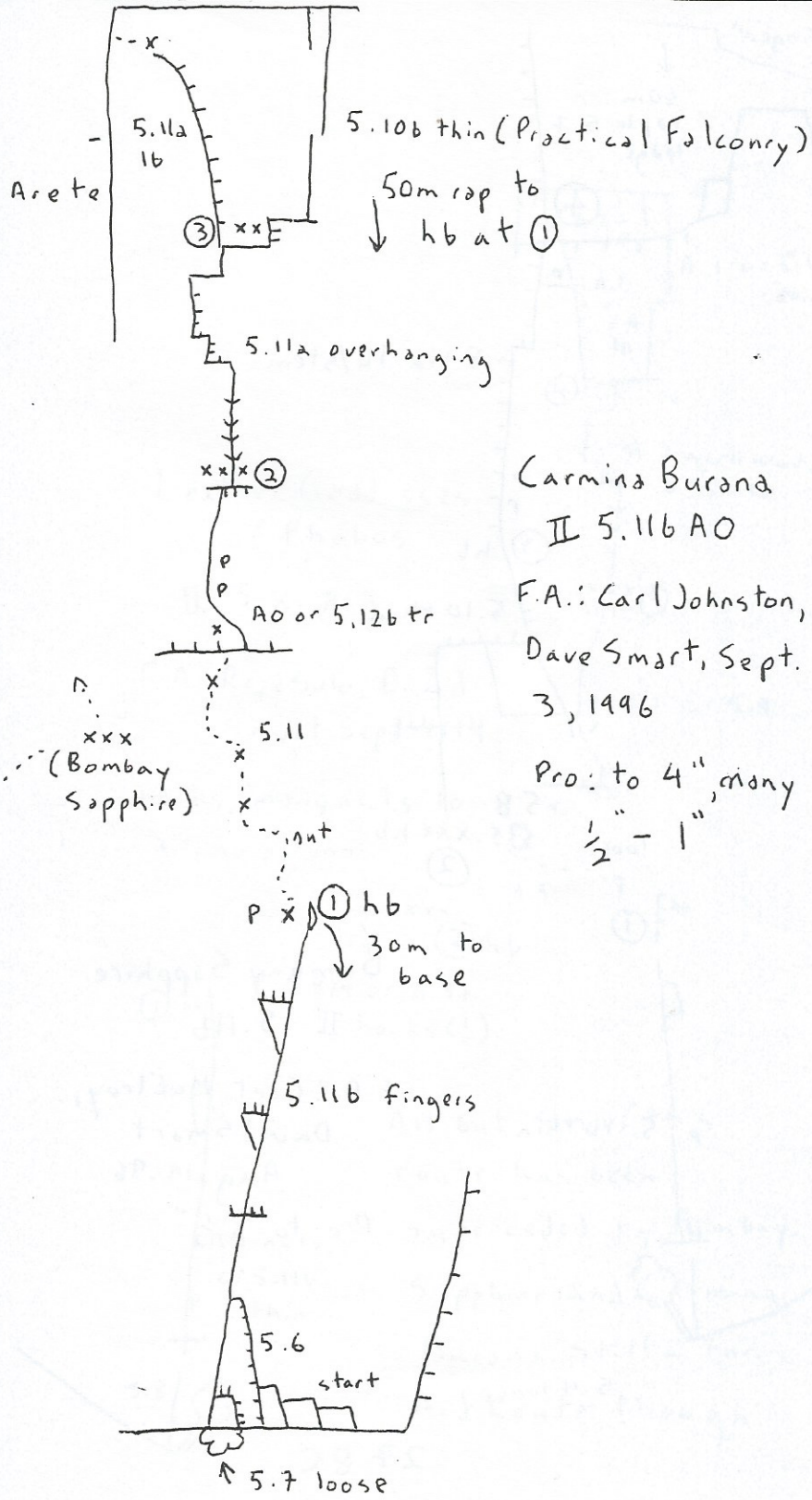
Philip May, Larissa McWhinney
Noreen Holmes, Jul.
1996



← 5.0 from lake



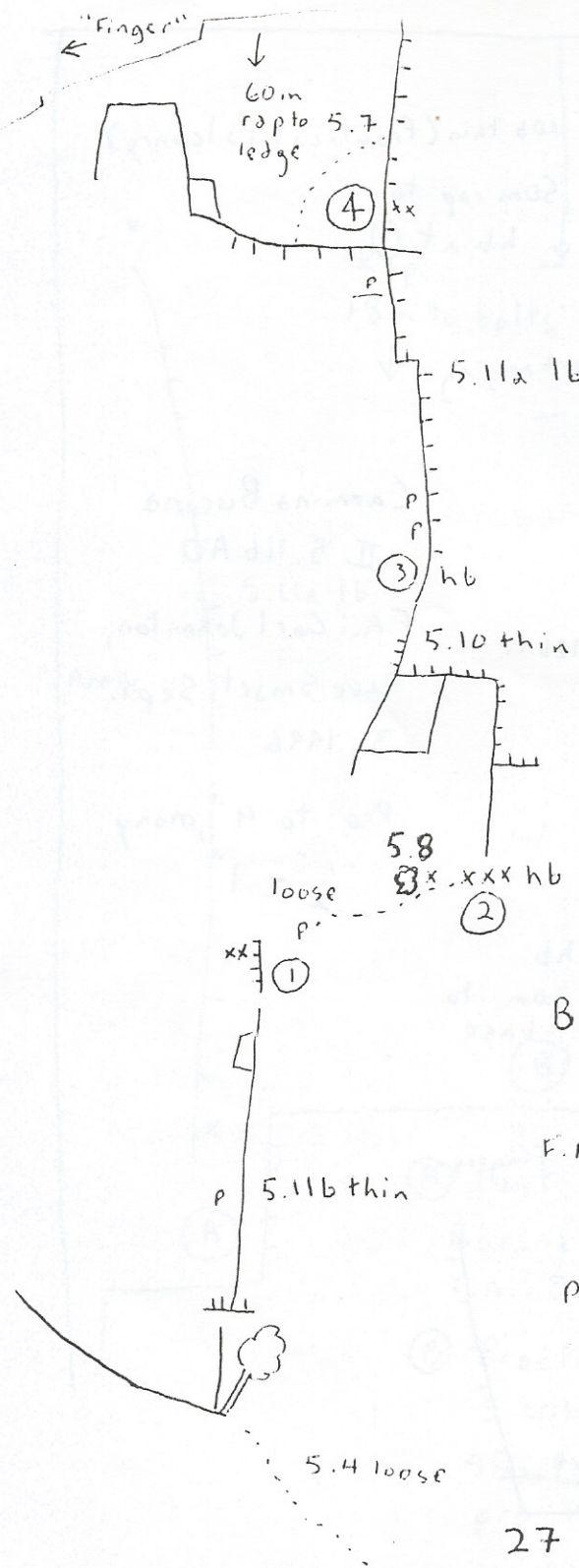
- Ⓐ Last Pitch of Carmina
Burana 5.11a,
F.A.: David Smart, 1995
- Ⓑ Practical Falconry
5.10b, F.A.: David
Smart, Philip May, 1995
pro. to 1 1/2"



Carmina Burana
II 5.116 A0

F.A.: Carl Johnston,
Dave Smart, Sept.
3, 1996

Pro: to 4" moly
 $\frac{1}{2}$ " - 1"



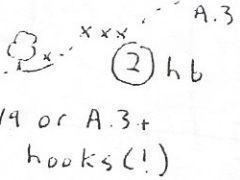
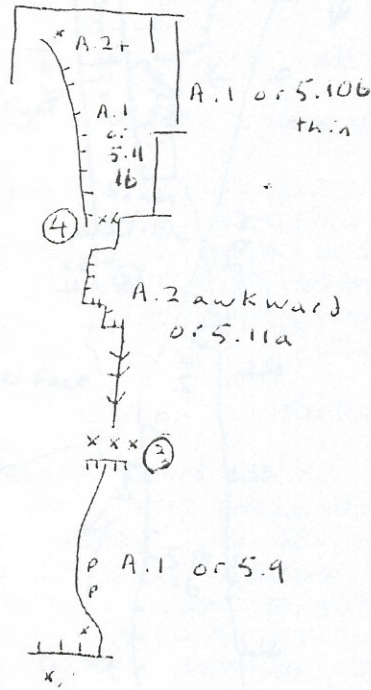
Bombay Sapphire
 II 5.11b
 F.A.: Cort McElroy,
 David Smart
 Aug. 19.96
 Pro. to 3 1/2"

Leather Goddesses
of Phobos

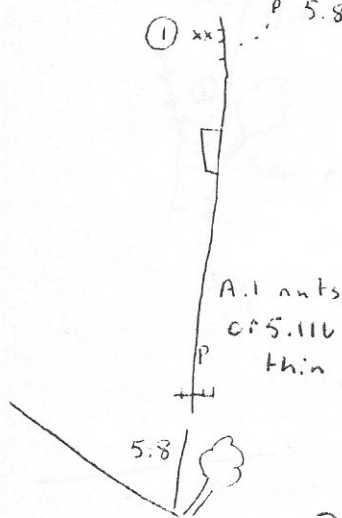
II 5.8 A.3

F.A. Rope Solo, David
Smart Sept. 1994

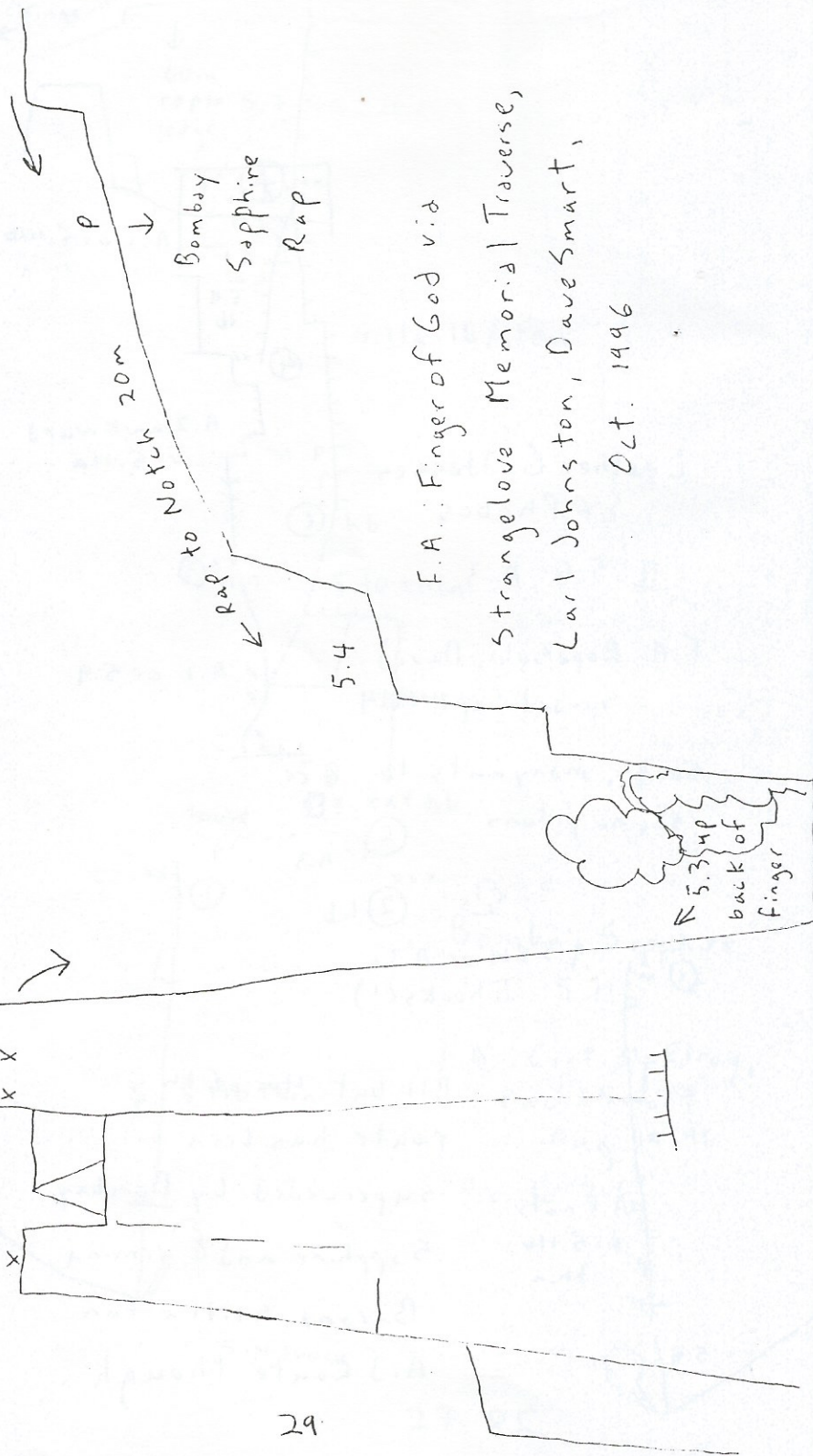
hooks, many nuts to
3", no pitons



All but 4m of this
route has been
superseded by Bombay
Sapphire and Carmina
Barons. Still a fun
A.1 Route though

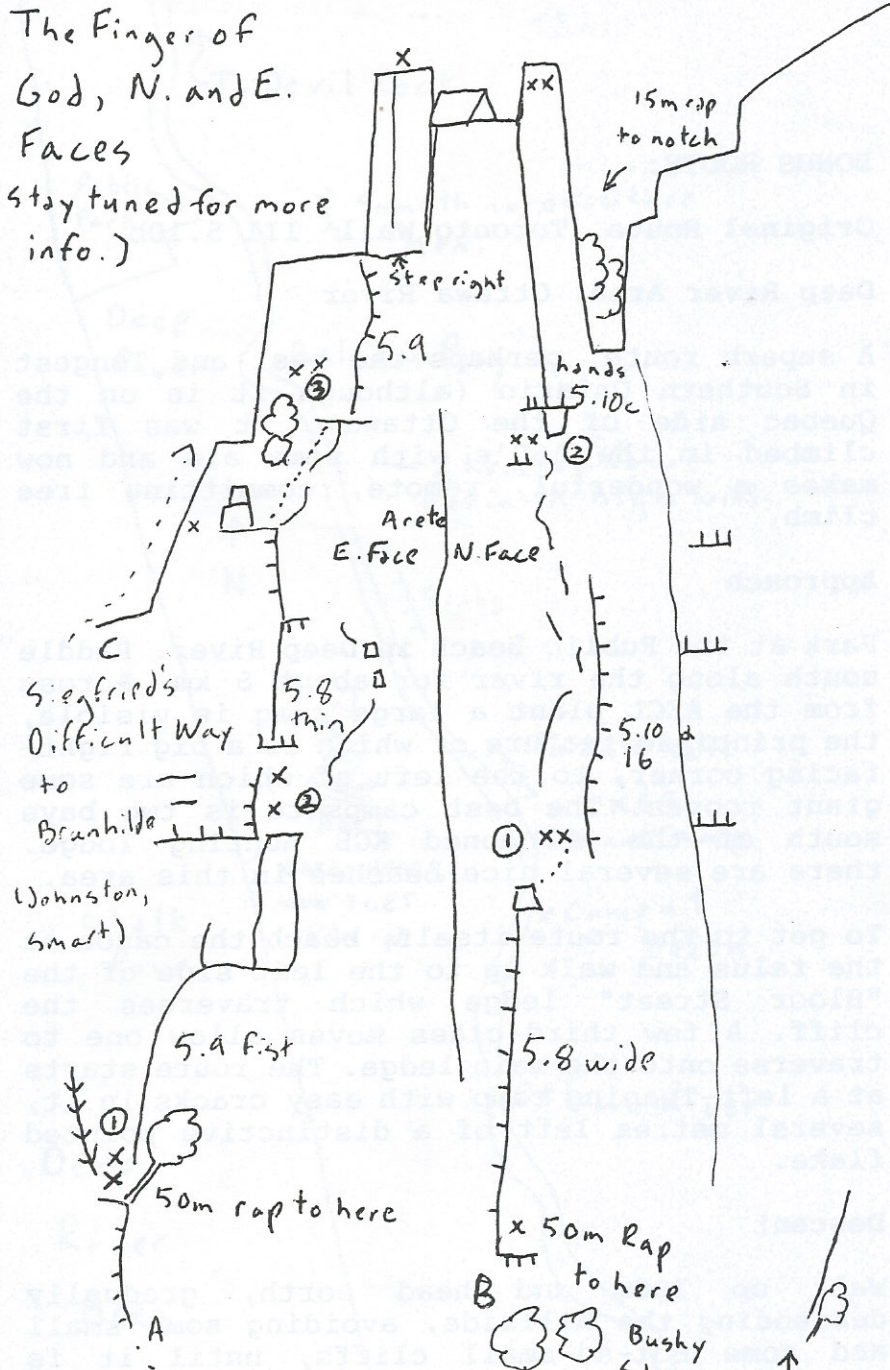


The Finger of God



F.A.: Finger of God via
 Strangelove Memorial Traverse,
 Carl Johnston, Dave Smart,
 Oct. 1996

The Finger of God, N. and E. Faces
 (stay tuned for more info.)



Siegfried's
 Difficult Way
 to
 Branhill
 (Johnston,
 Smart)

- A) Delilah I 5.9
 (F.A.: L. Johnston, D. Smart April 1997)
- B) Samson I 5.10c
 (F.A.: L. Johnston, D. Smart, May 1997)

Bombay Sapphire

BONUS ROUTE:

Original Route, Toronto Wall III 5.10b

Deep River Area, Ottawa River

A superb route, perhaps the best and longest in Southern Ontario (although it is on the Quebec side of the Ottawa). It was first climbed in the '60's with some aid and now makes a wonderful, remote, committing free climb.

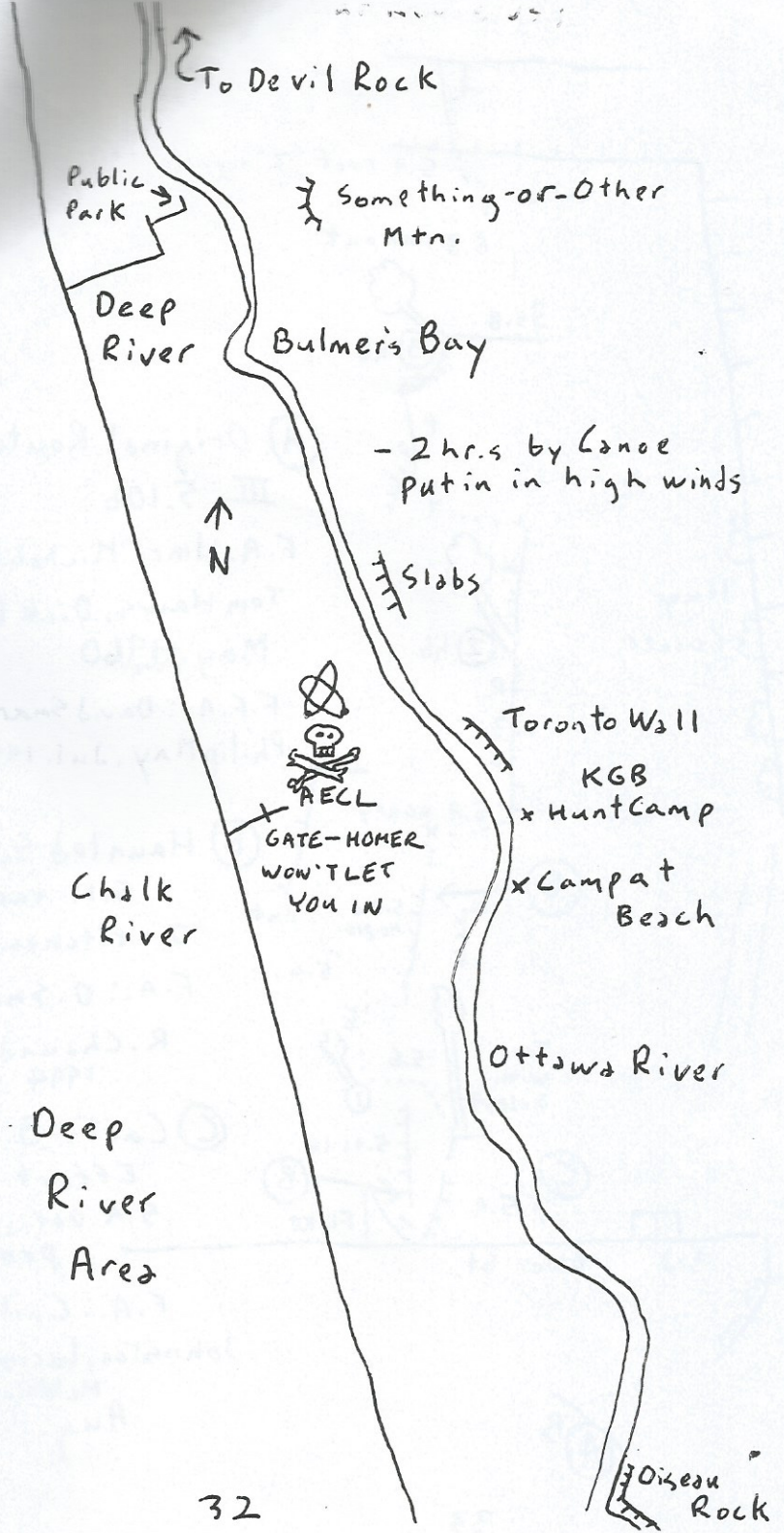
Approach

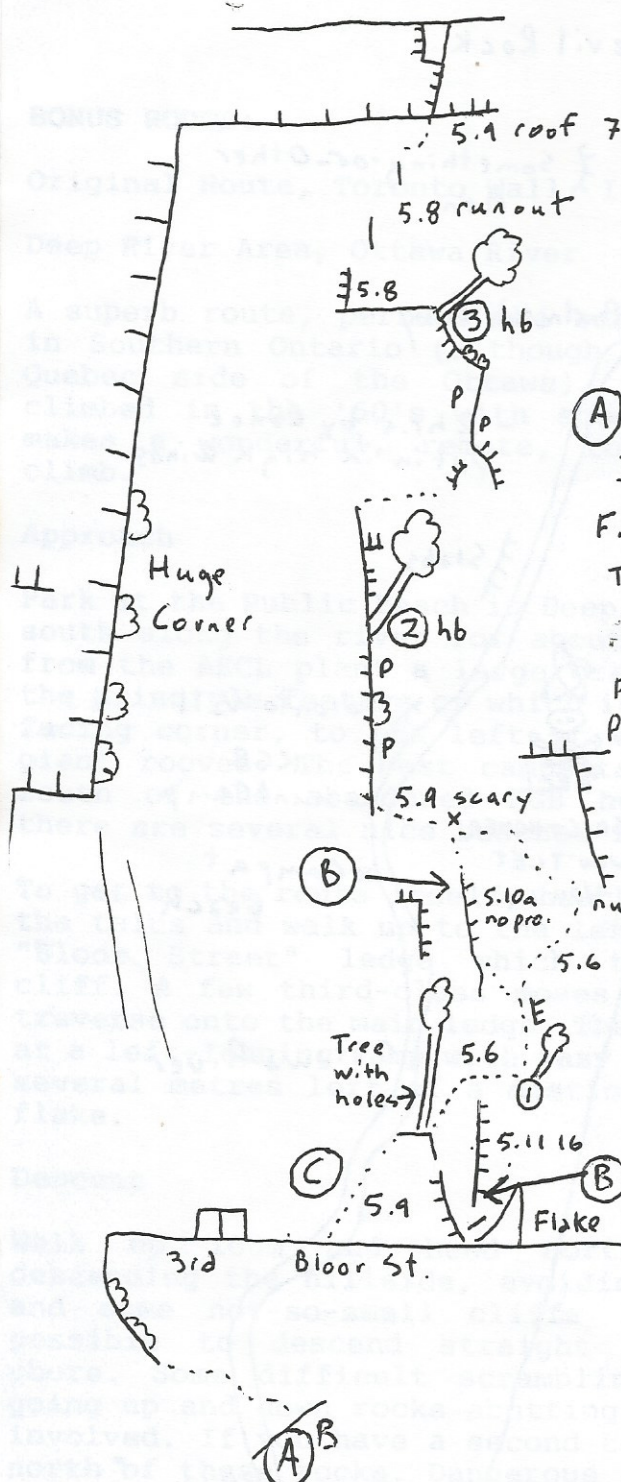
Park at the Public Beach in Deep River. Paddle south along the river for about 5 km. Across from the AECL plant a large crag is visible, the principle feature of which is a big right-facing corner, to the left of which are some giant rooves. The best campsite is two bays south of the abandoned KGB hunting lodge. there are several nice beaches in this area.

To get to the route itself, beach the canoe at the talus and walk up to the left side of the "Bloor Street" ledge which traverses the cliff. A few third-class moves allow one to traverse onto the main ledge. The route starts at a left-leaning ramp with easy cracks in it, several metres left of a distinctive pointed flake.

Descent

Walk up 100m and head north, gradually descending the hillside, avoiding some small and some not-so-small cliffs, until it is possible to descend straight down to the shore. Some difficult scrambling, involving going up and down rocks abutting the river is involved. If you have a second canoe leave it north of these rocks. Dangerous in the dark.





(A) Original Route,
 III 5.10b
 F.A.: Imre Micholik,
 Tom Haws, Dick Dorling
 May, 1960
 F.F.A.: David Smart,
 Philip May, Jul. 1946

(B) Haunted Summer
 5.11 var.,
 2 Pitches,
 F.A.: D. Smart,
 R. Chaudy,
 1994

(C) Carl's Big
 Effort
 5.9 var., no
 pro.
 F.A.: Carl
 Johnston, Larissa
 McWhinney
 Aug. 1946



Cort "Everest" Mc Elroy wows the boaters with his fingerlocking on the first pitch of Bombay Sapphire.
(Photo: Noreen Holmes)