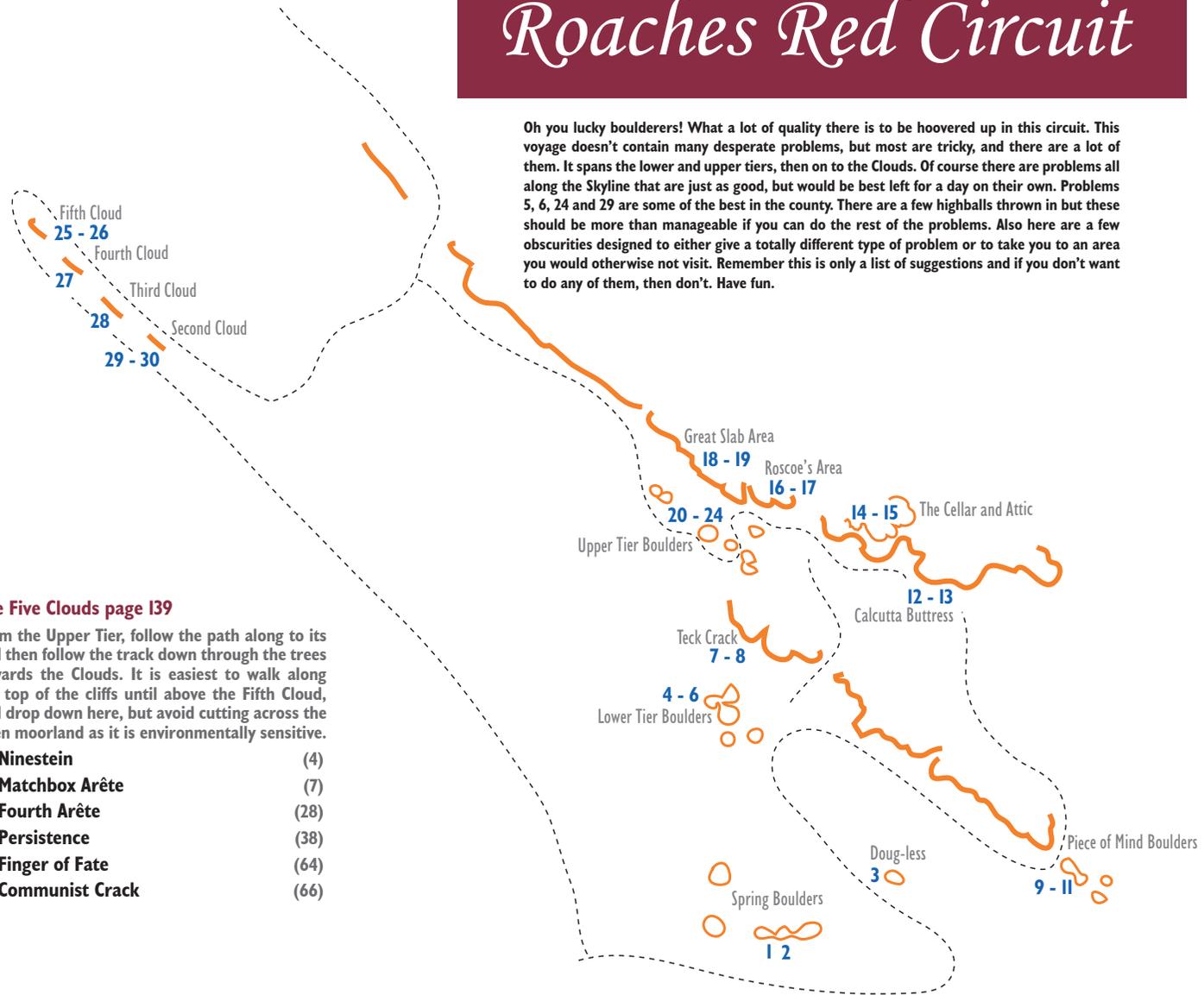


Roaches Red Circuit

Oh you lucky boulderers! What a lot of quality there is to be hoovered up in this circuit. This voyage doesn't contain many desperate problems, but most are tricky, and there are a lot of them. It spans the lower and upper tiers, then on to the Clouds. Of course there are problems all along the Skyline that are just as good, but would be best left for a day on their own. Problems 5, 6, 24 and 29 are some of the best in the county. There are a few highballs thrown in but these should be more than manageable if you can do the rest of the problems. Also here are a few obscurities designed to either give a totally different type of problem or to take you to an area you would otherwise not visit. Remember this is only a list of suggestions and if you don't want to do any of them, then don't. Have fun.



Spring Boulders page 38

Lots of classics here but only a couple in the circuit because of the usual boggy conditions. If you find it dry underfoot, add Skinned Rabbit (11) and Mr Left (16) to your itinerary. Even as it is, Bog Mosnster will feel more like a deep mud solo.

- 1 C3PO (31)
- 2 Bog Monster (23)

Doug-less Boulder page 41

- 3 Scratchy Scoop (44)

Lower Tier Boulders page 42

- 4 Pine Slab (25)

Done with a jump from the boulder, and no hands, of course.

- 5 Stretch and Mantel (16)
- 6 Three Pocket Slab (9)

Lower Tier page 46

- 7 Ascent of Man start (8)
- 8 Teck Crack Direct (18)

Piece of Mind Boulders page 70

- 9 Open Bum Cleft (2)
- 10 Wildy's Right (18)
- 11 Off Work (15)

Calcutta Problems page 108

- 12 Mistral Start (6)
- 13 Calcutta Crimp (2)

Cellar and Attic page 102

- 14 Ride My Pimp (21)
- 15 Reachy Wall (8)

Upper Tier Boulders page 92

- 16 Oik (64)
- 17 Sheep Shit Crack (63)
- 18 Flake Museum (53)
- 19 The Break (51)
- 20 The Nose (42)
- 21 Left Groove (39)
- 22 The Boss (4)
- 23 Long Boulder Mantel (26)
- 24 Joe's Arête (14)

The Five Clouds page 139

From the Upper Tier, follow the path along to its end then follow the track down through the trees towards the Clouds. It is easiest to walk along the top of the cliffs until above the Fifth Cloud, and drop down here, but avoid cutting across the open moorland as it is environmentally sensitive.

- 25 Ninestein (4)
- 26 Matchbox Arête (7)
- 27 Fourth Arête (28)
- 28 Persistence (38)
- 29 Finger of Fate (64)
- 30 Communist Crack (66)

A Churnet Ramble

Wright's Rock page 310

Wright's Rock may seem a bit steep to start on, but you may as well get used to it — things ain't gonna get any easier. To get there, take the left fork on the main track from the Rambler's and follow this to the start of the first pool. At this point a well worn track angles off on the left leading up through trees, over a stile, past a pool to a fenced-in track. Go left along this to a gate and waddle up to the Out There block, turn right past the Sharp Holds block to arrive at the Niche area of Wright's.

- 1 **Hob Traverse** (44)
 - 2 **Nose Section** (C)
- Continue up Alternative Start for the full tick.
- 3 **Thorns Section** (A)
 - 4 **Niche Traverse** (7)

Gentleman's Rock page 308

Head back down to the fenced-in track below the field and turn left, following the fences then over a stile and down through the trees to the main riverside path at a sharpish bend just by some wooden steps and a footbridge. Note the point you join this as it is useful when you come to locate Virgin Wall. Continue left, upstream on the main path. After about 70m there is a bench on your left beside a small track running left uphill. Ignore that — for future reference, that track leads off up to the Peakstone Inn Amphitheatre — and carry on the main path. After a couple of hundred metres there is a series of small dams and pools on the right. Halfway along the first pool, and about 60m before a forestry track leads off left (towards Spooky Land), the overhanging wall of Gentleman's Rock sits about 25m up and left. Go thither.

- 5 **Low Traverse** (II)

Try linking this into Jill the Traverse for the full V6 tick.

Virgin Wall page 308

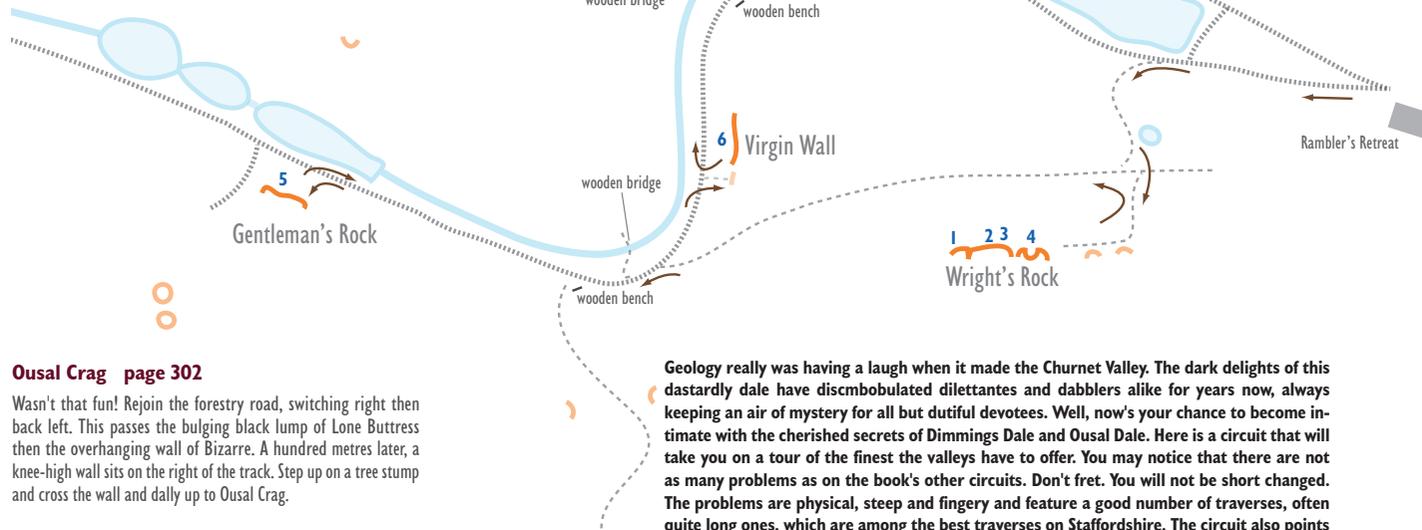
Return to the main path again (the Chained Block boulder sits in the hillside directly opposite at this point), turn right and double back on yourself, following the path downstream. Eventually you will arrive again at the sharpish bend near the wooden steps where you came down from Wright's. From the bend continue for about 50m and find a vague track up into the trees on the right. There is not much of a path direct to Virgin Wall, so follow this one which leads to the end of a line of rocks. If you contour left along these rocks, through the rhododendron, you arrive at Virgin Wall. Fondling some of the holds on this wall provides more frottage than Cottage.

- 6 **Virgin Wall Traverse** (I)

Cottage Rocks page 304

Tired yet? Don't worry. You're halfway there. Back down again to the main path and turn right and follow the path downstream for another hundred metres or so as it curves rightward. At the apex of the curve is a bench with a wooden bridge below. Drop down to the bridge, but do not cross it. Instead follow a muddy track rightwards, parallel with the main path above, as it runs down along a wall then turns left to cross a little bridge at the head of the lowest pool. (For future reference, if you were to contour the hillside from Virgin Wall, past lots of lo-kwal rock, then Lord's Buttress is directly above you at this point.) Having crossed the little bridge you join another large path. Turn right and follow this along the poolside until, halfway along, a forestry road cuts off on the left. (The small path that runs into the hillside in front of you leads to the Toilet Block area.) Taking the forestry road uphill, follow this until Cottage Rocks comes into view just before a right-hand bend.

- 7 **Pine Wall** (17)
- 8 **Orange Crush** (10)
- 9 **Glory Hole** (14)
- 10 **Cottage Slab** (6)



Ousal Crag page 302

Wasn't that fun! Rejoin the forestry road, switching right then back left. This passes the bulging black lump of Lone Buttress then the overhanging wall of Bizarre. A hundred metres later, a knee-high wall sits on the right of the track. Step up on a tree stump and cross the wall and dally up to Ousal Crag.

- 11 **Booze** (3)
- 12 **Ousal High** (7)

Good news. You're done. Now retreat to the Ramblers where you can dip your fingers in a bowl of cold water and have some well-earned cakes.

Geology really was having a laugh when it made the Churnet Valley. The dark delights of this dastardly dale have discombobulated dilettantes and dabblers alike for years now, always keeping an air of mystery for all but dutiful devotees. Well, now's your chance to become intimate with the cherished secrets of Dimmings Dale and Ousal Dale. Here is a circuit that will take you on a tour of the finest the valleys have to offer. You may notice that there are not as many problems as on the book's other circuits. Don't fret. You will not be short changed. The problems are physical, steep and fingery and feature a good number of traverses, often quite long ones, which are among the best traverses on Staffordshire. The circuit also points out other crags that may be of interest in future visits to help you to get the measure of the place. As such it is an ideal itinerary to follow for the first-time visitor. The problems vary in difficulty from V2 to V5. But don't worry if this isn't your grade range — most crags will have easier substitutions; all, most certainly, have harder. Set aside a whole day for the tour, and perhaps consider a belay session in the Ramblers before visiting Cottage Rocks.