

EPHEL DUATH

Ephel Duath is a large cliff at the head of a side valley west of Wakonda Buttress. It consists of a series of impressive buttresses and extends across the side of Wendell Mountain. There are relatively few natural lines, however, and generally the rock is mediocre.

Approach & Descent

All climbs require an early start as the approach takes about three hours from the parking lot and descent via the east ridge is exposed and time-consuming. An alternative descent down easy scree slopes on the west side of the mountain takes considerably longer, particularly if return to the base of the cliff is necessary.

The first two climbs, Hitchcock Railway and Borkum Riff, are situated on a smaller triangular buttress at the east side of the cliffs, directly above the side valley.

Hitchcock Railway 375 m, 5.8

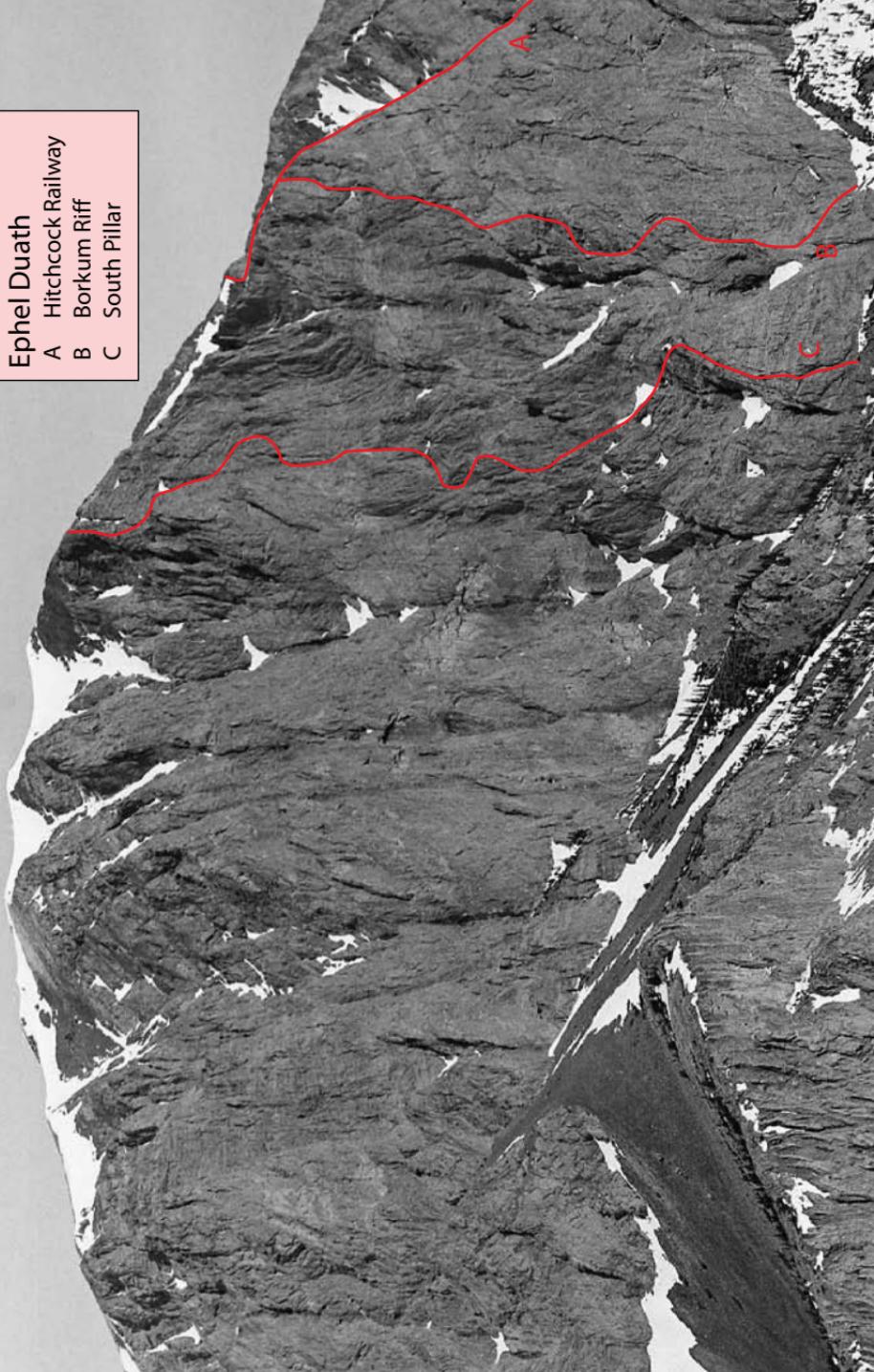
J. Jones & J. Horne, May 1971

This climb follows the east ridge of the triangular buttress and is mainly 5.5. Start below a shallow groove immediately left of a large gully.

- 1) 40 m Climb the groove to a large ledge on the left.
- 2) 20 m Move up and then traverse left to the top of a short crack. Continue left and belay on a small pinnacle.
- 3) 40 m, 5.6 Climb up and left toward trees; belay by a small tree.
- 4) 20 m Climb the crack above, then traverse left to a large ledge with cracks above.
- 5) 35 m Climb the left-hand crack for about 10 m and then follow an easy break right until level with a base of a chimney.
- 6) 40 m Climb the chimney and continue up to the second large fir tree.
- 7) 35 m, 5.6 Climb a steep wall to the right and then diagonal right following a ramp. Move round the corner to easier climbing that leads to a ledge on the ridge.
- 8) 40 m Follow the ridge to an awkward stance in a groove.
- 9) 35 m Move up a short distance, and then step round left and climb a small corner. Follow the groove above and continue over loose rock to a large ledge, situated to the left of a yellow overhang (visible from the stance).
- 10) 40 m, 5.8 Climb up and right on steep rock until easier climbing is reached on the ridge. Follow the ridge to a stance below loose rock.
- 11) 30 m Climb rotten rock to the top of the buttress.

Borkum Riff 350 m, 5.8

Ephel Duath
A Hitchcock Railway
B Borkum Riff
C South Pillar



G. Homer & J. Jones

This route climbs the west edge of the buttress and is mainly 5.6-5.7 with only one pitch of 5.8. White Slabs, a route climbed in 1978 by U. Kallen, basically follows the same line.

Scramble up from the right to a ledge with a small tree just right of a snowpatch. Follow a slanting groove up right until a traverse left can be made (two pitches). Continue up, then go up and left toward a large gully. Follow the first possible groove up to a band of overhangs, traverse beneath them and climb a smooth wall (5.8) to the edge of the buttress. Stay on slabs left of the edge for three long pitches until a tree at the base of a ramp is reached. One more pitch leads to easy ground and the top of the buttress.

South Pillar 600 m, 5.8

U. Kallen & G. Spohr, May 1978

This is the right-hand of the three main pillars on Ephel Duath. Start beneath a groove on the left side of a small, pear-shaped buttress below the pillar.

- 1) 45 m, 5.8 Climb the wall and make a difficult move to gain the base of the groove. Continue up the groove to a bolt belay.
- 2) 25 m, 5.6 Climb over a bulge and follow the right-hand groove; move up left past a big loose block to a scoop.
- 3) 45 m, 5.8 Continue up slabby rock, over a bulge and up to a ridge at the top of the small buttress.
- 4-5) 90 m Scramble up left and follow an easy water runnel to a belay below a left-slanting groove.
- 6) 45 m, 5.6 Climb the groove and follow a crack back right to a belay in a scoop.
- 7-8) 70 m Continue up easy ground to big ledges with a tree.
- 9-10) 85 m, 5.6 Walk right to the end of the ledges and climb up and right on sloping holds to gain an easy runnel. Go up this to a large scoop.
- 11) 40 m, 5.8 Climb the left side of the scoop and follow a steep pillar to a small niche.
- 12) 45 m, 5.7 Traverse right over exposed rock and follow grooves to the top of a small pillar. Belay 5-10 m higher.
- 13) 45 m, 5.8 Climb back left over slabby rock to a runnel and go up this, past a bulge, to easier ground.
- 14) 45 m, 5.7 Continue up to a notch on the ridge. Follow the ridge past a bulge, drop down the other side and climb part way up a groove.
- 15) Continue up the groove to the summit ridge.