

By early May of 1989 I was ready to go collecting. Unfortunately, most of my favorite collecting localities were not ready for me. No snow in the winter makes for a deep, deep frost. Deep frost plus a lot of late April/early May rains made most dirt roads impassible. Out of desperation, I headed for one of my favorite localities of the early and mid-seventies, Mt. Apatite, Auburn, Maine. Unfortunately, my two favorite localities at Mt. Apatite, the Keith and Pulsifer quarries, are no longer readily available to collectors. However, the Maine Feldspar and Greenlaw quarries are open for collecting. These localities are both described in the recent publication by the Maine Geological Survey *A Collector's Guide to Maine Mineral Localities*. After parking my car (see above-mentioned publication for directions and where to leave your car), I enjoyed a nice walk up to the quarries. As I walked I noted very little snow and ice in the woods which was an encouraging sign.

How things had changed since my last visit to these localities some ten years previous! A lot of holes dug in the dumps attested to the continued interest these localities still generate among some collectors. I next proceeded to try digging at several of my favorite spots in the dumps. But, what I feared might be true was. After digging down one to two feet in the dumps I hit solid frozen ground. I have always stayed away from early spring dump digging for just this reason. There is nothing as frustrating as being continually stymied by ground frozen as hard as a rock. I scouted around for about another hour, but frustration had cooled my zeal and my heart just wasn't in it anymore. So, I headed back home. While I had no luck on this particular day, I have had good luck previously here, and so feel the localities deserve a little further discussion.

If you should want to try these quarries, early fall or late spring are your best times of the year. Also, I have had my best luck collecting micros at the Greenlaw Quarry. Referring to the previously mentioned publication, page 27, under walking direction "...for about 0.75 miles to the quarries.", you have just walked the vertical of a capital letter "T". At this point if you make a 90 degree turn to your right and walk straight ahead until you only have about 20 feet of dump material left (there should be an old apple tree in the immediate area), you will be in an area I have previously dug through a hundred times before. This means you have to dig deep and try and pick out an area that looks relatively untouched. In the late seventies I found some beautiful micro, tabular, blue apatite crystals and some nice microlite crystals in this area. Plus, there is always the chance of picking up a piece or two of elbaite.

If instead of making a 90 degree turn to the right you instead make a 90 degree turn to the left, you are near my favorite area for dump digging at the Greenlaw. After making the turn to the left, walk about 40 feet and look to your right. In between the two water-filled areas is a small dump which faces on the smaller water-filled pit. Once again, this area in the past has provided me with some nice micro material. Here I have found hydroxyl-hercynite crystals, colorless apatite, free-standing columbite crystals, and some nice green muscovite crystals. All of these are associated with the green muscovite and flesh-colored perthite.

While I had pretty much struck out at Mt. Apatite this year, I would still recommend it to anyone who is not afraid to put some time and effort into dump digging. No you don't have to put a "Dana Jewell", i.e. Herculean, effort into it, but if all you are going to do is surface scratch -- don't bother with this locality.

The rest of May I pretty much devoted to collecting at Sugarloaf, Bethlehem, New Hampshire. I am not going to say much about Sugarloaf because of a forthcoming article in *Rocks and Minerals* magazine devoted to this area. Two of our members, along with another gentleman, are co-authoring this article. The two members, Bob Janules and Scott Whittemore, have added quite a few minerals to the list of those that occur in New Hampshire by concentrating on this locality over the last several years. Both Bob and Scott have had phenomenal success here. I have collected at this locality about eight times over the past several years, and most of my best micro specimens from Sugarloaf are still those given me by Bob and Scott.

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