MAINE GRANITE QUARRIES AND PROSPECTS

Introduction

This publication is the second of a series which is designed essentially to provide basic information on the locations of mineral occurrences in Maine which may be of commercial importance or popular interest. Contained in this publication is a compilation of some 170 granite quarries and prospects, their locations, mineral associations, and buildings, monuments, or other structures in which Maine granites have been used. Although this publication is not represented to be complete, it may be found useful as the most comprehensive collection to date of certain basic data on Maine granites.

Granites in Maine, or other igneous rocks which for commercial purposes may be classed as "granites", include many textures, compositions, and colors which fall generally into three classes: Pink or red; white, blue, or gray; and black. Pink or red granites are usually fairly coarse-grained and contain pink or salmon-colored feldspar, clear to smoky quartz, and black biotite mica or hornblende. Well-known examples of these granites may be seen in Wells, Stonington, Machias, Red Beach, Mount Desert, and Mount Katahdin. White, gray, or blue granites are usually finer grained than the pink granites, and contain "blue" or white feldspars, clear or smoky quartz, and biotite or muscovite micas. Gray granites may be seen at Hallowell, North Jay, at many places in Waldo and Penobscot Counties, and Sullivan. The so-called black granite is generally gabbro, norite, or diorite containing dark-colored feldspars, amphiboles and pyroxenes. Black granites are found in many, relatively small deposits throughout the state.

Granites have been of importance in Maine since the arrival of the first settlers, when stone for building foundations was generally cut from convenient deposits for use locally. As the state grew, granite became important as a building stone, and for use in road and bridge construction. The development of Portland cement, with its relative convenience and economy for construction purposes, caused the demand for granite to diminish. At present the demand for granite lies mainly in decorative applications in building construction and in memorial stones. Through active merchandizing, granite producers should in time realize increasing demand for their products for such uses as interior and exterior decorative trim on buildings and private homes, and decorative terraces and other landscaping features.

Acknowledgments

The information presented in this publication has been collected by study of existing literature and by field examination. Much of the information presented herein was collected during the summer of 1957 by Muriel B. Austin, Department of Geology, Colby College, Waterville, Maine, and compiled for publication by Mrs. Austin and Arthur M. Hussey II, Geologist, Maine Geological Survey. Several interested persons and companies have contributed information for the compilation, and the Maine Geological Survey extends its appreciation for all assistance and information provided by each in the course of compiling this publication.

Explanatory Considerations

As has been previously noted, this publication represents quite a complete compilation of granite quarries and prospects in Maine. It should be emphasized, however, that since granite was at one time widely used throughout the state in the foundations of private houses, there are probably scores of small openings not listed here from which private individuals produced stone for very local or restricted consumption. In addition, only a small percentage of the quarries listed here have been in production during the last five or ten years, and many of the older quarries have grown up with trees and bushes and are now quite difficult to locate.

The quarries for which only approximate locations are known are shown on the index map inside the back cover by small open circles. It is hoped that as time passes, interested persons will submit new or additional data to the Maine Geological Survey so that subsequent revisions of this publication may be of increasing value and accuracy.