The Bay of Fundy area has always been a popular agate and mineral collecting area, especially with New Englanders and New Yorkers whose home states have never produced an abundance of cabbing or tumbling material. In the Fundy area, as in most places, collectors invariably overwork a few localities and leave the rest of the area virtually unexplored. Grand Manan Island, up until recently, has remained off the beaten path of tourist and rockhound alike. Approximately fifteen miles long and six miles wide, Grand Manan is situated in the mouth of the Bay of Fundy. This Canadian island, which is less than ten miles from the coast of Maine, is now relatively accessible by auto, thanks to a seagoing ferry which makes two trips a day from Black’s Harbor, New Brunswick.

Geologically speaking, Grand Manan is practically all basalt. Cliffs of basalt guard the island on three sides, forming dark ramparts which tower up to four hundred feet. In some places the basalt occurs in classic columnar formations and the talus heaps below look like piles of giant crystals. In other places the basalt is vesicular and contains excellent specimens of zoisite minerals. The gem hunter’s basalt, however, is that which contains seams of agate, bloodstone, and amethyst.

Specimen quality amethyst is fairly abundant on Grand Manan beaches, occurring as seams of tightly interlocked crystals which are invariably pale. The seams, one to six inches thick, frequently contain sparkling vugs. Typical of Fundy amethyst though, very few seams will produce anything suitable for cutting. Books mention the occurrence of goodes between North Head and Dark Harbour, but I have never been lucky enough to verify the claims. But I can verify the occurrence of other gem materials, namely agate, jasper, bloodstone, porphyr and unakite.

The most interesting lapidary material found there is a type of seam chalcedony which can be cut into fine bloodstone cabochons. It is abundant enough to supply vacationing hobbyists, yet scattered enough to frustrate the commercial collector. The material is not a typical bloodstone in which red spots occur uniformly throughout but a green matrix, a chalcedony sandstone, so to speak, with a red moss agate core centered between two green layers of plasma. The interface between the red and green layers is irregular, and if the base of a cabochon is cut parallel to the layers, the top of the cabochon will have an unusual blood-on-stone pattern.

This bloodstone material can be found all along the beach at Whale Cove and for approximately half a mile up the shore toward a cliff called Seven Days Work. More about this cliff later. The best way to find the bloodstone is to arrive at the beach just when the tide is going out and walk back and forth along the receding waterline. On a sunny day the material flashes a bright green, making it extremely easy to spot.

The tides at Grand Manan are among the highest in the world, a condition which exposes a great deal of beach at low tide and also presents an attractive hazard to the unsuspecting beachcomber, when the tide comes in, it covers a lot of dry land in a hurry. Rising water can't trap you at Whale Cove, but elsewhere on the island you can find your retreat cut off by icy surf. Under these circumstances it's too late to run and you will have to sit, swim or climb. To twist an old saying, time and tide for no last piece of agate wait.

Returning to the cliff called Seven Days Work. It was named not for the amount of effort it takes to walk there, but for the horizontal layers of basalt of which it is composed. It's a rather slow walk to it if you follow the beach from Whale Cove, but it's only a ten to fifteen minute stroll if you use a trail which follows Ecl Brook down from the highway. This trail leaves the highway just beyond a dump (rubbish type, not rock). If you have a personality which is annoyed by irrationality, be sure...
not to count the layers of basalt in Seven Days Work, an endeavor which is likely to ruin your day. Be forewarned that you have to stand in one particular spot to see seven layers; anywhere else there are from five to nine. Even at that one spot, it is necessary to decide whether the thin layers between the main layers boost the total of work to two weeks or more. The spot may be called Seven Days Work, but it takes only a few minutes to (Continued on Page 1622)

**Top left—**Basalt cliffs rise to four hundred feet in places. Below the cliffs, an abundance of rock makes progress slow, especially for the gem hunter. But the scenery is spectacular and the beachcombing interesting.

**Lower left—**Nearly all of Grand Manan’s beaches are rocky, but this is all to the gem hunter’s advantage.

**Top right—**Fog drifts through the island’s picturesque fishing villages through much of the year—unfortunately even in spring and early summer, the time when rock hunting is at its best due to winter storms. Chances for clear weather are best in late summer and early fall.

**Lower right—**Rocky beaches such as those along the Grand Manan coast line provide good rock hunting, especially after a high tide.
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it were. Grand Manan is famous for a particular type of seafood which can be gathered along the beaches near Dark Harbour. This crisp delicacy, called dulse, is an edible seaweed which is gathered from the rocks at low tide and then dried in the sun to bring out its flavor. What does it taste like? It's almost indescribable. A salty poem of the sea is about the best description I can offer.

Gemstones and edible seaweed are not the only rewards for the beachcomber. There is an abundance of bleached driftwood (from pine stumps to mahogany planks), fishnet, nylon rope, and to the delight of children, an assortment of sea urchins, sand dollars, lobster claws and clam shells. In the middle of August the island meadows offer wild blueberries, raspberries and caraway seeds.

Bird watchers outnumber rockhounds on Grand Manan; in fact, Grand Manan is a virtual Mt. Mica for ornithologists. Because the island is situated in a natural funnel for migratory birds, there is a great variety of transient and permanent avian residents — the Wilson's Warbler, Duck Hawk, Bald Eagle and Gannet to name a few.

Whether you want to hunt rocks or watch birds, the island's game warden and ranger, the remarkable Vernon Bagley is the best source of information about foot trails and how to get to places that don't even have a trail. The March 1968 Reader's Digest carried a spellbinding account of how he roped down one of the island's cliffs in a winter storm to rescue a shipwrecked fisherman, an act for which he received the Carnegie Silver Medal for heroism. Having guided some copper prospecting outfits around the island, Vernon has a good knowledge of what type of rock can be found there.

Recently he had the satisfaction of finding a "lost" copper mine, a personal quest he had been conducting for several years. Although there was ample evidence that the mine did exist, no amount of searching could locate it. Century old records mentioned that the mine tunnel was near the beach at Sloop Cove and that the ore was loaded directly onto ships. Vernon had conversed with people who could recall seeing the mine years ago; however, their memories could never pinpoint the location. When he finally discovered the mine, it was during an all out attempt for one of the prospecting outfits.

The moment of enlightenment came during one of the infrequent times he sits down to rest. Noticing a section of hewn timber all but buried under the talus at his feet, he called the prospecting crew over. Clearing the rockslide away, they exposed the tunnel, which ran straight back under a cliff for several hundred feet. Vernon had conversed with people who could recall seeing the mine years ago; however, their memories could never pinpoint the location. When he finally discovered the mine, it was during an all out attempt for one of the prospecting outfits.

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