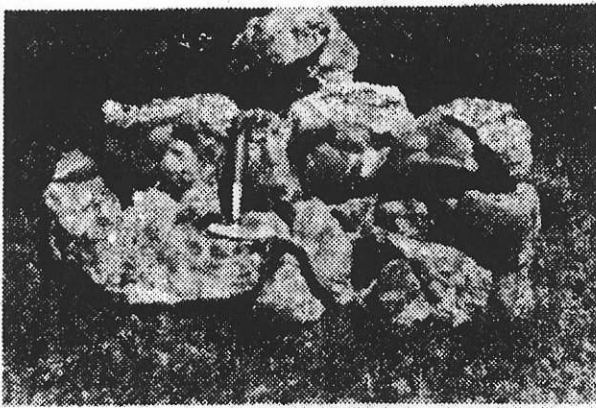


n's Luck

Miriam Sutton



I suppose many rockhounds have the dream of someday finding the one that is extra big and very beautiful. It must be pretty, something never before seen on land or sea and, of course, be gem quality. Actually my dreams were a little more practical. I would have settled quite happily for 75 pounds of agate.

Let me tell you what I did find. Like numerous other rockhounds I spent the May weekend hunting rocks in the vicinity of Kamloops. I was climbing a slope back of Robbin Creek, going up the hill. As is my custom, following a game trail, when I found the rock. I, the one who usually comes back from climbing with nothing but abrasions and contusions to show for all my efforts, had found the big one.

The members of my family have been nattering at me for months over my promise to "find a big one and we will dig it out for you". So I did. Within three hours my rock was in the truck in all its crystalline beauty. Believe me they have often worked longer hours for less. We weighed it in at 536 pounds and then, several days later, found some more of it in a pack sack that had been over-looked. All it weighed over 550 pounds.

Had it come out in one piece we would have called it a specimen and been thrilled to have such a spectacular specimen, however, frost fractured in the basalt and it came out in several chunks. The largest weighs 119 pounds and has a round hole in the center. At Kamloops I noticed people rubbing the rock for good luck. They said it reminded them of the fat little Laughing Buddha.

Since we had some small bits we decided to work some to see if the blue color would hold. After the back was polished and the dop stick was off the back we found that, not only was the stone looking blue but something new had been added. The result from the back of the cab shaded from silvery yellow and to a deep orange, depending on the angle at which the light

SUTTON'S LUCK.....Cont'd

We immediately set to work experimenting with stones of different shapes cut from different sections of the rock to see if they would vary but the effect was the same in them all. Apparently it is from the basic structure of the rock. When viewed through a magnifying glass the rock has a textured appearance, not unlike the weave of a piece of Harris tweed.

The rock works up differently from a piece of ordinary agate and here are the results of our testing to date:

Colour - Smoky blue, shows pleochroism.
 Hardness - More than 7.
 Specific Gravity - 2.56.
 Fusibility - On the charcoal block with a propane torch we got a glazed effect on the thin edge and on the back of a tiny chip. Perhaps 5½
 Formation - A botryoidal geode in basalt.
 What is it? Suppose you tell me.

It has been suggested that we call it "Moon Agate" which most certainly sounds glamorous but it is scarcely scientific. Until it has been positively identified by someone more knowledgeable than I, I'll continue to call it just "My rock".

One thing my rock has done for all of us is this. It has reminded us that there is no end to the variety of lapidary material we can hope to locate in British Columbia. All we have to do is to keep looking. When will the next big find be made, and by whom?

Perhaps it will be you.

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