

Geologic Site of the Month
August, 2004

Daggett Rock - Maine's Largest Glacial Erratic



44 50' 40.61" N, 70 18' 50.90" W

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Introduction

An erratic is a fragment of rock carried by glacial ice some distance from the rock outcrop from which it came. The size of erratics can range from pebbles to massive boulders, and the rock type of an erratic is usually different from the underlying bedrock upon which it rests. Daggett Rock, sometimes referred to as Daggett's Rock, is thought to be the largest glacially transported erratic in the State of Maine.



Photo by Woodrow B. Thompson

Figure 1. Daggett Rock



Daggett Rock

Daggett Rock is approximately 80 ft long, 30 ft wide, and 25 ft high and may weigh as much as 8000 tons. It has broken into three pieces since coming to rest. The power of the glacier can be appreciated by determining the source of the boulder. The rock is made of granite with some feldspar crystals more than 1 inch long. The granite may be derived from the Redington pluton in the Saddleback Mountain area many miles to the northwest -- a long way to transport an 8000 ton rock!

A colorful legend exists regarding why the boulder is split into pieces. The story goes that two hundred years ago a woodsman named Daggett came upon the rock during a wild thunderstorm. Daggett, inebriated and upset at the storm, climbed onto the rock. Cursing, he took the Lord's name in vain and raged that he could not be struck down. A gigantic lightning bolt flashed from the sky followed by a boom of thunder. Daggett was instantly killed and the rock was cracked into the three fragments found today.



Souvenirs

Daggett Rock has been a tourist locality since the late 1800s, as indicated by many old postcards and souvenirs of the feature.



Photos by Ron Rainka

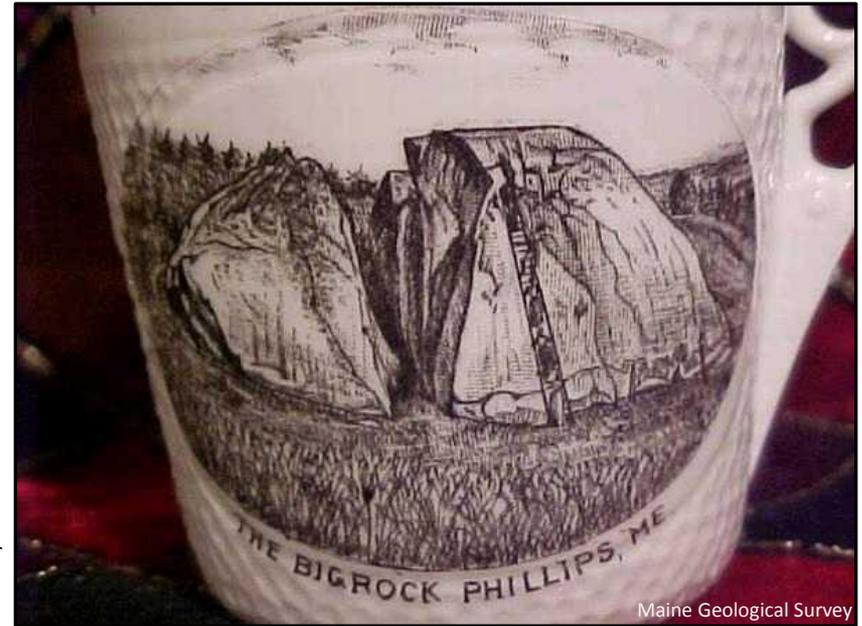


Figure 2. Two views of a souvenir china cup made in Germany and dating from the very early 1900's. The etching shows The Big Rock (Daggett Rock) in Phillips, Maine. In the closer view on the right, note the ladder with several people scaling the rock.

Visiting Daggett Rock

Today Daggett Rock is accessible via a public path approximately 1/3 mile (0.5 km) long that extends west from a trailhead and parking area on Wheeler Hill Road in Phillips. The best time of the year to view Daggett Rock is when deciduous leaves have dropped from the trees.



Figure 3. Location map showing route to Daggett Rock in the town of Phillips.

