

Clarifying two Newport, NH mines
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In early July 2013, I visited two localities off Chandlers Mill Road near Newport, Sullivan County, New Hampshire. I explored the area, photographed the mines and dumps, and collected a few specimens. When I discovered that these two localities were listed as a single locality on Mindat (an obvious error), I began investigating the history of the area and the mines. Based on this research, I review relevant publications and make recommendations about naming conventions.

Chandlers Mill history in a nutshell

Newport, Sullivan County, New Hampshire is like many towns – it is surrounded by small villages. To the west of Newport are Kelleyville and Chandlers Mill (L. Cote, Newport Historical Society, pers. comm., 2013). In the mid-1800s, Lewis W. Randall and Carroll W. Peabody built a sawmill called “Randall’s mill” along the banks of the Sugar River about 3.5 miles (5.6 km) west of Newport. Between 1867 and 1870, Ira F. Chandler (1842 - 1918) purchased the mill and operated it for many years; the mill was then called “Chandler’s Mill “ (Wheeler 1879).

I contacted several agencies in Newport concerning the proper spelling of the village since it appears on different maps with a variety of spellings. These include Chandlers Mill, Chandler Mills, Chandler’s Mill, and Chandlers Mills. Cameron et al. (1954) refer to a railroad stop in the mid-1940s called “Chandler Station.” Since the village is an unincorporated populated place, it doesn’t show up on lists of official town names. Consequently, the spelling of the village name is what you choose it to be. Since the name is based on Ira F. Chandler’s sawmill and he had only one, it seems reasonable to call it, as others have, “Chandlers Mill.” This form will be used here when not quoting from other documents.

Ira F. Chandler, a widower with three young children, is found on the June 1870 Federal census of Newport, Sullivan County, New Hampshire. Four months later, he married his second wife Nellie Wright. Two houses away from Ira Chandler on the 1870 census was the residence of Benjamin Marshall with his wife and children. His 18 year old son Allen P. was working as a laborer on their 80-acre farm. This farm is the location of an old, abandoned pegmatite mine that was worked prior to 1936 when it was studied by Carleton A. Chapman (1941, 1942, 1943). It is not known when the pegmatite mine was first worked or by whom, but it was described as “abandoned” by Chapman (1941).

In 1886, Frank P. Smith and his wife Vinnie acquired a small tract of land near the Sugar River from Jane B. Cram, whose husband had died the year before. Frank and Vinnie Smith’s son, George Frank Smith, was born there 24 April 1887; both he and his name are integral to the history of the mines.

Benjamin Marshall died in June 1893. Three years later in 1896, his son Allen sold the 80-acre farm to Frank P. Smith. On the 1900 Federal census, Frank Smith and

his family were living on this farm. The 1920 census shows Frank Smith, wife Vinnie, son George F. (working on the family farm) and daughter Florence with her child Franklin C. Parmenter on what was then called Kelleyville Road (now Chandlers Mill Road). Frank P. Smith died the day after Christmas in 1921. In 1922, Frank's widow Vinnie transferred all of the land to her children including George F. Smith.

In 1924, George F. Smith married Agnes E. Brown. On the 1930 census, George, wife Agnes, two children and George's mother Vinnie were living on the farm. The 1934 Newport town directory lists George and Agnes living in "Chandler's Mill." The 1940 census shows George & family living on the "old back Claremont & Kelleyville Rd through Chandler Mills."

In 1938, George F. Smith acquired his sister Florence's share of the 80-acre farm. In 1943, George and Agnes took a lease on the adjacent property between the road and the Sugar River. This same tract of land was then leased to a business partnership consisting of George and Agnes Smith, John G. Sargeant and his son Lawrence E. Sargeant (Sargeant Mining Company operated a mica mine nearby in southeastern Claremont) and William A. Hoy (who worked in a Newport shoe shop with his wife Flora E.); the partnership was doing business as the "Smith Mica Company" of Newport, New Hampshire. As detailed below, the small quarry on this tract of land near the Sugar River was opened by G. F. Smith and worked by Smith Mica Company.

Mine names and mining histories

Mindat shows only one mine for this Newport locality and refers to it as "G. E. Smith mine (Chandler Mills quarry)." This may be an error carried over from the ambiguity in Morrill (1963), the triphylite description in Meyers and Stewart (1977), or the Newport mines entry in Smith (2005). In spite of the single Mindat locality, there are in fact **two** mines about 125 m apart that are not "adjacent" as stated on Mindat. The two distinct mines are clearly shown on Plate 2 of Olson (1950), Plate 41 of Cameron et al. (1954), field trip maps for the Boston Mineral Club (BMC 1958, 1963), and a map in Meyers and Stewart (1977). There is also an obvious issue with the misspelled name "G. E. Smith" used on Mindat and elsewhere.

Chandlers Mill mine

The first and oldest mine is up the hill about 160 m south of the Sugar River and is identified as the "Chandler Mills mine" on maps in Olson (1950), Cameron et al. (1954), BMC (1958, 1963), and Meyers and Stewart (1977). It is also mentioned in Table 1 (page 8) of Page and Larrabee (1962). The first published account of the locality, Chapman (1941:377), simply refers to it as a "small abandoned pegmatite" that he studied and mapped from 1937 to 1940 (several years prior to the opening of the G. F. Smith mine) (Chapman 1941, 1942; Cameron et al. 1954). Note that it was called Chandlers Mill mine [corrected by moving the "s"] at the time that it was actively being worked, and was visited by E. N. Cameron, J. J. Page et al. in the 1940s as described in Cameron et al. (1954).

Cameron et al. (1954) state that the Chandlers Mill mine was leased by New Hampshire Mica and Mining Co. (Keene, NH) in 1942; it was reopened and worked by them from May 1943 to December 1944.

The Chandlers Mill mine is the type locality of hurlbutite (Mrose 1952), and the source of the triphylite described in Chapman (1943). Unfortunately, these articles use the confusing and incorrect term “Smith mine” when describing Chandlers Mill mine. In the description for the type locality of hurlbutite, Mrose (1952) states that the name “Smith mine” refers to the land owners George and Agnes Smith. In a description of hurlbutite, Meyers and Stewart (1977) correctly state that the mineral was found at the “Chandler Mills mine,” yet inexplicably add the incorrect name “Smith” mine in parentheses. It’s certainly true that George and Agnes Smith owned the land, but there was already another nearby mine using the name Smith that had been opened 9 years prior to the publication of Mrose (1952).

G. F. Smith mine

The second and newer mine is about 35 m south of the Sugar River and just east of the Smith residence. It is identified as the “G. F. Smith mine” on maps in Olson (1950), Cameron et al. (1954), Meyers and Stewart (1977), and in other references like Page and Larrabee (1962). BMC (1958) and the first map in BMC (1963) simply call it the “Smith mine” (an obvious source of confusion since previously mentioned references also use “Smith mine” when referring to Chandlers Mill mine). Note that it was called G. F. Smith mine at the time that it was actively being worked, and was visited by E. N. Cameron, J. J. Page et al. in the 1940s as described in Cameron et al. (1954).

Cameron et al. (1954) state that George F. Smith personally worked this mine in 1943. Then Smith and his associates (aka Smith Mica Company) worked the mine up to November 1944. After that, it was leased by Newport Mica Co. from December 1944 through February 1945.

BMC (1963) reports the G. F. Smith mine as “barren,” obviously from a mineral collector’s perspective. When Mindat provides separate locality entries for both Chandlers Mill and G. F. Smith mines, I will be posting some interesting minerals (some the first reported occurrences) collected on my recent visit to the G. F. Smith mine dumps.

The name of the G. F. Smith mine has been misspelled many times. As documented above, the owner’s full name is George Frank Smith. The incorrect term “G. E. Smith” is found in the text of Olson (1950), Morrill (1960), the second map in BMC (1963), the text of Smith (2005), and on Mindat. “G. E. Smith mine” is also found on labels for some Harvard specimens with the added complication that they were not from the G. F. Smith mine at all, but rather the Chandlers Mill mine. Cameron et al. (1954:289) use “G. G. Smith” once, clearly a typo since “G. F. Smith” is used correctly in the remainder of instances in their text.

Morrill (1960) deserves a special note. Based on reported minerals and directions to the mines, it appears that Morrill (1960) has completely reversed the mine

names. He attributes the long list of reported minerals associated with Chandlers Mill mine to G. F. Smith mine, and locates Chandlers Mill mine east of the Smith residence (where G. F. Smith mine is located). The coordinates Morrill uses are also wrong as detailed in Morong (2011).

Recommendations

- 1) The village name should be called “Chandlers Mill, Newport, Sullivan County, New Hampshire.” Since it is unincorporated and may change without notice, Chandlers Mill should not be used in locality references without also specifying the nearest incorporated town, Newport.
- 2) The mine nearest to the Sugar River worked by George F. Smith should be called the “G. F. Smith mine” as it was called in the 1940s when it was actively being mined, and as shown on maps by Olson (1950), Cameron et al. (1954), and Meyers and Stewart (1977). The full reference should be: G. F. Smith mine, Chandlers Mill, Newport, Sullivan County, New Hampshire. The use of only “Smith mine” should be avoided due to confusion with Chapman (1943) and Mrose (1952).
- 3) The mine further south up the hill should be called “Chandlers Mill mine” as it was called in the 1940s when it was actively being mined, and as shown [corrected from “Chandler Mills”] on maps by Olson (1950), Cameron et al. (1954), BMC (1958, 1963), and Meyers and Stewart (1977). The full reference should be: Chandlers Mill mine, Newport, Sullivan County, New Hampshire. An explanatory note should point out the erroneous “Smith mine” used in Chapman (1943) and Mrose (1952) when referring to Chandlers Mill mine.
- 4) Based on this research and recent field trip surveys, it is recommended that Newport, New Hampshire specimens of crystallized triphylite, hurlbutite, brazilianite, and secondary phosphate species (e.g., augelite, beryllonite, goyazite, wardite) have their locality labeled as: Chandlers Mill mine, Newport, Sullivan County, New Hampshire.

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