

**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY, NEW YORK:
NO LONGER AN AREA PRODUCING QUALITY MINERAL SPECIMENS?**

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INTRODUCTION

It is so often said when describing the localities available to mineral collectors, “*That location is exhausted*”. One might get the impression that there are no longer places where fine mineral specimens can be collected. This statement could not be further from the truth when it concerns St. Lawrence County, New York. As one of the most mineralogically productive counties in our country it continues to offer field collectors ample opportunity to find exceptional mineral specimens. Numerous localities described as *exhausted* have produced significant finds (often better than historic specimens in museums) in contemporary time. *Exhausted*, “I say not”!

Participants on this field trip will be led to two sites often referred to as exhausted but still available to collectors: Powers farm in Pierrepont, St. Lawrence County, New York and the Wolf property near Edwards, St. Lawrence County, New York will both be visited. There will be approximately three hours of collecting time at each site.

To participate meet Mike Walter at the Pierrepont Highway Department parking lot at 9 am on Saturday October 11th, 2014. The Highway Department is found at the intersection of county routes 24 and 29 in the town of Pierrepont. From there participants will be taken to the first site, the Powers farm approximately two miles away.

STOP 1 POWERS FARM, PIERREPONT, ST. LAWRENCE, COUNTY, NEW YORK

(44° 33' 32" N by 75° 01' 12"W)

Common Mineral Species: Dravite, Quartz, Calcite, Phlogopite, Pyrite, Fluorapatite, Talc

Less Common Mineral Species: Chalcopyrite, Magnetite, Tremolite, Actinolite, Marcasite, Goethite, Diopside, Microcline, Malachite, Sphalerite, Synchysite-(Ce), Vermiculite, Gold
*many unusual pseudomorphs are found at this location, as well.

The tourmaline species from this location is now being described as dravite, as per new International Mineralogical Association (I.M.A.) guidelines. Previously known as uvite these lustrous black crystals can reach impressive dimensions. Individuals of large size are uncommon but have been known to reach 30 cm. More commonly they are in the one to three cm range. Although the target species is normally the these fine dravite crystals other species can be desirable. The mica, phlogopite, can form beautiful, large, double terminated crystals to 15 cm in size. Quartz can be found in two distinct generations. First generation quartz is found in unattractive milky to gray colored tessin habit crystals. The second generation quartz is highly prized by collectors forming in prismatic crystals to 10 cm in length of alpine quality.

Many other species can be found in well-formed crystals but most are less common. Pseudomorphs are numerous and include talc after quartz and scapolite, quartz after phlogopite, pyrite after pyrrotite, and quartz after diopside, to name a few.

The reality is that land owners are being more restrictive in allowing access to their land but many locations remain accessible if collectors simple ask for access and act responsible when it is granted. This location, however, has been open to the public since the mid 1800's as a fee site. The land owner, Bower Powers, Jr. charges five dollars and visitors may keep all the mineral specimens they find. Field trips from area colleges, high schools, and mineral clubs frequent this location and often and fine specimens are collected with regularity (fig. 1). There will be no fee charged for our visit.



Figure 1. An attractive dravite cluster collected by a 10th grade high school student on May 16th, 2014. He had never been mineral collecting before! It was found loose on the soil and measures 8.8 cm with individual crystals reaching 4.8 cm.

STOP 2 THE WOLF PROPERTY (also known as the Morgan Farm), EDWARDS, ST. LAWRENCE, COUNTY, NEW YORK

(44° 19'01" N by 75° 14'21" W)

Common Mineral Species: Diopside, Microcline, Tremolite, Mica

Less Common Mineral Species: Pyrite, Apatite, Molybdenite

It seems that this site has been seldom visited over the past 40 years. It is on private property and we will have permission for this one time collecting effort. It has the reputation as being "exhausted" but that is not true. A large feldspar vein and the road cut where enormous diopside crystals were collected in the early 1960s are now likely depleted but other diggings at this location will produce specimens. There has been very little collector activity at the site in the past 40 years and the location holds strong potential for further finds of quality specimens.