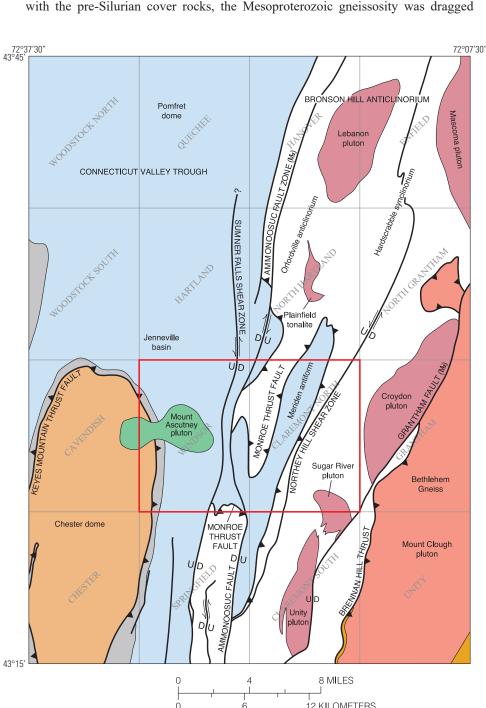
U.S. Department of the Interior U.S. Geological Survey

The bedrock geology was mapped to study the tectonic history of the area and to provide a framework for ongoing characterization of the bedrock of Vermont and New Hampshire. This Scientific Investigations Map of the Mount Ascutney 7.5- x 15-minute quadrangle consists of sheets 1 and 2 as well as an online geographic information system (GIS) database that includes contacts of bedrock geologic units, faults, outcrops, structural geologic information, and photographs. Sheet 1 of the report includes the bedrock geologic map. Sheet 2 includes a simplified tectonic map (fig. 1), and igneous rock geochemistry results (fig. 2; table 1) of the main map units from the Mount Ascutney stock. Sheet 2 also includes three cross sections from the geologic map on sheet 1, a tectonic map (fig. 3) showing major structural features, and a structural domain map (fig. 4) showing the orientation and distribution of measured joints, faults, and dikes with summary stereonets and rose

the map area by Walsh and others (1996a, b). The name "Mount Ascutney" has changed over the years on published topographic maps and in the geologic literature. Older published topographic maps listed the name as "Ascutney Mountain" and that name was applied in the classic scientific work by Daly (1903). Modern geographic usage lists the place name as "Mount Ascutney" and this report adopts that usage, except where the geologic nomenclature is well established, and there the term "Ascutney Mountain" is

diagrams. The report follows a preliminary report compiled for the Vermont part of

SUMMARY OF BEDROCK GEOLOGY The bedrock geology of the Mount Ascutney 7.5- x 15-minute quadrangle consists of highly deformed and metamorphosed Mesoproterozoic through Devonian metasedimentary and meta-igneous rocks intruded by rocks of the Mesozoic White Mountain Igneous Suite. In the west, Mesoproterozoic gneisses of the Mount Holly Complex are the oldest rocks and form the northeastern flank of the Chester dome (Ratcliffe and others, 2011). The allochthonous Cambrian through Ordovician rocks include the Moretown and Cram Hill Formations and the North River Igneous Suite; these rocks structurally overlie the Chester dome along the Keyes Mountain thrust fault (Ratcliffe, 2000a, b; Ratcliffe and others, 2011), which may represent the ancient Ordovician suture (Red Indian line) between crustal blocks with Laurentian versus Ganderian affinity (Macdonald and others, 2014; Valley and others, 2019). Silurian and Devonian metasedimentary and metavolcanic rocks of the Connecticut Valley trough (CVT) unconformably overlie the pre-Silurian rocks. The easternmost extent of the CVT in New Hampshire is exposed in the Meriden antiform. Ordovician to Silurian and Devonian metasedimentary rocks of the Bronson Hill anticlinorium, sometimes referred to as the "New Hampshire sequence" (Billings, 1937, 1956; White and Jahns, 1950; Rankin and others, 2013), structurally overlie the CVT along the Monroe thrust fault. The oldest part of the Bronson Hill anticlinorium, called the Bronson Hill arc, consists of Ordovician metamorphosed volcanic, plutonic, and sedimentary rocks of the Ammonoosuc Volcanics, the Partridge Formation, and the Oliverian Plutonic Suite. The Ammonoosuc Volcanics represent the base of the exposed section in the area. The rocks of the Bronson Hill arc may be partly correlative with the pre-Silurian rocks above the Chester dome (Valley and others, 2019) and are exposed in two fault-bounded structural belts (Cornish City and Claremont belts) and in the Sugar River dome (fig. 2). Collectively, these belts form the regional Orfordville anticlinorium, Hardscrabble synclinorium, and the western part of the broader Bronson Hill anticlinorium in western New Hampshire (fig. 1). Silurian to Devonian metasedimentary rocks of the Clough Quartzite, and Fitch and Littleton Formations unconformably overlie the rocks of the Bronson Hill arc. Devonian granitic and pegmatitic dikes and sills of the New Hampshire Plutonic Suite intruded previously deformed rocks. Post-tectonic Cretaceous plutonic and volcanic rocks of the Ascutney Mountain Intrusive Complex (new formal name) underlie Mount Ascutney and Little Ascutney in the map area and in the adjacent Cavendish quadrangle (Ratcliffe, 1995a, 2000a). Informally referred to as the "Ascutney Ratcliffe and others, 2011), the name is formalized here as an intrusive complex in accordance with the North American Stratigraphic Code, article 37 (Easton and others, 2016, p. 220). The intrusive complex contains both intrusive and extrusive igneous rock types that are all lithodemic units within the White Mountain Igneous Suite (Ratcliffe and others, 2011). The complex only occurs in eastern Windsor County, Vermont, and the type locality includes exposures on the peaks of Mount Ascutney and Little Ascutney. Hitchcock (1884) first used the name "Mount Ascutney granite" for rocks that only occurred at Mount Ascutney. Foyles and Richardson (1929) used the obsolete term "Mount Ascutney nordmarkite," which referred only to the syenite, and since the intrusive complex contains more than just granite and syenite these two names are obsolete. The Ascutney Mountain Intrusive Complex includes syenite, granite, aplite, gabbro, and diorite, with screens and xenoliths of co-magmatic volcanic rocks. Mount Ascutney is the classic location where Daly (1903) discussed the evidence for piecemeal stoping as a pluton emplacement mechanism. This theory was later modified to favor cauldron subsidence, or ring-fracture stoping, as an alternative mode of emplacement (Chapman and Chapman, 1940). Our new mapping supports the cauldron subsidence model, and shows that the main Ascutney Mountain stock is a funnel-shaped composite pluton in agreement with geophysical data (Daniels, 1990). Because of the historically significant scientific research, and its prominence in the landscape, Mount Ascutney is commonly regarded as Vermont's most famous



The oldest structure in the bedrock is a relict gneissosity in the

Mesoproterozoic Mount Holly Complex in the Chester dome. At or near the contact

0 6 12 KILOMETERS White Mountain Igneous Suite (Cretaceous) Rangeley Formation (Silurian) Connecticut Valley trough (Devonian and Silurian) New Hampshire sequence (Devonian to Ordovician) Oliverian Plutonic Suite (Ordovician) Moretown and Cram Hill Formations and North River Intrusive Suite (Ordovician and Late Cambrian) Basement rocks (Mesoproterozoic)

Thrust fault—Sawteeth on upper plate Post-peak metamorphic fault—Arrows indicate relative motion, queried where unknown; U, upthrown side; D, downthrown side. Abbreviation: Mz, Mesozoic

Figure 1. Simplified tectonic map and index to 7.5-minute quadrangles (outlined in gray). Modified from Ratcliffe and others (2011) and Lyons and others (1997). The area of this report is outlined in red.

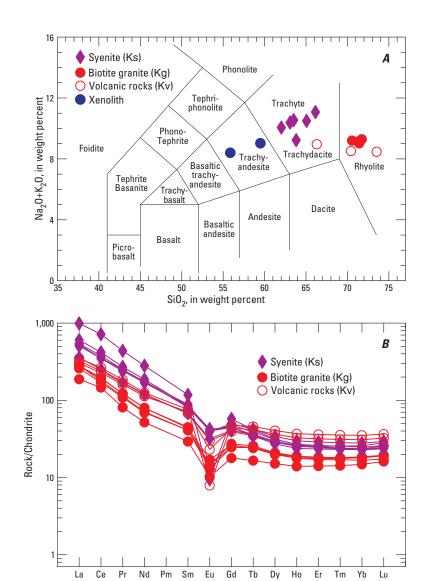


Figure 2. Diagrams showing the geochemical results for syenite (map unit Ks), biotite granite (map unit Kg), volcanic rocks (map unit Kv), and xenoliths from the Ascutney Mountain stock. **A**, Geochemical results shown on a total alkali-silica (TAS) diagram (TAS diagram after LeBas and others, 1986). **B**, Geochemical results shown on a rock/chondrite rare-earth element (REE) diagram (normalized REE diagram after Sun and McDonough, 1989). Foland and others (1985) report that the late-stage biotite granite was derived from basaltic magma by fractional crystallization with little or no crustal assimilation, whereas the more mafic magmas experienced greater crustal assimilation. The negative europium (Eu) anomalies (shown in **B**) are consistent with magma sources having undergone fractional crystallization. Further, Foland and others (1985) describe the xenoliths as basaltic, but two analyses of "basic segregation" xenoliths within the biotite granite (Kg) plot as trachyandesite on the TAS diagram shown in **A** (xenolith data from Daly, 1903, p. 84). The sample locations (except for xenoliths) are included in the geographic information systems database. See Cox (1987) for the geochemical results for trace elements from rock, stream-sediment, soil, and panned concentrate samples for the entire Ascutney Mountain Intrusive Complex and the observation of a minor gold anomaly in gray sulfidic schist that is south and east of Mount Ascutney.

into parallelism with a penetrative foliation that is a second-generation foliation in the pre-Silurian cover rocks. This second-generation foliation is axial planar to abundant isoclinal and reclined folds of both the gneissosity in the Mount Holly Complex and the schistosity in the overlying pre-Silurian rocks. This fabric is interpreted to be a relict Taconian foliation perhaps related to movement along the Keyes Mountain thrust fault. A younger and almost certainly Acadian foliation is also found subparallel to this older Taconian schistosity in the pre-Silurian rocks. In contrast to the pre-Silurian rocks above the Chester dome, there is no clear evidence in the map area for an Ordovician deformational fabric in the exposed pre-Silurian rocks in the Bronson Hill arc; such evidence does exist in the older rocks beneath the Ammonoosuc Volcanics in the Albee Formation in the Littleton, New Hampshire area (Rankin and others, 2013). This implies that the Ammonoosuc Volcanics post-date regional deformation related to an orogenic episode interpreted as either Taconian or Penobscottian (Rankin and others, 2013). The oldest foliation in the Silurian and Devonian rocks is a bed-parallel schistosity (Acadian S₁) containing rarely observed isoclinal folds (Acadian F₁). These folds are the nappe-stage folds of Thompson and others (1968). Only in the hinge regions of these early F₁ folds is it possible to see bedding that is not parallel to a foliation. Both the Connecticut Valley trough and Bronson Hill anticlinorium (BHA) rocks possess this first generation (Acadian S₁) schistosity, but they do not appear to have developed under the same metamorphic conditions. The S₁ foliation in the BHA appears to have developed prior to or during peak metamorphism that reached as high as staurolite grade (Walsh and others, 2012), but the S, foliation in the western part of the CVT developed prior to the peak of upper greenschistduring or after Acadian S, development

facies metamorphism. In the western CVT, relative age relationships between porphyroblasts and fabric suggest that peak metamorphic conditions occurred The second-generation planar fabric in all the Silurian and Devonian rocks (Acadian S₂) varies from a non-penetrative cleavage to a penetrative schistosity. Folds associated with the second-generation planar fabric (Acadian F₂) vary from open to isoclinal with generally consistent shallow plunges to both the north and south, but locally the plunges are quite steep. Acadian S, and S, are the most dominant, or visibly conspicuous, planar fabrics in the Silurian and Devonian rocks. Locally, these two planar fabrics are parallel, and it is difficult to discern one from the other. In such places where only a single penetrative schistosity is observed, and no crosscutting relative age relationships can be discerned, a foliation symbol is used to represent a dominant foliation (S_n) on the map. Acadian S₁ and S₂ are deformed by a minimum of two younger cleavages. The next youngest generation of planar fabrics include broad to open folds (F₃) with both shallow and steep fold hinges and associated millimeter- to centimeter-spaced cleavage (S₃). These structures have many different orientations, although they most commonly strike northeast, dip vertically to steeply northwest, and locally have sinistral rotation senses in the eastern part of the map. These structures are, in part, related to the last stages of doming, and the older Acadian S₁ and S₂ planar fabrics are deformed by them. It is not certain whether these younger "dome-related" structures are entirely coeval across the map. The S₁ fabric is interpreted as Acadian, the S₂ fabric is interpreted as Acadian to Neo-Acadian or even Alleghanian, and the S₃ fabric is Alleghanian. Late-stage F₃ folds locally show preferred left-lateral rotation sense and are probably related to late dome-stage Alleghanian deformation or motion along lower greenschist-facies regional faults that were active at around 300 million years before present (Ma, mega-annum) (McWilliams and others, 2013) or between 310 and 280 Ma (McAleer and others, 2017). The Bald Mountain shear zone shows that the re-activation of S₂ fabric occurred during lower greenschist-facies metamorphism, with white mica recrystallization taking place as young as the Early Triassic where white mica yields ⁴⁰Ar/³⁹Ar ages of about 250 Ma (McAleer and others, 2016). The youngest generation cleavage (S₄) in the area is a 1- to 30-cm-spaced cleavage that locally occurs as parallel sets of kink bands or low-amplitude, high-wavelength folds with variable fold hinge orientations. Secondary minerals, mainly quartz, calcite, and dolomite, occur as vein-filling material in the cleavage planes. This latest generation of cleavage generally strikes east-west and dips sub-vertically, sub-parallel to the regional joint trend (fig. 4). This cleavage, and the outcrop-scale and map-scale brittle faults in the area, may be related to Mesozoic extension (Hatch, 1988). In the Hartland and North Hartland quadrangles to the north, the kink bands are spatially related to the Ammonoosuc fault (Walsh, 2016), but sufficient data were not observed in this map area to demonstrate spatial correlation between kink bands and brittle faults. The youngest deformation is characterized by Mesozoic brittle faulting, kink bands, motion along the Ammonoosuc fault and smaller unnamed faults, possible re-activation of the Sumner Falls and Northey Hill shear zones, and subsequent jointing (figs. 3 and 4). Rocks of the Mount Holly Complex in the core of the Chester dome may have reached hornblende-granulite-facies metamorphic conditions during the Mesoproterozoic Grenvillian orogenic events, and experienced subsequent metamorphism at lower grades during both the Ordovician (Taconic) and Devonian (Acadian) orogenic events. Peak metamorphic conditions in the Chester dome reached staurolite-kyanite grade during Paleozoic metamorphism, but direct evidence of Grenvillian granulite-facies metamorphism is lacking (Ratcliffe, 2000a, b). Paleozoic metamorphism locally attained amphibolite-facies conditions in the basement rocks, the pre-Silurian sequence, the eastern part of the BHA, and the western part of the CVT, but attained only greenschist-facies conditions in parts of the central CVT and BHA during the Acadian orogeny. We did not identify relict Taconian metamorphic mineral assemblages in the pre-Silurian rocks in this area, perhaps due to the thoroughness of recrystallization associated with the Acadian metamorphic overprint. The Monroe fault carried the BHA rocks over the CVT during an early Acadian F, nappe-stage event that pre-dated lower amphibolite-facies peak metamorphism. The onset of doming occurred during F, deformation, which folded the Monroe thrust sheet, folded earlier isograds, and created the Meriden antiform and related structures. Doming continued as evidenced by the deformation of D₂ by the D₃ structures. Lower greenschist-facies (Alleghanian) faults such as the Sumner Falls and Northey Hill shear zones truncated peak-metamorphic assemblages, isograds, and older F, folds and faults. These faults experienced a protracted history and played a major role in the metamorphic discontinuity documented along the Connecticut River Valley, evidenced by amphibole and muscovite 40Ar/39Ar ages of ~380 and ~330 Ma in Vermont, and ~330 and ~270 in New Hampshire (Harrison and others, 1989; McWilliams and others, 2013; McAleer and others, 2015). Additionally, in the vicinity of the Bald Mountain shear zone, ⁴⁰Ar/³⁹Ar data from muscovite record a mixture of cooling ages of ~300 Ma and crystallization ages of ~245 Ma. The younger ages are associated with new muscovite and pseudomorphic replacement of staurolite, and the younger ages expand the occurrence of ductile deformation and down-to-the-east normal extension in the area into the Triassic (McAleer and others, 2014, 2015, 2016). These ages suggest that the peak metamorphic conditions developed during the Acadian orogeny and that retrograde greenschist-facies metamorphism occurred during the Alleghanian orogeny. Apatite fission-track data indicate that the Ammonoosuc fault was active prior to about 100 Ma and experienced little to no reactivation in the Cretaceous, but other regionally significant older ductile shear zones (such as the Northey Hill shear zone) experienced Late Cretaceous (approximately <80 Ma) reactivation (Roden-Tice and others, 2009). Recent data suggest some Cretaceous activity on regional brittle

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

reactivated and may show varying senses of motion.

faults (for example, the Grantham fault in the Springfield quadrangle to the south) may have extended into the Paleocene (Schnalzer and others, 2015). The sense of displacement (shown on sheets 1 and 2) is identified where it was observed along faults, but given the protracted history (discussed above) the faults may be

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Shaded relief from ESRI, 2009, at http://goto.arcgisonline.com/maps/World_Shaded_Relief

/ Igneous Suite

Intrusive Complex

Ascutney Mountain

VALLEY

Photograph of Mount Ascutney and the Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge from Cornish, New

Hampshire, looking southwest across the Connecticut River towards Windsor, Vermont.

Table 1. Whole-rock geochemistry results of map-unit rock samples from the Ascutney Mountain Intrusive Complex.

Photograph by G.J. Walsh.

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Figure 4.—Structural domain map of the Mount Ascutney quadrangle showing the orientation and distribution of representative measured brittle features. Structural domain boundaries are divided by the Ascutney Mountain Intrusive

Complex, the Sumner Falls shear zone (divides west and central domains), and the Northey Hill shear zone (divides central and east domains). The map shows the locations and data results for measured outcrop-scale joints, kink bands,

brittle faults, and Cretaceous mafic dikes (map unit Kd). Results for measured joint data are summarized on four pairs of diagrams (at left and right of map) separated into four structural domains: the Ascutney Mountain Intrusive

Complex and the west, central, and east domains. Each pair includes a stereonet and a rose diagram. Results for measured kink bands include all four structural domains shown on one stereonet and rose diagram (at top of map).

Locations and data results for measured outcrop-scale brittle faults and Cretaceous mafic dikes (map unit Kd) are shown at top of map and also include all four structural domains. For all stereonets, contoured poles to the associated

brittle features are shown along with the strike and dip orientations for poles to the principal planes in the dataset. For all rose diagrams a normalized subset of the data is shown in the corresponding stereonet for dips >59°, and principal

peaks are shown with 1 standard deviation (for example, 276°±9° for the joints in the west domain). The number of data points is indicated by "n" at the bottom of each diagram. Stereonets and rose diagrams were plotted using the

Structural Data Integrated System Analyser (DAISY, version 4.95.05) software by Salvini and others (1999) and Salvini (2013). Consult the GIS database for the complete data, which are not plotted on the figure due to cartographic

constraints. Note that the outcrop-scale strike and dip symbols for joints and brittle faults are not shown on the geologic map (sheet 1). Also, the limited number of joint measurements in the west domain reflects limited fracture data

collection in the previous study by Walsh and others (1996a, b) and does not indicate that the rocks are less jointed in the west domain. No structural measurements were taken in Corbin Park because access to the park was denied.

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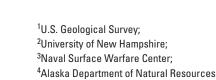
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n=144 (dip>59°)

NOT ON MAP

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



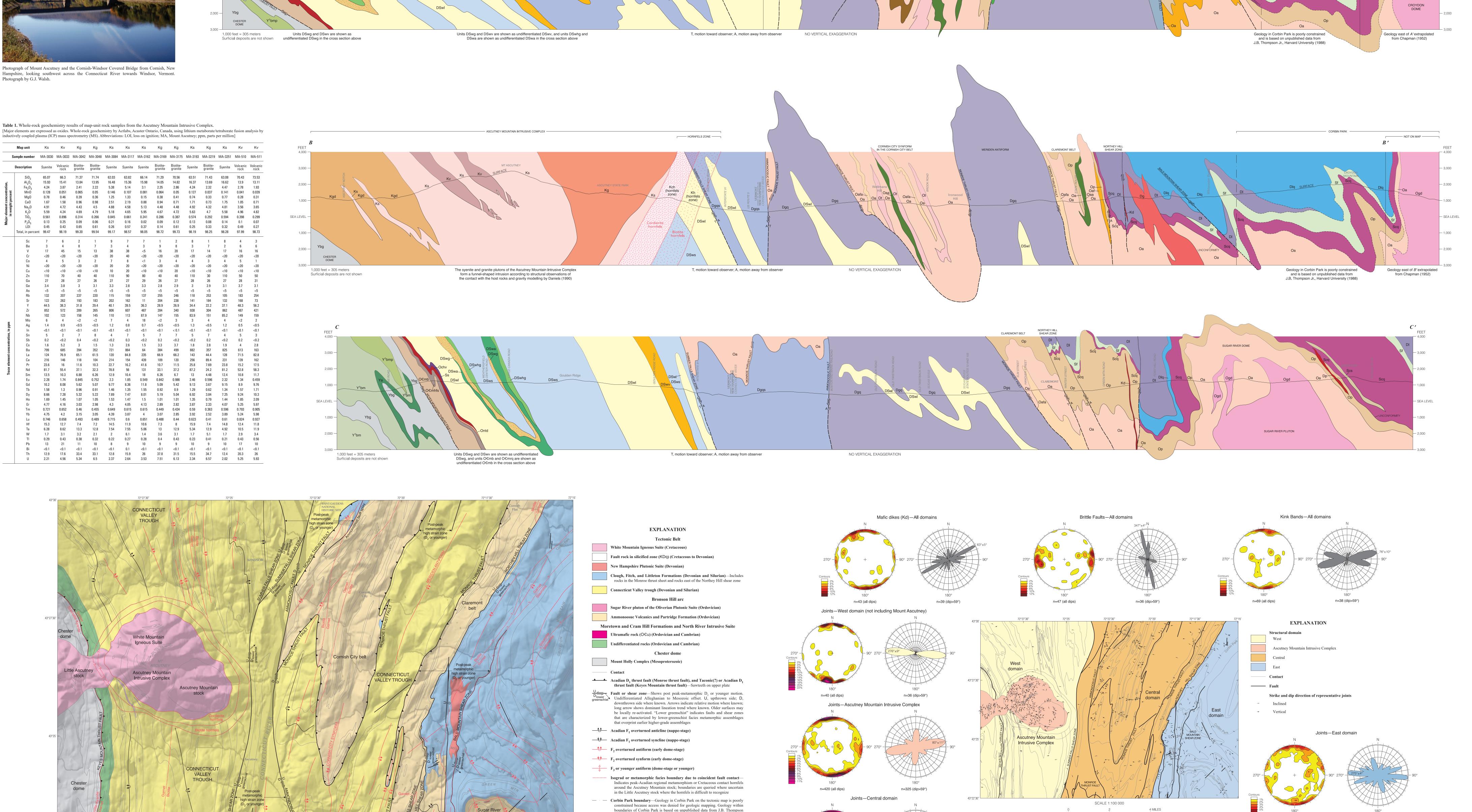


Figure 3. Tectonic map showing major structural features of the Mount Ascutney quadrangle. The axial traces of the F₂ folds (shown by solid red lines with arrows) define the dominant structural grain and deform Acadian F₁ folds and faults. Retrograde high-strain zones are recognized in the

Connecticut River Valley, the Meriden antiform, and near the Northey Hill shear zone. These zones show evidence for both ductile and locally brittle deformation during protracted events. The Ascutney Mountain Intrusive Complex cross-cuts all Mesoproterozoic and Paleozoic structures.

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Survey Scientific Investigations Map 3440, 2 sheets, scale 1:24,000, https://doi.org/10.3133/sim3440

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n=202 (all dips)