

St. George Granite History

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In the Beginning

According to geologists a molten mass of red granite intruded the roots of a great mountain chain in the St. George area. The mountains were intensely folded Ordovician and Silurian rocks. This intrusion occurred during Devonian times about 380 million years ago (Tupper and Hart, 1961). Millions of years of erosion of this mountain chain finally exposed its roots which are the St. George granites (as we know them) today.

Bailey (1870-71) described their extent and compared them favorably with the well known granites of Aberdeen, Scotland.

Start of the Industry

The first interest in commercial exploitation of this resource dates back to an 1872 fishing trip to Lake Utopia by Mr. Charles Ward, a New York artist and photographer. Mr. Ward was fascinated by the immense ledges of beautiful dark red granite and it was his enthusiasm that "sparked" St. George's first granite firm, The Bay of Fundy Red Granite Company, in 1872. It was made up of New York capitalists and practical granite-men with Mr. Ward as secretary. This company purchased 1,320 acres of land, and erected a \$75,000 plant at Magaguadavic Falls.

According to Parks (1914) the first monumental stone manufactured by this company was a large red granite cross marking the resting place of the Reverend Samuel Thompson (1861) in St. Mark's Cemetery, St. George.

The Granitemen and Their Products

It was a Scotchman, Mr. McLachan, who brought out the first experienced granite-cutters for the Bay of Fundy Red Granite Co. They came from his homeland to St. George in 1872-74.

I have not been able to discover exactly who Mr. McLachan was. It could have been Hubert McLachlin, medical doctor, St. George, who is listed in *McAlpine's Charlotte County Directory*. There is nothing to associate this man with granite, but many names are misspelled in this directory, so I am wondering if he was the man responsible for inviting the Scottish stone workers to our area. Mr. Wm. Coutts' obituary in a clipping from an unidentified newspaper tells us the story of some of these first workers:

*"In 1868 William Coutts, Alex G. Milne, James Watt, and Alex Milne came from Scotland to America, and to St. George in 1874, and were employed with the Bay of Fundy Granite Company for nearly two years. In 1876 these four men formed the firm of Milne, Coutts and Company. They began manufacturing granite in the "Gully" until 1884, when they purchased the Bay of Fundy Granite Company, where the industry progressed extensively for many years." (*The "Gully" is the narrow gorge below the Magaguadavic River falls and may be seen from the highway bridge at the west end of St. George.)*

Alex Milne was known as "Big Sandy" and Alex G. Milne as "Little Sandy". The two men were cousins and Mr. James Watt Sr. had been employed as foreman of the Bay of Fundy Red Granite works; when they bought out the company in 1884 they renamed it Milne Coutts and Company. Mr. Watt retired about 1885. That same year Capt. Charles Johnston retired from the sea, joined the new company, and purchased the controlling interest from Mr. Watt who died in 1892.

In 1911 Capt. Johnston became manager and installed a column-cutter. He remained with the company until his retirement and death a few years later. In 1932 or 1933, his interests were sold to Arthur W. Stewart who had been with the company a few years. Mr. Stewart had been formerly employed by Meating Epps Company as bookkeeper or office manager. Eventually he became manager of Milne Coutts Company and held that post until the firm closed out in 1953.

A hewn beam crossing the gully shown in James L. Watts picture was used as a footbridge by many of our first granitemen. It accommodated those employees of Milne, Coutts and Company who lived in that part of our town that was nicknamed "*South Boston*". They crossed the gully on their way to and from the granite sheds.

All the granite workers were not from Scotland. Many came from Saint John and other parts of New Brunswick. At that time the lumbering industry was on the decline and many woodsmen left the forest for the granite sheds to become stone cutters or stone polishers, which took about three years of learning. Others became expert quarrymen, and some who were artistically gifted learned to do lettering, engraving, designing, and scrollwork.

Examples of their fine work may be seen in cemeteries in St. George and elsewhere. Besides gravestones, their products included urns, letter-presses (with names or plain), door-stops, bookends, polished balls of granite in different sizes, hat-pin heads (for your sweetheart or someone else's), hairpins, table tops, and scenes cut or sandblasted on flat pieces of polished granite. All varieties of granite had their uses and a common use was for foundations, especially in older homes in this vicinity. On one special occasion, "*curling stones*" were cut and polished.

A red granite newel post, a work of art, was made and finished by the Meating Epps Co. It was sent to the Chicago Columbian Exposition, 1893, celebrating the 400th anniversary of Columbus discovering America, or the Chicago World's Fair, where it received first prize. It was eventually placed in Henry Meating's residence, now occupied by his grandson, Harry Meating.

A more massive production was manufactured before 1911 to serve as a base of an Ottawa war memorial (perhaps the Boer War). The Roosevelt Cairn was made by Mime Coutts & Co., and was taken by scow to Campobello where it was then assembled by Frank N. Chaffey and John W. McGrattan.

Columns for the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Boston, Mass., and columns for the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, and stone for the American Museum of Natural History, New York, were supplied by St. George.

Quarrying Methods

In those early years, granite was quarried by hand methods. These methods produced much waste material or "*grout*". Rows of holes were drilled along natural fracture lines and blasted to produce

blocks with relatively straight edges. Small blocks could be handled with hand winches or derricks. Horse derricks were used in most quarries for large blocks. The hoisting cable was wound on a windlass turned by a long pole or boom hauled by a horse walking in a circle.

The Bay of Fundy Granite Company cut granite first at Youngs' Front (also called Burpee) Quarries and later at the Burpee Quarries (sometimes called Saint John Quarries). These were near the intersection of Highway No. 710 and the Manor Road. From there it was moved by a train to a nearby stone shed for polishing.

In summer granite was also transported on scows from Lake Utopia through "*the canal*" then down the Magaguadavic River to the granite sheds. Much later trucks were used.

Granite Polishing

At first Lake Utopia sand was used in polishing the granite. Later on, steel shot replaced sand for smoothing rough surfaces. The stone was next washed clean of all traces of shot, then polished with coarse carborundum, an extremely hard compound of carbon and silicon. The second polishing was with fine carborundum, and the third (final) polishing to a gloss was done with whitening and scouring blocks. The scouring blocks were cut from trunks of willow trees, placed upright in the polishers so the end grain, saturated with whitening, was in contact with the stone. Felt was sometimes used instead of willow blocks but in either case the result was a fine polished surface.

Shipping

After polishing the products were often hauled down the Lower Road to the Red Store Wharf at Breadalbane and transported from there by boat to Saint John. In winter oxen were used on this route to haul larger stones for special jobs.

Breadalbane was at the mouth of the Magaguadavic River about two miles from St. George. Sailing vessels used to discharge winter supplies there when ice prevented them from coming up the river to the St. George wharf. The "*Red Store*" was located on the wharf. Over 100 years ago many people, including a number of Scottish families in that area, drove to the Red Store for supplies. Later our St. George stores hauled supplies from the Red Store wharf. One St. George man, H. Vernon Connell, now in his eighties, remembers hauling hogsheads of molasses to town over these two miles of winter roads.

Rise and Fall of the Industry

As mentioned earlier, the Bay of Fundy Red Granite Company initiated the St. George granite industry that was to have a life span of 60 years. That company played an important role but its history was brief and many other companies came and went. Table 1 (below) summarizes the story.

I have been able to assemble more detailed information on some of these firms by inquiry and reading. Dr. Ruitenberg's map shows the sites of quarries they operated. Wright, 1934, presented similar maps including black granite quarries of the Bocabec, Chamcook and Bayside areas. He gives the local names for several of these.

Developments to 1875

In 1875, Matthew visited the area and recorded his observations in “*Report of Progress for 1876-77*”. He described operations of three companies, the Bay of Fundy Red Granite Company, the New Brunswick Red Granite Company, and the Brothers Michael.

The Bay of Fundy Red Granite Company then employed about 100 men. Their plant was working night and day to fill orders for columns for the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Boston and had supplied polished columns for the parliament buildings in Ottawa and for the post office in Saint John.

The New Brunswick Red Granite Company had been operating Youngs' Front (Burpee) Quarries on the west side of Magaguadavic but their \$30,000 plant, or mill, at the falls had been burned. For a short period their stone was finished in Saint John, but that mill also burned.

The Brothers Michael Quarry had been recently opened on the east side of the Magaguadavic, and they were shipping stone in the rough. This quarry was later owned by the Epps and Dodds Company.

Table 1. Various companies that participated in St. George granite industry.

Names of Company and Principals	Period of Operation	Fate of Company
Bay of Fundy Red Granite Co. Charles Ward, Sec'y	1872-1884 (ca.)	Sold to Milne, Coutts & Co.
St. George Granite Works Alex. Taylor & three sons	1876-1900 (ca.)	Sold to O'Brien & Baldwin Co. but business continued under same name.
Milne, Coutts & Co. A. and A.G. Nilne, W. Coutts and James Watt	1876-1953 (ca.)	Company closed.
Tayte, Meating Co. A. R. Tayte, Nicholas Meating Sr. and Joseph Meating	1897-1915	Sold to St. George Pulp & Paper Co.
Epps, Dodds Co. Chas. Epps, Mgr. James Dodds	1897-1910 or 11	Sold to Meating, Epps Co.
Meating, Epps Co. George F. Meating, Mgr. Owners: Henry Meating, Chas. Epps, George & Nicholas Meating Jr.	1910 (ca) -1945 (ca.)	Closed and property taken over by Milne Coutts Co.
Henry McGrattan & Sons Charles W. McGrattan, Mgr.	1912 (ca) - (?)	Company closed.
Victoria Red Granite Co. Walter Messinett & John McDougall	1897 - (?)	Milne Coutts Co. took machinery.
Young Quarries John Maxwell	1897 - (?)	Formed company.

The 27 July 1876 issue of the St. Croix had this to say:

Manufacturing facilities of St. George

The red granite business, still in its short clothes, and one saw-mill in operation are all that we can claim as a manufacturing town.

The 19 July 1877 issue reported:

Annual meeting of the Bay of Fundy Red Granite Co., April 10, directors elected -

*Hon. R. B. Stevenson Pres.
B. R. Lawrence Treas.
Thomas Barry
C. C. Ward Sec.
Henry Rudge
J. S. Brown (New York)
Robert Ellin (" ")*

At or about that time the Bay of Fundy Red Granite Company employed 65 men in the finishing factory and an additional 15 in the quarries, located about five miles north of St. George.

The Company's dam was directly under the bridge which has since been rebuilt. The rushing water fell through a flume and turned a water wheel at the base. At that time the power was transferred, by means of a cogwheel, to the main shaft in the mill, situated behind the hill. Power was taken off the long shaft at various points in the mill for operating lathes, column-cutters, and polishing machines

St. George Granite Works

Alex Taylor III, born in Blackburn, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, came with his family to America in 1872. He settled in St. George in 1874, and was employed by the Bay of Fundy Granite Company for nearly two years. Then, in 1876, he established with his three sons the St. George Granite Works.

In 1897, he died suddenly while on a business trip to the province of Quebec. Alex Taylor Jr. assumed responsibility for the business as senior partner with his brothers. Within a few years the two brothers died but Alex Jr. continued the business for nearly thirty years before selling out in 1890 or 1900.

The new owners were John O'Brien and Andrew S. Baldwin. They continued the business under the same name. S. L. Tilley Moran, a grandson of John O'Brien, became manager.

State of the Industry 1897

In 1894 (St. Croix Courier 1954 in "60 Years Ago" reported) "*the granite manufacturers combined (last week) and built a new dam at the head of the falls, and now have plenty of water.*"

Bailey (1897) reported that the Bay of Fundy Red Granite Company, which had been purchased by the Milne Coutts and Company about 1881, was shipping stone by rail over the Shore Line joining St. George and Saint John. (This line was built in 1875 by Russell Sage, was taken over by Grand Southern in 1882, and in the early 1900's became part of the CPR.)

Three other companies, Tayte, Meating and Company, Epps, Dodds and Company, and the Victoria Red Granite Company, were also operating in 1897. By this time, they had begun working with black granite and besides exploiting local resources they were finishing imported American stone. They supplied stone for the Museum of Natural History in New York and many other private and public buildings. However, U.S. duties on manufactured granite were "*well nigh prohibitive*" and the St. George product was marketed almost wholly in Canada.

In 1902, a New Yorker bought rights to build a pulp mill below the falls at St. George and promised to supply power to the stone sheds for 99 years. In 1920 this company was sold to New York World Company and in 1927 to the International Paper Co. In 1933, the mill was sold to the Lacroix family. In spite of all these changes, this Company was always known as The St. George Pulp & Paper Company Ltd.

Conditions 1910-1930

An important report of this period was that made by Dr. William Parks (1914) based on his own field work in 1912. He found the following six firms or individuals quarrying granite at that time: Milne Coutts and Company; Epps; Dodds and Company; Henry McGrattan and Sons; Tayte, Meating and Company; O'Brien and Baldwin; and John Maxwell who was operating the Young Quarries.

A contract of some interest was let in 1923 (St. Croix Courier, 1953, "30 Years Ago"): Henry McGrattan and Sons undertook to supply stone for the Saint John Dry Docks. It was taken from the Dawson Mountain quarry, and the work continued for three months, furnishing work for 30 men.

The total annual value of the product at that period stood at about \$75,000. The red granite finished in 1910 was valued at about \$45,000; the black and gray, about \$22,000, and imported stone finished in St. George, about \$8,000.

The Resource

In 1934 Dr. N. J. Wright with assistance from Hazen Baldwin, a well known quarryman of this district, prepared an excellent report on the granite industry. It shows the vast extent of the granite formations that extend 60 miles westerly from the Saint John to the Saint Croix River. Granite has been quarried in many places in this area but the most important were at Spoon Island (Hampstead, N. B.) and at St. George.

Wright's report describes the location, history of development, including ownership changes and the condition of most of the known quarries at that time. I would recommend it to any of you who wants information on particular quarries in Charlotte County. It describes not only those near St. George but others on the Digdeguash, on the Bocabec, on Chamcook Mountain and at Bayside. The last produced granite under the trade name, "*Irish Black*".

It would be beyond the scope of this paper for me to quote Dr. Wright's report and I am not including his map showing positions of quarries in the St. George area. The quarry numbers refer to sections of the report in which they are described.

As Dr. Wright's Index Map shows, the St. George quarries lie along the southern margin of the granite formation and extend westerly from Lake Utopia to Oak Bay, a straight-line distance of 18 miles.

In this area there are at least 50 quarries, some of which have been operated since 1872. They have supplied stone to all parts of Canada and the eastern States, and building stone for many noted structures in Montreal, Boston, and New York, the supply being unlimited.

The stone quarried in the St. George area falls into two general classes, commonly called "St. George Red" and "Black Granite". The red granite varies in colour from place to place, from deep-red through light-red, salmon-pink, flesh-coloured, ivory, gray, and almost pure white. Particular colours were obtained from particular quarries, offering customers a wide range for selection.

Resume of Industrial Development

The Bay of Fundy Red Granite Company began operations using simple hand methods. It was Milne) Coutts and Company that installed steam or pneumatic power for drills and derricks in the quarries. These could be moved from quarry to quarry as old ones were abandoned and new ones opened.

Milne, Coutts and Company also used electric power, of which about 75 horsepower was used and obtained from the St. George Pulp & Paper Company under the agreement referred to above. The plant equipment included 1 compressor (Can. Rand Co.) delivering air at 80 lbs; one pneumatic surfacing machine (Tron & Holden); 8 polishing machines (Jenny Linds, Union Foundry Co., St. John, N. B.); 10 stations for pneumatic tools; 2 plug drills; 1 cutting lathe; 6 polishing lathes; 1 pendulum polisher; 5 vertical polishers; and a column-cutter installed about 1911. Twenty-two men were employed: stone-cutters received from \$2 to \$2.75 per day of 8 hours and polishers \$1.50 to \$1.80 per day.

In 1910, 720 ft of red stone, 300 to 400 ft of Spoon Island grey, and a small amount of black Bocabec stone were cut. This is exclusive of imported stone. The Company paid \$1.00 per cubic ft for red stone quarried from their own property and delivered at the mill.

Tayte and Meating Co. was one of the oldest St. George Granite concerns. It operated the largest column-cutter in the area. This Company's property was sold about 50 years ago to the St. George Pulp and Paper Co.

Tayte and Meating Company mill consisted of one building 115 ft by 40 ft and two other buildings each 23 ft by 60 ft. About 40 horsepower was used, obtained from Pulp Co. The equipment included: 2 compressors (1 auxiliary); 1 pneumatic surfacing machine; 1 column-cutter; 2 polishing lathes; 4 polishing machines (Jenny Linds); 1 vertical polishing machine; 1 pendulum polisher; 9 stations for pneumatic tools; and 1 plug drill. Seventeen men were employed in the period about 1910.

The mill operated by Epps, Dodds and Company was 110 ft by 70 ft, and equipped with 1 pneumatic surfacer; 1 gang-saw; 8 stations for pneumatic tools; 1 compressor; 5 polishing machines (Union Foundry Co., Saint John); vertical polishers and polishing lathes. About 40 horsepower of electrical energy from the Pulp Co. was used. Twenty men were employed.

After the death of Mr. Dodds, the Epps Dodds Company name was changed to Meating Epps Company. Mr. Henry Meating carried on operations for 35 years and the business was continued by his sons, George and Nicholas Meating. Charles Epps of Epps Dodds Company invented a machine for quickly making (or forming) granite balls of all sizes. The first granite balls were hand-made by Daniel Matheson Sr., who came from Prince Edward Island many years ago.

One of the Mooreland quarries (No. 22, near highway east side of Magaguadavic River north of Milne Coutts property) was first worked by Thomas Colmer about 1892 and afterwards used by Epps, Dodds Company, has claim to fame. A column 15 ft long was removed from it.

The O'Brien and Baldwin Company mill was 150 ft x 45 ft and equipped with 3 polishing machines (Jenny Linds); 2 vertical polishers; 1 cutting lathe; and 2 polishing lathes. About 40 horsepower of electrical energy was obtained from the Pulp Co. There was no pneumatic plant. In 1910 about 30 men were employed in mill and 6 in quarry.

The Henry McGrattan and Sons mill was about 100 ft by 50 ft and used 30 horsepower of electrical energy, at a cost of \$20.00 per horsepower per year. The plant contained 2 compressors delivering air at 80 lbs pressure; 1 surfacing machine; 5 polishing machines (Jenny Linds); 1 polishing lathe; 10 stations for pneumatic tools; and 1 plug drill. In 1910 between 25 and 50 men were employed.

In 1910 the amount of New Brunswick stone cut was:

Red granite, 2,000 cubic feet

Grey granite (Spoon Island) 800 cubic feet

Black granite, 350 cubic feet.

Black Granite Quarry in the Digdeguash area was owned by Stephen Spinney and Eldon Holt and worked by them for several years. They sold out to Kenneth Fitzgerald of St. Stephen, who recently sold to Nelsons of Sussex. The Nelsons are still removing stone from this quarry.

Frost Mountain Quarry was owned and worked by Alex Maxwell, George Maxwell, and Arthur W. Stewart.

Walter Messinett and John McDougall formed the Victoria Red Granite Company and erected a granite shed on Riverview Avenue, St. George, where they finished and shipped stone by the nearby railroad. Walter Messinett and John McDougall later joined Milne, Coutts Co., and the machinery was taken over by them. Thereafter and until his death, Mr. McDougall served as bookkeeper for the Milne, Coutts Company.

Charles Young Quarries were operated by the New Brunswick Red Granite Company in about 1875, and are sometimes called the Saint John Quarries. They were afterwards owned and operated by Messrs. Burpee who shipped rough stone to Saint John. About 1893 they were purchased by Charles Young. Young shipped undressed stone by rail to a finishing plant in Calais, Maine. After Young's death, the quarries were operated until 1933 by Henry McGrattan and Sons on a 'stumpage' basis. That year they were purchased by Messrs. Nicholas and George Meating of Meating, Epps and Company.

Demise of the Industry

The St. George granite industry began in 1872 and expanded quickly. For 60 years it was a source of revenue but ground to a near halt during World War Two. Who know whether its bones will rise again?

The stone has been used in several well known public buildings in the New England States and eastern Canada and the ornamental stone is known all over Canada. But the granite industry has many difficulties. As early as 1910 statements like the following were being made (Parks, 1914):

"It must be noted that it has never been the practice of the owners to ship rough stone, but to employ practically all the product in the mills at St. George. The increase in production, therefore, is not due to a lessened market for rough stone, but to a decline in the demand for finished monuments. This decline was due chiefly owing to the birth of manufacturing plants at other centres where other stone is more easily obtained. As there is no outlet for St. George rough stone, the quarrying industry has declined with the lessened demand for finished work."

The following were some of the facts of life for granite operators of 1910. Rough stone delivered at the mills was valued from \$1.00 to \$1.25 per cubic foot. The average value of finished material was about \$.00 per cubic foot.

The amount of red stone cut in the mills in 1910 was about 9,000 cubic feet of which rather less than half was of dark red type. The product was worth approximately \$45,000. The amount of black granite cut was 1,400 cubic feet, having an approximate value of \$22,000; and of grey granite about 3,000 cubic feet. To this must be added a considerable amount of imported stone, which would raise the total output to about \$75,000 in 1910.

Numerous quarries had been opened on Lake Utopia from time to time. Stone was taken from the lake quarries by water to St. George; from other quarries it was hauled a distance of two or more miles, first by (oxen) teams, and later on trucks.

But by the 1930's the industry really began to languish in spite of its natural assets. In 1932 it was suggested that the decrease in number of employed was partly accounted for by:

1. The then modern practice of buying stones from contractors at a fixed price per cubic foot, thus dispensing with regularly employed quarrymen like Messrs, Farquharson, Dukendief, Louis Stevens, Oscar Leavitt and Fred Baldwin who had grown up in the business.
2. By using large amounts of imported stone.

The cost of foreign production and foreign freight rates were so low that stone quarried in Sweden could be imported through Scotland and landed in Saint John and brought to St. George almost as cheaply as it could be procured from the St. George quarries.

In 1932, the following companies were still operating: Milne Coutts & Company. Mgr. – Arthur W. Stewart; Meating, Epps Company., Mgr. – George F. Meating; Henry McGrattan and Sons, Mgr. – Charles W. McGrattan; and O'Brien & Baldwin, Mgr. – S. L. "Tilley" Moran. That year a scheme was proposed to stabilize the ailing industry. Henry McGrattan & Sons were to amalgamate with the Meating, Epps Company under the name of Meating & McGrattan, but the scheme was abandoned.

The last shipment of Swedish granite to arrive in Saint John by boat and transported to Milne Coutts Company of St. George was just before World War Two. Mr. Arthur W. Stewart was still in charge at that time. Little quarrying was done during the war years, and foreign stone was not available.

Immediately after World War Two (about 1946) there was a demand for gravestones, and Gillmore and Cotterelle filled many orders. But this was only a temporary demand. A vigorous industry could not thrive on occasional contract like these.

The death was slow. Percy G. Tayte, son of Anthony R. Tayte of the old Tayte & Meating Company, John W. McGrattan and Sylvester Southard, collected many orders for monuments which kept a small crew busy finishing and delivering for a few more years before the final closing of the last operators, Milne, Coutts Company.

In 1953, the Milne Coutts Company property was purchased by the St. George Pulp and Paper Company for the timber on it. Much of the grout had been salvaged to face up river banks and piers. This was the end of the St. George granite business.

An appraisal of the quarries was made from the New Brunswick Department of Industry and Reconstruction by Fletcher, and results were reported by Patterson (1948). It estimated that investments of several hundred thousand dollars would be necessary to establish a modern operation.

In the overall view, the possibilities of revival are not bright.

Recollections

I have lived all my life in or near the light and shadow of the granite industry. Even during my grandparents' time many of those who were connected directly or indirectly with granite were my family's friends and neighbours. Understandably it has everlasting affected my life. Many granite people departed long ago, many of them long before I arrived, including my grandfather, Wilson A. Hamilton, who was a polisher (of finisher) for Tayte & Meating Company. There is hardly a name mentioned in this paper that I have not heard many times. Their descendants are here, or they still come and go as visitors, and we are always happy to see them. Among our older townsmen there are several of the first granite cutters and polishers and many younger men who joined the industry after it was established.

The granite industry touched the lives of nearly every St. George family in some way. I can still remember its sights and sounds. Footsteps hurrying by in early morning, crunching the snow in winter; horses and wagons arriving with workmen from Canal, Caithness or Mascarene sometimes with sleigh bells tinkling; trundling of heavy truck wagons leaving for the quarries and returning later, laden with blocks of granite in the rough for finishing in the mills; and the comic forgetful man hurrying off to the quarry (with horse and wagon and dog) who discovers when he is half-way there that he has mistaken the tea kettle for his lunch box, and mist sheepishly return home and be late for work.

I remember hearing of opposition to the first air compressor installed by the Milne Coutts Company to operate pneumatic equipment and also used to blow the whistle and how "Little" Sandy Milne used to say it was only good for one thing, "*to blow the d--- whistle*".

After the 7 a.m. whistle, the drills rattled: the granite cutters began their clinking; the surface cutters, column-cutters and polishers made their own heavy, steady sounds; the derricks squeaked as they moved huge stones from place to place and mixed with all this clamour were the shouts of the workmen themselves.

The whistle blew again at noon, at one o'clock, and at four and, twice every day, crews of men covered with granite dust emerged from the mills. I used to meet them on my way home from school at noon.

The finished stones were crated away and hauled by wagon to the railway station, to be shipped by the Shore Line which later became the Grand Southern and eventually the CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway).

Relics

These sights and sounds have long since passed and there are few relics left to show that an industry once thrived here.

In 1961 I visited two granite quarries in the Lily Lake area. No. 41 of Tayte & Meating and No. 40 of O'Brien & Baldwin. The openings were filled with waste rock and the depths indeterminable. At the bottom of one quarry I saw a broken wheel once turned by a horse that had helped remove stone years ago. As I stood looking down I tried to picture how it must have been then. It must have required much courage, patience and determination to make a start and keep going. It has all been accomplished in the most difficult and primitive way. And now the quarries were overgrown with trees. The quarries were very deep.

Where were the 500 men who worked in the granite industry, the quarrymen, the stone-cutters, the teamsters, the polishers and finishers, the blacksmiths who sharpened tools, the water-carriers, the derrick men, the machine hands, the scrollwork designers, the shapers of monuments and columns, the letterers and shipping crates? Where were the owners, the directors, and the shareholders? Gone – all away! The only relics were inanimate things, like red granite wheel, partly attached to an iron rod behind O'Brien & Baldwin's old red mill. One time it polished fancy edges, flutes and hallows, and had swung like a pendulum.

The Tayte & Meating Company mill still stands, robbed of its machines and now used for pulp storage. The old red mill that belonged to Epps & Dodds Company (later Meating, Epps Co.), the cement office, and the second Bay of Fundy store (the first, built in 1883, had burned) have all been taken over by the St. George Pulp Company. The store has become a residence. Only blocks, chips and bits and pieces of granite, a rusted wheel, scatter parts of a derrick, wooden pulleys, and an old grindstone are left to remind us that St. George was once called *The Granite Town*. All is quiet and serene.

I must not forget to say that back in 1902 we had a paper, *The Granite Town Greetings*. That same year the horse watering trough at the old town pump was finished by Thomas Armstrong and Edward McGirr. It was made of red granite with "1902" cut in its face side. This trough was Bob Wetmore's conception and Sandy Milne, Dr. Henry I. Taylor and others were involved in its creation. This antique and the old town pump were removed some years ago for shame. But both are back in place now.

We still have the Presbyterian Manse, built in 1904 of native red granite the Rev. Hillock was minister. Ernest Jackson and another man (name unknown) made and installed the intricate granite window frames, a work of art. We also have the Post Office, built of granite in 1936, and a memorial name of a society of lasting importance, "*The Granite Chapter, Order of Eastern Star*".

Our oldest artificial relic, and one in which we fell too little pride, is one of Canada's earliest works of white men. I refer to the red granite medallion believed to have been carved in 1604 by a member of the DeMonts settlement on St. Croix Island. This is preserved in the New Brunswick Museum, Saint John. It was found in the St. George area (Lake Utopia) about 1862.

Our medallion is more than 350 years old and it was at one time considered as a suitable insignium for our Charlotte County Historical Society but the head of the Queen Charlotte was preferred. Our Society is still without an insignium and I would like to advocate here that the medallion be chosen for this purpose.

Apart from these historical society partisan considerations, the ups and downs of industry and the comings and goings of familiar scenes and people, the Devonian granite hills of St. George and Charlotte County stand aloof and serene as they have stood these many million years. What is man?

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