

The Granite Quarries

By
Russell T. Bates

Not many of the present residents of Weymouth know that fifty years ago shipments of Weymouth Seam-Face Granite were made to more than twenty-five states for use in the construction of many beautiful buildings.

Weymouth Seam-Face Granite has been quarried commercially since about 1890. However, its use can be traced as far back as 1800 when it was used on the Toll House on Washington St., Weymouth near the Hingham line. The vein of Weymouth Seam-Face Granite parallels the Weymouth-Hingham town line, north and south of Washington St. The fact that the natural seam in the quarry becomes the face of the stone in a building, is what makes Weymouth Granite different from other granites. In addition, the color in the seams is very beautiful and will not wear off with time. Weymouth Granite is also one of the most durable of all building granites. This, coupled with the fact that it worked well under the stone cutters tools, made it a very desirable building stone.

When quarrying started, just about everything was done by hand. For example, quarry drilling was done with striking hammers, and drill holes were made to split the stone. Hand drilling was eventually replaced by steam drills, and then air drills. The stone was taken from the quarry by derricks first operated by hand cranks, then steam power, and then on to electric power. Stone was hauled from the quarries by horse drawn tip-carts. Now modern excavating equipment does the job.

The granite industry in Weymouth and Hingham reached its peak in the 1920's. At this time between 200 and 300 men were employed quarrying and cutting Weymouth Granite. As much as 500,000 sq. ft. of stone was shipped



Photo Courtesy James E. Bristol, Jr.



Bates Quarry

Photos Top Center Courtesy of G. S. Lord

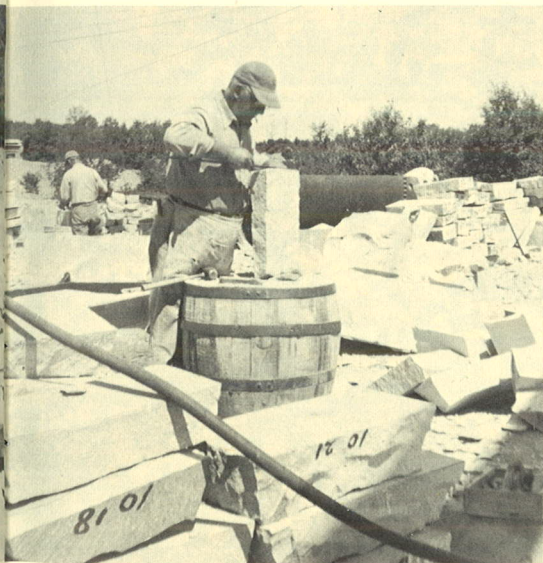
annually from the East Weymouth railroad yard. There is hardly a city or town of any size in the eastern part of the United States that does not have at least one of its outstanding buildings constructed of Weymouth seam-face granite.

Weymouth granite has been used in college buildings, libraries, churches, municipal buildings, and many fine residences. In Weymouth we have some fine examples: The Fogg Library in South Weymouth, Tufts Library on Broad Street, The U. S. Post Office on Washington Street, the East Weymouth Congregational Church, The Episcopal Church on Columbian Street, the Fire Station in Lincoln Square, and the Central fire station on Broad Street are all built of Weymouth seam-face granite.

In nearby Quincy there are six churches, three schools, an armory, a post office, and more than fifty houses built of Weymouth granite. There are more than 400 churches of many denominations.

Weymouth granite has also been used for bridges and underpasses on many of our highways. Among these are bridges on Route 128, Worcester and Springfield, Baltimore Harbor Underpass; Lincoln Tunnel (approaches New York City); and in bridges on Federal Highway between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Over one thousand residences are scattered over the Eastern Seaboard.

At present Weymouth granite is still quarried by two quarries; one in Weymouth and one in Hingham. Much of the work consists of matching buildings for additions. Stone is a quality product that will never go out of style.



*St. Ignatius Church, Newton, Mass.
"A striking example of Weymouth Stonework"*

Picture Courtesy of Russell T. Bates