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Gehlbach J., Gabriola's dimension-stone quarry, *SHALE* 19, pp.11–24, Nov. 2008

Errors and omissions:

References:

Gehlbach J., Gabriola's sandstone quarry—the earliest days, *SHALE* 21, pp.36–42, July 2009
Gehlbach J., The origins of quarrying for sandstone on Gabriola, *SHALE* 19, pp.3–10, Nov. 2008
Gehlbach J., Gabriola's millstone quarry, *SHALE* 19, pp.25–41, Nov. 2008
Gehlbach J., Gabriolans and the sandstone quarries, *SHALE* 19, pp.42–52, Nov. 2008

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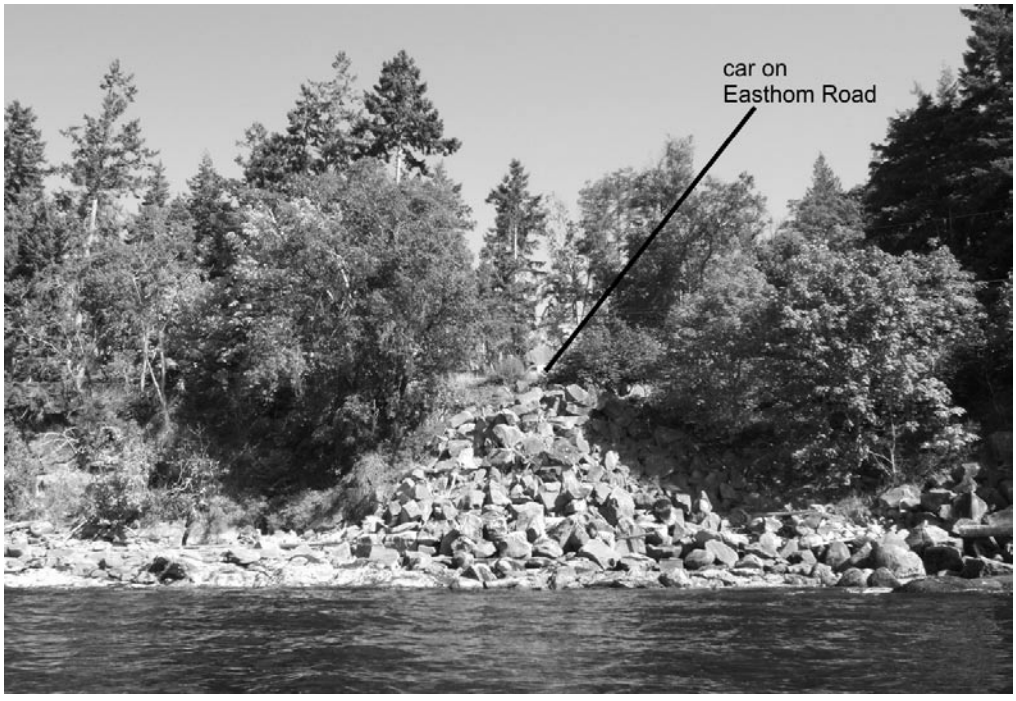
December 16, 2012.

Report of the Minister of Mines, 1905



Above: The dimension-stone quarry seen from Descanso Bay. The photo (one of few) was taken *circa* 1904 and shows A-frame derricks used for lifting stones from the quarry face to the shore.

Below: The view today. All that remains is a pile of rubble that supports Easthom Road.

Gabriola's dimension-stone quarry

by Jenni Gehlbach

The early history

Stone blocks quarried and "dressed" (trimmed and finished) for building are referred to in the trade as "dimension stone" or "measurement stone". Although quarrying for sandstone on Gabriola is perhaps best known in the context of the millstone quarry that operated in the 1930s, a dimension-stone quarry had operated at the same site some thirty years earlier.

The early history of Gabriola's dimension-stone quarry is linked to the history of quarrying on Newcastle Island, but when exactly the first stone was cut on Gabriola and by whom is not a matter of historical record.[1] All we know is that in 1904, H. Carmichael, the Provincial Assayer, noted that building stone had been worked for "a number of years" on the north end of Gabriola by "Messrs. Kelly and Murray".[2]

Operations began on Newcastle Island in 1870, but Provincial Ministry of Mines Reports only mention Gabriola in the 1880s in reference to the search for coal on Thomas McGuffie's land near False Narrows. That search was abandoned in 1889, though shale was found for brick making.[3] Nevertheless, Gabriola's sandstone cliffs are clearly visible from downtown-Nanaimo and they must inevitably have attracted attention as a potential source of dimension stone.

At this point, Gabriola's quarry lands near Descanso Bay, then called Rocky Bay, were still owned by their pre-emptor John Canessa,[4] an Italian-born fisherman, so presumably the quarrying company was leasing the land from him, though we have no documents to confirm this. The 1899 Mining Report for the Nanaimo District listed sandstone quarries on both Newcastle and Gabriola Islands (also noting an *andesite* quarry on Haddington Island up near Alert Bay), but gave no further details.

Certainly, the Californian fuel company that bought Newcastle Island in 1902 had no interest in Gabriola's sandstone, but a quarrying company in Vancouver did.

In 1897, William Carey Ditmars had come to Vancouver from Toronto to join a new bridge-building firm, Armstrong & Morrison.[5] By 1903, he had become a full partner in this company, which built the Granville, Cambie, and Fraser Street Bridges and laid foundations for the Lions Gate Bridge. The construction company needed granite for their bridge piers, so early in 1900, Ditmars signed a memorandum of

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[1] *The origins of sandstone quarrying on Gabriola*, *SHALE* 19, pp.3–9, 2008.

[2] H. Carmichael, *Stone Quarries of the Coast*, Report to the Minister, G250, 1905.

[3] *Gabriola's Industrial Past—the brickyard*, *SHALE* 15, pp.3–35, 2007.

[4] Canessa's land was described in the pre-emption certificate as "88 acres of land in the SW¼ of Section 20 of Gabriola". It lay between Mike Manly's land in Section 25 and Alexander Hoggan's land in Section 19—a situation that led to a court case and adjustment of the surveying lines in later years.

[5] William Carey Ditmars (1865-1960) was born in St. Catharines, Ontario and died in Vancouver, BC. In Toronto, he worked as an accountant for John Doty Engine. He married Winifred Calvert on 10 April, 1912, in Vancouver. Ditmars was a bold, modern man—in 1899, he bought a tiller-steered "Stanley Steamer", the first horseless carriage in Vancouver, for his business partner W.H. Armstrong. In 1928, the Native Sons of British Columbia awarded him their "Best Citizen" award.

association with W.H. and Robert Armstrong, and with Alexander and Donald R. Morrison, to become directors of a new quarrying company.

The Vancouver Granite Company

The Vancouver Granite Company was incorporated on February 21, 1900, with offices at 111 Alexander Street. In the shareholders list, W.C. Ditmars is described as the bookkeeper. Each director held only a few shares, as did Hugh Keefer, who was a member of Canada's most famous engineering family, and had built Vancouver's first sewer system in 1890.[6]

Keefer owned a brickyard in Vancouver and had been quarrying building stone in Burrard Inlet since 1892. His granite quarries were on the west side of the North Arm of Burrard Inlet and on Cro[c]ker Island. Hugh's wife, Marion Keefer, and the Armstrong and Morrison Company held most of the shares in Vancouver Granite, which was effectively the quarrying arm of the civil engineering company.

In 1902, the Vancouver Granite Company bought John Canessa's Gabriola land and its sandstone quarry for $300. Their 1906 letterhead confirms that the Company then owned quarries on Gabriola and in Burrard Inlet. They kept their Gabriola land until 1930, by which time Hugh Keefer had died, the Armstrong and Morrison Company held nearly all the shares, and W.C. Ditmars had become the company's President.

Vancouver Granite Company must have employed or collaborated with "Messrs. Kelly and Murray" to do their quarrying because in 1904, H. Carmichael, the Provincial Assayer, noted that: [7] [8]

> The quarry now being worked is easily accessible from Nanaimo…and is operated by Messrs. Kelly and Murray, of Vancouver. The shipping facilities are excellent, the quarry being on the edge of deep water.

Vancouver Granite also quarried granite up in Jervis Inlet although they did not own the land there. A recent BC Ministry of Mines file states that:[9]

> Quarries on Nelson Island have been operated intermittently since the mid-1800's, providing stone for a number of buildings and monuments in Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster, and Nanaimo. The stone has also been exported to Australia, California, and Hawaii. Vancouver Granite Company operated the quarries more or less continuously during the first half of this century. The stone was marketed under the trade name 'Nelson Island Grey'".

Another such report[10] states that the quarries on Granite Island (now called Kelly

[6] Hugh Keefer (1848-1912) travelled extensively across the United States and built his reputation as a contractor and property speculator. In 1885, while Hugh was away working on the railway in BC, his wife, Marion, took charge of building the grand red stone family home that replaced a log structure in Thorold, a Loyalist stronghold in Niagara, Ontario. This is now called "The Keefer Mansion—the booklovers' inn". She spared no expense and almost bankrupted Hugh and his father John. Hugh was a colourful personality and did not fit the stereotypical contractor profile. He was a drinker and a gambler and ordered 24 steps up to their mansion—the number of cards in an euchre deck. The Canada Permanent Loan and Savings Company repossessed the Mansion in 1894 after John and Hugh Keefer's dwindling fortunes could not cover the back property taxes. www.keefermansion.com.

[7] I found no evidence for any formal corporate connection with Kelly and Murray in the Company records of Vancouver Granite kept in BC Archives.

[8] Carmichael, *Stone Quarries…*, G250.

[9] BC Ministry of Mines: MINFILE #1092F 568.

[10] BC Ministry of Mines: MINFILE #1092F 196.

Island)[11] were operated by the West Coast Granite Company, which was the company that took over Kelly and Murray's operation. Martin Kelly had bought Granite Island in 1899, and Carmichael noted in 1904 that Kelly and Murray operated the granite quarries at the mouth of Jervis Inlet, saying that Nelson Island had "formerly supplied the demand for granite", but had been abandoned the year before in favour of neighbouring Granite Island

> …where the quarries are more easily worked. With the exception of the small amount obtained from boulders, all the granite used on the coast of British Columbia has been quarried on these two islands, and shipments are now being made to Seattle.

Kelly (Granite) Island is west of Nelson Island and the granite quarried there is technically *granodiorite*.[12] Another Canadian Ministry report noted in 1908 that the quarry on Granite Island was supplying stone for the new Post Office in Vancouver.[13]

The earlier Carmichael report also noted other important quarries in the region: the Newcastle Island's sandstone quarry, which in addition to the San Francisco Mint, had since furnished stone for the Bank of British North America and the Bank of Montreal (both in Vancouver); and two *andesite* quarries on the south-eastern end of Haddington Island, whose stone was used for the superstructure and carvings of the Provincial Government Buildings in Victoria.

Gabriola's sandstone quarry continued to have strong links with these other quarries. Even today, quarrying companies often operate at several locations at once, and personal reminiscences tell us how labourers and foremen went back and forth among the quarries along the Strait of Georgia for training and work.

Gabriola's dimension-stone quarriers in the 1900s

In the 1901 Gabriola census, George D. Murray was listed as a Scottish-born stone-cutter of 53, living with his 20-year-old son Jack A. Murray from America, oddly described as a baker.[14] It seems most likely that George was the Murray of "Messrs. Kelly and Murray of Vancouver".

John Holm,[15] said to be a 33-year-old Swede living in Canada since 1888, was listed as a quarry labourer lodging with Murray.[16] The census also reported that Martha Holm (Alexander Hoggan's daughter, born in 1883) and her daughter Elizabeth (described as Swedish) were living on Gabriola, though not with John at Murray's place.

[11] Janet Mason, Provincial Toponymist, reports that the name of Granite Island was changed "during production of BC Lands map 2D, Powell River, published in 1923, to avoid confusion caused by duplication". She also says it was renamed Kelly Island "after Martin Kelly, who purchased the island 22 June, 1899, for use as a stone quarry".

[12] Eric Van den Kerkhof, who is the owner of Adera Natural Stone in Burnaby, BC, (in business since 1951) says that his company has operated several quarries in Jervis Inlet in recent years, including on Kelly Island. They also quarry in China.

[13] G. E. Leroy, *Preliminary Report on a Portion of the Main Coast of British Columbia and Adjacent Islands Included in New Westminster and Nanaimo Districts*, Canada Department of Mines, Geological Survey Branch, Ottawa, 1908.

[14] The census taker's handwriting is difficult to read. George and Jack's surname could be "Murry", though this spelling is unusual.

[15] June-Lewis Harrison, *The People of Gabriola*, p.77, 1982. His date of birth is given there as 1872, not 1867.

[16] June Harrison, *The People…*, p.78 says John Holm had worked for the "Vancouver Grain Company" on Nelson Island, but this is a misprint for "…Granite Company", which operated the quarries there.

Two other quarry labourers were listed as lodging with Murray: Dale Soderberg, a 32-year-old Swede in Canada since 1894, and Angus ? a 33-year old Scot. [17] A 54-year-old Welsh engineer named David S. Roberts who had arrived in Canada in 1871 also lodged with Murray, as did young "Jim" the 17-year-old Chinese cook, who had immigrated when he was 9 years old.

In the same Gabriola census, John Easthom was listed as a 22-year-old quarry labourer living with his mother Martha Higham. This constitutes a decent-sized quarry crew.

Talking about the old building stone quarry, Jimmy Rollo told June Harrison:[18]

> …John …and Dick Eastham were cutting stones, Gib [Gilbert, another Easthom brother] and Jack Murray also worked there. The Vancouver Granite Company was here before I can remember, and it has been a quarry as long as I can recall … Then, the stone buildings were not being built and the quarrying decreased, as the demand for stone declined.

In 1897, John Easthom, according to the family, was drowned after falling from a canoe in a fit due to an earlier work-related head injury, though the family doesn't remember whether the injury was suffered quarrying or logging.[19]

We have an account of "The Gabriola Stone Quarry around 1910" given by Martha and John Holm's second daughter Hillma Holm Lenshaw. She writes:[20]

> On the bluff there stood a big bunkhouse, divided down the middle with the bunks for the quarrymen on one side and a common room and kitchen on the other.… The cook was a Mrs. Brace, who was a veteran of quarry camps. Her daughter was married to the quarry carpenter, named Coleman. Before I was born, my father was the blacksmith who sharpened the drills. He met my mother because she did the baking for the camp and came almost every day with bread, pies, and cakes.
>
> George Murray was the boss of the quarrymen and William Keefer was the superintendent for the Vancouver Granite Company. Keefer came to the island periodically to check on the operation….
>
> When my father married the pie baker and bought a farm up from the ferry landing, George Murray was a frequent visitor to our home. He missed his grandchildren in East Vancouver and I was a handy substitute.

By the time of the 1911 census, nobody on Gabriola is specifically described as a stone-cutter or quarry labourer, though both Richard Easthom and John Holm are listed as farmers with secondary work as labourers.

Buildings using Gabriola's sandstone

The first verifiable use of Gabriola's sandstone (as opposed to vaguely stated "Gulf Islands sandstone") was in 1898, when the new Post Office was built at 816 Government Street in Victoria.[21] The original base of the building was granite from Nelson Island but its upper (structure…)

[17] Angus McAuly, McManly, or McNally?

[18] June Harrison, *The People…*, p.60.

[19] This was actually Harry Easthom, John's brother's story, see June Harrison, *The People…*, pp.84–6. John died in 1930. Harry was injured when forced to jump 60-feet from the Bastion Street Bridge, which was on fire. He was a fireman at the time. Coincidently, the brothers' father, John, also died in a small-boat accident crossing from Nanaimo to Gabriola (Nanaimo Free Press, Dec.11, 1880).

[20] Gabriola Sounder, 1993.

[21] Z.D. Hora and L.B. Miller: *Dimension Stone in Victoria, BC, A City Guide & Walking Tour*, Ministry of Energy & Mines, 1994.

Gabriola House on Davie Street in Vancouver's West End. Built from Gabriola sandstone 1900–1.

Left: the Carnegie Centre, now a Vancouver east end Community Centre, also built from Gabriola sandstone.

Above: the Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver, again a Gabriola-sandstone building.

Gabriolan sandstone carvings, but not, I trust, of Gabriolans. Even the two dogs look grouchy.

The lady on the front cover is another example. All are from the Gabriola House, *ca* 1900, except top left, which is from the Carnegie Centre.

structure was sandstone from Gabriola. It was extensively renovated and reconstructed in 1956 to become the Customs and Immigration Building, so that much of the original stone is no longer visible, but at the back of the building on Wharf Street, the original Gabriola sandstone structure remains. It shows excessive staining and spalling (peeling) due to weathering.

Between 1898 and 1903, a cluster of significant structures in Vancouver used sandstone said specifically to come from Gabriola Island. Discussing Vancouver in this period, Frank Lilquist[22] tells us:

> With all these civilizing influences, the rough and ready construction industry was ready to start building Vancouver proper… Early examples include Holy Rosary Cathedral at 646 Richards, completed in 1900 of Gabriola sandstone with granite foundations.

The grand new stone building designed by T. E. Julian and H. J. Williams replaced a wooden church built in 1889. What we know as the Holy Rosary Cathedral was, until 1916, simply the parish Church of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. The cornerstone of the new *granodiorite* foundation was laid in 1899, and the first mass was said there in 1900—the efficient contractor was R. P. Forshaw—and it was regarded as the "finest piece of architecture west of Toronto and north of San Francisco".

Other significant Vancouver buildings using Gabriola's stone in this period were:[23]

- the Drill Hall (constructed 1899-1901) at 620 Beatty Street, which had granite foundations, three-foot thick brick walls, and sandstone trim;
- the Flack block at 163 West Hastings Street, built in 1899 by Thomas Flack with his Klondike fortune. Most of its facade is "bossaged" (with protruding, roughly textured surface) sandstone with carved Art Nouveau arabesques on its window columns;
- Gabriola House at 1523 Davie Street, Vancouver, designed by Samuel Maclure and built in 1901 for the founder of the Rogers Sugar empire. It has Vancouver's earliest concrete basement, but is built entirely of sandstone from Gabriola with bossaged finish, shown below, and much beautiful carving on entablatures;

- the Carnegie Centre at 401 Main Street, Vancouver, which was built 1902 to 1903 as a library. It was used for a decade after 1957 as a museum, and then became the downtown eastside's Community Centre. It is constructed mostly of bossaged and crenulated sandstone with beautiful floral carvings and some attractively grotesque little demonic faces above its window arches.

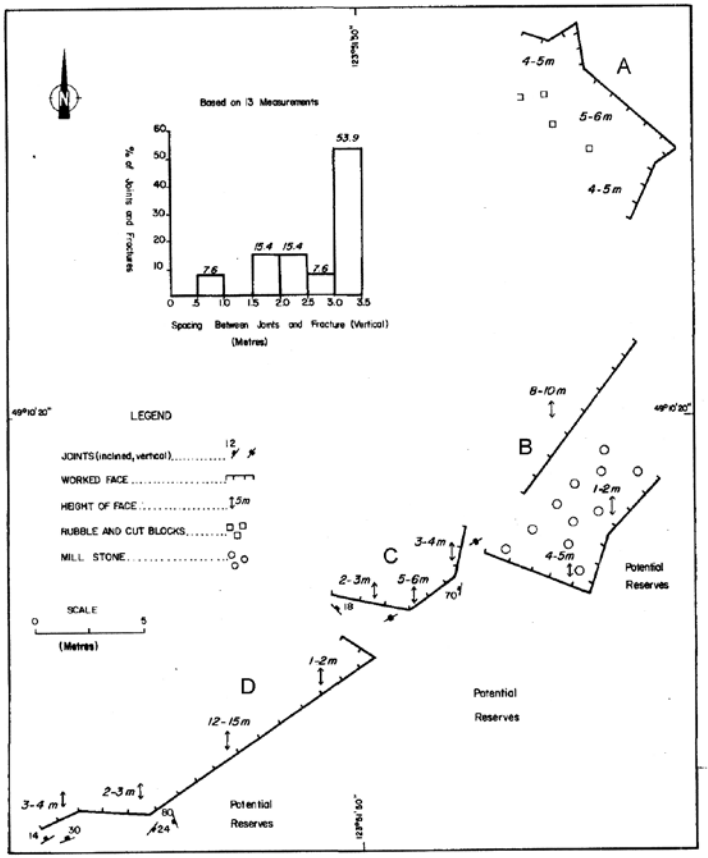
Quarry operations

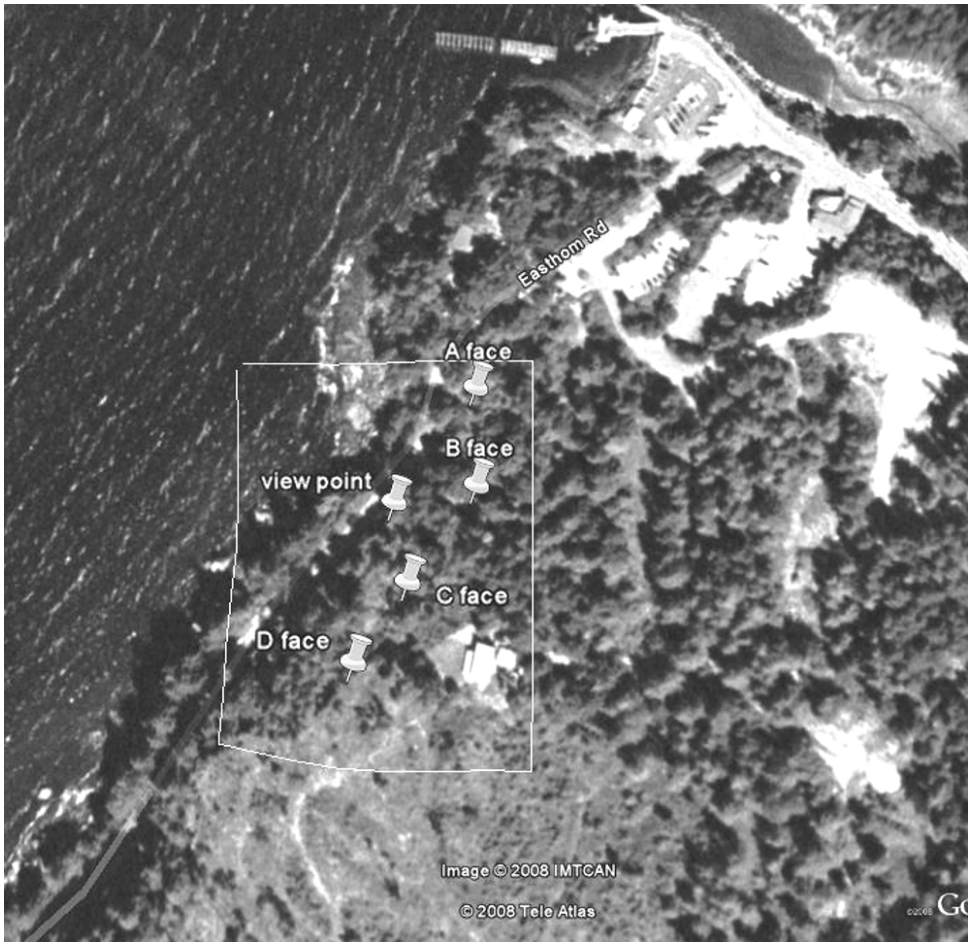
The sandstone

The 1904 Provincial Ministry of Mines Report said that Gabriola's sandstone was "…of a blue-gray colour, rather coarse, and

[22] Frank Lilquist, *History of Construction*, www.DiscoverVancouver.com.

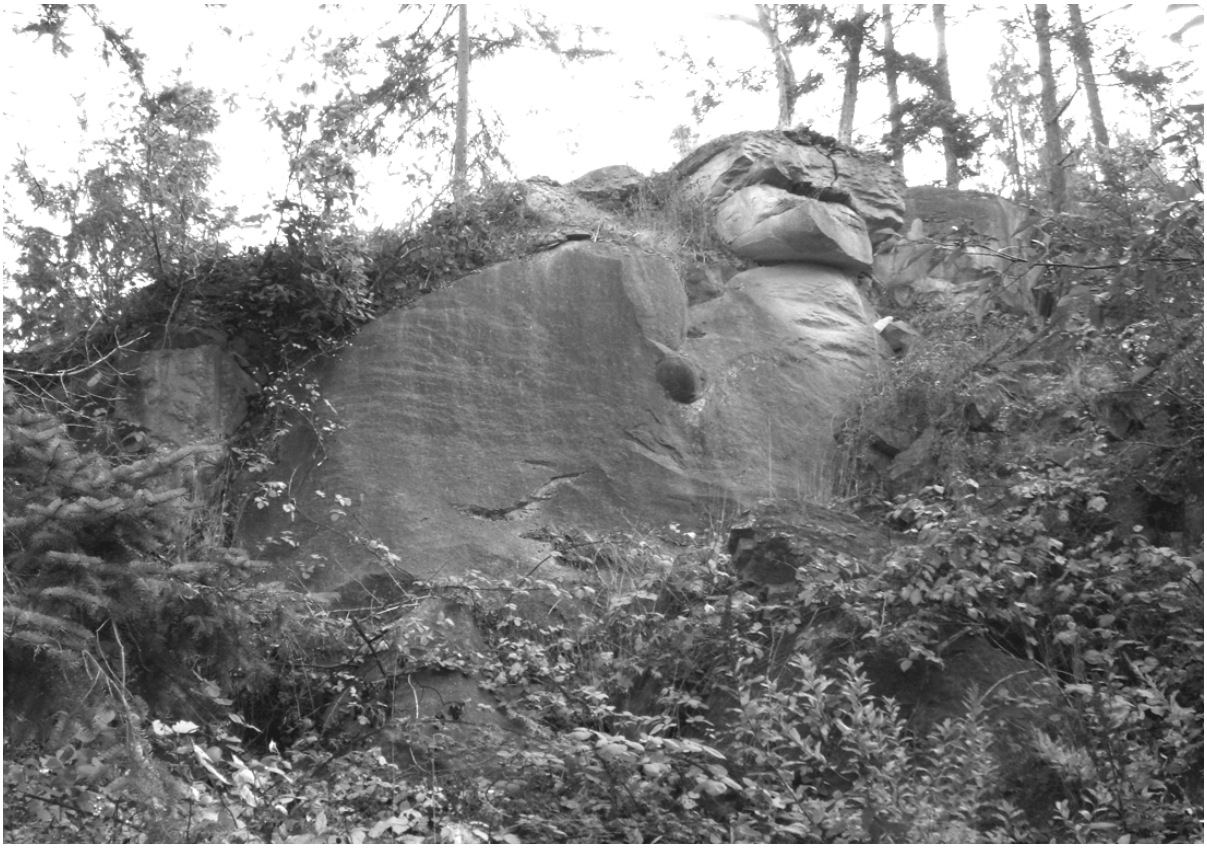
[23] P.S. Mustard, Z.D. Hora, and C.D. Hansen, *Geology Tours of Vancouver's Buildings and Monuments*, Geological Assoc. of Canada, 2003.





Left: Map of the quarry faces from G.V. White, *Sandstone Quarries…*, p.389. The annotations "A","B","C", and "D" identifying the faces are mine. Face A is seen in the old photograph on page 10. Although the map is accurate, the scales and geographic co-ordinates are wrong. Scale = 5 metres, should be scale = 20 metres; 49°10'20"N should be 49°10'33"N; and 123°51'50"W should be 123°51'36"W.

Right: Google Earth view of the same 160 m x 130 m (525 ft. x 427 ft.) area. The Gabriola ferry terminal is on the top edge of the picture.



Face A, now hidden in the brambles. The dark flaw just left of centre-left on the smooth face is a "cannonball concretion", known at the time, even in official reports, as a "niggerhead". Concretions, the bane of the quarriers, form around fossils—see *SHALE* 13, pp.42–3, 2006.

contains grains of *mica* and *hornblende* [a dark-green mineral]". After testing samples, another report to the Canadian Ministry of Mines said: [24]

The sandstone is medium grained, displays an even texture, and a light to medium brown tone similar to Saturna Island sandstone. [25]

Small angular quartz crystals and blades of *biotite* [black mica] (up to 3 mm) speckle the rock. Occasionally coarse concretions (up to 60 by 90 cm in size) and pebbles (up to 4 cm) disrupt the continuity of the bedding. The stone darkens on weathered surfaces…but remains solid and 'fresh'.

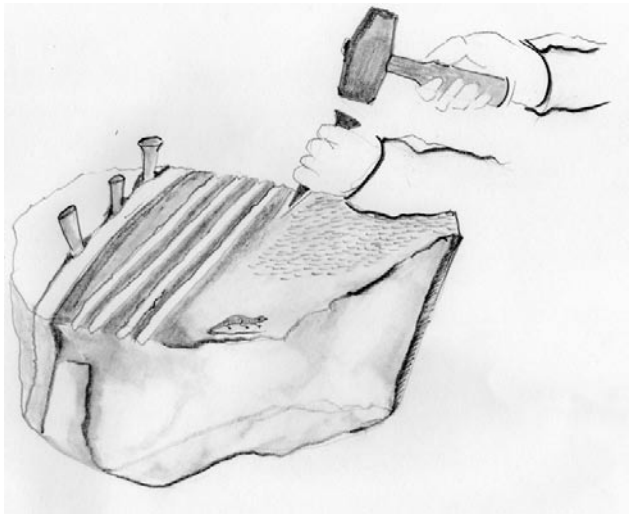
As seen in thin section, *quartz* grains range from 0.25–1.5 mm in size, are angular and comprise 70% of the rock. Other minerals include *orthoclase, plagioclase* [both feldspars], and *biotite*. Alteration of feldspar to *sericite* [fine-grained mica] is giving these grains a cloudy appearance.

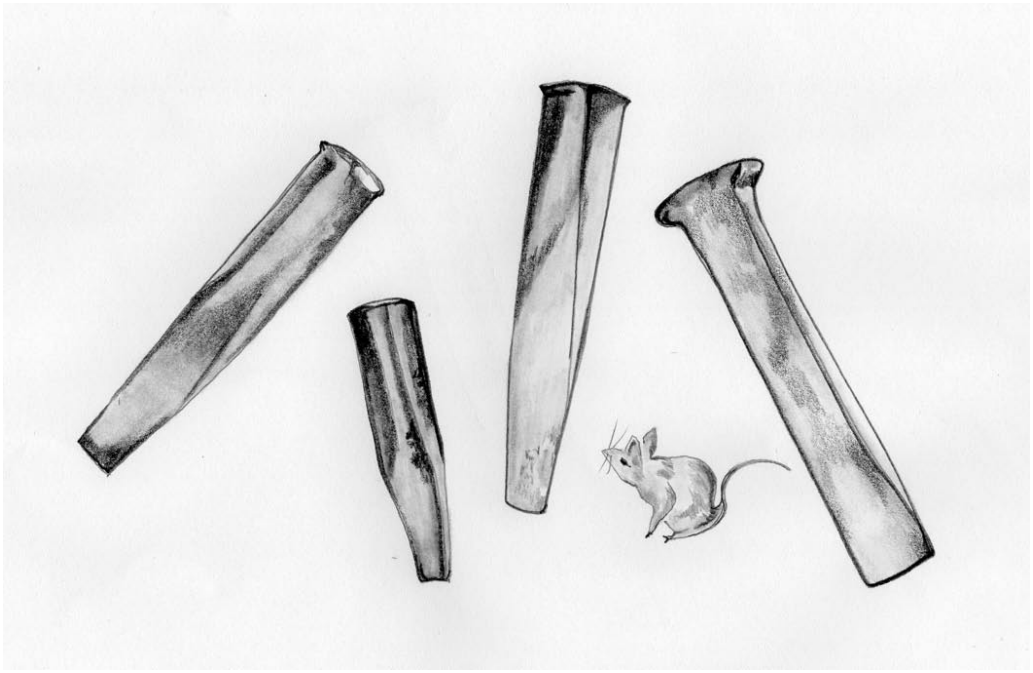
Quarry location

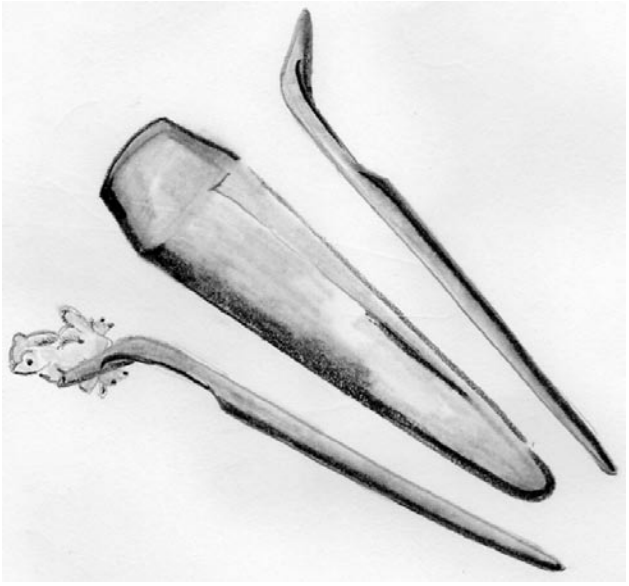
The 1904 Ministry Report included a photograph of the dimension-stone quarry

[24] W.A. Parks, 1917, Canada Department of Mines.

[25] Saturna Island sandstone was used for Victoria's Old Carnegie Library in 1904. See G.V. White, *Sandstone Quarries.…*. White notes several other sandstone quarries in the coastal region, including Mayne, Denman, and Saltspring Islands and says the quarry at Jack Point supplied sandstone for the Nanaimo Post Office. Ministry reports also note granite quarries in Burrard Inlet and on Fox Island; more sandstone at Cobble Hill and on Valdes Island; slate in Jervis Inlet, and marble on Texada Island. See Z.D. Hora, *Dimension Stone.…*.







Tools and techniques

Top left: Levelling a surface. A tool known as a "spalling chisel" was sometimes used. It was like a fork but with narrow chisels for prongs.

Bottom left: "Feathers" used as wedges in the initial stage of splitting the block.

Top right: "Gads" used as wedges in the final stage of splitting the block.

Sketches by Tawny Capon

face on Gabriola and described its structure in some detail:

> The quarry has at different times been worked for a distance of 400 ft. [122m] along the waterfront, the present working face being 75 ft. [23m] long, 28 ft. [9m] high, and 27 ft. [8m] back from the water's edge.
>
> Some two years ago a quantity of stone was taken from a point 200 yards [180m] east of this, where there is a face 180 ft. [55m] long, by 40 ft. [12m] high, and 40 ft. [12m] back from the water, but these workings have been abandoned.

Discussing its position and strata, the report said:

> An upper layer of sandstone 30 to 40 ft. [9-12 m] thick extends the whole length of the quarry, dipping, at the north-eastern end of the workings, 14° to the north-east. The layer of sandstone is underlain by a small stratum of *argillite* [hardened mudstone], and this again by smaller seams of sandstone.

Assessing the difficulties inherent in the layout, it said:

> In the middle and on the western end of the thick sandstone seam, quarrying has been suspended, partly on account of hard lumps or nodules [*calcite concretions*] which are encountered, and also because of the height of the face above the water. The latter difficulty is overcome at the north-eastern end of the quarry, where the present workings are, by the dip of the sandstone stratum, and although twistings and hard nodules occur there in places, very massive blocks of stone are to be obtained from this part of the quarry.

Millstones were later cut from the level area above lower face B of the dimension-stone quarry and discards can be seen from the path between faces B and C.

Quarry equipment

The 1904 Report said that the dimension-stone quarry's "equipment consists of three large derricks, a hoisting engine, and a short piece of track by which the stone is conveyed to salt water". From this comment, the stone appears to have been shipped unfinished from Gabriola.

Cutting and finishing sandstone

Many of the techniques used in early quarry operations are still used today, including black powder blasting, and "plug and feather" splitting. A stone-cutter can split small sandstone blocks by hand using short blunt wedges called "gads", which are hammered into the rock along the desired line of splitting as shown in the drawing opposite. To split a larger block, the cutter would first drill small holes and these would be expanded by placing into each hole a pair of small "feathers", which act rather like shoehorns, allowing the gads to be hammered down between them to split the rock.

Chisels of various shapes and sizes may be used to level the stone, cut grooves, incise patterns, and roughly texture the surface. In older days, workers called "scabblers" used picks to square up building stone for shipment and remove surface irregularities, but later on powered lathes were used.

The line of splitting must be carefully chosen to take into account the bedding planes of the rock. Apart from the difficulties in splitting the rock smoothly without shattering it, if the bedding planes are inappropriately aligned in finished sandstone, its ability to withstand wear and weathering can be compromised, as has happened in the old Post-Office building in Victoria.

The same principle is used to split large blocks of stone from the quarry face with the help of explosives. A series of long holes are drilled vertically down into the rock along the desired line and explosive powder

is inserted into the drilled holes and detonated simultaneously to blast off the rock with a clean face.

Virtual Museum of Canada 99726

In pre-industrial times, drilling was done by hand. One worker rotated the drill, while two others alternately hit it with a hammer (*lower level*). Later, the drills were steam powered (*upper level*).

Personal reminiscences

Personal reminiscences from the period when building stone was being quarried on Gabriola are rare, but as a child, Helen Mary Towle Taylor,[26] who lived at Twin Beaches from 1896 to 1908, recalling her childhood, said:

> I can also remember the stone quarry going full blast, which would account for the Farmer's Landing being there, but we never went too close to the area, except sometimes at lunch time.

Although quarrying certainly continued on Gabriola in the first decade of the 20th century, the only evidence I have found of the specific use of Gabriola sandstone in new buildings after 1904 was in an account of the Gabriola stone quarry around 1910, written by Hillma Holm Lenshaw, in which she said: [20]

> The stone from the Gabriola quarry was shipped on scows to San Francisco and went into buildings there, most notably, the Seventh & Mission Post Office… In my years in San Francisco, I passed the post office many times and the stone from Gabriola would never let me forget.

The ascendancy of andesite

A comment about the Sun Tower (World Building) at 96-100 Pender Street, built in 1911 and 1912 from the volcanic rock called *andesite*, helps to explain the demise of sandstone as a building material: [27]

> The Sun Tower demonstrates well the reason Haddington Island andesite replaced Gulf Islands sandstone as the preferred building stone in the early decades of the 20th century. The andesite provides an attractive appearance that is easy to finish and can be carved in fine detail, but its crystalline nature is much more resistant to the effects of weathering than the sandstone has proven to be.

[26] June Harrison, *The People…*, pp.95–102 reports that Helen was the daughter of Rev George William Taylor (1854–1912), who was sold land at Twin Beaches for $1. His wife Elizabeth had died 10 days after their youngest child was born in 1895. He came with three of his children (the baby having been sent to Victoria to be raised by maiden aunts), landing from a rowboat in 1896. In 1908, the family left Gabriola to live in Departure Bay where George directed the establishment of the Pacific Biological Station. Helen later became a teacher with the married name Mrs. C.B. Hill-Tout.

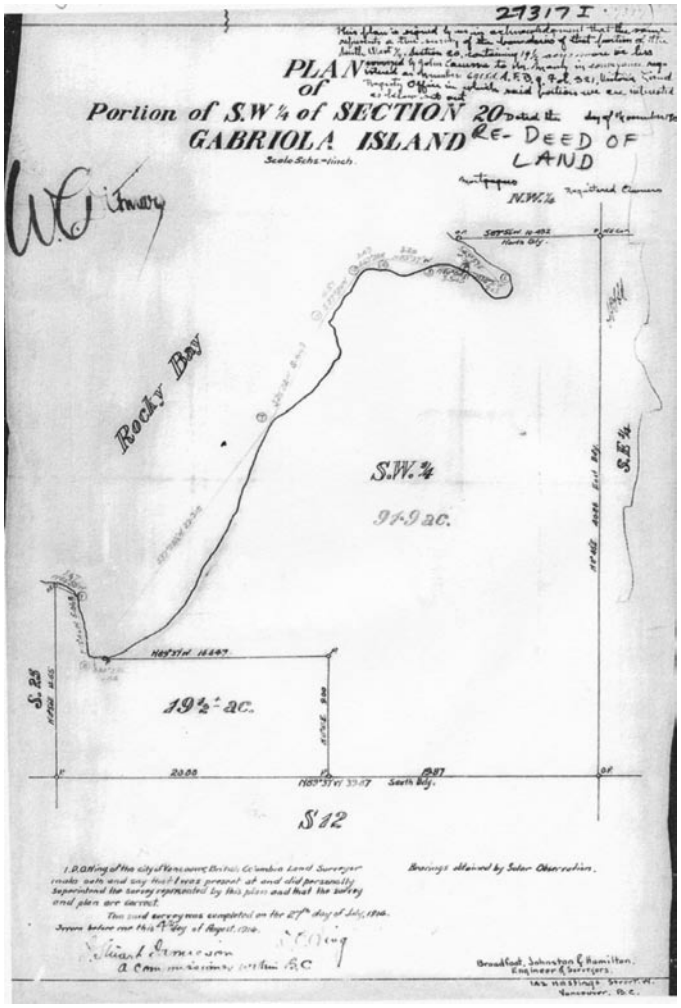
[27] P.S. Mustard, *Geology Tours…*, Stop 2.

In 1904, the BC Ministry of Mines had said of the Haddington Island andesite:

> Although the stone requires a little more care in dressing than does sandstone, its fine appearance and durability, taken in conjunction with the shipping facilities of a quarry where the rock can be loaded directly into scows, ensures a large market for the product.

Ending the Vancouver Granite Company's involvement in Gabriola

In 1917, Vancouver Granite Company's holdings on Gabriola, then valued at $3300, were clarified under the Quieting Titles Act, as conforming to a 1914 survey. This new survey had been required because at the time of the pre-emptions, surveying had been sketchy, a deficiency that led to a rancorous legal dispute between Canessa and his neighbour to the north, Alexander Hoggan. Also, Canessa had sold about 19 poorly defined acres in the southwest corner of his land to his other neighbour, Mike Manly.



The Vancouver Granite Company bought pre-emptor John Canessa's land including the sandstone quarry in 1902. The land had to be re-surveyed in 1914 because the original survey was too sketchy. It was sold again in 1930 to Bill Coats. Note W.C. Ditmars' signature, top left. "Rocky Bay" is Descanso Bay.

Vancouver Granite had moved their company offices to 813-815 Bower Building, Granville Street, in 1910, and by 1920,[28] they also owned waterfront work yards at False Creek near the foot of Hornby Street. Ditmars was the Secretary-Treasurer of the Company then, and the company was listed as having quarries on Gabriola Island and Nelson Island.

In 1923, the company shipped granite from Nelson Island for the Dominion Government Dry-dock at Esquimalt, and for new buildings at the University of British Columbia. They also produced substantial amounts of stone that year for monuments, mostly for trade to the US, despite high tariffs, and lots of "rubble". But that year the company reported no revenue from their Gabriola operation, even though they were still taking some sandstone from Denman Island.

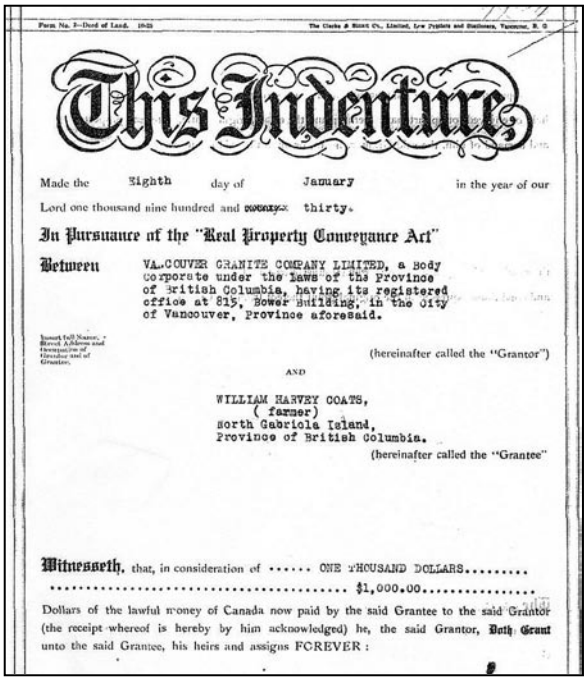
By then, the glory days of grand stone buildings had ended and concrete was in increasing use. Sandstone was still

[28] UBC CRMM 960031 Henderson BC Directory 1920–1929.

occasionally needed later for restoration work, but it was not Gabriola stone. G.V. White writes that in 1955, Newcastle Island stone was used to restore Christchurch Cathedral in Victoria, noting that its old stones had darkened with exposure.[29] The old Victoria Post Office was reconstructed in 1956 and in 1983/4 restoration was done on Holy Rosary Cathedral for Pope John Paul II's visit to Vancouver, but these restorations also used sandstone from Newcastle Island.

Vancouver Granite sold its Gabriola land to Bill Coats in 1930, but continued quarrying granite in Jervis Inlet. In 1943, the Company was still operating the Nelson Island quarry "when there is a demand for stone". The Company was acquired in 1961 by British Columbia Slate Company,[30] who, the Ministry report said, "during this year removed 1000 tons of quarry rubble, from which was produced split-face granite for building finish veneers".

All is quiet now at the dimension-stone quarry on Gabriola, which is part of the Coats Millstone Reserve. ◊



This Indenture,

Made the Eighth day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and ~~ninety~~ thirty.

In Pursuance of the "Real Property Conveyance Act"

Between VANCOUVER GRANITE COMPANY LIMITED, a Body Corporate under the laws of the Province of British Columbia, having its registered office at 815, Bower Building, in the City of Vancouver, Province aforesaid.

(hereinafter called the "Grantor")

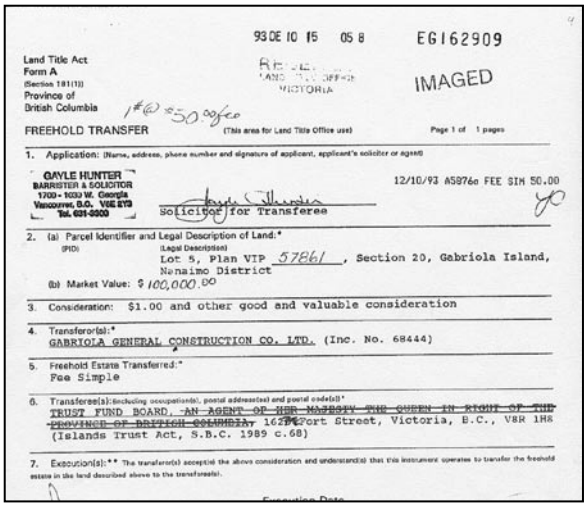
AND

WILLIAM HARVEY COATS, (farmer) North Gabriola Island, Province of British Columbia.

(hereinafter called the "Grantee"

Witnesseth, that, in consideration of ..... ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS..... ..... $1,000.00.....

Dollars of the lawful money of Canada now paid by the said Grantee to the said Grantor (the receipt whereof is hereby by him acknowledged) he, the said Grantor, Doth Grant unto the said Grantee, his heirs and assigns FOREVER :



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Land Title Act
Form A
(Section 181(1))
Province of British Columbia

IMAGED

FREEHOLD TRANSFER (This area for Land Title Office use) Page 1 of 1 pages

1. Application: (Name, address, phone number and signature of applicant, applicant's solicitor or agent)

GAYLE HUNTER
BARRISTER & SOLICITOR
1700 - 1030 W. Georgia
Vancouver, B.C. V6E 2Y3
Tel. 681-3000

12/10/93 A5876e FEE SIM 50.00

Solicitor for Transferee

2. (a) Parcel Identifier and Legal Description of Land:*
(PID)
(Legal Description)
Lot 5, Plan VIP 57861, Section 20, Gabriola Island, Nanaimo District

(b) Market Value: $ 100,000.00

3. Consideration: $1.00 and other good and valuable consideration

4. Transferor(s):*
GABRIOLA GENERAL CONSTRUCTION CO. LTD. (Inc. No. 68444)

5. Freehold Estate Transferred:*
Fee Simple

6. Transferee(s): (including occupation(s), postal address(es) and postal code(s))*
TRUST FUND BOARD, ~~AN AGENT OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA~~ 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C., V8R 1H8
(Islands Trust Act, S.B.C. 1989 c.68)

7. Execution(s):** The transferor(s) accept(s) the above consideration and understand(s) that this instrument operates to transfer the freehold estate in the land described above to the transferee(s).

Above: Transfer of the Vancouver Granite Company quarry lands to William Coats and subsequently his family in 1930.

Below: Transfer to the Islands Trust Fund, 1993, through the generosity of Clyde Coats.

[29] G.V. White, *Sandstone Quarries Along the Strait of Georgia*, Ministry of Energy, Mines…, 1987.

[30] British Columbia Slate Company had a slate quarry at Deserted Bay on the east shore of Jervis Inlet, which was first opened in 1890, reopened briefly in 1907 when slate was exported to California, and used in a number of barracks of the North West Mounted Police. BC Slate was active again in 1957 and 1958 producing slate for flagstone and tile. Approximately 600 tonnes of slate was quarried and shipped to Vancouver over these two years. In 1961, British Columbia Slate Company offices were at 813-745 Howe Street in Vancouver, under President Philip Graham.