The granite industry in Quincy was well-established before the Finnish immigrants arrived. The 1892 directory of members of the Granite Manufacturers' Association of New England, listed 112 firms in Quincy. In 1909, the newly formed Granite Manufacturers' Association of Quincy listed 144 companies with their locations shown on a map of Quincy. By 1927 the number of companies in the Association was down to 102, to 91 in 1930, and by 1983, only eight were left, employing about 45 union men.

Workmen had formed The Granite Cutters' National Union in March, 1877, in Rockland, Maine. The Quincy branch was formed in June, 1877, with 112 granite cutters enrolled. Through the years peak employment reached about 2,000. In 1905 the union was renamed The Granite Cutters' International Association of America.

The first Finnish immigrant to arrive in Quincy was Thomas Thompson, in 1886. He went to work as a quarryman for the Granite Railway Company at about age 20 and worked there until he retired. Soon other Finns followed, some arriving by way of Cape Ann and other places where they had already worked in the granite trade. Many others, with past experience as woodsmen and laborers, entered the granite industry.

The Finnish community in Quincy developed in the south and west areas.
Quarry Work Was Hard, Hazardous

Continued from page 1

of Quincy, from near Albertina Street toward Water, Granite and Quarry Streets, over the North Common to the West Quincy railroad depot and Bates Avenue, with Brewers Corner as the central shopping area. The first Finnish Hall was constructed in 1898 at the corner of Nelson Street and the new Suomi Road by a temperance organization. Next a Congregational church was built on Buckley Street, followed by a Lutheran church on Suomi Road at Buckley Street. A group of workingmen, with the hope of advancing their standard of living through socialism, built a Finnish Hall at 74 Arthur Street in 1906. The secular and religious activities centered around these facilities.

It is a Finnish custom to have a sauna, or steam bath. Since most of the houses in the area did not have bathrooms, such as we are accustomed to today, John Wesanen met that need with a sauna building at 61 Suomi Road. This sauna existed from about 1900 to about 1978. It was converted into a single family residence in 1979. Throughout the years several others saunas have also existed.

In All N. E. States

Finns migrated from place to place in search of work. Work at quarries presented the first available jobs. At times, an extended work strike caused some to move to other areas. Granite quarries employing Finns were located in all the New England states. Locations in Maine were along its rocky coast, places like Vinalhaven, Long Cove, Hurricane Island, Stonington and Red Beach. New Hampshire quarries were located in Concord, Fitzwilliam Depot, Milford and Redstone. Barre and Montpelier were the primary locations in Vermont. Other locations were a source of slate and marble. Connecticut quarries were mainly in Niantic, Groton, Millstone and Waterford. Rhode Island's quarrying industry was near Westerly. Massachusetts had many locations, such as Cape Ann, Chelmsford, Acton, Chester, Quincy, Braintree, Weymouth and Hingham.

Quincy had many quarries and many more granite manufacturing plants which established a countrywide trade. Most of the business was wholesale, responding to retail outlets throughout the country. Granite from local and out-of-state quarries as well as foreign granite was utilized. This attracted and maintained a stable work force.

Work in the quarries included drilling, blasting and splitting; then hoisting large blocks of granite to work areas out of the pits. These large blocks were split into building blocks, curbing, paving stones and suitable material ordered for further manufacturing process. Black blasting powder was used instead of dynamite because it provided a controlled cleaving force to loosen a sheet of quarry ledge. Dynamite would shatter the rock causing undesirable cracks throughout the material.

Quarry Boat

Workmen were lowered and hoisted into and out of a quarry by means of a rectangular open box or "boat" attached to falls (cable) of a derrick boom. Ladders up the sides of the quarry were used from ledge to ledge. Early drilling machines were powered by steam; later compressed air-powered pneumatic tools became standard equipment. Much waste granite or grout accumulated beside the quarries in large and small pieces. These were called grout piles. Some of the waste was used to make paving stones and cellar foundation blocks. Granite chips were used as aggregate in concrete and other uses. Large irregular pieces provided useful breakwater construction.

Work at the quarries was hard and hazardous. Machine drilling down in the quarry caused clouds of dust. Lack

Quarrymen in process of splitting stones. Drilled holes fitted with shims and wedges in a line parallel to bottom of stone are being struck in unison to sever the irregular top part of the stone. Owners Oscar Djerf (2nd left) and Karl Winquist (2nd right) of Common Quarry Company join their workers. (From Amerikan Album, published in Brooklyn, N.Y., 1904.)
Many Died of Stonecutter's Consumption

Continued from page 2

of safety precautions and failure of mechanical equipment as well as human failure caused serious injuries, even death.

Manufacturing work at the finishing sheds involved detailed dimensioning, smoothing, polishing, carving, lettering and sculpturing. Much of the work involved the use of pneumatic machines and tools that produced large amounts of stone dust. To qualify as a journeyman granite cutter, one trained as an apprentice for three years. This training program was coordinated between the Granite Manufacturers' Association and the Union.

The major hazard in the industry was created by stone dust entering the lungs of the workers. Years later technical developments for dust removal and sandblasting techniques with protective devices provided better and safe conditions. However, before these improvements and before enforcement of rules by state departments of health, workers breathing the dust developed a disease called silicosis complicated by tuberculosis, also called stonecutter's consumption. Many succumbed to the disease after some twenty years at this occupation. The introduction of the dust-removing apparatus and other improvements came too late to prolong lives of many workers. After 1920, hospitals and sanatoriums began filling with stonecutters for treatment and "rest cures." (Quincy City Hospital was founded largely to care for these men.)

The first Finnish granite manufacturing concern in Quincy was Sampo Granite Company, established in 1900 and located off Albertina Street at the end of Sampo Road. Organizers included John Hakola, Michael Seppala, Konstant Tikkanen, Herman Tuori, and John Haavisto. Later others joined until Andrew Kusti Nisula bought out the shareholders around 1926 and became the sole owner. The business ceased in June 1944 because Nisula was in poor health and four years later succumbed to silico-tuberculosis. He had hoped that his son Edwin would take over the business, but Edwin was killed in action in Normandy in 1944.

Oscar Emil Djerf, Dr. Charles Djerf's father, learned the trade and became foreman of a quarry. He and Karl Gustav Winquist purchased land in the North Common off Quarry Street and developed a quarry in 1902 known as Common Quarry Company. Their operation ceased around 1923 when Karl entered a dairy business in Hingham; Oscar died in 1925.

About 1903, the Piispanen brothers, Continued on page 4

The Sampo Granite company, first Finnish granite manufacturing concern in Quincy, established in 1900. It was located at the end of Sampo Road, off Albertina Street, South Quincy. Andrew Kusti Nisula became sole owner of the firm in 1926 and the business ceased in 1944. Mr. Nisula is at left, away from the group. The derrick visible between the masts is in the yard of the National Granite Company shown on page one. (Walter O. Nisula files.)
The Finnish Congregational Church, Buckley Street, West Quincy, about 1903. At right, on the church steps, its leaders assemble for a photograph. Rev. Kari Henrikson, the congregation's first pastor, is in center at front. Rev. Andrew Groop, extreme right, came from Fitchburg to assist in organizing the church. (From Amerikan Album.)

New Firm Specialized In Retail Business

Continued from page 3

Matti, William and Lauri, organized the Suomi Granite Company and started a quarry off Centre Street. In 1906 Matti went to Chester, Massachusetts, where he joined with John Hakola, Albert Hanninen and others, who started a granite manufacturing plant known as Chester Monumental Works. Later it expanded to include polishing operations and quarrying under a new name, Chester Granite and Polishing Works. It became the largest Finnish-owned granite concern in the East, until World War I.

Matti Piispanen returned to Quincy about 1919. Samuel Hirvimaki joined with him to reorganize the Suomi Granite Company under the name of Elkhill and Bishop, with a quarry and manufacturing plant at the end of Wilson Court, later renamed Brewer Street, off Centre Street. In 1923 the company again reorganized as the Gray Rock Granite Company owned and operated by Matti Piispanen and his sons, John, Arne and Arthur. Hjalmar Nelson entered into the business and finally became sole owner, until it ceased when the United States entered World War II. In 1928 the company had adopted granite sawing machinery that was new to the industry.

In 1908 the National Granite and Polishing Company, on Sampo Road off Albertina Street, was formed by shareholders Samuel and John Hirvimaki, John Liljeqvist, Herman Hermanson, John Kujala, Gabriel Koivisto, Felix Erickson, Jacob Pinola, Matti (Raisio) Henrikson, John Huovinen, Victor Leppala and A. Koskinen. In 1918 John A. Hakala and Kustaa Waino Fagerlund bought the company; but about a year later Hakala sold his share to Fagerlund, who continued the business until his retirement in 1957. His son, Elmer Fagerlund, took over the business which terminated in July 1960. Young Fagerlund bought the business of William M. Adrian in 1965 and continued it to specialize in supplies for the granite trade.

After previous experience with the Sampo Granite Company and in Chester, Michael Seppala and his eldest son Jacob (also born in Finland) formed the Chester Granite Company on Weeden Place, adjacent to Sampo Place, around 1910. Michael's son, Henry, and his nephews, Stanley and Walfred, became involved in the business. Later Michael's son, Herman Richard, became manager; and the name of the concern was changed to Memorial Granite Company, which specialized in retail business. The company had their own retail outlets, or show yards, at remote locations. This business prospered until about 1960.

Willard Granite and Polishing Company on Willard Street at California Avenue was established by Konstant Tikkanen and Neil McDonald in 1915. In 1917 it was incorporated with added shareholders Herman Hermanson, John Rintamaki, Fabian Kyllonen, Matti Henrikson and Matti Teorilus Rintamaki. Later the ownership reverted to Tikkanen and McDonald. After McDonald died, Tikkanen carried on until his death in 1946.

John A. Hakala started a granite business on Garfield Street in 1920 and soon relocated to Vernon Street. He sold it in 1930 to August K. Hanninen, who operated it as a wholesale business under the name of Blue Hill Granite Company until his death in 1944. Hakala had moved to Weymouth and established a retail outlet under the name Eastern Memorial Granite Company until he died in 1943.

Star Granite Company was established at the end of Weeden Place adjacent to Sampo Granite Company in 1922 by John and Adolf Laaperi, August and Otto Hanninen, and Frank Stenwall. By 1927, the company had acquired polishing machinery and changed its name to Star Granite and...
Polishing Company. August Hanninen left to form his own Blue Hill Granite Company. Shortly after 1931 Adolf passed away, the Star operation ceased and John bought a farm in Bridgewater.

Michael and Nilio Tuomikoski and Matti Ojanpera established the New England Granite Company located on Sampo Road next to Fagerlund's National Company in 1923. This company carried on until 1928. Michael Tuomikoski died in December 1927.

Air Service
It is interesting to note that W. J. McLeod & Company on Vernon Street provided services to polish granite and also to furnish compressed air power to the stone sheds in the immediate area. A pipe line for air power was laid across Vernon, Branch and Albertina Streets to Sampo Granite Company and adjacent concerns.

Jacob Niemi had been in Quincy in 1900 operating a variety store at Brewers Corner. He moved to Chester where he joined with other Finns in the Chester Granite and Polishing Company. In 1925 he returned to Quincy and, with his sons Theodore, Waino and George, went into granite manufacturing under the name of Jacob Niemi and Sons on Vernon Street. In 1930, with the addition of polishing machinery and the introduction of a new granite from Finland, the name was changed to Premier Granite and Polishing Company. The granite from Finland was known as Premier Pink, which was in addition to other existing types known as Balmoral Red and Baltic Black from the same country. Jacob died in 1950 and his son Theodore passed away in 1952. Waino and George continued the business until 1971. This was the last Finnish granite company to operate in Quincy. Waino died in July 1975.

Victor Wilander and Jerry DiBona established the Peerless Granite Company in 1927 on Penn Street. Wilander left after a few years, but many Finns worked for DiBona. Jerry had previously worked in Chester.

For a short time during the 1920s, Otto Winquist (a blacksmith) and Waino Alex Helin with others formed the Rock Quarry Company. They broke through the easterly end of the abandoned Hardwick Quarry off Quarry Street and operated into the adjacent ledge. The granite was suitable for paving stones, curbing and foundations or base courses to monuments and buildings.

The Finnish granite companies flourished when Quincy was known as a major source of granite products. Monuments of Quincy granite exist in most cemeteries throughout the nation. All members of the Quincy Granite Manufacturers' Association, which included the Finnish concerns, produced granite products not only of Quincy granite but of granite from all the New England states, from Georgia, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Sweden and Finland. Some journeymen stone-cutters thought of returning to Finland to ply their own craft. Andrew Nisula and Leander Hill were two that went there to operate a trial retail business. They gave up within two years and returned to Quincy.

The Finns, with the other ethnic groups with the Granite Manufacturers' Association, joined in annual picnics and clambakes held at various locations, such as Worrick Inn (Nantasket), Pemberton, quarry sites of Westerly, Rhode Island, and the J. K. Pirie Estate in Barre, Vermont.

(Walter O. Nisula, author of this history, is a native of Quincy and a member of the Society. He writes that his "narrative is based upon knowledge derived from close relationship to the business, and from reference to journals and directories of the trade, as well as from associations with other personalities in the business and the craft.

Quincy's Song from the Past

From time to time citizens of Quincy feel the need for a city anthem. Sometimes one of them will write a song for Quincy. None has caught on. The following offering was written by Frederic Allison Tupper, headmaster of Quincy High School, and was sung at the dedication of the new high school building on Hancock Street next to the Dorothy Quincy Home on September 11, 1894. (The school is now the Central Middle School.)

My Quincy By The Sea

My Quincy by the Sea
Founded by patriots free,
Thy praise is great:
Town where my hero sires
Kindled fair Freedom's fires,
Whose glory ne'er expires
Guards'y by Fate.

My native Quincy dear,
City without a peer,
I love thee well;
That granite stores enfold
A mine of wealth untold,
No tongue can tell.

Who hath the power to count
The charms of Merry Mount
Or fair Blue Hills?
Stand on the ledges high,
And feast the enraptured eye,
Gone all life's ills.

My fathers' God, I pray,
Keep Quincy safe alway
Beneath Thy care.
Bless Thou her Public School
Let truth and beauty rule,
As by Siloam's pool
Bloom lilies fair.

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Kindled fair Freedom's fires,
Whose glory ne'er expires
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My native Quincy dear,
City without a peer,
I love thee well;
That granite stores enfold
That granite stores enfold,
A mine of wealth untold,
No tongue can tell.

Who hath the power to count
The charms of Merry Mount
Or fair Blue Hills?
Stand on the ledges high,
And feast the enraptured eye,
Gone all life's ills.

My fathers' God, I pray,
Keep Quincy safe alway
Beneath Thy care.
Bless Thou her Public School
Let truth and beauty rule,
As by Siloam's pool
Bloom lilies fair.
"Hardscrabble" - one of the Taylor Collection granite sloop models. (Oberg Photo)

Downs and Ups of Collecting

By H. Hobart Holly
Society Historian

Few items in the Society's collections represent more Quincy history or tell a more interesting story than the Peleg F. Jones granite sloop half-models.

First, it was the granite sloops and schooners that provided the cheap saltwater transportation that made expensive Quincy granite economically competitive; the Granite Railway and the Quincy Canal were both built to load them.

Second, the granite sloop is the only vessel design indigenous to Quincy.

Third, these are the only stone sloop half-models known to have survived.

Fourth, when an old vessel's days are over, it leaves little behind — not even a cellar hole to delight the archeologist. Thus the builders' design models are generally the most important relic from which to learn what old vessels were like. (We have taken the hull lines from our models for the Smithsonian and other museums.)

Fifth, the story of their return to Quincy is history in itself.

Peleg F. Jones was the foremost builder of stone sloops. He had his yard from 1835 to 1868 on Quincy Point where the oil tank field near the circle is now located. After his death his half-models went to his son George. (George Jones' Civil War relics are in our collections, and it was he who made the leather labels that identify many items in the GAR collection.) One day in 1936 a gentleman called on Mr. Jones at his home in Squantum and made an irresistible offer of $100 for the models. He sold all but one that he used as a pipe rack and was overlooked.

The late D. Foster Taylor, to whom the Society owes so much for his spearheading of our Building Project, was a noted maritime historian. In 1937 he learned of the models and went to see them, only to learn of their departure the year before. Knowing their importance to Quincy, he determined to find them and bring them home. His starting point was the elderly Mr. Jones' recollection that a year before he had sold them to a man from somewhere out west who collected Indian souvenirs, wore a fur coat, had a big chauffeur-driven Packard touring car, and had stayed for a few days at a hotel near Boston Common.

With these meager clues, Mr. Taylor started by canvassing the Boston hotels with the slim hope that someone might recall a guest of the previous year. Eventually he found a bellhop at the Hotel Touraine who recalled a man with a fur coat and a big Packard car. A search of the hotel register pointed to a Mr. Hibben from Indianapolis. In January 1938, Mr. Taylor wrote to Mr. Hibben but no reply resulted. He had given up hope when a letter from Indianapolis arrived in January of 1940. Mr. Hibben stated that he did not wish to part with the models but appreciated that they belonged in Quincy. He would trade them, however, for an old and good whaler model of the type that one used to see in Cape saloons. With one search ended, another began; but Mr. Taylor met with no success in finding a model of the quality that Mr. Hibben wanted.

With the War and other events diverting Mr. Taylor's attention from his half-model quest, it was the 1950s before he resumed his hunt. Letters to Indianapolis brought no response. Finally in the spring of 1958, Mr. Taylor wrote once more stating that he was planning a trip west and would like to see Mr. Hibben. Back came a letter from a bank saying that the owner of the models had died two years before. The Taylors' itinerary was changed to include Indianapolis, and Mr. Taylor took his tools for taking off the lines in case the models were there but not obtainable.

In Indianapolis the bank official could offer nothing regarding the models but believed that Mr. Hibben's sister and beneficiary might. With three and one-half hours before his train left for Boston, Mr. Taylor took a taxi to Mrs. Hackleman's home. As he walked in, there on a table were some of the models. When he left, four models were in his luggage, others followed later. After twenty-one years the saga was over; the stone sloop models were back home in Quincy.

Mr. Taylor presented his treasures to the Quincy Historical Society for its maritime museum. George Jones' daughter later presented the remaining model, the sloop Amelia built in 1858, along with records of Peleg F. Jones and his Quincy Point yard.

This story of Mr. Taylor's quest appeared in detail in The Quincy Patriot Ledger of July 16, 1958, written by our late good friend Fred Hunt, himself an authority on Quincy's maritime history.