Bodwell Blue: The Story of Vinalhaven's Granite Industry

Roger L. Grindle

University of Maine Fort Kent

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal

Part of the United States History Commons

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine History by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.
When the Bodwell Granite Company’s store on Vinalhaven, Maine, “sold out the last of its goods and chattels” in 1919, it marked the end of nearly a half-century of company dominance over the island’s economy. The firm’s stone wagons, galamanders, derricks, and other equipment were painted “Elder Littlefield Blue,” locally known as “Bodwell Blue.” In 1901 the State of Maine ranked first in the nation in the value of granite produced. Nearly $3,000,000 worth of capital was invested in the industry, and approximately $2,000,000 was paid annually to a work force of 3,500. There were 152 quarries reporting to the Maine Bureau of Industrial and Labor Statistics that year, and those of the Bodwell Granite Company were among the most extensive and productive. A brief history of the granite industry on Vinalhaven provides a useful insight into the importance of the industry to the state’s economy.¹

Vinalhaven, first called South Fox Island, is located fifteen miles east of Rockland in Penobscot Bay. Named in honor of John Vinal of Boston, it was first permanently settled in 1765, and incorporated in 1789. Its population increased from 1,252 in 1850 to 2,855 in 1880, declining thereafter. Population figures reflect the economic ups and downs of the island’s granite industry. According to local historians, a New Hampshire man by the name of Tuck quarried the first cargo of stone at Arey’s Harbor, Vinalhaven, in 1826. Joseph Kittredge and Enoch Carleton opened the East Boston Quarry in 1849, and were joined in the following year by William Kittredge.
But, Vinalhaven’s granite industry really began with the arrival of Moses Webster and Joseph R. Bodwell in the early 1850’s.²

Webster came from Hudson, New Hampshire in 1851, and Bodwell arrived from Metheun, Massachusetts a year later. E. P. Walker of Montville, Maine, joined them in 1854. The copartnership operated under the name of Bodwell, Webster and Company until the Bodwell Granite Company was incorporated in 1871. When Bodwell, a future governor of Maine, and Webster began operations on Vinalhaven little had been done to develop the granite resources, except to open a small quarry where some paving was cut. Joseph Kittredge and S. Gilman Webster opened the Diamond Rock quarry at Arey’s Harbor around this time. A contract to provide stone for the Petit Manan Light Station was received in 1854. Also during the 1850’s a contract for stone for the New York Navy Yard was filled. It was the largest contract to date. In 1856 a reporter claimed that Vinalhaven granite men had “material enough in the beautiful granite which abounds there to employ them for a century to come.” Such local promotion helped secure two federal contracts in 1858, one for the Pensacola Navy Yard and another for the dock at Fort Norfolk, Virginia.³

The next decade opened auspiciously. Two quarries began operations in 1860, located on opposite sides of Kittredge Hill, later known as Armbrust’s Hill. A third quarry opened in 1863, and was later purchased from the original owners by Bodwell and Webster. The Civil War interrupted normal development of the industry on Vinalhaven, although stone was quarried for strengthening gun platforms at a number of forts.⁴

It became apparent after the Civil War that a reorganization of Vinalhaven’s quarry operations would be beneficial. Bodwell and Webster, already recognized as “veterans in the industry,” led the consolidation move-
ment; and Cobb, Wight and Case, the leading lime manufacturers from Rockland, agreed to transfer their Spruce Head granite property to a new company. The Bodwell Granite Company was established in 1871, and at the first meeting of the stockholders held in Rockland, J. R. Bodwell, Moses Webster, John S. Case and H. W. Wight were chosen as directors. The directors then elected J. R. Bodwell, president and Moses Webster, vice-president. E. H. Lawry, who was considered “smart as a whip,” was lured from his job with the *Rockland Free Press* to become secretary of the new company. Francis Cobb, head of Maine’s largest lime manufacturing concern, became the first treasurer.\(^5\)

A review of the Bodwell company’s progress in 1872 shows over 600 men quarrying and cutting granite for the State Department Building in Washington, the piers of New York’s East River Bridge, and for the Union Mutual Life Insurance Building in Boston. With that record it was not surprising that all the officers of the company were re-elected at the annual meeting. In 1877 Bodwell Granite was low bidder on 6,876 yards of granite for the New York Bridge Co. and on the cut granite for the Rockland Custom House. The stone for the latter was white granite from the recently purchased Wildcat quarry in St. George. The biggest contract of the year, however, calling for between $3,000,000 and $4,000,000 worth of dressed stone, was for the new government buildings in Cincinnati. These contracts, plus one for the St. Louis Custom House, represented an impressive showing for the newly organized company.\(^6\)

It was voted to increase the capital stock in the Bodwell Granite Company to $400,000 at the stockholders annual meeting in 1874. The delayed effects of the Panic of 1873, including the shortening up of building contracts, help explain the dramatic discharge of 300 workers in early 1876. The prospect of another dramatic layoff may have
encouraged Vinalhaven's cutters to form a union branch early the following year.  

"Our union is attacked by interested parties and mercenaries but we will stand the storm...", said T. H. Murch, International Secretary of the recently organized Granite Cutters Union. Murch attacked the opposition press for supporting the Bodwell Granite Company in its battle with union members. The initial meeting leading to the creation of the Granite Cutters Union was held at Clark Island, Maine, January 2, 1877. The purpose of the new union was to establish uniform rates and improve conditions. Delegates from Clark Island, Spruce Head, Hurricane Island and Carvers Harbor (Vinalhaven) held a convention in Rockland, drafted a constitution, and elected a president, a secretary, and a national board. The board first met on March 10, 1877. The national office was opened in Rockland, and the first issue of the Granite Cutters Journal appeared in April.

At that time the granite industry in Maine was fairly well established, especially in the Penobscot Bay region. This was due primarily to lucrative government contracts for public buildings. These contracts were commonly known as the Fifteen Per Cent Contracts because of the amount of profit guaranteed to the contractors. When granite workers compared their wages with the huge profits supposed to be made by the "Granite Ring," they were attracted by the promises of unionization. The Ring, including J. R. Bodwell of Vinalhaven, seemed to have a monopoly on government contracts. U. S. Attorney General Devens declared the fifteen percent contracts illegal in 1877. This decision affected the Bodwell Granite Company then working stone for the Cincinnati Custom House. Local cutters feared the Ring would protect its future by reducing their wages. This, and the fear that the contractors would hold back their pay and compel them to
spend it all in company stores, led more of them to seriously consider joining the union.9

The men remembered that only eighty had worked for the “Company” during the winter of 1876-1877, and even they could not earn a decent living at the wages paid. Moreover, the company refused to give them credit at the store. Admittedly, the company paid “big wages at times,” but this was offset by the fact that it sometimes held back on the payroll for three or four months. Rumors began to circulate when J. R. Bodwell and several prominent men from Chicago visited the island that February, and John Lowe, chief architect, suddenly left for Washington. “There must be something of vital importance to take John so far away from home and friends,” speculated one cutter. Two explosions that rocked the polishing mill set the company back three weeks. The mill had been running even Sunday nights, and more reasonable hours at the mill were one of the goals of the workers who turned to unionization in 1877.10

A man owed over $100 by the company went to E. H. Lawry to collect. Lawry claimed that there was not a penny in the office, but promised to get enough for the man’s fare to Boston, with “meals on the way.” This situation hardly encouraged good employer-employee relations. Neither did the knowledge that J. R. Bodwell was strongly resisting the intentions of Government Superintendent Goodwin to eliminate piecework and bring in a government paymaster. Still, there was little alternative to working for a concern “outside the stock company.” John Hopkins ran “quite a large gang,” but he was still “only a small fish” in the stone business. Although Hopkins was admired for being “shrewd enough to paddle his own canoe without getting into the stock company, where the other small granite manufacturers who had received “the pressing invitations” to join the Bodwell Granite
Company? “Not one left . . . . There is no doubt that the big fish will eat the little fish every time . . . .”\textsuperscript{11}

“King” Bodwell made another trip to the island in the spring of 1877 and “passed sentence” on one man, supposedly denying him work on Vinalhaven because of letters he had written for the \textit{Rockland Opinion}. One Vinalhaven observer vouched that another worker who had voted a straight Democratic ticket the previous fall was told by “one of the company’s tools” that he too could not get another job on the island. Mr. Sheriff, who had taken charge of all the paving cutters on Vinalhaven that spring, was invited by the Bodwell company to pay his men through their store. Sheriff said “he could do his own paying.” When the paving cutters marched over to Sheriff’s office a week later, they received the wages due them. Many hoped that “such transactions were catching,” because some of the Bodwell Granite crew had not been paid for nine months.\textsuperscript{12}

Ask Ed Lawry “if that ship that was bringing $\text{20,000}$ for the company store has gone down,” said one cutter. When the men saw Lawry arrive on the boat, they gathered at the company store, thinking “perhaps they might get a few cents.” They were disappointed; Lawry was just meeting with Vice-President Webster and E. P. Palmer about money owed a man they had sent to work in Connecticut. The Bodwell Granite Company tried to soothe feelings through pro-company articles, supposedly written by Lawry, in the \textit{Free Press}. The pro-labor \textit{Rockland Opinion} asked, “Did the Bodwell Granite Company make this and the people thereby, or did the resources of the island and the people make him [Lawry] a rich man as he is today?” A Vinalhaven resident added, “God may have made the Hebrews for Solomon to rule over . . . but I can’t believe this island was ever made for the Bodwell Granite Co. to rule over.”\textsuperscript{13}
What was happening on Vinalhaven was blamed on the Granite Ring. Belief in the existence of such a ring caused many workers to vote for T. H. Murch for Congress. They were especially interested in Murch’s promise to implement the Eight Hour Law. The men also hoped to be able to complain directly to James G. Blaine and other Washington dignitaries who were scheduled to visit Vinalhaven in the summer of 1877. But Blaine did not debark from the steamer Fire Fly when it pulled into the harbor. However, two of the company’s officers, Bodwell and Cobb, and other guests did tour the works, lending credence to the rumor that some government work was about to start.14

Meanwhile, work continued. At summer’s end there were 300 cutters at work. Some earned $2.50 per day on the Chicago job. Quite a number did piecework on the Cincinnati Post Office and Custom House. Bodwell’s return to the island in the fall was considered a good omen by union members. One brother noted, “I expect some changes as there is generally at the time of his visits.” It was rumored that Bodwell had added to the prices paid for some stones, but the man wanted something more substantial than rumor. Consequently, the local branch raised funds to send a delegate to the union congress where they would establish a bill of wages and hours of labor. One member felt it “would have been better for some contractors if there had been a union of granite cutters some eight years ago, as then they would know to a certainty what they would have to pay their help—for at least one month.” With standard wages and hours a contractor would be regulated, “if he is wise, by what he is sure he will have to pay for the cutting of the same.”15

Approximately 400 cutters on the various jobs at Vinalhaven found it possible to make “a fair average pay,” as winter approached in 1877, and the men seemed “more
content at present than they were at the start of the work under the piece work system." The force was increased in anticipation of a partial contract for the East River Bridge in New York, but the economic picture reversed with the suspension of work on the Cincinnati job. Morale collapsed as prospects for the granite trade were reevaluated as "very poor." One of the workers wrote a "plea for Liberty," saying, "We are crushed down by the great soul destroying corporation .... These Ring masters came here as poor as Job's turkey and have fattened and feasted on us ...." He had specific complaints. "There are many who have no alternative but to do as the Ring commands and that is to toil and work for a miserable pittance, paid when the Ring chooses to pay it, in such commodities as they have, for which they charge any price they see fit." Angrily he concluded, "My God! How long will this community permit itself to be doomed to misery, poverty and degradation?"16

Tempers cooled during the winter, and by spring there was plenty of work for the cutters then on the island. The bulk of these worked on stone for the State, War, and Navy Department Building in Washington and on the East River Bridge. Some had resumed work on a few stones for the Cincinnati Post Office, which had been left unfinished from the time of the suspension the previous fall. Those cutting Cincinnati stone seemed to be the most contented with the prices paid. Wages on stone for the Washington building seemed second best; but those men working on bridge stone had to "rattle their bones" in order to make ends meet. An additional government inspector arrived to insure that the stone for the State, War, and Navy Department Building met specifications.17

"War!! — Plundered Granite Cutters at Arms! — Our Brethren at Vinalhaven Revolting Against Starvation and Oppression!" In the spring of 1878, a list containing the
names of 30 of the most important members of the union was given to George Wharff, company agent, with orders to fire them. “An uprising the like of which has never before been seen in Maine” followed. About 200 men immediately left the works. A special meeting resolved to “stand by the proscribed brothers,” demand the bill of prices, and suspend work until the demands were met. Wharff, “in a very excitable and profane manner,” refused to listen to the demands of a union committee sent to meet with him, and he ordered a complete suspension of work. The committee was subsequently empowered “to treat with the company when-ever they should manifest a disposition to do so.” A relief committee was set up, and a relief store established to receive food contributions for sympathetic citizens. International Union Secretary Murch gave a firsthand account of activities on the island: “best of order . . . no demonstrations no cases of drunkeness.” Other union branches made liberal contributions to the relief fund.18

The company feigned indifference, and claimed it was about to shut down, strike or no strike. Union men considered this talk “bosh” because there were two large government contracts under the hammer in addition to numerous private jobs. That the company would just close its doors and absorb heavy losses seemed unreasonable. There would be a loss of $2,500 a week in wages to citizens of Vinalhaven, “besides the tax upon other ‘Union’ men in contributions for the relief of the strikers.” The Bodwell company had spent approximately $150,000 for labor and about the same amount for store supplies in the previous fifteen months. Between January 1, 1878 and the time of the strike, some $26,900 was paid in wages. In different terms, the “average amount per year earned by all classes” was nearly $700.19

Funds in the union treasury were insufficient to pay the unemployment benefit of $6.00 per week to approxi-
mately 200 brothers for the duration of a long strike, and the Vinalhaven branch made a formal appeal for help in the union journal. This appeal met with some success. Murch defended the union’s actions in the *Rockland Opinion*. Josiah Dyer, in the *Granite Cutters Journal*, claimed he had been suspicious of the intentions of the Bodwell Granite Company long before the strike because of information supplied by a cutter dismissed from the Hallowell plant. The company countered with articles, including wage lists, published in the *Rockland Free Press* and the *Rockland Gazette*. Dyer warned the editors of these papers: “Our Union though young is too strong to be broken up by any firm in Maine, for although it was born in Maine it has traveled around considerably for a youngster, is growing nicely, and is just cutting its teeth . . . ”

Thirty scabs went to work for the company, including three union men, “the balance having been procured at places in the vicinity of Prospect, Maine.” An effigy of Bushrod H. Clay, elected to the previous legislature with the aid of granite cutters, was paraded around town, “sentenced and hung.” Union cutters were furious, ”that men could be found so utterly degraded as to act the part of Benedict Arnolds toward their fellow workers.” Many sympathized with the Vinalhaven workers’ “War for Bread” and blamed the strike directly on “bad management in government affairs.” Years previously Bodwell had “blasphemously appealed to heaven, that the day might come when stone cutters could be obliged to work for a dollar a day.” The government was blamed. “Even the sanguine Bodwell could not have anticipated the crushing downfall in wages, and had the government failed to contract their work, and prevented him from monopolizing the interest and percentage of those contracts this never would have occurred.” That is to say Bodwell’s “cherished hopes would never have been realized.”

60
“Peace is declared at last and the stone-cutters strike is at an end . . . .” An arrangement among the Vinalhaven strike committee, the International Union Secretary, and the Bodwell Granite Company was finalized on May 1, 1878. The settlement came at a “critical time when men false to every conception of honor and justice were flocking from all quarters in response to offers of ‘large pay.’” Hopefully, the conduct of the union men during the strike “would forever set at rest the charge that their union would seek to carry out their ends by violence and riot.” It would be a long time before they forgot “the Benedict Arnold of the Union — Bushrod H. Clay.” Clay and two others were officially expelled from the union for having violated their pledges to the union during the strike. Bodwell insisted that the company had won its battle with the strikers since the men had agreed to finish stones under the hammer at the old prices. Bodwell asserted that “no advance was made or promised in consequence of the strike,” nor were the men’s wage demands conceded to in any way. “An advance was ordered on a portion of the work, several days previous to the strike,” Bodwell stated, “which advance was not generally known to the workers.” This statement could be interpreted to mean that wages had indeed been advanced because of the strike.22

Bad feelings eased temporarily by midsummer of 1878. The work force rapidly expanded to 450 cutters, and the company announced plans to build a 200 foot extension to the “big shed.” The stone for the General Wool Monument was quarried. When erected this monument constituted the tallest obelisk in the country made from a single piece of granite. There was, apparently, more work than usual, but most was for the government. The wages, however, were lower or only equal to those of the previous summer. Where were the benefits of the strike?23

After the strike Vinalhaven branch proceeded to put its union house in order. Pressure was applied to those in
arrears, and delinquent members were struck from the rolls. Josiah B. Dyer was backed to replace Murch who had resigned as International Union Secretary to take his seat in Congress. A man of Dyer's ability was needed since the Bodwell Granite Company soon regained its confidence and then discharged some more men that fall. Branch secretary John Dunn considered the situation serious. "Many of our members have been impressed with the idea that if they stayed away from the branch meeting they would be more secure in their jobs for the winter," he said. But this, he noted, was a false sense of security since "now they see in the last discharge that the company is no respector of persons." It was feared that some were fired because they were branch officers of the union. National union officials came to Vinalhaven to check on this. After talking with some of the men involved and to some company representatives, the visiting union officials concluded that the company had "made no discrimination betwixt Unionists and non-Unionists, and had no wish to harm the branch... if they could — but would rather everything went along in harmony."24

The Bodwell Granite Company started a fifty foot addition to its new stone shed early in 1879, making it the longest in the country. The shed, with the Washington, Cincinnati, and other contracts, provided work for over 300 men. That winter was considered the "liveliest for several years." National Secretary Dyer visited Vinalhaven early in 1879, and found a number of union men "waiting to see what Mr. Murch can do in Congress for them." Murch introduced a joint resolution at the special session of Congress, declaring eight hours a legal workday for all laborers, workers, and mechanics employed on government jobs. A modified version of this resolution, in bill form, was effectively killed through tabling.25 Murch also introduced a bill to establish a Bureau of Labor Statistics, only to have it die in committee. Undaunted, he then
introduced a resolution calling upon the Secretary of the Treasury to transmit to the House copies of the original Fifteen Per Cent contracts and the new contracts for the same buildings, directing the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds to make “full inquiry into the system of constructing public buildings. The latter resolution received a majority vote, but not the necessary two-thirds. One Vinalhaven cutter thought the men would “have to do it for themselves.”26

Whether union members on the island would pick up the challenge of doing things for themselves depended on day-to-day working conditions. In early 1879, a few cutters were put on, “initiating them in by giving them a ‘dig’ at the East Boston sills, with a little less (in some instances) than a single man’s board expenses.” There was at least one prospect for better pay, “the Cincinnati job, which has always been the best paying government job here.” Later in the year when there were nearly 500 men working, it was questioned why so few members took part in union affairs. Perhaps it was the “dread amongst some of them that the length of their jobs depends on their dropping the Union.”27

Although men were daily discharged in the summer and rumor claimed “about one hundred to be dispensed with,” the Bodwell crew was busy with the last stages of cutting the General Wool Monument. The company carefully executed this contract; it wanted the finished product to be “a splendid advertisement of what an enterprising granite company can accomplish.” The finished monument was placed on a barge and towed by the tug Knickerbocker to its destination. The company also contracted to provide granite posts for the elevated railway in New York. More important to the entire crew, however, was that summer Tuesday, when the Bodwell Granite Company “put out many thousands of dollars among their workmen for labor done in April.”28
One Vinalhaven granite man was still trying to become independent of the Bodwell company. In the summer of 1879, John Hopkins made news with a big blast, moving a 600 foot long mass of granite which was supposedly "the largest sheet of granite ever moved with power on Vinalhaven." Hopkins employed 40 men cutting platforms for the Brooklyn, New York jail. But, for most Vinalhaven cutters, winter employment was uncertain. The Cincinnati job was nearly finished, and the only major work in progress was the stone for the State, War, and Navy Building. The workers doubted the company's announcement that it "hoped to keep their present force through the winter." 29

Favorable publicity was attached to the shipment of the Wool monument in 1879, and the completion of the Brady monument for Philadelphia about the same time. The Bodwell Granite Company reduced its force and closed down a portion of its plant in the winter of 1879-1880, but the polishing plant was started up again the following spring, promising "constant employment" on the large polished columns for Chicago. Work continued on the War, State, and Navy Department and Cincinnati jobs. The crew at the East Boston quarry was cutting platforms. Union men observed that "some of the jobs are very poor ones, while others are good paying ones." W. W. Kittredge replaced Frank Kittredge as foreman for Bodwell on Vinalhaven when the latter was transferred to the company yard in Charlestown, Massachusetts. 30

A contract for a Philadelphia depot kept a Bodwell crew busy during the winter of 1880-1881, and the company secured another Philadelphia contract for a six-story records office. One union man felt Vinalhaven had received the two Philadelphia contracts because standard wages in Philadelphia were $2.50 per day compared to less than $2.00 a day on Vinalhaven. 31
In March, 1882 the Bodwell Granite Company was high bidder on tools, machinery and stock on Vinalhaven belonging to the Treasury Department. The Duchane Hill quarry was reactivated by A. A. Beaton, John Lowe and others, who quarried monumental stock, mostly for the Bodwell company. Foreman Beaton also supervised extensive paving operations there. Workers did not like Duchane Hill granite. “The stone artist who has to cut work from this stock may use words not suited to Henry Ward B’s table; but we think if the same H.W.B. had to pound some of it for ten hours he would require something more nutritious than ‘bread and water’ to strengthen his frame after a hard day’s work.” A black granite quarry was opened on nearby Lane’s Island in 1882 by Vinalhaven’s Benjamin Kittredge. Because good black granite was scarce and much in demand as monumental stone, Kittredge quickly “received liberal offers for all of the granite... he could take out in a year.”

Late in 1882 Bodwell Granite received orders to resume work on the State, War, and Navy Department Building. This part of the contract had to be completed within two years. A crew of 180 cutters was soon “rushing along this contract very fast.” The following spring the Bodwell firm started running their polishing mill “day and night,” employing “the largest force of cutters working by the day that they have had for some years past.” The schooner Manitou, bound from Vinalhaven for Baltimore with Bodwell paving, sank off Chatham, Massachusetts. As was typical of many granite schooners, the vessel was not insured and the cargo only partially covered. The highly publicized granite eagles for the new Board of Trade Building in Chicago were shipped that fall.

To Steve Sprague, foreman of the Harbor Quarry in 1884, the best evidence of the influence of the Bodwell Granite Company lay in the pay envelopes of the 200
employed stone cutters. Almost all of these men traded with E. S. Bodwell, who managed the "largest retail store in the state." Even at the Masonic Hall where an oil portrait of Moses Webster, one of the founders of the company, hung on the wall, citizens were reminded of the importance of the granite industry to Vinalhaven's economy.34

Also in 1884, the last stones for the Chicago Board of Trade Building were loaded aboard the well-known granite sloops Yankee Girl and H. H. Hamilton for Portland, and thence, by rail, to Chicago. The crew was sorry this contract was finished because the job had been a good one for the workmen. Still there were about 100 men, including teamsters, employed at the Sands quarry, "the largest crew ever employed there at one time." But, the wages were considered low, averaging only $1.50 per day. John Blethen, superintendent of the Spruce Head plant, filled in for John Lowe, superintendent of the granite works on Vinalhaven, who left for Scotland that year.35

When Hopkins filed for bankruptcy in early 1884, the Bodwell company was accused of driving the small independent producers out of business; but the cutters working for Hopkins evidently found jobs elsewhere on the island or nearby. Paving cutters remained active, having received orders to make nothing but Baltimore paving "until further notice." J. A. Crockett, an ex-resident of Vinalhaven, opened a new granite yard in Bangor, and editor Lyons noted that Crockett and the Bodwell company shared one attribute, modern polishing machinery. The first polishing machinery had been set up in the United States only eighteen years before. The Bodwell Granite Company had readied and shipped twenty-four large, polished granite columns for the Indiana State Capitol in 1884. The Bodwell firm expected to complete the latest contract for the State, War, and Navy Department Building by the end of that year. This
meant work for at least 200 cutters for the season, and marked the twelfth or thirteenth year since the company first started on the sub-basement and basement of the building. Still another job was reaching completion in 1884, the Higgins-Reynal sarcophagus. One man labored nearly a whole year cutting the die for this contract.36

When the stone cutters for the Washington Monument laid down their hammers in 1884, Colonel Casey, the government supervisor, was quick to call the men's action a temporary stoppage rather than a strike. This was a piecework project, and the cutters had the stone ready up to course 470 which was the base for the pyramidal top of the monument. The workers complained they could not make a living wage from the forty and fifty cents per square foot being paid, and seventy-three of them refused to go back to work until the price was advanced. Colonel Casey told a Washington Star reporter, "There was no grievance at all . . . and not the slightest disagreement." Whether or not relations with the employees were as rosy as Casey pictured, the men were soon back to work at "seventy cents per square foot for cutting the face stone, and sixty cents for the other parts."37

Vinalhaven's quarrymen and cutters were disappointed when news came that the contract for the Standard Oil Company Building in New York, which Bodwell Granite had been counting on, had been awarded to the Clark Island Company. J. S. Black, on the other hand, made preparations for an "extensive" paving business at Duchane Hill that summer, and the Vinalhaven granite workers probably enjoyed reading about themselves in an article written by a New York Sun correspondent. This article traced the history of quarrying operations on Vinalhaven prior to the Civil War and closed with the following observation: "Since then they have prospered, and now do probably the largest quarrying business in the U.S., employing from 500 to 1,000 men, as the volume of
trade varies, paying $25,000 to $50,000 a month in wages, and keeping the whole island community happy and prosperous."\textsuperscript{38}

In 1885 one of the most visible pieces of evidence of the importance of granite industry to Vinalhaven was the big shed. Built in the winter of 1873-1874, and lengthened six years later to 540 feet, this shed was claimed to be "the largest known . . for stone cutting purposes in the country." Work continued that year on the State, War, and Navy Department Building in Washington, D. C. A crew of 150 stone cutters and 40 quarry men had been carried through the winter by this job alone. A quarry recently opened by Walls and Sanborn on the north side of Carvers Harbor provided even more employment. A. B. Hall was cutting paving on the site known as Flat Rock. Paving was being shipped regularly. For example, the schooner \textit{Ohio} loaded stone ultimately destined for St. Louis, and the schooner \textit{J. B. Holden} loaded 56,000 paving blocks for New York\textsuperscript{39}

The Bodwell Granite Company was low bidder on the Brooklyn Post Office at $94,790, with fifty-eight cents per additional foot. The contract was to be completed in one year. Other activity on the island also increased. Eighteen columns of Roberts Harbor granite, known as one of the finest dark granites in the country, were readied for the cutting machine, and the Bodwell firm put on more apprentices at the Sands quarry under W. W. Kittredge. Roberts Harbor stone was also being sent to Rockland Granite Company as monumental stock. The Brooklyn Post Office project was started in June, and the first consignment for this building left on the schooner \textit{Ringdove} a month later.\textsuperscript{40}

The destruction of Vinalhaven's Granite Hotel by fire in the spring of 1880 deprived the local granite cutters' union of a meeting hall. The Knights of Labor had just
reached a “satisfactory agreement” with the Bodwell company, whereby the men secured “a slight advance over winter's wages.” But, the crew at the Bodwell works, with the exception of a few quarrymen, were discharged in October. Only a small crew was taken back for the winter, causing a number of Vinalhaven’s unemployed granite men to form a cooperative granite company and buy out the quarry on nearby Granite Island. There was a temporary revival in late 1886, but this was followed by another discharge. Rumor spread that business would “soon shut down altogether for the winter.”

Dr. Israel T. Dana of Portland came to tend to a “very ill and failing” Moses Webster in early 1887. Shortly thereafter Webster, who had left Pelham, New Hampshire, some three decades earlier to go into partnership with Joseph R. Bodwell, now governor of the State of Maine, died. Governor Bodwell and his daughter attended the funeral. Ironically, there were only about fifty workers employed at the time of Webster's death, and a few of them were on half time.

Thirty-five more men were “set to work” in early February, and a few paving cutters started on New York and Cambridge paving blocks, at $20 and $14 per thousand, respectively. A Knights of Labor committee met with representatives of Bodwell Granite to settle their differences and come up with a new scale of prices. The Kennebec Journal reported that “a scale of prices is the universally recognized method of adjusting grievances among stone workers, but in this section it is used only by a few firms, and it is not just now reasonable to have a firm bound to an agreement while others are under no obligation.” Vinalhaven Knights were viewed as “conservative, reasonable and cool-headed men who are fully alive to the welfare of the town.” Governor Bodwell was considered “equally desirous to have the labor matters here satisfactorily arranged for the good of all concerned,”
and he came to the island to have a conference with his employees. He thanked the men for faithfully keeping the agreement to date. But, whereas other granite companies were not bound by fixed prices, the results were so "disasterous" for his company" that no contracts were taken, and Vinalhaven experienced a year of unusual dullness, the quarries and sheds were closed." An agreement for another year was reached, but not in the form of a firm bill of prices desired by strong union men. Before returning to Augusta, Bodwell offered to rent or purchase a reading room for the use of the workmen.43

With the labor dispute settled, sheds and quarries were cleared to meet new contracts. Red granite from the Bodwell quarry in Jonesboro was cut for a monument in memory of Solomon Juneau, first white settler and mayor of Milwaukee, and for a building in Philadelphia. The big project of the summer, however, was the quarrying of a 850 ton monolith, the "largest single shaft to granite ever taken out there." This was done on the company's "own account," not under contract. This activity led C. H. Healey to boast that his town was in "the most prosperous condition it has been for a long time. We are what one may call a booming community everything is gliding along on a greased track." The Bodwell Granite Company had the contract for the library and musical conservatory for Allegheny City, Pennsylvania, which would require a year or more to complete. They were also expecting to ship nearly 800,000 paving blocks under the supervision of Joseph Black that season. Unfortunately, a seam was found in the 131 foot shaft being quarried at the Sands quarry, necessitating its being cut into smaller blocks.44

In the fall of 1887, Thomas J. Lyons, well known throughout the granite industry for his contributions to the Granite Cutters Journal, reported 143 cutters employed, mostly on stone for the Allegheny building. Cutters were housed in sheds that were "all clapboarded painted and

70
lighted by glass windows," and what was most important to workers, "well heated in cold weather." Lyons noted "no discharging this fall, and very few if any loafing for want of work." The largest number of drill holes ever bored in one line could be seen at the Sands quarry. "Wild winds" blew down one of the paving sheds at Diamond Rock quarry, a sign that winter was fast approaching. Frank Kittredge finished positioning his new derrick at the Pequod plant. The company had about 300 men employed on the Allegheny, Harlem Bridge and Western Savings Bank jobs in late 1887.\textsuperscript{45}

Vinalhaven's Duchane Hill and Diamond Rock granite was to be used for the Harlem Bridge contract. Locally, it was reported that those in charge of construction of the bridge were "so impressed with the B.G. Co.'s granite, its cutting, their superior knowledge of the business, that it had been left to their judgement to select a certain portion of the bridge trimmings." Despite this and other smaller contracts, there were two successive layoffs in December, followed by more bad news.\textsuperscript{46}

Governor Joseph R. Bodwell died on December 15, 1887, at his residence in Hallowell, less than one year after the death of Moses Webster. Vinalhaven's granite industry was deprived of its "last great head." An edged-in-black local editorial summarized the effects of Bodwell's thirty-six year association with the island's leading industry.

It is to the granite industry Vinalhaven owes its growth and present prosperous condition. The people of this place will feel his loss more than any other community, for the reason that he has been identified in the business interests of Vinalhaven from its beginning up to the present time, and every workman and every household were personally acquainted with him and knew him as he was, honest, generous, and true. The whole community found in him a friend.

Conscious of the fact that obituaries tend to be eulogistic, the editor strove to present a balanced portrait of the deceased governor.
His repute in the business world stood untarnished as it did in social life; his word was his bond with everybody; a verbal obligation to him was a written pledge. His great success in life was due to his courteous, straight forward business ability. He was a man of untiring industry and uncommon natural capacity. He carried out in his birth, training and achievements, the best traditions of a typical businessman, and Vinalhaven will long revere his memory.47

That the average workingman shared this view is uncertain. No special mention was made of Bodwell or his contribution to the industry in the regular branch reports made to the union journal by Thomas J. Lyons. Yet, Lyons was on the Knights of Labor committee which passed resolves in Bodwell’s memory, speaking of the good employer-employee relations. “We deplore the loss of an honest employer . . . who was ever ready to listen to and redress the grievances of his employees as was evidenced by the agreements entered into between himself and this assembly.” The Knights were represented at the funeral.48

The Bodwell Granite Company shut down before Christmas, but the quarrymen were kept at work during the winter of 1887-1888 “on account of vessels loading and being behind the cutters on quarried stone.” Joseph Black transferred his entire business to Duchane Hill because of water in East Boston quarry. At the big shed repairs were made on the head car of the elevated railroad. Stone destined for the Harlem Bridge was marked from the “paint pot” of Luther Crockett, foreman at the Sands quarry. Bodwell’s superintendent, John Lowe, left for New York to check on progress of this contract. The men at Vinalhaven went on a nine hour day the first of February and heard, through company officials, that Vinalhaven was going to have a share of the Boston Post Office contract awarded to Hurricane and Cape Ann.49

George Banks supervised the polishing of the columns needed for an unfinished auditorium in Chicago. He was aware of one problem that had frustrated many a
water-side Maine granite firm in the past and which Vinalhaven had tried to solve. The weight of profitably-sized cargoes of granite increased the draught of vessels considerably. The ten foot difference between high and low tide left some of the bigger vessels tide-nipped. Accordingly, a petition asking Congress for funds to dredge the harbor was circulated among the island’s citizens. In the meantime, Bodwell Granite Company increased its force, and E. W. Arey and Co. resumed work. Editor Healey boasted: "We have always been the liveliest little village in Maine and intend to retain the acknowledged recognition. Vinalhaven first and Hurricane second are their actual standing in Maine villages, — the plum puddings in the Pine Tree State."  

At the first annual meeting of the Bodwell Granite Company after Bodwell’s death, the following officers were elected: G. M. Brainerd, president; Francis Cobb, vice-president; E. H. Lawry, secretary and treasurer. All three were from Rockland and were joined on the board of directors by E. P. Walker, John Lowe and F. S. Walls of Vinalhaven; and J.F. Bodwell of Hallowell, the governor’s son. Their first job was to review the granite cutters’ proposed new bill of prices, and secondly, to evaluate the increasing competition on the island. One of the Booth brothers, who sold millions of paving blocks in New York City, had arrived with a foreman to open the paving quarry at the Narrows and to contract with Captain Hamilton to construct a wharf, J. P. Armbrust decided against moving to California and negotiated for Reuben Brown’s quarry at Arey’s Harbor, with the intention of developing paving operations there. When the granite inspector for the Harlem River Bridge job arrived on the island, he found, besides the expected large force at the Bodwell yards, over 100 men employed in the granite business, “something not known before for years.”  

73
Vinalhaven’s granite cutters supported their National Union Committee’s resolution before Congress asking that granite be excluded from the free list. There was enough competition inside the country without having to vie with cheap imported foreign stock, especially in the monumental line. C. F. Noyes, Vinalhaven's branch secretary, spoke for his fellow workingmen when he said: “The granite cutters in this vicinity think by taking the duty off granite, even in the rough, it will injure them and also the quarrymen.” Locally, “Business here is very good, the most of the work is for the Allegheny City library building, with some bridge and polished work.” The first test of the company since Bodwell’s death waited in the wings, for the granite cutters union agreement with the company ran out on April first.52

Pay for work on the Boston Court House was said to be very good, and the men were once again received encouragement about back pay owed them for work done on government projects prior to the passage of the eight hour law. Nelson Dingley and the rest of the Maine congressional delegation backed a bill introduced in 1888, which would have adjusted their past claims. Nearly 300 Vinalhaven citizens signed a petition supporting this legislation. The petition was presented to the House.53

The fact that “quite a drift of work was coming into Maine just now,” including contracts for the Methodist Bible House of New York and the Augusta Post Office, encouraged the Bodwell Granite Company to settle on a new bill of prices. Union men considered this bill “one of our own getting up” and labeled the final results as “encouraging.” The local newspaper reported that in the future the yard would be strictly a Union one.54

At a branch meeting the Vinalhaven granite cutters passed a resolution asking union headquarters to charge an initiation fee of $50 to all “unnaturalized granite cutters.” This was one of the first reactions to the im-
portation of Italian laborers. The Lucy P. Miller landed a "cargo" of Italians at Rockland, and many of these were presumed to be heading for the islands. The pages of the Vinalhaven Echo were filled with comments on the living and drinking habits of the Italians on Vinalhaven and Hurricane Island. Whether because of prejudice or fear of competition from cheap labor, Scottish, English, and American granite laborers did not welcome this Italian influx.\textsuperscript{55}

Booth Brothers opened up their paving operation on Vinalhaven with a crew of thirty-five men in April, 1888, the same number employed by Kittredge and Smith at their Diamond Rock plant. The new firm of Brown, Morton and Brown opened their paving business at Arey's Harbor in the spring of 1888. Another new concern, with J. P. Armbrust as the "leading capitalist," leased the whole of Kittredge Hill for a paving operation. Armbrust erected a derrick on his quarry, and left James C. Brown to manage the operation while he was absent in Philadelphia. He returned with a contract for Philadelphia blocks.\textsuperscript{56} Armbrust represented Philadelphia and Cleveland capitalists, and he announced that the Crown Hill Granite Company, as his firm was officially known, would start with a crew of fifty paving cutters and "take any contract for building or other stone work he could get.\textsuperscript{57}

The Bodwell company secured contracts for the six-story front of the Fidelity Trust and Deposit Co. in Newark, New Jersey and trimmings for the guard house of the Philadelphia County Prison. The company also submitted the lowest bid, $145,800, for the Congressional Library in Washington. It was easier for the firm to attract and retain a crew with contracts on hand and having the distinction of being one of the few firms in the state paying fortnightly. Counting stone cutters, paving makers, quarrymen and other grades of workmen, the Bodwell work force totaled nearly 500 in midsummer. C. F. Noyes
could now report "everything . . . moving along smoothly" and "plenty of work for the number of men."\textsuperscript{58}

Joseph Black closed up business at Duchane Hill in late 1888 and went to Granite Island to supervise the building of a six-fire blacksmith shop. Black and Booth Brothers of New York had purchased the 70 acre Bennett place on Granite Island and put on a crew to open the quarry to be ready for a big drive in the spring. Kittredge and Smith who had manufactured about 500,000 paving blocks for delivery that season, were also cutting stone for the Dover reservoir at their Diamond Rock quarry. J. P. Armbrust constructed a temporary railway on his wharf, and if this experiment proved practical, he planned to lay a track between the wharf and the quarries. The Crown Hill Granite Company's advertising cards now read: G. H. Bacon, Philadelphia, Selling Agent, and J. P. Armbrust, Vinalhaven, Manager.\textsuperscript{59}

Everything was "moving along lively" in the granite business on Vinalhaven that fall. The models for the carving to be done on the New York Bible House had arrived. Bernard Galager, a bidder for the Bodwell Granite Company was awarded the contract for the Brooklyn Post Office. The company was still adding to its force in late fall, when there were 200 cutters on the job. The "shrill shriek" of the whistle at the Sands quarry announced the start of an even larger force in November, and tools were made for still more.\textsuperscript{60}

Work was temporarily suspended at the Bodwell company's job-shop while a bent water-wheel shaft was sent to Knowlton Brothers in Camden for repairs. A second suspension resulted when the car supplying men with stone was tied up loading a vessel at the wharf; but work soon resumed on carving the trimmings for the New York Bible House and the Brooklyn Post Office, and interest, correspondingly, revived in the Granite Cutters National Union. The local branch voted to "lay before the union"
the question of having foreign stone cutters "prove by 
certification that they have served three years of ap­
prenticeship in the trade." 61

A uniform bill of prices was proposed for the State of 
Maine late that year. The bill was designed to offset the 
argument of Maine contractors who, when asked to pay a 
bill of prices, answered they would be willing to pay what 
other contractors did, "and so it goes from one to the other 
until there is no regular standard." Vinalhaven branch 
had over 200 members on the books, and union granite 
cutters supported the idea of a uniform bill of prices. 62

A new air of confidence was expressed by union granite 
cutters on Vinalhaven in 1889. They prepared a petition 
to the Maine legislature asking that the fortnightly pay bill 
"be made general and continue in force." Prospective 
signatures included those then working for the various 
granite firms on the island: Bodwell Granite Company, 
300; Booth Brothers, 40; J. P. Armbrust, 40; Kittredge 
and Smith, 40; J. S. Black, 40. T. J. Lyons, "one of the 
most conservative, earnest workers for the labor cause," 
represented the labor organizations when the fort­night­
ly pay bill came before the Committee on Labor in 
Augusta. 63

L. M. Crockett, foreman of the granite cutters at the 
Bodwell works, marked 1600 stones and kept time for 235 
men over a month's time. Three men sharpened 1743 
drills in a single day for the workmen in the Sands quarry. 
"Nothing like having plenty of business and knowing how 
to do it." Business was reported as "booming" in January 
and "very flourishing" with 221 cutters employed a month 
later. 64

By spring, work on the Brooklyn Post Office job was 
"fairly under way." The 1888 bill of prices was still in 
effect, but the new bill was scheduled to take effect on 
June first. On the negative side, the Maine legislature
passed the Intimidation Law, which read: "Whoever by threat, intimidation, or by force, alone, or in combination with others prevents any person from entering into, or continuing in the employment of any person, firm or corporation, shall be punished by imprisonment not more than two years, or by a fine not exceeding $500." This meant union men would have to work with scabs. Therefore, "granite cutters take warning and agitate for the repeal of such a tyrannical law." And, if that failed, "look to your ticket when voting for members of the next legislature." To union men like Noyes the Intimidation Law meant, "Scab a job if you like, and the state will protect you."65

But, correcting anti-labor legislation had to wait. Work continued on the island. By summer the Brooklyn job was nearing completion, with only one story left to be cut. Noyes hoped Vinalhaven would get the Congressional Library work, and was sorry when the contracts went elsewhere. He shrugged his shoulders saying, "business continues fairly with us" and "what would benefit us will benefit someone else, so someone will be happy."66

Business began to slip toward the end of the year. In October, Noyes warned anyone looking for a job to "stay clear of this place, for there is not enough work on hand to run the present crew later than December." A month later business was "on the wane" and the crew "reduced nearly one half." Hurricane, not Vinalhaven, won the contract for the addition to the Massachusetts State House. Union secretary Everett Mills issued a brief and pessimistic report in December. There were only thirty journeymen working, and these were soon discharged. Mills first report in 1890 noted that not a single cutter was working at Vinalhaven. Another decade in the history of the granite industry at Vinalhaven had passed. The seasonal slump, an age old problem in the industry still remained. The next decade included additional problems.67
The census of 1890 reported Massachusetts, Maine, California and Connecticut as the four states leading the nation in granite production. The dollar value of Maine's output increased from $1,175,286 in 1880 to $2,225,839 in 1889. A total of $1,175,026 was paid out in wages to 3,737 men working in the industry in 1889. However, the year of the census did not open auspiciously at Vinalhaven, one of the Maine granite centers which had contributed significantly to the statistics of growth over the preceding decade. The first of the year found "not one cutter working," and the Bodwell Granite Company did not resume operations until March. The union then put in a request for a guaranteed nine hour day, but the State Association of Granite Contractors, at an April meeting in Rockland, voted that "the men have the option of working nine or ten hours as they may elect, but that the wages by the piece or hour shall not be increased above those paid in 1888." In reaction Thomas Lyons said, "it seems by the tone of their meeting that they choose war rather than peace." The war however was a short one, and Lyons was able to report within twenty-five days that Vinalhaven branch had "taken her place alongside her sister branches of Maine and other States in the nine hour column."^68

Typically, company officials complained that valuable time was lost and a number of contracts "let go" because of the "uncertainty of the labor movement at that time." Management viewed the prospects at the end of 1890 as "not very flattering," and two full crews were discharged, more quarrymen laid off, and paving cutters dismissed "right and left." On reflection, the nine-hour day victory seemed an empty one. Yet, spirits rose as spring approached. "We once again enjoy the exhilarating ozone of the big shed," wrote Lyons in 1891. The 150 men who "depended on granite cutting for a living" did not believe Congress would act after debating the back pay question once again. Senator Reagan of Texas told Senator Blair,
chairman of the Committee on Labor, that the proposed bill did not apply to granite cutters and "was never meant to." Maine granite workers disagreed. As Lyons predicted, the back-pay question was still being used as a political device to gain the workingmen's vote and was not to be settled in that session of Congress. 69

Although the crew on Vinalhaven was temporarily increased to 180 cutters in the spring of 1891, an unexpected layoff of three crews (twenty-six men) quickly followed. Lyons could see no reason for the change. He and the men thought everything was settled, "both with ourselves and the quarrymen, on a satisfactory basis with the company previous to anyone being discharged." Lyons pointed out that "it would not be unreasonable for us to ask, and for the company to grant — that whenever a reduction in the crew is contemplated, sufficient notice should be given." Maybe the company was taking advantage of the fact that three-fifths of the island's 2,500 population was dependent, directly or indirectly, on the granite industry, and having invested in homes there, could be depended on to remain during dull times until the company decided to resume operations. 70

The cost of living was not one of the major complaints on the island at that time. During good years the men bought or built their own homes instead of paying rent for tenements. The high price of wood or coal (brought by the company's own fleet of schooners) was offset by the satisfaction of owning their own homes. Single men complained there were "no rum or beer saloons," but milk was cheap and good beefsteak ran between eighteen and twenty cents per pound. Complaints about inflated prices at the company store rose and fell with the regularity of pay days. In mid-1891 the work week was fifty-eight hours, with a full day's pay for Saturdays. Bodwell paid fortnightly. Twenty percent of the union cutters worked for $2.70 to $3.00 per day. Union tool sharpeners earned
$2.60 per day. The 100 plus union quarrymen received a five and one-half percent increase, equal to the wages received for a ten hour day two years earlier. Fifty-five union paving cutters agreed to a compromise wage scale determined by arbitration.71

President George M. Brainerd must have enjoyed the publicity given Bodwell Granite in Stone magazine in 1891. The magazine boosted Brainerd's company as the "largest capitalized granite company in the United States or the world . . . ." A $500,000 capitalization was large for a Maine granite firm. Other companies, in Maine and elsewhere, contested the promotional claim that Bodwell granite "undoubtedly has no superior either in extent, the quality of its stone, the character of its plant, and the finished work shipped from its dock." The company could bid on a wide variety of contracts because of the different stock it had available in its quarries at Vinalhaven, Spruce Head, St. George and Jonesboro. The article also referred to "Jumbo," the huge horse-drawn truck or galamander which, with its twelve feet diameter wheels and coat of "Bodwell blue" paint, was a familiar sight in Vinalhaven. Stone viewed the purchase of the Corliss engine, turning lathes and overhead tramway as progressive management. The workmen on Vinalhaven, however, were somewhat apprehensive that they might lose their jobs through such mechanization.72

The famous Sands quarry was the only Bodwell quarry operating in June, 1891; but Bodwell was cutting red granite brought in the rough from the company's Jonesboro quarry. Paving was produced at the Dyer, Granite Island and East Boston quarries, and Kittredge Hill was turned into a paving operation. Booth Brothers and Hurricane Island Granite Company opened and made preparations to "do quite a paving business at the Pequod quarry."73
The union branch at Radstone, New Hampshire raised some questions:

First, is the further importation of foreign granite cutters likely to prove a benefit or an injury to our trade? Second—is not one class of these foreign workers, known as birds of passage, a positive injury to every member of our union? Third—Should any means be taken by the G.C.N.U. to make it unprofitable for granite cutters to come to this country, whose object is to work here for only a short time, then return to Europe with their earnings?

Lyons answered by pointing out that he was an American citizen of Irish extraction and was still considered a foreigner, “or more plainly speaking, a d___ Irishman.’” He said it was more important to forget where we were born and consider only what is for the best interest of our trade.” In regard to the “birds of passage” Lyons warned, “I have seen and heard so much prejudice expressed against citizens of foreign birth that I am afraid that any action taken by our union members would in some instances be governed by race prejudice.” One answer to the problem was to pass legislation making “citizenship, or a declaration to that effect, the only means of obtaining employment, especially on public works.” Lyons even suggested that “undesirable persons” who might become “either a menace to our institutions or an object for our charity” could be kept out by closing the gates of immigration.74

Rank and file worker on Vinalhaven was less interested in the birds of passage than in the upcoming Labor Day celebration. Bodwell Granite Company offered the use of Lanes Island for “games and sports of all kinds.” A “match game” of baseball, with the paving cutters and quarrymen challenging the granite cutters (won by the latter 18-3) was followed by a band concert. The Vinalhaven band provided “some of their finest airs” after they “got the stone dust blowed out of their horns.” The paving cutters and quarrymen won their share of ten
sent cigars in events ranging from "putting the stone" to the final tug of war.⁷⁵

New contracts in the fall of 1891 added to the good mood created by the Labor Day activities. The City Bank Building in Wheeling, West Virginia was completed, and most of the crew was switched over to cutting Jonesboro stock for the new Erie County Savings Bank in Buffalo, New York. This project had been under way for nearly a year and was being cut at Vinalhaven and at Stony Creek, Connecticut, under Vinalhaven foremen. Jonesboro stock was also used to fulfill the contract for the Reading Railroad Company terminal in Philadelphia. Bodwell cutters at Vinalhaven and Spruce Head realized about three months work from this job. The front of the Clark apartment building in Chicago, another new contract, was cut from Vinalhaven stock. Of the other contracts on hand, the most important was for two vaults for H. Q. French of New York City. Twenty-six cutters and two sharpeners were added to the crew because of these contracts. For once winter prospects looked good, but they did not hold true.⁷⁶

There were 130 cutters and 10 sharpeners at work on Vinalhaven at the end of October, but 30 of these were discharged within a month. There was enough work, but management claimed it was cheaper to send rough stock to Philadelphia or New York and have it cut there. "So it is even at our standard of wages we cannot secure steady employment; and it seems almost impossible for our Maine contractors to get a job in open competition unless there is preference shown for some particular class of stock or something of that kind," Lyons noted. Paving quarry operators used the same arguments. Booth Brothers were paying out $2,000 per month in salaries through their superintendent, William Grant, to 50 hands. George Smith, who manufactured 45,000 paving stones per month for sale to Booth Brothers, employed another
28 paving cutters. By contrast, the paving business on Vinalhaven was “practically at a standstill” by the first of December, and paving contractors, Booth Brothers, L. M. Crockett, George Smith and Walter McNaughton, at Pequod, had discharged all their help.77

Samuel W. Matthews, Maine’s Commissioner of Industrial and Labor Statistics, recorded one of the most famous events in the history of the industry, the Great Lockout of 1892. As of May, 1892, the greater part of the granite workers in New England were out, and many yards and quarries were idle. The principal point at issue was changing the expiration date of the bills of prices from May, the traditional date, to the end of the calendar year. Manufacturers favored the change because large building jobs came at the end of the year. They felt handicapped figuring bids with an increase in wages pending, and the possibility of a strike during the busiest season. The men disagreed. They thought that if the bills began in January, a dull time when manufacturers could easily shut down for several months, but a time when the men most needed work, it would be the men who suffered. Quarrymen and paving cutters, therefore, had “gone out” with the expiration of their bills on May first; the granite cutters shortly after. A standoff developed between the 12,000 members of the three unions and the Granite Manufacturers Association of New England.78

The figures were grossly exaggerated for effect. One Maine newspaper claimed 1,000 workmen “out” in Vinalhaven. On Monday morning, May second, the sheds “gave forth no sound.” Word spread — “the granite cutters of Vinalhaven are on strike.” The men were upset when the Bodwell Granite Company reopened one of its largest quarries with a scab crew of Swedes and Finns. Those locked out waited patiently for “some solution of the present condition of the labor question.” By fall some were forced into business for themselves. After five
months Vinalhaven's staunch union men were "still in it." The manufacturers offered to open their yards if the unions would promise not to discriminate against non-union men. J. E. Tolman responded that "surely it is hardly fair to expect us to return to work with those who, for the last five months, have filled our places at the banker and in the shop, who have been the cause of many of us leaving home and but for whom we would probably have been at work long ago." It was Tolman who announced in January, 1893, that the men had "made a settlement with the manufacturers on what we consider very good terms." The agreement meant a "decided advance" on Vinalhaven's previous bill on both day and piece work.79

One side effect of the lockout was the development of cooperatives. There was talk of forming a stock company among the workmen in May, and in mid-June a "number" of paving cutters leased a quarry. The Fox Island Co-Operative Granite Company was formed, and enough orders were obtained to put thirty cutters and fifteen quarrymen to work almost immediately. Thomas Lyons was named president and agent. Bangor's Industrial Journal wished the new company success and noted the spread of the cooperative idea to the monumental field. C. A. Athearn, once employed by the Bodwell firm as a letterer, had started his own monumental yard, and was "employing quite a few hands." Lyon's company leased a wharf and bid for ornamental, building, vault, and street work of "any kind and to any amount." Lyons and James Grant, secretary of the paving cutters, went to New York, set up an office and "waited on" the principal contractors of New York and Brooklyn. Lyons returned home "with his pockets stuffed with contracts" for cross-walk, curbing, basin and other street work. The contracts were made "at prices that will enable the men to make more money than ever they did at work for a company." Even the co-
operative however was hit by the winter lull, and "nearly all of its help" were discharged by December.80

Twenty hands were reemployed by the cooperative in February, 1893, and two schooners loaded at the company wharf in April. The Fox Island Co-Operative Granite Company formally incorporated in the latter month with a capital stock of $10,000, divided into 400 shares of twenty-five dollars each. T. J. Lyons, Fred Lermond, T. C. Creed, J. A. Babbidge and L. W. Smith were named directors. The company landed "a good sized contract" that was expected to carry the crew into the winter months. Lermond, also quarry superintendent, purchased second-hand equipment for his firm from the Martin's Point Granite Company of Friendship. A new granite shed was erected. Other cooperative contracts were entered into under the firm names of Vinalhaven Granite Company and Co-Operative Paving Company.81

The Bodwell Granite Company was awarded a half-million dollar contract for the new post office in Washington, D.C. in 1893. Carvers Harbor stock was designated by the contract, and the job had to be completed in two and one-half years. A new shed and other improvements were made for the post office job. The first three stories were to be rock-faced ashlar, and the upper stories a mixture of rough and hammered stone. A considerable amount of carving was specified. President Bainerd personally supervised the quarrying of the first stone for this new contract.82

The repercussions of the Panic of 1893 affected Vinalhaven. By September work was "slacking up," and this was attributed to "the tightness of the money market." The Bodwell company shut down three fires and let men go from a fourth. J. E. Tolman noted, "Plenty of work, but no money seems to be the cry everywhere." A month later he reported that "the closeness of the money market makes it very hard for this place." By December, however,
business was reported as “good” and “all the boys at work.” “It looks now as though we have passed the worst of the money panic here,” Tolman stated. “Owing to the Great Lockout of 1892 and the depression of the money market in the year just ended,” he concluded, “the granite industry has made a very poor showing.” Still, his year-end report indicated guarded optimism about business prospects for 1894 and 1895.83

There were 170 cutters on the Bodwell payroll in early 1894. The McComb residence, cut from red granite, was finished, freeing 13 crews to devote full time to the Washington Post Office contract. Two stones taken from the Sands quarry and cut into column caps for the main entrance of the post office took one cutter working steady for 7 or 8 months to complete. The Fox Island Granite Company finished a job in the spring, expanded its wharf, erected a new derrick and cut a cargo of rough stock and 1000 feet of curb. A crew of 200 men, including twelve apprentices, worked through the summer for Bodwell. Two sharpener crews were added late in the fall, bringing the Bodwell crew to a total of 16 gangs.84

The Bodwell Granite Company technically violated the fortnightly pay law in 1894. The Rockland Opinion saw some justification in the company’s reverting to monthly payments. The company, “far from being alone in not observing the law, was the only granite corporation in the state (except the Hallowell Granite Corporation with which it is closely connected) that has ever observed the law.” Bodwell had paid bimonthly from the inception of the law until August 15, 1893. At that time there were two large buildings under contract. The cut stone for one was not due until the fall of 1893, and the Washington Post Office stone due in the spring of 1894. The company was not paid for work on either building until the stone was actually set. This put a severe strain on the company’s reserves in the meantime. Company officials decided “it

87
was not considered judicious" to continue the large force then at work during the remainder of the financial panic of 1893 if fortnightly payments were expected. The men agreed to waive fortnightly pay, "until there should be an improvement in financial matters," if the company promised not to reduce the crew and to meet definite monthly payrolls. This enabled the Bodwell Granite Company to keep its large-sized force through the fall and winter. Upwards of 600 men were working for Bodwell during the summer of 1894. The company was informed of delays in the completion of iron and other contracts, which caused a further delay in setting stone and paying granite contractors. Again the men agreed to the firm’s request to accept monthly payments in exchange for a non-reduction in the labor force.85

Workers in Vinalhaven were unsure how they would be affected by the Tobin Law passed by the New York Legislature in 1894. The bill required that all stone used for state or municipal projects within the state, be worked, dressed or carved on the site. Maine papers resented the interpretation that the Tobin Law was designed to protect the stone cutters of New York from competition with the “cheap labor” of Maine. The initial reaction in Vinalhaven was mild. It was incorrectly assumed that only cut stone would be affected, and that Maine would continue to sell millions of paving blocks to New York City. But, the New York City Board of Public Works decided “all stone . . . worked with the hammer” was covered by the Tobin law. To the most pessimistic this meant “the market for Maine paving blocks in the state of New York is totally destroyed by one blow.” Many existing paving contacts were voided, and many prospective contracts were lost. On Vinalhaven the Bodwell Granite Company immediately discharged all seventy-five of its paving cutters.86

Early in 1895 the granite cutters and the Bodwell Granite Company agreed on a new bill of prices for the
coming year. This paved the way for increased business, especially if the Tobin Law were amended to exempt paving as was rumored. An editor commenting on the rumor said, “Let us hope so, as this means many thousands of dollars to this place.” The law was amended in April, immediately boosting the paving industry in Vinalhaven. This change was especially important to some of the smaller concerns. “This will be a great thing for business in this section. New York is the largest and best market for Maine paving and there are several places where almost the entire business consists in cutting paving for New York.”

Bodwell’s sheds were soon crowded to capacity, causing some of the 230 cutters to work outside that spring. Work continued on the Washington Post Office, and new contracts included the McCombs Monument, the General Hancock Statue and the new Harlem River Bridge being constructed by the New York Central Railroad Company. The old blacksmith shop at the harbor was moved to the Sands quarry and fitted for two more fires to provide for the tools needed on these new contracts. Work also began on one of the most famous longterm contracts ever handled by the Bodwell Granite Company, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. The first cargo of foundation stone for the cathedral was shipped in the summer of 1895.

The officers of the Bodwell Granite Company and about sixty business and professional men boarded the steamer Governor Bodwell for Vinalhaven to tour the company’s works that fall. The visitors were especially impressed with the two granite lathes, the larger of which handled columns up to twenty-five feet long and five feet in diameter. The fourteen columns of Jonesboro red granite for the Church of Ignatius in New York City were turned on this lathe. The company had two expensive polishing machines, one for flat surfaces and the other for
cylindrical pieces. The latter was used on the church columns, which when erected were supposedly "the largest polished granite columns in any building in the country."  

Late in the year John Pierce of Mount Waldo and New York was awarded the contract for the foundation and area walls of the Buffalo Post Office. Red granite from Bodwell's Jonesboro quarry was to be used for facing and gray granite from Vinalhaven for the footings. There was a four month time limit on the contract. But, four crews were discharged in November because work on the contract began too late to offset the slack created by the impending completion of the Washington Post Office contract.

Vinalhaven's granite cutters negotiated another bill of prices in 1896. Except for minor advances on special stones, the bill, which ran for three years, was nearly the same as that of 1892. A small dividend was declared by the Bodwell Granite Company but still the company discharged over 100 men. Some were rehired when the company acquired the contract for the Girard Office Building in Philadelphia calling for Jonesboro red granite to be cut at Vinalhaven and at Hurricane. More were recalled when Bodwell obtained the contract for a trust company in Rochester, New York. Because this contract had a four month time limit a portion was sublet to the Bodwell Granite Company. These were all short term contracts, and men on Vinalhaven did not feel secure until the contract for the superstructure of the Buffalo Post Office was confirmed in late 1896.

In anticipation of the Buffalo contract the company erected a new cutting shed at the Sands quarry, with a double track railway running its entire length. The shed would hold twelve or thirteen gangs of cutters, or about 160 men. The Buffalo Post Office was officially awarded to John Pierce who sublet to the Bodwell firm.
stone was to be used for this four story building and its 250 foot tower. It was debated whether to cut at Jonesboro or at Vinalhaven. Island cutters were upset when Pierce “suggested” to the union that cutting rates be shaded to cover the cost of the freight on the rough stone from Jonesboro to Vinalhaven. Pierce asked the Vinalhaven branch to reduce prices by seven percent. When the branch refused, the company threatened to cut the stone at Jonesboro, on the ground that “considerable saving would be effected in freight and rough stock.” The men argued that the cost of erecting sheds and boarding houses at Jonesboro could be saved by cutting at Vinalhaven. Since the company had invested in a new shed at the Sands quarry and in a new locomotive, they eventually decided to do the cutting at Vinalhaven. A “large amount” of Jonesboro granite arrived on December first, and about 120 cutters went to work in the new shed. “Happy” Don McCarthy, government inspector of the Buffalo Post Office, arrived, prompting an optimistic statement from union secretary David Grant. “There is quite a boom at present . . .”

In August, 1897, there was one crew each at Deep Hallow and Dark Brook on Vinalhaven. The Dark Brook crew was cutting foundation stone for the cathedral in New York, and the Buffalo Post Office constituted the principal work at the Sands Quarry. Bodwell officials changed their minds and put a large force of cutters at work at Jonesboro to save shipping costs. Only small vessels could reach the wharves at Jonesboro, so there was some agitation for federal support for dredging the channel to make it possible for the company to use deep-draught vessels and thus ship directly to New York. Robert White spent the equivalent of 150 workdays carving the eagle for the Buffalo Post Office. He hoped the Albany bank contract might also be obtained. An Augusta correspondent noted that $2,000,000 for the
granite portion of that contract was "not very poor picking." The Bodwell crew benefited from the work associated with the contract for the twenty-story Empire Building awarded to the Hallowell Granite Company that fall. The end of the season approached with approximately 300 men on the Bodwell payroll.93

The year of 1898 was dull for the granite industry on Vinalhaven. Frank Arey and his brother George were among the discouraged who abandoned stone cutting for fishing. J. P. Armbrust had returned to town after nearly a year's absence with some paving block orders for the Crown Hill Granite Company of New York. Bodwell was laying pipes to bring water from the Sands quarry to the polishing mill, indicating an intention to continue operations there. Rumor held that a large portion of the granite for the Chicago Post Office would be cut at Vinalhaven. On the other hand two local quarry owners suspended operation and leased their facilities to New York and Massachusetts parties. The Buffalo Post Office was in its last stages, and E. Russell, who supervised the cutting of Jonesboro stock for the post office, was brought back to Vinalhaven. The last granite eagle for the Buffalo contract was finished. Paving and building stone quarries, even the Sands, were shut down in July and August. A skeleton crew overhauled "McKinley" the steam derrick at the Sands quarry. Hard times were attributed to the interruption of building operations occasioned by the Spanish-American War. "It has been over nine years since Bodwell Granite Co. has been reduced to a similar standstill as now exists at Vinalhaven," observed the editor of a trade journal.94

The sinking of the battleship Maine in 1898 drew the attention of Maine granite cutters. Direct commentary on the Spanish-American War and its effects on the granite trade in Maine came from various quarry towns. When two Vinalhaven cutters, "Brothers Lane and Myrick,"
enlisted, their fellow workmen proclaimed, "They went on their own free will and accord and will hold up the Pine Tree State, as the boys have done before. We hope they will remember the Maine and unconditional surrender." David Grant said, "I suppose in all branches the war is the principal topic of the hour." He hoped the United States Army and Navy would "soon exterminate the cruel Spaniards and let us have peace."95

The last year of the decade was not very prosperous for granite workers on Vinalhaven. Bodwell Granite Company did obtain the contract for the eight large columns for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, but cutting was slow and did not require a large number of men in 1899. However, the contract did draw much attention because of a controversy as to whether the columns were the largest ever carved from single blocks of granite. Stone Trade News ran a picture of one of these rough blocks, taken from the long-idle Wharff quarry. It measured sixty-four feet long, eight feet wide and seven feet thick. The finished columns measured fifty-four feet long and six feet in diameter. The caption under the picture stated that it was the largest piece of granite quarried in the United States.96

The cathedral contract was the largest job under the hammer in 1899. Although there were periodic shipments of paving or small monuments, like the soldiers monument for Camden, Maine, insufficient work existed for the available cutters and quarrymen. Many left for other quarry sites around the state. A fatal accident at the Wharff quarry further marred the year. Charles Ingeson, quarry foreman, lit a time fuse, which exploded and threw him into the air, causing fatal injuries. This was only one of the many accidents which Thomas Lyons had witnessed in his long association with the granite industry. He probably could not help thinking how poorly paid his comrades were, considering the hazards of their occu-
pation. Still, hope existed. "For the past ten years the tendency has been to (try to) decrease wages . . . . The losses that we have met through lock-outs and strikes have been more than outbalanced by what we have gained through the shortening of our working day and increased wage rates, and this will apply to the future as well as the past," Lyons wrote.97

The Granite Cutters Union gave advance notice of their intention to ask for a $3.00 daily wage and an eight hour workday in 1900. At Vinalhaven the company agreed to the eight hour day, a six day week, and a thirty-five cent hourly minimum as of June. Lyons lamented the return to monthly paydays. The Bodwell company resumed operations by the first of July, having contracted for a New York building that would require 100 men and four months to complete. There were 75 men, including sharpeners and four fires, at the Sands quarry, and one fire at the Wharff quarry, where they were roughing out the columns for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Shaped by hand to within three inches of the line, these columns were turned in a lathe and polished. This process took four weeks. Each column weighed approximately 120 tons when put into the lathe. A new, twelve-forgo blacksmith shop was built to replace one destroyed by fire the previous year.98

Lyons favored good labor-management relations. "We want our employers to be prosperous, for in their prosperity depends our opportunity for steady employment." The men should join hands with employers to help maintain the trade on a paying basis and drive out cutthroat competition. Lyons said quarrymen were unorganized, and that "ruinous competition" existed among granite producers. Lyons was also concerned about the number of deaths in the industry caused by consumption. He estimated that ninety percent of approxi-
mately fifty Vinalhaven men with whom he had worked over a thirty-five year period had died of consumption.\textsuperscript{99}

Booth Brothers were awarded a contract in 1901 to furnish and dress the granite for the Metropolitan Bank Building in New York City. Hurricane and Vinalhaven stone was to be used for the five lower floors, and stone from the Booth's quarries in Waldoboro for the thirteen upper stories. The Bodwell Granite Company was assigned a portion of the work at Vinalhaven. Joseph Black shipped over 800,000 paving blocks to New York and Philadelphia in 1901. John Pierce's bid on the New York Custom House specified Vinalhaven stock, but all the original bids exceeded the appropriations. In rebidding, Pierce was awarded a $495,646 contract for a portion of the superstructure of the Custom House, and was given eighteen months to complete the job. Part of the contract was sublet to Spruce Head and Hurricane because of the deadline.\textsuperscript{100}

Work continued on the pillars for St. John the Divine. One column broke while being turned on the specially made $50,000 lathe. Two other columns, each cut, turned, and polished in two sections, were successfully completed in 1902. The company "held back" on both major projects and other work as the quarrymen moved for an eight hour day. The union movement prompted the Bodwell company to introduce modern cutting machinery, such as surface-cutters and pneumatic tools. The alleged object of putting in this machinery was to lower the cost of production. Lyons hoped the volume of business would increase. If it did not, the introduction of machinery would result in "spare kits to just the extent that the machine displaces the man."\textsuperscript{101}

Two of the eight columns that formed the arc about the altar of St. John the Divine were completed in the summer of 1903, and were shipped from the Wharff quarry to
New York on a specially constructed lighter. There was a “great boom” in the paving industry causing a steady advance in prices, Vinalhaven paving cutters were “much in demand.” Captain A. M. Webster shipped stone from his Pleasant River quarry to Boston and New York. J. S. Black furnished stone from his Pleasant River location for the Portsmouth Dry Dock and for New York. Thirty paving cutters were working for J. P. Armbrust at Kittredge Hill. Before leaving for the A. F. of L. convention in Boston, Lyons reviewed the work under the hammer, including work for the New York Custom House and the Ram Island lighthouse. Lyons applauded the choice of R. J. Williams of Cape Ann as government inspector for the latter job. Williams was a staunch union man. It was “much more satisfactory to have a practical man trying up your stone than some one who can not tell a bush-hammer from a side hill plough.”

The last of the eight columns for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine had been shipped to New York by January, 1904. Unloading the columns in New York had posed a problem because the two piece sections weighed 90 tons and 43 tons, respectively. Finally a rope was wound around the case of each column piece, which in unwinding the rope, rolled the column from the lighter to a specially-built ten-ton truck for the two mile trip to the cathedral grounds. This was the last major contract supervised by L. M. Crockett who had been cutting foreman at the Bodwell works for over thirty years. Known for “his real Yankee shrewdness,” Crockett had been connected with the granite industry all his life, except for two years spent in Nevada in the 1860’s.

Lyons discussed a variety of subjects of interest to Vinalhaven granite cutters in 1904. Quarrying and cutting stone in the winter months was always a problem, but it usually was taken in stride by men on the job. Lyons advocated heating the cutting sheds, so that men could be
employed year round and do their job in comfort. He also took note of the problems created by the introduction of machinery. “When the old hand tools were the only kind in use,” he observed, “granite dust was not supposed to be unhealthy . . . but the use of machine tools has brought a new way of making and stirring up dust . . . .” Many employers cared less about the dust question, but others were willing to make “suitable arrangements to get rid of the obnoxious dust if a practical method were presented.” On the question of machinery replacing manpower, Lyons remained hopeful. “Instead of our trade being harmed by their use we anticipate as time rolls on and these machines are perfected and new ones brought into use that the output of fine cut granite will be increased.” Increased production by union men paid adequate wages and working under proper conditions would lead, he thought, to a quality product, economical enough to compete with other building materials.¹⁰⁴

A branch of the Quarry Workers Union was organized at Vinalhaven in 1904. Shortly, all those eligible, except those employed by J. S. Black and Company and Webster and Childs, had joined. Quarrymen on Vinalhaven worked a nine hour day. Those elsewhere in Maine usually worked only eight hours. The Vinalhaven quarrymen’s request was modest. They were poorly paid, averaging $1.75 per day or $10.50 per week. This was inadequate considering working conditions, time lost due to foul weather, and the constant exposure to danger. The request was granted “without any friction,” and henceforth the men received the same pay for eight hours as they had for nine hours. “There was no politics used as a propelling force to this movement,” Lyons claimed. “It was simply a case of men uniting under the trade union banner.” Reports on these and other topics including a discussion about socialism, furthered Lyons’ reputation among granite cutters across the nation. He was again
Lyons returned from the convention even more firmly convinced that better wages and working conditions were needed. He now advocated a total suspension of work during the winter months in order to decrease the amount of time spent breathing hazardous dust. Lyons held that the only properly ventilated shed was “without any roof but the blue canopy of heaven.” But that was impractical given Maine’s climate. The effective remedy, he thought, was “a voluntary vacation or enforced absence from the sheds during certain portions of the year.” The cutters prime concern, however, was the pay scale. A new, three-year bill of prices was drawn up in 1905, providing for a minimum wage of 37\(\frac{1}{2}\) cents per hour, or \$3.00 for an eight hour day. A sharpener’s gang was to consist of fourteen men, plus two apprentices. All but the apprentices were to be paid \$3.00 per day. Piecework prices were advanced seven percent. Wages were to be in cash, paid every other Friday, with not more than five days wages held back. Surface cutters and lathe operators were to receive 42\(\frac{1}{2}\) cents per hour, or \$3.40 per day, with no overtime, “except in case of absolute necessity.” This was designed to offset the practice of rushing contracts to completion through the use of over-time, and then laying off the men during the winter. The winter of 1904-1905, “the gol darndest we have had for the last hundred years,” delayed the start of spring operations when the new bill went into effect for work on the New York Custom House and four fountains.196

Vinalhaven was flooded with rumors of big jobs and contracts in 1905, but many of these were awarded elsewhere. Lyons complained, “if present conditions are to continue we will have to adopt the plan of following the jobs and establish ourselves as the United States constitution does when following the flag.” Married
cutters, however, were reluctant to move. This observation was made by the *Boston Globe* in an article reporting the marriage of Andrew Lakestrom, a Finn, which took place in J. P. Armbrust's quarry. About that time, P. F. McCarthy arrived to settle quarrymen's strikes on Vinalhaven and Hurricane. Bodwell company, then engaged in making costly improvements, was especially anxious to settle. "This is a step in the right direction," said Lyons. "To keep on the ground floor of success in these times of close competition, not only modern business methods must be installed, but modern machinery as well."107

Bodwell Granite Company shared the contract for the U. S. Senate Office Building with Booth Brothers and Hurricane Island Granite Company. Mt. Waldo Granite Company received the contract for the Cleveland Post Office and shipped rough stone from its Frankfort quarries to be cut at Vinalhaven. Work was suspended so the men could hear Samuel J. Gompers, President of the A. F. of L., speak at the Vinalhaven Opera House. Gompers, his daughter and J. F. McWilliams, president of the quarrymen's union, toured the quarries and works. Gompers supported Lyons as a delegate to the A. F. of L. convention in Pittsburgh in 1905.108

Bodwell's Vinalhaven crew was kept busy on the Cleveland Post Office and another building through 1906. The following year Charles D. Athearn spent two months in Kansas City putting the finishing touches on the Kansas City Post Office, built of Jonesboro red granite. Athearn also did the carving and lettering for the new National Bank of Commerce Building in Kansas City for Bodwell. The company also had contracts for ten drinking fountains for the Humane Society. One of these fountains stood in the square near the West End Hotel in Portland. A year-end contract was received for a soldiers monument for the National Cemetery at Salisbury, North Carolina.
Governor Cobb of Maine appointed Thomas Lyons as Commissioner of Industrial and Labor Statistics. The big news of 1907 was the sale of the Monaghan quarry to J. Leopold and Company of New York.\textsuperscript{109}

The Salisbury monument was completed before the Vinalhaven workers went on strike in 1908. They were opposed to the use of small hand-held surface cutting machines in the sheds. These machines, familiarly known as “bumpers,” made too much dust. Although various types of ventilating devices were tried at Vinalhaven, none had worked satisfactorily. The workers, therefore, wanted an agreement to limit the use of machines to certain kinds of work. The company reluctantly agreed after the strikers had been out for six months. The settlement led to an expansion of the Bodwell company’s operations. The “Bee Hive,” a large tenement house owned by the company, was torn down, a derrick erected, and a new quarry opened.\textsuperscript{110}

The George A. Fuller Company was awarded the contract for the new Chicago and Western Railroad terminal in Chicago. This was sublet to the Bodwell Granite Company, Booth Brothers, and Hurricane Island Granite Company, thus assuring work for 500 men. Later in the year about 200 hands were working at Vinalhaven and another 100 in the Bodwell quarries in Spruce Head. The new federal building at Bar Harbor and the Chicago terminal were the major projects.\textsuperscript{111}

The Chicago terminal job was completed in 1910. A small crew cut “another lot of fountains,” stone for the New York municipal building (subcontracted from Mt. Waldo) and an office building for the Union Pacific Railroad at Omaha. The fountain work was augmented by Bodwell’s contract for the Otis Building in Chicago in 1911. Only three of the sixteen stories of the Otis Building were to be granite. A new bill of prices for four years at an “advanced wage rate” was signed in 1912. A church job was started that year. “Everything is lovely, and the goose
hangs high,” commented the secretary of the quarrymen. "We can’t touch it with a ship’s boat hook. But never mind boys, better days are coming." 112

The Granite Cutters Journal ran a cover picture in 1914 showing the first column for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine being turned on the famous cutting lathe. The quarry workers union claimed a membership of 148, which was good considering quarry business had been dull for several years. Leopold company, the paving concern, installed a new air compressor, providing the “death blow to that old chestnut: “What’s the matter with the air?” The only company employing quarrymen through the winter of 1914-1915 was Leopold’s, and the paving cutters all worked “motions,” quarrying their own stock because the “track was closed down for the winter.” In 1916 there was a six-week strike for $4.00 a day minimum wage. Paving cutters at Leopold’s East Boston and Booth’s quarry at Pequot attributed part of the 19 percent decrease in Maine paving block production to the strike. A good proportion of the nearly nine million blocks manufactured in Maine in 1916 came from Vinalhaven. 113

Thomas Lyons reflected on the changed status of the granite industry in Maine in 1917, saying “for several years past the trade, especially the part depending upon building construction, has degenerated to such an extent that it is impossible for a man to make a living.” The slump was decidedly noticeable in Maine, and the prospects for improvement were discouraging. He partly blamed existing conditions on the Treasury Department in Washington, which had decided the price of granite for public buildings was prohibitive. Hence, many public buildings were built of Indiana limestone. Lyons disavowed Washington’s argument. “I can hardly believe that if proper business methods are pursued by the manufacturers that limestone or any other building material can be freighted from long distances over the

101
railroads... for less money than granite can be produced..."\textsuperscript{114}

In 1917, Booth Brothers tried to cut costs by not operating their compressor during the winter months. They were the first of the paving contractors to offer their cutters an extra five or ten percent for drilling by hand during the winter. When electricity came to the island, Leopold switched to electric derricks and compressors, hoping to save money on the manufacture of New York blocks, the island's specialty. The effects of the war in Europe began to appear when street car companies spent less for blocks in 1917 than in 1916. One cutter predicted that "if the war continues cities will fall in line." More importantly, "the draft is going to take a good many of our members and we can see the paving cutters dwindle down to a small number." F. B. Snow of the quarry workers union agreed, and a union granite cutter observed, "there will be nobody left but a few of the old boys; they are going pretty fast now, but when the 18 years to 45 comes in effect I should say it will clean them out pretty well." Vinalhaven's paving cutters pointed out they had met their quota on the Third Liberty Loan when they appealed to state officials and congressmen for support in securing barges or vessels for shipping blocks.\textsuperscript{115}

George M. Brainerd, president of the Bodwell Granite Company since Bodwell's death in 1887 and the last of the original group of stockholders, died in 1917. A report in the \textit{Granite Cutters Journal} in August, 1918, indicated "nothing doing and no sign of anything." This was the last journal report from Vinalhaven until 1937-1938, when the Capital City Granite Company began cutting bridge stone and curbing for Bar Harbor and New York. One of the last branch reports in 1938 recorded the death of Marius F. Calderwood, who turned the great columns for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.\textsuperscript{116}
After World War I paving operations resumed on Vinalhaven. Booth Brothers cut blocks at the East Boston quarry. The Swamp quarry, which the Booths opened in the spring of 1920, operated for another decade. The Roberts Harbor Granite Company and the Jones Granite Company were active in the 1920's, but both owed their existence to contracts awarded through the "paving king" Joseph Leopold. Frederick Jones and Christopher Roberts operated a paving quarry from 1923 until 1927, when their quarry was taken over by J. Leopold and Company. Leopold stopped paving operations at the East Boston and Jones-Roberts quarries in 1931, but continued to cut and ship paving blocks from other sites throughout the 1930's. Joseph Leopold, "one of the most prominent manufacturers of granite paving in the country," died in 1938. The company missed his "aggressive and outstanding personality." Although Andrew Johnson, a union paving cutter, hoped business would be "carried on as usual," J. Leopold and Company ended operations in August, 1939, after a work season of only seven weeks.\textsuperscript{117}

The history of the Maine granite industry from 1910 to World War II was characterized by the demise of old established firms; a struggle to maintain the paving industry; brief spurts of activity at individual quarries to fulfill special contracts; and the nostalgic reminiscences of the ever-diminishing number of men who had actually worked in the Maine quarries. The days of "Bodwell Blue" were ended.


4 William Kittredge and S. G. Webster opened one quarry; Joseph Kittredge, Samuel Clay and Ezekiel Sargent, the other. The quarry purchased by Bodwell and Webster was originally owned by Garrett Coughlin, Edward Russell and James Sprague. Winslow, *Op. cit.*, pp. 21-25.

5 *REP*, May 17, 1871, p. 2.

6 *RFP*, January 24, 1872, p. 2; March 20, 1872, p. 2; April 9, 1873, p. 2; August 6, 1873, p. 2; August 27, 1873, p. 2; October 22, 1873, p. 2; *RG*, September 4, 1873, p. 2.

7 *RFP*, March 18, 1874, p. 2; May 3, 1876, p. 2.


9 *RO*, February 23, 1877, p. 2; May 18, 1877, p. 2; June 1, 1877, p. 2.

10 *RO*, January 19, 1877, p. 3; February 23, 1877, p. 2; March 2, 1877, p. 2.

11 *RO*, April 20, 1877, p. 2; April 27, 1877, p. 2.

12 *RO*, May 4, 1877, p. 2; May 11, 1877, p. 2; May 18, 1877, p. 2.

13 *RO*, June 8, 1877, p. 2; June 15, 1877, p. 2.

14 In June, 1868, an act was passed limiting the workday to eight hours, whereas most granite employees worked ten hours. A year later president Grant issued a proclamation directing that there be no reduction in a day's wages on account of the reduction in hours of labor on existing or future government contracts. In 1872, Congress authorized back pay for those whose pay had been reduced from June, 1868, to May, 1869. Murch tried to get Congressional recognition that

15 *GCJ*, September, 1877, p. 1; October, 1877, p. 1; November, 1877, p. 1.

16 The East River Bridge was parceled out to, Pierce, Rowe and Co., of Frankfort, the Collins Granite Co. of Bluehill and the Bodwell Granite Co. of Vinalhaven. *RO*, November 9, 1877, p. 2; November 16, 1877, p. 2; November 30, 1877, p. 1. *GCJ*, December, 1877, p. 1.

17 *GCJ*, April, 1878, p. 1.


24 *RG*, October 24, 1878, p. 3; November 21, 1878, p. 3. *GCJ*, October, 1878, p. 1; December, 1878, p. 1.

25 *GCJ*, January, 1879, p. 3; April, 1879, p. 1. *RG*, March 13, 1879, p. 2; May 1, 1879, p. 2; May 8, 1879, p. 2; May 15, 1879, p. 2.

26 *RG*, May 8, 1879, p. 2; May 29, 1879, p. 2; June 12, 1879, p. 2.

27 *GCJ*, May, 1879, p. 4.


31 *GCJ*, January, 1881, p. 5; March, 1881, p. 4; May, 1881, p. 2; December, 1881, p. 1.

32 *GCJ*, April, 1882, p. 1; September, 1882, p. 1.

33 *KJ*, November 15, 1882, p. 5; November 29, 1882, p. 5; February 14, 1883, p. 4; April 11, 1883, p. 5; August 22, 1883, p. 5; September 26, 1883, p. 1. These eight eagles weighed three tons apiece. *GCJ*, December, 1883, p. 1. This shipment was also referred to in Vinalhaven's first newspaper, *The Wind*, January 12, 1884, p. 2. Hereinafter cited as *TW*.
34 *TW*, January 5, 1884, p. 1; January 12, 1884, p. 2; January 19, 1884, p. 3.

35 *TW*, January 19, 1884, p. 4; February 2, 1884, p. 3; February 9, 1884, p. 3; March 15, 1884, p. 3. The Maine Secretary of State’s report for 1883 listed the Bodwell Granite Co. as having an assessed value of $101,288 and total number of men employed 650. Reprinted in *TW*, February 16, 1884, pp. 2-3.

36 Hopkins’ creditors met in Rockland, and F. S. Walls was chosen as assignee, *TW*, March 8, 1884, p. 3. Paving blocks varied in size. The most common ones were known as Standards. Other sized blocks were known by the name of the city making extensive use of a different size, thus Baltimore blocks, *TW*, March 15, 1884, p. 3; March 22, 1884, p. 3.

I. A. Crockett and Co. (the “company” being Jewell Granite Co. of Lincoln) was an example of a successful monumental firm setting up business in a more populous area and being dependent on outside quarries for their stock. Stock for Crockett’s yard came from Lincoln, Lincolnville, South Thomaston, Mount Desert, Oak Hill (Belfast), Addison (red) and St. George (red). *TW*, April 12, 1884, p. 4; April 19, 1884, p. 4; April 26, 1884, p. 4.

37 Reprinted and commented on in *TW*, May 3, 1884, p. 4.


39 *The Wind*, Vinalhaven’s first recorded newspaper failed, probably due to competition from larger mainland newspapers. Its successor the *Vinalhaven Messenger* met a similar fate. *Vinalhaven Messenger*, February 6, 1885, p. 3. Hereinafter cited as *VM*. *VM*, February 13, 1885, p. 3; April 10, 1885, p. 3. For an obituary of S. G. Webster, one of the pioneers of the granite industry on Vinalhaven see *VM*, April 3, 1885, p. 2. For evidence of varied quarry activity on the island see *VM*, April 10, 1885, p. 3; April 17, 1885, p. 3; April 24, 1885, p. 3.

40 Bodwell also completed a monument to C. P. Dixon, late of Dix Island. *VM*, May 8, 1885, p. 3; May 15, 1885, p. 3; May 29, 1885, p. 3; June 5, 1885, p. 3. *KJ*, July 8, 1885, p. 5. *VM*, July 3, 1885, p. 3.

41 There is a gap in Vinalhaven newspaper coverage between mid-1885 and late-1887 when the *Vinalhaven Echo* started. Charles Scontras discusses the Knights of Labor in Maine in *Two Decades of Organized Labor and Labor Politics in Maine, 1880-1900* (Orono: University of Maine, 1969), pp. 12-13. *KJ*, March 31, 1886, pp. 1-5; October 27, 1886, p. 5; November 10, 1886, p. 4; December 29, 1886, p. 5.

of the firm, had just been elected to the Maine Senate. KJ, January 9, 1887, p. 2; January 26, 1883, pp. 1-5.

43 KJ, February 9, 1887, p. 5; April 6, 1887, p. 2; April 13, 1887, p. 1; May 4, 1887, pp. 4-5.

44 KJ, June 1, 1887, p. 5; June 29, 1887, p. 5. The shaft was 100 feet long and 10 feet square at its base. KJ, July 20, 1887, p. 5; September 7, 1887, p. 5. The Vinalhaven Echo was the third attempt to maintain a local newspaper. Vinalhaven Echo, October 7, 1887, p. 2. Hereinafter cited as VE. There was promotional value in being known as quarriers of the biggest stone or the largest shaft. Local newspapers were full of accounts of attempts to beat existing records. VE, October 7, 1887, p. 3.

45 GCJ, November, 1887, p. 7. VE, November 17, 1887, pp. 1-2. About this time two Vinalhaven men, Ames and Mills, opened a granite concern in Saccarappa, Maine. VE, November 24, 1887, p. 3.

46 VE, December 1, 1887, p. 4; December 8, 1887, p. 3; December 15, 1887, p. 3.

47 VE, December 22, 1887, p. 2. For comparative editorials see Hallowell Record, December 17, 1887, pp. 2-3; December 24, 1887, p. 1.


49 GCJ, January, 1888, p. 6. VE, December 29, 1887, p. 3; January 5, 1888, p. 3; January 19, 1888, pp. 2-3; February 2, 1888, p. 3. Subcontracting, or sharing of contracts was common throughout the industry. This contract was eventually divided into three equal parts. VE, February 9, 1888, p. 2; March 1, 1888, p.3.

50 VE, February 16, 1888, p. 3; March 1, 1888, p. 1.

51 GCJ, March, 1888, p. 7. VE, March 1, 1888, p. 1; March 8, 1888, p. 7; March 15, 1888, pp. 1,3; March 22, 1888, p. 2.

52 GCJ, April, 1888, p. 6.

53 Favorable action was not forthcoming at that time. VE, April 5, 1888, p. 1.

54 The Bible House was cut from Jonesboro red granite. GCJ, May, 1888, p. 7; June, 1888, p. 1. VE, April 12, 1888, p. 1; April 19, 1888, p. 2; April 26, 1888, p. 3.


56 VE, April 19, 1888, p. 2; May 3, 1888, pp. 2-3; May 10, 1888, p. 2; June 14, 1888, p. 2; July 12, 1888, p. 1; July 19, 1888, p. 2. GCJ, October, 1888, p. 5.
Union branches in many Maine towns were still fighting for a designated monthly payday. *VE*, August 2, 1888, p. 3; August 16, 1888, p. 3.

W. W. Kittredge of Vinalhaven was foreman of the Niantic Granite Co. in Niantic, Conn., at this time. *VE*, November 1, 1888, p. 1.

W. W. Kittredge of Vinalhaven was foreman of the Niantic Granite Co. in Niantic, Conn., at this time. *VE*, November 1, 1888, p. 1.

The *Vinalhaven Echo* stopped publication with its January 24, 1889 issue. *GCJ*, February, 1889, p. 5; March, 1889, p. 5.

Quarrymen also struck for ten hours' pay for nine and one-half hours work but soon compromised on nine and a half hours pay with full pay for eight hours on Saturday. *GCJ*, July, 1890, p. 6.

Specified of the paving cutters' bill were not reported in the local papers. *GCJ*, June, 1891, p. 5. *CG*, April 7, 1891, p. 4; June 2, 1891, p. 4.

This same article was reprinted earlier in the *CG*, February 3, 1891, p. 2.
75 GCJ, August, 1891, p. 6; November, 1891, p. 6. CG, August 11, 1891, p. 6; September 15, 1891, p. 6.
76 CG, September 29, 1891, p. 1; October, 1891, p. 1; October 13, 1891, p. 1.
77 GCJ, November, 1891, p. 6; December, 1891, p. 5. CG, October 20, 1891, p. 8; December 1, 1891, p. 8.
79 Vinalhaven Neighbor, December 8, 1937, p. 3. GCJ, May, 1892, p. 1; August, 1892, p. 4; September, 1892, p. 4; October, 1892, p. 4; January, 1893, p. 4. IJ, July 8, 1892, p. 1.
80 RO, May 20, 1892, p. 2; August 26, 1892, p. 2; September 2, 1892, p. 2. CG, June 14, 1892, p. 8. GCJ, September, 1892, p. 1; December, 1892, p. 4.
81 IJ, August 11, 1893, p. 1; October 13, 1893, p. 1. GCJ, February, 1893, p. 3; April, 1893, p. 3; June, 1893, p. 6. RO, March 24, 1893, p. 2; April 7, 1893, p. 3; April 27, 1893, p. 3; June 2, 1893, p. 1; November 3, 1893, p. 3.
83 GCJ, September, 1893, p. 4; October, 1893, p. 4; December, 1893, p. 3. IJ, August 11, 1893, p. 1.
84 GCJ, February, 1894, p. 3; April, 1894, p. 4; June, 1894, p. 5; August, 1894, p. 4; December, 1894, p. 4. RO, April 13, 1894, p. 3; November 16, 1894, p. 2.
85 RO, July 13, 1894, p. 2.
86 GCJ, September, 1894, pp. 1-2. RO, September 21, 1894, p. 2; October 26, 1894, p. 2.
87 RO, March 5, 1895, p. 3; April 19, 1895, p. 2; April 25, 1895, p. 2. GCJ, March, 1895, p. 1. IJ, January 11, 1895, p. 8; March 29, 1895, p. 1.
88 GCJ, May, 1895, p. 4; July, 1895, p. 6. IJ, May 3, 1895, p. 1; May 10, 1895, p. 1; May 31, 1895, p. 1; June 7, 1895, p. 1; June 28, 1895, p. 1.
89 RO, September 6, 1895, p. 2.
90 GCJ, September, 1895, p. 1; November, 1895, p. 6; December, 1895, p. 7. Stone Trade News, November 12, 1895, p. 2. Hereinafter cited as STN. RO, November 15, 1895, p. 2.
91 RO, February 14, 1896, p. 2; June 12, 1896, p. 2. STN, February 18, 1896, p. 3; March 12, 1896, p. 3; September 1, 1896, p. 7. GCJ, March, 1896, p. 6; July, 1896, p. 6.

92 RO, September 18, 1896, p. 3; October 16, 1896, p. 2; November 6, 1896, p. 2; November 20, 1896, p. 1. GCJ, October, 1896, p. 7; November, 1896, p. 7. STN, October 1, 1896, p. 5; November 1, 1896, p. 5; November 15, 1896, p. 9; December 11, 1896, p. 4.

93 GCJ, August, 1897, p. 7; October, 1897, p. 6; December, 1897, p. 5. STN, May 1, 1897, p. 13; July 15, 1897, p. 5; August 15, 1897, p. 4; October 15, 1897, p. 5. RO, April 30, 1897, p. 3; June 25, 1897, p. 3; November 19, 1897, p. 2. The Albany bank job went to Hallowell. STN, July 15, 1897, p. 5.

94 RO, March 25, 1898, p. 3; April 22, 1898, p. 3; May 13, 1898, p. 2; May 20, 1898, p. 3; August 5, 1898, p. 3; October 21, 1898, p. 3; December 16, 1898, p. 2; December 23, 1898, p. 2.

95 GCJ, May, 1898, p. 6; June, 1898, p. 6.

96 STN, October, 1899, p. 12.

97 GCJ, November, 1899, p. 7.

98 RJ, July 6, 1900, p. 1. GCJ, January, 1900, p. 7; February, 1900, p. 7; April, 1900, p. 7; June, 1900, p. 7; July, 1900, p. 7; August, 1900, p. 6; September, 1900, p. 7; December, 1900, p. 6. KJ, January 10, 1900, p. 9; May 23, 1900, p. 8; June 20, 1900, p. 9; July 4, 1900, p. 12. Rockland Daily Star, February 21, 1900, p. 1. Hereinafter cited as RDS.

99 GCJ, May, 1900, p. 7; November, 1900, p. 6.

100 RO, October 25, 1901, p. 2; May 24, 1901, p. 2; May 31, 1901, p. 3; December, 1901, p. 4. GCJ, January-December, 1901.

101 GCJ, January, 1902, p. 11; February, 1902, pp. 5, 11; March, 1902, p. 11; April, 1902, p. 12; May, 1902, p. 10; June, 1902, p. 9; July, 1902, p. 9; August, 1902, p. 10; September, 1902, p. 11; October, 1902, p. 11; November, 1902, p. 10; December, 1902, p. 10. RO, March 28, 1902, p. 2; October 10, 1902, p. 2; November 7, 1902, p. 3; November 21, 1902, p. 2. KJ, December 17, 1902, p. 16.

102 RO, July 17, 1903, p. 2. GCJ, January, 1903, p. 11; April, 1903, p. 11; August, 1903, p. 11; October, 1903, p. 11. RCG, May 12, 1903, p. 3; June 9, 1903, p. 3. KJ, April 1, 1903, p. 14.

103 GCJ, January, 1904, p. 11. RO, December 2, 1904, p. 2; December 9, 1904, p. 3.

104 GCJ, February, 1904, p. 1; April, 1904, p. 11; May, 1904, p. 4.

105 GCJ, May, 1904, p. 12; June, 1904, p. 11; July, 1904, p. 11; August, 1904, p. 11; September, 1904, p. 10; October, 1904, pp. 2, 10; November, 1904, p. 8.


108 RO, August 25, 1905, p. 3; September, 1905, p. 2; October 13, 1905, p. 2. GCJ, August, 1905, p. 9; September, 1905, p. 9; October, 1905, pp. 9-10; November, 1905, p. 4; December, 1905, p. 8.

109 GCJ, January, 1906, p. 8; March, 1906, p. 10; August, 1906, p. 9; October, 1906, p. 10; November, 1906, p. 10; December, 1906, p. 9; January, 1907, p. 10; February, 1907, p. 9; March, 1907, p. 12; April, 1907, p. 11; May, 1907, p. 10; June, 1907, p. 10; July, 1907, p. 10; August, 1907, p. 4; October, 1907, p. 9; November, 1907, p. 10; December, 1907, p. 7. RO, October 12, 1906, p. 2; November 23, 1906, p. 4; February 1, 1907, p. 4; May 10, 1907, p. 5; June 7, 1907, p. 5; August 2, 1907, p. 8; November 1, 1907, pp. 4-5. IJ, November, 1907, p. 5.

110 GCJ, January, 1908, p. 8; February, 1908, p. 9; May, 1908, p. 9; July, 1908, p. 10; August, 1908, p. 10; October, 1908, p. 8; November, 1908, p. 9; December, 1908, p. 9. RO, February 14, 1908, p. 8; March 13, 1908, p. 2; August 28, 1908, p. 5; October 23, 1908, p. 1. IJ, March, 1908, p. 22.

111 IJ, April, 1909, p. 5; October, 1909, p. 15. GCJ, January, 1909, p. 9; February, 1909, p. 9; April, 1909, p. 9; May, 1909, p. 9; June, 1909, p. 8; July, 1909, p. 8; August, 1909, p. 8; October, 1909, p. 8; December, 1909, p. 10.


114 GCJ, September, 1917, p. 16; July, 1918, p. 17.
115 PCJ, January, 1917, p. 4; May, 1917, p. 3; June, 1917, p. 2; August, 1917, pp. 2, 3; June, 1918, p. 2. QWJ, August, 1918, p. 2.
