

# **Arnprior Marble**

## ***From the Cemetery to the Senate***

“In the neighbourhood of Ottawa, at Arnprior, are extensive quarries of the best marble to be found in America, in proof of which the specimens to be seen at the new Parliament Buildings need only be cited.”

Ottawa and Counties of Carleton and Russell Directory 1866-67, page 2

**To honour the early Arnprior craftsmen  
who created original and artistic works  
simply from the stone they walked on.**

by

Dave and Mary Forsyth  
With help from many

Image courtesy Arnprior & District Museum



**Contents**

<b>Arnprior Marble From the Cemetery to the Senate</b> - Title Page:(fireplace figure, Arnprior District Museum) .	
<b>Foreword</b> .....	iii
<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Features of Arnprior Marble - How was Arnprior Marble formed?</b> .....	1
<b>Marble Sites - Where were the quarries?</b> .....	3
Quarry on the Island at the “foot of the lumber slide” - William Knowles.....	3
The “Cove of the Ottawa” ,”Russell and Elgin”, the “mill” near the C.P.R. Bridge, “Lot No.2, 15 <sup>th</sup> Conc, Township of McNab”.....	7
Cove of the Ottawa.....	8
Russell and Elgin.....	10
“Ravine east of Arnprior” – Indenture for “Lot No.2, 15 <sup>th</sup> Conc., Township of McNab”.....	10
<b>Mill and Shop Sites: Marble Finishing and Technology</b> .....	13
48 Hugh Street – “South Hugh Street” the first C.P.R. Station .....	13
48 Hugh Street –T.J. Somerville to J.G. Watson, by 1887.....	16
“South side of the Madawaska” River.....	17
John Street – Spence & Co., Watson and Danlin.....	18
Elgin Street - Transition from Wm Spence to T. J. Somerville to John L. Fraser – Dominion Marble Works - New Granite and Marble Works - Central Marble Works 1885, 1888 –1890.....	18
Arnprior Marble Quarry, Plant and Shop Site Summary.....	20
<b>Arnprior Marble Craftsmen and Products – Who were they? What did they make?</b> .....	21
Marble Craftsmen.....	21
William Knowles – the Egan Monument – 1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales.....	23
1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales.....	26
The Spence Family.....	27
The Somervilles.....	29
R. MacDonald and Son.....	30
The Cemetery Market - local head and tombstones, Albert Street Cemetery, Arnprior.....	31
The Tombstone Trails of Arnprior Marble and a link to the War of 1812 .....	32
Cataraqui Cemetery, Kingston, Ontario.....	34
Arnprior Marble – Craftmanship – Sculpture.....	35
<b>Architectural use of Arnprior Marble</b> .....	36
Arnprior buildings:.....	36
“The Hill” - Galilee Centre – by 1857 .....	36
Arnprior Village Hall – 1862? to April 2, 1888.....	37
Arnprior’s Town Hall – 1888 .....	39
224 Harriet – 1888?.....	39

More original Arnprior Village Hall stones may be found ...	40
Grace St. Andrew's United Church Manse, 24 Ottawa Street – 1871-1872	41
Tierney Block – 1865.....	42
“The Retreat” - 451 Madawaska blvd – 1866.....	43
Craig Block, 146 John Street - 1870's?.....	44
Campbell Block – post 1863?.....	45
Scotiabank – 1870s?.....	46
Grace-St. Andrew's United Church – 1890 .....	47
Brick buildings with Arnprior Marble; 67-71 Madawaska; 122-126 Daniel St. ....	48
Chimney Caps and Pieces.....	49
Local building sites.....	49
<b>Architectural use of Arnprior Marble – First Parliament Buildings and University College.....</b>	<b>50</b>
Centre Block Entrance .....	50
House of Commons.....	51
Senate Chamber.....	52
Arnprior Marble Parliament Buildings Material Invoice.....	53
Arnprior Marble in the Principal Hall, University College, University of Toronto.....	55
<b>Significance – Industry size - How famous was the Arnprior Marble industry?.....</b>	<b>56</b>
Provincial Awards.....	56
International Awards.....	57
“Arnprior Marble” – a recognized quality standard .....	59
<b>Abrupt Demise of the Arnprior Marble Industry.....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Arnprior's Marble Era Timeframe.....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Heritage Values and Sites .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Questions - Areas for Further Research .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Appendix: Marble in Arnprior – today .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>References:.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Airphotos: .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Pre-1916 House of Commons and Senate images:.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Further Reading: .....</b>	<b>74</b>

## Foreword

As enterprises expanded along the Ottawa Valley of the 1800's, river junctions were coveted sites. The smooth, easily accessible rocks at the Madawaska-Ottawa junction proved an irresistibly welcome landing. Geology had made Arnprior.

The curved, paisley-like patterns in the washed marble at Arnprior record the particular ductile folding that made "*Arnprior Marble*". Although more difficult to extract, the marble was closer than limestone and softer, more easily worked than granite. Marble had made Arnprior's geoheritage. Sir William Logan, director of the Geological Survey of Canada in 1842, wrote:

From Logan's "Progress Report" from "Commencement" (1842) to 1863. The "mill ... at Arnprior" had "been erected" before 1863.

Quarry technology of hammer, bar, wedges, block and tackle, derrick and simple sweat was augmented by steam-powered saws and polishing tools in nearby plants. W. Knowles may have used water power to run gang saws cutting marble from the island at the Madawaska bridge.

A headstone in the Craig St. cemetery, Perth, with a date of death of

September 1835 and a signed stone with an 1845 date of death in the Anglican cemetery on Carp Road indicate the industry was well underway before Arnprior's lumber boom and Dan McLachlin's arrival. The stone of choice for cemeteries along routes from Arnprior to the Pontiac, Ottawa, Cornwall, Brockville, Perth and Kingston attests to the local reputation of "*Arnprior Marble*". By 1859, the quality and artistry from decades of monument production was rewarded by contracts for internal columns, fireplace facades, mantles and floor tiles for Canada's first Parliamentary and Departmental Buildings. By 1878 Arnprior Marble was recognized with international awards. Although less celebrated than logging, the marble industry bolstered the regional economy. Apparently akin to trade issues today, federal duties and production costs facilitated the industry's demise by about 1890. While depleted forests ended Arnprior's lumber boom, Arnprior did not "*run out*" of marble.

At the mouth of the Madawaska in MacNab, on the Ottawa, there is a great extent of crystalline limestone, which is colored of a bluish-grey, apparently from an admixture of plumbago. This color is irregularly distributed, some portions being nearly black, and others almost white, so that the rock often presents a striped or barred appearance. In many cases however the beds are very much corrugated, and sections of it exhibit curious complicated patterns like the grain of certain woods; the white, bluish-grey, and black colors being so arranged as to give very pleasing effects. Different portions of the marble vary in the size and arrangement of the colored bands; and their aspect changes as it is cut with or across the beds. The stone is somewhat coarse grained, and contains a little tremolite; but it takes a good polish, and is obtained in large blocks, which are easily wrought. A mill has been erected in the vicinity, at Arnprior, for the purpose of sawing and polishing this stone, which is known as the Arnprior marble, and has begun to be employed both for interior decoration, and for funeral monuments; for which last, by its color, it is well adapted. The price of the marble delivered in Ottawa, is stated to be \$1.50 the cubic foot; or sawn into slabs, \$0.45 the square foot.

As the significance of the Arnprior Marble story grew, our efforts to pursue more than we had anticipated rose in large measure to the urging of early reviewers including S. Forsyth, Civic Collections, City of Kingston, Ontario, J. Carlile, Arnprior and District Museum and L. Dougherty, Arnprior McNab/Braeside Archives. The referral to R. Newell's "Arnprior industry prior to 1900" by volunteers at the Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives was pivotal. We felt at times both blessed and cursed with the tasks "assigned" by Newell to pursue documents that would confirm, clarify and expand her myriad of references to the products, persons, dates, locations and events that mark Arnprior's "*Marble Era*". It is likely that artefacts of the Late Victorian marble industry in Arnprior remain to be unearthed.

The study evolved from questions posed while preparing geology tour guides for the Macnamara Field Naturalists Club (see: <http://www.mfnc.ca/macnamaratrail/geologyfieldguides.html>).

We hope this report may help to recognize both the Arnprior industry and the remnant marble sites as heritage locations of both local and national significance. Much may still be done.



## Introduction

Beneath recent clays and Ordovician sediments, all of Arnprior is underlain by Precambrian marble. The marble is but one feature of the geology that has framed the history of Arnprior.

During Arnprior's "Marble Era" from the 1830's to ~1900, local quarries produced two principal types of marble. The dark grey-blue shades and smoothly crenulated internal fabric define "Arnprior Marble". Newspaper reports often referred to it as the "dark Arnprior". Lighter grey stone with a finer fold pattern was designated "Ottawa Valley Marble". The 1892 Toronto Globe suggests J. (John) Watson was planning to market "Madawaska Marble". The intricately sculpted draped shawls and low relief forms on headstones testify to local stonecutter artistry. Framing of the United Church and Manse, the hand-hammered quoins of "The Retreat" on Madawaska Blvd., Scotiabank, Campbell Block, Craig Block, Arnprior Town Hall and polished columns in the first Parliament buildings document the function, durability and beauty of *Arnprior Marble*.

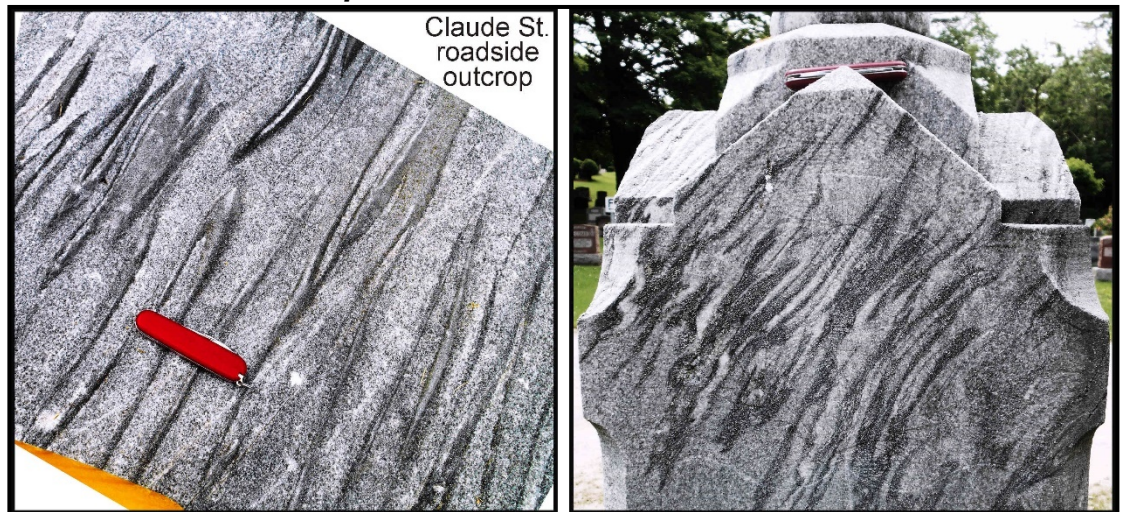
A headstone signed by Arnprior marble merchant P.T. Somerville with an 1845 date of death indicates Arnprior's marble industry was established by the 1840s. An unsigned, apparent Arnprior Marble stone in the Craig St. Cemetery, Perth, with a date of death of September 1835 suggests the industry may date from the 1830's. The industry boomed with the patronage of Daniel McLachlin and the arrival of the Brockville and Ottawa railway in the 1860's. When the Province of Canada sought marble for the first parliament buildings in 1859, the local industry was ready. Marble was a major industry when the *Municipality of the Village of Arnprior* was incorporated in 1862.

Marble products included highly polished, decorative outdoor and indoor monuments, urns, pedestals, columns, chimney pieces, counter and table tops, fireplace mantles and facades, baptismal fonts, wash basins, curling whins, hitching posts, tomb and head stones, blocks (quoins), lintels, sills, steps and door frames for building construction and columns and floor tiles for the first parliament buildings. The Arnprior marble industry is recorded in cemeteries along historic routes from Arnprior to the Pontiac, Ottawa, Cornwall, Brockville, Perth and Kingston.

This report tries to document the features of Arnprior Marble, the quarry sites in Arnprior, the people involved in the Arnprior marble industry, their products, the industry's time frame and the significance of the industry's contribution. Seven historic quarry sites have been clearly identified within Arnprior. At least 5 pits at three sites are recognizably intact today. Arnprior's geological heritage was a principal contributor to the settlement's early industrial history. Today, the marble industry appears little known.

## Features of Arnprior Marble - How was Arnprior Marble formed?

The special traits of Arnprior Marble are a product of its tectonic history. Although details of the early life of Arnprior Marble are sketchy, the rock probably began as calcium- and magnesium-rich mud beneath seas some 1.5 billion years ago along another continental margin.



Same scale comparison between "Arnprior marble" outcrop, Craig Street and an unsigned 1892 headstone, Albert Street Cemetery, Arnprior

By about 1 billion years ago, plate tectonics had joined the continental fragments containing these now transformed sediments into part of a major “Grenville” crustal structure. The muds, mixed with the nearby quartz-rich materials, had been buried and transformed – subjected to pressures of about 6-9 kilobars (or ~ 87000-130,000 psi) and temperatures of between 400 to 800 degrees Celsius – akin to depths near 10 km within the Earth’s crust (see, for example, Goodwin-Bell, 2008). The result metamorphosed the marine sediments into calcium- and magnesium-rich marbles, a form of carbonate rock. Since carbonates deform at lower temperatures and pressures than the other silica-rich continental materials, the layered marbles yielded to crustal stresses as a ductile mass (like warmed plastic) to produce the complex, intricately crenulated fold patterns that distinguish “*Arnprior Marble*”. Like a finger print, the easily identifiable “*dark Arnprior*” referred to in historical accounts reflects the unique geological conditions at Arnprior.

Under the same conditions, the non-carbonate, more quartz-rich material or “silicates” - now granites, quartzite layers and intruded diabase dykes - remained stiff, cracked under stress and appear as rigid blocks created by “brittle” fractures. Like broken raisins in porridge, blocks of angular silicate fragments have been offset and drawn apart by the ductile host marble, evident along the Madawaska shoreline at Bell Park. Within the “dark Arnprior”, lighter layers of mainly calcium-magnesium-rich marble separate darker mineral bands with graphite (carbon) and grey to black, centimetre-scale laths of tremolite. Reflective, often rusty, crystals of mica and fractures with brass coloured pyrite and

Pods of green epidote in 1859 headstone by W. Knowles, Albert Street Cemetery, may also be seen in the Scotiabank building.



Lighter “Ottawa Valley” and darker “Arnprior Marble”

Brittle fragments of black diabase drawn apart in ductile marble, Bell Park, Arnprior.

Pods of beautiful light green epidote and diopside may be found in the Albert Street cemetery. Other headstones illustrate the lighter “*Ottawa Valley*” and darker “*Arnprior Marble*”. More of Arnprior’s geology is at: <http://www.mfnc.ca/macnamartrail/geologyfieldguides.html>.



**Marble Sites - Where were the quarries?**Quarry on the Island at the "foot of the lumber slide" - William Knowles

William Knowles quarried marble from the island downstream of the Madawaska Bridge by at least 1859. The letter from W. Knowles to Dan McLachlin of August 24, 1859 (MU6765, Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives) proposes a business plan between Knowles and Dan McLachlin.

Letter William Knowles

page 1

Arnprior, Aug. 24/59

D. McLaughlin Esq.  
Dear Sir,

As my works are now making considerable progress, and I am expecting to bring the sawing machinery and Bridge to a completion this week I feel that it is but right to make you some definite proposal on which to base an arrangement for the regular occupation of the premises, and water privilege.

I am grateful for your liberality in allowing me the use of the Island and marble on it, but as I am satisfied that a good

paying business can be done with it, I am willing to pay a fair rent and to have the Premises and privileges on Lease for a definite time.

I trust that such an arrangement will be satisfactory to you also, as I know that it is your desire to promote in every way as far as you can the interests of Arnprior.

I do not know how far my ideas of the value of the Island and water privilege, and of the use of the marble may correspond with yours, but I feel satisfied that I may safely offer Fifty Pounds per annum for it on a Lease of say 10 years and to agree to such conditions as you may con-

page 2

page 3

sider necessary to protect your own interests.

I shall feel obliged if you will take this into consideration, and let me know your views on the subject.

There is another matter about which I have to ask your assistance, and I regret that I am under the necessity of doing so. - I have been lately at very heavy expence in regard to commencing this business, and find myself just now very much pinched for money to meet the cost of putting up the works, especially, as I have to pay half the contract price of the saw mill this week.

I shall be under the necessity of borrowing Fifty Pounds

for 3 months, and would prefer having the Loan from you than from any other person, as I wish to give you power over the whole property, in the form of a security for the Loan. - If you desire it I will also give you an order for the amount on the Legan Monument Committee.

I trust you will oblige me in this,

and believe me  
Dear Sir

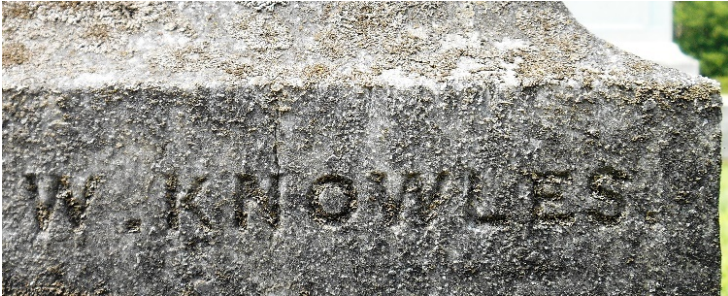
6765

Yours respectfully

William Knowles

page 4

An advertisement in the Ottawa Citizen of March 12 1861, coded November 15, 1859, affirms the *Ottawa Valley Marble Works* was operated by William Knowles and supplied marble for the "New Houses of Parliament and Departmental Offices". The role of Arnprior Marble in the first parliament buildings is detailed in a later section.



*Right:* Ottawa Citizen from March 12, 1861 (coded November 15, 1859); *above:* Arnprior marble headstone signed by W. Knowles with a death date of 1859 in the Albert Street Cemetery, Arnprior. A company run by W. Knowles called "Ottawa Valley Marble Works" produced "Arnprior Marble" in Arnprior, C.W. (Canada West) in 1859.

The Almonte Gazette, November 8, 1861 (from the Woodstock Sentinel, November 1, 1861), describes a visitor's observations:

ted for agriculture. We went on the island in the Madawaska, which runs through the town, to examine the much talked of marble quarry, which only requires an enterprising spirit, and some capital, to make the works here begun, a profitable enterprise. There is abundant water power for all manufacturing purposes, and we regretted to see the gang of saws, for slabing the huge rocks of marble, lying idle merely for the want of capital to prosecute the works. The supply of this dark

The newspaper report suggests a plant using a water-powered gang saw was used to cut marble slabs from blocks quarried on the island. From the date of November 1861, the island quarry was operated by W. Knowles who submitted the estimate to provide marble for the Houses of Parliament in 1859.

**OTTAWA VALLEY MARBLE WORKS.**  
**ARNPRIOR, C.W.**

THESE WORKS, for Quarrying and Manufacturing the already popular

**ARNPRIOR MARBLE**

are now in full operation, and the Subscriber is prepared to execute in the BEST STYLE every description of Ornamental Marble Work, from the simple Pier-Table, or Washstand, to the most elaborate MAN-  
**PLE PIECE or MONUMENT.**

This Marble obtained the

**FIRST PRIZE AND DIPLOMA**  
 AT THE LATE  
**PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION,**  
 and the fact of its having received the preference over all others, for the Marble Works of the  
**NEW HOUSES of PARLIAMENT**  
 AND  
**DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES,**  
 is a sufficient proof of its beauty and adaptability for Ornamental purposes.

Designs and prices, furnished on application to the Proprietor,

**WILLIAM KNOWLES,**  
 Ottawa Valley Marble Works,  
 Arnprior, C. W.

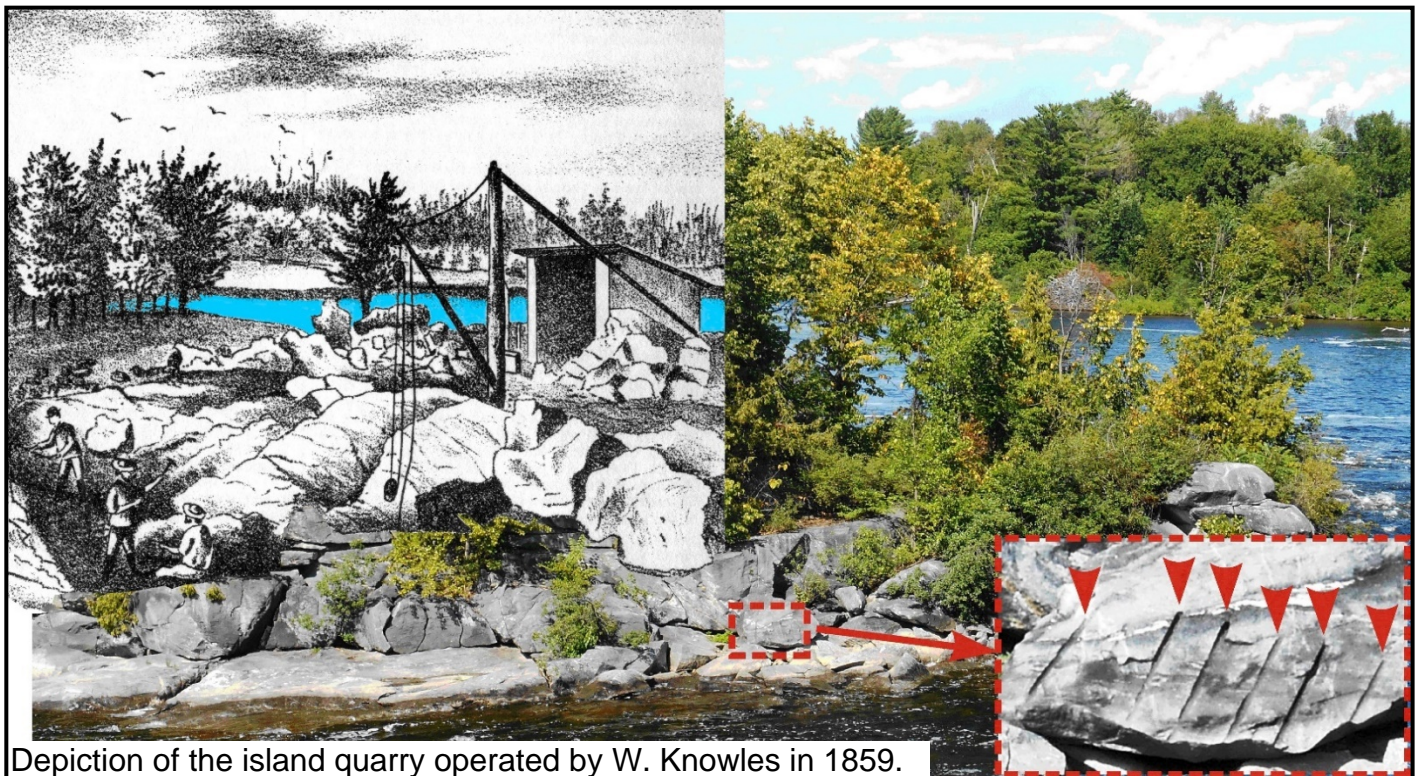
Encourage Home Productions, and Home Manufactures. — £ I

November 15, 1859. (14)†††

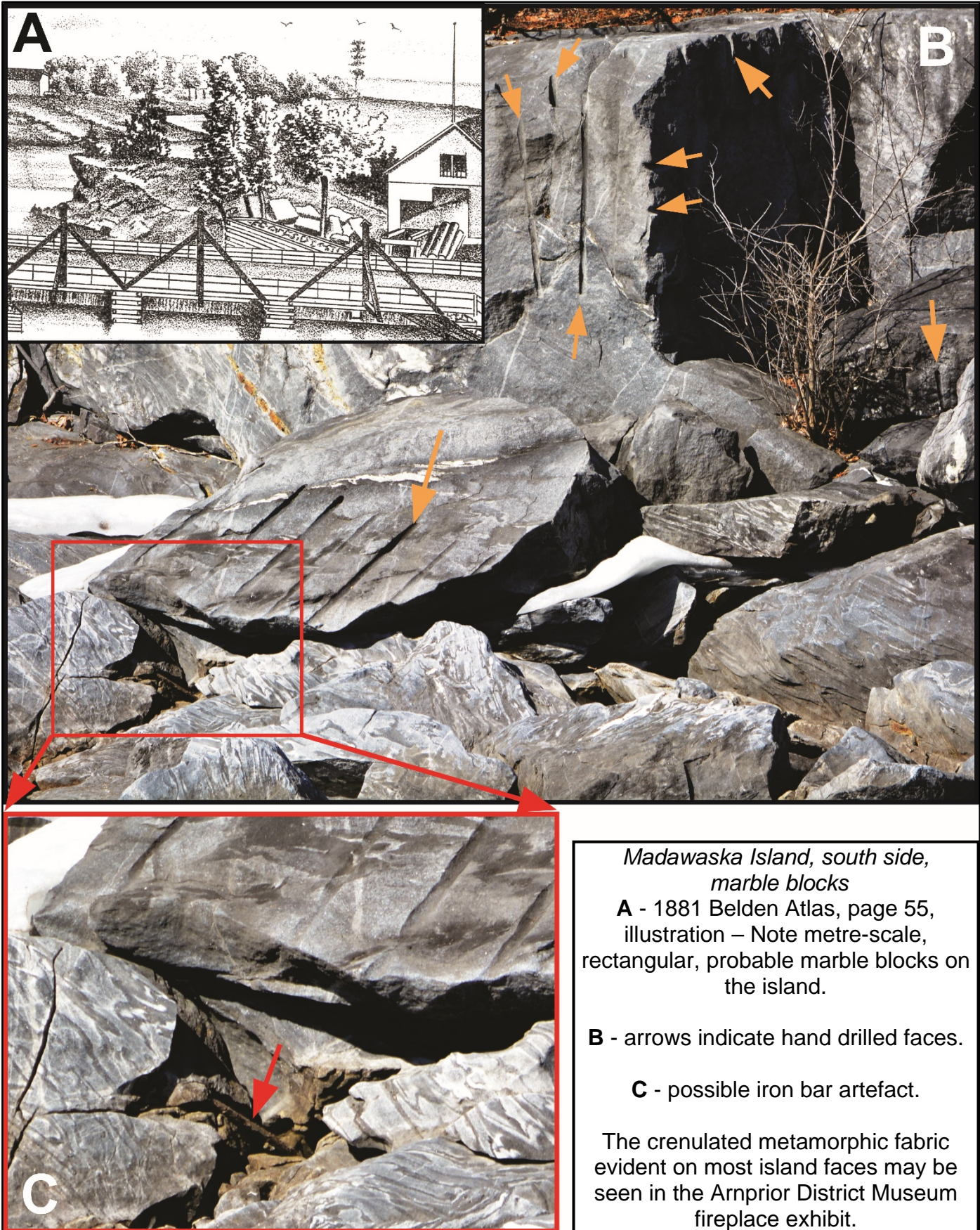
The remnants of the quarry on the island "at the end of the timber slide" (arrow) are evident in a 1927 air photo. Here the Madawaska ran through a series of islands. The short inter-island spans formed curves in the bridge. Below the bridge, the shore reflects the lower water level prior to establishment of the Chats Falls dam head pond.



A quarry scene is composed using a sketch from the Illustrated Atlas of Renfrew County, 1881, H. Belden & Co., Toronto, page 46, combined with an image of the island today. The view might have been from the 1880's bridge, the timber slide or upper window of McLachlin's grist mill. Arrows in the following images point to the last holes drilled by workers to split marble blocks from the island bedrock. A human height of 5.5' has been used to scale the images.



Depiction of the island quarry operated by W. Knowles in 1859.



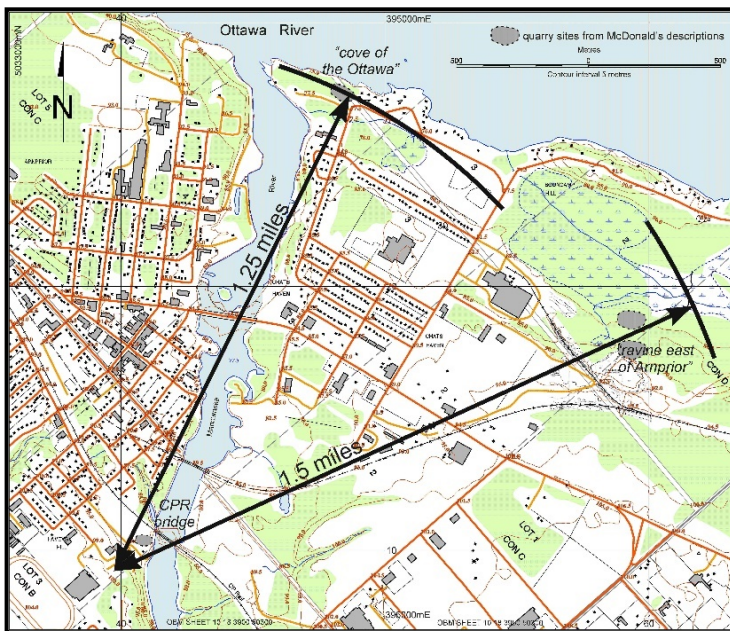
The "Cove of the Ottawa", "Russell and Elgin", the "mill" near the C.P.R. Bridge, "Lot No.2, 15<sup>th</sup> Conc., Township of McNab".

The following description by Alexander McDonald identifies quarry sites and marble trade names.

**A. R. McDonald**—I live at Arnprior, and am a member of the firm of R. McDonald & Son. I am engaged in the marble manufacturing and producing business. One of our quarries is at the corner of Russell and Elgin streets in this town; the other is about a mile and a quarter distant, in an easterly direction, on a cove of the Ottawa river. The marble from that quarry is known as Ottawa Valley marble, while the other is known as Arnprior marble. We have another quarry here at the mill, but it is the same as the Arnprior. We have three sawing gangs, five lathes, three turning lathes, two polishing lathes, a rubbing bed, and a 25 h.p. boiler and engine. I do not know the total value of the plant. This mill was formerly on the south side of the Madawaska, and was owned by Farquharson, McLaughlin & Hartney; they ran it for about four years. We acquired the property in the fall of 1878 and have been running it since. I cannot tell you what our output is. Our market is altogether in Ontario. It is used for monumental purposes, and to a small extent for ornamental purposes such as table tops and mantel pieces. It has been used for a number of public buildings, among others in the House of Commons at Ottawa. I suppose we make about \$4,000 or \$5,000 worth of monumental marble a year. The Arnprior marble has a dark blue ground with wavy veins; the Ottawa Valley marble has a grey ground with dark wavy veins. I do not know any other marble that will take as good a polish: it cannot be stained; it will not absorb moisture at all, and it stands exposure well. We have not been working this year, one reason being on account of the state of the market. When we are working we employ from 15 to 25 men. The engineer gets \$1.50 a day, quarrymen \$1.25, polishers \$1.25 to \$1.50, stone cutters \$1.25 to \$2.50, and other men \$1.20 to \$1.25. One of the reasons that we find it difficult to compete with the American marble is that our stock is very hard and difficult to get out, and then it does not come out in the right shape. American mountain blue is a cheap marble. Southern Falls is a good marble; it is light in color, and I think is as good as this; besides, it can be worked cheaper than ours. The Ottawa Granite Co. get marble at Renfrew, but they don't sell much of it as monumental marble; it is mostly the American that is sold for that purpose. The duty on marble is 35 per cent. sawed on four sides, 25 per cent. on two sides, and in the rough 15 per cent. I am informed that the Americans sell marble here at \$2.00 and \$2.50, while they sell at \$3.50 in their own country. They make a slaughter market of ours, and it is mostly inferior marble they sell here. That is the reason we are not running now. The marble dips about 30 degrees, and runs north-east and south-west. About a mile and a half from here we have a marble very like the Gouverneur marble; it is light grey with light brown streaks and extends about five miles to the south and three miles to the west. There is no granite in this part of the country; it is all marble. North-west it extends about twenty miles, and east of here about 12 or 15 miles. In different places it varies in color and texture.

Alexander MacDonal's note to the *1890 Report of the Ontario Commission upon the Mineral Resources of Ontario and Measures for their Development*, pages 82, 83. The note by Arthur S. Hardy on page x of the report suggests information may be current only as of May 16, 1888, perhaps earlier. Obtained at <http://books.google.com/>.

Alexander McDonald's account together with a contemporary Arnprior Chronicle of July 27 1888, and a description of "The Old Arnprior Quarry" in a "ravine east of Arnprior" (see below) serve to locate a quarry at the "mill" and his two other area quarries. The letter appears written "here at the mill". The July 1888 advertisement places the mill or "Manufactory near the Rail road Bridge". The CPR was the only railway into Arnprior in 1888. One quarry is "at the corner of Russell and Elgin



Quarries located from A.R. McDonald's letter

## ARNPRIOR MARBLE WORKS.



The undersigned wish to call the attention of the people of Arnprior and vicinity to their stock of

Monuments, Headstones, &c.,

We are in the Wholesale Trade, and keep constant, on hand a full stock, ready-made up, from which to choose from.

Call and see some of our \$50 monuments, which stand over 7 feet high, before purchasing elsewhere.

Workshop and Show Room on South Hugh street near the C. P. R. Station. Manufactory near the Rail road Bridge.

R. McDONALD & SON.

ARNPRIOR, Ont.

Adapted from Chronicle, July 27, 1888, Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives

streets". The quarry "on a cove of the Ottawa river" lies "about a mile and a quarter distant in an easterly direction". Another quarry is "about a mile and half from here". Present-day quarry remnants in Bell Park, along the Macnamara Trail and a mill or "Manufactory" and associated quarry at the west end of the CPR Bridge fit very well with the directions and distances described.

### Cove of the Ottawa

Provincial descriptions of mineral occurrences provide dimensions and locate the quarry at the "Cove of the Ottawa" in Bell Park (see Goudge, Satterly, below). McDonald's account defines the marble from the Bell Park area as "Ottawa Valley Marble" while the stone from the Elgin and Russell quarry and "at the mill" is "Arnprior Marble". From this, we infer that the Elgin and Russell quarry is known in advertisements as the "Arnprior Quarry".

The "cove of the Ottawa" is described by Goudge, 1938 and Satterly 1944.

From Goudge, 1938:

"One of the small marble quarries is on the low point on the east side of the mouth of the Madawaska River. It covers an area 150 feet square and has been worked to a depth of 8 feet. The rock is a medium-grained, greyish blue, rather hard and compact, faintly striped calcium limestone, striking N. 63° W. and dipping southerly at an angle of 60 degrees. Impurities include flakes of mica, which in places are present in nodular masses, and also a thin, broken band of basic rock."

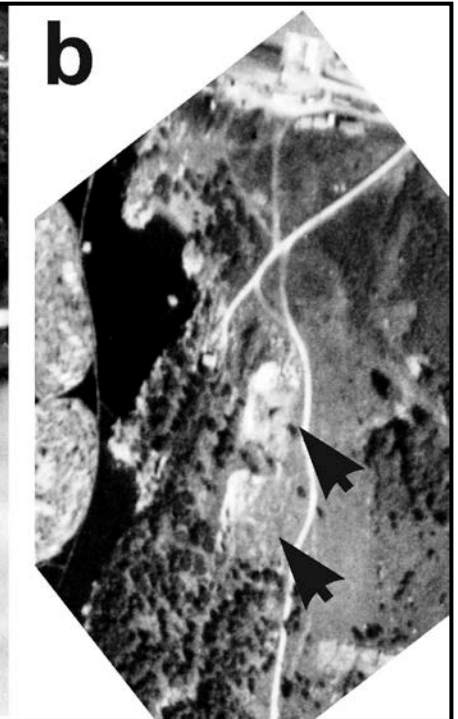
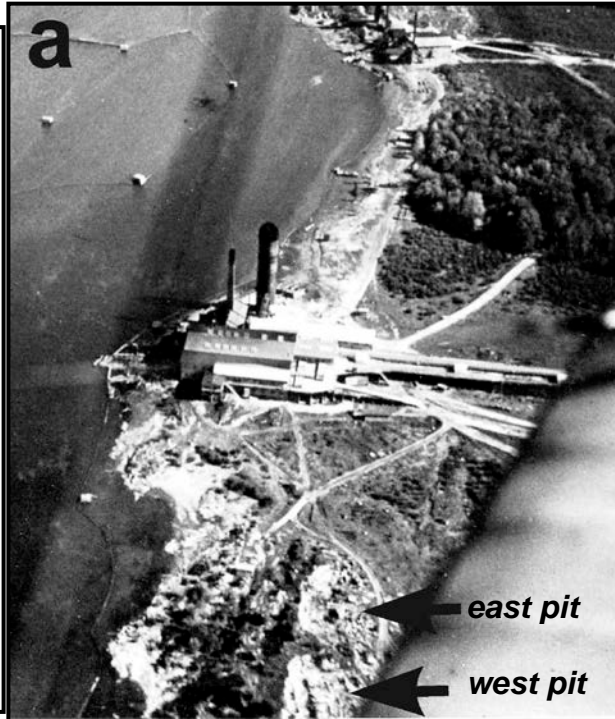
From Satterly, 1944:

"Concession D, Lot 4 - Two adjoining marble (crystalline limestone) quarries occur on a small point on the east side of the mouth of the Madawaska river, half a mile north of No. 17 highway in lot 4, concession D, McNab township. One quarry is 150 feet square and 6 feet deep; the other is 120

feet square and from 5 to 10 feet deep. Both quarries face south. The rock exposed is a light- and dark-grey, medium-grained, banded crystalline limestone striking N. 75° W. and dipping 60° S.”

Today, at the “Cove of the Ottawa” the ends of the eastern pit are evident and the entire western pit appears largely intact within Bell Park.

In airphotos: **a** – taken from Arnprior’s 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary Facebook page and **b** – from NAPL HA515-006 Sept. 8 1927, arrows show the scars left by two “Ottawa Valley Marble” quarries within and beside Bell Park. The Mills suggest the image in **a** is before 1930 when high water levels behind the Chats Falls dam raised the shoreline. The west pit is intact today.



In July 2018, residential excavations revealed the west and north walls of the eastern pit.



West and north walls of R. McDonald & Son’s eastern pit at the “Cove of the Ottawa” quarry

National Airphoto Library images - Left - HA515-006 Sept 8 1927 and Right - HA525-051 Nov. 9 1927, illustrate quarry sites on the island and at Russell and Elgin near the Elgin Street Bridge. The bare lots at the corner of Elgin and Russell in 1927 are possible quarry sites referred to by Alex McDonald. Alexander MacDonal's 1890 note includes "25 h.p. boiler and engine" indicating they used steam to power gang saws in the "mill".



"Ravine east of Arnprior" - Indenture for "Lot No.2, 15<sup>th</sup> Conc., Township of McNab"

A July 22, 1883 indenture at the Arnprior & McNab Braeside/Archives between James Eckford and R. McDonald & Son defines the terms and payments to mine marble from the quarry along today's Macnamara Trail. Page 2 of the indenture specifies that the cost of quarrying marble is to be measured as "every load drawn by two horses". Marble properties were not always owned by marble merchants.



Dated 22<sup>nd</sup> <sup>3131</sup> July A.D. 1883

Agreement

Between

James Eckford

and

R. McDonald Son

Affecting Lot No. 2 in the 15<sup>th</sup> Con.,  
Township of Macnamara

I Certify that the within Instrument is  
duly Entered and Registered in the Registry  
Office for the County of Renfrew in Book  
... for the Township of ...  
at ... o'clock, A. M., of the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
day of ... A. D. 1883  
Number 3131

Registrar.

in the same contained shall absolutely cease deter-  
mine and become utterly null and void Saving however  
the right of the said party of the First Part to recover  
payment for any stone drawn away or removed and not  
then paid for.

The said parties of the Second Part covenant and  
agree to and with the said party of the First Part that they  
shall and will draw away and remove the stone, to be  
taken out of the said mine, upon sleighs in the winter  
Season only and not otherwise nor at any other Season of  
the Year.

And the said parties of the Second Part for themselves  
their executors administrators and assigns further Cov-  
enant and agree to and with the said party of the First  
Part his heirs executors administrators and assigns  
that they the said parties of the Second Part their execu-  
tors administrators or assigns shall and will keep a  
true and full account of the number of loads of stone  
drawn away or removed by them from the said mine  
and shall and will on the thirty first day of August in  
each Year until all the stone drawn away or removed  
from the said mine is fully paid for tender and fur-  
nish to the said party of the First Part his heirs executors  
administrators or assigns a detailed true and full  
account of the number of loads of stone drawn away  
and removed from the said mine during the then pre-  
ceding year.

In Witness Whereof the said parties hereto have  
hereunto set their hands and seals the day and of Con-  
trist above written

Signed Sealed and Delivered  
in the presence of  
Arthur Burwash

James Eckford  
Robert McDonald  
R. McDonald

Cover and page excerpts adapted from the July 22, 1883 indenture defining the agreement for the marble mined along today's Macnamara Trail.

Executors administrators and assigns that they shall and  
will pay or cause to be paid to the said party of the First  
Part his heirs executors administrators ~~or~~ or assigns the  
sum of Fifty cents for each and every load, drawn by two  
horses, of rough stone or pointed stone drawn away or  
removed by the said parties of the Second Part their execu-  
tors administrators or assigns from the said mine, and the  
sum of Seventy five cents for each and every load drawn  
by two horses, of fine cut stone or brush hammered stone  
drawn away or removed by the said parties of the Second

The 1912 Report on the Building and Ornamental Stones of Canada, pg. 333, by Wm. A. Parks states:

*The Old Arnprior quarry.*

This quarry was opened many years ago in the side of a ravine east of Arnprior. The limestone beds strike northeast and dip southeast at an angle of 30°. Parallel to this direction, the stone is banded in white and greenish-grey layers. In places the banding is irregular so as to constitute clouds rather than bands, in others the grey material is in excess so that it forms the base rather than the white part, which then appears as irregular clouds, in still other parts the two colours are mixed so as to give a “pepper and salt” effect. In descending order the following beds are seen:—3 feet, 3 feet, 4 feet, 3 feet, 18 inches, 18 inches, 4 feet (thin bedded), 3 feet, 2 feet (thin bedded), 6 feet, 2 feet, 12 feet, 4 feet. Strong joints cut these beds in a northwesterly direction; they are close together for 2 or 3 feet, with undisturbed intervals of 8 or 10 feet between. A less pronounced series of joints runs in a easterly direction across the formation. The major joints are clean cut and provide an excellent working face.

The Parks’ description of “The Old Arnprior Quarry” agrees with the location and structural features within quarry remnants located along the Macnamara Trail today. Marble blocks were crudely squared before transport to the mills. A remnant pile of marble chips and fragments with drill holes remain at a Macnamara Trail quarry edge today.



R. MacDonald & Son marble quarries - the “ravine east of Arnprior” on lot 2, 15<sup>th</sup> Concession, Township of McNab. Above – Left: drill hole with 8.3 cm jackknife; Right - quarry wall; inset – block with hand-drilled holes ~ every 6 inches (5 cm scale marks on walking staff). The site includes a remnant chip pile from roughly dressed blocks at the quarry.

R. McDonald & Son may have been more of a wholesale marble dealer after selling “Arnprior Granite Works” in 1888.

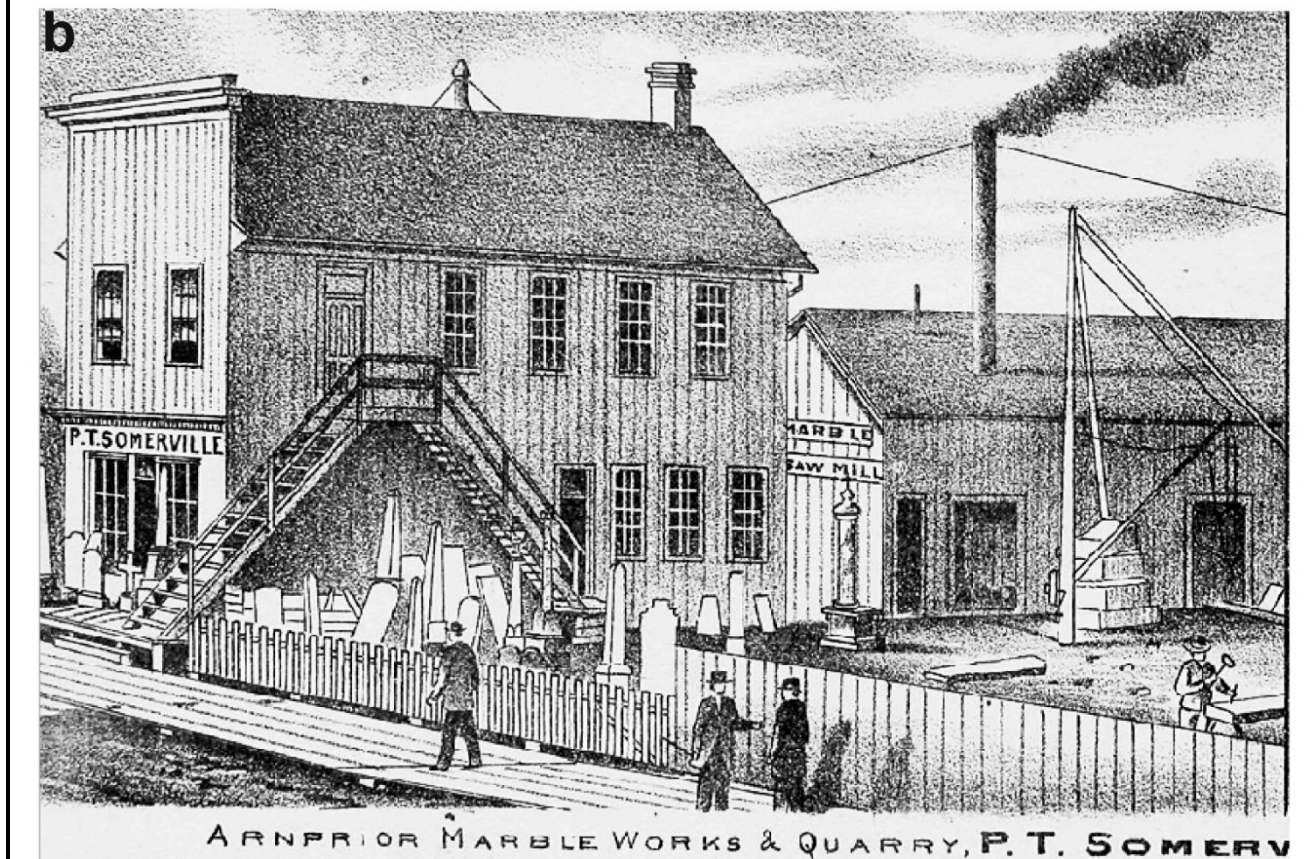
**Mill and Shop Sites: Marble Finishing and Technology****48 Hugh Street – “South Hugh Street” the first C.P.R. Station**

Different marble merchants successively occupied 48 Hugh Street. As perhaps the last, Alex McDonald's letter together with the Chronicle advertisement of July 1888 indicates a “Manufactory” near the (C.P.) Rail road Bridge and a “Workshop and show room on South Hugh Street near the C.P.R. Station.” The “South Hugh street” property (black arrow below) was sold by Patrick McGonigal to P.T. Somerville on August 31, 1871 (Arnprior Land Records, Arnprior Book. No.1, pg. 163, Arnprior & McNab/ Braeside Archives). Arnprior Land Records indicate the 48 Hugh Street property was sold by P.T. Somerville to T.J. Somerville on August 13, 1884 and by T.J. Somerville to John G. Watson on December 17, 1887.

Overlaying part of the 1865 “Plan Of The McGonigal Estate” (Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives, in red) on National Airphoto Library image HA515-007 from September 8, 1927, shows that



the original Brockville and Ottawa Railway station occupied the same site as the later Canadian Pacific Railway freight shed. Together the evidence indicates the illustration of P.T. Somerville's “ARNPRIOR MARBLE WORKS” in Belden's 1881 atlas of Renfrew County (below) is based on a photograph (Arnprior District Museum) taken after 1871, looking southwest from just north of the Somerville store and plant at 48 Hugh Street. The building corner with an extended soffit in the left background appears to be the west end of the 1865 B&O station and on June 9, 1881, Arnprior's first C.P.R. station. See *Tracing The Lines, Eastern Ontario & West Québec Railway History in Maps* by B. Gilhuly, Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives.



*Truth and advertising:* comparison of restored photograph from the Arnprior District Museum **a**, with **b**, a sketch from the Illustrated Atlas of Renfrew County, 1881, H. Belden & Co., page 46. The upper floor was advertised as a “Hall” for rent by Peter Somerville in 1876.

The November 29, 1878 edition of the *Almonte Gazette* described the P.T. Somerville's steam-powered operations as:

As might be expected of one so enterprising, Mr. Somerville has introduced steam power into his establishment, and is thus enabled to execute work expeditiously and economically. The marble, rough from the quarry, is first sawn as near as possible to the required shape, and placed on a "rubbing bed," or circular board, which revolves while the marble is held stationary, sand and water being fed meanwhile. After the sand and water, it is rubbed by hand with coarse grit sandstone, then with a finer grit, next with a very fine stone procured in Ayreshire, Scotland, and lastly it is polished with putty powder. If the piece is to be circular in form, it is roughly chiselled, put in a lathe, and turned with tools similar to those used for metals. It is rather astonishing to see how deep a cut can be taken. The marble admits of a very high polish, and is well adapted for mantle pieces, table-tops, bureau tops, counters, monuments, and general use in ornamental building. So far, the trade

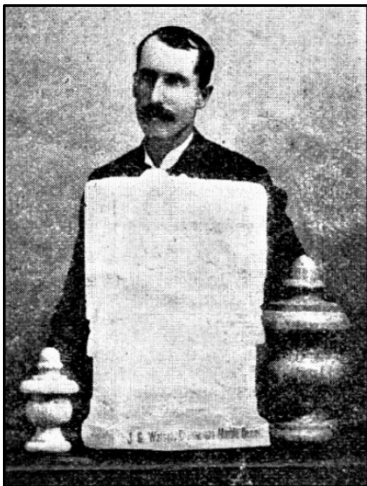
Almonte Gazette, Volume XII, No.8, November 29, 1878

The 1894 Arnprior Watchman article indicates the business “Known as the Arnprior Marble Works”, was “Established in 1861. The Arnprior Review and South Renfrew Chronicle ad shows that Peter Taylor Somerville had a “Hall” over the 48 Hugh Street shop in 1876. By June 1894 the “property on South Hugh Street”, now owned by J.G. Watson, included “four comfortable tenements”.

**HALL TO LET!**  
Over the Arnprior Marble Works.  
TERMS: \$1.00 per night, or \$75 per year, with power to sublet.  
**P. T. Somerville,**  
ARNPRIOR, ONT.

Peter Taylor Somerville advertisement for “Hall to Let!” in the Arnprior Review and South Renfrew Chronicle, October 6 1876, page 3 (Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives).

His plant and shop on Elgin Street included a 20 hp engine, 12 hp boiler, 10 hp engine, 3 turning lathes, a saw, a polisher and a quantity of marble. Steam technology is evident.



J.G. Watson, Marble cutter. The Saturday Globe, October 1, 1892.

The sale by J.G. Watson in 1894 appears to mark the end of a marble business at 48 south Hugh Street that began with P.T. Somerville’s purchase of the property from Patrick McGonigal in September 1871. A Carp Road headstone date suggests P.T. Somerville had already been in the marble business in 1845.

1894 Arnprior Watchman newspaper fragment (Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives)

Arnprior Watchman, June 1, 1894, page 4

**Extensive Private Sale**  
of the Property and Business Known as the Arnprior Marble Works, Established 1861.

AS I have determined to retire from the marble business, I will dispose of by private sale within the next thirty days, all my property, stock machinery, etc. The property on South Hugh Street, including four comfortable tenements, each of which is drawing a good annual rate. One span of horses, one single buggy cutter, two sets of single harness, also a double set of coarse fine harness, almost new; cooking stove, two coal stoves, two box stoves and an oil stove. Also, a number of other household articles. At my shop on Elgin Street will also be sold a 20-horse power engine and boiler, a 12-horse power boiler and a ten horse per engine; three turning lathes, four hoist derricks, one saw gate, one polishing machine; a large number of quarry tools, chains, rope locks, etc. One half barrel machine oil; and 20 finely finished monuments, besides a large quantity of marble in slabs, cemetery runs, etc. All the machinery specified above is in working order and can be seen working any time. The building and sheds used as a marble shop will also be disposed of. These articles will positively be sold. Come and secure bargains. Terms made known on application. For particulars apply to

J. G. WATSON,

"South side of the Madawaska" River

Alexander McDonald's 1890 letter and the 1885 Annual Report of the Bureau of Industries for the Province of Ontario together indicate a "mill for the manufacture of the stone" owned by Farquhar(son), McLachlin and Hartney about 1869-1874 on the "south side of the Madawaska". The Arnprior Review and South Renfrew Chronicle of October 6 1876, page 3 (Arnprior & McNab/ Braeside Archives) reported an *Arnprior Marble* exhibit by "Messrs. Wright & Farquharson".

**Arnprior Marble**

The *Port Hope Guide*, in its report of the Central Exhibition just held at that place, makes the following reference: "A monument exhibited by Messrs. Wright & Farquharson, and carved from Arnprior marble, showed an exquisite finish, and attracted much attention."

The firm of Wright and Farquharson produced an Arnprior Marble monument for the "Central Exhibition" at Port Hope in 1876.

The exact date, the relationship between Wright & Farquharson or Farquhar, McLachlin and Hartney, and the precise mill location "south side of the Madawaska" are not yet clear. A site near

**A** mill for the manufacture of the stone was erected about sixteen years ago by Farquhar, McLachlin, Hartney & Co., but in 1878 it passed into the hands of Robert McDonald & Son. The senior member of the firm died some time ago, and the business is now carried on by the son. The mill has a 35 horse-power engine, which drives three gangs of saws, five lathes, a rubbing bed and two polishing machines. The stone is cut in slabs and blocks from one-half an inch to seven feet in width, and ten feet in length. The mill runs from the first of April to Christmas each year, employing from twenty to twenty-two men. In the winter season fifteen men are employed at the quarries. From 18,000 to 20,000 cubic feet are taken out and worked up annually. Common mill hands are paid \$1.15 per day; lathe men, \$1.50; cutters and polishers, \$1.50 to \$2.50; and quarrymen \$1.25 per day.

*From: Annual report of the Bureau of Industries for the Province of Ontario, 1885, Printed by Warwick & Sons, 26 and 28 Front street West, Toronto, page cxlviii.*

the quarry remnants in present day Bell Park is possible. Alternatively, Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives map 2004-0168-M024\_1882c indicates an "old quarry" in the area of Elgin street as it extended south of the Madawaska. Due to delays in printing, the 1885 account derives from information a year or more earlier. Nominally the Farquhar, McLachlin, Hartney & Co. mill "for the manufacture of stone" might date from 1885 - 16 = 1869. This conflicts with McDonald's 1890 letter that could indicate ~1878 - 4 = 1874. The 1885 report indicates a "35 horse-power" engine while McDonald's letter describes a "25 h.p. boiler and engine".

The report in the November 22, 1878 edition of the *Almonte Gazette* supports Claude McLachlin, as a partner with Messrs. Farquhar and Hartney in Arnprior's marble industry.

Almonte Gazette,  
November 22, 1878

**Mr. Claude McLachlin is interested in the development of the marble interest, of which more anon.**

No additional details of Claude McLachlin's "marble interest" have been found.

John Street – Spence & Co., Watson and Danlin

Fuller's Counties of Leeds, Grenville, Lanark and Renfrew Directory for 1866 and 1867, listing page 120, places "SPENCE & CO." on "John st". The "John st" site of Spence & Co. in 1866-67 is uncertain. The Arnprior Chronicle of March 28, 1890 indicates J.G. Watson & W.B. Danlin had "moved to Stafford's Factory" suggesting a John Street site just north of the Arnprior District Museum today.

**120** **ARNPRIOR.**

**RORISON, JAMES, [Rorison & McEwan] John st**  
 Rowe, Thomas, stone mason and plasterer, Isabella st  
**Russell, A. & Son, [Andrew Russell, Sr., and William Russell]**  
 general merchants, Elgin st  
**Russell, Andrew, Sr., [A. Russell & Son] postmaster, Elgin st**  
**Russell, William, [A. Russell & Son] Elgin st**

**Schofield, Joseph, carpenter, Hugh st**  
**Secley, Ellen, tailor, John st**  
**SPENCE & CO., proprietors Arnprior Marble Works, John st**

www.collectionscanada.gc.ca > Library and Archives Canada > Canadian Directories: Who Was Where > Fuller's Counties of Leeds, Grenville, Lanark and Renfrew Directory for 1866 and 1867, listing page 120.

Elgin Street - Transition from Wm Spence to T. J. Somerville to John L. Fraser – Dominion Marble Works - New Granite and Marble Works - Central Marble Works 1885, 1888 –1890

Elgin Street sites, beside or opposite the Post Office (now Shoppers Drugs), were also re-occupied marble stores. Arnprior Chronicle advertisements of 1885, 1888 and 1890 show T.J. Somerville had taken over Wm Spence's Dominion Marble Works and J.L. Fraser was employed by T.J. Somerville as a manager for "New Granite and Marble Works" in 1885. As owner of the Central Marble Works by 1888, John L.

**NEW GRANITE AND MARBLE WORKS.**



**T**HE undersigned has opened a branch shop in Spence's Old Stand opposite the new Post Office, Elgin st., Arnprior, and is prepared to furnish the latest designs in Monuments, Headstones, Mantle Pieces, Railings, &c., either of Renfrew Granite or Vermont Marble, at the Lowest Rates. Door and Window Sills, and all kinds of Cut Stone furnished at bottom prices.

**T. J. SOMERVILLE, - Proprietor.**

**H. B. SOMERVILLE, Agent.** **J. L. FRASER, Manager.**

The Arnprior Chronicle, Friday, July 3, 1885. Arnprior McNab/Braeside Archives

**DOMINION MARBLE WORKS**

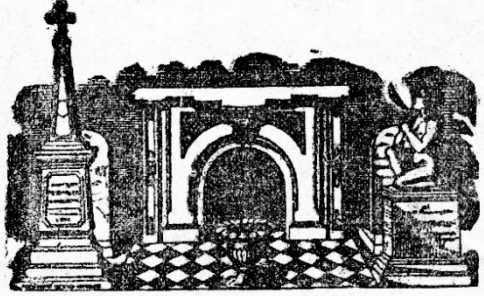


**WM. SPENCE,**

Dealer in all kinds of  
**Native and Foreign Marble,**  
 Monuments, Headstones, Tombs, Mantels, Ornamental Fencing for Grave Plots, etc.  
**ELGIN ST., ARNPRIOR, ONT.**

Arnprior Chronicle, Friday, July 3, 1885. Arnprior McNab/Braeside Archives

**J. L. FRASER,**

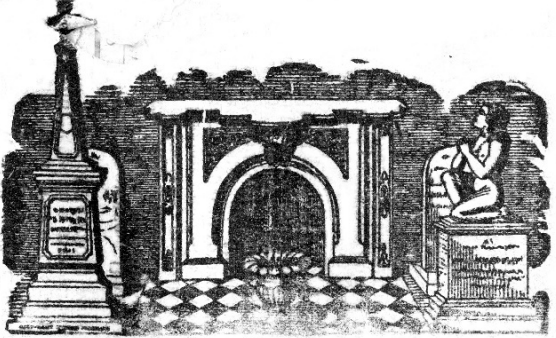


**Satisfaction Guaranteed**  
**SHOP NEXT TO R. S. DRYSDALES,**  
Elgin street, Arnprior, Ont.

Dealer in Marble and Granite Monuments, Headstones, Tablets, etc. Plain and Ornamental Work. Cemetery Work of every description neatly executed. Orders promptly filled and satisfaction guaranteed.

J. (John) L. Fraser 1890 Arnprior newspaper fragment - Arnprior McNab/Braeside Archives

**J. L. FRASER,**



**Shop Opposite the Post Office,**  
Elgin street, Arnprior, Ont.

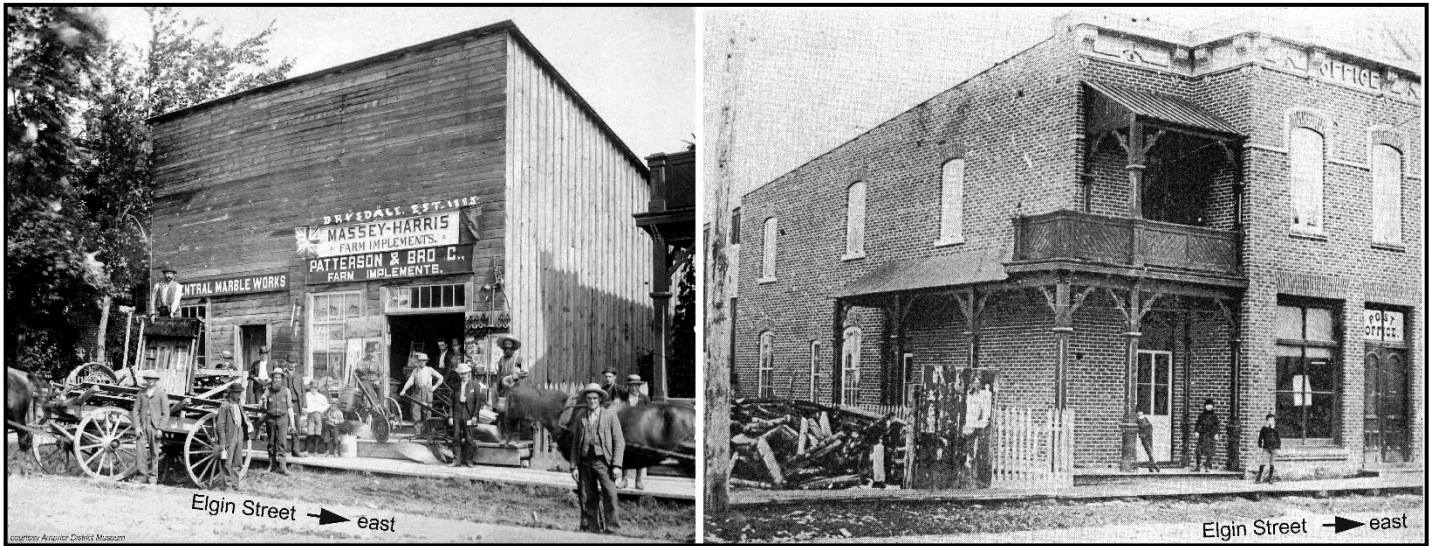
Chronicle, July 27 1888 - Arnprior McNab/Braeside Archives

Dealer in Marble and Granite Monuments, Headstones, Tablets, etc. Plain and Ornamental Work. Cemetery Work of every description neatly executed. Orders promptly filled and satisfaction guaranteed.

Fraser changed his 1888 location from "Shop Opposite the Post Office", on the south side of Elgin Street, to "next to R.S. Drysdale's" by 1890. In fact, the April 30, 1926 Arnprior Chronicle indicates the "Central Marble Works" had been established on the north side of Elgin Street adjacent to R.S. Drysdale, in 1888. Clearly, both Elgin Street west of John Street, and 48 Hugh Street (near the present Town Centre) were principal sites for marble retail outlets and finishing plants.

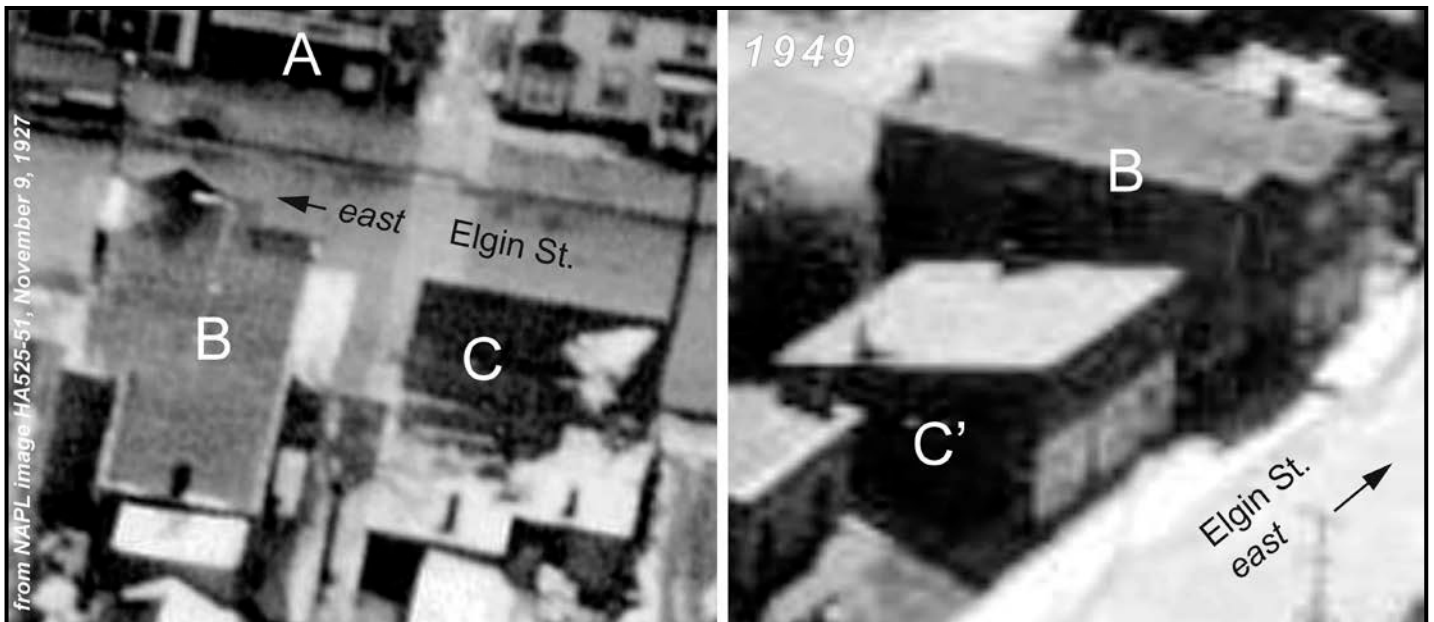


The merchant history adjacent to Elgin Street marble businesses is documented in several Arnprior Chronicle issues or images at the Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives and Arnprior District Museum. The image described in the Arnprior Chronicle, April 30, page 3, shows J.L. Fraser's 1888



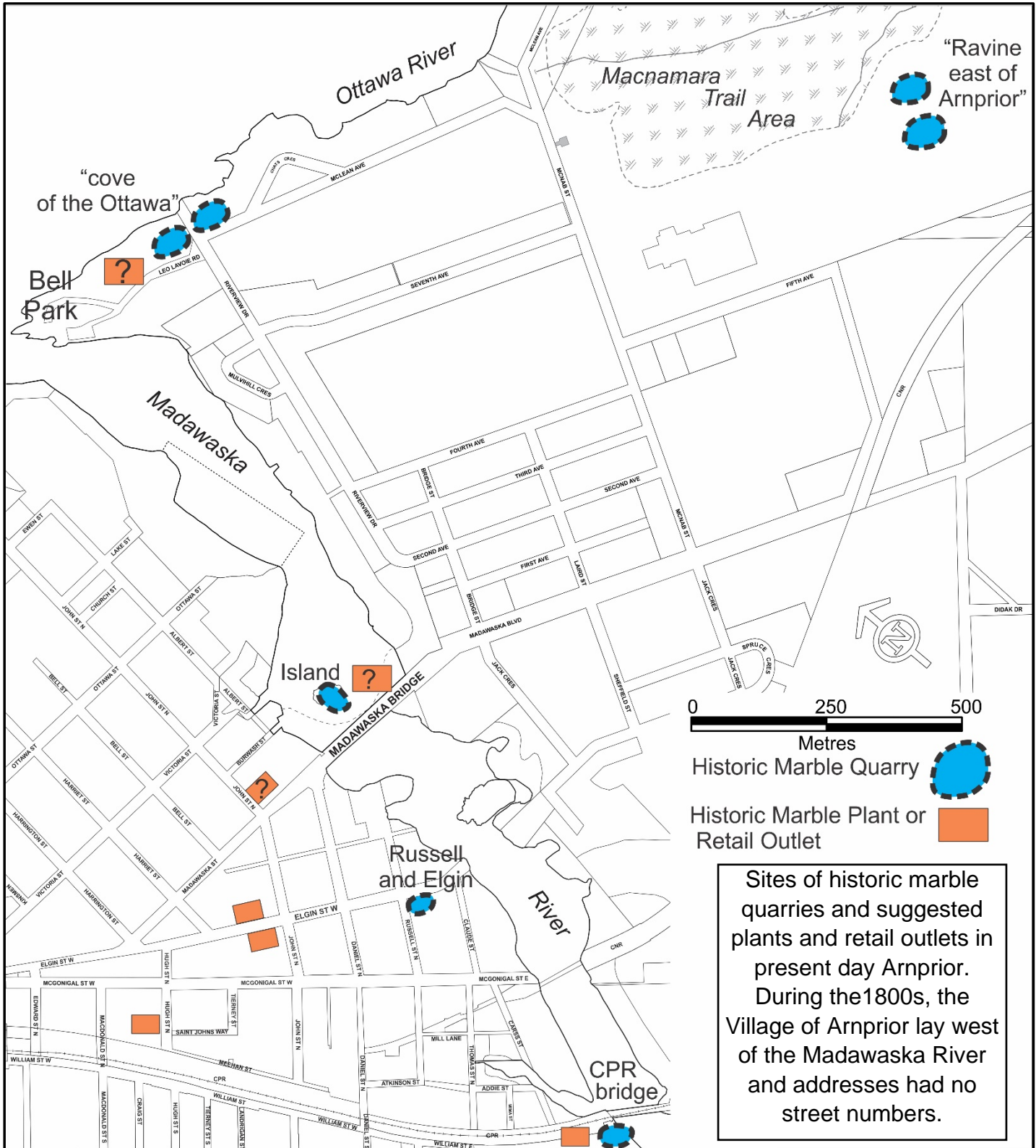
Central Marble Works and a building shadow to the east. The building to the east (image from Lavoie, 1984, page 127) is the post office described in the advertisements by T.J. Somerville and J.L. Fraser above. The post office image also appears to show fire debris probably left from the fire Saturday, June 30, 1928 described in the July 6, 1928 Arnprior Chronicle (Arnprior & McNab/ Braeside Archives).

Air photos from 1927 and 1949 illustrate the building locations on Elgin Street. A indicates the south side marble shop location of T. Somerville and J.L. Fraser before 1888, B is the post office and C is the location of J.L. Fraser's central marble Works. C' shows the building was shortened when reconstructed after the fire in 1928. Shoppers Drug Mart now occupies sites B and C.



Arnprior Marble Quarry, Plant and Shop Site Summary

At least seven quarries lay within Arnprior's town limits today. Documentation for the "cove of the Ottawa" at Bell Park, the island adjacent to the Madawaska Bridge, Russell and Elgin and near the C.P.R. Bridge is reasonably clear. The 1883 indenture between James Eckford and R. McDonald and Son identifies the quarry site along the Macnamara trail, as the "ravine east of Arnprior".



Arnprior Marble craftsmen and Products – Who were they? What did they make?

Marble Craftsmen

Craftsmen from 1845 to 1897 are listed from reports, advertisements and signed headstones.

www.collectionscanada.gc.ca > Library and Archives Canada > Canadian Directories: Who Was Where > Fuller's Counties of Leeds, Grenville, Lanark and Renfrew Directory for 1866 and 1867, pg 116; listing page 120.

116 ARNPRIOR.

**ARNPRIOR MARBLE WORKS.**

SPENCE & CO.,  
MARBLE MANUFACTURERS,  
ARNPRIOR, CANADA WEST.

F. Spence & Co. beg to inform the public generally that they are prepared to supply any parties requiring Monuments, Tomb and Head Stones, Chimney Pieces, Counter and Table Tops, Baptismal Fonts, &c., of either Arnprior, Vermont, or Italian Marble, at the lowest possible prices. They are also prepared to furnish the Arnprior Marble, either in Blocks or Slabs, from the Mill, according to order, at the shortest notice, and at a reduced price.


Please call and Examine before purchasing elsewhere.

---

120 ARNPRIOR.

RORISON, JAMES, [Rorison & McEwan] John st  
Rowe, Thomas, stone mason and plasterer, Isabella st  
Russell, A. & Son, [Andrew Russell, Sr., and William Russell] general merchants, Elgin st  
Russell, Andrew, Sr., [A. Russell & Son] postmaster, Elgin st  
Russell, William, [A. Russell & Son] Elgin st

Schofield, Joseph, carpenter, Hugh st  
Seeley, Ellen, tailoress, John st  
SPENCE & CO., proprietors Arnprior Marble Works, John st  
—See Advertisement  
STEWERT & TIERNEY, [Thomas Stewart and John Tierney] dealers in staple and fancy dry goods, groceries.



**ARNPRIOR MARBLE WORKS**

**R. McDONALD & SON,**  
Proprietors of the Celebrated  
Ottawa Valley and Arnprior Marble Quarries,  
with facilities for getting out blocks of marble to any dimensions. Sawed blocks and slabs constantly on hand. Monuments finished to order. Urns, columns, vases, etc., turned and polished to order.

Price Lists and Samples furnished to the trade.

**R. McDONALD & SON.**

www.collectionscanada.gc.ca > Library and Archives Canada > Canadian Directories: Who Was Where > Ontario Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1886-87, pg 91



**Arnprior Marble Works.**

**P. T. SOMERVILLE,**  
DEALER IN  
*Scotch Granite, Freestone,*  
*Italian, American and Arnprior*  
**MARBLE,**  
Monuments, Tombs, Headstones,  
Mantle Pieces, Table Tops, &c.  
Near B. & O. Station.  
**ARNPRIOR, - - ONTARIO.**

www.collectionscanada.gc.ca > Library and Archives Canada > Canadian Directories: Who Was Where > City of Ottawa Alphabetical, General, Miscellaneous and Subscribers' Classified Business Directory, August 1873 to August 1874, pg 173

From: the Arnprior Watchman, August 16, 1895, page 7

**JOHN • G. • WATSON**

MANUFACTURER OF AND DEALER IN

**GRANITE, MARBLE and STONE FOR MONUMENTAL PURPOSES, CEMETERY RAILINGS, ETC., ETC.,**

Why pay 15 per cent to agents for taking your order, and then you are buying from designs that you can see nothing about. Come to my shop and see what you are buying, as I have constantly on hand a large stock of Granite and Marble Monuments, and can guarantee good value for your money.

**J. G. WATSON,** ELGIN STREET  
Opposite Post Office

**J. L. FRASER,**



Dealer in Marble and Granite Monuments, Headstones, Tablets, etc. Plain and Ornamental Work. Cemetery Work of every description neatly executed. Orders promptly filled and

**Satisfaction Guaranteed**  
**SHOP NEXT TO R. S. DRYSDALE'S,**  
Elgin street, Arnprior, Ont.

Arnprior Chronicle, August 22, 1890 / Arnprior&McNab/Braeside Archives

Arnprior marble industry advertisements

The list of marble industry merchants and craftsmen includes William Knowles, Danlin ("J.G. Watson & W. B. Danlin", Arnprior Chronicle, 1890, Watson & Danlin headstones), J.L. Fraser, Wm Niblett, R. Niblett, Robert McDonald, Alex McDonald, J.W. McDonald, W.G. Smart, Hugh McEwen, Finley Spence, William Spence, R.G. Spence, T. Spence, Peter Taylor Somerville, T.G. Somerville, Thomas James Somerville, J.G. Watson, A. Taylor, Farquhar, McLachlin, Hartney & Co., Wright & Farquharson and Spence & Firth.

There were probably more craftsmen and marble firms than available data can verify. For example, a newspaper from 1876 indicates the *East End Marble Works* was an Arnprior firm. No additional evidence of this company has been found.

**Wanted.**

An apprentice wanted to learn the Marble Cutting. Apply at the East End Marble Works, Arnprior.

Arnprior Review and South Renfrew Chronicle, October 6, 1876, page 3. (Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives)

The Arnprior marble craftsmen signed their stones in a variety of fonts.



A sample of headstone signatures from Arnprior area cemeteries

In the late 1860s, the 1936 *Arnprior Curling Club Constitution and Bylaws* states: “curlers used whins, some of which were made from Arnprior marble “. Products also included monuments, urns, pedestals, columns, fireplace faces and mantles, chimney caps and pieces, counter and table tops, baptismal fonts, basins, tomb and head stones, equestrian hitching blocks, floor tiles and construction stones (quoins, lintels, sills, door frames) for buildings.

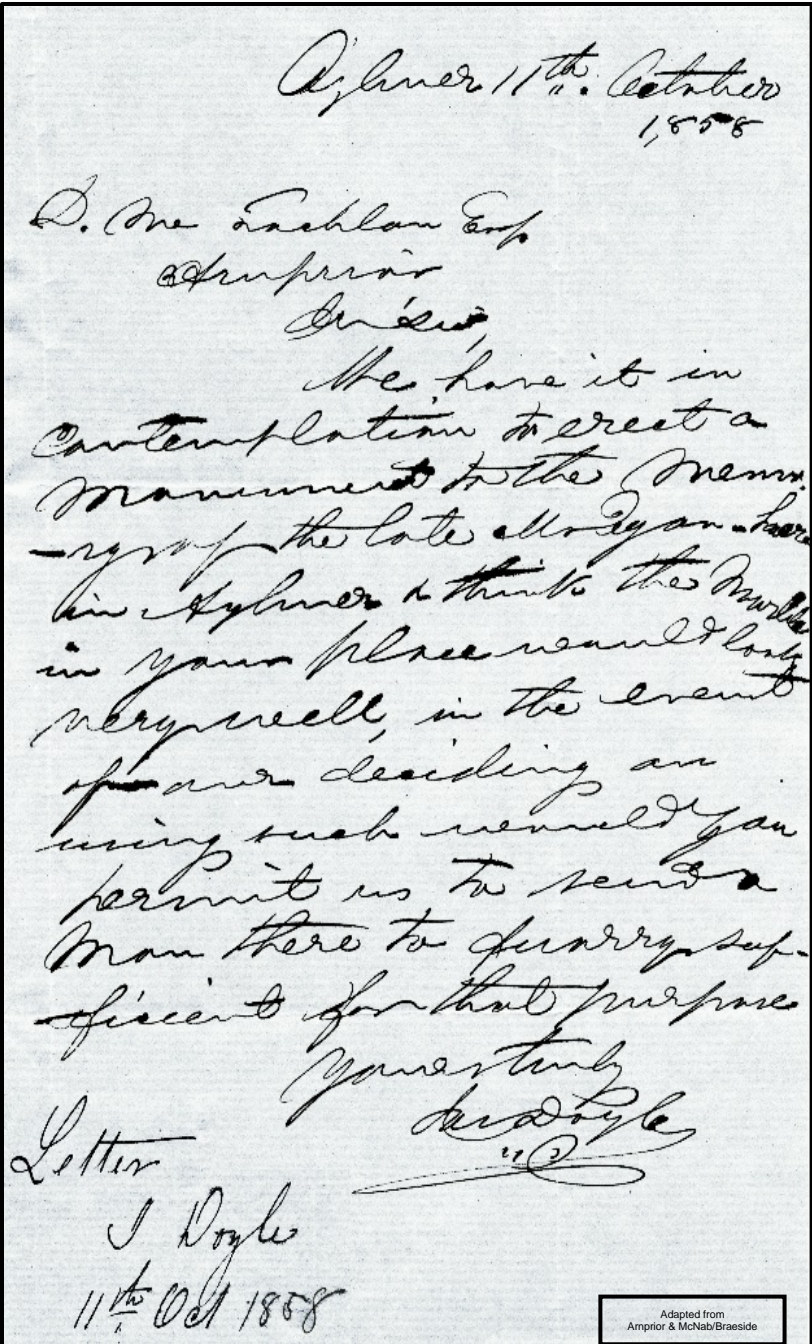
William Knowles – Egan Monument – 1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales

The earliest discovered Arnprior marble merchants include Peter Taylor Somerville, Spence & Firth and William Knowles. All were very active in exhibiting Arnprior Marble products at Provincial and international exhibitions. McLachlin Family Letters at the Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives suggest the success of W. Knowles was partly due to the financial support and patronage of Dan McLachlin. The letter addressed to Dan McLachlin from J. Doyle dated October, 11, 1858, includes a request to supply Arnprior Marble for the monument to John Egan, Aylmer's first mayor. The letter of August 24, 1859 (noted in the section on *Marble Sites - Where were the quarries?*) indicates William Knowles leased the island north of the Madawaska bridge from Dan McLachlin to quarry marble and that Knowles was working on "an order for the amount on the Egan Monument Committee."

**THE LATE MR. EGAN.**  
 (From the Ottawa Citizen.)

The funeral took place on Wednesday, the 15th instant, at 4 o'clock, p. m. The pall-bearers were the Hon. L. T. Drummond, Judge McCord, Joseph Aumont, H. L. Routh, John Foran and James Doyle, Esquires. The procession was formed, and moved from his late residence to the church, where the Rev. John Johnstone preached an eloquent sermon from Psalm 39, verse v : "Thou hast made my days as an hand-reath, &c." After which the procession moved on to the place of interment, in his own premises in the village, where it was stated the merchants of Quebec and Montreal intend erecting a monument to his memory.

John Egan funeral, Ottawa Citizen, 18<sup>th</sup> July, 1857. Pall-bearers included James Doyle.



Letter from J. Doyle to Dan McLachlin requesting Arnprior Marble for the Egan Monument (MU6765. Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives).

The name of James Doyle in the list of pall-bearers links the October 1858 letter to Dan McLachlin, W. Knowles and the Egan monument committee. The committee was serious. Stent and Laver, the Ottawa architect firm involved in designing the first Houses of Parliament, was contracted to design the Egan monument in 1859. (Bio-graphical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1950).

Details of the Egan monument are laid out in the Ottawa Citizen of September 29 1860.

Monument to the Late J. Egan, Esq  
M.P.P.

“The monument at Aylmer, erected to the memory of the late John Egan, M.P.P., by the Lumbermen of the Ottawa Valley, as a tribute of their respect, has been finally finished. It is built chiefly of Arnprior marble, a material in our opinion especially adapted for monumental structures, being in character and colour so suited to that melancholy purpose. It reminds us of the loss of one who served so well the interests of this section of the country *with untiring zeal* --- this event one and all deplore, and we can scarcely forbear the reflection that had the deceased gentleman survived to have seen the result of his endeavors to establish the seat of government at Ottawa, no one could have joined with more heartfelt enthusiasm, to give effect to the demonstration we all so recently witnessed, in laying the corner-stone of the Permanent Government Buildings, in this city --- so effectually and forever sealed by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. The style of Architecture in which the monument is erected, we understand, is that known as the third pointed or Perpendicular Gothic, and may be described as being of Quadrilateral form having Angled Buttresses, with recesses on each side of statuary marble, with spandrils of the same material, richly carved, containing the monogram, springing out of which is, gracefully arranged, the maple and shamrock intertwined, as emblems of his adopted country, and that of his birth. In the other spandrils is designed, the Oak with acorns and other combinations in a conventionalized form. The purity of this marble contrasts well with the sombre tint of the Arnprior, and both in strict harmony with each other --- so highly characteristic of the essential elements of an erection of this nature --- and giving a chaste and effective ap-

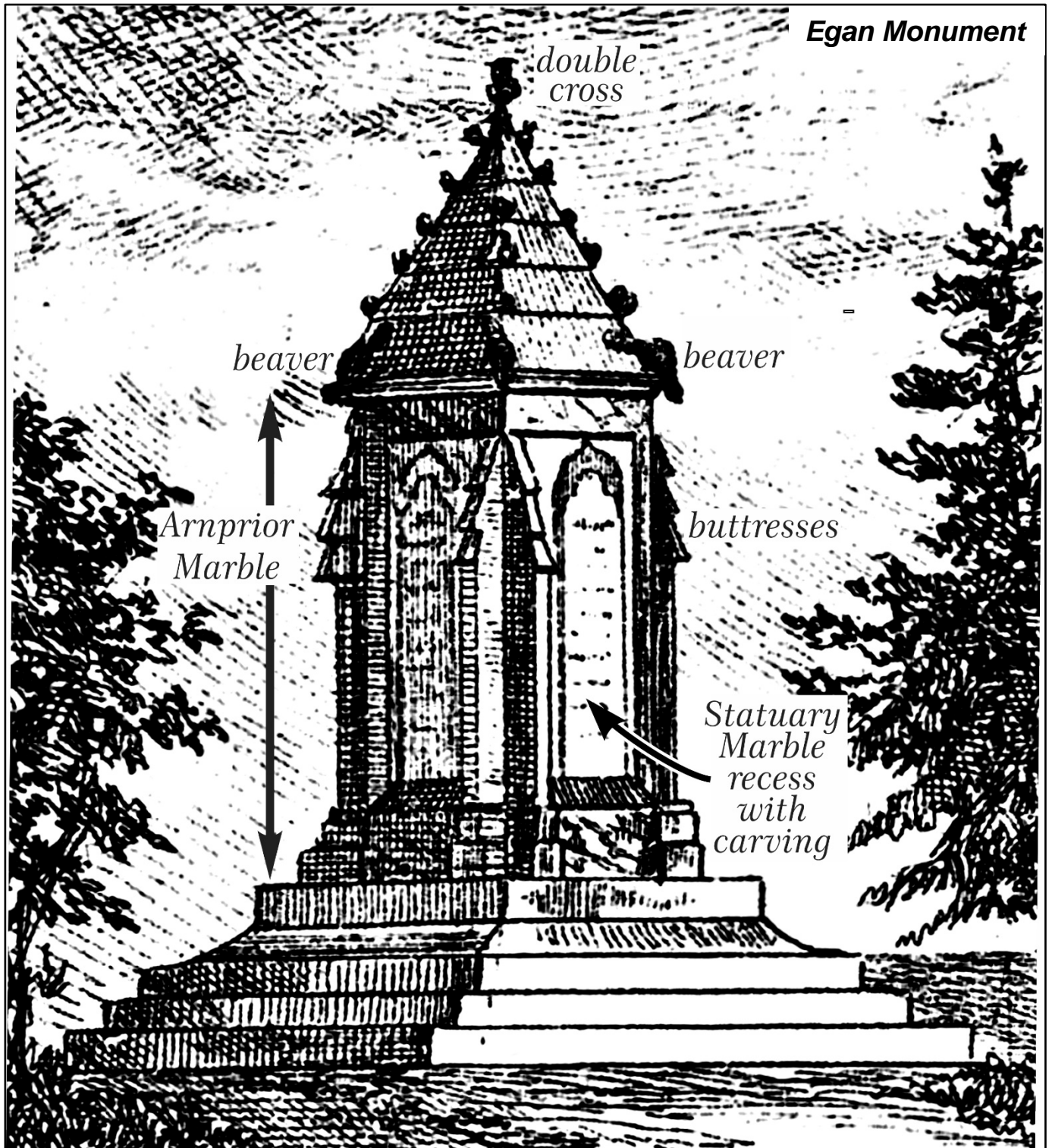
pearance to the whole. At each Angle above the buttresses the Beaver is tastefully placed, stopping the moulding going all round, and out of which the flowing ornament takes the place off crockets extending up the water table or roof, the whole being surmounted by a finial well designed and elegantly carved as a double cross. The monument is erected on a beautifully elevated plot of ground adjoining the late residence of the deceased at Aylmer, and nearly in front of the Episcopal Church. We hear it is contemplated, as soon as subscriptions are raised, to put an ornamental wrought iron railing around on an Ohio stone base of appropriate design. --- This will also contrast favourably with the finely worked pedestal and steps, which are of limestone from the Gloucester quarries.

On the whole, it is the finest thing of the kind we have seen in Canada, and does great credit to the designers, Messrs. Stent & Laver of this city, who are also the architects of the structure.

The inscription on the Tablet has been carefully cut in ancient lettering, having illuminated capitals, as follows:

“Sacred to the memory  
of  
JNO. EGAN, Esq., M.P.P,  
Born at Lissivahane, County Galway,  
Ireland,  
Who died at Quebec, 11th July, 1857.  
Aged 47 years.

As a merchant, a legislator, and an enterprising citizen, he was the best friend the Ottawa country ever had. His name is identified with almost every advancement in material wealth and political importance which this part of Canada has undergone. This monument is erected as a tribute to his great worth by a few of his friends.”



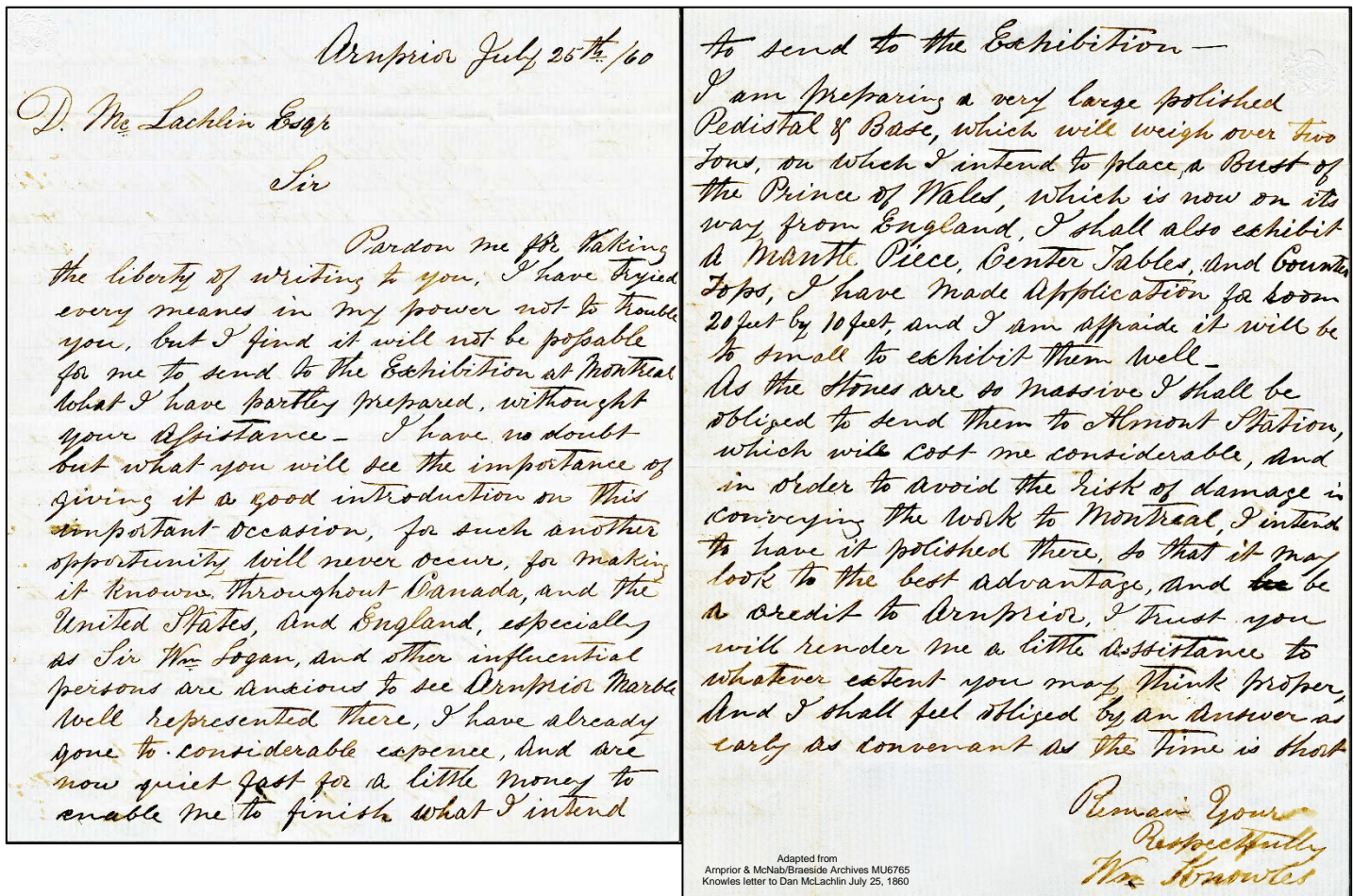
Egan Monument, Library and Archives Canada, Canadian Illustrated News, September 7, 1878, page 152. Annotation from description in the September 29, 1860, Ottawa Citizen.

The Egan monument was a sculptural tour de force for Aylmer and Arnprior Marble. John Egan's gravesite beside his mansion in Aylmer was later deconsecrated and he was re-interred in Beechwood Cemetery, Ottawa, with family members on June 3, 1903 (*Beechwood Cemetery file*). The Beechwood Egan family site is now marked with a large granite headstone. *Where is John Egan's original monument?*

At about the same time, William Knowles also received awards (described later) for Arnprior Marble products at the Exhibition of the Provincial Agricultural Association of Upper Canada, in Kingston, on September 27-30, 1859. The awards, coupled with the growing awareness of Arnprior Marble are contemporary with the estimate by William Knowles to provide Arnprior Marble for use in Canada's first parliament buildings in September 1859 (See later section on [Arnprior Marble in the First Parliament Buildings.](#))

### 1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales

The next year, the opportunity presented by the visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada in 1860 was not missed. The letter of July 25, 1860 from William Knowles requests support from Dan



McLachlin for the exhibition in Montreal to accompany the visit. This was before the railway reached Arnprior in 1864. The account of the Prince's visit in the Toronto Globe of August 29, 1860 notes:

Erroneous description from Toronto Globe, August 29, 1860. There was no marble within Ottawa's boundary of the 1860s. The "square block of the same kind" by W. Knowles means the baptismal font, chimney piece and block are actually made of the "dark Arnprior" (not "dark Ottawa") marble.

A baptismal font, shown by the manufacturer, Mr. W. G. Smart, of Arnprior, is one of the most beautiful objects in the Exhibition. It is in what is known as the early English style. From a square base rise four plain round Saxon pillars, supporting a square basin. It is made of dark Ottawa marble, highly polished. Behind it are a chimney-piece and a square block of the same kind of marble, exhibited by Mr. W. Knowles, of Arnprior.



The Spence Family

The Spence family name was associated with Arnprior's marble industry for at least 3 decades. A headstone in Arnprior's Albert Street Cemetery with a date of 1854 is signed "Spence & Firth". Kingston's Cataraqui Cemetery stone with a date of 1864 signed "F. Spence" indicates Finley Spence was producing Arnprior Marble products in 1864. The Toronto Globe's report on the Provincial Exhibition in London Ontario of September 20, 1865, attests to production of Arnprior Marble products by T. Spence.

From the advertisement and listing in "Fuller's Counties of Leeds, Grenville, Lanark and Renfrew Directory for 1866 and 1867", page 116, the Spence firm is now "Spence & Co.". Neilson's Weekly, May 29, 1869, Vol. II, No. 22 carries "F. Spence, Marble Manufacturer". The Arnprior Weekly Review July 3, 1874 shows that following Confederation, the company is called "Dominion Marble Works" and imported marble is being marketed.

**T. Spence, of Arnprior, exhibits some specimens of Arnprior marble in a marble water tank, table, and stand. This is the beautiful marble of which so much is used for pillars, &c., in the public buildings at Ottawa.**

Part of column from: The Provincial Exhibition: Preparations for the Fair Grounds and ... *The Globe* (1844-1936); Sep 20, 1865; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Globe and Mail, pg. 1

**DOMINION MARBLE WORKS**  
**ARNPRIOR, Ont.**

**F. SPENCE, Proprietor.**

The subscriber hereby informs the Public in general that he is prepared to supply any parties requiring

**MONUMENTS, TOMB AND HEAD-  
 STONES,  
 CHIMNEY PIECES,  
 Counter and Table Tops,  
 BAPTISMAL FONTS**

—IN EITHER—

**Arnprior, Vermont or Italian Marble.**

At the Lowest Possible Prices.

He is also prepared to furnish the Arnprior Marble in the Rough for Monumental purposes, in Blocks to order on the shortest notice, and at reduced prices

Please call and examine before purchasing elsewhere.

Workshop and office on Elgin street near the White Bridge.

116

ARNPRIOR.

**ARNPRIOR**

**MARBLE**  **WORKS.**

**SPENCE & CO.,  
 MARBLE MANUFACTURERS,  
 ARNPRIOR, CANADA WEST.**

F. Spence & Co. beg to inform the public generally that they are prepared to supply any parties requiring Monuments, Tomb and Head Stones, Chimney Pieces, Counter and Table Tops, Baptismal Fonts, &c., of either Arnprior, Vermont, or Italian Marble, at the lowest possible prices. They are also prepared to furnish the Arnprior Marble, either in Blocks or Slabs, from the Mill, according to order, at the shortest notice, and at a reduced price.

Please call and Examine before purchasing elsewhere.


**F. SPENCE,  
 MARBLE  
 MANUFACTURER,  
 ARNPRIOR, ONT,**

**T**OMB and Head Stones, Monuments,  
 Mantlepieces, Counter and Table Tops,  
 Door and Window Sills, Steps, Stovepipe and  
 Chimney Stones, Hitching Posts, &c. &c.

Arnprior Marble, in Monumental Blocks,  
 furnished to order.

A transition in the family ownership appears by the change from Dominion Marble Works under *F. Spence* in the February 16, 1877, edition of the *Arnprior Review and South Renfrew Chronicle*, to *Wm. Spence* in the July 3, 1885 edition of the *Arnprior Chronicle*. As noted in the previous discussion of the Elgin Street site, the July 3, 1885 *Arnprior Chronicle* also noted the end of the Spence family connection with the Arnprior Marble industry in the advertisement that noted that T.J. Somerville "has opened a branch shop in Spence's Old Stand opposite the new Post Office, Elgin st."

**DOMINION**



**Marble Works**

ELGIN STREET, ARNPRIOR.  
**F. SPENCE, Prop.,**

DEALER IN SCOTCH GRANITE, FREESTONE  
ITALIAN, AMERICAN AND ARNPRIOR  
MARBLE, MONUMENTS, FONTS, HEAD-  
STONES, MANTLE PIECES, TABLE  
TOPS, THE CHEAPEST AND  
BEST IN CANADA.

**LETTER CUTTING.**—To this department Mr Spence gives special attention, every inscription being carefully drawn before being engraved, thus showing accuracy and beauty in arrangement. Mr Spence likewise arranges from time to time to visit different parts of the country, where additional inscriptions, &c., may be required. Notes of such should be sent to him at Arnprior, and the earliest opportunity will be taken for attending to them.

**RENOVATION OF MONUMENTS.**—Cleaning, Painting, Gilding, &c.—Mr. Spence will direct special attention to this department. A very small outlay is generally sufficient to give permanence and add beauty to works which may have been impaired by time, &c., and it will be his constant care to give faithful service in this as in all other departments.

**CHIMNEY PIECES, Furnishings, &c.**—Mr. Spence will be happy to execute to order, Chimney pieces, and Stone Furnishings of every kind for the interior and exterior of Houses, Mansions, &c.

**PLANS, PRICES, and every information** connected with the above Departments, forwarded on application to F. Spence, So. Arnprior. F. SPENCE.

**N. B.**—Goods carefully packed and forwarded to any part of the Country. 28-17

**DOMINION  
MARBLE WORKS**



**WM. SPENCE,**

Dealer in all kinds of

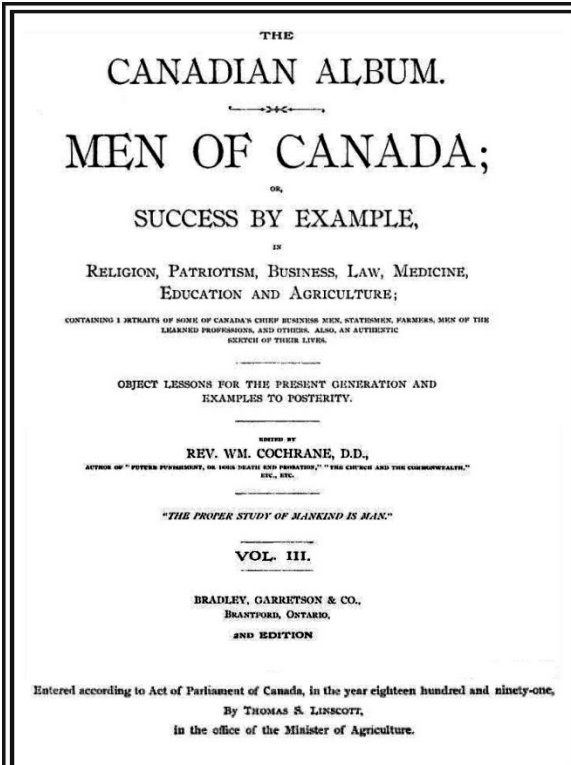
**Native and Foreign Marble,**

Monuments, Headstones, Tombs, Mantels, Or-  
namental Fencing for Grave Plots, etc.

**ELGIN ST., ARNPRIOR, ONT.**  
Arnprior Chronicle, Friday, July 3, 1885, Arnprior McNab/Braeside Archives

The Somervilles

The Somerville name is prominent in Arnprior's marble industry. Peter Taylor Somerville's name appears as a signature on an early headstone with a date of 1845 as well as on the image of "Arnprior Marble Works" at 48 Hugh Street. The 1891 Canadian Album describes T. J. Somerville.



156 MEN OF CANADA.  
THOMAS JAMES SOMERVILLE, Manufacturer of monuments and headstones in marble and granite, Brandon, Man., was born, March 12th, 1854, in Tarbolten, Carleton County, Ont. He is the son of Thos. George and Elizabeth (Taylor) Somerville, of Aberdeen, Scotland, who came to Canada in 1849. The former followed mercantile business at Mohr's Corners, in Carleton County, Ont., during his life. He was educated at the public schools, and went to learn the tanning business when he was thirteen years of age, following it for seven years, when he went to learn the mar-

ble business in Arnprior, Ont. He began in Renfrew, on his own account, in 1874, and went to Brandon, Man., in April, 1891, and opened up his present business. It must be recorded, to the credit of Mr. Somerville, that by natural ability, push, and enterprise, he has to-day not only the most complete and extensive establishment in his line west of the great lakes, but in some important respects, the best equipped in the Dominion of Canada, having the only pneumatic lettering tools in the Dominion. His establishment would be a credit to any city in Canada. The tools and machinery are run by a twelve horse-power engine, and he keeps a staff of twelve men busy the year round. He is a member of the A.O.U.W. and I.O.O.F., in which he has filled all the most important offices. Owing to pressure of business he has declined municipal honors. In politics, he is a Liberal, and in religion a Presbyterian. He was married in 1884, to Elizabeth Ellison, daughter of Alexander Thompson, of Arnprior, Ont. Mr. Somerville is a man of good, sound business judgment, high social standing, and fully deserving of a place among the foremost men of Canada. The highly creditable position he occupies in the business world has been reached by his own industry, determination, and skill. He fully understands that knowledge is power, and, therefore, brings to bear on his work the best thought and most progressive methods known to his art.

→  
→  
→  
→ 1867-8  
→  
→ 1874



T.J. Somerville signature from headstone death date 1886, White Lake Cemetery

The headstone supports T.J. Somerville's time in Arnprior and the 1891 "Men of Canada" article.

T.J. Somerville advertisement, Arnprior Chronicle, December 14, 1888. R. McDonald & Son's Arnprior Granite Works passed to T.J. Somerville "on the 1st of October" 1888. Note the same central graphic appears in the 1888-1890 advertisements of J.L. Fraser. The Chronicle advertisement of July 3 1885 indicates Fraser worked for T.J. Somerville before taking over in about 1888.

THE ARNPRIOR GRANITE AND MARBLE WORKS

T. J. SOMERVILLE, PROPRIETOR.

Manufacturer and Dealer in all kinds of Granite and Marble Monuments, Headstones, Tablets, Cemetery Coping, Etc. Also, all kinds of Building Work.

The Arnprior Granite Works, formerly occupied by R. McDonald & Son, will be opened by the undersigned on the 1st of October. Parties requiring Monuments and Headstones will save 25 per cent. by withholding their orders until then.

By seeing my agent, H. B. Somerville, before ordering elsewhere, you will save money and get a finished job.

T. J. SOMERVILLE, Arnprior, Ont.

The R. McDonald & Son business began when Robert McDonald, stone cutter, purchased a quarry after 1866-7 from J.S. Bellamy. The Bellamy quarry site is unknown. Following the death of R. McDonald on August 12, 1884, the business passed to sons Robert and Alex (*Ontario Gazetteer and Business Directory 1895, pg 89*). The 4 quarries operated are described in the **Marble Sites** section.

**THIS WEEK 25 YEARS AGO**  
*(From Chronicle File of 1914)*  
 The crops in Fitzroy looked unusual. The funeral was attended by a number of Indians.  
 Robert McDonald, owner of the Arnprior marble quarry, died on the 12th inst. He was a stone cutter by trade and he was one of the first employed on the construction of the parliament buildings at Ottawa. After the completion of that immense work he came to Arnprior and purchased a quarry from Mr. J. S. Bellamy.  
 At a regular meeting of Arnprior lodge No. 254, Independent Order of Good Templars, the following officers

← *The Arnprior Chronicle, August 13, 1909, page 5*

*Arnprior McNab/Braeside Archives*

**Robert McDonald, owner of the Arnprior marble quarry, died on the 12th inst. He was a stone cutter by trade and he was one of the first employed on the construction of the parliament buildings at Ottawa. After the completion of that immense work he came to Arnprior and purchased a quarry from Mr. J. S. Bellamy.**

THE  
 MERCANTILE AGENCY  
**REFERENCE BOOK**  
 FOR THE  
 BRITISH PROVINCES;  
 CONTAINING RATINGS  
 OF THE  
 PRINCIPAL MERCHANTS, TRADERS, AND MANUFACTURERS IN THE  
 CANADAS, NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW-  
 FOUNDLAND, AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.  
 1866.  
 VOL. III.  
 MONTREAL AND TORONTO:  
 PUBLISHED ANNUALLY BY DUN, WIMAN & CO.  
 1866.

20	ARNOLD—ARTEMESIA.	
	ARNOLD, Oxford Co., C. W.	
Hall, Thomas .....	Tavern .....	?
Teetzell, John.....	Tavern .....	?
	ARNPRIOR, Renfrew Co., C. W.	
Bellamy, J.'S. & Co.....	Tinsmith .....	3½
Brown & Wilson.....	General Store.....	2 1½
Butler, John.....	Tinsmith .....	3½
Campbell, John.....	Hotel .....	?
Carss, William.....	General Store .....	2½
Craig, D.....	Baker .....	2½
Edey, Edmund.....	General Store .....	?
Fitzsimons, J. K.....	Innkeeper.....	?
Hamilton, R.....	General Store .....	?
Harrington, Eric.....	General Store .....	3½ 2
Leitch, G. S.....	Boots, &c.....	3
Lyon, Robinson.....	Hotel.....	?
Mackay, William.....	Lumber .....	2½ 2
McDonald, Samuel.....	Blacksmith.....	?
McLaughlin, Daniel.....	Lumber .....	2 1½
Moore & Ramsay.....	General Store .....	3½
Ramsay, Daniel.....	Grocer.....	?
Russell, Andrew, & Son.....	General Store.....	3½ 2
Stewart & Tierney.....	Shoes.....	2½
Tilly, Arthur.....	Store .....	3½
Toy, Thomas.....	Axe Maker.....	3½
Wait.....	Drugs.....	4 2½
Watson, Samuel.....	Shoes.....	?
Wolfe, Jonathan .....	Cabinetmaker.....	3
Young, Alexander.....	Agricultural Implements..	4 2½
Young, Robert.....	Toys and Crockery.....	3½ 2

Page 20 of the Mercantile Agency Reference Book 1866, lists "Bellamy, J. S. & Co." as Tinsmith in Arnprior.

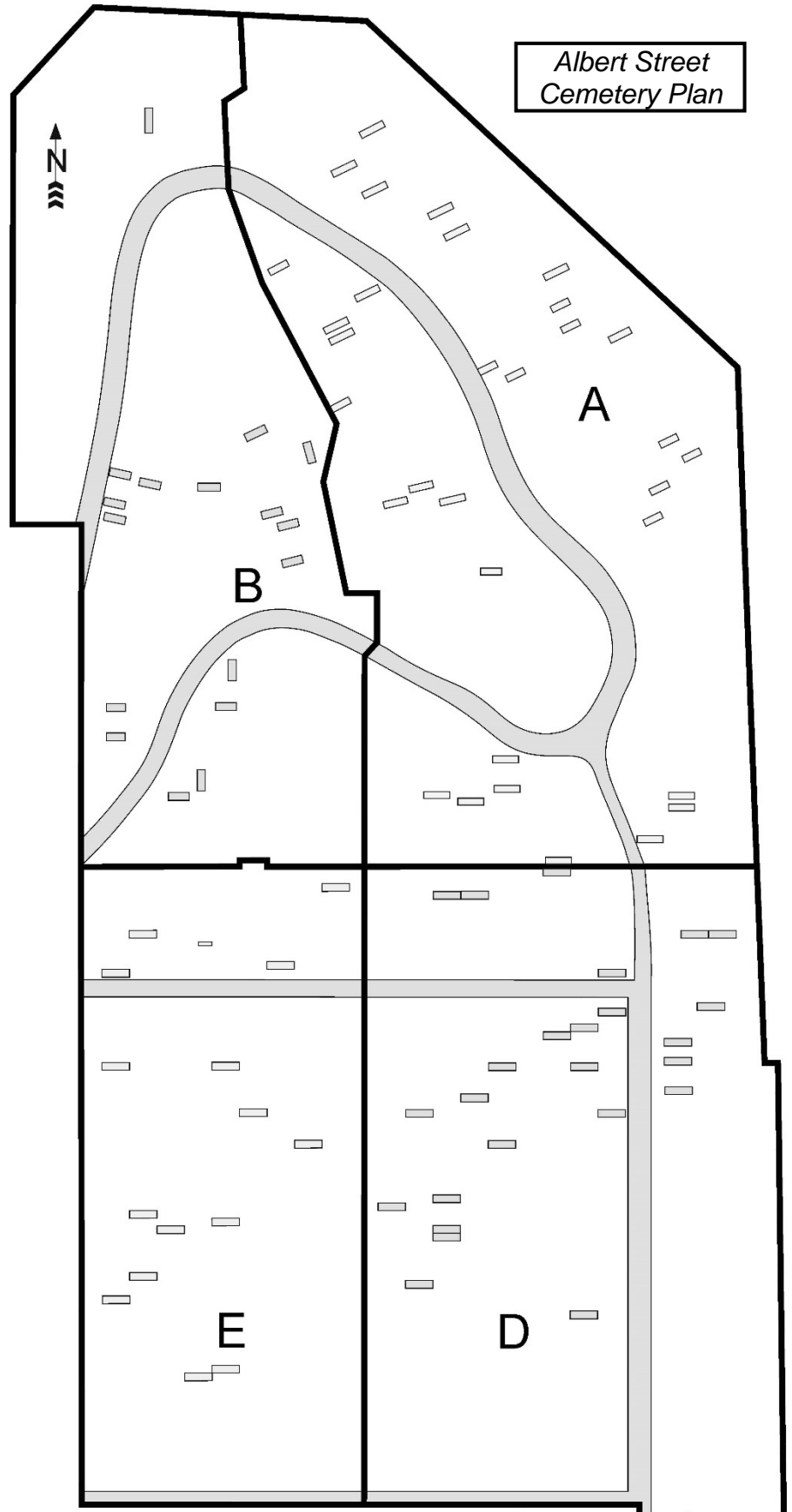
The Cemetery Market - local head and tombstones, Albert Street Cemetery, Arnprior

Headstones were probably responsible for the beginning and became the mainstay of Arnprior's stone industry. Arnprior marble was used to fashion many early head and tomb stones in sections A, B, D and E of the Albert Street cemetery. Early stones were also fashioned from sandstone, limestone and marble brought to Arnprior. Granite and other silicate stone appear somewhat later.

A map of the local marble stones in the Albert Street cemetery has been prepared using the cemetery plan obtained courtesy of the Arnprior Municipal Office, as a base. A nominal rectangular symbol was chosen based on the individual plot size in sections D and E. Symbols are oriented following the plots on the base plan.

More marble stones from local quarries are located in the older section A than in the other sections. Locations overlooking the Madawaska River were clearly preferred. As the local marble industry faded, a decreasing number of local marble stones followed in sections B and E.

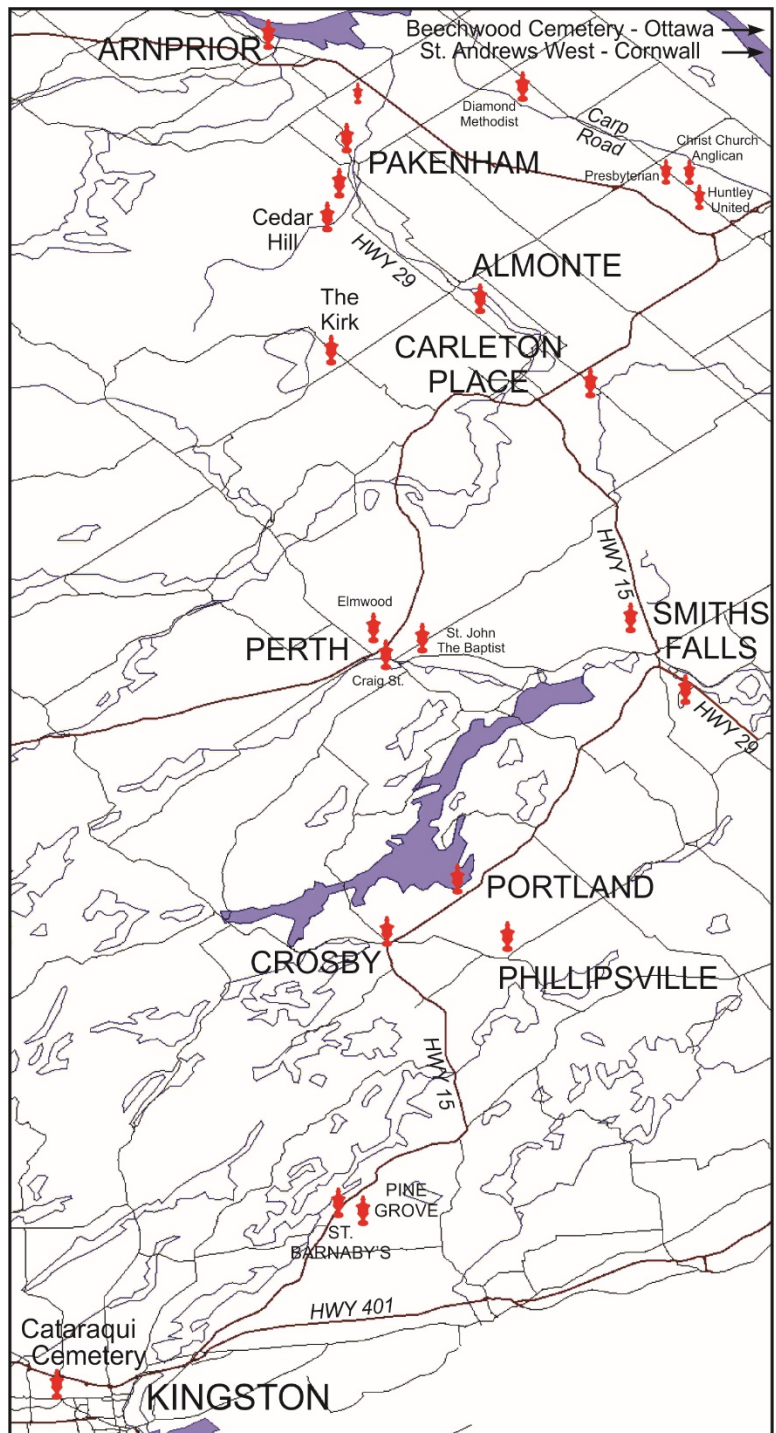
A few headstones appear to have been restored using granite parts. More simply fashioned, local marble grave markers may have been fashioned from "left over" stone after the end of Arnprior's "Marble Era" about 1900.

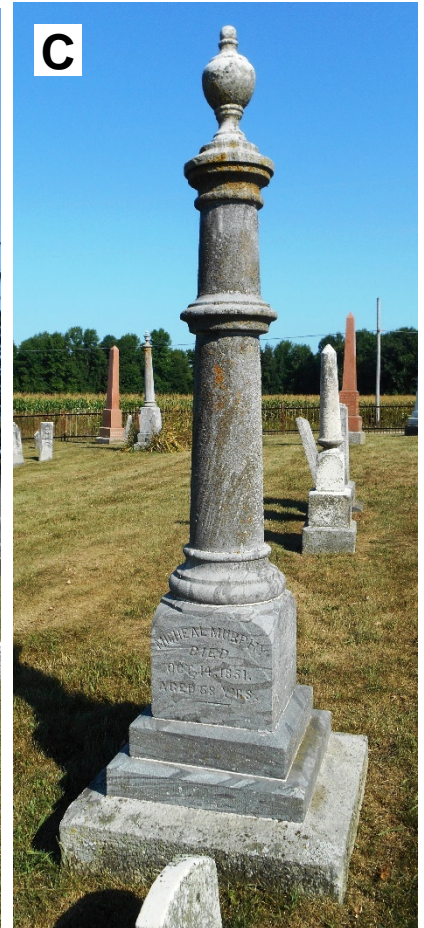


The Tombstone Trails of Arnprior Marble and a link to the War of 1812

Many Arnprior Marble headstones are found in cemeteries dating to Arnprior's Marble Era along routes from Arnprior to Beechwood Cemetery, Ottawa, and along the corridors from Arnprior to Perth and Kingston. Other cemeteries across Ontario and beyond probably contain Arnprior Marble stones.

A poignant link to the War of 1812 lies a few kilometres east of Phillipsville. Here a superb slab of Arnprior marble records the passing of a soldier from the War of 1812. The flame-like fold structure in the pedestal base so closely resembles the structure in the Claude Street outcrop (page 5) that the stone may be from the quarry of R. McDonald & Son at the corner of Russell and Elgin streets. The date of May 31, 1869 indicates the stone was produced ~3 years after R. McDonald arrived in Arnprior having finished work on the first Parliament buildings.





**A** - Maple Vale Cemetery, Hwy 29 south of Smiths Falls.  
**B** - Presbyterian Cemetery, Carp Road  
**C** - Crosby Cemetery, Hwy 15  
**D** - Bright orange lichens follow folded mineral trends in Arnprior Marble at Pine Grove Cemetery north of Kingston.  
**E** - Low relief sculpture, headstone column, 3008 Carp Road

Modular construction of turned top monuments, columns or rectangular midsections and pedestal base components made shipping easier. Components could be assembled on site with central iron bars fixing the parts. Lettering might be done later by local craftsmen.

Cataraqui Cemetery, Kingston, Ontario

The crenulated structure and blue-grey shades of Arnprior Marble distinguish many impressive stones in Cataraqui Cemetery. Larger stone components have been shipped from Arnprior and lettered by Kingston area craftsmen. Several headstones closely match Arnprior Marble models advertised in the 1869-1883 Canadian Illustrated News (inset). The west side of the pedestal beneath one smaller stone, apparently finished and shipped from Arnprior, is signed "F. (Finley) Spence Arnprior". This stone is notable for the use of some 6 different fonts strategically and skillfully carved to within millimeters of the monument's edge. The delicate carving has not led to fracture of the edges even after some 150 years of weathering.

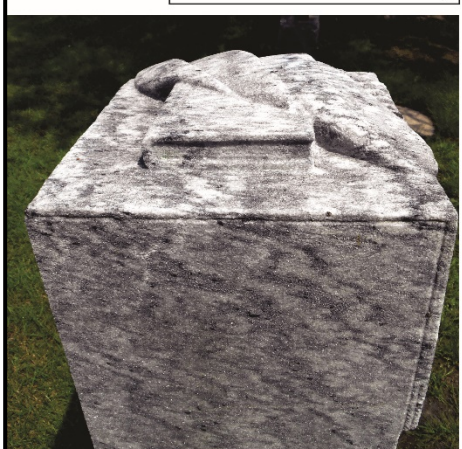
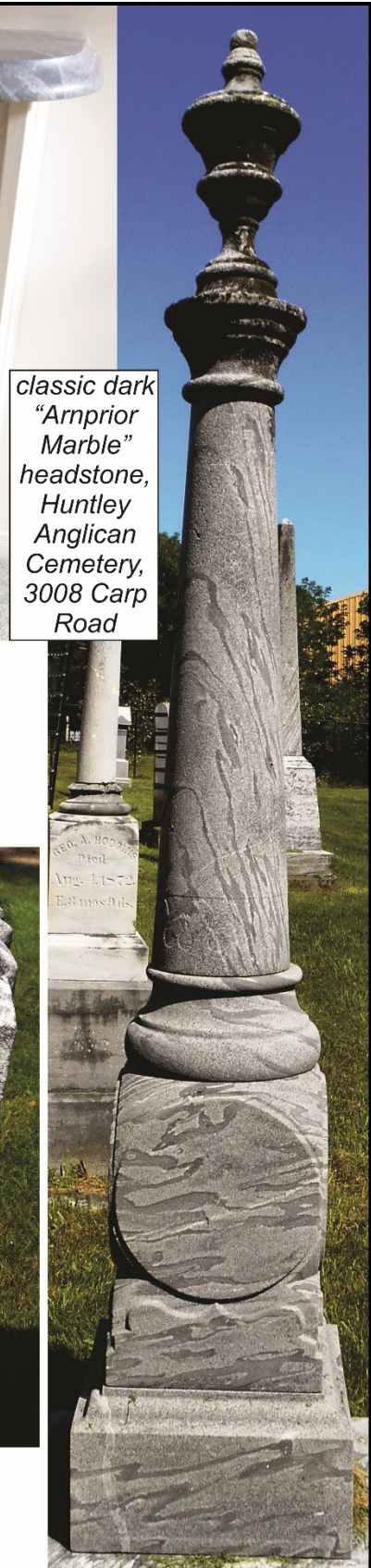


Cataraqui Cemetery  
Kingston



Arnprior Marble – Craftmanship - Sculpture

Some of the best examples of Arnprior marble sculpture survive in fireplace mantles at “The Hill”, in the Arnprior District Museum and on headstones from Arnprior to Ottawa and Kingston.



Arnprior buildings:

Although within Arnprior, marble was harder to extract and form into blocks than the naturally layered dolomitic limestone. The limestone was easier to fashion but had to be carried farther. Marble was therefore used strategically for chimney caps, keystone door and window lintels, entrance pillars, sills and thresholds, building corners (quoins and buttresses) as well as interior elements (floor tiles and fireplaces). Limestone filled the walls.



The original appearance of buildings was quite different than today. Some 150 years of weathering has oxidized iron in the dolostone sediment structure to produce rusty shades of orange to brown. Marble faces have changed colour from original dark grey-blue shades to lighter beige, although glimpses of colour are still evident under the weathered surface. Close examination will reveal crystals of dark grey to black laths of tremolite and pods of bright green diopside or epidote. Originally reflection and refraction from the marble's unweathered crystal structure would respond variably to the light and light angle to contrast with the dolostone. The changing exposure from soffit to street or ground level has also affected weathering. Marble blocks near the foundation of the Scotiabank and the Campbell block pillars provide a glimpse of the original marble with darker folded bands that clearly distinguish the marble from the horizontally layered dolostone.

"The Hill" - Galilee Centre – by 1857

Daniel McLachlin's home at 398 John Street north used sculptured forms for marble chimneys a

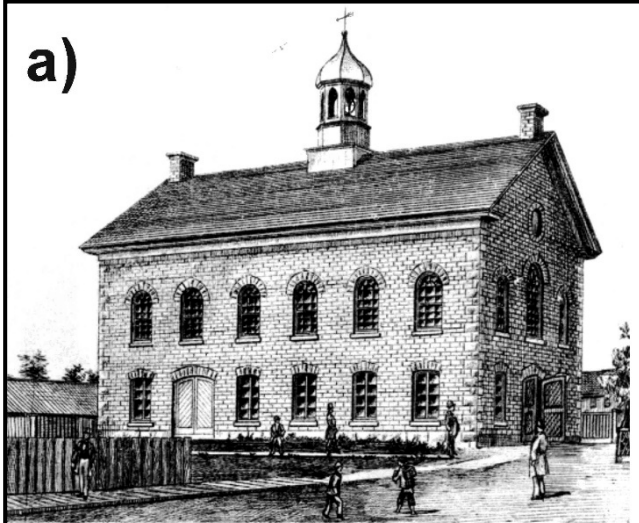


**Corners a and b** entrance at "The Hill" are framed with Arnprior Marble

and precisely sawn and beveled blocks of local marble with no edge decoration for window sills and quoins **c**. Marble quoins and keystone lintel frames the front door in **b**. An impressive block of Arnprior marble of over a square meter forms the entrance threshold.

Arnprior Village Hall – 1862? to April 2, 1888

Arnprior Village Hall appears on Arnprior's 1863 business directory map at the northwest corner of Victoria and Bell (then Hugh) streets. We assume it was constructed in time for Arnprior's incorporation as a village in 1862. With the new school and church on Ottawa street a block to the north, a post office a few doors to the south on Hugh Street, a railway near the southern limit of the McLachlin property and the mills to the southeast, the village hall was effectively at the centre of Dan



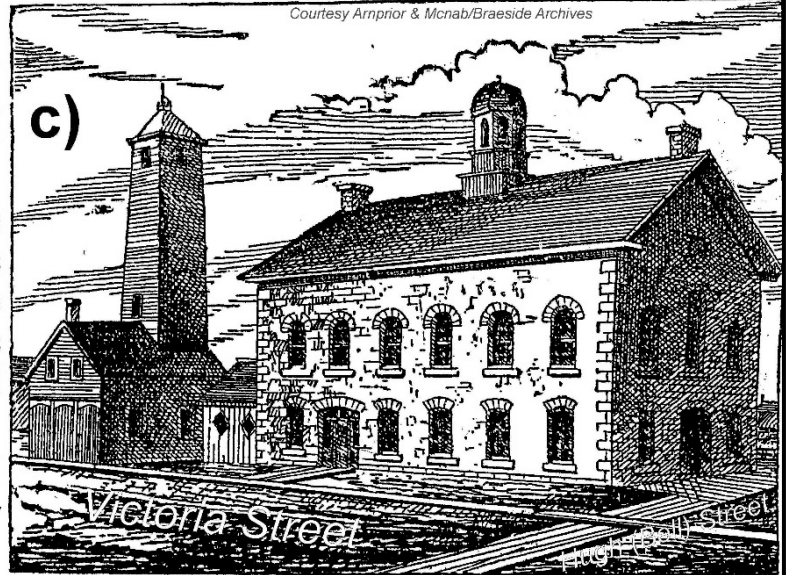
a) Village Hall, south side, Nov. 16, 1878. Canadian Illustrated News, vol.XVIII, No. 20, 312-313, Library and Archives Canada.



Adapted from Grace St. Andrew's United Church 1840-1990.

Courtesy Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives

b) Village Hall, north side, image (part) from the roof of Daniel McLachlin's house (Galilee) ca. 1870 - before frame building-hose tower (Grace St. Andrews United Church 1840-1890, Centennial pamphlet)



c) Village Hall with frame building and hose tower, south side. Arnprior Chronicle illustration, Dec. 14, 1888.

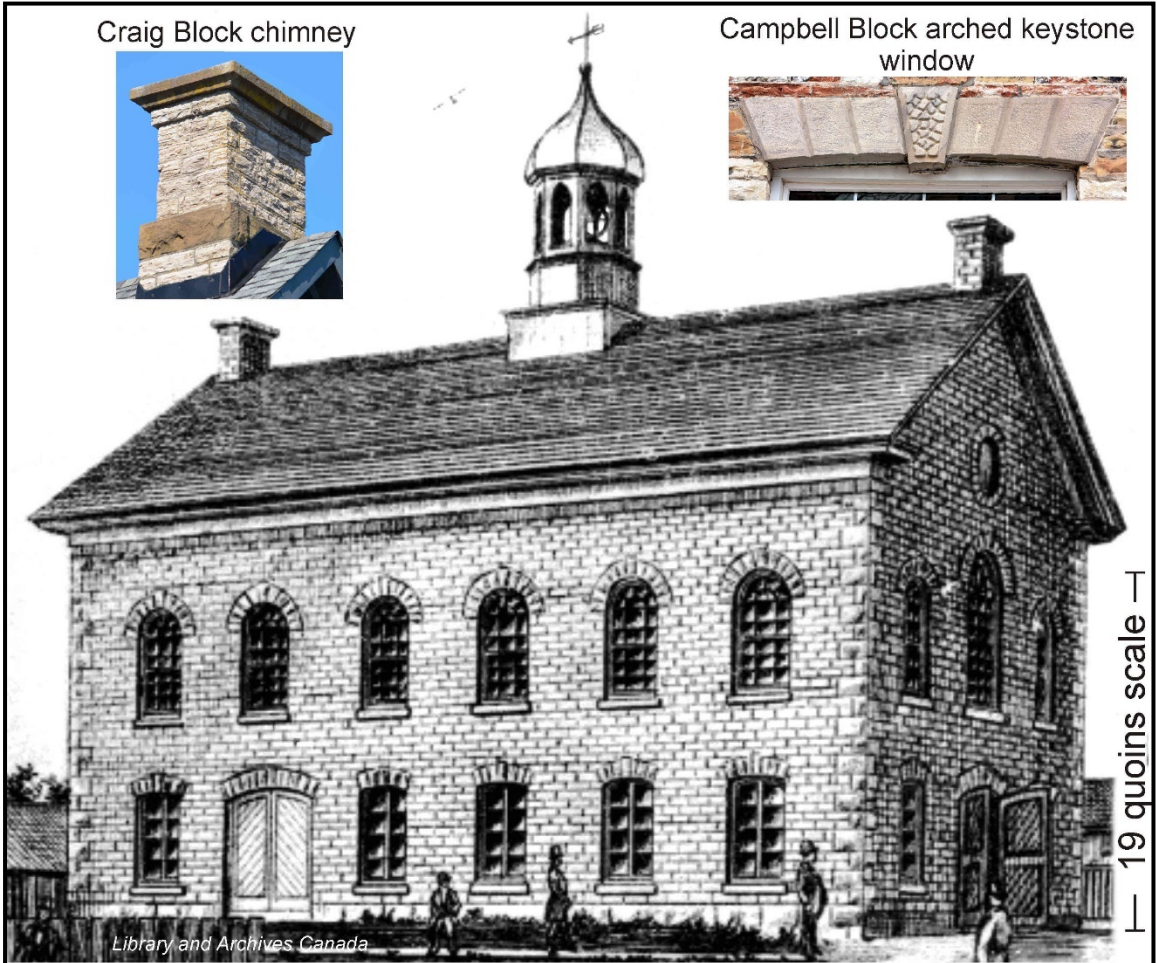
McLachlin's Arnprior. Illustrations from the 1878 Canadian Illustrated News and a photograph taken from the roof of Daniel McLachlin's house in 1870 suggest the first Village Hall at the "Market Square" corner of Victoria and Hugh streets was constructed of limestone block walls accentuated by more reflective marble corner quoins, window sills and arched lintels.

Using the corner quoins for scale, the Village Hall would have been a little larger than today's Craig Block. The keystone marble arched lintels above the upper windows are similar to the style of the Scotiabank windows. Chimney caps and slightly arched keystone lintels of the lower windows in the 1860's Village Hall resemble features of the Craig and Campbell blocks today.

Craig Block chimney



Campbell Block arched keystone window



Library and Archives Canada

— 19 quoins scale —

Arnprior's first Village Hall, probably built by 1862, may have been slightly larger than the Craig Block.

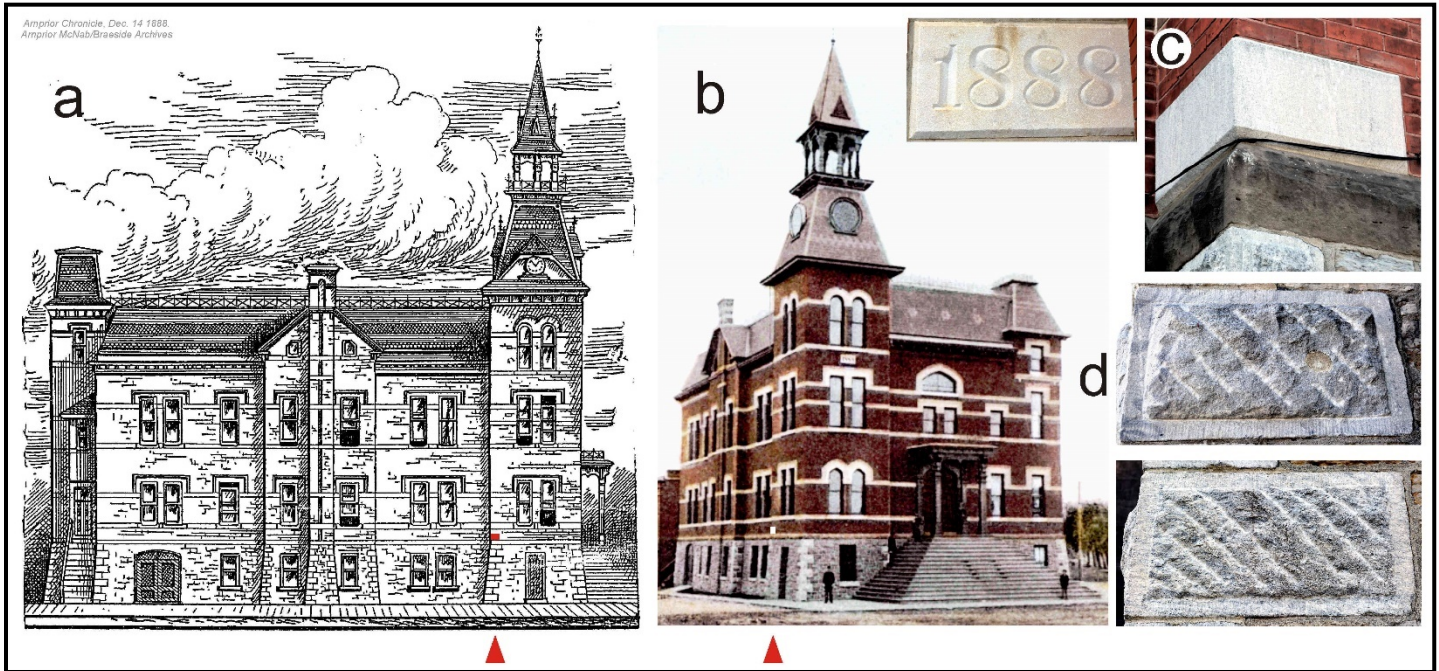
Craig Block



— 19 quoins scale —

Arnprior's Town Hall - 1888

The meticulous report of the design, construction and personnel involved in the new town hall (Dec. 14, 1888 Arnprior Chronicle, Holiday Edition) oddly omits the source of the "light colored Arnprior marble". Beckwith Stone from just south of Carleton Place was used as a brick stop.



Arnprior Town Hall 1888. **a** - architect's plan; **b** – coloured photograph from *virtualmuseum.ca* of clock tower with date stone; **c** – blank, white (Portage du Fort?) marble block; **d** – refaced? marble quoins; red arrows – site of blank block of white marble in north side brickwork

Tapered, hand-hammered edges of Arnprior marble quoins frame the base of the present municipal building built in 1888. Some quoins retain holes drilled to split the marble and several faces appear to be reworked. The almost white marble elements probably came from quarries near Portage du Fort. The white marble was saved for window sills, the date stone originally below top floor windows in the clock tower and an enigmatic stone set in the base of the brickwork on the north side. Was this stone intended to carry a commemorative engraving?

224 Harriet – 1888?

The brick-sided house at 224 Harriet Street features Arnprior marble quoins and brick stop sills. Sawn marble blocks top corner quoins at the soffit and diagonal chipping suggests quoins may have been refaced. The brick stop appears to be large edge-hammered marble blocks cut lengthwise.



Were the refaced quoins and cut brick stop blocks re-used after demolition of a previous stone building? Since the house is older than the 1995 demolition of

the Tierney Block, the demolished building with marble was most likely Arnprior's first Village Hall originally located less than 100 meters to the east. In this case, stones from Arnprior's first Village Hall may still be seen today. It would also mean that 224 Harriet was built after the April 2, 1888 Village Hall fire. Arnprior's 1863 Business Directory map suggests a Nathan Shipper; "brick-yard" may have occupied the Harriet Street site. The similarity between the diagonally chipped stones at 224 Harriet and quoin blocks in the base of the present town hall and the rapid construction of the new town hall leads us to suspect that Village Hall stone was recycled and remains today as the base of the 1888 Town Hall at Madawaska and Elgin.

*More original Arnprior Village Hall stones may be found ...*

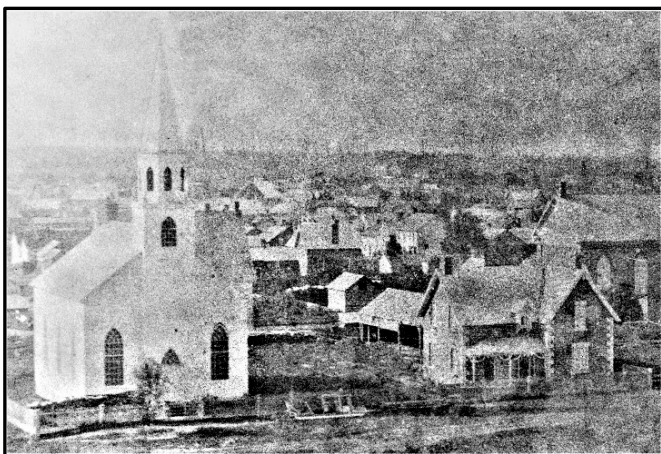
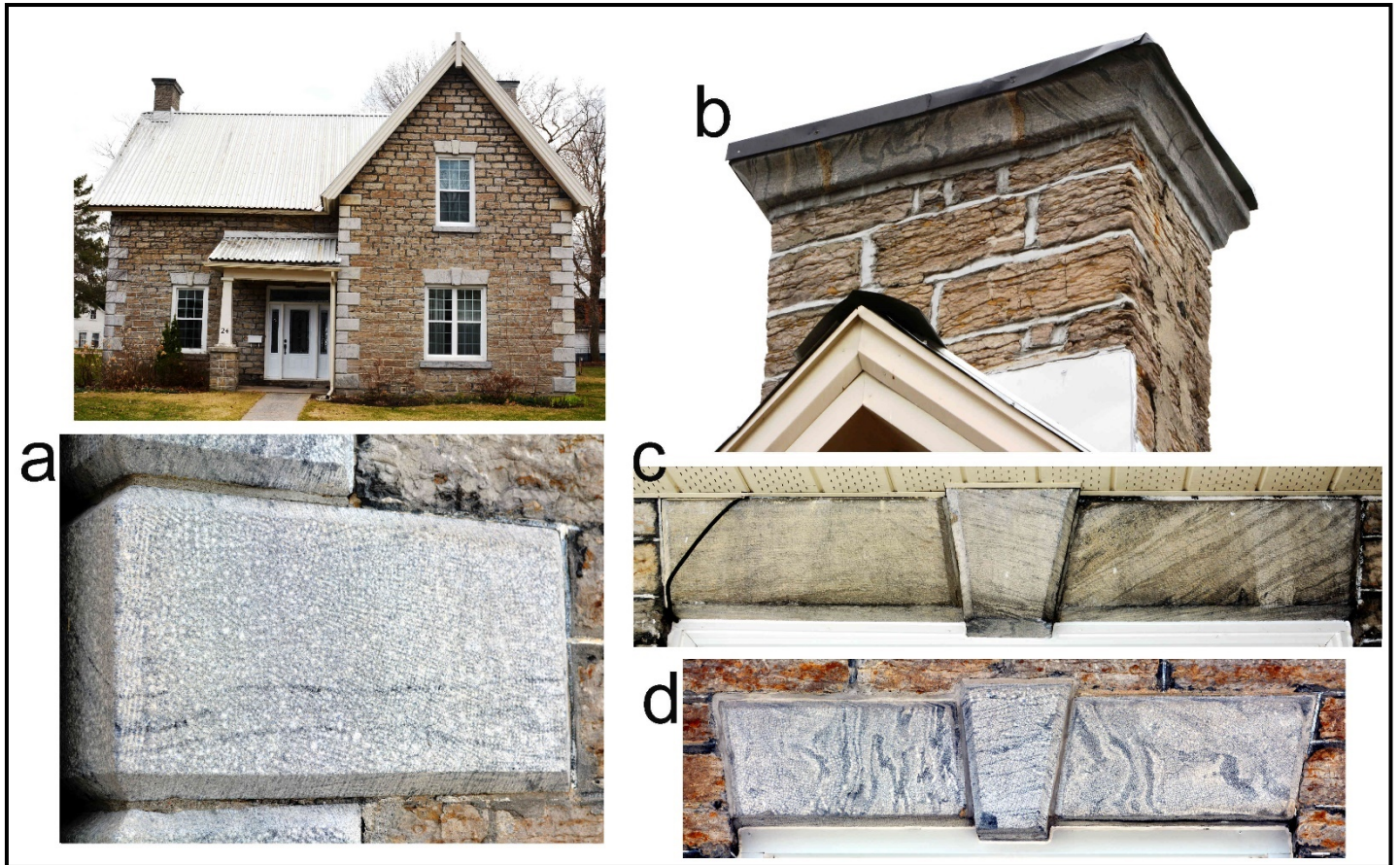
Recent landscaping at the reported original home of Daniel McLachlin (Hessel, 1988, 118) unearthed a marble corner quoin. Like the stones at 224 Harriet, the quoin is along the route from the original Arnprior Village Hall at the corner of Victoria and Hugh (Bell) streets to the present Arnprior Town hall.



Grace St. Andrew's United Church Manse, 24 Ottawa Street – 1871-1872

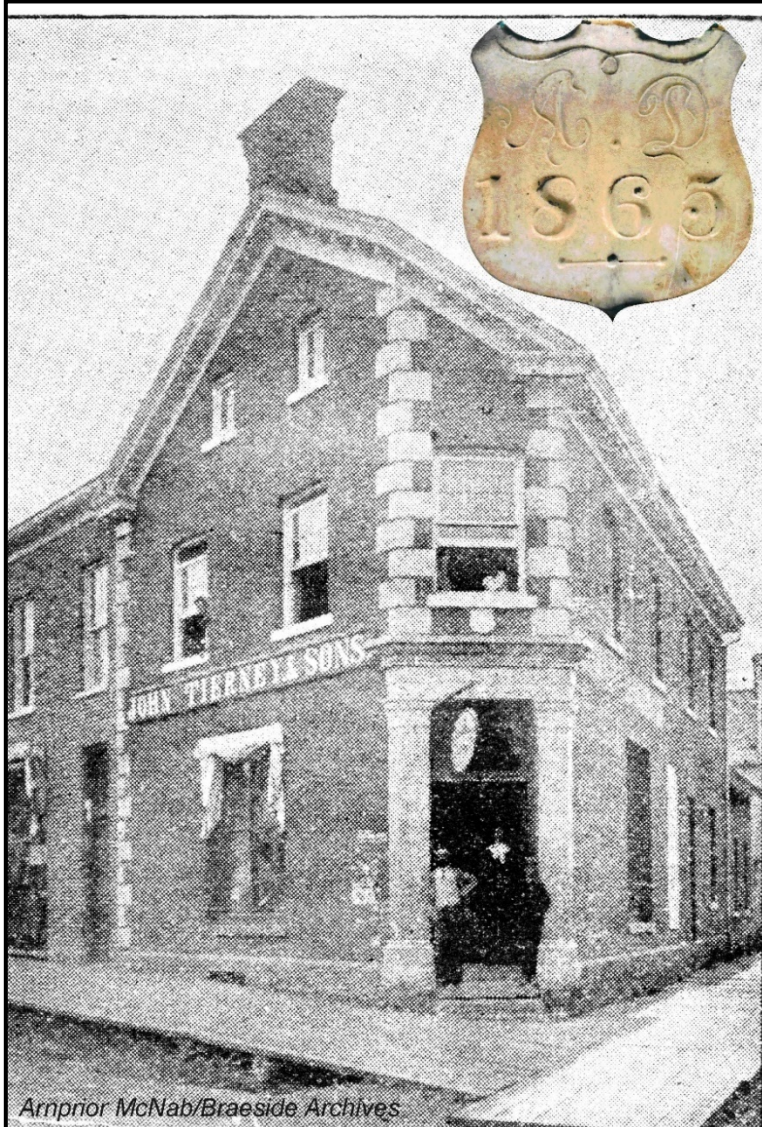
The 1863 map of Arnprior indicates a building close to the present Manse. The Grace-St. Andrew's United Church 1840-1990 centennial booklet reports the current manse dates from 1864. The apparent absence of the Manse in the foldout photograph in the same booklet suggests a post-1870 date. A photograph in the Arnprior District Museum suggests the present stone Manse existed by 1873 indicating construction in 1871-1872. Records of the "Kirk Session Arnprior" on January 11, 1863 (Arnprior & McNab Braeside/Archives) indicate "session met in the Manse." This would suggest a Presbyterian Manse existed by at least 1862. The location of the earlier Presbyterian Manse is unknown.

Marble elements of the United Church Manse include: **a** – sawn, hammered surface and bevelled edge corner quoins, **b** - chimney caps, **c** - simple bevelled keystone door and **d** - window lintels. These contrast with the decorated keystone lintels used in the Campbell Block and Robertson-Gillies house that were also v-jointed to portray more stones.



Above: Marble elements of the present United Church Manse.  
 Left: 1859 Presbyterian Church and Manse - adapted from image dated 1873 (Arnprior District Museum). Note the front of the original Manse had a full porch and a small dormer window above the front entrance.

The date stone (in the Arnprior & District Museum) and *Arnprior Chronicle* advertisements indicate the business run by 'John Tierney and Sons' was established in 1865. The structure was an example of brick and Arnprior marble construction with an angled soffit and entrance matching those of the Scotiabank and museum facing the intersection of John and Madawaska streets.



The evolution of the Tierney Block from 1865 to 1938. Date stone in the Arnprior & District Museum. Original angle marble quoins and entrance elements were returned to Arnprior in October 2017.

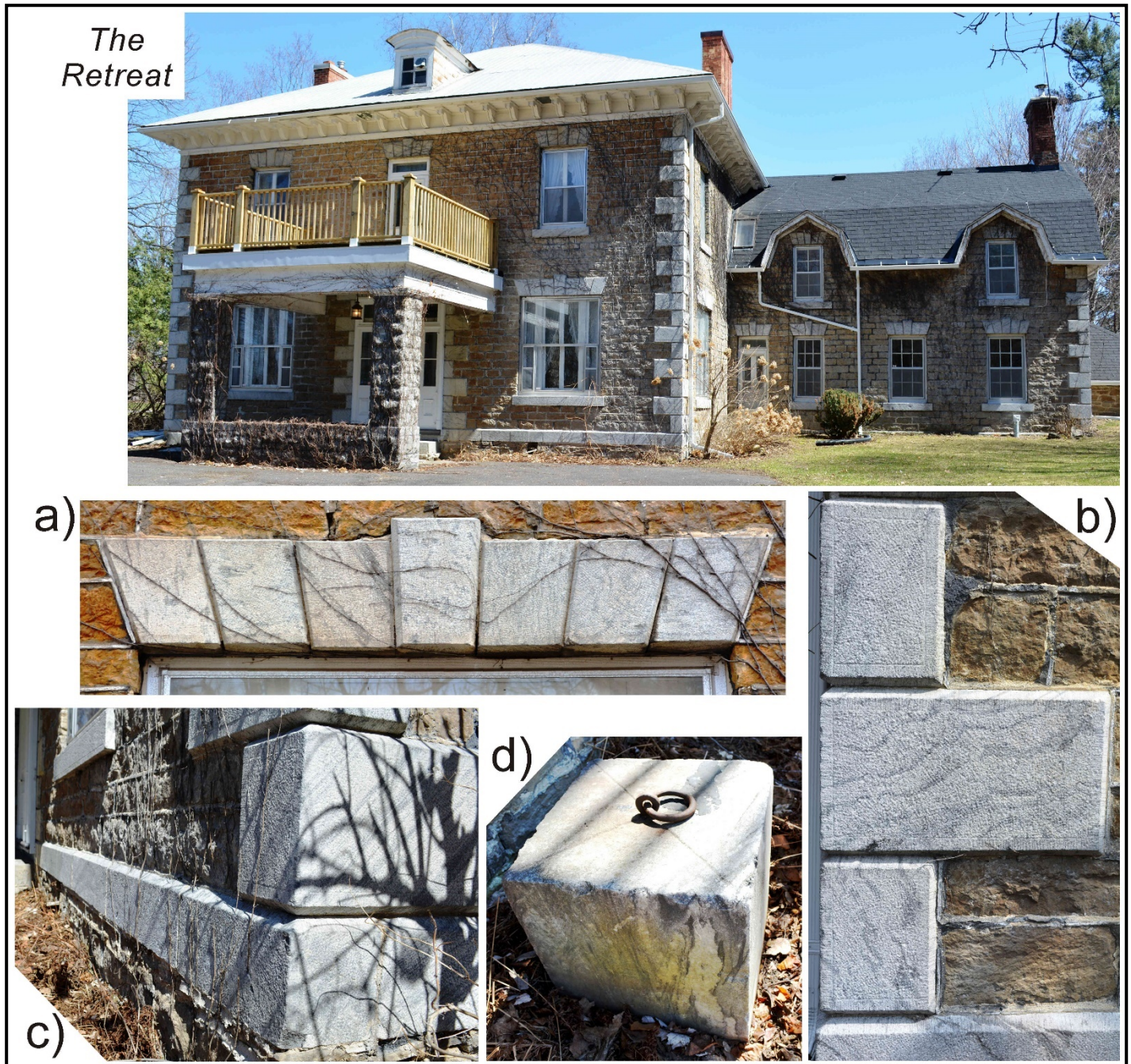
*Tierney Block 1938*





"The Retreat" - 451 Madawaska Blvd - 1866

Family records (courtesy K. Gillies) indicate the house was commissioned by Mr. Neil Robertson and constructed by 1866. The Gillies family have been caring for the house since 1953. The present



**"The Retreat" at 451 Madawaska Blvd. a) keystone window lintel, b) dressed, edged, bevelled quoins, c) a marble sill supports dolostone walls, d) marble hitching block**

building evolved in stages with the north part added later. As a percentage of the stone used, local marble probably makes up a greater portion of the Retreat structure than any other Arnprior residence. Unlike other buildings, marble has been used on all sides of the structure rather than only the "most-viewed" sides. Besides marble keystone lintels and sills on doors and windows, a marble sill plate supports the dolostone walls on all sides. Family records indicate the dolostone comes from the remnant quarry to the north across Madawaska Blvd.

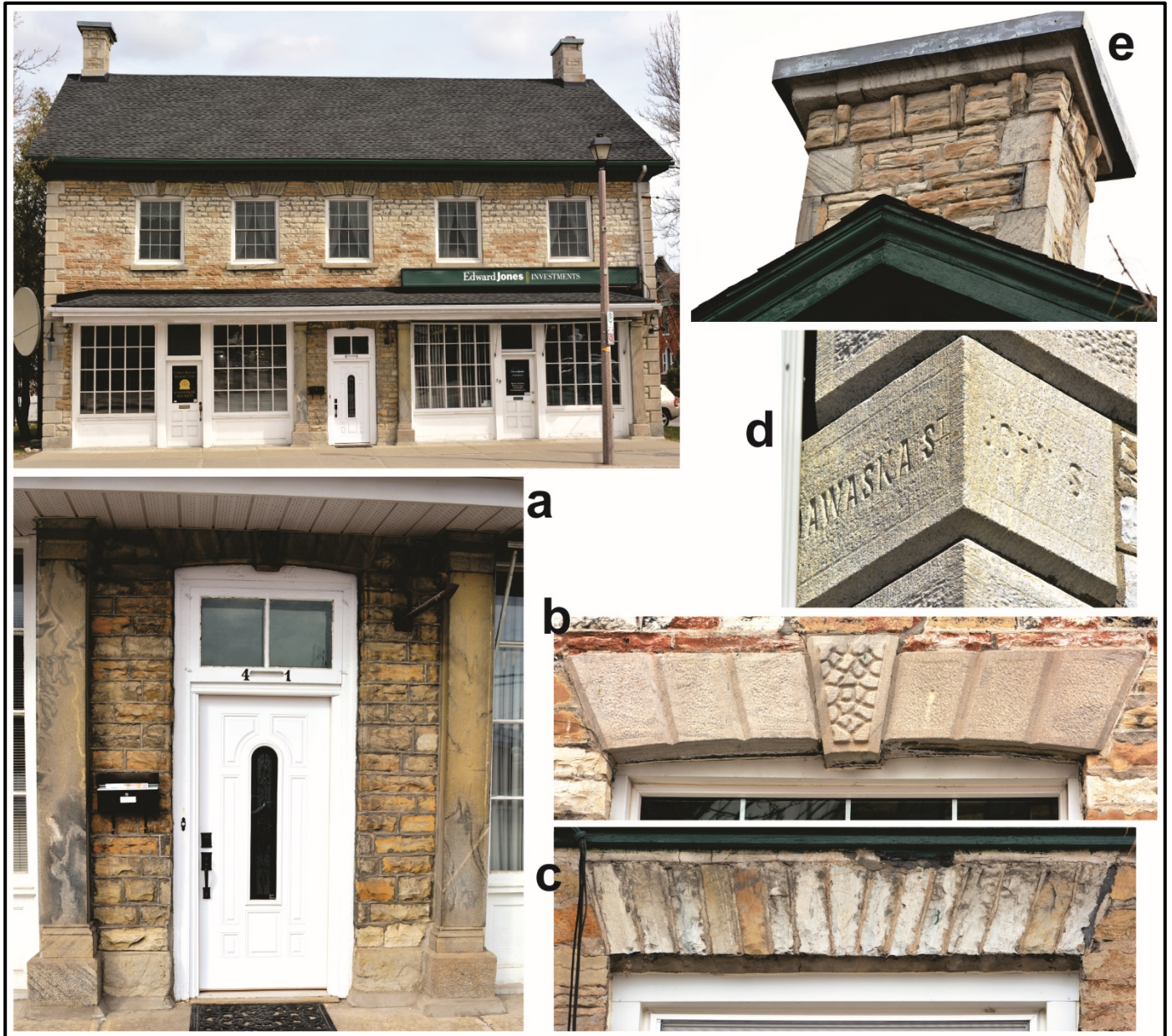
The Town of Arnprior Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study indicates the Craig Block at 146 John Street was built between 1873 and 1887 (Arnprior & McNab Braeside Archives records).



In the Craig Block images **a**, the brown sandy dolostone called Beckwith Stone from a few km south of Carleton Place was used to make keystone door and window lintels **b**, as well as basal chimney pieces **c**. Marble was used in chimney caps **c**, and for hand-hammered corner quoins **d**.

Campbell Block – post 1863?

The Campbell Block is an Arnprior stonework demonstration project. While Hessel (1988, pg 117) dates the structure to 1853, the Town of Arnprior Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study indicates between 1864 and 1892. The building is not on Arnprior's 1863 business directory map.



The Campbell Block features impressive street-side marble elements.

In addition to quoins much like Grace-St. Andrew's manse, the front on Madawaska Street features perhaps the largest surviving pillars **a**) of Arnprior Marble. The pillars, cap stones and underlying pedestal blocks are analogous to the entrance of the earlier Tierney Block across the street. The sides facing the streets also included decorated arched keystone lintels to windows and the central door **b**), while the other sides used a simpler limestone lintel **c**). Hammer-edged, bevelled quoins with street names Madawaska St and John St are carved into a simpler faced corner quoin **d**). Limestone from different strata, perhaps different quarries, are used on the sides not directly viewed from the streets. The intricate chimneys featured vertical limestone supports for the marble chimney caps and carefully cut marble corner blocks in quoin style **e**).

Although home to the Bank of Ottawa, established in 1874, we are not aware of documents dating construction of the building at Madawaska and John streets to 1874.

Sawn blocks of lighter, grey-blue, Arnprior marble decorated with hammered edges frame the



walls, windows and doors (a and c) of the Scotiabank, John Street, Arnprior. A successful attempt has been made at matching the deformation fabric “grain” at the north corner (d). A remnant quarry hole appears at the edge of a block with flecks of grey-black laths (b) of probable tremolite.

Grace-St. Andrew's United Church – 1890

Perhaps the latest structure built with Arnprior marble is Grace-St. Andrew's United Church. Both finely cut and more roughly fashioned blocks frame much of the Church at 269 John Street North.



The crenulated ductile fold structures identify Arnprior Marble in sawn buttress caps (**a** and **b**) and window sills (**c**). More precisely hand-dressed marble frames the adjacent manse built about 28 years before. The layered, rusty weathered wall stone is dolostone, probably from local quarries.

Brick buildings with Arnprior Marble; 67-71 Madawaska; 122-126 Daniel St.

Local marble elements may also be found in local professional brick buildings and residences. Like the Tierney Block, the structure housing 67-71 Madawaska Street was constructed as a brick building (not brick-sided) with marble components. Arnprior marble may be seen as a foundation brick stop, window sills on both first and second story windows, entrance thresholds and pedestal blocks to pillars framing the entrance at 71 Madawaska. Arnprior land records show the 63'X100' lot,



**Christmas Cakes.**  
 Have your relatives early for Christmas and New Year's cakes with  
**D. CRAIG.**  
**Just Arrived,**  
 my third and best set of  
**Extra Fine Apples,**  
 (Canadian, sweet, favorite eating.)  
**The BEST BRANDS OF FLOUR**  
 (large or best.)  
 made Directly from the all Purest of the Downs.  
 A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.  
**CRAIG THE BAKER.**  
 Arnprior Chronicle, December 14, 1888.



Adapted from postcard at Arnprior and District Museum

likely with a building, was purchased by George Craig, baker, on July 8, 1873. Advertisement from December 14, 1888 Chronicle. A 1918 Arnprior Museum postcard shows an awning at the bakery and a horse collar at the adjacent entrance of the harness shop.

122-126 Daniel Street, similar to 67 Madawaska, features arched second floor windows and Arnprior Marble window sills and door threshold. The structure appears slightly modified from the original that housed the "J.H. McKerracher, Harness Maker" shop in 1875.




**WHOA, JUPITER!**

I WANT TO OAGL ON

**McKerracher, the Horse Milliner,**  
 Who manufactures the best and most stylish  
**Fine and Coarse Fine Harness!**

To be found in the Ottawa Valley.  
 Full Lines of Blankets, Brushes, Bells,  
 And all kinds of Horse Millinery, at prices which will  
 astonish you for cheapness.

Wishing all patrons a Merry Christmas and a  
 Happy New Year,

**J. H. McKERRACHER,**  
 Daniel Street, Arnprior.



McKerrachers - 1875



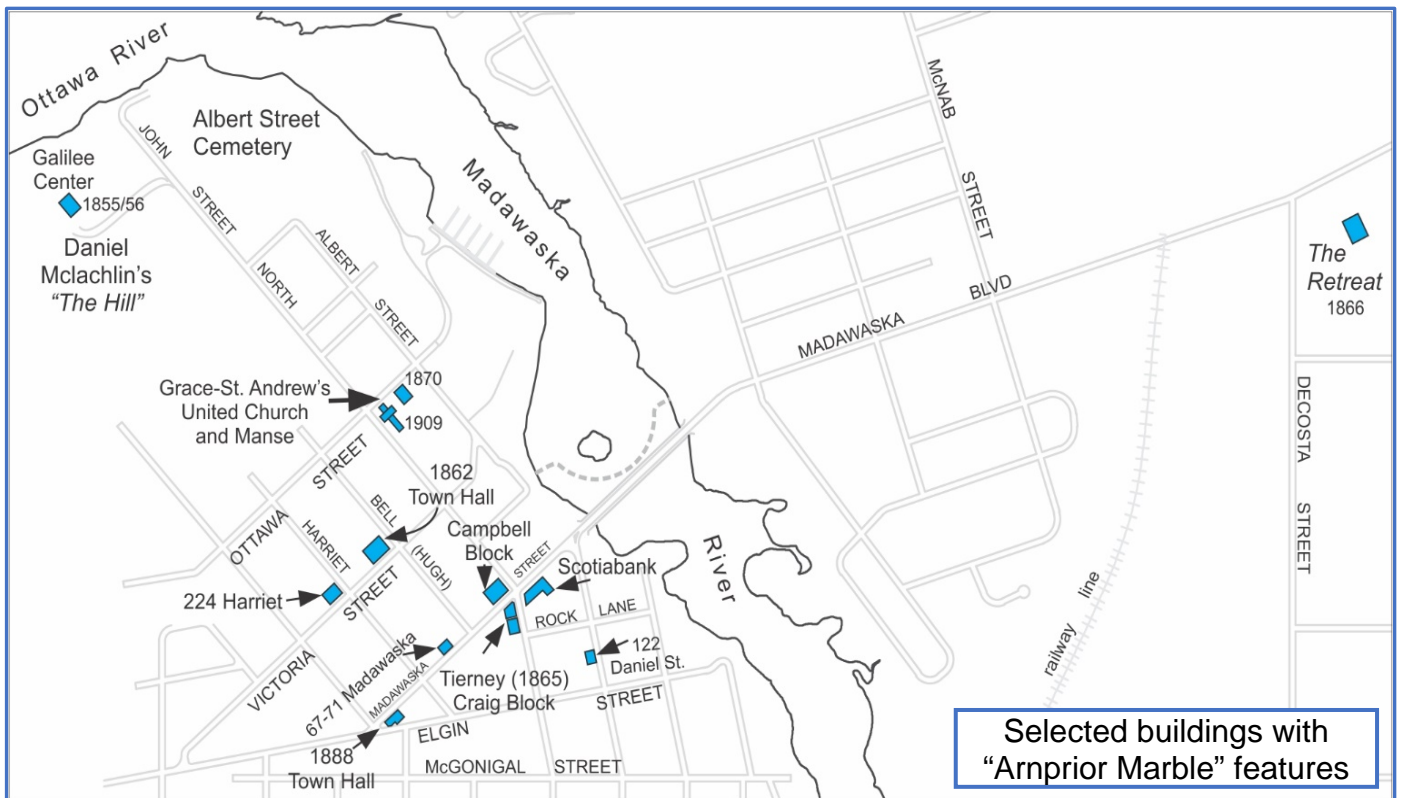
Above: Arnprior Marble window sill. Centre: 1888 Chronicle advertisement. Right: Comparison with present structure. 1875 postcard image courtesy Arnprior District Museum.

A variety of styles of chimney caps and pieces for both residences and professional buildings from Arnprior's "Marble Era" have survived.



Local building sites

Building sites with Arnprior Marble elements are mapped below. Other existing Arnprior business and residential buildings may also have marble thresholds, sills and lintels. Much of Arnprior's first village hall may now form the base of the Arnprior town hall.



<http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.redirect?app=fonandcol&id=3256952&lang=eng>



**Centre Block Entrance** “The main entrance is through the principal tower, the spacious arches of which admit of a carriage way under them. The piers which support the tower are ornamented with pillars of polished Arnprior marble. Passing through it we enter a large hall, paved with tiles, and also surrounded with marble pillars....” (Handbook to the parliamentary and departmental buildings. Canada, by Joseph Bureau 1867. page 15). To limit costs Mr. John Morris, architect and “Clerk of the Works” in the 1859 Department of Public Works, sought local materials to be used in the construction of the first Parliament and Departmental Buildings. Morris visited stone works in many areas surrounding Ottawa. For

Arnprior, the account in Exhibit No. 23, Appendix page 154, from *Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into Matters Connected with the Public Buildings at Ottawa 1863* includes:

**ARNPRIOR MARBLE.**—This marble which has obtained such favorable notice at the recent exhibition at Kingston, is found in large quantities on the banks and islands of the Madawaska river, near the Village of Arnprior, in the County of Renfrew. The marble quarry now in operation is situated on an island, which is situated at the foot of the lumber slide at Arnprior. It is now in the occupation of Mr. J. Knowles. The marble is grey with wide dark veins in wavy lines, it is perfectly sound and can be obtained in large sizes. The cost delivered in Ottawa is about \$1.50 per cubic foot, and if sawn into slabs varying from one to five inches in thickness, the cost would average 45 cents per superficial foot in Ottawa. The material is admirably adapted for bases, staircases, floors and pillars, and may be used with excellent effect for the pillars of the Legislative Chambers.

**EXHIBIT, No. 20.**

**SCHEDULE OF PRICES OF ARNPRIOR MARBLE.—1859.**

	Price at the Quarry.	Delivered at Ottawa.
Marble in block, random sizes, at per foot, cube,.....	\$1.00	\$1.50
Sawn slabs, 5 inches thick, per foot supl.,.....	0.75	1.00
“ “ 4 “ “ “ “ .....	0.58	0.75
“ “ 3 “ “ “ “ .....	0.50	0.63
“ “ 2 “ “ “ “ .....	0.42	0.53
“ “ 1½ “ “ “ “ .....	0.37	0.43
“ “ 1¼ “ “ “ “ .....	0.35	0.40
“ “ 1 “ “ “ “ .....	0.32	0.37
“ “ ¾ “ “ “ “ .....	0.30	0.35

An extra charge will be made if the marble is required to given dimensions.  
 The above prices of delivery at Ottawa will be during sleighing season only. In summer the delivery will be somewhat higher.

**WILLIAM KNOWLES.**



Mr. Morris apparently requested the estimate, dated 1859, submitted by William Knowles as Exhibit No. 20, Appendix page 153, from *Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into Matters Connected with the Public Buildings at Ottawa, 1863*.

House of Commons

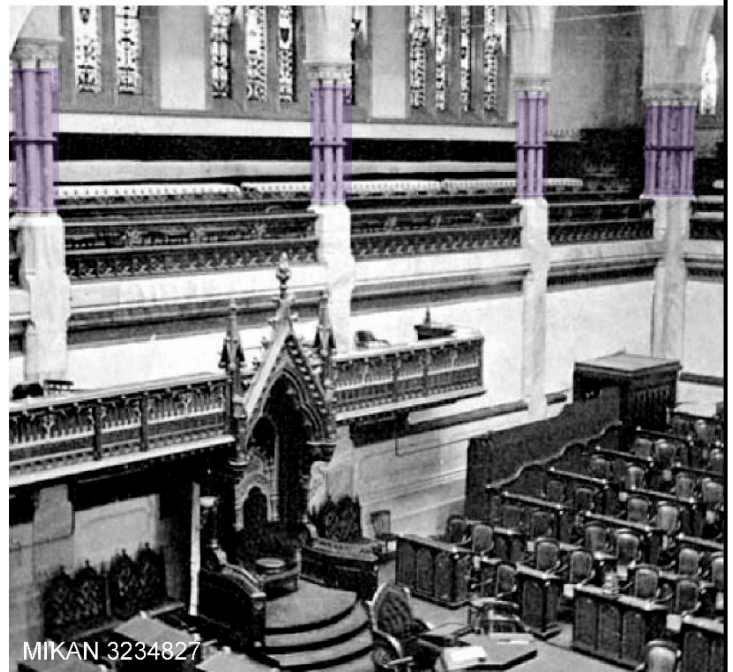
As constructed, clusters of five, 4-1/2 inch diameter columns of the “dark Arnprior” marble were used to support the arches on top of lighter coloured marble pillars from quarries near Portage du Fort, Quebec.



Pre-1916 House of Commons. The clustered columns (coloured) supporting the arches are polished “dark Arnprior” marble. The Arnprior marble columns are in turn supported by lighter marble pillars from quarries near Portage du Fort. Poorly imaged fold banding is just visible in both marbles.

Images are from Library and Archives Canada.

See also: Young, C.A., 1995, pages 58, 59, 96, 97.



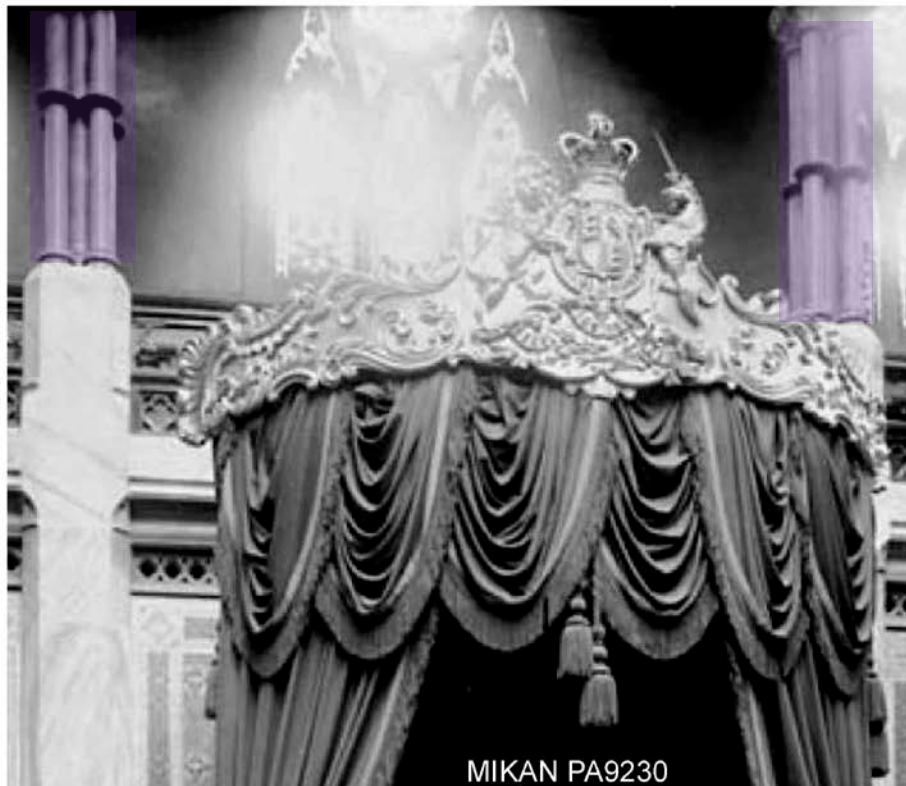
*“On the right of the Main entrance is the Senate Chamber. The Room measures 82 by 45 feet, the ceiling being over 50 feet high, and formed of fine open work. The skylights above this intermediate ceiling, with the stained glass windows at the sides, throw a plentiful soft light over the whole place. The room is surrounded by large piers of a light greyish marble from Portage du Fort, surmounted just above the galleries by clusters of small pillars of the dark Arnprior; the arches supported by these pillars being again of the light coloured marble. The galleries can accommodate about 1,000 persons.” (Illustrated Guide to the House of Commons and Senate, page 117.)*



from Glenbow Museum NA-2883-32

Clusters of polished Arnprior Marble columns support the arches in the pre-1916 Senate Chamber. Note banding in support pillars of lighter marble from near Portage du Fort.

Images from the Glenbow Museum Archives and Library and Archives Canada



MIKAN PA9230

Arnprior Marble - Parliament Buildings Material Invoice

Schedule G from the Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into Matters Connected with the Public Buildings at Ottawa, 1863, identifies costs and problems associated with providing Arnprior Marble columns to the first parliament buildings.

		124						125										
SCHEDULE G.																		
MEASUREMENT of Work prepared on Ground for Parliament Buildings, Ottawa.																		
No.	DESCRIPTION.	Contract Work.			Omissions from Contract.			Additional Work.			Heating and Ventilation.			TOTAL.				
		Quantities.	Rate.	Amount.	Quantities.	Rate.	Amount.	Quantities.	Rate.	Amount.	Quantities.	Rate.	Amount.	Quantities.	Rate.	Amount.		
		\$ cts.		\$ cts.		\$ cts.		\$ cts.		\$ cts.		\$ cts.		\$ cts.				
1	Nepean and Brockville stone for quoins.....	cub. ft.	2821 0	0 50	1410 50									2821 0	0 38	1071 98		
2	Picked face work to do.....	sup. ft.	3991 0	0 17	678 47									3991 0	0 20	798 20		
3	Nepean facing averaging 10 in. bed.....	do						12401 0	0 27	3348 27				12401 0	0 27	3348 27		
4	Poodam stone for relieving arches.....	do						435 0	0 55	239 15				435 0	0 55	239 15		
5	Large sized bond stones for tower.....	do						514 3	0 21	107 99				514 3	0 27	138 85		
6	Picked face limestone for ducts and main sewer stone.....	cub. ft.									2133 5			2133 5	0 17	362 68		
7	Picked face to do.....	sup. ft.										2367 3	0 86	852 21	2367 3	0 17	402 43	
8	do Circular.....	do										454 7	1 25	568 22	454 7	0 42	190 93	
9	Brockville stone.....	cub. ft.						117 0	0 55	64 35				117 0	0 66	77 22		
10	Plain face to do.....	sup. ft.						94 9	0 30	28 45				94 9	0 33	31 27		
11	Sunk face to do.....	do						40 2	0 70	28 11				40 2	0 53	21 29		
12	Chamfered to do.....	do						29 0	0 55	15 95				29 0	0 40	11 60		
13	Moulded stops.....	No.						29 0	0 50	19 00				29 0	0 50	14 50		
14	Brockville stone in steps.....	cub. ft.										8 7	1 60	13 73	8 7	0 66	5 66	
15	Picked face to do.....	sup. ft.										22 8			22 8	0 33	7 48	
16	Ohio stone.....	cub. ft.	1255 0	0 45	564 75			147 3	0 75	110 44			9 7	0 75	7 19	1411 10	0 84	1185 94
17	Plain face to do.....	sup. ft.	475 5	0 22	104 59	33 8	0 22	7 41				12 5	0 28	3 48	454 2	0 25	113 54	
18	Do circular.....	do	24 8	0 30	7 40									24 8	0 35	8 63		
19	Sunk face do.....	do	481 4	0 35	168 47			254 1	0 42	106 72			8 0	0 42	3 36	743 5	0 40	297 37
20	Do circular.....	do	27 6	0 50	13 75			281 8	0 56	157 73			2 3	0 56	1 26	511 5	0 50	155 71
21	Moulded work do.....	do	155 0	0 31	48 05			33 7	0 40	13 43					188 7	0 50	94 29	
22	Do circular do.....	do	124 0	0 48	59 52			18 0	0 62	11 16			3 3	0 62	2 01	145 3	0 75	108 94
23	Chamfered do.....	do	0 4	0 24	0 08			28 2	0 32	9 01					28 6	0 31	8 84	
24	Carred do.....	do	21 7	0 76	16 40			21 7	1 08	23 31					43 2	1 50	64 75	
25	Moulded stops.....	No.	24 0	0 20	4 80	12 0	0 20	2 40						12 0	0 50	6 00		
26	Arnprior Marble,	cub. ft.	141 6	1 05	148 58									141 6	1 50	254 70		
27	Circular face polished to do	sup. ft.	1087 0	0 74	804 38									1087 0	2 50	2717 50		
		Exclusive of 17 columns prepared for houses but condemn'd.																
28	Portage du Fort Marble	cub. ft.	1555 4	1 40	2149 47			87 0	1 80	156 60				1622 4	1 80	2920 20		
		The additional work consists of columns prepared for Members of the Legislature, stated to have been ordered by Hon. Mr. Cauchon.																
29	Plain face polished.....	sup. ft.	629 7	0 53	333 67									629 7	1 50	944 38		
		Carried forward.....		6512 90		9 81		4484 65		1451 46		15651 80						

26 Arnprior Marble,  
27 Circular face polished to do

Exclusive of 17 columns prepared for houses but condemn'd.

Other documents testifying to the use of Arnprior Marble in the first houses of parliament include:

- Young, C.A. 1995. *Glory of Ottawa: Canada's First Parliament Buildings* by Carolyn A. Young, McGill-Queen's University Press 1995 ISBN 0-7735-1227-6, pages 96, 97.

Caption to Figure 58 in Young, 1995: "*The House of Commons in the Centre Block, Ottawa, after 1872. This room originally housed the Legislative Assembly. The light-coloured marble of the piers came from Portage du Fort on the Ottawa River; the darker marble of the clustered columns was from Arnprior, (NA, PA8361)*"

Text from Young, 1995, page 96: "The use of slender Arnprior marble columns (only 4 1/2 inches in diameter), banded together in clusters of five to support the gallery arcades in the Legislative and Council chambers".

- Handbook to the parliamentary and departmental buildings. Canada, by Joseph Bureau 1867. page 15, [http://www.archive.org/details/cihm\\_23443](http://www.archive.org/details/cihm_23443)

Referring to the "*Parliamentary Buildings*", i.e. the East and West Blocks - "The ceiling of the passages and of many of the rooms of the Parliament Buildings are made of pine wood, varnished, which being wrought into ornamental cornices and panels produce a rich and very fine appearance. The same material has been used for the doors. The fillings around the grates and mantle-pieces are of polished Arnprior marble; it is greyish blue marble of very fine grain, and capable of being polished to a high degree."

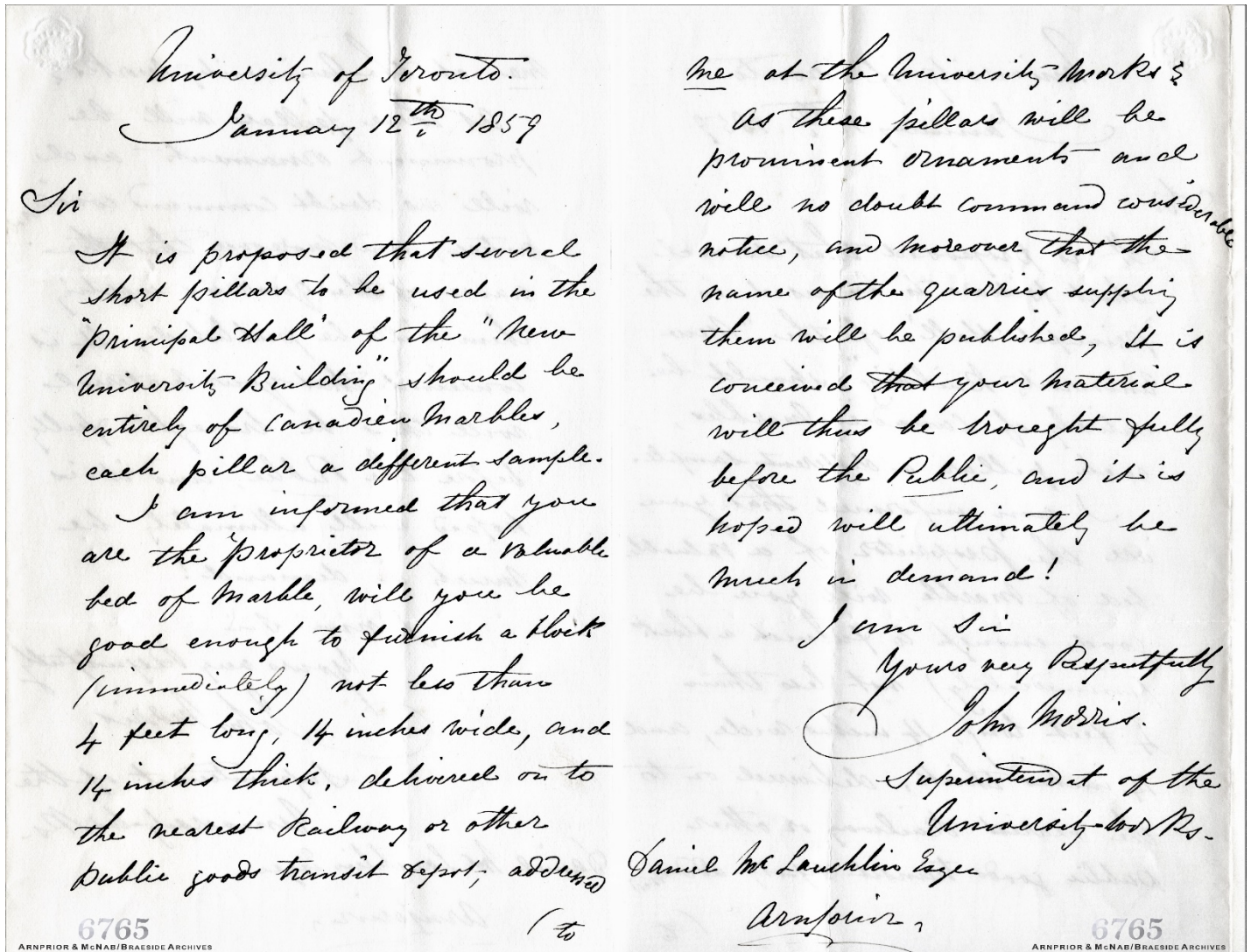
- The House That History Built by R.A.J. Phillips – See: Canadian Parliamentary Review – Article at: <http://www.revparl.ca/english/issue.asp?param=100&art=442>

"So it is in the office of Sir John A. Macdonald. The fine blue-grey Arnprior marble fireplace has reappeared from the cream-coloured latex paint with which one of the last occupants had it coated."

The descriptions indicate that "light greyish marble" was also supplied to the first parliament buildings from the area of Portage du Fort. Both Arnprior and the lighter marbles are from different parts of the same northeast trending marble-rich geological terrane underlying central Ontario and western Quebec. The local deformation at Arnprior and related development of minerals such as tremolite and graphite in "Arnprior Marble" contribute to the "dark" or "blue-grey" designation.

Arnprior Marble in the Principal Hall, University College, University of Toronto

Immediately before seeking stone for the first Parliamentary and Departmental buildings in 1859, John Morris was Clerk of the Works during construction of University College at the University of Toronto. The McLachlin Family Papers (MU6765 Arnprior McNab / Braeside Archives) include a letter from Morris to Dan McLachlin seeking a block of Arnprior Marble "not less than 4 feet long, 14



inches wide, and 14 inches thick" for pillars in the "Principal Hall" of the "New University Building". Inquiries to the University of Toronto and pages 74, 104 and 158 in the account of University College and its history by D. Richardson (1990) confirm that John Morris was Clerk of the Works during construction phases of University College but do not verify that Arnprior Marble was indeed used as described in the letter to Dan McLachlin. The fire of February 14, 1890 in University College and the following reconstruction may have - like the 1916 fire in the Parliament Buildings - eliminated the marble elements requested by John Morris.

**Significance – Industry size - How famous was the Arnprior Marble industry?**Provincial Awards

Marble merchants used demonstrations of Arnprior Marble products at exhibitions as a major form of advertising. Documents indicate marble from Arnprior quarries was recognized locally, Provincially, Federally and received international awards.

The Arnprior industry expanded significantly after the awards to Wm Knowles at the 1859 provincial exhibition in Kingston. The following mention and awards are documented in the *Transactions of the Agricultural Association and Board of Agriculture of Upper Canada*, pages 249, 258, 277, 284 in: *The Canadian Agriculturist*, and *Journal of the Board of Agriculture of Upper Canada*, Volume 11, September 1859.

**Mr. Wm. Knowles exhibited a mantel-piece of marble taken out of a small island in the Madawaska river, within the village of Arnprior. It is black and grey in colour, and so curiously striped as to make it quite unique. For monuments and mantel-pieces in plain rooms it is well adapted. It is easily got out, the bed having been washed on the surface by the river. The marble is very hard; Sir Wm. Logan gives it as his opinion that it is the most durable yet discovered in America. The grain of the sample exhibited is coarse, but the quality improves the deeper you go. Mr. Knowles has been only two months quarrying, but hopes to make a good business of it.**

*page 249*

**LIST OF PRIZES.***page 258*

**Awarded at the Fourteenth Annual Exhibition of the Provincial Agricultural Association of Upper Canada, held at Kingston, September 27, 28, 29, and 30, 1859.**

**EXTRAS.—Mrs. Clarence Hall, Seymour, “Magdalene” from an old master, 5 dol; pencil drawing, 4 dol; W. Knowles, Arnprior, table and counter tops, in limestone, 5 dol; Miss L. A. Piper, Toronto, “Holy Family,” from an old master, 5 dol; Wm. Knowles, Arnprior, specimens of native marble, 8 dol;**

**Best collection of Canadian building and flagging stones, Wm. Knowles, Arnprior, diploma and 20 dols.**

*page 284*

These awards, the order for the Egan monument, the exhibit for the 1860 visit of the Prince of Wales and the visit of John Morris to inspect the marble operation at Arnprior explains the account of Mr. Morris in the *Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into Matters Connected with the Public Buildings at Ottawa, 1863*, page 156, noting “ARNPRIOR MARBLE - This marble which has obtained such favourable notice at the recent exhibition in Kingston”. The selection of the “dark Arnprior” for the first parliament buildings followed.

International Awards

Awards were also earned by both marble and craftsmen from Arnprior at international exhibitions. P.T. Somerville won a bronze medal (Sessional paper, Legislature of the Province of Ontario, Vol.3) award for his submission of Arnprior Marble to the 1876 Philadelphia International Exhibition.

97

**AWARDS TO CANADIAN EXHIBITORS, INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION.**

**I.—MINERALS, MINING, METALLURGY, AND MACHINERY.**

**P. T. Somerville, Arnprior, Ont., Monuments of Dark-clouded Marble of Arnprior. New Rockland Slate Co., Montreal, Roofing Slate and Slate Slabs from Melbourne, Canada.**

**Ontario Lithographic Stone Co., Marmora, Ont., Lithographic Stone.**

**R. Robertson, Halifax, N.S., Gold Specimen.**

**A. Seaman and Co., Lower Cove, N.S., Grindstones.**

**Daniel and Boyd, St. John, N.B., Block of Freestone.**


**Dorchester Union Freestone Co., Dorchester, N.B., Building Stone.**

**Robert Forsyth, Montreal, Red Granite Monuments, &c., from Gananoque.**

**Geo. J. McDonald and Co., Cornwallis, N.S., Building Stone.**

Excerpt from page 97 in *Reports on the Philadelphia International Exhibition of 1876, Vol. II, presented to both British houses of Parliament, printed by George E. Eyre and William Spottiswoode, London, England, 1877.*

The 1876 Award at the United States Centennial Exhibition was used in the Somerville advertisement from the February 16, 1877 Arnprior Review and South Renfrew Chronicle.



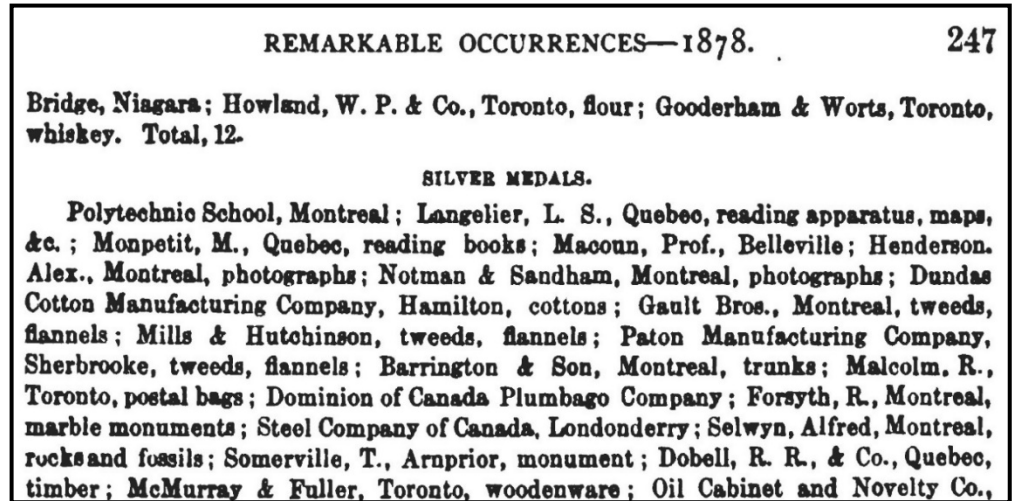
**Awarded to the ARNPRIOR MARBLE WORKS,  
P T. SOMERVILLE,**  
— MANUFACTURER OF —  
MONUMENTS, HEADSTONES, MANTLE PIECES, TABLE TOPS, &c.  
The latest patterns in Cemetery Railings. Orders by mail promptly attended to.  
Office and Works near the B. & O. Railway Station.  
T. G. SOMERVILLE, Travelling Agent.  
And Wholesale Dealer in Arnprior Marble.  
Arnprior, Ont., Feb. 15, 1877. 18.



Newspaper advertisement and image of the type of bronze medal awarded to P.T. Somerville for his monument at the 1876 USA Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (medal diameter 68 mm), courtesy Arnprior District Museum

The Dominion Annual Register and Review for the Twelfth Year of the Canadian Union 1878, published by Dawson Brothers, Montreal, 1879, printed a list of Canadian awards at the Paris exhibition in the section "Journal of Remarkable Occurrences", page 247. The partial page identifies T. Somerville (probably T.J. Somerville) as a winner of the silver award at the 1878 Paris Exhibition.

A silver Medal was awarded to T. Somerville, Arnprior, for his monument at the Paris exhibition of 1878.



The 1878 Paris silver medals were stamped with the recipient's name. An image of the silver medal awarded to "T. Somerville" for his Arnprior Marble monument has been reconstructed below.



Reconstructed image of the 1878 Paris Exhibition silver medal awarded to T. Somerville. Original medal was ~68mm in diameter. (from eBay images)



“Arnprior Marble” – a recognized quality standard

On January 30, 1872 the Anglican Christ Church vestry building committee in Ottawa reported that “Christ Church should furnish themselves with a building harmonizing with the improvements taking place in the architecture of the city” (Hill, P.H., K.C., 1932, page 54). In 1872, the recently completed Parliamentary and Departmental buildings may have served as a standard of construction for the new cathedral. The similarity between Christ Church Cathedral columns and Arnprior Marble columns in the first Senate chambers is in keeping with both this standard and the 1872 opinion of Christ Church vestry building committee. Christchurch columns may be of the light marble from near Portage du Fort.

Comparison of marble columns in Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa and the first Senate Chambers.



Glenbow Museum image NA-2883-32

Image with permission  
Christ Church Cathedral Ottawa

In 1875, Pierre Marier & Co., Ottawa, used standards of marble quality as: “*Italian, American and Arnprior Marble*”.

Arnprior marble as a quality indicator.  
From: [www.collectionscanada.ca](http://www.collectionscanada.ca) > Library and Archives Canada > Canadian Directories: Who Was Where > Ottawa Directory, 1875, page 161.

An excerpt from the 1885 *Annual report of the Bureau of Industries for the Province of Ontario* summarizes the international reputation of marble from Arnprior.

Ottawa Marble Works.

—O—

**PIERRE MARIER & Co.,**

—DEALERS IN—

**Mantle Pieces, Scotch Granite, Freestone,**

Limestone, Italian, American and Arnprior Marble, Monuments, Tombs,  
Headstones, Table Tops, &c. Works, on the Montreal Road,  
Orders can be taken at No. 351 King St.

**WM. McFARLANE,**  
*Superintendent.*

**Arnprior Quarries.**—These quarries are at Arnprior village, near the junction of the Mississippi and Ottawa rivers. The layers extend from the Chats falls on the Ottawa up to the Bonnechere river and seven or eight miles back from the Ottawa. The stone

cxlviii.

is variously marked. At the Arnprior quarry it is a blue ground with dark clouded veins, while at the Ottawa valley quarry, one and a quarter miles distant, it has a grey ground with dark flowing veins. It is generally known as Arnprior marble, but the proprietor informed me that when exhibited at the Philadelphia, London and Paris exhibitions the judges classified it as granite. It is hard, takes a fine polish, and absorbs no liquid. Iron, oil or other substances produce no stain upon it. The pillars and arches of the House of Commons at Ottawa are specimens of the Arnprior quarry stone.

From: *Annual report of the Bureau of Industries for the Province of Ontario, 1885,*  
*Printed by Warwick & Sons, 26 and 28 Front street West, Toronto, pages cxlvii-cxlviii.*

**Abrupt Demise of the Arnprior Marble Industry**

By the late 1870's the Arnprior industry is the victim of an unfair system of duties on Canadian marble. Using terms familiar today, a group in Arnprior authored the following letter in February 1879.

**PROTECTION TO ARNPRIOR MARBLE.**

(To the Editor of *The Globe*.)

Sir,—At the present time, when native industries and the fostering thereof are subjects of such prominent discussion, perhaps you will allow me a few remarks regarding what promises to be, even without any fostering, a local industry of considerable importance, and what, by a little “judicious” and “effective” nurturing, might be rendered not inconsiderable as a national industry. I refer to the Arnprior marble industry. A petition to the Minister of Finance on the subject has lately circulated here, and seems to have been indiscriminately signed by free traders and protectionists alike. After setting forth the importance of the manufacture to this section of the country, especially under the present depressed state of the lumber trade; the beauty and fine quality of the marble; the disadvantages which the unfair competition of the United States places the manufacturer here at; etc., the petition goes on to say, “Your petitioners would, therefore, humbly pray that during the present sitting of the Parliament of Canada measures be adopted towards imposing duties on marble coming from the United States equal to those imposed by the American Government on Canadian marbles, thus placing the manufacturers of this country in a better position to contend with their foreign competitors.

Now, I do not suppose that the professed free traders who signed the petition winding up with such a paragraph as the above intended to commit themselves generally and absolutely to a policy of protection, but simply signed it on the principle that since the fatted calf was indubitably to be killed, they might as well have a “cut” of the animal to whose fattening they had contributed their share.

REPRODUCED FROM *The Globe* (1844-1936); March 1, 1879; From: ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Globe and Mail*, pg. 2

As pointed out in the *Arnprior Review*, the present petition is not liable to the objection brought against the somewhat similar petition circulated some little time ago, viz., that of removing the evil only one step further off, and while protecting the marble-dresser against his competing manufacturer, taxing the builder upon his raw material. Protection from the foundation (that is, of the marble as marble—let us not dig deeper in the pit) is here advocated; and I do not see why, since we are to have a system of protection, the benefits should begin half way up the ladder. The man who quarries native marble suffers equally with the man who polishes imported marble, in the increased price of his food, clothing, etc., and, on the ground of developing a native industry, is surely equally worthy of protection. If then, protection is to be equally imposed, and the system so constituted that one class shall not suffer at the expense of another with no more claim to Government beneficence, the compulsion to buy his neighbour's quarrying must as certainly be imposed upon the marble polisher as is the compulsion to buy the latter's polishing imposed upon his neighbour. And further, if the development of substantial native industry is what protection aims at promoting, then assuredly the production of a beautiful and useful marble, as an industry at once legitimate in itself and beneficial to the country, deserves fostering quite as much as many of those industries that have lately made so much clamour.

Of course, I believe that the whole system of protection, from its conception to its remotest ramifications, is one of injustice; but if injustice is to be perpetrated, let there be something of equity in the perpetration, and, if we must shoulder an unnecessary burden, let it be at least equitably and indiscriminately imposed, and equally borne.

Yours faithfully,

ARNPRIOR.

Arnprior, 18th Feb., 1879.

A decade later, effects of the duties in Arnprior are still evident in Alex McDonald's letter of 1890. Would US merchants sell marble here for less than at home just to secure market share?

One of the reasons that we find it difficult to compete with the American marble is that our stock is very hard and difficult to get out, and then it does not come out in the right shape. American mountain blue is a cheap marble. Southern Falls is a good marble; it is light in color, and I think is as good as this; besides, it can be worked cheaper than ours. The Ottawa Granite Co. get marble at Renfrew, but they don't sell much of it as monumental marble; it is mostly the American that is sold for that purpose. The duty on marble is 35 per cent. sawed on four sides, 25 per cent. on two sides, and in the rough 15 per cent. I am informed that the Americans sell marble here at \$2.00 and \$2.50, while they sell at \$3.50 in their own country. They make a slaughter market of ours, and it is mostly inferior marble they sell here. That is the reason we are not running now.

From Alexander MacDonald's note to the *1890 Report of the Ontario Commission upon the Mineral Resources of Ontario and Measures for their Development*, pages 82, 83. The information may be current as of May 16, 1888, perhaps earlier.

T.J. Somerville advertised his departure in the December 23, 1887 Christmas Edition of the Arnprior Chronicle. J.G. Watson's departure advertised in the Arnprior Watchman of June 1, 1894 was described earlier. Although incomplete, the newspaper data indicate that in the August 22, 1890 Arnprior Chronicle there were 3 advertisements by headstone merchants and 2 were specifically for Arnprior Marble. In 1897 there was one and by 1899 there appear to be none. By 1909, one tombstone ad was placed by an Ottawa merchant in the Arnprior Chronicle. Arnprior's "Marble Era" had effectively ended by 1900.

Hugh McEwen's ad of June 25, 1897 was one of the last by Arnprior Marble merchants in the local papers.

## HUGH McEWEN

DEALER IN

**Monuments,  
Headstones,  
Cemetery Railings.**

The cheapest and best place in the valley of the Ottawa to purchase anything in the monumental line is at the

**Arnprior Marble and  
Granite Works,**

Established 1860.

We challenge competition in lettering and finish. Call and see samples of foreign and native granites and marbles, and the latest designs procurable.

HUGH McEWEN,  
Arnprior, On

**Important to Marble Dealers.**

THE  
**Arnprior Marble Works**

FOR SALE BY

**A U C T I O N,**

—ON—

**Saturday, 24th Dec., at 1 p. m.**

These Works are run by Steam, and have all the machinery for a large trade, such as  
ENGINE AND BOILER, SAW GATE,  
TURNING LATHES, RUBBING AND  
POLISHING BEDS, PUMPS, ETC.,  
**All in Good Order.**

The Factory is situated within 200 feet of the C. P. R. station, and is well adapted for doing a large business. Abundance of Arnprior Marble, Ottawa Valley Marble and Howe Granite in the vicinity. These Marbles are getting more and more in demand from all parts of the Dominion.

\$600 of the purchase money can remain on Mortgage.

**Full Particulars at time of Sale.**

SALE WILL TAKE PLACE WITHOUT RESERVE,  
AS THE PROPRIETOR DOES NOT REQUIRE IT.

T. J. SOMERVILLE,

Proprietor.

GEO. E. NEILSON,

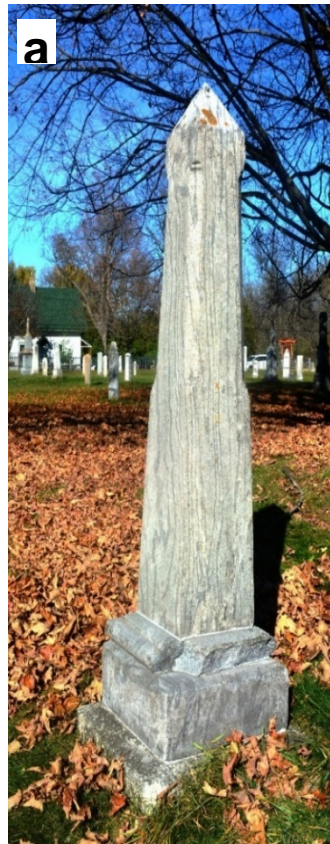
Auctioneer.

T.J. Somerville's departure from the Arnprior marble business, December 23, 1887 Arnprior Chronicle

**Arnprior's Marble Era Timeframe**

Benchmarks, including dated headstones, that mark Arnprior's marble era include:

- Sir William Logan, director, Geological Survey of Canada clearly described the special character of Arnprior marble in his 1863 report.
- A probable Arnprior Marble headstone in the Craig Street cemetery, Perth (a, right), has a date of death of September 12, 1835.
- An Arnprior Marble stone with an 1845 date of death and the signature "P. T. Somerville, Arnprior" (b, far right) rests in the Christ Church Anglican Cemetery, 3008 Carp Road. Congregation members familiar with the Christ Church history suggest the stone is not a replacement stone. Christ Church was built in 1838 and was spared the great fire of 1870.
- Albert Street cemetery headstones signed by Spence & Firth and P.T. Somerville are dated 1854 and 1859 respectively. Other Albert Street marble stones with dates of 1851, 1852, 1855, 1856, 1858 and 1859 support an industry well established by the 1850's.
- The estimate for Arnprior marble provided by William Knowles to John Morris for the first Parliament Buildings is dated 1859.
- Awards and a succession of Arnprior marble dealers and sites characterize the industry's peak from the late 1850's until the 1880's.



Headstone dates and newspaper advertisements indicate the Arnprior marble industry had largely ended by about 1900. Headstones made from local marble appear unsigned after about 1890. Letters by an Arnprior group in 1879 and in 1890 by Alex McDonald suggest reasons for the industry's demise. By 1916, the local marble industry was unable to supply reconstruction of the new Parliament buildings.

The Arnprior Watchman reported J.L. Fraser's marble works continued until 1919. The lack of other evidence for a marble industry at this time may indicate J.L. Fraser's was mainly a retail outlet.

Arnprior Watchman article suggesting J.L. Fraser's marble business continued until 1919.

**TIMELY TOWN TOPICS**

← From the Arnprior Watchman May 2, 1919, page 3.

—Miss Myrtle Sheffield spent Easter week with Ottawa friends.

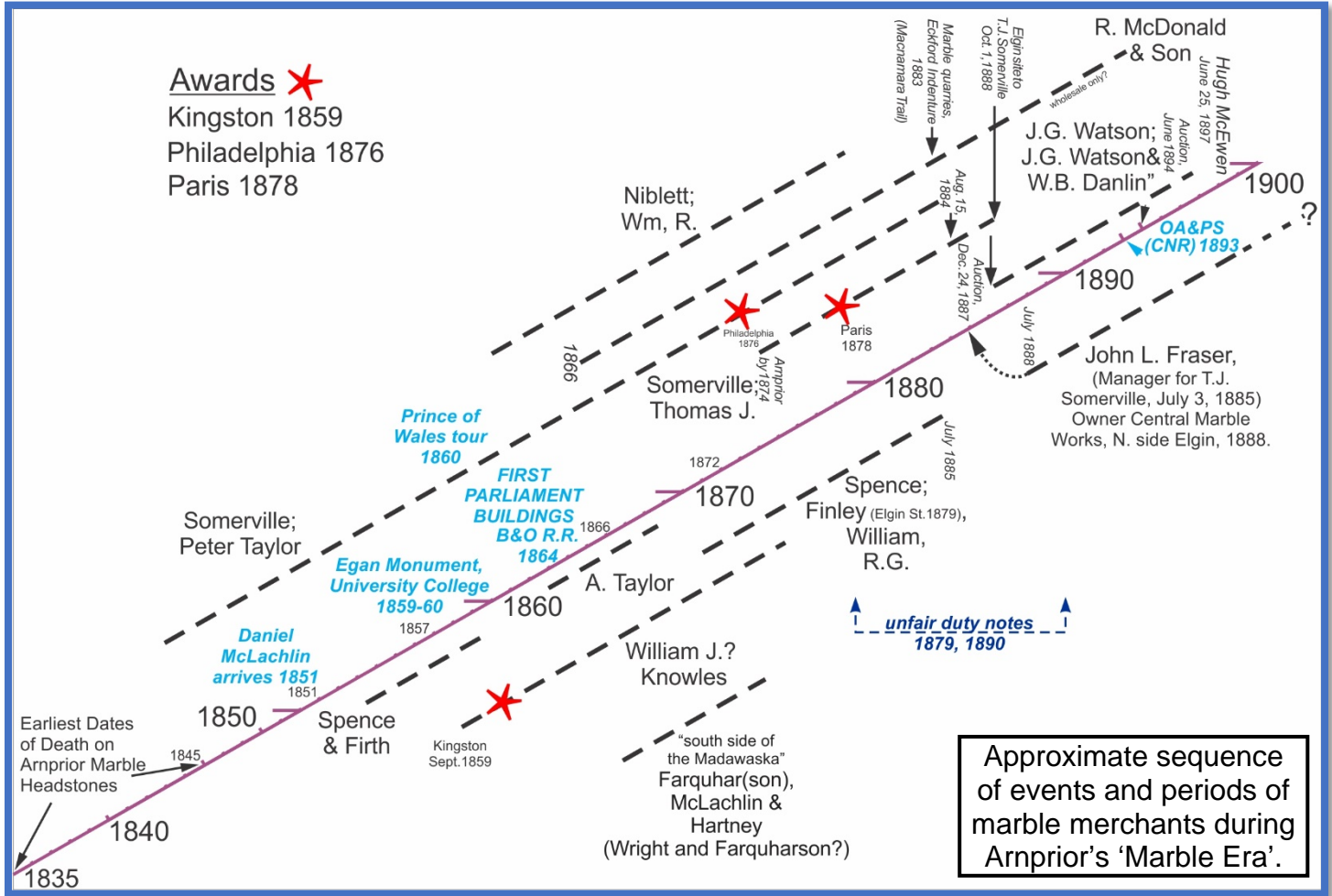
—Mr. and Mrs. J. A. P. Haydon, of Renfrew, are in town this week.

—Mrs. Broese, of Eganville, visited

—Mr. Thomas Hazelton, the quick shoe repairer, has moved his business to the shop next to J. L. Fraser's marble works in the Galvin block on Elgin street.

—Mr. and Mrs. George Owens, of

Arnprior's Marble Era history is graphed below.



Other references to marble at Arnprior may be found in the "PROGRESS REPORT for EXPLORATIONS AND SURVEYS MADE DURING THE YEARS 1875 AND 1876, IN THE COUNTIES OF RENFREW, PONTIAC AND OTTAWA .... BY HENRY G. VENNOR" (pages 244, 245, 246, 247, 281 in: The Geological Survey of Canada "Reports of Exploration and Surveys. 1876 -77."; "Published by Authority of Parliament" in April, 1878 (available at <http://books.google.com/>).

For the Bell Park area, Provincial Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines map 53B (1944) and mineral occurrence descriptions at <http://www.geologyontario.mndmf.gov.on.ca/> include:

**Comments:**

27/08/2011 Satterly described the rock as a light- and dark-grey medium-grained banded marble striking N75W and dipping 60S. The quarries are described as being 150 feet square and 6 feet deep and the other described as 120 feet square and from 5-10 feet deep".

For the existing remnant quarry in Bell Park, this description is accurate today.

The use of *Arnprior Marble* in cemeteries from Arnprior to the Pontiac, Ottawa, Kingston, Perth and probably beyond, attests to its recognition. “The fine blue-grey Arnprior marble fireplace” ...” in the office of Sir John A. Macdonald” confirms Arnprior Marble’s national repute. Awards at provincial, Philadelphia and Paris exhibitions and as the stone of choice for both structures in the first Parliament Buildings and to commemorate a veteran of the War of 1812, also attest to the national and international significance of the stone.

It appears clear that Arnprior buildings including the Galilee Centre, the United Church and manse, the Retreat, Scotiabank, Campbell Block, Craig Block, the present municipal building and perhaps 224 Harriet Street possess an architectural heritage value beyond just their age. The discovery of a marble quoin at Daniel McLachlin’s first Arnprior home is particularly notable. Further study may reveal more structures and marble artefacts. Restoration of the Tierney Block entrance will be emblematic of Arnprior’s geoheritage.

The existing island immediately downstream of the hydro weir was the site of the quarry operated by William Knowles in 1859. The island’s quarried stone won several awards. The 1859 date on the estimate for provision of marble to the first Parliament Buildings suggests the island quarry was the source of the polished “dark Arnprior” columns and other interior elements in the first House of Commons and Senate chambers. Drill holes attesting to the quarry are evident today and mark the site as part of Arnprior’s industrial heritage.

The 1883 indenture establishes the terms for mining marble by R. McDonald & Son from the quarries along the Macnamara Trail today.

Overgrown but still quite recognizable, remnant quarry sites from Arnprior’s late 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial activities in Bell Park, on the island near the Madawaska weir and along the Macnamara Trail are evident today. The sites at Russell and Elgin and near the CPR Bridge have been obscured by later development.

Apparent hand-drilled blocks measuring metres on a side remain in some remnant quarries. All may represent sites of potential artefact recovery.

We suggest the Bell Park and Madawaska island sites represent a significant industrial phase in Arnprior’s early history and may warrant designation as municipal heritage sites.

The marble outcrop extending along about 1 km of the abandoned Canadian Pacific railbed offers excellent exposures to learn more about the stone that contributed so much to Arnprior’s and Canada’s early history.

**Questions - Areas for Further Research**

Some 18 marble Arnprior merchant signatures in stone and over 20 names have been identified from Arnprior's marble era from the 1840s to about 1900. Since there were more craftsmen than quarries, a cooperative system to use the stone from particular quarries must have worked. While Knowles, the McDonald and Somerville families are identified as quarry owners, what was the relationship between the many craftsmen and the few quarries?

Although Arnprior Marble headstones carry dates of death after 1890, why do craftsmen's signatures on headstones appear to stop at about 1890? What was the protocol for signing stones?

The Arnprior Chronicle of August 13, 1909 indicates Robert McDonald bought a quarry from J.S. Bellamy after construction of the first Parliament buildings (i.e. after 1866-67). Of the various Arnprior quarries, which quarry was owned by J.S. Bellamy?

Was Arnprior Marble used in the construction of the Principal Hall at University College?

The Illustrated Atlas of Renfrew County, 1881, H. Belden & Co., Toronto, page 52, describes the industry as including "*two marble-dressing establishments, running 200 saws and employing about 50 men*", but lists no locations or owners. Given steam and manual technology, we wonder if 50 men could run 200 saws. Perhaps it might be more reasonable to have 200 men running 50 saws? Even with only 50 workers in the "plants", given the different classes of workers described in Alexander McDonald's 1890 letter and the work required in quarries, finishing plants, retail outlets and transportation, the total marble industry workforce would appear to have reached a hundred or more in a community of less than 2000 – perhaps 20% or more of the workforce. With the depressed lumber market of the mid 1870's, the Arnprior marble industry was a stabilizing force in the village.

Marble merchant sites changed hands and appear to have moved. Newspaper advertisements and Arnprior Land Records (Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives) such as the September 4, 1871, Arnprior Land Records, pg. 163, Arnprior Br. No. 1, that shows "B&S Patrick McGonigal to Peter Taylor Somerville - Lot 48 Hugh St." and J.G. Watson's sale notice of 1894 were vital to mapping the evolution of the marble industry. T.J. Somerville succeeded William Spence. J. (John) L. Fraser was a manager for T.J. Somerville by 1888. J. L. Fraser's advertisement of 1890 indicates his shop was on the north side of Elgin Street "Next to R.S. Drysdale's" near the present Shoppers Drug store. The 1888 image shows Fraser's business was called "Central Marble Works". His nearly identical 1888 advertisement indicates "Shop Opposite the Post Office, Elgin Street". This would have been on the south side of Elgin Street opposite the present Shoppers Drug Mart store. The Arnprior Watchman note indicates Fraser may have moved into the Galvin Block by 1919. J.L. Fraser and Hugh McEwen may have been the last merchants of Arnprior's '*Marble Era*'.

The Arnprior Chronicle article of April 30, 1926, page 3 (from 1885 or 1888) and J.G. Watson's advertisement in the Arnprior Watchman of June 1, 1894, page 4, suggest a marble shop was located on Elgin Street and at least part of the Hugh Street property had been transformed into "tenements" by 1894. The 1888 advertisement by R. McDonald & Son indicates they also had a "Workshop and Show Room on South Hugh Street near the C.P.R. station". Hugh Street south of the present Arnprior Town Hall and both sides of Elgin Street near the present Shoppers Drug store were established locations for final marble preparation and retail shops. Exact John street locations occupied by Spence & Co. and Watson and Danlin are less resolved due to the absence of street addresses at the time.

P.T. Somerville's advertisement from 1873-1874 indicates a site on Hugh Street near the Brockville and Ottawa Railway Station - before the Canadian Pacific Railway built a new station to the east closer to John Street. We suggest the illustration of the P.T. Somerville store and shop in Belden's 1881 Atlas for Renfrew County is based on Peter Taylor Somerville's establishment at 48 Hugh Street indicated on the 1865 Plan of the McGonigal Estate (Arnprior & McNab Braeside Archives; photograph Arnprior District Museum).

The advertisement by John G. Watson in the Arnprior Watchman of 1895 (Arnprior & McNab Braeside Archives) also indicates a marble (shop?) opposite the Post Office on Elgin Street. The listing and advertisement by *Spence & Co* on pages 116 and 120 of Fuller's Counties of Leeds, Grenville, Lanark and Renfrew Directory in 1866 and 1867 indicates a shop on John Street. Were other marble merchant shops or '*plants*' located on John and Elgin streets and where?

From Alexander McDonald's account and the 1885 *Annual report of the Bureau of Industries for the Province of Ontario*, the "mill for the manufacture of the stone" on "the south side of the Madawaska ... owned by Farquharson, McLaughlin and Hartney" (or "Farquhar, McLachlin, Hartney & Co.") operated in ~ 1869-1874. The Arnprior Review and South Renfrew Chronicle indicates there was a firm run by Wright & Farquharson in October of 1876. The 1878 Almonte Gazette articles suggest Claude McLachlin had an interest in the marble business. The Arnprior Review and South Renfrew Chronicle, October 6, 1876, page 3, indicates there was a firm called the *East End Marble Works*. Where was the "East End Marble Works? How many firms existed and what was their relationship to one another and the quarries?

The 1859 estimate by William Knowles indicates "delivery at Ottawa" will be cheaper "during the sleighing season". Advantage was clearly taken to transport stone by horse and sleigh on ice. The Brockville and Ottawa railway reached Arnprior in 1864. Arnprior marble headstones have been found in cemeteries along routes to Ottawa, along the highway 29 -15 corridor from Arnprior to Kingston and at Perth. While earlier shipment of marble products may have used the Ottawa River (both summer and winter?), how significant was the railway in aiding the marble industry after 1864?

Arnprior's '*Marble Era*' appears to have arisen during the Buchanan brother's timber operations and maintained a village workforce that grew with the lumber industry after about 1860. Arnprior's fortunes appear to have waned between the demise of the Buchanan brothers' operations in the early 1830s and the rise of Daniel McLachlin's lumber mills after 1865. The Arnprior marble industry would have been a stabilizing influence. The quarries at Bell Park and along the Macnamara Trail lie at the western and eastern limits of the McLachlin Brothers' lumber yards. Was there any interaction between the industries?

While resources for the lumber industry became effectively exhausted, the marble industry did not run out of stone. The reasons for the unfair duties alleged in the Arnprior marble industry letter of 1879 and Alexander McDonald's letter of 1890 are the subject of another study.

Arnprior once had four bridges, all built before 1900. Was marble used in the construction of bridge abutments?

The similar deformation fabric and colour of most of the marble in The Retreat, Grace-St. Andrew's United Church manse, the Scotiabank building and the Campbell Block suggest the stone was locally known as '*Ottawa Valley marble*' and may be from quarries at Bell Park or on the Macnamara Trail. Much of the stone in Daniel McLachlin's house appears closer to the "Arnprior Marble" or the "dark Arnprior" and may have come from quarries at the Island in the Madawaska, Russell and Elgin or near the CPR Bridge. Many of the marble quoins in the Craig Block, the base of the present Town Hall and 224 Harriet Street are '*dark Arnprior*' marble.

Local marble may also be found in many other residences and professional buildings in Arnprior. Simply cut marble blocks for door thresholds, window sills and random foundation stones may have been used opportunistically as available to local builders both during and perhaps from remnant stone after Arnprior's "Marble Era" had ended.

A study of the limestone quarries for buildings in Arnprior remains to be done. Differences in limestone suggest some wall stone in the McLachlin House and the Campbell Block came from different strata. Wall stone of the Scotiabank, Craig Block, Grace-St. Andrew's United Church, United Church Manse and base of the present town hall appears to be derived from a different quarry or beds. Family records indicate stone in *The Retreat* was from a nearby quarry just north of Madawaska Blvd.



The loss of buildings with Arnprior marble such as the Tierney Block at the corner of Madawaska and John, the first Village Hall and potentially the McLachlin grist mill at the Madawaska Bridge is unfortunate. That most of Arnprior's first Village Hall stone has been recycled and remains in the residence at 224 Harriet, the base of the present municipal building and perhaps a few local flower beds appears possible. With the discovery of the marble entrance components to the Tierney block at a stone mason's 'bone yard', the Arnprior Town Council repatriated the entrance for future restoration.

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Grace St Andrew's United Church - 269 John Street north, Arnprior, Ontario

Museum staff in Carleton Place and Perth

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**Appendix: Marble in Arnprior – today**

Spectacular views of the fold patterns and intrusive relationships between marble and both black mafic dykes and rusty granitic bodies are displayed along the defunct Canadian Pacific Railway line.



Impressive examples of mafic and quartzite dykes intruding marble and the effects of stress locked into the rock mass about 1 billion years ago are evident in the railway cut exposures.



Fold patterns adjacent to the contacts between granite and marble add to the complex geological history beneath Arnprior.



Few communities can define their geological heritage like Arnprior can.

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