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Winston-Salem, N. C. 27104
June 20, 1996.

Mr. Swanson Richards
1410 Henri St.
Mt. Airy, N. C. 27030

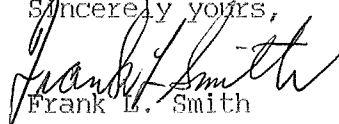
Dear Swanson:-

When I last saw you, you stated that you would like to interview me about the history of our quarry.

I am enclosing a record of my memories of the quarry history so you can pick out things about which you might want to discuss with me if we have a recording session.

I am sending copies of this document to my children so, for their benefit, I have listed several things that I personally did

Sincerely yours,



Frank L. Smith

Frank Smith's recollection of North Carolina Granite Corporation history. (Includes research done by Ruth Minick on the early history of the quarry).

After graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and spending 2 1/2 years in the U. S. Army Air Corps, I was employed by the North Carolina Granite Corporation in February, 1932 as payroll clerk.

This was during the great depression, and the quarry was still cutting the Wright Brother's Memorial. I had been paid \$240 per month in the Army, and I started at \$60 per month at the quarry. I still recall Mr. Sargent's briefing that to be successful in the business, you must always put more into the business than you take out. This was wise counsel that I have always tried to carry out.

With the completion of the Memorial, the quarry had practically no work, and Mr. Sargent had to cut the payroll sharply. I was only spared when Mr. John Frank who was then I believe Ass't Secy-Treas convinced Mr. Sargent that we still had to meet a payroll and that I could operate a loader at the crusher part time. Shortly thereafter, business improved and I was back in the office full time. Going around the quarry, crusher, curb yard, and cutting sheds handing out pay checks gave me an excellent chance to learn about the business. When President Roosevelt closed all banks to stop mass withdrawals, Mr. Martin, our Treasurer flew to Washington to get cash owed us by The District of Columbia for street curbing. Paying in cash, I carried a pistol as I made the rounds.

I was given the responsibility to push crushed stone production and to develop a poultry grit business as feed manufacturers were urging us to provide "chicken teeth" to be used with their grain feeds. The Davidson Granite Company in Lithonia, Ga. already had the jump on us in the market. Our antiquated crushing plant was already behind on production, and in my zeal to speed production, I was helping the operator break oversize stones that would not feed into the primary crusher when the 16-lb. sledgehammer slipped out of my hand into the crusher taking a big chunk out of the crusher cone. Of course we were down for many days replacing the massive part. Quite embarrassing and certainly an expensive lesson.

Having little capital to work with, to make poultry grit sizes from chick to turkey, we built a rotary screen hand cranked by Theo Young, father of Revel Young, our current Vice-President of Curbing and Ashlar Sales and a Board Member. Theo later became foreman of our maintenance department. He was perhaps the most loyal employee that I ever worked with. His goodness not only molded Revel but several other sons who have made good in the business world.

With demand for crushed stone and poultry grit high and demand for monuments, building stone, and curbing low during the depression years, Mr. Sargent and the Board authorized me to design and build a new crushing and poultry grit plant. Having broken my leg while playing soft ball, I had to swing around the framing like a monkey during construction. During World War II, we could only get supplies for poultry grit production as a part of the food chain, and poultry grit kept us alive. Mr. Sargent commented "It looks like the tail is wagging the dog." Having spent 2 1/2 years as a pilot in the U.S. Army Air Corps, with Mr. Sargent's o.k., I volunteered to return to service but was turned down because of lack of interim flying time.

Early in my employment, stone for the crusher was broken from quarry scrap with sledge hammers down to sizes that would go through the crusher, and then hand loaded up into light dump trucks for hauling. To ease the strain on the spall beaters, I designed what the workmen dubbed "the bug truck". Instead of a dump bed, the truck had a pivoted inclined plane with rollers and a powered winch mounted behind the cab. Several boxes with open back ends and inclined fronts were set on the ground where the spall beaters were breaking stone scrap and could thus load at ground level. When a box was full, the truck backed into the inclined slope on the box, which drove the pivoted truck inclined plane to the ground. The winch cable was then hooked to the box and pulled up the inclined plane. When the box was well up the slope, it passed the pivot point and the inclined plane lifted off the ground. In the quarry, after stone was broken loose from a ledge, a small chunk was broken out from a lower corner so that a heavy crowbar could be wedged under it. Then a strong wooden board was put across the end so five or six men could bear down on it and lift up the block of stone so a wedge could be driven under it. When wedged high enough, the tongs of a forklift could get under the block of granite. I designed tongs for the forklift made like crowbars, and the tilt of the forklift pried the stone up, eliminating the hazardous hand operation.

In the history of the quarry, the record shows that Salem Moravians sent Brothers Kapp and Blum 40 miles to the Hollow Road with two wagons to pick up two millstones in 1775. Around 1778, Thomas Smith known as a stonecutter, bought 400 acres on Renfrow Creek (later called Ararat River) for 50 shillings an acre. He was careful that his deed listed "all rights to mines and minerals". It appears that Thomas had been "quarrying" on the King's public lands prior to his purchase and probably cut the millstones referred to above.. Two years later, Thomas Smith sold his tract to Daniel Humphries or Humphreys. He in turn willed smaller tracts to his children on both sides of Renfrow Creek. From 1795 to 1840 there is no clear record of transfers, but its recorded that the Lebanon Church built about 1835 was built on four granite posts with a granite step. In 1840, Samuel D. Moore sold 840 acres to Tyre Glen. In 1849 Tyre Glen sold the entire tract to Robert S. Gilmer. The story goes that Glen in showing Gilmer the timberland stayed clear of the 40 acres of bare rock. When Gilmer discovered it he said the deal was off. To save his sale, Glen gave him the 40 acres. In 1888 the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railway extended its line into Mt. Airy, and contracted with an Englishman named Thomas Woodroffe to build stations along the route from Greensboro. Woodroffe found his building stone on Gilmer's Flat Rock. Tom was so impressed with the even texture of the granite that he and his sons, Thomas, George, Frank, and William persuaded J. O. Odell, a Greensboro business man to purchase the Flat Rock from Gilmer for \$5,000 in 1889 and with the help of other Greensboro investors formed the Mt. Airy Granite Company. They purchased adjoining land from J. A. Bingman and Zachary T. Smith and began quarrying. In 1891 the company built a railroad from the quarry to connect with the new Atlantic & Yadkin Railway Co. In 1899 the Woodroffes leased from the Company "100 acres of quarry land, and quarry rights to 175 acres - adjoining the property of J. A. Bingman and Robert Gilmer", forming the firm of Thomas Woodroffe and Sons - one less sons as William had been killed in a quarry blast. All the Woodroffes were talented musicians and invited townsfolk to hear them play classical music as a stringed quartet on Sunday afternoons in the music hall of their home - still standing on Main Street across from the old First Baptist

Church . Tom Woodroffe was a better musician than business man but he did manage to bring a few Yankees into the ownership by incorporating into The North Carolina Granite Corporation in 1904.

Somewhere along the way, the Corporation bought the abandoned "little flat rock" which lies some ~~800~~ yards south of the main quarry. I'm not familiar with its history, but Ruth Minick found that a letter to The Mt. Airy News in 1946 by a Mr. Bennett stated "Among the things that were very interesting to us was the big quarry. We used to call it the big flat rock, for there was a smaller rock just south of the large one. Would say that my father and a man by the name of James Fair moved onto the rock". "These men had looked for a quarry that that they might secure a type of rock for street paving".

In 1910 the Corporation hired as quarry superintendent 39-year old John Davis (Jack) Sargent, a Vermont stonecutter who came to the south where he could get away from the closed sheds that were giving him silicosis. Mr. Sargent not only was a good superintendent, but with great self confidence, he leased a shed from the Woodroffes and started The J. D. Sargent Granite Company, specializing in larger monuments and mausoleums.. Since local farmers knew nothing about granite cutting, he brought in skilled workmen from New England, Scotland, Ireland, Italy and Austria. Many of these stayed at the Thompson Boarding House(still standing). Thus came to Mt. Airy such names as Monroe, McKenzie, Gibson, Thompson, Leitch, Dobie, McKellar, Burton, Williamson, Dimmock, Stratton, Valentine, D'Amico, DePalma, Migliore, and Bianco. He hired good carvers including "Big Jim" Alfano, an Italian, Frank Birkner, an Austrian, and later developed Sam Willard from local talent. An early major job was The Pennsylvania Monument at Gettysburg.

Having received no dividends, stockholders readily sold their shares to Mr. Sargent, financially backed by Col. Francis H. Fries and W. F. Shaffner of Winston-Salem and Charles B. Keesee of Martinsville, Va., each owning one fourth of the corporate stock, and The J. D. Sargent Granite Company becoming the cut stone department of The North Carolina Granite Corporation. New steel sheds were built and the business prospered especially with the cutting of the massive Arlington Memorial Bridge in Washington, D.C. containing ~~30,000~~ tons of Mt. Airy Granite with its 12 carved bison heads and hundreds of carved banisters. Not being able to get one in this country, Mr. Sargent went to Scotland to have made a special turning lathe for big granite columns like those in the Union Trust Building in Washington, D. C. and many mausoleums. When I started work at the quarry, they were in the process of cutting the Wright Brothers Memorial at Kitty Hawk, N. C. Because of the tapered shape of the monument, in the cutting shed, each course was set on the one below it before shipment to be sure they matched out.

Mr. Sargent loved to tell about his experiences. Once on the quarry, he saw a driller sitting on a block holding his drill in position but sound asleep. When Mr. Sargent tapped him on the shoulder, the man opened his eyes, saw Mr. Sargent's feet, and hastily said "And God bless Mr. Sargent, Amen". On another occasion, he said that he loved to tease his head carpenter who stuttered and got excited every time Mr. Sargent showed up. The man was using a level to square up a post, and Mr. Sargent gruffly said "That level is no good. Throw it away!" The man immediately slammed the level against the post and broke it in pieces.

Mr. Sargent died at his office desk on May 24, 1945, and was succeeded as President by my first cousin John P. Frank, son of missionaries to Japan, and who lived in our home on Rockford Street during the summer months while on vacation from Trinity College in Durham where he was quarterback on the football team. On graduation from Duke University he went to work at the quarry as a draftsman about the year 1926. Mr. Frank's outstanding feat as President was a reorganization of the capital stock of the Corporation in 1947.. At the time he became President, local officers owned approx. one fifth of the capital stock with the principal owners having one fifth each. Col. Fries having died many years ago, and W. F. Shaffner more recently, the trustees of their estates wanted to sell their stock in the Corporation. Mr. Frank arranged a bond issue owned by Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Co. with a mortgage on the quarry and property as security, and loans from First National Bank by several Corporation Officers to buy the shares of both estates. This transaction placed ownership of 3,250 shares out of 4500 total in the hands of Mt. Airy residents.

Being close cousins, Mr. Frank involved me in all the major decisions of the Corporation. If I proposed something, he would use all the arguments he could think up against it. If he proposed something, he expected me to do the same. If I agreed with him, he would say, "Now wait a minute". He wanted to be absolutely sure we made the right decision. Some time during the late 1960's, we were approached by a group from North Wilkesboro about converting our Stone Mountain property into a State Park. To prevent competition, this tract of land containing well over 1,000 acres and straddling the line between Wilkes and Allegheny Counties had been purchased in the early days of the Corporation as it contained several outcroppings of granite almost identical in color and texture to the Mt. Airy quarry. The State had no money to purchase land for parks, but the Federal Government had money available as matching funds. Accordingly, we made a gift of the Stone Mountain Dome, similar in shape to the one at Stone Mountain, Ga. but smaller, to the State of North Carolina with the agreement that from the matching funds received from the Federal Government, the State would purchase the remaining acreage from us. The deeds specified that Stone Mountain Dome could only be used as a State Park and would revert to NOGC when it ceased to be a State Park, and reserved to NOGC the mineral rights to 125 acres on a sight personally picked by me on the other side of a ridge from Stone Mountain near the edge of the property. This 125-acre tract contained about one-third of the sloping bare Wolf Rock deemed suitable for a crushed stone operation and a larger flatter area mostly covered by trees as suitable for a quarrying operation similar to that at Mt. Airy. At the end of 25 years from its issuance, the deed specifies that NOGC, or its successors, could exercise its mineral rights, erecting buildings, clearing land, quarry, cut, and crush stone

Thus the State got a free State Park, and we had our quarry site on the outer edge well hidden from the Stone Mountain Dome. This looked like a good deal until the State in later years bought land that put our quarrying tract right in the middle of the Park. Now that the 25 years have expired, there is controversy with the State about our rights, and an effort is being made by both parties to arrive at a settlement whereby we would give up our mineral rights to this valuable granite deposit.

With Mr. Frank planning to stay in office after my retirement, we hired and then lost several outstanding young men we hoped to train

for the Presidency. These included John S. Clark who later founded the John S. Clark Construction Co., Haywood Merritt, Jr., who later became a top official with Floyd S. Pike Electrical Co., Guy Byerly, who became a top official in Belks Department Stores, and Richard Vaughn, who is now President of John S. Clark Construction Co. Finally we succeeded with Lacy S. Vernon a young man just out of business college. Lacy was a quiet and reserved person, eager to learn, and ever ready to accept challenges. He proved his merit when I assigned him the task of developing street curbing sales in the State of Connecticut, and he grew very rapidly from that success.

I retired as Senior Vice President in 1973 and Lacy took over my duties as manager of the Quarry, Crushing, Curbing, and Maintenance Departments. Soon thereafter he became President with Mr. Frank continuing to serve as Chairman of the Board. I have continued to serve on the Board of Directors until this day in 1996. Though quiet and reserved, Lacy could and did make tough decisions without flinching. His two outstanding contributions to the Corporation were the securing of a contract to replace the marble on the Amoco Skyscraper in Chicago with Mt. Airy granite, and the building of a new sawing and cutting shed to facilitate the production of this large contract. He also broadened our base of Out Stone Operations to cut many different colors and textures of granite by acquiring two other quarries and making contracts with other quarriers.

Due to failing health, Mr. Frank resigned as Chairman of the Board at age 84 in 1989, and was succeeded by W. R. Broaddus III, serving on the Board as a representative of the Charles B. Keeseee Educational Foundation, owner of one-fifth of the Corporate Stock. Mr. Frank died the following year.

Early in the year 1993, several Directors learned from Staff Members that Mr. Vernon was not responding to their requests for guidance, but would set at his desk and just look at them. Realizing that he had a health problem, the Board reached an agreement with him for early retirement from all Corporate duties on April 29, 1993. This was a difficult situation as neither Mr. Vernon nor his wife thought that he had a health problem. Since then, his mental condition has deteriorated to the point that his family is well aware of his disease.

To follow Mr. Vernon as President, the Board chose Donald R. Shelton, who had advanced up the Corporate ladder from Stock Room Clerk to Senior Vice President of Operations. Having thorough knowledge of production, Mr. Shelton is now successfully developing the other skills required of a President, and has been very successful in developing sales of Mt. Airy granite rough blocks in foreign countries.

When I first worked on the quarry as a summer job during my college days in the late 1920's, stone was hauled to the crusher and moved around the curb yard on horse drawn vehicles. Rough blocks were slowly moved on gum rollers from ledges to a stiff leg hoist, lowered onto a rail cart and down to the foot of the quarry, again hoisted up by a stiff leg and lowered onto a rail flat car. On a good day, three blocks could be loaded. Smaller blocks were hoisted and lowered to flat cars at the foot of the quarry by several cableways extended across the quarry. Steam engines were used to power all cableways and hoists. All cutting and drilling tools were of tempered steel that had to be sharpened often. Now 70 years later, cutting and drilling tools

have tungsten carbide tips which last much longer with faster cutting. Improved drills in the quarry, cutting four feet per minute, have revolutionized quarrying methods which give beautiful rectangular blocks that can be speedily loaded onto a trailer truck by large fork lifts. In the cutting sheds, 10-foot diameter diamond saws can be programmed to saw four big blocks into slabs of predetermined thickness over the week-end without any attendant. If anything goes wrong, the saw shuts itself down and phones for help.

Frank L. Smith June 20, 1996.