

[Page 1 - The Plaster Quarry at St. Ann's](#)ISSUE : [Issue 15](#)

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The Plaster Quarry at St. Ann's Hector Carmichael, Munroe's Point: Well, I should remember it pretty well because I went to work there the first time they started. I was only 16 years old when I went to work in the quarry, the last of June or July in 1904, There were three families living out there then • three little farms. There was a Morrison family there, and a MacLennan, and a MacDonald, That's before the quarry started. The quarry was actually on MacLennan's place. They started clearing away the ground the first year • all pick and shovel and horse and carts and wheelbarrow • that's all they had then. Then that fall they started surveying and cutting the right of way for the railroad • all out there and around. It took them two years to build the rail? road. I guess there were 20 or 25 worked there the first summer. Later on there was about 50, towards fall. They took the rails on big schooners and landed them down at the pier there. But the locomotives, they came on a scow from Sydney, It was an American machine. And they landed it over here on Neil MacDonald's shore • a little bit further up here. They hauled it up to the railroad with cables and stuff on rails. Steam engine. It burned just coal. There was another little engine they took in here first • and old Norman Morrison, North River, was running that one for a while. They used to shunt cars and one thing and another, out the quarry. The bigger engine came when they started shipping the plaster. It wasn't very big. It was a narrow gauge. But it was a good chunk of a thing, I was braking on the cars in 1908, Three of us, taking the cars in to the shore. You had to watch them that they didn't go too fast, coming down the hill. You know, there's quite a descent from the quarry into the shore here. And there was lots of sharp curves in the road. It was going out and taking a big circle • Ane as' Curve. There were three trestles • one a large, large trestle. I think it was around 250 feet long. I don't think we ever took more than 20 cars at a time. You'd have to jump from one car to another to put on the brakes. (Did the train ever crash?) Oh, no. We were too capable, (Did you run in bad weather?) Oh, yes, there was no cover over us. Jumping from car to car. If they were going too fast you'd have to jump back and put more brake on. Then you'd get to a level place and you'd have to slack them up. The train would come in through the woods. You couldn't see anything till you came in here, above Goose Cove, opposite Dan Allan on the hill this side • it was a Morrison that was there then. Whatever rocks they had stored up they stored in the quarry. They weren't shipping any of it down here till the boat would come in. The car was going out on the pier and it was tipping • what they called the tippie • the car was going out and it was tripping it, down and in. There was something to open the latches and the door was opening and that plaster was going down the shoot. And when the car was empty • tip back and it pushed it back on a different track, you know, and then another car would come on the other track again. In the quarry we used to break the rock with sharp picks. The plaster rock was soft and you would hit them quite a few times in the same place and they'd split. The big rocks used to come down when they'd blast them. Then if they were too big to handle you'd have to break them up with those picks. And we were getting wonderful big money, ife



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