

GRANITE AND SANDSTONE IN TASMANIA.

Tasmania is fortunate in possessing large deposits of excellent building and ornamental stones. Of these the most suitable types are sandstone and granite.

Sandstone. Sandstones suitable for many purposes occur in the Ross series of the Triassic system which is extensively developed in the North-Eastern, Eastern, Midland and South-Eastern parts of the State. These sandstones are specially suitable for building, constructional, and monumental purposes, grindstones etc. They have been extensively quarried throughout the above districts for the building of houses, particularly in the early days of settlement.

In the cities of Hobart and Launceston and the townships throughout the country the public and other large buildings are chiefly constructed of these sandstones. In the early building days of Melbourne, Tasmanian sandstones were largely used.

They have also been used for bridges as at Ross, Richmond and Pontville. At Ross the sandstones are specially adapted for grindstones and large numbers of these are shipped to the Mainland.

In addition, these sandstones are the principal rocks used in Tasmania for tombstones, headstones, monuments etc.

The sandstones owe their utility to the following factors, viz. they are easily quarried, provide blocks of almost any size, and are very easily dressed, and worked for ornamental purposes. They have a pleasing appearance, and are fairly resistant to the action of the weather. Some of the older buildings are in the vicinity of 100 years old and still retain well preserved appearances, while tombstones dating back to 1835 are found in good order. These sandstones can be obtained in a variety of colours, the most common being buff to brownish yellow, white grey and variegated.

The front of the Commonwealth Bank at present in the course of construction at Hobart is composed of Tasmanian sandstone.

Granite. Granite outcrops at many localities in Tasmania, chiefly in the North-East, East and Western districts, but up to the present it has not been utilised to any great extent.

Numerous varieties occur, particularly with regard to texture but colours are confined to black and white, (grey) and red or pink.

The only granite which has been exploited for commercial purposes occurs at Coles Bay on the East Coast. This granite is a red, coarse-grained type and has been opened up in a small quarry along the water front.

The red colour and the polishing qualities of this granite render it an attractive stone for building and monumental purposes, while in common with other granites, its durability is unquestionable.

Polished blocks of this granite were recently utilised in the base of the new Commonwealth Bank in Hobart where it presents a most pleasing appearance. Quantities have been shipped to the Mainland during the past two years.

Transport and working facilities are good since the rock outcrops along ground rising steeply from the fore-shore, and the granite is loaded directly from quarry to boat.

The area occupied by this red granite is extensive and the available quantity is very large.

Red and pink granites are also known to exist at Mt. Heemskirk, Gladstone, Maria Island and Tomahawk River but the commercial possibilities of these have not been investigated.

Black and white or grey granites have up to the present only been used for road making purposes, but enormous quantities and many varieties in grain size are available, particularly in the North-Eastern part of the State.

Some of the deposits are well situated as regards transportation and working facilities and should be suitable for use in building and ornamental work.

Signed

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