

The Quarry Italians Part 1

By Bill Glennie

In his introduction to *'Moruya's golden years'*, Bob Colefax wrote that while Moruya and the surrounding district made a significant contribution to the operation of the granite quarry where the masonry for Sydney's Harbour Bridge was prepared, *'it is true to say that Scotland principally, and also Italy, supplied the bulk of the skilled sections'*.ⁱ The Italians were, after the Scots, the largest contingent of masons employed at Moruya Quarry. It was not the first time that Scottish and Italian masons had worked side by side. Some forty years earlier, Scots and Italians had helped establish the granite industry in Barre in the state of Vermont in the United States. The Scots there recognised the skills of their Italian colleagues. The fine statue in Barre of Robert Burns, Scotland's national bard, was carved by members of Barre's Italian community. The purpose of these articles is to bring together what little information we have of the Italians who worked at the Quarry and to correct and update the names of those known to have worked there.



Despite its remoteness Barre in Vermont attracted Aberdeenshire granite masons from 1880 onwards. William Barclay, originally a farmhand from near Fraserburgh, and his brother Andrew, established there what would become one of the largest quarrying and manufacturing plants in the United States before 1914. The long roofed shed (above left) carries their names. In 1890 it was reckoned that Scottish immigrants accounted for 20 per cent of the town's inhabitants. Soon Barre boasted several of the pre-requisites of Scottish identity: a Presbyterian church, a Scottish society, a Burns Club, and a Burns statue (above right). The statue of the Scottish poet was carved from American granite by members of Barre's Italian community, for here in Barre the men from Aberdeenshire worked side by side with Italians, as they would at Moruya forty years later.

Part 1

The import of Italian masons

In his biography of John Bradfield, the Chief Engineer and driving force behind the Harbour Bridge project, Richard Raxworthy wrote that Italian masons, like most of the Scottish contingent at Moruya, were imported to compensate for the shortage of skilled Australian masons.ⁱⁱ This assumption, that *'Dorman Long recruited skilled masons from Scotland and Italy to cut and shape the stones'*, has persisted.ⁱⁱⁱ It did not happen, and it could not have happened. That much became clear within days of the Bridge contract being signed on 24 March 1924.

Two days after the signing, Lawrence Ennis, who had accompanied the Dorman Long tender to Sydney, set sail for England to prepare the groundwork for the

biggest challenge of his engineering career. But first he visited the disused quarry at Moruya in the company of John Bradfield. He confirmed his company's intention to source the granite from the site for the Bridge's architectural features: the pylons. But what of the skilled labour force needed to prepare the stonework? In the memorandum which accompanied Dorman Long's tender, there had been a warning that *'it would probably be necessary to import foreign labour for this work, and on its completion it is possible there would be no further use for this class of labour'*.

Shortly after Ennis's departure, it was rumoured that Dorman Long planned to bring from Italy 100 skilled masons for the duration of the Harbour Bridge's construction. It is unclear how or where the rumour started. Richard Ball, the Minister of Public Works, commenting that he did not know if there was any truth in the allegation, said that he believed it originated in Melbourne.^{iv}

Dorman Long had established a works in Melbourne in 1900. Ennis would have made a brief call when his ship stopped there. Was he or someone in the Melbourne office responsible for a casual, ill-considered remark which found its way to the ears of Richard Worrall, the Secretary of the Operative Stonemasons' Society of New South Wales? The Society's reaction was predictable. The Federal Council, of which Worrall was a member, passed a resolution against any such proposal to import stonemasons to work on the Bridge.^v

A few days later Senator George Pearce, the Federal Minister for Home and Territories, gave an assurance that there was no question of Italian stonemasons being imported, nor could such labour be imported without a permit granted by his Department.^{vi}

In a letter to Hugh MacPherson, the General Secretary of the Building and Monumental Workers in Scotland, a relieved Worrall informed his Scottish counterpart, *'We received information that led us to expect a large influx of foreign (mostly Italian) masons, but as a result of steps we took, we believe that most of these are blocked'*.^{vii}

As if to make certain, the issue was raised a few weeks later in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. Major Hugh Connell asked Richard Ball if press reports that Italian workmen would be brought into Australia to carry out masonry work in connection with the Harbour Bridge were true. Ball reminded him that the statement had already been denied, but *'I give it a further denial now. I am in a position to assure him that no workmen will be brought here from any part of the world, not even from Great Britain'*.^{viii} This was one politician's promise that would be broken eighteen months later.

The Stonemasons' Society was already uneasy about Italian masons entering New South Wales. In 1922 the number of Italian names found in the members' register was still in single figures. (One of them, Vittorio Melocco – his name would be anglicized to Victor – would later act as interpreter for his fellow Italians at Moruya.) A dozen new Italian names appeared in 1923, another twenty in 1924. In May of that year there was a call by members of the Society to *'investigate the influx of Italian masons'*.

The Society was not the only Australian trade union voicing concerns at the rising number of Italians entering Australia. There was a perception – and a fear – that Italians and other southern European immigrants through their readiness to accept low wages were a threat to conditions and jobs.

The increase in Italian immigrants was the result of the USA's decision to impose restrictions on

European immigration in 1921. Many Italians wanting to escape the social, economic and political turmoil in Italy in the aftermath of the Great War now looked to Australia. Only 631 Italians had entered Australia in 1920, but in 1927 the figure would rise to almost 8,000. Most of the immigrants were farmers, but a significant number were masons and marble workers, although this was not always clear on their arrival. When Fioravante Cudizio arrived in Sydney from Naples on the *'Caprera'* in November 1925, he was described on the passenger lists as *'farmer, aged 39'*. Less than two weeks later he was a member of the Stonemasons' Society, and less than two years later he was working at Moruya Quarry where he helped prepare the Cenotaph earmarked for Martin Place in Sydney.

Anxiety over the implications of the rising numbers of these *'swarthy travellers'*, as one newspaper termed them, was voiced beyond the trade union movement.^{ix} When the Victorian government sent a strongly-worded despatch to Stanley Bruce, the Prime Minister, in 1925 calling for an *'effective check'* on Italian immigration, it reminded him of the need to preserve Australia as *'a home for people of British stock'*.^x

Measures were taken in an attempt to restrict the number of Italian, Greek and Yugoslav immigrants. New arrivals had to be sponsored by residents in Australia who were prepared to look after them, or have a minimum of £10 capital on arrival. That requirement was raised to £50 in 1925. (£3 was the requirement for a British arrival.) Little wonder that most of the Italians arriving in the early 1920s were single men or married men who hoped to bring out their families later.

Few of the Italians had any knowledge of English, and this raised particular concerns in the Stonemasons' Society. In May 1925 notice was given of a motion *'That every applicant for membership in the Society must possess a fair working knowledge of the English language before admission'*. In that same month Richard Worrall sent a letter – in Italian – to all Italian members of the Society in which he voiced his concerns regarding *'the want of knowledge of the English language'* amongst them, as a result of which *'many instances have occurred where this has been the cause of accidents to other masons'*. Two years later and the Society was still voicing its concerns – *'an appreciable proportion of the membership already consists of persons totally ignorant of the English language, and their effect on local conditions will need to be carefully watched'*.^{xi}

The issue of importing masons, this time Scottish, resurfaced in December 1925. For most of 1925 a

dispute between Dorman Long and the Stonemasons' Society had hampered recruitment of masons at the Quarry. The Society was determined to enforce at Moruya the 'country allowance' provision of a recent pay award, entitling masons engaged in Sydney and sent to Moruya Quarry to an additional 21 shillings a week. The company tried to side-step the issue by signing men on directly at the Quarry, but managed to entice only a few masons, mainly from Scotland, and most of them known to the Scottish management team.

The Society lifted its embargo in October 1925, pending referral of the dispute to a conciliation committee in December, when it was agreed that Moruya masons would receive a special rate. But there was no rush of masons to Moruya. Whether it was because of the remoteness of the Quarry or a shortage of men skilled in granite-working, only 38 masons were enrolled by the end of December. Lawrence Ennis, the Director of Construction, estimated that he needed 100 - the same figure which had been bandied around in April 1924, suggesting there might well have been substance to the rumoured importation of 100 Italian masons.^{xii}

Time was of the essence. Ennis calculated that the Quarry was six months behind schedule. He proposed a radical solution. He approached the Department of Labour and Industry to seek leave to import sixty stonemasons from Aberdeen, Scotland's 'Granite City', but the Stonemasons' Society had sufficient clout with the Department to ensure that the number was restricted to thirty. The possibility of importing Italians was not raised. In fact if Ennis had been permitted, he would have found as many

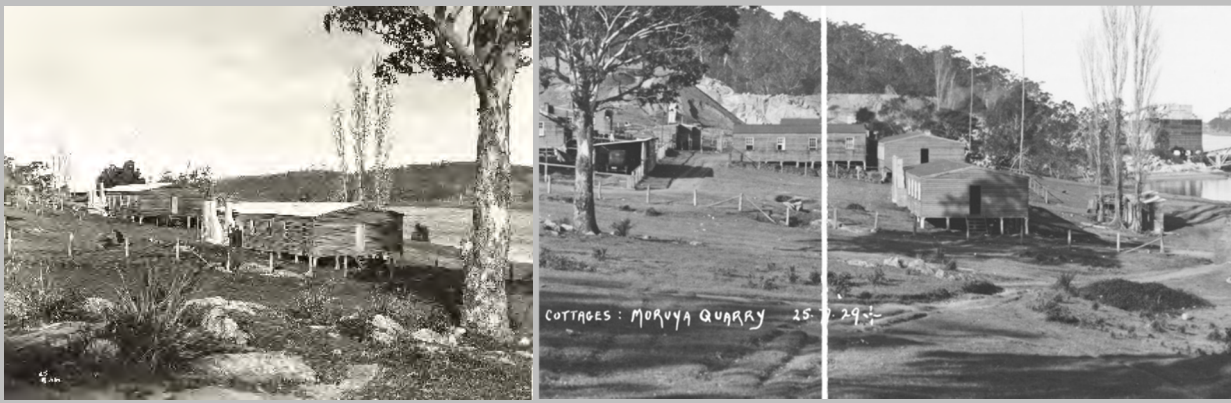
masons as he needed in Aberdeen. The granite industry there was in the doldrums, and the reaction to the attractive package offered by Dorman Long surely took the company by surprise: 248 applications were forwarded to Dorman Long's Bridge Office in London to fill the thirty vacancies.^{xiii}

The Society's preparedness to sanction the import of the thirty Scottish masons was not welcomed in all quarters. The Federal Council of the Operative Stonemasons' Society took exception to the New South Wales branch condoning *any* masons being recruited overseas. The Secretary of the Victorian branch of the Society alleged that when he had written to Dorman Long offering to supply masons - provided the firm paid their fares from Melbourne - his offer was turned down. Richard Worrall, the Secretary of the New South Wales branch, was on hand at the meeting to receive his dressing-down.^{xiv} How much louder would have been the opposition to the import of Italians?

It is quite clear that the fear, suspicion and hostility shown in many quarters towards Italian immigrants was such that there was no likelihood of the Operative Stonemasons' Society or any state or federal agency authorising the import of Italian masons to address the shortage of skilled men at Moruya Quarry. So there is no record in the membership ledgers of the Stonemasons' Society of Italian masons joining en bloc in 1926 as there is for the thirty Scottish masons who arrived on the *Barrabool* and the *Pakeha*. In fact most of the Italian masons who made their way to Moruya were already in Australia.



The opening of the granite quarry at Moruya brought new challenges to Richard Worrall, the Secretary of the Operative Stonemasons' Society of New South Wales. He was already under pressure because of the rising number of foreign masons arriving in the 1920s. The dispute between his Society and Dorman Long over wages at the Quarry contributed to the first serious delay in the delivery of the Bridge contract. But Dorman Long did not control the purse strings. Written into the Bridge contract was the proviso that any increase in wages was to be met by the New South Wales government and had to be sanctioned by the Minister for Public Works. His intervention restricted the number of Scottish masons Dorman Long was able to import in 1926, but the firm made up the shortfall from the increasing drip-feed of Italian masons entering New South Wales. A marble plaque in the Trades Hall in Sydney commemorates his twenty-six year term as Secretary of the Stonemasons' Society and fifteen year term as Secretary of the Trades Hall Association. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Sydney Trades Hall)



By February 1926 Dorman Long had completed two hutments in Granite Town, usually referred to as the Bachelors' Quarters. The photograph (above left) was taken on the occasion of a visit to the Quarry by John Bradfield and Lawrence Ennis in June 1926. By the time the New Zealand photographer, Robert Moore, visited the Quarry in July 1929, a third hutment had been built (above right). The Italian contingent occupied one of the blocks in 1926, and their numbers suggest they might well have had need of a second block. In Moore's photograph, the newest block is seen lying at right angles to the other two. (Reproduced by kind permission of the State Library of New South Wales)

Of the twenty-seven Italian masons known to have worked at the Quarry, seventeen were in Australia before Ennis issued his SOS in December 1925. Of the other ten, the records show that eight joined the Society for the first time between March and August 1926, the other two in May 1927. They were probably all new arrivals in Sydney and some of them appear to have made their own way to the Quarry. It is quite likely that there was an Italian grapevine at work, directing fresh arrivals in Sydney down to Moruya. At least three Italians, and possibly as many as five, were joined by brothers at the Quarry. Richard Worrall had successfully restricted the number of Scots permitted to Dorman Long, but there was little he could do to stop the firm making good the shortage from this alternative source. He was advised in June 1926 that *'the firm have been compelled to put on foreign labour who have applied in person at Moruya, owing to the shortage of men'*.^{xv}

In addition to the three- and four-bedroom bungalow-style houses Dorman Long provided for the Quarry workers and their families at Granite Town, the company built two barrack-style buildings for the

single men, the Italians having their own block. The earliest photograph of these is dated 10 February 1926, by which time a number of Italians had made their way to the Quarry. In June of that year, twelve single men arrived from Aberdeen on the *Barrabool*, and some of these would have been housed in the other block, but some are known to have lodged with families in Granite Town.

In July 1926 the two blocks accommodated a total of twenty-two men. In a letter to the District Postal Inspector that same month John Gilmore, the Quarry Manager, wrote that a further extension to the Bachelors' Quarters *'will shortly be commenced'*, and later photographs show a third block lying at right angles to the other two.^{xvi} While most sources acknowledge that the Italians had their own accommodation block, their numbers suggest that they might well have occupied two.

Dorman, Long & Company did recruit skilled masons from overseas, but only Scots. When the call came, there were sufficient numbers of skilled Italian masons already in Australia – or about to arrive.

ⁱ *Moruya's golden years*, A V (Bob) Colefax, 1997, Introduction

ⁱⁱ *The proud arch*, David Ellyard & Richard Raxworthy, 1982, p49; *The unreasonable man: The life and works of J J C Bradfield*, Richard Raxworthy, 1989, p83

ⁱⁱⁱ See, for example, *The proud arch*, David Ellyard & Richard Raxworthy, 1982, p49; *The unreasonable man: The life and works of J J C Bradfield*, Richard Raxworthy, 1989, p83; *Sydney Harbour Bridge: Conservation Management Plan*, RTA, 2007, p134

^{iv} *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 April 1924

^v *Barrier Times*, 4 April 1924

^{vi} *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 April, 1924

^{vii} *Letter from Richard Worrall to Hugh McPherson, General Secretary, Building and Monumental Workers, Scotland*, April 1924

^{viii} *New South Wales Parliamentary Debates*, 1 July 1924

^{ix} *The Register*, 22 September, 1924

^x *The Gippsland Times*, 12 January, 1925

^{xi} *Annual Report of the Operative Stonemasons' Society of New South Wales*, 1927

^{xii} *Lawrence Ennis: Monthly progress report, No 12*, December 1925

^{xiii} *The Building and Monumental Workers' Journal*, March 1926

^{xiv} *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 February 1926

^{xv} *Letter to Richard Worrall from the Manager, State Labour Exchanges*, Department of Labour and Industry, NSW, 30 June 1926

^{xvi} *Letter to the District Postal Inspector, Cooma*, John Gilmore, 21 July 1926

The Quarry Italians Part 2

by Bill Glennie

The Italians at Moruya

Our knowledge of the Italians at the Quarry is fragmentary: the briefest of sketches of individual characters from Bob Colefax and Reg Saunders; brief references in the *Moruya Examiner*; and brief anecdotes from the few relatives that have been traced.

Little wonder, then, that Bridge histories have little to say about the Italians beyond the standard fare: *'The Italians were mostly single men and lived in barracks accommodation with their own dedicated cook to prepare Italian meals'*.ⁱ Nothing is known of the culinary skills of Sergio the cook - Reg Saunders remembered that he charged so much per head - or of the Italian meals he provided.ⁱⁱ Fish might well have been a mainstay, for when Sergio Spadavecchia first appeared in the electoral rolls in 1933 - he had applied for naturalisation the year before - his occupation was given as *'fisherman'*. So keen a fisherman was he that in 1935 he and a colleague fell foul of the authorities while fishing on the Parramatta River, and he was charged with obstructing a Fisheries Inspector.ⁱⁱⁱ

Young Albert Ogg, who was 5 years old when his father took the family from Aberdeen to Moruya in 1926, remembered how he would sit on the wharf and *'watch as the Italian men fished for octopus found around the jetty legs. This was a favourite delicacy of theirs'*.^{iv}

The Moruya River could be a dangerous place, as one Italian found to his cost: *'Through getting out of his depth in the river the other day, one of the Italians from the Quarry was nearly drowned. His companions, none of whom could swim, managed to rescue him, and he was in a bad way after being taken out of the water'*.^v The section of river which had been fenced off in early 1927 offered swimmers protection from sharks but not from themselves.

The olive oil for Sergio's kitchen was brought down from Sydney in the custom-built steamers built to transport the dressed granite stone and aggregate to the construction site. It had uses outside the kitchen.

Peter Amato remembers his father, Michele, telling him he gargled olive oil before setting off to work, again after the *'smoko'* break, and after lunch. This helped catch the granite dust in the throat before he spat it out.

Reg Saunders remembered a less agreeable oral habit of Fioravante Cudizio which he described to Richard Raxworthy:

'He had such a robust constitution that to smoke for him was not sufficient, so to get a full charge of the effect of nicotine into his blood this is what he used to do. He would pick up his pipe and out of it, with his penknife, he would scrape or dig the nicotine-saturated dregs, and he would make a ball of that in his hand and pop it into his mouth. Thus he used to get his full charge of nicotine. You know, Richard, as well as I, that nicotine is of such incredible strength that it will put a goanna over on its back if you put it on his tongue'.

There are no indications that it put Cudizio on his back. In all photographs of him taken beside the Cenotaph stone which he helped dress at Moruya, he was very much the upright mason.

Peter Amato also recalls his father telling him that the Quarry Italians were amongst the first clients of the DeBortoli wine merchants who established their business in 1928, the wine being delivered in kegs. Harry Rootsey, an Australian stonemason interviewed by Richard Raxworthy, alleged the Italians also made their own wine - *'they had a good business there'* - but Reg Saunders knew nothing of that. *'Inebriation was taboo'*, he told Richard Raxworthy.^{vi} It might well be that there was only one bad habit the Italians enjoyed. John Ross of Aberdeen was told by his father, a quarryman at Moruya, that there was plenty opportunity to head to the Italian men's quarters for some gambling, but John Ross Senior preferred fishing. Whether money exchanged hands in a game similar to French *boules*, which Albert Ogg remembered them playing, is unknown.



Above: Fioravante Cudizio takes a break from working on the Sydney Cenotaph, his hammer over his shoulder - his favourite pose – on 9 July 1927. Like many of the Italians who worked at the Quarry Cudizio's name has been recorded in various spellings, a result of illiteracy amongst many of the Italian immigrants and Australian officials struggling to record unfamiliar names.

Below: George Chewying's shop in Queen Street, Moruya. George and his horse were one of the many traders who took their business to Granite Town. George brought vegetables and kerosene but on his calls to the Italian men's quarters wine invariably appeared, and George and the horse on occasion returned to Moruya having enjoyed too much Italian hospitality and having sold too few vegetables.



The Italian workforce was isolated in one sense only: language. Bob Colefax recalled that one of their number, Victor Melocco, acted as their interpreter. 'In fact he spoke better English than some of the locals'.^{vii} Vittorio – Victor – Melocco had arrived in Sydney in May 1913, giving him a head start in learning English. He had been a member of the Stonemasons' Society for some years. He set off for Queensland in March 1925, but returned to New South Wales and Society membership nine months later. The generous pay settlement agreed between the Society and Dorman Long might well have lured him down to the Quarry.

But Melocco's ears would have been challenged by the language which dominated the Quarry: the Doric of the north-east of Scotland, a rich dialect impenetrable even to some Scottish ears. The Doric

dominated, from the management team downwards, more so when additional masons and their families arrived from Aberdeen in 1926. 'Many locals reckoned, as the Scottish community continued to grow, that an interpreter would have been handy'.^{viii}

There was one distinguished visitor to the Quarry who did not need Victor Melocco's services. In May 1930 Lord Stonehaven, the Governor-General, paid a visit to Moruya. After lunching with Lawrence Ennis at the Hotel Adelaide, the vice-regal party was given a tour of the Quarry, during which Lord Stonehaven 'conversed in their own language to a number of Italians'.^{ix}

The Scots also dominated Granite Town's social life, but that domination was not exclusive. On more than one occasion an Italian mandolin soloist entertained

the largely Scottish audience from the stage of the Recreation Hall which was provided by the company in 1927. At the grand opening concert, sandwiched between Mrs Jock Simpson's rendition of 'Angus MacDonald' and John Kelman strutting his stuff as 'Burlington Bertie', Mr A Rodighiero performed a mandolin solo.

Not every Italian performance was well received if Bob Colefax is to be believed. When Ettore Sanguini, 'a big rosy-cheeked stonemason', possessed of a powerful baritone voice, took the stage to sing 'On with the motley' and 'La donna è mobile', he may have rattled the rafters, but he also rattled the audience. His singing and 'dramatic gestures and facial expressions' were greeted with laughter and jeers by an audience not schooled in the finer points

of grand opera. He walked off the stage, and no more was heard of him at concerts. When Bob Colefax wrote of his 'powerful impulse to commit mass homicide' that night, it was the audience he had in his sights, not Signor Sanguini.^x

In general, however, there was musical harmony between the Scots and the Italians. Musicians of both nationalities appear to have featured in the various musical combinations which provided music for dancing. No doubt the Italians found it easier to find common ground in the music of Granite Town's Progressive Jazz Band than the various instrumental combinations which provided the vibrant music for the reels, strathspeys and schottisches so enjoyed by the Scots in the Recreation Hall.



Above: Aberdonian Gordon Smith, second from the left, wrote on the back of this photograph, 'Amongst the Tra La Las. Look for the juicy bottle', but the 'juicy bottle', probably containing wine rather than fruit juice, is hard to see. A Scottish colleague of Gordon Smith is standing on the extreme right. Smith shared a passion for fishing with some of the Italians. (Reproduced by kind permission of Jean Mills, daughter of Gordon Smith)

Below: In a rare photograph from the collection of Ruby Webberley, four of Granite Town's musicians take a break from rehearsals to pose for the camera. On the back of the photograph is written, 'Jim Milne (fiddle), Bob MacDonald (drums) and two unnamed Italians'. Might that be Sergio Spadavecchia, cook, fisherman and mandolinist, playing guitar, or Mr A Rodighiero? Was this the Granite Town Progressive Band, without the piano which arrived from Sydney in July 1927 in time for the opening of the Recreation Hall? (Reproduced by kind permission of Gail Cassie, daughter of Ruby Webberley)



In *Granitetown Memories*, Ruby Webberley described how the dances, held first in the workers' mess room – 'not a very nice place, but at the time,

the only place large enough' – then in the Recreation Hall, brought the community together. 'Quite a few

Aussies came from in and around Moruya and enjoyed themselves immensely’.^{xi}

It might well have been on the dance floor of the Recreation Hall – ‘a top notch dancing floor of the best jarrah’ according to the *Examiner* – where at least three Italians first met their future brides: Michele Amato married a Bodalla girl; and Andrea Rodighiero and Sergio Abbatista both married local girls, the latter ‘having the distinction of becoming a husband and a father on the same day’, according to Bob Colefax.^{xii} With Pietro Mastropasqua already joined by his wife in July 1927, here were four Italians at least who had committed themselves to a future in Australia

Following the closure of the arch in August 1930, work began on the completion of the four pylons. As the pylons grew higher, the need for Moruya granite grew less. Two months earlier, an attempt by the Stonemasons’ Society to obtain employment for additional men at the Quarry failed. The job was overstaffed.^{xiii} The three steamers built by Dorman Long to transport the dressed stone and aggregate, which for most of the Quarry’s life span were underemployed, were already sold off, the last one in February 1930. The coastal steamers of the Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company were more than adequate to freight the dwindling cargos of granite.^{xiv}

For Moruya Quarry was never more than what the Stonemasons’ Society had claimed it to be: ‘a country job’, albeit a highly expensive and hugely impressive one. Despite the bullish statements of the Dorman Long management, John Bradfield, and the ever-optimistic *Moruya Examiner*, there was to be no life for the Quarry beyond the Harbour Bridge. The onset of the economic depression and changing fashions in building materials saw to that. Had Sydney Harbour Bridge been built 20 years later, the pylons might well have been built of concrete, as recommended by the Scottish architect, Sir John Burnet.^{xv}

As the Quarry headed towards its demise, Italians and Scots alike faced a dilemma: to return home, or stay on in Australia where employment prospects were bleak. They were not alone. The statistics for the first nine months of 1931 show that almost 12,000 more people left Australia than entered the country.^{xvi}

The thirty masons who arrived from Aberdeen in 1926 knew their Australian experience might be temporary. That was not the case with the Italians. They had arrived in Australia to seek a better life. Those who did opt to return would go home to a very different Italy. The clampdown by Benito Mussolini’s Fascist government on labour

organisations would have been unacceptable to many of the Italian masons employed at Moruya where the evidence points to lively union activity and the likes of Victor Melocco and Michele Amato would have been dismayed by Fascist attacks on freemasonry. Both men were members of the local lodge of the freemasons in Moruya.

In the short term, there were job opportunities on the Bridge. Towards the end of 1931 the minute books of the Stonemasons’ Society show an increasing focus on what was happening in Sydney. In September 1931 Dorman Long began work on pointing on the pylons, employing unskilled labourers to do the job alongside masons. For the next four months the Society fought hard to ensure that all ragging and pointing should be the preserve of masons, and that working continuous overtime should cease. Dorman Long might have been motivated by the need to have the Bridge ready for its projected opening in March 1932, but Richard Worrall and the Society were motivated by ensuring work for as many masons as possible. By the time the Society reached a satisfactory arrangement with the company in January 1932, Bridge time was running out, but at least the Society could claim that it had secured employment for over fifty masons on the pylons. There were former Quarry employees amongst them, but what proportion is unclear.

Back at Granite Town, the *Moruya Examiner* chronicled the sorry decline of the Quarry. The masons were the last men to lose their posts, but before they did, there was time for the Italian community to host a function in the Granite Town Recreation Hall in August 1931. ‘A happy time was spent in tripping the light fantastic after which a sumptuous supper was partaken of. At the conclusion of the evening the hosts took the opportunity of bidding farewell to their Australian friends’.^{xvii}

As in Barre in the United States, Scottish and Italians stonemasons had worked together. In Barre they helped develop a new industry, in New South Wales they helped enhance an arch bridge. Like all skilled artisans, they had no need to brag of their work. The evidence was there for all to see in the granite structures which John Bradfield called ‘the Acropolis of Sydney’.^{xviii} Italian masons had stepped into the breach at a moment of crisis. They helped Lawrence Ennis address a shortfall of skilled men, saving the Bridge contract from further delay. If they were all as skilled as Adolfo Lorenzi, then Ennis, Dorman Long and the citizens of Sydney were indeed fortunate. Reg Saunders, who began his apprenticeship working alongside these men, knew that. ‘If the citizens of Sydney knew the toil that went into those pylons they would feel they owe the Scots and Italians a debt of gratitude’.

Adolfo Lorenzo

Bob Colefax remembered him as ‘Adalfa’, hence the entry in the 2007 edition of the *Sydney Harbour Bridge Workers: Honour Roll*: ‘Adalfa, given name unknown, stonemason; Italian’. The only other fact Bob Colefax recalled about him was his appearance: ‘a very handsome, made-to-order, matinee idol type with a Rudolph Valentino countenance’. Indeed, this studio portrait taken in Sydney suggests that ‘Adalfa’ might have been more at home on a Hollywood film set than a granite quarry in New South Wales.

‘Adalfa’ can now be identified as Adolfo Lorenzi, born on 23 July 1900 in Lubaria in the province of Verona. He left Italy in 1920 or 1921, spent a short time in India, and then sailed on to Australia. In February 1925 he entered the record books of the Operative Stonemasons’ Society of New South Wales, his name wrongly registered as ‘Adalfa, Lorenzo’.

The photograph shows a self-confident young man pleased with his lot. He had good reason to be. Having abandoned the poverty and turmoil of post-war Italy, he had found prosperity in New South Wales.

In 2007 his grandson, Giovanni Adolfo Camerada, of Cape Town, South Africa, decided to find out more about the Australian connection of the man who had spent the last 10 years of his life in what had once been Giovanni’s room in his mother’s house. The grandfather had told his grandson of sculpting monuments in Australia; there had been mention of an ‘Anzac monument’; he had talked of a quarry and of the noisy men he shared accommodation with in makeshift barracks, of the lack of privacy; of the cold water for washing and the soup and bread; of the muddy ‘streets’ when it rained, of the muddy shoes and pants.

Giovanni found a number of items in a cardboard box in his grandfather’s wardrobe following Adolfo Lorenzi’s death in 1995. These included mementoes of his grandfather’s brief sojourn in New South Wales: three photographs taken in the ESMA studios in Oxford Street, Sydney; a duplicate of a cheque for £60 sent by Adolfo from Sydney to his father, Giovanni Lorenzi, in Italy dated October 1925; another cheque dated April 1927, countersigned by the bank manager of the Moruya branch of the Bank of New South Wales, for the payment of £7 to the mysterious Antonietta Slaviero – perhaps a landlady, for Adolfo tired of the accommodation at the Quarry; perhaps a girlfriend he never talked of; and a re-entry permit dated November 1930 when Adolfo departed Australia, which gave him the option to return within 2 years.

Adolfo Lorenzo did not return to Australia. He settled and married in South Africa where he became a sculptor of some note. He and his sculptures were featured in newspapers and magazines, in cinema newsreels in the 1960s and on national television in the 1980s. Only when his eyesight faded did Adolfo Lorenzi cease sculpting at age 86.

While searching on websites for references to granite monuments in and around Sydney and Moruya on which his grandfather might have worked, Giovanni Camerada found a reference to Christine Greig’s history of Moruya Quarry in an Australian library website. He contacted the library and asked for his details to be passed to Christine, who was kind enough to send them to myself. I am grateful to Giovanni for sharing what details he has of his grandfather’s remarkable life.

Good fortune, then, has enabled this gifted Italian mason and sculptor to take his place alongside his compatriots on the *Honour Roll* of Italians who worked at Moruya Quarry.



RIGHT: Giovanni Camerada located his grandfather (circled) in this photograph of Moruya masons taken around 1928.

BELOW LEFT: A master craftsman at work: Adolfo Lorenzi, aged 71, deep in concentration in a photograph featured on the front cover of *The Cape Times Week-end Magazine*, April 1971. When he died in 1995, he left behind a backyard full of statues and sculptures – a lifetime of work. He left his mark, too, on one of Cape Town's finest art deco landmarks, the Old Mutual Building. Between 1937 and 1940 he worked on the building's external granite sculpture work. Examples of his work are also found in the Heart Transplant Museum of the Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town.

BELOW RIGHT: A piece of his grandfather's extraordinary work treasured by his grandson, Giovanni Camerada, which took two years to complete. According to Giovanni, Adolfo loved horses, had served on one in the Great War, and at Moruya may have owned a horse for a time on which he commuted between the Quarry and Moruya and which he used to escape into the bush at weekends.



ⁱ Caroline Mackaness, Caroline Butler-Bowdon & Joanna Gilmour in *Bridging Sydney*, 2006, p180

ⁱⁱ Reg Saunders, interview with Richard Raxworthy, 1982

ⁱⁱⁱ *The Barrier Miner*, 26 January 1935

^{iv} *Connected to the Bridge: Albert Ogg's biography*, Sally Cains, 1995, p6

^v *Moruya Examiner*, 12 January 1929

^{vi} Reg Saunders, interview with Richard Raxworthy, 1982

^{vii} *Moruya's golden years*, A V (Bob) Colefax, 1997, p16

^{viii} *Moruya's golden years*, A V (Bob) Colefax, 1997, p16

^{ix} *Moruya Examiner*, 31 May 1930

^x *Moruya's golden years*, A V (Bob) Colefax, 1997, pp 16 & 18; *Moruya Examiner* 18 February 1928

^{xi} *Granitetown memories*, Ruby Webberley, 2003, p29, p37 & p46

^{xii} *Moruya's golden years*, A V (Bob) Colefax, 1997, p18

^{xiii} *Minutes of General Meeting of the Operative Stonemasons' Society of NSW*, 30 June 1930

^{xiv} *A history of the Moruya Granite Quarry: Part I: Text and figures*, prepared for the Department of Lands and Water Conservation, Wollongong, Brian Rogers, 1997, pp70-73

^{xv} *Memorandum accompanying Sydney Harbour Bridge tender*, Dorman, Long & Co, January 1924, p18

^{xvi} *Moruya Examiner*, 5 December 1931

^{xvii} *Moruya Examiner*, 22 August 1931

^{xviii} *The Sydney Harbour Bridge, Specifications and tenders*, radio broadcast, 28 October 1931

The Quarry Italians Part 3 and the Amato Family

by Bill Glennie

The Honour Rolls

In the year 2000 a project was launched to locate and record the names of the men and women who helped build the Harbour Bridge: an *Honour Roll* of workers. It was initially published in a limited edition of 50. The only Moruya employees documented were those named in taped interviews conducted in 1982 by the late Richard Raxworthy with former Bridge employees and in the report on the Quarry submitted by Brian Rogers of Wollongong to the Department of Public Works and Services in 1997. Only 6 Quarry Italians featured in this first edition of the *Honour Roll*.

By the time a second edition appeared in September 2001 a wider range of sources was consulted, including Christine Greig's history of the Quarry. In this edition the Moruya Quarry employees were assigned their own section.

When a third edition was published in 2007 to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the Harbour Bridge's opening, the number of Italians listed as Quarry workers had grown to 21: 17 stonemasons; 2 'quarry labourers'; 1 who simply 'worked in the quarry' and another who was a 'cook in the Italian quarters'.

This most recent edition of the *Honour Roll* drew its information from five sources.

Source 1

The most comprehensive source was the list of Quarry employees compiled by Bob Colefax, Allan Greig, Mary Kelman and Nell Greig, all of whom had close associations with the Quarry. Bob Colefax, a native of Moruya, was Quarry Clerk from December 1924 until early 1929 when he was appointed time-keeper on the Bridge construction site in Sydney. Allan Greig worked as a quarryman, commuting by bicycle at the weekends to and from Bergalia. He lodged during the week in the Bachelors' Quarters in Granite Town, the village constructed for the workforce by the Harbour Bridge contractors. Mary Kelman and Nell Greig were daughters of John Gilmore, the Quarry Manager, Mary working in the Quarry office for a time, and Nell, until her death in 2008, the stalwart guardian and promoter of the Quarry's history.

Their combined efforts are found in the revised edition of Christine Greig's history of the Quarry, *'Not forgotten: Memorials in granite'*, published in 1998. In the list of almost 250 Quarry employees, the

names of 15 Italian stonemasons and 2 Italian quarrymen were recorded. Three years later, when the second edition of the *Honour Roll* appeared, a sixteenth Italian mason was added to the Moruya list.

Source 2

In 1982, the year of the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Harbour Bridge, Richard Raxworthy was commissioned by John Andrew of the Department of Main Roads to interview over 40 men and women who had worked on the Harbour Bridge project. Raxworthy's interviews were recorded on cassette tapes and these were lodged with the Mitchell Library in Sydney. All have now been transcribed. One of his interviewees was Reg Saunders who had worked for two and a half years as an apprentice mason at the Quarry. He recollected the names of two Italian masons. One of these, transcribed as Furavanti Cuditio, was recorded in the Moruya list. The second, however, was not. His unfamiliar name was written as Zillo. (In the 2007 edition of the Honour Roll the spellings Zealo and Zeltot were offered.)

Source 3

A further Italian was located by Geoff Reynolds in his study of the Moruya and district electoral rolls of 1925-1932. Only five Quarry Italians were recorded on these, because so few had applied for naturalization, thereby barring them from voting. Each one of the five was described as either 'mason' or 'stonemason'. Four had already appeared in the Moruya group's list: Victor Melocco – his name, Vittorio, was anglicised on the roll; Michael Amato – his name, Michele, was also anglicised; Andrew Rodeyhiero – his name, Andrea, was anglicised on the roll, and his surname, Rodighiero, was wrongly transcribed; and Sergio Abbattista, along with his wife, Constance, who was a local girl according to Bob Colefax.

The fifth Italian, Geramini Gugielino, was new. Beside his name on the roll was entered, *'Granite Town, Moruya, Stonemason'*.

Source 4

Brian Rogers of Wollongong, in his comprehensive report on the Quarry prepared for the New South Wales Department of Public Works and Services, located another Italian as a result of his thorough trawl through the pages of the *Moruya Examiner*. He found a report in the *Examiner* of 25 September 1926

of a whist drive held in the Bachelors' Quarters in Granite Town. After the playing cards and tables had been put away, *'dancing was indulged in, the music being supplied by the now famous Walton-Jaffrey combination, assisted by Mr Spada Vecchia who tickled his mandolin to the delight of all'*. This accomplished mandolin player appeared on the list of Italian employees in the first edition of the *Honour Roll* in 2000. But what kind of work might he have done at the Quarry? In a variation of the list of Quarry employees held in the museum at Moruya his name was entered alongside the stonemasons, but the editors of the third edition of the *Honour Roll* exercised caution, and he was described simply as *'Italian, worked at the Quarry; expert mandolin player'*.

Brian Rogers did sense that another Italian was lurking in the pages of the *Moruya Examiner*. He admitted being puzzled by an item in the *Examiner* in July 1927: *'The latest arrival in Granite Town is Mrs L Mastro from Italy, who has joined her husband here'*. But, he noted, *'Neither the name Mastro, nor any like it, was found in the employee lists'*. However, when the second edition of the *Honour Roll* appeared in 2001, the name Pietro Mastropasqua had been added to the list of Italian masons. Brian Rogers' brief reference to Mrs Mastro may have inspired someone at Moruya to recall her missing husband.

Source 5

Finally, one further Italian was added from a source which had been published as early as 1967, when Bob Colefax wrote a series of reminiscences of the Quarry for the Moruya Rotary Club's bulletin. In 1997 these were gathered together and published in booklet form: *Moruya's golden years*. All ten of the Italians Colefax made reference to in his book were already on the list compiled with his Moruya colleagues – except one: Sergio, who cooked for the Italian employees and who, remembered Bob, *'was a talented mandolin player'*.

Thus Sergio, *'family name unknown'*, found his way into the second and third editions of the *Honour Roll*.

Towards a new list

Now, seven years after the publication of the third edition of the *Roll*, it is possible to update the details of the Italians employed at the Quarry. There are incongruities that can be cleared up and gaps in our knowledge of individuals' names that can be filled. There are also new Italian masons who can be added to the list.

Most of this can be done by reference to a source hitherto unused: the records of the Operative Stonemasons' Society of New South Wales, the

masons' trade union. Some of the Society's records from the era of the Harbour Bridge's construction have survived, and these are deposited in the Noel Butlin Archives Centre at the Australian National University in Canberra. They include minutes of general and committee meetings and contribution books in which payments of members' dues were recorded.

However amendments can be made to the 2007 list without recourse to the Canberra records.

There is further information on the Italian presence at Moruya to be found on the pages of the *Moruya Examiner*. This local weekly newspaper was used by a number of Italians at the Quarry to advertise their intention to apply for naturalization. Three did so in 1930 and 1931. One of these, Sergio Abbattista, was already known.

So, too, was the second, but his details may have been recollected incorrectly. Recorded in the 2007 edition of the *Honour Roll* is Robbo Luigi, *'quarry labourer'*. But on 28 June 1930, the *Examiner* carried the following notice: *'I, Luige Rubbo, of Italian nationality, born at Santa Caterina, province of Vicenza, resident 5 years in Australia, now residing at Moruya Quarry, Moruya, intend to apply for naturalization under the Commonwealth Nationality Act 1920-1925'*. Since the *Examiner's* *'Luige'* (rather than *Luigi*) is unlikely it is possible that *'Rubbo'* rather than *'Robbo'* is likewise wrong.

The third Italian who gave notice to seek naturalization is new. On 31 January 1931 Giovanni Paganin announced his intention to seek naturalization, having resided in Australia for 6 years. Like Luigi Rubbo – or Robbo - he hailed from the province of Vicenza in north-eastern Italy. His name is recorded in the records of the Stonemasons' Society in Canberra as Giovanni Paganni. He joined the Stonemasons' Society in August 1925. Joining at the same time was Antonio Paganni, probably his brother. Did he, too, head for Moruya? If he did, the Pagannis would have been neither the first nor the last Italian brothers to work at the Quarry. (The spelling should probably be Pagani.)

One further mason remained undiscovered in the *Examiner*. On 7 April 1928 the *Examiner* reported a ball in the Granite Town Recreation Hall in aid of the Hospital Sports. To the *'rhythmic strains dispensed by the Granite Town Band'* novelty dances were featured, and amongst the winners were Mr G Serancalipari and his partner, Miss E Cameron. The Canberra records note that a G Sciancalipore joined the Stonemasons' Society in March 1926 having until then been a mason in South Australia. (Sergio Abbattista made a similar move a few weeks later.) While Calipari is a recognisable Italian surname the

double-barreled rendering, be it Serancalipari or Sciancalipore, is unusual.

Finally, before setting off for the Butlin archive in Canberra, one Italian can be removed from the *Honour Roll*.

The Italian community appears to have been well endowed with mandolin players. In addition to Spada Vecchia who ‘tickled his mandolin to the delight of all’ and Sergio the cook, who was as accomplished on the mandolin as he was in the kitchen, there was, too, A Rodighero who, according to the *Examiner*, performed a mandolin solo at the concert held to celebrate the opening of the Granite Town Recreation Hall in September 1927.

But there is one mandolinist too many in the 2007 *Honour Roll*. The confusion arises as a result of the *Examiner*’s reporting of Spada Vecchia’s performance at a dance in Granite Town in September 1926. This individual, first documented by Brian Rogers in 1997, was assumed by some to be a new Italian to add to the list. This ‘Spada’ appeared in one variation of the Quarry employee list in Moruya as ‘Spaga’ Vecchia, a stonemason. In the first edition of the *Honour Roll* he reverted to ‘Spada’ Vecchia, but by 2007 he was once again ‘Spaga’ Vecchia.

The name should be written as a single word. Spadavecchia is an Italian surname.

Meanwhile, Sergio the cook, whose problem, recalled Bob Colefax, ‘was that once he got on stage, there was great difficulty getting him off’, had been recorded in the 2007 *Roll* ‘given name unknown’.

Brian Rogers assumed that Spada Vecchia and Sergio were one and the same person. He was right. So ‘Spaga’ Vecchia can depart the *Honour Rolls*, and Sergio, the cook, can assume his given name: Spadavecchia.

The records of the Operative Stonemasons’ Society of New South Wales confirm that Messrs Colefax and company did a remarkable job in recollecting as many Italian stonemasons as they did. All 16 of the names they listed, and the further two attributed to Geoff Reynolds and Reg Saunders, were registered as paid-up members of the Society at various times between 1922 and 1928. Some of these, of course, can be confirmed from other sources: the electoral rolls, the *Moruya Examiner*, and in two cases, the records of the local freemasons’ lodge.

The Canberra records clear up confusion over numbers. The Moruya group’s 16 names and the additional two from Reynolds and Saunders add up to 18 masons, but only 17 are listed in the 2007 edition of the *Honour Roll*.

The discrepancy arises from a misreading of an entry in the Moruya group’s list: *Caputs* (2). Geoff Reynolds – correctly as it turns out – interpreted this to mean that there were *two* masons of that surname at the Quarry. In the second edition of the *Honour Roll* the surname did appear twice. The editors of the 2007 edition, however, decided there was one Caput too many, and listed only one.

The Society’s records show two masons registered with the surname Caputi: Vincenzo and Donato. Vincenzo Caputi applied for membership of the Society in April 1925 but this was delayed while proof of his competency was sought. He was invited to join in September of that year. Donato Caputi, no doubt his brother, joined the Society six months later. The records show that one of the masons who proposed Donato for membership was ‘*Brother Amato*’. Two Amatos were registered as Society members, Michele and Serge, and both were employed at the Quarry. Donato Caputi, perhaps newly arrived in Sydney from Italy, may have made his way down to the Quarry to join his brother Vincenzo. Either Michele Amato, a Society member since March 1923, or his brother Sergio, a member since April 1924, proposed this latest newcomer to the Quarry, Donato Caputi, for membership.

The Canberra records also help clear up confusion over names.

Avicangelo Barbieri, Lindo Marchiori, and Ettore Sanguini can now appear in print with their Christian names, although Arcangelo Barbieri is to be preferred to the name recorded in Canberra. Mrs Mastro’s husband, recorded in the 2007 edition of the *Honour Roll* as Pietro Mastropasqua, can be amended to Pietro Mastro. The swarthy Zillo, who made his colleagues look like apprentices according to Reg Saunders, was registered as Giovanni X-ilo, but that spelling is unlikely, the letter ‘x’ being used infrequently in the Italian alphabet. Bob Colefax and his Moruya colleagues were not alone in struggling to come to terms with unfamiliar Italian names. The records of the Stonemasons’ Society suggest similar problems were encountered by the Society’s secretaries.

Fioravanti Cudicio is a case in point. The role of Cudicio in Quarry folklore is assured. He was one of the select group of masons associated with the preparation at the Quarry of the Sydney Cenotaph in 1927, and he accompanied the dressed block of stone to Sydney in August 1927 to oversee its setting in Martin Place. When he arrived in Sydney from Genoa in November 1925, his name was recorded on the passenger lists as Fioravanti Cuddico. Less than a fortnight later, when he was proposed for membership of the Stonemasons’ Society, his name was written as Fiavante Cudicio, yet on the register of members it was entered as Fearavanite Cudicio.

The blurred writing of that entry, however, suggests uncertainty on the part of a secretary. When he reappeared on the register the following year, the secretary played safe, entering him simply as F Cudicio. The 2007 edition of the *Honour Roll* hedged its bets and offered two spellings of his Christian name and two of his surname. Fioravante Cudicio (or Cudizio) is almost certainly how his name should be recorded.

Recording unfamiliar names was not helped by the lack of knowledge of English amongst the Italian immigrants, a failing many contemporary Australian newspapers, discomfited by the increasing numbers of southern European immigrants, frequently commented on in negative terms. Nor can a degree of illiteracy on the part of some of the Italian masons be discounted. Educational provision may have been compulsory in Italy since the 1870s, but not until 1904 was the school leaving age raised from 9 to 12, and even then there were few sanctions to compel parents to send children to school. The illiteracy rate remained high in rural areas, especially in the south. One Moruya Italian, a gifted sculptor, left school at the age of nine to learn his carving skills alongside his father in the local quarry.

The confusion over the names of the four members of the Rodighiero family listed as stonemasons can be resolved. Four are registered with the Society: Gino and Antonio for the first time in December 1924; Placido in December 1925 - beside his name is written '*granite, Moruya*'; and Andrea in May 1926, with '*mason, Moruya*' entered next to his name. These names are at odds with the 2007 *Honour Roll* listing, where the names Andrea, Placido (sic), George and Batista are listed. (Family tradition has it that Batista worked in Lidcombe in Sydney and was never at the Quarry. The same source has it that another brother, Marco, may have worked at Moruya, although his name is not recorded in the Canberra records as a mason.)

The Society's records reveal seven further Italian masons to add to the list. Two of these were proposed for membership of the Society by the Shop Steward at Moruya, and six of them have '*mason, Moruya*' written next to their names. Two of them, J Corradazzi and Chas (sic) Della Chilla, joined the Society at the end of August 1925 and are the first Italians recorded at the Quarry. Giovanni Colonna and Fortunato Pesavento were two of a trio of Italian masons who joined the Society in May 1926 and were linked to the Quarry. (The third, Andrea Rodighiero, was already documented. The surnames Rodighiero and Pesavento are typical of the Altopiano di Asiago in the province of Vicenza in north-east Italy.) In October 1926 Christian Pesavento, possibly a brother of Fortunato Pesavento, joined the Society but there is no evidence that he worked at Moruya. G Porto and D Arello registered for the first time in August 1926, and Antonio Fasolo in May 1927.

So as many as 30 Italians, 27 of them masons, can now be associated with Moruya Quarry, although it is unclear if – and unlikely that – they were all employed at the Quarry at the same time, for the Operative Stonemasons' Society imposed a strict quota on the number of foreign masons employed in yards. In July 1930, when '*someone in authority at the quarry*' was ready to give a start to '*newly arrived foreigners*', Richard Worrall, the Secretary of the Stonemason's Society, intervened to block the newcomers from starting '*as local members had been refused a start*'. In doing so, Worrall was adhering to a Society principle that the quota of foreign masons should not exceed 25% in any job. So Reg Saunders may have been correct when he told Richard Raxworthy he remembered 18 to 20 Italians at the Quarry during his two-and-a-half year spell at the Quarry.

The author is grateful to Dr Paolo Baracchi of the Italian Historical Society, Carlton, Victoria, for his invaluable help and advice regarding the transcription of Italian names.

A new *Honour Roll* of Italians employed at Moruya Quarry 1925-1931 (September 2014)

ABBATTISTA, Sergio ('Serge'), Italian, stonemason; born Molfetta; arrived Adelaide October 1925; proposed for membership of the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in June 1926 by the Shop Steward at Moruya; married, Constance, a local girl; still resident with wife at Moruya Quarry, February 1935 (MQ, BC, OSSNSW)

AMATO, Michele, Italian, stonemason; born Molfetta, Province of Bari; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in March 1923; granted naturalisation, July 1928; joined the local freemasons' lodge, Moruya; married Mary Ann, a Bodalla girl; still resident with wife at Moruya Quarry, February 1935; purchased his Granite

Town house; later moved to South Australia (MQ, BC, GR, OSSNSW)

AMATO, Sergio, Italian, stonemason, born Molfetta, Province of Bari; brother of Michele; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in April 1924; returned to Italy in July 1927 to bring back his bride; later moved to South Australia (MQ, ME, OSSNSW)

ARELLO, D, Italian, stonemason, first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in August 1926; '*proposed by the Shop Steward at Moruya*' (OSSNSW)

BARBIERI, Avicangelo, but probably Arcangelo, Italian stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society in May 1927 (MQ, BC, OSSNSW)

CUDICIO or CUDIZIO, Fioravante: Italian, stonemason; name appears in various spellings; arrived in Sydney from Genoa, November 1925, recorded on passenger lists as '*farmer, aged 39*'; first joined the Stonemasons' Society in December 1925; worked on the Sydney Cenotaph at the Quarry; selected to accompany it to Sydney to remove the lifting dog knobs (MQ, RR, BC, OSSNSW)

CAPUTI, Donato, Italian, stonemason, first joined the Stonemasons' Society in March 1926; membership proposed by either Michele or Serge Amato (MQ, OSSNSW)

CAPUTI, Vincenzo; Italian, stonemason; first applied for membership of the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in April 1925; '*application for membership of the Society was ordered to stand over for proof of competency*'; granted membership in September 1925 (MQ, OSSNSW)

COLONNA, Giovanni; Italian, stonemason; one of a trio of Italians joining the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in May 1926; each recorded as '*mason, Moruya*'; clearance card issued February 1930 (OSSNSW)

CORRADAZZI, J, Italian, stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in August 1925; recorded as '*mason, Moruya*'; may have been one of the first Italians at Moruya (OSSNSW)

DELLA CHILLA, Chas: Italian, stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in August 1925, '*proposed by Shop Steward, Moruya*', recorded as '*Moruya, mason*'; may have been one of the first Italians at Moruya (OSSNSW)

FASOLO, Antonio, Italian, stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society in May 1927; recorded as '*mason, Moruya*' (OSSNSW)

GUGIELINO, Geramini, (Christian name Guglielmo or surname Guglielmino both possible): Italian, stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in March 1923; recorded as resident in Granite Town, Moruya, September 1930 (GR, OSSNSW)

LONI, J, Italian? Quarry labourer (MQ)

LORENZI, Adolfo; Italian, stonemason; born July 1900, Lubaria, Province of Verona; son of a stone cutter; left Italy in 1920 or 1921 for India; sailed to Australia possibly 1922; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in February 1925; described by Bob Colefax, the Quarry clerk, as '*a very handsome, made-to-order, matinee idol type with a Rudolph Valentino countenance*'; departed Sydney 1930; sailed for South Africa; settled there, marrying in 1933; became a sculptor of some renown; work featured in newsreels, newspapers; television; continued sculpting until age 85; died in Cape Town 1995 (MQ, BC, OSSNSW)

MARCHIORI, Lindo; Italian, stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW when at Bowral (MQ, OSSNSW)

MASTRO (probably a shortening of MASTROPASQUA), Pietro, Italian, stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in April 1926;

joined at Moruya by his wife from Italy, Mrs L Mastro, July 1927 according to the *Moruya Examiner* (MQ, OSSNSW)

MELOCCO, Vittorio (Victor, Vic), Italian, stonemason; arrived Sydney May 1913; recorded as member of the Stonemasons' Society 1922 onwards; clearance granted March 1923, went to Queensland; returned to NSW and Society membership in December 1925; member of the local lodge of freemasons, Moruya; acted as interpreter for the Italian workforce at the Quarry; possibly related to the Melocco family, stone merchants, Sydney (MQ, BC, GR, OSSNSW)

PAGA(N)NI, Giovanni, Italian, stonemason; born Carre, Province of Vicenza; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in August 1925; application for naturalisation recorded in the *Moruya Examiner*, January 1932; an Antonio Paga(n)ni is recorded joining the Society at the same time; may have been a brother (ME, OSSNSW)

PESAVENTO, Fortunato, Italian, stonemason; possibly from the province of Vicenza; one of a trio of Italians who first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in May 1926; each recorded as '*mason, Moruya*'; a Christian Pesavento was registered for the first time in October 1926; may have been a brother (OSSNSW)

PORTO, G, Italian, stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in August 1926; recorded as '*mason, Moruya*'; proposed by the Shop Steward, Moruya (OSSNSW)

ROBBO or RUBBO, Luigi, Italian, quarry labourer; born Santa Caterina, province of Vicenza; application for naturalisation recorded in the *Moruya Examiner* June 1930 (MQ, ME)

RODIGHIERO or RODEGHIERO, Andrea ('Andrew'), stonemason, Italian; married a local, Jean Crandell, and stayed in Moruya; an 'A Rodighiero' reportedly played a mandolin solo at the concert to mark the opening of the Granite Town public hall; may have been his brother, Antonio; buried alongside wife and son, Brian, in Moruya cemetery

RODIGHIERO or RODEGHIERO, Antonio, stonemason; one of four brothers employed as stonemasons

RODIGHIERO or RODEGHIERO, Gino, stonemason; Italian; one of four brothers employed as stonemasons

RODIGHIERO or RODEGHIERO, Placido, stonemason; youngest of four brothers, all stonemasons, who worked at the Moruya Quarry

SANGUINI, Ettore, Italian, stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in March 1926; an operatic baritone (MQ, BC, OSSNSW)

SCIANCALIPORE or SERANCALIPARI G: The surname might be CALIPARI; Italian, stonemason; first joined the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in April 1926, having moved from South Australia; recorded winning a novelty dance in the *Moruya Examiner* April 1928 (ME, OSSNSW)

SPADAVECCHIA, Sergio, Italian, born Malfetta, Province of Bari; application for naturalisation recorded in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in December 1930; listed

in Darlinghurst electoral rolls in 1933 and 1936 as 'fisherman' (BC, BR, ME)

ZILLO or ZEALO or ZELTOT or XILO, Giovanni; Italian, stonemason; recorded as member of the Stonemasons' Society of NSW in August 1923; registered as X-ILO in December 1926; remembered by Reg Saunders, a Quarry apprentice: 'a 6 foot man, black as the Ace of Spades and tough. The way that man used to belt into that granite, he used to make some of the other fellows look like apprentices'. (RR, OSSNSW)

Key

MQ: *Moruya Quarry workers, Dorman Long employees, 1924-1932*, compiled by A V (Bob) Colefax, Mrs Helen (Nell) Greig (nee Gilmore), Mrs Mary Kelman (nee Gilmore), and Allan Greig, c 1995, held by the Moruya & District Historical Society
GR: *Granite Town 1928*, compiled by Geoff Reynolds, 1993

RR: Interview conducted by Richard Raxworthy with Reg Saunders, 1982

BR: *A history of the Moruya Granite Quarry*, Department of Lands and Water Conservation, 1997

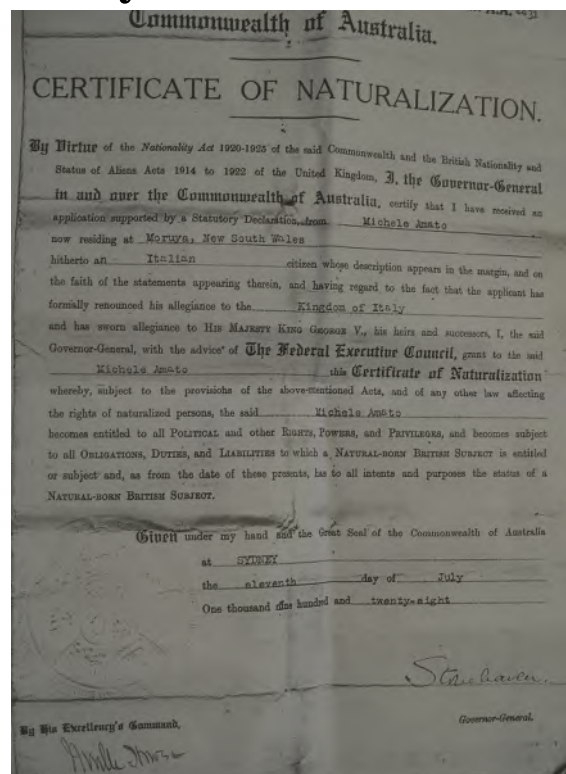
ME: *Moruya Examiner*

OSSNSW: Records of the Operative Stonemasons' Society of New South Wales, Noel Butlin Archives, Australian National University

The Amato Family

Michele Amato first joined the Operative Stonemasons' Society of New South Wales in March 1923. He decided to seek naturalization after spending the required 5 years residency in Australia. The certificate of naturalization was signed on behalf of Lord Stonehaven, the Governor-General, who paid a visit to the Quarry in 1930. Australian citizenship enabled Michele Amato to vote, and his name first appeared in the electoral rolls in April 1932, still resident in Granite Town. His wife, Mary Ann, a Bodalla girl, joined him on the February 1935 roll. The Amatos bought their cottage, and their address was still given as 'Moruya Quarry' in 1935. Later they moved it to Bodalla.

Michele's brother, Sergio, joined the Society a year later than his brother. In July 1927 the *Moruya Examiner* reported that 'Mr S Amato has left for Italy. It is understood that he intends to return to Moruya with a companion not of the masculine gender'. Mr and Mrs Sergio Amato were back in town in May 1928. Both families eventually moved to South Australia.



Left: The Amato family, possibly 1937: from left to right, Michele, Roma, Stella behind Peter, Mary Ann, Mary.

Below: Roma and Peter, Canberra, 2008

