

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

18

315

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Norcross Brothers Granite Quarry  
other names/site number Castellucci Quarry

2. Location

street & number Quarry Road  not for publication  
city or town Branford  vicinity  
state Connecticut code CT county New Haven code 009 zip code 06405

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

John W. Shanahan March 17, 2003  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
John W. Shanahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
  - determined not eligible for the National Register.
  - removed from the National Register.
  - other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
6-6-2003

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 0            | 0               | buildings  |
| 1            |                 | sites      |
|              |                 | structures |
|              |                 | objects    |
| 1            | 0               | Total      |

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EXTRACTION: extractive facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Not in use

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other N/A

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Norcross Brothers Quarry  
(Castellucci Quarry)  
Branford, New Haven County, CT

Section number 7 Page 1

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### Description:

The Norcross Brothers Granite Quarry, also called the Castellucci Quarry after the name of the last operator, is a small quarry cut into the side of a hill at the end of Quarry Road in the eastern part of the town of Branford, Connecticut, just north of Stony Creek village. The quarry was worked from 1887 to about 1980; currently, a larger pit-type quarry is being worked just to the north but is not part of the nominated property (see Site Plan). The quarry consists of a semi-circular stepped rock face about 50 feet above ground level and approximately 300 feet wide (Photograph 1). A pool of water has filled in the area at the base of the face, indicating that extraction of stone occurred even further down than is visible. The upper part of the quarry face is characterized by widely spaced pairs of drilled holes (Photograph 2), whereas the lower part reflects the extraction of stone by means of the modern flame-cutting technique (Photograph 3). A few old wooden ladders remain in place on the stepped face (Photograph 4), and there are three small shed-roofed buildings perched on the edge of the precipice that served to house hoisting mechanisms (Photographs 5 and 6). That most recently operated was built about 1960 to shelter an old set of hoisting drums, now powered electrically, that were probably originally steam-powered when in place aboard a harbor lighter vessel (Photograph 7). The box-girder derrick that last served the quarry (Photograph 1) was erected about the same time.

Further south down the hill are remnants of the second part of the enterprise, the stone-cutting that finished the quarried granite into the form required by customers. There are stone and concrete foundations to three buildings just north of the road that leads to the quarry: a boiler house, which includes a remnant of a chimney (Photograph 8), a blacksmith shop (Photograph 9), and a building that housed the operation's steam engine (Photograph 10). The largest structure in the complex, a timber-framed building that housed sawing, turning, polishing, and other stone-cutting operations, was demolished in the 1950s and has left little above-ground evidence of its existence. Quarry Road was originally a rail line that connected the quarry to the New Haven Railroad's Shore Line Route in Stony Creek village; today the chief remnant of rail operations is a large pit for a track scale (Photograph 11).

Scattered throughout the 69-acre site that makes up the nominated property are implements used in quarrying and remnants of work that was either not finished or rejected as not meeting standards. These objects, of which there is no definitive count, include lengths of cable (Photograph 12), pipes and reservoirs for compressed air or steam, wooden spars to old derricks (Photograph 13), large quantities of rough granite blocks of all sizes, flat granite slabs (Photograph 14), and architectural components such as columns and pediments (Photographs 15 and 16).

The granite that was quarried here is described as "a biotite granite gneiss of medium reddish-gray color and of very variable but mostly from medium to coarse, not porphyritic, gneissoid textures, with feldspars from 0.1 to 0.3 and even 0.8 inch and mica to 0.2 and 0.3 inch." (Dale and Gregory

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1911: 79). It was mostly used for monuments and monumental public buildings. Notable examples include Boston's South Station, the Newberry Library in Chicago, the Bulkeley Bridge in Hartford, the foundations for the George Washington Bridge in New York City, and the West Point, N.Y., Battle Monument, a 43-foot tall obelisk.

Because of the large number of small objects, buildings, and features that make up the resource, it was counted as a single contributing site. The period of significance was chosen to represent the quarry's years of continuous operation prior to its re-opening in the 1950s.

**View of the lower part of the Norcross Brothers property, ca. 1910. Foundations to some of the buildings on the left are still visible on the east side of Old Quarry Road; the large building on the right, where the stone was cut and finished, has left little above-ground evidence (copied from *Flesh and Stone* (2000), p. 106).**



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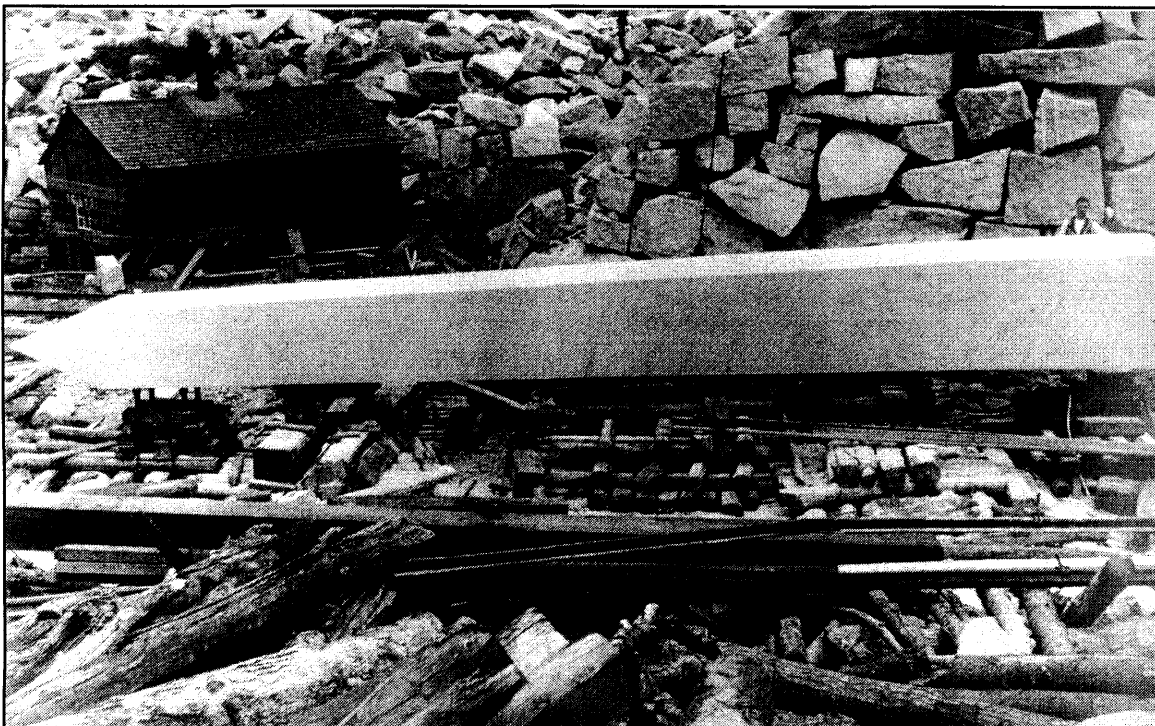
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**Obelisk, 44 feet long, in place at Norcross Brothers Quarry, prior to being shipped to Sault Ste. Marie, where it was erected in 1905 to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the St. Mary's ship canal and the construction of the 1902 "Soo" canal.**



8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark an "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, structure
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1887 - 1929

Significant Dates

1887

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Not Known

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Building Survey
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Connecticut Historical Commission,
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106

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Norcross Brothers Quarry  
(Castellucci Quarry)  
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### Statement of Significance:

#### Summary

The remains of the Norcross Brothers Granite Quarry constitute a significant historic resource because granite quarrying played a pivotal role in the social and economic history of Branford (National Register Criterion A). At one time or another there were eight other granite quarries active in Branford, with six more not far away over the town line with Guilford. Yet today residential development has erased nearly all evidence of quarrying, leaving the Norcross/Castellucci site as the prime reminder of this once-vital activity. Granite quarrying pumped life into the local economy and added immigrants from the British Isles, Scandinavia, and Italy to the social mosaic of the community. The impressive rock face bearing the extraction marks of air drills and torches, the ladders trod by generations of quarrymen, the huge blocks of granite blasted out of the face and left in place (see Photograph 5, left center), and the Neoclassical architectural fragments left moldering in the woods all serve to bring this aspect of history to life. Now town-owned and part of a passive recreation area, the property can be expected to play its heritage-fulfillment role for many years into the future.

#### Historical Background: Norcross Brothers

The quarry was started in 1887 by Norcross Brothers of Worcester, Massachusetts, a large construction firm that specialized in institutional and public buildings of an impressive scale. Rather than buy from a quarry owner or broker, Norcross Brothers adopted the strategy of developing its own unique sources of building stone, starting with the East Longmeadow red sandstone that went into H. H. Richardson's Trinity Church in Boston (1877). Over subsequent years, the company started or acquired numerous sources of slate, marble, and sandstone in different states, as well as several granite quarries. The company also operated its own wood-working and metal shops in Worcester. Norcross Brothers built more than 80 major buildings in every part of the country, of which only a few can be mentioned: the New York Central Railroad station in Albany, N.Y.; the Marshall Field building in Chicago; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Equitable Building in Baltimore; and the Howard Memorial Library in New Orleans.

Norcross Brothers was a partnership of James Atkinson Norcross (1831-1903) and Orlando Whitney Norcross (1839-1920); it was formed in 1864 upon the younger brother's return from service in the Civil War. Starting out by building commercial blocks, churches, and schools in Worcester and other western Massachusetts communities, the firm grew rapidly and expanded its reach to every corner of the country. The *Worcester County Biographical Review* attributed the firm's prosperity to the brothers' "reputation for thorough workmanship, for unswerving rectitude, and for frank and

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generous dealing,” and opined that “the monuments of the skill and energy and courage have multiplied until, indeed, the aggregate of their contracts would suffice for the building of a stately city.” Although closely associated with the architect Henry Hobson Richardson, Norcross Brothers also worked with many of the other leading architects of the day, including McKim, Mead and White, John Russell Pope, and Peabody and Stearns. Despite its success, the firm did not long survive the passing of O. W. Norcross, who died in 1920 at the age of 81.

Norcross Brothers sold the quarry in 1923 to the Dodds Granite Quarry of Milford, Massachusetts, which operated it for six years before closing it. The quarry remained idle until it was reopened by the Castellucci family of Rhode Island in 1955. The portion represented by the nominated property, known locally as the “Old Hole,” was in active use until the 1980s.

### **Importance in Local History**

In addition to being one of Norcross Brother’s most important operations, the quarry was also one of the largest of more than a dozen granite quarries in the Stony Creek area of Branford, employing some 600-700 men in quarrying and finishing the stone, and it is the only one which retains a substantial number of features that directly relate to the extraction and finishing of granite. In 1910 the company operated 11 hoisting engines and derricks, including one of 35-ton capacity. Its equipment included two locomotives; a lathe capable of turning a piece of granite 19 feet long, as well as two smaller lathes; saws that could handle blocks of granite measuring 15 feet by six feet; a 20-ton overhead crane to move the stone; and various steam drills, surfacers, polishers and other implements used in breaking out and finishing the granite. The quarry operated its own railroad line, with two steam locomotives to transport the stone to the southern part of town where it could be hauled away by rail or water.

Branford is an old town dating back to 1644, when the first English settlers arrived. Over the years it has had many identities, including a small shipbuilding and trading port in the colonial period, an agricultural community; an industrial town with thriving metal-working industries, and a place of summer resort for the well-to-do. Beginning with Benjamin Green’s 1859 quarry at Hall’s Point in Stony Creek, Branford began an association with granite extraction that would last in full force for more than a half-century and continues, in reduced form, to the present day. Several factors combined to make the granite business prosper in that period: perfection of steam-powered drills, good rail transportation, and the physical, demographic, and economic growth throughout urban America, resulting in a tremendous demand for large public and commercial buildings, churches, railroad stations, and commemorative monuments. Stony Creek granite, with its rich pink and black mottled color, its relatively straight grain, and its proximity to good water and rail transportation, was bound to be a highly sought-after building material. Numerous operations were started in the 1870s



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and 1880s and remained active until about 1930, when the use of concrete, economic downturns, and a leveling-off of urban growth reduced the demand for monumental granite-clad buildings.

Quarrying transformed the social make-up of Branford, especially the section known as Stony Creek. At its height the industry probably had some 1,500 to 2,000 workers. Although many were single men living in boardinghouses owned by the quarry companies, others had families, so the total impact on what had theretofore been a small town was even greater. Many of the quarry workers were immigrants from the British Isles, Scandinavia, and Italy, creating religious and cultural diversity in a formerly "Yankee" community. Some of the immigrants founded distinctive organizations, such as the Swedish Lutheran Church, started in Stony Creek in 1888; a Catholic mission church started the same year just across the town line at the Beattie quarry; a Methodist Church, started by English-born quarry workers in 1894; and the Sons of St. George, a fraternal association of English immigrants. In addition to the tax revenue brought to the town by the quarries, Branford merchants benefited from a greatly expanded market for groceries and other provisions. The changes brought by the quarries to the community did not occur without conflict: wealthy summer residents were not always enthusiastic about rubbing shoulders with the occupants of company boarding houses, and the importance of the saloon as a centerpiece of immigrant, working-class social life was not appreciated by temperance-minded Yankees.

Stony Creek also was the scene of intense labor organizing in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, with the local Granite Cutters and Quarrymen unions forging a coalition that united disparate ethnic groups and skill levels. The Granite Cutters were a union dominated by Yankee, Irish, and English skilled workers, while the Quarrymen's union was more inclusive of laborers and other less-skilled workers. In 1892 a long labor dispute closed the quarries of Stony Creek. It began when 75 quarrymen walked off the job at Norcross Brother Quarry over a wage dispute; the strike spread to other area quarries and was followed by a lock-out on the part of Norcross Brothers and other employers. Although there were local issues, the disagreement was part of a larger power struggle between the unions and the New England Granite Manufacturers' Association. Eventually nearly every quarry in New England became involved; one New Haven newspaper called it "the greatest labor trouble New England has ever been afflicted with," an exaggeration but indicative of the effect that the strike/lockout had on people at the time. Norcross Brothers brought in strikebreakers to take the union men's jobs, and gradually people began to go back to work. As a result, the Quarrymen's Union completely fell apart. The Granite Workers Union was able to hold on longer, and the tide began to turn. One by one, the Stony Creek quarries agreed to negotiate with the union and recognize union contracts as the basis for employment. Norcross Brothers was the last hold-out, even though their other New England quarries had recognized the union. Finally, in September 1895, Norcross Brothers Stony Creek quarry recognized the union; for its part, however, the Granite Cutters Union was obliged to accept a reduction in wage rates.

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Norcross Brothers Quarry  
(Castellucci Quarry)  
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Today a number of descendants of the Stony Creek quarrymen remain in Branford, though the granite industry itself employs only a very few workers. The Norcross Brothers quarry site can play an important role in perpetuating the memory of important episodes in their families' histories and the history of the community. The "Old Hole," the ladders, cables, derrick and hoist, the foundations of the buildings, and the remnants of rough and finished granite together constitute an evocative heritage resource that recalls the working lives of the past.

Norcross Brothers advertisement, *New England Business Directory*, 1898, p. 2100.



### Acknowledgments

The author of this inventory-nomination form wishes to acknowledge the assistance provided by the Stony Creek Granite Quarry Workers Celebration. Not only did this grass-roots community-history organization produce an outstanding book, *Flesh and Stone: Stony Creek and the Age of Granite*, they also provided abundant unpublished materials and photographs that helped greatly. Also, Branford First Selectman Anthony DaRos, himself a former quarry worker, was invaluable in arranging access to the site and interpreting it from his own experience and the traditions that were passed down to him.

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Norcross Brothers Quarry  
(Castellucci Quarry)

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### Bibliography:

*Biographical Review of Worcester County, Massachusetts*. Boston: Biographical Review Publishing Company, 1899. Entries on J. A. Norcross, pp. 595-602, and O. W. Norcross, pp. 1021-23.

Dale, T. Nelson, and Herbert E. Gregory. *The Granites of Connecticut*. Washington, D.C. : Government Printing Office, 1911.

Deford, Deborah (ed.). *Flesh and Stone: Stony Creek and the Age of Granite*. Stony Creek, Conn: Stony Creek Granite Quarry Workers Celebration, 2000.

Gillette, Halbert P. *Handbook of Rock Excavation, Methods, and Cost*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1916.

Greenwell, Allan. *Practical Stone Quarrying: A Manual for Managers, Inspectors, and Owners of Quarries, and for Students*. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1913.

Hurd, D. Hamilton (ed.). *History of Worcester County, Massachusetts*. Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1889. Entry on Norcross Brothers, pp. 1720-22.

Lenzi, Richard. "Workingmen's Order: The Granite Cutters' Union of Stony Creek, Connecticut, 1885-1900." Graduate seminar paper, History Department, Trinity College, Hartford, 2000.

"Norcross Family," *Historic Homes and Institutions and Genealogical and Personal Memoirs of Worcester County, Massachusetts*. New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1907. Vol. II, pp. 221-223.

O'Gorman, James F. "O. W. Norcross, Richardson's 'Master Builder': A Preliminary Report." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 32 (May 1973): 104-113.

Norcross Brother Granite Quarry  
Name of Property

New Haven County, CT  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** approx. 69 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

|   |              |          |   |                          |          |
|---|--------------|----------|---|--------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Zone Easting | Northing | 3 | Zone Easting             | Northing |
| 2 |              |          | 4 | ■ See continuation sheet |          |

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bruce Clouette, Historian  
organization Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc. date December 5, 2002  
street & number P.O. Box 209 telephone 860-429-1723  
city or town Storrs state CT zip code 06268

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional Items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Branford, Connecticut  
street & number 1019 Main Street telephone (203) 488-8394  
city or town Branford state CT zip code 06405

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Norcross Brothers Quarry  
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### Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property consists of a portion of the parcel at the northern terminus of Quarry Road, owned by the Town of Branford, and recorded in the Branford Assessor records as Map K-7, Block 5, Parcel 1; the depiction of the property lines continues onto Map K-6. The nominated portion of this parcel is shown on the accompanying sketch map, scale 1" = 200', which was traced from Assessor Maps K-6 and K-7. The boundary to the nominated property generally follows the lot lines depicted on the Assessor Maps, except that the boundary excludes the part of the quarry currently being worked, and it extends to the brook at the southeast corner. Although lot lines are shown on the Assessment Maps, all of the land is owned by the Town of Branford.

### Boundary Justification:

The parcel includes all those portions of the parcel that relate to its operation in the historic period: the sites of buildings and structures, the old quarry face and pit, and the surrounding land on which are deposited numerous objects relating to the quarry's history: old derrick booms, air tanks, lengths of cable, unfinished and discarded pieces of cut stone.

### UTM References:

1: 18.688860.4572870  
2: 18.689200.4572870  
3: 18.689390.4572460  
4: 18.689280.4572480  
5: 18.689180.4572300  
6: 18.689100.4572340  
7: 18.689060.4572260  
8: 18.689000.4572260  
9: 18.688940.4572440  
10: 18.689000.4572500  
11: 18.688960.4572690  
12: 18.688860.4572820



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**Norcross Brothers Quarry  
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Section number Photographs

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**All Photographs:**

1. Norcross Brothers Quarry (Castellucci Quarry)
2. Branford, New Haven County, CT
3. PAST, Inc. Photo
4. April 2002
5. Negative filed with PAST, Inc.

**Captions:**

1. Overview of old quarry face, camera facing northwest
2. Detail of top of face, showing marks of drilling, camera facing west
3. Detail of face, showing more recent flame-cut marks at base, camera facing west
4. Quarry face, showing old wooden ladder for accessing levels, camera facing northwest
5. View from top of quarry, looking down on pool, camera facing southeast
6. Hoist house, c.1960, at top of quarry, camera facing southwest
7. Hoisting machinery, salvaged from a lighter vessel, camera facing north
8. Foundation for boiler house, camera facing east
9. Foundation for blacksmith shop, camera facing west
10. Foundation for engine building, camera facing southeast
11. Pit marking location of track scale, camera facing south
12. Typical remnant of cable as found throughout the site
13. Derrick spar, close to road leading from stone-cutting area to quarry, camera facing southwest
14. Large flat slab, apparently a discard, sitting in woods
15. Column fragments sitting in woods
16. Architectural pediment sitting in woods

# Norcross Brothers Granite Quarry (Castellucci Quarry)

Branford  
New Haven County, Connecticut

## Site Plan

Quarrying  
Currently  
Ongoing

Boundary cuts across lot



Old Quarry

Boundary follow extension of lot line  
southeast to brook



Boundary follows lot lines

Boundary follows lot lines

Foundation Remains

1 Photo Positions

Lot lines as shown on Branford  
Assessment Maps K-6 and K-7

Boundary of Nominated Property

200 FEET

QUARRY ROAD

Boundary follows east side of Quarry Road,  
then crosses road

