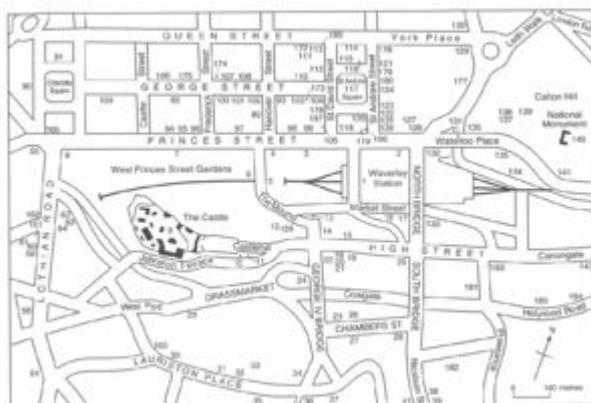


Building stones in Edinburgh from the Ballagan Formation

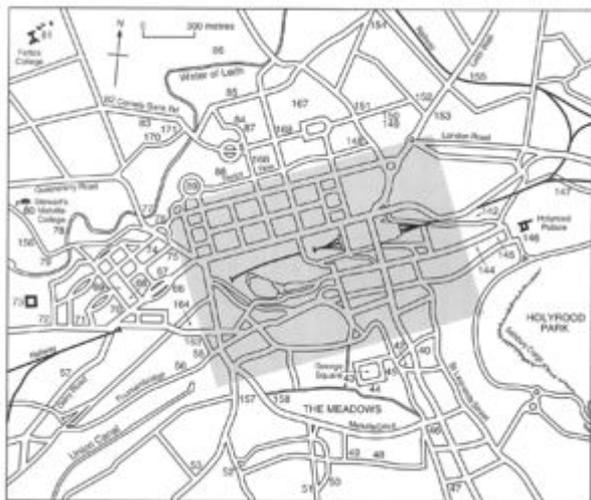
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From: **McMillan, A.A., Gillanders, R.J. and Fairhurst, J.A. 1999 [Building stones of Edinburgh](#)**. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Geological Society.



Edinburgh's buildings - location map, inset (Central Edinburgh).



Edinburgh's buildings - location map.

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The 'Salisbury' quarries (Camstone and Dumbiedykes)

Early quarrying of sandstones of the Ballagan Formation also took place in Holyrood Park. It seems likely that the Camstone Quarries east of Salisbury Crag, together with other workings such as those at Dumbiedykes, west of the Crag, provided the stone for **Holyrood Palace** (146) between 1529 and 1536. Wall stones, newels, arch stones and stones for gutters were taken from these 'Salisbury Quarries' (presumed to include the Camstone Quarry) for the north range, the present north-west tower and the west and south ranges of the quadrangle of the Palace. In December 1532 local stones were used for a great oven in the Palace although the base of the oven used material from North Berwick (probably a basaltic rock rather than a sandstone). Sir William MacDowell was an overseer of these quarries between July and November, 1536. Sledges were used to carry stones between the quarry and the building work at Holyrood. Sometimes these sledges were hauled by horses but often men were used. The proximity of the Salisbury quarries to Holyrood and the intervening sloping ground would certainly have made sledges easy to use. In 1748 part of the Royal Park was let to George Knox with 'liberty to open and work stone quarries' and he did this between 1755 and 1757. In the late 18th century stone from Salisbury quarries was used to build the 'Bridewell' on Calton Hill, and to pave the Regent Road and Waterloo Place between 1810 and 1820. The 'Bridewell' had been founded by the Earl of Morton, the Grand Master of Scotland in 1791 and was the first of the prisons on the Calton Hill.

Salisbury Crag quarries



No. 16 George Square, Edinburgh.
Craigmillar sandstone. Built in 1767-1774.
IS015

At Salisbury Crag in Holyrood Park some of Edinburgh's oldest quarries worked the dolerite sill (a hard, coarse-grained, dark grey igneous rock). This durable rock, locally known as whinstone, was used extensively as 'calsey stanes' for the streets of Edinburgh. The stone was used as rubble in buildings on the south side of Edinburgh. Rubble used at **No. 82 Nicolson Street** (40) (late 18th century) and snecks at **Nos. 16-22 George Square** (43) are likely to be from these quarries. Occasional blocks of dolerite are seen as in **No. 20 George Square**.

The earls of Haddington were the hereditary keepers of the Royal Park of Holyrood and, over nearly 200 years to 1845 during which they held that office, permitted gradually increasing quarrying activity. This reached a peak during the first twenty years of the 19th century. So much stone was taken for paving the streets of Edinburgh, London and other cities that considerable alarm was expressed at the damage being inflicted on the Crag. The situation became so serious that legal action was taken to prevent further deterioration, but the case dragged on for twelve years, first in

the Court of Session in February 1819 'to restrain certain operations authorised or conducted by Lord Haddington tending materially to the detriment' of the Royal Park. In September 1831 the House of Lords concluded that the Earl of Haddington had no right of title to work quarries in the Royal Park. In 1845 the 9th Earl was paid L30,674 sterling as compensation for surrender of the office of Hereditary Keeper.'

Greyfriar's Port quarries

Greyfriar's Port, afterwards called Society or Bristo Port, was situated outwith the City Wall at the junction of Candlemaker Row and the present George IV Bridge. Quarries were present there in the early 16th century, since it is recorded that in October 1530 a woman, Katryne Heriot, was ordered to be drowned in one of the quarry holes. She was convicted for theft and for 'bringing of this contagious sickness from Leith to this town and breaking the statutes made thereupon'. Twenty-three years later, James Henrison was ordered by the Town Council to stop quarrying there and fill up the holes.' Stone was still being taken in 1583 and then in 1585 the Town Council made Andrew Slater, College Master of Works, responsible for filling up the holes.

The Society Quarry (possibly one of the Greyfriars Port quarries) lay close to the west end of present-day Chambers Street. It belonged to the Fellowship and Society of Brewers and provided rubble for the preliminary work on nearby Parliament House (21) from the spring of 1632 and throughout 1633. In 1632 two quarriers were employed, each earning 66/8d Scots per week. Twelve labourers, working with them, were paid 30/- Scots each. The next year the quarriers received £4 Scots per week. The quarries in the Society Yard are mentioned again twenty years later when space was allocated for bakers' ovens.

Other Old Town quarries

Several other quarry sites lie within the Old Town but cannot be located precisely. In May 1581, a quarry on the land belonging to the Justice Clerk was used for repairs to the town wall in the Blackfriars and Cowgate Port area.' The Town's College had its own quarry which was in use in May 1670. Further south, Windmill Lane, connecting Chapel Street to George Square is near the site of a 17th century quarry which supplied stones for the use of the town. Nearby, a windmill was used to pump water from the Burgh Loch for local breweries. The quarry may have been the same one which was leased from time to time eighty years later, when it was rented by a mason who hired a quarryman and two barrowmen. Part of the condition of his seven-year let was that three feet of best earth was to be laid on top of the quarry rubbish. The quarry gave its name to Quarry Close near the junction of West Crosscauseway and Chapel Street. Building stones in Edinburgh from the Gullane Formation, where to see them

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