



THE NORTH CAROLINA GRANITE CORPORATION

P. O. Box 151 Mount Airy, North Carolina 27030

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☎ +1.336.786.5141

☎ +1.336.719.2623

www.ncgranite.com

HISTORY

In 1872 a farmer named John Gilmer purchased several thousand acres of farm and woodland covering what is now part of Mount Airy, NC and the Flat Rock Community. After discovering that the tract contained 40 acres of bare rock, a furious Mr. Gilmer demanded that he be reimbursed for the "useless" portion of his land. Thus, the world's finest natural quarry "changed hands for nothing."

About 17 years later, the old Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad was built from Greensboro to Mount Airy. A firm of builders, Thomas Woodruff and Sons, were commissioned to build several railroad stations along the way. Accustomed to finding and using local materials, they were quick to learn about the "Flat Rock" east of Mount Airy and purchased John Gilmer's rock for \$5,000. The Woodruffs bought additional land surrounding the rock to build cutting plants and facilities, selling capital stock to get their venture off the ground. Quarrying was underway in 1889 and has continued since without interruption.

Hearing of the opening of a huge new quarry, many skilled quarrymen and stone cutters moved into Mount Airy from New England, Scotland, England, and Italy. As years past, more and more Surry County and Virginia natives learned the trades. Today, many descendents of those pioneer granite workers are still employed at NCGC, several with over 30 years experience.

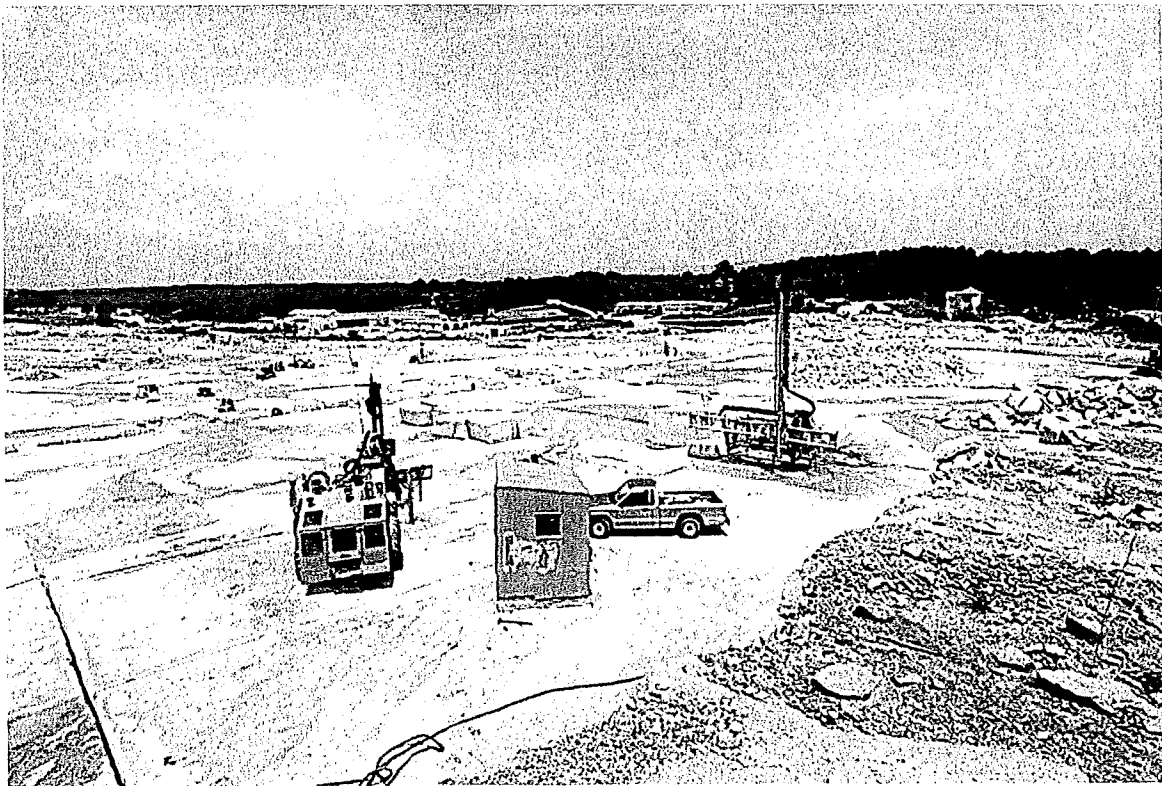
The quarry was operated under the name of Thomas Woodruff & Sons until 1904 when The North Carolina Granite Corporation was organized. At that time, the operations consisted of quarrying and shipping rough granite blocks to the job sites where they were fabricated on-site. In order to form a corporation and expand operations, more capital stock was sold and ownership in the corporation was scattered from Canada to Florida with important holdings in Philadelphia and the entire state of Pennsylvania. In fact, the principal office was located in Philadelphia for a short time. In 1910, the major stockholders persuaded the Woodruffs to employ John D. Sargent as Quarry Superintendent. Mr. Sargent was from Vermont and was a man of great ability and dynamic personality. Highly experienced in quarrying and finishing, he served as Quarry Superintendent for several years.



The Home of Dimensional Stone®

Around 1920, J.D. Sargeant leased a shed from the Woodruffs and began his own finishing business. He was now serving in two capacities – Quarry Superintendent for NCGC and owner of the J.D. Sargent Granite Company. The finishing business flourished. In fact, it became such a major function of the Mount Airy Granite industry that it created friction between Mr. Sargent and the Woodruffs. As a result, Mr. Sargent obtained financial backing from Colonel F.H. Fries and William Shaffner (bankers from Winston-Salem), and Charles B. Keesee (a banker from Martinsville, VA) and purchased the quarrying operation from the Woodruffs. The three bankers put up equal shares in exchange for part ownership in the J.D. Sargent Granite Company. The four men became known as "The Big Four."

Eventually, The North Carolina Granite Corporation and the J.D. Sargent Granite Company merged into a single entity. Today NC Granite produces a variety of world class natural stone products ranging from architectural building stone to granite curbing, crushed stone, and landscaping products.





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TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The Mount Airy Quarry is recognized as the world's largest open face granite quarry.

There are larger pit quarries (below surface), but no larger open face quarries. An open face quarry is defined as open and fairly level onto which one could walk or drive, making access to the stone much easier and more affordable.

Formation & Extraction

Granite began as molten magma within the earth's surface. Over centuries, the contraction of the earth's shrinking crust forced the magma to a higher plane where it gradually cooled and solidified under the weight and pressure of natural mountains into masses of stone we now know as granite.

Granite deposits are found all over the world although they are not always easily accessible for quarrying. The deposits are often formed in layers known as "Bed Planes" due to the time duration of the natural cooling processes. Mount Airy Granite's deposit is a homogenous mass free from natural bed planes and vertical cracks. Because the granite has no natural beds and cracks, it is necessary to free great sheets of granite from the mass by a process called "lifting." Dynamite is never used for quarrying. Results of its use would be disastrous as its force would shatter and crack the granite, causing flaws in blocks.

The deposit was developed by nature and it appears that Mother Nature is actually the most valuable worker at the quarry. Heat expansion in the summer and contraction in the winter are the key forces in lifting large beds of granite. Of course, a boost is needed to get things started in the right direction. The chief aide is one of the oldest of explosives, black gunpowder, and this is used sparingly. The grain of granite is horizontal and a light force can start a split.

The Mount Airy quarry is in the shape of an enormous oyster shell and covers approximately 90 acres under operation. The deposit is approximately one mile long and one-third mile wide. Geological mapping shows the total mass to be approximately 7 miles by 4 miles and 6,000 to 8,000 feet deep. Since 1889, quarrying has been in full operation and according to depth tests, we have only scratched the surface. Geologists inform us that we can quarry for approximately 500 more years without exhausting the supply.

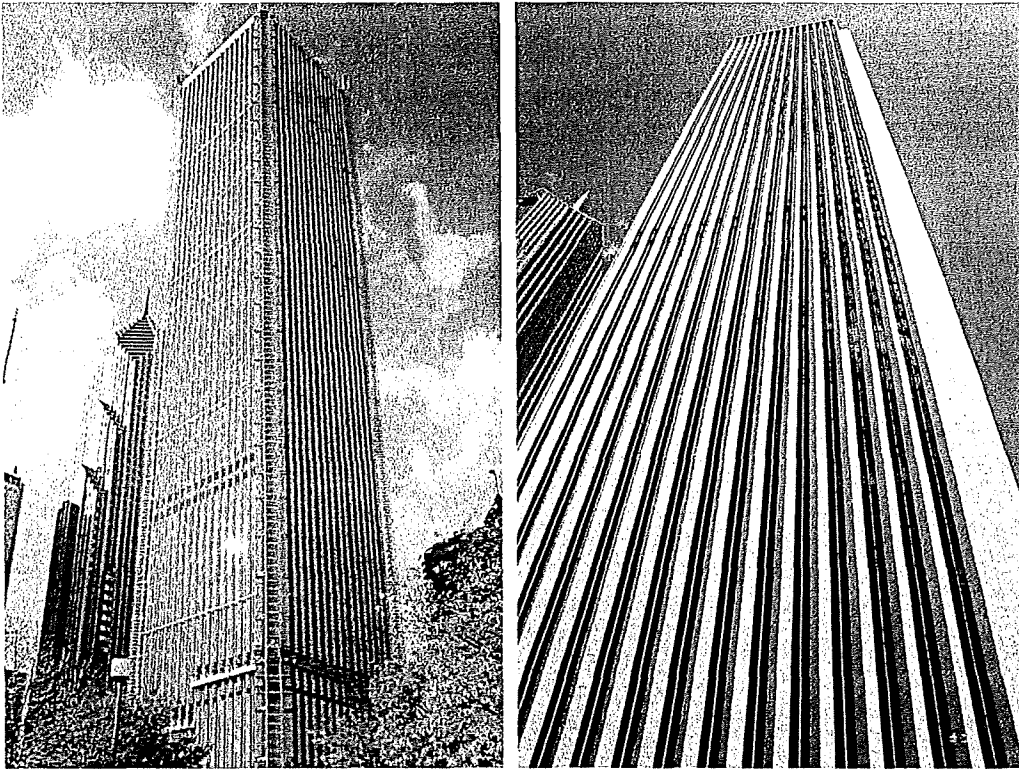


Composition

Mount Airy Granite is a biotite granite of medium grain, almost white, but with a light grey appearance. The three components of Mount Airy granite are (1) Quartz – the white portion and principal constituent (2) Feldspar – blue-grey in color (3) Mica – naturally black. All these components are evenly distributed throughout the entire deposit.

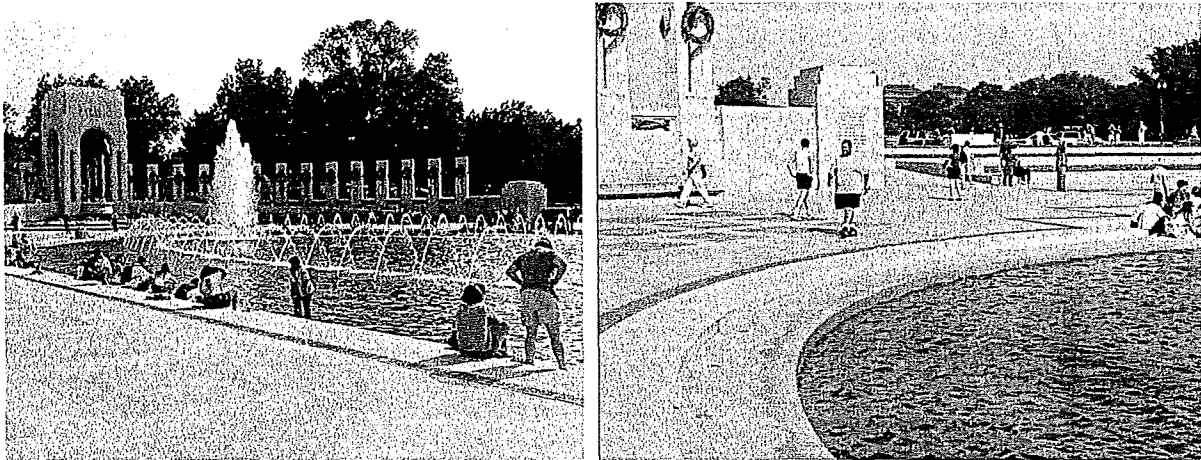
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The Aon Center (Amoco Building)



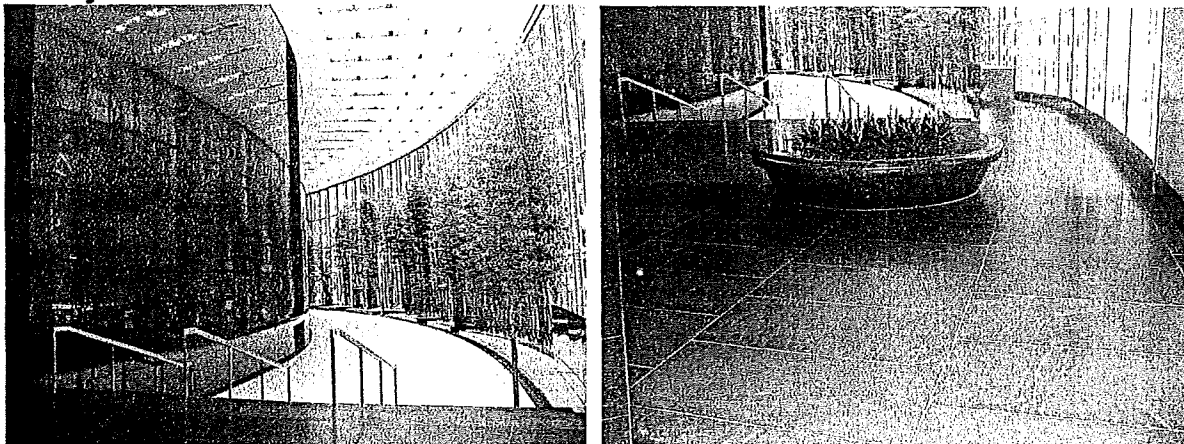
The exterior of the Aon Center in Chicago is clad exclusively with NCGC granite, making it the world's tallest granite-clad building.

The National World War II Memorial - Washington, DC

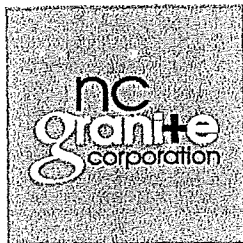


NCGC supplied granite paving and curb for the National WWII Memorial. Following its completion in 2004, we were commended for our dedication and valuable contributions to the project.

The Hyatt Center



NCGC quarried and fabricated 48,500 square feet of our *Virginia Mist* granite for the Hyatt Center in Chicago, including the polished radial wall panels shown above.



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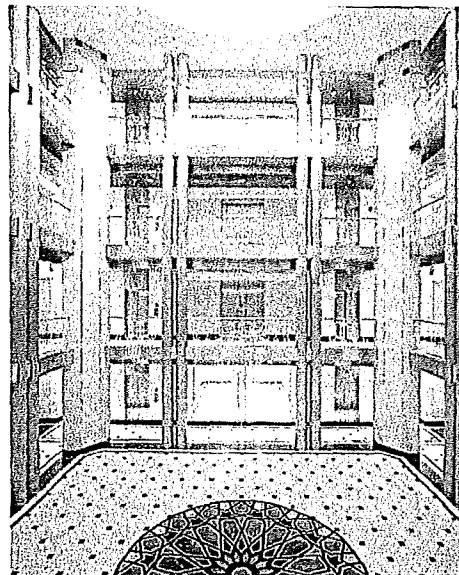
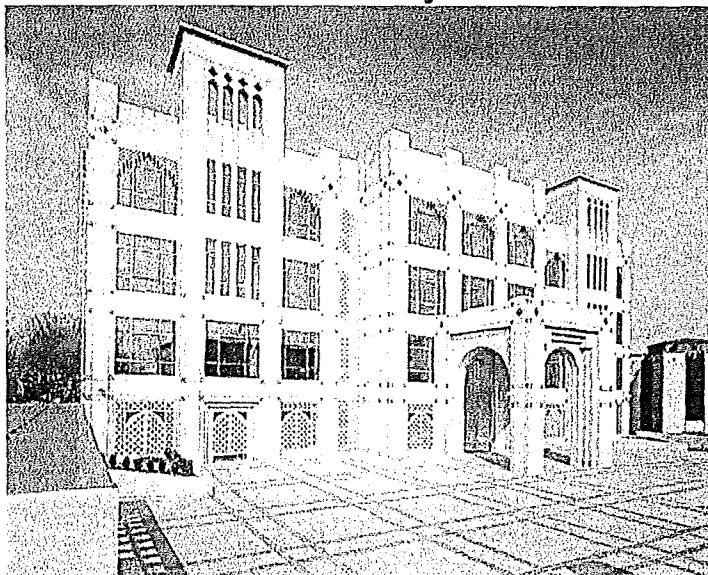
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NOTABLE PROJECTS

United Arab Emirates Chancery



The United Arab Emirates Chancery in Washington, DC received the Grand Prize Award in the 2002 Prism Design Competition. Comprised of 35,011 pieces of Mount Airy Granite in three different finishes, this extraordinary piece of architecture surpassed hundreds of international entries.

Brooklyn Battery Tunnel Ventilation Building



Mount Airy White granite was selected as the façade for the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel Ventilation Building in Brooklyn, NY (Governor's Island) after several other materials failed to withstand the harsh marine environment. The beautiful result earned a prestigious Tucker Design Award in 2006.



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