

THE MT. AIRY GRANITE INDUSTRY

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The Mt. Airy granite deposit covers over 200 acres, of which 70 acres are stripped of their overburden and in active operation. The granite deposit is known to be 200 feet deep and probably extends well towards the center of the earth.

Mt. Airy supplies the trade with granite in the rough for monumental yards, building stone sheds, cut and finished ready to place in its final location in every conceivable form in which granite is used from statuary and massive monuments down to copings for bridges and kellerstones for paper mills. Many northern cities use its curbing as their standard and hundreds of miles of their streets are paved with its blocks. In addition to this the odd-shaped pieces and cut-offs from other operations are worked up into rubble and used for rock-faced work in churches, residences, and other buildings, and the residue is then run through the crusher and sold as crushed stone. Even the screenings and sand from the crusher are sold to the railroads to be used in dressing their station platforms.

The volume of business is over one million dollars yearly. The quarries have been operated for nearly forty years. The output is over 3,000 carloads yearly. Three cutting companies are located at the quarries and cut Mt. Airy granite exclusively: The J. D. Sargent Granite Company, The North State Granite Company, and the Mt. Airy Granite Cutting Company. The first named is a subsidiary of the North Carolina Granite Corporation, which is the owner of the Mt. Airy deposit.

The granite industry at Mt. Airy employs over 750 men and its payrolls are over \$900,000.00 yearly.

The quarries and cutting sheds are equipped with all the latest up-to-the-minute machinery and appliances and from time to time as new ideas or appliances prove their value at other places they are added to the equipment.

Mt. Airy has specialized in the heavier type of monuments, both public and private. On account of its ability to get out stones of any length or size readily up to and beyond the limits of transportation, it has a reputation for handling this class of work. Also it was the pioneer in furnishing public mausoleums and has seen that phase of the industry change from a doubtful experiment to an established feature of the granite industry. It now has well over one hundred of these structures to its credit and some of the original ones have had as many as six additions to the original buildings. Its private mausoleums run up into the thousands.

The Mt. Airy quarries were selected from all the quarries in this Country to furnish and cut the granite for the new Arlington Memorial Bridge over the Potomac River at Washington, D. C. The first contract amounts to over \$1,500,000.00 and will require two years to complete.

The Victory Memorial at Danville, Illinois, designed by Loredo Taft, the noted sculptor, was selected in Mt. Airy granite by the sculptor. It has an heroic-sized statue at each corner of the monument cut from Mt. Airy granite, each figure representing one branch of the service. These figures are slightly over eight feet in height.

In 1925 out of a million dollars worth of work put out only \$17,000.00 was furnished to North Carolina, except, of course, the crushed stone which amounted to about \$30,000.00 which is of necessity a local product. In 1926 the finished products amounted to about \$56,000.00. Pennsylvania alone took \$120,000.00; Illinois \$86,000.00; and Ohio \$55,000.00

Very few of the North Carolina cities have any very notable examples of Mt. Airy's products. Greensboro, in its courthouse and the base of the Jefferson Standard Building and several other minor buildings, is probably one of the largest local users. Winston-Salem, the largest city in North Carolina, uses scarcely any. It now looks as though Asheville would use considerable Mt. Airy granite in the coming years, but the present outlook in other North Carolina cities is still not very promising. It would look as though granite products as well as prophets are without honor in their own Country.