

Hayward, John, *A Gazetteer of Massachusetts*, Boston 1846

Excerpt from description of Monson, p. 206

“Nearly a mile from the centre of the village, and two and a half miles from the western railroad, is an inexhaustible quarry of granite, of a beautiful quality, and much used for architectural purposes. Good samples of this may be seen in dwelling-houses and stores in Springfield, Westfield, and other places. Blocks of this granite may be obtained seventy feet in length and of any desired width. On dressing this stone, it presents a variety of colors, and appears as handsome as clouded marble.”

Nason, Rev. Elias, *A Gazetteer of the State Massachusetts* Boston 1874

Excerpt from description of Monson, p. 345

“The principal rock is ferruginous gneiss and dolerites. Large quantities of gneiss, known as ‘granite,’ are quarried here, and used for building purposes. In this business, under W. N. Flynt, more than 100 men are now employed; and the ‘sound of the chisel, mallet, and drill is constant.’”

A two-page article on the Flynt quarry originally published in 1888 can be found on-line at

www.anable.com/MONSON/MDC/Flynt/slides/MOA.html

It was evidently converted electronically from the original, so it is full of garbled words. It is reproduced below, /with an attempt at correcting typos by LL/

One of the most productive and advantageously located quarries in Massachusetts is that of the Flynt Granite Company, about a mile north of Monson, a flourishing town of Western Massachusetts, situated about twenty miles east of Springfield. The granite quarried here, which is now well known throughout the county, resembles that of the Quincy and Rockport quarries in appearance, texture, and other lithological characteristics. The granites of this variety are noted for their extreme toughness, evenness of texture and durability. The prevailing colors are shades of bluish-gray. They have been used in all parts of the United States for building and monumental purposes, and are properly ranked among the most valuable building stones of the United States. The enduring qualities of the Monson stone, like that of the Quincy and Rockport granites, is to be ascribed to the fact that in it the mica is replaced by the much more unchangeable hornblende, and by the further fact that the feldspars in the rock are present in the glassy condition in which they most successfully resist atmospheric influences. In these granites, however, the feldspathic element is subordinate in quantity to the more enduring quartz and hornblende, and the iron, which is present in the form of magnetic oxide, is quite unchangeable. From its lithological character, therefore, it could safely be predicted that the Monson granite would be a rock of the most enduring nature, and consequently well adapted for architectural uses.

The quarry of the Flynt Granite Company, of which we give an illustration in connection with this article, is situated about a mile north of the town, on the road to Palmer on a spur track of the New London railroad. The first stone taken from it was quarried by the United States government for the stone of which the Springfield Armory buildings are built. In 1824, the quarry was opened and worked on a small scale by Rufus Flynt. In 1839, it passed into the hands of W. N. Flynt, the founder of the present company, under whose management its business has greatly enlarged, until at the present time the yearly product reaches 30,000 tons of stone, of the value of \$200,000. The product is shipped extensively not only to the cities and towns of the Eastern section of the country, but as far even as Kansas.

The quarry land owned by the company covers over 500 acres, all underlaid with granite, of which, however, only a small portion has been opened, sufficient however to furnish an abundance of stone for an indefinite period. The location of the opening is admirably adapted for quarrying operations. The workings are situated on the slope of a hill, about 75 feet below its crest, and sufficiently high above the drainage level of the surrounding territory to keep the workings dry. The rock is divided by natural cleavage faces into horizontal layers from 1 to 12 feet in thickness, and wedges are mainly depended upon for getting out even the largest masses, powder being used merely to lift the loosened layer from its bed. The largest single piece which has yet been taken out was 354 feet long, 11 feet wide and 4 feet high, and 1,104 wedges were used in detaching it.

Up to time of the opening of the Boston & Albany railroad, in 1839, the demand for the stone was necessarily local, but the transportation facilities offered by the railway were at once availed of and greatly stimulated the business. The nearest station was three miles distant, and stone was hauled thither by teams. In 1865 Mr. Flynt brought the shipping station within a mile of time quarry by arranging with the New London Northern Railway for a side track. All this time Monson granite was becoming more widely known and more generally sought, the demand for it was rapidly increasing, and, after the completion of the above-mentioned important improvement, two steam derricks, fifteen or twenty teams, and a correspondingly large force of workmen were required to get out a supply equal to the demand. Still greater facilities were required in the year 1875 by the construction of a two-mile railway from the main line of the New London Northern railroad into the quarry itself. The necessity for teaming was thus done away with, and steam derricks now lift the quarried stone directly upon the cars. With these facilities, the company is able to successfully confront any possible competition in the Boston, New York and Chicago markets.

From March to December about 200 quarrymen and 40 stone-dressers are employed, and during the winter an almost equal force is kept at work. Last year 28,403 tons of granite were shipped.

The stone of the Monson quarry, of the excellent qualities of which we have already spoken, is of two varieties, one a mottled white and the other a beautiful dark blue, both of them capable of taking a high polish.

We append herewith a list of some of the more prominent buildings that have been built of Monson granite: Horatio Lyon Memorial Library and /Meumia- mini/? Town Hall, Monson; Republican Block, Boston & Albany railroad building, Agawam Bank, Springfield Court House, and Dr. Corcorans and A. L. Fennessy's houses On Crescent Hill, Springfield City Hall, Holyoke; Universalist church, Palmer; G. Henry Whitcombs residence and two business blocks, Worcester; Boston & Albany Railroad depots, at Boston and Palmer; Walker hall, Amherst College, Amherst ; fronts of St. Francis Xavier church, Sixteenth street, the new Isabella Home One Hundred and Ninetieth street, and the pastoral residence, corner of Eighty-fourth street and Fourth avenue, New York city; Catholic church, Norwich, (... page 84 ...) The Manufacturer and Builder. Conn.; Hall Memorial Chapel, Watertown, Conn.; South P. Avenue M. B. church, Chicago, Ill. The granite for the new hotel buildings at Ware and Warren, Mass., and the stone for Judge Henry Hiltons

mansion, Saratoga Springs. N.Y., are from this famous quarry. The stone for the imposing tomb, in Woodland [Woodlawn?] Cemetery, of O. D. Munn, senior partner of the firm of Munn & Co., New York city, was also furnished by this company, and it is sending granite as far West as Topeka, Kan., and Keokuk, Iowa. The company makes a specialty of stone for bridge-work, and furnishes an immense amount of curbing, the latter at the rate of six miles of streets per year. The W. N. Flynt Granite Company was incorporated under the laws of the State of Massachusetts in January, 1885, with a capital of \$100,000. W. N. Flynt is the president and Geo. C. Flynt treasurer.

Quarrying: The Flynt Granite Company's Quarries at Monson, Mass [pp. 83-84] From the serial The Manufacturer and Builder Volume 0020 Issue 4 (April 1888) in Cornell Library's Making of America collection.