

Pieces of Iowa's Past, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the legislative session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All historical publications are reproduced here with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

April 17, 2013

BACKGROUND:

The Ste. Genevieve sandstone is the buff color stone on the exterior of the Capitol. The Carroll County sandstone was the light color or contrast stone on the Capitol exterior. The Carroll County stone did not wear well and was removed from the building during the exterior renovations in the 1980s and 1990s. Both sandstones are from Missouri.

THIS WEEK:

Iowa State Capitol Structural Sandstone Origination

From The Iowa Capitol Commissioners Reports

Report of Capitol Architect A.H. Piquenard, submitted December 16, 1875

The Ste. Genevieve sandstone is a close, fine grained stone, the cement binding the sand being nearly pure silica; it is very strong for a sandstone, a little hard to cut, in fact I consider it the strongest and most durable sandstone I have ever seen used, and it is of a very uniform and pleasing color.

The Carroll county, Missouri, sandstone is also a very fine grained stone, the cement binding the sand being a carbonate of lime, it is not so strong as the St. Genevieve, but it is much easier to cut and in using it for mouldings, carving and other ornamental work, we have saved a large percentage in the cutting.

The stone of both these quarries have been proven by long actual experience to stand very well all the influences of the weather, the Carroll county stone being second only to the Ste. Genevieve stone.

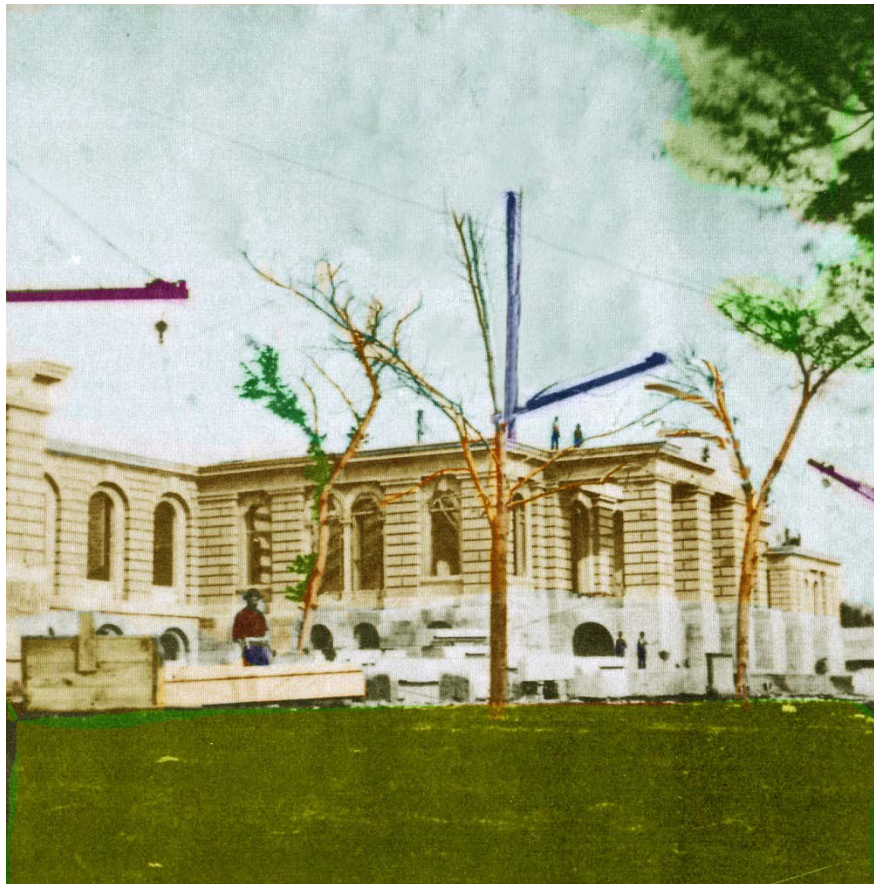
The effect of the contrast between stone of different color in the building, in the manner we are doing it, is, I believe very pleasing in appearance and increases considerably the general effect of the design.

From Robert Finkbine, Superintendent of Iowa State Capitol Construction

Final Report on Iowa State Capitol stone in superstructure, submitted June 30, 1886.

Carroll County sandstone 145,789.7 cubic feet in superstructure

Ste. Genevieve sandstone. 130,768.11 cubic feet in superstructure

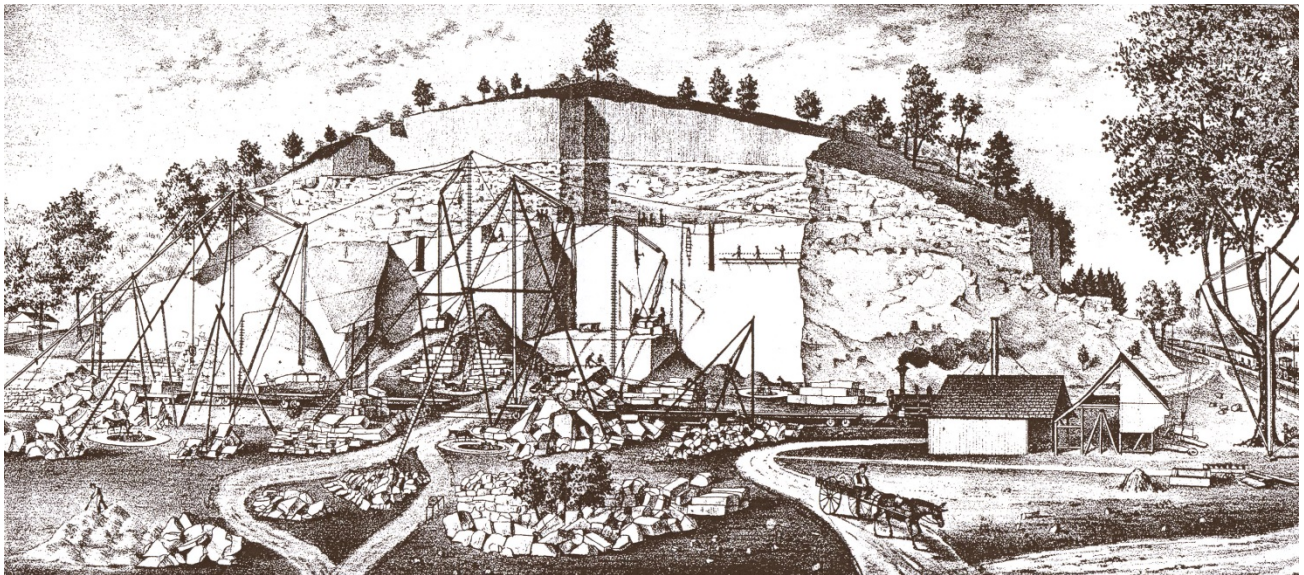


East side of the Iowa State Capitol, circa 1876

Kevin and Mandi Wright provided the following information and pictures. They currently own the Carroll County, Missouri, quarry.

From the Historical Atlas of Carroll County, Missouri 1876

At the White Rock Quarries a settlement has been made of about twenty-four families—a considerable part of the population being employed in working the quarries. The White Rock stone is celebrated for its beauty and adaptability for building purposes. It is nearly white, very tough, and close grained, and easily dressed or sawed. The quarries have been worked since 1840, but only within the last few years have facilities been perfected for getting out the stone in large quantities, and its shipment to distant points. It has been used largely for buildings and bridges at St. Louis, Kansas City, Chicago, St. Joseph, and other leading cities.



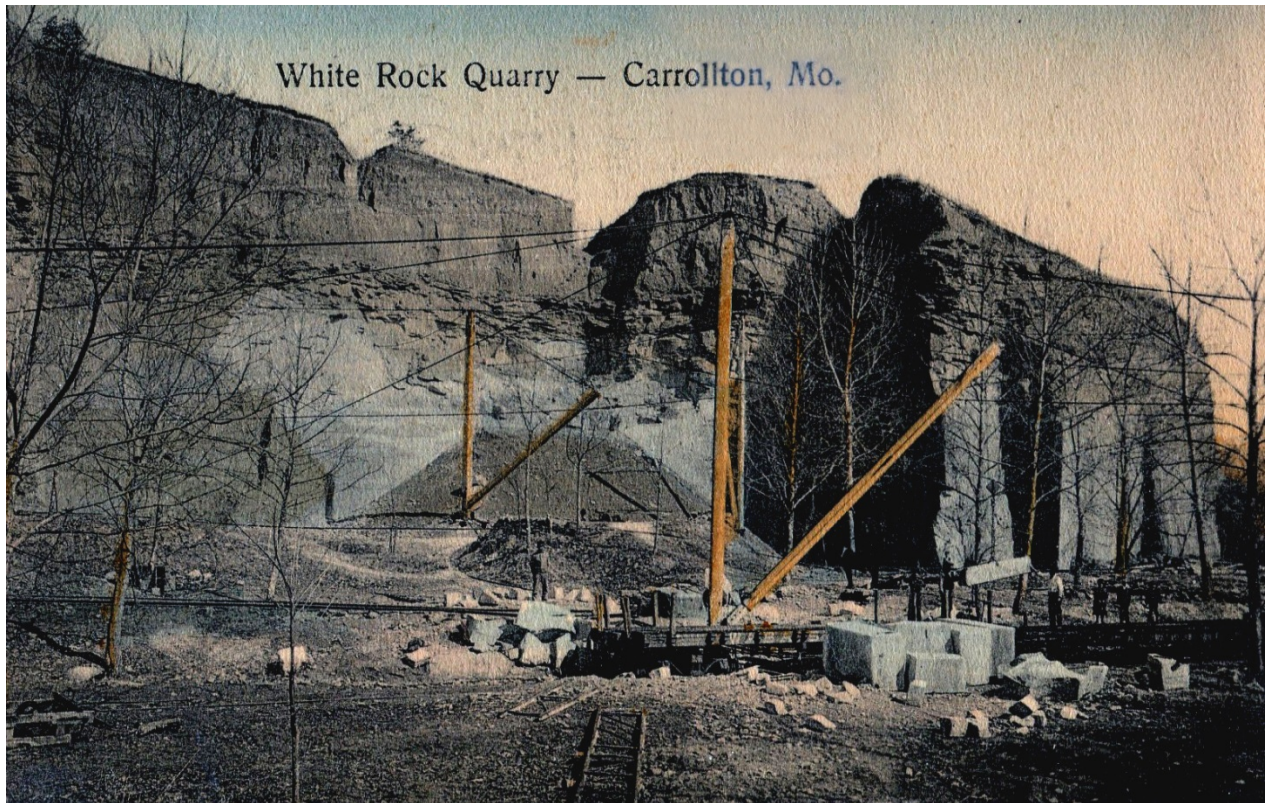
Drawing of the Quarry at White Rock, Carroll County, Missouri—1876

From the History of Carroll County Missouri 1882

Miami Township

The point of great interest in Miami township is the celebrated "White Rock Quarries," located on the line of railroad, in the south half of the northwest quarter of section eight. They were opened in 1840, and have been worked ever since. The quantity is almost inexhaustible, and the quality is very superior. Its color and adaptability for finishing purposes is becoming widely known, and it is being shipped to many of the cities in different states. It is used extensively for public buildings, bridges, etc., owing to its tough, close grained qualities, and is easily dressed and polished. Heavy shipments are made to St. Louis, Chicago, Kansas City, and St. Joseph, and the new capitol building at Des Moines, Iowa, is drawing largely from it for the fine portions

of the work. From the singular formations often found embedded in the rock, forty and fifty feet from the surface, the geologist, by scientific investigation, would no doubt find food for deep research.



Photograph of the Quarry at White Rock, circa 1876



Quarry at White Rock as it looks today.



Quarry at White Rock as it looks today.

