

“A Preliminary Report on the Marble Industry of Tennessee”

Excerpt from
The Resources of Tennessee, Vol. 1, Tennessee Geological Survey
1911, pp. 25-27

This excerpt, which begins on the next page,
is presented on the Stone Quarries and Beyond web site.

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“The State Geological Survey has just issued an illustrated report and map of the marble Industry of East Tennessee. Tennessee is perhaps better known outside of the State by its marble than by any other one thing. Tennessee marble has been used so long and so widely, especially for interior decoration, that it meets one in fine buildings, both public and private, so frequently as to suggest that no fine building is complete unless lined, at least in part, with Tennessee marble. In addition to its wide use in this country, it has been shipped to London, Australia, Mexico and elsewhere. For interior decoration it has been used in as widely scattered buildings as, the Bank of Montreal; New York Hall of Records; the Boston Library; the Congressional Library; the Harris Trust and McCormick buildings in Chicago; the Hord Building of Detroit and hundreds of others. As an exterior building stone it has been used in the J. P. Morgan Library, in New York City; the Denver Mint; the Morgan Memorial, Hartford, Conn.; Cambridge Savings Bank, Cambridgeport, Mass.; the Band Stand on Boston Commons, now under construction, and hundreds of others. The marble is also finding an extensive use for statuary purposes, as is evidenced by its use for the colossal figures in such notable buildings as the United States House, New York City; the Cleveland, Ohio, Postoffice; the United States Government Buildings at Providence and Indianapolis.

“So much for the actual use of Tennessee marble. The present bulletin, after describing briefly the distribution of marbles of all kinds in Tennessee, discusses the general geology and distribution of the Holston marble, the only one being worked. This marble is confined to East Tennessee, in a wide belt running northeast and southwest through Knoxville. While originally laid down over a broad area 150 miles long, as a result of subsequent folding of all of the rocks and their partial removal by erosion, the limestone is now found in a series of some seven belts. The occurrence and character of the marble in these belts are described in some detail, as well as shown by a map. Then the character of the marble is described and figures quoted, showing the high crushing strength of the stone, and its very low absorption of water, making it especially suitable for exterior work.

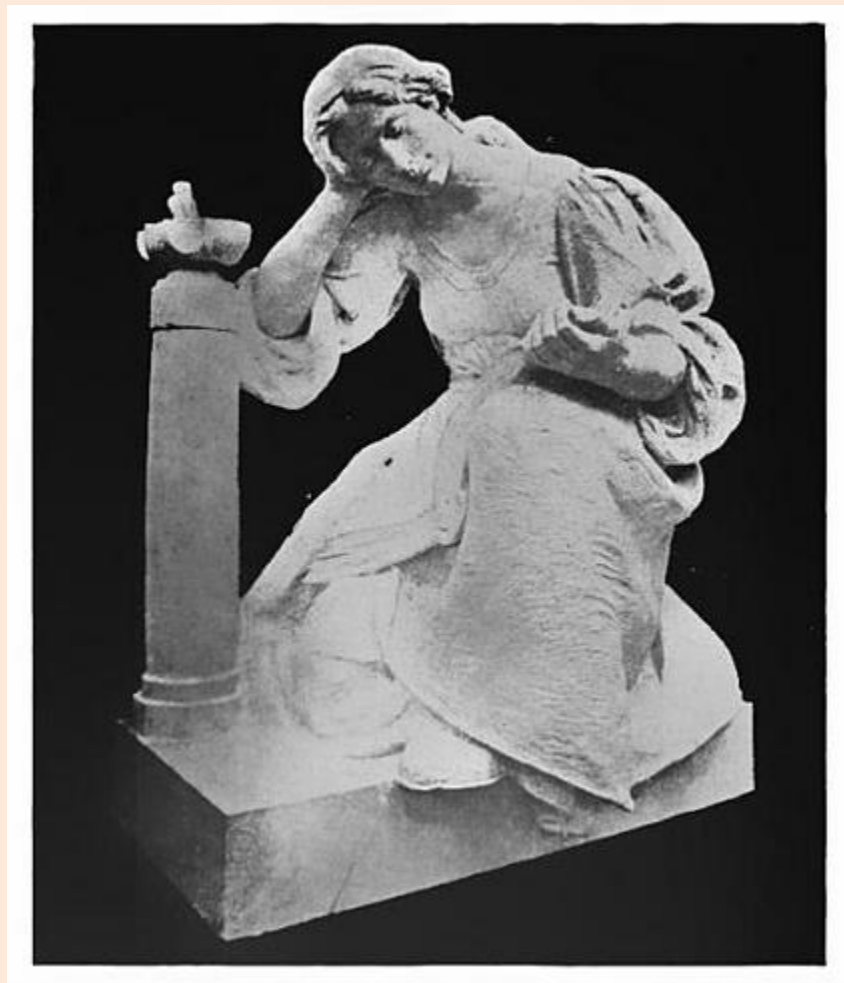
“For use in interior work Tennessee marble has the great advantage over other marbles equally good and beautiful, in that its color meets the present day need of a stone that is at once bright, cheerful and warm. The day of black and dark marbles has largely passed, no matter how beautiful in color or markings, or how perfect a polish they may take. With our present methods of building, the interior stone must aid rather than detract from the lighting of the buildings and halls, yet it must not be too white and cold. The warm pink, ‘cedar,’ yellow and pinkish grays of the Tennessee marble seem to meet the demand exactly.

“In Merrill’s ‘Stones for Building and Decoration’ it is stated: ‘Slabs ten by four feet, or six feet square, are readily obtained, free from all flaws and blemishes, giving over every inch of surface a finish like enamel, and requiring no filling whatever. All the Tennessee marbles will cut to a

sharp edge and acquire a beautiful and lasting polish not excelled and rarely equaled by any foreign or domestic marbles. Of foreign marbles, so far as the writer is aware, they have no exact counterpart, but perhaps resemble the Rosso de Levanto from Spazia, or the Persian fiorto more closely than any other that can be mentioned.

“The bulletin then describes briefly the location, equipment and the marble of the several quarries and mills now in operation, and illustrates some of them. It closes with statistics of production.

“The bulletin is No. 2-D, being part “D” of bulletin No. 2, ‘Preliminary Papers on the Resources of Tennessee.’ It is entitled ‘The Marbles of Tennessee,’ it is by Prof. Charles H. Gordon, of the University of Tennessee, who has been studying the marbles of the Knoxville region for some time. It can be obtained by sending postage, 2 cents, with a request to the State Geologist, Capital Annex, Nashville, Tenn.”



“Carved of Tennessee Marble for Federal Building at Providence, R. I. (See Bulletin 2-D.)”

(See next page for online resources relating to the Tennessee marble industry.)

The Tennessee section of our web site, Stone Quarries and Beyond, is not online yet. If you'd like to learn more about Tennessee marble, you can visit the links below. Peggy B. Perazzo

Samples of Tennessee Marble, presented by the Tennessee Marble Co.

<http://www.tnmarble.com/tennesseemarblequarry.aspx>

Tennessee Marbles, on Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tennessee_marble

Tennessee Marble, presented by Wayne G. Powell

<http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/geology/powell/613webpage/NYCbuilding/TennesseeMarble/TennesseeMarble.htm>

“**The Industrial Progress of The South**” (circa 1880), by J. B. Killebrew, in *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, Vol. X, No. 6, December 1880, pp. 642-652 (article presented on our Stone Quarries and beyond web site)

http://quarriesandbeyond.org/sources/pdf/industrial_progress_of_the_south_in_frank_leslies_popular_monthly_magazine_dec_1880.pdf

The Ross Marble Quarry, at Ijams Nature Center in Knoxville

<http://www.outdoorknoxville.com/places/trails/south/ijams-nature-center-trails>

Candoro Marble, located in the east Tennessee region, is one of the largest marble producers in the world, according to their web site.

http://candoromarble.org/?page_id=282

An Ordovician limestone called “Tennessee Marble” in the Tennessee State Supreme Court building, presented by Bruce Railsback, on his “A Web Gallery of Stone Buildings and Their Building Stone” web site.

<http://www.gly.uga.edu/railsback/BS/BS-TSC.html>

<http://www.gly.uga.edu/railsback/BS-Main.html>

Field Trip No. 1 East Tennessee Marble District, by Stuart W. Maher, Principal Geologist, Tennessee Division of Geology, Knoxville, Tennessee

http://www.minsocam.org/MSA/Fieldtrip_Guidebooks/MSA_ACAfieldtrip_Trip_1.pdf

Tennessee State Rock: Limestone

http://www.statesymbolsusa.org/Tennessee/TN_rock_Limestone.html