

California Stone Monument & Building Industry circa March 1910

“The West Coast”

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“San Francisco, March 28. – The weather has been very favorable for outside work in California for the last few weeks, and the retail monument dealers all over the state have been very busy. A good deal of their work has been in setting up monuments which were purchased some time ago, but from all reports sales this month have been very good. There is a lot of business in view in this line, and all the retailers in this vicinity count upon one of the best summer seasons in a number of years. There is now very little left of the large stocks taken on a few months ago, and orders taken by those who handle eastern monuments in a wholesale way have been both numerous and large. Dealers are disposed to make ample provision for the needs of the next few months, and most of them are getting in heavy shipments. The greater part of the business is of the usual character, with few jobs having notably unique features.

“The Sloat monument* at Monterey, California, one of the most notable and largest monuments ever erected in California, is now nearing completion. It has been under way for several years, and contains many different varieties of material, mostly contributed by the various counties of California. The first stone in the top of the monument was laid March 16, and several carloads of granite from Rocklin quarries are on the ground. It is expected that it will be ready for dedication by June 15. It is massive in construction, and when complete will rise 25 feet above the base. The Sloat monument is said to be the only one besides the Washington monument to which money has been contributed by our government.

(* According to the Wikipedia article, John Drake Sloat (July 6, 1781 – November 28, 1867) was a commodore in the United States Navy who, in 1846, and claimed California for the United States. He was the first Military Governor of California. The monument described in this article was erected in John D. Sloat’s honor on the Presidio of Monterey U.S. Army post.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_D._Sloat

“The arrival of spring has caused a marked revival in the business in all kinds of building stone. As has been expected for some time, this year is bringing a large number of interior marble jobs, most of them rather small, but still of enough importance to be attractive. Contracts for such work have been quite numerous for the last week or two, and there are many more in view. The larger contracts are still withheld, for the most part, but are sure to be let within a few months, and in the meantime attract the attention of all the marble contractors. The margin of profit in local marble work is still smaller than it should be. This is shown by the fact that, in spite of the comparatively high labor cost here, practically all the jobs on which eastern competition was invited have been taken by local shops.

“The granite and sandstone contractors are still working at full capacity, though the greater part of the work is on old contracts, with a few small jobs which have been taken recently. The McGilvray Stone Company is working on the Connecticut brownstone for the Pacific Union Club, and overhauling the stone in the walls of the old building which are still standing. Steady progress is reported in setting the Colusa sandstone on the Hall of Justice and the Utah monti* (limestone) on the Scottish Rite temple, and the granite exterior of the Union Trust Company is

about completed. The white monti* front of the Mechanics' Institute, recently finished by this company, is one of the prettiest jobs in the city. Some vault work in the local cemeteries has also been taken. Mr. McGilvray states that there is work enough on hand to keep the plant going until next July, and a night shift has been working since the first of the year to get the yards cleaned up sufficiently to take on some more large contracts which will be let before long.

(* *"Monti" should be "manti."*)

"The Raymond Granite Company is also rather busy at present. It has just delivered the first lot of granite for the San Francisco Savings Union building and will be occupied with this structure for some time.

"A large contract was let early this month for the main approach and pediment to the State Capitol of Idaho at Boise, to be constructed of granite and sandstone."