

BUILT FROM STONE

THE WESTERLY GRANITE STORY

VOLUME
14 of 52

IT TAKES A TEAM

Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it took a team to produce a granite monument. Before the stone reached the sheds, the “quarry team” had been at work. Quarry men had freed the stone from the earth, riggers had lifted the stone from the depths of the quarry and “lumpers” had moved the stone several times.

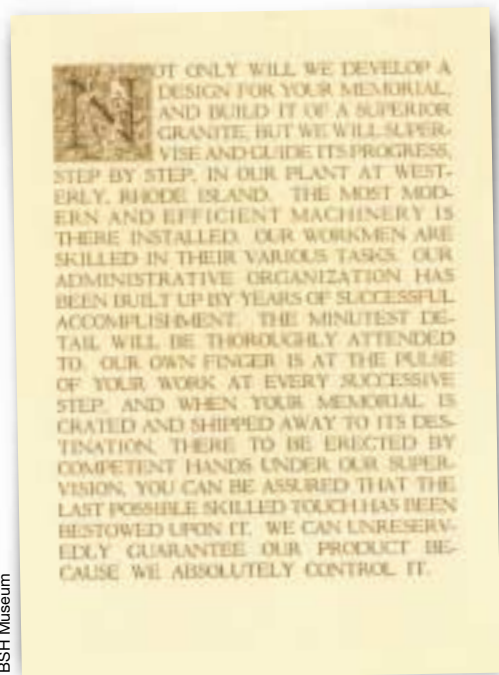
Once the stone was in the shed, the stonecutters cut the stone to the specified dimensions. Other men operated the finishing machines or polishing mills to give the stone the appropriate finish. Letter cutters cut the inscription. On some monuments, carvers produced the exquisite details that show up so nicely in Westerly granite. Statue cutters carved granite statues for the most elaborate monuments.

In addition, there was another team of tradesmen who never touched the stone.



BSH Museum

The Joseph Coduri Granite Company Shed (circa 1930). Can you identify any of these men?



BSH Museum

The team is featured in a Smith Granite Company sales booklet (circa 1920)

The blacksmiths sharpened the tools, the carpenters boxed the finished product, the teamsters drove the oxen in the early days and in later days drove the trucks, and the railroad engineers drove the locomotives to bring the finished stone to the main railroad line.

The granite quarries and sheds were not easy environments in which to work all day long and the challenges of the environment and of the unforgiving granite forged teams of skilled professionals.

Linda Smith Chaffee



BSH Museum

Smith Granite Company Cutting Shed circa 1889. We can tell that this is a posed picture because granite sheds were never this neat and tidy. Henry Moriarty can be seen in right foreground. Can you identify any of the other men?

TODAY IN GRANITE

UNITED BUILDERS SUPPLY, along with the Babcock-Smith House Museum and The Westerly Sun, is proud to be part of this effort in bringing the heritage of the Westerly Granite industry back to the people of Westerly.

United Builders Supply is excited to be able to offer these historic granites, a treasure from the past, to the marketplace again.

Westerly Granite is again being used successfully in the region.

All masonry materials were supplied by United Builders Supply Co., Inc.



This picture shows the use of Westerly Pink in a recent restoration of an historic wall in Watch Hill. Westerly Pink was integrated with existing stones on the site to restore the wall to its original splendor.

WHERE IN WESTERLY?

The history of the community is recorded by the historical markers that were erected throughout the town as part of the celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the State of Rhode Island. These markers were designed by Isaac G. Smith, Sr. On Margin Street is a marker that indicates the site of a 19th century shipyard. The design at the bottom shows a ship under construction. The inscription reads “Entrance to the shipyard 1834-1874 whence sailed whalers and merchantmen hewn from native timber, commanded by native sons.”



BSH Museum



Historical marker on Margin Street commemorating the 19th century shipyard.

STONE CHIPS

“Ed Smith considered everybody as part of his family because when the Depression came along ... he didn't lay the gang off. What he did, he split the gang in half ... He had them working 3 days and then the other gang worked 3 days so one week you got 3 day's pay and the other week you got 2 day's pay, but at least you got enough money comin' in so you had food on the table. This is the way Ed Smith operated. Because he had good men he wanted to keep.”

Arthur Ferraro in an interview in 1984.

YOUR PART IN HISTORY

Thank you for supporting The Babcock Smith Open House. We are pleased that so many of you came out to share your photographs, treasures and knowledge of the local granite industry with us. We know there are more of you out there and encourage you to contact us with your stories. Babcock Smith House Membership Drive is currently in full swing so come join us!

Phone: (401) 377-8490 Linda Chafee or Email: bsh1734@verizon.net

COMING
NEXT WEEK

Transportation

PEOPLE WHO BUILT WESTERLY DOCUMENTED GRANITE WORKERS

Cautelin, John, Jr.	Chase, T.H.
Cealb,	Chase, T. Hyde
Cellucci, L.	Cherenzia, James
Chadwick, Edwin	Cherenzia, Sam
Champion, Frederick	Chiaradio, “Jimmy the Horse”
Champion, Fred L.	Chistest, Olaf
Chapman, Charles D.	Christie, James
Chapman, Charles P.	Cilio, James
Chapman, F.	Clancy, James
Chapman, Orsemus S.	Clancy, John
Chapman, Otis P.	Clancy, Joseph
Chapman, Sydney	Clancy, Michael
Charles, Austin	



Babcock-Smith
House Museum

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