

## **“Monuments in Stone: The Output of a San Jose Manufactory”**

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### **One of Santa Clara County's Public Buildings – A Stately Tomb.**

“One of the big industries of San Jose, and in fact one that is known the whole length of the Pacific coast, is that of the Western Granite and Marble Company. This company was organized with a capital stock of \$100,000 only about three years ago. From its very interception the enterprise met with success. Behind it were wide-awake, energetic business men, who whenever the opportunity presented, pushed in and established themselves. During the past year their business has increased almost 100 per cent; to-day they are giving employment to over 100 skilled mechanics, and they are producing some of the handsomest work in stone and marble to be found in the country. In all parts of the State they are rearing piles of masonry which will stand for ages as monuments of their skill and enterprise.

(Photo caption: “Western Granite and Marble Co., San Jose.”)

“The company's works are on First street, near the broad-gauge railway depot. Their mammoth workhouse has a frontage of seventy feet on First street and runs back 275 feet to Second street. Probably the first thing to challenge the wonder of a visitor to the works is the ease with which the workmen handle the large blocks of marble, granite and sandstone which are to come under chisels and hammers. There is every facility for the handling of these great blocks of stone with the least possible waste of force and labor. The expense has been reduced to the minimum. A switch from the railway runs the whole length of the building down the middle. So complete are the company's facilities that two men are able to unload a car of granite within twenty minutes from the time it leaves the main track. With their machinery two men are able to handle a twenty-ton block of any kind or size almost without exertion. By the aid of overhead tracks and cranes they are not only able to remove the block from the car, but to put it down on any spot within the walls of the company's works, which, by the way, are the largest on the Pacific coast.

“The Western Granite and Marble Company has extensive quarries in Santa Clara and Placer counties. From its great sandstone quarry, seven miles out from San Jose, is obtained the finest quality of stone for facing and dressing purposes. The company's granite quarries are in Placer county. Not far from Loomis, in two quarries, they have granite in almost inexhaustible quantity. They own another great granite quarry at Crystal Lake. Besides these native stones the company is its own importer of Italian, Vermont and Tennessee marbles and fine Italian statuary. They also handle in large quantities all kinds of American, Scotch and Swedish granites.

(Photo caption: “San Jose Hall of Records.”)

“The ability of the company to produce monumental and structural stone work of the very first class can never be questioned. The most competent draughtsmen are in their steady employ and ready at all times to supply original designs of any work desired. Under these favorable conditions it is not surprising that the company's business is so rapidly extending to all the building centers up and down the coast.

“But more to the point perhaps, is the work that the company is doing. San Jose, or rather Santa Clara county, was not slow in showing its appreciation of the Western Granite and Marble Company’s enterprise. The result of the county’s trust in the company is a magnificent stone structure that appeals to the critical eye of every visitor to San Jose. This monument in masonry is the new Hall of Records building, which this company is now completing at a cost of \$200,000. There is nothing about the structure that is not first class. The building itself a sketch of which is printed herewith, is a standing recommendation, not only of the company but of the quality and beauty of the granite from the Placer county quarries.

“Another magnificent piece of work, but one of a wholly different nature, is nearing completion in this city under the hands of the Western Granite and Marble Company’s artisans. It is the stately sepulchral monument which is being reared in the Masonic Cemetery for the memory of the late John Wieland, and of which a representation is given herewith. The structure when completed is to be forty-five feet in height, twenty-one feet across at the base, and is to rest upon a mass of masonry thirty-two feet wide by forty-five feet long, covering a whole cemetery lot. The design is by Joseph Schwind, the company’s chief draughtsman and the plans are being carried out under his direction. The tomb is after the design of the old Greek temples, with slight adaptations from the Gothic. In the sarcophagus or tomb proper are receptacles for twelve bodies, two in the center and the ten others in the circle radiating from the center. The main body of the mausoleum is of Fresno or Mount Raymond granite in what is known as a twelve-cut hammered finish. Above the tomb proper and supporting the dome are six massive pillars, each formed of six clustered columns three of Black Diamond granite from Addison, Me., and three of red beach granite, also from Maine. These columns are highly polished. The arches and interiors are of Italian marble and the interior filling of red Tennessee marble, which, with the panels, have been polished to the highest degree. In the center of the pavilion will be raised a pedestal upon which will rest a statue of ‘The Remembrance.’ The stairs shown in the picture as leading up to the pavilion are of the granite used in the body of the tomb. The rail of the staircase is of the same material, but the forty-two balusters are of polished Black Diamond granite. The tomb is erected by the heirs of the late John Wieland at a cost of \$40,000.

“Throughout the State are other imposing monuments in stone from the works of this company. The C. M. Chase vault in Laurel Hill Cemetery, this city, for solidness and beauty of architecture is a model. Another fine vault is the one erected for Mrs. Dr. Backesto\* (sic) in Oak Hill Cemetery, San Jose, at a cost of \$9000. The tomb recently erected by the company at Fresno for Mrs. Fiske-Marceau over the grave of her late husband, A. J. Fiske, is a modest but most beautiful and costly design. The sarcophagus erected by the company for John E. Moore, at a cost of \$4500, is considered the finest piece of work in the Stockton Cemetery. The Arguello mausoleum at Santa Clara Cemetery is another sample of their skill. The memorial arch recently erected in Santa Cruz at a cost of \$10,000, also a production of the works at San Jose. For a solidity of design and beauty of construction this arch could not be improved upon.”

(Photo caption: “Wieland Vault”)

(\* Backesto)