

STONE MOUNTAIN - Last of

One of World's Wonders Is Strange Outcropping of Bed of Granite and Rock on Which Atlanta Is Situated.

By Paul Steven

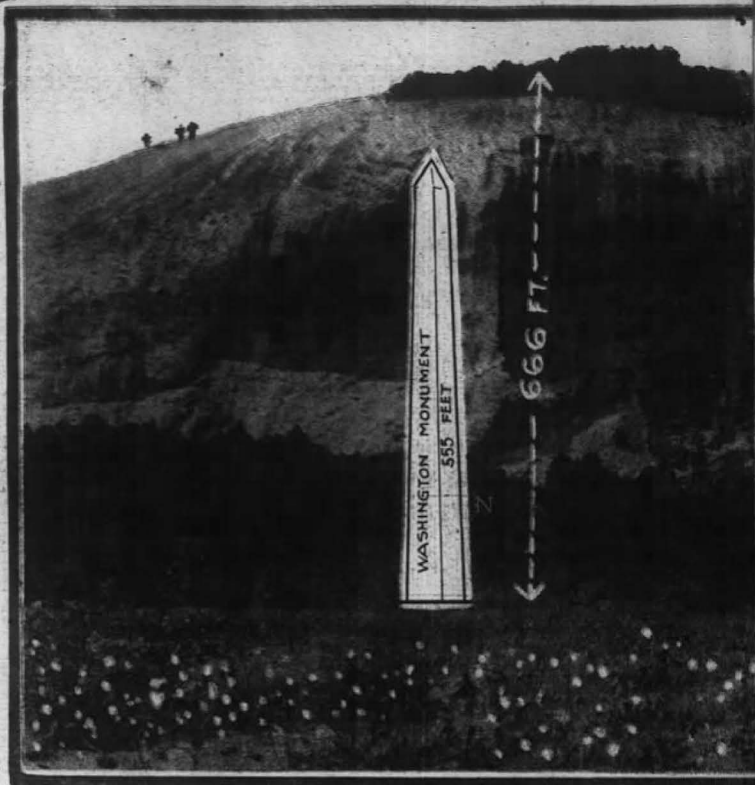
STONE MOUNTAIN—solid pile of granite—rising sheer and stark from level plains to a height of 666 feet. A mighty rock standing in lonely grandeur serving as History's sentinel as ages come and go in endless procession down the shadowy corridors of Time. Why is it there? What convulsion of Nature formed it? How long has it remained in its present shape and condition? As the dandy would say, "How come it?"

It is the largest rock on the western hemisphere!

Located sixteen miles from Atlanta, this strange phenomenon of nature, is viewed by tens of thousands of people every year; visitors from all sections of the country gaze on it in wonder; parties of pleasure seekers give picnics on its broad slope or under its towering shoulder; lovers stroll over its bare, bald summit; men and women carve their initials in its granite sides and even natives look at it in awe and reverence.

Stone Mountain—what a wealth of tradition envelopes it. Battles have been fought around its base. Fugitives have sought shelter in its fastnesses. Shells from the batteries of the armies of Joe Johnston and Sherman have exploded on its face. Revolutionary war followers of General McIntosh and General Green have trudged wearily before it. Cherokee Indians tore down their tepees from in front of it in their last march westward. The last conference of the Indian tribes was held near the mountain when Alexander McCallie, half-breed chief of the Creek Indians, was sent to New York in 1796 to sign a treaty with the United States government.

HARDY SPANISH adventurers under Hernando De Soto visited Stone Mountain in 1539. Stone Mountain was



A striking view of Stone Mountain, showing the great rock towering above the tops of the trees in the foreground. The monument and the Candler building, seventeenth

standing almost exactly as it stands today when Columbus first sighted land in the West Indies in 1492. Practically unchanged, this vast monolith was standing when the Saracens were driven back from France by Charles Martel at Tours. When the Caesars swept over Europe, when Christ was born in Bethlehem, when the writing appeared on the walls in ancient Babylon, when the mighty hosts of Xerxes crossed ponderously over the Hellespont, when Ramses I. built an empire on the Nile, old Stone Mountain stood, almost unchanged from its present shape, towering high above the present plains around it.

Indians looked upon Stone Mountain with superstitious awe. From earliest

times it has been a conspicuous object on the horizon. In the early history of Georgia it was called "Rock Mountain," and Dr. Sherwood, who wrote the famous Gauteer, was the first to call it by its proper name, "Stone Mountain." At one time a tower, 165 feet high, was erected on its crest by Aaron Cleod but it fell long ago, "a prey to the storms," as one writer puts it.

In Dr. Lucian Lamar Knight's "Georgia's Landmarks, Memorials and Legends," it is stated that there was a settlement at Stone Mountain long before there was a house built at Deatur and Deatur in many years older than Atlanta. As early as 1835 a stage coach line ran from Milledgeville to Stone Mountain by way of Madison and Kolston. Another line ran from Stone Mountain to Athens, Tenn. Even in those days Stone Mountain was an object of keen interest to tourists from all parts of the state and from the other states then in existence.

GEOLOGISTS are of the opinion that Stone Mountain has existed in its present shape for millions of years. Dr. S. W. McCallie, one of the foremost geologists in America and head of the geological department of Georgia, probably knows more about Stone Mountain than any other one man. Dr. McCallie declares that the granite knob projecting above the earth known now as Stone Mountain was forced through a weak

spot in the earth's crust by some convulsion of nature millions of years ago. He said the granite which forms Stone Mountain is a much more recent rock than the rock surrounding the mountain.

Stone Mountain is nearly seven miles in circumference at its base. This mass of granite was forced up through the rock, consisting of schists and gneisses, and originally formed the inner base of a very high mountain. The gneisses and schists which were bent upward and once formed the top of the high mountain are several million years old, according to Dr. McCallie. The granite of which Stone Mountain is formed is probably between 5,000,000 and 5,000,000 years old.

Granite of various ages and kinds is found in spots underneath the earth's crust in the territory now occupied by the city of Atlanta. These granites also are underneath the earth's crust in the territory between Atlanta and Stone Mountain on the east and between Atlanta and the Chattahoochee river on the

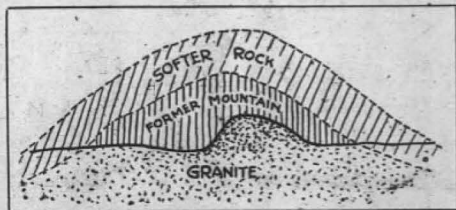


Diagram showing the present mountain as it pushes itself above the rockbed of the plateau; the former mountain of granite and the softer rock, which is believed to have surmounted the former mountain of granite.

TWO LINE REPRESENTS THE BASE OF STONE MOUNTAIN—IT IS NINE MILES IN CIRCUMFERENCE AT THE BASE