

Five-and-Half Ton Stone on Columba, Missouri, Memorial Causes Difficulty

MAY 30 - 1935 -

The large stone which is being erected at the intersection of Ninth Street and Conley Avenue by the Daughters of the Confederacy as a memorial to the Confederate soldiers has caused both much speculation and toil.

The stone, sitting on a little concrete base, weighs five and a half tons. It is a granite boulder, coming from Graniteville, Mo. The Orscheln Brothers Truck Lines was responsible for the task of moving it.

"It was a hard job to load and unload that rock," said Ben Blaser, supervisor and the one to whom O. S. Sigler sublet the contract. "It took us a whole day to lower it on its foundation."

When taken off the truck it was facing the wrong direction. The rock had to be turned through 180 degrees to face in the right direction. The terrific task of revolving those five and a half tons of gran-

ite on that small base was accomplished by iron rollers and two giant jacks. Should the rock fall, the danger of death was imminent, since human heads were under it to see that the rollers were placed correctly, and jackmen were raising one corner an inch at a time.

Nute Coates, the 74-year-old youngster, manipulated the point and mash hammer as accurately and nimbly as if he were a boy. Nute has worked on most of the buildings on the campus. His latest "big job" was on the Memorial Tower. This was work on limestone, an easy rock to work with. The big stone was red granite, however, and with such a brittle rock care must be taken always to judge properly the grain of the rock.

But Nute doesn't miss. He executed his work with precision and accuracy, and the rock was shaped to fit its foundation.