



Tablet in Washington Monument.

p. 1

The Cherokee council in 1849 made provision for the presentation to the Washington Monument Association of a properly inscribed block of Cherokee marble, to be placed in the great shaft in course of construction at the national capital in honor of the first president of the United States. The block was taken from a deposit in the southeast section of the Cherokee Nation, but it was not immediately prepared and forwarded to its contemplated destination. In 1852, however, the offering was sent to the monument association and was ultimately placed within the monument. "The Cherokee Nation, 1852" is inscribed upon the well-finished and polished block. Members of Cherokee delegations, and others who have visited the city of Washington in past years have spoken of seeing the Cherokee marble as they ascended the interior of the great monument on the Potomac. As related long ago by Judge R. W. Walker, a white man from North Carolina, whose wife was a Cherokee, he, as a young man in 1849, recently arrived in the Cherokee Nation, assisted in taking the block of marble from a place in the hill country. During many years engaged in the practice of law in the Cherokee Nation, R. W. Walker, some years before the dissolution of the Cherokee government, was selected to serve as chief justice of the Cherokee supreme court. He was the first and only white man to be elevated to the position.

There is a vast deposit of marble in the region from which the block was taken in 1849. A number of tombstones and monuments have been made from the Cherokee marble, more particularly in the early period, by stone masons of considerable skill in polishing the stone and in chiseling inscriptions.

Of interest would be the name of the man who prepared the block for the Washington monument, but his name is not now remembered, though it may be preserved in some forgotten document.