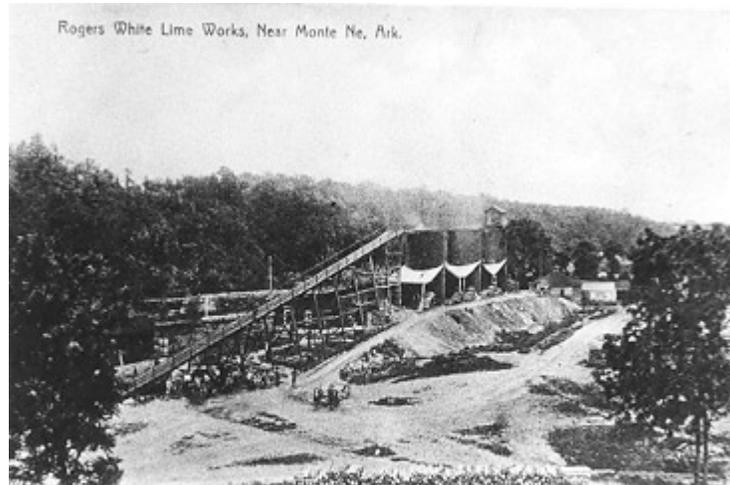


Photo of the Month

Mining in Northwest Arkansas



Rogers White Lime Works
Monte Ne, Arkansas
c.1910s
Neg. # 007873
Rogers Historical Museum

Is there gold in Benton County? Well, yes, and lead, zinc, and copper as well! The geology of Northwest Arkansas, with its layers of sedimentary rock and its numerous caves, gave birth to the hope that mineral wealth was to be found here. Throughout the years, prospectors and investors have tapped into the richness of these Ozark hills, extracting gold, copper, limestone, coal, and a variety of other minerals. Success, though, can be hard to come by. While some ventures were merely dreams, others proved more prosperous. In the end, lime and silica showed the true wealth of the land.

Pictured at right is an image of Rogers White Lime Works near Monte Ne in the 1910s. This processing facility was just one of many such industries in the area. Tons of raw materials have been processed locally over the years for use in agricultural, building, and finishing products.

Limestone is abundant in Northwest Arkansas and in Benton County especially. Limestone kilns were operated in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries in Rogers and Garfield. Much of the limestone in Benton County is from the Boone Chert. Limestone was responsible for approximately \$100,000 of the annual income of Benton County during the first decade of the 20th Century.

Dolomite is also a common mineral in Benton County and was heavily mined in the 1920s and 1930s. It is commonly used in soil fertilizer. Likewise, Tripoli is another common Benton County mineral. Used as an abrasive material, it is derived from and much like the crystalline compound silica. Rogers is home to the most extensive and thickest deposits of Tripoli in Arkansas and our silica industry produced large quantities of this mineral for use in rubbing and buffing agents, paints, glass, and concrete.

These minerals found in the Ozark Mountains remain important to the economy of Northwest Arkansas. According to data from the US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Mines, Washington and Benton Counties continue to maintain a concentrated crushed stone mining center in the Northeastern and Southeastern corners of the counties, respectively.