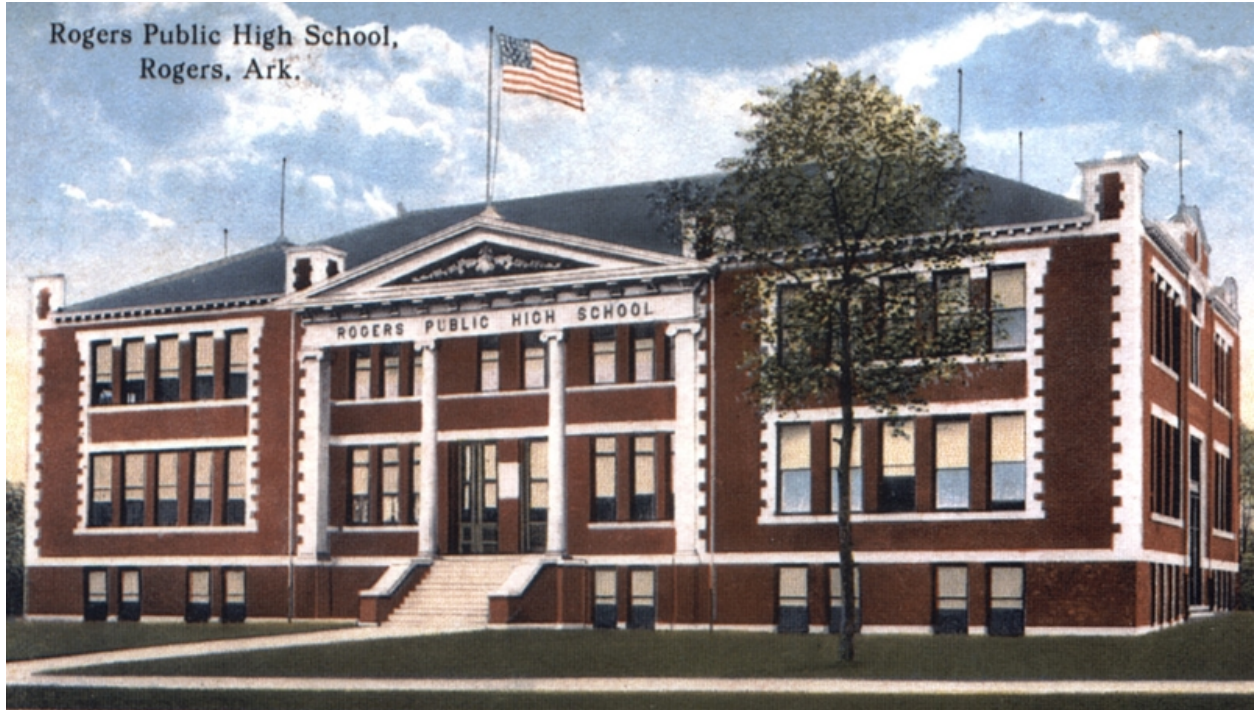


Donation of the Month

Rogers High School Dedication Stone



Rogers Public High School



Rogers High School Dedication Stone, 1911 2004.17.1
Donated by James and Kay Matthew

Written In Stone

Bricks and stones often mean very little by themselves but when you realize what they were once a part of, they become pieces of a rich history. This large slab of grey limestone is the dedication stone from the Rogers Public High School building which opened on Walnut Street in November of 1911. Placed prominently between its front doors, the stone was engraved with the names of the school's Board of Directors as well as the architects and contractor who designed and built the school.

The two-story building was designed by noted architect A.O. Clarke, who created many of the landmark buildings in early Rogers. J. A Fraser, of Rogers, served as contractor. The school building, made of brick, cost \$32,000 to build and opened with an enrollment of 698 students!

Other key players in the school's construction were Frank, Zeke, and John Matthew. The Matthew brothers were brick masons who apprenticed under J.J. Barnett, a master brick mason of Rogers. The brothers made brick for buildings in Rogers, Bentonville, and Springdale, many designed by A.O. Clarke.

The brick made in Rogers was typically soft brick. Sometimes the brick was made right on the building site, but often the bricks were pressed and baked in nearby brickyards.

The Barnett brickyard was located on North Second Street in Rogers. Bricks and stone were laid with

sand (from the White River) and lime mortar.

The finished Rogers High School building was home to 49 graduating classes, the last of which was in 1960. In 1961, the second Rogers High School was opened on Mountie Boulevard. After the first Rogers High School building was torn down in 1968, the old bricks and stones were probably used for other projects. The dedication stone, however, found its way to the family of John Matthew, who kept the stone that commemorated the Matthew brothers' work in building the first Rogers High School. More than just a stone, it is a symbol of progress, hard work, and pride in a well-earned history.

CREDITS

"Turn of the century architect: One man designed city's most notable buildings," from the Northwest Arkansas Morning News, May 25, 1986. Lynn Atkins, "Old school has rich history," from the Rogers Hometown News, March 22, 2000. Donor file and Research Library files, Rogers Historical Museum.