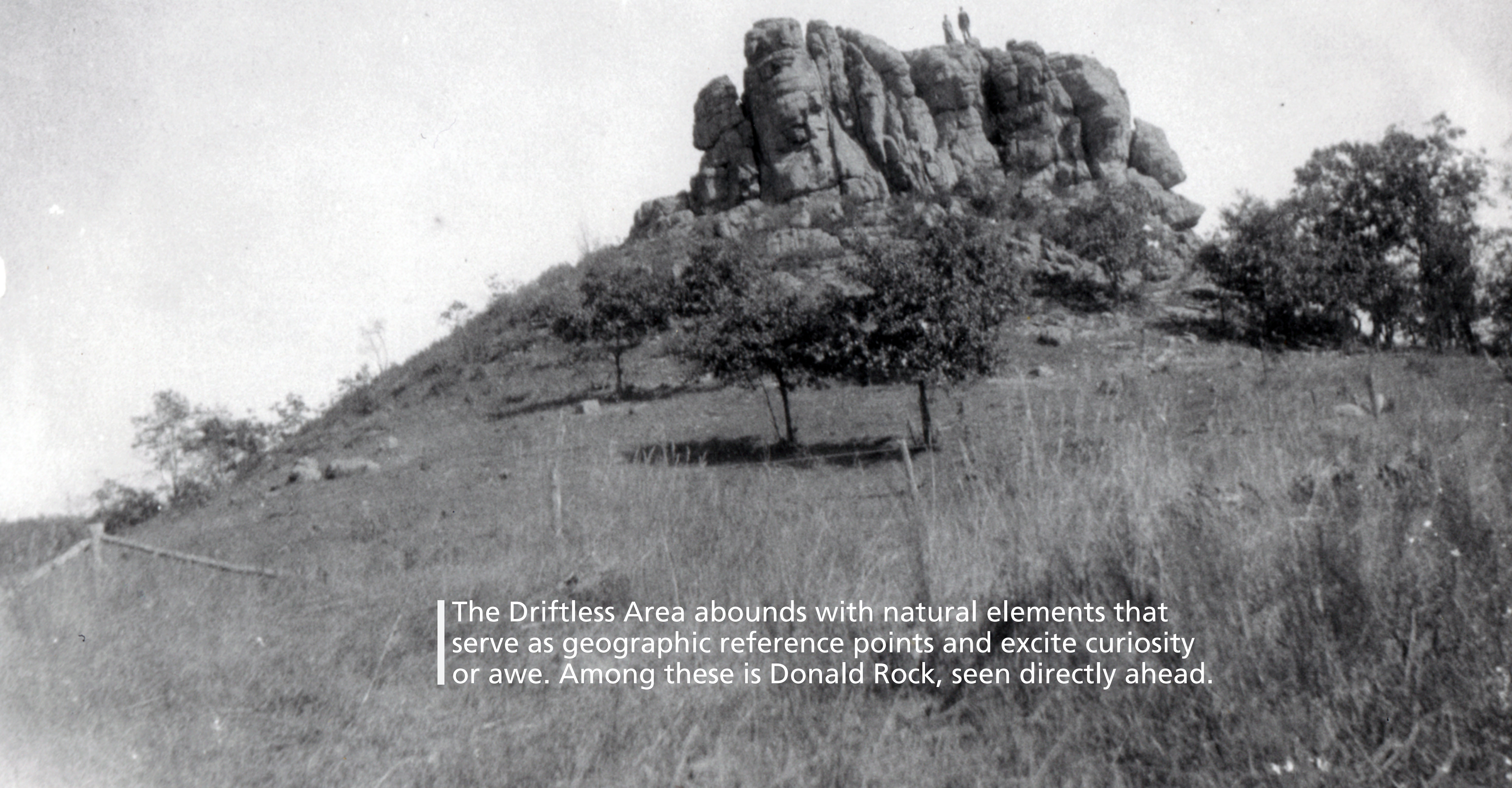


# Donald Rock: centuries-old travelers' landmark



The Driftless Area abounds with natural elements that serve as geographic reference points and excite curiosity or awe. Among these is Donald Rock, seen directly ahead.

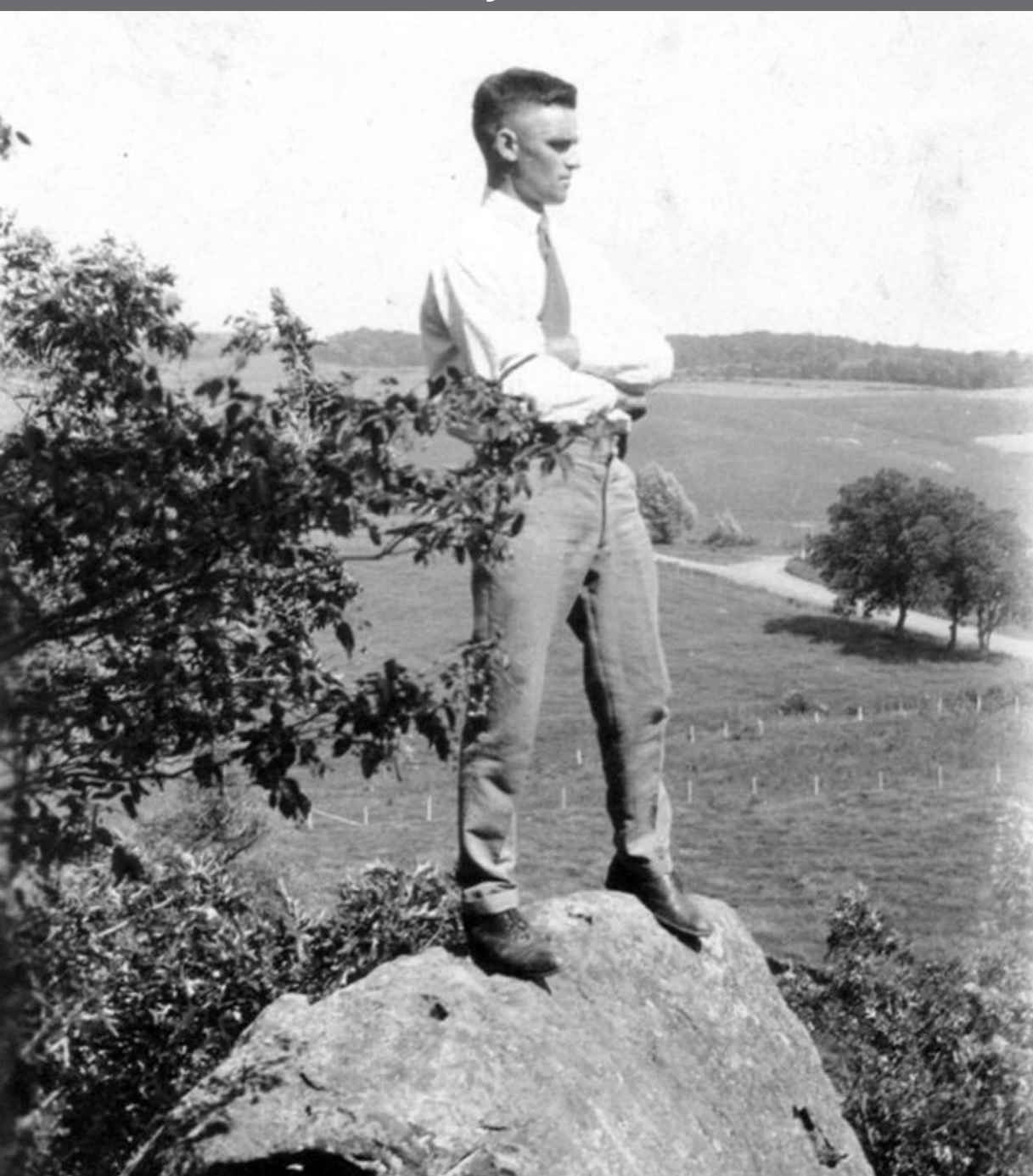


◀ While traveling the area with his camera and wagon darkroom in the 1870s, Norwegian immigrant Andreas Dahl (1844-1923) took the first photographs of this formation, which was then called McCord Rock or Preacher's Cap.

▼ Donald Rock was depicted in a somewhat idealized landscape in American Regionalist painter John Steuart Curry's *Rockview Farm*, 1940.



Albert Marty stands atop Donald Rock in the early 1920s.



## DONALD ROCK HAS CAPTIVATED PEOPLE FOR CENTURIES

Years ago, this prominent formation could be seen from a great distance. Rising above a largely treeless landscape, it served as an important directional landmark for generations of travelers.

Beginning in the 19th century, many people found the rock an impressive form to paint or photograph. By the late 19th century, it was sometimes called Picture Rock because people frequently posed here for photographs after the camera became widely available.

In the past, those who scaled Donald Rock's heights enjoyed a commanding view of the countryside. By the late 20th century, trees shrouded the once-prominent formation. Today, Friends of Donald Park volunteers work to remove overgrowth so that the striking form is visible again. There is no longer access to the rock, due to the need to protect sensitive vegetation and soil.

## HOW WAS DONALD ROCK FORMED?

Donald Rock is composed of an erosion-resistant block of St. Peter Formation sandstone. Millions of years ago, continental seas covering this area retreated. The rock became isolated as overlying rocks and the surrounding softer sandstone gradually wore away.

☐ Please visit the Friends website at [donaldpark.org](http://donaldpark.org) for information about area geology.

**IMAGE CREDITS** Donald Rock: Mount Horeb Area Historical Society. Andreas Dahl: Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-26131. *Rockview Farm*: Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Gift in memory of Professor James G. Woodburn and Delma Donald Woodburn, 2004.77. Albert Marty: Marty Family Collection.