

The Desirability of Medina Sandstone



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THIS prospectus has been compiled to bring to the attention of individual contractors and municipalities the desirability of Medina sandstone for use in new construction and replacement projects. This stone is found almost exclusively in Orleans County, New York, and there are quarries in or near the Villages of Albion, Holley and Medina along the route of The Erie Canal. The stone takes its name from the last named Village as it was near there that operations were originally begun. There are over 50 quarries in the County and the supply of valuable stone appears to be inexhaustible.

Quarrying operations started shortly after the Civil War on a relatively large commercial scale. With very little advertising Medina stone was soon recognized by the State and City engineers as a high grade paving material. From 1880 to 1917, on the merits of the stone alone the industry obtained markets for its products in the principal cities of New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. Many testimonials were received from eminent engineers, architects, and contractors, attesting to the beauty and durability of the Medina sandstone. Tests to determine the strength of the stone were conducted in Federal laboratories in Washington, D. C., and Worcester, Mass. These tests showed that the crushing resistance of Medina stone ranges from 21,500 to 29,000 pounds per square inch. By comparison the resistance of the granite in the Bunker Hill monument was 17,700 pounds per square inch. The prosperous stone business in this district was interrupted during the World War due to lack of able man power. Activities were revived in 1920 and continued on successfully until 1930 when, due to the effects of the depression, the quarries were practically idle. This condition still exists, and although there are now some 300 skilled workers available, the industry has not been returned to its former prominence.

Medina sandstone is characterized by its extreme hardness and durability as compared with similar substances and it is devoid of any granite qualities. It can be hewed or split. It will not crack or break like limestone and does not wear smooth and slippery like granite. It is naturally rich in beauty and varies in color from light gray to deep or brownish red with a mixture of different shades. It never fades but seems to grow brighter the

longer it is exposed to the climate. It does not absorb dampness and rapid changes in temperature do not affect it. Frost has no terrors for the Medina stone. The lifetime of the stone for building purposes is not known, as the oldest buildings in which it is used show no sign of disintegration after nearly 100 years.

Medina stone has one quality which is possessed by no other sandstone, limestone, granite, or marble. It is fireproof. For many years Medina stone has been used to line kilns in which limestone is burned into lime. In several buildings where this stone has been used, which have since burned, the Medina stone suffered no damage. According to an old report published for the University of the State of New York in 1890, Medina stone heated to the melting point of copper and suddenly cooled was practically unimpaired, while under the same tests granites, marbles, limestone and other sandstones crumbled at a blow, and their strength was entirely gone.

Medina stone also possesses in the highest degree all the requisites for ideal street work. Superior in strength and crushing strain to most of the granites, it never wears turtle-back, but always wears evenly. It does not scale or flake off and as it will not accept a polish it cannot become smooth or slippery, even in wet or muggy weather. Medina stone will take a close joint, and as a deadener of noise it is almost equal to asphalt. For curbing its great strength and ease of working render it without an equal. Being fireproof, bonfires in the street do not impair or affect it in any way, and this one quality is an important item in saving expense, as many city engineers have found. For platforms, stairways, and crosswalks its evenness of wear and durability make it the most desirable of materials.

As a summary, to all users and prospective users of stone, whether it be for flagging, building, paving or curbing, Medina sandstone offers these outstanding qualities:

It may be had in any dimension.

Its color is rich and will never fade.

Frost or climatic change does not affect it.

It is durable, yet springy enough so that it does not polish.

It is fireproof.

It does not chip or flake but wears evenly.