Little Italy’s Local Stone

Berea Sandstone

- Has coarse sand grains; its buff color weathers to dark brown.
- On the Heights, Berea was quarried where local waterfalls exposed it. Important locales included Cedar-Fairmount, Coventry-Euclid Hts, and Superior-Euclid Hts. Berea Sandstone was preferred for building masonry. Several Berea houses remain in the area. Many Berea monuments lie in Lake View and East Cleveland cemeteries.

Euclid Bluestone

- Has fine sand grains; color ranges from blue-gray to red. Early settlers quarried bluestone at the tops of local road “hills,” such as Cedar, Kinsman, Mayfield, Shaker and Superior. By 1834, the Cedar Hill quarry was sending stone to Euclid Ave on the Quarry Railroad.
- Bluestone also came from the Dugway Brook waterfall areas at current Lake View Cemetery and Forest Hill Park.
- Euclid Bluestone was used primarily for sidewalks, stone walls, parapet copings, and fine millwork including early gravestones.

Little Italy, Set in Stone

Roy Larick, Bluestone Heights

Cleveland’s East Side Heights lies atop two hard rock layers:
- On top is the Berea Sandstone (brown area).
- Below is the Euclid Bluestone (yellow area).
- Below the bluestone lies Little Italy (green & blue area).

Blue ovals = Bluestone quarries. Red = Sandstone quarries.

Little Italy and stone working are closely linked. The district lies below two beds of high quality sandstone. By the late 1870s, Italians worked in local quarries and used the products to fashion infrastructure, buildings, and monuments.

Little Italy had more and retains more worked local stone than any other Cleveland neighborhood. Beautiful examples are to be found on thoroughfares and side streets as well as in neighboring Lake View and East Cleveland Cemeteries.

Come, explore!

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Holy Rosary front basement (rear view), Berea Sandstone, 1901.

Berea Sandstone basements. 12002-04 Paul Street.

Gattozzi store 1924 E 123rd St. Built, 1909, of Berea Sandstone. One of 4 Berea stores built early 1900s.

Grant house, 2203 Cornell Rd. Built 1896, by John Grant, who employed Italians in many building projects. Bought by cardiologist John Barracelli in 1902. In 1985, the house became a restaurant and inn.

Little Italy, Set in Stone
From the 1880s to the 1930s, Little Italy Italians helped build many prominent structures of local stone. These included railroad bridge abutments, industrialist mansions, and cemetery monuments. At home, local stone became part of more moderate features such as house foundations and ornamental moldings. Every Little Italy street holds examples, prominent and tucked away.

Google Earth – railsandtrails.com

Map overlay: G.M. Hopkins Platbook of Cuyahoga Co, 1912
Map underlay: USGS 3m LiDAR

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