

# Take A Driving Tour To Spot Scenes of Early Medina History

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This is a look-see tour. It takes less than an hour to make the tour unless you want to stop and loo around at some of the sites. Or you can look at your leisure whenever you are in the vicinity of the cited spots. Many, fewer residents of Medina may be interested also in some of Medina's past history. Strange as it may seem, there are long-time residents who also have not taken the time to explore their village. Not all places of interest are included in this tour but just some highlights.

You need to start on Paddy's Mill, the name first given to that area across from State Street Bridge that crosses the canal.

1. Drive right to Pleasant St. almost to the end. 214 Pleasant Street is the present residence of the Tomelka-Raymond-Jack families. It is believed to have been built between 1825-1830 and is believed also to be the site where Catholic church services were held by the Irish settlers of that time.

2. You come to Erin Road; turn right and drive down to the end. You can see the Oak Orchard Creek and Glenwood Lake between the trees. A better view of the lake can be seen from Boxwood Cemetery.

3. Turn right on Maple Ave. and then right onto Horan Road back to Pleasant St. Turn right onto Pleasant St. until you come to Laurel. Turn left on Laurel and when you come to the end you will find parking area near the bridge. Get out and walk around. The Medina Falls is located there. This was the site of power for the milling industries when a bridge crossed the early canal at Church St. Some remnants of these buildings can still be seen from the towpath along the canal.

4. Return to State St. and turn left. The Blissett Home is located on the left at the turn in the street. This house was built for Isaac Bennett, a large property owner in the early history of this area. A bridge crossed the canal at this point known as the Bennett Street Bridge and the street ran along the canal north also known as Bennett St. (now Horan Road). This home was a way station for slaves of the underground railroad during the Civil War and afterwards. The room still is a part of this home.

5. Return to Center St. The area east of State St. was an outgrowth of development by W. Mead for whom Mead Avenue was named. On East Center St. at Church is St. John's Episcopal Church, built in 1833 and formerly known as St. Luke's. It is the oldest public building still in use in Medina. It is also in the middle of Church St.

6. Turn right at Church St. and again right on Manilla Place to the end. The sandstone building at the end, now a part of the Maine Lumber Co. property, was once Hedley Mills, one of the first mills in the area, getting its power from the raceway which ran along the street. This building was the first site of a shirt factory known as Beach, Neill and Newell. Newell's finally moved to West Center Street.

7. Continue back on Manilla Place, in back of the Main Street stores to the corner of Main and Mill Sts. The building housing the Medina Parts Co., Inc. was originally the Arcade Building with stores and offices. Later it was converted to the Bancroft House and still later White's Hotel. Early arriving settlers stayed at this hotel and it was a popular meeting place.

8. Continue north on Main Street to the Main Street high bridge to Glenwood Ave. A stone ramp is all that remains on the

east side of the site of the Tucker Foundry, then A. L. Swett Foundry and finally the Central Foundry. Swett sold his interest and built a large foundry across the street known as the A. L. Swett Iron Works. A building on the corner housed the Monitor Clock Works. Current occupant of the building is the Leadex International Corp. Return via Stork Street to North Gravel Road and left to Commercial St. Commercial Street was the western boundary of the first village location.

9. Go to West Ave. On the left is the Acer & Whedon tinshop; one of the oldest frame buildings in Medina, now covered with tin. It is also one of the oldest businesses still operated by family descendants of the original owners.

10. At the corner of West Avenue and Eagle Street is St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church; built in 1902 of Medina pink sandstone and the rectory adjoining of the same stone. This corner block dates to 1835 when it became the possession of the Catholic parish in the village and various buildings were added through the years.

11. Continue south on West Avenue to West Center St. The First Baptist Church on the corner was built in 1872. If you look closely you will note the various shades of sandstone; the front and north side are gray; the south side a pinkish gray.

12. Continue down West Avenue past Hedley Street. Note the many houses with cupolas in this area, a traditional decoration for the early homes in this area. Mr. W. Hedley built the home on the left on the hill now occupied by Dr. Kenneth Clark. He built a home for his son just north of his at 1011 West Avenue now occupied by the Carl Tuohes. Two other homes were built on Hedley Street for his two daughters. In order to do this and form the street that now bears his name, he had to invade the huge park he had created in back of his home known as Deer Park.

13. Across the street at 1018 West Avenue is the Webb home. Note the huge pillars of sandstone and the structure of the porch roof, also of Medina sandstone.

14. Turn right at Highland Ave. to Gwinn Street and turn right again. You pass Gwinn Street Park at the corner of Gwinn and West Oak Orchard Street, the first official public burial ground in Medina.

15. Turn right at Park Avenue. Note the pink sandstone house on the left just before reaching West Ave. This was known as the Beecher Hotel and housed the first Salvation Army workers in this area.

16. Turn left at Main Street. The First Presbyterian Church in the middle of the block was the second religious group formed in Medina. The earlier church burned in 1870 and the present structure replaced it. The first village bell tolled from this church summoning the congregation to church services. The bell also served as fire bell, times to start and finish work hours for the village.

17. Turn left at Main and Center. The building housing Jay's Drug Store was the site of Moore's Tavern, later known as the Paddock House and Medina House, the site of one of the earliest hotels in this area.

18. Opposite Jay's on the right corner is Bent Opera House, of white sandstone; the scene of many glittering early balls, travelling roadshows (comedy and drama); now the site of one of Medina's newest banks, the Liberty National Bank.

In the block from Main to West Avenue on the left is the present home of Newell Shirt Co., an internationally known manufacturer of custom tailored shirts and other men's apparel.

19. Turn right at Proctor Place (one way street). On this street is the site of one of the early blacksmith shops, operated by a Mr. Burchell. John Wochna operated this shop for many years. It presently houses the Grant-Pollard Insurance Co. whose offices have retained much of the color of that building.

20. Go left on Pearl Street to the Armory. This is one of the finest structures of Medina sandstone which was built in 1902 after quite a political hassle. Organization of the 1st Medina militia goes back to 1859 when Col. S. M. Burroughs and R. M. Hill established an arsenal on Walsh Alley.

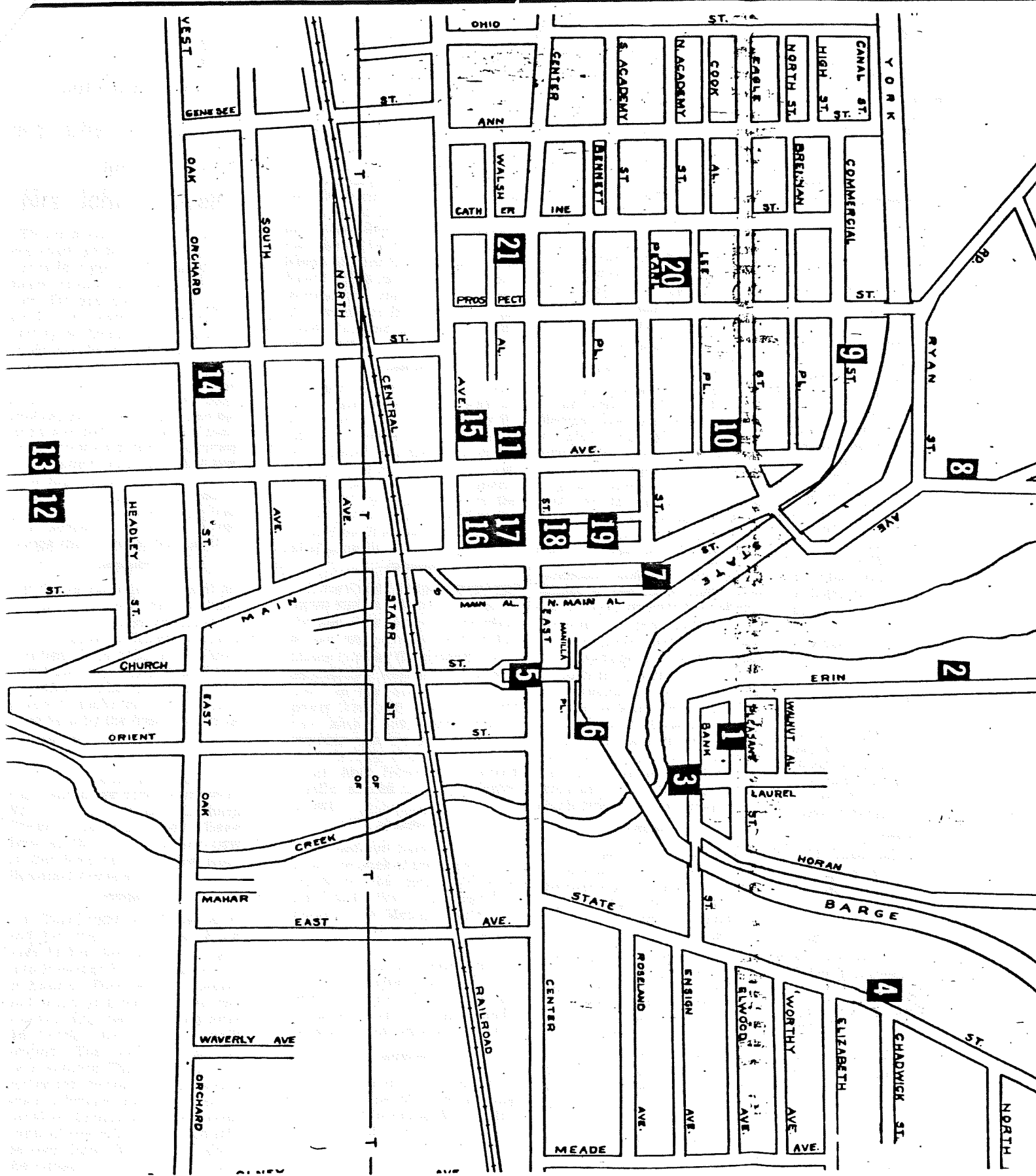
21. Turn left on Catherine to West Center Street. Between Catherine and Main Street are some very representative sandstone homes built in the 1800s.

The house at the southeast corner, pink sandstone, was built for P. Horan, an early Medina settler who fared well in this area; now owned by the Howell family; 321 W. Center St. The home on the right in the middle of the first block east known as the V. A. Acer residence, 309 W. Center St. The Luther home at the corner of Prospect and W. Center Street, northwest; 304 W. Center St.

The Bland residence in the middle of the second block on the right, next to the Christian Science Church; 227 W. Center St. Note how close to the street the Acer and Bland residences are now, since the street was broadened.

The Gregory home with its Ionic columns at 215 W. Center St.

If you'd like to drive out the North Gravel Road you will see a fine old home at the bend (to the left) with large barns. This was the home of William H. Watson, a prominent banker and civic leader in the 1800s. The Boxwood Cemetery just beyond at the right has been village owned since 1849 when purchased from private interests for \$600. Bodies were removed from the Gwinn St. cemetery and placed in this area. If you drive down the road at the right entrance to the end you will get a good view of Glenwood Lake; the dam in the Creek used for early power. As you turn to the left at the opposite end are the tombstones of those early settlers buried there.



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HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SCENES IN MEDINA, N. Y.

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1. 214 Pleasant St. built between 1825 and 1830
2. 203 State St. way station for slaves of the underground rail road during the Civil War, built by Isaac Bennett
3. Buildings at the back of Maine Lumber Co. was once Hedley Mills and also first site of the Beach, Neill & Newell Shirt Factory
4. Medina Parts Co. building was once the Arcade Building, then later the Bancroft House and then White's Hotel
5. Acer & Whedon tinshop one of the oldest frame buildings
6. 1018 West Ave. Webb home made of Medina sandstone
7. Dr. Clark's home on West Ave. built by W. Hedley
8. 204 Park Ave. was once the Beecher Hotel it's made of pink sand stone
9. Main & Center Sts. where Jay's Drugs was once Moore's Tavern, the Paddock House, and later the Medina House, the site of one of the earliest hotels in this area
10. Liberty National Bank at Main & Center Sts. was the Bent Opera House of white sandstone
11. Grant-Pollard Ins. building on Proctor Place was an early blacksmith shop operated by Mr. Burchell and later by John Wochna
12. Pearl St. the Armory was built in 1902, first Medina Milita goes back to 1859
13. 321 West Center St. pink sandstone building built by P. Horan
14. 309 West Center St. sandstone home of V. A. Acer
15. 304 West Center St. and corner of Prospect, the Luther home
16. Christian Science Church 227 West Center St.
17. 215 West Center St. Gregory home has Ionic columns
18. East Center & Church Sts. St. Johns Church built in 1833
19. Presbyterian Church on South Main St. second oldest religious group formed in Medina in 1829
20. West ave. & Eagle St. St. Mary's R C Church built in 1902
21. West Ave. & West Center Sts. Baptist Church built in 1872 of gray sandstone
22. West Center St. Methodist Church
23. West Ave. the two Luthern Churches, St. Peter's & Trinity
24. Sacred Heart Catholic Church at 208 Ann St.
25. Views of Glenwood Lake & Medina Falls, Erin Rd. & Laural St.