

# Cement and Concrete; Mortar and Plaster

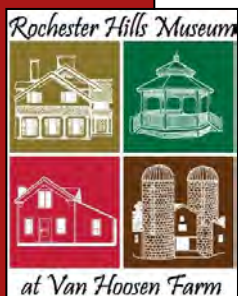
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So, what's the difference? Cement is a limestone (calcium carbonate) with clay and or shale. When added to sand and rocks it's called concrete. The addition of water causes the chemical reaction "hydration" which allows it to harden. Material from the Big Barn contains large pieces of aggregate making it concrete. Before 1920, concrete was used commercially or as brick mortar for residences.

Mortar and concrete are also very similar; it's a difference in particle size. Mortar is made with sand. If money was available, it would be used to hold rocks together in footings and basements.

Plaster on the other hand is made from gypsum (calcium sulfate). Instead of using aggregate, straw (late 1660s to 1790) or hair (horse, cow, and deer) may be used to bind the material together resulting in a very fine grained substance that could be placed on walls to smooth their surface.

Concrete, mortar, and plaster with hair fibers are part of the Van Hoosen artifacts.



## Bibliography

Remer, Deborah J. "...into the fertile valley of Stony Creek..." 2011. Pages 57-58.