

Meshberger Brothers Stone Corporation

Founded: [ca. 1874 ?]

Location: Originally on the Wabash River, Linn Grove (ca.1874– ); 550 East Road 100 South, Berne (1993)

Sometime in the 1870s David Meshberger established a stone quarry on the Wabash River outside Linn Grove. Meshberger was the son of immigrants from Bern, Switzerland. After his marriage to Jane Heller in 1877, he purchased a forty-acre farm. By 1907 Meshberger owned four hundred acres of the best land in Adams County. His quarry furnished most of the stone used in buildings and roads for many miles around Linn Grove. At the turn of the century Meshberger built a small crusher just east of the river. He died in 1910, after which his widow Jane oversaw the quarry. In 1923 Jane and two of her sons, Harry and Oscar, formed the Meshberger Brothers Stone Company. Harry became president and Jane vice president.

After their mother died in 1927, Harry and Oscar Meshberger purchased the interests of the other heirs and began operating the company as a partnership. The brothers moved the original quarry away from the river to avoid the risk of flooding and acquired additional quarries in Pleasant Hills and Columbus. In January 1946 the brothers divided the company: Oscar became sole owner of the Linn Grove and Pleasant Hills quarries, and Harry assumed control of the Columbus site. Oscar employed fifty-four people and operated twelve trucks.

In 1961 Oscar's son-in-law Ronald D. Fryback began to manage the business. In 1963 the company formed Penn Aggregates, which included a sand and gravel operation in Pennville. A division of the company involved in road construction and the

application of asphalt products branched off as Lica Construction Corporation in 1968.

The company acquired a quarry in Ridgeville in 1973 and one year later quarries in Portland and Fairview. Carolyn S. Fryback, Oscar Meshberger's daughter, later succeeded to the presidency of the company, which operated five stone quarries and four hot mix asphalt plants producing crushed stone, glass stone, mineral filler, fertilizer filler, and pulverized lime.