

"chalcedony | calcedony, n.". *OED Online*. D-cember 2014. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/30251?redirectedFrom=chalcedony&> (accessed M-rch 02, 2015).

chalcedony | calcedony, n.

Pronunciation: /kæl' sɛdɒni/ /'kælsɪdɒni/

Forms: α. ME *calsydoyne*, *calcidoine*; β. ME *chalcedun*, 15–17 *calcedon*, 16–17 *chalcedon*; γ. (ME *calcedonius*), ME *calsydony*, *calcideny*, (15 *chalcedonium*), 16 *calchedonie*, *calsidonie*, *chalcidonye*, ME– *calcedony*, 15– *chalcedony*. See also *CASSIDOINE n.*¹

Etymology: The current form *c(h)alcedony* is directly adapted < Latin *c(h)alcedonius*, used in the Vulgate to render Greek *χαλκηδών*, in *Rev.* xxi. 19, the name of the precious stone forming the third foundation of the New Jerusalem, but found nowhere else. Adapted forms of the same word in Old French were *calce-*, *calcidoine*, whence the Middle English *calcidoine*, *calcedun*; also *cassidoine*, whence Middle English *CASSIDOINE n.*¹ and its varieties, which are separately treated. The 16th cent. *chalcedon* was perhaps directly from N.T. Greek.

The word is of very complicated history. The Latin is commonly assumed to be the same as the adjective *chalcedonius* of Chalcedon in Asia Minor, as if it were 'Chalcedonian stone', but this is very doubtful. In interpreting the name in the Vulgate, which has the variant form *carcedonius*, the early writers identified it with a stone mentioned by Pliny xxvii. §§103, 104, where MSS. have the variants *carchedonia*, *charchedonia*, *calcedonia*, *calchedonia*, *carchedonius*, said to be found in North Africa, and to be brought by way of Carthage (*Καρχηδών*), which, from the description, could have nothing to do with the chalcedony of the moderns. Isidore has *carchedonia*; Epiphanius *de Gemmis* iv, says it is produced *ἐν Καρχηδόνι τῆς Αἰβόνης*. The *carchedonius* or *chalcedonius* is mentioned and moralized upon by a whole catena of writers, including especially Bæda; but to none of them was it more than a traditional name, about which there clustered notions originally derived from Pliny with an accretion of later fables. The first to try to identify it with any known stone was apparently Albertus Magnus (1205–1282), who may have had in view some form of the stone to which the name is now given. (See the exhaustive article of Schade *Altdeutsches Wbuch*. 1363.)

A precious (or semi-precious) stone, which in its various tints is largely used in lapidary work: a cryptocrystalline subspecies of quartz (a true quartz, with some disseminated opal-quartz), having the lustre nearly of wax, and being **either transparent or translucent**. It is not safe to carry the modern application back before the 16th or at earliest the 15th c.; and references to earlier notions come down to the 17th. In modern lapidary work, chalcedony receives different names according to its varieties of colour and structure, as **agate**, *cornelian*, *cat's eye*, *chrysoprase*, *onyx*, *sard*, etc. Most of the varieties were included by Pliny under his *jaspis*. (Westropp.)

1393 J. GOWER *Confessio Amantis* III. 133 The calcidoine..for his stone he underfongeth.

c1400 (?c1380) *Pearl* l. 1002 Þe calsydoyne..withouten wemme.

β.

c1305 *Land Cokaygne* 94 in *Early Eng. Poems & Lives Saints* (1862) 158 Ametist and crisolite, Chalcedun and epetite.

1555 R. EDEN tr. Peter Martyr of Angleria *Decades of Newe Worlde* III. v. f. 115, Precious stones cauled Smaragdes, calcidones, and Iaspers.

1586 J. FERNE *Blazon of Gentry* 142 A Calcedon is the fifth stone, being most strong and hard by nature, instructing the Soueraigne that he exercise the cardinall vertue Fortitude.

1648 T. GAGE *Eng.-Amer.* (1655) xii. 53 Adorned with Emeralds, Turquies, Chalcedons. 1686 *London Gaz.* No. 2116/4 A great Calcedon truly Oriental of a Foot long, and half a Foot broad.

1747 R. DINGLEY in *Philos. Trans.* (Royal Soc.) 44 503 Of the Beryl there are three species, the Red..the

Yellow..and the **White, commonly called the Chalcedon, of the Colour of sheer Milk,**

attrib.

1644 J. EVELYN *Mem.* (1857) I. 98 In another [cabinet] with calcedon pillars, was a series of golden medals.

γ.

1382 *Bible (Wycliffite. E.V.)* Rev. xxi. 19 The thridde, calcedonyus [1526 Tindale, calcedony; 1557 *Genev.* chalcedony].

1398 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomew de Glanville *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (1495) XVI. xxvii. 561 Calcidonius is a pale stone and sheweth dymme colour meane bytwene Berell and Iacynct and comyth and is gendred of the reyne of our lorde.

c1460 *Play Sacram.* 171 Crepawdis & calcedonyes semely to se.

1463 in S. Tymms *Wills & Inventories Bury St. Edmunds* (1850) 41 My bedys of calsydony.

?1484 M. PASTON in *Paston Lett. & Papers* (2004) I. 388 My peir bedys of calcidenys gaudied with siluer and gilt.

1621 R. BURTON *Anat. Melancholy* II. IV. I. iv. 442 There is a kind of Onyx called a Chalcedonye.

1688 R. HOLME *Acad. Armory* II. 40/1 The Calcedon or Calchedonie..being well chafed & warmed, will draw a Straw or a Rush to it. [From Pliny.]

1756 tr. J. G. Keyssler *Trav.* I. 458 Pieces of agate, jasper, oriental chalcedony.

1833 C. LYELL *Princ. Geol.* III. 222 Opal calcedony, resinous silex.

1855 H. W. LONGFELLOW *Hiawatha* IV. 62 Arrow-heads of chalcedony, Arrow-heads of flint and jasper.

1861 C. W. KING *Antique Gems* (1866) 7 Calcedony..is a semi-transparent white quartz, slightly tinted with yellow or blue.

1876 D. PAGE *Adv. Text-bk. Geol.* (ed. 6) vii. 146 Many of the older lavas yield agates, chalcedony, leucite.