

376886 37th Line, Zorra



Location: Lot 31 West,
Concession 5,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage
Notable features:
Classic proportions
Construction date:
between 1854-1861
Original owner:
Hugh Matheson, 1794-
1861
Stone Mason:
Hugh Matheson, 1794-
1861

2022 west elevation

376886 37th Line, Zorra



circa 1940s south elevation



2022 south elevation

Hugh Matheson (1794-1861) & his wife Janet McKay (1800-1864) came to West Zorra with their children in 1835 from Rogart, Sutherland, Scotland; their trip by ship took 12 weeks. In 1854, they received the deed for the west 100 acres on Lot 31. The 1851 Census of Canada documents the family living in a log cabin. It is believed that Hugh built the house from stones found clearing the land for farming. The couple had a family of eleven children: John (1820-1907), James King (1821-1907), Marrion (1824-Deceased), Neal (1826-1870), Angus (1828-1883), Isabella (1830-Deceased), Mary (1833-Deceased), Elizabeth (1835-1894), Jane (1838-Deceased), William (1839-1847), George (1844-Deceased). On the death of Hugh, the stone house passed to his son, Angus (1828-1883). In 1878, Angus sold to William Wadland (1836-1900) & Thomasena Rowe (1832-1901), and they farmed here until their deaths. The school on the corner of their farm came to be called Wadland's.

376886 37th Line, Zorra



Built in the manner of early stone houses, the Matheson Ontario Farmhouse Cottage is an example of snecked rubble masonry: stones are roughly dressed and laid in courses. Snecked rubble features stones of varying sizes with small supporting fillers or snecks between them. The house façade displays an example of raised ribbon style mortar work, perhaps a later repointing restoration. Extremely even blocks were created by the stone mason, with proportionate corner stones. The replacement windows are in the six-over-six pane pattern & reflect what may have once existed originally.

2022 north & west elevation

376886 37th Line, Zorra

Lintels and window sills are quarried limestone, which arrived by wagon from St. Marys. Limestone is relatively soft and can more readily be shaped into precise blocks that window encasements demand. The gracious front door is highlighted by side lights & a transom window, letting light into the front hallway. The lintel above the door is composed of carefully selected stones shaped & tightly set vertically. Window sills were fashioned from wood, replaced with limestone at a later date. The detailed deep eaves and returns provide accent to the side elevation.

The original roof may have been wood shake shingles. Elegant, twin stone chimneys still ornament the roof. A wood frame tail section likely accommodates the kitchen & pantry.

The Matheson stone house went on to be owned by the Innes family and later the McCorquodale family, who are continuing to preserve & maintain the stone house to this day.

2022 north elevation



414774 41st Line, Zorra



Location: Lot 19 West,
Concession 2,
North Oxford
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Georgian
Notable features:
Victorian elements
Construction date:
between 1854-1861
Original owner:
Henry William Nelles,
1814-1873
Stone Mason:
unknown

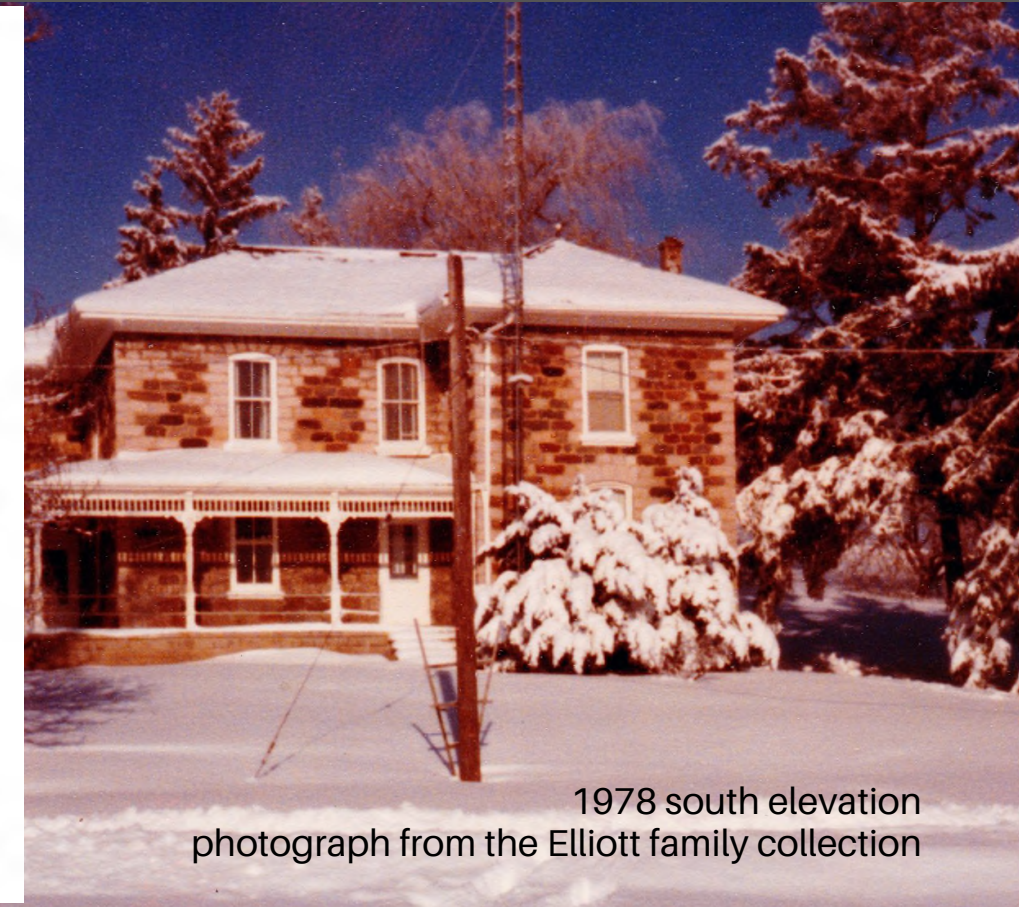
2022 south elevation

414774 41st Line, Zorra

circa 1950 south elevation
photograph from the Elliott family collection



E. A. NELLES,
DEALER IN
DRY GOODS,
FAMILY GROCERIES,
Boots and Shoes,
HARDWARE, CROCKERY, PATENT MEDICINES,
And all other articles usually kept in a general Store. The Stock is well select-
ed, and the best of goods will always be sold at living profits.
COAL OIL AND LAMPS.
PRODUCE TAKEN IN EXCHANGE.
E. A. NELLES, Beachville.



1978 south elevation
photograph from the Elliott family collection

Lathrop Green (1803-1899) acquired Lot 19 in 1853 and is shown living in a log house in 1861. The 1861 Census of Canada documents the Henry William Nelles (1814-1873) family living in a two storey stone house on part Lot 19. Henry William, gentleman, is living with his sisters: Catherine Priscilla (1823-1825) & Nancy Rosannah (1834-1892). Brother Elijah Alonzo (1829-1900) had a general store in Beachville, as advertised in 1862 Directory of Oxford. It is difficult to document who might have commissioned the stone house to be built. The farm was later acquired in 1876 by Thomas Downing from Lathrop Green. Thomas Downing is described by the 1871 Census as a lime burner, and may have been looking for a larger house for his family of eight children, adjacent to his nearby lime quarry.

414774 41st Line, Zorra



1950s south & west elevation photograph from the Elliott family collection

The farm and stone house that Thomas Downing, Jr. (1847-1911) bought from his father, Thomas Sr., (1818-1881) in 1888, housed him until his death in 1911, when it was sold to the Elliott family. In 1959, it was bought by Domtar.

Ingersoll Chronicle & Canadian Dairyman

Dec 28 1911

THOMAS DOWNING DEAD--The death of Mr. Thomas Downing, of North Oxford [township], occurred yesterday afternoon after a lingering illness. The late Mr. Downing had been a resident of the township for many years and had always merited the esteem of all with whom he came in contact. He was in his 65th year and is survived by a widow, two sons and a daughter. The funeral will take place from his late residence, Lot 2, Concession 19 on Saturday and proceed to the Ingersoll Rural Cemetery. Service at the house at 1:30 o'clock

414774 41st Line, Zorra



2022 west elevation

The Nelles Ontario Farmhouse Georgiran stone house has a pleasing façade, with carefully chosen stones, evenly distributed for their colour and carefully crafted into similar sizes. Hand wrought lintels were fashioned from carefully shaped arching limestones, highlighting windows & doors. Limestone quoining surrounding windows further accentuates this element. The limestone corner blocks are evenly hewn and of a size corresponding to the stones in the field & also form a quoining pattern. The current windows speak to the Victorian era & perhaps once were six over six paned. The original roof was crafted of slate, lasting until the 1990s.

414774 41st Line, Zorra

The house was initially rectangular in shape with a protrusion on the east side front, a later addition to the north side became a new kitchen area and gave the house a symmetrical look from the front.

There was no basement in the older part of the house but a basement was constructed in the new north portion.

The house was abandoned for a few years in the early 1990s before the present owners completely renovated and modernized the structure.

--Glenn Elliott

The Nelles stone house has a Victorian asymmetrical aesthetic, with deep eaves & soffits, as well as decorative wooden wrap around porch. In 1861, it likely had a more balanced, square, Georgian appearance.

The house stands in a park-like setting, with many original black walnut trees.

Current owners, the Lussier family, maintain the stone house with great care & attention to heritage preservation.



2022 east elevation

415448 41st Line, Zorra



2022 south elevation

Location: Lot 8 West,
Concession 6,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage
Notable features:
Elegant proportions
Construction date:
before 1861
Original owner:
George Campbell,
1797-1870
Stone Mason:
unknown

415448 41st Line, Zorra

1956 east & south elevation



2022 east & south elevation



George Campbell (1797-1870) was born in Sutherlandshire, Scotland. He emigrated to Zorra with his wife, Marion Murray (1812-1848), before 1838. The West Zorra Tax Collector's Roll documents George Campbell (1797-1870) paying tax on Lot 8 in 1850. The 1851 Census of Canada indicates that Marion had passed away and the family was living in a log house. The 1861 Census of Canada shows George living as widower of 62 years of age, with his adult children in a stone house: Margaret (1833-1889), Janet (1835-1910), Alexander Murray (1838-1917), John B. (1842-1925), Ellen (1843-1916).

415448 41st Line, Zorra



2022 east elevation

The Campbell Ontario Farmhouse Cottage has a pleasing façade, with carefully chosen stones, evenly distributed for their colour and carefully crafted into similar sizes. Hand wrought stones comprise lintels over the windows, originally perhaps with wooden sills. The corner blocks are evenly hewn and of a size corresponding to the stones in the field. The façade masonry is comprised of smaller rubble stones, brought to courses with mortar, with smaller sneck stones supporting the construction. The masonry on the side elevations is an example of un-coursed random rubble stone masonry. It is the roughest and the cheapest form of stonewalling. Since field stones are not of uniform shape and size, they are arranged with great care so as to distribute pressure over the maximum area and at the same time avoid long vertical joints. What was once an original door with a wood lintel, can be seen at left, now interpreted into a large window.

415448 41st Line, Zorra

The replacement windows mimic what were likely original six over six paned.

Proportionately smaller windows make up those on the second storey. The original roof was crafted of wooden shake shingles. Twin brick chimneys grace the roofline.

The front door is framed by a transom window & side lights, supported by a distinctively-shaped oxbow wood lintel. In a unique detail, a tiny window hovers above the door. It would have provided light to the upper floor bedrooms and a vantage point to view the approach to the house.

A wood frame addition extends to the east, likely providing kitchen & pantry space, complete with an elegant porch.



2022 west elevation

417024 41st Line, Zorra

Location: Lot 33 West,
Concession 6,
West Zorra

Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage

Notable features:
Raised Ribbon Mortar
Construction date:
before 1861

Original owner:
William Murray, 1820-
1912

Stone Mason:
William Murray, 1820-
1912



2022 south elevation

417024 41st Line, Zorra



1972 aerial looking north east



William Murray, 1820-1912

William Murray (1820-1912) was born in Dornoch, Sutherland, Scotland. He married Elizabeth 'Betsy' Rose Ross (1816-1906) in 1842. The couple emigrated to Zorra with their first born son, William Jr. (1843-1843) who sadly died that summer, shortly after their arrival. William acquired Lot 33 in 1856. The 1861 Census of Canada documents the Murray family living in a stone house. William & Betsy went on to have eleven more children: 'Elsie' Elspet (1844-1931), James (1845-1930), Marion (1846-1917), Mary Ann (1847-1947), Isabella Mable (1848-1934), John William (1849-1914), Georgiana (1851-1852), Robert George (1853-1939), Donald 'Dan' (1855-1915), Hugh Alexander (1856-1934), Maria Christina (1860-1932).

William Murray built the stone house, which is still standing, and the barn. He lived here until 1896, when he made a trip to Scotland, later coming back to Canada to retire. Mr. Murray, who was known as 'Swamp William', sold the farm in 1896.
Brooksdale WI Tweedsmuir History

417024 41st Line, Zorra

The Murray Ontario Farmhouse Cottage façade is an example of masonry comprised of smaller rubble stones, brought to courses with mortar, with smaller sneck stones supporting the construction. Hand wrought stones comprise lintels over the windows, originally perhaps with wooden sills. The corner blocks are evenly hewn and of a size corresponding to the stones in the field. . The masonry on the side elevations is an example of roughly coursed random rubble stone masonry. Since field stones are not of uniform shape and size, they are arranged with great care so as to distribute pressure over the maximum area and at the same time avoid long vertical joints. The mortar work on the house is done in the raised ribbon style, likely a later restoration.



2022 east elevation

417024 41st Line, Zorra



2022 west elevation

The replacement windows mimic what were likely original six over six paned. Proportionately smaller windows make up those on the second storey, original lintels having been replaced upon new window installation. The original roof was crafted of wooden shake shingles and has now transitioned to metal. Twin brick chimneys once bookended the roofline.

The front door was once much larger and likely had a transom window & sidelights, as evidenced by the double lintel now apparent in the façade.

A wood frame addition extends to the north, likely providing kitchen & pantry space.

435751 43rd Line, Zorra

Location: Lot 13 East,
Concession 6,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival
Notable features:
Uniform field stones
Construction date:
after 1861
Original owner:
Alexander Campbell,
1846-1930
Stone Mason:
unknown



2022 east elevation

435751 43rd Line, Zorra



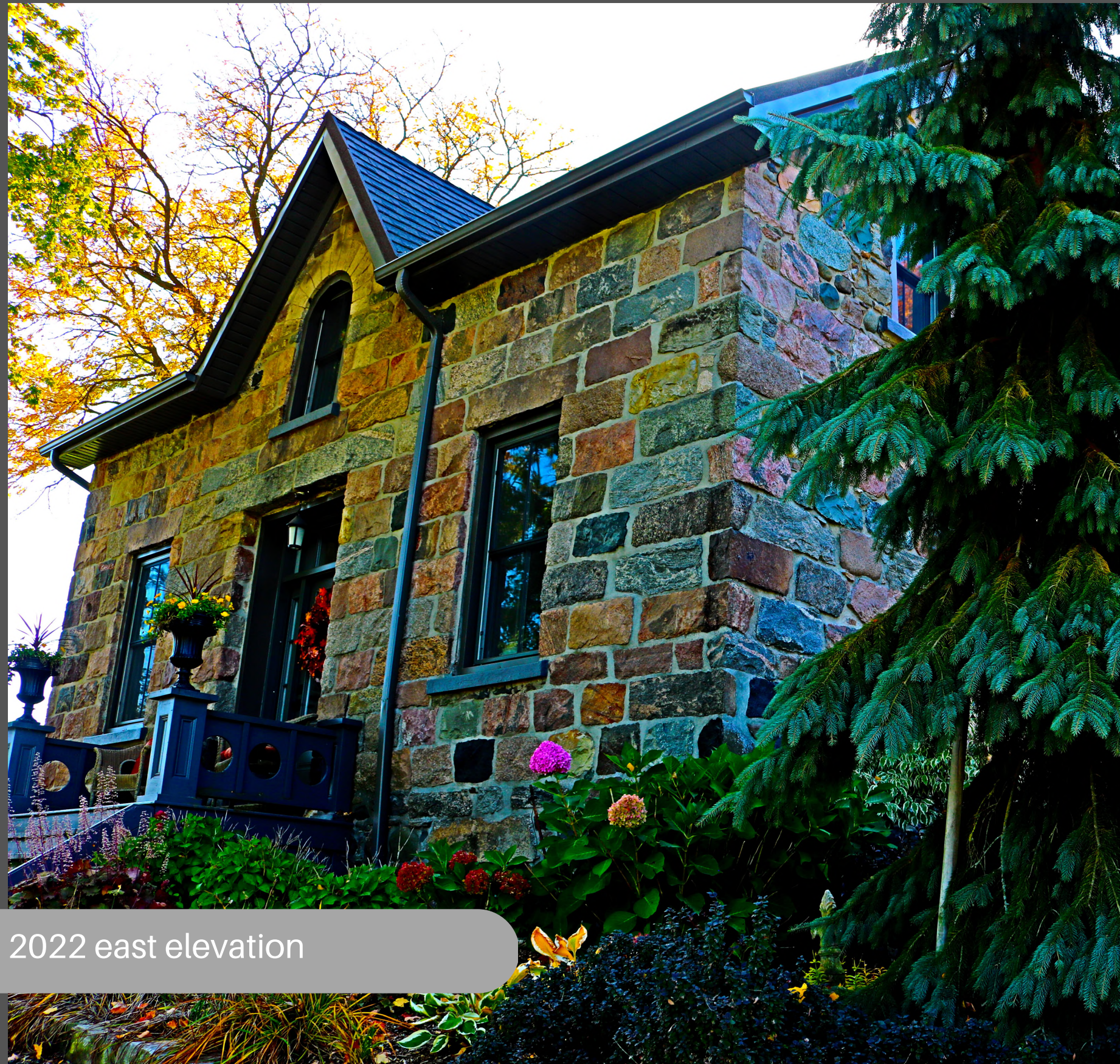
ALEXANDER CAMPBELL
Embros, Feb. 20.—There passed away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. William French of this village at 10.15 o'clock Wednesday evening, Alexander Campbell, a life-long resident of the neighborhood. The deceased, who was 84 years of age, was born in West Zorra and was for years known throughout the district as a farmer and thresher. "Sandy", as he was familiarly known, was always a welcome visitor in Zorra homes at threshing time. He had been ill for many months, having spent some time in the Woodstock general hospital a year ago, when gangrene set in in one of his legs. He had never completely recovered.
Mr. Campbell is survived by two daughters, Mrs. French of Embros, and Mrs. C. C. Lowe of Brampton, and three sons, George, Charles and Burns, all residing in the province of Saskatchewan. Funeral arrangements have not been made, pending word from the sons.



2007 east elevation photograph by Doug A. Huntley

Alexander 'Sandy' Campbell (1846-1930) was born in Zorra to parents: William Campbell (1810-1879) & Elspeth McKay (1810-1888). His father acquired Lot 13 in 1837. Alexander married Margaret McKay (1846-1913) in 1868, pictured above on their wedding day. The family grew to have twelve children and perhaps the stone house was built to accommodate them: Christina, Lucinda, Annie, William James, Martha Edith, Lillie Christina, George, James A., Charles Henry (1882-1962), Burns, Graphina & Traphene. On the death of Alexander, the farm passed to son, Charles Henry, who continued to farm until 1943.

435751 43rd Line, Zorra



The Campbell Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival stone house is sited across a creek with a park-like aspect, overlooking a pond. The façade, as well as the side elevations have extremely evenly hewn blocks, with no discernibly large corner stones. It is an example of coursed square rubble masonry, in which chisel dressed stones, squared on all joints, are laid in courses, with evenly applied mortar.

Front elevation lintels and window sills are quarried limestone, which arrived by wagon from St. Marys. Limestone is relatively soft and can more readily be shaped into precise blocks that window encasements demand. The front door has a gracious millwork surround with transom & sidelights.

2022 east elevation

435751 43rd Line, Zorra



Side elevations feature smaller windows in a Victorian two-over-two pane pattern. The gothic arched window in the front gable has been framed by fan-shaped limestones fashioned to highlight the curve. The original roof may once have been wood shake shingles. The Ontario Gothic Revival Farmhouse was not complete without decorative wood trim to accent the gable, this ornamentation was known as barge board or gingerbread. Between 1840-1880, barge boards became a medium of artistic expression for individual carpenters, who turned their saws to the wide virgin pine boards that had been felled to clear farm land. The Campbell house still maintained lacy barge boards on the front gable, with an elaborate finial at the peak that likely once extended above the roof line until 2007. A wood frame addition has been added recently to accommodate modern living.

2022 north elevation

455583 45th Line, Zorra

Location: Lot 10 East,
Concession 7,
West Zorra

Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage

Notable features:
Rustic elegance
Construction date:
between 1851-1861

Original owner:
Alexander Murray,
1798-1882

Stone Mason:
unknown

Demolished: 2019



2019 south elevation

455583 45th Line, Zorra



2004 south elevation
photography by Doug A. Huntley

Alexander Murray (1798–1882) was born in Dornoch, Sutherland, Scotland & married Janet Ross (1807–Deceased) in 1828. Together the young couple emigrated to Zorra, acquiring Lot 10 in 1835. The 1851 Census of Canada documents the family living in a log cabin with their five children. The 1861 Census of Canada states that the Murrays had built a one storey stone house, the adult children continuing to live & work the farm: James Lovell (1834–Deceased), Margaret (1836–Deceased), Rev. John Lovell (1839–1913), Alexander Lovell (1840–1923), Rev. Dr. David L (1843–1910). On the death of his father, son Alexander Lovell (1840–1923) took over the farm & lived in the stone house.

John McDonald (1883-1955), bought Lot 10 in 1917. He was known as Singer John. A tenor, he was known for performing at Knox United Church in Embro, and at other community gatherings in the Golspie area. In 1965, Alexander & Sandra (Fulkerson) Graham bought the property and began to extensively renovate the stone house, adding a large wood frame addition to the west. Through 1975, they reforested the woodlot and yard around the house. The stone house was demolished in 2019.

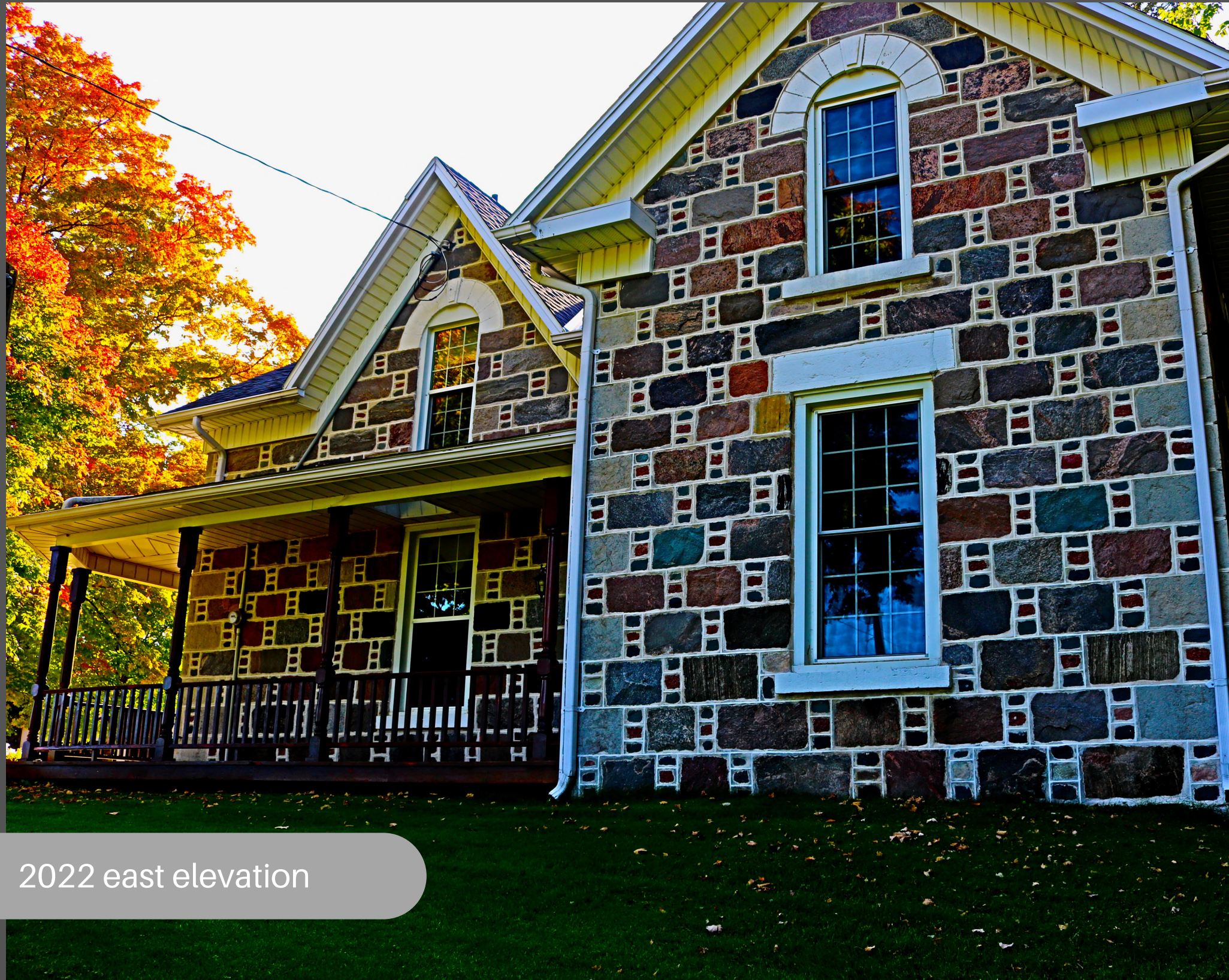
455583 45th Line, Zorra

The Murray Ontario Farmhouse Cottage is constructed of smaller rubble stones, brought to courses with mortar - each course reflecting the size of the corner block. The blocks of stones that are used are either undressed or comparatively roughly dressed. The masonry has wide joints since stones of irregular size are used, with small neck stones supporting the courses. Lintels are composed of carefully selected stones shaped & set vertically. Windows sills were fashioned from wood. The front door is supported by a simple wooden frame & heavy beam lintel. The original roof was likely wood shake shingles, with twin chimneys bookending the roofline.



Historically Bound: The History of Embro and West Zorra, 1820-2007

455703 45th Line, Zorra



2022 east elevation

Location: Lot 12 East,
Concession 7,
West Zorra

Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival

Notable features:
Aberdeen Bond
Construction date:
1882

Original owner:
Archibald Clarke,
1809-1883

Stone Mason: John
Thompson Crellin,
1837-1922

455703 45th Line, Zorra

circa 1890, Clarke family at Seven Oaks



2022 east elevation

Archibald Clarke (1809–1883) married Ann Arnott (1816–1909) in Campbeltown, Argyll, Scotland in 1839. The couple emigrated to Zorra in 1856, and acquired Lot 12 in 1859. The Clarke family is documented on the 1861 Census of Canada living in a log house with their children: Robert (1841–1895), Matthew (1845–1901), Elizabeth (1848–1932), Mary Ann (1858–?), John (1854–?) & Daniel (1859–?). Construction of the cut fieldstone house on this lot is thought to have been completed by Scottish masons in 1882. Most of the fieldstone was local, but the limestone corners and sills were quarried in St. Marys. The Clarkes called the house Seven Oaks. It is one of the first in the area to have had a central, free-air furnace rather than room-by-room stoves and fireplaces.

Historically Bound: The History of Embro and West Zorra, 1820-2007

455703 45th Line, Zorra

John Gerald McDonald (1874-1951) grew up on Lot 11, Concession 8. In 1904, he and his brother Hugh (1881-1937) bought the 150-acre farm on Lot 12. John married Agnes White and they raised seven children at Seven Oaks: Gertrude, (1909-1969), John W. (1911-1973), Dorothy (1914-1968), Alvin (1917-1960), Agnes (1919-1989), Lillian (1922-1989) & Douglas G. (1928-1973).

John Gerald farmed here his entire life. After the death of Agnes in 1945, he continued to live here with his sons: John W. and Douglas.

After John G.'s death in 1951, the farm operation passed to Douglas. Doug and Ruth had two children: Steven (married Kathryn Clark) & Gordon. In 1973, Doug died at age 44. Ruth, Steven and Gordon continued to operate the farm until 1987, when its ownership went to Steven, who retains & preserves Seven Oaks to this day.

Historically Bound: The History of Embro and West Zorra, 1820-2007



1913 east elevation

455703 45th Line, Zorra

2022 south elevation



Classic Gothic Revival arch-top tracery windows once graced the upper storey, highlighted by fan-shaped limestone with centre keystone quoin. Three elaborate decorative brick chimneys were once in evidence. Finely wrought shutters, were built to fit & compliment the windows, likely by Crellin, who was also known for his carpentry.

The Clarke Ontario Gothic Revival Farmhouse stone house was built by John Thompson Crellin (1837-1922), in his distinctive Aberdeen Bond masonry style. Hand hewn granite blocked were carefully selected by colour, given a woven appearance. Quoined corner blocks, heavy top window lintels & sills are quarried white limestone, which arrived by wagon from St. Marys. Limestone is relatively soft and can more readily be shaped into precise blocks that window encasements demand.

455703 45th Line, Zorra

2022 west elevation



The eaves of 'Seven Oaks' once dripped with Gothic Revival decoration details, including paired, turned corbels - all created by Crellin. The metal-clad bell-cast roof adds a charming touch to the original wrap around porch. The 1882 porch is trimmed with delicate diamond patterned wood features. By 1913, simplified scrolled wood corbels support the porch. Deep eave returns accentuate the gable ends, adding another element of trim & detail.

The Clarke stone house secondary façade on the south elevation is made up of even courses of masonry beginning at each quoin with stacks of two snecks in random colours rather than three on the east elevation. In all these cases, this secondary façade faces a driveway. The wall of the house opposite the driveway side is made up of courses of squared blocks of fieldstone of similar size with no snecks, while the back wall of the kitchen wing is rubble, as on the west elevation, above.

455704 45th Line, Zorra

Location: Lot 12 West,
Concession 8,
West Zorra

Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage

Notable features:
Rustic elegance

Construction date:
1861

Original owner: John
Bruce, 1811-1879

Stone Mason:
unknown



2022 west elevation

455704 45th Line, Zorra



John Bruce (1811–1879) was born in Sutherlandshire, Scotland and emigrated to Zorra with his parents: William Bruce (1773–1852) & Catharine Sutherland (1779–1872). His father took possession of Lot 12 in 1851, but passed away in 1852. The 1861 Census of Canada records John living with his wife, Ann (1814–1892) & their son, Charles Henry (1848–1908) in a stone house that is under construction. Charles continued in the stone house until around the turn of the century.

The Bruce Ontario Farmhouse Cottage is an example of masonry comprised of smaller rubble stones, brought to courses with mortar, with smaller sneck stones supporting the construction. Hand wrought stones comprise lintels over the windows, originally perhaps with wooden sills. The corner blocks are evenly hewn and of a size corresponding to the stones in the field. . The masonry on the side elevations is an example of roughly coursed random rubble stone masonry. Since field stones are not of uniform shape and size, they are arranged with great care so as to distribute pressure over the maximum area and at the same time avoid long vertical joints.

455836 45th Line, Zorra



Location: Lot 14 West,
Concession 8,
West Zorra

Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage

Notable features:
Rustic elegance

Construction date:
1861

Original owner: William
McKay, 1802-1873

Stone Mason:
unknown

Margaret (1840-1935) & Angus McKay (1846-1933), children of William McKay (1802-1873) & Charlotte McKenzie (1810-1890) of Lot 14, Concession 8. Photograph circa 1925.

455836 45th Line, Zorra

The west half of Lot 14 was acquired by William McKay, who in 1820 had emigrated from Dornoch, Sutherlandshire, Scotland, with three of his brothers and two sisters. The McKays sailed to Canada aboard the same ship as a McKenzie family that included Charlotte McKenzie (1809-1890), whom William went on to marry in 1832. Nicknames were used to distinguish the many McKay families that lived in Zorra, and so it was that William and his descendants came to be called the Bain McKays. Bain is Gaelic for white, and because William had fair hair, he and his became the Bain (blonde) McKays. William and Charlotte had nine children: Catherine (1834-1903), Donald (1834-1930), John (1838-1848), Margaret (1840-1935), Andrew (1842-1932), William Jr. (1845-1848), Angus (1846-1933), Annie (1850-1909), & William B. (1852-1935). The 1861 census of the Canada documents the family living a two storey stone house. William McKay was one of the founders of the first church in Zorra, the Old Log Church.

The following is taken from the McKay-McKenzie reunion booklet of 1928.

"This stone house is a split-level type, built into the west-facing hill. On the west side was a veranda, with a woodshed at the north end. It is now a sun porch. The west entrance to the house is on the kitchen or lower level, while the eastern entrance is on the parlour level, one floor above. "Entering the west door to the kitchen, the first impression was of the quietness, dignity and coziness of it all. A bedroom door was located the northwest, and then a door led upstairs. On the west side stood a homemade fall-leaf table with chairs beside a nice window. "Also to the front was an old Champion stove with five lids, three in front and two behind. Located back of the lids, and above, was the oven, out of which came the bread, pies, maple sugar cookies and all of the other good things. Champion stoves were something special to own in their day. "On the south side of the room was a fireplace, which was later boarded in with a cupboard and a large woodbox at one end.

Historically Bound: The History of Embro and West Zorra, 1820-2007

455836 45th Line, Zorra



A sketch of the McKay-McKenzie stone house graced the cover of the reunion booklet of 1928.

"On the east side of the kitchen, at the south end, was a good-sized pantry. North of this was a place just the size of a bed, and in it was a beautiful homemade post bed with a thick feather tick and a pieced quilt in a log cabin pattern. The pillow cases had home made lace. "In front of the bed were drapery curtains with tie-backs for daytime. In the northeast corner of the kitchen was a cellar. A work table was placed under the stairway to the upper floor. Homemade mats covered the floor of the room. "Upstairs, on the north side as one entered from the east door or from the kitchen stairway, was the parlour with a fireplace on the north wall. It was inviting with its deep windows, its rag carpet, hooked mats and antique furniture. South of this was a hall (where the stairs came up) with two bedrooms opening off it to the south. "The attic was used mainly for storage. Since the house has been remodelled, the attic is now finished. "To the east of the house, which is now lawn, there used to be many beehives. The spring still supplies water for this house, but today it is piped in."

475847 47th Line, Zorra



Location: Lot 14 East,
Concession 8,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Georgian
Notable features:
Limestone Quoining
Construction date:
1870
Original owner:
Hugh Ross, 1833-1872
Stone Mason:
unknown

2022 east elevation

475847 47th Line, Zorra

John Ross (1792–1868), who bought the east 50 acres on the east half of Lot 14 in 1836, was a brother-in-law of William McKay at 455836 45th Line, who in the same year took title to the west 150 acres. Ross had married William's sister Christina (1794-1875) in Rogart, Scotland before they emigrated in 1830. John & Christina had two daughters and six sons: John Munro (1818–1859), Christy (1819–1886), Alexander (1821–Deceased), Catharine (1823–Deceased), Angus (1824–Deceased), Andrew (1826–1907), Alexander (1828–Deceased), Margaret (1829–Deceased), Thomas Barclay (1830–Deceased) & Hugh Ross (1833–1872). It was one of these sons, Hugh (Hughie), and his wife Mary A. Isa, who in the 1870s built the stone house that is here. The large corner stones were drawn here by horses from St. Marys. Hughie, it seems, was determined to outdo neighbours across the road, who had just put up a stone house. Ownership of the property officially passed to Isa in 1939. A dozen years later it went to Dwight MacKay, who updated the house with electricity, cupboards and a bathroom.



475847 47th Line, Zorra



The Ross Ontario Farmhouse Georgian stone house overlooks the surrounding countryside from an high vantage point. The façade, as well as the side elevations have extremely evenly hewn blocks, with no discernibly large corner stones. It is an example of coursed square rubble masonry, in which chisel dressed stones, squared on all joints, are laid in courses, with evenly applied mortar. The mortar joints have been treated with Plaster of Paris to deter moisture infiltration. Lintels and window sills are quarried limestone, which arrived by wagon from St. Marys. Limestone is relatively soft and can more readily be shaped into precise blocks that window encasements demand. The front door has a gracious surround with transom & sidelights. The limestone quoining pattern on the façade is very distinctive.

2022 east elevation

475847 47th Line, Zorra

A covered porch likely once protected the front doorway, as the attachment points are still visible, anchored in the stone work. Deep eaves and ornate cornice brackets highlight the soffits supporting the roof. The original roof was likely once slate. The window were perhaps once six over six paned, the replacement windows, mimic this style. A stone tail section, extending to the west perhaps housed the kitchen & pantry areas - it is made up of random rubble masonry, with small sneck stones supporting the field stone walls. A simple vertically set shaped-stone lintel bolsters the doorway.



2022 south elevation

623248 Road 62, Zorra



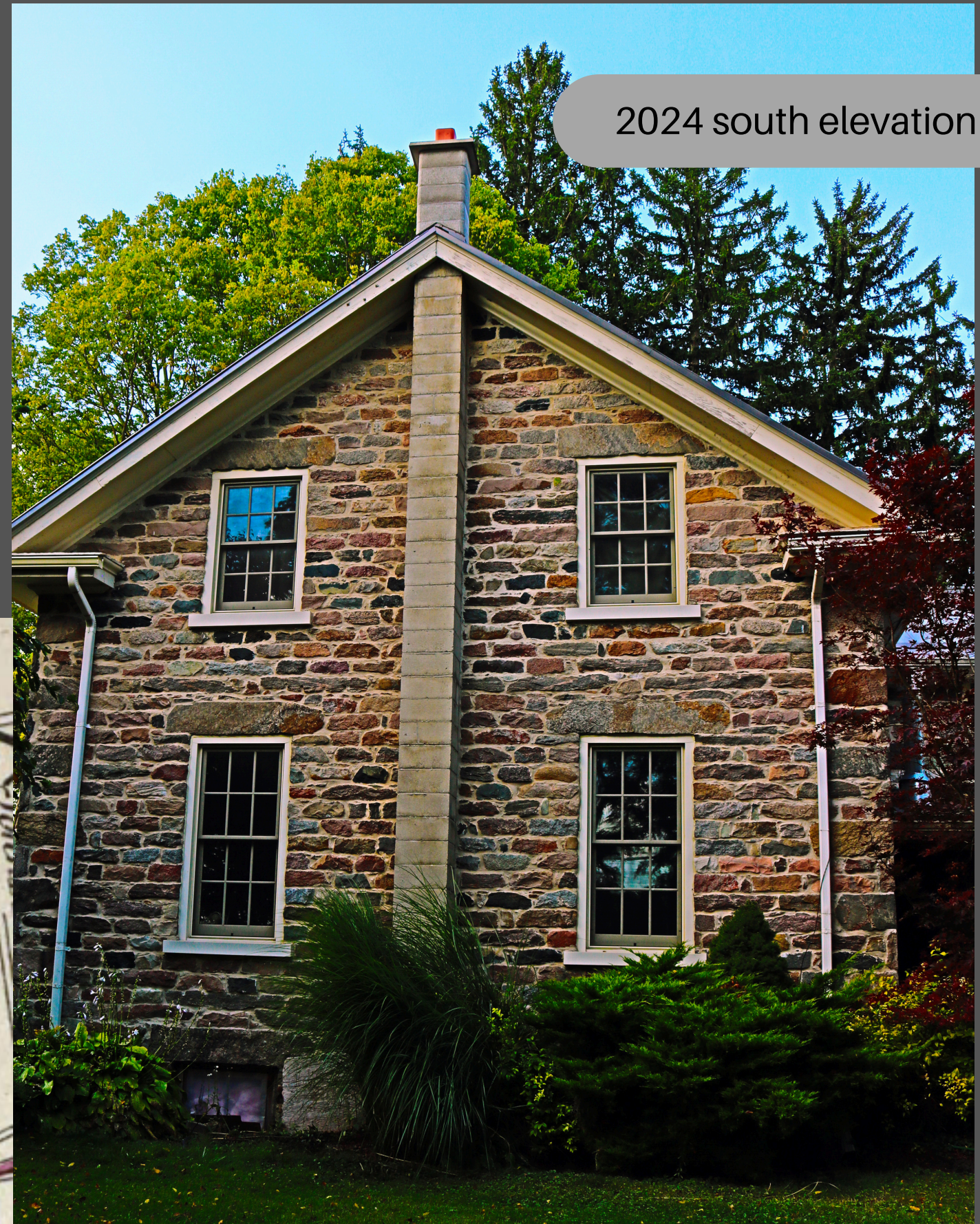
Location: Lot 4 North,
Concession 4,
North Oxford
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage
Notable features:
Narrow stones
Construction date:
1860s
Original owner:
Robert Chapman,
1820-1888
Stone Mason:
unknown

2024 west elevation

623248 Road 62, Zorra

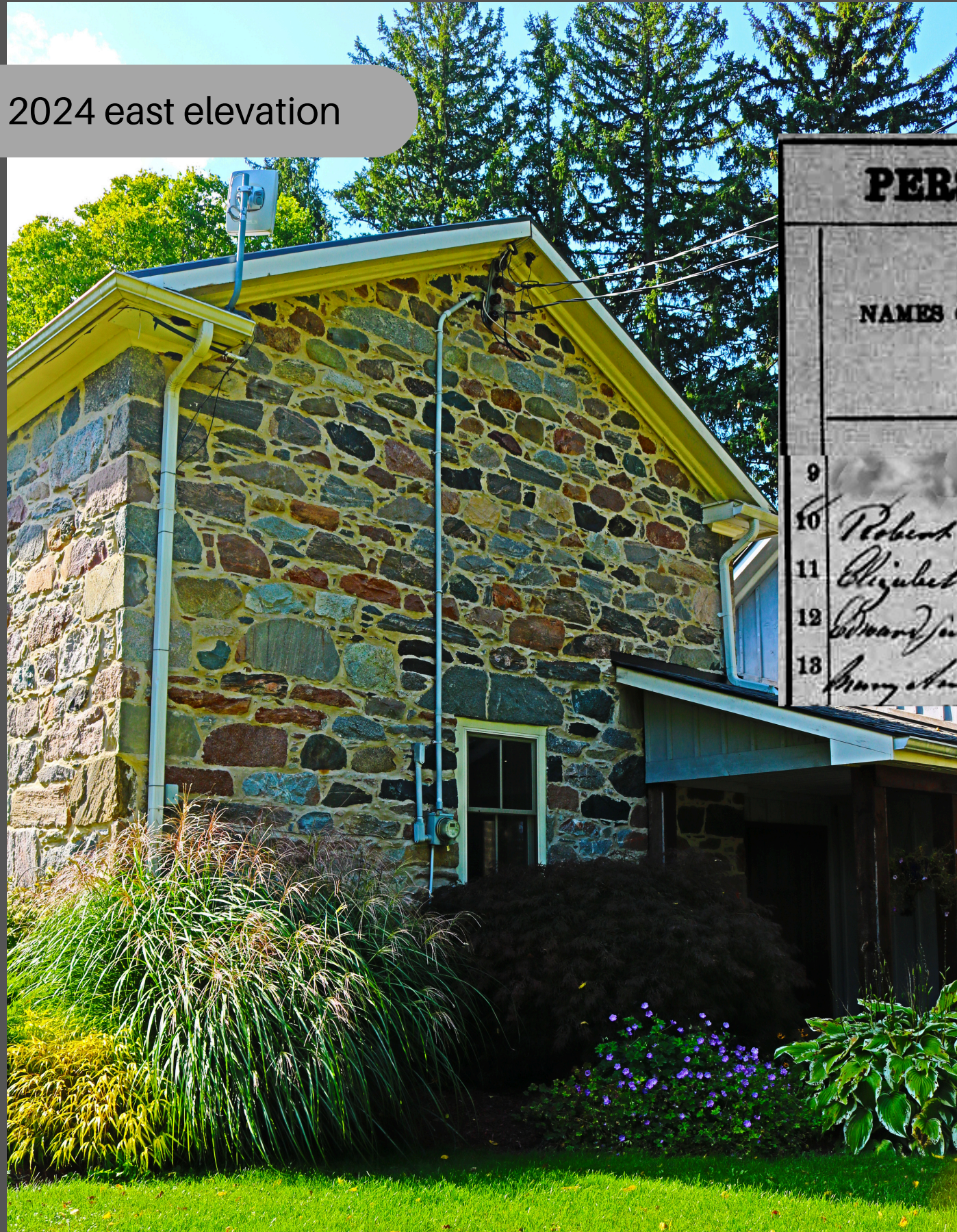
Robert Chapman (1820-1888) emigrated with his parents (James Chapman, 1774-1853 & Mary Ann Nixon, 1781-1862) & four brothers from Sapcote, Leicestershire, England in 1830. They first settled in Connecticut, USA, but the surge of yellow fever & cholera convinced Robert's parents to seek a new life in Canada. The family arrived in North Oxford Township in 1832, documented as acquiring Lot 4, Concession 4 in 1848.

The 1852 Tremaine's map records Robert Chapman as the land owner of Lot 4.



623248 Road 62, Zorra

2024 east elevation



Robert Chapman married Elizabeth Thompson (1828–1893).

PERSONAL CENSUS.		Enumerated		of			
NAMES OF INMATES.	PROFESSION, TRADE, OR OCCUPATION.	PLACE OF BIRTH	Age next Birthday.	SEX.		Married or Single.	Brick, Stone, Frame, Log, &c.
				Male.	Female.		
1	2	3	7	8	9	10	11
9							
10	Robert Chapman	England	44	1		M	Log
11	Elizabeth Chapman	England	30		1	M	
12	Edward James Chapman	Up Canada	4	1		✓	
18	Mary Ann Chapman	Up Canada	2		1	✓	

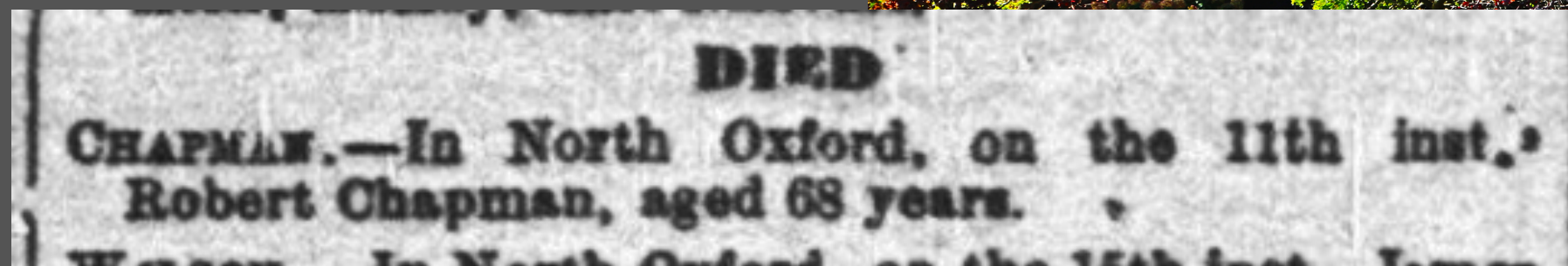
The 1861 census records the couple living in a log house, together with children: Edward James (1858–1943) & Mary Ann (1859–1864). Robert & Elizabeth expanded their family to include four more children: Jessie Chapman (1862–1864), Mabel Elizabeth Chapman (1863–1865), Emily Chapman (1864–1865) & Elizabeth Ann Chapman (1876–1907).

623248 Road 62, Zorra

Some time after 1861 Robert Chapman constructed a stone house or had a local stone mason create a new home for his family. Records document Robert Chapman owning this farm until his death on 11 May 1888. The Chapmans rest in the Ingersoll Rural Cemetery. The farm passed to only son, Edward James Chapman (1858-1943), who had worked side by side with his father managing their crops.



2024 south & east elevation



The 1891 census documents Edward continuing to farm & live with his mother until her death in 1893. Edward established an apple orchard on the property & developed a reputation locally as a fine horticulturalist. In 1910, he married Annie Speaight (1864-1942), the couple was to have no children.

623248 Road 62, Zorra

The Chapman Ontario Farmhouse Cottage stone house is constructed in a unique manner. The masonry technique employed to build this house is distinctive in that very narrow stone slabs are utilized, with relatively small corner blocks. Perhaps the stone mason worked alone on this project and the use of smaller stones made the process more manageable. The house has a consistent stacked stone appearance on the symmetrical façade & side elevations.

2024 north elevation



Substantial limestone lintels & sills support the doors & windows. The front door has a generous transom window with side lights. The windows appear to be original or an appropriate six over six reproduction configuration. The rear elevation is created with random rubble masonry brought to rough courses with small sneck stones supporting. Thick bands of mortar hold the stones in place. The roof was perhaps once wood shake shingles.

623248 Road 62, Zorra

2024 west elevation



Edward J. Chapman Passes Away In Hospital

North Oxford Township lost one of its most highly esteemed and well known residents on Sunday in the passing at Alexandra Hospital, Ingersoll, of Edward J. Chapman, just three months after the death of his wife. Mr. Chapman will long be remembered for the beauty of nature surrounding his home from spring to fall each year. His was a lovable nature, kind and generous and ever unassuming. He was born in the pioneer log house on the farm where he lived all of his 85 years and he retained the greatness and graciousness of pioneer days through all the changes life has made since those early days. As he changed from log home to modern house, progressing with the times, his character seemed enriched and he passed on his wealth of geniality to others. He was a well read man, having in his possession a fine collection of books. He was a horticulturist, excelling in the flowers he grew and was renowned for his enormous apple orchard and excellent fruit. Being a good citizen himself, he was always seeking those finer qualities in others and was esteemed by all who knew him for his high principles of integrity.

FUNERAL TO COME

Ingersoll Tribune, 21
January 1943

reported the death
of Edward
Chapman. He & his
wife Annie, who died
in 1942, rest in the
Ingersoll Rural
Cemetery.

The stone house
passed out of the
hands of the
Chapman family in
1943. The Chapman
legacy lives on, in
that there are still old
apple trees on the
property to this day,
continuing the
pioneer story.

623314 Road 62, Zorra



Location: Lot 5 North,
Concession 4,
North Oxford
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival
Notable features:
Narrow stones
Construction date:
1870s
Original owner:
John Elliott, 1817-
1893
Stone Mason:
unknown

2022 north elevation

623314 Road 62, Zorra



2022 west elevation

John Elliott (1817-1893) was born in England and emigrated to North Oxford about 1848. He married Alice Richardson (1826-1900) in 1844 and the pair went on to have a family of 12 children: George (1846-1848), John (1846-1869), William R. (1849-1866), Thomas D. (1852-1915), Henry (1853-1925), Charles Brooks (1855-1920), Joseph (1856-1893), Mary E. (1860-1860), James Gilroy (1861-1923), George Edward (1863-1936), Maria Jane (1864-1943), Richard Seldon (1868-1929). The 1861 Census of Canada records the family as living in a frame house. The stone house was likely built in the 1870s.

623314 Road 62, Zorra

OBITUARY.

JOHN ELLIOTT.

The death of Mr. John Elliott, which occurred at his late home, North Oxford, on Sunday last, removes one of the oldest and most highly respected residents of the county.

Deceased was born in Devonshire, England, in 1817, and came to this country 52 years ago, settling in Scarboro. In those days there were no "ocean greyhounds" which cross the ocean in a little more than five days, as at present, but simply sailing vessels, and Mr. Elliott was on the boisterous waters fifteen weeks before his craft reached the harbor.

After a residence of some ten years in Scarboro he purchased a farm in North Oxford, where he has lived continuously ever since. There were, of course, no railroads at that time, and he had to drive the whole of the distance over roads that were considered good in those days, which would hardly be classed as such now, being of the corduroy style, the nature of which, perhaps, most of our readers are familiar with. North Oxford was then a dense forest. There were a few clearings in the neighborhood, but Mr. Elliott had to hew out for himself a home in the wilderness, so to speak, there not being a clear acre on his whole farm. However, he went bravely to work and gradually the forest disappeared, until finally he had one of the best farms in the county.

During his residence in Scarboro deceased was married to Miss Alice Richardson, who survives him, and had he lived they would have celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary a few weeks hence. They had twelve children, seven of whom are living, as follows: Thomas, of Guelph; Henry and James, of Mackinaw, Mich.; Charles, of Beachville; George E., of North Oxford; Mrs. Andrew Bailey, of Ingersoll, and Richard, who lives on the old homestead. Mr. Elliott was a trustee of S. S. No. 3, North Oxford, for over a quarter of a century, and was a man highly esteemed by all who knew him. Deceased had been ailing for about a year from Bright's disease of the kidneys and was confined to his bed about three weeks before death ensued.

The funeral took place on Tuesday afternoon and was very largely attended, a testimony to the warm estimation in which he was held by the community.

*Ingersoll Chronicle,
21 September 1893*



Richard Seldon Elliott (1868-1929) & his wife Fannie Williamson (1869-1961) circa 1920, photograph from the Elliott family collection

On the death of John Elliott, the stone house transferred ownership to his youngest son Richard Seldon Elliott, who continued on the farm until his death in 1929.

623314 Road 62, Zorra

The Elliott Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival stone house is constructed in a unique manner. The masonry technique employed to build this house is distinctive in that very narrow stone slabs are utilized, with relatively small corner blocks. Perhaps the stone mason worked alone on this project and the use of smaller stones made the process more manageable. The house has a consistent stacked stone appearance on the façade as well as the two side elevations.

Relatively large corner stones are in evidence. Substantial limestone lintels & sills support the doors & windows. The front door has a generous transom window with side lights. The original windows were likely two-over-two pane pattern. An arched window is the focus of the gable peak.



2022 east & north elevation

623314 Road 62, Zorra



The rear elevation is created with random rubble masonry brought to rough courses with small sneck stones supporting. Thick bands of mortar hold the stones in place. The roof was perhaps once wood shake shingles. The pitch of this roof is very steep, resulting in a deep gable epitomizing Victorian styling. Deep eave returns add detail to the gable ends. The Ontario Gothic Revival Farmhouse was not complete without elaborate decorative wood trim, which may have been lost to time in this case. Millwork does still accent the area below the soffit. A stone tail section extends to the south, and likely houses a kitchen & pantry. A wood frame addition extends to the west, this structure was perhaps once an open covered porch that sheltered the back door.

2022 south elevation

683306 Road 62, Zorra

2022 north elevation



Location: Lot 5 West,
Concession 1,
North Oxford

Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival

Construction date:
after 1861

Original owner:
Jesse Brown, 1812-
1884

Stone Mason:
unknown

Demolished: after 1976

683306 Road 68, Zorra

Jesse Brown (1812-1884) was born in Roxburgh, Scotland. He married Isabella Hossack (1801-1863) in Dornoch, Sutherland, Scotland on 8 Aug 1829, the pair emigrated to Oxford County. Jesse acquired Lot 5 on July 25, 1857 and is documented by the 1861 Census of Canada as living in a log house. Jesse held many local offices, among them that of License Inspector. The Browns were members of the Presbyterian Church & their children were: James Hossack (1833-1916), Mary Brown (1834-1875), Thomas (1847-deceased), John Hossack (1850-1920).

Given the census information & the Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival architectural styling of the Brown stone house, is it presumed that construction occurred sometime after 1861. Perhaps it is likely that the new house was built before the death of Isabella in 1863. The Browns may have decided to build a larger home to accommodate their growing family.

The 1871 Census shows Jesse farming with his sons, Thomas & John. On the death of Jesse in 1884, the farm was sold.

Ingersoll Chronicle

Oct 2 1863

BROWN--In North Oxford

[township], 25th ult., Isabella
Hossack, beloved wife of Mr.

Jesse Brown, aged 63 years

683370 Road 68, Zorra

Location: Lot 6 West,
Concession 1,
North Oxford

Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage

Construction date:
before 1851

Original owner:
George Weir, 1805-
1884

Stone Mason: George
Weir, 1805-1884

Demolished: after 1976



George Weir (1805-1884) was born in Rogerhill, Crawfordjohn, Lanark, Scotland. He was the son of James & Janet (Ross) Weir. In 1827, he married Mary Moffatt (1807-1889) who was born in Glasgow, Larnark, Scotland. The couple emigrated to Zorra around 1843. Pictured above is a wood frame house, first constructed by the Weirs on Lot 6.

683370 Road 68, Zorra

George & Mary had nine children, the first seven were born in Scotland and the last two born in Zorra: Thomas (1828- 1848), George (1830-1887), James (1832-1848), Hugh (1835-1839) died in Scotland, Marion (1837-1932), Hugh (1839-1878), John (1842-1913), Alexander (1844-1911), Janet (1846-1926). Two of their children, Thomas and James were on a berry picking outing after which they went swimming in the Thames River at Banner. Both brothers drowned in the river near the bridge on the Banner Road. George Weir was a stone mason. He built his own stone home at Lot 6 as well as several other houses in the area, in particular, 295135 29th Line. Both houses were Ontario Farmhouse cottages and were likely similar in appearance. The 1851 Census of Canada documents the Weir family living in a stone house.

From Forest to Farm: the Story of North Oxford Township

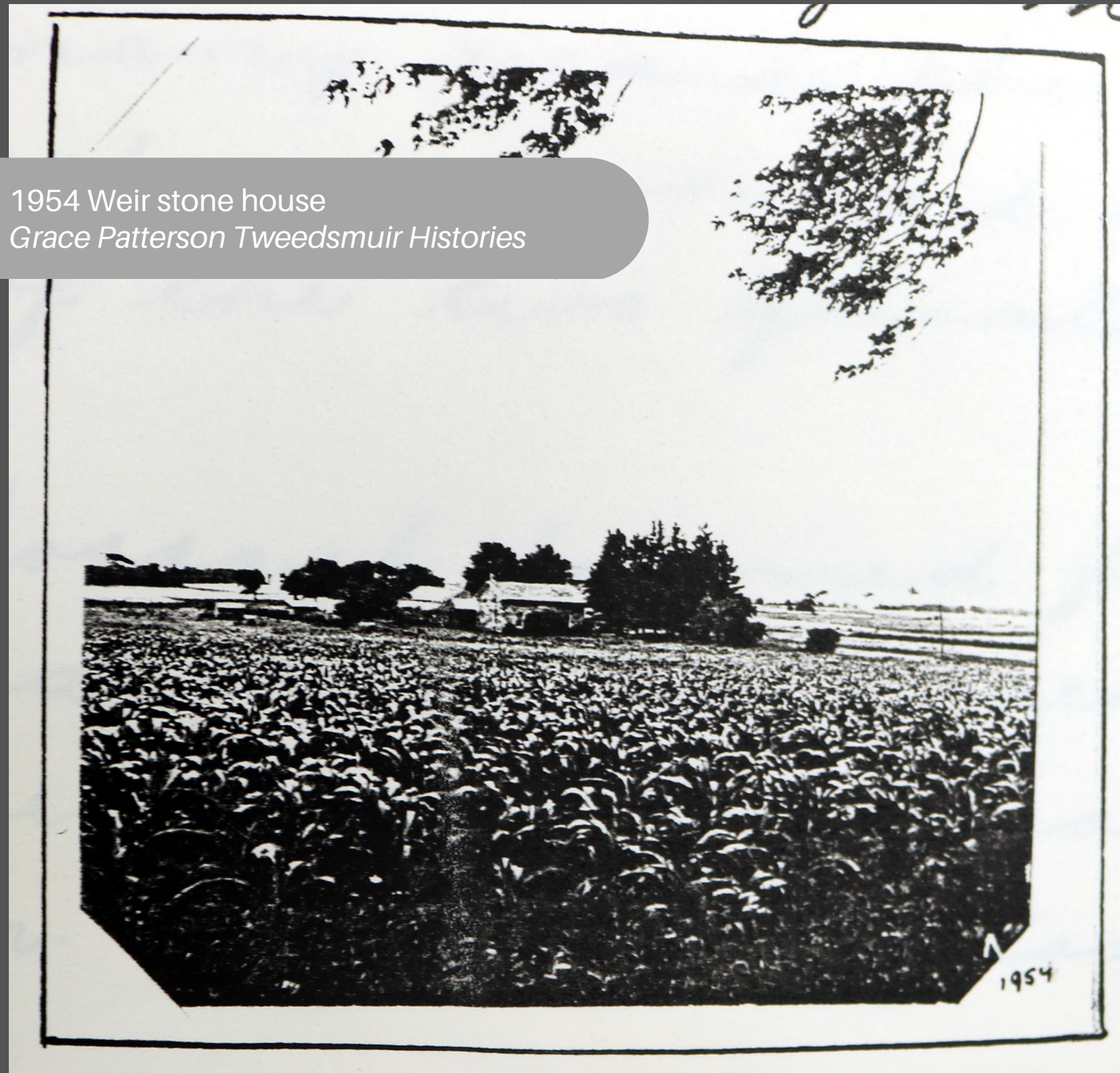


1940s south elevation, Weir family collection

Mary and George Weir lived on this farm all their lives. During this time, George was a Reeve of North Oxford Township in 1865 and 1866. After Georges' death in 1884, the farm was willed to his son, Alexander and his wife Jane who raised their family on this farm, one of their children being Dr. Moffat Weir, a well-known physician in the Thamesford area. Ownership of the farm remained with descendants of George and Mary until 1943. The house was demolished after 1976.

683370 Road 68, Zorra

1954 Weir stone house
Grace Patterson Tweedsmuir Histories

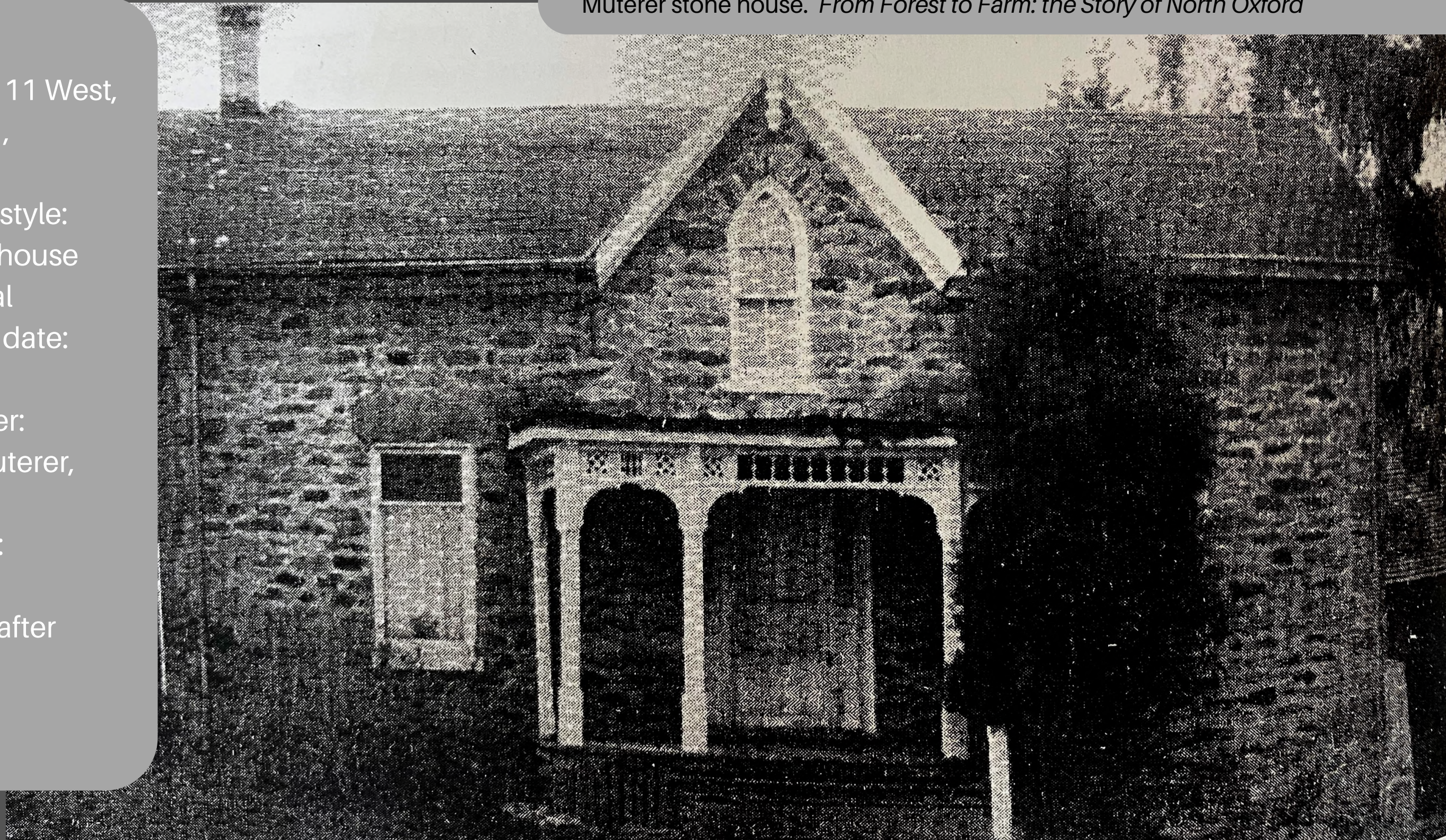


On the death of George Weir, the stone house passed to his son, Alexander Weir (1844-1911) & wife, Jane McKay (1846-1933). They had 6 children: George (1875-1965), John (1876-1955), Hugh (1878-1879), William (1881-1954), Christina (1883-1972) & Moffat (1887-1958). This family built the bank barn in 1885 & added a frame kitchen to the rear of the house. In 1909, the stone house passed to Alexander's daughter, Christina & her husband John Reith (1879-1971). The couple had three daughters, Mabel, Marion & Anne. This family built the driveway in 1933 and a chicken house. In 1942, the farm passed to Cyril Lowes and his wife, Eva Little. Cyril was a great-great-grandson of stone mason, George Weir. The stone house remained in the Weir family for nearly 100 years.

683666 Road 68, Zorra

Muterer stone house. *From Forest to Farm: the Story of North Oxford*

Location: Lot 11 West,
Concession 1,
North Oxford
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival
Construction date:
1874
Original owner:
Alexander Muterer,
1814-1909
Stone Mason:
unknown
Demolished: after
1976





Alexander Muterer, 1814-1909

PASSED AWAY IN HIS 95TH YEAR

Death of a North Oxford Pioneer in the Person of Mr. Alex- ander Muterer

From Monday's Daily.

One of the pioneers of North Oxford, and a widely known and respected resident passed away on Saturday in the person of Alexander Muterer, Deceased, who was born in Scotland, had attained the ripe old age of 94 years and 10 months, and up to the time of his death had full possession of all his faculties.

The late Mr. Muterer came to Canada when a young man, settling first in London, Ont., in 1847. Three years later he came to Ingersoll and successfully conducted a blacksmithing business on the site where the Dereham House now stands. In 1853 he was married to Miss Jane Weir of Westminster, and in 1857 they moved to North Oxford where he has since resided. Mr. Muterer, at the time of his death, was living with his son George, of North Oxford.

The deceased, who was one of the oldest members of St. Paul's church, leaves to mourn his loss three sons, George, Alex. and John, and one daughter, Mrs. Coventry, all of North Oxford.

Alexander (Sandy) Muterer (1814-1909) was born in Banffshire, Scotland & was the youngest son of John Muterer (1790-1851) & Helen Jamieson. In 1850, Alexander came to Ingersoll & operated a blacksmith shop near the corner of King & Oxford Streets. In 1853, he married Jane (Jean) Weir (1826-1886).

The young couple made the decision to move to the farm at Lot 11 in 1855. A log cabin was built and a blacksmith shop established on the Governor's Road (Road 68). Later in 1874, a new stone house was built. Seven children were born to Alexander and Jane: Alexander Robb (1844-1935), John Proudfoot (1854-1928), William (1856-1873), Alexander (1858-1935), Margaret (1862-1943), Annie (1864-1873), George (1867-1927), James (1869-1890), Berthie Weir (1881-?).

683666 Road 68, Zorra

The Muterer Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival bears similarity to other stone houses in North Oxford. The masonry technique used to build this house is unique in that very narrow stone slabs are employed, with relatively small corner blocks. The front of house has a consistent stacked stone appearance, with the other three sides having stones placed randomly, with little regard for size or colour. Thick bands of mortar holding the stones in place. The gable is highlighted by a tracery window supported by shaped stones framing the arch. The façade windows are distinctive, in that they appear to be single pane, with a stained glass panel above. The Ontario Gothic Revival Farmhouse was not complete without elaborate decorative wood trim: a finial points skyward at the peak. The Muterer stone house had a fanciful Victorian portico sheltering the front door, complete with turned spindles & detailed corner brackets. The roof was likely originally crafted of wood shake shingles.



Jane Weir Muterer, 1826-1886

743730 Road 74, Zorra

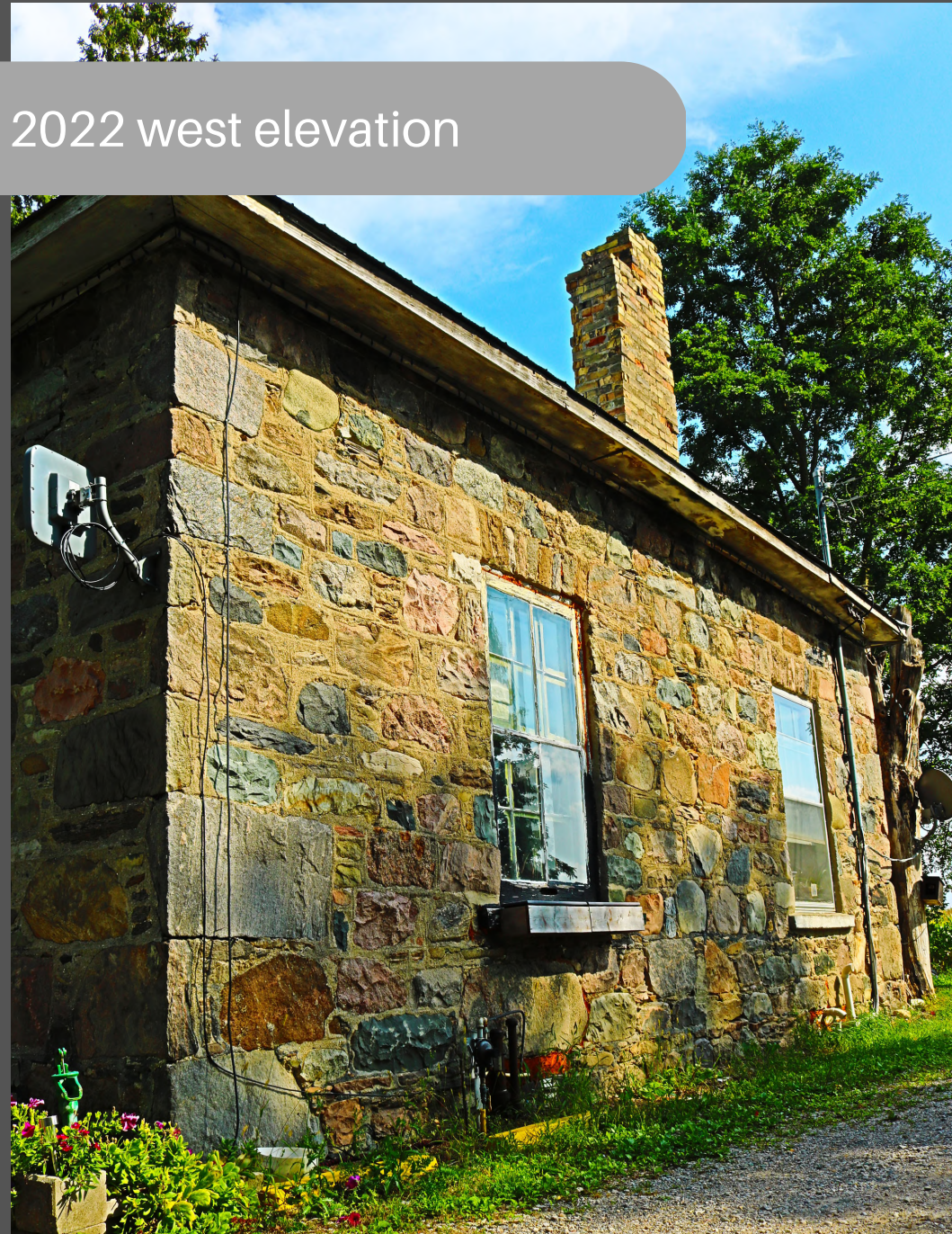
Location: Lot 5 East,
Concession 2,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage
Notable features:
Hip roof
Construction date:
between 1851-1861
Original owner:
James McDonald,
1805-1860
Stone Mason:
unknown



2022 north elevation

743730 Road 74, Zorra

2022 west elevation

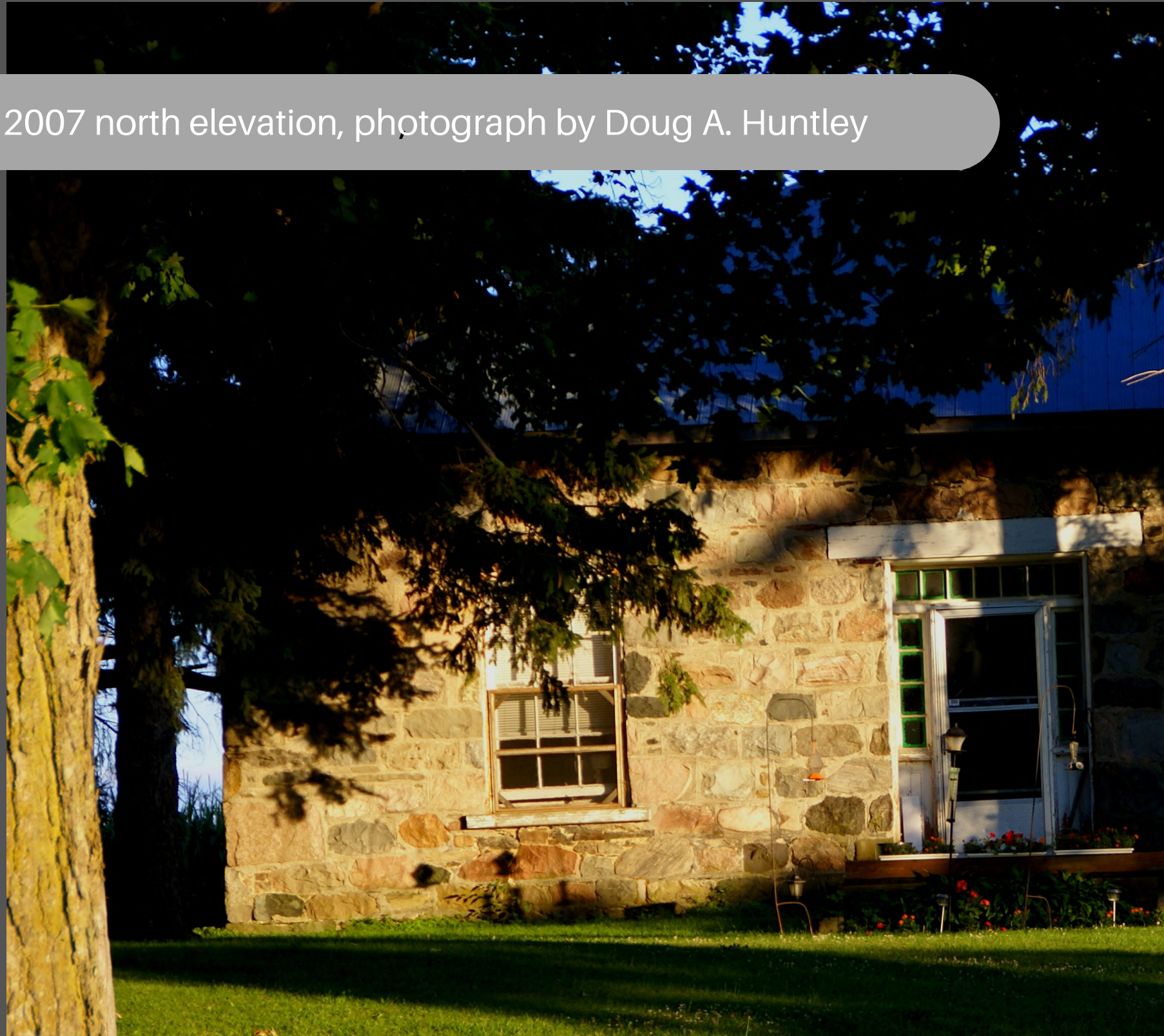


James McDonald (1805-1860) was born in Dornoch, Sutherland, Scotland. In 1830, he married Elizabeth (Marion) Sutherland (1810-1871). The couple emigrated to Zorra in 1831 and went on to have a family of seven children: Mary (1830-1895), Alexander (1832-?), William (1833-1912), Marion (1834-1861), Robert (1837-1915), John (1842-1904), George (1847-1922). The 1851 Census of Canada documents the family living in a log cabin.

By 1861, the census states that James has passed on and son William has assumed the head of the household, with the family living in a stone house. William (1833-1912) went on to wed Mary Murray (1846-1924) and raised his own family in the stone house, continuing to live here until his death in 1912. William & Mary's son, James Alexander (1881-1964) continued the legacy and is registered on the 1921 Census of Canada residing in the stone house with his family.

743730 Road 74, Zorra

2007 north elevation, photograph by Doug A. Huntley



The McDonald Ontario Farmhouse Cottage is an example of a Regency cottage, with a four-sided hip roof. Symmetry is essential for the Regency design. The corner stones are large, considering the size of the cottage. The masonry technique used is that of random rubble brought to courses. The blocks of stones that are used are either undressed or comparatively roughly dressed. The masonry has wide joints since stones of irregular size are used, with many small sneck stones supporting the courses. Window lintels are composed of carefully selected stones shaped & set vertically. Window sills were fashioned from wood originally. A wide door with divided sidelights & a transom window brought light into the hallway, supported by a heavy wood beam. Classic six over six paned windows flank the doorway.

743804 Road 74, Zorra



Location: Lot 5 West,
Concession 3,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival
Notable features:
Substantial rear tail
Construction date:
before 1861
Original owner:
Murray, George, 1815-
1894
Stone Mason:
unknown

2022 north elevation

743804 Road 74, Zorra

George Murray (1815-1894) was born in Dornoch, Sutherland, Scotland and emigrated to Oxford with his parents, Alexander Murray (1791-1862) & Mary Ann Fawcett (1790-?). The 1851 Census of Canada documents George as living in a log house with his wife, Mary Fraser & their family of four children: James, Alexander, George & Willimina. By 1861, the census shows the family living in the stone house; with three more children: John, Ann & Mary. In 1891, George & Mary were still living on the farm, with their sons, George & John (1859-1939) working the land. The Murray family maintained ownership of the family until 1931, when it passed to William E. Fleming. The Flemings have carefully maintained the stone house over the intervening years, and it remains in this name today.

Ingersoll Chronicle, 1894

DIED.

**MURRAY—In West Zorra, on Sunday, the 1st inst.,
George Murray, aged 78 years.**



2022 east elevation

743804 Road 74, Zorra



2022 south & east elevation

The Murray Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival stone house is an example of coursed square rubble masonry, in which chisel dressed stones, squared on all joints, are laid in courses, with evenly applied mortar. The stone mason has arranged three sneck stones are laid in horizontal stacks to lend integrity to the wall, particularly near corners.

743804 Road 74, Zorra

The Murray stone house bears resemblance to the Munroe stone house at 335407 33rd Line. It is possible that it was also once a cottage, with the shallow Gothic Revival gable peak added at a later date. The arched tracery window would have added light to the upstairs rooms & elevated the façade; it is framed with shaped limestone, unique to this window only. The windows reflect the early construction period, in the six over six paned pattern - replacement windows mimic the historic esthetic. Window lintels are composed of carefully selected stones shaped & set vertically with sills having been fashioned from wood. The spirit of the original door surround seems to have been maintained, with sidelights & millwork highlighting the opening. A heavy wood beam supports the stones above the main entrance, which also speaks to an early construction date. A covered wood portico was once part of the façade, with a remnant of the joist ledger board still in evidence above the front windows. The portico was likely highly decorative with ornamental brackets and carefully crafted posts. Plaster of Paris can still be seen highlighting & protecting mortar joints in some areas.



2022 north elevation

743804 Road 74, Zorra



2022 west elevation

Ornate twin brick chimneys, once complimented the roofline, only one survives today. The roof itself was crafted of wood shake shingles. Gable end eave returns add further detail to side elevations. The large stone tail section is storey & a half, with small windows, lighting the upper level. It featured covered porches on both sides, the east elevation boasting another peak and inset window.