

295784 29th Line, Zorra

circa 1970 west elevation photograph by Joyce McCorquodale Groves

Location: Lot 14 West,
Concession 1,
West Zorra

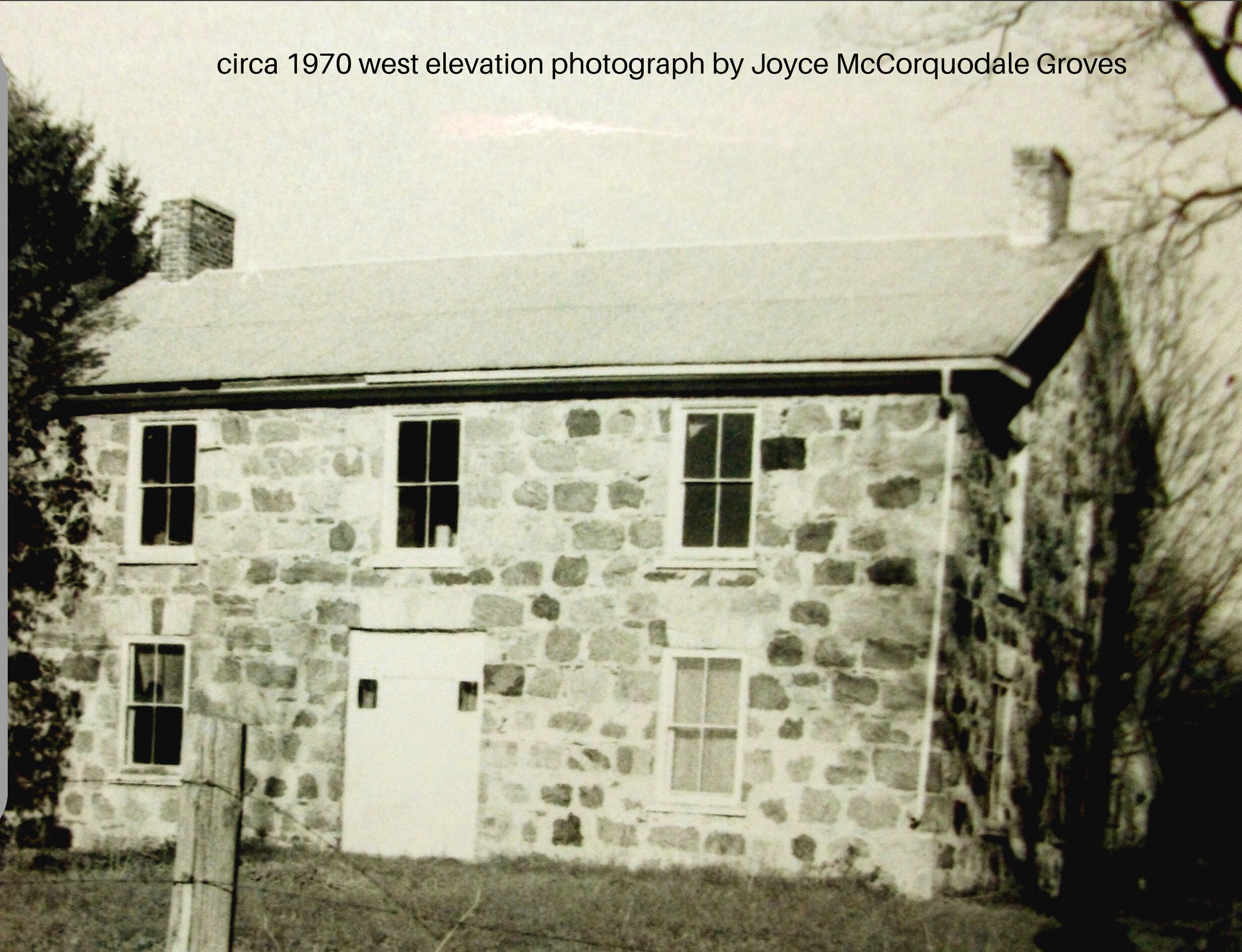
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Georgian

Notable features:
Uniform stone size
Construction date:
1861

Original owner:
Archibald McCaul,
1804-1870

Stone Mason:
unknown

Demolished: late
1980s



295784 29th Line, Zorra



circa 1891 photograph of the McCaul family: Christine Campbell McCaul (1841-1909); Herman (1883-1970); Mary Josephine Moffat McCaul (1889-1980), Malcolm (1841-1935) and Bruce (1884-1967).



In 1820, Archibald McCaul came to Canada from Kilmartin, Argyleshire, Scotland, with Hugh McCorquodale. It is thought Archibald worked on the construction of the first Welland Canal (1824- 1829), even after he bought these 200 acres for 100 pounds from Elizabeth (Clark) Force. In the winter months, McCaul worked at clearing his land on this lot, finally settling in a log house in 1830. In 1834, Archibald married Ann (Nancy) McDonald (1803-1880), who had come to Canada in 1830 from Dornoch, Sutherlandshire, Scotland. The couple had six children: Robert (1834-1916); Christina (1839-1893); Malcolm (1841-1935); Archibald Jr. (1844-1923); Nancy (1847-1926); & Margaret (1850-1908). In 1861, Archibald had a stone house built, just south of where he had dug his well. In 1867, son Malcolm took ownership of the northwest 50 acres & the stone house. In 1935, Malcolm's son Bruce took over this farm and lived here until his death in 1967. The Ball family took over this property in 1973.

295784 29th Line, Zorra

circa 1970 north elevation
photographs by
Joyce McCorquodale
Groves

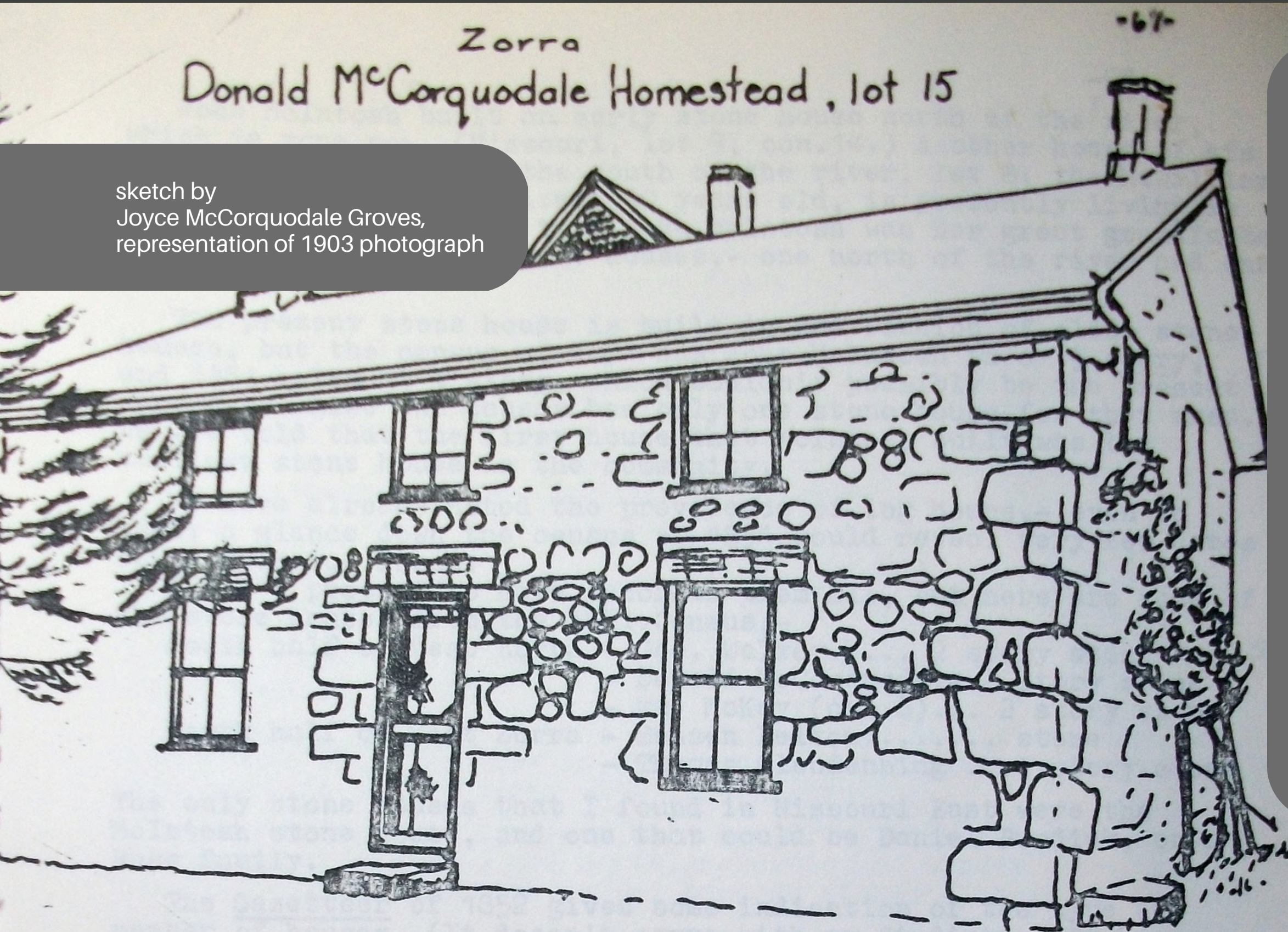


The McCaul Ontario Farmhouse Georgian stone house is an example of random rubble masonry, brought to courses. Stone corner blocks support similarly sized rubble stones, roughly dressed - each course reflecting the size of the corner block. The masonry has wide joints since stones of irregular size are used, small sneck stones are used to support the courses. Lintels are composed of carefully selected stones, shaped & tightly set vertically, with a unique centre quoin stone of a contrasting colour. Windows sills were fashioned from wood. Windows are a two-over-two paned configuration, which seem to speak more of the late Victorian period, perhaps originals were replaced at some point. The original roof was likely wood shake shingles, which transitioned to metal. The wide front door is covered by distinctive shutters, perhaps hiding side lights and transom window. Twin chimneys compliment the roofline. A stone tail section, likely accommodated the kitchen & pantry space.

295884 29th Line, Zorra

Zorra
Donald McCorquodale Homestead, lot 15

sketch by
Joyce McCorquodale Groves,
representation of 1903 photograph



Location: Lot 15 West,
Concession 1,
West Zorra
Architectural style: Ontario
Farmhouse Georgian
Notable features:
Unique windows
Construction date:
before 1851
Original owner:
Donald McCorquodale,
1779-1852
Stone Mason: unknown
Demolished: burned
circa 1936

295884 29th Line, Zorra

Squire Alexander McCorquodale
1818-1896



Donald McCorquodale (1779-1852) followed his brother Hugh McCorquodale (1787-1833) to Zorra. The pair emigrated from Turnalt, Craignish, Argyleshire, Scotland. Donald, by then a widower, travelled with his sons, Alexander (1818-1896) and James (1821-1890), arriving in 1832. Also in the party was his mother, Sarah McDougall McCorquodale (1751-1851). They joined Hugh on Lot 15, but in the next few years, Hugh died without a will. There was a family dispute over the property with Alexander McCorquodale (1792-1853), another brother, acting as executor of the estate. There were several trips to Ingersoll and many letters before Hugh's affairs were settled. Those affairs included their brother Donald's purchase of this farm in 1837. On the death of Donald in 1852, the farm passed to Alexander McCorquodale (1818-1896), who came to known as the Squire. At the time of the 1851 census, the McCorquodales were living here in a one & a half-storey stone house, then one of the few large stone residences in the township. In that census, the age of Sarah, the family matriarch, was recorded as 100. In 1847, Squire Alexander married Isabella McKenzie (1817-1863) & they had 10 children. In 1864, Squire Alexander married Ann Nancy McCaul of East Missouri & they had eight children.

East Nissouri Township: People, Perseverance, Progress, 2012

DEATH OF AN EX-WARDEN.—Alex. McCorquodale, the well-known ex-warden of Oxford county, died at Embro Wednesday, aged seventy-eight years. Deceased had been ill for six months. He leaves a wife and large family. Alex. McCorquodale first entered the county council as deputy-reeve in 1858. With the exception of one year he was elected reeve continuously from 1858 until 1870, which year he was in the council as warden.

In 1870, he was the warden of Oxford County and was also a justice of the peace for several years. After an illness of about six months, Squire Alex died in 1896. *Ingersoll Chronicle, 21 May 1896*

Extensive Credit Sale.

THE Subscriber has received instructions from James McCorquodale, Administrator to the Estate of the late Donald McCorquodale, to dispose of by Public Auction, on Lot No. 15, 1st Concession of West Zorra, on MONDAY, Oct 13th, all that valuable property belonging to the late Donald McCorquodale, consisting of 11 milch cows, one yoke of Oxen, 20 young cattle, 8 calves, one pair of working horses, one span matched colts, one mare and colt, one draught horse, 22 sheep, 27 hogs, two sets double harness, two wuggens, one set of bob-sleighs, one sled, one iron plough, two wooden ploughs, two drags, two fanning mills, one saddle, 25 tons of hay, three stacks do., one caidron kettle, and share in reaper and one share in thrashing machine, one buffalo robe, one cooking stove and one parlor do. Also, a large quantity of Fall and Spring Wheat, Peas, Oats, and a great many other articles too numerous to be mentioned.

TERMS OF SALE.—All sums of \$4 and under, Cash; over that amount two months credit will be given on furnishing approved joint notes.—Further particulars made known at time of sale. Sale to commence at 10 o'clock, A. M.

J. S. MATHESON,

Auctioneer.

W. Zorra, Sep. 26, 1856

63-21

As reported in the *Ingersoll Chronicle* of 1856, there was a family dispute over the stone house at Lot 15, Concession 1, belonging to Donald McCorquodale. Brothers, Squire Alexander McCorquodale (1792-1853), and James (1821-1890) took their battle public in the press. Eventually the Squire prevailed, and the property continued in this branch of the family. On his death, it passed to his youngest son, James Ross McCorquodale (1874-1928).

CAUTION.

I Hereby caution any person against purchasing from Alexander McCorquodale, of Lot No. 15, in the 1st concession of West Zorra, any part of the stock or effects of the late Donald McCorquodale, deceased, who died on the said lot, as I am the administrator to the estate of the said deceased, and no one has any authority to dispose of any of the said estate but myself. All debts due to the said estate must be paid to me.

JAMES McCORQUODALE.

W. Zorra, September 16, 1856.

1601f

295884 29th Line, Zorra

The McCorquodale Ontario Farmhouse Georgian stone house is an example of random rubble masonry, brought to courses. Stone corner blocks support similarly sized rubble stones, roughly dressed - each course reflecting the size of the corner block. The masonry has wide joints since stones of irregular size are used, few small sneck stones are used to support the courses.

The windows in the Donald McCorquodale stone house were changed between 1888 and 1903. Perhaps the four large panes were considered an improvement over twenty small panes with their bubbles & distortions. Smaller square windows on the upper storey are unique.

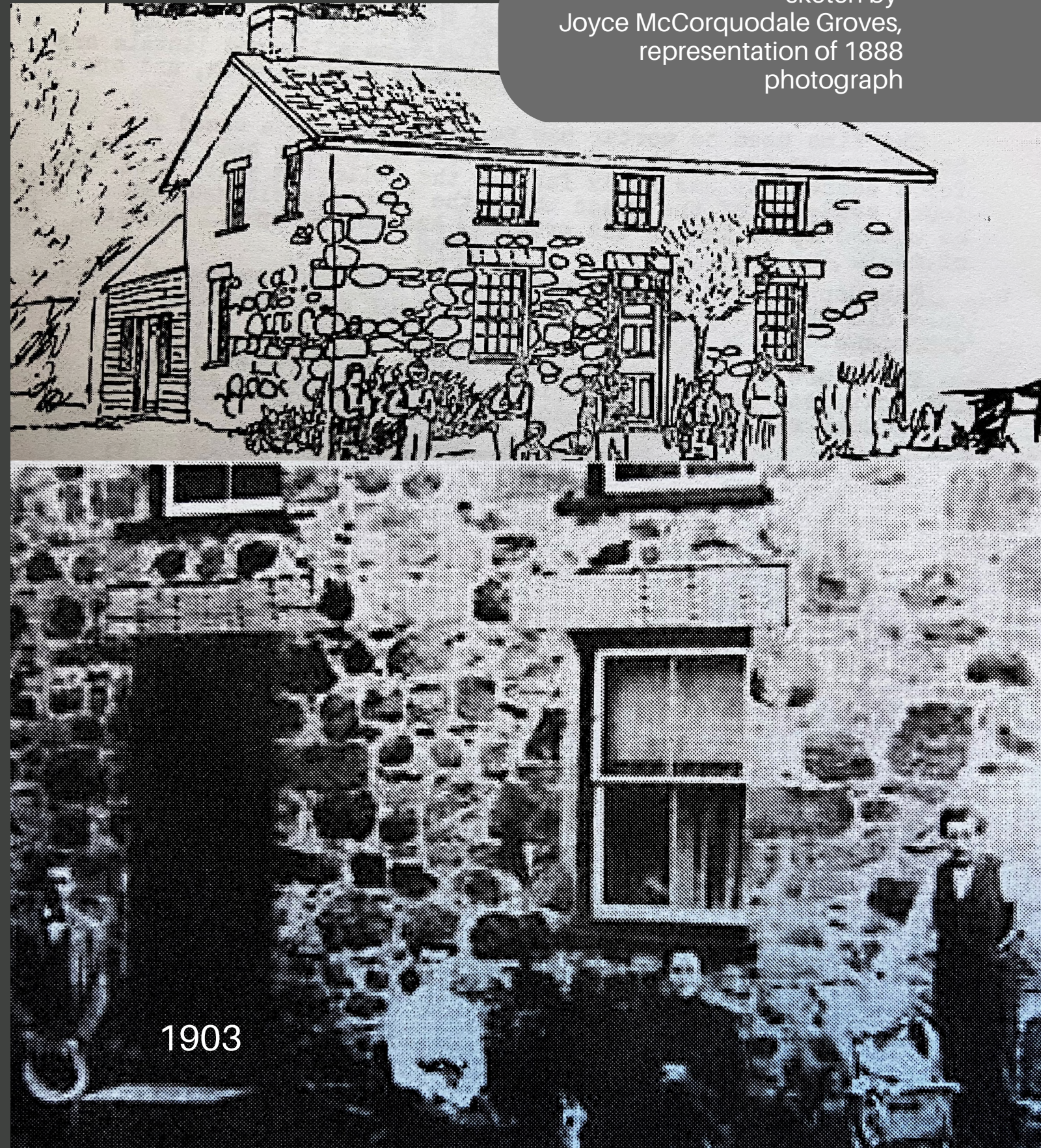
*The Townline of West Zorra and East Nissouri, 1820-1900:
The McCorquodales and Their Neighbours
by Joyce McCorquodale Groves*

Windows sills & lintels were fashioned from wood. The original roof was likely wood shake shingles, which transitioned to metal. The front door is a simple raised panel design. Twin chimneys compliment the roofline. A brick tail section, likely added at a later date, accommodated the kitchen & pantry space.

Around 1936, Janet Ross McCorquodale (1919-2009), daughter of James Ross McCorquodale (1874-1928) was baking pies when a spark from the wood stove started a fire. It was during harvest, and the men were in the fields. The family had no telephone, and by the time she was able to get help, the house was ablaze. The house was lost in the fire.

East Nissouri Township: People, Perverance, Progress, 2012

sketch by
Joyce McCorquodale Groves,
representation of 1888
photograph



296565 29th Line, Zorra

Location: Lot 26 East,
Concession 14, East
Nissouri

Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival

Notable features:
Aberdeen Bond masonry
Construction date:
1875

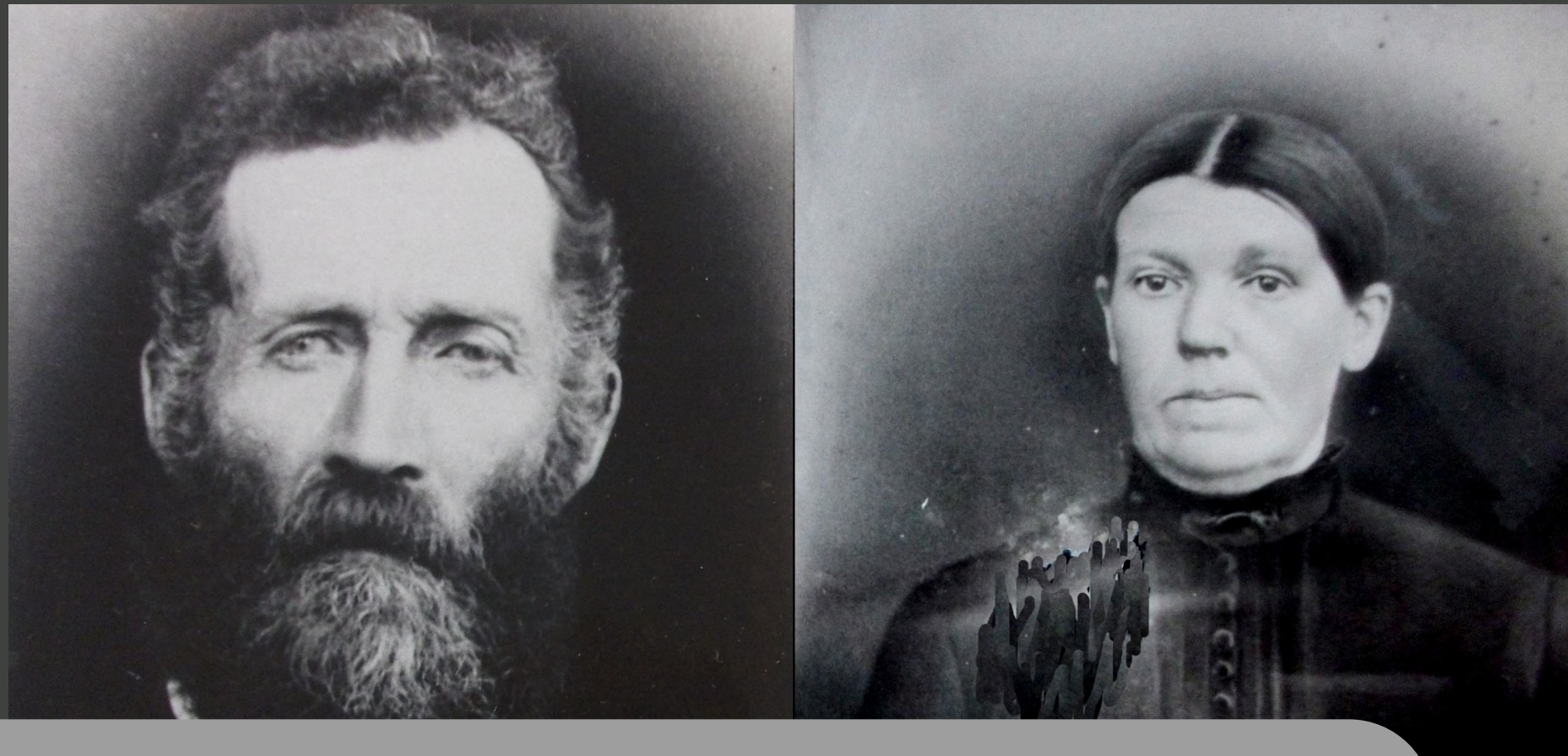
Original owner:
Cornelius McCorquodale,
1834-1918

Stone Mason: John
Thompson Crellin, 1837-
1922



2022 east elevation

296565 29th Line, Zorra



Above: charcoal sketches from the collection of Joyce McCorquodale Groves, circa 1870. Depicted: Cornelius McCorquodale ((1834-1918) & Jane Marshall McCorquodale (1835-1899)

Below: photograph from the collection of Joyce McCorquodale Groves, circa 1960, depicting the farm as seen from the corner of 29th Line & Road 92, looking north.



Cornelius McCorquodale (1834-1918) married Jane Marshall (1835-1899) in 1860. Jane was born in Ireland & came to Canada about 1855. The young couple lived in a log house built by Cornelius' father, Alexander. Cornelius developed a dairy herd & in 1872, he built a cheese factory. Robert Marshall, brother of his wife Jane, was the first cheese maker. The factory was known as Lakeside Cheese Factory. Jane was bookkeeper while her brother was the cheese maker. Jane fell in the factory one day, and because of her diabetes the wound never healed, resulting in her dying at age 63. Cornelius and Jane's legacy includes building and running one of the early cheese factories in the Township, building a stone house (1876), and having six children: Carolyn Sophia (1861-1952), Mary Ann (1862-1943), William Joseph 'Will' (1866-1948), Alexander (1867-1929), Robert Hugh (1873-1946) & George Augustus (1876-1945).

*East Nissouri Township:
People, Perseverance, Progress, 2012*

296565 29th Line, Zorra

Photograph depicting the Cornelius McCorquodale stone house, taken between 1875-1899. The family is shown posed in front of the house, perhaps commemorating the completed construction in 1875.

A log barn is shown to the right of the house, the cheese factory was to the left of the house, with the factory gate entrance accessed from Road 92.

*The Townline of West Zorra and East Nissouri, 1820-1900:
The McCorquodales and Their Neighbours
by Groves, Joyce E. (Joyce Elizabeth)*

The Sentinel Review of August, 1903, carried the following story: "About 4 P.M. fire broke out in the boiler room of the Lakeside Cheese Factory on the corner of the townline between East Missouri and West Zorra and about 3 miles from Harrington. The building with all its equipment and half of the July make of cheese was completely destroyed. The factory was owned by William Shcrdownc of Lakeside. He had purchased it recently from Cornelius McCorquodale.



296565 29th Line, Zorra



circa 1960 east elevation photograph from the collection of Joyce McCorquodale Groves

The Cornelius McCorquodale Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival stone house was built in Crellin's distinctive Aberdeen Bond masonry style. Hand hewn granite blocks were carefully selected by colour, given a woven appearance. 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. A classic arch-top window enhances the gable peak, with an intricate fan-shaped stones stones & centre quoin, highlighting the curve. Other windows are in the two-over-two pane pattern. In high Gothic Revival fashion, the fancy turned barge boards drip from the soffits, with an decorative finial that extended above the roof line.

296565 29th Line, Zorra



2022 north elevation



2022 south elevation

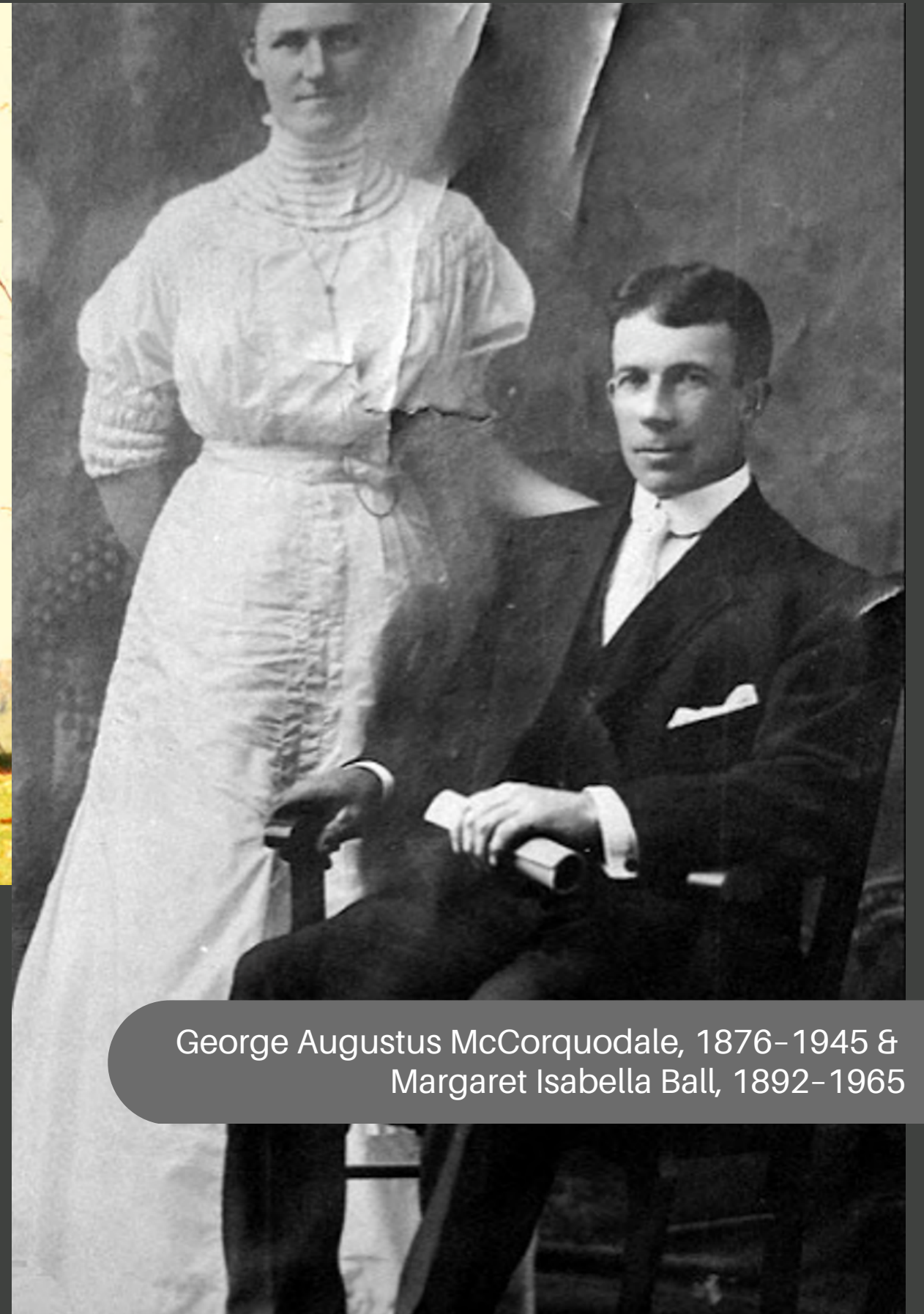
Elaborate, tall twin decorative brick chimneys once graced the roof, formerly crafted of slate. Originally, the rear tail section had a simple gable roofline, with a covered porch facing south - this configuration remained until the 1960s. The detailed deep eaves and returns provide accent to the side elevation. Above, side elevations are contrasted showing Crellin's clear hierarchy based on prominence and visibility. A secondary façade facing a driveway, is made up of even courses of masonry beginning at each quoin with stacks of two snecks in random colours rather than three. The elevation away from the driveway is made up of courses of squared blocks of fieldstone of similar size with no snecks; the back wall of the kitchen wing is rubble. Mortar joints are covered with plaster of Paris.

The Late Nineteenth-century Stone Farmhouses of John Thompson Crellin by Karen Elisabeth Armstrong

296565 29th Line, Zorra



2004 east elevation photograph by Doug A. Huntley



George Augustus McCorquodale, 1876-1945 &
Margaret Isabella Ball, 1892-1965

George McCorquodale (1876-1945) took over the farm from his father Cornelius in 1918, likely he was the first child to be born in the stone house. George & his wife, Margaret Ball, raised a family of six children on this farm.

297006 29th Line, Zorra



Location: Lot 33 East,
Concession 1, West
Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival
Notable features:
Aberdeen Bond
masonry
Construction date:
1872
Original owner:
Robert Duncan, 1822-
1904
Stone Mason: John
Thompson Crellin,
1837-1922

2022 west elevation

297006 29th Line, Zorra

Robert Duncan (1822- 1904) emigrated from Fife, Scotland in 1842. Shortly after arrival, Duncan married Sarah Ann Bell (1823-1913). They had four children: William, (1852-1852), Sarah (1853- 1940), Philip (1856-1936) and John (1859-1942).

It was the Duncan family who commissioned master stone mason John Thompson Crellin to build the house, with its panoramic view of what is now part of the Wildwood Conservation Area.

In 1899, son John took title to the farm, and he and his sister Sarah lived here until he sold the 100 acres in 1938. From John Young, this farm passed to his son Jack in 1964.

In 1974, he severed an acre from the lot and on it built a house. In the same year, he sold the other 99 acres to Camille Petitjean and Michael Smuk. Since 1978, the stone house farm has been owned by John and Joan (Walker) Aiderman.

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



2022 east elevation

297006 29th Line, Zorra



The Duncan Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival house was built in Crellin's distinctive Aberdeen Bond masonry style. Hand hewn granite blocks were carefully selected by colour, given a woven appearance. 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. Classic arch-top windows enhance the gable peaks, with an intricate fan-shaped stones stones highlighting the curve. Original windows may have been in the two-over-two pane pattern. In high Gothic Revival fashion, the fancy scrolling barge boards drip from the soffits, with turned decorative finials once extending above the roof line on all gable ends. The roof was originally slate. The east elevation is constructed of random rubble brought to courses and is considered to be the back of the house. The original driveway once extended from the 29th Line past the north elevation along a long line of spruce trees.

2022 north elevation

297006 29th Line, Zorra

The Duncan House plan is a reversal of Smith's "Suburban Villa" and it is likely the first house completed by Crellin in this asymmetric style. The elevation was changed so that a window became a door and led onto the front veranda from the parlour. The projecting front eliminated the bay window and was widened to accommodate two bays. The front door under the veranda roof in Smith's design was moved to the projecting front facing forward and is not visible because it and the veranda are enclosed by a one-story wood addition, built sometime in mid-twentieth century. All the windows in the projecting two bay gable are rectangular. A round arch window is located in the smaller gable above the veranda. The usual Aberdeen Bond with three snecks is used on the front only. Sometime in the past, the stone was badly damaged by an inexperienced workman using the wrong mortar mix with a very sloppy application when he tried to repoint the house front. The original kitchen extension has been removed. A second wood addition on half the house back includes a new kitchen, an office, the back entry and stairs to the half-excavated cellar which is dry and usable.

The Late Nineteenth-century Stone Farmhouses of John Thompson Crellin by Karen Elizabeth Armstrong



2022 south elevation

315270 31st Line, Zorra



Location: Lot 5 West,
Concession 2,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Georgian
Notable features:
Massive corner stones
Construction date:
before 1851
Original owner: George
Walker, 1800-1872
Stone Mason:
unknown

2022 west elevation

315270 31st Line, Zorra

George Walker (1800-1872) was born north of Toronto, then known as "Muddy York." His parents had moved to Upper Canada because they wanted no part of the American Revolution. They later returned to New York State. George and his American-born wife, Hannah Lloyd (1802-1884) came to the west half of Lot 5 in 1832 by oxen-drawn cart from Niagara Falls, New York. The 1851 Census of Canada documents the Walker family living a two storey stone house with seven children. The couple went on to have another five children.

George was intent on his children getting a good education, but there was no school in the area. So he arranged for classes to be held in his barn - for his children and others in the area. Walker severed a corner of his Concession 1 property and made it available to the trustees of West Zorra school No. 1. Not surprisingly, the log building they erected came to be called Walker's school and was in use until 1964.

What is left of the Walker family farm is a 56-acre part on the west half, now owned by The Kirwin Family, purchased in 1997, who maintain the stone house to very high standard, with a serious eye to heritage preservation.

Ingersoll Chronicle, 7 March 1872

WALKER--In West Zorra [township], 6th inst., Mr. George Walker, Sr., an old and highly respected inhabitant, in the 72nd year of his age



George Walker (1800-1872) & Hannah Lloyd (1802-1884)



315270 31st Line, Zorra



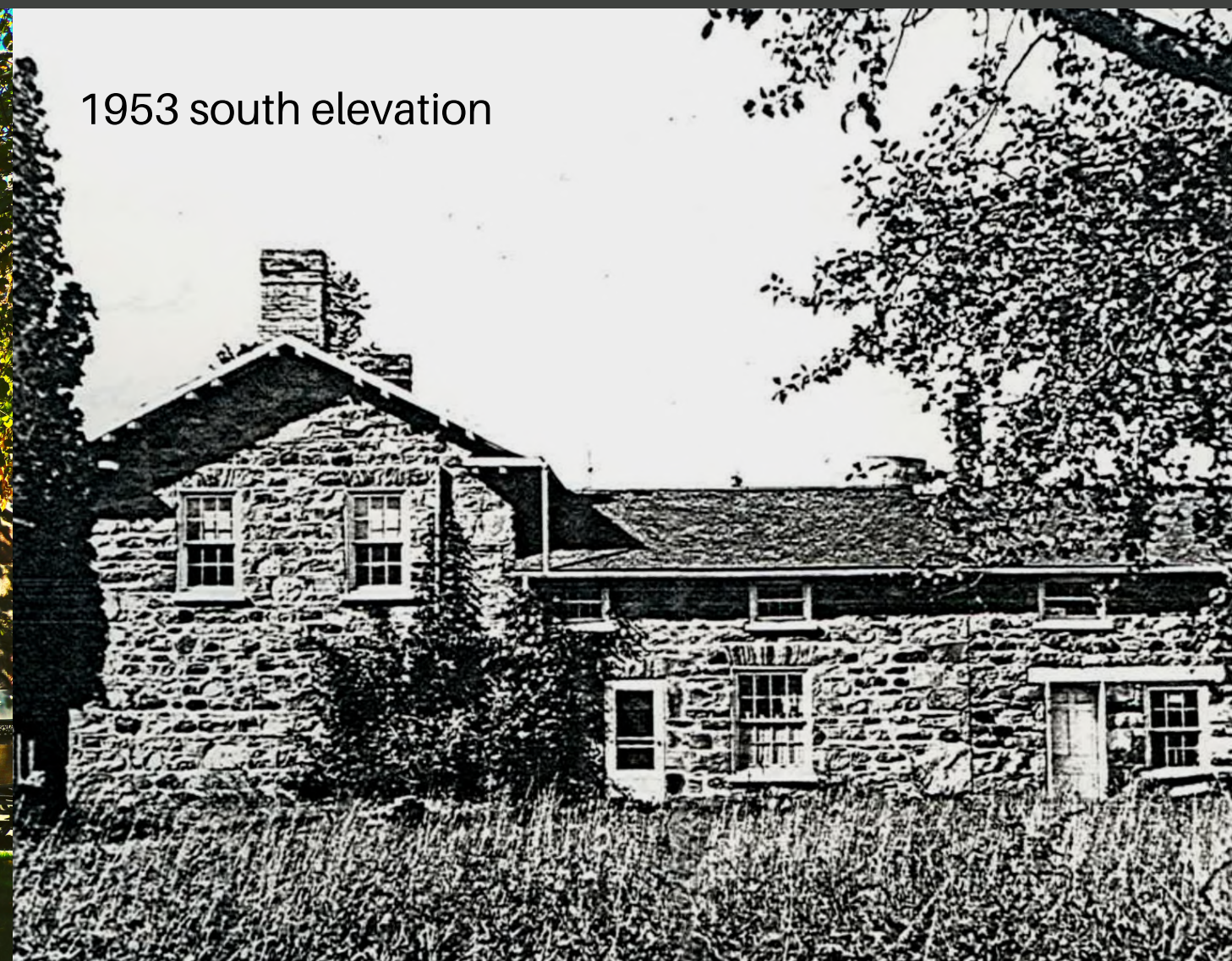
1960s west elevation photograph by Joyce McCorquodale Groves

The Walker Ontario Farmhouse Georgian stone house is an example of random rubble masonry, brought to courses. Massive stone corner blocks support courses of smaller sized rubble stones, roughly dressed. The masonry has wide joints since stones of irregular size are used, small sneck stones are used to further support the courses, particularly in the area between windows & doors. Unique lintels are composed of carefully selected & shaped limestones, tightly set vertically. Windows sills were fashioned from wood. Windows are a two-over-two paned configuration, which seem to speak more of the late Victorian period, perhaps replacing originals at some point. The original roof was likely wood shake shingles, which transitioned to metal. The original wide front door was covered by distinctive panels, perhaps hiding side lights and transom window.

315270 31st Line, Zorra



2022 south elevation

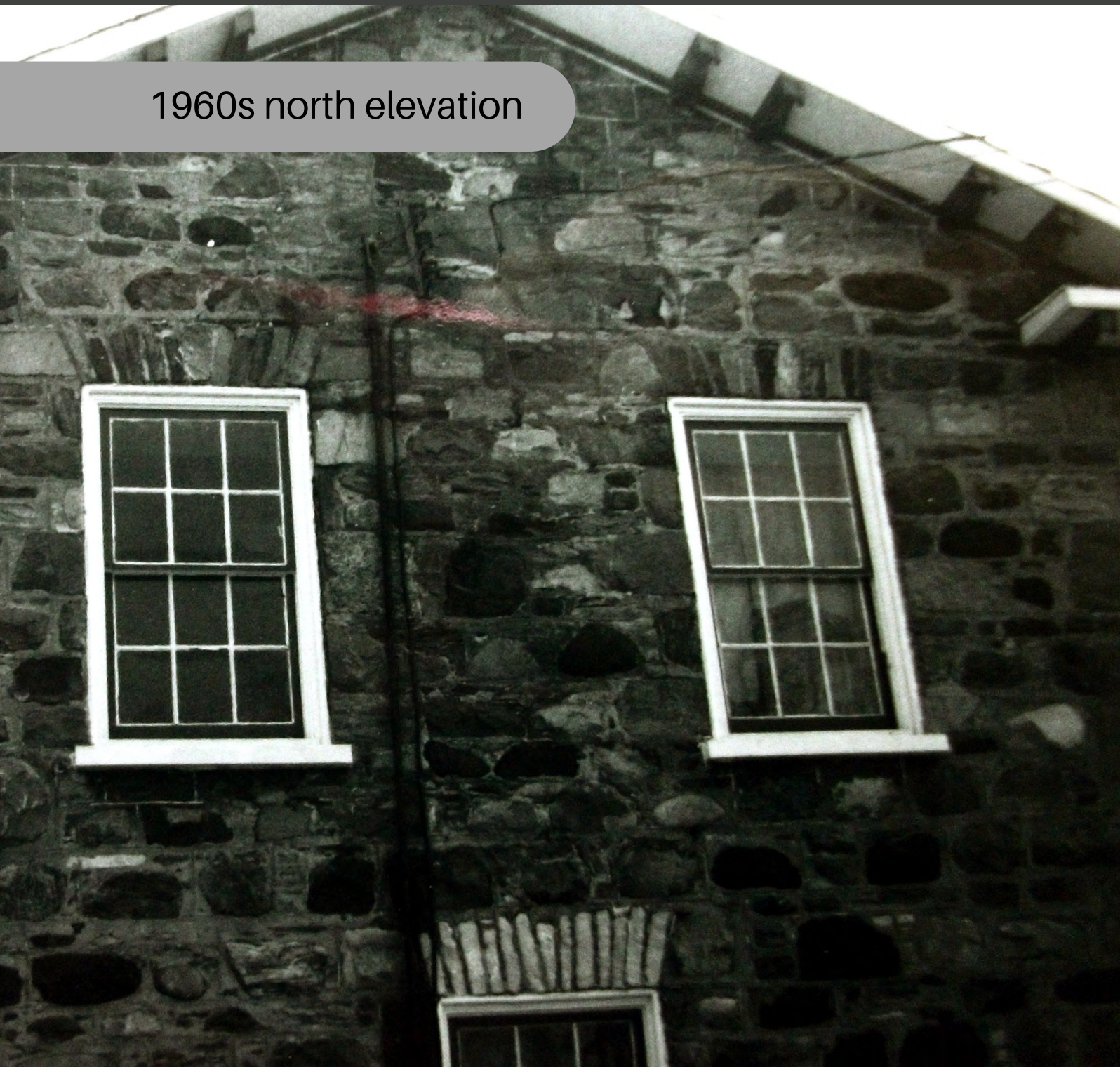


1953 south elevation

Twin stone chimneys compliment the roofline. A stone tail section, likely accommodated the kitchen & pantry space & was perhaps constructed at different times, as a clear join in the masonry seems evident. The detailed deep eaves and returns provide accent to the side elevation; decorative rafter tail corbels add ornament to the soffits on the gable ends. Original windows can be seen on the side elevations in the six over six pane pattern, common up to the 1870s.

315270 31st Line, Zorra

1960s north elevation



2022 north elevation



315424 31st Line, Zorra

1976 aerial photograph depicting the 31st Line, river, barn & the stone house



Location: Lot 7 East,
Concession 2,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage
Construction date:
before 1861
Original owner:
George Holt Harris,
1804-1876
Stone Mason:
unknown
Demolished: between
1976-1980

315424 31st Line, Zorra

A handwritten census document from 1861, showing the Harris family and their stone house on the 31st Line. The document is a table with columns for name, occupation, birthplace, age, sex, and marital status. The Harris family members listed are George, Mary A., Nelson, Eliam, Marshall, Malinda, Maryot, Albert, Lucy, and Esther. George is a farmer, and the others are listed as laborers or children. The birthplace for George and Mary A. is 'U. States' and 'U. Canada' respectively. The ages range from 54 to 4. The marital status for George is 'Stone' and for Mary A. is '1'.

Name	Occupation	Birthplace	Age	Sex	Marital Status
George Harris	Farmer	U. States	54	M	Stone
Mary A. Harris		U. Canada	50	F	1
Nelson Harris	Laborer	U. States	24	M	
Eliam Harris		U. States	22	M	
Marshall Harris		U. States	19	M	
Malinda Harris		U. States	17	F	
Maryot Harris		U. States	11	F	
Albert Harris		U. States	10	M	
Lucy Harris		U. States	4	F	
Esther Harris		U. States	4	F	

1861 Census of Canada, showing the Harris family and their stone house on the 31st Line

George Holt Harris (1804–1876) acquired Lot 7, Concession 2, West Zorra in 1834. George was a grandson of Ely Harris (1755–1813) & Lucretia Abigail Ransom (1755–1836), who were pioneering settlers in the Ingersoll area. George married Mary Ann Secord (1811–1879) in 1825. The couple would go on to have a family of 14 children, most whom were born in the stone house. The farm stayed in the Harris family until 1913.

In 1953, geologists were singing the praises of West Zorra as a source for high-grade limestone and the farm was acquired by Union Drawn Steel Co. Ltd, and the stone house was rented. Sometime hereafter, the interior burned after a tenant tried to kick-start the fireplace with diesel fuel. The stone walls were later buried near where they stood.

In 1995, the Weber family built a house atop the hill, from where they have a panoramic view of the valley that follows the Middle Branch of the Thames River. They call their house De Wijde Blik, which means “wide view” in English.

315441 31st Line, Zorra

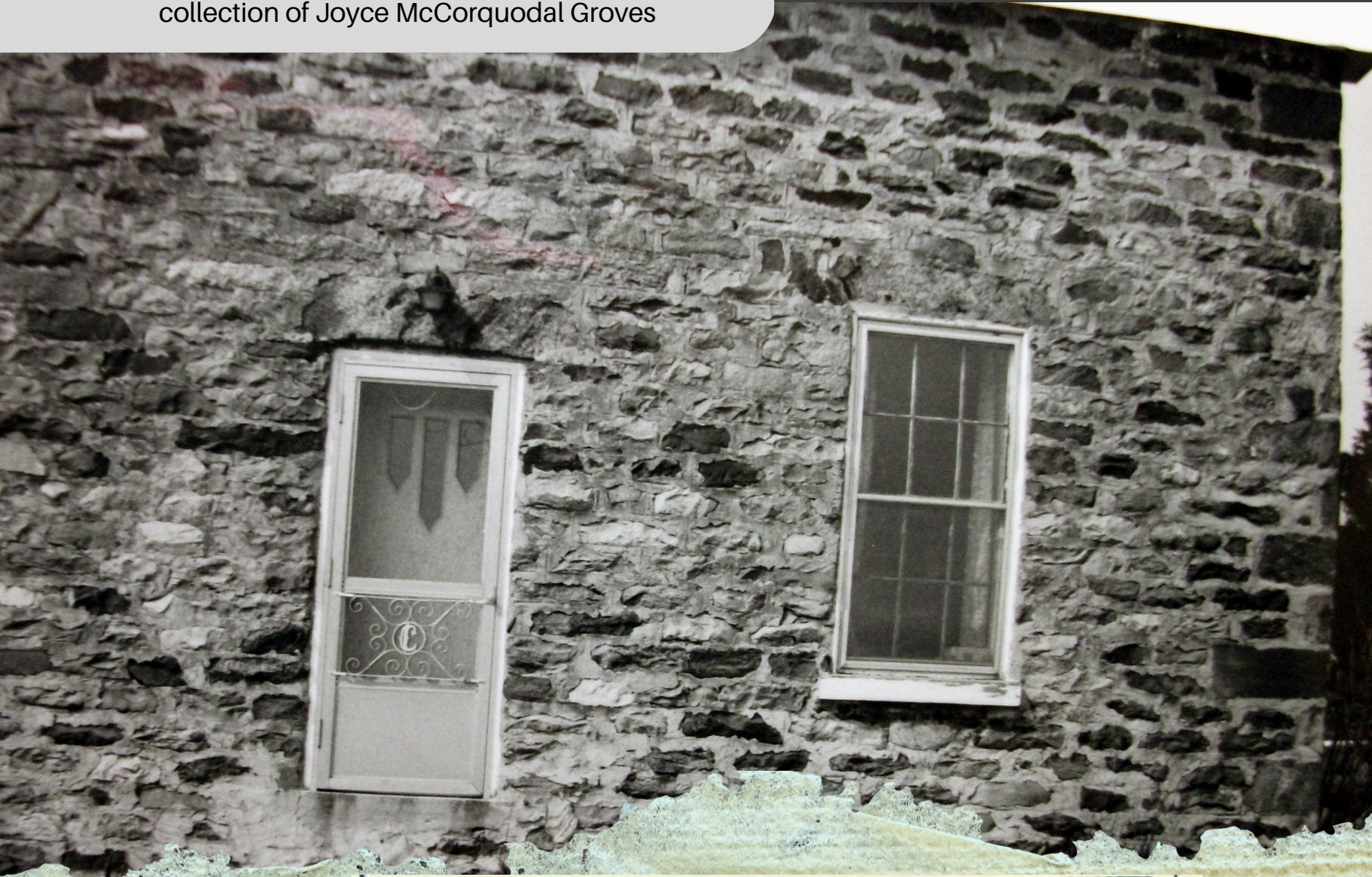
Location: Lot 8 East,
Concession 1,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage
Notable features:
Uniquely narrow
stones
Construction date:
before 1861
Original owner:
John Bennett, 1812-
1890
Stone Mason:
unknown

2022 south elevation



315441 31st Line, Zorra

1960s south elevation, photograph from the collection of Joyce McCorquodall Groves



DIED.
BENNETT—In the Township of West Zorra, on the 28th inst. Miss Mary Bennett, second daughter of John Bennett, Esq., aged 18 years.
BENNETT—On the same day, at the same place—Hannah, the beloved wife of John Bennett, Esq., mother of the above.

The 1851 Census of Canada documents John Bennett (1812-1890) living in a log house on the east half of Lot 8, with his wife Hannah, as well as their children, all born in Canada, including Ann (1839-1875), Mary (1843-1862) & Wallace (1849-1913). It was the Bennett family, between 1846 and 1860, who built the stone house, documented by the 1861 Census of Canada. In 1862, a tragedy befell the Bennett family, when mother, Hannah & her child Mary, both died on 28 January, as noted in the Ingersoll Chronicle. Since 1960, the 150 acres have been owned by Cooper family who operated a dairy operation. The stone house remains in the Cooper family today.

315441 31st Line, Zorra

1960s east elevation, photograph from the collection of Joyce McCorquodall Groves



The Bennett Ontario Farmhouse Cottage is tucked into the brow of a hill looking southward over the Thames River Valley. It was likely constructed by owner John Bennett, using stones found on the property. The masonry technique used to build this house is unique, in that very narrow stone slabs are employed, with relatively small corner blocks. Perhaps Bennett worked alone on this project and the use of smaller stones made the process more manageable. The front of house has a consistent stacked stone appearance, with the other three sides maintaining this consistency. Thick bands of mortar holding the stones in place. Similar in construction method is that of the stone house at 214566 21st Line. Shaped stone lintels support door & window openings. Original six over six paned windows are featured. A stone tail section extends to house the kitchen & pantry areas. A stone chimney likely vented the cookstove. The roof was originally crafted of wood shake shingles.

316355 31st Line, Zorra



Location: Lot 22 East,
Concession 1,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival
Notable features:
Unique gable window
Construction date:
after 1861
Original owner:
Alexander Bain, 1814-
1855
Stone Mason:
unknown

2022 east elevation

316355 31st Line, Zorra

Alexander Bain (1814-1855) of Inverness, Scotland, acquired Lot 22 in 1846. The 1851 Census of Canada documents Alexander living with his Scottish-born wife Mary Colvin (1827-1900) & children, Andrew, 2, and Alex Jr., in a log house. Alexander Sr. died in about 1855 and his estate was settled in the following year. He left his widow Mary and children Andrew, William, Catherine and Alexander, all of whom lived here until 1881. Given the style and construction method, the stone house was likely built during the Bain family's ownership.

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

2022 south & east elevation



316355 31st Line, Zorra



Belle (Sutherland) and Hugh McCorquodale of Lot 22, Concession 1, on their wedding day in 1904-



Marion (Findlay) and LaVerne McCorquodale of Lot 22, Concession 1, on their wedding day, Nov. 16, 1938.

William Marshall, bought the east half of this lot from Andrew Bayne (Bain) in 1884 & married Catherine McKenzie. The children of William and Catherine were Joseph, Alexander, Mary Ann, William Jr., Fred and Ethel. When William Sr. died in 1894, at age 56, ownership of the 100 acres went to his son, Joseph A., who in turn sold it in 1903 to his first cousin Robert Hugh McCorquodale (1872- 1946). In 1904, Hugh McCorquodale married Isabelle (Belle) Sutherland (1877-1937). They raised three children: Marshall, LaVerne and Jessie. In 1944, LaVerne took ownership of the farm and continued to live in the stone house now owned and occupied by his daughter Eleanor and her husband, Bruce Elliot.

316355 31st Line, Zorra

The Bain Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival stone house façade as well as the sides of the house have extremely even blocks, with no discernibly large corner stones. Very few sneck stones support the roughly dressed stones in the field. The side elevations were treated with red clay mortar, perhaps in a later repointing restoration. Corner blocks, 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 original tracery gothic arched window in the front gable is supported in a unique way by a simple squared limestone lintel. Original windows were all in the six over six pane pattern. The original roof may 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. The Bain house may once have had such decoration, but currently the front gable is accented by a simple Victorian flat trim detail. A stone tail section likely accommodates the kitchen & pantry, with a welcoming side porch on the south elevation that includes an upper balcony.



2022 south elevation

317144 31st Line, Zorra



Location: Lot 35 West,
Concession 2,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Gothic Revival
Notable features:
Double gable façade
Construction date:
1877
Original owner:
John Clifford, 1831-1911
Stone Mason: John
Thompson Crellin, 1837-
1922

2022 west elevation

317144 31st Line, Zorra



Clifford family
1940s
west elevation

An Irish yeoman, Dennis Clifford (1795-1861), came to Canada from Derry, with his wife Ellen Sullivan (1821-?), and in 1853 they took up the west 100 acres on Lot 35. They had three sons: John and Dennis Jr., both born in Ireland; and Daniel, born in Canada. The 1861 Census of Canada documents the Clifford family living in a frame house. John Clifford (1831-1911) married Anne Quirk, and they had seven children: Catherine, born 1863; Elizabeth, born 1865; Dennis, born 1867; Mary, born 1868; Anne, born 1870; Margaret, born 1873; and John Joseph, born 1881. Only Elizabeth, Dennis and John Joseph reached adulthood, though Dennis died in his early 20s. The others died of scarlet fever or diphtheria, which went through the area in 1871-1872. After the death of Dennis Sr., John (1831-1911) took ownership of the farm and engaged master stone mason John Thompson Crellin (1837-1922) to construct a stone house, completed in 1877.

John passed the farm to his son John Joseph (1881-1962), who married Hannah O'Flaherty in January 1910. On New Year's Eve 1911, John Sr. died. John Joseph and Hannah worked the land and raised dairy cattle. In 1932, John Joseph's uncle Jack, a well-known stonemason, repaired the mortar and slate roof on the house. In 1962, John Joseph Clifford passed away.

In 1971, Robert and Janet Faulds bought the Crellin-built stone house and spent years restoring the interior & exterior. Today, the home is owned by the VandeKamp family who have renovated the kitchen area in a very sympathetic manner and are striving to maintain the stone house to a very high standard.

317144 31st Line, Zorra

A small but agile man, Crellin came to Canada in 1853 and settled near Kintore. The 10 or so houses he built in Oxford County represent a distinctive Scottish style - a mix of large and small blocks. But this mason was equally good at carpentry, and the houses he built are equally noteworthy within.

There was no date stone placed in the Clifford house because John supposedly said he didn't care when it was built or when it fell down - as long as it stood during his lifetime.

Gathering, splitting and squaring the granite and quarry stone was a laborious process. For the Cliffords, Crellin and his workers used small black- and orange-coloured stones to separate the large granite rocks on the front of the house.

For the interior framework Crellin used four- inch-by four-inch hardwood studs and two-inch- by-10-inch joists which were attached to two- inch-by-10-inch planks embedded every four feet in the inside stone walls. All the floors, which were laid before any partitions were built, were made from tongue-and-groove pine. The fancy door trim was eight inches wide and the baseboards 12 inches high. Most of the windowsills or seats were 18 inches deep. All the windows had pine panelling on their sides and those in the living room, which are only three inches deep, were panelled to the floor. The windows in the front doors came from the Knox Presbyterian Church in St. Marys, Ontario, a church which is no longer standing.

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



2022 west & south elevation

317144 31st Line, Zorra



2022 south elevation

A kind of J-shaped structure with two gables on the front instead of the customary one, the Crellin house, considered state of the art when built, is still in use. Most of its windows, which measure 37 by 78 inches, have just four panes of glass instead of the eight or 12 or more which were usual in that time period.

Though it originally had three brick chimneys, the house had no fireplaces. It was heated by a wood stove in the kitchen and a large parlour stove in each of the dining room and living room.

The second floor was warmed by heat from the smoke pipes of the stoves.

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

317144 31st Line, Zorra

Expensive “extras” in the house included cranberry glass panels above and around the front door, and 10-inch fancy plaster mouldings around the ceiling in the living room and front hall. Even the chandelier hook and smoke-pipe ceiling holes on the main floor were decorated with plaster trim.

The banister and its 72 spindles in the front hall staircase are solid cherry. Three-foot high pine wainscoting, topped with moulding, was added to the walls of the dining room. All the doorknobs are made of white porcelain.

There was only one coat of paint on the ceiling and no wallpaper or painted trim in the house while the Cliffords owned it. The walls were coloured with pink or purple alabastine, a mixture of coloured powder similar to whitewash.

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



2022 north elevation

335358 33rd Line, Zorra

Location: Lot 6 West,
Concession 3,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage
Notable features:
Gable windows
Construction date:
between 1851-1861
Original owner: Robert
McDonald, 1795-1882
Stone Mason:
unknown



2022 west & north elevation

335358 33rd Line, Zorra



1963 south elevation, photograph from the collection of the Harrison family

Robert McDonald (1795-1882) was born in Dornoch, Sutherland, Scotland. On 22 December 1822, he married Christy McKenzie (1801-1879). The couple emigrated to Zorra and they appear on the 1851 Census of Canada living in a log cabin. By 1861, the census documents the pair living in stone house. The 1851 West Zorra Voters' List records record McDonalds living on Lot 6. They had at least one child, Elsie (1824-1910) born in Scotland and it is believed she emigrated with them.

Ingersoll Chronicle, December 7, 1882

DIED.

MCDONALD.—On Monday, 27th ult., Mr. Robert McDonald, 2nd line, West Zorra, aged 87 years.

335358 33rd Line, Zorra

In 1994, Jim & Carol Harrison bought the west half of Lot 6. There is a woodlot on about 50 of the 73 acres kept by the Harrisons. The Harrisons have gutted, renovated and re-roofed the stone house. In 1995, they enlarged it with a red-cedar log addition built by Pan-Abode.

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



2022 north elevation



The Harrisons photographed a pair of antique shoes discovered inside the wall of the stone house during their renovations. Pioneers believed shoes hidden in the walls, under the floorboards, or near an opening of the house, warded off evil spirits.

335358 33rd Line, Zorra



The Robert McDonald 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 sneck stones supporting the courses. Some evidence of Plaster of Paris can still be seen, covering the mortar joints. Lintels are composed of carefully selected stones shaped & set vertically. Unique square gable windows are supported by a single stone lintel. Windows sills were fashioned from wood. The original roof was likely wood shake shingles.

2022 west elevation

335407 33rd Line, Zorra



2022 east elevation

Location: Lot 7
East,
Concession 2,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Cottage / Gothic
Revival
Notable features:
Façade gable
retrofitted
Construction date:
before 1861
Original owner:
Angus Munroe,
1811-1900
Stone Mason:
unknown

335407 33rd Line, Zorra



1904 north elevation
Embro & Zorra 1858-1953



2022 north elevation

Angus Munroe (1811-1900) emigrated to Canada from Ross-shire, Scotland. He married Ruth Anna Crandall (1815-1894) in Norwich, New London, Connecticut, in 1840. The couple went on to have a family of three children: George Angus (1841-1929), Thankful Crandall (1845-1848), John Birnie (1849-1895). Angus is registered as paying tax on Lot 7, recorded by the 1850 West Zorra Tax roll. The 1861 Census of Canada documents the Munroe family living in a stone house. Angus Munroe was a member of the West Zorra municipal council and its representative on the Brock District council in the late 1840s. Crandall Munroe, son of George A. Munroe, came to this farm on lot 7, concession 2 about 1904. The house is of stone with a brick addition & is typical of the era. The farm always had a good maple syrup bush. Crandall Munroe had one daughter, Mary D., who lives in Shedden now. Later, Charles Douglas bought this farm and now the owner is Barney Evans.

Embro & Zorra 1858-1953

335407 33rd Line, Zorra

The Munroe Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival has a gracious façade, with carefully chosen stones, evenly distributed for their colour and carefully crafted into similar sizes. 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 small sneck stones supporting the courses. The side elevations seem to have originally had a raised ribbon mortar treatment. Relatively small corner blocks are used. Lintels are composed of carefully selected stones shaped & set vertically. Windows sills may have been fashioned from wood.



2022 south elevation

335407 33rd Line, Zorra

circa 1908 photograph, courtesy of Oxford County Archives.



circa 1908 east & north elevation



2022 east & north elevation

As shown in the 1908 photograph, the original Munroe stone house was an Ontario Farmhouse Cottage, with a simple gable end. The Gothic Revival front gable was likely added in the 1880s, during the height of this architectural fashion. The arched tracery window would have added light to the upstairs rooms & elevated the façade. The roof itself was crafted of wood shake shingles. Ornate twin brick chimneys, with a keyhole detail, compliment the roofline. The windows reflect the early construction period, in the six over six paned pattern - replacement windows mimic the historic esthetic. The spirit of the original door surround seems to have been maintained, with sidelights & detailed architrave & millwork, highlighting the opening.

335407 33rd Line, Zorra



2022 south elevation

2022 north east elevation

The Munroe Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival had brick tail section, likely once housing the kitchen & pantry area. The front of the house is complimented by a portico with columns, likely added at a later date. Side porches shade access doors. The detailed deep eaves and returns provide accent to the side elevation. In 2003, the Glassford family removed the brick tail and added a large board & batten addition to the rear of the home.

OBITUARY.

ANGUS MUNROE.

The death of Angus Munroe which occurred last week, removes one of the pioneers of West Zorra. He was born in Ross-shire, in the year 1812. His father was John Munroe. John had been educated in Aberdeen College with a view to the ministry, but failing health compelled him to desist from study before he graduated. In 1832 the deceased came to the U. S., and having received careful training in Scotland he shortly after arriving in America embarked in the construction of railroads. This branch of work was then in its infancy, and he found ample field for his talents. In Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York and elsewhere his services were in constant demand. As a consequence of this he soon acquired a competency, and desirous of a quiet life he determined to settle on a farm where he could enjoy the fruits of his labor in peace. Rural life was to him the acme of enjoyment, so after careful consideration between Connecticut and Zorra he finally chose Zorra as his future home. In the year 1812 he purchased his late home, lot 7, con. 2, West Zorra, from a Mr. Minot, a gentleman from the United States also. Upon this farm there was then an extensive nursery. The right to the nursery

was also purchased and Mr. W. H. Merritt, the proprietor of the Welland canal, who was the real owner, gave Mr. Munroe the deed. This nursery was, we are informed, the only one in the district, which may surprise our readers if we will remember that both Zorras are included as well as Nissouri and the Oxfords. Mr. Munroe was one of the first councillors of the district and when separation took place he remained in the West Zorra council for years, and all the older residents never fail to speak of his sterling qualities as a public man. In the year 1848 he was united in marriage to Ruth Ann Crandall, in the city of Norwich, Conn. Miss Crandall was a native of Rhode Island and was a woman of uncommon force of character, kindly of disposition, well informed in mind, solicitous for the well being of others. She was a worthy helpmeet, so when Mr. Munroe and the family followed the body to the tomb in the summer of 1894 they had indeed sustained the one great loss—that of a beloved wife and an affectionate mother. To Mr. and Mrs. Munroe were given three children, Geo. A. Thankful Crandall (who died in infancy,) and John B., who died some years ago. Geo. A. still cultivates the homestead. In politics Mr. Munroe was a Reformer and attended Embury Congregational Church. Mr. Munroe was an ardent admirer of Horace Greeley, editor of the N. Y. Tribune, and one of his most highly prized articles was a copy of Webster's Dictionary presented to him by Mr. Greeley upon completing his fortieth year of subscription to that paper. Mr. Munroe was in possession of many of the early records of the township.



circa 1908 photograph, courtesy of Oxford County Archives.
George A. Munroe & family inherited the stone house from his father Angus Munroe (1811-1900)
Back row from left: Mabel Munroe Whitehead (1875-1929), Marion Davidson Munroe Burrill (1907-2004), Crandall Munroe (1874-1969)
Front row from left: Jessie Murray Munroe (1873-1941), [?], Mary Davidson Munroe (1849-1928), and George A. Munroe (1841-1929).

336206 33rd Line, Zorra



1997 west elevation
photograph by Doug A. Huntley

Location: Lot 20
West,
Concession 3,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario
Farmhouse
Cottage
Notable features:
Massive corner
stones
Construction date:
before 1851
Original owner:
Benson Pelton,
1812-1890
Stone Mason:
unknown

336206 33rd Line, Zorra



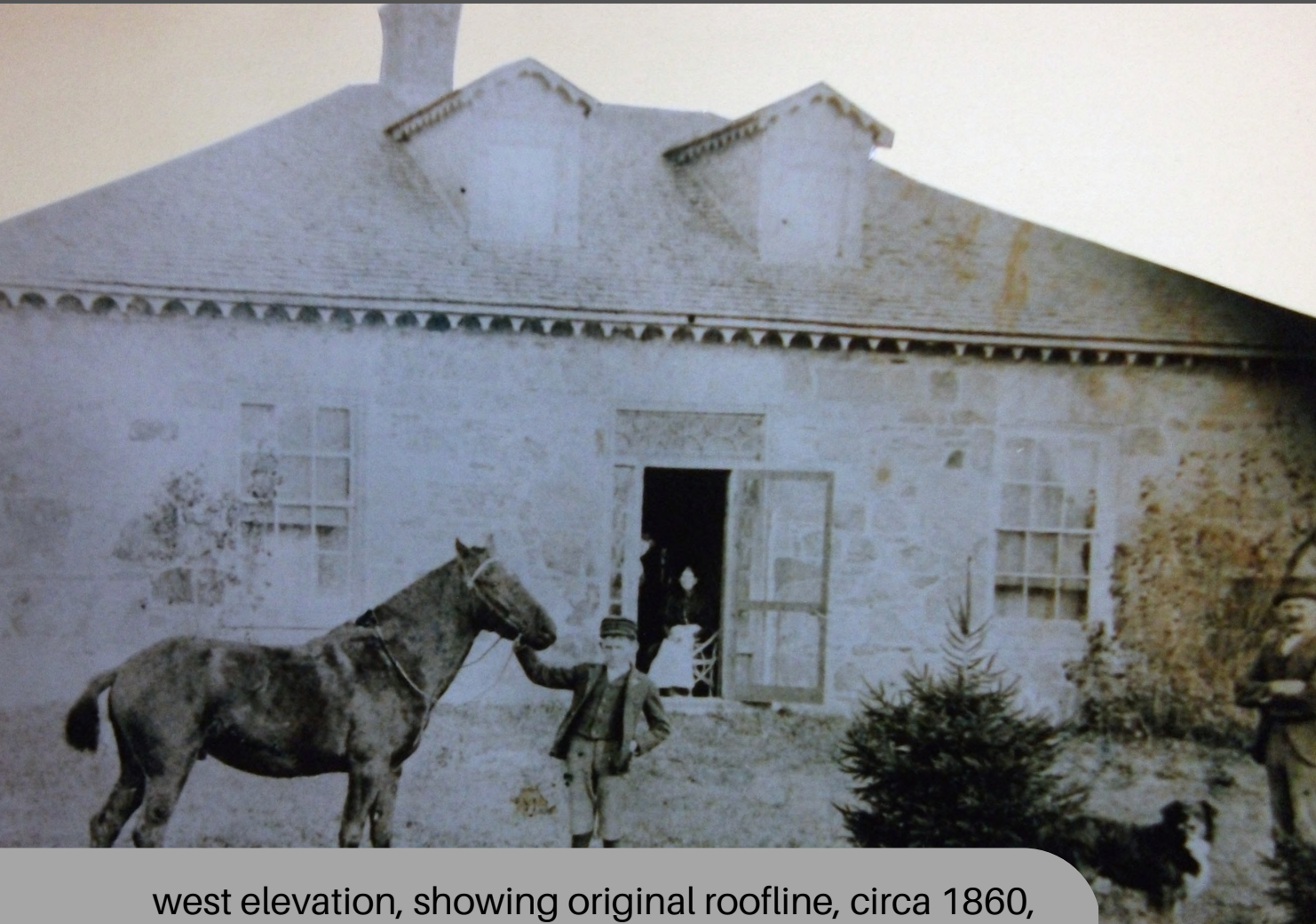
Benson Pelton, circa 1880



2022 west elevation

Benson Pelton (1812-1890) was born in Blenheim Township. He married Mary Lewis (1818-1883) in 1833 and in 1846 the couple moved to Lot 20. They already had several children at this time and went on to have a family of twelve. The 1851 Census of Canada documents the Peltons living together in a stone house. Pelton was a Councillor for West Zorra Township 1850-1852. The stone house passed from Benson to three of his sons: James (1838-1891), Henry (1848-1942) & Joshua (1847-1901). In 1944, after 100 years the farm passed out of the Pelton name and was sold to the Kittmer family, who still own it today.

336206 33rd Line, Zorra



west elevation, showing original roofline, circa 1860, Joshua Pelton is depicted holding the horse



west elevation, photograph from the collection of Joyce McCorquodale Groves, circa 1960

The Pelton stone house is an example of a Regency cottage, with a four-sided hip roof and twin roof dormers, it typifies this architectural style. Symmetry is essential for the Regency design. The placement of the chimney indicates that the interior of the house is placed around a central fireplace. An ornamental frieze board highlights the soffits, as well as the gabled peaks of the dormer windows. A wide door with sidelights & a transom window brought light into the hallway, sometime in the 20th century this doorway was downsized. Classic six over six paned windows flank the doorway. The transition of the house to a Dutch Colonial, with a gambrel roof and large front window, likely occurred in the 1890s, the height of popularity of this style. The Pelton family numbered fourteen, perhaps the expansion accommodated more bedroom space on the upper storey.

336206 33rd Line, Zorra



south elevation, photograph from the collection of Joyce McCorquodale Groves, circa 1960



2022 west & north elevation

The Pelton Ontario Farmhouse Cottage is unique in that, for its size, the corner stones are massive. 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, only the corner stones seem to have been squared. The masonry has wide joints since stones of irregular size are used, with many small sneck stones supporting the courses. Lintels are composed of carefully selected stones shaped & set vertically. Windows sills were fashioned from wood originally. The Regency windows were replaced in the Victorian era, with distinctive eight over two paned patterns.

336603 33rd Line, Zorra

2022 east elevation



Location: Lot 26
East,
Concession 2,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario
Farmhouse Gothic
Revival
Notable features:
Aberdeen Bond
Construction date:
1870s
Original owner:
John McComb,
1845-1923
Stone Mason:
John Thompson
Crellin, 1837-1922

336603 33rd Line, Zorra

John McComb (1845-1923) acquired Lot 26 in 1872.

John married Rachel Field Youngs (1846-1919) on 26 Jan 1871, in West Zorra. The couple started their family on this farm and went on to have a family of seven children: Henry Fields (1872-1952), Clarence Edwin (1873-1903), Nellie Jane (1876-1959), William George (1878-1879), Ernest Cecil Lionel (1880-1967), John Egerton (1882-1973), Charles Wilburn (1884-1912).

John & Rachel needed to house their large family and looked no further than John's brother-in-law, master stone mason, John Thompson Crellin (1837-1922).

The Crellin and McComb families were friends in England and when the McCombs immigrated to Oxford County in 1850, Crellin married Elizabeth McComb. He built his first farmhouse for her brother's family.

*Branches, This Will Be A Story of the John Thompson Crellin - Elizabeth McComb Family
by Griffin, Audrey Furse Lindsay*

George Matheson (1879 - 1962) acquired the farm in 1919. He married Maggie Amos McIntosh (1889-1961) in 1924 and under their ownership, hydro was brought to the stone house. The farm continued in the Matheson family, with Willis George (1925-1994), son of George continuing the legacy until 1990.



2022 south elevation

336603 33rd Line, Zorra



2022 south elevation

The house had a roof of dark grey slates, imported from Scotland, and its trim work was extensive. The windows were large and flanked with teal green shutters. There was an elaborate porch across the front, the foundations of which were still in the ground in 1990. At the rear of the stone house the McCombs added what appears to have been a complete, single-storey house of white brick. In all likelihood it was moved from one of the properties united to form the 150-acre farm. The addition of three more chimneys brought the total for the house to five. Included in the additional house was a summer kitchen, a privy, the main kitchen, a small pantry and a bedroom. A sunporch with a row of south-facing windows covered the entrance to the basement, which was under the original house.

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

336603 33rd Line, Zorra

The McComb Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival - which was likely Crellin's first— he chose to create the north secondary façade following exactly the same patterning as the east front façade with stacks of three snecks between larger blocks, suggesting that Crellin was new to the use of Aberdeen Bond. He arrived at the colour combination of black over pink over black snecks at the second-floor level of both façades of the McComb house after many experiments using coloured snecks in various combinations, on the east and north walls facing the driveway that encircled the house. The south wall of the house on current driveway is made up of courses of quarry-faced blocks alternating with stacks of two randomly coloured snecks, such that three sides of the McComb house are built in Aberdeen Bond, two of which use courses containing three snecks and one with courses of two stacked snecks.

The Late Nineteenth-century Stone Farmhouses of John Thompson Crellin
Karen Elisabeth Armstrong

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. The McComb house corner blocks were hand chiseled by the mason, with a smooth scribed outer frame and a rock-faced inner square.



2022 north elevation

336603 33rd Line, Zorra



2022 east façade

The McComb Ontario Farmhouse Gothic Revival is defined by the arch-top tracery windows gracing the upper storey, with shaped limestones highlighting the curve. A plaque mounted above the window is blank, perhaps it once decreed the build date, but over time the east wind & sun took their toll. In high Gothic Revival fashion, the fancy turned barge boards drip from the soffits, as well as the gracious front porch. A dentil frieze board completes the ornament at the roof line. The detailed deep eaves and returns provide accent to the side elevations.

In 1990, Jim & Katherine Grieve bought the stone house and have since spent many hours learning about their house. They've discovered that over the years, some of the rooms have been "re-organized" with minor changes, but that there is no one left who can explain the original layout. There is a centre hall, open to the front door, with original newel, balustrade and railings on the stairwell. Some believe the front door is not original because of evidence of another latch in the frame. The current door features the round, fluted panel which, along with the slightly off-centre pavement of the door opening, was a popular vice of Scottish builders to confuse and keep out the devil.

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

The Grieve family have renovated & maintained the McComb stone house extensively, always with an eye for meticulous detail, historical accuracy & preservation.

336604 33rd Line, Zorra



2022 north elevation

Location: Lot 26
West, Concession 3,
West Zorra
Architectural style:
Ontario Farmhouse
Barn
Notable features:
Timberframe
structure
Construction date:
1996
Original owner:
John Herman, 1928-
2022
Stone Mason:
John Herman, 1928-
2022

336604 33rd Line, Zorra

In November 1990, John Herman (1928-2022) & Marilyn Mountain Robinson (1944-) bought 95 acres on Lot 26. John was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1928. He moved to eastern Ontario in the early 1950s, and until 1970 he operated lumber mills in the United States and Canada. Then he began training as a Presbyterian Church minister. He completed that training at McGill University in Montreal and took a job with a church in the same city. In 1986, his work with seniors took him to Spruce Lodge in Stratford, where he met Marilyn (Mountain) Robinson. They married in 1989, in St. Marys United Church. Marilyn was born in Downie Township, Perth County. She became a registered nurse in 1964 and worked at Stratford General Hospital and St. Marys Memorial Hospital before going to Spruce Lodge in 1977.

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



336604 33rd Line, Zorra



2006 east & south elevation



John Herman 1928-2022

As John & Marilyn wound down busy careers, they decided they would build a timber-frame house. To that end, John took down a bank barn near Milton. But before he could get the timbers to Zorra, they were stolen. John found a barn near Whalen Corners, west of St. Marys that he could dismantle. The house that John built here is a replica of the 50-by-80-foot Whalen Corners barn, except the height from peak to floor deck was reduced by five feet. It was a labour of love, albeit part time, for John, who, with occasional assistance from family and friends and professionals, did most of the work. That included digging the foundation, laying out and pouring footings, mortising and tenoning timbers, adding a roof, finishing the inside, and splitting stone for the exterior.

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

336604 33rd Line, Zorra

The old barn timbers deteriorated, & as a result John chose pine trees to be used for the main timbers from a woodlot in the Simcoe area. All of the timbers were mortised & tenoned with oak pegs as fasteners. The frame was raised in 1994. John and Marilyn moved here in November 1997. For several years John had been gathering the foundations of old barns, hoping to use the stone to finish the exterior of the house. He built a hydraulic splitter to split the large stone. First, he built two large fireplaces. Then, in 1998-1999, he covered the outside of the building, resulting in a spectacular edifice.

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

2022 south elevation

