

Each Building Has Beauty Of Its Own

By William Aeberli

Since the rediscovery of cobblestone architecture, authorities clarify its origin as being the end result of the abundant supply of glacial material and man's ingenuity and creativity.

But only an hypothesis exists when we try to answer the question: "What prompted the first mason to create the first, crude cobblestone wall in the first place?"

Take note that the first forms of cobblestone architecture were not too different from the usual flush stone masonry of centuries past. Perhaps many years ago, one particular mason experimented with laying up a different kind of a wall principally for appearance sake--then again, there could be other reasons.

But what does set apart the usual from the unusual (in this case the cobblestone wall) is selection of stones, purposely numbered in a group for the horizontal course, to fit into a specified,

vertical space of a quoin or corner stone.

This means that early cobblestone architecture or "its first types of masonry" were the blueprints for the contemporary middle period and the very artistic late period. But in effect, the basics of construction always remained the same, only the veneering changed!

But regardless of period workmanship, all cobblestone buildings have an individualized beauty of their own. We should have a better understanding of this phenomenon by studying the three remaining cobblestone buildings along the Ridge in Murray.

The Lewandowski cobblestone cottage undoubtedly is one of the very early types of the 1825 era in this area, and is located at 15698 Ridge Rd. W., on the south side near the Hindsburg Rd.

The material is almost entirely fieldstone with 3 courses to a quoin. There was an attempt to protrude a few stones, here and there.

At first glance, the walls have a pronounced flush

appearance which gives off a dark, bluish-gray sheen effect when the sun is overhead. The climbing foliage across half the west wall completely covering the chimney blends with the mortar and material.

In contrast to this fine example of early workmanship, there is an example of early middle period work located eastward on the north slope at 16035 Ridge Rd. W.

The front wall is made up with a more careful selection of cobblestones, four to a quoin; the masonry although rough provides that rustic quality so characteristic throughout the whole middle period.

We may date this building between 1834 and 1838 and not be too far off the mark. An unusual feature is this building's full-size basement windows.

In conclusion, we have two examples of two periods within a short distance illustrating the progression of cobblestone architecture--"the simplified" and "the more selective" of stone material.



EARLY PERIOD--Lewandowski cobblestone on the Ridge was built almost entirely of fieldstone, around 1825.

4-21-76