

5. ALTON METHODIST CHURCH

This church in Alton is about 120 years old and has been in the Methodist denomination for the entire time.

The wide bands of red and white stones are very striking.

STONES: The red lakestones are  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -3 x  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -1  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

Courses are  $2\frac{1}{4}$ -2  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches high.

JOINTS: The horizontal V is  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches high.

The vertical are V's and pyramids.

MORTAR: The mortar is brown with some pebbles in it.

QUOINS: The quoins are untooled sandstone at the rear where they have not been cemented over.

LINTELS: The lintels are wooden.

consistency. From either the bead or the "V" one can tell that after the mason had laid a row, he went back along with a tool to shape the horizontal and vertical joints. Thus the mortar had to be such as to hold its shape yet manageable to mold easily. I have been told that road dust was collected to be used in the mortar. This might explain how some mortars got their very fine and hard qualities.

An intriguing part of this art is the many patterns or designs used. One type exclusively used in the Late Period is the "herringbone". The stones used in this were long slim red sandstone about 6" long and  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " high. These were laid diagonally at an approximate 50 degree angle. Every other row was laid the same way, but the alternate row was laid slanting toward the other side! On a good sunshiny day this creates a rich, impressive mingling of shadows on the stone that varies all day long.

Usually these different patterns are arranged in fours, such as in the **Alton Church**: two red, one white, one black. These color bands form definite patterns only on individual houses, not on these houses as a whole. Also, on several homes can be seen more red stones toward the bottom with more white toward the top, or vice versa. Many masons also seemed to favor stones of either brown, black, or yellow hue, or a mixture of these.

