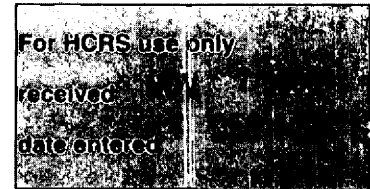


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Meyerhofer Cobblestone House (preferred)

and/or common Wager House

2. Location

E of Lake Geneva on

street & number Townline Road

___ not for publication

city, town Lake Geneva *ms.* vicinity of

congressional district First

state Wisconsin code 55

county Walworth

code 127

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Roberta and Ervin Wager

street & number Route 4, Box 185

city, town Lake Geneva ___ vicinity of

state Wisconsin 53147

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Walworth County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Elkhorn

state Wisconsin 53121

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of
Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date 1974

___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison

state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Wager cobbleston house is a two-story, rectangular building with gabled end wings and a center pavilion, constructed about 1850. At a later time, a frame summer kitchen, also with a gable roof, was added to the west rear portion of the house. A low foundation of like cobblestone and fieldstone construction supports the house. The entrance to the house is constructed of brick, with brick quoins, and has Greek Revival features, particularly in the segmental-arch doorway and the pediment. The house has symmetrical fenestration. Elements of deterioration on the exterior include a large hole in the southeast corner of the roof and a gradually widening vertical crack in the rear of the building. (Originally, heavy wood cornices formed a pediment over the center of the second story, and course denticulation decorated the wings.) In the interior of the house, only the frames of the interior walls remain to mark the past arrangement of rooms. The cellar, a brick barrel vault with a dirt floor and once used to store wine, is the one interior feature in reasonably good condition. It is the plan of the new owners to restore the house to its original condition.

There are numerous outbuildings on the farm, including a barn, a granary, chicken house, shed, and an outhouse. These are all generally of frame construction and in deteriorating condition. In addition, a large cement silo with a stone foundation stands at the rear of the house, alongside the foundation where a cobblestone barn once stood. Although many of these buildings are quite old, they are not of sufficient architectural significance to contribute to the nomination.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1850¹

Builder/Architect Nikolaus Meyerhofer²

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Cobblestone architecture in Wisconsin is mostly derived from antecedents in the north-eastern United States, particularly the cobblestone buildings constructed in western New York by masons who had previously worked on the Erie Canal. As a result, most of the Wisconsin cobblestone structures still in existence are similar in construction, marked by carefully selected and arranged stones of uniform size and color.³

The Meyerhofer House is a marked contrast to other Wisconsin cobblestone masonry. Nikolaus Meyerhofer came to Wisconsin from Germany sometime around 1845, and purchased 160 acres for farming in Walworth County in 1847. He had been a stonemason in Germany and put his skills to use in the building of his home. The result, completed in 1850, sacrificed the more usual (for this period of architecture) uniformity of stones in favor of speed of completion. Meyerhofer's daughters gathered a wide assortment of stones, together with bits of ledge rock, which were used by their father to fashion the sturdy walls of the two-story structure.⁴ The use of brick was confined to the quoins and the entrance. This type of cobblestone masonry, with stones of various sizes and colors laboriously pieced together with a minimum of mortar, has been termed "opus mixtum" and is identified with the northern European area from which Meyerhofer came.⁵

The basic form of the Meyerhofer house is almost entirely unaltered since its first occupant completed it. It retains formal classical massing that is not present in the more vernacular examples of cobblestone architecture elsewhere in Wisconsin. Most notable of these features are the originally pedimented center pavilion with side wings, segmental-arch motif over entrance and windows (formed by brick voussoirs), the remaining stone pediment and the leaded glass sidelights of the doorway. These features set off the structural soundness of the house to render a comfortable combination of rugged texture with more graceful lines.

1. Perrin, The Architecture of Wisconsin, 52.
2. Statement of Florine Helgert Warner, great-granddaughter of Nikolaus Meyerhofer. A copy of her statement is in the possession of this office.
3. Schmidt, Cobblestone Masonry, 1-12.
4. Statement of Florine Helgert Warner.
5. Perrin, op. cit., 52. Perrin mistakenly refers to the builder of the house as Nikolaus Helgert. "Helgert" was, in fact, the name of the man who married Meyerhofer's daughter, and the Meyerhofer house remained in the Helgert family until recently.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Virginia A. Palmer, The Octagon House and the Cobblestone Building in Wisconsin, Madison, 1978.
Richard W. E. Perrin, The Architecture of Wisconsin, Madison, 1967.
Carl F. Schmidt, Cobblestone Masonry, New York, 1966

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 0.14
Quadrangle name Lake Geneva, Wisconsin

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	6	3	8	6	0	0	0	4	7	1	5	1	5	1	0
Zone			Easting					Northing							

B

Zone			Easting					Northing							

C

Zone			Easting					Northing							

D

Zone			Easting					Northing							

E

Zone			Easting					Northing							

F

Zone			Easting					Northing							

G

Zone			Easting					Northing							

H

Zone			Easting					Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Terry L. Shoptaugh, Historian, Historic Preservation Division

organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date June 19, 1980

street & number 816 State Street telephone 608/262-2970

city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Richard Marney

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

date 10/22/80

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

John W. Ray
Keeper of the National Register

date 12.8.80

Attest:

David Fritz McClelland
Chief of Registration

date 12-8-80

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 1

10. VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nominated site shall consist of a rectangular plot 100 feet north-to-south from the northern edge of Town Line Road and 60 feet east-to-west from a point 200 feet from the eastern edge of a parcel of land located in the South 1/2 of the southeast 1/4 of Section 32, Town 2 North, Range 18 East, Walworth County, Wisconsin, described as follows: Commencing at the South 1/4 corner of said Section 32; thence N 89° 18' 55" E 742.28 feet along the South line of the Southeast 1/4 of said Section 32 to the place of beginning; thence N 0° 41' 05" W 33.00 feet; thence continue N 0° 41' 05" W 650.02 feet; thence S 41° 43' 05" E 596.25 feet; thence N 88° 47' 20" E 295.62 feet; thence S 5° 06' 00" W 237.17 feet to the South line of the Southeast 1/4 of said Section 32; thence S 89° 18' 55" W 164.71 feet along said South line; thence N 0° 41' 05" W 45.00 feet; thence S 89° 18' 55" W 485.00 feet; thence South 0° 41' 05" E 45.00 feet; thence S 89° 18' 55" W 13.43 feet to the place of beginning.

Containing 5.01 acres, exclusive of road, of which the actual nominated parcel (house and lot) occupies 0.14 acres.