

## **Cobblestone Pavement Discovered During Archaeological Investigations at the Bimeler House in Zoar Village**

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In the fall of 2012, Ohio Historical Society archaeologists were in the process of performing archaeological investigations and monitoring at the Bimeler House in Zoar Village, Tuscarawas County, Ohio. The purpose of these investigations was to determine whether or not any archaeological evidence of life in the Zoar Village era could be recovered during the house lifting and foundation replacement efforts at the Bimeler House (Herson et al. 2013).

The Bimeler House was severely damaged by floods which occurred in the winter of 2005. Subsequent soil coring and other structural investigations determined that soils under the house foundations had a limited bearing capacity and that a complete foundation replacement would be required in order to preserve the building and return it to its pre-flood condition (Herson, Pansing, Pickard and Lepper 2013). The house would need to be mechanically lifted and its foundation rebuilt before lowering the house back into place (Figure 1).

During monitoring, a previously unknown cobblestone feature was exposed near the southeast corner of the house (Figure 2). The cobblestone feature was trapezoidal in shape with loose scatters of stone located to the northwest and west of the feature. The cobblestone feature was 3 m N-S by 2.65 m E-W. The cobbles range in size from between 25 x 15 cm to 8 x 10 cm with the in-filled cobbles measuring 3 x 4 cm. The feature resembled the floor of some structure, but no postmolds were observed to confirm this. Numerous nails and glass fragments were associated with the feature, however.

Howard Sturm Jr., step-son of Lillian Bimeler-Sturm who lived at the house, informed Pansing that he recalled a patio associated with the Bimeler House, possibly in the same location as the cobble feature. Former Zoar site manager Kathy Fernandez suggested that the feature could be a pavement where visitors to the house could be dropped off to keep their feet dry. Another possibility is that the pavement was created as a work surface during the time the 1914 basement was being constructed. The numerous nails, spikes, glass, etc. recovered in association with the feature might relate to that activity.

The entire feature was removed during the preparation of the site for raising the Bimeler House from its foundation. Since the pavement may have belonged to the Zoar period, we have recommended that it be restored and further historic research be undertaken so that this feature may be included in future interpretive programs at the Bimeler House (Figure 3).

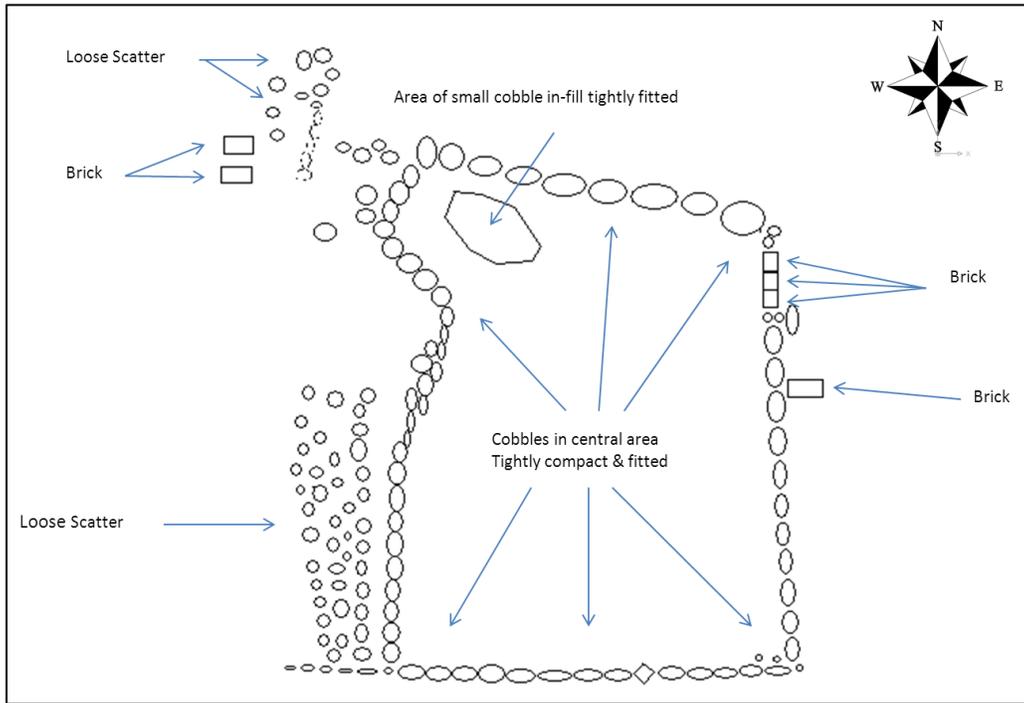
If any readers are aware of any similar features at late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century houses we would appreciate hearing from you. Please contact the senior author at [cherson@ohiohistory.org](mailto:cherson@ohiohistory.org).

### References Cited

Herson, Chandler S., Linda Pansing, Bill Pickard and Brad Lepper  
2013 Report on Archaeological Monitoring and Recovery at the Zoar Village State Memorial (NR 750002124) Bimeler Museum (TUS-771-9, 33TU634), Lawrence Township, Tuscarawas County, Ohio. Manuscript in preparation, to be placed on file at the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, Columbus.



**Figure 1. Overview of lifted house, view to the north.**



**Figure 2. Cobblestone feature.**



**Figure 3. Cobblestone feature, west profile.**