

The Parsonage of the Rev. Asa Hillyer  
59 Main Street, N.E. cor. of Hillyer Street  
Orange, Essex County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer  
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The Parsonage of The Rev. Asa Hillyer  
59 Main Street, N.E. cor. of Hillyer Street  
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Owner: Estate of Thomas W. Harvey, M.D., deceased

Date of Erection: Rear wing 1805-1809; main house  
about 1817; about 1834, front  
porch and gable about 1850

Architect: Unknown

Builders: Rear wing by Stephen Tichenor, main house  
by the Rev. Asa Hillyer, west wing and front  
porch by Dr. William Pierson

Present Condition: As erected, subject to later minor  
alterations, and well maintained

Number of Stories: One and one-half and cellar, also  
one story wing

Materials of Construction:

Foundation - stone masonry

Exterior walls - timber frame, clapboarded

Interior walls - lath and plaster on frame  
studding

Chimneys - brick, built into inside of gable  
end walls; fireplaces refaced with  
modern brick and tile

Roof - gable, modern asphalt roofing; the  
box cornices of the gable and caves  
rebuilt about 1850. Dormers and bay  
window not original

## Historical Data:

By deed of 1805, Jedediah Chapman<sup>(a)</sup> of Seneca County, New York, conveyed to Stephen Tichenor of Essex County, New Jersey, a 1.83 acre tract in the part of then Newark Township which was set off in 1806 as Orange Township, describing a lot having a 394 foot frontage on the east side of a "new road" (King Street, later Hillyer Street) and 178 foot on the north side of "the main road leading from Samuel Munn's to Newark" (Main Street, Orange). The consideration money is not stated in the deed and no house is mentioned as being then on this lot. As pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Orange, the grantor would have the use of the parsonage elsewhere in the village, a further indication that he sold the lot, above described, as then vacant.

Stephen Tichenor who purchased this 1.83 acre lot in 1805 as above stated, evidently built a house thereon between that year and 22 April 1809, for on that date he with wife Jane conveyed to Moses Tichenor, all the parties being of Orange Township, for \$2000, "all that tract or parcel of land and premises.....in the Township of Orange in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey whereon said Stephen Tichenor now lives," reciting the conveyance from Jedediah Chapman above mentioned.

This Moses Tichenor of Orange Township, acquired 279 feet additional frontage eastward on Main Street, and with wife Dorcas conveyed the house and its lot as 4.14 acres to Moses Condit and Moses Lindsley of same place, by their deed of 19 December, 1816, for \$2000.

(a) The Reverend Jedediah Chapman was born in East Haddam, Conn., graduated from Yale 1762, installed pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Orange, New Jersey, 1766, an ardent patriotic chaplain in the American Army during the Revolution, resigned pastorate 1800 and served as superintending missionary in western New York for the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church, founded several congregations there, and died 22 May 1813 in 73rd year, then senior pastor of Geneva, N.Y. (F. Jamison, The First Presbyterian Church of Orange, 1928, p. 32)

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On 1st of April 1817, these two grantees conveyed the same premises to the Reverend Asa Hillyer<sup>(b)</sup> of Orange Township for \$2500. He and his family had moved into this house two years previous, considering it more healthful than the old parsonage provided by the church. Evidently, he built the main house, incorporating the existing one as the rear wing.

In April 1829, the pastor Asa Hillyer, conveyed to the Trustees of the church the same property abovesaid, for \$3000, and the latter sold an acre thereof, having 180 foot frontage on Main Street and extending north along King Street, to William Pierson Jr. by deed of 12 July 1834. This grantee was son-in-law of the Reverend Dr. Hillyer. The balance of the lot eastward was then in possession of Harriet and Caroline R. Pierson.

(b) Reverend Asa Hillyer, D.D., born in Sheffield, Mass., graduated from Yale 1786, pastor at Bottle Hill (Madison) Morris Co., N.J., for 12 yrs., and of Orange 1801-1833, died 28 Aug. 1840. His residence was at the corner of Main and Hillyer Sts., the house now occupied by Dr. Thomas W. Harvey and formerly by Dr. Hillyer's son-in-law, Dr. William Pierson who named the street for the former. A daughter Jane Eliza Hiller died in 1902 aged 101. His granddaughters were the Misses Margaret Hillyer Pierson and Louisa R. Pierson. The remains of Dr. Hillyer and his wife were removed from the parish burying ground in 1841 to Rosedale cemetery. (Jamison, cited in note (a), p. 33). The demolition of the old meeting house was followed not long after by the abandonment of the parsonage. This was occasioned by Mrs. Hillyer's belief that her health was affected by residence in that old stone house, which led to the family's removal in 1815 to a wooden house at the corner of Main and Hillyer Streets. That house was later the house of Dr. Hillyer's son-in-law, Dr. William Pierson. (Rev. Jas. Hoyt, The Mountain Society, A History of the First Presbyterian Church, Orange, N.J., 1860, p. 182).

This grantee, Dr. William Pierson Jr., who thus came into possession of the house of his father-in-law, the pastor, evidently erected the west wing as an office and occupied it until the time of his death having devised it by will to his daughters Jane R. and Ann Pierson. The Misses Pierson last named, of the City of Grange and evidently still occupying the house, sold it and part of the lot to Thomas W. Harvey of same place, for \$10,500, by their deed of 17 March 1887.

The grantee, Thomas W. Harvey, M.D., occupied the premises and devised his estate by will dated 16 April 1935 and proved 22 April 1938 to his executors in trust for the benefit of his widow, sons Thomas W. Harvey Jr. and Spencer G. Harvey, and daughter Alice K. Harvey. The first named son, with his mother and sister are the occupant at the date of our survey of this house in July 1940.

**Bibliography:**

Report received 2 July 1940 on the title in the Land and Probate records of Essex County as searched by Thomas J. Riley, H.A.E.S. abstractor

Leuris S. Cook  
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Sev Mour Williams  
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.  
District Officer

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