

The John Woodruff House
Hanover, Morris County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-681

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

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

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The John Woodruff House
Hanover, Morris County, New Jersey
(25 HANOVER RD.)

Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Alexander T. Seymour,
Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Hanover, New Jersey

Dates of Erection: Rear unit about 1790; front unit
about 1826

Architect: Unknown

Builders: Rear unit supposed by Darling Beach (1764-1793);
front unit by John Woodruff (1771-1837), owners

Present Condition: Original, somewhat decayed and now
vacant

Number of Stories: One story without cellar in rear unit;
one and a half story over cellar in front unit

Materials of Construction:
Foundation - stone masonry
Exterior walls - timber frame, clapboarded
directly
Interior walls - lath and plaster on frame
end walls
Roof - gable, wood shingled
Flooring - original pine boards

Historical Data:

The identity of the original owners of this house which stands across the old Kings Highway (County Road No. 14) from the remodelled parsonage originally that of the notable Reverend Jacob Green in the village of Hanover has been established by deduction from the evidence derived from search of title as recorded in the County archives and is reported as follows:

By a deed of 8 January 1820, in which no recital of grantor's title appears, one Keturah

Young(a) of Hanover Township, Morris County, conveyed to Daniel D. Condit(b) of same place for \$725 a 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ acre tract whose lines are described therein as "Beginning at a corner of Calvin Green's land* about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ chains southeast from the house**, of the Rev. Aaron Condit" across the highway, and as having a frontage of 396 feet on the southeast side of that road (now County Road No. 14). The lot is described as bounded southeast by land of Joseph Smith, northeast by those of Benjamin Cook# and of the heirs of David Young decd., and northwest by the highway. The amount of consideration money may indicate the existence of a small house on the lot at that time. The grantor's title evidently came from one or the other of her two successive husbands, Beach and Young, deceased, and not from her father, the Reverend Jacob Green of Hanover, in whose will of 23 April 1790 she is named as devisee of a certain amount of cash only, but searches made in the land and probate records do not reveal the facts.

(a) Keturah Green, bapt. 30 Apr. 1768, a daughter of the Rev. Jacob Green (pastor of Presb. Ch. Hanover 1746-1790) and his 2nd wife Elizabeth Pierson, d. 18 Jan. 1856 in 89th yr. and was bur. in Hanover Chyd. "Of these years, 44 were passed chiefly on her bed in much bodily pain cheerfully through the consolations of the gospel" says gravestone inscription. She mar. 1st 31 Mar. 1790 Darling Beach of Hanover who d. 31 Aug. 1793 in 29th yr., son of Capt. Enoch Beach, by whom she had a dau. Elizabeth bapt. 1790-91 and living 1814, and 2nd David Young who d. bef. 1799. (Inscript on Tombst. at Whippany and Hanover, copied and publ. 1894, p. 34. Beach Family Magazine, 1926, pp. 29 & 70.)

(b) Daniel Dayton Condit b. 21 Oct. 1797, d. 24 Jan. 1881 in Indianapolis, son of the Rev. Aaron Condit of Hanover, Morris Co., N.J., and 1st wf. Mary Dayton, mar. 3 Feb. 1824 Charlotte T. Coon and removed from Hanover to Terre Haute, Ind., 1831 as mercht. (J. H. & E. Condit, Genealog. Record of Condit Family, 1916, p. 48).

(#) The house on that 3 3/4 a. lot has been surveyed as NJ-561, The Aaron Ball House.

* See NJ-517, The Calvin Green House

** In its present remodelled state, this parsonage has not been considered suitable for survey.

Daniel D. Condit, grantee abovenamed, with wife Charlotte, of Hanover Township, conveyed the same plot of $5\frac{1}{4}$ acres to John Woodruff by their deed of 18 March 1826, for \$500, and removed soon after to Terre Haute, Indiana.

This John Woodruff^(c) certainly occupied a house on this plot, if he did not also build it, and by his will dated Hanover, 27 May 1837, devised to his wife Sally Woodruff the use of all household goods during her lifetime, in addition to her right of dower in his estate, and the remainder thereof to his youngest daughter Harriett Woodruff afterwards, as also to her the "privilege of a residence in the house where I now live in Hanover opposite the residence of the Rev. Aaron Condit" while unmarried. To his youngest son Stephen C. Woodruff he devised "the place on which I now live which I purchased of Daniel D. Condit containing something over five acres of land", he to pay off the mortgage of \$350 and interest held by the widow Keturah Young and testator's other debts remaining after settlement of the estate, subject to the rights of his mother and sister therein as above. He states that "I feel that I have heretofore done all to help my older children that it has been in my power to do and I trust that none of them will be disposed to find fault with this arrangement which I think is the best I can make", and appoints his wife and his eldest son James H. Woodruff as executors.

Stephen Condit Woodruff, youngest son of John Woodruff of Hanover and devisee of the $5\frac{1}{4}$ acre homestead in that village, whose house is here surveyed, purchased from Daniel Hopping and Caleb H. Ely a 23 acre tract extending from its southeast rear line down to Passaic River by deed of 27 August 1841, and from William

(c) John Woodruff d. 5 Aug. 1837 in 66th yr., his widow Sarah d. 25 Jan. 1850 in 75th yr. (Inscriptions cited above, p. 90). John Woodruff had issue: James Henry bp. 14 Oct. 1798, Samuel bp. 29 June 1800, Wyckliff bp. 6 June 1802, and Newton Young bp. 3 June 1804. Sally wf. of John Woodruff was bapt. 29 May 1808 possibly a 2nd wife. John and Sarah Woodruff had issue: Betsy A. and Nancy L. both bp. 23 June 1811, Julia and Harriet both bp. 26 June 1814 and Stephen Condit bp. 8 June 1817 of whom further. (Register of Hanover Presb. Ch. 1796-1835, publ. in Genealog. Mag. N.J., VI.) The daughter Betsey A. Woodruff d. 25 Sept. 1901, widow of Willis Green. His house stands next south of the former parsonage across the road from the house here considered and has been surveyed as NJ-517.

a 10 acre tract along the southwest line thereof and the river by deed of 6 August 1844. He died intestate before 5 March 1864 on which date administration upon his estate was granted to Martha Ann Woodruff and James H. Woodruff. His son William B. Woodruff conveyed on 8 February 1869 his undivided third part of the three tracts mentioned above to said Martha Ann, describing them as being adjacent and as forming the homestead farm of Stephen C. Woodruff deceased.(d)

Martha A. Woodruff (widow of Stephen C.) continued to reside on the place and died 28 January 1912, having devised by will her real estate to her daughters Annie M. and Joseph M. Woodruff equally and they conveyed the farm as above described to Samuel A. Reeve by deed of 25 January 1913. His mortgage on the property was foreclosed and by sheriff's deed of 12 August 1940 it was conveyed to Alexander T. Seymour and wife who own and occupy the Aaron Ball House (NJ-561) nearby on Mt. Pleasant Avenue. The house remained vacant at the time of our survey in November 1940.

Reference:

Search of title in land and probate records of Morris County by James Hanlon, H.A.B.S. abstractor, reported 10 December 1940

(d) The map of the village of Hanover publ. in Atlases of Morris Co., 1868 and 1887, shows this house marked "Mrs. S. Woodruff", the old parsonage across the road as then owned by Mrs. M. Force, the house next south thereof as of Mrs. E. Green and the new parsonage next north of the Woodruff house.

Levi D. Cook
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
District Officer