

The Israel Swayze House
Near Hope
Warren County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-706

HABS

N.J.

21 Hope V

3

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

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

The Israel Swayze House
Near Hope
Warren County, New Jersey

Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Woodbridge, near
Hope

Tenant: Copper Smith, farmer

Date of Erection: "Built 1759" inscribed on corner-
stone

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Israel Swayze (1720-1774) original owner

Present Condition: Original except south front
porches and window sash. Separate kitchen
building vacant

Number of Stories: Two and one-half, against hillside

Materials of Construction:

Foundation - stone masonry (unexcavated)
Exterior walls - same (Ashlar front; rubble sides
Interior walls - frame partitions and rear.)
Chimneys - stone, built inside gable end
walls
Roof - gable, slate covered. Plastered
cove eaves

Historical Data:

The identification of this obviously
ancient stone farmhouse by discovery of the name
of its original owner as above stated is the result
of a search of title as recorded in the County
archives, reported as follows:

It is said(a) that a certain Barnabas
Swayze came westward from Chester, Morris County, . . .

Footnotes :-

(a) "Barnabas, an elder brother of Israel, removed
from Chester to what is now called Hope Township
in 1743 and purchased a large tract of land, contain-
ing about 800 acres, a part of it lying on the

(continued next page)

in 1743, purchased a tract of about 800 acres and having settled thereon at the place since called Swayzo's Mills, Hope Township, Warren County, granted to his brother Israel Swayze about 1745 the part of the tract lying on the road from the village of Hope southwest to Belvidere. Thus it appears that the tract lay in the valley of the Muddy Brook-Honey Run branch of Beaver Brook and extended further southeast across the latter to the foot of Jenny Jump Mountain. The house here considered bears the inscription "Built 1759" in a stone of its southeast corner, a date also proclaimed by its design and details. It faces south on the Hope-Belvidere highway, at a buttonwood tree remarkable for its 23 feet girth and the tradition of General Washington's having rested in its shade en route from Easton to the Moravian village of Hope in July 1782.*

.....
Footnotes :

(a) continued

present road leading from the village of Hope to Belvidere, and part of it in the direction from Hope to Delaware Station. This purchase of Barnabas proved larger than he could handle and pay for, so his father said to the brother Israel, 'You must go up there and take part of it, and I will come and divide it between you', which was done about the year 1745." (ex. biogr. of Hon. Jas. K. Swayze publ. in J. P. Snell's History of Sussex and Warren Counties, N. J. 1881, p. 668). Photo of the house of this Barnabas Swayze, a mile northwest of the house here surveyed, appears in R. J. Sims, Some Old Farms and Farmhouses of N. J., publ. by N. J. Dept. of Agriculture, 1938, p. 11.

* "General Washington passed at least once over the route through Hope (July 1782).....he is said to have halted under General Washington's tree, a buttonwood, still standing about a mile and a half south of Hope. Possibly this was while Etwein rode on ahead to notify the Moravians of the General's coming" (G.W. Cummins, Hist. Warren Co., N.J., 1911, p. 169.) But compare W. S. Baker, Itinerary of Genl. Washington, 1892, p. 270, which quotes the Moravian record of the General having halted at Easton while Etwein proceeded to Hope. The bed of the old road curving to the northwest of the tree, replaced by the present easier curve southeast of it, is still visible between the new road and the old fence line.

Israel Swayze(b) who is said thus to have come into possession of the land in Oxford (now Hope) Township, Sussex (now Warren) County, in his will dated 27 August 1774 and proved 29 September following, devised to his sons Obediah and Israel 100 Pounds each and "my estate that I purchased at Messasippy", and to his daughters-- Mary wife of Silas Hopkins, Mehitable wife of Peter Hopkins and Susanna wife of Thomas Dunn, 30 Pounds each. To his wife Elizabeth he devised "The land I live on, but if she marry, it shall go to my sons Joshua, Caleb, James and Jacob", and appointed her and his son Joshua as executors. The inventory of his personal estate, taken on 19 September 1774, amounted to 775 pounds 8 shillings 2 pence.(c)

In the stone-walled graveyard whose iron gates bear the label, Swayze Cemetery, south west of his house (here considered) is found the gravestone inscribed thus:

In Memory of
Israel Swayze who
was born on Long Island
and removed with his
father to Roxbury in
Morris County & from
thence removed to
Oxford in Sussex County
& died Augst 27, 1774
Aged 53 years & 10 months (d)

.....

(b) Samuel Swayze b. 20 March 1689, Southold, L.I. removed thence in May 1737 to Roxbury Tp., Morris Co., N.J., d. there 11 May 1759, having mar. 1st Penlope-----who d. 1 Dec. 1746, and 2d. 20 Apr. 1747 Susannah Huntington, widow, and had issue: Penelope 31 July 1710; Rev. Samuel 4 July 1712, rem. to Miss.; Barnabas 12 Jan. 1715, d. 1779 in Hope Tp. Warren Co., Richard 20 May 1717, rem. to Miss. 1773; Israel 16 Oct. 1720. d. 27 Aug. 1774 in Hope Tp., of whom further; Caleb 22 Mar. 1722, rem. to Canada; Johanna 25 June 1725, m. Philomena Dickerson and Isaac Badely; Mehitable 27 July 1728, m. one Carns?; Lydia 4 Mar. 1731, m. Elijah Forton; and Mary 3 Apr. 1733, m. John Seward. (F.F. Chambers, The Early Germans of N.J. 1895, p. 520).

(c and d footnote next page)

The subsequent history of the house and farm of Israel Swayze appears thus by search of title in the public records. By a deed of 24 April 1797, Joshua, Caleb and Jacob Swayze, "sons and heirs of Israel Swayze" of Oxford, deceased, quitclaimed to their brother James Swayze, "agreeable to the last will and testament of the said Israel Swayze", tracts of 142 acres and of 8 acres, describing the lines of the first as beginning at a pile of stones in the line of land belonging to the heirs of James Swayze decd., thence S 42° W 20 chains to a pile of stones, S. 48 E 68, N 33 E 20, N 48 W 46.50, N 57 E 2.50, N 48 W. 5, S 57 W 2.50, and N. 48 W. 16.00 to the place of beginning.(e) The 5th course appears in later conveyances as being the north side of the road (in front of the house) from Hope to Belvidere, the sixth as extending from it and past the north-east end of the barn to the stone cliffs rising behind it and the house. The road thus cut off the northwest third of the tract from the balance which extended 3/5 mile further southeast and across Beaver Brook to the foot of Jenny Jump Mountain.

.....

(c) Abstracts of Wills publ. in N.J. Archives XXXIV, 514.

Israel Swayze, b. 16 Oct. 1720, Southold, L.I., d. 27 Aug. 1774, Oxford (Hope) Twp., Sussex (Warren) Co., N.J., having mar. Elizabeth ---- who d. after 1807, and had issue: Obediah, Joshua, Caleb d. 4 Nov. 1815 ae. 59, Israel, Penelope d. 30 Aug. 1777, James d. in Ohio ae. 80, Jacob d. 13 Aug. 1809 ae. 38, Abigail d. 18 Aug. 1777, Mary m. Silas Hopkins, Rehitable m. Peter Hopkins, and Susannah m. Thos. Dunn. (T.F. Chambers, Early Germans of N.J., 1845, p. 520).

(d) See photograph herewith. This remarkable grave-stone inscription was evidently in recollection of that of his father, Samuel Swayze, in the Congregational Churchyard, Chester, Morris Co., which states his birth in Southold, L.I., 20 March 1689, and his having "Removed from thence to Roxbury, May 1737", etc. See Genealogical Magazine of N.J., XI, 65.

(e) Sussex County Deed Book W-491.

N.J.
21 Mar. v

3.

Similarly, by deed of 28 October 1807, Elizabeth Swayze, widow of Israel Swayze, of Oxford Township, Sussex County, quitclaimed to her son James Swayze of same place, for \$100, her dower right in the same two tracts, "All of which lands was bequeathed to me by the will of my said husband dated 27 August 1774."(f)

A tract further extending southeast the paternal farm was added by a deed of 7 December 1807 in which Joshua Swayze of Oxford Township, Sussex County, and Jacob Swayze of New Hampton, Hunterdon County, quitclaimed to their brother James Swayze some 89 acres, describing it as being one-third of a tract which Daniel Smith and wife had conveyed to the three brothers as tenants in common by deed of 28 January 1790.(g)

Having thus come into possession of the paternal homestead in 1797 and enlarged it in 1807, this James Swayze of Oxford Township, with his wife Rachel, conveyed the whole to Aaron Davis of Mansfield Township, for \$3733.33, by their deed of 1st January 1808, and presumably removed to Ohio, where he is said to have died at the age of 80 years. In this deed the 142 acre tract is described as "being land that the said James Swayze inherited from his father Israel Swayze deceased, as by the quitclaim of his brothers Joshua, Caleb and Jacob, dated 24 April 1797, will appear, as also by the quitclaim of his mother, Eliza Swayze dated 28 October 1807", and the 89 acre addition as being one-third of a tract conveyed to grantor and his brothers Joshua and Jacob from Daniel Smith and wife Sarah by deed of 28 January 1790. In the description of the first tract by courses, the two corners at the southeast end are mentioned as being corners "to the old survey".(h)

.....

(f) Do, R-542.

(g) Sussex Co. Deed Bk. R-544.

(h) Sussex County Deed Book Q-527. Inquiry in the records of the Board of Proprietors of West New Jersey, at Burlington, in regard to the "Old Survey" mentioned above, has not been made for this essay. Possibly it refers to the grant to Barnabas Swayze, 1743.

N.J.
21 Nov 19
3

This Aaron Davis evidently removed thereon and for \$954 acquired from Caleb Swayze and wife Elizabeth, by deed of 19 March 1816, in which the parties are described as resident in Oxford Township, a 34 acre addition on the south-west side of the farm he had purchased as above-said. The lines of this tract are described as beginning at a stake "in the turn of the road on the south side of Beaver Brook", a corner to William Eibler's land, thence by Davis' other land S. 48 E 38.69 to stones in his line, "on Jennyump mountain", S. 55 W 14.38 to James Van Horn's corner in the line of land of heirs of Jacob Swayze decd., by their line N 42 $\frac{1}{2}$ W 2.76 to a corner in the line of lands of the heirs of Hezekiah Drake, on their line N 16 $^{\circ}$ 15' E. 5.31 to a corner of that land, by another of their lines N. 48 W 25.84 to a corner of said William Eibler's land, by his line N 1 $^{\circ}$ 30' W 5.34 to another corner thereof, and by his line N 24 E 5.10 to the point of beginning.(i)

Similarly, by deed of 21 September 1818, Aaron Davis of Oxford Township (evidently occupying the house here considered) acquired from Henry D. Swayze of Brownville Township, Jefferson County, N.Y., for \$1200 some 33 acres additional along the northeast side of the farm which he had purchased in 1808. This tract is described as extending southeast from a frontage of 165 feet on the "road leading from Hope to Easton", along said Davis' land 4435 feet, and as having descended to said Swayze in the division of the real estate of his father, Jacob Swayze decd., in 1816.(j)

Finally, by a deed of 27 August 1832, Aaron Davis acquired from Robert E. Swayze and wife Sarah, all being of Oxford Township, for \$30 a one-acre addition having 260 feet frontage "on the north side of the road leading from the said Aaron Davis' to Hope", and extending northwest from the road 165 feet to the "top of a lime stone ridge" which rises behind his barn.(k)

.....

(i) Sussex Co. Deed Bk. 32 - 411.
(j) Sussex Co. Deed Bk. M2-344. Surrogates Book E. of Division of Lands, p. 209.
(k) Warren Co. Deed Bk. No. 10 - p. 375).

N. J.
21. Hope. V
3

In his will dated 26 December 1839 and proved 14 August following, this Aaron Davis of Oxford Township, Warren County, ordered all his personal estate to be sold, except \$300 worth retained by his wife, and all his real estate likewise to be sold, the proceeds to be used to settle the debts and \$2500 "to be left in the homestead farm during the life of my wife", the interest thereof to be paid yearly to a grandson, Aaron D. Parke, and the balance to be divided equally among testator's six children, and appointed eldest son Mark W. Davis and friend James K. Swayze as executors. (1)

By deed of 1st April 1840, Mark W. Davis and James K. Swayze, the abovenamed "Executors of Aaron Davis late of the Township of Hope", Warren County, deceased*, conveyed to (the youngest son and heir) John A. Davis of Randolph Township, Morris County, for \$10,908, the "Homestead farm of Aaron Davis deceased" as containing some 206½ acres which included the original 142, and a 28½ acre tract adjacent. (m)

.....

(1) Warren Co. Will Bk. No. 1, p. 417. Aaron Davis, b. 23 Oct. 1775, in Asbury, Mansfield Twp., Warren Co., d. 27 July 1839 near Hope, same Co., having mar. 10 July 1796, Mary Williamson, b. 15 July 1776, and had issue: Rebecca, Eliza, Rebecca 2d., Mark W., Harriet, Charles R., John and John A., of whom Mark W., b. 4 Mar. 1804 in Mansfield Twp., Warren Co., removed 1839 to Harrison Tp., Hudson Co., in cattle business and hotel keeping there, mar. Ann Reed of Hope Tp., and had issue: Irene M. m. George W. Cross, Hiram W. 1829-1876, and Jerome B. (F.B. Lee, editor, Genealog. & Mem. Hist. of State of N.J., 1910, IV, 1489). Mark W. Davis owned the stone farmhouse (NJ-705) 3/4 mile north of Hope on the road to Blainstown 1828-1836, and evidently occupied it. **Miss Louise Blake of Schooleys Mountain, N.J., is a descendant, and owns that house.**
(m) Warren Co. Deed Bk. No. 18, p. 225

* Hope Township was created 1839 from parts of Knowlton and Oxford Twps.

N.J.
at Hope, N.J.
3.

By deed of same date, the grantee, John A. Davis, conveyed the same property to the said James K. Swayze of Hope Township, for the same price, and he with his wife Lavins H. passed title on 11 December 1854 to Amos H. Drake of same place, 198 acres, at \$12,457. 92.(n)

By deed of 19 February 1873, the several heirs of Amos H. Drake, deceased, conveyed to John G. Hoit of Warren County, for \$11,899.50 the 198 acre farm above described, excepting the graveyard lot of .37 acres, and reciting the conveyance from James K. Swayze to said Amos H. Drake, 11 December 1854, above mentioned.(o)

In his will dated August 1882 and proved 1st June 1885, John G. Hoit of Oxford Township, Warren County, devised "to my son Lewis E. Hoit the farm known as the Drake farm in the township of Hope, except the house and lot by the graveyard" during the term of his natural life and afterwards to his children.(p)

Lewis Hoit abovesaid died intestate in February 1918 leaving as heirs his daughters Sadie wife of Frank Venable and Mary wife of Grant Lanterman, of whom Mary conveyed her share in his estate to her sister. The last conveyed the farm to Victor Osman and wife Mary Dora by her deed of 5 April 1923 who occupied the house until his death, after which the widow sold the farm to Ernst Bilhuber of Maywood, Bergen County, and he in turn to Hope Sperry Woodbridge of Hope Township, by his deed of 6 September 1941.

.....

(n) Warren Co, Deed Bk. No. 40, p. 216. See Snell cited above, p. 868 for biogr. and portrait of this James K. Swayze, 1807-1878 store-keeper at Hope, 1826-1838, N.J. State Senator 1861-63, director of Hackettstown Natl. Bank, first presdt. Washington, N.J., Natl. Bank. His house in Hope was the second building north of the American House Hotel in 1874.

(o) Warren Co. Deed Bk. No. 87, p. 17.

N.J.
21-100-1
3.

In or before 1934, Mrs. Woodbridge had acquired a 5 acre tract of the Hezekiah Drake farm adjacent on the southwest thereof, which includes a grist mill,* on the southeast side of Beaver Brook, and occupied the remodelled farmhouse with her husband, Charles E. Woodbridge, attorney, former treasurer of the Texas Corporation, member of the Foreign Trade Commission, etc., formerly of Brooklyn, N.Y.C.

Reference:

Search of title in land and probate records of Sussex and of Warren Counties by the undersigned

Lauri H. Cook
Supervising Historian 23 October 1941

Approved:

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

.....
* "The grist-mill on Beaver Brook, below the mouth of Honey Run, was originally built by Israel Swayze and now owned by Charles Bartow." (J. P. Snell, History of Sussex and Warren Counties, New Jersey, 1881, p. 668).

(p) Warren Co. Will Bk. No. 6 & 608. In F. W. Beers Atlas of Warren Co., 1874, plate 25, Hope Twp., shows the house (here considered) marked J. G. Hoyt, about 1 1/2 miles southwest from the village of Hope, on the road to Belvidere, also the Swayze Burial Ground and between it and Honey Run a small house (since demolished) also marked J. G. Hoyt.