

Hobson House
DuPage County
N. Naperville, Illinois

HABS Ill. No. 154

HABS
ILL,
22. NAPVILLE,
1-

Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. Ill.1.

Historic American Buildings Survey
Earl H. Reed, District Officer
435 North Michigan Ave., Chicago.

HABS
ILL,
22. NAPVILLE

No. HOBSON HOUSE
Naperville, DuPage County, Illinois

Owner - Leo Schwartz, his brothers and sisters.
Occupants as well as owners.

Date of Erection - Between 1834 and 1837

Builder - Bailey Hobson had the building erected
by a carpenter whose name is unknown.

Present Condition - Poor

Number of Stories - Two

Materials of Construction - Rubble Stone Foundation,
wood floors, walls and roof; interior walls plastered;
brick chimneys.

Other Existing Records - Photographs and History pub-
lished in "The Story of an Old Town - Glen Ellyn" by
Ada Douglas Harmon and "Naperville Centennial".

Additional Data - Bailey Hobson, the first white
settler on the soil of DuPage County, then part of
Cook County, took up a large Government claim on both
sides of the DuPage River and with his wife and five
children moved there in March 1831. He built a log
cabin in the timber "to protect it from storms". This
was before the country was surveyed and much of his
original claim was settled by others. Naper followed
the Hobsons the same year with a colony of 50 or 60
from Ohio and settled the town of Naperville, two miles
to the north of the Hobson home.

There being no grist mill in the northern part of
the state, Bailey Hobson and Harry Boardman built a mill
in 1834 and farmers came from far and wide with loads
of grain to be ground. He also built a barn to house
the loads of grain while waiting their turn and a tavern
for the accommodation of the farmers who were sometimes
accompanied by members of their families. This tavern,
known as the "Hobson House", is the subject of this sur-
vey.

Cyrus B. Ingham said of Bailey Hobson, "That man was a philosopher as well as a philanthropist under his outward rough exterior. He would say to me, 'What if I sell you a hundred pounds of flour, - what will the rest do?' His prudence saved much suffering that summer among the new immigrants".

Source for the above material - Naperville Centennial.

Daniel M. Green ran the mill on shares during the years 1836-37. The cash receipts for meal, as shown in the old books, were over \$4,000.00 a year.

"Bailey Hobson also built a sawmill near the other mill to accomodate the early settlers who were building their homes. The foundations of the mills, the mill race and the dam oan still be plainly seen, also near the bridge the foundation of the miller's log cabin. The mill was moved in 1894 across the road to the Andrew Wehrli farm. It is very interesting to see the huge beams put together with wooden pegs. These were sawn in the mill."

From the "Story of an Old Town" by Harmon.

In July 1883 Mrs. Hobson, then a widow living in a little white cottage in Naperville, gave an interview to a representative from the "Inter-Ocean" in which she vividly described the escape of the family from the Indian massacre in 1832, when they took refuge in Fort Dearborn. The interview is published in the "Naperville Centennial".

Four Chapters of the D. A. R. in conjunction with the DuPage County Forest Preserve Commission erected a monument in DuPage County Forest Preserve dedicated to the Pioneers of 1829. The old mill stones stand beside the tablet, which reads in part: "This tract is part of the original grant to the first white settler, Bailey Hobson. These mill stones are from the Hobson Mill built on this site in 1835."

By Margaret Jones
Edwards

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