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# A HISTORY OF PATERSON

AND

## Its Relations with the World

BY

THE JUNE 1932 SENIOR CLASS

OF THE

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL

AT

PATERSON, NEW JERSEY

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### City Normal School

It was not until 1855 that a City Normal School was organized. In 1854 Colonel Andrew Derrom who was appointed as superintendent of schools of Paterson, formed a committee to draft a series of school regulations. This committee was made up of Dr. Charles Inglis, Cornelius T. Vandervoort, Robert Millar, and Isaac D. Blauvelt.

No official record of the regulations adopted is available, but according to William Wilson, author of the "History of Passaic and Bergen Counties," one of the regulations provided for a normal school and under that authorization a "normal school" was established in the fall of 1855, with sessions on Wednesday evenings only.

The next fall the school was regularly opened in the new East Ward School. We learn from a report by Adrian E. Patmos, president of the Board of Education, that "the committee on normal and high school" was charged with the supervision of the peculiar interests of such school. The object of which "shall be more thoroughly to familiarize our teachers with the course of instruction they are required to pursue with their pupils."

The record further set forth that "the sessions shall be held at school Number 1 on each Tuesday afternoon during the year, except July and August." From April to November 1, the hours were from 4:30 to 6:30, and from November 1 to April 1, they were from four to six o'clock. The School No. 1 mentioned was Old No. 1, which was on the site now occupied by Fire Headquarters on Van Houten Street. The school was built in 1855. Sessions were also held on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Finally it dwindled to a course on Saturday mornings only.

It was thought that the group should be divided into several classes, therefore in February, 1857, four classes were formed having Mr. Horsford, Mr. De Hart, Miss Van Querardon, and Miss Stitt as teachers. Because of the expense, however, the classes were again reduced to two in January, 1858. The Board ordered that a "penalty be paid—such as—one dollar fine for each absence, and even dismissal." The school was not a success and in 1860 the plan was abandoned. To confess the school a failure was not in the minds of the Board so a Teachers' Association for mutual improvement in their profession was organized which in 1861 was divided into three classes with Messrs. Horsford and Myers and Miss Dankersley as teachers.

No tuition charge was made for instruction. The aim of the Normal School was to teach the rudimentary branches instead of teaching how to teach. With this organization and plan, it does not appear strange that it died quietly.

After these many futile attempts to form a Normal School, one would think the idea would succumb, but the Board again was not willing to admit defeat. Thus the school was revived and a definite course of study in psychology, history, and philosophy of education, methods of teaching the various subjects of the course of study in the schools, school management, and discipline was set up. Those who had been graduated from any high school were permitted to take the prescribed course at the Normal School. This attempt proved to be successful, for in 1862 a model training school was opened in the basement of the old Second Presbyterian Church, Ellison and Church Streets, where the pupils were instructed by accomplished experts and the school endured for one year.

All the teachers in the grammar schools of the city were required to attend the sessions of the Normal School. The principal of the High School was the principal of the Normal School and for his services he received a salary of \$1,350 a year. The High School and Normal School were conducted in old School No. 6, on the corner of Ellison and Summer Streets, the present site of the vocational school.

At this time, the Board made a significant change. Before this time the object of the Normal School, which was presided over by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mr. E. U. De Draff, had been to instruct teachers in the different methods and principles of teaching, to familiarize them with the courses of study, to increase their knowledge in the theory and practice of teaching; in brief, to teach teachers how to teach. A new step in reorganization was the combining of the theory and practice work. With the inclusion of practice work in the curriculum the course was extended from one to two years. Together with the practice work in teaching, which was under the supervision of the members of the faculty and the principal of the high school, the Normal School pupils studied mental and moral philosophy and the science of teaching. Soon after this reorganization, the quarters of the school were transferred to School No. 17, which had been built two years before. In a report of 1900 it was found that further progress and reorganization was brought

about by Miss Mary R. Doyle, now Mrs. James C. Hinchliffe, who was called to take charge upon the death of William J. Slattery.

Mrs. Hinchliffe, in a contribution to the Teachers' Bazaar Magazine on the Normal School, states that it was in 1882 that this department of instruction received the title of Normal School.

The sessions which were usually held in old School No. 17 were moved to School No. 24 in September, 1910, at which time there were 112 pupils enrolled under the principalship of Dr. Frank Webster Smith, who remained in this position until 1925, two years after the Normal School became a State School.

### State Normal School

The most important step in the building of the normal school was realized in 1923 when the city training school was changed to a State school. This event led to the granting in 1931 of an appropriation of \$400,000 for the erection of the first unit of a modern state normal school. Many attempts had been made by representatives in the legislature and civic organizations to induce the state authorities to establish a state school in Paterson or vicinity.

While a member of the City Normal School faculty, Miss Kathryn D. Noonan, principal of School No. 17, was appointed by Mayor Van Noort to the board of education. In December, 1922, Miss Noonan, as chairman of the normal school committee, called a meeting of the legislative delegation from Passaic, Bergen, and Morris counties. Passaic County was represented by Albin Smith, Assemblyman William W. Evans, and Assemblyman Henry A. Williams, Chairman of the House Committee on Education; Bergen County sent Senator Mackay, and Morris County sent Senator Whitney. Their plan was to launch a tri-county drive. Miss Noonan had to prove that a new school was needed. To meet this necessity, she prepared a booklet and charts showing the population of the district of North Jersey which the Normal School serves, and facilities for reaching Paterson. Active members of the State Board of Education and prominent citizens were interviewed. Superintendents Wilson, Bennert, and Thompson helped in the campaign.

After it had been discussed in many meetings, the proposition was ready to be presented to the State authorities. It contained the following terms:

1. The State should take over the City Normal School.

2. The Legislature should be asked for an appropriation of \$30,000 to cover cost of tuition.

3. The local City Board of Education should furnish the building, light, heat, and janitor service.

Assemblyman Williams presented to the Legislature the bill which was passed under the heading: "An act to establish the New Jersey Normal School at Paterson and to provide for the maintenance, support, and management thereof."<sup>1</sup> One of the first changes to be made after the school was taken over by the State was the addition of the third year to the two-year curriculum for teacher training. Immediately after this, the size of entering classes became much smaller, but since that time, 1929, the enrollment has been steadily increasing. In 1925, Dr. Frank Webster Smith resigned to become Principal Emeritus, after serving the city for twenty-one years and the State for two years. Mr. Roy L. Shaffer succeeded Dr. Smith as principal, and his untiring efforts have made Paterson State Normal School one of the leading schools of the State. Mr. Shaffer says: "The Normal School is organized and maintained for the sole purpose of training teachers for grades one to eight of the elementary school. It is a vocational school, and as such the vocational aim is as important as the academic subject matter."<sup>2</sup> The students are required to participate in extra-curricular activities. The administrators feel that training in club work is as essential as training in educational methods. The following clubs are organized for this purpose: Athletic Association, Art Club, Pi Sigma Mu (which is the boys' organization), Demosthenian Club, Glee Club, Masque and Masquers, Nature Science Association, Normalite Staff, P and Q Club, Poetry Club, Psychology Club. These clubs are chartered by the Student Government Association.

The Paterson State Normal School offers only one course for the training of teachers, general elementary course of three years' length. The course includes training in methods and a well planned system of observation and practice teaching. Instruction is given in the following courses: English, speech, library methods, handwriting, science, psychology, history, geography, mathematics, home econom-

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<sup>1</sup>Reference from Education Bulletin of May, 1923, page 163, Related Laws, Session 1923, Chapter 52.

<sup>2</sup>From the Address of Welcome in the Handbook 1931-1932.

ics, problems, principles of teaching and school management, art, music, health, and physical education.

The next step in the building of a fine teachers' college in Paterson was inaugurated by Mrs. Isabelle Summers, who spent a great part of her legislative career paving the way for a new State Normal School building. Through her influence, in order to stimulate the state school authorities to grant the necessary appropriation, the City of Paterson offered a site for the new building. The land on which the present almshouse is located was approved, and the Finance Board on March 20, 1930, adopted a resolution agreeing to pass the title of the almshouse site to the state. In December, 1930, the Board of Chosen Freeholders passed similar resolutions granting the title of the property adjoining the almshouse. Through the deep interest of State Comptroller McCutcheon, the state appropriated \$400,000 for the first building of the institution.

The last enactments of the 1931 Legislature, because of the financial difficulties of the State, eliminated \$400,000 from the appropriations bill. It is hoped that in a few years the dream of a new normal school building will be realized.

As we look into the future we see the last step in our building—a fine, well-organized four-year course. We see a beautiful teachers' college occupying a site between Preakness Avenue and West Broadway, beginning at Crooks Creek and extending to the top of the mountain upon which is built the Valley View Sanatorium.

### **Paterson Collegiate Center**

The Paterson Collegiate Center owed its origin to the public spirited activity of the Chamber of Commerce. Many people of Paterson and surrounding communities felt the need of educational courses that would give credit toward a degree. Realizing this, the Institute of Education and the University Division of New York University in co-operation with the Paterson Chamber of Commerce arranged for a schedule of courses to be given in Paterson. Both cultural and professional courses are taught. The courses are accepted for credit in the School of Commerce, Accounts and Finance, and the Washington Square College of the University.

This comprehensive program of courses was planned in such a way that it will be particularly helpful not only to stu-

dents, business men and women, but also to teachers, thereby enabling them to elect an educational, commercial, or cultural course.

The Paterson Collegiate Center was organized in 1925. Today the enrollment averages from four to five hundred students. Classes are held during the evening at Central High School, Paterson, New Jersey. All courses are taught by professors of New York University at a relatively low cost.

It is hoped that in the future Paterson will be able to offer to its people the opportunity to attend a Junior College in which courses for pre-medical and pre-law students will be taught.