



HOBART  
MANOR  
PRESERVATION  
ASSESSMENT

Preservation Assessment  
for  
Hobart Manor  
of  
The William Paterson College,  
New Jersey

National Preservation Institute  
sept. 88

Historic Preservation Assessment  
HOBART MANOR  
The William Paterson College of New Jersey  
Wayne, New Jersey

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## Preface

The National Preservation Institute respectfully submits the following Preservation Assessment to The William Paterson College of New Jersey. The subject property, Hobart Manor, serves the college as a center of admissions, alumni affairs and community affairs. The Preservation Assessment herein coordinates the existing information about the building and presents a series of recommendations for a preservation program.

William Paterson College has recognized the importance of Hobart Manor as both a didactic resource and a historic link to Wayne and the community. To meet its responsibilities as a steward of this National Register property, the College has set the following preservation goals:

1. to preserve Hobart Manor in a way that respects its historic significance.
2. to use Hobart Manor in a way that enhances the mission and space needs of the College.

Hobart Manor is an important asset to William Paterson College and to the history of Passaic County, New Jersey. The building is significant because of its association with two important persons and eras of Passaic County history and because it exhibits the work of a well known local architect.

This Preservation Assessment has identified five alternatives for preservation treatment. The first is a status quo alternative which would promote a general program of regular maintenance and repair. The second and third alternatives identify preservation treatments for (a) a museum restoration to the building's earliest period or (b) restoration of the 1919 design for the residence which maintains much of its historic integrity today. The fourth alternative is to restore select and adaptively reuse other areas of the building for the College's needs. The fifth alternative is to preserve the exterior of the building only and to remodel the interior to fulfill the College's space requirements, without preserving any of the historic interior.

In a final chapter NPI recommends that an adaptive restoration program be developed. An outline of appropriate planning and analysis activities is included in this chapter to provide a set of guidelines for the preservation of Hobart Manor.

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Peter Spiridon, Vice President  
Dennis Santillo, Director of College Relations  
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Mary Zafino, past secretary to the president, WPC

### Passaic County Historical Society:

James Ward, Curator

### National Preservation Institute:

Edwin Finder, Project Director  
Constance Werner Ramirez, Project Manager  
James C. Massey, Architectural Specialist  
James Biddle, Furnishings Specialist  
Carol Gould, Preservation Specialist  
Peggy Boucher, Administrator

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## Chapter One History of Hobart Manor

### Introduction

Hobart Manor is an historic building that serves William Paterson College as the center of admissions, alumni affairs and the community affairs office, each of these being functions that link the college to its past and prepare for its future. It is an important facility given the College's community-oriented educational philosophy and mission. William Paterson College pursues educational excellence in association with the northern New Jersey region by intensifying its efforts to serve intellectually, culturally and economically. Since Hobart Manor houses the College offices which interact with significant regional constituents, is recognized by the community as an historic regional social center, and is both symbolically and actually the center of the College's thrust, the building's future is of immense importance.

Designed as an estate in the hills above Paterson, New Jersey, Hobart Manor is a historic place around which the college has been developing since 1951. The building is an important symbol of the college and one which two generations of alumni identify with as the central administration facility for their alma mater. The Manor is also significant for its history of acquisition by the State of New Jersey in 1949.

Hobart Manor, known historically as Alisa Park, was

property that was first developed in the 1870s, by wool merchant John W. MacCullough during the time of industrial prosperity for Paterson. Over the years and with new ownership, the quantity of land and the size of the residence increased as did the importance of persons associated with the property. The estate was purchased in 1902 by the family of Garret A. Hobart, twenty-fourth Vice President of the United States. The Vice President had been born in Long Branch, New Jersey, and spent many years of his youth in Monmouth County. Hobart established his legal career in Paterson with a keen interest in public affairs. His wife and successive generations of the Hobart family who resided at Hobart Manor were equally committed to public affairs in Paterson and the region in general.

Hobart Manor is significant as an example of a late nineteenth century estate which, when renovated and expanded between 1915 and 1919, evolved into a Tudor style mansion occupied by one of Paterson, New Jersey's most distinguished families. The history of the residence, region, and associated persons are presented in these first two chapters. In order to make sensible decisions regarding the use of Hobart Manor, it is necessary to understand the building's historic uses and appearances as outlined in this first chapter. In the second chapter consideration will be given to the building's significance within the context of late nineteenth and early twentieth century life in Wayne, Paterson, and the New Jersey-New York region.

A Chronological History of Hobart Manor

MacCullough's Castle(Ailsa Craigs): 1874-1902

In 1874, John Watt MacCullough, a Scottish immigrant involved in the wool industry, began to assemble the land upon which he would build a castle to reflect his growing economic success. Like many industrialists in this era, MacCullough chose to construct a grand residence removed from the center of industrial activity. The first parcel that John W. MacCullough acquired was from a Robert MacCullough (no known relation), purchased on June 13, 1874, for the sum of \$1,000.<sup>1/</sup> The deed specified that John MacCullough was a newcomer to Paterson from Buffalo, New York; Robert MacCullough, however, was already a resident of Paterson. On April 22, 1875, John MacCullough purchased an additional parcel from Henry and Mary Hillman at the cost of \$705.<sup>2/</sup> Though there is no known architect or permit information on record for the construction of the castle--an issue that warrants additional research and clarification--the National Register Nomination form documenting the property, indicates that the early building was erected in the late 1870s. This assessment is supported by a county map of 1877 (Illus. 1) which recorded a rather large, square building form on the site of John MacCullough's property. An early photograph (Illus.

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<sup>1</sup> Passaic County Recorder of Deeds. Liber H-5, pages 301-323.

<sup>2</sup> Passaic County Recorder of Deeds. Liber D-5, pages 517-518.

2) records a two-story asymmetrical fieldstone building articulated by two octagonal towers and a similarly shaped cupola with a dome cap which marked the center of the hipped roof over the main section of the building. At the front was a two-story wooden portico which provided a covered entrance way on the first floor and small porch accessible from the second story. The National Register form prepared in 1975 by Ronald McArthur of William Paterson College, stated that the southern elevation had "a large bay window with a mansard roof extending over the second floor....All other visible windows were of plain design indicating a functional rather than decorative purpose."

An anonymous history of "Ailsa Farms," discovered by the Passaic County Historical Society, suggests that Mr. MacCullough's total land parcel was only three and one-half acres. These were surrounded by forests and hills not unlike the rugged beauty of Ailsa Crags, an island off the west coast of Scotland. "As the place and the name [Ailsa Crags] were dear to him, so he gave memory tangibility, and new meaning in a new world, in a new Ailsa Crags." <sup>3</sup>

A circa 1900 photograph (Illus. 3) illustrates changes made to the building in these early years. Most prominent was the removal of the two story wooden front portico, replaced by a fieldstone, single story entry porch. About 1900 John MacCullough returned to Scotland where he chose to stay, leaving a caretaker to dispose of his New Jersey home. The property was

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<sup>3</sup> Anonymous. "Ailsa Farms" manuscript. Not dated. pg. 2.

a caretaker to dispose of his New Jersey home. The property was placed at public auction in May 1902, and Mrs. Garret A. Hobart, widow of the twenty-fourth vice president of the United States, purchased the estate at the cost of \$5,285. <sup>4/</sup>

If there exists any more detailed history of "Ailsa Crags," perhaps it is in family archives abroad. It does not appear that there are any plans or family remaining in this country. Today there are portions of original stonework remaining on the ground story front elevation and on both stories of the rear elevation. There is, however, little trace of original finishes on the interior except in the foundation work at the basement level and perhaps in the oldest attic section. It is, therefore, difficult to speculate on the inside configuration of the early building without opening walls and investigating the structure. At this time only the basement level and varying patterns in the exterior stone work may suggest where changes have occurred. With further analysis, these traces might show the chronology of changes to the earliest building material.

Hobart Family Summer Residence: 1902-1915

Upon the death of the Vice-President of the United States, Garret A. Hobart, in 1899, Mrs. Esther Jane (Jennie) Tuttle Hobart returned from Washington, D.C., to reside in the Hobart family home of Carroll Hall, one of Paterson's large Italianate-

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<sup>4</sup> Ronald C. McArthur. National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination Form. Prepared 1975.

property until it was razed in 1939, Mrs. Hobart acquired more real estate nearby. By one account, she was said to have been convinced by John MacCullough's caretaker to consider purchase of Ailsa Farms, though she had otherwise hoped to establish a country residence "far in the mountains or within sight of the sea."<sup>5</sup> In any case she was convinced to make a minimum bid of \$5,000 on Ailsa when it came to auction in 1902. As highest bidder for \$5,285, Mrs. Hobart took possession of the estate which she chose to make primarily a summer residence, though it would also accommodate holiday festivities such as Christmas. It was at Christmas of the same year that Mrs. Hobart gave the deed of the property to her eighteen year old son Garret A. Hobart, Jr. Record of how Garret Hobart Jr. and his family occupied Ailsa Farms remains sketchy in the early years. In 1915, his family had elected to use the property as a year-round residence. By this time Mr. Hobart had acquired additional acreage surrounding the estate and had expanded his business interests in the New York Stock Exchange. This helped justify enlarging the residence to provide for several entertaining and guest room spaces.

#### Hobart Family Permanent Residence: 1915-1943

From 1915 to 1919 Garret Hobart Jr. undertook an extensive remodeling and expansion of Ailsa Farms. The project was awarded to Fred W. Wentworth, F.A.I.A., and Frederick J. Vreeland.

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<sup>5</sup> Anonymous. "Ailsa Farms" manuscript, pg. 3.

The project was awarded to Fred W. Wentworth, F.A.I.A., and Frederick J. Vreeland, A.I.A., architects from Paterson. The work included remodelling the exterior of the original manor. The octagonal towers were removed and a new single story stone entrance way, surmounted by a five-bay window, was added. The stonework facing on the second story of the entry elevation was removed, and plain sash windows were replaced with leaded glass casements in many of the formal entertaining spaces of the original building. There was also the addition of a three-story wing to the northeast and addition of a fieldstone and tile terrace on the east side of the original building. By the time work was completed in 1919, the house consisted of over forty rooms with a marble fireplace in nearly all of them, eight baths, a roof-top terrace, and a grand spiral staircase in the entry hall. Some of the most important documentation of the modifications at this time is contained in a 1929 published photographic essay on the work of architect Fred W. Wentworth. The front elevation (Illus. 4), though still asymmetrical, had lost much of its early picturesque qualities to a more formal sense of order. Lancet arches, semi-hexagonal casement bay windows and massive chimneys of tudor precedent were combined with colonial revival detail of mock quoining at window surrounds and a parapet balustrade. The latter tied the whole of the entry elevation together with a consistent roofline unlike the previous towered and domed roof. Details of the interior finishes, also illustrated in this publication, offered a combination of

classical beaux arts and baroque precedents to be noted in the repeated use of paired French doors (Illus. 5), walls defined with moldings to suggest paneling, a grand spiral staircase (Illus. 6), and overmantles with elaborate plasterwork swags of fruit and flora (Illus.7).

An undated set of plans, prepared just after the State's acquisition of the property in 1948<sup>6</sup>, offers valuable definition of the interior spaces which are in part confirmed by the Wentworth-Vreeland photographic essay. These, coupled with a 1975 narrative of reminiscences prepared by Elizabeth Hobart Kingsbury (granddaughter of Garret and Jennie Hobart), provide extensive information about the early twentieth century arrangement of rooms.

At the basement level (Illus. 8) in the northeast wing, there were four servants' rooms and a large children's playroom, recalled by Mrs. Kingsbury to have been later cut in half to afford an additional bedroom.<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Kingsbury remembered a household staff of a cook, kitchen maid, houseman, waitress-parlor-maid, butler and one or two chambermaids. Two chauffeurs, the laundress and assistant laundress were housed in the old

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<sup>6</sup> The State acquired the property in 1948 and is said to have installed the elevator in the three story wing. The elevator is depicted in these plans which otherwise record the residential uses inherent in the building prior to conversion to an educational facility.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth H. Kingsbury. Letter to a Mrs. Randall recalling the author's life at Ailsa Farms. September 28, 1975. pg. 2.

carriage house directly behind the first floor kitchen.

The first floor of the new wing (Illus. 9) included three children's bedrooms, a nurses room, two guest bedrooms, a separate bath for each guest room, a shared bath for adjacent children's rooms, and a shared bath for the nurse's quarters linked to the third child's bedroom. The first floor plan of the main building contained the central stair hall with a grand spiral stair. To the east of this was a small smoking room adjacent to a large reception room. To the west of the central hall, there was a children's dining room, serving pantry, several closets, and a vault accessed from a closet off the central stair hall. Linking the east reception room to the kitchens at the western most end of this floor, was a passage including a bath, a flower room and a servants' dining area on the north side.

The second story of the main building housed the formal entertaining spaces for the residence. From the spiral stair one would reach the spacious upstairs hall with a broad semi-hexagonal bay window. Off this stair hall to the east was a drawing room which extended the full depth of the main building. To the west of the stair hall was a library and toilet. A billiard room at the farthest west end of this floor abutted a butler's pantry which was linked by circular stair to the kitchen below. The formal dining room was on the north side of the building, behind the library, and to the east of the dining room was an "ante room" passage to the drawing room. Mrs. Kingsbury's recollection was that this once served as an office for her

father.

The second floor plan (Illus. 10) of the wing included Mrs. Jennie Hobart's room at the east end linked by passage, bath and closet to a maids chamber and linen closet on the north side. The master suite for Mr. and Mrs. Garret Hobart, Jr., a large dressing room and bath abutted a guest room and bath on the south side.

Above this level of the main building (Illus. 11) were two additional bedrooms, a bath and an organ room. These attic chambers were servants quarters according to Mrs. Kingsbury. She also wrote that the organ loft over the front hall stair was an ideal vantage point from which to watch and eaves drop on family parties excluding the supposed sleeping children. On the top level of the wing was a roof top terrace which also served as a dance hall when Mrs. Kingsbury's parents had an orchestra and two Arthur Murray dance teachers to instruct on this terrace. <sup>8</sup> /

The above described configuration of the exterior and interior rooms characterized the residence up until the time of its conveyance to the State of New Jersey in 1948. The grounds had been expanded in 1938 to more than two hundred acres to include the Gaede's Estate on top of "Haledon Hill." <sup>9</sup> / By 1941 both Garret A. Hobart Jr. and his mother Jennie Hobart had died.

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<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Kingsbury letter. pg. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Driscoll. "Hobart Manor Restoration Proposal." c. 1986 (as suggested by fundraising under consideration at that specified time). pg. 2.

Mrs. Hobart lived to be ninety-one, but her son, who suffered heart failure, lived to be only fifty-five. By 1948 Mrs. Garret (Caroline Frye) Hobart, Jr., decided to sell the property to the State of New Jersey for \$200,000.<sup>10/</sup> As the Newark News reported in the summer of that year, this sum was just half or perhaps one third of the property's estimated value at that time.<sup>11/</sup> Given the history of the Hobart family's contributions to the Paterson community, this good fortune for the College may not have come as a surprise.

#### Paterson State Teachers College/Haledon Hall: 1948-1976

Several years passed before the Board of Education permitted the State Teachers College to occupy the site. The annual report of the New Jersey State Teachers College at Paterson, 1951-1952, specified that the manor was designated "East Hall" and served as administrative offices and the college library, with three classrooms in the basement.<sup>12/</sup> The report further detailed that the library was not opened until January, 1952, as a result of unfinished work by various contractors, particularly the Watson-Flagg Company, contractor for lighting.

Drawings prepared by architects Lapierre & Litchfield in

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<sup>10</sup> Driscoll. "Hobart Manor Restoration Proposal" c. 1986. pg. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Trenton Bureau. Newark News. "Hobart Estate Seen Ideal as Paterson College Site." Summer 1948.

<sup>12</sup> "Annual Report: New Jersey State Teachers College at Paterson, 1951-1952" Addressed to one Dr. Raubinger. pg. 1.

July 1958 suggest the schematic changes necessary for the educational uses proposed in the oldest section of the manor building. Few of these changes were structural. The drawings show that the servants' dining room, flower room and bath were converted to one large waiting room. The first floor reception room off the entry hall was reduced in size to accommodate a passage along the north wall which lead from the waiting room to a fire door on the east wall. A fire stairway was installed in the northwestern corner of the building where additional kitchen facilities had been at both the first and second story levels. Elsewhere at the second story level partitions were added to create necessary office spaces; however, all of these were removed by William Paterson College in 1985-1986. It is important to note that changes made to the significant spaces of the manor house were minimal and intended only to adapt the house to its new institutional use. With the exception of the first floor reception room, waiting room and northwest corner fire stair, all of these adaptations have been removed, leaving the building much as it was when designed by Fred W. Wentworth between 1915-1919.

In addition to the interior changes made between 1950 and the late 1970s the building was renamed twice: first in the late 1960s, when it was designated Haledon Hall; and then in 1976, when the building was renamed Hobart Manor.<sup>13</sup> The latter year

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<sup>13</sup> Driscoll. "Hobart Manor Restoration Proposal" ca. 1986. pg. 3.

was also important in the history of the building as that was the year in which it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Hobart Manor: 1976-1988

Since the early 1980s, William Paterson College has been contemplating and developing a preservation program for the building. In 1983 the College began planning for the restoration of the building and its significant interior spaces. During 1985-1986 all the offices were moved from Hobart Manor and the College undertook repairs necessitated by water damage; the removal of all walls and partitions added since 1952; and the improvement of the electrical, plumbing and heating systems. <sup>14/</sup>

In 1987, the College moved its admissions, community affairs and alumni affairs offices into the building. Now in 1988, William Paterson College is undertaking this Preservation Assessment to refine its treatment of Hobart Manor.

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<sup>14</sup> Driscoll. "Hobart Manor Restoration Proposal" c. 1986. pg. 3.