

Hobart Estate Was Choice Tract of Land

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"This spirit of fidelity and courage was his by inheritance. The blood which flowed in his veins was from good English stock, and was mingled with the martyr blood of Dutch and Huguenot ancestors. He would have been untrue to all his ancestral memories and tendencies, if he had not served the cause of freedom, of education, and of God. The ideals of his home life, under which he was trained, were of a high and holy character. They influenced and guided his life to its close. Had he lived as men ordinarily live, he might have reached the limit of fourscore years. He has died in the ripeness of his powers; full of honors, not of years."

THIS WAS written as part of the eulogy for the 24th vice president of the United States, Garret A. Hobart. The Hobart

estate is now occupied by the William Paterson College.

The 225-acre estate at the junction of Hamburg Turnpike and Pompton Road near the crest of Gaede's Hill (once the property of silk manufacturer Robert Gaede) housed three generations of Hobarts before it was sold to the state by the widow of Garret A. Hobart Jr. in 1948.

His mother, Esther Jane Tuttle Hobart, the widow of the vice president had purchased the estate, rich in revolutionary history and legend, at a public auction in 1902. The vice president's widow died on the estate in 1941 at the age of 91. Garret Jr. served as president of the Passaic County Park Commission. He also died on the estate that same year.

Known as Ailsa Farms, the

Hobart property was regarded as one of the choice pieces of land close to metropolitan Paterson situated in the communities of Haledon, North Haledon and Wayne Township.

The 40-room Tudor style manor house with its ivy clad walls, on the central hillside of the estate is now occupied by college admissions and registration officers. Its marble-framed fireplaces and parquet floors still remain.

Atop the five-story spacious mansion a roof garden, once used for entertaining guests of the Hobart family, overlooked the Paterson metropolitan area and now

provides a view of the New York skyline.

The contour of the estate, capable of expansion due to its long rolling lawns and shady hills, permitted development and in the late 1940's seemed earmarked for a state-educational institution.

IN NOVEMBER of 1947 The News reported that the New Jersey State Board of Education "had virtually settled on the spacious Hobart Estate on Pompton Road in Haledon" as a site for meeting the growing educational demands of the area.

Work in converting the buildings on the state to su-

college purposes began shortly after the college became the home of Paterson State Teacher's College in October of 1951.

Stables Converted
Garage quarters soon became the site of the college's first cafeteria and bookstore. Old horse stables were converted into the first student center, the focal point for student activities.

The Hobart family purchased the estate of Robert Gaede, (Gaede's Hill), in 1938. Ten years later the state was to purchase the entire Hobart Estate, described as one of the finest country estates in the county.

On the Gaede Estate was Gaede's Pond which still stands today as a popular ice-skating spot. It was man-made in the 1900's having earlier stood as a swamp bog

fed by springs. Peat was reportedly extracted from it for use as fuel for Gaede's Silk Dyeing Company.

The main house on the Gaede estate was located on the center hill where the college water tower now stands. On that major tract of land, consumed by the Hobart estate, now stands the college's communications faculty where television and radio studios are housed. It is named Hobart Hall in memory of the distinguished family who occupied the land.

ADDED TO the total 250-acre tract occupied by the college in 1969, are the historic Buttermilk Falls, which were protected from future development by the college's Development Fund Corporation, of which Garret Hobart IV is a member.

The corporation purchased this additional 8.2 acre tract adjacent to the Wayne campus from a North Bergen resident, who held title to the property.

The falls are located on the

site of a partly man-made sandstone quarry which supplied stone foundations to many of the houses in the area.

Science faculty members at the college conducted research studies which indicate the site is underlain by volcanic rock, the result of lava flow in prehistoric times. Huge boulders near the falls suggest that glaciers once covered the area.

The remains of stone walls in the wooded area by the falls attest to lands once farmed, later abandoned and overgrown by trees.

The thickly wooded pines which stood on the Hobart Estate at the turn of the century still remain although lessened in number since John MacCulloch developed the grounds and erected the castle manor house in 1877.

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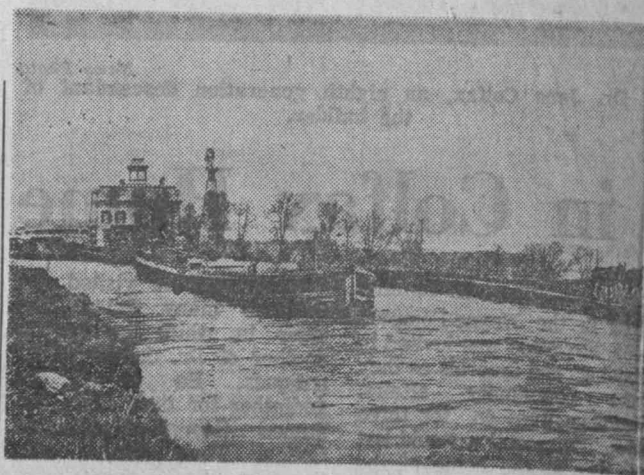
By the developers of Urban Farms

If you would like to see this neighborhood before going into the homes — Directions: Hamburg Tpke. to Valley Rd. extension (just west of North Jersey Country Club). North on Valley Rd. to Urban Club Rd. (first right). Continue on Urban Club Rd.

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Courtesy of Wayne Historical Commission

MORRIS CANAL had a series of feeder canals leading into the Pompton River. This is a typical scene along the river behind the Schuyler Colfax House on the Hamburg Turnpike.

There's a connection between the Preakness in Wayne Township and the famed annual classic run at the Pimlico Race Course, in Baltimore.

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