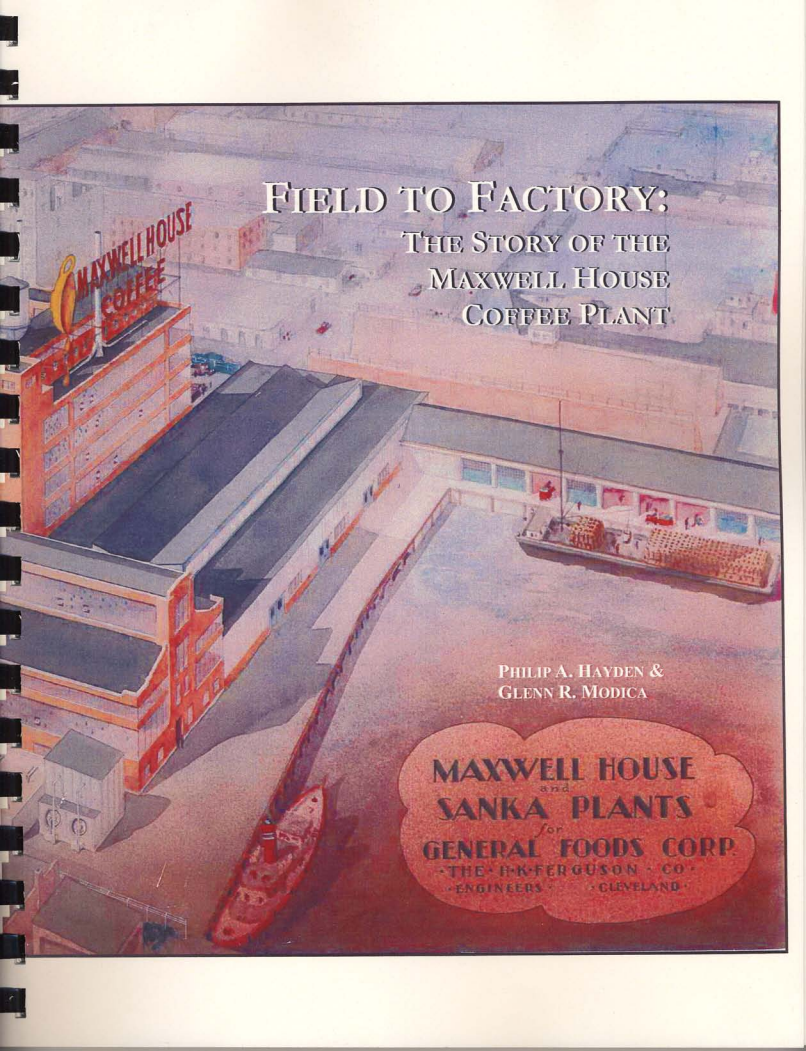


An aerial, watercolor-style illustration of the Maxwell House Coffee Plant. The main building is a large, multi-story structure with a prominent sign on its left side that reads "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" in red letters. The building has a dark roof and several windows. To the right of the main building is a long, low structure, possibly a warehouse or loading dock. In the foreground, there is a body of water with a red tugboat and a larger ship. The background shows other buildings and a city street.

FIELD TO FACTORY:

THE STORY OF THE MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE PLANT

PHILIP A. HAYDEN &
GLENN R. MODICA

MAXWELL HOUSE
and
SANKA PLANTS
for
GENERAL FOODS CORP.
• THE H. K. FERGUSON • CO. •
• ENGINEERS • CLEVELAND •

Field to Factory:
The Story of the Maxwell House
Coffee Plant

Philip A. Hayden

Glenn R. Modica

April 2005

Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc., Cultural Resource Consultants
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Illustrations:

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Cover: Architectural rendering of the proposed Maxwell House and Sanka Plants prepared by E. D. McDonald, circa 1938 (Courtesy Hoboken Historical Museum)

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INTRODUCTION



Maxwell House Coffee Plant from *Factory Management and Maintenance*, April 1940 (Courtesy Kraft Foods, Inc.)

From the introduction of management, Maxwell House and Kraft Foods prepared to do it on their own, using their own resources and their own methods.

INTRODUCTION

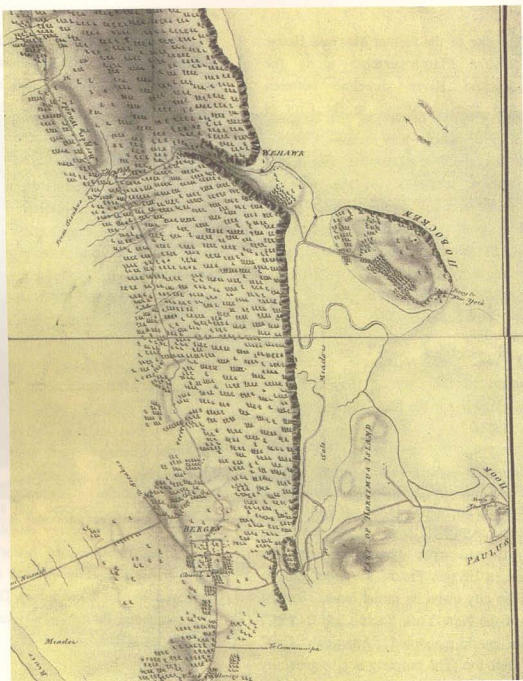
The site of the former Maxwell House Coffee Plant stretches along the Hudson River shoreline between Tenth and Twelfth Streets in the City of Hoboken. The factory was a marvel of its time, the largest coffee processing plant in the world, and a landmark on the western waterfront for over half a century. In 2003, as part of a plan to redevelop the former Maxwell House Plant for residential and commercial use, a team of historians and archaeologists evaluated the factory for historical significance. The investigation found the plant to be an important historic resource associated with the industrial development of the City of Hoboken and therefore eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Founded partly on original high ground and partly on fill, the site once included key landmarks in the early history of Hoboken. Among these were pavilions, pathways, and open spaces marking the entrance to Elysian Fields, the great park to which the city owed its initial fame. The first home of the New York Yacht Club (NYYC) and its world-renowned "America's Cup" stood there too. The property is also generally

regarded as the birthplace of modern baseball, a phenomenon of such significance, and one so inexorably tied to the American experience that for the game alone the place deserves special note.

This story recounts the history of the site. It pays special attention to the nineteenth century, when the land underwent its most dramatic changes, and it looks closely at the role of the Stevens family, the founders of Hoboken, in shaping the tract to suit their aims. The design of the Maxwell House Plant also figures prominently, since it transformed the site and led to the initial historic study and ultimately this publication.

The investigation was the result of a process by which historical, architectural, and archaeological sites are managed today. In 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act was passed by Congress and signed into a federal law. New Jersey established similar regulations to safeguard historic resources. New Jersey's historic cultural resources are managed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Historic Preservation Office in Trenton.



Bayard estate occupies the promontory marked "Hoboken" (Sketch of the Road from Paulus Hook and Hoboken to New Bridge, 1770. Library of Congress).

EARLY YEARS

Settlement and Early Owners

Hoboken in its earliest days consisted largely of marsh and salt meadow. The exception was a large promontory or point, rising island-like out of the grass and mud on the Hudson River's western edge. This natural garrison commanded spectacular views up and down the river and across to the settlement of New Amsterdam on the tip of Manhattan Island. A Dutch settler named Michael Pauw acquired lands along the west bank of the Hudson River in 1630, covering all of present-day Hoboken.¹ In 1635, the lands passed to the Dutch West India Company, after which a period of conflict with the Native Americans left possession of the lands in constant dispute.² A new indenture between the Native Americans and Petrus Stuyvesant of New Amsterdam secured title to the lands once and for all in 1658.³ Stuyvesant's tract of approximately 276 acres extended along the west bank of the Hudson River from Weehawken Cove to Hoboken Creek, a meandering tidal stream formally located near Newark Street. Governor Stuyvesant conveyed the tract to his brother-in-law, Nicholas Varlett, on February 5, 1663.⁴ This title was later confirmed by Philip Carteret on May 12, 1668.⁵

One observer writing in 1680 described the tract as

a good plantation in a neck of land almost on an island called Hobuck. It did belong to a Dutch merchant, Aert Teunissen, who formally, in the Indian war, had his wife, children and servants murdered by the Indians, and his house, cattle and stock destroyed by them. It is now settled again, and a mill erected there by one dwelling in New York.⁶

Varlett died intestate in 1675.⁷ Title passed to his daughter, Susanna de Freest, then to her daughter, Susanna Hickman, wife of Robert Hickman. The Hickmans sold the tract in 1711 to New York merchant Samuel Bayard. Bayard developed the property for farming and erected a comfortable summer residence on the promontory. So began a tradition of recreation and leisure that would continue with the property for 150 years.

By 1760, according to the *New York Mercury*, Bayard's property included all the buildings needed for a well-managed farm and contained a five-acre garden with peaches, pears, plums, cherries, nectarines, and apricots, as well as sizable apple orchards of over a thousand trees.⁸ The property also offered unparalleled convenience for marketing and commerce between the two shores. Cornelius Haring started regular ferry service from the southern tip of Hoboken to New York City in 1774.⁹ The 1778 map of the area by John Hills illustrates the ferry landing and the original road leading north

through orchards and wooded groves along part of the present-day route of Washington Street.

Bayard's loyalist grandson, William, had the land confiscated by the State of New Jersey in 1780. Abandoned, the house stood vacant until marauders torched it, and the fields went fallow for the remainder of the Revolution. At last in March 1784, the Bergen County agent of forfeited estates sold the Bayard tract to Colonel John Stevens, Jr. (1749-1838) for £18,360.

Colonel John Stevens and the Creation of Hoboken

Colonel John Stevens was a man of means and a great inventor, whose life and contributions to New Jersey's history are too numerous to recount here. Archibald Turnbull's 1928 biography of Stevens remains the seminal work on his life. Stevens began an immediate program of improvements to the former Bayard estate, but neglect had taken its toll.¹⁰ Ruined fields needed clearing. "I have near 200 boats of wood cut at Hobuck," he wrote shortly after acquiring the property, "and hope to have 3 or 400 more by winter."¹¹ He built a new country seat on the promontory, and by 1792 the Stevens family was spending the summer in the residence. The house was sufficiently grand and visible that some began to call it "Stevens' Castle" or "Castle Point." The name stuck. Large-scale improvements to Castle Point, including the planting of hundreds of new fruit trees and over 5,000 lombardy poplar trees, were well



Stevens Castle, built and landscaped by Col. John Stevens (Winfield 1895).

underway by 1797 to enhance the estate's salubrious air.¹² The painter William Dunlap described the place as "built in the Style [sic] of English nobility," undoubtedly a reference to the fashionable, naturalistic British landscapes created by such masters as William Kent and Capability Brown.¹³

With an eye toward development, Stevens drew up a master plan in 1804 to create a new seaport town at Hoboken. The plan, prepared by Charles Loss and titled, "A Map of the new City of Hoboken," divided the lands south of Castle Point into house lots along a grid of streets aligned with the existing road to Weehawken (Washington Street). Stevens expended \$50,000 "in making wharves, buildings, and other improvements at Hoboken" for the anticipated trade.¹⁴ The Hudson River's western bank, Stevens reasoned, offered a comparable location for the businesses of New York, but with a more healthful prospect, free from the city's squalor and disease. Outbreaks of cholera, typhoid, and yellow fever hindered New York commerce for long periods during the summer months, and prompted a flurry of efforts

designed to stem the spread. A yellow fever epidemic in 1803, for example, sent New Yorkers fleeing to the country.¹⁵ Stevens latched onto this seasonal turmoil to help promote his new town. In March 1804, he petitioned the New Jersey Legislature to establish the Hoboken Company, citing the concerns of

sundry merchants, trades, manufacturers, and mechanicks [sic] who are at present inhabitants of the city of New York and of the other cities within the United States, together with many other persons who are necessarily dependent on them for their subsistence, are desirous of removing to a place where they may be able to pursue their respective vocations free from the danger of those epidemic disorders to which many of the Cities within the United States are at certain seasons subject, and where they will be exempt from the operation of certain laws and ordinances which they conceive to be impolitic and burdensome.¹⁶

Such development would have the added benefit of attracting business "highly advantageous to the State by the consequent increase of population, commerce and manufacturers...."¹⁷ The legislature failed to act, but Stevens pressed forward with his plans. He planned a sale of 800 lots to take place on March 20, 1804 at public venue over the course of four days and placed advertisements in the region's principal newspapers.¹⁸

The results were disappointing. Traversing the Hudson was less attractive and more expensive than migrating northward to Greenwich Village. Only low-cost transportation could help entice would-be settlers. Over the next two decades, Stevens devised various plans to improve communication between New York and Hoboken. These included plans for a tunnel, a floating bridge, and a permanent span.¹⁹ His experiments in steam propulsion for boats must also be considered within this context. In 1811, Stevens secured the lease on the franchise operating between Hoboken and New York and developed a steam-powered ferry service.²⁰ Between 1817 and 1821, the family sublet the ferry franchise to others, but service proved so poor that Stevens sued to regain control. This also ignited his battle to overturn the New York state law granting Robert Fulton and Robert Livingston a monopoly on steamboat service across the Hudson. The case (*Gibbons v. Ogden*) landed in the United States Supreme Court, which struck down the New York franchise, arguing that only the federal government held the power to regulate interstate commerce. The ruling helped assert federal influence over the nation's economy. By 1825, some 43 steamboats competed to carry people and goods between New Jersey and New York.²¹



THE ELYSIAN FIELDS AND CASTLE POINT.
A moonlit view of the north side of Castle Point from Elysian Fields, circa 1845 (Basil Stevens Scrapbook, New Jersey Historical Society).

ELYSIAN FIELDS

New York's First "Central Park"

Fast, regular, and reliable ferry service at last opened Hoboken to New York City. But instead of land, people came for recreation, and they came in droves. As early as the 1804 sale, to help entice settlers Stevens offered to make his private grounds around the estate available to purchasers as part of the deal.²² Visitors soon took advantage of the semi-public nature of Stevens' property, and by 1824 the ferries to and from Hoboken yielded, in Stevens' words, "an immense income, which is rapidly increasing as the population of the city and adjacent country increases."²³ He set about improving the grounds and a portion of the riverfront with a walkway to entertain the crowds. It was an instant hit. Over time the demand from New Yorkers to visit Stevens' shores grew so great, and his profits from the ferry service increased so much, that by 1824 he thought of turning over the entire shoreline to the City of New York:

as a place of general resort for citizens, as well as strangers, for health and recreation. So easily accessible, and where in a few minutes the dust, noise, and bad smells of the city may be exchanged for the pure air, delightful shades and completely rural scenery, through walks



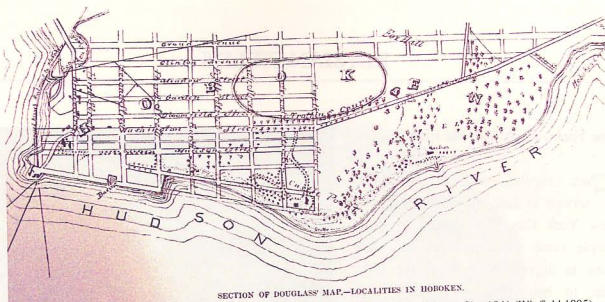
Wooded paths of Elysian Fields (Winfield 1895).

extending along the margin of the majestic Hudson to an extent of more than a mile.²⁴

His proposal also called for the erection of pavilions, "for affording every accommodation and refreshment, and also adequate protection against sudden showers of rain."²⁵ For these structures he advocated the use of the best architectural styles, noting that

perhaps nothing could have a more powerful tendency to civilize the general mass of society...in such promiscuous assemblages of the rich and poor, in situations where nature and art are made to contribute so largely to the embellishment of every scene presented to their view.²⁶

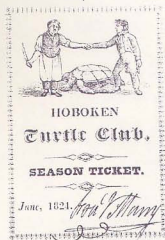
But New York showed no interest in the envisioned park, so, undeterred, Stevens developed it himself.



SECTION OF DOUGLASS' MAP.—LOCALITIES IN HOBOKEN.
Elysian Fields occupied the north end of Hoboken in Douglas's *Topographical Map of Jersey City*, 1841 (Winfield 1895).

At the ferry landing on the southern end of Hoboken, passengers emerged onto a wide lawn lined with elm trees. Stevens extended the waterfront path, now called the River Walk, around the base of Castle Point to the level ground at the property's north end. Here he created a clearing in the tree-lined shore called "Turtle Cove" where by 1824, hungry picnickers sated themselves on bowls of turtle soup.²⁷ In 1826, a visiting traveler on a tour through North America noted, "the beautiful walk extending for two miles along the Hudson is kept in the finest order, and commands a noble view of the city on the opposite shore."²⁸ The Scotsman James Stuart, who spent the Winter of 1829 and 1830 residing in Hoboken, praised the Stevens' for their accomplishments: "They have laid out their property adjoining the river, for about two miles, in public walks, which the inhabitants of New

York, who come over in prodigious numbers, enjoy very much."²⁹ Stuart went on to note the corresponding increase in the value of the ferry, as well as the rent on Stevens-owned businesses such as the hotel.³⁰

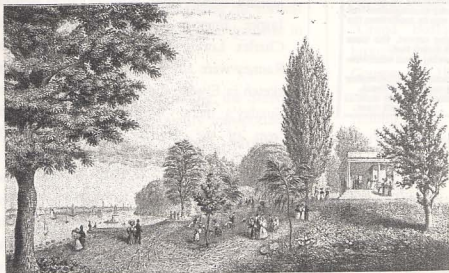


The club met at Turtle Cove (Winfield 1895).

Improvements to the park continued into the 1830s. Among the shelters and watering places Stevens constructed were a grotto-like cave at the base of Castle Point called Sybil's Cave and a large Grecian temple at Turtle Cove. On May 21, 1831, diarist Philip Hone wrote: "Messrs. Stevens have a large number of men employed in laying out the grounds in a very tasteful manner, and erecting a large, light airy building, which is to be called by the classic name of Tivoli, near the place formally known as Turtle

Grove, at the extremity of the beautiful walk from the ferry."³¹ Called "The Colonnade," the structure stood east of present-day Hudson

Street, between Eleventh and Twelfth Streets
on the former Maxwell House Coffee Plant



A. Dick's 1831 view of The Colonnade at Elysian Fields, looking south (Winfield 1895).

site. "It will be thronged every sultry afternoon through the summer," wrote an enthusiastic reporter in the *Intrepeiad* newspaper, "if it is kept up in the spirit of its commencement."³² In keeping with the classical nature of The Colonnade, Stevens renamed the area "Elysian Fields" after the heavenly abode of the dead in ancient Greek mythology, and he opened it in a grand public celebration on July 11, 1831.³³ Elysian Fields, vast in its expanse with open ground, wooded groves, and meadows, extended from the northern base of Castle Point to the deepest reach of Weehawken Cove, and provided welcome space for an assortment of uses. Picnics, sports, and games allowed the New York multitudes to stretch their legs in relative freedom.³⁴ Theodore Sedgewick Fay wrote in 1831 that a newcomer to Elysian Fields could react "with delight and upon the softness, the brightness and variety of this scene, the

improvements of which... are laid out in great taste.³⁵ Frances Trollope, a visiting Englishwoman pronounced it a "little Eden" and said it was

hardly possible to imagine one of greater attraction.... [H]e has restricted his pleasure grounds to a few beautiful acres, laying out the remainder simply and tastefully as a public walk.... a broad belt of light underwood and flower shrubs, studded at intervals with loft forest trees, runs for two miles along a cliff which overhangs the matchless Hudson: sometimes it feathers the rocks down to its very margin, and at others leaves a pebbly shore, just rude enough to break the gentle waves, and

make a music which mimics softly the loud chorus of the ocean.³⁶

By 1832, Samuel Lorenzo Knapp estimated that as many as 20,000 visitors a day descended on Hoboken during the summer season to find "a most delightful retreat for a summer's day."³⁷ For all intents and purposes, Stevens and his family had effectively created New York's first "Central Park."³⁸

Marketing Elysian Fields

Hoboken's success rested in part on America's growing interest in its natural surroundings. Beginning in the 1820s and 1830s, architects and tastemakers such as Asher Benjamin, Alexander Jackson Davis, and Andrew Jackson Downing advocated the

**THE MOST DELIGHTFUL OF ALL
EXCURSIONS**—A rail across the Hud-
son River to HOBOKEN, and then a walk
to ELYSIAN FIELDS, along the exceedingly picturesque
shores of the place, will prove the easily accomplished and
attractive of all rural excursions that can be made from the
city.

The ground now presents a charming aspect, the trees
being in leaf and the soil covered with a rich turf.

The Walks are in excellent order having been consider-
ably embellished the present spring.

The Ferry Boats from Barclay, Canal, and Christopher
streets, are completely fitted up with awnings and Seats.

Night boats run from Hoboken to Barclay street until 11
o'clock. Ferryage 6¢ cents. admission free.

New York Evening Post advertisement for Elysian Fields,
June 2, 1846.

virtues of country living in their landscape
plans, building designs, and popular
treatises.³⁹ The origins of this movement, and
the relationship between nature, Classical and
Medieval-style architecture, and Christian
virtue, had its roots in England but found
fertile ground in the Hudson River Valley,
where landscape painters of the period exulted
in the raw, untamed qualities of the American
wilderness. Many of New York's artistic and

literary circle visited Stevens' park to find
their own form of inspiration. Asher B.
Durand, Robert Weir, William James Bennett,
Jasper Francis Cropsey, Robert Havell,
Charles Loring Elliot, and William Tylee
Ranney were among the painters to visit and
sketch in Elysian Fields.⁴⁰ Durand spent most
Sunday's there, "strolling under the noble
trees of the Elysian Fields."⁴¹ In 1830,
William Cullen Bryant extolled the beauty of
the wooded walks, particularly in May, "when
the verdure of the turf is as bright as the green
of the rainbow; and when the embowering
shrubs are in flower."⁴² Robert Sands
described the Elysian Fields in 1832 as "one
of the prettiest places you may see of a
summer's day," with wooded groves "worthy
of being painted by Claude Lorraine [sic]."⁴³
As late as 1844, Lydia Maria Child described
moonlit nights in Hoboken "beautiful beyond



View of New York City and Castle Point from Elysian Fields (Basil Stevens Scrapbook, New Jersey Historical Society).

imagining” and Elysian Fields as a place “where a poet’s disembodied spirit might well be content to wander.”⁴⁴ This picturesque setting was by one account among the earliest public or semi-public landscaped gardens in America.⁴⁵

To keep visitors coming, the Stevens’ relied on three things: quality transportation, changing attractions, and advertising. Comfortable appointments on fast, reliable boats made the river crossing both pleasurable and affordable. Every few years, Stevens embellished the park with improvements or new attractions, and he rented out areas for various private affairs or public spectacles. Newspaper advertisements trumpeted Hoboken as the best “of all rural excursions that can be made from the city” and appeared regularly for years in one form or another in the city’s press.⁴⁶ Fledgling city directories, such as Gavit’s Directory, proclaimed places like the village of Hoboken, “with its Elysian Fields, Sybil’s Cave, serpentine walk, and shady retreats...the ‘great park’ and picnic ground for pleasure seekers from the great city on the other side of the river...”⁴⁷ Other special amusements included a merry-go-round, a tenpin alley, and wax figures.⁴⁸ A crude ferris wheel-like contraption near The Colonnade gave thrill-seekers a chance to take in the scenery from changing elevations.

The Stevens’ supplemented these attractions with staged entertainments such as horseraces, ox roasts, and Indian war dances.⁴⁹ Rented tents, carnival booths, and tables and benches provided opportunities to watch the human parade in relative comfort.⁵⁰ As a

venue available for rent, Elysian Fields also enjoyed free advertising from all those who hired the facilities. P. T. Barnum’s 1843 announcement in the New York press of his “Grand Buffalo Hunt, Free of Charge” brought 24,000 spectators to the Trotting Course at Hoboken, where the animals ultimately broke the fence and sent the crowd running.⁵¹

Boating

Pleasure boating, yet another form of leisure, also took root in Elysian Fields. John Cox Stevens, an outgoing, energetic member of the Stevens clan, helped popularize yachting more than any other. In July 1844, Stevens gathered together a group of like-minded yachtsmen for a sail to Newport. This



First New York Yacht Club clubhouse (Basil Stevens Scrapbook. New Jersey Historical Society).

“saucy-looking squadron of schooner-yachts lying off the Battery...excites considerable admiration,” wrote one New York diarist on July 29.⁵² The next day, Stevens summoned members of the party to his vessel *Gimcrack* and proposed they form a boat club.⁵³

Organized under the name of the NYYC, the group elected Stevens as their first Commodore. Later that year, Stevens commissioned their first permanent clubhouse on family lands at Elysian Fields, and on July 15, 1845, the club met for the first time in their new quarters near the foot of present-day Tenth Street.⁵⁴ While the architect for the tiny Gothic-Style cottage is unknown, the popular romantic designer Alexander Jackson Davis, then engaged in designing Stevens' New York townhouse at College Place and Murray Street, may well have authored the building.⁵⁵ Davis favored historical models, drawing from classical antiquity and the English gothic for inspiration. John Cox Stevens maintained a long and fruitful professional relationship with Davis long after the clubhouse was built, adding credence to the attribution.⁵⁶

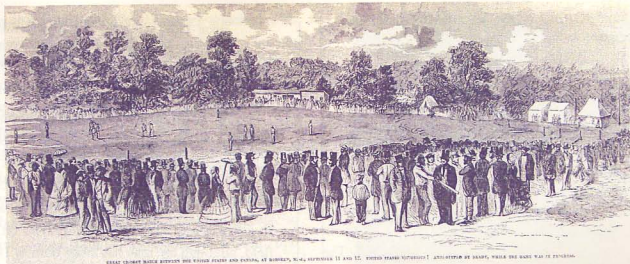
Two days after their first meeting in Hoboken, the club members sailed their first "trial of speed." The course ran from Robbins Reef to Bay Ridge and Stapleton, through the Narrows to a point off Southwest Spit, and back to the finish off of the clubhouse at Elysian Fields.⁵⁷ The "race" attracted thousands who watched from both shores and chartered steamers.⁵⁸ Commodore Stevens placed third on board *Gimcrack*. From that time forward, the club began and ended its annual regatta off the clubhouse grounds at Elysian Fields until 1865. The club's most famous race, however, began overseas. While based in Hoboken, John Cox Stevens built the yacht *America*, and in 1851 sailed it to England to race and win the first "America's Cup" against 14 British yachts on a course around the Isle of Wight.⁵⁹ Stevens and the

NYYC were henceforth forever tied to the yachting world's best known contest, although the actual cup stayed safely tucked away in the winner's private residence, not the clubhouse.

By 1868, the original clubhouse had outlived its usefulness, and the membership voted to relocate to Staten Island.⁶⁰ The smaller New Jersey Yacht Club, organized originally in 1871, took over the Hoboken clubhouse and remained there from 1875 to 1898.⁶¹ After acquiring the site in 1899, the Pennsylvania Railroad presented the original structure to the NYYC.⁶² In 1904, the club floated the building by barge from Elysian Fields to Glen Cove, Long Island, where it served as a station stop.⁶³ Later it was moved to the Mystic Seaport Museum, then to the grounds of the NYYC's Newport, Rhode Island clubhouse, where it remains to this day.

Baseball

Among the many sports played at Elysian Fields, pleasure seekers favored games with balls and bats from an early date. Fresh air and wide spaces offered clubs the ideal place to meet and play, away from the rapidly diminishing open lots of New York. Most historians agree that these matches resembled the English games of rounders and cricket.⁶⁴ As early as October 21, 1845, according to the *New York Herald*, teams of nine New Yorkers faced off with nine Brooklynites to play at Elysian Fields under the new rules devised by Alexander Cartwright.⁶⁵ The New York team, called the Knickerbocker Ball Club, went on



CRICKET GROUND BEFORE THE HOBOKEN MATCH AND EXHIBITION, AT HOBOKEN, N.J., SEPTEMBER 11 AND 12, 1856. THOMAS H. BARTON. LITHO. BY H. BARTON, WHERE THE GAME WAS IN PROGRESS.

A match with the Hoboken Cricket Club attracted crowds in 1856 (Basil Stevens Scrapbook, New Jersey Historical Society)

to compete in the more well known match against the New York Base Ball Club on June 19, 1846, where the New York team won 23 to 1.⁶⁶ Also played at Elysian Fields, this game is most often cited as the beginning of modern baseball. Subsequent games, both formal and informal, continued at the park. Many won special notoriety. The Knickerbockers played The Washington Club of Yorkville in 1851, winning 21 to 11.⁶⁷ A match between the Eagles and the Gothams at Elysian Fields on September 8, 1857 was illustrated for a local magazine. On October 21, 1861, some 15,000 observers watched all-star teams from New York and Brooklyn compete for a silver baseball trophy.⁶⁸ Another championship match between the Mutual Club of Manhattan and the Atlantic Club of Brooklyn on August 3, 1865, attracted 20,000 spectators to Elysian Fields and became the subject of a popular lithograph produced by Currier and Ives in 1866. By mid-century, Hoboken served as one of the game's most popular venues.⁶⁹



THE AMERICAN NATIONAL GAMES OF BASE BALL.

Currier & Ives print, *The American Game of Baseball* (Crouse 1930)

The exact location of the first game, or later ones for that matter, is anyone's guess. The Douglass map of 1841 shows at least three clearings on the north side of Castle Point. One lay on the high ground behind Stevens Castle, between Tenth, Eleventh, Hudson, and Washington Streets. This was known as the St. George Cricket Ground.⁷⁰ Two others to the north of The Colonnade were for other sports as well. Many of the known ball clubs favored the northern fields, and in 1865, with permission from the Stevens

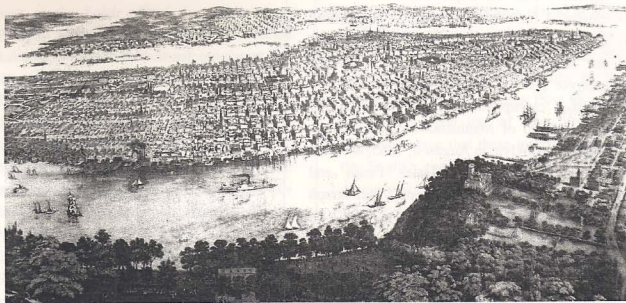
family, three teams set about "enlarging and improving the grounds, cutting down several trees, removing rocks, leveling and turfing, as well as erecting several rows of seats for spectators."⁷¹ The newly improved northern fields opened on May 25, 1865.⁷² Bachman's 1866 *Bird's Eye View of New York City and Environs* illustrates the back side of The Colonnade, and its surrounding grounds with a game of baseball underway in the northern clearing. Another field lay south of The Colonnade. Its approximate location was at the intersection of Hudson and Eleventh Streets. William A. Shephard recalled his visits to what seems to be the southern field in the late 1850s:

A walk of about a mile and a half from the ferry, up the Jersey shore of the Hudson River, along a road that skirted the river bank on one side and was hugged by trees and thicket on the other, brought one suddenly to an opening in the "forest Primeval." This open spot was a level, grass-covered plain, some two hundred yards across, and as deep, surrounded

upon three sides by the typical eastern undergrowth and woods and on the east by the Hudson River. It was a perfect greensward [turf].⁷³

In 1946, the City of Hoboken installed a plaque at the foot of Eleventh Street to commemorate what they believed to be the site of the historic 1846 game. Their choice of location was based in part on the personal recollections of someone who played on the field, although the man had been born in 1864, long after the event.⁷⁴

Baseball's great popularity, and the unpoliced character of Elysian Fields, brought with it drawbacks. Crowds took a heavy toll on the ferry boats, grounds, and facilities.⁷⁵ A brawl, well remembered for years to come, erupted among members of a German social club at Elysian Fields in 1851.⁷⁶ In 1865, one ball match between the Mutuals and the Eckfords attracted so much betting and included so many unusual plays that team-members were accused of throwing the



Baseball game underway in lower left, next to The Colonnade (*Bird's Eye View of New York City* 1866. New York Public Library).

game.⁷⁷ Affluent New Yorkers watched with growing alarm at the decline among "respectable" visitors to Hoboken.⁷⁸ These folk gradually left for quieter places, including Staten Island, Newport, and the Upper Hudson River Valley.⁷⁹ Fed up with the general disorderliness, the Stevens' finally banned large championship games in 1867.⁸⁰ Two years later they divided up the waterfront between Tenth and Thirteenth Streets to individual family members and their real estate holding company, effectively ending play on the lower fields favored by the Knickerbockers.⁸¹ Baseball continued on the northern grounds favored by the Empire Club, and as late as 1870 the Knickerbockers constructed a new clubhouse for themselves in the upper reaches of Elysian Fields.⁸² But the damage was done.

New York's own Central Park, begun in 1857, quickly replaced Hoboken as the destination of choice for most New Yorkers.⁸³ Elysian Fields rapidly gave way to residential and commercial buildings along extensions of the existing street grid.⁸⁴ In 1890, the Stevens family opened and dedicated Hudson Street between Tenth and Fourteenth Streets, so that by 1894, according to John Durand, the son of



1946 baseball plaque installed at the foot of Eleventh Street with Maxwell House Complex in background (Courtesy, Kraft Foods, Inc.).

the famous landscape painter, "broad avenues had been created, existent trees fell under the axe, and the Elysian Fields vanished from the face of the earth."⁸⁵



Hudson Street recedes across the former Elysian Fields, past the long sheds of the Sheppard and Morse Lumber Company on the northern Hoboken waterfront, circa 1930 (Stevens Family Papers, New Jersey Historical Society).

INDUSTRIALIZATION

The Hoboken Land & Improvement Company

The improvements of the previous decades successfully opened Hoboken for large-scale development. The Stevens family sought to exploit the open land. At Colonel Stevens' death in 1838, his heirs formed, and the Legislature authorized, the Hoboken Land and Improvement Company (HL&I Co.) with full powers

to improve all such lands as they are hereby authorized to own or purchase, by laying out that portion of the same which lies north of Fourth Street in the village of Hoboken, into lots, streets, squares, lanes, alleys, and other divisions; of leveling, raising, and grading the same, or making thereon all such wharves, workshops, factories, warehouses, stores, dwellings, and such other buildings and improvements as may be found or deemed necessary, ornamental, or convenient....⁸⁶

The act also granted the company the rights "to purchase, fill up, occupy, possess, and enjoy all land covered with water fronting and adjoining the lands that may be owned by them."⁸⁷ The HL&I Co. served as a kind of real estate holding company for the Stevens family and became the principal force behind all future development in Hoboken. Between the 1840s and 1870s, the company focused its efforts south of Eighth Street, leaving the open spaces to the north in pastoral form. But by

then a number of forces conspired to extend the town.

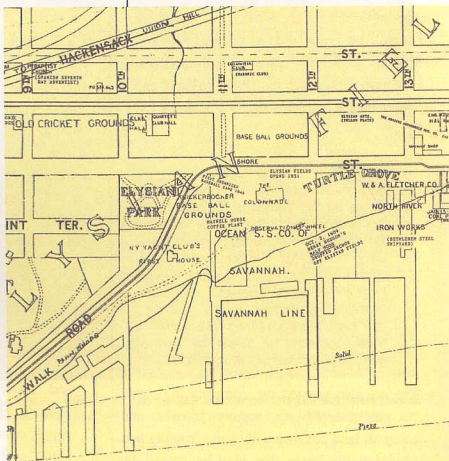
The Transformation

The end of Elysian Fields coincided with changing attitudes toward health and nature, one of the principal reasons for its initial success. During the park's heyday, the miasma theory of disease held sway. This theory assumed that poisonous gases emanating from human waste and garbage caused deadly outbreaks of cholera and typhus.⁸⁸ The cure was fresh air, afforded by places like Hoboken. But advances in the germ theory of disease, first shown by Louis Pasteur in 1857 and more firmly established by Robert Koch in the 1870s, led to a growing awareness of the correlation between contaminated water and disease. New Yorkers learned how to control outbreaks, and fewer and fewer people sought escape to the country. Heretofore, Hoboken's own water supply came from the Passaic River via Jersey City.⁸⁹ But the identification of the microorganisms that caused cholera and typhus led to great advances in city water supplies and filtration. In part to safeguard their investment, the Stevens family acquired some 300,000 shares of stock in the recently reorganized Hackensack Water Company, and in 1881 the City of Hoboken contracted with

the company to supply the city with fresh drinking water drawn from the Hackensack at New Milford.⁹⁰ Within two years, Hoboken's death rate dropped from 26.6 to 21.1 per thousand.⁹¹ Other municipal improvements in sanitation at last gave Hoboken the infrastructure it needed for full-scale urbanization.⁹² This, along with spectacular increases in the value of riverfront property, ended most concern for fresh air and open spaces.

Changes in the Stevens family itself helped spur development north of Castle Point. Edwin Augustus Stevens, son of the Colonel, died in 1868, and his will provided for the establishment of a college focused on mechanical engineering. The Stevens Institute of Technology opened in 1870. A year after his death, Edwin A. Stevens' widow Martha Bayard Dod Stevens (d. 1899) and her step-daughter Mary P. Stevens (Garnett) Lewis (d. 1903) exchanged shares in the HL&I Co. for two adjoining tracts of land between Tenth and Thirteenth Streets.⁹³ Portions of these two tracts would eventually make up the site of the Maxwell House Coffee Plant. Martha's tract was the largest and included the NYYC clubhouse and other boathouses lining the shore, as well as the site of The Colonnade

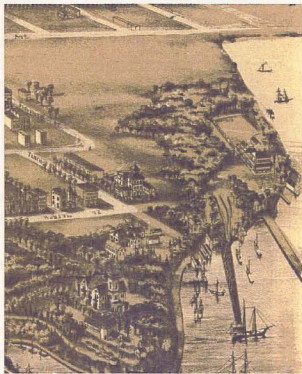
building at the north end of the River Walk, which traversed the property. By 1876, at least two sizable wharves extended from her tract into the Hudson.⁹⁴ One stuck straight out from the foot of The Colonnade and may have existed as early as 1841, according to the Douglas map, and almost certainly by 1857, when a similar pier, with connecting ferry service across the river, appeared on the Phelps map (1857) of New York City. The



General Historical Map of the City of Hoboken, NJ, According to the Official Surveys Embracing the History of Over a Century, 1909 (Hoboken Historical Museum).

second pier projected from the shore at an oblique angle but parallel to Martha's southern property line. This line had been deliberately drawn to follow the course of Fourteenth Street in New York City, a clear

indication of the symbiotic forces at play between the two shorelines. By 1881, the Lewis property featured a sizable Italianate-style villa as seen in a birds-eye view of the city by Bailey and Ward.⁹⁵ The same view captured both piers, as well as sundry buildings, ships, and pleasure craft moored in the coves.

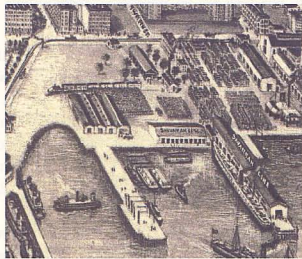


The foot of Tenth Street as it appeared in 1881 (*The City of Hoboken*. Library of Congress).

Riparian rights - claims to land under water - played their own role in shaping the waterfront. The HL&I Co.'s charter of 1838 granted the company all rights to fill the lands under water, but the State's claim to such lands in the 1860s forced the HL&I Co. to apply for and secure a lease for the riparian rights in 1885.⁹⁶ The grant extended as far as the solid fill line established by an act of the legislature. The same act also created a line to control the reach of pier structures. Martha B.

Stevens and Mary P. Lewis acquired their riparian rights in 1886, costing them \$50,000 and \$25,000, respectively, to secure the claims.⁹⁷ Such sizable outlays offered one reason at least for developing the land.

Industrialization of the Elysian Fields shoreline began in earnest in the final decades of the nineteenth century. The HL&I Co. launched a new ferry service from Hoboken's Fourteenth Street in 1884 and built new shops between Ninth and Tenth Street to service the boats.⁹⁸ Five years later, Martha Stevens sold the north half of her waterfront tract to the Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah, Georgia.⁹⁹ Within two years, the new owners reclaimed much of the land lying underwater and erected a series of sheds and outbuildings to conduct their business.¹⁰⁰ The Ocean Steamship Company also built two new piers - the North Pier and the South Pier - at the extensions of Eleventh and Twelfth Streets and leased space to various concerns, including the Clyde Steamship Company and



Foot of Tenth Street showing Ocean Steamship Company fill and piers (*City of Hoboken*, 1904. Library of Congress).

the Southern Cotton Oil Company.¹⁰¹ Mrs. Stevens leased the oddly angled pier on the southern half of her land to the firm of Tietjen & Lang, a ship repair and dry dock company.¹⁰² Only the New Jersey Yacht Club's building and several related boathouses continued to offer a haven of leisure in the rapidly changing shoreline.¹⁰³

Mary P. Lewis turned over her adjoining waterfront property between Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets to C. L. Bucki & Co., a yellow pine lumber dealer.¹⁰⁴ Most of this land was also filled in by 1891.¹⁰⁵ Immediately north of Thirteenth Street, the HL&I Co. leased lands in their control to the W. A. Fletcher & Co., manufacturer of steamship fittings, so that by 1896 the entire waterfront between Castle Point and Weehawken Cove was almost completely transformed by filling and occupied with heavy industry.¹⁰⁶

Role of the Railroads

The success of Hoboken's northern waterfront required not only easy water access to New York, but also reliable rail service.¹⁰⁷ The Stevens family remained closely identified with railroading through their interests in the Camden and Amboy Railroad and the Morris and Essex Railroad.¹⁰⁸ In 1895, they formed the Hoboken Railroad Warehouse and Steamship Connecting Company (HRR), with a planned route along the old River Walk at the base of Castle Point. Spearheading the project were Edwin A. Stevens 2nd and Edwin A. S. Lewis,

sons of Martha Stevens and Mary Lewis, the principal landholders.¹⁰⁹ Martha Stevens and Mary Lewis each deeded over land for the right-of-way in 1898, but by the time Martha died a year later, none of the line had been constructed.¹¹⁰ The company at last filed a revised survey plan in 1901, indicating that construction was underway or about to begin. By 1904, the Hughes and Bailey view of the City of Hoboken pictured tracks running along the base of Castle Point and north up Hudson Street, and by 1910, the principal line, branches, and sidings were all in place.¹¹¹

A second important rail line formed shortly after construction commenced on the HRR. The new line, called the Hoboken Manufacture's Railroad Company (HMRR) was chartered on July 21, 1902 to build a rail line along the western edge of Hoboken near the base of Bergen Hill.¹¹² The purpose of this five-mile-long series of branch lines and sidings was to encourage and service development in Hoboken's swampy northwestern quadrant and was intended to link with the Stevens' HRR and the much larger Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad (DL&WRR), whose eastern terminus was in Hoboken.¹¹³ The new line's promoters included Robert M. Dickinson of the Campbell & Company warehouse concern in Hoboken.¹¹⁴ In 1905, the Dickinsons formed the American Warehouse and Trading Company, which acquired the HMRR through majority stock purchase.¹¹⁵ With little of its own tracks laid and most of the commercial traffic centered along the waterfront, the HMRR leased the HRR on June 12, 1906.¹¹⁶ The newly united company proceeded to

develop the waterfront route of the HRR, completing only 365 feet of track in its own right-of-way before abandoning it altogether in 1924.¹¹⁷ As early as 1907, the joint company's letterhead called itself the "Hoboken Shore Road," but it did not formally adopt the name until 1954.¹¹⁸



Lason & MacMurray Lumber Co., looking north (Hoboken Historical Museum).

Railroad interests continued to shape the northern waterfront. The DL&WRR, which relied on the Stevens' ferries for access to New York, took over the Hoboken Ferry Company service at Fourteenth Street and Ferry Street on December 29, 1904.¹¹⁹ After Martha B. Stevens' death in 1899, her executors and the Hoboken Ferry Company sold off her tract and the ferry repair shops to Benjamin W. Carakaddon, a front man for the powerful Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR).¹²⁰ Carakaddon in turn transferred the ferry shops to the United New Jersey Railroad Company and Martha Stevens' land to the Manor Real Estate and Trust Company, both subsidiaries of the PRR.¹²¹ The PRR went on to lease part of its lands to the American Warehouse and Trading Company, whose HMRR helped move freight along the riverfront.¹²² On the

eve of World War I, the PRR and the Ocean Steamship Company then sold portions of their lands to the Hudson Realty Company, a DL&WRR subsidiary.¹²³ By 1916, the entire waterfront between Ninth and Twelfth Streets lay in the hands of three railroads: the PRR, the DL&WRR, and the HMRR.

With the nation's entry into World War I, the U.S. Government nationalized the railroads on December 26, 1917, along with most of the Hoboken waterfront. The Lawson & MacMurray lumber company property became one of many staging areas for the war effort.¹²⁴ The federal government eventually returned control of the railroads to the stockholders, and by 1938 the DL&WRR was again leasing the property to a variety of building supply dealers. They included the Sheppard and Morse Lumber Company (main block); the Dodge and Leslie Terminal; Lawson & MacMurray, lumber dealers (North Pier); and Schultz Building Materials, dealers in masonry materials (South Pier). Long, one-story lumber warehouses on the west end of the property flanked two railroad spurs crossing the property from north to south. Offices with adjacent "stalls" were situated along the street. A lumber shed, plane building, wood works, sawdust collector, and two small structures of indeterminate function separated the warehouses from the rest of the yard where lumber was stacked awaiting processing or shipment.¹²⁵ In 1938, the DL&WRR sold the land to the General Foods Corporation for their new coffee roasting and processing factory.¹²⁶



Sacks of green coffee beans await processing in the new Maxwell House Coffee Plant (*Compressed Air Magazine*, March 1941. Courtesy Kraft Foods, Inc.).

MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE

Maxwell House and the General Foods Corporation

The story of Joel Owsley Cheek and the creation of Maxwell House Coffee is well known. Born in 1852 on the Cheek family farm in rural Kentucky, Joel Cheek went to Nashville in 1873 where he found work as a traveling salesman, specializing in the sale of coffee for a wholesale grocery store. In 1884, he became partner in the firm of Cheek, Webb & Company. All the while Cheek had been experimenting with coffee samples, mixing them until he found the right blend. After he found the optimal blend, Cheek walked in to Nashville's prestigious Maxwell House Hotel in 1892 carrying several bags of his personal blend of coffee. There he met Mr. Bledwell, the food buyer at the Maxwell House. Cheek gave Bledwell 20 pounds for free to use on a trial basis. When the coffee ran out and the hotel went back to its regular brew the guests complained. Cheek's coffee was brought back to the hotel and granted a six-month trial after which he was allowed to name the blend after the hotel.¹²⁷

Cheek formed a partnership with John Neal to create the Nashville Coffee and Manufacturing Company, later renamed the Cheek-Neal Coffee Company. The company produced several other less expensive brands of coffee, but it was the Maxwell House blend

that proved the most popular. In 1905, the Cheek-Neal Company opened a roasting facility in Houston, Texas, followed by others in Jacksonville, Florida in 1910 and Richmond, Virginia in 1916.¹²⁸

Maxwell House Coffee achieved everlasting recognition and the foundation for its future sales pitch in 1907. That year, President Theodore Roosevelt visited the Hermitage in Nashville and was served a cup of Maxwell House Coffee. When asked how the coffee tasted, Roosevelt purportedly declared it "Good to the last drop."¹²⁹ While Maxwell House could not buy a better endorsement, capturing a broader share of the coffee drinking public proved elusive in a market dominated by larger, more well-established brands. At a time when coffee makers concentrated on regional markets, Maxwell House had established itself well in the South. Dominating the coffee market was Arbuckle Brothers, whose Ariosa brand of coffee outsold all others for many years, accounting for one out of every seven pounds of coffee sold in the United States. In 1913, Arbuckle Brothers successfully launched Yuban coffee to become New York City's preferred brand. With its manufacturing plant in Brooklyn, Arbuckle Brothers had a foothold on the New York City market and the East Coast, by far the largest coffee consuming market in the nation.¹³⁰

Maxwell House took aim at Arbuckle Brothers in 1921, building their own roasting plant in Brooklyn. In 1923, due in no small part to a successful marketing campaign showing flappers sipping coffee, Maxwell House overtook Yuban as Manhattan's leading brand of coffee. Maxwell House continued to expand its market, building new roasting plants in Los Angeles in 1924 and Chicago in 1927.¹³¹ In 1927, after erecting a "Good to the Last Drop" neon sign in Times Square and flying a monoplane named Miss Maxwell House across the country to promote their product, Maxwell House became the best-selling brand of coffee in the nation, a position it would hold for the next 40 years.¹³²

The success of the Cheek-Neal Company, in general, and Maxwell House, in particular, caught the eye of Edward F. Hutton, head of the Postum Cereal Company, a national cereal and beverage corporation that changed its name the following year to General Foods Corporation. During the 1920s, the Postum Company was looking to diversify its product line by buying recognizable and profitable consumer brands. On August 1, 1928, the Postum Cereal Company acquired the Cheek-Neal Company, renaming it Maxwell House Products Company. Postum paid \$42 million for the Cheek-Neal Company, enough for Joel Cheek to split the profits with his nine children and two nephews and make them all instant millionaires.¹³³

General Foods acquired the Cheek-Neal Company at the peak of the economic boom. After the stock market crash of 1929, however, coffee sales declined, hitting

Maxwell House especially hard since it was one of the highest-priced brands on the market. Profits of nearly \$3 million a year on sales of 50 million pounds before the 1929 crash disappeared to no profit on sales of 39 million pounds in 1932.¹³⁴ While consumers would pay the higher price of Maxwell House coffee in flush times, the dramatic decline in personal income required that the leaders of General Foods take action to protect their market share. In an effort to cut costs, General Foods consolidated coffee making operations, closing its plants in Nashville, Richmond, and Chicago.¹³⁵

As a further cost-cutting measure, General Foods trimmed its advertising budget from \$3 million to \$1 million, concentrating all of it on a new medium: radio. An hour long variety show called the "Maxwell House Show Boat," inspired by the Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein musical of 1927, debuted in 1932. The show is credited with innovations for the medium: it was the first radio show to have a live audience, and the first to instruct the audience with cue cards that read "APPLAUSE" and "LAUGH." Within a year on the air, the "Maxwell House Show Boat" had become the most listened-to radio show in the nation. The show's popularity attracted famous stars of the era, with appearances by Bob Hope, Robert Benchley, Gloria Swanson, Jackie Coogan, Amelia Earhart, and Dale Carnegie. The script was so written that audiences could hear pouring coffee, rattling coffee cups, and sounds of lip-smacking satisfaction from the great taste of Maxwell House.¹³⁶

Meanwhile, General Foods scientists experimented with modifying the Maxwell House blend. In order to lower the retail price by a nickel, less Brazilian beans and more, much less expensive high-grown mild beans were added. The price cut and improved blend were announced on the January 1, 1933 "Maxwell House Show Boat." Sales rose 70 percent two months later and 85 percent by year's end.¹³⁷ In the midst of a deep economic depression, Maxwell House actually increased its profits. As Bill Benton, partner in Benton & Bowles, the advertising firm that handled the Maxwell House account observed,

Maxwell House didn't know there was a Depression. The chain stores were selling coffee that was almost as good - the difference was undetectable - for a much lower price. But advertising so gave glamour and verve to Maxwell House that it made everybody think it was a whale of a lot better."¹³⁸

While unemployment lines in America grew longer, employment at General Foods doubled between 1929 and 1939, from 5,500 to 11,000.¹³⁹ Throughout the Depression years, General Foods solidified Maxwell House's lead in the coffee market by absorbing the competition. In 1932, the company acquired Sanka, the leading decaffeinated coffee, adding to its growing roster of coffees that also included Kaffee Hag and Bliss. The once dominant but now ailing Arbuckle Brothers was taken over by General Foods in 1937.¹⁴⁰

With profits at an all-time high, General Foods found that its existing coffee facilities were struggling to keep up with demand. The company not only needed a large

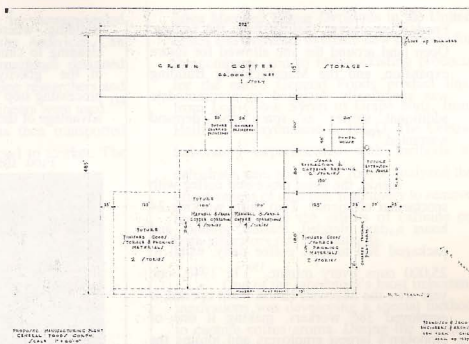
roasting facility, one near its corporate offices in New York, but also a regional office and laboratory within convenient reach of its mid- and high-level managers. In Hoboken, New Jersey, the company found what it was looking for.

Planning the Maxwell House Factory

For the design and construction of the new facility, General Foods selected the H. K. Ferguson Company, an engineering and construction firm based in Cleveland, Ohio. Founded by Harold K. Ferguson in 1918, the H. K. Ferguson Company served as one of the country's leading builders of industrial facilities by the 1930s, constructing plants for Procter & Gamble, National Cash Register, Firestone Tire and Rubber, and Union Carbide. The firm's satellite offices were located in New York, San Francisco, Toronto, and Mexico City.¹⁴¹

Harold K. Ferguson was born in 1883 in Albion, Michigan. After graduating from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1905, Ferguson went to work for the Austin Company, a major engineering firm that would later rival Ferguson in the field of industrial design.¹⁴² While at the Austin Company, Ferguson developed the "standard factory" principle of building, a technique that called for the construction of factory buildings from stock plans.¹⁴³ By using standard plans that could be easily adapted to different industrial processes, the H. K. Ferguson Company earned a reputation for its ability to mass-produce standardized factory buildings in both

This left Hudson Street - the site's principal public face - available for a detached combination office and laboratory building, complete with separate access for management and lab employees. Hudson Street also became the logical place to employ the building's more eye-catching architectural features.¹⁴⁷



Another factory layout and site plan proposed by Francisco & Jacobus, 1937 (Hoboken Historical Museum).

Operations

The entire Maxwell House Complex was built around the production process.¹⁴⁸ The seven original buildings, with over 500,000 square feet of floor space, consisted of the Pier Shed, Green Bean Warehouse, Manufacturing Building, American Can Company Factory Building, Extraction Building (for the decaffeinated Sanka brand), Offices and Central Laboratory, and Power House. Extending 522 feet into the Hudson River, the Pier Shed consisted of a steel-frame building built atop the pre-existing timber piles. The Warehouse was attached to the end of, and at a 90-degree angle to, the Pier Shed. Along the west side of the Warehouse stood the four-story Manufacturing Building, where coffee was cleaned, roasted, and ground. Attached to the west side of the Manufacturing Building stood the American Can Company Factory. Here the coffee was

vacuum-sealed for freshness. The three-story Extraction Building stood at the south side of the Warehouse, adjacent to the plant powerhouse, which provided all the energy needed for roasting, processing, and



Original Maxwell House Coffee Plant after initial construction (Factory Management and Maintenance, April 1940).

packaging the product. The Offices and Central Laboratory marked the only standalone building in the complex. Spatially, the Office and Central Laboratory reflected its role as a regional office for all of the General

Foods Corporation, distinct from the factory. Open land around the site allowed for future expansion, and the Manufacturing Building was specifically designed to accommodate additional stories as space and demand warranted.¹⁴⁹

Inside, the plant processed coffee with spectacular efficiency. Two shifts working 24 hours a day, blended, roasted, ground, and packaged 300 tons of coffee daily, equal to 25,000 cups every minute.¹⁵⁰ In 1940, one year after the Maxwell House Plant opened, it employed 386 workers, making it one of Hoboken's largest employers and joining the likes of American Lead Pencil, Bethlehem Steel, and General Electric.¹⁵¹ Freighters laden with green beans from all over the world, from Tanzania, Uganda, Costa Rica, Columbia, and Brazil, docked alongside the pier. Burlap sacks of green beans weighing 132 pounds were unloaded and then sorted according to type and stored for up to a year on wooden pallets in the Warehouse, a single-story, steel-frame building capable of holding up to 7000 tons of green coffee beans.¹⁵² Samples from each type of bean were taken to be checked for quality and future blending.¹⁵³

When ready for processing, the beans were dumped into five separate hoppers attached to five independent roasting and milling plants. The redundant system allowed for continuous processing, even when parts of the plant were out of operation for maintenance or repairs.¹⁵⁴ From each hopper, the beans were raised in bucket elevators to the sixth floor of the adjacent Manufacturing

Building, where the entire operation, from cleaning to canning, was achieved by means of the "gravity-flow method," where each processing step was arranged vertically to take advantage of the force of gravity.

First the beans were poured into a cleaner where streams of high-pressured air removed foreign matter. The cleaned coffee beans were then either sent to the Extraction Building or directly to mixers to be blended with other beans, roasted for 20 minutes, cooled for another 20 minutes, and sent to pneumatic separators to remove stones and other heavy material. The huge roasters, the largest in operation at the time, were designed and built specifically for the Hoboken plant with the input of General Foods technicians.¹⁵⁵ Collected chaff from the roasters traveled by way of a pneumatic system to incinerators located on the roof.¹⁵⁶ The roasted coffee then descended via storage bins to the grinding equipment, also the largest in the world for its time. Finally the ground coffee dropped into filling machines on the floor below. After the coffee was inspected, it passed to ground level where the finished product was packaged and sealed.¹⁵⁷

For the manufacture of the decaffeinated brands Sanka and Kaffee Hag, caffeine was removed in the Extraction Building. Caffeine and coffee oils were drawn from the beans in large drums, then taken by pipeline to the Central Laboratory, where the caffeine was refined. Coffee oils and wax were returned to the beans prior to roasting to preserve the coffee flavor.¹⁵⁸

Canning the coffee in vacuum-sealed containers took place in the American Can Factory Building, where machines designed by General Foods Corporation researchers and American Can Factory engineers were used.¹⁵⁹ The packaged product was then transported either by truck or by railroad to market. The



Loading the canning machine (*Compressed Air Magazine*, March 1941).

DL&WRR built its own float bridge and railcar barge facility on its remaining property immediately south of the Maxwell House Plant.¹⁶⁰ The finished product could be floated directly across the river to New York City and points north or carried via the HMRR to markets in the South and West. As truck transport proved to be more economical than rail after World War II, these railroad facilities were gradually replaced with truck bays.

In the Offices and Central Laboratory, Maxwell House employed 275 scientists and laboratory personnel to train scientists from

other Maxwell House Divisions in the United States and overseas, to create new products for the company, and to refine existing products for the entire General Foods product line, from Log Cabin Syrup to Grape Nuts, from Hellman's Mayonnaise to Jell-O. The Central Laboratory experimented with methods to dehydrate, can, and freeze foods; analyzed the effectiveness of different machinery to remove dust; and studied the effects of caffeine on both laboratory rats and humans.¹⁶¹

One of the laboratory's most important innovations was developing a special method to capture coffee aroma. During the grinding process, coffee beans release a natural gas. To capture this gas, or aroma, pipes built into the grinding machines sent the gas upstairs, where the gas was frozen with liquid nitrogen, producing a snow-like substance called "coffee aroma frost." This frost was mixed with raw coffee oil and then converted to a liquid. A tiny bit of this liquid coffee aroma was squirted into the coffee and the can quickly sealed, waiting to be released upon opening.¹⁶²

The ground-breaking ceremony for the new facility took place on June 6, 1938, and the first completed building - the Extraction Building, or Sanka Plant - went into operation in January 1939.¹⁶³ On Friday, October 13, 1939, Hoboken's Maxwell House Division was formally dedicated.¹⁶⁴ Clarence Francis, President of General Foods, held a luncheon at Meyers Hotel for 150 guests, including Hoboken Mayor, Bernard N. McFeely, and Robert Cheek, son of the founder Joel Cheek, who served as director of General Foods.¹⁶⁵

General Foods held an "Open House Party," giving tours to some 6,000 visitors, including local residents, stockholders, food distributors, and members of the press.¹⁶⁶ Hoboken's local paper, *The Jersey Journal*, printed the story the following Monday, quoting conciliatory remarks made by Clarence France during the luncheon and reporting that the Hoboken site had been selected because of its "live and helpful community," and that the plant had been built in "record time."¹⁶⁷ *The New York Times* devoted half a column in the Business Section to the opening of the "Big Plant," which was certainly an understatement, since the Maxwell House Site was then the largest coffee roasting plant in the world.¹⁶⁸

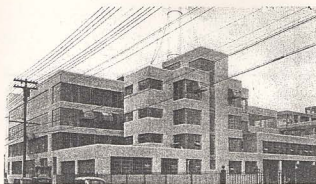
Mostly hidden from the rest of Hoboken but clearly seen from across the Hudson River, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign would be the most remembered feature of the Maxwell House Site. Perched atop the Manufacturing Building and facing Manhattan, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign was the de facto symbol of Maxwell House and an icon on the Hoboken landscape. The sign was first lit on May 1, 1939, its thousands of feet of neon tubes illuminating the Maxwell House brand of coffee to millions. The sign measured 182 feet long and 72 feet high. Large copper letters weighing three tons broadcast "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" across the Hudson River. Left of the lettering was a tilted coffee cup, 42 feet high. Below were two coffee drops, each nine feet in diameter. These "last drops" could hold almost 30,000 cups of coffee: the cup, nearly two million. The "Good to the Last Drop" sign joined the ranks of other advertising legends

in the New York metropolitan area - the Colgate Clock in Jersey City, the Swingline Billboard in Long Island City, and the Domino Sugar Billboard in Brooklyn.¹⁶⁹

The International Style and Factory Design

The H. K. Ferguson Company was already well known to General Foods Corporation after completing their largest corn mill in the world in Kankakee, Illinois in 1937.¹⁷⁰ This eight-story structure had set-back roofs and featured bands of continuous window glazing, concrete spandrels, and complete lack of ornament characteristic of the "International Style" of architecture. An engineering journal, *Architectural Concrete*, observed that the continuous spandrels and sash on the corn mill produced "a clean-cut, pleasing exterior without resort to ornament in any form."¹⁷¹ The outward appearance of the corn mill was strikingly similar to the American Can Company Factory and Manufacturing Building at Maxwell House, although for those buildings Ferguson would continue the window fenestration around the corners of the buildings.

Americans were first introduced on a wide scale to the International Style (known then as European Modernism) during the Chicago Tribune Building competition of 1922. Although the Gothic-inspired winning entry appeared to be a victory for historical styles, entries by European architects, such as Adolf Loos and Walter Gropius, distanced themselves from the past and pointed the way of the future.



Cantilevered floors allowed for nearly continuous ribbons of glass along floors and around corners on the American Can Factory Building (*Factory Management and Maintenance*, April 1940).

In 1926, Walter Gropius's Bauhaus School buildings in Dessau, Germany dramatized the steel frame with cantilevered and recessed terraces and broad glass plates almost flush with the wall plane. The American public was formally introduced to the new style in 1932, when Henry Russell Hitchcock and Phillip Johnson launched "The International Style," a retrospective of modern architecture at the newly opened Museum of Modern Art in New York City.¹⁷²

The International Style was seen as a break from historic architectural styles.

Applied ornament gave way to the functional decoration of modern industrial materials, such as steel, concrete, and glass. In their overall composition, International Style buildings emphasized volume over mass, function over style, and machine-made materials over traditional handicraft. By the 1930s, the International Style's inherent flexibility was readily accepted in factory design. But to engineers like Ferguson, conveying a particular "style" had less to do with an aesthetic sensibility and was more a product of practical considerations and standardized construction techniques. While the design aesthetic of minimal or no architectural ornamentation became defining characteristics of the International Style, the minimal facade detail had a practical purpose, as the vibration of machinery argued against projecting ornamentation on exterior walls.¹⁷³ In a refinement to the refrain of form following function, the company acknowledged "there is no reason why any factory building cannot be attractive in design and laid out for both appearance and convenience."¹⁷⁴



A circa-1990 aerial view of the Maxwell House Coffee Plant (Courtesy Kraft Foods, Inc.).

Large signs along the Chicago River, including the "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" sign, were the "beacon" for the plant. The plant was a landmark in the city, and the "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" sign was a major attraction. The plant was a landmark in the city, and the "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" sign was a major attraction. The plant was a landmark in the city, and the "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" sign was a major attraction.

The Maxwell House Coffee Plant was a landmark in the city, and the "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" sign was a major attraction. The plant was a landmark in the city, and the "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" sign was a major attraction. The plant was a landmark in the city, and the "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" sign was a major attraction.

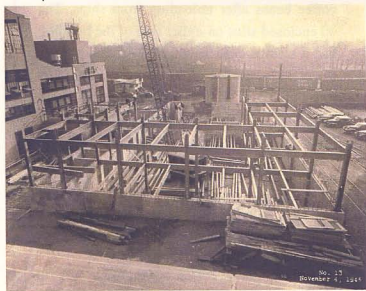
A NEW ERA

Post-World War II

During World War II, government rationing of coffee significantly reduced sales on the homefront. But the coffee industry still managed to prosper as the military supplied American GI's with all the coffee they could drink. Maxwell House converted its Hoboken facility to produce "10-in-1" rations in waterproof, shockproof packages that included enough food and coffee for ten people a day.¹⁷⁵ The Central Laboratory also experimented with different processes to dissolve coffee grinds in hot water to produce instant coffee. Instant coffee had been on the market since World War I, but due to its poor taste it had only limited appeal. In 1945, General Foods introduced Instant Maxwell House and Instant Sanka to compete with what was then the leading brand of instant coffee, Nescafe.¹⁷⁶ To process instant coffee, the company purchased an additional strip of land along its south border from the DL&WRR and constructed the Soluble Building in 1947.¹⁷⁷ Processing instant coffee required a substantial financial outlay for tall spraying towers and additional treatment processes, but the final product cost 1.25 cents per cup, 1 cent less than regular. By 1952, instant coffee accounted for 17 percent of all coffee

consumption in the country; the following year Instant Maxwell House surpassed Nescafe as the nation's leading instant brand.¹⁷⁸

By war's end, the General Foods Corporation could boast of 77 plants and processing units, 66 in the United States, 7 in Canada, and 4 overseas.¹⁷⁹ Of the four Maxwell House Divisions then in operation, it was the Hoboken plant that produced more than half of all Maxwell House Coffee. During the 1950s, with coffee consumption at an all-time high, the Maxwell House Plant



Soluble Building under construction, 1946 (Courtesy Kraft Foods Inc.)

reached its peak period of production by employing 2,000 factory workers, scientists, and managers, five times the number when the plant opened in 1939.¹⁸⁰ In 1957, the

corporation purchased more land from the DL&WRR and built a large parking lot to accommodate the many employees.¹⁸¹

During the 1960s, General Foods coffee, represented by its Maxwell House, Sanka, and Yuban brands, still dominated the coffee market, accounting for over one-third of national coffee sales, with Maxwell House coffee, "the well-advertised and low-priced giant," leading the pack with 24 percent of the coffee market.¹⁸² Further expansion occurred in 1962 when a portion of the Process Building was constructed adjacent to the Central Laboratory, and tons of fill deposited in the Hudson River to erect new Storage Silos and concrete piers in front of the Warehouse Building. General Foods built the Storage Silos to more efficiently store green coffee beans after unloading from ships. The 40 enclosed silos on either side of the building had a storage capacity of 20.5 million pounds of coffee beans. The plant had now reached its full build-out, with the exception of small additions to the Processing Building and miscellaneous changes to loading docks and service areas.

Plant Closing

By the 1960s, coffee consumption was on the decline, dropping from 3.1 cups a day in 1962 to 2.2 cups in 1974. In 1962, nearly three-quarters of all Americans drank coffee, a figure that dropped to little more than one-half by 1982, a drop of 39 percent.¹⁸³ In 1978, Procter & Gamble entered the New York and eastern market, unveiling its Folger's brand, a

coffee previously confined to the western market and the number two brand behind Maxwell House. Folger's soon garnered 28 percent of the coffee drinking public to surpass Maxwell House.¹⁸⁴ Price wars with Folger's and declining sales led to further unprofitability for Maxwell House. By the 1980s, a new trend of smaller roasters with specialty coffees further cut into Maxwell House's sales. It became clear that Maxwell House, long the behemoth of the coffee industry, was being trounced.

After Phillip Morris acquired General Foods in 1985, production at Maxwell House divisions across the country were scaled back to almost half their capacity. By the late 1980s, it became clear that the declining trend in coffee consumption was not going to be reversed. As a drastic cost-cutting measure, a decision was made in 1990 to close one of two Maxwell House Divisions: Hoboken or Jacksonville. The Jacksonville facility, a complex predating the Hoboken plant by more than 20 years and in operation since the days of Joel Cheek, had the advantage of location closer to Central American markets and lower labor costs. Despite receiving greater economic incentives to stay, Phillip Morris announced on June 27, 1990, that it would shut down the Hoboken Plant by Spring 1992.¹⁸⁵ Maxwell House was Hoboken's largest employer, and with the plant's closure, 600 mostly blue-collar jobs were lost. On May 1, 1993, 54 years to the day since it was first lit, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign was dismantled and taken away.¹⁸⁶

The demise of Maxwell House followed in a long line of factory closings in Hoboken, after Lipton Tea, Tootsie Roll, Levolor, and Colgate-Palmolive, to name a few. Factory closings and the trend to relocate industrial facilities from the inner city to larger complexes in the suburbs began after World War II. Hudson County, in general, and Jersey City and Hoboken, in particular, were especially hard hit as more and more manufacturers left the region.

Ironically, what attracted people to Hoboken in the first place, its views of the

river and close proximity to New York City, helped fuel the city's renaissance. Converted lofts and modern residential construction, designed to resemble earlier industrial buildings, have driven a new wave of development along Hoboken's northern shore and revived the city in many important ways. One is a growing appreciation for the richness of Hoboken's heritage, where historic preservation and new construction harmoniously co-exist, contributing to the next great phase in the city's remarkable history.

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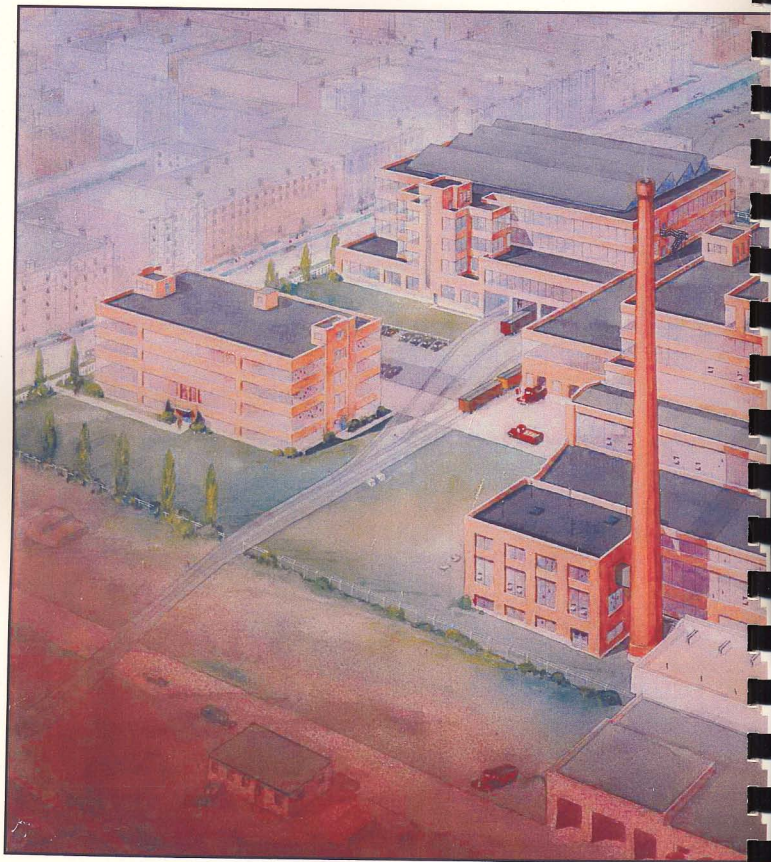
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- ¹⁸¹ P. A. Caulfield, "Sketch of Survey of Property Located in the City of Hoboken New Jersey," March 8, 1956, Maxwell House Architectural Drawing Collection, Hoboken Historical Museum, Hoboken, New Jersey; Hudson Realty Company to General Foods Corporation, November 15, 1957 (2734:108), Hudson County Registry of Deeds, Jersey City, New Jersey.
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- ¹⁸³ Pendergrast, 314.
- ¹⁸⁴ Pendergrast, 334.
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Field to Factory: The Story of the Maxwell House Coffee Plant

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April 2005

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Cover: Architectural rendering of the proposed Maxwell House and Sanka Plants prepared by E. D. McDonald, circa 1938 (Courtesy Hoboken Historical Museum)

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aerial photo: Maxwell House Coffee Plant from Factory Management and Maintenance, April 1940 (Courtesy Kraft Foods, Inc.)

pg 1

INTRODUCTION

The site of the former Maxwell House Coffee Plant stretches along the Hudson River shoreline between Tenth and Twelfth Streets in the City of Hoboken. The factory was a marvel of its time, the largest coffee processing plant in the world, and a landmark on the western waterfront for over half a century. In 2003, as part of a plan to redevelop the former Maxwell House Plant for residential and commercial use, a team of historians and archaeologists evaluated the factory for historical significance. The investigation found the plant to be an important historic resource associated with the industrial development of the City of Hoboken and therefore eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Founded partly on original high ground and partly on fill, the site once included key landmarks in the early history of Hoboken. Among these were pavilions, pathways, and open spaces marking the entrance to Elysian Fields, the great park to which the city owed its initial fame. The first home of the New York Yacht Club (NYYC) and its world-renowned "America's Cup" stood there too. The property is also generally regarded as the birthplace of modern baseball, a phenomenon of such significance, and one so inexorably tied to the American experience that for the game alone the place deserves special note.

This story recounts the history of the site. It pays special attention to the nineteenth century, when the land underwent its most dramatic changes, and it looks closely at the role of the Stevens family, the founders of Hoboken, in shaping the tract to suit their aims. The design of the Maxwell House Plant also figures prominently, since it transformed the site and led to the initial historical study and ultimately this publication.

The investigation was the result of a process by which historical, architectural, and archaeological sites are managed today. In 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act was passed by Congress and signed into a federal law. New Jersey established similar regulations to safeguard historic resources. New Jersey's historic cultural resources are managed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Historic Preservation Office in Trenton.

pg [2] map illustration: Bayard estate occupies the promontory marked "Hoboken" (Sketch of the Road from Paulus Hook and Hoboken to New Bridge, 1770. Library of Congress).

pg 3

EARLY YEARS

Settlement and Early Owners

Hoboken in its earliest days consisted largely of marsh and salt meadow. The exception was a large promontory or point, rising island-like out of the grass and mud on the

Hudson River's western edge. This natural garrison commanded spectacular views up and down the river and across to the settlement of New Amsterdam on the tip of Manhattan Island. A Dutch settler named Michael Pauw acquired lands along the west bank of the Hudson River in 1630, covering all of present-day Hoboken.¹ In 1635, the lands passed to the Dutch West India Company, after which a period of conflict with the Native Americans left possession of the lands in constant dispute.² A new indenture between the Native Americans and Petrus Stuyvesant of New Amsterdam secured title to the lands once and for all in 1658.³ Stuyvesant's tract of approximately 276 acres extended along the west bank of the Hudson River from Weehawken Cove to Hoboken Creek, a meandering tidal stream formally located near Newark Street. Governor Stuyvesant conveyed the tract to his brother-in-law, Nicholas Varlett, on February 5, 1663. This title was later confirmed by Philip Carteret on May 12, 1668. ⁵

One observer writing in 1680 described the tract a good plantation in a neck of land almost on an island called Hobuck. It did belong to a Dutch merchant, Aert Teunissen, who formally, in the Indian war, had his wife, children and servants murdered by the Indians, and his house, cattle and stock destroyed by them. It is now settled again, and a mill erected there by one dwelling in New York. ⁶

Varlett died intestate in 1675. ⁷ Title passed to his daughter, Susanna de Freest, then to her daughter, Susanna Hickman, wife of Robert Hickman. The Hickmans sold the tract in 1711 to New York merchant Samuel Bayard. Bayard developed the property for farming and erected a comfortable summer residence on the promontory. So began a tradition of recreation and leisure that would continue with the property for 150 years.

By 1760, according to the New York Mercury, Bayard's property included all the buildings needed for a well-managed farm and contained a five-acre garden with peaches, pears, plums, cherries, nectarines, and apricots, as well as sizable apple orchards of over a thousand trees. ⁸ The property also offered unparalleled convenience for marketing and commerce between the two shores. Cornelius Haring started regular ferry service from the southern tip of Hoboken to New York City in 1774. ⁹ The 1778 map of the area by John Hills illustrates the ferry landing and the original road leading north

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through orchards and wooded groves along part of the present-day route of Washington Street.

Bayard's loyalist grandson, William, had the land confiscated by the State of New Jersey in 1780. Abandoned, the house stood vacant until marauders torched it, and the fields went fallow for the remainder of the Revolution. At last in March 1784, the Bergen County agent of forfeited estates sold the Bayard tract to Colonel John Stevens, Jr. (1749-1838) for £18,360.

Colonel John Stevens and the Creation of Hoboken

Colonel John Stevens was a man of means and a great inventor, whose life and contributions to New Jersey's history are too numerous to recount here. Archibald Turnbull's 1928 biography of Stevens remains the seminal work on his life. Stevens began an immediate program of improvements to the former Bayard estate, but neglect had taken its toll.¹⁰ Ruined fields needed clearing. "I have near 200 boats of wood cut at Hobuck," he wrote shortly after acquiring the property, "and hope to have 3 or 400 more by winter." ¹¹ He built a new country seat on the promontory, and by 1792 the Stevens family was spending the summer in the residence. The house was sufficiently grand and visible that some began to call it "Stevens' Castle" or "Castle Point." The name stuck. Large-scale improvements to Castle Point, including the planting of hundreds of new fruit trees and over 5,000 lombardy poplar trees, were well

illustration: Stevens Castle, built and landscaped by Col. John Stevens (Winfield 1895).

underway by 1797 to enhance the estate's salubrious air.¹² The painter William Dunlap described the place as "built in the Style [sic] of English nobility," undoubtedly a reference to the fashionable, naturalistic British landscapes created by such masters as William Kent and Capability Brown.¹³

With an eye toward development, Stevens drew up a master plan in 1804 to create a new seaport town at Hoboken. The plan, prepared by Charles Loss and titled, "A Map of the new City of Hoboken," divided the lands south of Castle Point into house lots along a grid of streets aligned with the existing road to Weehawken (Washington Street). Stevens expended \$50,000 "in making wharves, buildings, and other improvements at Hoboken" for the anticipated trade.¹⁴ The Hudson River's western bank, Stevens reasoned, offered a comparable location for the businesses of New York, but with a more healthful prospect, free from the city's squalor and disease. Outbreaks of cholera, typhoid, and yellow fever hindered New York commerce for long periods during the summer months, and prompted a flurry of efforts

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designed to stem the spread. A yellow fever epidemic in 1803, for example, sent New Yorkers fleeing to the country.¹⁵ Stevens latched onto this seasonal turmoil to help promote his new town. In March 1804, he petitioned the New Jersey Legislature to establish the Hoboken Company, citing the concerns of

sundry merchants, trades, manufacturers, and mechanicks [sic] who are at present inhabitants of the city of New York and of the other cities within the United States, together with many other persons who are necessarily dependent on them for their subsistence, are desirous of removing to a place where they may be able to pursue their respective vocations free from the danger of those epidemic disorders to which many of the Cities within the United States are at certain seasons subject, and where they will be exempt from the operation of certain laws and ordinances which they conceive to be impolitic and burdensome.¹⁶

Such development would have the added benefit of attracting business "highly advantageous to the State by the consequent increase of population, commerce and manufacturers...."17 The legislature failed to act, but Stevens pressed forward with his plans. He planned a sale of 800 lots to take place on March 20, 1804 at public venue over the course of four days and placed advertisements in the region's principal newspapers.18

The results were disappointing. Traversing the Hudson was less attractive and more expensive than migrating northward to Greenwich Village. Only low-cost transportation could help entice would-be settlers. Over the next two decades, Stevens devised various plans to improve communication between New York and Hoboken. These included plans for a tunnel, a floating bridge, and a permanent span.19 His experiments in steam propulsion for boats must also be considered within this context. In 1811, Stevens secured the lease on the franchise operating between Hoboken and New York and developed a steam-powered ferry service.20 Between 1817 and 1821, the family sublet the ferry franchise to others, but service proved so poor that Stevens sued to regain control. This also ignited his battle to overturn the New York state law granting Robert Fulton and Robert Livingston a monopoly on steamboat service across the Hudson. The case (*Gibbons v. Ogden*) landed in the United States Supreme Court, which struck down the New York franchise, arguing that only the federal government held the power to regulate interstate commerce. The ruling helped assert federal influence over the nation's economy. By 1825, some 43 steamboats competed to carry people and goods between New Jersey and New York.21

pg [6] illustration: A moonlit view of the north side of Castle Point from Elysian Fields, circa 1845 (Basil Stevens Scrapbook, New Jersey Historical Society).

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ELYSIAN FIELDS

New York's First "Central Park"

Fast, regular, and reliable ferry service at last opened Hoboken to New York City. But instead of land, people came for recreation, and they came in droves. As early as the 1804 sale, to help entice settlers Stevens offered to make his private grounds around the estate available to purchasers as part of the deal.22 Visitors soon took advantage of the semi-public nature of Stevens' property, and by 1824 the ferries to and from Hoboken yielded, in Stevens' words, "an immense income, which is rapidly increasing as the population of the city and adjacent country increases." 23 He set about improving the grounds and a portion of the riverfront with a walkway to entertain the crowds. It was an instant hit. Over time the demand from New Yorkers to visit Stevens' shores grew so great, and his profits from the ferry service increased so much, that by 1824 he thought of turning over the entire shoreline to the City of New York:

as a place of general resort for citizens, as well as strangers, for health and recreation. So easily accessible, and where in a few minutes the dust, noise, and bad smells of the city may be exchanged for the pure air, delightful shades and completely rural scenery, through walks

extending along the margin of the majestic Hudson to an extent of more than a mile.²⁴ His proposal also called for the erection of pavilions, "for affording every accommodation and refreshment, and also adequate protection against sudden showers of rain."²⁵ For these structures he advocated the use of the best architectural styles, noting that

perhaps nothing could have a more powerful tendency to civilize the general mass of society...in such promiscuous assemblages of the rich and poor, in situations where nature and art are made to contribute so largely to the embellishment of every scene presented to their view.²⁶

But New York showed no interest in the envisioned park, so, undeterred, Stevens developed it himself.

illustration top right: Wooded paths of Elysian Fields (Winfield 1895).

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illustration top, Section of Douglass' (sic) Map - Localities in Hoboken: Elysian Fields occupied the north end of Hoboken in Douglas's Topographical Map of Jersey Cily, 1841 (Winfield 1895).

At the ferry landing on the southern end of Hoboken, passengers emerged onto a wide lawn lined with elm trees. Stevens extended the waterfront path, now called the River Walk, around the base of Castle Point to the level ground at the property's north end. Here he created a clearing in the tree-lined shore called "Turtle Cove" where by 1824, hungry picnickers sated themselves on bowls of turtle soup.²⁷ In 1826, a visiting traveler on a tour through North America noted, "the beautiful walk extending for two miles along the Hudson is kept in the finest order, and commands a noble view of the city on the opposite shore."²⁸ The Scotsman James Stuart, who spent the Winter of 1829 and 1830 residing in Hoboken, praised the Stevens' for their accomplishments: "They have laid out their property adjoining the river, for about two miles, in public walks, which the inhabitants of New

York, who come over in prodigious numbers, enjoy very much."²⁹ Stuart went on to note the corresponding increase in the value of the ferry, as well as the rent on Stevens-owned businesses such as the hotel.³⁰

Improvements to the park continued into the 1830s. Among the shelters and watering places Stevens constructed were a grotto-like cave at the base of Castle Point called Sybil's Cave and a large Grecian temple at Turtle Cove. On May 21, 1831, diarist Philip Hone wrote: "Messrs. Stevens have a large number of men employed in laying out the grounds in a very tasteful manner, and erecting a large, light airy building, which is to be called by the classic name of Tivoli, near the place formally known as Turtle Grove, at the extremity of the beautiful walk from the ferry."³¹ Called "The Colonnade," the structure stood east of present-day Hudson

illustration center, Turtle Club season ticket: The club met at Turtle Cove (Winfield 1895).

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Street, between Eleventh and Twelfth Streets on the former Maxwell House Coffee Plant site. "It will be thronged every sultry afternoon through the summer," wrote an enthusiastic reporter in the *Intrepeiad* newspaper, "if it is kept up in the spirit of its commencement."³² In keeping with the classical nature of The Colonnade, Stevens renamed the area "Elysian Fields" after the heavenly abode of the dead in ancient Greek mythology, and he opened it in a grand public celebration on July 11, 1831.³³ Elysian Fields, vast in its expanse with open ground, wooded groves, and meadows, extended from the northern base of Castle Point to the deepest reach of Weehawken Cove, and provided welcome space for an assortment of uses. Picnics, sports, and games allowed the New York multitudes to stretch their legs in relative freedom.³⁴ Theodore Sedgewick Fay wrote in 1831 that a newcomer to Elysian Fields could react "with delight and upon the softness, the brightness and variety of this scene, the improvements of which... are laid out in great taste."³⁵ Frances Trollope, a visiting Englishwoman pronounced it a "little Eden" and said it was

hardly possible to imagine one of greater attraction.... [H]e has restricted his pleasure grounds to a few beautiful acres, laying out the remainder simply and tastefully as a public walk....a broad belt of light underwood and flower shrubs, studded at intervals with loft forest trees, runs for two miles along a cliff which overhangs the matchless Hudson: sometimes it feathers the rocks down to its very margin, and at others leaves a pebbly shore, just rude enough to break the gentle waves, and make a music which mimics softly the loud chorus of the ocean.³⁶

By 1832, Samuel Lorenzo Knapp estimated that as many as 20,000 visitors a day descended on Hoboken during the summer season to find "a most delightful retreat for a summer's day."³⁷ For all intents and purposes, Stevens and his family had effectively created New York's first "Central Park."³⁸

illustration left: A. Dick's 1831 view of The Colonnade at Elysian Fields, looking south (Winfield 1895).

Marketing Elysian Fields

Hoboken's success rested in part on America's growing interest in its natural surroundings. Beginning in the 1820s and 1830s, architects and tastemakers such as Asher Benjamin, Alexander Jackson Davis, and Andrew Jackson Downing advocated the

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illustration top: New York Evening Post advertisement for Elysian Fields, June 2, 1846.

virtues of country living in their landscape plans, building designs, and popular treatises.³⁹ The origins of this movement, and the relationship between nature, Classical and Medieval-style architecture, and Christian virtue, had its roots in England but found fertile ground in the Hudson River Valley, where landscape painters of the period exulted in the raw, untamed qualities of the American wilderness. Many of New York's artistic and literary circle visited Stevens' park to find their own form of inspiration. Asher B. Durand, Robert Weir, William James Bennett, Jasper Francis Cropsey, Robert Havell, Charles Loring Elliot, and William Tylee Ranney were among the painters to visit and sketch in Elysian Fields.⁴⁰ Durand spent most Sunday's there, "strolling under the noble trees of the Elysian Fields."⁴¹ In 1830, William Cullen Bryant extolled the beauty of the wooded walks, particularly in May, "when the verdure of the turf is as bright as the green of the rainbow; and when the embowering shrubs are in flower."⁴² Robert Sands described the Elysian Fields in 1832 as "one of the prettiest places you may see of a summer's day," with wooded groves "worthy of being painted by Claude Lorraine [sic]."⁴³ As late as 1844, Lydia Maria Child described moonlit nights in Hoboken "beautiful beyond

illustration bottom: View of New York City and Castle Point from Elysian Fields (Basil Stevens Scrapbook, New Jersey Historical Society).

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imagining" and Elysian Fields as a place "where a poet's disembodied spirit might well be content to wander."⁴⁴ This picturesque setting was by one account among the earliest public or semi-public landscaped gardens in America ⁴⁵

To keep visitors coming, the Stevens' relied on three things: quality transportation, changing attractions, and advertising. Comfortable appointments on fast, reliable boats made the river crossing both pleasurable and affordable. Every few years, Stevens embellished the park with improvements or new attractions, and he rented out areas for various private affairs or public spectacles. Newspaper advertisements trumpeted Hoboken as the best "of all rural excursions that can be made from the city" and appeared regularly for years in one form or another in the city's press.⁴⁶ Fledgling city directories, such as Gavit's Directory, proclaimed places like the village of Hoboken, "with its Elysian Fields, Sybil's Cave, serpentine walk, and shady retreats...the 'great park' and picnic ground for pleasure seekers from the great city on the other side of the river...."⁴⁷ Other special amusements included a merry-go-round, a tenpin alley, and wax figures.⁴⁸ A crude ferris wheel-like contraption near The Colonnade gave thrill-seekers a chance to take in the scenery from changing elevations.

The Stevens' supplemented these attractions with staged entertainments such as horseraces, ox roasts, and Indian war dances.⁴⁹ Rented tents, carnival booths, and tables and benches provided opportunities to watch the human parade in relative comfort.⁵⁰ As a venue available for rent, Elysian Fields also enjoyed free advertising from all those who hired the facilities. P. T. Barnum's 1843 announcement in the New York press of his

"Grand Buffalo Hunt, Free of Charge" brought 24,000 spectators to the Trotting Course at Hoboken, where the animals ultimately broke the fence and sent the crowd running.⁵¹

Boating

Pleasure boating, yet another form of leisure, also took root in Elysian Fields. John Cox Stevens, an outgoing, energetic member of the Stevens clan, helped popularize yachting more than any other. In July 1844, Stevens gathered together a group of like-minded yachtsmen for a sail to Newport. This "saucy-looking squadron of schooner-yachts lying off the Battery ... excites considerable admiration," wrote one New York diarist on July 29.⁵² The next day, Stevens summoned members of the party to his vessel Gimcrack and proposed they form a boat club.⁵³

illustration right: First New York Yacht Club clubhouse (Basil Stevens Scrapbook. New Jersey Historical Society).

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Organized under the name of the NYYC, the group elected Stevens as their first Commodore. Later that year, Stevens commissioned their first permanent clubhouse on family lands at Elysian Fields, and on July 15, 1845, the club met for the first time in their new quarters near the foot of present-day Tenth Street.⁵⁴ While the architect for the tiny Gothic-Style cottage is unknown, the popular romantic designer Alexander Jackson Davis, then engaged in designing Stevens' New York townhouse at College Place and Murray Street, may well have authored the building.⁵⁵ Davis favored historical models, drawing from classical antiquity and the English gothic for inspiration. John Cox Stevens maintained a long and fruitful professional relationship with Davis long after the clubhouse was built, adding credence to the attribution.⁵⁶

Two days after their first meeting in Hoboken, the club members sailed their first "trial of speed." The course ran from Robbins Reef to Bay Ridge and Stapleton, through the Narrows to a point off Southwest Spit, and back to the finish off of the clubhouse at Elysian Fields.⁵⁷ The "race" attracted thousands who watched from both shores and chartered steamers.⁵⁸ Commodore Stevens placed third on board Gimcrack. From that time forward, the club began and ended its annual regatta off the clubhouse grounds at Elysian Fields until 1865. The club's most famous race, however, began overseas. While based in Hoboken, John Cox Stevens built the yacht America, and in 1851 sailed it to England to race and win the first "America's Cup" against 14 British yachts on a course around the Isle of Wight.⁵⁹ Stevens and the NYYC were henceforth forever tied to the yachting world's best known contest, although the actual cup stayed safely tucked away in the winner's private residence, not the clubhouse.

By 1868, the original clubhouse had outlived its usefulness, and the membership voted to relocate to Staten Island.⁶⁰ The smaller New Jersey Yacht Club, organized originally in 1871, took over the Hoboken clubhouse and remained there from 1875 to 1898.⁶¹ After acquiring the site in 1899, the Pennsylvania Railroad presented the original structure to

the NYYC.⁶² In 1904, the club floated the building by barge from Elysian Fields to Glen Cove, Long Island, where it served as a station stop.⁶³ Later it was moved to the Mystic Seaport Museum, then to the grounds of the NYYC's Newport, Rhode Island clubhouse, where it remains to this day.

Baseball

Among the many sports played at Elysian Fields, pleasure seekers favored games with balls and bats from an early date. Fresh air and wide spaces offered clubs the ideal place to meet and play, away from the rapidly diminishing open lots of New York. Most historians agree that these matches resembled the English games of rounders and cricket.⁶⁴ As early as October 21, 1845, according to the New York Herald, teams of nine New Yorkers faced off with nine Brooklynites to play at Elysian Fields under the new rules devised by Alexander Cartwright.⁶⁵ The New York team, called the Knickerbocker Ball Club, went on

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illustration top: A match with the Hoboken Cricket Club attracted crowds in 1856 (Basil Stevens Scrapbook, New Jersey Historical Society)

to compete in the more well known match against the New York Base Ball Club on June 19, 1846, where the New York team won 23 to 1.⁶⁶ Also played at Elysian Fields, this game is most often cited as the beginning of modern baseball. Subsequent games, both formal and informal, continued at the park. Many won special notoriety. The Knickerbockers played The Washington Club of Yorkville in 1851, winning 21 to 11.⁶⁷ A match between the Eagles and the Gothams at Elysian Fields on September 8, 1857 was illustrated for a local magazine. On October 21, 1861, some 15,000 observers watched all-star teams from New York and Brooklyn compete for a silver baseball trophy.⁶⁸ Another championship match between the Mutual Club of Manhattan and the Atlantic Club of Brooklyn on August 3, 1865, attracted 20,000 spectators to Elysian Fields and became the subject of a popular lithograph produced by Currier and Ives in 1866. By mid-century, Hoboken served as one of the game's most popular venues.⁶⁹

The exact location of the first game, or later ones for that matter, is anyone's guess. The Douglass map of 1841 shows at least three clearings on the north side of Castle Point. One lay on the high ground behind Stevens Castle, between Tenth, Eleventh, Hudson, and Washington Streets. This was known as the St. George Cricket Ground.⁷⁰ Two others to the north of The Colonnade were for other sports as well. Many of the known ball clubs favored the northern fields, and in 1865, with permission from the Stevens

illustration right: Currier & Ives print, The American Game of Baseball (Crouse 1930)

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family, three teams set about "enlarging and improving the grounds, cutting down several trees, removing rocks, leveling and turfing, as well as erecting several rows of seats for spectators."⁷¹ The newly improved northern fields opened on May 25, 1865.⁷²

Bachman's 1866 Bird's Eye View of New York City and Environs illustrates the back side of The Colonnade, and its surrounding grounds with a game of baseball underway in the northern clearing. Another field lay south of The Colonnade. Its approximate location was at the intersection of Hudson and Eleventh Streets. William A. Shephard recalled his visits to what seems to be the southern field in the late 1850s:

A walk of about a mile and a half from the ferry, up the Jersey shore of the Hudson River, along a road that skirted the river bank on one side and was hugged by trees and thicket on the other, brought one suddenly to an opening in the "forest Primeval." This open spot was a level, grass-covered plain, some two hundred yards across, and as deep, surrounded

upon three sides by the typical eastern undergrowth and woods and on the east by the Hudson River. It was a perfect greensward [turf].⁷³

In 1946, the City of Hoboken installed a plaque at the foot of Eleventh Street to commemorate what they believed to be the site of the historic 1846 game. Their choice of location was based in part on the personal recollections of someone who played on the field, although the man had been born in 1864, long after the event.⁷⁴

Baseball's great popularity, and the unpoliced character of Elysian Fields, brought with it drawbacks. Crowds took a heavy toll on the ferry boats, grounds, and facilities.⁷⁵ A brawl, well remembered for, years to come, erupted among members of a German social club at Elysian Fields in 1851.⁷⁶ In 1865, one ball match between the Mutuels and the Eckfords attracted so much betting and included so many unusual plays that team-members were accused of throwing the

illustration bottom: Baseball game underway in lower left, next to The Colonnade (Bird's Eye View of New York City 1866. New York Public Library).

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game.⁷⁷ Affluent New Yorkers watched with growing alarm at the decline among "respectable" visitors to Hoboken.⁷⁸ These folk gradually left for quieter places, including Staten Island, Newport, and the Upper Hudson River Valley.⁷⁹ Fed up with the general disorderliness, the Stevens' finally banned large championship games in 1867.⁸⁰ Two years later they divided up the waterfront between Tenth and Thirteenth Streets to individual family members and their real estate holding company, effectively ending play on the lower fields favored by the Knickerbockers.⁸¹ Baseball continued on the northern grounds favored by the Empire Club, and as late as 1870 the Knickerbockers constructed a new clubhouse for themselves in the upper reaches of Elysian Fields.⁸² But the damage was done.

New York's own Central Park, begun in 1857, quickly replaced Hoboken as the destination of choice for most New Yorkers.⁸³ Elysian Fields rapidly gave way to residential and commercial buildings along extensions of the existing street grid ⁸⁴ In 1890, the Stevens family opened and dedicated Hudson Street between Tenth and Fourteenth Streets, so that by 1894, according to John Durand, the son of the famous

landscape painter, "broad avenues had been created, existent trees fell under the axe, and the Elysian Fields vanished from the face of the earth." 85

photo top right: 1946 baseball plaque installed at the foot of Eleventh Street with Maxwell House Complex in background (Courtesy. Kraft Foods, Inc.)

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aerial photo: Hudson Street recedes across the former Elysian Fields, past the long sheds of the Sheppard and Morse Lumber Company on the northern Hoboken waterfront, circa 1930 (Stevens Family Papers, New Jersey Historical Society).

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INDUSTRIALIZATION

The Hoboken Land & Improvement Company

The improvements of the previous decades successfully opened Hoboken for large-scale development. The Stevens family sought to exploit the open land. At Colonel Stevens' death in 1838, his heirs formed, and the Legislature authorized, the Hoboken Land and Improvement Company (HL&I Co.) with full powers

to improve all such lands as they are hereby authorized to own or purchase, by laying out that portion of the same which lies north of Fourth Street in the village of Hoboken, into lots, streets, squares, lanes, alleys, and other divisions; of leveling, raising, and grading the same, or making thereon all such wharves, workshops, factories, warehouses, stores, dwellings, and such other buildings and improvements as may be found or deemed necessary, ornamental, or convenient...."86

The act also granted the company the rights "to purchase, fill up, occupy, possess, and enjoy all land covered with water fronting and adjoining the lands that may be owned by them." 87 The HL&I Co. served as a kind of real estate holding company for the Stevens family and became the principal force behind all future development in Hoboken. Between the 1840s and 1870s, the company focused its efforts south of Eighth Street, leaving the open spaces to the north in pastoral form. But by then a number of forces conspired to extend the town.

The Transformation

The end of Elysian Fields coincided with changing attitudes toward health and nature, one of the principal reasons for its initial success. During the park's heyday, the miasma theory of disease held sway. This theory assumed that poisonous gases emanating from human waste and garbage caused deadly outbreaks of cholera and typhus.⁸⁸ The cure was fresh air, afforded by places like Hoboken. But advances in the germ theory of disease, first shown by Louis Pasteur in 1857 and more firmly established by Robert Koch in the 1870s, led to a growing awareness of the correlation between contaminated water and disease. New Yorkers learned how to control outbreaks, and fewer and fewer

people sought escape to the country. Heretofore, Hoboken's own water supply came from the Passaic River via Jersey City.⁸⁹ But the identification of the microorganisms that caused cholera and typhus led to great advances in city water supplies and filtration. In part to safeguard their investment, the Stevens family acquired some 300,000 shares of stock in the recently reorganized Hackensack Water Company, and in 1881 the City of Hoboken contracted with

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the company to supply the city with fresh drinking water drawn from the Hackensack at New Milford.⁹⁰ Within two years, Hoboken's death rate dropped from 26.6 to 21.1 per thousand. ⁹¹ Other municipal improvements in sanitation at last gave Hoboken the infrastructure it needed for full-scale urbanization.⁹² This, along with spectacular increases in the value of riverfront property, ended most concern for fresh air and open spaces.

Changes in the Stevens family itself helped spur development north of Castle Point. Edwin Augustus Stevens, son of the Colonel, died in 1868, and his will provided for the establishment of a college focused on mechanical engineering. The Stevens Institute of Technology opened in 1870. A year after his death, Edwin A. Stevens' widow Martha Bayard Dod Stevens (d. 1899) and her step-daughter Mary P. Stevens (Garnett) Lewis (d.1903) exchanged shares in the HL&I Co. for two adjoining tracts of land between Tenth and Thirteenth Streets.⁹³ Portions of these two tracts would eventually make up the site of the Maxwell House Coffee Plant. Martha's tract was the largest and included the NYYC clubhouse and other boathouses lining the shore, as well as the site of The Colonnade building at the north end of the River Walk, which traversed the property. By 1876, at least two sizable wharves extended from her tract into the Hudson.⁹⁴ One stuck straight out from the foot of The Colonnade and may have existed as early as 1841, according to the Douglas map, and almost certainly by 1857, when a similar pier, with connecting ferry service across the river, appeared on the Phelps map (1857)-of New York City. The second pier projected from the shore at an oblique angle but parallel to Martha's southern property line. This line had been deliberately drawn to follow the course of Fourteenth Street in New York City, a clear

map right: General Historical Map of the City of Hoboken, NJ, According to the Official Surveys Embracing the History of Over a Century, 1909 (Hoboken Historical Museum).

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indication of the symbiotic forces at play between the two shorelines. By 1881, the Lewis property featured a sizable Italianate-style villa as seen in a birds-eye view of the city by Bailey and Ward.⁹⁵ The same view captured both piers, as well as sundry buildings, ships, and pleasure craft moored in the coves.

Riparian rights - claims to land under water - played their own role in shaping the waterfront. The HL&I Co.'s charter of 1838 granted the company all rights to fill the lands under water, but the State's claim to such lands in the 1860s forced the HL&I Co. to apply for and secure a lease for the riparian rights in 1885." The grant extended as far as

the solid fill line established by an act of the legislature. The same act also created a line to control the reach of pier structures. Martha B. Stevens and Mary P. Lewis acquired their riparian rights in 1886, costing them \$50,000 and \$25,000, respectively, to secure the claims.⁹⁷ Such sizable outlays offered one reason at least for developing the land.

Industrialization of the Elysian Fields shoreline began in earnest in the final decades of the nineteenth century. The HL&I Co. launched a new ferry service from Hoboken's Fourteenth Street in 1884 and built new shops between Ninth and Tenth Street to service the boats.⁹⁸ Five years later, Martha Stevens sold the north half of her waterfront tract to the Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah, Georgia.⁹⁹ Within two years, the new owners reclaimed much of the land lying underwater and erected a series of sheds and outbuildings to conduct their business.¹⁰⁰ The Ocean Steamship Company also built two new piers -the North Pier and the South Pier - at the extensions of Eleventh and Twelfth Streets and leased space to various concerns, including the Clyde Steamship Company and

illustration top left: The foot of Tenth Street as it appeared in 1881 (The City of Hoboken. Library of Congress).

illustration bottom right: Foot of Tenth Street showing Ocean Steamship Company fill and piers (City of Hoboken, 1904. Library of Congress).

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the Southern Cotton Oil Company.¹⁰¹ Mrs. Stevens leased the oddly angled pier on the southern half of her land to the firm of Tietjen & Lang, a ship repair and dry dock company.¹⁰² Only the New Jersey Yacht Club's building and several related boathouses continued to offer a haven of leisure in the rapidly changing shoreline.¹⁰³

Mary P. Lewis turned over her adjoining waterfront property between Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets to C. L. Bucki & Co., a yellow pine lumber dealer.¹⁰⁴ Most of this land was also filled in by 1891.¹⁰⁵ Immediately north of Thirteenth Street, the HL&I Co. leased lands in their control to the W. A. Fletcher & Co., manufacturer of steamship fittings, so that by 1896 the entire waterfront between Castle Point and Weehawken Cove was almost completely transformed by filling and occupied with heavy industry.¹⁰⁶

Role of the Railroads

The success of Hoboken's northern waterfront required not only easy water access to New York, but also reliable rail service.¹⁰⁷ The Stevens family remained closely identified with railroading through their interests in the Camden and Amboy Railroad and the Morris and Essex Railroad.¹⁰⁸ In 1895, they formed the Hoboken Railroad Warehouse and Steamship Connecting Company (HRR), with a planned route along the old River Walk at the base of Castle Point. Spearheading the project were Edwin A. Stevens 2nd and Edwin A. S. Lewis, sons of Martha Stevens and Mary Lewis, the principal landholders.¹⁰⁹ Martha Stevens and Mary Lewis each deeded over land for the right-of-way in 1898, but by the time Martha died a year later, none of the line had been

constructed.¹¹⁰ The company at last filed a revised survey plan in 1901, indicating that construction was underway or about to begin. By 1904, the Hughes and Bailey view of the City of Hoboken pictured tracks running along the base of Castle Point and north up Hudson Street, and by 1910, the principal line, branches, and sidings were all in place.¹¹¹

A second important rail line formed shortly after construction commenced on the HRR. The new line, called the Hoboken Manufacture's Railroad Company (HMRR) was chartered on July 21, 1902 to build a rail line along the western edge of Hoboken near the base of Bergen Hill."² The purpose of this five-mile-long series of branch lines and sidings was to encourage and service development in Hoboken's swampy northwestern quadrant and was intended to link with the Stevens' HRR and the much larger Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad (DL&WRR), whose eastern terminus was in Hoboken."³ The new line's promoters included Robert M. Dickinson of the Campbell & Company warehouse concern in Hoboken.¹¹⁴ In 1905, the Dickinsons formed the American Warehouse and Trading Company, which acquired the HMRR through majority stock purchase."⁵ With little of its own tracks laid and most of the commercial traffic centered along the waterfront, the HMRR leased the HRR on June 12, 1906."⁶ The newly united company proceeded to

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develop the waterfront route of the HRR, completing only 365 feet of track in its own right-of-way before abandoning it altogether in 1924.¹¹⁷ As early as 1907, the joint company's letterhead called itself the "Hoboken Shore Road," but it did not formally adopt the name until 1954.¹⁸

Railroad interests continued to shape the northern waterfront. The DL&WRR, which relied on the Stevens' ferries for access to New York, took over the Hoboken Ferry Company service at Fourteenth Street and Ferry Street on December 29, 1904.¹¹⁹ After Martha B. Stevens' death in 1899, her executors and the Hoboken Ferry Company sold off her tract and the ferry repair shops to Benjamin W. Carakaddon, a front man for the powerful Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR).¹²⁰ Carakaddon in turn transferred the ferry shops to the United New Jersey Railroad Company and Martha Stevens' land to the Manor Real Estate and Trust Company, both subsidiaries of the PRR.¹²¹ The PRR went on to lease part of its lands to the American Warehouse and Trading Company, whose HMRR helped move freight along the riverfront. ² On the eve of World War I, the PRR and the Ocean Steamship Company then sold portions of their lands to the Hudson Realty Company, a DL&WRR subsidiary.¹²³ By 1916, the entire waterfront between Ninth and Twelfth Streets lay in the hands of three railroads: the PRR, the DL&WRR, and the HMRR.

With the nation's entry into World War I, the U.S. Government nationalized the railroads on December 26, 1917, along with most of the Hoboken waterfront. The Lawson & MacMurray lumber company property became one of many staging areas for the war effort.¹²⁴ The federal government eventually returned control of the railroads to the stockholders, and by 1938 the DL&WRR was again leasing the property to a variety of

building supply dealers. They included the Sheppard and Morse Lumber Company (main block); the Dodge and Leslie Terminal; Lawson & MacMurray, lumber dealers (North Pier); and Schultz Building Materials, dealers in masonry materials (South Pier). Long, one-story lumber warehouses on the west end of the property flanked two railroad spurs crossing the property from north to south. Offices with adjacent "stalls" were situated along the street. A lumber shed, plane building, wood works, sawdust collector, and two small structures of indeterminate function separated the warehouses from the rest of the yard where lumber was stacked awaiting processing or shipment.¹²⁵ In 1938, the DL&WRR sold the land to the General Foods Corporation for their new coffee roasting and processing factory.¹²⁶

illustration upper left: Lason [Lawson] & MacMurray Lumber Co., looking north (Hoboken Historical Museum).

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photo illustration: Sacks of green coffee beans await processing in the new Maxwell House Coffee Plant (Compressed Air Magazine, March 1941. Courtesy Kraft Foods, Inc.).

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MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE

Maxwell House and the General Foods Corporation

The story of Joel Owsley Cheek and the creation of Maxwell House Coffee is well known. Born in 1852 on the Cheek family farm in rural Kentucky, Joel Cheek went to Nashville in 1873 where he found work as a traveling salesman, specializing in the sale of coffee for a wholesale grocery store. In 1884, he became partner in the firm of Cheek, Webb & Company. All the while Cheek had been experimenting with coffee samples, mixing them until he found the right blend. After he found the optimal blend, Cheek walked in to Nashville's prestigious Maxwell House Hotel in 1892 carrying several bags of his personal blend of coffee. There he met Mr. Bledwell, the food buyer at the Maxwell House. Cheek gave Bledwell 20 pounds for free to use on a trial basis. When the coffee ran out and the hotel went back to its regular brew the guests complained. Cheek's coffee was brought back to the hotel and granted a six-month trial after which he was allowed to name the blend after the hotel.¹²⁷

Cheek formed a partnership with John Neal to create the Nashville Coffee and Manufacturing Company, later renamed the Cheek-Neal Coffee Company. The company produced several other less expensive brands of coffee, but it was the Maxwell House blend that proved the most popular. In 1905, the Cheek-Neal Company opened a roasting facility in Houston, Texas, followed by others in Jacksonville, Florida in 1910 and Richmond, Virginia in 1916.¹²⁸

Maxwell House Coffee achieved everlasting recognition and the foundation for its future sales pitch in 1907. That year, President Theodore Roosevelt visited the Hermitage in Nashville and was served a cup of Maxwell House Coffee. When asked how the coffee tasted, Roosevelt purportedly declared it "Good to the last drop."¹²⁹ While Maxwell House could not buy a better endorsement, capturing a broader share of the coffee drinking public proved elusive in a market dominated by larger, more well-established brands. At a time when coffee makers concentrated on regional markets, Maxwell House had established itself well in the South. Dominating the coffee market was Arbuckle Brothers, whose Ariosa brand of coffee outsold all others for many years, accounting for one out of every seven pounds of coffee sold in the United States. In 1913, Arbuckle Brothers successfully launched Yuban coffee to become New York City's preferred brand. With its manufacturing plant in Brooklyn, Arbuckle Brothers had a foothold on the New York City market and the East Coast, by far the largest coffee consuming market in the nation.¹³⁰

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Maxwell House took aim at Arbuckle Brothers in 1921, building their own roasting plant in Brooklyn. In 1923, due in no small part to a successful marketing campaign showing flappers sipping coffee, Maxwell House overtook Yuban as Manhattan's leading brand of coffee. Maxwell House continued to expand its market, building new roasting plants in Los Angeles in 1924 and Chicago in 1927.¹³¹ In 1927, after erecting a "Good to the Last Drop" neon sign in Times Square and flying a monoplane named Miss Maxwell House across the country to promote their product, Maxwell House became the best-selling brand of coffee in the nation, a position it would hold for the next 40 years.¹³²

The success of the Cheek-Neal Company, in general, and Maxwell House, in particular, caught the eye of Edward F. Hutton, head of the Postum Cereal Company, a national cereal and beverage corporation that changed its name the following year to General Foods Corporation. During the 1920s, the Postum Company was looking to diversify its product line by buying recognizable and profitable consumer brands. On August 1, 1928, the Postum Cereal Company acquired the Cheek-Neal Company, renaming it Maxwell House Products Company. Postum paid \$42 million for the Cheek-Neal Company, enough for Joel Cheek to split the profits with his nine children and two nephews and make them all instant millionaires.¹³³

General Foods acquired the Cheek-Neal Company at the peak of the economic boom. After the stock market crash of 1929, however, coffee sales declined, hitting Maxwell House especially hard since it was one of the highest-priced brands on the market. Profits of nearly \$3 million a year on sales of 50 million pounds before the 1929 crash disappeared to no profit on sales of 39 million pounds in 1932.¹³⁴ While consumers would pay the higher price of Maxwell House coffee in flush times, the dramatic decline in personal income required that the leaders of General Foods take action to protect their market share. In an effort to cut costs, General Foods consolidated coffee making operations, closing its plants in Nashville, Richmond, and Chicago.¹³⁵

As a further cost-cutting measure, General Foods trimmed its advertising budget from \$3 million to \$1 million, concentrating all of it on a new medium: radio. An hour long variety show called the "Maxwell House Show Boat," inspired by the Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein musical of 1927, debuted in 1932. The show is credited with innovations for the medium: it was the first radio show to have a live audience, and the first to instruct the audience with cue cards that read "APPLAUSE" and "LAUGH." Within a year on the air, the "Maxwell House Show Boat" had become the most listened-to radio show in the nation. The show's popularity attracted famous stars of the era, with appearances by Bob Hope, Robert Benchley, Gloria Swanson, Jackie Coogan, Amelia Earhart, and Dale Carnegie. The script was so written that audiences could hear pouring coffee, rattling coffee cups, and sounds of lip-smacking satisfaction from the great taste of Maxwell House.¹³⁶

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Meanwhile, General Foods scientists experimented with modifying the Maxwell House blend. In order to lower the retail price by a nickel, less Brazilian beans and more, much less expensive high-grown mild beans were added. The price cut and improved blend were announced on the January 1, 1933 "Maxwell House Show Boat." Sales rose 70 percent two months later and 85 percent by year's end.¹³⁷ In the midst of a deep economic depression, Maxwell House actually increased its profits. As Bill Benton, partner in Benton & Bowles, the advertising firm that handled the Maxwell House account observed,

Maxwell House didn't know there was a Depression. The chain stores were selling coffee that was almost as good - the difference was undetectable - for a much lower price. But advertising so gave glamour and verve to Maxwell House that it made everybody think it was a whale of a lot better."¹³⁸

While unemployment lines in America grew longer, employment at General Foods doubled between 1929 and 1939, from 5,500 to 11,000.¹³⁹ Throughout the Depression years, General Foods solidified Maxwell House's lead in the coffee market by absorbing the competition. In 1932, the company acquired Sanka, the leading decaffeinated coffee, adding to its growing roster of coffees that also included Kaffee Hag and Bliss. The once dominant but now ailing Arbuckle Brothers was taken over by General Foods in 1937.¹⁴⁰

With profits at an all-time high, General Foods found that its existing coffee facilities were struggling to keep up with demand. The company not only needed a large roasting facility, one near its corporate offices in New York, but also a regional office and laboratory within convenient reach of its mid-and high-level managers. In Hoboken, New Jersey, the company found what it was looking for.

Planning the Maxwell House Factory

For the design and construction of the new facility, General Foods selected the H. K. Ferguson Company, an engineering and construction firm based in Cleveland, Ohio.

Founded by Harold K. Ferguson in 1918, the H. K. Ferguson Company served as one of the country's leading builders of industrial facilities by the 1930s, constructing plants for Procter & Gamble, National Cash Register, Firestone Tire and Rubber, and Union Carbide. The firm's satellite offices were located in New York, San Francisco, Toronto, and Mexico City.¹⁴¹

Harold K. Ferguson was born in 1883 in Albion, Michigan. After graduating from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1905, Ferguson went to work for the Austin Company, a major engineering firm that would later rival Ferguson in the field of industrial design.¹⁴² While at the Austin Company, Ferguson developed the "standard factory" principle of building, a technique that called for the construction of factory buildings from stock plans.¹⁴³ By using standard plans that could be easily adapted to different industrial processes, the H. K. Ferguson Company earned a reputation for its ability to mass-produce standardized factory buildings in both

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drawing illustration upper left: A proposed site plan by Francisco & Jacobus, 1937 (Hoboken Historical Museum).

a short time frame and at a competitive price. "Standard designs are necessary," wrote Ferguson, "because industrial buildings are always wanted in a hurry. Furthermore, some kind of a standard is necessary as a base upon which to make improvements. It is much better to refine a standard product than to attempt to embark upon a radically new, though theoretically improved product."¹⁴⁴

To the engineer, the practical necessities of plant layout, internal arrangement of machinery, and adequate working light and air were tantamount to a well-designed factory. The arrangement of equipment ensured the smooth flow of raw materials to finished product. Industrial facilities also required flexibility. That is, the buildings on the site needed to allow for easy alteration, enlargement, or adaptability to purposes other than the original intention. Writing about the necessity of an efficiently planned and functional internal layout, H. K. Ferguson wrote the following in 1939:

My own high mark to date is the making and testing of thirty-four alternative layouts for one plant before arriving at the one and only one extremely simple and clean-cut arrangement which most nearly harmonized the ideal and practicable layout in all particulars.¹⁴⁵

Plans for the new Maxwell House Plant were no exception. Surviving sketches from the firm of Francisco & Jacobus, consulting engineers for the project, show how the company experimented with layouts before settling on a final site plan.¹⁴⁶ Each iteration tried to accommodate the need for straight-line assembly manufacturing - from green coffee to finished product - as well as to provide for a powerhouse and future expansion. At the same time, the exercise helped determine the needs for additional land fill. But despite the flexibility afforded by the site, several pre-existing conditions helped determine the plant's final form. The property included ample wharf space for receiving

and storing green beans. This dictated the location of the piers, warehouses, and processing facilities. Street access existed on just two sides of the tract at Hudson and Twelfth Streets, while the railroad operated existing spurs into the property from the adjoining tracts. Rails and roadway intersected at Twelfth Street, making for easy distribution via truck and train from that general location.

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This left Hudson Street - the site's principal public face - available for a detached combination office and laboratory building, complete with separate access for management and lab employees. Hudson Street also became the logical place to employ the building's more eye-catching architectural features.¹⁴⁷

Operations

The entire Maxwell House Complex was built around the production process.¹⁴⁸ The seven original buildings, with over 500,000 square feet of floor space, consisted of the Pier Shed, Green Bean Warehouse, Manufacturing Building, American Can Company Factory Building, Extraction Building (for the decaffeinated Sanka brand), Offices and Central Laboratory, and Power House. Extending 522 feet into the Hudson River, the Pier Shed consisted of a steel-frame building built atop the pre-existing timber piles. The Warehouse was attached to the end of, and at a 90-degree angle to, the Pier Shed. Along the west side of the Warehouse stood the four-story Manufacturing Building, where coffee was cleaned, roasted, and ground. Attached to the west side of the Manufacturing Building stood the American Can Company Factory. Here the coffee was vacuum-sealed for freshness. The three-story Extraction Building stood at the south side of the Warehouse, adjacent to the plant powerhouse, which provided all the energy needed for roasting, processing, and packaging the product. The Offices and Central Laboratory marked the only standalone building in the complex. Spatially, the Office and Central Laboratory reflected its role as a regional office for all of the General

drawing illustration top right: Another factory layout and site plan proposed by Francisco & Jacobus, 1937 (Hoboken Historical Museum).

photo lower right: Original Maxwell House Coffee Plant after initial construction [Factory Management and Maintenance, April 1940).

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Foods Corporation, distinct from the factory. Open land around the site allowed for future expansion, and the Manufacturing Building was specifically designed to accommodate additional stories as space and demand warranted.¹⁴⁹

Inside, the plant processed coffee with spectacular efficiency. Two shifts working 24 hours a day, blended, roasted, ground, and packaged 300 tons of coffee daily, equal to 25,000 cups every minute.¹⁵⁰ In 1940, one year after the Maxwell House Plant opened, it employed 386 workers, making it one of Hoboken's largest employers and joining the likes of American Lead Pencil, Bethlehem Steel, and General Electric.¹⁵¹ Freighters

laden with green beans from all over the world, from Tanzania, Uganda, Costa Rica, Columbia, and Brazil, docked alongside the pier. Burlap sacks of green beans weighing 132 pounds were unloaded and then sorted according to type and stored for up to a year on wooden pallets in the Warehouse, a single-story, steel-frame building capable of holding up to 7000 tons of green coffee beans.¹⁵² Samples from each type of bean were taken to be checked for quality and future blending.¹⁵³

When ready for processing, the beans were dumped into five separate hoppers attached to five independent roasting and milling plants. The redundant system allowed for continuous processing, even when parts of the plant were out of operation for maintenance or repairs.¹⁵⁴ From each hopper, the beans were raised in bucket elevators to the sixth floor of the adjacent Manufacturing Building, where the entire operation, from cleaning to canning, was achieved by means of the "gravity-flow method," where each processing step was arranged vertically to take advantage of the force of gravity.

First the beans were poured into a cleaner where streams of high-pressured air removed foreign matter. The cleaned coffee beans were then either sent to the Extraction Building or directly to mixers to be blended with other beans, roasted for 20 minutes, cooled for another 20 minutes, and sent to pneumatic separators to remove stones and other heavy material. The huge roasters, the largest in operation at the time, were designed and built specifically for the Hoboken plant with the input of General Foods technicians.¹⁵⁵ Collected chaff from the roasters traveled by way of a pneumatic system to incinerators located on the roof.¹⁵⁶ The roasted coffee then descended via storage bins to the grinding equipment, also the largest in the world for its time. Finally the ground coffee dropped into filling machines on the floor below. After the coffee was inspected, it passed to ground level where the finished product was packaged and sealed.¹⁵⁷

For the manufacture of the decaffeinated brands Sanka and Kaffee Hag, caffeine was removed in the Extraction Building. Caffeine and coffee oils were drawn from the beans in large drums, then taken by pipeline to the Central Laboratory, where the caffeine was refined. Coffee oils and wax were returned to the beans prior to roasting to preserve the coffee flavor.¹⁵⁸

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Canning the coffee in vacuum-sealed containers took place in the American Can Factory Building, where machines designed by General Foods Corporation researchers and American Can Factory engineers were used.¹⁵⁹ The packaged product was then transported either by truck or by railroad to market. The DL&WRR built its own float bridge and railcar barge facility on its remaining property immediately south of the Maxwell House Plant.¹⁶⁰ The finished product could be floated directly across the river to New York City and points north or carried via the HMRR to markets in the South and West. As truck transport proved to be more economical than rail after World War n, these railroad facilities were gradually replaced with truck bays.

In the Offices and Central Laboratory, Maxwell House employed 275 scientists and laboratory personnel to train scientists from other Maxwell House Divisions in the United States and overseas, to create new products for the company, and to refine existing products for the entire General Foods product line, from Log Cabin Syrup to Grape Nuts, from Hellman's Mayonnaise to Jell-O. The Central Laboratory experimented with methods to dehydrate, can, and freeze foods; analyzed the effectiveness of different machinery to remove dust; and studied the effects of caffeine on both laboratory rats and humans.¹⁶¹

One of the laboratory's most important innovations was developing a special method to capture coffee aroma. During the grinding process, coffee beans release a natural gas. To capture this gas, or aroma, pipes built into the grinding machines sent the gas upstairs, where the gas was frozen with liquid nitrogen, producing a snow-like substance called "coffee aroma frost." This frost was mixed with raw coffee oil and then converted to a liquid. A tiny bit of this liquid coffee aroma was squirted into the coffee and the can quickly sealed, waiting to be released upon opening.¹⁶²

The ground-breaking ceremony for the new facility took place on June 6, 1938, and the first completed building - the Extraction Building, or Sanka Plant - went into operation in January 1939.¹⁶³ On Friday, October 13, 1939, Hoboken's Maxwell House Division was formally dedicated.¹⁶⁴ Clarence Francis, President of General Foods, held a luncheon at Meyers Hotel for 150 guests, including Hoboken Mayor, Bernard N. McFeely, and Robert Cheek, son of the founder Joel Cheek, who served as director of General Foods.¹⁶⁵

photo illustration left: Loading the canning machine (Compressed Air Magazine, March 1941).

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General Foods held an "Open House Party," giving tours to some 6,000 visitors, including local residents, stockholders, food distributors, and members of the press.¹⁶⁶ Hoboken's local paper, The Jersey Journal, printed the story the following Monday, quoting conciliatory remarks made by Clarence Francis during the luncheon and reporting that the Hoboken site had been selected because of its "live and helpful community," and that the plant had been built in "record time."¹⁶⁷ The New York Times devoted half a column in the Business Section to the opening of the "Big Plant," which was certainly an understatement, since the Maxwell House Site was then the largest coffee roasting plant in the world.¹⁶⁸

Mostly hidden from the rest of Hoboken but clearly seen from across the Hudson River, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign would be the most remembered feature of the Maxwell House Site. Perched atop the Manufacturing Building and facing Manhattan, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign was the de facto symbol of Maxwell House and an icon on the Hoboken landscape. The sign was first lit on May 1, 1939, its thousands of feet of neon tubes illuminating the Maxwell House brand of coffee to millions. The sign measured 182 feet long and 72 feet high. Large copper letters weighing three tons broadcast

"MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" across the Hudson River. Left of the lettering was a tilted coffee cup, 42 feet high. Below were two coffee drops, each nine feet in diameter. These "last drops" could hold almost 30,000 cups of coffee: the cup, nearly two million. The "Good to the Last Drop" sign joined the ranks of other advertising legends in the New York metropolitan area - the Colgate Clock in Jersey City, the Swingline Billboard in Long Island City, and the Domino Sugar Billboard in Brooklyn.¹⁶⁹

The International Style and Factory Design

The H. K. Ferguson Company was already well known to General Foods Corporation after completing their largest corn mill in the world in Kankakee, Illinois in 1937.¹⁷⁰ This eight-story structure had setback roofs and featured bands of continuous window glazing, concrete spandrels, and complete lack of ornament characteristic of the "International Style" of architecture. An engineering journal, *Architectural Concrete*, observed that the continuous spandrels and sash on the corn mill produced "a clean-cut, pleasing exterior without resort to ornament in any form."¹⁷¹ The outward appearance of the corn mill was strikingly similar to the American Can Company Factory and Manufacturing Building at Maxwell House, although for those buildings Ferguson would continue the window fenestration around the corners of the buildings.

Americans were first introduced on a wide scale to the International Style (known then as European Modernism) during the Chicago Tribune Building competition of 1922. Although the Gothic-inspired winning entry appeared to be a victory for historical styles, entries by European architects, such as Adolf Loos and Walter Gropius, distanced themselves from the past and pointed the way of the future.

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photo illustration top left: Cantilevered floors allowed for nearly continuous ribbons of glass along floors and around corners on the American Can Factory Building (*Factory Management and Maintenance*, April 1940).

In 1926, Walter Gropius's Bauhaus School buildings in Dessau, Germany dramatized the steel frame with cantilevered and recessed terraces and broad glass plates almost flush with the wall plane. The American public was formally introduced to the new style in 1932, when Henry Russell Hitchcock and Phillip Johnson launched "The International Style," a retrospective of modern architecture at the newly opened Museum of Modern Art in New York City.¹⁷²

The International Style was seen as a break from historic architectural styles. Applied ornament gave way to the functional decoration of modern industrial materials, such as steel, concrete, and glass. In their overall composition, International Style buildings emphasized volume over mass, function over style, and machine-made materials over traditional handicraft. By the 1930s, the International Style's inherent flexibility was readily accepted in factory design. But to engineers like Ferguson, conveying a particular "style" had less to do with an aesthetic sensibility and was more a product of practical considerations and standardized construction techniques. While the design aesthetic of

minimal or no architectural ornamentation became defining characteristics of the International Style, the minimal facade detail had a practical purpose, as the vibration of machinery argued against projecting ornamentation on exterior walls.¹⁷³ In a refinement to the refrain of form following function, the company acknowledged "there is no reason why any factory building cannot be attractive in design and laid out for both appearance and convenience."¹⁷⁴

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color aerial photo: A circa-1990 aerial view of the Maxwell House Coffee Plant (Courtesy Kraft Foods, Inc.).

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A NEW ERA

Post-World War II

During World War II, government rationing of coffee significantly reduced sales on the homefront. But the coffee industry still managed to prosper as the military supplied American GI's with all the coffee they could drink. Maxwell House converted its Hoboken facility to produce "10-in-1" rations in waterproof, shockproof packages that included enough food and coffee for ten people a day.¹⁷³ The Central Laboratory also experimented with different processes to dissolve coffee grinds in hot water to produce instant coffee. Instant coffee had been on the market since World War I, but due to its poor taste it had only limited appeal. In 1945, General Foods introduced Instant Maxwell House and Instant Sanka to compete with what was then the leading brand of instant coffee, Nescafe.¹⁷⁶ To process instant coffee, the company purchased an additional strip of land along its south border from the DL&WRR and constructed the Soluble Building in 1947.¹⁷⁷ Processing instant coffee required a substantial financial outlay for tall spraying towers and additional treatment processes, but the final product cost 1.25 cents per cup, 1 cent less than regular. By 1952, instant coffee accounted for 17 percent of all coffee consumption in the country; the following year Instant Maxwell House surpassed Nescafe as the nation's leading instant brand.¹⁷⁸

By war's end, the General Foods Corporation could boast of 77 plants and processing units, 66 in the United States, 7 in Canada, and 4 overseas.¹⁷⁹ Of the four Maxwell House Divisions then in operation, it was the Hoboken plant that produced more than half of all Maxwell House Coffee. During the 1950s, with coffee consumption at an all-time high, the Maxwell House Plant reached its peak period of production by employing 2,000 factory workers, scientists, and managers, five times the number when the plant opened in 1939.¹⁸⁰ In 1957, the

photo illustration right: Soluble Building under construction, 1946 (Courtesy Kraft Foods Inc.)

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corporation purchased more land from the DL&WRR and built a large parking lot to accommodate the many employees.¹⁸¹

During the 1960s, General Foods coffee, represented by its Maxwell House, Sanka, and Yuban brands, still dominated the coffee market, accounting for over one-third of national coffee sales, with Maxwell House coffee, "the well-advertised and low-priced giant," leading the pack with 24 percent of the coffee market.¹⁸² Further expansion occurred in 1962 when a portion of the Process Building was constructed adjacent to the Central Laboratory, and tons of fill deposited in the Hudson River to erect new Storage Silos and concrete piers in front of the Warehouse Building. General Foods built the Storage Silos to more efficiently store green coffee beans after unloading from ships. The 40 enclosed silos on either side of the building had a storage capacity of 20.5 million pounds of coffee beans. The plant had now reached its full build-out, with the exception of small additions to the Processing Building and miscellaneous changes to loading docks and service areas.

Plant Closing

By the 1960s, coffee consumption was on the decline, dropping from 3.1 cups a day in 1962 to 2.2 cups in 1974. In 1962, nearly three-quarters of all Americans drank coffee, a figure that dropped to little more than one-half by 1982, a drop of 39 percent.¹⁸³ In 1978, Procter & Gamble entered the New York and eastern market, unveiling its Folger's brand, a coffee previously confined to the western market and the number two brand behind Maxwell House. Folger's soon garnered 28 percent of the coffee drinking public to surpass Maxwell House.¹⁸⁴ Price wars with Folger's and declining sales led to further unprofitability for Maxwell House. By the 1980s, a new trend of smaller roasters with specialty coffees further cut into Maxwell House's sales. It became clear that Maxwell House, long the behemoth of the coffee industry, was being trounced.

After Phillip Morris acquired General Foods in 1985, production at Maxwell House divisions across the country were scaled back to almost half their capacity. By the late 1980s, it became clear that the declining trend in coffee consumption was not going to be reversed. As a drastic cost-cutting measure, a decision was made in 1990 to close one of two Maxwell House Divisions: Hoboken or Jacksonville. The Jacksonville facility, a complex predating the Hoboken plant by more than 20 years and in operation since the days of Joel Cheek, had the advantage of location closer to Central American markets and lower labor costs. Despite receiving greater economic incentives to stay, Phillip Morris announced on June 27, 1990, that it would shut down the Hoboken Plant by Spring 1992.¹⁸⁵ Maxwell House was Hoboken's largest employer, and with the plant's closure, 600 mostly blue-collar jobs were lost. On May 1, 1993, 54 years to the day since it was first lit, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign was dismantled and taken away.¹⁸⁶

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The demise of Maxwell House followed in a long line of factory closings in Hoboken, after Lipton Tea, Tootsie Roll, Levolor, and Colgate-Palmolive, to name a few. Factory closings and the trend to relocate industrial facilities from the inner city to larger

complexes in the suburbs began after World War n. Hudson County, in general, and Jersey City and Hoboken, in particular, were especially hard hit as more and more manufacturers left the region.

Ironically, what attracted people to Hoboken in the first place, its views of the river and close proximity to New York City, helped fuel the city's renaissance. Converted lofts and modern residential construction, designed to resemble earlier industrial buildings, have driven a new wave of development along Hoboken's northern shore and revived the city in many important ways. One is a growing appreciation for the richness of Hoboken's heritage, where historic preservation and new construction harmoniously co-exist, contributing to the next great phase in the city's remarkable history.

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