



# PASSAIC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

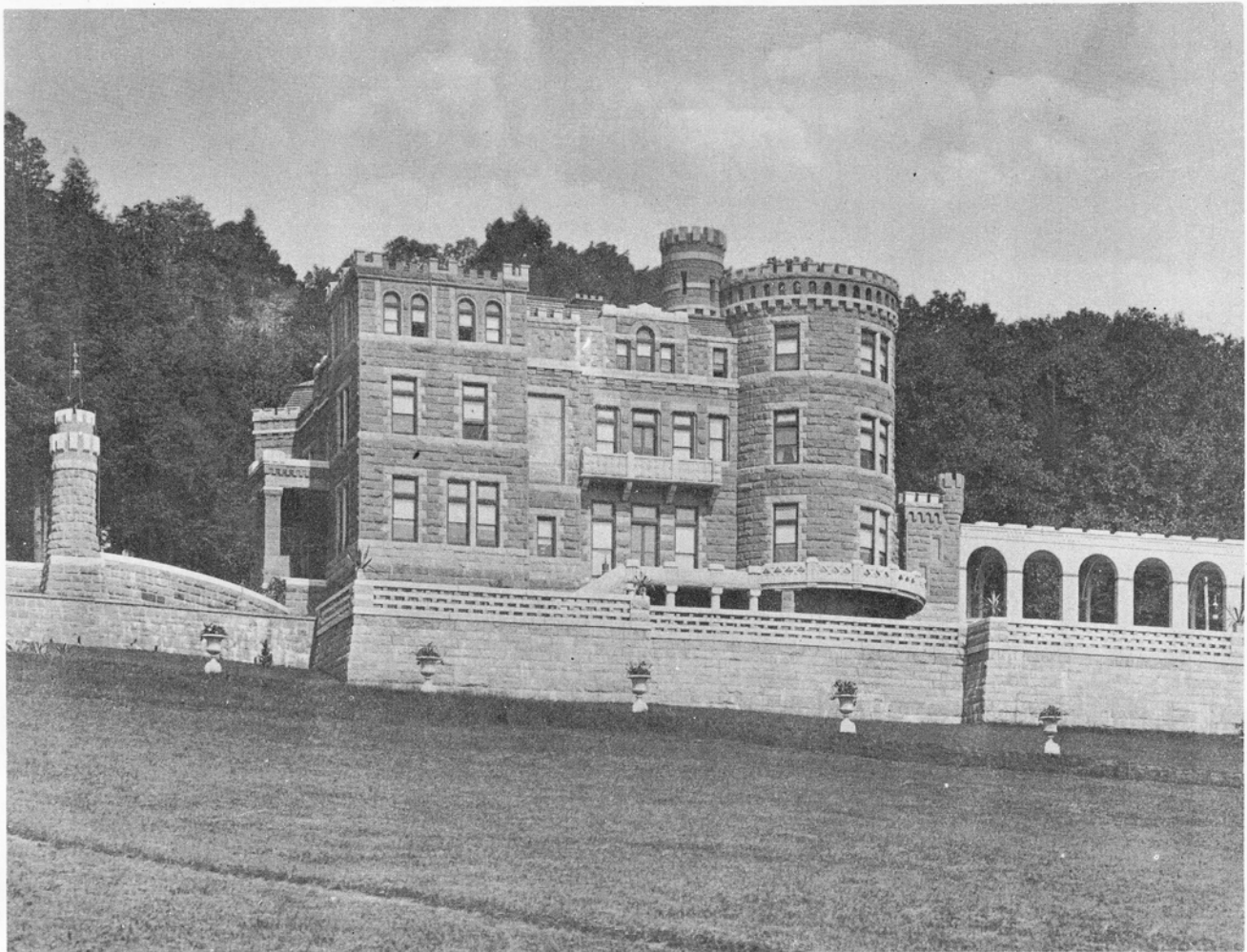
Museum and Headquarters  
LAMBERT CASTLE  
Garret Mountain Reservation  
PATERSON, N. J.  
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## LAMBERT CASTLE



The above photograph of Lambert Castle was taken in the spring of 1893, the year that the Castle was completed. It was January, 31st of that year that Mr Lambert opened it as his home.

With some minor changes this is the Castle as it is today. The arches at the right and the tower for the electric arc lamp to the left have been removed years ago. The Castle is now hidden by ivy vines, covering the left half of the building.

By  
E.M.Graf

Catholina Lambert was born in Keighley, Yorkshire, England, on March 28, 1834 and died at Belle Vista Castle, Paterson, February 15, 1923.

He started work at an early age, Ten years, in the cotton mill of Walter Evans & Company, receiving a salary of eighteen pence a week. After seventeen years in his native land he looked toward the land of promise and greater things, so left for New York, landing there on October 29, 1851. Having had a letter from a friend in Boston he left for that city immediately after arriving in New York. In Boston he found employment as an office boy for the silk firm of Tilt & Dexter, at four dollars per week. This firm was composed of Anson Dexter & Benjamin B. Tilt. In 1853 Mr. Tilt retired; Catholina Lambert having bought his share, he was made a member of the firm and business continued under the name of Dexter, Lambert & Company.

This firm as early as 1849 attempted ribbon weaving but it was not a financial success. They attempted again weaving ribbons in 1856 but again it proved unprofitable. They have been credited with being the first to weave ribbon in this country.

The first factory of the firm was a two story frame building 100 X 40 feet on Coventry Street, so named by Mr. Tilt. Here they wove fringes, gimps, gimp machines, spinning wheels, braiding machines and a small plant of throwing machinery. Upholstery, military, parasol, millinery, hatters, furriers, cloak and dress trimmings, and known in those days as a trimming house.

In 1856 the business was increased and more space was needed so a mill was erected, 160 X 50 feet, three stories high in Lennox street, Boston. Paterson having become a center for silk manufacturing and machine making; for many years most of the silk made in this country was dyed here, brought Mr. Lambert to this town often on business trips; was attracted to its surroundings and decided to locate in this section. With this in view, in 1861 he purchased the James Close estate in South Paterson, known as "Maplewood."

In 1861 Anson Dexter retired from the firm, George R. Dexter his son, and William N. Lambert a brother of Catholina Lambert were admitted into the firm. William Lambert visited South America for his health and died there in 1869. Anson Dexter on retiring requested his former associates to continue under the name of Dexter, Lambert & Company and the name was never changed to the end.

In 1866 Lambert having a desire to locate near New York, purchased a mill site on the east side of Straight Street, near Clay and erected the Dexter Mill, three stories 220 X 50 feet. This mill is still standing having been sold in 1916.

In 1874 Mr. Lambert went to England and bought a plant of power looms which he shipped to this city and set them up in the Straight Street mill, with them began weaving broad silk goods. In 1877 the firm purchased the A. Soleliac & Sons, ribbon plant which was located in the Dale Mill, operated the plant in this same location until the end of June 1879.

In December 1878 Lambert prepared to erect another and larger mill, purchased property from the S.U.M. on the west side of Straight Street, opposite the Dexter Mill. This mill 100 X 75 feet two stories high was completed and occupied about July 1, 1879. This mill was generally known as the Lambert Mill and was connected with the Dexter Mill by a bridge over Straight Street.

In the spring of 1879 Lambert purchased the plant of Sterrett, Ryle and Murphy.

In 1880 Mr. Lambert erected his fourth mill; Hawley, Penna. was selected as the site, property was purchased; erected a mill 380 X 44 feet and a center projection of 80 X 80 feet. On Thursday June 3, 1881, Mr. Lambert, accompanied by his wife and daughter and a large number of personal and business friends visited Hawley and christened the factory, naming it the "Bellemonte Mill."

In 1887 Mr. Lambert built another mill at Honesdale, Penna.

Mr. Lambert married in 1856, Isabel Shattuck, of old New England family in Massachusetts, there were eight children. Mr. Lambert went to Europe to recuperate his failing health and while at sea on the return trip their baby son, Clifford, one year and five months old died on July 25, 1870. The funeral was postponed until the arrival of the parents and was buried from their home 2 PM on August 4th.

During the year 1892 Mr. Lambert built a new residence on the side of Garret Mountain and named it BELLA VISTA, for his wife Isabel. Here he housed his extensive art collection and other antiques. Mrs. Lambert died in 1901 and in 1904 Mr. Lambert married Harriet Estelle Bibby, widow of Dr. Bibby, who was a sister of his first wife. She died November 27, 1916 surviving besides her husband was a son Harry Lambert Bibby, a practising physician in New York; two sisters, Mrs John C. Ryle and Mrs Robert Gilmore; two brothers Freeman Shattuck, who resided at Maplewood the former homestead of Mr. Lambert and Samuel S. Shattuck of Providence.

In 1914 the firm, having financial difficulties, Mr. Lambert had decided to liquidate. On October 20, 1914 the company was granted an extension of two years to meet the liabilities against it. Lambert at that time issued notes, payable in two years from date and at the same time agreed to offer his entire estate as collateral. On January 15, 1915 Mr. Lambert offered his entire estate including his collection of art for the extension of credit for the Dexter, Lambert & Company, and placed his signature to a trust mortgage in favor of the Paterson Safe Deposit and Trust Company to the amount of \$1,103,754.95 This was said to be the largest personal mortgage ever placed on record in Passaic County up to that time.

In February 1916, the art collection consisting of 365 pictures and a number of pieces of statuary were sold at auction at the Plaza Hotel, New York; the amount received was \$592,050, which was claimed to be about one third its real value.

In December 1916 the Dexter Mill was sold to the Van Der Weyhe Bros., fur manufacturers, from Belgium, for \$60,000.

On February 15, 1923 seated in the library, when one of his closest friends, John C. Ryle, who was a brother-in-law of Lambert called to have a little visit with him. He conversed upon his favorite topic, "The Silk Industry," and showed that he retained the keen mind and insight into the trade conditions that made him a remarkable man all his life. The pioneer silk manufacturer was assisted to his room and prepared for bed. It was apparent that a change had come over him that indicated the end of life was approaching and no doubt he was aware of it. He smiled his goodby to his son Walter and friends and passed away at 4.15 PM at the age of 89. Dr. Victor Bullen his physician was at his side.

Mr. Lambert requested a simple funeral, the services were held 2 PM February 18, with the reading of scripture by Rev. Alvin C. Sawtelle of the Second Presbyterian Church of which Mr. Lambert was the oldest member. The services were held in the northeast parlor where the body lay in a solid mahogany casket, Interment was made at Cedar Lawn.

All the holdings of Mr. Lambert were turned over to his only son Walter S. Lambert.

### THE FIRST RECEPTION.

On the east side of Garret Mountain stands the brown stone, Castle like building, the former home of Catholina Lambert.

For many months during 1892, brown stone blocks cut out of the local quarries, were being assembled to build this new home of Mr. Lambert. By early 1893 it had taken the form of an old Castle so familiar in his native land; England.

Mr. Lambert had moved his art collection from his old home, on the other side of the Valley Road, which was known as "Maplewood."

On Tuesday evening January 31, 1893 Mr. Lambert invited four hundred guests for the first reception in his new home, to show them his collection of paintings and other valuable articles, bric-a-bac, old carvings and antiques in every part of the Castle.

At This period Mr. Lambert was said to have had the finest private Art collections in this country. His collection of paintings by the best artists of England, was also rated better than any one collection in England.

A special train over the Lackawanna railroad from Jersey City brought over one hundred guests. Carriages were waiting at the Depot then located at Barclay Street, to convey them to the Castle. Thirty five coaches were required throughout the evening to bring the guests to and from the reception, which were furnished by Charles B. Hindle.

The Castle was brilliantly illuminated and could be seen for miles. The large arc lights that sent their brilliancy from stone tower tops and the myriads of lamps in the building itself, formed a dazzling picture. It was extremely romantic and picturesque, as the place was approached from the foot of the hill and the carriages wound round the serpentine driveway to the castellated building.

Entering the Castle, to the right was the reception room where Mr. and Mrs. Lambert were assisted in receiving the guests by their son Walter S. Lambert and his wife and their daughter, Mrs. William F. Dorflinger of Honesdale, Pa. Next to the reception room was the Grand Staircase leading to the living apartments and the second gallery. The main hall continued on through the Grand Art Hall, breakfast room and conservatory making a promenade 150 feet in length, terminating in the summer house at the extreme northeast end.

Facing the art hall to the east was the music room, where Prof. Dayton Vreeland and his string orchestra were stationed behind an embankment of exotic plants and ferns and played delightful music. In the upper gallery of the art room was stationed a mandolin orchestra from New York, the dreamy and delightful music rendered embracing the effect of the surroundings, and produced a most pleasing effect on the guests.

Next to the music room was the drawing room, occupying the first floor of the tower. On the second floor were the living rooms, designed to be used en suite or single. On this floor over the music room was the Gem Room and over the drawing room the Guests Chamber, while to the north of the art gallery were the Pink and Blue rooms. The servants quarters were in a separate part of the house, removed from the main building facing the mountain.

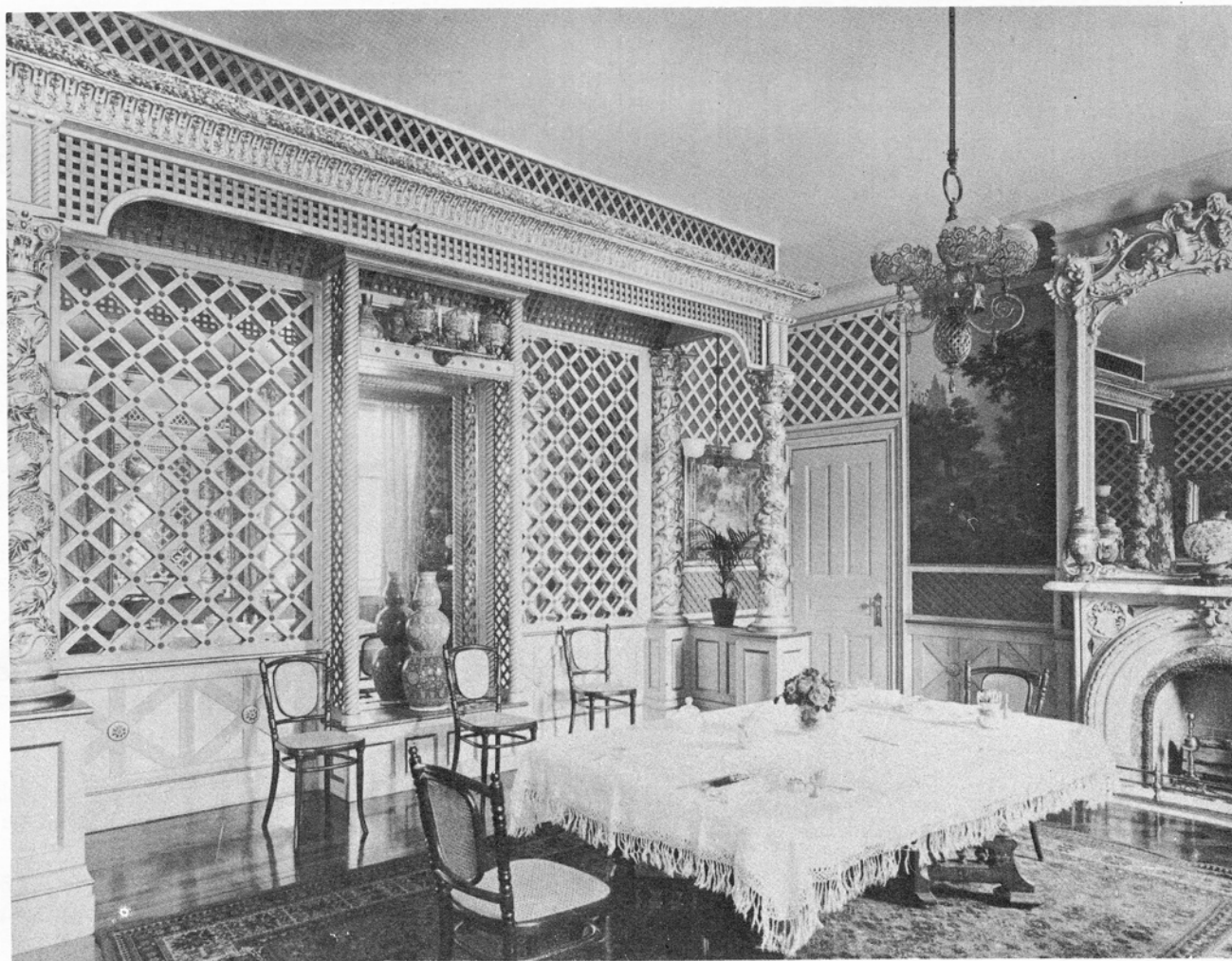
Four hundred guests had been invited and with but few exceptions all responded. Every room in the Castle was thrown open and there were inviting easy chairs to be found at all points from which to enjoy the feast of art that was spread out before the guests.

Mr. Lambert had been collecting works of art for many years but until he built his new home had no place in which to properly display his beautiful collection. This was one of the main reasons that prompted him to build for himself such a large mansion.

The wood work in all the rooms is of the finest oak. From the centre of the ceiling in the dining room hung a French bronze chandelier, beautiful in design. The room was supplied with furniture of Italian design of the sixteenth century and some of the pieces were the finest hand carved work in this country. A "King Lung Empire" vase of 1732 stood near the door and a Hawthorne vase, said to have been the third finest in this country was conspicuous.

On either side of the entrance are Italian columns carved and decorated in Gold and Black, representing the sixteenth century. Overhead was a piece of Russian carving brought from Pisa by Mr. Lambert. The floor of the main art hall is laid in square blocks of marble and partly covered with rugs of the finest pattern and texture. The floor of the music room is similar to that of the art hall. Monticelli's famous painting, "The Vestal Virgins," hung over the mantel in the music room. The carving on the mantel, of Carrara marble is very beautiful and appropriate. It consists of a host of cherubs representing music, song and dance.

The drawing room, on the first floor of the tower, is similar to that of Windsor Castle. It was furnished in Louis XV style. The ceiling was covered with a painting in oil by L. Leistner, an Austrian decorator. The mantel is of Italian tulip wood, elaborately carved and decorated in Gold and black. On one side was a piece of Empire furniture from the Prince Demidoff collection, upon which were rare vases, two Chinese vases formerly in the possession of Emperors, such as were exchanged by the rulers of Empires as presents to each other.



BREAKFAST ROOM IN 1893

The breakfast room was in the northwest wing of the main building. The entire room was furnished in turquoise and gold. The walls were ornamented with beautiful paintings by Monet and Renoir. The bower supported by four columns, two in front being spiral and copied from those in front of St. Peter's church in Rome. The others are Italian renaissance style and came from Pisa. In the rear was an immense plate glass mirror, covering the whole side of the room and giving the appearance of several rooms. The prettiest floral effect was secured in the breakfast room, where a grill work in front of the mirror was festooned with genuine plumosa vine, studded with roses. The gallery fronts in the art hall were also festooned with the same and presented a pretty picture.

The art gallery extended from the ground floor to the dome of the Castle. In the gallery on the third floor were paintings of the Kremlin Palace of Moscow by Verestchagin. Another painting by the same artist representing the interior of a Mosque with the priests at worship was found hanging at the top of the main staircase underneath the bridge of the third gallery.

The reception lasted throughout the evening and the four hundred people partook of the sumptuous dinner served by Maressi of New York. The floral and plant decorations were by Mr. Towell who brought out all the possibilities of plant and flowers in interior adornment.

#### THE NEW ART GALLERY

Mr. Lambert had only completed his castle when he planned to enlarge his art gallery.

An addition to the building on the north end was added, with a long gallery 100 feet long and 35 feet wide. In it were displayed a large number of paintings and marble statues. His collection of English painters represented work from Sir Thomas Lawrence, Hoffany, Gainsborough, Russell and Harlow, hung in the same line along the gallery. A large canvas by Sir Augustus Callcott, several by David Teniers, the elder and a few by Wilson and Constable.

Mr. Lambert held a social gathering on February 25, 1896, to which 800 guests were invited. It was termed an "Art Reception" being in the nature of a housewarming for opening of his new Art Gallery.

Special trains on the Lackawanna again brought the guests from New York and Pennsylvania.

A Hungarian Gipsy Band from New York, in the music room, gave a concert through the reception and Haase's State Band played in the new Art Gallery.

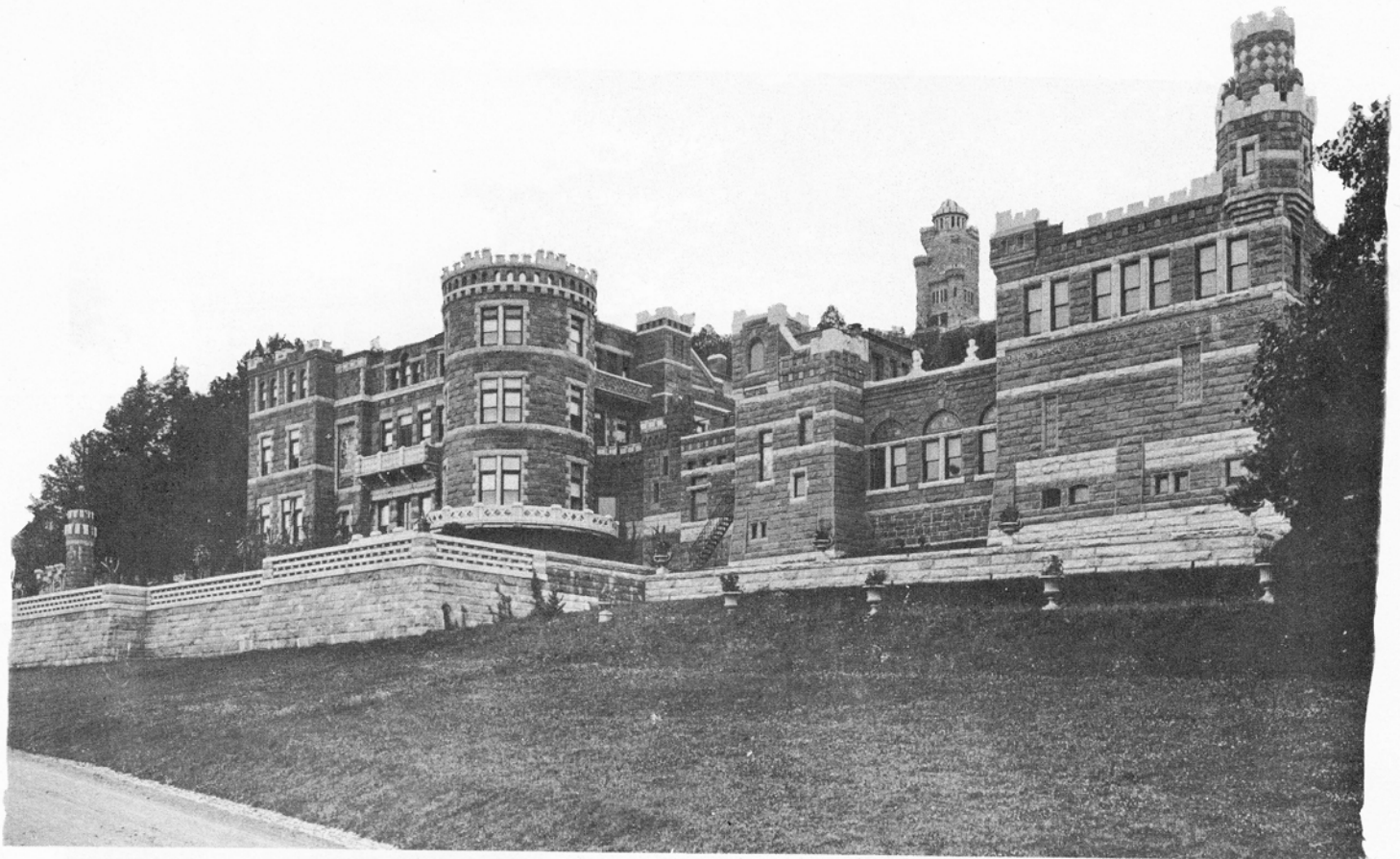
Guests who had travelled extensively in Europe said it would be hard to find a collection of paintings in any private gallery anywhere which could match Mr. Lambert's.

While the new Art Gallery was nearing completion, Mr. Lambert built the tower on top of the mountain, which was completed in the summer of 1896. From the Castle there was a carriage driveway to the tower, it was used as a summer house or observatory from which a fine view of the surrounding country can be had. It was not to be used for living quarters. It stands about seventy feet above the mountain.

During March 1896 it was learned that Mr. Lambert had offered to buy some lots on the Colt Hill tract opposite the Court House to build an Art Gallery, offering \$500 per city lot.

It was known to some of his intimate acquaintances that it was his intention to leave his collections to the people of this city on his death. When questioned on the subject he stated that such was his intentions -- --But he did not know what the future held, so the collection was sold at auction and left these parts.

LAMBERT CASTLE IN 1896.



President McKinley's visit to the Castle.

For a few days, President McKinley had been a guest of Vice President Garret A. Hobart at his home "Carroll Hall."

On the afternoon of September 5, 1898 President McKinley, Vice President Hobart, with Col. William Barbour, drove to Belle Vista the mansion of Catholina Lambert on the slope of Garret Mountain.

Mr Lambert welcomed his guests and took great pride in showing the chief magistrate of the nation his famed art galleries.

President McKinley was charmed with all he saw. Vice President Hobart, remarked to the President, "We have here the nucleus of an American Lourve," which brought smiles to both the President and Mr Lambert. The President was enthusiastic over the magnificent view from the house, saying that it surpassed anything of the kind he had seen. After light refreshments they drove to Warren Point to see Attorney General Griggs play golf.

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Lambert Castle was purchased, at a public sale, by the City of Paterson in 1925.

On the afternoon of July 9, 1927 the Castle was taken over by the Paterson Tuberculosis Health League when 110 little girls from 6 to 13 years were "at home" in the Castle.

In 1929 it was acquired by the Passaic County Park Commission, and it now is part of Garret Mountain Reservation, one of the County Park units with some 575 acres. There are good roads, a number of picnic grounds and plenty of room to relax among the woodland country, away from crowded city streets.

MAIN ENTRANCE AND REAR VIEW OF THE CASTLE IN 1893

