

Great Falls/SUM
Historic District
Vicinity of Passaic River,
below Great Falls
Paterson, New Jersey
Passaic County

HAER No. NJ-1

HAER
NJ,
16-PAT,
15-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
GREAT FALLS S.U.M. HISTORIC DISTRICT

HAER NJ-1

HAER
NJ,
16-PAT,
15-

Date: 1793 - ca. 1915

Location: District encompasses about 90 acres spanning the raceway system in Paterson, N.J.

Designed by: Pierre L'Enfant, Peter Colt, and others.

Owner: Various private interests, Great Falls Development Corp., Inc.

Significance:

In 1791 Alexander Hamilton and others founded an industrial venture known as the Society for the Establishment of Useful Manufactures (S.U.M.). The formation of this Society embodied the theory propounded by Hamilton in his Report on Manufacturers (1791), that the best way to ensure America's independence of Europe was by establishing industries in the U.S.

Under Hamilton's guidance, the Society acquired land at Paterson, New Jersey, at the Great Falls of the Passaic River. The falls, one of the largest on the east coast, was to supply the power to various mills and manufactories through a 2-1/2 mile system of raceways (see HAER No. NJ-2). Although not a terribly successful venture at first, approximately 60 mills, as well as other manufacturing plants, were established in what is now the S.U.M. Historic District, many dating from the 1830s and 1840s.

The S.U.M. is recognized as being one of the sites where the American Industrial Revolution began, and was the first planned industrial area in the U.S.

Transmitted by: Monica E. Hawley, Historian, 1983

Addendum to:
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HAER No. NJ-1

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NJ,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

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ADDENDUM TO:
GREAT FALLS/S. U. M. HISTORIC DISTRICT
(Society for the Establishment of Useful Manufactures)
Oliver Street
Paterson
Passaic County
New Jersey

HAER NJ-1
HAER NJ, 16-PAT, 15-

COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001