

How Roland Park Was Founded And Developed

THIS IS THE FOURTH of a series of occasional articles dealing with the suburban towns surrounding Baltimore, with especial reference to their little-known history. Later articles will be devoted to Relay, Catonsville, Lutherville, Arlington, Mount Winans, Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, Canton, Highlandtown, Waverly, Hampden, Forest Park, Pothatun, Carroll, Woodberry, Calverton, Sudbrook, Pikesville and other old and new towns within and beyond the present city boundary. Mount Washington, Govans and Sparrows Point have been discussed in recent issues.

THE most fashionable and, undoubtedly, the most pretentious suburb of Baltimore is Roland Park. The mad, mad rush to get to Roland Park in the last few years has been appalling. Stand on the new St. Paul Street Boulevard and you can actually almost count the families struggling with their family chattels piled in vans, on their way to the suburb, and the wishes of those people who don't live there and would like to live there whiz by you like Rossetti's new souls going to heaven.

You need ask many of the citizens of Baltimore where they would like to live if they didn't live where they do live now, they would reply Roland Park.

With English Capital. The development of Roland Park has been phenomenal since a generation ago. It was a majestic and rather disorderly stretch of orchard forest and meadow land. Now it is a beautiful, tidy, ultra-civilized suburb, with its own schools, churches, and all the amenities of a city.

No doubt the founders of the place had ambitious and hopefully far-reaching schemes, but they could hardly have foreseen, even in their wildest moments, that these would materialize so delightfully.

They started their project bravely on large capital, borrowed for the most part from foreign sources, and it grew and grew like Jonah's gourd. Two of the founders have gotten out of the company, with large fortunes safely stowed away. One of the founders remains, the present president of the company.

The Roland Park Company was organized in July, 1901, and it was financed largely by Englishmen. It had a capital of \$1,000,000. The three men who conceived and got up the company were Charles H. Grady, now best known through his various newspaper and magazine work, and William Edmunds and Edward H. Bouton.

These gentlemen saw that the city was building north. Mount Washington was then just in the noonday of its favor as a fashionable suburb, and they say that the tides of fortune were sweeping toward it. They saw a magnificent tract of wooded land on a spine of hills by Jones' falls, and they say that the Lands Trust Company of England was feeling around this country for a good investment, through its agents, Jarvis & Conklin, of Kansas City, Mo. They saw all these things, and then they mixed them together.

Many Estates Bought. The property first purchased by the company aggregated 500 acres, and it was obtained in several sections. From the Hiram Woods, father of Dr. Hiram Woods, of Park avenue, it purchased the largest part of the holdings, comprising in the estate of Woodlawn. From the Penningtons it obtained Oakland, another large strip, and from the Maynards, Hephern, the ground they called "Jones' falls and stonemason's" and it had an elevation of about 400 feet.

Since then the Roland Park Company has purchased additional tracts and today of the following tracts of land: Woodlawn, formerly owned by the late Hiram Woods; Oakland, formerly owned and occupied by the late Mrs. Emily Grady Pennington; Armat, owned by the Misses Armat; Poplar Hill, owned by James Edward Ward, Hephern, formerly owned by J. Y. Maynard; The Hill tract, formerly owned by C. J. Hill.

break the back of a snake, as their victims are very brittle. Then the reptile is at your mercy.

HE BREAKS THEIR BACKS. After disabling a snake the hunters congregate about their prey and make a careful study of its anatomy and leading characteristics. By using the snake all the poison of the sack located under its mouth, is emptied from the fangs. These are needlelike and are used with great rapidity in the snake's efforts to kill.

A few days ago Mr. Oldfield caught a large copperhead, and more than a teaspoonful of brown fluid issued from the fangs, filling its mouth after its head had been cut off.

"In a few minutes," said Mr. Oldfield, "a number of flies had commenced upon it and mopped it up with apparent relish. I looked on with great interest, expecting a wholesale suicide of flies. To my surprise, they ate the fly and went off rejoicing, to tell their fellows of the feast. Truly what a poison to man is food for flies."

Mr. Oldfield contends that the so-called rattlesnake is a rattlesnake, or of which is grown every year after the third, are not instruments by which the noise peculiar to the snake is made. According to him he has caught copperhead snakes and on teasing them they have made the identical noise, despite the fact that they are devoid of rattles. He thinks the noise is made by the scales of the snakes in quick vibration.

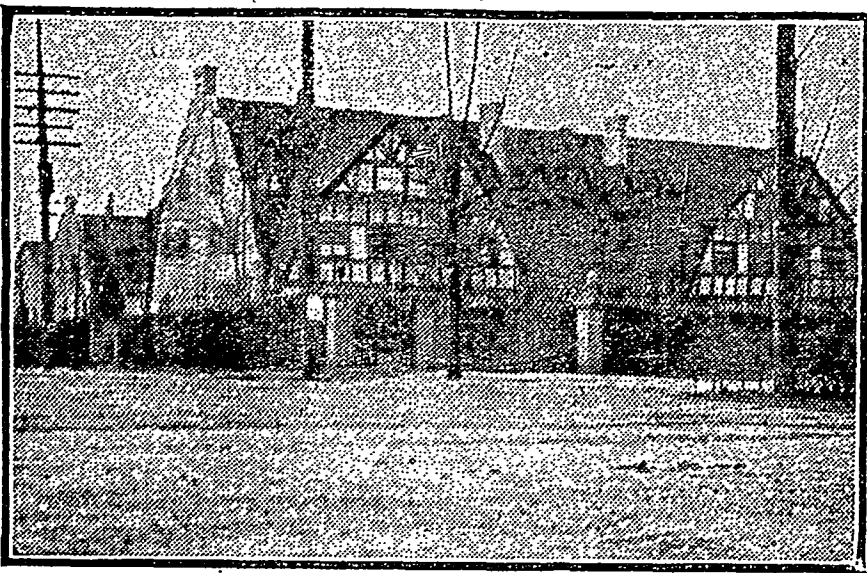
NOT A NATURE FAKER. "I know that President Roosevelt and others will call me a nature faker," said Mr. Oldfield. "This is a perplexing question and I would like some light thrown on it. Let us discuss it without prejudice or passion, and in an intelligent manner. As a rule, he was watchful, suspicious and inclined to sarcasm in his speech. One used to keep the stump of a well-worn cigar in his mouth and prod the mud with it at intervals."

They were liable to sudden disappointances. One individual, to whom a companion on many weary journeys he had become accustomed, being missed from his accustomed stool, inquiry was made of his successor as to his fate.

"Gone on the swing," was the dark reply. "He dared ask no more. Was he hanged for crimes against the company? There is a phrase 'to swing for it.' Did he take a holiday, to 'have his swing'? Or was it some form of punishment, peculiar to horse-car drivers? The riddle is still unsolved."

The route to Merryman's lane was one of many curves and steep grades, passing quite a bit of wild scenery in the narrow valley now spanned by the Cedar avenue bridge. The route was a narrow one, and many others bound on business or pleasure filled up the contingent of passengers.

Now and then, but very rarely a figmy woman would come out under the zealous supervision of the driver. One of these, being severely run down, was taken to a keep, quiet, as there were ladies present, was quite insulted by this hint.



The Roland Park Business Block.

Vauxhall, formerly owned by C. O. D. Lee. The McCormick tract, formerly owned by John P. McCormick.

The Garrett tract, formerly owned by John W. Garrett.

Paradise, formerly owned by the late Robert T. Tamm.

The Brookhead tract, formerly owned by Lennor Blackhead.

The Whitridge tract, formerly owned by Dr. William Whitridge.

The Dulin property, owned by the heirs of the Dulin estate.

And there are various very small tracts not included in this list.

In The Early Days. The Hiram Woods estate, which comprises a great part of the present Roland Park, was about 200 acres in extent, and it lay just at about the middle of the present park. The mansion house of the estate is still standing and is occupied and owned by Mrs. Charles H. Grady.

It is at the corner of Woodlawn and Upton roads. The Hensler house, not far away, is said to be made of stone from the old Woods greenhouse. Before the Woodses acquired the property it had belonged to the Carringtons, who were the Fendalls.

Mrs. Charles H. Grady, one of the oldest residents in the neighborhood of Roland Park, stands at the land upon which the park stands just before it was developed, as follows last week:

"There used to be a large grove of chestnut trees on the top of the hill here" (her house is situated, by the way, near Cross Keys, on the western outskirts of the park). "It was a favorite picnic ground. Chestnut trees, huckleberry and blackberry bushes, and a gravel pit—that's all Roland Park was at the time. The edge of the estate ran beyond where the Rigwood road is now."

The children of the neighborhood used to go up there and gather chestnuts, and it was a favorite picnic ground. Chestnut trees, huckleberry and blackberry bushes, and a gravel pit—that's all Roland Park was at the time. The edge of the estate ran beyond where the Rigwood road is now."

When the dweller in the suburbs came into the city on the electric cars, which consisted of a motor car trailing a passenger car, he was never sure of the manner of his return. Frequently the cars were taken off for a day or so and passengers were left to wait for the next car.

The horse cars, which took the place of the electric line, were of the "hobnob" variety, and were driven by a driver and a conductor. The driver also acted as conductor and the fare was deposited in the "slawson box" under the watchful eye.

Three years ago in that line of the road to the southeast along the new boulevard, Roland Park, altogether, is made up today of the following tracts of land:

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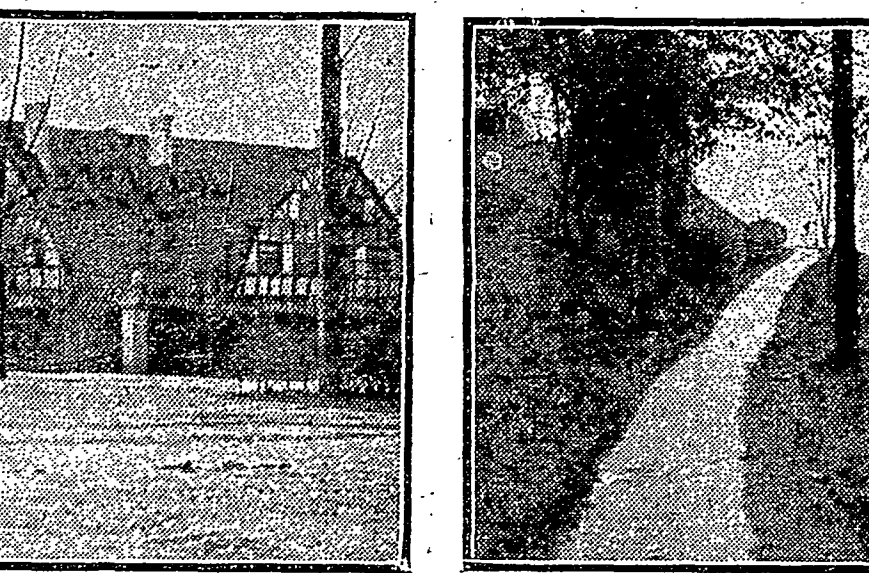
The Fendall property lay to the east of the Roland Park Company, which bought it from the Fendall family. One of the largest and finest black walnut trees ever seen grew on the lawn and was said to have grown from a nut planted by a Fendall dame more than a century ago.

Woodlawn was beautifully laid out and planted. There were two entrances, each with a porter's lodge—one on Roland avenue, the other on the east of the grounds. The extensive orchard of fruit trees added to the attractions, but the ravages of the Woodberry boys were a drawback to the pleasure of the owners.

On one occasion the ladies came suddenly on a band of marauders—small boys—who had filled their clothing with stolen apples. Tying strings around their legs, even their trousers were utilized as bags; shoes and jackets full, they could hardly walk, and flight was impossible!

Mr. Woods sold Woodlawn to the Roland Park Company. Beyond were the lands of Mr. Charles O'Donnell, Mr. Bonaparte and Mr. Dushane, now all merged in Roland Park.

They Drove To Town. The country dwellers generally drove into the city. Mr. Bonaparte usually drove in twice every day. The ladies and children patronized the narrow-gauge road, the Maryland and Pennsylvania was called then.



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There are two clubs—the Baltimore Country Club and the Roland Park Woman's Club. Although organized in 1901, the Baltimore Country Club is practically the property of Baltimore now, as its membership is largely made up of Baltimoreans. It is one of the foremost organizations of its kind in the State. It has a membership of 2,200. It occupies about 135 acres of land, 30 acres of which it owns outright and the rest of which it rents from the Roland Park Company for golf course. It owns its club buildings and bowling alley, which, together, cost nearly \$125,000.

Probably no country club in America has a more beautiful situation. Seated at the top of a high hill overlooking the Jones Falls Valley, it can be seen for a long distance, and its windows afford a glorious view. This excellent situation serves a practical as well as an aesthetic purpose, as the members have constructed from the clubhouse to the foot of the hill the only toboggan slide in the South, and upon this they descend during the winter.

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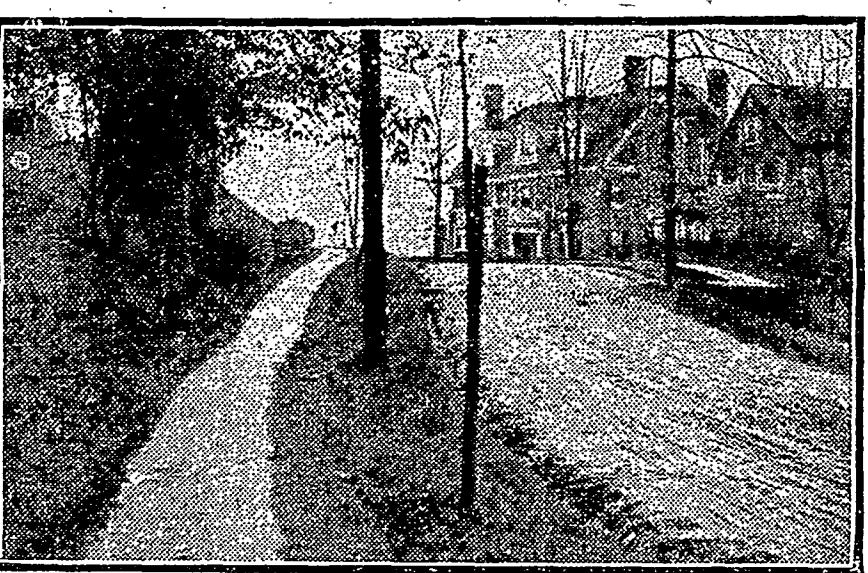
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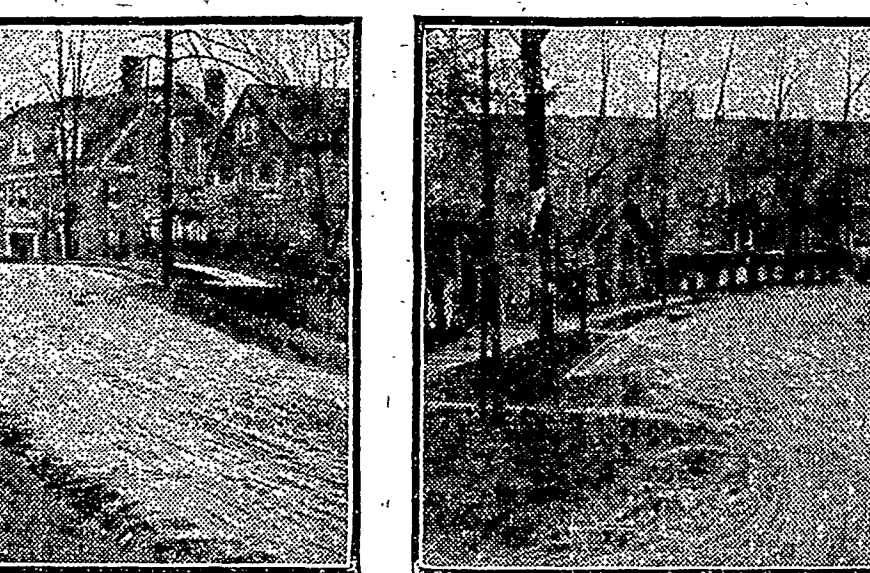
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The first two officers are the largest stockholders. Mr. Miller is also largely interested in the Garage Amusement Company, which introduced roller skating in its vogue in Baltimore.

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Churches And Clubs. The churches in Roland Park are: St. David's Protestant Episcopal Church, Rev. Dr. T. C. Poole, rector; the Presbyterian Church, Rev. John W. Douglas, pastor; the Methodist Church, Rev. W. V. Mallin, pastor.