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GREEN COUNTRY TOWNS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHILADELPHIA'S MAIN LINE, 1870-1915.

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE (WINTERTHUR-PROGRAM), M.A., 1981

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GREEN COUNTRY TOWNS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF
PHILADELPHIA'S MAIN LINE, 1870-1915

By
John Marshall Groff

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Art in Early American Culture.

June, 1981
GREEN COUNTRY TOWNS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF
PHILADELPHIA'S MAIN LINE, 1870-1915

By

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PREFACE

The topic of this thesis developed in part from a lifelong interest in the Main Line and its history. Having been raised in that area, I was well acquainted with various colonial sites, focusing my attention on the well-known structures while ignoring those of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I took for granted that all of the Welsh village names like Bryn Mawr dated from William Penn's time, not realizing their relative modernness. It was course work in architectural history with Dr. George Tatum at the University of Delaware which first made me aware of Victorian buildings. I began to give more attention to the fascinating houses in the Main Line area from that period and discovered the actual history of its development. With a background in archaeology and anthropology and my studies at Winterthur Museum and the University of Delaware I decided to approach the study of the Main Line from several viewpoints, including history, sociology and architectural history.

I would like to thank my professors in the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture for
preparing me for the study of material culture, and especially Kenneth L. Ames who made me aware of the fascination of the 19th century and who so ably advised me on this paper.

I would also like to thank the following for their help in the preparation of this thesis: Jane Allen, Philadelphia Maritime Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Katherine Cummin, Radnor Historical Society, Wayne, Pennsylvania; Dorothy H. Therman, Radnor Historical Society, Wayne, Pennsylvania; the library staff, The Athenaeum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the library staff, Gladwyne Library; Gladwyne, Pennsylvania; the library staff, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the staff of the Lower Merion Historical Society, Rosemont, Pennsylvania; and the administrators and owners of the numerous houses and estates I was able to visit.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Diane, for her assistance and patience, particularly as we wound around the country roads of the Main Line in pursuit of a late 19th century house or the remnants of an estate.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION. IMAGE VS. REALITY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I. THE WELSH TRACT: AN HISTORICAL PRELUDE</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II. THE COMING OF THE RAILROAD</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III. EARLY COUNTRY HOUSES: BRYN MAWR IN THE 1870'S AND 1880'S</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV. THE EARLY ESTATES: THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD AND BALDWIN LOCOMOTIVE BARONY</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER V. A BIT OF OLD ENGLAND IN PENNSYLVANIA: COUNTRY LIFE FOR PHILADELPHIA'S OLD AND NEW RICH</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER VI. MR. CHILDS'S AND MR. DREXEL'S FAIR SUBURBS: WAYNE AND ST. DAVIDS</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION. THE END OF AN ERA</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ILLUSTRATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BRYN MAWR STATION, CIRCA 1875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>THE BRYN MAWR HOTEL, CIRCA 1875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>WOOTTON, CIRCA 1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CHESWOLD, CIRCA 1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>WENTWORTH, CIRCA 1884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>REDLEAF, CIRCA 1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CLAIREMONT, CIRCA 1897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>MEADOW LODGE, CIRCA 1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>WAYNE BUSINESS DISTRICT, CIRCA 1900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GREEN COUNTRY TOWNS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF
PHILADELPHIA'S MAIN LINE, 1870-1915

By

John Marshall Groff

An abstract of a thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Early American Culture.

June, 1981

Approved: Kenneth L. Ames Ph.D.
ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the development after the Civil War of Philadelphia's Main Line as a residential area for the upper and upper middle classes. While the villages of the area give the appearance of being named and developed during the Welsh period of settlement in the late 17th and 18th centuries, in reality they were developed after 1865 and named by the Pennsylvania Railroad. They grew through the interest of that railroad, its executives, the officers of the Baldwin Locomotive Works and financiers like Anthony J. Drexel and publisher George W. Childs.

Development which began in the area around Bryn Mawr and its famous resort hotel spread to other villages along the Main Line as large country estates were built by upper class Philadelphians. The manners and recreations of country life and the associated architecture and landscaping echoed the preoccupation with country living. This lifestyle contrasted with the source of wealth, most often in modern industry or manufacturing. Summers and holidays of gentlemanly leisure were spent on estates, often of several hundred acres, in increa-
ingly formal houses of thirty or more rooms. Architectural styles and interior decoration reflected both current fashion and the social antagonism between Philadelphians of old and new wealth. The styles were also adopted by the upper middle class, making suburban developments like Wayne and St. Davids a success in the last two decades of the 19th century.

By 1915 many of the Main Line houses were becoming year round residences. The colonial allusions and the images of country gentility begun by the Pennsylvania Railroad and the early developers were pervasive.
INTRODUCTION

IMAGE VS. REALITY

Visitors to Philadelphia's residential area called the Main Line are consistently impressed with its beauty as winding roads pass well maintained estates and manicured suburban residences. The sense of history is pervasive in Welsh village names like Bryn Mawr, Bala Cynwyd and Haverford. Rambling 18th century fieldstone houses overlook pasturelands and gardens. An occasional late 19th century Gothic manor or French chateau intrudes into the colonial landscape, but the image of centuries of quiet prosperity and taste persists. The success of this illusion is complete, yet in reality this country suburb is really the result of planning by several influential gentlemen and a railroad. It is rooted not in the 18th century, but in the late 19th or early 20th centuries. The 18th century fieldstone house was probably built in 1910 or 1920, years after the manors and chateaus. It is apparent that the visual impressions of country houses and country life in the 18th or early 19th century modes does very little to explain the actual history of
The Main Line is the result of planning in the boom period following the Civil War. The architecture, the landscape, and the affectations of British country life are an idealization made possible by the large fortunes made in the industries of this period. One hundred and twenty-five years ago Bryn Mawr was the farming community of Humphreysville. It comprised small farms and larger tracts which had been land grants by William Penn to families like the Ellises and Robertses.1 The owners of these country seats often lived in Philadelphia where they made their real fortunes in industry and finance. Life for the upper class of Philadelphia was centered in the city, not in these difficult to reach rural areas. There was little inducement to settle in the country. The railroad, put through in the 1830's, eased transportation but did little to stimulate development west of what today is Fairmount Park and the Montgomery County line. It would take planning, a large influx of capital, and changing fashion to stimulate significant suburban growth.

Although this paper briefly surveys the area's colonial history, its focus is post-Civil War development when the early Welsh allusions helped induce
settlement along the Main Line. The critical years came after 1857 when the Pennsylvania Railroad purchased the Columbia Line. After the interim of the Civil War they began to plan the development of the area, hoping to turn it into a fashionable summer resort and the location for numerous country estates. There was very limited interest at first, but railroad officials like George B. Roberts and Alexander J. Cassatt and publisher George W. Childs built country estates in the area and soon began to market "country life". Pressure was placed on Pennsylvania Railroad and Baldwin Locomotive executives to build summer retreats in this area. A lively resort life grew around the Bryn Mawr Hotel and smaller boarding houses. The Main Line began to become socially acceptable and profitable to landholders and developers. A parallel Society arose around the summer diversions of upper class Philadelphians. This was not a primitive retreat but had familiar comforts within the security of the same social group. Men with newly made fortunes followed the summer exodus to the suburbs in the 1870's hoping to establish their social credentials in these less rigid months so that they might return to the city in the fall and find themselves accepted by the city's social elite.

In the 1880's and 1890's the Main Line grew from a summer resort to a landscape with country estates and
year-round residences. The railroad facilitated the changes in the patterns of population and the beginning of the decline of the city as the most desirable residential area. Large influxes of immigrants rapidly altered the character of city neighborhoods as Philadelphia's elite moved first from Society Hill to Rittenhouse Square and then to the suburbs of the Main Line and to Chestnut Hill.

Although most prominent Philadelphia families liked to imagine that there wealth was based in the 18th or early 19th century in finance or trade, after the Civil War it was most often rooted in heavy industry or manufacturing. To deny this monetary base, which had the social stigma of the nouveau riche, the older families surrounded themselves with the trappings of the country squire: fox hunts, gentleman's farms, cricket clubs, golf courses etc. The Main Line became a perfect stage to present this image. Anyone could be rich, but the illusion of generations of wealth and position were the key to social prestige. Their styles of architecture and designs of interiors are now often looked on as arbitrary and unworthy of study, but these late 19th and early 20th century designers had a clear image of what their monied clientele wanted and what each style represented. The owners of the houses used the design
and development of their estates to reiterate their position in Philadelphia Society and to subtly convey the distinctions within this set.

Struthers Burt, his son Nathaniel, Stephen Birmingham and E. Digby Baltzell have all examined Philadelphia's social structure at length. The most extensive and probably best known work is Nathaniel Burt's portrait of the self-important Philadelphia gentleman in The Perennial Philadelphians. Although Burt is perceptive in his study of the social mores of the city he only paints part of the picture. The social structure of a group is formed by a multiplicity of factors. The structure is by no means a closed one and the "ideals" of society are often not the realities. The tight society that many books portray reveals more of the desires of the languishing colonial elite of the city than the realities of the post-Civil War world. As Baltzell has demonstrated in his three important studies of the city's upper class, the class persists but the names of the families who hold the most exalted social positions continually change. There was an aristocracy in America, as De Tocqueville had observed early in the 19th century, but it was a monied one. Within a few generations the stigma of new wealth was erased as the descendants of the founder of the family fortune, if they played the game properly and made a few
socially beneficial marriage alliances, were soon at the crest of the social wave. There were certain rules of behavior to follow, certain dues to pay, but good manners, good taste, and a generous spirit did bring acceptance.

After the Civil War the Main Line became the playing field for various economic and social games. The building of large estates, the design and marketing of suburban developments like Wayne all appealed to the social and emotional needs of these Philadelphians. Using what Baltzell labeled the sociology of architecture and design, this paper investigates the growth of the Main Line. Motivations and processes for the social reconditioning of the area are revealed in the houses, their builders and the design of the entire Main Line.

In 1980 the Main Line is a very different place. It is truly suburban with the resultant problems of over crowding and pollution that the early developers had tried to escape. It is by no means an upper class area of homogeneous ethnic make up. Only about a dozen of the large estates still exist in private hands, yet the image of country exclusivity and the grand manner persists. Welsh and British allusions abound and country life in clubs and hunts continues although less pervasive than earlier years. The true gentleman's farm has moved further west
to Unionville, West Chester, and the like, but the selling
of the Main Line continues rich with colonial references
and suggestions of the beneficial and desirable social
life it offers. For a whole new generation of wealthy
individuals the image of country gentility is being
carefully shaped and sold.
CHAPTER I

THE WELSH TRACT: AN HISTORICAL PRELUDE

After the Civil War, when the railroad developers decided to create a new and appealing image for the Main Line they found a wealth of material from its English and Welsh settlers. In the 1680's in an attempt to raise money, William Penn sold off parcels of his land grant in Philadelphia and its environs. A number of prominent Welsh Quakers were attracted by the talk of a "Welsh Barony" to be located to the west of the city in an offering of about forty thousand acres in five thousand acre lots.\(^1\) Penn assured these Welshmen autonomy and their own council. Unfortunately, this was another instance where Penn's promises were unfounded. In reality, Penn had already sold lots in Philadelphia with the condition that each buyer take country acreage. Thus, several parcels were spoken for.\(^2\) Penn hoped to foster an interrelated community of town and city dwellers but in misleading the purchasers of land laid the foundations for future antagonism.

The Welsh investors soon found their concept of

8

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a "Welsh Barony" improbable because of the intrusion of speculators in country land. The formation in 1689 of Penn's Provincial Council ended any possibility of real power. Their tract, composed of Haverford, Merion and Radnor Townships, was divided into two different counties. Although Penn is remembered for his contributions to the early colony he cannot be credited with thoughtful organization. Consciously or unconsciously he alienated factions like the Welsh settlers by trying to manipulate land and power to his own ends. Too often he was absent from the colony, leaving power in the hands of incapable representatives.

Discouraged in the concept of self-government, the Welsh turned to their land and developed prosperous farms and mills. Quaker meeting houses were established in Merion, Haverford and Radnor. Thirty thousand acres of land had been purchased by seven Welsh companies at £100 for each five thousand acres. Among the heads of companies were: Dr. Edward Jones, John Bevan, Dr. Thomas Wynne, Charles Lloyd, and Rowland Ellis. Most of these men established country seats which wholly remained in their families until the 1860's when the Pennsylvania Railroad began its suburban expansion.

Settlement of the area was at first very slow. About a dozen Welsh families dominated the area and by
inter-marriage and close economic and social affiliations exercised some control over local affairs. Many, alienated by Penn's failure to grant them autonomy began a pattern of non-participation in governmental matters. In the area now called Bryn Mawr, and the southern portions of Haverford, Ardmore, and Wynnewood, the Humphreys family controlled much of the land. By the 19th century, descendants of John Humphreys held over 1900 acres and several country seats including Joshua Humphreys' Pont Reading in Haverford. Typical of the more prosperous Quakers, the Humphreys had become involved in finance and early industry in Philadelphia. The village at modern Bryn Mawr was on Humphreys family land and was called Humphreysville until renamed by the railroad after the Civil War.

The other major land holders in the area were the Ellis family. Brothers Thomas and Rowland Ellis arrived in 1686 in the Welsh Tract from Merionethshire, Wales with plans for a plantation. Rowland, a preacher for the Society of Friends, became an interpreter for the Welsh in the area and by 1700 represented the Welsh Tract in the Pennsylvania Assembly. In 1704 he built a stone "mansion" which he named Bryn Mawr after his family's Welsh home. As Carl Doebley has noted in his survey of Lower Merion Township architecture, this house with its
Georgian symmetry and pent eaves was a significant change from the frame houses of the earlier settlers.\textsuperscript{13} It moved beyond Welsh provincial architecture, establishing a sophisticated presence which was copied by other prosperous landowners in the design of their country seats.

In 1717 Richard Harrison purchased Bryn Mawr after his marriage to Hannah Norris, the daughter of Philadelphia Quaker merchant Isaac Norris and grand-daughter of Deputy Governor Thomas Lloyd.\textsuperscript{14} They renamed the plantation Harriton and Harrison, a Marylander, introduced tobacco and slaves to the farm with moderate success. In 1747 Harrison died, leaving the estate to his daughter, Hannah, who in 1774 married Charles Thomson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and Secretary of Congress.\textsuperscript{15}

By 1732 Lower Merion Township had fifty-two landholders and tenants.\textsuperscript{16} Ten years later, 101 taxable landholders, 7 slaves, 4 taverns, 5 grist mills, 4 sawmills, 2 tanneries, 245 horses and 298 cattle were listed.\textsuperscript{17} In that year, the Lancaster Road expanded from a primitive trail to a busy link between Philadelphia and Lancaster. A 17th century stretch of the road was also reconstructed and later became known as Conestoga Road.\textsuperscript{18} Farming dominated the area but a number of
the Welsh landowners realized the potential of the creeks passing through their properties. By 1750 mills flourished along Mill Creek grinding flour, sawing wood, and at Dove Mill, making paper. Road names like Righter's Mill, Levering's Mill, Mill Creek, and McClenaghan's Mill reflect the growth of these small industries at that time. Seventeenth century families like the Robertses became active in the local milling and manufacturing. At Pencoyd Farm (now part of Bala Cynwyd) one member of the family established an early iron foundry.

During the Revolutionary War, many Welsh Quakers whose families settled in the Welsh Tract in the previous century moved out from Philadelphia where they had been in commerce. They retreated to their country homes, escaping the fighting which their religion abhorred. Others strayed from the Quaker tenets, either feeling the principles of the Revolution were too strong or the profits to be made were too tempting. Schisms within the Society of Friends rapidly developed and never healed. Several Quakers began the exodus to the Episcopalian Church as they intermarried with wealthy families of Anglican background.

At the end of the Revolutionary War there came a brief retreat into quiet rural life. Descendants of 17th century settlers still controlled the major land-
holdings in the area, but often became absentee landlords. Attracted by the mills, farm land, and Schuylkill River fisheries, a number of German immigrants settled, became tenant farmers, mill workers and small landowners. Members of the Cadwalader, Ellis, Lloyd, Roberts, and Humphreys families established city residences focusing on the meeting house at Fourth and Arch Streets, and near to their lucrative pursuits in commerce and finance. At the same time, upper class Protestant families built houses in the city's Society Hill section. Although barriers remained between the two religious groups, cross-overs prompted by marriage and business expediencies soon followed. Precedents for the 19th century country life of the Main Line were found at the country seats of several of these influential families.

In 1792 the Lancaster Road was again improved and was incorporated as the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike Company. The road stretched sixty-two miles and was built at a cost of $465,000. Stage lines increased their number of weekly trips with villages like Humphreysville (Bryn Mawr) and Athensville (Ardmore) as focal points. Population increased with a larger number of people needed to serve the travelers in inns and hotels, but most people passed through favoring the Lancaster area and its strong provincial commerce. By 1800 the
population of Lower Merion stood at 1422 with approximately 350 taxable landholders. 1828 saw a rise to five hundred taxable landholders, but it was hardly a booming area. Life for the wealthy still focused on the city, and transportation, while improved, was far from ideal. The same families continued to dominate the area and often increased their holdings. By mid-19th century, through intermarriage and business acumen, they were powerful figures in Philadelphia's economic and social worlds. The family trees of the post-Civil War industrialists typically contain a Cadwalader or Evans, Ellis or Lloyd, who had been 17th century Welsh Tract settlers.

1823 was a pivotal year for the growth of the Main Line. On March 31st of that year John Stevens received a charter from the state legislature for a railroad. The private backers of this road planned to run it from Philadelphia to Columbia where it would connect with a canal system. Stevens’s venture did not materialize, but in 1828 the state passed a new act and undertook the construction themselves. By 1834 eighty-two miles of track were laid for the Main Line of Public Works of the State of Pennsylvania, giving the area to the west of the city its familiar name, the Main Line. The railroad succeeded, and in
the late 1830's the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad was established to compete for the profits. Its line ran through Lower Merion Township along the Schuylkill River close to the mills of Mill Creek.29

The immediate effect of the railroads was not so much a stimulation of local development, rather it made transportation to the outlying areas quicker and more comfortable. Those who enjoyed their country retreats or liked to pass a few summer weeks in a peaceful rural setting continued to do so with a new ease of transportation. However, the Main Line was not yet a center of social activity. Fashionable Philadelphians located their country homes along the Delaware River or to the northwest of the city along Wissahickon Creek.

By the 1830's and 1840's neighborhoods were changing within Philadelphia. The area south of Washington Square where the majority of the upper class lived, felt strong pressure from immigration and industrial encroachment. Many of the 18th century houses showed signs of neglect and did not have the design or scale compatible with 19th century prosperity and their life style. A shift began towards the area of Rittenhouse Square, west of Broad Street, and by the 1850's
large houses were under construction. Digby Baltzell commented about Rittenhouse Square:

At no other time in the city's history before or since, have so many wealthy and fashionable families lived so near one another.30

Among those who moved to Rittenhouse Square were Main Line landholders. The social interrelationship of families on the Square helped increase interest in the Main Line.

After the completion of the Columbia Railroad line, a number of small communities grew along the tracks to the west of Philadelphia. In the 1830's the "Paoli Local" trains started and still continue today as a commuter line of Conrail.31 The earliest trains had the appearance of a stage coach, with bright red cars lighted by oil lamps and heated with coal stoves. Because of their appearance riders dubbed them "fire-flies".32 The average speed of these trains was four miles per hour, but this soon improved with more sophisticated locomotives from the Baldwin Locomotive Works.33

Before the 1860's the western rail lines were not geared to commuter traffic. There were six scheduled trains a day which stopped at the small depots, but their primary function was to take freight or passengers further
west to Lancaster, Pittsburgh and beyond. Sometimes land owners on the Main Line would have to ride the "emigrant train" which was crowded with recent immigrants on their way west.34 The first stop in the western reaches of Philadelphia was at Merionville, where Old Lancaster Road crosses Montgomery Avenue in present day Merion. Nearby was Academyville where the Lower Merion Academy for boys was founded in 1812. This area was renamed Bala Cynwyd by Pennsylvania Railroad President, George Roberts, in the 1870's. Heading west the train passed through Libertyville (modern Narberth) with its wheelwright shop and stores and on to Athensville (Ardmore) where there were three inns. To the northwest of Athensville was the small village of Merion Square (Gladwyne), serviced by the Reading Line. Merion Square was close to the Mill Creek mills and served as their depot.35

In 1833 Haverford College was founded by Quakers and located between Athensville and Humphreysville (Bryn Mawr). A small community developed around the college and by the 1840's was serviced by the railroad. Others saw the advantages of locating a college in the country and in 1842 the Augustan Fathers, a Catholic order, founded Villanova University on a hill to the west of Humphreysville.36
In 1850, the population of Lower Merion stood at 3515 and tax rolls listed property valued at $1,783,000. Several perceptive executives of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which had been chartered in 1846, felt the railroad which passed through this area could be crucial to the establishment of a major freight and passenger line. In addition they saw excellent possibilities for development along the right-of-way. In 1857 they reached an agreement with the state and purchased the Main Line of Public Works for $7,500,000, about $10,000,000 below the cost of construction. Humphreysville, important since 1850 as a water and fuel depot, became a focus for the railroad's plans. In 1859 they built its first passenger depot. Called White Hall Station, it served as telegraph office, ticket office, and passenger station. Development was slow but after the Civil War White Hall had many more passengers passing through as the interest in the area increased.

Country life and resort life to the west of the city had some attraction by the Civil War. With increased development, the presence of the right individuals and the suggestion of exclusivity they were able after the Civil War to also gain the patrician's attention. By 1865, several of the Pennsylvania Railroad lines left
Philadelphia. Trains journeyed southwest to Media and West Chester, northwest towards Chestnut Hill, but the focus of their attention became the Main Line. A choice was made, and the railroad officials and Baldwin Locomotive executives soon began the construction of large and well planned country estates. The word would spread of the advantages to health and well-being in country life, with the lure of social acceptability clearly understood.
CHAPTER II

THE COMING OF THE RAILROAD

The development of the Main Line as an area of country houses is intricately linked to the Pennsylvania Railroad. The ease of commuting to the city is an obvious indicator of the railroad's significance, and the layout of villages, roads, and the rural landscape were directly related to the railroad, its associated industries and its leaders. In the second half of the nineteenth century the Pennsylvania Railroad became a pivotal institution among Philadelphia's elite. A directorship or executive position provided almost certain acceptance in the loftiest social circles. When the railroad executives took up residence, their presence became a magnet, attracting other prominent Philadelphians. The numerous boarding houses expanded to accommodate their larger clientele and new hotels were constructed.

During the 1860's the Pennsylvania Railroad decided to straighten the track as it passed through Humphreysville. Therefore:
The company's agents sought to buy rights-of-way through farmlands for the present cut-off, but the prices asked were so high that the company concluded it was better to purchase the whole farms.

In 1869 they bought sixty-two acres from the farmers, and a few early city landholders, and made plans to develop Bryn Mawr. W. Hansell Wilson wrote in 1895 in "Reminiscences of an Engineer":

For the purpose of stimulating suburban travel, several tracts of land adjacent to the revised line of the Pennsylvania Railroad ..., were purchased in my name and a town laid out.

Wilson became general manager of the property and he claims that as titular owner he chose the name Bryn Mawr taking it from Rowland Ellis's 17th century plantation. Undoubtedly the suggestions for a name were numerous, but Bryn Mawr conveyed the image the developers desired. At the time Wilson assumed management, the railroad realized that something was needed to publicize the development and attract potential buyers. A grand resort hotel and concentration on the area as an idyllic alternative to city life seemed the answer.

The popularity of the Main Line as a summer resort for Philadelphians in the 1870's and 1880's began modestly in the period before the Civil War. In addition to the inns serving the travelers of the railroad and those following the Lancaster Turnpike west, there
were several boarding houses which opened for the season each May 1st and attended to guests throughout the summer. Accommodations were simple and reasons for a visit usually focused on health and the benefits of country air. The White Hall in Humphreysville exemplifies the boarding house type. Built in the 1830's alongside the railroad tracks, it was serviced by six daily trains. The White Hall provided modest rooms without the comforts of indoor plumbing. A butcher shop shared the ground floor of the structure, doing little to enhance its atmosphere. About seventy-five guests could be accommodated. Few of the city's prominent families gave it a second thought, but for some it offered country air, simple fare and an escape from the city, all at a modest price.

The White Hall Hotel continued well into the resort heyday of the 1870's and 1880's, attracting wealthier visitors as its surroundings improved. Stabling for fifty horses and a servant's annex were now available, and the weekly rate rose to $12.00.

By the 1870's more people were attracted to the boarding houses along the Main Line. In 1874 fifty-four boarding houses operated from Overbrook out to Downingtown and accommodated a total of 1350 guests. Houses like the Summit Grove in Bryn Mawr showed a new sophistication with copper bathtubs and well appointed
rooms. For $12.00 to $15.00 per week eighty-five guests could enjoy home grown produce, fresh milk and poultry, all in a restful setting among familiar faces. As Henry Graham Ashmead wrote in 1885, these were:

...places for the enjoyment of sweetness and light of the God-made country by those who have worn out health or patience in gathering the apples of fortune in the financial and commercial orchard of the man-made town.

The Pennsylvania Railroad promoters adopted this theme of country rest with leisure time for family enjoyment and sport. They concentrated on the healthy air, noting that Bryn Mawr was four hundred feet above sea level and received comforting breezes. They did not discuss the flies or mosquitoes, the stagnant ponds or the dirt from the roads.

One of the first boarding houses to gain the patronage of some of Philadelphia's prominent families was the Wildgoss on the western edge of Haverford College's campus. Among others, members of the Scull, Dayton, Wheeler, Converse and Williams families patronized this house and set a social tone which attracted other visitors. As Benjamin Kramer noted:

The Wildgoss boarders were a jolly lot as though they were members of one big happy family. The hotel was always filled to capacity and had a long waiting list for each season.
The characterization of the big happy family is quite revealing. By marriage, business or social relationships these summer visitors formed an upper class or upper middle class family with distinct perimeters, modes of behavior and rules for entry. Shared tastes and hobbies made summer vacations as comfortable and secure as life around Rittenhouse Square in the city. Upper class Philadelphians were not cosmopolitan; they formed a provincial elite. Despite their proffered preference for the culture of the city, the elite was often far better conditioned to the manners of country gentility. The Wildgoss operated from 1868 until 1888 letting rooms only for an entire season and fostering a club-like group of perennial visitors. Some members of this group, like Andrew Wheeler, built large summer estates of their own, but continued to enjoy cricket and croquet and by the 1870's tennis with others from Philadelphia's upper class.13

The construction of the Bryn Mawr Hotel gave the area a more cosmopolitan air and a new emphasis on formal manners. The central image of the railroad's development became this four story mansard roofed hotel with its broad verandas and stylish grounds. In 1875 William B. Sipes wrote in the company sponsored Pennsylvania Railroad:
Occupying a delightful position in the midst of a fertile and well-watered country ... beautiful and comfortable station houses were built and these were followed by a suburb hotel ... from a scattered hamlet the place is growing into proportions of an elegant town.\textsuperscript{15} (Plate 1)

Suites and single rooms for two hundred and fifty guests, gas lights, bowling alleys, billiard rooms, and the first elevator on the Main Line were enticements for a wider section of the city's elite.\textsuperscript{16} The first structure of the hotel was built in 1871 from designs by Wilson Brothers of Philadelphia.\textsuperscript{17} In 1873 and 1876 two additional wings were added producing a large box-like stone building whose mansard roof was dominated by a central tower framed in the half-timber style (Plate 2).

The first years of the hotel were less successful than the railroad's brochures and books intimated. Under the management of the Keystone Hotel Company the season opened each May 31st, often to a dismal spring. In front of the hotel were two ponds which turned into quagmires. The twenty-five and a half acres of property were mostly treeless and presented a less than inviting image.\textsuperscript{18} The railroad realized that this centerpiece to their upper class development needed considerable refinement. The ponds were drained and terraced gardens planted. Avenues of trees were developed and coaching drives and riding trails laid out on the grounds.\textsuperscript{19}
Plate 1. Bryn Mawr Station, circa 1875
Plate 2. The Bryn Mawr Hotel, circa 1875
Most importantly, prominent Philadelphians like Alexander J. Cassatt, Percival Roberts and Richard Brinton took up summer residence, often while their own country estates were being constructed. As might be expected, directly or through relations, most of the early visitors or trendsetters had money or position invested in the Pennsylvania Railroad and its improvements. They were, however, prominent enough figures to stir the interest of Philadelphia Society in this new resort.

The Bryn Mawr Assemblies (balls), performances by Philadelphia's leading glee club, the Orpheus Club, and varied sporting activities created a gayer life than that of the boarding houses. Many of the exclusive sporting clubs of the Main Line were founded by these resorters. Established clubs like the Merion Cricket Club, founded in 1865, expanded with resort patronage. "Cavalcades" of as many as twenty-five riders left the Bryn Mawr Hotel to explore the Mill Creek Valley. Foundations for the Radnor Hunt Club were laid by early patrons of the hotel who built large summer houses along Bryn Mawr Avenue. Magnificent coaches pulled by two, four or six horses in gleaming tack ushered in the pastime of the afternoon drive and made attractive illustrations for the hotel's brochures. The early years may have been tenuous and somewhat forced, but by the
1880's upper class Philadelphia had accepted the Bryn Mawr Hotel as one of the desirable spots for summer sport.

On October 11, 1887 fire raced through the hotel. Fortunately, only forty people were still in residence at this late date and all were saved.23 Bryn Mawr did not have a fire company at this time so equipment was brought out from Philadelphia on railroad gondolas, but arrived far too late to be effective in saving the hotel.24 The hotel was rebuilt, but instead of railroad ownership, was financed by a syndicate of neighboring estate owners.25 A half a million dollars was raised in the sale of stocks and bonds in the venture. Among the stockholders were the familiar names of A.J. Cassatt (at that time the Pennsylvania Railroad's Vice-President), George W. Childs (publisher of Philadelphia's premier newspaper, the Public Ledger), and Andrew Wheeler (partner in one of the city's largest iron foundries). The building was designed by the architectural firm of Furness, Evans & Co., favored architects of well established members of Philadelphia Society.26

The new hotel was completed in 1890, and opened to social acclaim for its architectural splendor and the luxuries of its accommodations for three hundred and fifty guests.27 However, the demand for hotel rooms in
this area was decreasing. Those who had adopted the Main Line as a summer home found it more comfortable to build a large house and staff it with their own servants. The Bryn Mawr Hotel continued as a center for large functions and the overflow of house guests, but no longer commanded waiting list exclusivity. Also at this time the popular resort season shrank from the entire summer to the months of June and September as wealthy Philadelphians discovered the refined pleasures of Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor on the Maine Coast, and the more gilded social whirl of Newport for the hot and humid months of July and August. The stock of the Bryn Mawr Hotel never paid a dividend; the bond interest came due but checks were not forthcoming, so in 1896 the hotel and its land were sold to the Baldwin School for Girls which maintains it today.

Other large hotels flourished further west on the Main Line in the 1870's and 1880's but like the Bryn Mawr hotel declined towards the end of the century. The Bellevue Hotel in Wayne, built in 1881 by George W. Childs and Anthony J. Drexel and the Devon Inn erected in 1876 by A. Stanley Stanford were the most notable. These hotels and the boarding houses had dominated the social life of the Main Line. They attracted the wealthy and socially prominent and introduced them to country life.
By the 1890's people would journey much further from their city residences to New England to escape the summer heat. Their children might then meet and marry their counterparts from the upper classes of other Eastern cities, but a pattern of club life, proper resort manners and customs would be carried with them from these early hotel visits along the Main Line. For the railroad and the landowners the hotels had served their purpose in stimulating investment through the aura of social desirability. Farmland would now become manicured lawn; farmhouses would be replaced by manor or chateau.
CHAPTER III

EARLY COUNTRY HOUSES: BRYN MAWR

IN THE 1870'S AND 1880'S

Although the Pennsylvania Railroad was anxious to attract buyers for their land in Bryn Mawr, they realized certain restrictions were necessary to maintain an upper class image. When they began in the 1870's to offer lots, they included in the deeds a restriction that houses along Montgomery Avenue cost not less than $8,000 and on other streets not less than $5,000.1 Montgomery Avenue was to be a fine boulevard with large houses set-back from the road. With neither municipal or township government at this time, restrictions could be dictated by the landowner and passed along in property deeds. In this period, $8,000 built a stone or brick residence of at least five bedrooms with numerous specialized rooms such as library, music room, study, and servant's quarters. Stained glass windows, fine carvings of stone and wood finished the interiors.2 Outbuildings would be included at an additional cost. The railroad hoped to attract prosperous
country estate builders by assuring a minimal standard of size and quality, and essentially creating a restricted neighborhood.

Fashion was an important factor in the promotion of the new development. Aware that they must supply the momentum, the Pennsylvania Railroad executives, and their associates at Baldwin Locomotive and in Philadelphia's financial institutions (all of whom had investments at stake) took the lead in establishing country houses. Alexander J. Cassatt, general manager of the railroad, began construction of his house, Cheswold, in Haverford in 1871. Soon houses were underway along Montgomery Avenue, providing visual samples of what was available and could be constructed for as low as the minimum price. Visitors to the Bryn Mawr Hotel were certain to see these attractive new houses.

Some of the executives were reluctant either to move to the area or to invest their money. However, the ambitious company men heeded the railroad's strong recommendation. As Stephen Birmingham wrote:

When the hotel venture was not immediately successful, the line added houses and when these, too, failed to sell well, it decreed that all railroad executives of stature must build large estates there—a thing many railroad men and their wives were not eager to do.

Although often unhappy about it, the railroad officers
bent under company pressure and in the 1870's created a number of fine suburban retreats. Rapidly they found country life could be quite pleasant, and several, like Cassatt, made their homes year-round residences.5

The first residences to be built on Montgomery Avenue were comfortable and large but hardly distinctive in style. One of the first railroad officers to purchase a house in Bryn Mawr was Samuel Rea, assistant to vice-president DuBarry, and later president of the railroad himself.6 Located on Montgomery Avenue, at a diagonal to the Bryn Mawr Hotel, it was a very boxy structure of stone with red brickwork decoration around the windows and doors.7 The architect of the house was Addison Hutton, a Quaker whose conservative style was popular with many early Main Line residents.

One of the earliest residents of Bryn Mawr was Charles Wheeler, a Philadelphia iron foundry owner. Wheeler rented the Humphreys homestead on Lancaster Avenue while his estate at Morris Avenue and Gulph Road, Pembroke, was under construction. Wheeler's brother, Andrew, also built a large house in Bryn Mawr across from Pembroke on what is now called Fishers Road.8 These two extended their social prominence from Philadelphia to become leaders in the new local Society. Charles Wheeler's son, Charles Jr., is credited with

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being the first child born in the new Bryn Mawr. When the Wheelers moved to their completed estate, the Humphreys house was sold to John M. Kennedy and then to Theodore N. Ely, both with the railroad.

Other early residents on Montgomery Avenue included William H. Weimer whose Weimercroft was across from Samuel Rea's house; R.D. Barclay of the railroad who built a house west along the Avenue at Roberts Road; and vice-president Edmund Smith who purchased less expensive land further west at Villa Nova. Numerous other railroad officials like superintendent Samuel Black and freight agent William Joyce also built houses along Montgomery Avenue, Lancaster Avenue and the side lanes. By 1884 there were three hundred houses in a one mile radius of the Bryn Mawr Station. The success of the development was secured with twenty-seven daily trains east and twenty-three west to service the inhabitants. The turn-over of houses was fairly rapid, as many people moved to more elaborate estates, and other wealthy city dwellers sampled Bryn Mawr's country life. The railroad officers became a smaller proportion of the population as financiers, merchants and industrialists moved to the area. The small village expanded to accommodate the needs of the new residents. From 1869 on, the number of general stores, grocery stores, and ice
companies increased dramatically. A carriage trade also developed with speciality bakeries, milliners, haberdashers etc. As would be expected, the building of houses and outbuildings and the landscaping of grounds fostered the growth of contracting businesses: masons, carpenters and roofers for exterior work; plumbers, electricians, painters and paperhangers for the interiors. A literal carriage trade grew in the predominately Irish owned carriage shops and livery stables. By 1887, Derham Custom Body Shop prospered in Rosemont, building fine carriages to buyer's specifications.

If any one individual or one estate can be identified as pivotal in initiating the progress of Bryn Mawr's social and physical growth it is George W. Childs and his Wootton. Childs was born to humble circumstances in Baltimore in 1829, but by his fortieth year had risen to wealth and national prominence. Writing in 1883, Henry Graham Ashmead commented:

It is one of the greatest elements in the romance of American life that careers like that of Mr. Childs are not uncommon,-that the boy, however poor, however lowly, may make the man of wealth and of honorable distinction.

Coming to Philadelphia in his teens, Childs learned the book trade and by age twenty was a partner in the publishing house of Childs & Peterson. The successful
publication of Elisha Kent Kane's *Arctic Explorations* gave him the experience and the capital to turn to newspaper publication. Pairing with banker Anthony J. Drexel, who became his lifelong friend, he purchased the *Public Ledger* in 1864. His reorganization of the paper with a more conservative emphasis was a great success in the following years.

In addition to his "stately marble" house on Rittenhouse Square built in 1872, and his summer home at Long Branch, New Jersey he built Wootton in Bryn Mawr. It was this estate which became the focus of that developing area, with its clock tower keeping time for the village. Nathaniel Burt wrote:

> He built a mansion that was most extravagantly admired at the time, out in the then brand-new suburb of Bryn Mawr where it would stimulate interest in friend George Roberts's effort to settle the elite along the tracks of the railroad.

Wootton, begun in 1880, was located one mile south of the Bryn Mawr Station. Visitors approached Wootton on macadamized Bryn Mawr Avenue which wound its way out from the village. As *Artistic Houses* described the house in 1883 it was a

> ...first class, well appointed, and above all most comfortable specimen of pure Queen Anne architecture, internally and externally from cellar to top.

The house was a brick structure three stories high with
over a half-dozen gables inset with carved pendant timbers (Plate 3). Heavily fluted brick chimneys rose in between the gables. At ground level a wide staircase swept upward to a porte cochere supported by brick and stone columns. The designer of Wootton was John McArthur Jr., who had been the architect for the new Public Ledger Building and the much admired Philadelphia City Hall.24

Wootton was designed for country comfort not opulence, but as the years passed it took on increasingly formal estate features. As Ashmead wrote:

We are told that Wootton had its origin in the desire of Mrs. Childs to build a simple home which should be a retreat for the family, midway in season and elaborateness between the Philadelphia residence and the establishment at Long Branch, and that from time to time, as the attractiveness of the locality became more and more apparent, the original simple design was amplified and elaborated, until it resulted in the present commodious and elegant house.25

Although the architecture was not innovative in the area, the house was important as an arbiter of fashion. Because of Childs's social and economic prominence many people followed his lead in the decoration and landscaping of their Main Line estates. Numerous references described the furnishings as comfortable, without a feeling of ostentation; a house where Empire style chairs coexisted with wicker chairs, and formal tapestries hung near watercolor landscape paintings.26 The "French Renaissance
Plate 3. Wootton, circa 1902
(Moses King, Philadelphia and Notable Philadelphians)
"style" was appropriate to his Philadelphia residence, but the designs for a country house in this period were more sympathetic to the country locale.27

The house at Wootton surmounted the highest point of land commanding a sweeping view of perfectly manicured lawns, a curving drive, porter's lodge, and stables.28 Trees dotted the property, many planted by visitors during their stay. Such ceremony was just one example of Childs's intense love of British custom, an interest which led to generous benefactions in England, and the adoption of these customs at home. By 1883, Wootton encompassed 196 acres and included a 40 acre farm, a herd of Aldernay dairy cows and the necessary farm buildings. Every detail of the estate was carefully laid out to form a complete image of country perfection. Bridges across streams (many still standing) were built of brick and incorporated the stone ornamental designs of the main house. A small house for water pumping was also built of brick in the style of the other structures. An intricate part of a country estate were the greenhouses, and Childs erected extensive buildings to house rare tropical flowers and plants. Gardens included a formal "rosary," cutting garden, and kitchen garden. A novel landscaping device was a "stumpery," a mass of tree stumps covered with
In 1894, Childs died and leaving no children willed the estate to his best friend's son, G.W. Childs Drexel. Drexel whose lifestyle and expenditures rivaled the Vanderbilts and the Astors, turned Wootton into what his niece, Cordelia Drexel Biddle Duke Robertson termed "an English manor of the relentless school." His countless expansions, begun in 1898 by the architectural firm of Peabody & Stearns of Boston, embody the interest in period houses at the turn of the century and the replacement of country houses by formal country estates. By the early fifties this great estate like so many others had become a Catholic School.

The impact of this house and its design in the early years on the taste of other estate builders in the area was considerable. Childs was the prototypical Philadelphia Anglophile; his clothes, manners, and surroundings reflected these British interests. His emulation of British country life, and the ideas he brought back with him from his English visits were soon copied by other prominent Philadelphians, particularly the new industrial rich. The English manners and tastes of Philadelphia's Pre-Revolutionary War period families returned to popular favor. Childs's magnificent presence, his retinue of influential friends and well known guests...
turned Wootton into a national showplace, giving the
Main Line development prominence. As Ashmead concluded:

...as the country home on which wealth
has been lavished and taste used in its
extreme, and as the exponent of advanced
and practical agriculture, it has few if
any superiors in our country. 34
CHAPTER IV

THE EARLY ESTATES: THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD AND BALDWIN LOCOMOTIVE BARONY

As Bryn Mawr began to expand in the 1870's and 1880's several of the Pennsylvania Railroad and Baldwin Locomotive executives found the lots along Montgomery Avenue too limiting for their country house designs. They wanted enough acreage to allow the layout of working estates with all the associated outbuildings, gardens, and farm structures. Whether from personal interest or by railroad suggestion, at least a dozen noteworthy estates were created in this period by these executives.

One of the most important early estate builders was Alexander J. Cassatt. Born in Pittsburgh in 1839 to a prominent western Pennsylvania family, Cassatt studied engineering in this country and abroad. He rose through the ranks of the Pennsylvania Railroad to become one of its great expansionist presidents and a financier of national reputation. Along with George B. Roberts, Cassatt's predecessor as president, he was a leading force in the growth of the Main Line.
Cassatt's influence ranged from social pace setting to the ownership of the roads on the Main Line. Along with International Navigation Company president, Clement A. Griscom, he established a kind of fiefdom, albeit a benevolent one, in the building and ownership of highways and utilities in Haverford and out along the Main Line to Paoli. Cassatt's original interest in the area began in 1872 when he purchased fifty-six acres of land, located a few blocks north of Haverford Station. He immediately started the improvement of the property, commissioning Frank Furness to design the house. Completed in 1873, it cost $50,000 to build (over six times the minimal amount required for the large houses along Bryn Mawr Avenue). In 1879 Mrs. Martha C. Lamb described Cheswold as

...the Gothic villa of A.J. Cassatt near Bryn Mawr, the Welsh suburb of Philadelphia.... It is built of the light granite so common in that region, with brown-stone copings, and has a substantial and picturesque appearance.

Cheswold had thirty rooms, including seven bedrooms and seven baths (Plate 4). The interior was well appointed with walnut paneling and stained glass windows, and contained comfortable furnishings. Cassatt was considered a patron of the arts and decorated his home with paintings by European and American artists, and those by his sister, Mary Cassatt. In addition to the main
Plate 4. Cheswold, circa 1879
(Mrs. Martha C. Lamb, The Homes of America)
house there was a gate lodge, a carriage house and stables.8

Cheswold was a fine "suburban" estate, but like several other wealthy Philadelphians, Cassatt also owned a city house and a country farm. The Main Line estates of the 1880's, mostly fifty acres or less, were simply too small for their owners' farming and stock breeding interests. In 1881 Cassatt purchase six hundred acres in Berwyn, about nine miles west of Haverford. He wintered that year at Cheswold so he could supervise the improvements at Chesterbrook Farm.9 In 1882 Cassatt resigned from the railroad as first vice-president, disagreeing with the policies of George Roberts.10 It was fifteen years before he rejoined the railroad as president and in this period he devoted himself to expansion of his Main Line interests and properties. At Chesterbrook Farm he remodeled and expanded a Pre-Revolutionary War period farmhouse and added over a half-dozen barns, and a private track to test his race horses.11

By 1885, Cassatt had become the quintessential Main Line country squire. He rode to the hounds with the impeccable Radnor Hunt across the Bryn Mawr estates of his fellow railroad officers and directors, and for many years served as the Hunt's president.12 A high-
point of the Main Line social calendar became the annual point-to-point races held at Chesterbrook Farm each spring.\(^{13}\) Cassatt also entertained the exclusive Farmer's Club on a number of occasions and showed them stock breeding operations at his farm. His social activities were not, however, restricted to Haverford and Berwyn. His wife, in particular, enjoyed the life of the city. During the periods they spent at their Rittenhouse Square house, Cassatt became involved in the club life of Philadelphia. Active in the prestigious Philadelphia Club to which he was elected in 1875, he also belonged to the Rittenhouse Club, Penn Club, and the Corinthian Yacht Club where he kept his half-million dollar yacht.\(^{14}\) As Nathaniel Burt noted, Cassatt was the type of non-Philadelphian that the city's old guard could love.\(^{15}\) As sportsman, bon vivant, and later President of the Pennsylvania Railroad, he had few peers.

As previously mentioned, Cassatt was very active in the physical development of the Main Line and involved in local civic affairs. When he first moved to Haverford he found the roads in terrible condition. As Patricia Davis wrote concerning Lancaster Avenue:

\[
\ldots \text{he assumed the burden of its repair and maintenance. He persuaded some of his wealthy neighbors to join him in}
\]
buying the road, at a cost of $8,000, and formed the Lancaster Avenue Improvement Company. Tolls were collected at strategic stopping places along the 62-mile pike to help defray the expenses of maintaining the road.¹⁶

The Lancaster Turnpike remained a private road until World War I when the state assumed control. After 1880, Cassatt became interested in the improvement of Montgomery Avenue, the major route between Cheswold and Chesterbrook Farm. In 1882 he was elected a supervisor of Lower Merion Township, evidence of his popularity along the Main Line since he ran as a Democrat in a traditionally Republican area. One of his first tasks was to have Montgomery Avenue macadamized and widened, with granite curbstones lining the way.¹⁷ Cassatt's personal motives for a better road are obvious, but he also saw it as an enticement to travel in the area and increased interest in the Main Line development. As supervisor he oversaw the macadamizing and improvement of many township roads. J.W. Townsend commented:

The neighborhood owed more to Mr. Cassatt than to any other man in the matter of general improvements and in all details of roadbuilding.¹⁸

Cassatt also built the first electrical plant in Haverford: the Haverford Light Company. He had joined with neighbor Clement Griscom in funding the plant, primarily to supply power to their own estates, but also to provide
service for neighbors. In 1903 it was one of twelve private companies merged into the Merion and Radnor Gas & Electric Company, a public utility.

While Cassatt was busy with improvements in the Haverford area and to the west, his senior at the Pennsylvania Railroad, George B. Roberts, was developing villages named Bala and Cynwyd, just across Philadelphia's city line in Montgomery County. Roberts was born at the family farm, Pencoyd, in present day Bala Cynwyd in 1833. As Nathaniel Burt observed, the Roberts family, even more than Philadelphia's well-known Cadwaladers, represents the Welsh Barony. As the descendant of 17th century settlers and the nephew of Algernon S. Roberts, Pencoyd Iron Works founder and Pennsylvania Railroad director, Roberts had numerous social and business connections in Philadelphia. Like Cassatt, however, he did not draw upon his position, instead he worked his way through the ranks to achieve the presidency in 1880.

While more reserved than the bon vivant Cassatt, Roberts followed the established Philadelphia pattern of a Rittenhouse Square house (1901 Spruce Street), and a summer place in Philadelphia's extension in Maine, Northeast Harbor. Yet, he seemed happiest at his country seat, Pencoyd, which became his primary residence in 1893.
He was instrumental in the development of the Main Line through the railroad's interests but was not as keenly interested in its social life. He joined Cassatt in contributing to the improvement of local roads, but his contributions around his home in Bala are better represented by his construction of St Asaph's Episcopal Church. It is probable he sanctioned the Welsh names for the railroad stations and the country allusions that abounded in the publicity literature, and it is known that he named Bala and Cynwyd after his ancestral home in Wales. When Roberts took up residence at Pencoyd in 1893 he expanded the 18th century field-stone house which already showed the signs of nearly two hundred years of additions and alterations. Furness, Evans & Company were probably the architects who designed a new wing combining a classical portico, Georgian details, and their own familiar vocabulary of ornamentation in elements like the chimneys. Roberts redecorated the house and embellished the grounds, but it remained a working farm and he took great interest in its dairy operations. He was a popular member of the Farmer's Club, but his interest remained in the details of farming not the social evolution of the great estates.

Roberts was very much a part of the ruthless business world of the 1880's and 1890's. He could
compete with the Vanderbilts and Goulds, and negotiate with J.P. Morgan, but his heart really was in his country life. Charles Morris over romanticized this image in 1894, but an understanding of Roberts's personality can be gleaned from this portrait. He wrote:

On this farm a humble residence, built by Mr. Roberts' ancestors, is the most cherished of his possesions. In this house he was born, and in this house he still resides, affording a remarkable instance of home staying attachment amid the migratory impulse of Americans generally. He is not a lover of social distractions, and while giving attentions to the duties of his position at the Philadelphia office of the company, he returns every afternoon to his home, where in the enjoyment of his fine library and the leisure strolls over his well-tilled fields, he passes life in a calm enjoyment of books and nature that is richly worthy of emulation.

Several financiers, members of the old guard of Philadelphia Society were active in early Main Line estate building. Prominent among them was Rudolph Ellis whose Fox Hill and Fox Hill Farms totaled three hundred and fifty acres along Bryn Mawr Avenue in Bryn Mawr. Rudolph, a descendant of the Ellis family who owned the land since the 17th century was a Philadelphia banker, president of the Fidelity Trust Company, and a member of the Philadelphia Club; the exclusive mens' dining club, the Rabbit; and the Radnor Hunt. Members of the Hunt recounted some of their most memorable days pursuing
foxes across his land. When not in residence at his Rittenhouse Square home at 2113 Spruce Street, Ellis retreated to Fox Hill. His favorite part of the house designed by Theophilus Chandler, was the "cabin", a wing with high ceilinged rustic interior housing billiard room and recreation room. Trophies hung about the room on the cherry paneling and its rough log details and leather furnishings made it obvious that it was a masculine retreat. The house was built in 1881 of red brick, and crowned with several rustic ornamented gables and tall brick chimneys. Along the front and sides of the house a veranda with rustic railings provided a view of the countryside for miles around and of Fox Hill Farms which spread out below. Ellis set his house far enough back on the hillside that he was able to build a ha-ha which ran along the property to Ithan Avenue. Other buildings on the estates included stables, a gate lodge, several large barns, and a high-Victorian mansard roofed house that was occupied by another family member. Among the farms that comprised the agricultural sector were a stock farm for seventy to eighty thoroughbred horses and a Jersey cattle and sheep farm.

While equally important in the development of the Main Line, officers of the Baldwin Locomotive Works occupied a very different social position than men like
Cassatt, Roberts and Ellis. Their estates were often indistinguishable in choice of architect, design or layout, but a social barrier did exist. In the early development of the area the Baldwin men were economically associated with the railroad executives, yet socially were a colony apart. Perhaps, since many were Vermont rather than Philadelphia born they were excluded from the inner circle of the latter's Society. Yet, Cassatt, Childs and other social leaders were not Philadelphia natives. Most likely, the aversion to the Baldwin executive stemmed from the taint of heavy industry. To the mind of the old guard Philadelphian the running of a railroad was a gentlemanly pursuit, but the manufacture of its locomotives crossed the pale into the socially unacceptable area of machinery and industry. In addition, the Baldwin men were too preoccupied with the mechanical age in these early years to cultivate the recreations of the country gentleman, an important criteria for acceptance. Clubs like the Union League and the Philadelphia Country Club accepted these men, but the conservative Philadelphia and Rittenhouse Clubs turned their backs on them. Ironically, the Baldwin executives' estate construction poured more money into the area's development than any other group.

Noteworthy among the Baldwin estates, and a trend
setter for their creation was Dr. Edward Williams's Wentworth on Roberts Road in Rosemont (Plate 5).

Dominating his ninety acres was a three story stone mansion with large circular tower topped with balustraded walk and protected by a conical dome. As several people noted, the shape of the house intentionally resembled a locomotive with the rounded tower representing a wheel.\(^2\)

Williams, a descendant of a prominent Vermont family, was a partner in Burnham, Parry & Williams, owners of the Baldwin Locomotive Works.\(^3\) Characterized as an "exceedingly aggressive"\(^3\) partner and titan of industry, he was concerned more with business and engineering than country life, but provided his family a comfortable retreat on the Main Line. A photo album from the 1870's shows Wentworth at its best. The large stone house is a striking form at the crest of the hill overlooking flower gardens, vegetable gardens and the countryside.\(^4\)

To the right of the house was a large carriage house and stable with three story clock tower, and on the grounds were a gate lodge and summer house. In contrast to the imposing stone mansion are scenes of domestic tranquility with a simply dressed family relaxing on the veranda and playing games on the lawn. The interior was attractively paneled and decorated, with wicker furniture or cushioned chairs predominant.
Plate 5. Wentworth, circa 1884
(Henry G. Ashmead, History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania)
As will be seen in many of these early country estates, there is a dichotomy between the outwardly grand appearance of the house and outbuildings, and the relatively simple furnishings of the interiors. While the estate builders were concerned with the appropriate furnishings for country life and the supposed simplicity of these retreats, they could not escape the social need to demonstrate their wealth. As Thorstein Veblen demonstrated in his *Theory of the Leisure Class*, the building of large houses with conspicuous consumption of labor and materials was a keynote to late 19th century society. Melded together in most of these estates were a large house, costly outbuildings, greenhouses and formal gardens, to be contrasted with farmland, animal husbandry and country interiors. All these elements were time and money consuming and were important indicators of social position and the right avocations.

Dr Williams's secretary and protege, John Converse, who he had brought to Philadelphia from Vermont, built a house which became a landmark in Rosemont in the 1880's. Converse, who joined the firm in 1873, and in 1909 became the first president of the new Baldwin Locomotive Works, was also active in banking and philanthropy. His thirty-two acre estate, Chetwynd,
was begun in 1883 and expanded in the next decade with several additions. It was built of grey stone from the designs of Wilson Brothers of Philadelphia. Accents included rough cut timber work, terracotta panels, and gables which jutted from a red slate roof. In 1887 Converse added a one story wing connected to the library and designed as an art gallery. An 1890 addition provided a music room, an "Indian" room, and more bedroom space above. About one-third of the property was cultivated, one-third kept in lawn, and the remainder in pastureland. While Chetwynd was the site of many well remembered parties, and Converse was lauded as a great Philadelphian, like other Baldwin partners he was excluded from Philadelphia's premier clubs.

While the Bryn Mawr and Rosemont area was the primary locale for the estates of the Baldwin executives, several members of the firm built houses closer to the city. In Merion, Matthew Baird, who had taken over the company in 1866 at Matthias Baldwin's death, built a four story house called Bardwold. It was designed by Benjamin Linfoot and completed in 1885. Bardwold was an amazing structure with four piazzas, towering chimneys, Moorish arches, a stepped porte cochere, and a cupola. Rooms included a conservatory, music room, great hall,
and picture gallery. Nearby, in Wynnewood, William P. Henszey built Redleaf on forty-eight acres along Lancaster Avenue (Plate 6). Henszey amassed a fortune as Baldwin's chief of design and construction, but even his choice of Furness & Evans as the architects of his house did not bring him social acceptance. Finished in 1881, Redleaf had ornate interiors by Herter of New York which featured mahogany paneling, frescoed walls and ceilings and Louis XVI style furnishings.

The Main Line estate building of the 1870's and 1880's presents a fascinating picture of the intricate mechanics of wealth and social position. Dominated by men from the Pennsylvania Railroad and Baldwin Locomotive Works, the area gained national recognition for its estates and farms and the gentility of its lifestyle. Yet, neighbors did not always consider each other social equals. Business associates were not always social friends. That style and fashion are often a superficial guide is clearly indicated. The descendants of many of these families would become social peers by the mid-twentieth century. However, in the early estate building period there was a dichotomy. Some of their forebears lived in a secure position of old and respectable wealth while others imitated their design and lifestyle in an attempt to be assimilated into what was viewed by many
Plate 6. Redleaf, circa 1902
(Moses King, Philadelphia and Notable Philadelphians)
as the ultimate reward of wealth: "Proper Philadelphia" Society.
CHAPTER V

A BIT OF OLD ENGLAND IN PENNSYLVANIA:
COUNTRY LIFE FOR PHILADELPHIA'S
OLD AND NEW RICH

The "Welshification" of the Main Line accelerated in the 1880's and 1890's. It permeated every aspect of development from street names to estate names to choice of styles for houses, landscape and furnishings. As Stephen Birmingham stated:

many of the communities ... were given their names Welshly, and rather spuri­ously by none other than the railroad. Since then private builders, developers, city planners, and estate owners have contributed to this Welshification process with names of their own devising.¹

With only a few exceptions, all the villages along the Main Line now have Welsh names. Usually the exceptions had been named earlier. For example Villa Nova (later spelled as one word) was named after the Catholic college built to the west of Humphreysville in 1842. Others were Rosemont, named after the Ashbridge family farm between modern Bryn Mawr and Villanova, which dated from the 18th century, and Paoli, named after a Corsican general who fought in the Revolutionary War. George Childs's
suburb, Wayne, was also named for a Revolutionary War hero, General Anthony Wayne. One railroad village took an Irish name when in 1873 the Reverend George W. Anderson suggested Ardmore to replace Athensville. The name which means high ground in Irish was accepted by the railroad. Whatever the community name, the atmosphere that dominated was clearly British.

In practically every book or magazine describing the Main Line, whether an historical work or popular photo essay, the characteristic always singled out is Philadelphia's imitation of English country life. A 1940 Playbill from the Schubert Theatre's production of "The Philadelphia Story" informed its audience that Philadelphians were "more English than England." The Philadelphians' love of England, however, was a very selective affair. They chose elements of style and social and cultural life suitable to their upper class lives and ignored the problems of industrialization and urban poverty. As the essence of the infatuation, Nathaniel Burt found the Philadelphians' image of England in the romantic world of a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, not in realities like the industrial slums of Birmingham and Liverpool.

Although the matter is rarely discussed, many
of the late 19th century members of Philadelphia's upper class, like the Chews, had ancestors who were loyalists during the Revolutionary War. Many eventually supported the patriots, but there was always a Tory edge. If Philadelphia could not be part of Britain, it could at least create its own version of English country life in its outlying areas. As previously discussed, George W. Childs, the prototypical Anglophile, helped set the tone for the whole area with his passion for British styles. Childs's Wootton, Cassatt's Cheswold, and Ellis's Fox Hill all created a style soon copied. Patterned more after the Queen Anne or Gothic country cottages of England's gentry than the palaces of its blood royal or merchant princes, these Main Line estates were comfortable, often cluttered, with the look of well kept inherited possessions. They may have lacked the ostentation of the manors and chateaus of the nouveau riches, but they were rich in social suggestion.

The Philadelphians' Anglophilia was present in all areas of their lives. As Herman Collins wrote:

Arrangements of roads, parks, trees, woodlands and architecture of dwellings all are swathed in that British style of living luxuriously in the midst of lawns and endless miles of green hedges.

Philadelphians' dress, sports, club life, and even the clipped Philadelphia accent known colloquially as
"Main Line lockjaw" were modeled after English originals. A trip to London became a regular part of the year, when a man might visit his tailor, catch up on the latest styles, and with his wife frequent the art galleries and parties, and often visit family. It seemed so many had a brother or cousin who, finding Philadelphia too provincial, had expatriated themselves to the high circles of late Victorian and Edwardian England. Often the royal circles of England were more penetrable by a man with a large fortune than the world of the old guard Philadelphian. A daughter's or sister's marriage to a London gentleman or member of the aristocracy was one of the few times when marriage to a foreigner might receive family blessings. In this period even the servants for the country houses were brought over from England or Ireland, and their descendants continue to run the last of the great Main Line estates today. The lifestyle of the Philadelphian in this period richly represents the values that Digby Baltzell assigned to this sub-group when he documented the WASPS (White Anglo Saxon Protestants).  

English and Welsh characteristics extended beyond residential architecture and planning into public buildings, churches, and schools. An important example is Bryn Mawr College and the architectural precedents it created.
Founded by a New Jersey Quaker, Dr. Joseph W. Taylor, in 1880, the college's goals were to broaden the education of women and to give mothers better trained minds. The first buildings on campus, Taylor and Merion Halls, were designed by Quaker architect Addison Hutton and built of heavy granite in a rather conservative high Victorian Gothic style. With $800,000 bequeathed to the college at Taylor's death in 1887 and thirty acres of rolling hilltop land in Bryn Mawr, the administration began to expand the college campus.

The choice of the architectural firm of Cope & Stewardson (also Quakers) for the next group of buildings in the late 1880's and 1890's was a significant move. In buildings like Radnor Hall, Pembroke Hall, and Thomas Library they developed a full vocabulary of English Gothic and Tudor buildings. Granite arches, cathedral ceilings and Elizabethan bays, all characterize a style adopted by many other colleges in succeeding years. Ironically, a Quaker school set the style for high Anglican forms of architecture, but an understanding of the Anglophilia of the Main Line makes this choice less puzzling.

The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, a few blocks from the college in Bryn Mawr, exemplifies the English influence in ecclesiastical building. Although
a number of Welsh Quaker families still attended one of several meeting houses along the Main Line, the fashionable religion was Episcopalian. The Church of the Redeemer, consecrated in 1881, was the most fashionable of the suburban churches. In its early years it was favored for summer services, while St. Peters in Philadelphia was reserved for marriages, funerals and major church holidays. With more permanent settlement after the turn of the century, the large Gothic church in Bryn Mawr became the year-round parish for many families and its cemetery soon swelled with the names of the Main Line elite. The church, designed by Charles M. Burns Jr., again demonstrates the interest in English architecture.\textsuperscript{11}

In this period of "Welshification" and "Anglicification," the Philadelphia businessman and industrialist began to shape his self image and often his public persona as the country gentleman. Nathaniel Burt wrote:

\begin{quote}
And yet, though Philadelphia's aristocracy is a mercantile and a professional one, the Philadelphian's fateful image of himself as a country gentleman, a hard-riding hereditary country squire; a tinge of the South and of England, a sort of subdued but real romanticism prevents him from being whole hearted about his role of Merchant Prince.\textsuperscript{12}
\end{quote}

The concept of country life that Burt describes is not that of the rural farmer who makes his living from the
soil. Rather it is the gentleman's farm or country estate based on the British mode. In the Philadelphia area these estates were part-time homes, hobbies at best, and although some were working farms, their produce most often went to family and friends and was not counted as a source of income. As J.W. Townsend wrote:

Millionaires find that "gentleman farming" is the easiest way of spending money, even easier than a yacht. They enjoy this expensive luxury and incidentally they beautify the country, improve the strain of livestock, and objectively improve themselves by the exercise and fresh air they obtain in overseeing the wide acres.  

The country life offered by the Main Line was an idealized concept of English gentility, an imitation of the country squire the Philadelphian so admired. But the suggestion of an escape, almost a fantasy life differed from the English prototype. English landowners most often had centuries of family association with their land, and it formed the basis of their fortune. In many ways it was still a feudal system; local families, villages, schools, churches, etc., essentially belonged to the squire's estate. Journeys into London for the "Season" or to sit in the House of Lords were a duty many country squires could have done without. In contrast, in Philadelphia, the city and businesses were the focus, and the country estate was secondary, a
delightful pastime, but not on the level with a man's city affairs. A man might ride to the hounds, play some cricket, or devote time to his gardens, but talk of business would prevail over country matters.

If the city meant work, the country suggested a certain freedom, the durability of the agrarian image, particularly the colonial American image. Upper class Philadelphians spent much of their time creating a lifestyle which denied their occupation and emphasized taste and sensibilities. The country home was a justifiable reward for city diligence. In the early period of development on the Main Line, the railroad families and the financiers made their summer homes into comfortable and relatively simple retreats. A more genuine interest in the workings of a farm and the benefits of country living prevailed. In the second growth period, around the turn of the century, the country house became a large and more formal place with grounds tended by as many as fifty gardeners and farmers. Livestock became almost a decorative accent to an estate's overall image, and the farming aspect of its operation took a decided second place.

Clairemont, the Joseph Gillingham estate in Villanova illustrates well the first phase of country
estates. While the scale of this farm was larger than many, the general layout represents the envisioned ideal of these country gentlemen. Gillingham's model farm encompassed three hundred acres along Montgomery Avenue. The main house, a relatively modest mansard roofed structure with wide verandas, was designed by Addison Hutton (Plate 7). Located on a high point of land, it viewed most of the surrounding farm and its buildings. A three story bank barn housed Aldernay and Jersey cows and could store four hundred tons of hay and grain.\textsuperscript{15} The barn was more elaborate in its details than the house. It included paved stalls, a slate roof, and a copper dome. Adjoining the barn was a root house and nearby were corncrib, icehouse, wagon house and stables. Other outbuildings included an incubator for chicks, a chicken house, a colt stable, and a gardener's house. A springhouse had an enameled floor and white tiled sides and was used for cooling cream and butter. A steam engine ground grain and provided power for butter churns. Several houses on the property were leased to Gillingham's friends. Brinklow was occupied by Malcolm Lloyd of Philadelphia, and Meadowcroft, an early farmhouse with "exposed timbering" was rented by George Fletcher.\textsuperscript{16}

Obviously Gillingham directed a good amount of
Plate 7. Clairemont, circa 1897
(Rev. S.F. Hotchkin, Rural Pennsylvania)
of his lumber fortune into the layout of his estate and its farming activities. He received some return on his investment through his dairy products which were favored by many city residents. When Morris Clothier, a member of the Strawbridge & Clothier department store family, purchased Clairemont about 1920 he maintained the name but demolished the house and some of the farm structures. His Clairemont was more a formal estate than a working farm. In place of the original house, Clothier built a white neo-classical style mansion of over seventy-five rooms. Designed by Horace Trumbauer, this striking manor stretched across a ridge of land looking towards Gulph Mills. Representative of the second phase of estate building, Clairemont was well-known as one of the most gracious and largest of the Main Line estates. Other members of Clothier's family occupied houses on the borders of the property, more modest in scale but still impressive in design.

The Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 provided a major impetus to the evolving styles of country life. It also produced a fascinating dichotomy. On the one hand it lauded industry and technological progress. It created an awesome, yet comforting image of American prosperity and economic well-being.
On the other hand, it cast a nostalgic eye on the country's early history, generating renewed interest in colonial design. In the following decade furniture adapted from 18th century styles and motifs became popular among both the old and new rich. While ornate late Victorian furnishings and European objects gleaned from a grand tour still dominated, what is now called Centennial furniture was compatible with country houses being built in the colonial revival or Georgian styles. Some Philadelphians of early city ancestry undoubtedly found family antiques that they took for granted, back in fashion. Popular forms like Windsor chairs, cupboards, and even spinning wheels were well suited to summer homes and the supposed informality of country life. In addition, possession of actual antiques had increasing social significance. The number of millionaires rose dramatically each year. Colonial furnishings of quality suggested permanence and established social position when mixed with the more formal styles of late Victorian taste. Philadelphians continually reiterated that money alone could not open the doors of Society.

In the period from 1890 to 1900 Philadelphians found themselves spending more time at their country places. Interest in period architecture produced more
Historically correct styles in a larger scale befitting longer residency and more formal entertaining. William Herbert noted:

Americans who could afford it have been showing a disposition to live in the country for more than a few summer months and to take more pleasure in the characteristic occupations of country life. The villa with its few acres of land no longer satisfies their needs. They want big country places, equipped with all the conveniences and properties belonging to the great English estates.

While this was certainly true of the Philadelphian, his estates rarely reached the scale and the expense of the Long Island or Newport retreats of his New York contemporaries. The money was present in many new industrialists, but the older wealthy families still controlled Society, and their conservative style and often declining funds minimized the number of hundred room mansions. Within New York Society there were two groups. The descendants of the 17th century settlers and patroons, the "Knickerbockracy," were most akin to old Philadelphia Society. The other, comprised of the well publicized Vanderbilts, Astors and Whitneys and their rivalries created estates and lifestyles without parallel.

Florham Park, the Hamilton McK. Twombly estate in Morristown, New Jersey is a striking, but typical contrast to the Main Line estate. Laid out in the 1890's
it included twelve hundred acres landscaped by Frederick Law Olmsted, a Georgian house of over one hundred rooms modeled on Hampton Court in England, an extensive coach house, a private riding academy and horse barns with over one hundred box stalls. Conservatories and greenhouses contained fifty thousand square feet of glass. A large prize Guernsey herd and dairy operation were just one aspect of the farming sector. Other estates like George Gould's Georgian Court in Long Branch, New Jersey or Clarence Mackay's Harbor Hill on Long Island exemplify these huge estates. With the exception of the Widener, Elkins and Stotesbury estates northwest of Philadelphia, there were few places in this area which could approach the scale of these New Yorker's country houses.

In contrast, an illustrative example of a Main Line estate of the 1890-1900 period is Robert E. Strawbridge's Meadow Lodge. Although Mrs. Strawbridge was reluctant to move to the country, her husband purchased about fifty acres in the late 1890's in Bryn Mawr. On the land bordered by Bryn Mawr Avenue and Mill Road stood a small farmhouse. Three large additions designed in the Tudor half-timbered style quickly transformed the farmhouse into a commodious dwelling (Plate 8). Like many of his peers, Strawbridge was an ardent Anglophile. He took many pictures of country homes he admired in
Plate 8. Meadow Lodge, circa 1902

(Moses King, Philadelphia and Notable Philadelphians)
England for his architect, Mantle Fielding, to study. The house Fielding created had a great hall with an oak chimney piece, drawing room with a carved frieze, smoking room and numerous other first floor rooms. Second floor features included a master suite with two bedrooms and two baths, a morning room, and a half-dozen other bedrooms. The third floor contained ten servant's rooms, work spaces and storage closets. Naturally, the service area of the first floor had the requisite silver safes, a butler's pantry, thirty-three foot long kitchen and a wine cellar. The grounds at Meadow Lodge surrounded several stables, a barn, and a carriage house. A 1904 photograph shows dozens of sheep picturesquely grazing on the hillside in front of the main house. In 1908 a tennis court, fountain and fish pond, and a "cherry walk" which led to a wisteria-covered pergola formalized the property.

Although the Strawbridge fortune was in trade, and the family were Quakers, they were rapidly assimilated into Philadelphia Society. Listed in the 1891 Social Register at age twenty, Robert Strawbridge, a second generation family member soon rose both within the department store and the club world of Philadelphia. By 1900 he was a member of the Rittenhouse Club, Radnor Hunt, Merion Cricket Club, and Philadelphia Country Club. His wife, born Anita Berwind of the Berwind coal mine family,
was a member of the exclusive Acorn Club. Strawbridge, who eventually became a member of the Philadelphia Club (1915) and the Rabbit, received the ultimate honor for a Philadelphia Anglophile when in 1913 he was made Master of the Cottesmore Hounds, near his English house at Oakham, Leicestershire. Yearly he would transport as many as ten horses and hounds and four or five grooms and trainers between his American and English country houses. A statement by William Herbert summarizes this second period of Main Line estate building. Herbert wrote:

their relation to the country remains essentially casual and artificial. They raise a few vegetables for their own table, a little corn for their own use, and flowers enough to decorate their houses. These things are merely the conveniences and properties of country life, the care of which is turned over to hired employees.

Meadow Lodge did not produce income, rather it consumed it. Country life in this era was a costly luxury.

The reluctance to move to the Main Line dating from the 1860's and 1870's reappeared in a different form early in the 20th century. A fear of the unfashionability of suburban life with its lack of social lustre and its middle class associations arose. Elizabeth Pennell's comments are appropriate:

I had cultivated for all suburbs something of the large sweeping contempt, which in
the Eighteen-Nineties, Henley and the National Observer, ... made it the fashion to profess for the suburbs of London.\textsuperscript{30}

To counteract the suburban label the Main Line resident became even more involved in country imagery. George Howe of the firm of Mellor, Meigs and Howe reviewed with displeasure his own designs of the first few decades of the 20th century and stated:

As I look back on the conviction with which we imposed ducks, sheep, doves and cows on rueful stockbrokers, I am convinced these animals represented to us a "Symbol," the symbol of the fruitful soil as opposed to the hundred-acre suburban lot with its dreary monotony of lawn and landscaping.\textsuperscript{31}

The ultimate example of Mellor, Meigs and Howe's estates, although located northwest of Philadelphia, deserves attention. Laverock, built between 1921 and 1928 for Arthur E. Newbold Jr., was described by Howe as:

A Jumbo-Anti-Economy, Romantic Country House Package, complete with sheepfolds, duck ponds, dovecotes, and immemorial elms, transplanted at great expense.\textsuperscript{32}

In 1920 Arthur Meigs and George Howe spent six weeks in Normandy studying peasant houses and farms. The estate they designed for Newbold followed Norman lines but on a much grander scale. In 1921 a pigeon tower, sheepfold, goosepond and farm court were added to a colonial revival style house designed by another architect in 1913. In 1922 an avenue of trees was added, as
well as a cottage, potager (kitchen garden), and a tennis court, the latter somewhat incongruous to the farm concept. The house itself was rebuilt in the Norman country style in 1923 and any pretense of peasant scale then abandoned. One of the final improvements to the estate, in 1928, was a swimming pool. Arthur Meig's design for the pool was termed by Howe a "gothic-fantasy" and the final aberration. He departed the firm and turned to modern architecture. Perhaps the Newbold estate was an example of a style out of control but it represents the complete identification of both architects and owners with country life.

If home life centered on the estates, social life centered in the clubs where English associations were most complete. The Farmer's Club is the perfect representative of country life and recreation in this period. Founded along modest lines in 1847, by the 1880's it had become a "millionaires club" with more interest in railroads than crops. An 1884 club expedition in a private railroad car to Marietta, Pennsylvania was drollly reported by a New York newspaper:

The attire of the farmers is worth description. Farmer Childs [George W.] wore a diamond stud, patent leather shoes and a tight buttoned Prince Albert coat; Farmer Griscom [Clement A.] wore kid gloves and an English cutaway. They talked not of
crops ... but the relative value of gold and silver. 34
At their destination, liveried servants baited hooks
for fishing and after a little recreation the farmers
sat down to a large meal of clams, turtle soup, capon,
lamb, turkey and crab. 35 Although the reporter contrived
to make the club members somewhat frivolous, within the
stereotypes of Gilded Age wastefulness and the image
of the industrialist/financier in the guise of farmer,
there is a revealing picture of the social criteria of the
day and the mental balancing of the agrarian myth against
industrial wealth.

Other important clubs were generated from interest
in English sports, particularly lawn tennis, cricket and
bowling on the green. In 1865 the Merion Cricket Club
was organized in Haverford. Founders included William
W. Montgomery, Maskell Ewing, J. Aubrey Jones, and
Rowland Evans. From a first meeting in December, 1865
at Richard Montgomery's Glenays in Bryn Mawr, they
moved to a lot at Wynnewood the estate of Col. Owen Jones
and by 1873 to five leased acres in Ardmore. 36 Officially
chartered in 1874, club play continued at that site
until 1891 when twelve and one-half acres were purchased
on Montgomery Avenue in Haverford. Two stone houses on
the property, which bordered A.J. Cassatt's Cheswold,
were joined as the first clubhouse in 1892. In 1896 the house burned and a new one was erected from the designs of Furness, Evans & Company. The new building also burned when near completion and it was another year before this polychromatic brick and stone clubhouse was ready. In 1895 a golf course was added and later expanded to eighteen holes on land loaned by Clement Griscom. The Merion Cricket Club Golf Association was formed in 1910 and developed two famous courses in South Ardmore. The Cricket Club reverted to tennis, racquet sports and cricket, and Griscom's land was returned.

As it does today, the club provided a social focus for the surrounding areas. It had top-notch sports facilities, dining rooms and a ballroom, and under the presidency of men like Alexander Cassatt and Effingham Morris it became unequaled as a family sporting club. Its closest rival was the Philadelphia Country Club whose membership often overlapped. When founded in 1890 this club's activities centered on horse shows, polo tournaments, dining and dancing. The first clubhouse, located on Belmont Avenue at the edge of Philadelphia's Fairmount Park was easily accessible from the city by train or coach. Many who did not choose to have country houses found membership allowed them the enjoyment of outdoor recreation in the proper social
setting. An English observer of our country club life reported:

It exists as a kind of center of the social life of the neighborhood. Sport is encouraged by these clubs for the sake of general sociability.  

Attendance at a ladies horse show in 1892 is a clear indicator of the club's social position. Among those participating or attending were: Mrs. Rudolph Ellis, Benjamin Clyde, Charles Mather, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, Kathryn Cassatt, Arthur Meigs, Mrs. Cadwalader Biddle etc. Golf was soon added to the club's attractions, becoming the most important facet of the country club. In 1924 a portion of the Richard Wood estate in Gladwyne was purchased and made into an eighteen hole golf course.  

Horse and hound were also important elements of country life. As Nathaniel Burt stated:

Philadelphia's really expansive hunting days, ... coincide with its industrial and social expansiveness after the Civil War.  

The Radnor Hunt was chartered in 1866 and property was purchased along the Darby Creek on Roberts Road in Bryn Mawr. Soon the railroad executives and financiers began to build estates in this area and the Hunt grew to support three packs of American and English hounds. The interest in the breeding of fine thoroughbred hunters and the improvement of the pack became a favorite pastime of men.
like Cassatt, Ellis and Mather. In the hunting season (November to March) the Radnor Hunt went out four times a week, often on rollicking day long rides across the estates and farms of the Main Line. This was one exclusive club where real farmers might participate in exchange for the use of their land. Annual expenses to support the club, hounds, huntsmen, and whippers-in amounted to only $8,000 in the 1890's but thousands more were spent by the gentlemen riders on mounts, attire and tack. The interest in horses and hunting was pervasive, and steeplechases, point-to-point races and horse shows like the nationally famous Devon Horse Show all grew out of this passion.

For some Main Liners clubs like the Philadelphia Country Club became too large and in turn less exclusive in the twentieth century. Smaller clubs like the Gulph Mills Golf Club, founded in 1916 by A.J. Drexel Paul, Thomas McKean, Robert K. Cassatt, J. Kearsley Mitchell, Isaac Clothier and others, became the new exclusive retreats. Gulph Mills's colonial style clubhouse designed by Charles Barton Keen indicated the desire for less ostentation and a return to the simplicity of early club years. Digby Baltzell observed:

The familistic simplicity of a great deal of upper class life along the Main Line and Chestnut Hill sides of the river is reflected in small tennis and swimming
clubs with unpretentious old Pennsylvania farmhouses serving as clubhouses. Other such clubs as the Courts, a tennis club in Gladwyne, and the Mill Dam Club, a swimming club in Wayne, became important.

By the First World War, although a few large estates were still being constructed, there was a reaction against too unwieldy a country house. Exemplified by the Mellor & Meigs fieldstone house and the more modest club, old guard Main Line was reacting against a world that was slipping from its control. Expenses of maintaining estates skyrocketed. Both income taxes and property taxes seriously depleted the estate owner's income. In addition, the problem of staffing a household at a reasonable expense began. The suburban intrusion of smaller tract housing, and the beginning of the breaking up of some large estates necessitated a reentrenchment and effectively a new statement about country life. Many residents became more conservative in style and restrictive about their associates, closing ranks against the loss of preeminence they could foresee.

Adjunct to the creation of the country estates of the Main Line are psychological motivations giving clear insight into the upper class Philadelphian of the period from 1870 until 1915. The Philadelphia
industrialist in the guise of country farm is a recurrent theme. In reaction to the industrialization of the Civil War period an idealized naturalism developed, what Harvey Green has called the "fascination of the forest." As Green pointed out, the greatest irony of this era was that those whose fortunes were most linked to modernism aspired to the most traditional patterns. The development of country estates on the Main Line and the romanticizing of the colonial past are just two manifestations. The rich of this era have been severely criticized for their extravagance and social malevolence. They seemed to have created a nightmare of urban ugliness and industrial repression, yet they could escape from their work in a country retreat. Nathaniel Burt noted that they tried "to cultivate the illusion that they were really country folk, and forget the ugliness and the contradictions of the industrial civilization that supported them." But, rather than a conspiracy to gloss over their industrial excesses, the agrarian idealization was in many ways a subconscious attempt to cope with the criteria for social acceptance. As the social differences between the executives of the Pennsylvania Railroad and Baldwin Locomotive Works have indicated, industry had a very negative social value in this city.
The illusion of country gentility may have mentally soothed the creators of the idealized farms and their peers, but it antagonized the social critics. The dichotomy between industrial exploitation and the pleasantries of Main Line living was hard to tolerate. Yet, what the critic found reprehensible, the public found fascinating. Well into the 1920's and 1930's the activities of the rich, the descriptions of their Main Line showplaces and parties were favorite reading. They fueled the fantasies of people who rarely considered that their labor supported these elaborate lifestyles. After all, if they had a fortune they would do the same. In some cases the Society page image of the high living Main Line socialite became self-fulfilling. But the majority of the upper class removed themselves from both the industrial world and from the publicity of its rewards. They scorned the public, and established private sanctuaries among their social equals. Union riots, periodic financial panics, and tabloid stories of extravagance sometimes turned envy of the rich into hatred; it was easier to remove oneself from the stigmas of wealth. The professions of law and banking or even gentlemanly leisure were the best public facades. The source of the dividend was irrelevant if it could be denied in a lofty profession and country gentility. Because of the attitudes of the rich, and the hostility that was generated, scholars
often hesitate to study this class and its lifestyle. But to ignore a phenomenon or hide from it does little to explain or educate.

The escape from industry and the public eye leads to the characterization of the Philadelphia gentleman as hopelessly insular, particularly in comparison to the more cosmopolitan New Yorker. Elizabeth Pennell remarked:

There was no getting away from the same people in Philadelphia ... it had made itself socially into a village with the pettiness and limitations of village life.51

But, it was the security of the village and of country familiarity that offered the salve to the upper class Philadelphia's anxieties. The clear definition of social circles and behavior, and the incessant inter-marriage among the elite sealed him in a protective cocoon. Baltzell noted that there were many middle and lower classes in Philadelphia but really only one upper class, with a common cultural tradition and a "consciousness of kind."52 The Main Line became an extension of the urban social world, essentially moving Society a few miles west along the railroad for the summer months and then back into town. One had his city clubs and country clubs where he need not fear the intrusion of an unknown commodity, because the faces would always be the same.53

Family status of the Philadelphian as Burt
explained, is the basis of standing in the world, in a sense the ultimate club. The Main Line evolved as a place to establish family position and to maintain and protect traditional cultural patterns. After 1900 Philadelphians would increasingly travel to other summer resorts, but if they did not live among other Philadelphians, as often was the case, their Bostonian or New Yorker neighbors would probably have been created in a similar mold, and easily coexist. Marriages might extend social circles to overlap between East Coast cities, but really only evolve into a national upper class of shared traditions and equal insularity. Katherine Bingham (Mrs. John King Van Rensselaer) evoked the contentment of this social patterning when she wrote:

> Here at St.-James-the-Less, [Philadelphia] as I look around the dear little church-yard; I feel that I and my ancestors know or did know everyone who is buried here. It is a real comfort to me to feel that some day I shall lie among people we have always known.
CHAPTER VI

MR. CHILDS'S AND MR. DREXEL'S FAIR SUBURBS:
WAYNE AND ST. DAVIDS

The development of property along the Main Line in the 1860's and 1870's focused primarily on large country estates and summer homes. By the 1880's several astute investors realized there was a market for smaller and more affordable homes that could be year-round residences. The middle and upper middle classes of the city had followed the growth of the area through the newspapers' extensive coverage of resort life and mansion construction. Public Ledger publisher George W. Childs was keenly aware of the appeal of a suburb offering the advantages and status of country life, but city conveniences. In 1880, in partnership with Anthony Drexel, he began the creation of Wayne, the Main Line's first true suburban development. While by no means the country's first suburb, Wayne and St. Davids represent the idealized suburban community of this era.

The concept of a suburb was a major break with earlier residential patterns. Until the mid-nineteenth
century one either lived in city or town or near a rural village. Residence and place of work were separated by no more than a few miles. By the 1850's some developers suggested that year-round homes could be located as many as twenty or thirty miles from place of work. The proliferation of railroad lines allowed the growth of commuter traffic. Appeals were made to potential suburban residents citing the benefits of country life. Increasing population pressure as working class immigrants took over large sections of the cities and commercial districts expanded, made the suburbs a popular and often necessary alternative for the middle class. Similar to the development of upper class country estates, the acceptance of the middle class suburban community was not instantaneous; the developers had to become experts in marketing their new communities.

Many early suburban developments were conceived with some intellectually developed image of community or utopia. The first large development, Llewellyn Park in West Orange, New Jersey was laid out from 1853 to 1857 as a "garden" suburb, a rustic retreat linked to the Associationist ideas François Fourier. Llewellyn S. Haskell, a Philadelphia pharmaceutical dealer, and noted architect Alexander Jackson Davis developed this community on about four hundred and twenty acres, an hour's
traveling time from New York City. The Park was to be a retreat from city problems, an intellectual community sharing a similar social and economic level and similar ideals. But the utopianism was soon diluted. As people of varying occupations discovered the pleasures of this suburb the romanticized view of Haskell and Davis faded away. Llewellyn Park continued as the subject of lengthy articles in newspapers and journals, and as a model, generated a number of other suburban developments. After the Civil War the numbers grew; the utopianism of the earlier communities replaced by the marketing and inventiveness of entrepreneurial developers. Romanticism was displaced by the glitter of new wealth and a more lavish social life.

The first attempt to create a suburb to the west of Philadelphia began in 1864. In that year J. Henry Askin of Chester, Pennsylvania purchased ninety-one acres of farmland in present day Wayne. Two years later he built a large mansard roofed Second Empire style mansion naming it Louella after his daughters, Louise and Ella. Askin also undertook the building of several houses in the Second Empire style in a more modest scale for his small development, also named Louella. Located on present day West Wayne Avenue, the houses offered spacious rooms and good size lots. By 1870 he increased
his landholdings to over three hundred acres and arranged for the construction of a railroad station, named Cleaver's Landing, to serve the community. A Lyceum Hall, later the Opera House became a focal point. However, Askin's attempts as development were premature. At this time the Pennsylvania Railroad was just beginning to build the Bryn Mawr Hotel and develop the area around it. Askin's houses were well designed and built, but offered neither the comforts or the social advantages of city life. Because of failing health, Askin agreed to sell his land to George Childs and Anthony Drexel, and in 1880 they began their more successful development in Wayne, named about 1870 for Revolutionary War hero, General Anthony Wayne. A decade in time and refined techniques of marketing separated Louella and Wayne.

Childs and Drexel clearly understood the mechanics of the new entrepreneurial age. Childs (see Chapter III) rose to the pinnacle of the publishing world in Philadelphia and led the impetus in development around Bryn Mawr. Having succeeded in making Long Branch, New Jersey the premier American resort, Childs and Drexel turned to the six hundred acre parcel about fourteen miles west of Philadelphia that they had purchased. Location of the suburb was critical. When queried as to why it was built so far from town, Childs replied that the forty-
five minute train ride from the city was the average time for reading his Public Ledger. The availability of a large tract of land at a reasonable price was more likely the criteria. Areas closer to town were already too costly. As the Philadelphia Record reported in 1884:

Real estate men say that the tendency of purchasers of country homes along the Pennsylvania Railroad is beyond Bryn Mawr and they attribute this to three facts, the lower prices, higher elevations, and the extensive improvements at Wayne and other places nearby.10

The move to Wayne was not spontaneous. Childs and Drexel were appealing to an urban middle class who required strong incentive to move out to the distant suburbs. The developers' strength was an understanding of how to sell the community. As a first step in attracting interest Childs and Drexel followed the pattern in Bryn Mawr and helped establish several resort hotels. Visitors could stay at the large Belle-vue Hotel, the Mount Pleasant House, and Kenilworth Hotel or at Askin's converted mansion, Louella House. For a price range of $8.00 to $40.00 per week, over three hundred guests could be accommodated in the growing town.11 The resorters could not fail to notice the attractive houses and community buildings under construction and might be enticed to establish permanent residency. Ads flooded the press; publicity brochures arrived in the mail,
and by 1885 over six styles of houses on a variety of lot sizes were being built and purchased by a well-conditioned audience.

Under the expert management of Frank Smith, of the firm of Wendell and Smith, Wayne expanded. Appeals were made to the purchaser's health and well-being, to his recreational needs, to his taste, and importantly to his economic and social self-image. A broadside from 1890 proclaimed:

Thousands of city people have changed their homes to the Suburbs for the sake of health and enjoyment, and as the number increases each year, it is a fair inference that suburban life is healthy and enjoyable. Three-fourths of the population of Pennsylvania live outside the limits of the cities, and are mostly business people who prefer more favorable conditions for healthy and contented life than can be found in crowded towns.

The appeal was obvious. The broadside also proclaimed that the business man deserved

THE BEST HOMES
THAT CAN BE BUILT.
THEY HAVE EVERY CITY CONVENIENCE
PURE WATER IN ABUNDANCE,
UNDERGROUND DRAINAGE
ELECTRIC LIGHT AND STEAM HEATING
THE HIGHWAYS ARE SPACIOUS AND SUBSTANTIAL.

Usually the first appeal was made to health, decrying the city environment. In contrast, Wayne was "unmarked by the sights and noises that ever bring their troubles into city life." Brochures referred to "Rural Homes,"
rustic scenery and country life's relaxations. Also residents would not be troubled by the population pressures they found a major problem in Philadelphia.

The advertisement of a rural paradise was linked with the presence of the more positive aspects of city life. Comforts and technological improvements were important to their audience. Among the conveniences offered were electricity, steam heat, sewage plants, a waterworks and macadamized roads. In the early years of development the promises of these conveniences had to suffice, but by 1890 most existed. By 1886 electricity was provided and streets were lighted. Locally fired steam heat was generated at a central plant and piped beneath the streets to the houses. Boardwalks covered muddy paths and some roads were macadamized. But minutes from the North Wayne Protective Association's records indicate displeasure with sanitation and garbage problems, swampy grounds that could potentially be malarial and a general untidiness of the Childs's owned properties. Often there was a contrast between advertised comforts and the communities actual facilities. The middle class wanted the latest in technological advancements which they felt were appropriate to their economic status. Failure to provide these was not overlooked.
Builders Wendell and Smith issued a series of brochures which outlined the advantages from suburban life and ignored the unfulfilled promises. They provided plans of houses ranging from the Bruin Lodge at $5,250 to the Tower House at $8,000.¹⁹ As an important incentive to the purchase of property they offered an installment plan for payment of the purchase price. A buyer need only put one-third of the cost down and follow it with monthly installments to obtain his suburban dream. Well into the twentieth century advertisements boasted that Wayne and St. Davids were "Philadelphia's FIRST suburb and still 1st from the standpoint of community healthfulness."²⁰ Clean, modern, and artistic, all adjectives to shape the housing ideals of the middle class buyer were used. By 1895 Childs and Drexel had invested over a million dollars in the development of these suburbs and their investment had given them an excellent return. National attention focused on their management and methodology, and discussed the "establishment of a city on scientific principles," compatible with late 19th century technological change and the resultant prosperity.²¹

In addition to orienting the development towards modern conveniences Childs and Drexel touted the area as a haven for family activity and security. Schools
were built; land and funds provided for Episcopalian, Catholic, Methodist and Baptist churches.\textsuperscript{22} For example, St. Mary's Episcopal Church was constructed on a two hundred by three hundred foot lot donated by the developers with a $5,000 gift to start the building fund.\textsuperscript{23} Askin's Lyceum Hall was renovated as an Opera House and town meeting. A general store, drug store, bakery and refreshment saloon were joined in 1890 by a block of stores, each store delineated by a different architectural style (Plate 9).

The recreations of country living received considerable attention in Wayne and St. Davids. The developers were aware that a primary attraction to their area came in the opportunity to emulate the lifestyles of the upper class. The Wayne Country Club which began as the Merryvale Cricket Club was incorporated in 1892. It held various athletic events including cricket and tennis on a five acre site donated by Childs and Drexel with a clubhouse built by Wendell and Smith.\textsuperscript{24} In the Opera House the Euterpean (music) Society, the Wayne Horticultural Society, Wayne Oratorio Society, Wayne Needlework Guild and others met.\textsuperscript{25} National recognition came to the Wayne Natatorium, the largest man-made swimming pool when it opened in 1895. Even the reservoir for the community's water supply became a recreational
Plate 9. Wayne Business District, circa 1900
(Históric Wayne)
area with its "elegant promenade on top provided with rustic seats." Essentially, all aspects of the country life of the wealthy could be enjoyed by the residents, even if on a reduced and more public scale.

As has become apparent, the appeal to status consciousness was the basis for many of the decisions to move to the suburbs. Country life was equated with great wealth, leisure activity and importantly, success. The stereotypical "Great American Dream" of owning a house in the suburbs began in this era. The community offered status, yet it did not pit the residents against the actual upper class, with the risk of being snubbed. In many ways it was a community of people with similar goals and social position, and ambitions for higher status. The developers, completely aware of these goals, made a conscious attempt to cast the area in a social limelight. The Main Line was synonymous with wealth and social privilege, and after all, Wayne and St. Davids were part of that area. Ladies Every Saturday in 1894 perpetuated the allusion:

One thinks of castles, of battlements and towers, of chateaus and pagodas of houses foreign and ancient as he passes through Wayne's avenues.

To demonstrate the social importance of the new suburb, glowing articles and advertisements bandied
about names like Newhall, Watt, Burnett, Sayen, Colket, Mifflin and Rush. Most were prosperous manufacturers or merchants, or the junior executives of the railroad. These individuals were not part of the world of a Cassatt or Ellis, or for that matter, a Drexel or Childs, but were recognized as socially significant. The older names like Rush and Mifflin had social appeal but represented families whose fortunes had declined considerably since 1800. Like Atlantic City, Wayne and St. Davids were portrayed as the bastions of the rich and fashionable, not from veracity, but to create a desirable image for the ambitious middle class. The illusion of social importance sustained these developments. Ladies Every Saturday noted with a flourish:

One meets constantly in Wayne and St. Davids the names of the descendants of Philadelphia's old colonial families.28

Within the new suburb social distinctions also arose between different addresses in the small area. North of the railroad station was considered the "choicer" address. The North Wayne Protective Association undertook a number of improvements in this area while a similar group in South Wayne failed. Ironically, many of the larger, more formal houses were erected to the south of the tracks. North Wayne's claim to supremacy was supported by the public services it offered. Boardwalks
to alleviate the problems of mud, snow-plowing, and fire protection were all cited for their excellence. A number of large estates were built on the periphery of North Wayne, furthering its prestige. The social rivalry between the two areas lasted well into the twentieth century.29 For many, suburban Wayne and St. Davids were a starting point on the social ladder. When they created large estates of their own outside the development area it gave them a local prominence they were unable to obtain in Philadelphia or in other areas of the Main Line. In a sense the suburbs were a microcosm of the Main Line containing all the antagonisms between older and newer wealth, and jealousies between people with conflicting ideas of taste and fashion.

The styles of houses offered in the 1880's and 1890's were as diverse as the residents. Buyers could choose from an established range of house types, mostly designed by William Price, or bring in their own architects. It was of course pointed out that the former was far more economical and the time required for construction far less. Land ranged in price from $1,000 to $3,000 an acre in the 1880's with patterned houses available in the $3,000 to $10,000 range.30 Architect designed homes averaged much higher, often surpassing the $25,000 mark. Prominent architects like Cope & Stewardson and
Horace Trumbauer completed a number of commissions in this area, small in comparison to their period style mansions in the following decade. Among the noteworthy houses were a Queen Anne cottage designed by Horace Trumbauer and built for James Watt on Louella Avenue and a colonial revival house completed for Thomas Leaming in 1888 on Pembroke Avenue from Cope & Stewardson's plans. Other architect designed houses were built in the shingle style, Swiss Chalet, Elizabethan, and Gothic.

From 1887 to 1890 the population of Wayne increased to the twenty-five hundred level. With St. Davids opening in 1890 (most houses costing $8,000 or more) it enjoyed another large surge. Here, cottages in the Tudor style were neighbors to Japanese houses or colonial revival homes. Around 1890, a simple gabled house of brick and frame could be built for $6,500 on a 75' x 200' lot, containing hall, oak staircase, parlor, library, dining room, pantry and kitchen on the first floor. Second floor rooms included four chambers and a bath, and three rooms of undesignated use were located on the third floor. Exterior options included a stone first story for $7,250 or a stone first and second story for $7,500. The smaller Bruin Lodge with its gambrel roof, half-timbering and stone water table
could be built for $5,250. Still a roomy house, it contained living room, dining room, pantry and kitchen on the first floor, five chambers and bath on the second.34 A Japanese House in the shingle style was available for $6,500 with fretwork pediment and railings, its distinguishing feature. At the top of the price range were the Tower Houses whose "distinctive feature was taken from an old windmill tower at East Hampton on the Long Island shore."35 These houses featured a center hall, large library and parlor, four chambers and bath on the second floor and extensive servant and storage spaces above. The three story rounded stone tower and stepped fenestration in the main facade were obviously popular as many of these houses survive.

Interior details of the Wayne and St. Davids houses included oak stair halls, stained glass windows, paneled libraries and tiled fireplaces. The description of one house's interior gives an accurate image of the styles of the period, remarkable in its representation of the stereotypical late Victorian middle class dwelling.

A combination bookcase and desk ... is heavy and carved in much detail. Chairs vary from the very fragile slender legged types to an overstuffed nail studded leather chair.... Tables of various sizes occupy much space, most of them with lace trimmed covers reaching almost to the floor. Though the main lighting is from center-of-the-room electric chandeliers
there is also an oil lamp in the center of most of the tables. Portieres are heavy and fringed, pictures in ornate frames cover much of the wall space. One fireplace has a spinning wheel as its chief ornament. Every mantle and table has its knick-knacks in profuse abundance.36

If stability is any judge, Childs and Drexel created suburban towns with unparalleled success. A spirit of community persists in 1980 as descendants of the original inhabitants live in family homes, or others within the area. Businesses started in the 1880's and 1890's prosper. Houses are faithfully preserved and rarely torn down; in fact the increased interest in Victoriana has assured their future. Childs and Drexel, pleased with the results in Wayne and St. Davids and the work of Wendell and Smith shifted their attention back towards Philadelphia with a possible second development in mind. Neither Childs nor Drexel lived long enough to begin the development, but Drexel & Company under Edward Stotesbury and Drexel's son-in-law, James W. Paul Jr., went ahead with plans for Overbrook Farms.

In 1893 Drexel & Company purchased 168 acres between 58th and 66th Streets on City Line Avenue for $425,000.37 Wendell and Smith were placed in charge of the building and management of the development.38 Between 1893 and 1894 streams were drained, roads laid
out, utility line installed and general planning completed. In the next five years, $2,000,000 worth of property was sold in lots ranging from $7,000 to $18,000 to those who advertisers again claimed were

people of refinement, intelligence and wealth, many of them prominent in the intellectual, political and mercantile walks of life.39

A variety of house styles were available, with colonial revival predominant. Again a Childs and Drexel inspired project provided spacious and attractive housing only a few commuter miles from center city Philadelphia.
CONCLUSION

THE END OF AN ERA

Today visitors to former Main line estates react with amazement at the size of the houses and grounds and accompanying outbuildings. They marvel at the large number of rooms and their specialized functions and question how many servants were necessary to maintain these mansions. In a few decades the lavish lifestyle synonymous with the Main Line has become unfamiliar, and has nearly vanished. The few individuals who live in solitary splendor among forty or fifty rooms fiercely protect their privacy. Forbidding fences and tall trees shelter their showplaces from public view. The obvious function of these "stately homes" as visible symbols of wealth and status far beyond spatial requirements and comforts has been negated.

The period from the Civil War until World War I in Philadelphia was unprecedented for the accumulation of large fortunes in industry and manufacturing. Seeking both symbols of wealth and indicators of the knowledge of upper class taste and manners, Philadelphians
found the Main Line a perfect setting for estates dedicated to country life. Insiders of the Pennsylvania Railroad and prominent financiers understood the changing population patterns within the city and the financial potential if they could convince wealthy city dwellers to purchase summer houses on the Main Line. With a dramatic increase in the numbers of millionaires, strong social rivalries developed. Country estates were well adapted to the need to show importance through residences and manners.

In the earliest period of Main Line estate construction, 1870 to 1885, many of the houses were at least superficially designed as rustic retreats or gentlemen's farms. But each house probably numbered upwards of six bedrooms and contained specialized rooms such as library, billiard room, music room and morning room. Outbuildings might include gate lodge, stables, carriage house, spring house, bell tower, greenhouse and sometimes a power generating house. Lifestyles were more ritualized and compartmentalized with each room or building fulfilling a special household function. More importantly, they indicated economic well-being and leisure time.

From 1885 to 1915 the construction and elaboration of estates focused on the large period style
house and the panoply of country life activities. These consumed the time and money of the rich. Houses of fifty or more rooms, most often modeled after English examples, were even further compartmentalized into both state and private rooms. For example, Morris Clothier's Clairemont in Villanova contained among its seventy-five rooms both formal and family dining rooms, a ballroom and music room, as well as a family sitting room. Daily activity at a Main Line estate was carefully scheduled, with the appropriate attire and accoutrements for each function of the day a necessity. The rituals of country life were further delineated from city life. In essence, knowledge (or lack thereof) of the appropriate forms and paraphernalia of the upper class Philadelphians was a clear indicator of status.

In 1913 a Federal Income Tax was enacted, instigating a steady decline in the scale of living of the Main Line estate owners. Commonplace expenditures in the late 19th century of $10,000, $20,000, or even $50,000 for a single social occasion became far less prevalent as taxes increased. In 1890 if a Philadelphian made one million dollars in a single year he retained all of it. Even a spendthrift was hard pressed to spend that sum when a twenty room house could be built for $25,000 or an old master painting purchased for
Before World War I, expenditures on houses and social activities often reached the point of absurdity as more exotic means of display were sought. New Yorkers were the most famous for their extravagances in that city, on Long Island and in Newport, but several Main Line residents kept pace. For example, William Hinckle Smith employed over seventy servants for Timberline, his Rosemont estate, including several just to maintain the indoor swimming pool. Many Philadelphians owned as many as four or five residences including a Philadelphia house, Main Line estate, and homes in Society's favorite winter and summer resorts. George W. Childs Drexel, for example, had residences in Philadelphia, Bryn Mawr, Maine and Europe as well as three steam yachts, each over two hundred feet in length. As upper class fashion filtered down to the middle class, developments like Wayne and St. Davids were launched drawing on this extravagant image of Main Line life to market their houses. Main Line development, whether a three hundred acre estate or a four bedroom house was possible because of the rapidly changing economic status of late 19th century Americans. But with economic progress came the underlying tensions as old money disparaged new, and they both looked with scorn on the middle class suburban
After World War I, as taxes made larger inroads into the 19th century Philadelphia fortunes and servants became both more expensive and more difficult to find, the Philadelphians scaled down their lifestyle to less spacious arrangements. The interest in colonial design and the revival of the 18th century Pennsylvania fieldstone house style dominated upper class taste. In part it represented a conservative reaction by Philadelphia's old guard who wished to reiterate their long standing social position in comparison to the challengers of new wealth. However, its success was mainly due to its suitability to the rescaled lifestyle.

A major change in the post-World War I period was the abandonment of city houses by many of the rich who then used their Main Line residence year-round. Elizabeth Pennell wrote:

It is hard to say what struck me most, though nothing more obviously the first few days than that flight to the suburbs which had left such visible proofs as those signs "For Rent" and "For Sale" everywhere in the streets where I was most at home—a flight necessitated perhaps by the inroads of the alien, but only made possible by the annihilation of space due to the motor-car.¹

The automobile and the smooth operation of the railroads facilitated year-round residence on the Main Line, but
the deterioration of the city's former fashionable areas like Society Hill, as they became working class ethnic neighborhoods or industrial sites made it inevitable. The increased demand for suburban housing meshed well with the break up of a number of the large estates as fortunes declined and often family lines petered out. While a number of estates still existed in the 1920's and 1930's, the typical upper class dwelling became a house of fifteen to twenty rooms set on three or four landscaped acres. The upper middle class also shared in the move to the suburbs most often purchasing colonial style houses modeled after those of the rich but in a reduced scale on a smaller lot.

The intrusion of suburban housing after World War I put an end to many of the country life activities of the late 19th century gentry, forcing country clubs and hunt clubs to relocate west of the Main Line. In this period the areas around West Chester and Unionville became the country seats for many upper class Philadelphians. It was not uncommon to own a house in Bryn Mawr and a "farm" in Unionville. Wealthy Philadelphians became increasingly removed from the social and political life of the city and took less of an interest in its well-being. People might work in the city but their lives were completely oriented around their
suburban homes.

By 1940 the trappings of Victorian country life on the Main Line had all but disappeared. The countless fieldstone houses built by firms like Wallace & Warner on the sites of mansions from the 1880's and 1890's had solidified the colonial image of the area. Although the railroad officers who began this development after the Civil War would never be aware of it, their design of a residential area for the wealthy abounding in colonial allusions and aspects of country living was a reality.
NOTES

INTRODUCTION


6Baltzell, Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia, p. 243n*.

CHAPTER I

1Barbara Alyce Farrow, The History of Bryn Mawr, 1683-1900 (Bryn Mawr, Pa.: Bryn Mawr Civic Association and A Committee of Residents, 1962), p. 5.


3Farrow, p. 5. Radnor and Haverford were in Delaware County, Merion in Philadelphia County.
4. Carl E. Doebley, Lower Merion, A Portrait (Montgomery County, Pa.: Lower Merion Historical Society, 1976), p. 1. In 1695 a new meeting house was built which still stands on Montgomery Avenue in Merion. This building shows the continuation of Welsh provincial design in his country.

5. Farrow, pp. 6-7.

6. Ibid., p. 6.


8. Farrow, p. 17.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., pp. 10-11.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., p. 12.


15. Ibid., pp. 14-15. The land was deeded in 1798 to the descendants of Robert McClenaghan with life interest to the Thomsons. In the 19th century 698 acres passed to Naomi McClenaghan Morris, the wife of Philadelphia merchant Levi Morris. They built a "modern house" in the 1850's and Harriton became a tenant house. Descendants of the Morrises still own a large part of the land, although over three-quarters of it was sold to estate builders and developers before World War I.


17. Ibid.

18. Farrow, pp. 21-22.


22Farrow, p. 24.
23Doebley, p. 3.
24Ibid.
26Doebley, p. 3.
27Ibid. The cost of construction was $4,000,000.
28When the Main Line of the Public Works was completed, travel from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh was possible in four days via railroad and canal.
29Rev. S.F. Hotchkin, Rural Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs & Co., 1897), p. 66. Small villages grew along the stops of the Reading Line. For example, Rose Glen developed as a mill village. Several houses and stores were located on Mill Creek near to where it entered the Schuylkill River. Little remains of this settlement which is now part of Gladwyne.
30Ibid.
31Farrow, p. 30.
32Ibid.
33It will be seen in Chapters II and IV that the Baldwin Locomotive executives along with the Pennsylvania Railroad officers were among the earliest developers along the Main Line. There was almost the tone of an industry related development.
34Farrow, p. 31.
35Main Line Chronicle, p. 23.
CHAPTER II


3Joseph F. Tripician, "The Role Played by the Pennsylvania Railroad in the 'Main Line' Area of Philadelphia," 1960. (Typewritten.)

4W. Hansell Wilson as quoted in Tripician, p. 9.


6Ibid., p. 39.

7Ibid.

8J.W. Townsend, The Old "Main Line" (Bryn Mawr, Pa.: By the Author, 1922), p. 55. The first edition of this informative work was published in 1919 under the name A.N. Onymous.

9Farrow, p. 39.


13Ibid.

14Townsend, p. 31.


16Townsend, p. 57.


18Townsend, p. 57. The problem of an underground spring is still present. Often the front field floods, creating a large mud flat.

19Farrow, pp. 40-41.

20Townsend, p. 53.

21Ibid., pp. 58-60.


23Farrow, p. 41.

24Ibid.

25Townsend, pp. 56-57. It is likely that the Pennsylvania Railroad did contribute some funding to the new hotel.

26Farrow, p. 42. Although James O'Gorman implies Frank Furness did the design for the hotel, several local histories suggest that it was his partner Allen Evans who did the major work.

27O'Gorman, pp. 59-60.

CHAPTER III

1J.W. Townsend, The Old "Main Line" (Bryn Mawr, Pa.: By the Author, 1922), p. 51.

2R.W. Shopell, Shopell's Modern Houses, 1887 (New York: By the Author, 1887). Design 466 in Shopell's could be constructed for $8,000. The house had: double parlor, dining room, library, pantry and kitchen on the first floor; four large bedrooms with dressing rooms and one bath on the second floor; two large bedrooms on the third floor. The house was brick with a slate mansard roof.


5In 1888 Cassatt did purchase a house at 202 Rittenhouse Square as a convenient place to entertain or stay when city business occupied the majority of his time. However, he considered Cheswold his main residence and under normal circumstances commuted from this Haverford house to the city, daily. See: Patricia T. Davis, The End of the Line (New York: Neale Watson Academic Publishing Co., 1978) for an illustration of the Philadelphia house.

6Townsend, p. 78.

7Ibid. The house now belongs to Harcum Junior College.


9Ibid.

10Farrow, p. 49. Theodore Ely later purchased Wyndham an 18th century house which bordered on the Bryn Mawr College campus. The Ely family added several wings, keeping them in the colonial style. The house was given to the college in the early 1970's by Miss Gertrude Ely.
I have not attempted to describe the houses of this period as to architectural style and design. They were mostly made of stone with slate roofs, fairly simple in design, in a composite mid-Victorian style. Quaker architect Addison Hutton, the designer of many of these houses did not experiment in line and detail like Furness and later architects. The house owners seemed to be waiting to see if the area would gain prominence before they invested more money and their own concepts of design and decoration. Many of the families who built along Montgomery Avenue did maintain residences there for a number of years, but in the majority of cases they renovated and added wings to existing structures or built new ones as replacements. For this phase of settlement of the Main Line the personalities and their motivations for purchase of a house or land are the primary concerns.

Farrow, p. 45.

Ibid.

John M. Nugent, "Bryn Mawr Sketches," (newspaper clippings).

The Suburban Directory, Main Line District (Philadelphia:Palmer & Goodwin, 1907).

Farrow, p. 53. Derham Body would gain national prominence as a custom coach builder. In the age of the automobile they became one of the most famous makers of custom bodies for Packards, Lincolns, Dusenberg etc., for the Main Line and East Coast rich.

Henry Graham Ashmead, History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia:L.H. Everett & Co., 1884), p. 697. There is some question as to the legitimacy of Childs's birth. Nathaniel Burt stated that he was the illegitimate son of a prominent Baltimorean and spent much of his life trying to cover up his early years.


Morris, p. 93; Childs, p. 14; Elizabeth R. Pennell and Joseph Pennell, Our Philadelphia.
Wootton was named for the manor in England of the Duke of Buckingham. It was after a visit to that estate that Childs became particularly enthralled with English country life.


25 Ashmead, 695.

26 Artistic Houses, p. 158 and illustration plate.

27 Ibid., p. 159.

28 Ibid., p. 158.

29 Radnor Historical Society in Wayne now owns a shovel engraved with the signatures of the distinguished tree planters, which belonged to Childs.

30 Ashmead, p. 697.

31 E. Digby Baltzell, Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia (New York: The Free Press, 1979), p. 29. Childs is typical of what Baltzell terms the "cut-flower," the individual of talent and wealth who did not leave a family that might carry on a tradition. He notes the pattern of "cut-flowers" in Philadelphia was a major disadvantage in comparison to Boston with its Adamses, Cabots, Lowells etc.


33 James A. Michener, "The Main Line," Holiday April, 1950, p. 54.
CHAPTER IV


2Patricia T. Davis, End of the Line (New York: Neale Watson Academic Publishing Co., 1978), p. 43. For biographical information on Cassatt and his work with the railroad, Davis's book is now the definitive source.


4Davis, p. 42.


7Davis, p. 43.

8Ibid.

9Ibid., p. 83.

10Ibid., pp. 83, 123.

11Ibid., p. 114.


13Davis, p. 121.

14Social Register, Philadelphia 1891 (New York: The Social Register Association, 1891); The Philadelphia Club, 1834-1934 (Philadelphia: By the Club, 1934). In 1895 the Cassatts chartered a yacht, the STAR OF THE SEA, for a North Sea cruise. Cassatt decided to buy this vessel and rechristened it ENTERPRISE. The yacht, which cost $500,000 to build, had a crew of fifteen. Interior details included bird's eye maple and walnut.
paneling and frescoed ceilings. Cassatt used the sailing yacht on the Delaware and Chesapeake and in 1903 took it to Bar Harbor, Maine where he had built Four Acres, a rambling shingle style cottage.


16 Davis, p. 100.

17 Ibid., p. 99.

18 J.W. Townsend, The Old "Main Line" (Bryn Mawr, Pa.: By the Author, 1922), p. 63.


20 Ibid. Today, only a the gate lodge and a few outbuildings survive at Cheswold. The house was torn down to make way for a development of costly homes on a more manageable scale in the 1940's. The house at Chesterbrook Farm is just a shell, the victim of vandals over the years, and its six hundred acres are being developed into a town for over ten thousand people.

21 Burt, p. 191.

22 Morris, p. 88.


24 Ibid., p. 38.

25 Thomas and Myers, p. 211. Thomas and Myers attribute the work to Furness, Evans & Co., but place it circa 1889. Family records point to 1893. Possibly there were several phases of remodeling, or they are referring to another building on the property.

26 In contrast to George Roberts's fairly modest estate was that of his cousin, Percival Roberts, Jr., whose Penshurst was built in 1903–04 for over $500,000 from the designs of Peabody & Stearns of Boston. By the time the interiors were completed and an arboretum laid out on the six hundred acre property in Narberth over $2,500,000 had been spent.

27 Morris, p. 88.
28Social Register; Philadelphia Club.


31Hotchkin, p. 170.

32Townsend, p. 86; Ashmead, p. 680.

33Herman LeRoy Collins, Philadelphia: A Story of Progress 4 vols. (New York: Historical Publishing Co. n.d.), IV:33, 160-61. The Baldwin Locomotive Works were founded in the 1830's by Matthias Baldwin. The boom period for the firm was during the Civil War. In 1866 Matthew Baird bought the company and he in turn was bought out in the 1870's when it became Burnham, Parry, Williams and Company. In 1909 it was reincorporated as Baldwin Locomotive.

34Ibid., p. 161.

35Wentworth photo album, Radnor Historical Society Collection. In addition to the main house at Wentworth several family homes were added over the years. There were several family compounds on the Main Line including those of the Williams family; the Wheelers in Bryn Mawr; Converses and Vauclains in Rosemont; Fews in Ardmore. The Morris family estate known as Dundale had over six houses and a private railroad station called Upton to the west of Villanova Station.


38Hotchkin, p. 185; Ashmead, p. 678.

39Ibid.

40Hotchkin, p. 185. The house was torn down in the 1950's to make way for a high rise apartment building, but the carriage house survives as offices.
A white colonial revival mansion, Springbank, built on the property for Converse's daughter, Mary, is also used for offices today.

41Public Ledger as quoted in Oberholtzer, p. 695.

42Other Baldwin estates in the Bryn Mawr—Rosemont area included Samuel Vauclain's Broadlawn on Roberts Road; William Austin's Beaumont on County Line Road, and a larger house later erected on Ithan Avenue; Alba Johnson's Castana, a Theophilus Chandler designed house originally built for Pennsylvania Railroad freight agent William Joyce in 1890.

43Hotchkiss, p. 185.

44Ibid, p. 106; King, illustrated p. 98.

CHAPTER V


5Ibid., p. 517.


8J.W. Townsend, The Old "Main Line" (Bryn Mawr, Pa.: By the Author, 1922), pp. 100-02.

9Barbara Alyce Farrow, The History of Bryn Mawr,
The firm of Cope & Stewardson was founded in 1885 and became a leading residential and institutional designer. For a history of the firm see: Philadelphia and Popular Philadelphians (Philadelphia: The North American, 1891), p. 222.

Farrow, pp. 58-60.

Burt, p. 22.


Townsend, p. 103.


The Twenty-Seventh Annual Exhibition Given by the Philadelphia Chapter, American Institute of Architects and the T-Square Club (Philadelphia: By the Chapter, 1921), p. 252. Contrary to James Michener's statement in the April, 1950 issue of Holiday, the second Clairemont was not demolished and currently serves as a dormitory for Northeastern Christian Junior College.

Furnishings in the Howard French residence, Alderbrook, in Radnor show the mixture of European, American and oriental styles. In 1980 the house appeared almost frozen in time around 1910 with a variety of these types of furnishings. French was a wealthy paint manufacture who made a larger fortune as a partner in the pharmaceutical firm of Smith, Kline and French.


23 May Douglas Flanagan and Phyllis C. Maier, "Meadow Lodge, 1898-1968" (typewritten).

24 Ibid.


26 Social Register, Philadelphia 1900 (New York: The Social Register Assoc., 1900).

27 Flanagan and Maier.

28 Ibid.

29 Herbert, p. 66.


32 Ibid., pp. 45-46.


34 Burt, p. 253.

35 Ibid.

36 History of the Merion Cricket Club (Haverford, Pa.: By the Club, 1965).

37 Ibid. The Furness & Evans designed clubhouse is still in use, although interiors have been
altered beyond recognition.

38 In 1911 the first course was laid out at Merion, the famous East Course. In 1914 a second course was added. The courses still operate, independent of the Cricket Club as the Merion Golf Club.


41 In the 1950's the entire club was relocated to the Gladwyne golf course site in a clubhouse designed by Philadelphian Vincent Kling.

42 Philadelphia Press 23 September 1892.

43 Burt, p. 287.

44 Hotchklin, pp. 177-78; Gilbert Mather, ed., Master of Radnor, Diary of Charles E. Mather M.F.H. 1887-1901 (Philadelphia: A.G. Smith & Co., 1947), p. 21. The huntsmen and whippers-in were professionals who cared for the hounds and were responsible for them during the hunt. The Master of the Fox Hounds was a gentleman rider and leader both in the club and in the field.

45 A. Willing Patterson, History of the Gulph Mills Golf Club (Gulph Mills, Pa.: By the Club, 1975).

46 Baltzell, Philadelphia Gentlemen, p. 363.

47 Harvey Green, "Modernization and the Decorative Arts in the United States, 1850-1900," (paper presented to a conference of the Victorian Society in America and the Decorative Arts Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians, Philadelphia, October 26-28, 1978). One of the primary manifestations of the denial of modernism arose in the Arts and Crafts Movement at the end of the 19th century. Cottage industries and the skills of the early craftsmen were studied and adapted to the current time period. While industry seemed to be the man's world, much of the
Arts and Crafts Movement was developed by women. Even cottage architecture, albeit on a much enlarged scale, came into vogue.

48 Ibid.

49 Burt, p. 534.

50 Later the movie star would replace the Society figure as the center of attention, much to the relief of the old guard families, but to the chagrin of the stereotypical social climber who thrived on press exposure.

51 Pennell and Pennell, p. 149.

52 Baltzell, Philadelphia Gentlemen, p. 363.

53 Evelyn Page, The Chestnut Tree (New York: Harper & Row, 1964). This delightful novel about an old guard summer inn located to the west of the Main Line pursues the dilemma of the introduction of a new face into a crowd of seasoned visitors. It amusingly recounts the chaos that this seemingly unimportant addition creates in the staid upper class Philadelphian world.

54 Burt, pp. 40-41.


CHAPTER VI


These houses, many of which were converted to offices in the last few years, are now threatened with destruction, to make way for modern office buildings.

6Historic Wayne, p. 7.
7Ibid., p. 15.


10Philadelphia Record, 22 May 1884.


13"Wayne and St. David's," (advertising broadside).

14Ibid.
15Hotchkin, p. 233.


17Historic Wayne, p. 15.


19"Rural Homes," (advertising brochure).

20J. Howard Goodwin, The Main Line Beautiful (n.p.:By the Author, 1928).

21Henry Graham Ashmead, History of Delaware

22Ibid., pp. 682-83; Hotchkin, pp. 246-57.
23Hotchkin, pp. 254-57.
24Historic Wayne, p. 25.
26Ashmead, p. 683.
27"Beautiful Wayne and St. Davids," Ladies Every Saturday I (July 20, 1895).
28Ibid.
29Ziglar.
30"Beautiful Wayne and St. Davids."
31Hotchkin, pp. 250, 269.
32Emma Patterson, "Clippings," 1949: (scrapbook).
33"Wayne and St. Davids," (photo albums).
35"Rural Homes," p. 17.
36Patterson, 15 August, 1949.
38Ibid., p. 67.
39Ibid., p. 74.

CONCLUSION

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