

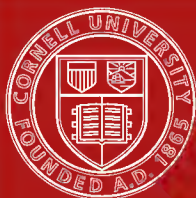
Proposed Improvements for the Buffalo Country Club

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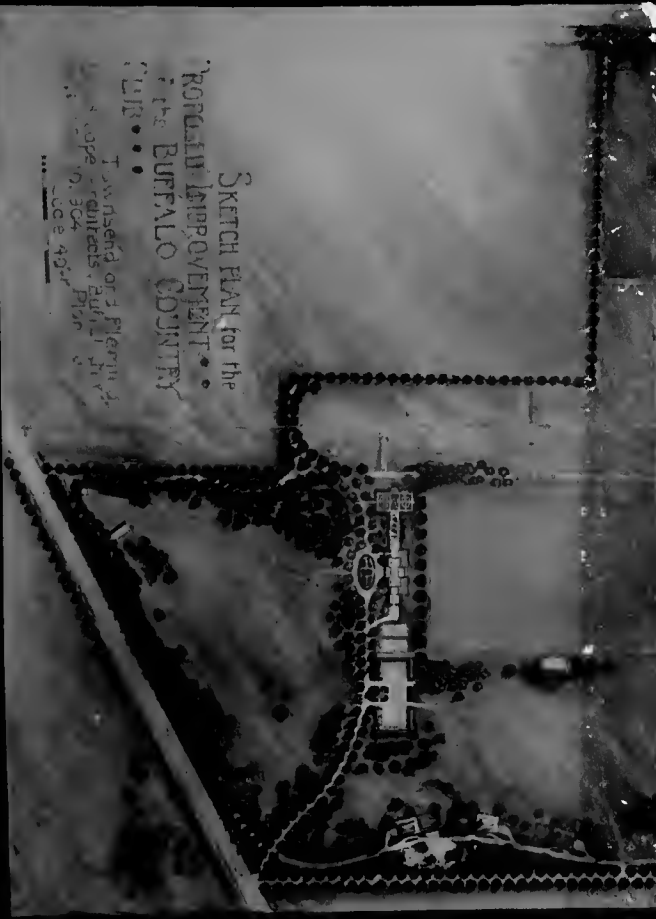
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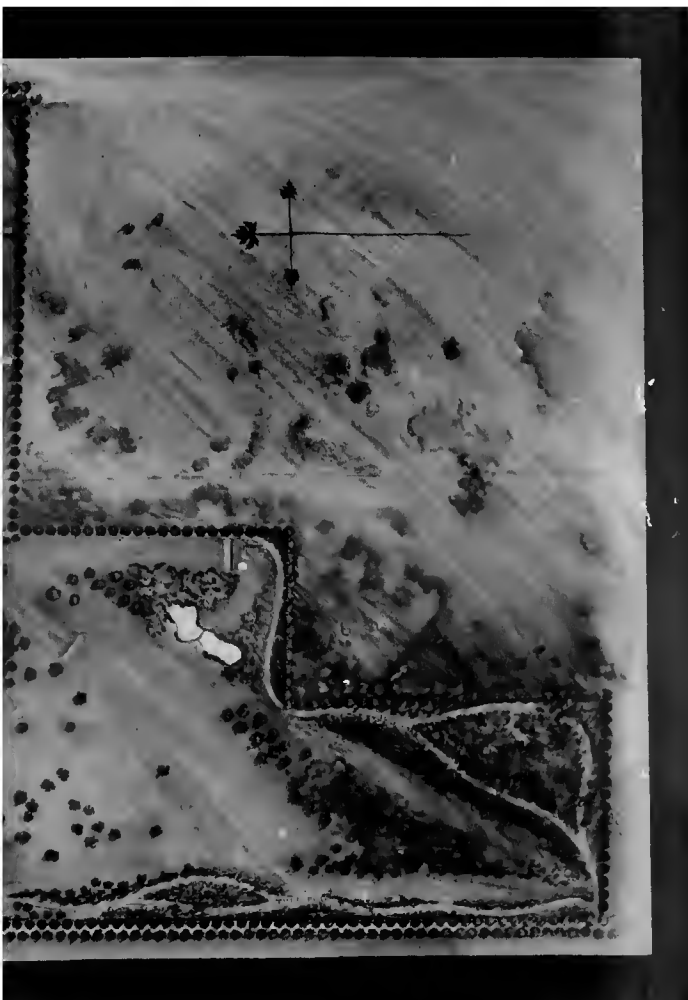
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SKETCH PLAN for the
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"Page 49"





PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

FOR THE GROUNDS OF

The Buffalo Country Club

BUFFALO, N. Y.



REPORT OF

F. DE PEYSTER TOWNSEND AND BRYANT FLEMING
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, BUFFALO, N. Y.



SEPTEMBER, 1904

**REPORT ON PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT ON THE GROUNDS
OF THE
BUFFALO COUNTRY CLUB.**

Original Purchase of Land.

THE original purchase of land by the Club, comprising seventy acres (more or less) was made in 1900. At the request of the House and Grounds committee, Mr. Townsend assisted in choosing a location for the club house, in determining upon the course of a road from Main street to the house and in establishing grades in the immediate vicinity of the buildings.

He was authorized to select and purchase, so far as possible at the Pan-American, planting material in sufficient quantities to produce an attractive appearance over that portion of the ground lying between the highway and the northern front of the building, the purpose being to alter the aspect of this area, from one of a neglected farm, to that of a place under cultivation, observing with due care, certain fundamental principles of landscape design.

It was desired to have the work in hand, as nearly complete as possible, for an opening on Arbor Day, 1902.

The work of road building, as approved by the House and Grounds committee, was commenced late in the autumn of 1901. At the earliest practicable time in the following spring (1902) the work was taken up again, together with grading and planting. Nineteen hundred and fifty (1950) sq. yds. of macadam road was constructed, grading which involved the

use of three thousand (3000) yards of earth for filling and six hundred (600) yards for top dressing, the bulk of which material was secured in grading for the road, was done. Planting which necessitated the handling of three hundred and twenty three (323) trees, four hundred and thirty five (435) flowering shrubs, eight hundred and fifty (850) perennials, one thousand (1000) hedge plants, one hundred and sixty seven (167) conifers, eight hundred (800) sq. ft. of bedding, together with approximately six thousand five hundred (6500) sq. yds. of seeding, and seven hundred and fifty (750) sq. yds. of sodding, was well on toward completion on Arbor Day, and was finished, so far as superintendence was desired on the 30th day of May.

The ground under treatment had been considerably improved, but owing to the desire to curtail expense, and the uncertainty as to a plan of procedure, the work of development was not carried further.

The Polo field, which, owing to an improper method of grading and seeding, had failed to produce grass, had, under a system of fertilization, become an expanse of green sward, and by a system of drainage, certain wet portions of the golf links and polo field had been relieved of a superabundance of moisture, and the quality of the turf somewhat improved.

Additional Purchase of Land.

The purchase of additional property in 1903 to the extent of about one hundred and forty (140) acres, and the determination to enlarge the Club House, necessitates certain changes in the

treatment of the ground in the immediate vicinity of the house, demands a different entrance from the main highway, and makes the field for Landscape work in general, of much broader scope.

Location of House.

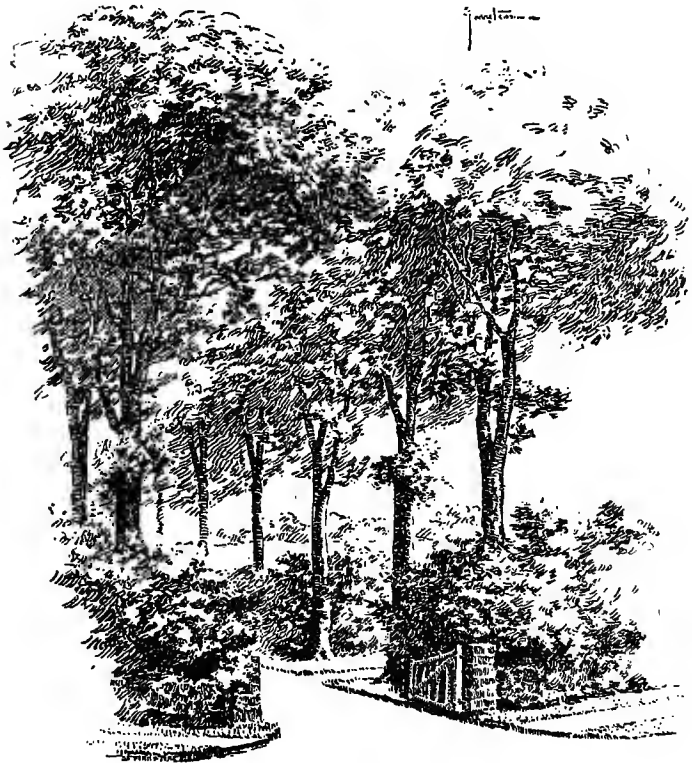
In producing a general plan for arrangement, it has been taken for granted, that the decision to let the house remain in its present location is final. As a site for the house under the present conditions, the high land about midway on the Bailey Avenue line, would be far preferable, as it is the view point for the whole property ; would cause the least interference in the matter of games ; is the quickest and easiest point to reach, coming from any of the several ways of approach from the city, and would permit of the most desirable exposures, so far as the rooms of the House are concerned.

Present Road to Club House in Relation to a New One.

In deciding the course of the present road, a strong argument was advanced, that it should leave the Highway at the nearest point of approach to the Club House. This argument led to the adoption of the road as against a straight avenue, which was recommended, and was calculated to be most effective from a Landscape point of view, beside being more distinctly in keeping with the architecture of the house.

The same argument, more forceful today, is justified, because of the added distance on Main Street, which makes an approach from the corner of Main Street and Bailey

Avenue, one of necessity. The distance now permits of a grace of curve and breadth of treatment, which is distinctly lacking in the original road.



A New Road of Approach.

This new road should have an entrance at the junction of Main Street and Bailey Avenue, and carry in a long sweep to

the oval in front of the Club House. No change need be made in this oval or in the direction of the present road, leading as far as the north stable entrance. This road could be opened for traffic, as a turf or dirt drive, but the road bed should be established on a proper gradient from Main Street to the oval, in order to form a finished grade on either side, which need not be disturbed when work on a permanent drive is undertaken.

The treatment of the ground in the immediate vicinity of the house is largely dependent on the plan of alterations. As shown, it is, to a greater or less degree, designed to meet the requirements of an enlarged house, as shown in the drawings of Mr. George Cary. In its main features, such as the arbor terminating in a garden on the east, the service yard, tennis courts and stables on the west, it is essentially a treatment which the style of the house demands, and should be incorporated in a final plan, at least in a modified form. The only change of importance from present conditions, is the removal of the garden, from which all material could be transferred at a small cost.

In our plan, the stone house is made an integral part of the stables, and could be used as a dwelling for a caretaker. It is too near the stables at present, to be desirable for any other purpose, and we have made ample provision in the plan for cottages.

Observation Stand and Dressing Rooms.

A small pavilion, located midway on the west side of the polo field, is designed to give housing facilities for polo and golf players, and to serve the purpose of an observation stand

for both polo field and golf links. The plan of arrangement suggests a series of seats, looking toward the polo field, a roof covered promenade, along the top, with a balcony overlooking the golf course. This building can be drawn into the landscape, and made less intrusive by careful planting in the near vicinity.

Cottage Sites.

The high land on Bailey Avenue must be considered from every standpoint the best for the location of cottages. The same reasons which have been advanced in its favor as a Club House site, hold true in respect to cottages. On the plan they are located so that they can be reached from the circuit drive, making additional roads unnecessary. They are in near proximity to the Club House, exposed to the prevailing breeze, and command the finest views; nor do they in any way interfere with the proposed golf links. They can, by proper arrangement of planting, be made to give as much seclusion as is desired. The exact location of these cottages, their plans and the arrangement of the grounds, as shown, are merely suggestions, and call for special study, provided the general plan of arrangement is adopted.

Circuit Drive or Bridle Path.

A circuit drive through the border plantations, offers an entrance to the Club grounds from all thoroughfares: Main Street, two points; Bailey Avenue, two points; and Eggert Street, one point. This path is intended to be in the nature of a natural woods path, which would not require to be built or maintained. Available for driving, riding, or walking, it would

be in constant use, and in time would become a distinctive attraction. The course of these roads has been governed to a great extent, by the golf links. In no place do they encroach on the space reserved for golf, except perhaps, in the one leading from Eggert Street to the corner of the Pomeroy property. The road here is made as narrow as possible, and is bordered by one row of trees, which is already planted. This road is, in our estimation, absolutely essential to a successful general plan of arrangement. A short cut from a point just south of the cottage sites, to the south stable entrance, (shown in plan in dotted lines) is the only place where a decided convenience to all Club members, seems to justify crossing the open field. This more direct way of getting to the Club House from the Bailey Avenue side, should be adopted if possible, as completing the practicable arrangement of roads.

Polo Field.

The polo field remains the same, a broad expanse of lawn on axis of the house, being one of the best features of the grounds.

Tennis Courts.

The Tennis Courts, two in number, are conveniently near the house. In remodelling the stable sheds, a balcony, made attractive with vines and flower boxes, could be included as a place of observation. These courts would be sufficient for present requirements, and when additional courts are needed, a part of the land where the orchard now stands, can be utilized. We would recommend that for the present, the

orchard be allowed to stand and that any planting done to replace this orchard, should take into account, the possible need of more courts.

Children's Play Grounds.

We can suggest no better place for a children's play ground, than where it is at present, in the gully under the apple trees. In the course of time, if conditions required it, a space in what is designed to be woodland at the south end of the property, could be used and a proper shelter provided.

Such a place would also be available for picnics, but it could not be considered desirable for either, until an effort has been made to produce a forest growth, which will afford shade and give the grounds a more natural aspect.



Small Lake or Pond.

To take the place of the ditch at the seventh (7th) hole, we would propose a small body of water, answering the same

purpose as a hazard, and having some merit as a water feature. This can be obtained by modifying the outlines of the shore, while increasing the size and planting the banks with appropriate shrubbery, thus giving an emphasis to the curves along its boundaries. If the natural water supply were inadequate, it could be kept sufficiently fresh, by an occasional flushing from the water mains. A bridge of simple design, would span its narrowest part, for the convenience of golfers. This pond could be used for skating in the winter.

Wild Garden.

The rough ground of an excavation, or old quarry site, almost directly west of the Club House and near Bailey Avenue, could be used to advantage as a wild garden. Planted with material, adapted to this purpose, it would add an interesting feature along the circuit drive.

Grading, Etc.

The matter of cultivating, grading, and seeding the new land, is one which is only indirectly concerned in the scheme of treatment, for the natural undulations of the ground if preserved, are all that could be desired. We observe that the land has been thoroughly drained, but it is nevertheless in no condition to be seeded down this autumn, as is demonstrated by the texture of the soil, and the weedy growth now covering it. In our judgment, all the new land, covered by golf links, should be ploughed and harrowed, planted immediately to some good soiling crop (as winter wheat), and at the earliest possible

time in the spring, ploughed and harrowed again, and seeded down. Under such treatment, it will produce a much more turfy sod, than is found elsewhere on the ground.

Planting.

The planting suggested in the plan, may be separated into two groups and five divisions, as follows :

Group 1—Ornamental planting about the house, garden and stable.

Group 2—Tree and shrub planting.

Division 1—Avenue trees along roads and lanes.

Division 2—Border plantation of trees and shrubs.

Division 3—Individual trees.

Division 4—Groups of trees in the open.

Division 5—Reforestation.

Planting Around House.

All the planting would have to be made the subject of special study, but generally speaking, that around the house, designed to be of a finer and more cultivated nature, would include smaller growing ornamental trees, flowering shrubs, perennials and vines.

Avenue Trees.

Avenue trees and those designed to shade the lanes, would be for the most part, elms, with maples, lindens, etc., where they could be used consistently and to advantage.

Border Plantations.

In the border plantation, a great variety of tall and medium growing trees could be used including oaks, hickory, beech, basswood, and such coniferous trees as are known to be hardy.

(here could be planted the poplars now on the ground). This planting of trees should be supplemented for the most part by small trees and shrubs, which are found in quantities on the ground, such as crataegus, cherry, cornus, willow, etc.

Copses and Hedge Rows. These copses and hedge rows as they exist, should be thinned out so as to lose their identity as such, and the material used for other planting.

Material Found on Ground. These, if collected from the copses and hedge rows, which should be modified in such a way as to be drawn into general border plantations, would be found sufficient to make a very substantial beginning of planting as proposed, beside affording an endless stock of material for starting a nursery.

Tree Groups. Individual Specimens. For groups of trees in the open, and individual specimens, the elm, oaks and maples, should be used principally.

All trees in groups, and individual trees (as on plan), are located with regard to a sense of the beautiful in **Vistas.** nature, with regard to vistas formed, and with regard to the importance of golf.

In the reforestation, proposed for the extreme south of the grounds, a well selected mixture of all the **Reforestation.** forest trees, hardy in this region, should be planted with native forest shrubs and trailing vines, as an undergrowth and ground cover. The required shrub growth could be largely obtained on the ground (as above suggested). Here eventually should be located a rustic summer house or shelter.

Avenue and Boundary Trees. All avenue and boundary line trees are planted forty feet apart. Those already planted (old road of approach excepted) could be allowed to remain, as they are making excellent growth.

Standing Trees. All old trees now standing can be preserved, and in the case of those which show signs of decay, immediate steps should be taken to stimulate them, by pruning, filling holes with cement, and cultivating the ground at the roots.

Present Orchard. The present orchard, north of the Club House, should be preserved as long as possible, the trees being replaced as fast as they die, by ornamental trees, following a certain well defined idea of planting.

Plans and Specifications.

The plan submitted, is in no sense to be considered a working plan; it is in the nature of a study, suggesting the improvement of the property as a whole. A general plan, of measured accuracy, based upon these suggestions, should be adopted before any work is undertaken, and such expenditures as are made by the Club on out door work, should be carried on with such a general plan in mind, and under the advice of its originators. In this way only, can the work of development, be made one that will produce satisfactory results. In a broad sense, such a plan as above outlined can be followed, but in certain instances, as about the house and stables, gardens,

cottage sites, water, entrances, etc., special plans and specifications, and experienced superintendence would be required. The cost of the work, in part, or whole, can be figured with



moderate accuracy, from such a general plan, and in the case of special work, as above outlined, the necessary expenditure could be made the subject of exact figures.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, we would say, that this report is not intended to be exhaustive in any degree, and is offered only as an explanation of the plan, and as showing its designers' ideas in general for the improvement of the property, along lines approved in landscape design.

The members of the Country Club have only to consider the development of their park system, to appreciate that certain fundamental things are required, to bring about radical betterments on open ground. First, an approved plan ; Second, a dominating influence over the development of the plan, by one whose authority is recognized ; Third, the proper expenditure of funds ; Fourth, co-operation and patience. If these conditions are met with by the gentlemen of the House and Grounds committee, and the members of the Club in general, results can be obtained which will serve to make the members proud of their Club, as representing the best that nature and art can produce, the grounds in themselves affording every opportunity for most successful treatment.

Respectfully submitted,

TOWNSEND AND FLEMING.

SEPTEMBER, 1904.



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