

BUILDING OAKCROFT, A 'RESIDENTIAL PARK'



Excerpted from

THE OLMSTED LEGACY: ANDERSON PARK IN MONTCLAIR, N.J.

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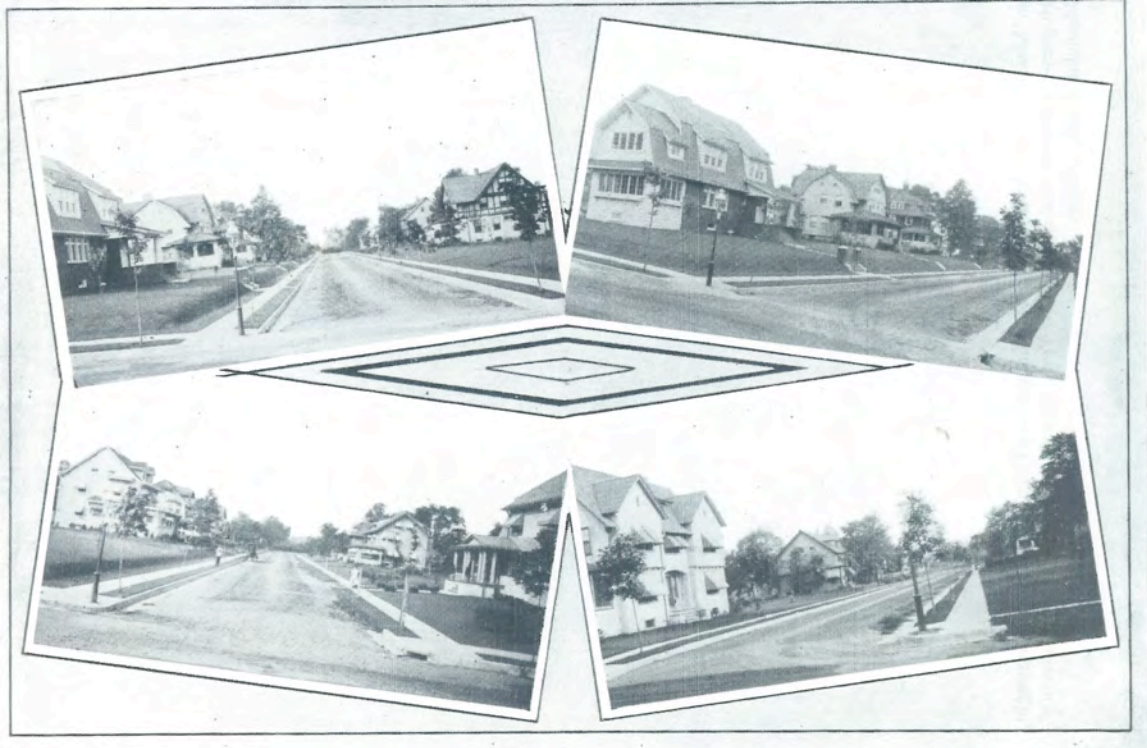
BUILDING OAKCROFT, A ‘RESIDENTIAL PARK’

Anderson Park’s development turned out to be a real-estate improvement project as much as a community-spirited beautification effort. The park’s creation provided the impetus for a new suburban neighborhood just south of its borders, and a symbiotic relationship existed among the housing developer, the Essex County Park Commission, and the Olmsted Brothers firm: the developer ensured worthy surroundings for the park, promising to build “fairly good dwellings” facing it,¹ and in return the commission and the landscape architect John Charles Olmsted agreed to give up a sliver of park property for the creation of The Parkside, a road that would allow construction of houses overlooking the park.²

The town, which approved this arrangement to help the new Oakcroft subdivision, also benefited through beautification and increased property taxes. As one civic leader put it when advocating for park development in 1906: “A block of parkland is usually an ornament to at least four blocks surrounding it.”³ By the time the Essex County park system was just a few years old, the ability for its parks to pay for themselves by enhancing property values was already being touted.⁴ And after about two decades a study of Essex County parks would confirm what town leaders already knew: The value of property adjoining four county parks studied increased

sixfold over 11 years compared with twofold elsewhere in the same tax district.⁵ As a large property owner along the park, Charles Anderson directly profited from this ripple effect and clearly understood its power: In 1912 he placed a real-estate ad for a spacious home “overlooking a beautiful park,” offering the promise of “a rare investment opportunity – rising real estate values” and the “chance for somebody to make a real home and some real money besides.”⁶

Anderson Park’s creation curtailed commercial development west of the Upper Montclair Village business district and halted the spread of industrial uses, which immediately abutted the eastern park boundary along the train tracks at the Osborne and Marsellis lumber, coal and masonry yard. A deed restriction for one tract in Oakcroft prohibited construction of a factory, store, lumber or sillar yard.⁷ All this solidified the trend toward residential development in the area, with Oakcroft being the first large-scale example. One Olmsted tenet held that neighborhood parks were important,⁸ and Anderson Park not only helped foster a strong bond between the park and the surrounding community, but it helped shape a neighborhood. The park spurred development of a multi-block district that now numbers about 80 homes, and more than a century later it continues to maintain the residential character of an area just a block or two from a commercial district. (Fig. 1)



STREET VIEWS, MONTCLAIR.

Figure 1: Oakcroft views ,clockwise, from upper left: looking north on Princeton Place from Godfrey Road; looking north on Princeton Place from Godfrey Road; looking south on Princeton Place from Anderson Park, with No. 25 in view; looking north on Edgemont Road from Godfrey Road. From “Montclair, New Jersey, and Its Advantages as a Place of Residence.” Real estate promotional booklet by Frank Hughes-Taylor Co., circa 1913.

By the time Anderson Park opened in 1905, Montclair was on the fast track for suburban development because of the commuter railroad’s arrival in the 1870s. Similarly, parkside property was poised for development because it was walking distance to the Upper Montclair train station.⁹ Oakcroft became part of a nationwide transformation of open land to suburban development, which began after the Civil War and continued into the early 20th century as railroad service expanded rapidly. Train lines radiating from large metropolitan areas made it possible for middle-class, white-collar workers in congested cities to afford outlying homes a short commute away, where birdsong and cricket chirps filled the air.¹⁰ Newspaper ads and a promotional booklet for Oakcroft highlighted the joys of urban living – “water, gas, electricity,

telephone, drainage and underdrainage” – along with the glories of the country – “spacious lawns, shady groves and many forest trees.”¹¹ (Fig. 2)



Figure 2: Newspaper classified advertisement promoting Oakcroft subdivision. The New York Times, April 24, 1910, pg. 17.

Aaron W. Godfrey of New York was buying property south of the park in earnest in 1906, and by that October he owned about 18 acres that would become Oakcroft.¹² His arrival removed a thorn in the side of the Park Commission, which had been embroiled in an acrimonious relationship with three previous owners of the Godfrey property who refused to give up portions of their development land for the park. Although Godfrey had every intention of building on this land, he was willing to work with Olmsted and the Commission in doing so, and agreements struck among these parties helped shape the southern boundary of the park as well as the emerging neighborhood.¹³

Before Oakcroft began to rise, its land served mainly as a drainage area for First Mountain runoff into Toneys Brook. A small section had been subdivided into a dozen residential lots by Marshall C. Kelley, a Michigan developer, and more lots were planned by adjacent owners, but construction never began.¹⁴

In October 1906 Godfrey announced plans to create Oakcroft, a subdivision that would cut six new streets and build scores of houses.¹⁵ A few months later The Montclair Times described the future Oakcroft as a parkside neighborhood with more than 100 houses and 500 residents, hailing the development as “a great improvement in that section of the town” and describing the houses as “high-class residences.” The development would be bounded by Anderson Park to the north, the south side of Godfrey Road to the south, North Mountain Avenue to the west and the train tracks to the east. (Fig. 3)

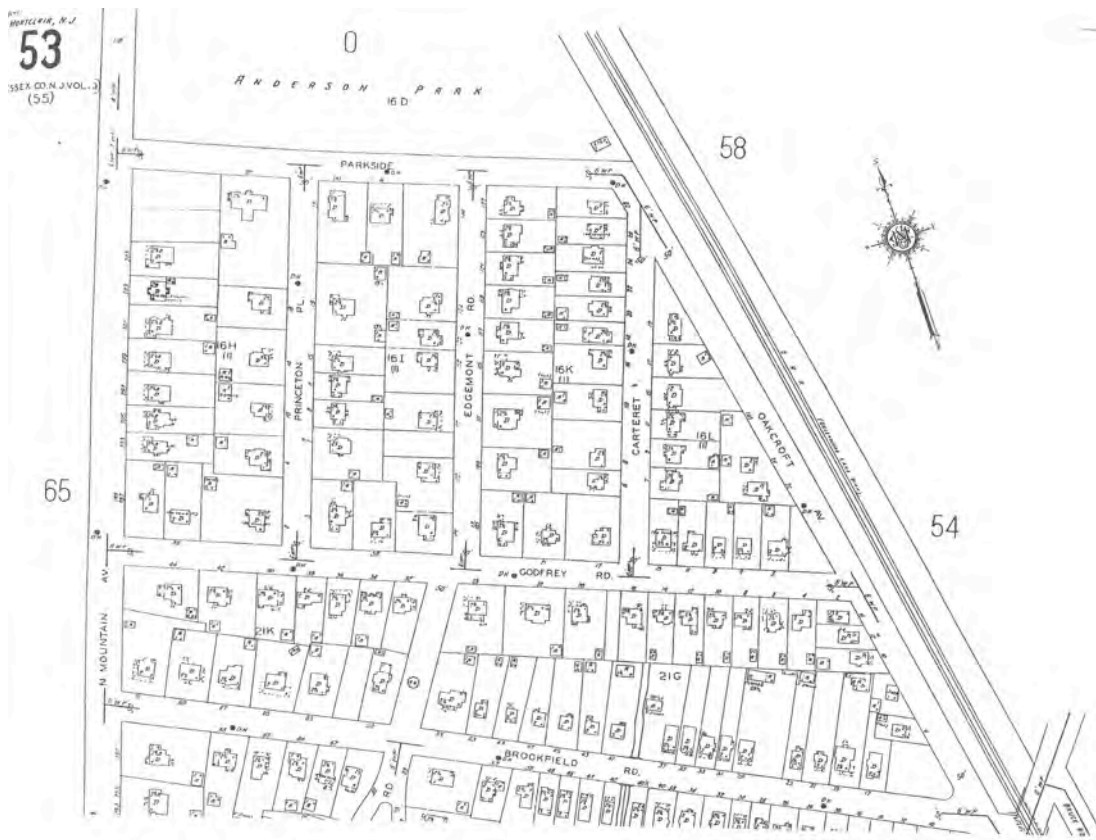


Figure 3: The Oakcroft subdivision, built out. Sanborn map, 1934.

By the spring of 1907 construction crews for the Godfrey Land and Building Company broke ground, laying drainage and sewer pipes, clearing brush and digging cellars. As the newspaper reported: “The improvement in this tract of land will add greatly to the appearance of that section of the town north of Watchung Avenue, and incidentally add a nice sum to the taxable values of the town of Montclair. ... Oakcroft will become one of the finest sites for homes in Montclair, situated as it is between Harrison [now Edgemont Memorial Park] and Anderson Parks.”¹⁶

By the end of 1906, Godfrey had approached the Park Commission about building a street along the park’s southern boundary, which would require paving some park acreage.¹⁷ A similar request had come up several years earlier from the previous owners, and at that time the Olmsted firm proposed three alternatives for such a street, including straight and curved alignments.¹⁸ In all those proposals Olmsted envisioned houses facing the park and set back at least 30 feet from the street, which would intersect North Mountain Avenue at a right angle. In one plan the road ran straight, as it does now; in another it curved south near where Carteret Road is today. To Godfrey’s request Olmsted responded likewise, but the men agreed to a straight street, homes with a 25-foot setback, the preservation of large trees along the boundary, and a strip at least 5-feet wide for planting a row of street trees along Godfrey’s land.¹⁹ By February 1907 the Township of Montclair formally approved the new street, to be called The Parkside.²⁰ (Fig. 4)



Figure 4: 130 Edgemont Avenue, with a view of The Parkside, looking west. Anderson Park is to the right. Undated.

The road, which Godfrey offered to construct at his expense, intersected with most of Oakcroft's other streets. By 1912 two of Oakcroft's north-south streets, Princeton Place and Edgemont Road, had direct links to newly extended pathways into the park, establishing a formal pedestrian connection between the park and the people living beside it.²¹

Both Godfrey and the Mountain Society, a civic organization, began advocating in 1909 for lights to be installed in the park, and although the Park Commission denied the request, it did review an estimate for Welsbach naphtha gas lamps in 1910.²² In 1922 electric lights finally arrived in the park – 22 of them, with posts made of ornamental reinforced concrete designed to resemble gray granite and opalescent Washington globes fitted with 100-candlepower lamps.²³

The park's presence was a strong selling point for Oakcroft, which was marketed in Montclair and New York City and described in one newspaper advertisement as “one of the choicest and best established of New York's picturesque suburbs.”²⁴ A promotional booklet

includes a photograph of the park and opens by saying, “Oakcroft fronts the superb twenty-five acre Essex County Park, [and] is in fact a continuation of it – a residential Park.”²⁵ (Fig. 5) An item in The New York Times promoted its location – at the foothills of a mountain, beside a park, minutes from mass transit²⁶ -- and likewise, an advertisement in The Montclair Times noted that the subdivision “adjoins Anderson Park, five minutes walk through the park from the Upper Montclair station, three minutes from the Valley Road [trolley] car.”²⁷

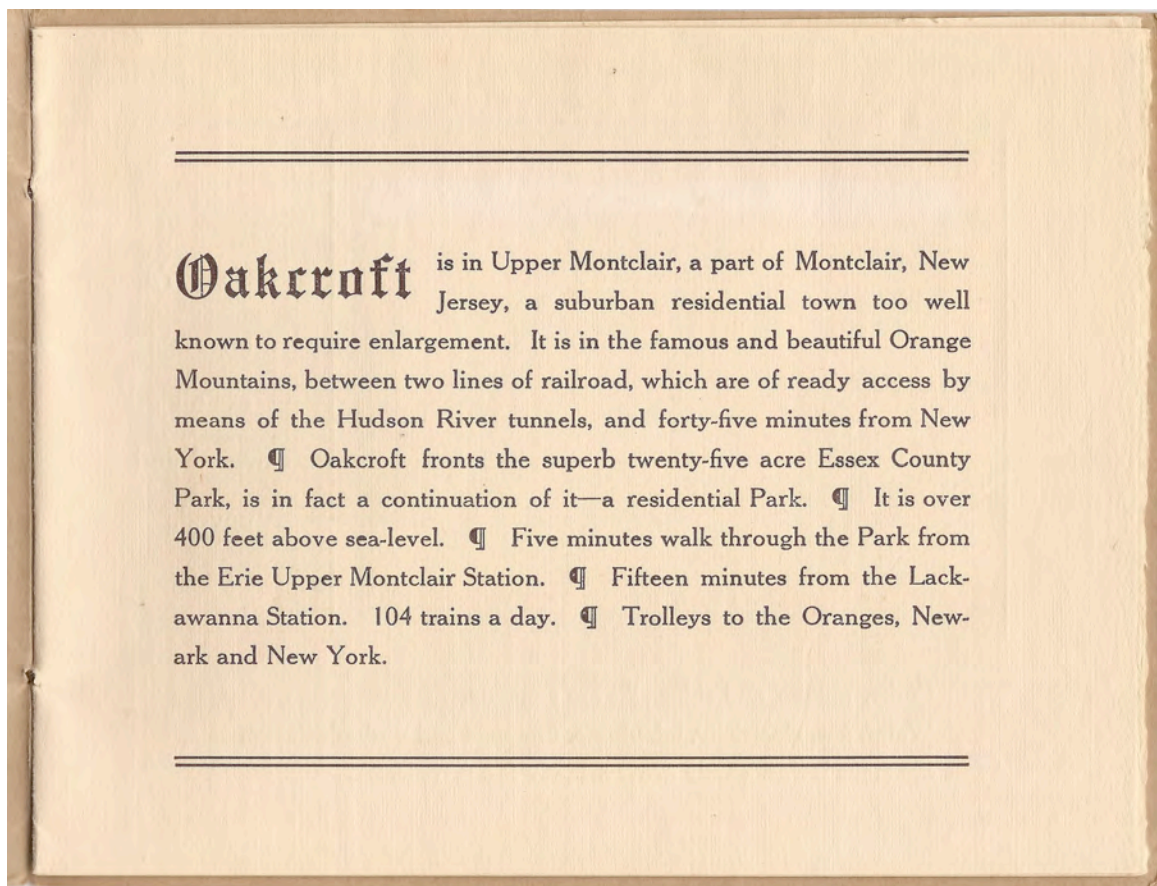
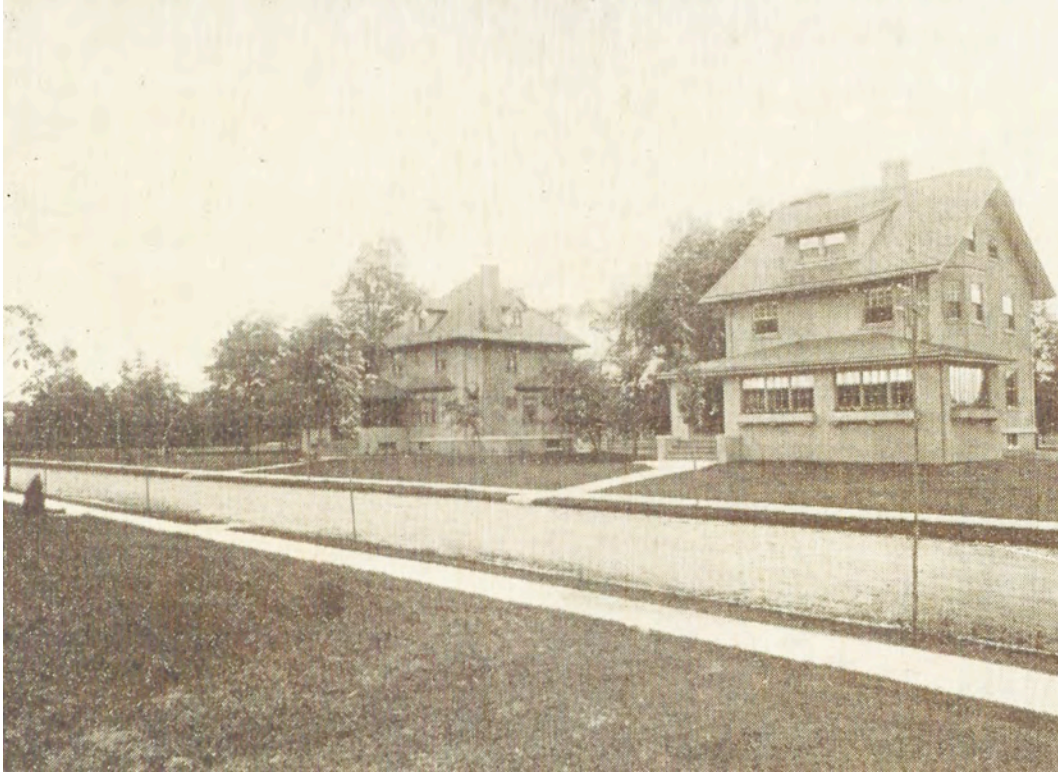


Figure 5: A page from “Godfrey Land and Building Co., Upper Montclair, New Jersey,” a promotional booklet for the Oakcroft subdivision, circa 1908.

“Residence parks” were all the rage in the early 1900s, and became early models of suburbia created in response to an industrialized nation and cities swelling with immigrants.

Their development restrictions set the stage for the city zoning and planning codes to come; their tract associations were precursors to homeowners' associations; and they paved the way for contemporary suburban development patterns.²⁸ One of the earliest in this genre – built in 1885 in New Rochelle, N.Y., for Adrian Iselin Jr. – had grounds designed collaboratively by John C. Olmsted and Downing Vaux.²⁹ Residence parks typically featured winding streets with curbs and sidewalks, cohesive architecture, homes set on “garden lots” surrounded by light and air, and common green spaces. Oakcroft boasted only some of these signature elements – its streets followed a grid and it lacked shared green spaces – but it piggybacked on the adjacent park to achieve this connection.

As in many residence parks, Oakcroft tapped notable architects, and its promotional material emphasized the quality of the homes. At least six of Oakcroft's first homes were designed by George A. Freeman and Francis G. Hasselman of New York,³⁰ architects who collaborated in 1904 on Rosemary Hall, a Georgian-style mansion in Old Westbury, N.Y., and went on to design other estates on Long Island and elsewhere.³¹ Their Oakcroft efforts were described in American Homes and Gardens magazine: “One of the most important principles to be considered in the building of a suburban home is that which affects the physical, mental and moral well-being of the prospective home-builder. A second principle which is equally important is the element of sincerity expressed in the designing of a house in a style of architecture that will be permanent and characteristic of all that is best in art expression.”³² (Figs. 6 and 7)



Figures 6 and 7: Edgemont Road around 1908. Top, looking east toward Nos. 115 and 111. Above, looking west toward Nos. 114, left, 118 and 124. From sales brochure.

Their diverse Oakcroft designs were not Georgian at all: they included Craftsman, Tudor Revival, Colonial and Prairie influences. (Figs. 8 and 9) The exteriors were varied, designed “in different forms and styles in order to make each house sufficiently distinctive.”³³ Nonetheless, several designs are repeated, with some tweaks, throughout the neighborhood. The “concrete” houses were of frame construction covered with metal lath and then coated in cement stucco.³⁴ These stucco houses sold better than the clapboard or shingle models.³⁵

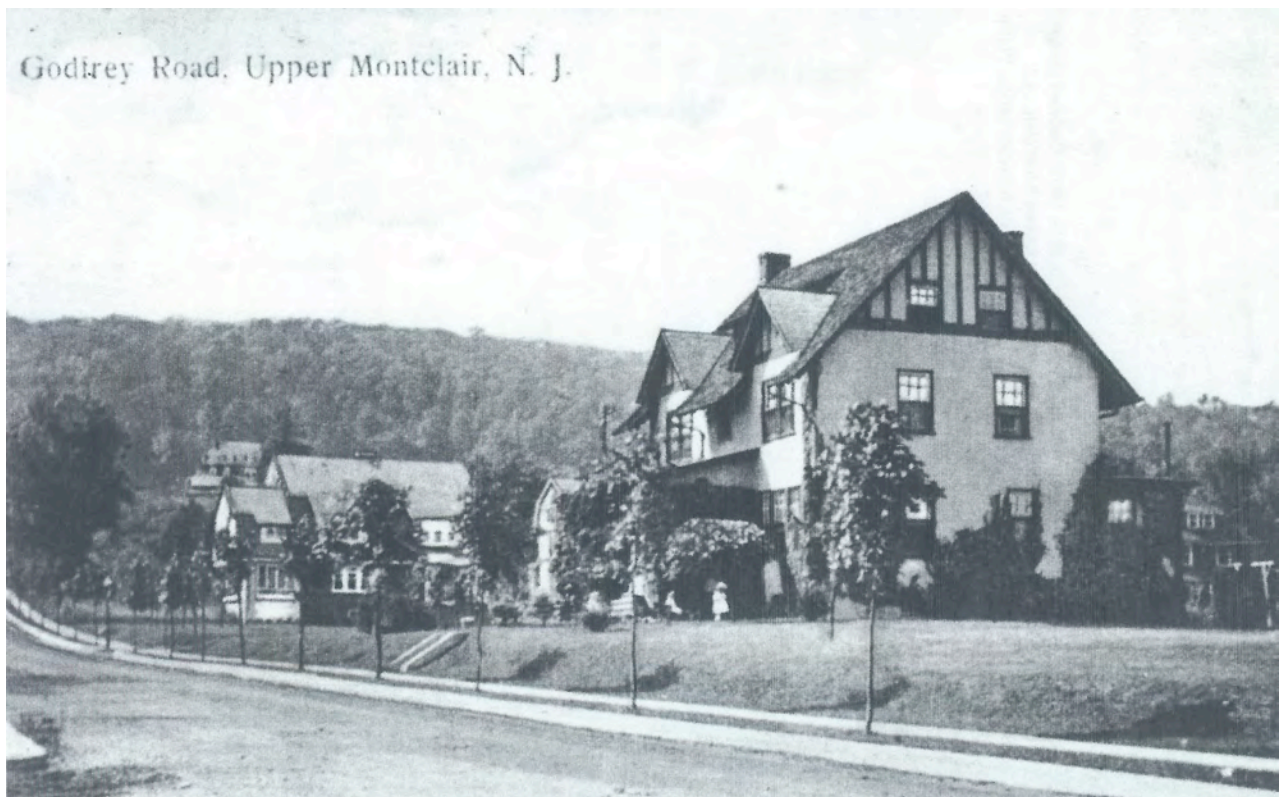


Figure 8: Undated postcard of 35 Godfrey Road, Montclair, N.J., built in 1907.

ous small lighted windows, with which the exterior walls are pierced. The house is of frame construction covered with metal lath and finished with a triple coat of cement stucco, tinted a light yellow. The trimmings are painted brown and the roof is covered with shingles, stained a reddish-brown. The interior arrangement of the house is similar to the plans shown in Figures 6 and 7, belonging to the house shown in Figure 9, with the exception that there are no bay windows at either the first or second stories of this house. The versatility of the architect is again very well expressed, for he has been able to design a distinctive exterior for a similar plan. The halls and living-rooms are trimmed with oak, stained and finished in a forest-green. The fireplace in the living-room is built of buff Roman brick with the facings rising to the height of four feet, at which line it is finished with a mantel shelf. The walls are covered with a two-toned brown wall-paper, with a large



Fig. 5—Mr. Godfrey's house is designed in the English half timber style



Fig. 6—First floor plan of Mr. Godfrey's house

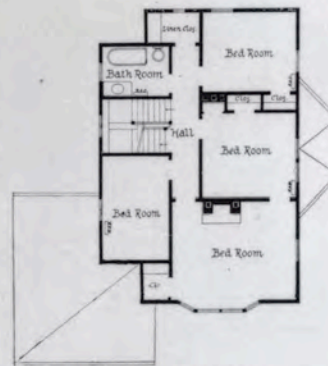


Fig. 7—Second floor plan of Mr. Godfrey's house

figure covering most of the surface space. The dining-room is trimmed with oak, finished in Flemish brown. The wall is covered with a plain yellowish-green paper, extending to the plate rack. The wall space above the plate rack is covered with a red and green wall-paper. The butler's pantry and kitchen are complete. The second floor is also trimmed with cypress and painted white, with the exception of the doors, which are finished in a forest-green. There are four bedrooms and bathroom on this, and two bedrooms and bath on the third floor. The bathrooms are tiled and are furnished with porcelain fixtures and exposed nickel-plated plumbing. The cellar contains the laundry, fuel room and heating apparatus.



Fig. 8—The charm of Mr. Brandon's house is its massive wall surface and numerous small lighted windows

Another house of distinctive character is the one built for Archery H. Loomis, Figures 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18. The house is square in form, with lines well broken by bay windows, living-porch and small latticed windows. The entrance is

Figure 9: Two Oakcroft homes, from *American Homes and Gardens* magazine, Jan. 1910. Top, probably 7 Princeton Place. Bottom, 19 Princeton Place.

On the interior, design elements included natural oak trim -- beams, plate rails, fireplace mantels, built-in china cabinets -- and walls painted or papered in earth tones. An advertisement called these homes “superbly finished with oak trim and floors, two baths and toilets, steam heat, gas and electric fixtures, tiled bathrooms, two or more open fireplaces, fine large verandas and shaded lawns.”³⁶

Oakcroft was advertised as “a carefully restricted residential park of 25 acres”³⁷ that “contains a complete drainage system, thoroughly improved with sewers, paved streets, cement sidewalks, curbs and gutters.”³⁸ That sidewalk offered an extra touch: street names, cast in bronze, inset into the pavement at intersections. (Fig. 10)



Figure 10: Sidewalk insert at the southwest intersection of Godfrey and Edgemont Roads, Oakcroft subdivision, Montclair, NJ.

One notable house, at 25 Princeton Place, built in a twin-gabled model reproduced with variations several times in the development, later became the childhood home of the Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin, who recalled playing pick-up football in the park and using the trees and boulders as goalposts.³⁹ (Fig. 11)



Figure 11: 25 Princeton Place, at corner of The Parkside, Oakcroft subdivision, Montclair, N.J. This became the childhood home of the Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin.

“A unique part of my youth was growing up with the park next to my house in Montclair,” Aldrin reminisced in 2008. “I played frequently on Saturdays with school buddies, throwing snowballs in the wintertime. Then I walked through the park to get to Upper Montclair during my junior high school years. It was an integral part of my surroundings, my environment, my life.”⁴⁰

Oakcroft appears to be Godfrey’s first foray into development. He was 33 years old when he began buying the Oakcroft land, and before that he had spent his post-college years briefly

owning a silver mine in Mexico, which failed; then working as a reporter and editor for newspapers in Philadelphia and Newark; then selling life insurance.⁴¹ It is unclear what drew him to Montclair. (Fig. 12)

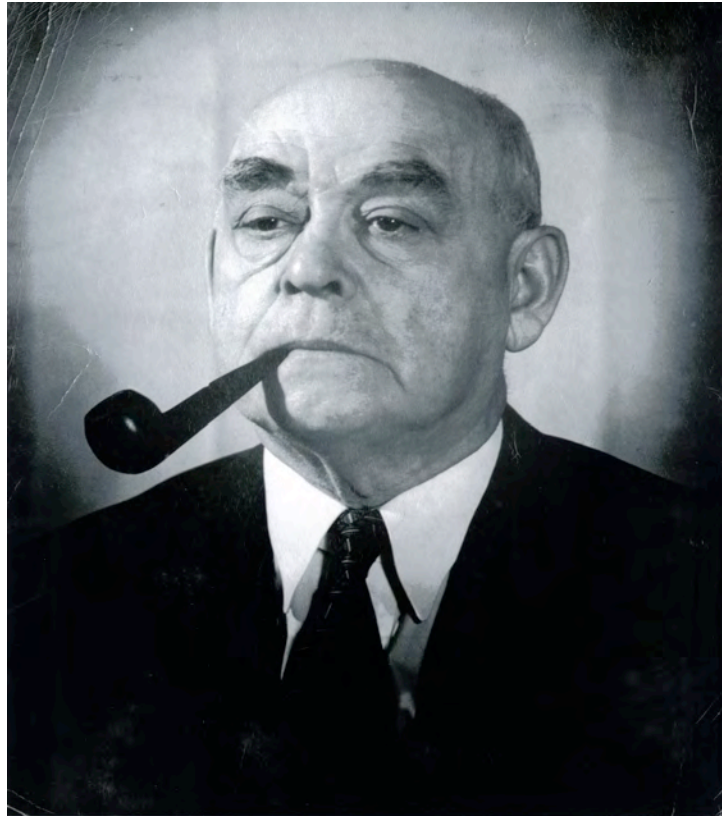


Figure 12: Aaron W. Godfrey, 1940.

Throughout his life, Godfrey remained a staunch supporter of his alma mater, Princeton University, from which he would have graduated with the Class of 1896 except that a family scandal forced him to leave early. (A brother-in-law was caught selling art forgeries.)⁴² In 1931

he received an honorary degree from Princeton, along with the likes of Charles Lindbergh and Willa Cather.⁴³ (Fig. 13)



Figure 13: Princeton University honorary degree recipients, 1931. Aaron W. Godfrey is back row, second from right. Other recipients in the photo include Charles Lindbergh (back row, second from left) and Willa Cather (front row, second from left).

His affection for the university is reflected in an Oakcroft street name: Princeton Place.

(Fig. 14)

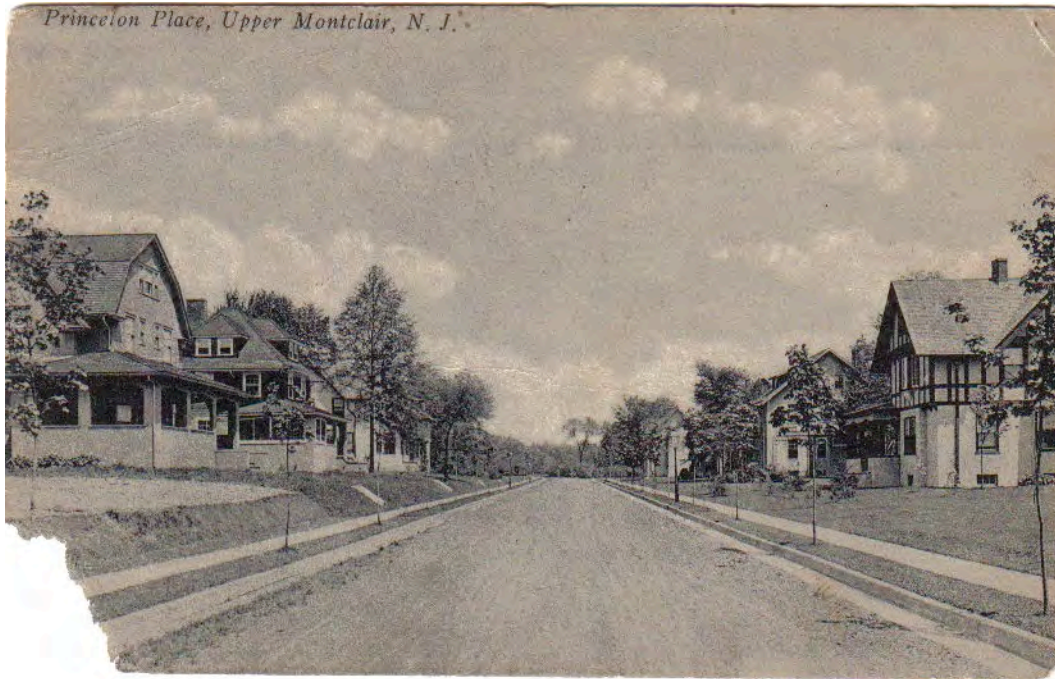


Figure 14: Postcard of Princeton Place, Montclair, N.J., looking north from Godfrey Road. Interstate Publishing Company, New York, N.Y. Postmarked June 30, 1916.

By 1916 the Godfrey Land and Building Company seemed to be wrapping up business around the park, though infill by other builders continued into the 1920s and '30s, mostly in the Colonial Revival style.⁴⁴ With the Oakcroft development a success, Godfrey later took on much larger subdivisions in Upper Montclair covering about 200 acres, building more than 60 substantial homes on Norman, Marion, Aubrey (named for a cousin and good friend) and Caroline Roads; Patton and Nassau Streets (both nods, again, to Princeton); and parts of Inwood Avenue and Clarewill Avenue (named for his wife). Beginning in the mid-1920s, just north of Montclair in Clifton, he began work on a subdivision where the streets bear the names of Princeton presidents: McCosh, Maclean, Hibben, Edwards, Witherspoon. In May 1930 he bought 36 acres of the William Hamilton dairy farm in Upper Montclair, south of Alexander

Avenue between Grove and Broad Streets. He planned a development meant to address “the problem of good but inexpensive small homes for young couples of modest means.”⁴⁵ It is unclear if that project came to fruition; if so, it may be the Stonehenge Road or Squire Hill developments. The New York Times estimated Godfrey’s worth in 1930 at \$1 million, and by then he lived on Park Avenue in Manhattan.⁴⁶

The land along North Mountain Avenue overlooking the western edge of the park did not belong to Godfrey, but it too experienced significant upgrading. When the park opened, five houses sat on the stretch of North Mountain between Bellevue Avenue and the future Parkside.⁴⁷

(Fig. 15)

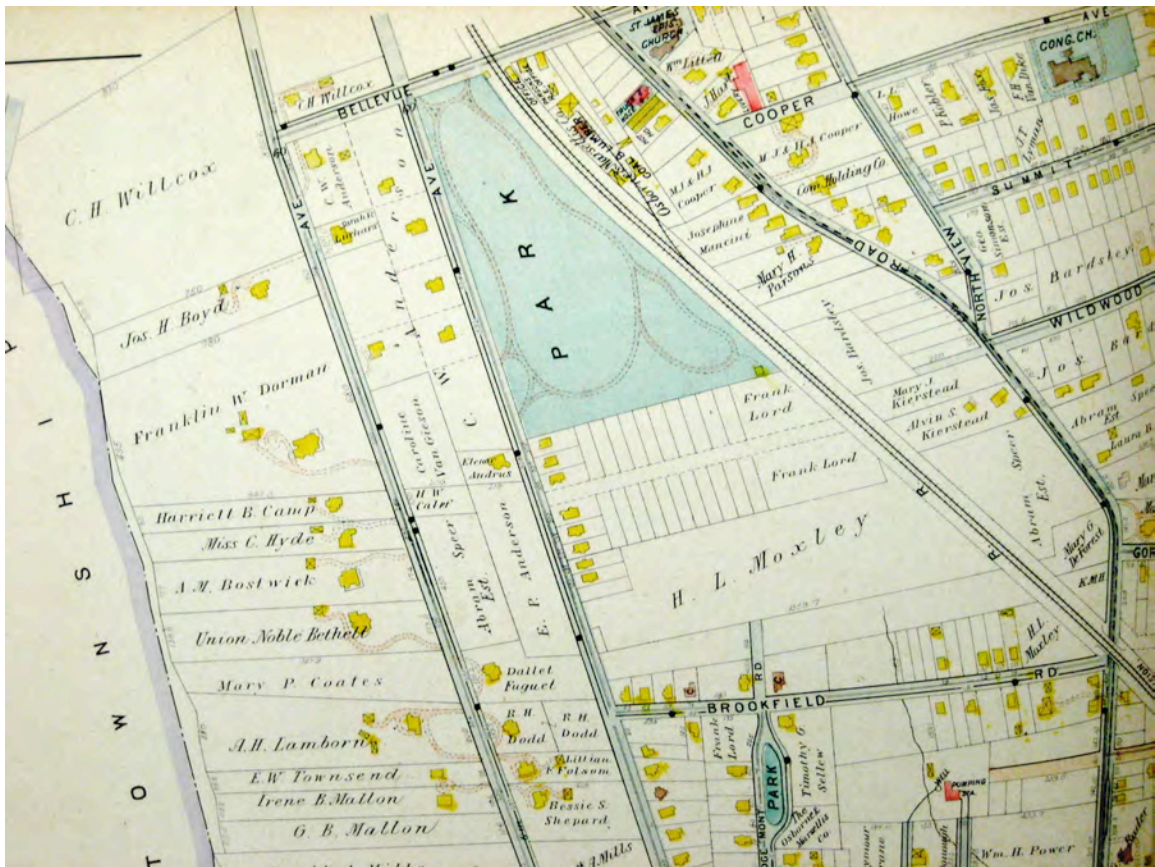


Figure 15: Anderson Park with early, unrealized subdivision plat to the south, shown in a 1906 atlas.

By 1928, ten houses took advantage of the park view, and some replaced wood-frame Victorian vernaculars that were demolished to make way for grander Georgian Revival and Tudor Revival homes. Several of these were built by members of the Anderson family.

This embrace of well-built homes along its southern and western borders has established and maintained the park's residential character for more than a century, reinforcing Anderson Park as an enduring example of the Olmstedian ideal of a suburban park.



INVENTORY OF OAKCROFT HOMES

Listed by House Number, Followed by Year Built

Based on municipal tax records

Researched by Deb Ellis

Godfrey Road

2 - 1928	3 - 1937
4 - 1916	5 - 1912
6 - 1907	7 - 1912
8 - 1922	9 - 1922
10 - 1917	11 - 1915
12 - 1911	
14 - 1923	15 - 1917
16 - 1912	17 - 1910
20 - 1907	21 - 1907
22 - 1919	
28 - 1907	
32 - 1919	
34 - 1912	35 - 1907
36 - 1907	
38 - 1917	
40 - 1917	
42 - 1918	
44 - 1918	45 - 1921

Oakcroft Avenue

4 - 1921
6 - 1928
10 - 1922
14 - 1905*
22 - 1930
24 - 1927

Edgemont Road

106 - 1917	105 - 1912
108 - 1910	109 - 1916
	111 - 1912
114 - 1910	115 - 1912
	117 - 1913
118 - 1902*	119 - 1913
120 - 1907	121 - 1916
124 - 1902*	125 - 1917
130 - 1908	127 - 1921

Carteret Street

6 - 1912	7-1916
8 - 1916	9-1914
10 - 1924	
16 - 1916	17-1915
18 - 1912	19-1922
20 - 1916	
22 - 1907	
24 - 1923	
26 - 1927	
28 - 1925	

Princeton Place

1 - 1925	3 - 1926
6 - 1905*	7 - 1907
	9 - 1919
10 - 1909	11 - 1926
14 - 1912	15 - 1904
18 - 1912	19 - 1902*
	25 - 1907

The Parkside

16 - 1927
22 - 1914
28 - 1946

* These dates are probably in error because groundbreaking did not occur until 1907.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: The Oakcroft subdivision, looking west-southwest toward Godfrey Road and First Mountain, from the railroad tracks or Oakcroft Road, Montclair, N.J. From “Godfrey Land and Building Co., Upper Montclair, New Jersey,” promotional booklet for the subdivision, circa 1908. Collection of Aaron W. Godfrey, the developer’s son, Port Jefferson, N.Y.

Fig. 1: “Street Views, Montclair.” Oakcroft, clockwise, from upper left: looking north on Princeton Place from Godfrey Road; looking north on Princeton Place from Godfrey Road; looking south on Princeton Place from Anderson Park, with No. 25 in view; looking north on Edgemont Road from Godfrey Road. From “Montclair, New Jersey, and Its Advantages as a Place of Residence.” Real estate promotional booklet by Frank Hughes-Taylor Co. (New York: Styles and Cash), circa 1913. Collection of the Montclair Historical Society, Montclair, N.J.

Fig. 2: Newspaper classified advertisement promoting Oakcroft subdivision. The New York Times, April 24, 1910, pg. 17.

Fig. 3: The Oakcroft subdivision, built out. Sanborn map, 1934.

Fig. 4: 130 Edgemont Avenue, with a view of The Parkside, looking west. Anderson Park is to the right. Undated. Collection of the Montclair Public Library, Local History Room, Photo 8130, Postcards Box 1, Montclair, N.J.

Fig. 5: A page from “Godfrey Land and Building Co., Upper Montclair, New Jersey,” a promotional booklet for the Oakcroft subdivision, circa 1908. Collection of Aaron W. Godfrey, the developer’s son, Port Jefferson, N.Y.

Fig. 6: Newly built on Edgemont Road in the Oakcroft subdivision, Montclair, N.J., looking east toward Nos. 115 and 111. From “Godfrey Land and Building Co., Upper Montclair, New Jersey,” promotional booklet for the subdivision, circa 1908. Collection of Aaron W. Godfrey, the developer’s son, Port Jefferson, N.Y.

Fig. 7: Newly built on Edgemont Road in the Oakcroft subdivision, Montclair, N.J., looking west toward Nos. 114, left, 118 and 124. From “Godfrey Land and Building Co., Upper Montclair, New Jersey,” promotional booklet for the subdivision, circa 1908. Collection of Aaron W. Godfrey, the developer’s son, Port Jefferson, N.Y.

Fig. 8: Postcard of 35 Godfrey Road, Montclair, N.J., built in 1907. Undated photo. Collection of the Montclair Public Library, Local History Room, Montclair, N.J. Published in “Images of America: Montclair: A Postcard Guide to Its Past,” Philip Edward Jaeger (Dover, N.H.: Arcadia Publishing), 1998.

Fig. 9: Two Oakcroft homes, from American Homes and Gardens magazine, Jan. 1910. Top, probably 7 Princeton Place. Bottom, 19 Princeton Place.

Fig. 10 : Sidewalk insert at the southwest intersection of Godfrey and Edgemont Roads, Oakcroft subdivision, Montclair, NJ. By Lisanne Renner. May 2013.

Fig. 11: 25 Princeton Place, at corner of The Parkside, Oakcroft subdivision, Montclair, N.J. This became the childhood home of the Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin. By Lisanne Renner. February 2008.

Fig. 12: Aaron W. Godfrey, 1940. Collection of his son, also Aaron W. Godfrey, Port Jefferson, N.Y.

Fig. 13: Princeton University honorary degree recipients, 1931. Aaron W. Godfrey is back row, second from right. Other recipients in the photo include Charles Lindbergh and Willa Cather. Collection of Aaron W. Godfrey, son of the developer, Port Jefferson, N.Y.

Fig. 14: Postcard of Princeton Place, Montclair, N.J., looking north from Godfrey Road. Interstate Publishing Company, New York, N.Y. Postmarked June 30, 1916. Collection of the Montclair Historical Society, Montclair, N.J.

Fig. 15: Anderson Park with early, unrealized subdivision plat to the south. "Atlas of Essex County, N.J., Vol. 3," A.H. Mueller and Company, Philadelphia, Pa., 1906. Plate 25. Essex County Park Commission archives, Newark, N.J.

ENDNOTES

¹ Correspondence to Alonzo Church, Secretary, Essex County Park Commission, from Olmsted Associates, Dec. 6, 1906. Reel 82, Box B113, Job 2125. Records of the Olmsted Associates, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

² The clearest illustration of the final alignment is the 1946 “Property Acquisition Map” drafted by Essex County. Essex County Park Commission archives, Newark, N.J.

³ “Bright and Interesting Letters on the Park Question,” letter from Charles H. Hartshorne, The Montclair Times, Mar. 24, 1906, Vol. XXX, No. 1563, pg. 1.

⁴ “Teachers Leaving Jersey Schools,” The New York Times. April 26, 1903, pg. 33.

⁵ County Parks: A Report of a Study of County Parks in the United States, (New York: Playground and Recreation Association of America), 1930, pp. 101-2. This study did not include Anderson Park, but would be applicable to the situation around it.

⁶ “A Rare Bargain in Upper Montclair, N.J.,” The New York Times, Mar. 24, 1912, pg. XX11.

⁷ Deed between Aaron W. Godfrey, grantor, and Godfrey Land and Building Company, grantee, for Map 16, Block D, Lot 70, and other lots, Jan. 5, 1907. At Montclair Municipal Building, Montclair, N.J. The deed says “sillar,” which is a volcanic rock in Peru; “silage” is probably what was meant.

⁸ “Essex County Park System, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan,” prepared for the Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs by T&M Associates, Middletown, N.J., April 2003, pg. 8.

⁹ Montclair, 1694-1982: An Inventory of Historic, Cultural and Architectural Resources, Vol. I, Preservation Montclair, 1982, pp. 24-30.

¹⁰ Kenneth T. Jackson, “Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States,” New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1985, pp. 91-92 and 101.

¹¹ “Godfrey Land and Building Co., Upper Montclair, N.J.,” promotional booklet, circa 1908, pg. 2. Collection of Aaron W. Godfrey, son of the developer, and on file with the author.

¹² “Concrete Houses in Upper Montclair,” The New York Times, Oct. 26, 1906, pg. 14; and “In the Real Estate Field,” The New York Times, Oct. 19, 1906, pg. 15.

¹³ Correspondence to Alonzo Church, Secretary, Essex County Park Commission, from William Whitney Ames, lawyer for Aaron W. Godfrey, on Nov. 27, 1906, Reel 82, Box B113, Job 2125. Records of the Olmsted Associates, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. See also minutes of the Essex County Park Commission, Vol. 3, for Nov. 26, 1906 (pg. 323), Dec. 16, 1906 (pg. 329), Dec. 18, 1906 (pg. 331), April 16, 1907 (pg. 360), and April 30, 1907 (pg. 365-7). Also see correspondence to Church from Godfrey, April 29, 1907, Essex County Park Commission archives, Newark, N.J.

¹⁴ “Montclair Park, Revised Preliminary Plan,” No. 16, Oct. 12, 1903, Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, drafted by W.D. Cook Jr. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Mass.

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- ¹⁵ “Concrete Houses in Upper Montclair,” The New York Times.
- ¹⁶ “Oakcroft to Be Opened Up,” The Montclair Times, Mar. 30, 1907, Vol. XXXI, No. 1616, pg. 1.
- ¹⁷ Nov. 27, 1906, letter to Essex County Park Commission from William Whitney Ames, Olmsted Associates.
- ¹⁸ Refers to 1903 blueprints No. 20A and 20B, both “Alternative Plan for Revision of Southerly Boundary,” by Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, Brookline, Mass. In Essex County Park Commission archives, Newark, N.J. A Dec. 6, 1906, letter to the Park Commission from Olmsted Associates also mentions Plan 26 in this context.
- ¹⁹ Dec. 6, 1906, letter to Essex County Park Commission from Olmsted Associates.
- ²⁰ Street-opening agreement between the Township of Montclair and Aaron W. Godfrey, township ordinance dated Feb. 19, 1907.
- ²¹ “General Plan for Anderson Park, Montclair, N.J.,” No. 35, 1912, map by Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, drafted by R.E. Sawyer. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Mass.
- ²² Minutes of the Essex County Park Commission, Vol. 3, April 12, 1910 (pg. 587), and letter from A.M. Reynolds Jr., Engineer, Essex County Park Commission, to unspecified recipient (probably the commissioners), Oct. 19, 1911. Essex County Park Commission archives, Newark, N.J. A request for lights had been made earlier, in June 1909, by the Mountain Society, a civic group in Montclair. See Essex County Park Commission minutes, June 8, 1909, pg. 534.
- ²³ “Report of the Park Commission of Essex County, New Jersey,” 1922, pg. 9. Essex County Park Commission archives, Newark, N.J.
- ²⁴ Display advertisement in The New York Times, April 26, 1908, p. 13.
- ²⁵ “Godfrey Land and Building Co.” booklet, pg. 1. Although the park never covered 25 acres, the number may also refer to the parklike area just across Bellevue Avenue from the county park, or it could have been promotional exaggeration.
- ²⁶ “Upper Montclair’s New Colony,” The New York Times, Nov. 7, 1909, pg. XX2.
- ²⁷ “Come and See Them!,” The Montclair Times, Vol. XXXIII, No. 1691, Oct. 3, 1908, pg. 4.
- ²⁸ Michael Borbely, “The Residence Park: Defining the American Dream.” San Jose, Calif.: World and Time Inc., 2007. Viewed online at www.palmhaven.info/Data/Docs/Article-20070507-PHInfo-TheResidencePark-Cont.htm on March 30, 2008.
- ²⁹ Entry for Downing Vaux, by Joy Kestenbaum, in Pioneers of American Landscape Design, edited by Charles A. Birnbaum and Robin Karson. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000, pg. 410.
- ³⁰ Francis Durando Nichols, “Some Eastern Homes Costing From Seven to Eight Thousand Dollars,” American Homes and Gardens, Jan. 1910, pp. 18-22.
- ³¹ Anne C. Fullam, “New Plans for a Landmark,” The New York Times, Feb. 5, 1984, Long Island Weekly section, pg. 3.
- ³² Nichols, pg. 18

³³ Nichols, pg. 18.

³⁴ *Ibid*, pg. 18.

³⁵ “New Houses Sold in Montclair,” The New York Times, Nov. 13, 1908, pg. 14.

³⁶ “Come and See Them!,” The Montclair Times.

³⁷ It is unclear what “carefully restricted” means. The deed for one of seven tracts purchased by Godfrey on Jan. 5, 1907, prohibited commercial and industrial uses; another tract (the only one with a house already on it) could not be sold to “any colored person or Italian,” and the deed restricted the land use to residential, with no more than two families per dwelling.

³⁸ “Come and See Them!,” The Montclair Times.

³⁹ Buzz Aldrin, illustrations by Wendell Minor, Reaching for the Moon, (New York, N.Y.: HarperCollins), 2005, unnumbered pages, and The Montclair Times, July 14, 2004, “Montclair’s Man on the Moon: Buzz Aldrin, 35 Years Beyond Apollo 11.”

⁴⁰ Comments from Buzz Aldrin on Mach 11, 2008, provided via e-mail by Lisa Cannon, President of StarBuzz Enterprises of Santa Monica, Calif.

⁴¹ “A.W. Godfrey Gets Honorary Degree,” The Montclair Times, 1931, biography file of the Montclair Historical Society, Montclair, N.J.

⁴² Typescript recollections of Aaron W. Godfrey, son of the developer, regarding his father, circa 2001, pp. 1-11. Provided by Aaron W. Godfrey, son of the developer, June 24, 2007; on file with the author.

⁴³ Princeton Alumni Weekly, July 2, 1931, Vol. XXXI, No. 36, pp. 915 and 921. Godfrey, awarded a Master of Arts degree, was described as “a discriminating collector of books, a man of wide reading and scholarly tastes. In the important concerns of an engrossing business career, he has held and broadened his interest in the liberal studies he began in Princeton.” Though he had been “compelled to leave college in good standing before graduation,” the degree officially made him “a son of Princeton.” Later in 1931 he donated to the Princeton University Library a collection of book plates, and contributed more a year later.

⁴⁴ “Insurance Maps of the Town of Montclair, Essex County,” Sanborn Map Company, New York, N.Y. 1934, Sheet 53. Viewed online.

⁴⁵ “A.W. Godfrey Gets Honorary Degree,” The Montclair Times.

⁴⁶ “Montclair Tract to Be Developed,” The New York Times, May 16, 1930, pg. 47.

⁴⁷ “Atlas of Essex County, N.J., Vol. 3,” A.H. Mueller and Company, Philadelphia, 1906, Plate 25. Essex County Park Commission archives, Newark, N.J.