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Llewellyn Park, Suburban idyll

Susan Henderson
Syracuse University, srhender@syr.edu

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Llewellyn Park, created by a group of progressive entrepreneurs and garden enthusiasts in 1850, was the first romantically planned suburb in the USA[1] (figure 1). The initiator of the project, Llewellyn Haskell, saw an economic opportunity in the increasing anti-urbanism of the middle class and the development of a nascent passenger rail service. But Haskell was also a progressive businessman who wedded his entrepreneurial endeavours to socially reformist ideas. From the outset Llewellyn Park was not simply a speculative venture but an alternative community, a curative haven from the pernicious influences of the city – from its bad air, disease, and moral corruption – and a fount of physical and mental rejuvenation.

The history of Llewellyn Park

> Emerson has somewhere said in his usual pointed and condensed manner, that the true use of wealth is to protect us from the vulgarities of the streets, to screen us against bad smells and bad neighbors, and to give us the vantage ground of pure air and healthful positions. What the transcendental philosopher suggests, Mr. Haskell with the true perceptions of genius has carried into practice in his idea of Llewellyn Park.[2]

Situated 12 miles west of New York City, Llewellyn Park hugs the rim of a 650 ft sheer cliff running from the Palisades in New York State south to Newark, New Jersey.[3] In 1800 the area was settled by small tanning and felt-making industries which dotted the hillsides, harnessing the small rivers that cascaded down the steep hillsides. Farming occupied the surrounding open terraces.

By the 1820s the influence of Newark and New York challenged these rural activities. In the wake of fantastic urban growth and a number of devastating epidemics, health resorts and spas had become a fashionable means of retreat. In 1823 the Orange spa, having opened only two years earlier, became the success of the season as a massive cholera epidemic compelled flocks of New Yorkers to seek respite from the disease-ridden city. For a brief moment, the mineral spring at Orange was second only to the spa at Saratoga Springs. When the spa faltered in a depression in the '30s, several lavishly landscaped estates appeared in its stead. The deliberately European and aristocratic manner affected in their design was typified by the Pillot estate on the site of the former spa. Purchased by Andrew Pillot in 1842 the grounds were landscaped in a formal French fashion suited to the grandeur of the large, and much-reported, parties held by the owner.[4] An adjacent villa, 'Beau Sejour', built in 1850, was designed in a 'princely' German style, and like the Pillot estate was known for the exotic origin of its trees and flowers.[5] Thus, as the reputation of the area as a resort faded, its repuration as a country retreat for the very wealthy grew – a place where conservatories and gardens were filled with exotic plants and large parties were given with an aristocratic flair.

Overall the area experienced a growth consonant with that of the larger New York-Newark area. In 1840 Orange township had a population of 7000 people; by 1855 it had

Figure 1. The entrance to Llewellyn Park, with a view of the kiosk at Willow Pond, lower left; the Porter's Lodge, lower right; Wildmont and the Eyrie, top. Engraving for the new edition of Downing's Landscape Gardening *after a painting of Edward W. Nichols in 1859, reproduced on Llewellyn Park promotional stationery. (From the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, New York.)*

grown into a prosperous town of 20,000. With the coming of the Morris and Essex Rail Line in 1851, Orange was securely drawn into the broader urban network, a trip to New York now taking only one hour. In the 1850s the hillside of the future Llewellyn Park contained all the amenities of a perfect rural settlement: fresh air and clear spring water, proximity to a large city, panoramic views, and a wilderness-like natural beauty. For the next 15 years and beyond it was to be the personal project of entrepreneur and progressive, Llewellyn Haskell, and architect, Alexander Jackson Davis.

Creation of the Park

Llewellyn Haskell was a pharmaceuticals magnate from New York City, a self-made man, an advocate of 'Nature', and a long-time friend of Alexander Jackson Davis, Washington Irving and Andrew Jackson Davis. An 'American Italian Villa' in Belleville, built for him by Davis as a speculative venture in 1850, initiated long conversations between the two men. Recognizing their mutual sympathies Davis designed a house for Haskell's own use in which the three principle rooms, the salon, dining room, and parlour were labelled, respectively, mind, body and soul.[6] Later, under encouragement from Davis who extolled the natural beauties and healthy environment of the Orange Mountains, Haskell fixed on building a planned community and park to embody his associationist ideals.[7]

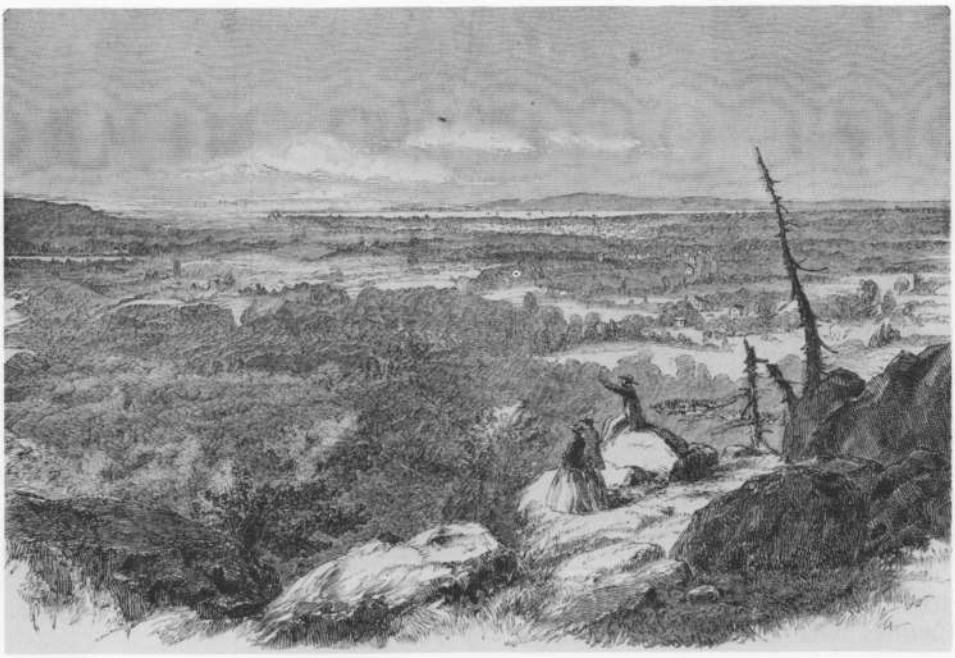


Figure 2. 'View from Eagle Rock, Llewellyn Park, Orange, New Jersey'. Wood engraving from The New York Illustrated News, *23 June 1860. (From the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, New York.)*

In 1852 Haskell bought the land at Eagle Rock near the summit of Orange Mountain (figure 2). The large table rock which opened up a viewing seat at Eagle Rock was already known locally for its magnificent view of 100 miles' extent, from the Palisades of New York south to Newark, New Jersey. While Haskell set about acquiring more land, construction began on his personal country retreat.

Of his 40 acres of forest about 15 were used for a picturesquely landscaped garden; the rest remained in its romantic and 'primitive' state. Designed by Davis and set on the foundations of an old farmhouse, Haskell's new home, dubbed the 'Eyrie', was a curious structure dominated by a pair of asymmetrical towers attached to a simple square plan (figure 3). The squat tower was built from massive chunks of local trap-rock; the second more slender and taller tower was of wood, while a veranda supported by craggy cedar boles and branches spanned the distance between. Vertical siding made from the bark of tulip trees, carefully procured to insure that the fragile mosses and lichens would remain intact, covered the wooden tower and the body of the house (figure 4). Atop the wooden tower three lens windows in the conical roof magnified the view: reportedly one could read the names of the ships in New York Harbor and the time on the clock of City Hall. A trio of cedar boles were used as antler-like 'spires' for the towers. Near the edge of the cliff was another viewing tower, this one some 30 feet tall equipped with a powerful telescope.[8]

This tower, along with the viewing point of Eagle Rock, the Eyrie's tower and the seats overlooking the New York skyline in the park, evinced a lively interest in panoramic

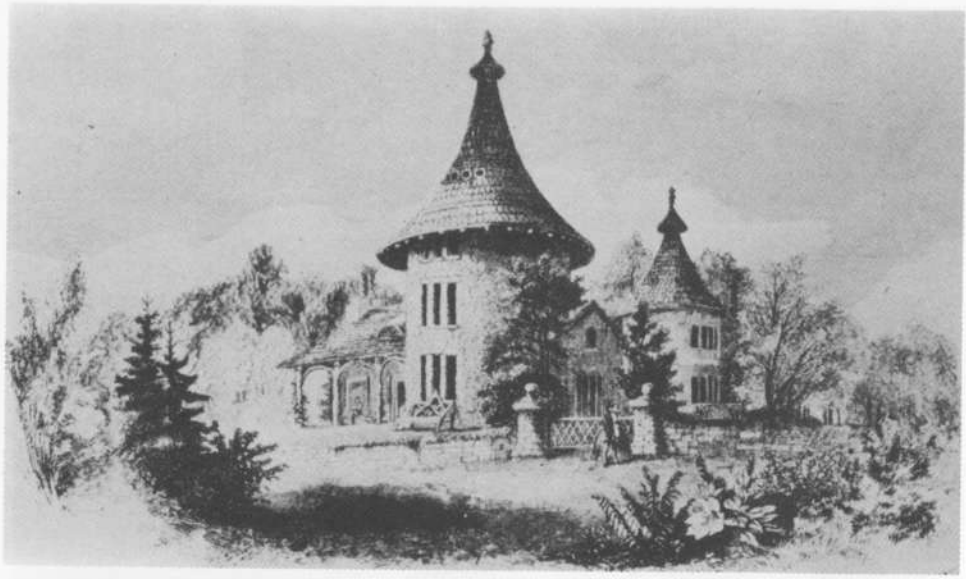


Figure 3. The Eyrie, Llewellyn Park. Watercolour and ink drawing by A. J. Davis. (Courtesy New York Historical Society, New York.)

Figure 4. The Eyrie, Llewellyn Park. Photograph 1897. (Courtesy New Jersey Room, Newark Public Library.)

views. When a newspaper reporter explored the deserted Eyrie in 1924 just before its demolition, he found lying on the floor a panoramic landscape painting, four ft in length, lying face down in the dust. This fascination with the panoramic view was part of the search for the natural 'sublime'. For Haskell and his colleagues, who believed in the spiritual immanence of natural phenomena, it neared that supreme moment in communing with nature which came closest to a transcendent state.[9]

Adjacent to Haskell's property and just south of Eagle Rock, Davis himself bought 25 acres and built 'Wildmont', a board and batten summer cottage in an effusive gothic revival style (figure 5). Like Haskell, Davis encircled the house with a picturesque garden of the type he knew so well from his work with Andrew Jackson Downing. For over ten years Davis spent hours tending to his garden, planting and 'improving', sharing materials and ideas with other settlers, particularly Haskell and A. O. Moore, one of the three original trustees. His personal records also testify to the importance of the house as a retreat, for himself, his family and friends, and of the garden as a constant source of occupation. Fire destroyed the house in 1884 but Davis rebuilt a small cottage on the site where he spent the last year and a half before his death.[10]

But the creation of the Eyrie and Wildmont was only a cornerstone of Haskell's larger project: Llewellyn Park was to be a vast housing estate with a fifty-acre central park and commodious 'villa' sites of from one to twenty acres spread across the terraced slopes of the mountainside (figure 6). Already in 1854, in advertisements entitled 'Country Homes for City People', the promise of a private residential park and retreat for businessmen, intellectuals and their families appeared in the New York and Newark papers. 'For . . . healthfulness of climate, being in proverbially the healthiest region so near the city; for the intelligence and moral character of its population; for beauty of situation and variety of scenery . . . the vicinity of Orange, especially the mountain side, possesses advantages not surpassed . . .'[11] In the course of the '50s and '60s Haskell proceeded to buy the surrounding woodlands, most of it from local farmers. By 1860 he had acquired 500 acres for the Park and 18 families were in residence. By 1870, only a year before Haskell's financial difficulties forced him to sell his interest in the Park, it had grown to 750 acres. With home sites planned for a total of 100 families, 50 of the lots were sold and 30 families were in residence.[12] The picturesquely designed park was the spiritual and social centrepiece of Llewellyn Park, to be freely used and jointly owned by the residents. In order to ensure the exclusively residential and rural aspect of the Park, Haskell devised a covenant, included in the deed of every property holder. The covenant required that each owner purchase at least one acre of land and pay an annual fee of ten dollars per acre for the maintenance of the commonly held properties. Votes on administrative and management matters were allotted on the basis of property: one vote per acre. All commercial undertakings on estate grounds were forbidden – even the simplest provisioning required a trip outside the Park – and there was an informal agreement that no fences would be built: '. . . each estate being isolated from the next, yet each, by a happy partnership with every other, possessing the whole park in common, so that the fortunate purchaser of two or three acres becomes a virtual owner of the whole five hundred; a plan by which a poor man, for a few thousands of dollars, may buy a country seat that challenges comparison with the Duke of Devonshire's'.[13]

A salient feature of the project was the economical provision of plentiful amenities – gate lodges, scenic roads, schools and a large private park – far beyond the private means of most well-to-do people. To keep the project within middle-class means Haskell had to constrict the initial investment and the cost of subsequent improvements and maintenance of the

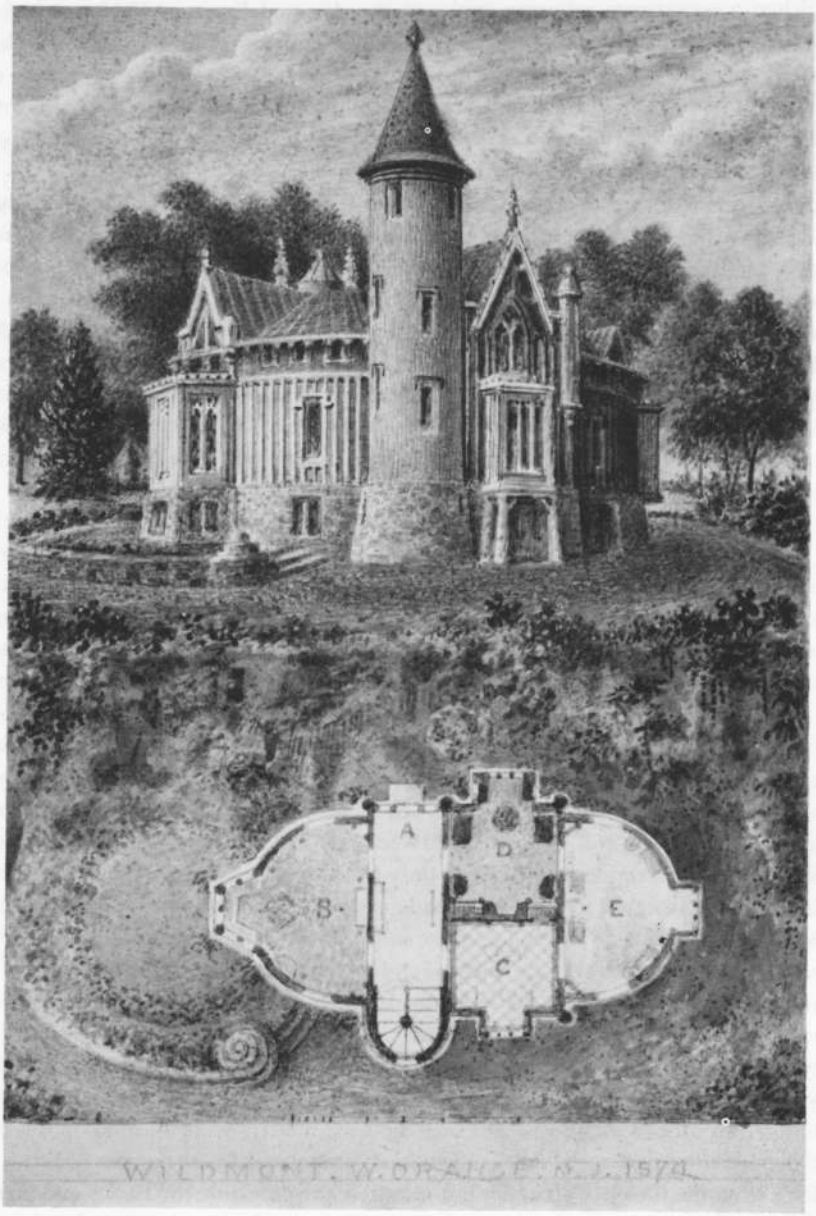


Figure 5. Wildmont, Llewellyn Park. A. J. Davis, architect. Watercolour delineation by A. J. Davis. (Courtesy A. J. Davis Papers, New York Public Library.)

park. Exactly those features making the park site undesirable for agricultural purposes, its steep ascent and central ravine, yielded cheap land prices and lent it the drama suited to picturesque use. The labour-intensive, formal style of gardening employed at the neighbouring Pillot and 'Beau Sejour' estates was abandoned in favour of one actively employing both the rugged terrain and much of the existing forest.

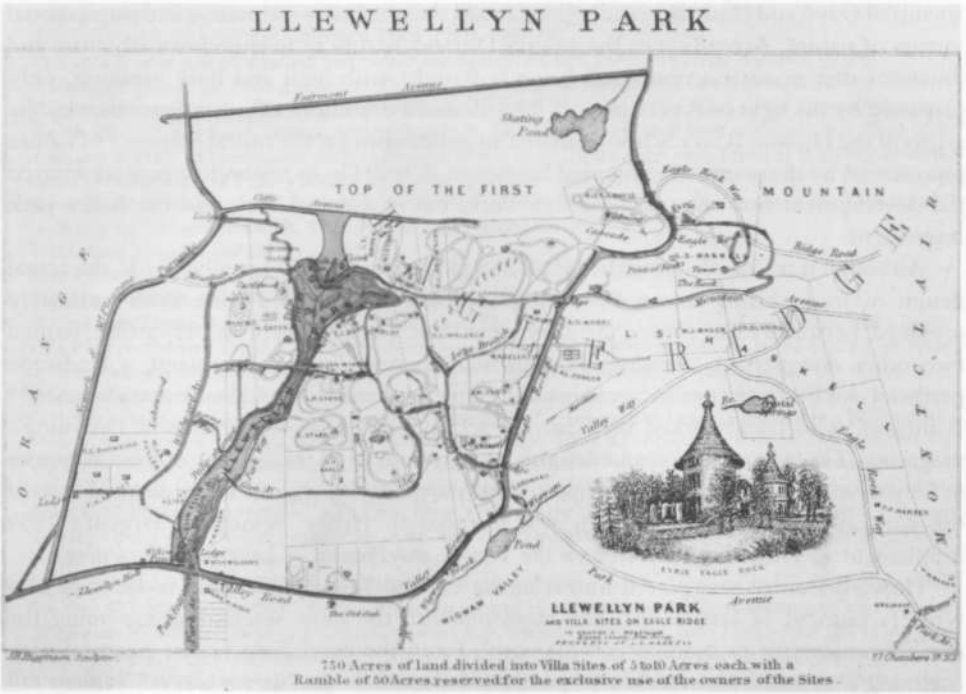


Figure 6. Map of Llewellyn Park showing early villa sites. Watercolour delineation. (Courtesy A. J. Davis Papers, New York Public Library.)

The design of Llewellyn Park

A. J. Downing in his *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Planning* (1841) divided the ideal rural landscapes into a ranked order of four distinct types: the sublime, the grand, the beautiful, and the picturesque. The sublime and grand were considered beyond the reach of ordinary people and the beautiful nearly so. But in the picturesque there existed a possibility for humbler sorts to create a simple and rustic splendour.[14] It was particularly favoured by an expanding middle class seeking a means of expressing their new-found, but not inexhaustible wealth, as well as to reflect their self-image as a class comprising rugged individualists and self-made men.

The roots of the concept for a suburban co-operative community are unclear. Examples of villa parks were not unknown though all of them were European, mostly English.[15] More seminal perhaps were the many rural homes completed through the co-operation of Davis and Downing which combined picturesque gardening and the gothic revival style. Certainly, there is a remarkable adherence in the design of the park to the principles of landscape gardening set down by Downing in his *Treatise*, while Downing's influence over the housing and park buildings was early and indirect.[16]

The landscape painting of the Hudson River School also exerted a conceptual influence on the park's design. The artists of the Hudson River School, a number of whom were close

friends of Davis and Haskell, broadly proclaimed the spiritually restorative and inspirational virtues of nature. According to the painter Durand 'nature in its wondrous structure and functions that minister to our well-being is fraught with high and holy meaning, only surpassed by the light of Revelation'.[17] The idealized depictions of natural wonders by the artists of the Hudson River School initiated an enthusiasm for the moral influence of nature represented by the primitive, untamed landscape. A belief in its restorative powers spurred the development not only of Llewellyn Park, but of Central Park and the entire park movement.

Although it is clear that together Haskell and Davis initiated Llewellyn Park, the actual design of its parkland cannot be attributed. Clearly these two were both intimately involved, personally supervising the daily work. But *The Crayon*, in an 1857 article, named two other designers as 'assisting' Haskell in his work: Eugene Baumann, a landscape gardener and European emigré and Howard Daniels, an architect and landscape gardener.[18] Baumann, who later worked on Central Park, published several articles in Downing's magazine, *The Horticulturalist*, and designed the grounds of 'Arcades', one of the few houses in Llewellyn Park Haskell built for speculative purposes. He also drew the detailed map of the park at Llewellyn Park which was featured in Henry Winthrop Sargent's 1859 supplement to Downing's *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*.[19]

Howard Daniels was placed fourth in the Central Park competition in 1858; he also wrote a number of articles for *The Horticulturalist*, the most interesting describing the attributes necessary to building a 'villa park'. From the panoramic views, a central park enclosing a stream with a variety of ponds and waterfalls, fine drives and convenient rail service, the article precisely describes the situation of Llewellyn Park but, curiously, never names it.[20] Although written in 1858, a year after *The Crayon* named him as one of the Park's designers, Daniels says he based his description on his experience as a tourist in England. Perhaps his role at Llewellyn was insignificant or the attribution simply mistaken. One can only suppose that Haskell and Davis, both devout students of landscape gardening, devised the overall plan, with Daniels and Baumann lending technical expertise, producing delineations, and advising on particular horticultural matters.

Description of the grounds

The landscape of Llewellyn Park, centred on the ravine slicing through the middle of the site, combined the picturesque style with a 'narrative' progression (figure 7). The natural beauties were preserved and ponds, waterfalls, rockworks, flowerbeds, glades and meadows created. Massed groupings of species evoked a variety of exotic and romantic moods while others stood singly, presented as natural sculptural objects. Two independent systems of carriageways and walks bordering the edge of the ravine united the whole in a series of 'fine scenes' 'each having a distinctive character of its own'.

The park followed the existing terrain to a great extent. In line with Downing's advice regarding economy, pre-existing dramatic or 'picturesque' conditions were emphasized and the more sylvan or 'Beautiful' sites augmented and tamed.[21] Thousands of trees were imported and flowerbeds, mostly done in Downing's English manner, massing single species together in irregularly-shaped and disposed beds, dotted the landscape. Shrubs, also favoured for their economy, found one of their first major American expressions here as did evergreens and weeping willows, favoured for their emotive and dramatic silhouettes.

Entrance and Willow Pond

While the park itself had a narrative line, the 'never-failing brook' was its ribbon of continuity. Flowing down the cliff, through the Ramble, and into the depths of Glen Ellyn, the stream periodically formed ponds and waterfalls providing occasional moments of both drama and repose.

The first 'scene', which set the tone of heightened sentiment and emotive oddity traceable throughout the park, occurred at Willow Pond immediately adjacent to the porter's lodge. 'Kimarrock, New American and Italian Willows and a great variety of weeping trees' draping the water's edge surrounded Willow Pond.[22] Cascades tumbled over roughly hewn stones at either end (figures 1 and 8). A rustic octagonal kiosk on the far side had supports of roughly hewn branches and a crown of gables and a large oak knot. A dense profusion of evergreen shrubs and a pine grove provided the dark backdrop. Following Downing's method the shrubs, of mixed indigenous and exotic types, sat atop a knoll to heighten topographical contrast and accentuate the grouping.[23]

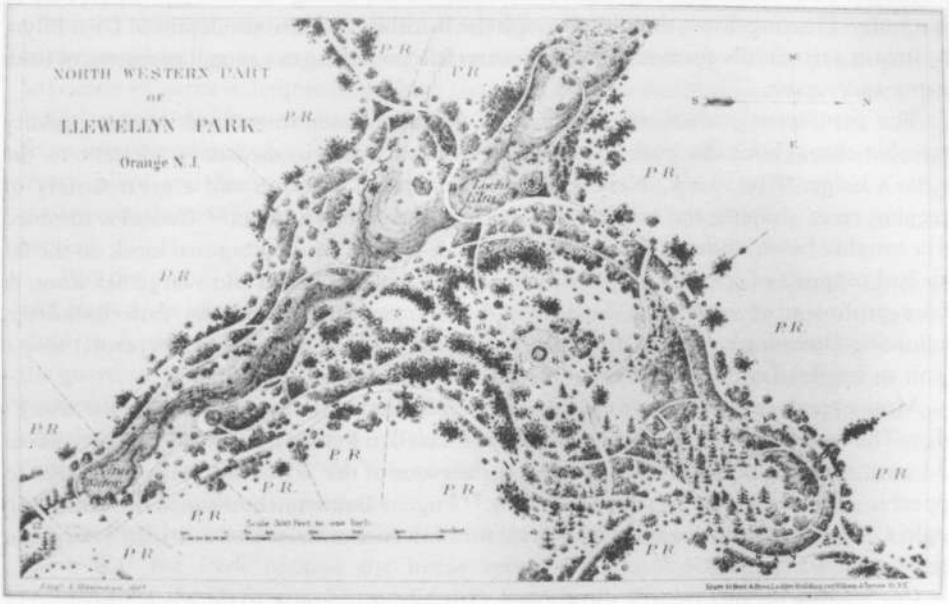
More evergreens – laurels, rhododendrons, mahonia and holly – clustered at the water's edge. The use of evergreen shrubs and trees at Llewellyn Park is notable. While evergreens had come into vogue in Europe with the Gardenesque of the '30s and '40s, they were not to appear in great use in America until the 1860s.[24] Eugene Baumann bemoaned this American neglect of evergreen shrubs and rockworks, for both economic as well as artistic reasons, in the *Horticulturalist* in 1856.[25]

Completing the picture at Willow Pond, Gate Lodge, adjacent to the kiosk, looked very much like the Eyrie. Trap rock and moss-covered tulip tree bark girded the exterior and an antler-like spire topped the round turret. The asymmetrically large and small gate posts of rough trap rock reiterated the peculiarity of the scene: 'The porter's lodge is a curiosity of itself – there is something medieval about it, and on approaching it one is almost prepared to find a warden ready, either to raise the portcullis and bid him enter, or to raise the draw-bridge and put the place in siege in accordance with the design of peace or war!'[26] (figure 9). Sheltered by a group of pine trees, the gate and lodge presented an abrupt transition from the broad tree-lined boulevard that led up to the Park to the 'primeval' forest within.[27]

Glen Ellyn

Entering the gently curving drive beyond Willow Pond, the forest of the park loomed up in a tumultuous mixture of deciduous and evergreen trees of both native and exotic varieties. Though the 'scenes' of the park highlighted single species, the initial carriageway drive luxuriated in diversity as a kind of grand introduction to what was to follow.[28]

Glen Ellyn, the most rugged area of the park, began at the base of the curved drive, only 300 ft from the entrance (figures 10 and 11). While indigenous plants augmented the existing planting, exotic species had no place here. This was the 'genius loci' of the park, the soul of its rugged individualism. Here nature lay in its pristine and mystical state in contrast to the more sentimental romanticism of Willow Pond. 'The solemn stillness of the forest spirit is about you . . . you are away from the common haunts of man.'[29] While a dense mass of trees – oaks, elms, enlivened by dogwood – towered over the paths, the ravine sides were studded with the familiar tulips, maples, hickories, birches, azaleas, and wild flowers. A footpath precariously close to the ravine edge and built of roughly hewn and joined branches, followed the stream bed up the ridge past a series of artificial ponds, waterfalls, paths and rustic bridges (figure 11).


NORTH WESTERN PART
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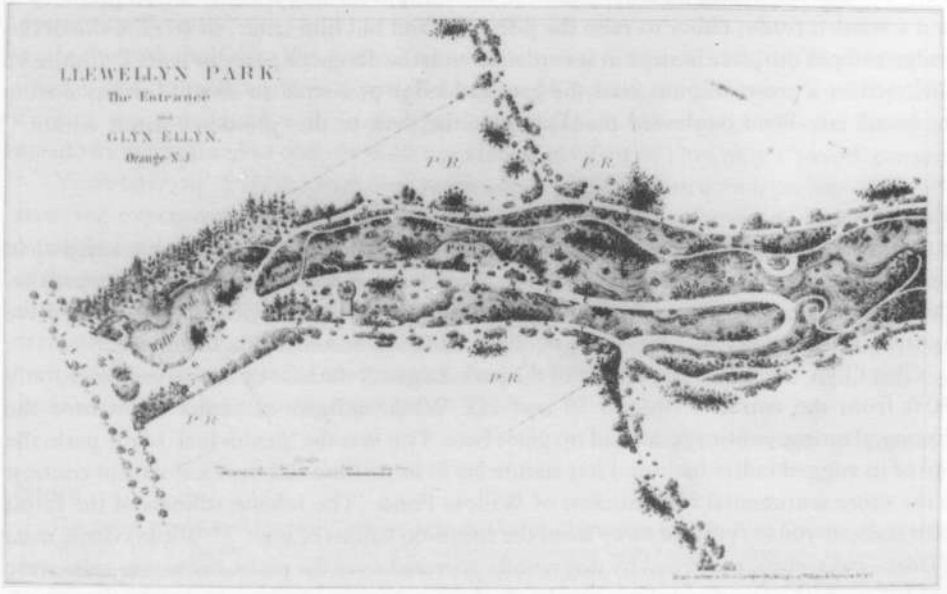
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The Entrance
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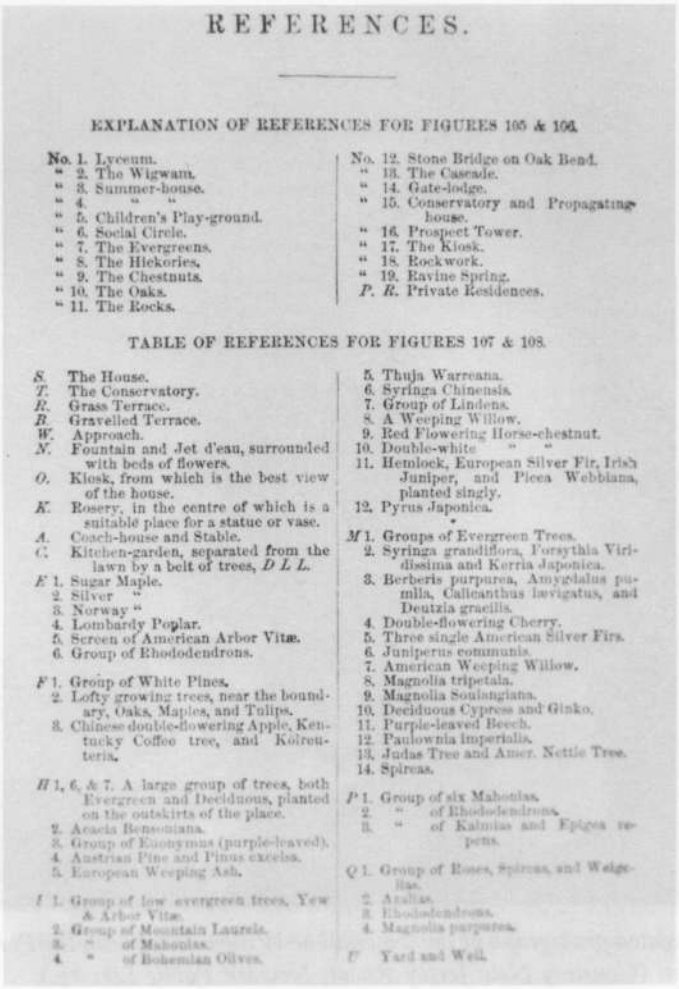

REFERENCES.

EXPLANATION OF REFERENCES FOR FIGURES 105 & 106.

No. 1. Lyceum.
" 2. The Wigwam.
" 3. Summer-house.
" 4. " "
" 5. Children's Play-ground.
" 6. Social Circle.
" 7. The Evergreens.
" 8. The Hickories.
" 9. The Chestnuts.
" 10. The Oaks.
" 11. The Rocks.
No. 12. Stone Bridge on Oak Bend.
" 13. The Cascade.
" 14. Gate-lodge.
" 15. Conservatory and Propagating house.
" 16. Prospect Tower.
" 17. The Kiosk.
" 18. Rockwork.
" 19. Ravine Spring.
P. R. Private Residences.

TABLE OF REFERENCES FOR FIGURES 107 & 108.

S. The House.
T. The Conservatory.
R. Grass Terrace.
B. Gravelled Terrace.
W. Approach.
N. Fountain and Jet d'eau, surrounded with beds of flowers.
O. Kiosk, from which is the best view of the house.
K. Rosery, in the centre of which is a suitable place for a statue or vase.
A. Coach-house and Stable.
C. Kitchen-garden, separated from the lawn by a belt of trees, *D L L.*

E 1. Sugar Maple.
2. Silver "
3. Norway "
4. Lombardy Poplar.
5. Screen of American Arbor Vitæ.
6. Group of Rhododendrons.

F 1. Group of White Pines.
2. Lofty growing trees, near the boundary, Oaks, Maples, and Tulips.
3. Chinese double-flowering Apple, Kentucky Coffee tree, and Koelreuteria.

H 1, 6, & 7. A large group of trees, both Evergreen and Deciduous, planted on the outskirts of the place.
2. Acacia Bensoniana.
3. Group of Euonymus (purple-leaved).
4. Austrian Pine and Pinus excelsa.
5. European Weeping Ash.

I 1. Group of low evergreen trees, Yew & Arbor Vitæ.
2. Group of Mountain Laurels.
3. " of Mahonias.
4. " of Bohemian Olives.
5. Thuja Warreana.
6. Syringa Chinensis.
7. Group of Lindens.
8. A Weeping Willow.
9. Red Flowering Horse-chestnut.
10. Double-white " "
11. Hemlock, European Silver Fir, Irish Juniper, and Picea Webbiana, planted singly.
12. Pyrus Japonica.

M 1. Groups of Evergreen Trees.
2. Syringa grandiflora, Forsythia Viridissima and Kerria Japonica.
3. Berberis purpurea, Amygdalus pumila, Calicanthus laevigatus, and Deutzia gracilis.
4. Double-flowering Cherry.
5. Three single American Silver Firs.
6. Juniperus communis.
7. American Weeping Willow.
8. Magnolia tripetala.
9. Magnolia Soulangiana.
10. Deciduous Cypress and Ginko.
11. Purple-leaved Beech.
12. Paulownia imperialis.
13. Judas Tree and Amer. Nettle Tree.
14. Spireas.

P 1. Group of six Mahonias.
2. " of Rhododendrons.
3. " of Kalmias and Epigea repens.

Q 1. Group of Roses, Spireas, and Weigelias.
2. Azalias.
3. Rhododendrons.
4. Magnolia purpurea.

U Yard and Well.

Figure 7. Map of Llewellyn Park, with a page of references. Delineation by Eugene Baumann in Henry Winthrop Sargent's 1959 supplement to A. J. Downing's Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening.

The Ramble

The rugged glen culminated in the intrusion at Oak Bend of the bearer of civilization, the carriageway. This was the beginning of the 'Ramble' proper, an area where the park broadened out, the ground curved more gently, the forests became less wild. In some sections it was characterized by Downing's 'Beautiful' rather than the 'Picturesque' type in gracious open forests of single species.[30] The Ramble, encircled by Park Way and Mountain Avenue, consisted of a series of forests interspersed with meadows each with a distinctive natural character, creating a series of natural setpieces: 'The effect is from gay to grave, from lively to severe.'[31] One of the most sylvan was the site of the unexecuted Lyceum – a meadow sheltered by surrounding oaks, filled with dogwoods and

Figure 8. Undated photograph of the waterfall at Willow Pond with the Porter's Lodge to the back right. (Courtesy New Jersey Room, Newark Public Library.)

honeysuckle – a genial environment suited to the schooling of the young. Further to the north, as the park skirted the edge of the sheer cliff, lay the mysteries of the 'Evergreens', a dark forest further 'beautified' by Himalayan and California pines.[32]

At its edge was a special meadow marked by the primitive 'Wigwam' nestling in the evergreens (figure 12) and by a Maypole. The yearly May Day celebration for which Llewellyn Park became locally renowned took place in the meadow. In a fascinating conjunction of landscape design and public ritual, the May Day celebration reveals much about the contemporary meaning of the Park and the early idealization of suburban life. For by far the most important social aspect of the Park was not either the underlying associationist ideal or its social eccentricities, but rather the total isolation and sentimentalization of domesticity and the meaning it was intended to gain from its natural surroundings. In a model of utopian middle-class life, the household was separated from the workplace, the well-to-do from the working class and poor, and the women and children from the outside world.

Figure 9. Glen Ellyn near the entrance to the Ramble at Llewellyn Park. Wood engraving from The New York Illustrated News, *23 June 1860.*

The social world of Llewellyn Park was thus of women's making, a world of women's associations, garden clubs and church bazaars, reflections of the new ideal of womanhood as the keeper of innocence and virtue, free from the corrupt outside world. The May Day festival was an extraordinary ritual enactment of the moral underpinnings of this new world:

> ... In the center of the green the May Pole was erected. It was a tall tulip tree, stripped of the bark, and the top of it was clasped by a garland of flowers and ribands, as in the old heathen days, when Priapus was a god, and all the people did him reverence ... A rural Kiosk, decked and flanked by cypress and yew trees, overlooked the scene: and not far from this picturesque temple ... was the throne of the May Queen. This was very beautifully designed and tastefully constructed ... festoons of flowers dropping from the ample roof of the throne, and kissing the brow of the beautiful Queen when her turn came to stand under it, as if they loved her and were proud of her ... for she was a sweet charming, and modest lady, and reminded us of what Nature must have thought about when she made roses and lilies ... A band of American Indians approach the Queen with presents and offered her the Pipe of Peace. Though no smoker herself, she passes it to 'them that is' and the Knight of Honor at her side performs the ceremony with gravity and gusto. The Indians ... swar no longer by Mumbo Jumbo but by her divine eyes, which are the windows of Heaven.[33]

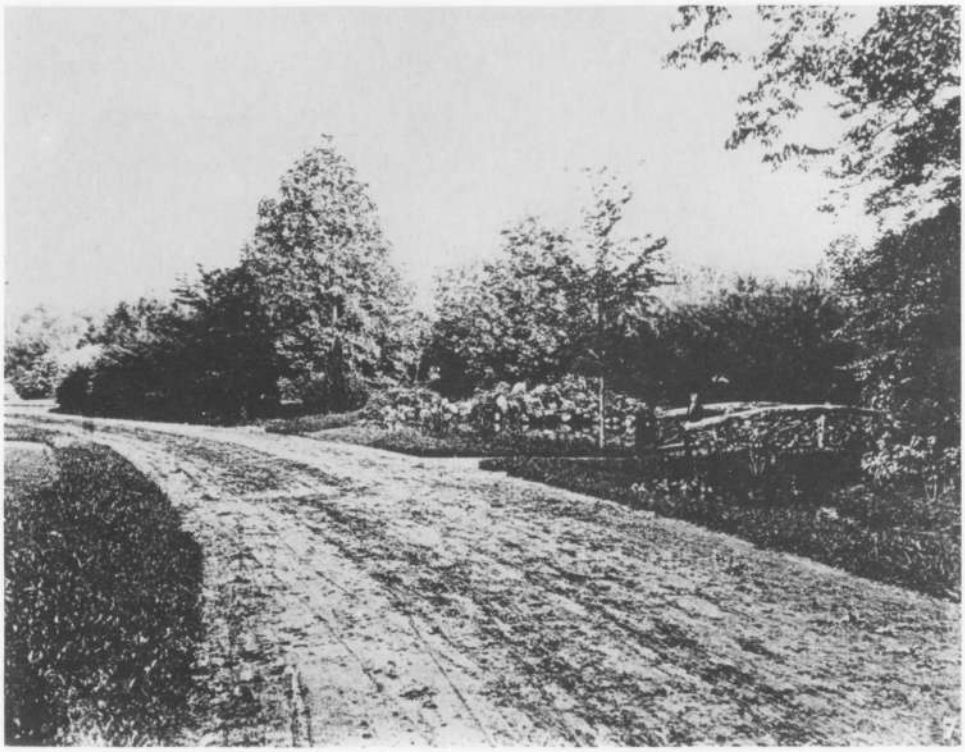

Figure 10. Rustic Bridge at the intersection of Glen and Wildwood Avenue at Llewellyn Park. The Glen and the cascade of figure 11 lie just below the bridge. Undated photograph. (Courtesy New Jersey Room, Newark Public Library.)

The Llewellyn 'Festival of Flowers', a paean to Nature, an extravaganza of fantasy and ritual, was a celebration of the Park as well as an expression of an endemic sentimentalization of woman, innocence, and nature (figure 13).

Loch Elm and the Rocks

Following the brook up past the glen and through the Ramble, the final meadow was reached at Loch Elm. Here 'a kiosk stands some twenty feet from the road and overlooks a sheet of water from the edges of which green bands and flowery beds rise in beautiful slopes'.[34] Another observer described the kiosk as 'a curious and novel structure, furnished with rustic chairs, and table in mosaic style. The roof is thatched with straw, and it is ornamented on the top by the branches of a tree, much resembling the antlers of a deer'.[35] Winding stairs led up from the kiosk past a waterfall of moss-covered trap rock to an area atop the cliff edge called 'The Rocks' and 'Cliff Walk' (figure 14).

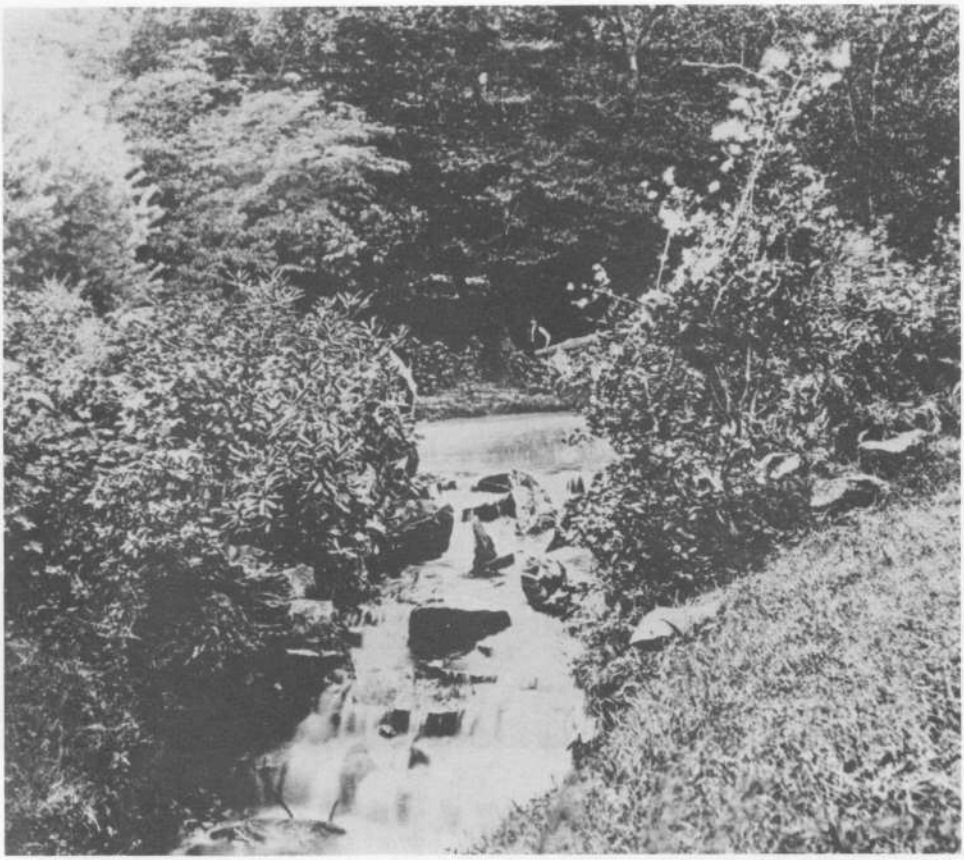

Figure 11. The cascade below Rustic Bridge and above Stone Bridge at Llewellyn Park. Undated photograph. (Courtesy New Jersey Room, Newark Public Library.)

The Carriageways

More than ten miles of carriageways wound their way through the park, individual routes and character defined by the special sequence of panoramic views, forests and meadows. For the individual estate Downing recommended a drive through the grounds 'to give the stranger some idea of the extent of the property'. Here at Llewellyn the drives along the periphery of the park serve to display the range of landscape and garden particularities before achieving the final destination. Park Way was a 'noble' avenue intersecting Glen Ellyn at Oak Bend. Here the gentle curve of the road around a single white oak gave occasion for a trap rock bridge and a rustic 'settee' overlooking the view towards New York to the east, the depths of the Glen at its feet. Tulip Avenue skirted the edge of the Glen on the south. Two great giant twin tulip trees at its entrance gave the road its name, but the road was as much characterized by a singular grove of beeches, which again following Downing's prescriptions, served as a screen along adjacent property.[36] Glen Avenue dove deep into the glen itself. It came to an abrupt end against a 50 ft high sandstone rock which Haskell planned to embellish with a dramatic waterfall.

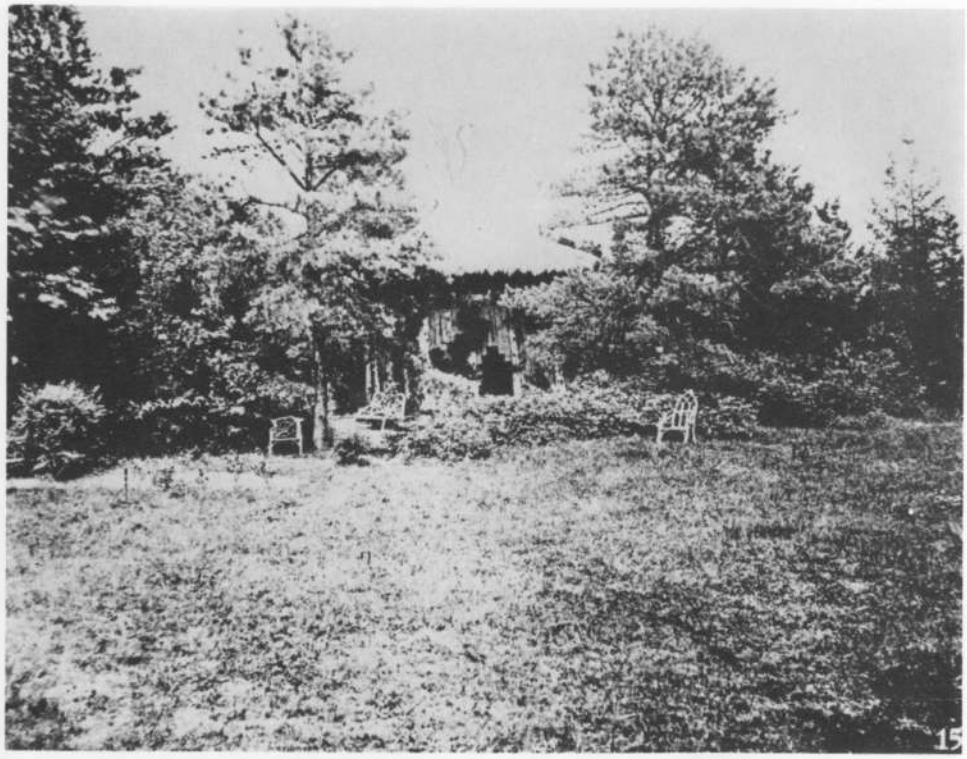

Figure 12. The Wigwam in the meadow at Llewellyn Park. Undated photograph. (Courtesy New Jersey Room, Newark Public Library.)

Architecture

Davis designed all the structures in the park: the two gate lodges, the gate, the 'settees', rustic kiosks, the Wigwam and the bridges. Other pieces recommended by Downing for a large rustic suburban garden were also included in the park: rockworks, a prospect tower, spiral stair to a viewpoint, arbours, bridges, and even a moss covered house.[37] The rustic style of these pieces was advocated by Downing in *The Horticulturalist*, and Catharine Beecher in *The American Woman's Home* as both stylistically appropriate and economic for the rural retreat.[38] Downing maintained that garden furniture of the rough picturesque type had 'the merit of being tasteful and picturesque' and at the same time was 'easily constructed by the amateur, at comparatively little or no expense'.[39] A lyceum, a tower and a conservatory were also designed but never built.[40]

Housing

The houses built by Haskell and Davis reflected the ideal of a moral and spiritual interrelationship with the natural world: Davis's sweet gothic cottage resonated with domestic sanctity, while Llewellyn's rugged Eyrie evoked the themes of primitive virtue and individualist self-sufficiency. Davis designed at least 20 other houses for the Llewellyn

Figure 13. The May Day Festival at Llewellyn Park. Engraving from The New York Illustrated News, *30 May 1860.*

Figure 14. The lookout at the top of Cliff Walk at Llewellyn Park. Undated photograph. (Courtesy New Jersey Room, Newark Public Library.)

Figure 15. The gothic revival Nichols Cottage by A. J. Davis. Designed in 1859. Undated photograph. (Courtesy New Jersey Room, Newark Public Library.)

Park including six villas for Haskell to speculate – of these only the 'Arcades' was actually built (figure 15). Downing was also commissioned by Park tenants for 16 other villas: two were built immediately, four were remodellings, and nine others were completed in the later years of the community's development. Other revivalist architects contributed as well: Calvert Vaux built a house for an early trustee, John Burt, and George Babb designed three Swiss cottages for D. C. Otis, inventor of the elevator.[41]

These early villas, nestling into their rustic settings, were in a variety of picturesque styles and local materials. (As an encouragement for the latter Haskell offered stone from his Eagle Rock quarry free of charge.) Davis enumerated the principles of picturesque design as the irregular silhouette, the broken silhouette, and deep shade with points of bright highlighting. Rough textures and vertical emphases were favoured for their emotive qualities. The gothic, Swiss bracketed and the Italianate, all quasi-vernacular styles, were appropriate choices within these general guidelines. At Llewellyn Park these three types represented the great majority of houses built. Eighteen Swiss houses were built in 1860 alone. The gothic was the most favoured by Davis. The style of the individualist and the

intellectual, it was the architectural counterpart of his rustic furnishings. These rural, quasi-vernacular styles symbolized the retreat from urban sophistication and worldly values and signalled an eschewal of luxurious comfort, sophistication and worldly values, and a desire to commune with nature. It characterized Llewellyn Park at a time when the ruggedness of the place and the novelty of the lifestyle suited its reputation as a haven for well-to-do eccentrics and intellectuals.

Llewellyn Park as social experiment

> . . . and by applying very slightly the much abused theory of association, he offers to its residents the benefits of superior situation free from the annoyances hinted at above with the luxuries ever attendant upon great wealth and immense expense, and all at a very moderate cost.[42]

The 'theory of association' here refers to the tenets of perfectionism, the philosophy developed by utopian theorist, Charles Fourier.[43] According to Fourier, the capitalism and individualism which characterized nineteenth-century life could eventually give way to a more communal and co-operative social order. This development depended on the fulfilment of Fourier's 'twelve basic human passions' which included the five senses and social and instinctual urges. To attain this passional fulfilment, society would eventually regroup in small, 'associational' or co-operative communities surrounded by Eden-like landscapes. Fourier favoured a landscape of picturesque siting, interspersed by hills, suited to a varied cultivation, with a stream and adjacent forest. Even outside his utopian settlements, Fourier's visionary ideal of the classless, quasi-agrarian society had a wide appeal to those seeking an alternative to contemporary urban life.

Haskell's interest in Fourier's perfectionism was as integral to the park's creation as his personal pleasure in landscape gardening. It reflected the truism held dear among Haskell and his friends and colleagues – including A. J. Davis, A. J. Downing and the Hudson River School – that 'Nature' was the source of everything from the more prosaic forms of self-knowledge and inner peace to the ultimate Truth.[44] The currency of perfectionist ideas is illustrated in Downing's describing the attraction of picturesque landscaping in associationist terms, that it is due to 'the struggle between the spirit and matter which is apparent in it'.[45]

Haskell said that Llewellyn Park was to be 'a retreat for a man to exercise his own rights and privileges', and 'the place for also the scholar and student'.[46] The early population of the Park was clearly a distinguished and thoughtful group. Aside from Haskell and Davis, the early residents included Orson D. Munn, founder of *Scientific American*, Edward W. Nichols, a landscape painter, and Wendell Phillips Garrison, son of William Lloyd, the abolitionist.

But the park was known more as a haven for eccentrics than for intellectuals: Haskell's son was married in the open air under a large tree in the Ramble; a young woman was buried in the Park without a coffin, clothed only in a shroud.[47] Such incidents encouraged the popular notion that many residents pursued scandalous and experimental lifestyles – the individualism and naturalism of the residents still had the power to shock Victorian sensibilities.

Conclusion

'Greenwood without the graves', 'a fairy glen', 'an Eden'; the praise for Llewellyn Park was unstinted and unanimous.[48] It served simultaneously as a major example of picturesque landscape planning, as a model of suburban life, and as a prototype of the public park. For advocates of parks it demonstrated how the proposed Central Park, as New York's 'green lungs', would ensure mental and physical health. Llewellyn Park redeemed the individual from urban regimentation, claimed romantics, as Nature succoured the innate character of every place and being. At a time when the benefits of park building were highly controversial and suburban life a utopian fantasy, the park at Llewellyn was an unquestioned success.

But the praises for what Llewellyn Park offered ignored perhaps its truer significance and impact. In introducing the commuting life to men and suburban life to women and children, it gave a new reality to the ideal of the home as a removed haven and of woman as the guardian of virtue and the hearth. But in the twentieth century, as the romantic suburb became simply the suburb, the haven offered women little more than a new type of social isolation, while the aspirations of domesticity deteriorated into a science of efficient consumerism. In this world the role of the garden soon lost its inspirational role and was reduced to the realm of ceremony.

The Park has remained a viable community, though somewhat sadly altered. After the Civil War the Park became the home more of industrial magnates than idealistic progressives: the Pullmans, Otises, Edisons and the Armours were typical of this new breed of residents. Newly-built houses became much larger while the small cottages of an earlier era were torn down or enlarged to make way for the luxury of the Gilded Age. Edison's home, 'Glenmount', a 23-room Victorian mansion of half-timber and pressed red brick was typical. The names were also de-ethnicized, Glen Ellyn to the Glen, Tyrandon Terrace to Terraces.

In the park itself the Glen and the communal spaces fell into disuse, the three lakes were filled in and the rusticana torn down. Private gardens changed, too. Munn's old Tyrandon Terrace was redesigned with formal gardens, while on other properties the forests and meadows were tamed to comply with a genteel equivalent of Downing's 'grand' category.

Years later, in 1941, the Park was re-zoned to permit construction on lots of one-half acre: the expensive upkeep of the large houses and extensive grounds had once again wrought economic uncertainty. When a highway was directed through the residential zone of the park in 1972 the size was reduced to about 420 acres. The northwest section that was eliminated included Eagle Rock and the site of the 'Eyrie', among the most naturally dramatic areas of the site. The former site of Eagle Rock, and that of the 'Eyrie', had already been given to the Eagle Rock Reservation in 1895. The Eyrie, left to ruin, had been demolished by the parks department in 1924.[49]

New Jersey Institute of Technology

Notes

1. The major articles on Llewellyn Park are JANE B. DAVIES, 'Llewellyn Park in West Orange, New Jersey', *Antiques*, CVII (January 1975), pp. 142–158, outlining its history with particular attention to the residences; and RICHARD GUY WILSON, 'Idealism and the Origin of the First American Suburb: Llewellyn Park, New Jersey', *American Art Journal*, XI (October 1979), pp. 79–90, who first explored the Haskell's associationism. See also CHRISTOPHER TUNNARD, 'The Romantic Suburb in America', *Magazine of Art*, 40 (May 1947), pp. 184–187; and JOHN ARCHER, 'Country and City in the American Romantic Suburb', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, XLII (May 1983), pp. 139–156. Archer maintains that the purpose in early suburban projects like Llewellyn Park was to combine the best aspects of both the city and the country.

2. Samuel Crane Williams, *Historical Sketch of the Growth and Development of the Town of West Orange, New Jersey* (Orange, New Jersey: Chronical Press, 1937), page 15.
3. This area is now part of a public park while the nearby site of Llewellyn's Eyrie is a rock quarry.
4. A schematic plan of the Pillot gardens is included as a detail on the *Map of the Town of Orange, 1856* by Thomas Hughes in the collection of the New Jersey Historical Society. Pillot imported many of the trees and plantings for his garden – boxwood, orange, lemon, hemlock, linden, tulip, fir – and kept conservatories filled with fruits and flowers. In consonance with its Prussian design many of the most prized trees at Beau Sejour were native to Germany. On Pillot's history see David Lawrence Pierson, *History of the Oranges to 1921*, Vol. II (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co. 1922), pp. 305–306 and Henry Whitmore, *The Founders and builders of the Oranges* (Newark, New Jersey: L. J. Hardham, 1896).
5. Whitmore, *Founders and Builders*, p. 310.
6. Item no. 114d, A. J. Davis Papers, New York Historical Society, New York, New York.
7. *The Horticulturalist*, IX (1855), pp. 127–128; Pierson, *History of the Oranges*, p. 306.
8. When Haskell built Llewellyn Park he intended that 'The Eyrie' be later converted to a gatehouse and a larger villa built for himself. Instead, Haskell's short stay at Llewellyn was spent entirely at the Eyrie with time devoted to its garden and curious viewing tower. A description of the Eyrie is found in Item I: G1, no. 14, A. J. Davis Collection, Avery Library, Columbia University. Other references to the site are found in A. J. Davis's daybook in brief mentions of his frequent trips to the Eyrie: '. . .ascended to Lawn [a reference to Wildmont]. Planted and cut trees with Pat. Returned by Haskell carriage. Took tea at cottage' (16 April 1853). His fee for the tower design, 'a column with a dome top' was recorded at $25·00 on 20 September 1852; a second plan 'for round tower for Orange' was presented to Haskell on 4 April 1853. See the Daybook, A. J. Davis Collection, New York Public Library, New York City, New York, for the years 1851–1853 and the Daybook at Avery Library for the years 1854 and following. A number of drawings of the tower are included in the A. J. Davis Papers at Avery Library. See items 13-1-39, 13-1, 13-9.
9. 'A tragic Spot is Eagle Rock', West Orange, newspaper clipping in West Orange Public Library, *c.* 1920.
10. See the *Alexander Jackson Davis Papers*, 'Floricultural and Horticultural Note-book relating to his Home at Wildmont New Jersey, including his personal diary kept while at Wildmont, June 7 1852–Nov. 26, 1874', Box 5, Manuscripts, New York Public Library, New York City, New York. Davis' diary is full of lists of the plants brought to 'Wild' and accountings of the many days he spent working in his garden. Lists entitled 'Arboretum et Fruiticetum Americanum' and 'Essential' detailed the characteristics of thw wide variety of species he considered for planting. Much of his knowledge and oftentimes the actual plants were gleaned from other gardening friends. On 23 April 1855, for example, he lists plants under the heading 'With A. O. Moore from Harvey's garden' – possibly a reference to George Harvey, the arthitect of Washington Irving's Sunnyside – which were brought up and planted one weekend. His colleagial friendship with Haskell is also indicated in the frequent entries mentioning joint garden endeavours and the inclusion in his diary of an inventory of the issues of *The Horticulturalist* in Haskell's private library.

    Also of interest, Davis' diary includes two diagrammatic sketches of the entry to Wildmont which delineate the specific locations of plantings on the central knoll. A third, rather schematic, plan of the garden is found in the *A. J. Davis Papers*, Avery Library, Item R2-38d.
11. 'Llewellyn Park. Country Homes for City People', *Orange Journal* (16 May 1857). Llewellyn Park not only offered these natural prescriptions but in its names – Glen Ellyn, Loch Elm, Blythea, Ballentrae – echoes of the Scottish Highlands promised an escape from the pernicious influence of the urban, principally Irish, immigrant population.
12. The crucial years in the building were 1856–57. The Civil War and the Panic of '57 seriously hampered Haskell's building aspirations. Haskell was injured in a mining accident in 1865, and died in 1872.
13. 'Nine Member Board Aids Proprietors', newspaper clipping file, New Jersey Historical Society, West Orange, New Jersey; the quotation is from Theodore, Tilton, 'Llewellyn Park', *The Independent*, 26 May 1864.
14. Andrew Jackson Downing, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardener*, 6th ed., with a supplement by Henry Winthrop Sargent (New York: A. O. Moore & Co., 859), pp. 61–2.
15. While the rural cemeteries designed in the '30s, Mount Auburn, Greenwood and Laurel Hill, exemplified romantic landscape design, residential models of the villa park only existed abroad. Birkenhead and Regent's Park are notable examples. For a history of the American romantic suburb see John Archer, 'Country and City in the American Romantic Suburb', pp. 139–156, John Reps, *The Making of Urban America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 339–348, and Christopher Tunnard, 'The Romantic Suburb in America', pp. 184–187.
16. For examples see Downing, *Treatise* (1859), pages 48, 53 and 56. While the Beautiful was characterized by simple and flowing forms – nature 'obeying the universal laws of perfect existence' – the picturesque was characterized by irregular, spirited, and striking forms 'obeying the universal laws rudely, violently, irregularly, and often displaying power only'. According to Downing a large estate could successfully combine the two types. Though the picturesque dominated early Llewellyn Park, the 'Beautiful' was also expressed in the gentler forests of single tree types like 'The Oaks'.
17. James Thomas Flexner, *That Wilder Image* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1962), pp. 72–73.

18. 'Landscape-Gardening', *The Crayon*, IV (August 1857), p. 248.
19. HOWARD DANIELS, 'Villa Parks', *The Horticulturalist*, XIII (October 1858), pp. 495–6; DOWNING, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardener* (1859).
20. HOWARD, 'Villa Parks', p. 496.
21. 'Llewellyn Park at Orange', *Newark Daily Advertiser* (11 May 1866).
22. *New York Illustrated* (12 May 1860).
23. DOWNING, *Treatise*, p. 84.
24. EDWARD HYAMS, *The English Garden*, p. 122. The use of shrubs in the nineteenth century was largely a matter of garden economy.
25. *Horticulturalist*, 11 (November 1856), p. 542.
26. 'Llewellyn Park, at Orange', *Newark Daily Advertiser* (11 May 1866). The entrance to Llewellyn Park bears a resemblance to Downing's design for the grounds at Springside near Vassar Cottage where he used a waterfall, rockwork, and flowerbeds to create a picturesque effect at the entry. Similarly, at Sunnyside, the drive led through a gothic revival gate and past the porter's lodge where the gravel road divided to pass around a conical knoll planted with sugar maples and oak trees. Apparently a small pool was originally located opposite to the entrance. George Bishop Tatum, 'Andrew Jackson Downing: Arbiter of American Taste', PH D Dissertation, Princeton University, 1950, p. 115.
27. The trees included Pinus Excelsa, American and European Silver Firs, Norway Spruce, Hemlock, Mountain Pine, Juniper, Deodar Cedar and Cedar of Lebanon.
28. The forest contains many species including: Mountain Ash, Tulip, Silver, Sugar, golden-leaved, striped and Norway maples, European larch, European Mountain Ash, Scotch Fir, Weymouth Red, Austrian and Dwarf Pine, Arbor Vitae, Oaks, Beeches, Elms, Hemlock, First and Spruce. See 'Llewellyn Park', *Orange Journal* (6 June, 1857 and 16 April, 1859); and *New York Illustrated* (12 May, 1860).
29. 'Llewellyn Park', *Orange Journal*, 6 June 1857.
30. Loudon's description of a gardenesque grouping of trees was almost directly transcribed in Downing's description of the 'Beautiful', cf. DOWNING, *Treatise*, pp. 80–81, and J. C. LOUDON, *The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion* (New York: Garland Press), p. 165.
31. WHITMORE, *Founders and Builders* p. 312.
32. 'Llewellyn Park', *Orange Journal* (6 June 1857).
33. 'The May Festival in Llewellyn Park', *New York Illustrated News* (12 May 1860). It is interesting to compare this sentimental, Victorian version of the May Day celebration with the American original. It was indeed a celebration of the friendship between white and Indian, but one rooted in pre-Christian fertility rituals. The Puritans of the New World spurned the celebration of May Day as an immoral, pagan rite. The first dionysian May Day celebration, given by a renegade settler friendly with the Indians and reported in Puritan Bradford's account in *Of Plymouth Plantation*, is still the recognizable antecedent of the purified pageant at Llewellyn Park: 'They also set up a maypole, drinking and dancing about it many days together, inviting the Indian women for their consorts, dancing and frisking together like so many fairies, or furies rather; and worse practices. As if they had anew revived and celebrated the feasts of the Roman goddess Flora, or the beastly practices of the mad Bacchanalians'. Quoted in RICHARD SLOTKIN, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600–1860* (Middletown: Conneticut, 1973), p. 64.
34. 'Country Seats and Parks, Llewellyn Park', *New York Illustrated News* (23 June 1860), p. 80.
35. DOWNING, *Treatise*, p. 148.
36. In 1855 Haskell offered three acres of land at Eagle Rock as a site for the new State Normal School. An astronomical observatory and telescope, furnished by a scientific society in New York at a cost of $25,000, were to form part of the complex: the offer was accepted, but the project was never built. See PIERSON, *History of the Oranges*, p. 311. Davis' design for a school for Llewellyn Park itself was a Greek revival structure, in contrast to the gothic and vernacular styles favoured for the housing. The delineation of the project, dated 1857, is held in the A. J. Davis Collection at the Metropolitan Museum, New York City, New York.
37. DOWNING, *Treatise*, pp. 394–402.
38. Ibid., p. 394.
39. Ibid., p. 394.
40. Rustic landscape furniture was promoted by many, among them CATHERINE BEECHER and HARRIET BEECHER STOWE in *The American Woman's Home* (1869): 'Or, what is better, because it is at once cheaper and a means of educating the ingenuity and the taste, you can make for yourselves pretty rustic frames in various modes . . . Nail on the edge a rustic frame made of branches of hard, seasoned wood, and garnish the corners with some pretty device such, for instance, as a cluster of acorns; or, in place of the branches of trees, fasten on with glued small pine cones, with large ones for corner ornaments. Or use the mosses of the wood or ocean shells for this purpose.' (p. 92). Beecher also fostered the cult of domesticity and housekeeping as a 'professional' occupation. She promoted the gothic style as the appropriate symbol both of rural life and the moral virtues of the American home. Rustic landscape furniture also had a prominence in the landscape literature of the era. See DOWNING, *Treatise*, pp. 370, 394–399; the *The Horticulturalist*, 13 (1858), pp. 304–306, 360–361; and *The Horticulturalist* 15 (1860), pp. 418–419.

41. In later years Charles McKim, who grew up in the Nichols gothic cottage designed by A. J. Davis, would return to Llewellyn Park where he designed several houses that in their grandeur and classical civilization betokened the arrival of the Gilded Age.
42. 'Llewellyn Park at Orange', *Newark Daily Advertiser* (11 May 1866). Haskell built a chapel just outside the Park grounds purportedly for the use of fellow perfectionists.
43. See WHITMORE, *Founders and Builders*, 1896, p. 314. Whitmore maintains that Haskell was a radical in religion. Once devoutly orthodox, he became interested in liberal thought, and eventually in mystic contemplation and the works of Jakob Boehme and Emanuel Swedenborg. References to Haskell's associationism are numerous. Such ideas were in broad currency at the time and could be vaguely identified by most literate people. See WILSON, 'Idealism and the Origin of the First American Suburb'. A. J. Davis, with whom Haskell shared many other sympathies, was himself a Swedenborgian, as is well-documented in his daybooks. Swedenborgianism was the parent philosophy of Fourier's perfectionism. See New York Public Mss. Daybook for 20 July 1851, p. 432. See also SAMUEL SWIFT, 'Llewellyn Park, West Orange, Essex County, New Jersey: The First American Suburban City', *House and Garden*, 3 (June 1903), p. 331.
44. The numerous entries in Davis' Daybook testify to the many hours he spent in the landscaping of both his own estate and Haskell's Eyrie. Much of the time he spent in supervising the felling of trees and the delivery of new plantings. From 1850 through 1858 Haskell, his wife, and Davis were in close contact, spending many evenings together as well as taking longer excursions. See Daybook, Alexander Jackson Davis Collection, Manuscript and Archives Division, New York Public Library, New York City, New York, for the years 1850–1853; and Daybook, Alexander Jackson Davis Collection, Avery Library, Columbia University, New York City, New York, for the years 1853 through 1868.
45. DOWNING, *Treatise*, p. 61.
46. 'Llewellyn Park at Orange', *Newark Daily Advertiser* (11 May 1866).
47. According to some local reporting the residents in the Park in the 1850s included both atheists and recluses, but any more specific information is lacking. It is true that marriage ceremonies, including Haskell's own, were held at dawn under a great tree, a socially daring act in an age in which the middle classes were still heavily bound to the church. SWIFT, 'Llewellyn Park, West Orange, Essex County, New Jersey', p. 331.
48. TILTON, 'Llewellyn Park'.
49. EUGENE FARRELL, 'Famous Eagle Rock Crumbling Away', *Newark Evening News* (29 October 190?) and an article on the Wildmont property, untitled clipping, *The Sunday Call* (1 January 1905), both in Box 7 of the A. J. Davis Collection, New York Public Library, New York City, New York.