

# Trolleys, Towers, Fruits, and Friends: The Story of 227 Edgewood Road

*by Dale Wayne Slusser*

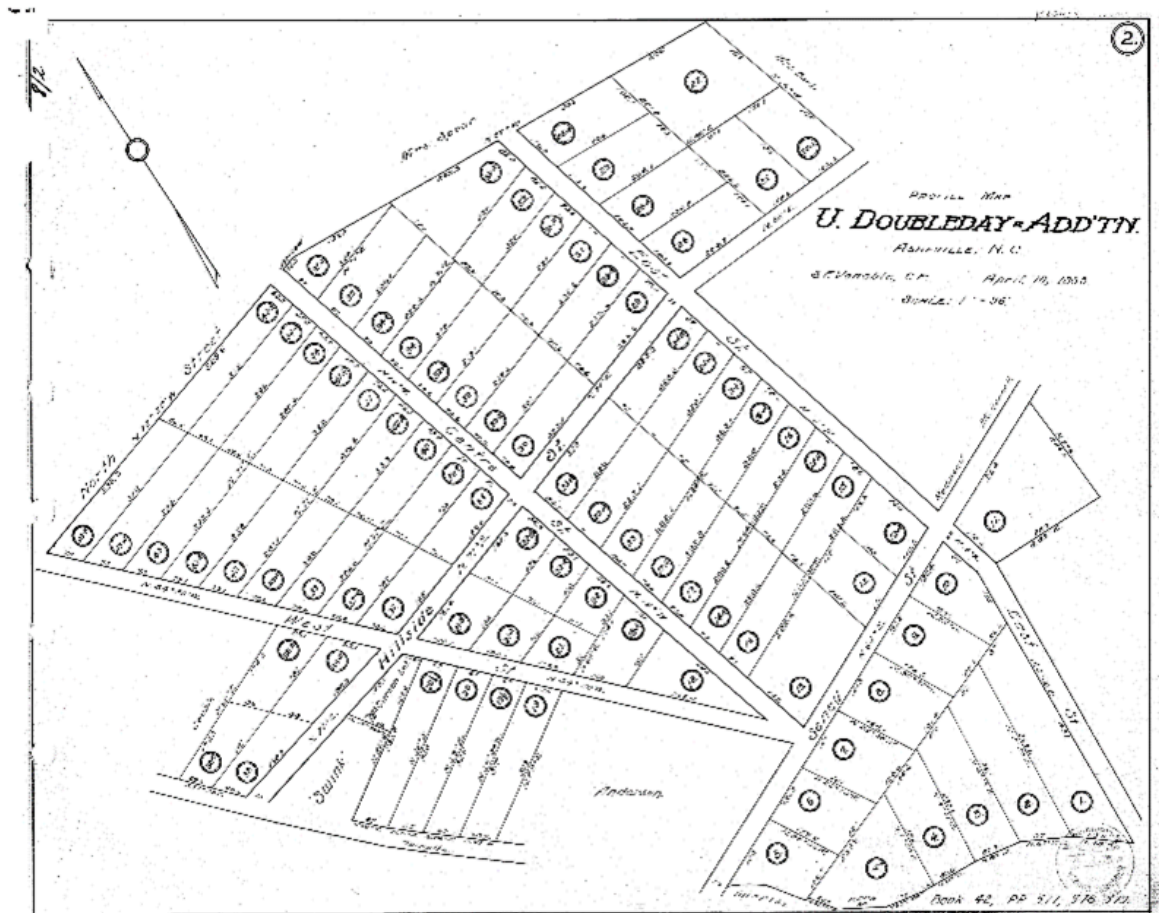


Asheville, North Carolina, founded in the 1790's in the mountains of Western North Carolina, remained remote and rather inaccessible well into the latter half of the nineteenth-century. And although promoted as a "health resort", beginning in the 1830's, Asheville's population by 1880 was still only 2,616.<sup>[1]</sup> But all that remoteness changed suddenly in 1880, when the Western North Carolina Railroad, which had been in the planning and construction stages for many decades, was finally completed to Asheville (from the east). This was shortly followed by the completion of the WNCRR line to Tennessee (connecting Asheville to the west and north), and by 1886 the completion of the Spartanburg and Asheville Railroad connected Asheville to the south.

The arrival of the railroads brought a sudden influx of people, both visitors and new residents, to Asheville. Suddenly, Asheville had an internal transportation problem. Visitors getting off the comfortable trains at the depot were greeted by buckboard wagons or horse carts to transport them and their accoutrement to their

accommodations. To solve the transportation problem, The Asheville Street Railway Company was chartered in 1881, primarily (or at least initially) to provide transport from the depot up the steep long grade to Center Square (now called Pack Square). However, because establishing and constructing a railway system required lots of money and cooperation between city officials and property owners for the necessary “right-of-ways”, the 1881 charter was only the first of several failed attempts to establish a trolley system in the burgeoning city of Asheville. It was not until February 1889 that the first trolley system began operation in Asheville.

The full story of the building of Asheville’s “street railway” (trolley) is told elsewhere[2] and is beyond the purview of our story of 227 Edgewood Road. However, once in operation in 1889, the newly established trolley system, which was the first electric railway system built in North Carolina, and the second system built in the south (preceded only by Richmond, VA), immediately began to expand with the building of new lines to other parts of the city besides Center Square. The building and growth of Asheville’s trolley system contributed to the eventual building of the house at 227 Edgewood Road.

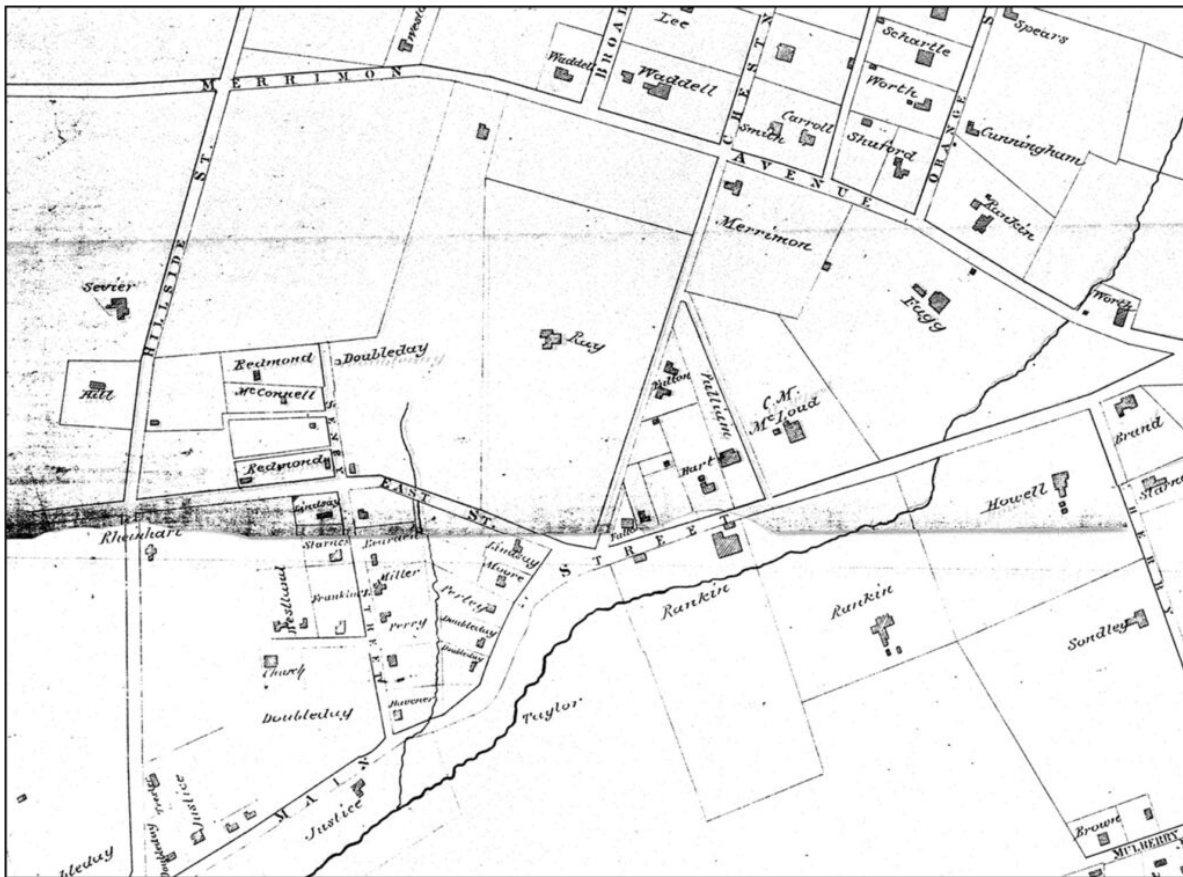


The arrival of the trolley system, aided in the establishment of Asheville’s first suburban neighborhoods, to meet the housing needs of its growing population. “Doubleday’s Addition”, was one of, if not the first of Asheville’s “suburbs”,

preceding the opening of the trolley system. In 1882, Asheville newcomer, Ulysses Doubleday, the brother of famed baseball “inventor” Abner Doubleday, had purchased a 60-acre tract of land on the northern city limits. This land was part of the William Augustus Patton estate.[3] Doubleday, who also was a business owner and partner with George F. Scott of the Asheville Lumber Company, immediately began to sell lots in his new subdivision. However, uniquely every lot that Doubleday sold, he also sold the lot with an agreement that he would build the house on the lot, for which the buyer would take out a promissory note (from Doubleday) to pay for. Being the owner of a lumber and millwork business, Doubleday was able to act as both a real estate developer and contractor. An 1886 map of Asheville shows that Doubleday had already, by then, built over a half-dozen houses in his new suburban development. The homeowners shown on the map: Havener, Moore, Perry, Lindsay, Miller, Bearden and Franklin had all purchased Doubleday lots with Doubleday-built houses.

Asheville Citizen-Times  
Sat, Jul 25, 1885 · Page 3

**To Let or For Sale,**   
**ON VERY EASY TERMS,**  
**HOUSES AND LOTS**  
**IN THIS CITY.**  
Apply to  
**DOUBLEDAY & SCOTT.**  
mch 18-4 mos s w



This 1886 map of Asheville shows that Doubleday had already, by then, built over a half-dozen houses in his new suburban development. The homeowners shown on the map: Havener, Moore, Perry, Lindsay, Miller, Bearden and Franklin had all purchased Doubleday lots with Doubleday-built houses.

“ANOTHER ELECTRIC RAILWAY” was the subtitle for the newspaper report following the April 17, 1891 meeting of Asheville’s board of alderman in which C. E. Graham “asked permission to connect an electric railway with the Asheville street railway from the present terminus at North Main street, running to Fenner Mountain, by way of East Street”. [4] This new railway, proposed by C. E. Graham, was referred to (though not officially named as such) the “East Street Railway” or the “Lookout Mountain Railway”. This newly proposed railway was to run directly to and through the Doubleday Addition.

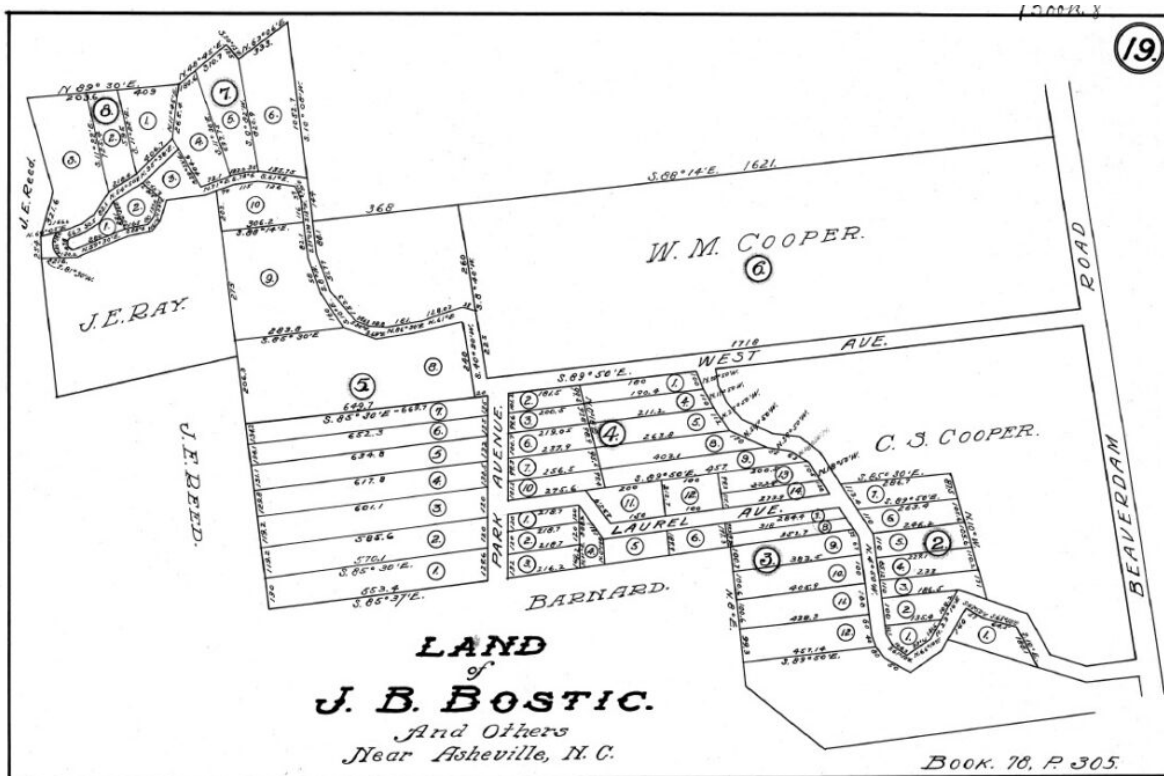
This new electric railway was neither initiated by nor owned by the Asheville Street Railway but instead was owned and initiated by a group of investors, headed by real estate investor, J. B. Bostic. John Baxter Bostic, a businessman from Shelby, NC, had moved to Asheville in 1887 and had established a vibrant real estate business.

In a shrewd business move, Bostic had formed his own railway company with a small syndicate of investors, C. S. Cooper, D. D. Suttle, and himself. These investors were not only “owners of the road”[5], but also partners in a large real estate investment in a new development property which they had strategically purchased

the year before, to be the terminus of the new railway line. *"TO FENNER MOUNTAIN"*, announced the April 8, 1891 edition of the Asheville Citizen-Times, *"The Street Railway To Be Extended To That Point"*.<sup>[6]</sup> The article went on to report that *"J. B. Bostic and D. D. Suttle, of Asheville, and W. M. Cooper, of Statesville"* had just recently purchased "Fenner Mountain" and have already *"set about improvement of their purchased property and have just perfected arrangements by which the street car line will be extended to that point"*.<sup>[7]</sup>

The property referenced in the April 1891 article, was the former 70 acre farm of Rev. J. S. Burnett in Raymoth (aka Woolsey), on the west side of Beaverdam Road (Merrimon Avenue) just north of the Asheville city limits, which had been purchased jointly by J. B. Bostic and D. D. Suttle in April 1890, a year before the railway announcement.<sup>[8]</sup> *"NORTH ASHEVILLE PARK"*, suggested the reporter in the April 4, 1890 edition of the Asheville Citizen-Times, should be the name given to the property recently purchased by a *"syndicate of gentlemen, at whose head is Mr. J. B. Bostic"*<sup>[9]</sup> The article further reported that the developers' plans for the property was to *"lay it out in five and ten acre tracts and sell it to desirable parties for suburban residences"*.<sup>[10]</sup> It was further announced that the development would have "two avenues" which would run from the city limits north to Woodfin Mountain (aka Fenner Mountain or Lookout Mountain), and that at the "apex" of the mountain a pavilion would be erected *"for the use of the residents and for dance and picnics"*.<sup>[11]</sup> Bostic's new development, which never adopted the reporter's suggested name, was just north of the Doubleday Addition, just above the Reynolds & Atkinson development which bordered the Doubleday Addition on its north side, just outside the city limits.

Speaking of the Reynolds and Atkinson development, in June of 1890, just after purchasing the "North Asheville Park" property, J. B. Bostic and other investors, C. M. McLoud, P. F. Patton, D. C. Waddell, W. W. Barnard, C. E. Graham, and J. M. Ray, purchased a \$100,000 "interest" in the Reynolds & Atkinson development, through which their later proposed "East Street Railway" would traverse.<sup>[12]</sup>



Final approval for the new East Street Railway, was finally granted by the Board of Aldermen in early May of 1891, but only after the railway company had agreed to widen the streets on which they would run their tracks. This is probably the reason that J. B. Bostic's property (purchased in 1890) was not officially platted until July of 1891.<sup>[13]</sup> The plat shows the subdivided lots along with names on lots of those who had already invested in the property. The name "Barnard" shows on the plat as an adjacent property owner on the south. J. H. Barnard (Joseph Hicks Barnard), a local and not to be confused with J. H. Barnard (John Hall Barnard), who was then the superintendent of the Asheville Street Railway, had purchased his 60-acre property in 1885.<sup>[14]</sup> Barnard Avenue was named after him. C. S. Cooper was already living on an adjacent property where he had erected a residence in 1888,<sup>[15]</sup> but he had purchased a  $\frac{1}{4}$  interest in the property development in May of 1890.<sup>[16]</sup> W. M. Cooper's name shows on the plat as well. W. M. Cooper of Statesville, NC, who was the brother of C. S. Cooper, had purchased two parcels on the southside of Fenner Mountain, in the Bostic development, in March of 1891.<sup>[17]</sup> It was on the W. M. Cooper lands that the house at 227 Edgewood Road would eventually be built.



The East Street line of the Asheville Street Railway, was officially opened on Friday, July 10, 1891. This 1900 Map shows the route the line ran from Pack Square, down N. Main Street (Broadway) to East Street, then north on East Street to the Winyah Sanitarium ("VonRuck on this map), then from Winyah north to West Avenue (Edgewood Road). The tracks went over a trestle at the creek (which shows on the map), where is now W. T. Weaver Boulevard.

Construction of the East Street Railway began on May 22, 1891. The Asheville Street Railway, which had leased the right-of-way from the East Street Railway, did the actual construction of the new line.<sup>[18]</sup> The announcement of the start of construction also came with the announcement that, along with the right-of-way, the Asheville Street Railway had also leased a ten-acre site at the terminus of the new line (Fenner/Lookout Mountain) *"to construct a park, lawn tennis, etc."*<sup>[19]</sup>. The East Street line of the Asheville Street Railway, from N. Main Street (now Broadway) to Lookout/Fenner Mountain was officially opened on Friday, July 10, 1891.<sup>[20]</sup> However, plans for the construction of a park at its terminus were put on hold.

As construction of the new East Street railway (trolley line) began, J. B. Bostic and his syndicate, continued to advertise and sell lots in his new development. On July 3, 1891, it was reported that Bostic had sold lots to: J. A. Nichols, W. T. Waltser, Mrs. L. A. Finley (two lots), W. M. Clarke, Prof. P. P. Claxton, H. C. Long, and Col. J. M. Ray.<sup>[21]</sup> Although it was reported that all the new lot owners intended to build residences on their acquired lots, very few houses were actually built.

In the summer of 1892, Otis A. Miller, who was then developing the town of "Skyland" south of Asheville, decided to join in the development of Bostic's Fenner/Lookout Mountain property. In August of 1892, Miller purchased a block of lots on the east side of Park Avenue in the Bostic development from H. C. Long.<sup>[22]</sup> Long had originally purchased the block from the Bostic syndicate the year before. Within the ensuing month, Miller purchased additional blocks and parcels of land from the Bostic development.<sup>[23]</sup> Although Miller had purchased a few lots on the east side of the development, along the railway car line, Miller had managed to

purchase almost the entire western and northwestern portion of the Bostic development, which he immediately formed into his own subdivision, which he named "Cavalier Heights".[24]

# CAVALIER HEIGHTS.

To the first ten purchasers who want to build we will sell beautiful lots by the Lookout Mountain (Cavalier Mountain) Street car line at these prices—good only for 30 days:

Choice of 17 lots for \$200.	Priced at \$400.
Choice of 15 lots for \$300.	Priced at \$600.
Choice of 10 lots for \$500.	Priced at \$900.
Choice of 18 lots for \$600.	Priced at \$1000.

We are now building three fine houses on these lots and will be glad to show you this property and sell to you.

We are no agent, but offer our own land and want to stir up a slight breeze these dull times. Let us show you these lots.

**OTIS A. MILLER,**  
**No. 11 Patton Avenue,**

Just as he had done in Skyland, Otis Miller planned on not only developing his property into residential lots, but he also planned on constructing a luxurious hotel atop Lookout Mountain, to be called "Cavalier Castle".[25] On August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1892 it was announced that Otis Miller was "*about ready*" to begin construction of "*his private residence and stables*" on his Lookout Mountain property, and also that construction on his new hotel, "Cavalier Castle", was "*to begin in two weeks*".[26] Miller built his private residence on the southside of Lookout Mountain on "Lot 8 of Block 6", which was bordered on the south and west by Barnard Avenue, on the north by the Fenner lands, and on the east by the W. M. Cooper lands. This site is now addressed as 255 Barnard Avenue and is the site of a modern apartment complex. Miller named his new residence "Bonnicastle". A vintage photo of Bonnicastle shows that it was three-stories high with a four-story tower/turret, and a two-story open side porch with round arched openings. Using materials which appear to have been stone and wood-shingles, combined with its numerous turrets, Miller's new residence was truly a castle on the hill.



This blurry vintage photo of Bonnicastle shows that it was three-stories high with a four-story tower/turret, and a two-story open side porch with round arched openings. Using materials which appear to have been stone and wood-shingles, combined with its numerous turrets, Miller's new residence was truly a castle on the hill.

By 1894, with sales of lots in "Cavalier Heights" having been slim, it was clear that Miller had over-invested. The first of numerous subsequent defaults came in September of 1894. It was then, at public auction that O. D. Revell purchased four valuable lots from Otis Miller's trustee, J. G. Merrimon.<sup>[27]</sup> The four lots (lot 10 Block 5, lots 1 & 3 of block 7 and lot 1 of block 8) were the upper most lots of Miller's, and I believe them to have been the location of his proposed "Cavalier Castle" hotel. Fortunately, for the present, "Bonnicastle" remained in Miller's ownership, although he soon began to take in boarders to help defray its costs.<sup>[28]</sup>

Otis Miller was not alone in overinvesting. In 1892, the Asheville Street Car Railway went into receivership, with Lewis Maddux being appointed as its receiver.<sup>[29]</sup> Under Maddux's leadership, in 1893, the company was reorganized as the Asheville

Street Railroad.[30] Unfortunately, the Asheville Street Railroad couldn't make a go of it either, and in 1895 it too went into receivership, with the court appointing J. E. Rankin as its receiver.[31] Rankin immediately began making improvements and finding ways to make the line more profitable. To that end, in May of 1896, the *Asheville Citizen-Times* made the following announcement:

*Receiver, J. E. Rankin of the Asheville Street Railroad company, in carrying out his plans for the improvement of the lines under his control and furnishing attractive rides for the patrons of the road, has developed the idea of a park at the terminus of the Lookout mountain division. For two weeks a force of men under E. P. Hart, superintendent of the construction forces has been busy clearing the ground and erecting buildings necessary to carry out the plans. The resort, for such it will undoubtedly become, has been christened Lookout Park. It lies immediately west of the car line and comprises a tract of eight acres. The undergrowth has been cleared away, leaving a grove of shade trees. A pavilion 30 x 40 feet has been erected, and will be used for dances and entertainments. Four large swings depend about the grounds, while benches are arranged under the trees for the comfort of the visitor. Cool water is to be had from a well near the pavilion. The grounds are to be beautified by flowers and plants.*[32]

### **A POPULAR ATTRACTION.**

#### **Lookout Park Draws a Large Crowd of Asheville People.**

Lookout Park yesterday and last night was a popular spot for Asheville people who wanted to spend an hour or two away from the bustle of the city. In the afternoon the attractions at the Park included orchestra music, a fine exhibition of club swinging by Harry Monroe, and singing and dancing by local colored talent.

In the evening there was a dance at the pavilion, and a large crowd went out to enjoy the occasion. Good order prevailed throughout.

Cars on the Lookout mountain division ran until after 11 o'clock to bring home the crowd. During the day and night Conductor W. R. Hough on car 14 collected 994 fares. Conductor W. H. Hough, with car 13, ran on this line after 9 p. m. and collected 143 fares, making the total 1137.

The newspaper went on to announce that Lookout Park had been leased to Charles Evans, of Indianapolis, "*an experienced man in amusement enterprises*", who was planning to have daily band music in the pavilion with Sunday concerts, a pony track, refreshment stand, and a merry-go-round. Additionally, Evans planned to have vaudeville entertainment at the park as well.<sup>[33]</sup>

Lookout Park, was reported to "*lie immediately west of the car line*"<sup>[34]</sup>, which I believe to have been where now is site of the house at 227 Edgewood Road.

Evidence for my assumption is supported by a statement given in 1896, where C. S. Cooper, a major landowner along the line, told an Asheville Citizen-Times

correspondent that receiver Rankin had come to Cooper “to get permission to use the grounds for park purposes”. The eight-acre site for the park was no doubt part of the land that was owned by Cooper’s out-of-town father. At the time, Bonnicastle would have overlooked the park from the northwest.



These two vintage photos (c. 1897-1898) which are labeled, “from July 4th or Labor Day” at “Lookout Park on Chatham Rd” show men preparing for bicycle races

Lookout Park formally opened on May 28, 1896, “to the accompaniment of speechmaking and music”.<sup>[35]</sup> The park soon became a popular summer resort for local citizens and tourists. Touring Vaudeville acts, band concerts, “moonlight excursions” (of course the park had electric lights), balloon ascensions, and bicycle races became regular features of the park. Two vintage photos from 1897-1898 show bicycles and bicyclists at Lookout Park. The two vintage photos (c. 1897-1898) which are labeled, “from July 4th or Labor Day” at “Lookout Park on Chatham Rd” show men preparing for bicycle races.<sup>[36]</sup>

## THE LOOKOUT PARK BALLOON ASCENSION.

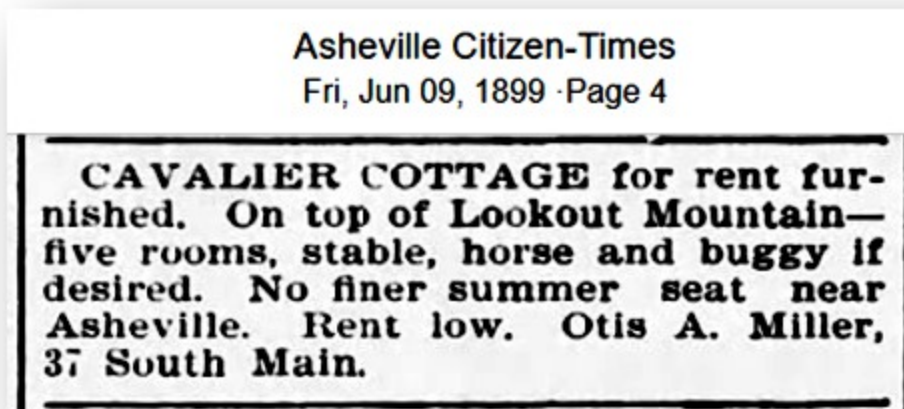


Notable were the “balloon ascensions” that would be held at the Park. A 1900 advertisement, which is accompanied by an appropriate sketch, gives us an “EXPLANATION” of the event: *“When the balloon is ready to go up there is a cannon attached to the bottom of it- just as shown by the above cut- and the man and his parachute are loaded into the cannon, and when the balloon reaches the height of two thousand feet the man and his parachute are fired out, as the cut shows above.”*<sup>[37]</sup>

A newlywed named Margaret Sloan had married in Asheville and while visiting Asheville in 1900, she noted in her daybook (diary) on July 20, 1900: *“Mr. Rufe, Willard and I went to Lookout Park tonight to a vaudeville performance and for a change it was good, we had some splendid well water and a jolly good time. Mr. Bryant treated to cream [ice cream] and chaperoned us royally.”*<sup>[38]</sup> The Vaudeville performance that Sloan had seen was an acrobatic performance by “Muller & Poole”.<sup>[39]</sup> The performance she saw included: a “horizontal bar act” by brothers W. E. & Carl Muller and Poole, a clown act by Carl Muller, a con song by Sam Weldon, Larry Kettrick imitating several comedians, and ended with W. E.

Muller and Poole doing an “*acrobatic turn*”.[40] The performers were “hometown” boys, Carl Muller, his brother W. E. (Eugene) Muller and J. B. Poole.[41] The Muller brothers were called to Europe in 1908 to perform, and later Eugene Muller got a professional job with the “Keith Circuit”, a chain of vaudeville theatres across the U. S.[42]

As the turn of the twentieth-century dawned, dramatic changes were to come for Otis Miller, the East Street Railway and Lookout Park. First, in May of 1898 most of the remaining Cavalier Heights/Otis Miller property was foreclosed on, including “Bonnicastle”. [43] But instead of a proposed sheriff-sale, Miller forfeited the property back to Bostic and his syndicate in September of 1898.[44] However Otis Miller was not ready to leave Lookout Mountain any time soon, as not only had he retained his 1892 property (Lot 2 of Block 7) on Lookout Road, but in late 1898 he re-purchased an adjacent parcel to the north (Lot 1 of Block 8), which he had forfeited to the Bostic syndicate a few months earlier.[45] Although the deed was not registered until 1901, in December of 1898, a small transfer notice was given in the newspaper: “*To Otis A. Miller, four acres on top of Lookout mountain which will be improved*”.[46] Less than a month later Otis Miller announced his plans to build a 75-foot high observatory on top of his new Lookout Mountain site. At the same time, it was reported that “*Mr. Miller is also building a 12-room cottage near the site of the observatory, which will be known as “Cavalier Cottage”, and will be rented as a county summer retreat*”.[47]



Cavalier Cottage was completed and offered for rent by June of 1899.[48] The cottage was advertised as being “five rooms”, which was half the size of its proposed size. I propose that current house at 30 Lookout Road, which has functioned as a Bread & Breakfast Inn (Bridle Path Inn) for many years, was Miller’s “Cavalier Castle”. The Miller’s sold the property to builder O. D. Revell in 1926.[49]

Revell is thought to have built the house, however, I suspect that although he made some major renovations to the property in 1931, that he started with the original Cavalier Cottage.[50]

Miller's observatory, which also featured a pavilion and refreshment stand which sold ice cream and drinks, was completed and opened to the public by July of 1899. [51] Miller installed a "Trieder binocular" at the top of the observatory, that was reported to be so strong that it could "*recognize friends six miles distant*"![52]



I propose that this house at 30 Lookout Road, which has functioned as a Bread & Breakfast Inn (Bridle Path Inn) for many years, started as Miller's "Cavalier Castle".

Although Otis Miller was able to maintain a presence on Lookout Mountain, J. B. Bostic was not so fortunate, as in 1899, having defaulted on his loan from the Burnett family (which was obtained when he purchased their Lookout Mountain land in 1890), Bostic forfeited his ownership in the development. Being the highest bidder at the courthouse sale in 1899, the Burnett family took possession of the land.[53] The Burnett family re-sold the property to C. T. Rawls in 1902.[54]

A further blow to the Lookout Mountain developments also came in 1902, when the Asheville Street Railway, made the devastating decision to discontinue the Lookout Mountain line. The reason for the closure was never clear to the public, but the decision, as sad as it is to think about today, seems to have centered around a racial

issue. *"IT IS NOW HILSIDE PARK"*, announced the *Asheville Citizen-Times* on July 3, 1902, *"The well known resort on Lookout Mountain is now being fitted up as a park for colored people and its name has been changed to Hillside Park. There will be music, fireworks, dancing, and refreshments tomorrow night and a large crowd of colored people will doubtless be there to enjoy them."*[55] At the time (the era of segregation) this looked like a good idea, as not only did the Asheville Street Railroad also have Riverside Park, but also they had recently (1901) connected to Howland's Overlook Park on Sunset Mountain, which gave them two other parks "for whites only". Also, there were several African-American neighborhoods near Lookout Mountain.

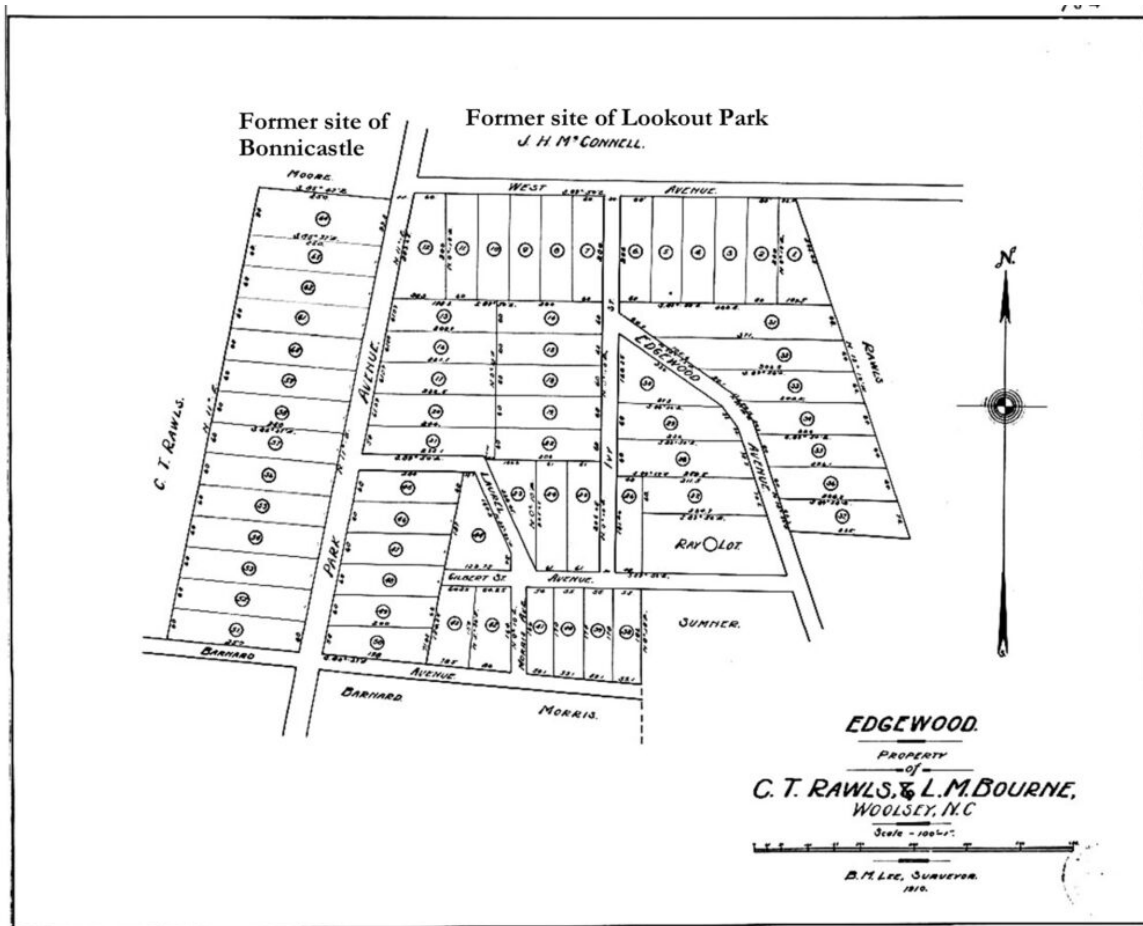


Three days after the Hillside Park announcement, the Asheville Street Railroad company announced its' *"intention to abandon the Lookout park route, building a track from the present line which will go east on Seney street and north on Merriman Avenue as far as Woolsey Hall"*. [56] The ASR company claimed the reason for the closing of the Lookout Mountain line was that it was no longer *"of much profit to the company"*. [57]

It took less than a week for the opposition to the park to hit fever pitch. The "citizens of Ramoth (Woolsey)", who were served by the East Street/Lookout

Mountain line, objected to sharing the trolley with “colored people”, who they claimed crowded the cars and refused to give up their seats for white folks.[58] Therefore the citizens called for the park to be closed and threatened that if it was not closed that the town would not grant a franchise for the trolley to come through their town! On August 11, 1902, the Asheville Electric Company, which had bought out the Asheville Street Railroad, signed a franchise with the town of Ramoth to run their lines through the town to connect to the Weaverville Railway. The deal was made WITHOUT the *“clause providing that the negro park be removed from the present Hillside Park and that no negro park be established on the line”*. [59] Kudos to the Asheville Electric Company for not agreeing to remove the park-however, knowing that Raymoth had threatened to pass an ordinance prohibiting the park, they could save face and pass the buck on to Raymoth to deal with the park as they saw fit.

Development on Lookout Mountain resumed in 1910, when C. T. Rawls, who had purchased the residual of the Bostic development from the Burnett family in 1902, partnered with associate L. M. Bourne and had the property re-subdivided and platted. Rawls and Bourne hosted a land auction on August 10, 1910 to kickoff sales. At the auction, which was a big success, forty-four of the fifty-fours lots were sold. [60] Mrs. T. P. Reynolds was the prizewinner in the name contest, with “Sunrise Park” as her entry. [61] Surprisingly, there is little evidence the name, “Sunrise Park” was ever used for the development. In fact the Rawls & Bourne plat shows its name as “Edgewood”.

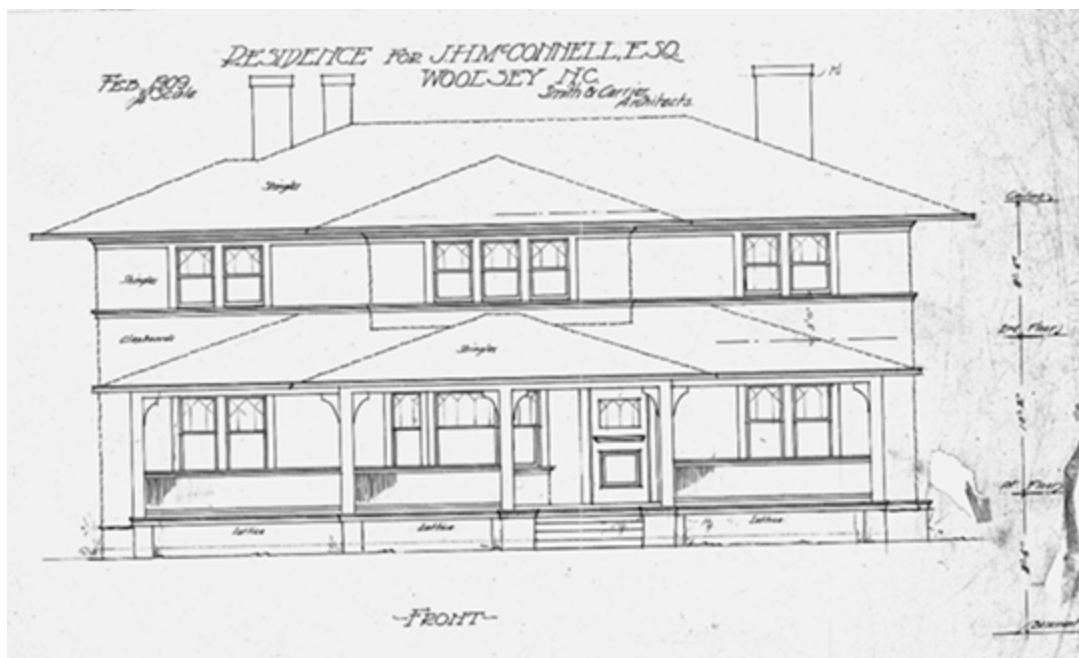


Although not recorded until 1910, in 1908 J. H. McConnell purchased a six-acre (5.6 actual) parcel from the estate of W. M. Cooper.<sup>[62]</sup> William M. Cooper, who died in 1907, had purchased two large tracts on the northside of West Avenue (now Edgewood Road) from J. B. Bostic in 1891. “J. H. McConnell” was James Harvey McConnell, a partner with his brother, W. C. McConnell of McConnell Brothers, a wholesale fruit and produce company. W. C. McConnell started the business in Asheville in 1884, and J. H. McConnell joined him in 1892, when the name was changed to McConnell Brothers.<sup>[63]</sup> The McConnell Brothers had been in various locations in Asheville over the years, but in 1906 they partnered with J. D. Nelson and others in erecting the “Nelson-McConnell Building” at the southeast corner of N. Main Street (now Broadway) and E. Walnut Street.<sup>[64]</sup> The building that was numbered 34, 36, & 38 N. Main Street is still standing today and known as The Windsor Hotel.



The Windsor at 36 Broadway Street was the former Nelson-McConnell Building, built in 1906, which was the home of the McConnell Brothers Wholesale Fruit and Produce business.

Shortly after buying his Edgewood Road property, J. H. McConnell commissioned architect Richard Sharp Smith to design a large residence. The extant drawings, now housed at the Asheville Art Museum, and dated February 1909, show a two-story English Arts & Crafts style house with clapboards on the exterior of the first floor with wood shingles on the second floor divided by a molded belt-course.<sup>[65]</sup> The simple boxed porch posts with curved brackets and the diamond-rectangular window muntins are distinctive R. S. Smith features. The large house was designed with five bedrooms, all on the second floor.



The new house was completed and the family, which then consisted of J. H. & Ella and their five children (ages 3-12 yrs. old), settled in by May of 1910.[66] The McConnells established a mini country estate from which they sold White Leghorn chickens, openington eggs (brown eggs) “for hatching”, and “Indian runner” ducks.[67] They even raised and sold pigs![68] Over the years the house was a place of numerous Sunday class outings, as the McConnells were active members of First Presbyterian Church, Asheville.[69]

J. H. McConnell died in August of 1936[70], and a few months later, on October 23, 1936 Wachovia Bank & Trust foreclosed on the property at 227 Edgewood Road, as the McConnell’s had defaulted on a 1931 loan.[71] Despite being owned by the bank, Ella McConnell and her daughter Bess McConnell (now a noted interior designer) continued to live in the house until Ella’s death in 1945.[72] Although the house had been purchased out of foreclosure by the McConnell’s out-of-town son, Robert P. McConnell, Bess McConnell (Robert’s sister) moved out of the house, and it was turned into a two-unit rental.

The house at 227 Edgewood Road remained a two-unit rental until 1956, when Robert McConnell sold the family home to Maurice W. & Marion Ellis in August of that year.[73] The Ellis family only owned the house for four months, selling it in December of 1956 to Eugene L. Edwards and his wife Bobbie.[74] The Edwards family (multiple generations) owned the house for almost thirty years until selling the house in the Fall of 1985 to the Religious Society of Friends (aka Quakers).[75]



Prior to purchasing the house at 227 Edgewood Road, Asheville Friends Meeting's realtor, Ben McKenzie filed for a conditional use rezoning in order to use the residence for a Meeting House.<sup>[76]</sup> However, by mid-October 1985, the Asheville Friends Meeting were able to move from their South French Broad YWCA location to the house at 227 Edgewood Road. Although the property has been reduced in size from the McConnell's original 5.86-acre estate, under the stewardship of the Asheville Friends Meeting, the house itself has retained its historic character and still would be recognizable to James Harvey McConnell.

**Image & Photo Credits:** *Note: All cropping and captions by Dale Wayne Slusser*

**Asheville Street Railway trolley on Patton Avenue**– Image #MS195.004 – Cabinet card view of an Asheville trolley car surrounded by passengers. Labeled “Asheville and Vicinity” and “Western North Carolina Views,”- Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

**Doubleday Addition Plat**– 04/10/1883 -DOUBLEDAY U ADDITION PLAT EAST & SENEY STREETS Db. 8/2. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

**Doubleday & Scott Advertisement**– *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 25, 1885, p. 3.

Doubleday Addition om 1886 Asheville Map- Image# MAP200- 1886 map shows property owners of each tract of land in the city of Asheville. – Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

**Doubleday Addition on 1886 Asheville Map**– Image# MAP200- Map of the City of Asheville, 1886, shows property owners of each tract of land in the city of Asheville. – Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

**Land of J. B. Bostic**– 07/08/1891 J. B. Bostic an Others -PLAT BEAVERDAM ROAD Db. 8/19. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

**East Street Railway on 1900 Map**– Image# MAP205- Map of the City of Asheville, 1900, made for H.F. Grant & Son Real Estate Agents. – Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

**Cavalier Heights**– *Asheville Citizen-Times*, November 1, 1892, p. 4.

**Bonnycastle Photo**– Image# O188-DS – Bonnie Castle [SIC -Bonnycastle]-, Built circa 1890, destroyed by fire in 1910. (Woolsey, Buncombe County, North Carolina.)- donor, James Walker. – Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

**A Popular Attraction Article**- *Asheville Citizen-Times*, May 22, 1896, p. 1.

**Bicyclists at Lookout Park**– Image# B317-8 – Photo from “July 4th or Labor Day” shows three men preparing for bicycle races at “Lookout Park on Chatham Rd” (in Woolsey). Identified: S. I. Bean (far right) and Mr. H. Hearn (2nd from left). Photo by A.B. Pope of Asheville; and Image# B316-8 -Samuel Isaac Bean, Jr. (left) and another man preparing for a bicycle race at “Lookout Park.” – Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

**The Lookoutt Park Ballon Ascension**– *The Asheville Times*, June 1, 1900, p. 5.

**Cavalier Cottage Notice**– *Asheville Citizen-Times*, June 9, 1899, p. 4.

**30 Lookout Road Photo**– by Dale Wayne Slusser, October 2025.

**Hillside Park Advertisement**– *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 4, 1902, p. 3.

**Rawls & Bourne Plat/Edgewood**– 03/01/1910 C. T. Rawls & L. M. Bourne PLAT WOOLSEY NC Db. 154/63. – Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

**Windsor Photo**-from Windsor website: <https://windsorasheville.com/>

**Front Elevation- J. H. McConnell Residence**–“Residence for J.H. McConnell- Woolsey- NC -Front, dated Feb. 1909”. Image# RS0567.1- The Richard Sharp Smith Architectural Drawing Collection is owned by and housed at the Asheville Art Museum. Digital copy from -Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

**227 Edgewood Road**– by Dale Wayne Slusser, October 2025.

[1] Trolleys In the Land of the Sky: Street Railways of Asheville, NC and Vicinity, by David Coleman Bailey, Joseph M. Canfield, and Harold E. Cox. (Forty Fort, PA: Printed by Harold E. Cox, 2000), p. 5.

[2] See David C. Bailey’s book, referenced in Endnote #1 above.

[3] 05/10/1882 C. M. & Ellie McCloud to Ulysses Doubleday 60 ACRES -WA Patton Estate Db. 42/211. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[4] “THE CITY FATHERS MEET. THE ALDERMEN’S SESSION LAST NIGHT”, *Asheville Citizen-Times*, April 18, 1891, p. 4.

[5] “THE EAST STREET RAILWAY”, *Asheville Citizen-Times*, May 22, 1891, p. 4.

[6] “TO FENNER MOUNTAIN”, *Asheville Citizen-Times*, April 8, 1891, p. 1.

[7] Ibid.

[8] 04/04/1890 (rec’d-05/08/1890) Jackson S. Burnett to J. B. Bostic & D. D. Suttle 70 ACRES BEAVERDAM ROAD Db. 70/405. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[9] “NORTH ASHEVILLE PARK -ANOTHER PROMISING SUBURB TO THE CITY”, *Asheville Citizen-Times*, April 4, 1890, p. 1.

[10] Ibid.

- [11] "NORTH ASHEVILLE PARK -ANOTHER PROMISING SUBURB TO THE CITY", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, April 4, 1890, p. 1.
- [12] "Another Big Sale", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, June 7, 1890, p. 6.
- [13] 07/03/1891 J. B. Bostic, C. S. Cooper, W. M. Cooper and J. E. Reed -TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN- PLAT WEST LAUREL PARK AVENUES BEAVER DAM RD Db. 78,305.; AND 07/08/1891 J. B. Bostic an Others -PLAT BEAVERDAM ROAD Db. 8/19. - Buncombe County Register of Deeds.
- [14] 12/26/1885 W. R. & Sarah Young to J. H. Barnard 59 ACRES BEAVERDAM ROAD Db. 52/370.- Buncombe County Register of Deeds.
- [15] 05/23/1888 M. J. & A. M. Fagg to C. S. Cooper 35 ACRES BEAVERDAM ROAD, Db. 62/390. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds; See also: *Asheville Citizen-Times*, June 14, 1888, p. 1
- [16] 05/04/1891 (rec'd-05/14/1890) J. B. & B. P. Bostic, D. D. & M. J. Suttle - $\frac{1}{4}$  Interest in 119 ACRES NEAR ASHEVILLE Db. 70/417. – Buncombe County Register of Deeds.
- [17] 03/26/1890 (rec'd-04/04/1891) J. B. & B. P. Bostic, D. D. & M. J. Suttle, B. P. & Fannie Blanton, and M. J. Green to W. M. Cooper ADJ DR PUREFOY 2 TRTS 28 ACRES Db. 77/134 – Buncombe County Register of Deeds.; See also: "THE COOPER-BOSTIC TRADE", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, March 16, 189, p. 3.
- [18] "THE EAST STREET RAILWAY", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, May 22, 1891, p. 4.
- [19] Ibid.
- [20] *Asheville Democrat*, July 16, 1891, p. 8.
- [21] *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 3, 1891, p. 4.
- [22] 08/01/1892 H. C. Long to Otis A. Miller PARK AVENUE Db. 82 / 256.- Buncombe County Register of Deeds.
- [23] 08/06/1892 J. B. Bostic and et. al. to Otis A. Miller PARK AVENUE Db. 83/83; 09/15/1892 J. B. Bostic and et. al. to Otis A. Miller RAMOTH-LAUREL AVENUE Db. 83/208; 09/15/1892 J. B. Bostic and et. al. to Otis A. Miller MOUNTAIN AVENUE Db. 83/211;-SD & LA Hall to Otis A. Miller MOUNTAIN AVENUE AND BLANTON STREET Db. 84/15. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.
- [24] "A LARGE LAND SALE- Otis Miller Purchases Lookout Mountain Property", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 30, 1892, p. 1.

[25] "CAVALIER CASTLE- Otis Miller's New Building On Lookout Mountain", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, August 12, 1892, p. 4.

[26] *Asheville Citizen-Times*, August 30, 1892, p. 4.

[27] 10/13/1894 Otis A. Miller, J. G. Merrimon, TR to O. D. Revell PARK AVENUE Db. 91/5. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.; see also: "NOTICE", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, August 24, 1894, p. 2.

[28] "SELECT board at Bonnicastle on Lookout Mountain at the end of car line. Three rooms will be vacated tomorrow. Large rooms. Grand views. APPLY at Otis A. Miller. No. 11 Patton Ave.", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, August 20, 1895, p. 4.

[29] "THE ORDER", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, November 12, 1892, p. 4.

[30] "REORGANIZED- I Is Now The Asheville Street Railroad Company", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, November 16, 1893, p. 4.

[31] J. E. RANKIN, RECEIVER", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, January 23, 1895, p. 4.

[32] "LOOKOUT PARK- An Attractive Spot Where The Visitor May Wile Aways Hours Pleasantly", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, May 16, 1896, p. 1.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] "WITH MUSIC AND SPEECHMAKING- LOOKOUT PARK FORMALLY OPENED TO THE PUBLIC", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, May 29, 1896, p. 4.

[36] Description from: Image B317-8 -Photo from "July 4th or Labor Day" shows three men preparing for bicycle races at "Lookout Park on Chatham Rd" (in Woolsey). Identified: S.I. (Samuel Isaac, Jr.?) Bean (far right) and Mr. H. Hearn (2nd from left). Photo by A.B. Pope of Asheville. Probably actually Overlook Park on Sunset Mountain. Estimated date 1900s-Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina. Note: *These photos were more likely c. 1896-1898.-Dale Wayne Slusser.*

[37] "AT LOOKOUT PARK -LAST ACENSION", *Asheville Times*, June 10, 1900, p. 5.

[38] The Shattered Dream- A Southern Bride at the Turn of the Century- The Day Book of Margaret Sloan, by Harold Woodell. (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1991), p. 54.

[39] *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 20, 1900, p. 5.

[40] "VAUDEVILLE AT THE PARK", *Asheville Times*, July 22, 1900, p. 3.

[41] "HOME TALENT IN A WARM MINSTREL SHOW", *Asheville Times*, February 28, 1900, p. 3.

[42] "INVITED TO EUROPE", *Charlotte Observer*, Charlotte, NC, October 22, 1908, p. 8.; See also: "MR. MULLER HERE- Well Known Vaudeville Performer In Asheville After Long Absence", *Asheville Times*, December 26, 1913, p. 10.

[43] "NOTICE", *The Asheville Weekly Citizen*, May 13, 1898 ·Page 3.

[44] 09/15/1898 Otis A. Miller to John Bostic, B. Blanton, and S. J. Green RELEASE Db. 108/190. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[45] 07/20/1901 J. B. & Betty P. Bostic to Ellen P. Miller LOT 1 BLK 8 BK 78 P 305 Db. 116/449. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[46] *Asheville Weekly Citizen*, December 6, 1898, p. .

[47] "AN OBSERVATORY- 75 Foot Tower To Go On Top of Lookout Mountain", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, January 9, 1899, p. 1.

[48] "CAVALIER COTTAGE for rent furnished. On top of Lookout Mountain- five rooms, stable, horse and buggy if desired. No finer summer seat near Asheville. Rent low. Otis A. Miller, 37 South Main.", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, June 8, 1899, p. 4.

[49] 05/07/1926 Otis A. & Ellen P. Miller to O. D. Revell NORTH MARGIN MOUNTAIN AVE RAYMOTH BK 78 P 305 Db. 348/47. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[50] In 1931, Otis A. Miller was granted a building permit to make "improvements", to cost \$2,000. -"BUILDING PERMITS", *Asheville Times*, December 4, 1931, p. 31.

[51] *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 21, 1899, p.4.

[52] "AN OBSERVATORY- 75 Foot Tower To Go On Top of Lookout Mountain", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, January 9, 1899, p. 1.

[53] 09/25/1899 J. B. Bostic & D. D. Suttle- C. T. Rawls, TR to Wilber E Burnett & Wiley B. Burnett-Execs of Jackson S. Burnett ON BEAVERDAM ROAD Db. 110/552. - Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[54] 10/17/1902 Wilber E Burnett & Wiley B. Burnett-Execs of Jackson S. to C. T. Rawls BEAVERDAM CREEK Db. 125/510. Also: 10/17/1902 Wilber E Burnett & Wiley B. Burnett-Execs of Jackson S. to C. T. Rawls BEAVERDAM ROAD Db. 125/525. - Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[55] *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 3, 1902, p. 4.

[56] *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 6, 1902, p. 8.

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] "RAMOTH RISES UP AGAINST THE PARK OR NEGROES", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 16, 1902, p. 1.

[59] "RAYMOTH STREET CAR FRANCHISE ACCEPTED", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, August 11, 1902, p. 3.

[60] "LOTS AT SUNRISE PARK SOLD IN AUCTION", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, August 11, 1910, p. 5.

[61] *Ibid.*

[62] 03/09/1910 C. S. Cooper, Comm. to J. H. McConnell 6 ACRES NEAR LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN Db. 165/441. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[63] "McCONNELL BROTHERS- Wholesale Fruits and produce", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, September 28, 1912, p. 18.

[64] "\$100,000 WOLESale HOUSE ORGANISED HERE YESTERDAY", *Asheville Weekly Citizen*, July 12, 1906, p. 3.

[65] "Residence for J.H. McConnell- Woolsey- NC -Front, dated Feb. 1909". Image# RS0567.1- The Richard Sharp Smith Architectural Drawing Collection is owned by and housed at the Asheville Art Museum. Digital copy from -Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

[66] 1910 United States Federal Census for James H McConnell- North Carolina, Buncombe, Beaver Dam District 0003. -ancestry.com

[67] "FOR SALE", *Asheville Times*, March 14, 1913, p. 11.

[68] "FOR SALE", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, March 22, 1913, p. .9

[69] One example: "Mid-Summer Party For Sunday School", *Asheville Times*, July 29, 1921, p. 14.

[70] "James H. McConnell", *Asheville Times*, August 11, 1936, p. 12.

[71] 09/16/1931 J. H. McConnell to C N Walker, TR [D/T] 5.86 ACRES WEST AVE Db. 316/141.; See also: 10/23/1936 C. N. Walker, TR to Wachovia Bank & Trust Co. 5.86 ACRES NORTH MGN WEST AVE Db. 492/128. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[72] “Mrs. J. H. McConnell”, *Asheville Citizen-Times*, June 27, 1945, p. 2.

[73] 08/03/1956 Robert B & Margaret P McConnell to Maurice W. & Marion Ellis  
EDGEWOOD RD Db. 776/46. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[74] 12/22/1956 Maurice W. & Marion Ellis to Eugene L. Edwards et al EDGEWOOD  
RD Db. 781/364. -Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

[75] 10/16/1985 Bonnie H. Edwards to Asheville Monthly Meeting– Religious Society  
of Friends [W/DEED ] EDGEWOOD RD ASHEVILLE TWP Db. 1407/328. -Buncombe  
County Register of Deeds.

[76] *Asheville Citizen-Times*, August 14, 1985, p. 37.

## Architectural Tidbits



### Before “The Muni” and Manna Food Bank: Pineknoll & Fanelhes

December 8, 2025



### Before “The Cloisters”: Swannanoa Lodge and the Thornton House/Cloverhill

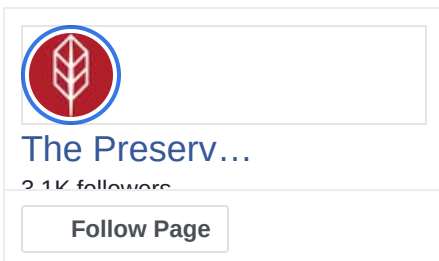
June 10, 2025



### The Governor’s Houses along the Swannanoa River—and elsewhere!

April 8, 2025

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