THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC ACCESS WITHIN
BALTIMORE’S CARROLL PARK: 1870-1954

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BALTIMORE’S CARROLL PARK: 1870-1954

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Abstract

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THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC ACCESS WITHIN BALTIMORE’S CARROLL PARK: 1870-1954 (96 pp.)

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In order to understand the present patterns of use seen in urban green spaces, it is often important to look at the history of the areas being studied. For example, people tend to shy away from parks with a history of racial violence or segregation even after the problem no longer exists. Baltimore’s Carroll Park provides an excellent example of an urban green space with a long history of different policies regarding who could be granted access to the park facilities. From its beginnings as a wealthy estate owned by the Carroll Family, the land being studied here passed into the hands of the private, German-run West Baltimore Schuetzen Association, and later into the possession of the City of Baltimore as what we now know as Carroll Park. Though designed with the Olmsted vision of green space access for all, many facilities in Carroll Park remained segregated until the 1950’s. Through detailing the history of the German and Segregation eras of Carroll Park, this thesis will help to contribute to the study of how Baltimore’s current patterns of park access and use came to be.

Approved:

Geoffrey L. Buckley

Associate Professor of Geography
Acknowledgments

There are many people and organizations that I need to thank for their contribution to this research. First and foremost, I want to thank Dr. Boone and Dr. Buckley for bringing me into the Ohio University Department of Geography and providing excellent guidance throughout this entire process. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Baltimore Ecosystem Study and Morgan Grove of the U.S. Forest Service for the funding I have received during my two years at Ohio University. I hope that my research can help them make Baltimore a greener city.

In regards to my analysis on Schuetzen Parks, I would like to thank Dr. Anderson for his expertise and advice on how to go about researching this little-written about field of study. My gratitude also goes out to Chris Jens of the Davenport Schuetzenverein for sharing his extensive knowledge of his organization’s past. The hospitality I received at Michigan’s Deutsch-Amerikanischer Schuetzen-Verein was truly heartwarming. To name only a few, I thank Oscar and Rosa Pscheidl, Michelle Blizack, and John C. Lamping for their generous assistance in every aspect of this research.

I also wish to thank Marvin Morton and Willie J. Smith of the Carroll Park Municipal Golf Course for giving me a personal tour of the both the golf course grounds and the Gwynns Falls Trail. Finally, I wish to thank the Department of Geography at the State University of New York at Geneseo for awakening my interest in the field of geography, as well as my family and friends who stuck by me during all seven years of my college career thus far. Without their support, I could not be here now.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to Carroll Park

Located on 170 acres, southwest of Baltimore’s Inner Harbor area (see figures 1.1 and 1.2), Carroll Park is the third oldest public park in the city, with roots that date back to 1890 (Bowditch, 2004). Both the initial plan for the eastern 72 acres, as set forth by the Baltimore Park Commission in 1890, and the revisions made by the landscape architecture firm, Olmsted Brothers, in the first two decades of the 20th century, attempted to create a park that embraced the values of the mid-19th century Picturesque movement, as well as the emerging urban playgrounds movement. Tree-lined pathways lead down a terraced hillside from the historic Mount Clare Mansion, eventually taking on the familiar curvilinear patterns through meadows and wooded groves we have come to associate with Olmsted designs. On the periphery, one would have found ball fields, a wading pool, a gymnasium, and a field house (City of Baltimore, 2001). Theoretically, Carroll Park became a center for both passive and active recreation for all people of Baltimore.

In reality, the land that became Carroll Park provides us with an excellent opportunity to study unequal urban park access, based on ethnicity and nationality, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. An obvious example of unequal access can be traced to 1923, when Parks and Recreation Director, Charles Hook, created the Carroll Park municipal golf course on 102 vacant acres of the park west of Monroe Street. Like the other courses in the city, Carroll Park remained “White-only” until 1934, when the Board of Park Commissioners allowed its desegregation. Two years later, the commission
granted exclusive usage rights to African Americans, barring whites from playing the course. All other municipal courses remained white-only, however, causing disputes over the fact that the facilities at Carroll Park were not equal to those enjoyed by whites at the other locations. Full racial integration of all Baltimore golf courses did not occur until 1951 (Gibson, 2004).

Half a century earlier, another kind of ethnic segregation was occurring on the same land. From 1870 until the sale of the land to the Park Commission in 1890, the Carroll family leased the Mount Clare Mansion and fifteen surrounding acres to the West Baltimore Schuetzen Association. Schuetzen Associations existed nearly everywhere that large numbers of German immigrants settled, both in the U.S. and elsewhere. Typically, such clubs created parks as places for those of German ethnicity to temporarily escape American life and enjoy their native culture. Rifle target practice proved to be the primary activity at these parks, though the West Baltimore Schuetzen Park also included a drinking hall, music pavilion, and bowling alley, with annual festivals that could attract as many as 20,000 people to the grounds (City of Baltimore, 2001). While Schuetzen Parks around the nation tended to open their doors to all people on many occasions, membership in the organizations and unrestricted access to the parks tended to be limited to only those who could prove their German heritage.
Figure 1.1 The location of Carroll Park today, in relation to other urban green spaces (Korth, 2005).

Figure 1.2 A Satellite View of Carroll Park and surroundings today. Courtesy of Google Earth.
1.2 Purpose of Research

The primary goal of this thesis is to examine the ways in which access to the land currently occupied by Baltimore’s Carroll Park been has influenced by issues of race and ethnicity. It is hoped that this project will contribute to the larger Baltimore Ecosystem Study, which, in the organization’s own words, “brings together researchers from the biological, physical, and social sciences to collect new data and synthesize existing information on how both the ecological and engineered systems of Baltimore work.” (http://www.beslter.org/, 2005).

This contribution to the Baltimore Ecosystem Study can be divided into two parts. First, by studying issues of ethnic and racial segregation of the past, planners can better understand the patterns of park use today. The findings of Wolch et al. (2005) indicate that America’s urban parks are still coming to terms with a past marked by segregation and racial violence. Reluctance to enter a park due to issues of race and ethnicity can have deep historical roots.

Second, as indicated in the 2001 Master Plan for Carroll Park, efforts to restore urban parks run into the problem of deciding what pieces of the past to preserve. In the case of Carroll Park, the time periods in question include that of the working Carroll Plantation (1732-1817), the period of industrialization (1818-1860), the Civil War Era (1861-1869), the Schuetzen Period (1870-1889), the Olmsted Era (1890-1926), and the Modern Era (1927-Present Day). While not the primary purpose of this thesis, it is hoped that the historical information presented here will assist city planners in their restoration efforts both in Carroll Park and Baltimore as a whole.
1.3 An Overview of the Carroll Family Land Prior to 1870

The first development of the land that would become Carroll Park began in July of 1732, when Dr. Charles Carroll, an Irish immigrant living in Annapolis, purchased 2,368 acres along Gwynns Falls (NSCDA, 2003). Dr. Carroll chose this location, which he called “Georgia,” for three reasons. First, the confluence of the Gwynns Falls and Middle Branch of the Patapsco River created a deep-water port, which could be used both for the anchoring of merchant vessels and the creation of a shipyard. Second, the land surrounding Gwynns Falls contained valuable deposits of iron ore. For this reason, Dr. Carroll became a founder of the Baltimore Iron Works Company, to which he immediately sold the 1,568 acres of “Georgia” lying west of Gwynns Falls (Trostel, 1981). Finally, the remaining 800 acres of land, situated east of Gwynns Falls, proved to be quite fertile. Here, Dr. Carroll established the “Georgia Plantation,” which provided food for the workers at the Baltimore Iron Works (See Figure 1.3).

Although there is incomplete archaeological evidence and historical documentation on the role and precise number of slaves working on the Carroll family land, it is believed that a large number of African Americans lived on the property throughout the plantation era. In 1742, financial records of the Baltimore Iron Works contained an order for “70 pair of Negro shoes,” as well as a reference to “more that 200 Negroes” in one shareholding advertisement (City of Baltimore, 2001). In addition, it is known that Margaret Tilghman Carroll managed a staff of 38 house servants in the Mount Clare Mansion during the latter 1700s (NSCDA, Undated).
Dr. Carroll died in 1755, leaving the Georgia estate to his son, Charles Carroll, Barrister. Best known for his role in the creation of the State of Maryland in 1776, the son of Dr. Carroll chose to include the term “Barrister” in his name, both in order to distinguish himself from the other Charles Carrolls living in Baltimore during the time period, and due to his law school experience in England during the early 1750s (Cockey, 1992). While “Georgia” remained the official name of the plantation well into the 19th century, the Barrister became the first to refer to the land as “Mount Clare,” after his sister and grandmother; Mary Clare Maccubbin and Clare Dunn Carroll (Trostel, 1981). Construction of the Mount Clare Mansion, the first permanent structure on the Georgia Plantation, was completed in 1760. The structure is still standing today.
The deaths of the Barrister in 1783, and of his wife, Margaret Tilghman Carroll in 1817, ended the direct line of Carroll descendents on the Mount Clare property. According to the Barrister’s will, however, his nephews, Nicholas and James Maccubin would inherit Mount Clare after Margaret’s death provided they assumed the “surname of Carroll only, together with the coat-of-arms and Armorial bearings of the family of Carroll at all times…” (Carroll, 1781, 1). Thus, it proved to be James Maccubin Carroll who took over the Mount Clare Plantation in 1817.

During his ownership of the property, from 1817 until his death in 1832, James Maccubin Carroll transformed Mount Clare from a functioning plantation into a far more industrial landscape. Sensing the possibility of immense profits to be made from the clay pits scattered about the property, James Carroll began leasing tracts of land to the west and southwest of the mansion to brick manufacturers (City of Baltimore, 2001). By 1830, he had also leased ten acres of land on the northern side of Mount Clare to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, leading to the creation of the first railroad bridge (The Carrollton Viaduct) and station (Mount Clare Station) in the country (Trostel, 1981).

Although the Carrolls did lease other parts of the Mount Clare plantation to farming families, the plot of land originally purchased by Dr. Carroll in 1732 had become, overall, a center for industry by the time James Carroll, Jr. inherited the property in 1832. In 1850, surrounded by noises from the railroad lines and brick factories, and faced with row-house encroachment from the east, James, Jr. found life at the Mount Clare Mansion to be unbearable (Rice, 2002). Thus, the last full-time resident of the estate vacated the mansion and moved himself to a wealthy neighborhood on Baltimore’s West Monument Street by the end of 1851 (Trostel, 1981).
The land uses of the Mount Clare Estate following James Carroll, Jr’s move protected it from being completely overrun by the expansion of industry and residential neighborhoods. In 1854, George Sugden leased the mansion at a rate of $25 per month for use as a hotel (Trostel, 1981). This hotel remained in operation until 1869. The Civil War also played a role in preserving the green space that remained to the west of the mansion. The importance of the Mount Clare Railroad Depot and the strategic hill on which the estate was situated made the Carroll Family land an ideal place for a defensive encampment (Rice, 2002). Camp Carroll, renamed Camp Chesebrough in 1863, also served as a cavalry training ground and hosted regiments from Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut (Trostel, 1981). As Figure 1.4 shows, the Mount Clare Mansion and areas to the north remained rural in character throughout the 1860s. A grove of trees surrounding the Sugden’s hotel managed to keep it visually appealing despite its Civil War-era surroundings. After the end of the war and the removal of the military camp, the Mount Clare Mansion and fifteen surrounding acres was leased for use by the West Baltimore Schuetzen Association.
Figure 1.4 Camp Carroll, 1862. This image is drawn from a perspective on the northwest side of the Carroll Estate, facing east. The Mount Clare mansion can be seen in the upper right, with the expanding City of Baltimore behind it. Image taken from Hayden, 2004.

1.4 The Contents of this Thesis

Before an analysis of the first park to exist on the Carroll Family land can be conducted, it is important to understand the progress and motivations of the different urban parks movements that swept across the nation during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Chapter 2 will provide an overview of these topics, and introduce Frederick Law Olmsted and his sons, who would become influential in the eventual design of Baltimore’s urban parks system. With the 19th century motivations for green space creation established, Chapter 3 focuses on the establishment and practices within German Schuetzen Parks across the nation. The West Baltimore Schuetzen Association, which used Carroll Park as its headquarters during the 1870s and ‘80s, is given special attention,
though this chapter’s primary purpose is detailing a national movement that has received very little attention in American literature.

Chapter 4 brings this research into the 20th century by detailing the segregation crises in Carroll Park from the 1930s through the 1950s. Though the history of the park as a whole during the first half of the 20th century is documented, the primary focus of this chapter is the battle over segregation in the Carroll Park Municipal Golf Course, as well as the other three public courses that existed in Baltimore during this time period. Finally, in the concluding chapter, the state of Carroll Park today is described in terms of accessibility and facilities offered. Modern day issues of park access and use along racial lines is also discussed on a national scale, along with avenues for further research in this field.
Chapter 2: A Literature Review of the Urban Parks Movements

2.1 Early Urban Expansion

The urban and industrial expansion that lead James Carroll Jr. to abandon Mount Clare in 1851 was not confined to Baltimore. As figure 2.1 shows, the populations of almost every American city exploded during the first half of the 19th century. Between 1800 and 1850, the population of Philadelphia grew by nearly three fold. Over the same period, Boston grew by over five times, Baltimore by over six, and New York City by a stunning 8.5 times. When one factors in the growth of nearby urban areas not yet annexed into the larger city, the figures are even larger.

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Table 2.1 The top 12 American cities, ranked by population, in 1800 and 1850. It should be noted that Kensington, Northern Liberties, and Southwark are all a part of modern-day Philadelphia. Brooklyn is a part of modern-day New York City. Source: United States Bureau of the Census, 1998.

As Barlow (1972) and Rosen (1997) point out, complaints heard from urban residents during the mid-1800s mirrored those one might hear today: the presence of crowded slums, noise pollution, and constant gang warfare. Cities of the early 1800s possessed few or no specialized districts. Thus, family homes existed side by side with
slaughterhouses, bone-boiling plants, or even open pits of raw sewage. American leaders at the time, such as Thomas Jefferson, saw urban expansion as a necessary evil that, while decreasing the quality of life for Americans living in these areas, also ensured that the United States could compete on the geopolitical scale with an industrializing Europe. Those living in the middle of these new urban expanses found themselves unable to easily escape their environment and enter a more rural setting. As one German immigrant remarked in an 1849 letter, “The city of New Jork [sic] is the largest in America, it is so big you can’t walk around it in one day” (Klinger, 1849, 537).

2.2 Frederick Law Olmsted and the First Urban Parks

Platt et al. (1994) outline the extent of urban green spaces in America prior to the 1850’s. With some exceptions, such as New York’s Battery Park, these consisted of tiny village commons or squares. In colonial times, these grassy patches were reserved primarily for government or military functions, and while they were generally opened to all following the Revolution, their size rendered them grossly inadequate when it came to meeting the recreational demands of a rapidly expanding urban population.

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1822, Frederick Law Olmsted reached adulthood in the midst of this changing time. Beveridge and Rocheleau (1995), as well as Hall (1995) provide a detailed analysis of the early influences upon Olmsted’s life and the reasons for his becoming one of the most famous landscape architects in American history. Though Olmsted’s father wished for him to receive an education at Yale, a case of poison sumac nearly blinded young Frederick at the age of only fourteen, thus making higher education impossible. Instead, Olmsted spent much of his youth traveling the world. Locations visited through the 1850s included all of the northeastern United States,
the American South, “Bloody” Kansas, Western Europe, and even China. Of these travels, Beveridge and Hall both point to the two that influenced young Olmsted the most. The first proved to be very close to home. During his travels in New Hampshire with his father, Olmsted found the environment that he felt best for civilization: small, compact, but not overcrowded villages, each containing a communal pasture (or square) which could be used for social functions of any kind. Such an environment, Olmsted believed, would facilitate communication between neighbors and foster a sense of community and brotherhood amongst all people without imposing on individual privacy.

Obviously, such neighborhoods would prove impossible to implement within a large urban area where people lived in apartment buildings, rather than single homes with grassy lawns. Nevertheless, as Melosi (2000), Spirn (1996), Platt (1994), and Tuason (1997) all argue, Romantic Era idealists of the mid-19th century believed that natural environments and the outdoors were not only essential to a person’s physical and mental health, but also that equal exposure to such environments helped the moral fabric of society as whole. The Rural Cemeteries Movement, lead by figures such as Andrew Jackson Downing and Dr. Jacob Bigelow, created large, beautiful park-like environments well beyond the urban fringe as early as the 1830s. Unlike most cemeteries today, these landscapes were designed for both the living and deceased, allowing visitors to both visit their departed loved ones and feel connected to nature at the same time (Bender, 1996). These rural creations, however, still did not address the issue of providing green space to the urban poor who lacked the ability to travel such distances.

The second of Olmsted’s influential travels proved to be his 1850 touring of Western Europe. At Liverpool’s Birkenhead Park, designed by Sir Joseph Paxton in
1844, Frederick found what seemed to be the answer to America’s urban problems. Here, the English pastoral landscape had seemingly been transplanted into a major center of population, complete with gently sloping meadows, ponds, curvilinear pathways, and groves of trees. Despite the more rigid class structure seen in Europe, as opposed to America, this park granted equal access to all those living in Liverpool (Hall, 1995). While touring the grounds of Birkenhead Park, Olmsted remarked to his companions that such designs were needed badly in the United States, and that upon returning, he hoped to fight to see them built (Beveridge, 1995). In 1852, these sentiments also appeared in Olmsted’s publication; *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* (Sweeting, 1999).

Armed with only moderate landscaping experience from his various positions in farm management, Frederick Law Olmsted joined with Calvert Vaux, former partner of the late Andrew Jackson Downing, in entering a design competition for a $250,000 grant to construct New York’s Central Park (Germic, 2001). As Blackmar (1998) and Rogers (1987) describe, Olmsted and Vaux drafted the winning design, known as the “Greensward Plan.” Though the final product (see figure 2.2) did not perfectly match the plan, the two architects successfully molded a barren landscape filled with swamps, boulder fields, and squatter settlements into a beautiful park which appeared to have been perfectly preserved over the centuries of European settlement. Until the Manhattan skyline finally grew tall enough to be seen in the 20th century, the dense vegetation lining the park’s peripheries and the submerged transverse roads allowed visitors to temporarily forget about the city surrounding them.
Olmsted believed that creating such a landscape, in what would become the center of Manhattan, served as a means of creating equality for all citizens of the United States. Over the course of the late 19th centuries, the Olmsted Firm worked on similar projects across the nation. These public green spaces included Brooklyn’s Prospect Park, completed in 1868, Montreal’s Mount Royal Park (1876) Boston’s Back Bay Fens (1883), Detroit’s Belle Island Park (1884), and many others throughout North America. As Hall, Beveridge, and Rocheleau explain, Olmsted detested slavery and believed in the equality of all races. He believed that equal rights, however, should only be given to those men who could first be properly educated and brought into a productive role in society. As the romantic ideals of the day taught that experiencing nature improved a person’s morality and general state of mind, Frederick believed that while he had designed Central Park and other urban parks for use by all, it would be the poor and underprivileged citizens who would benefit the most from their use (Beveridge, 1995). In fact, as Olmsted himself wrote after the Civil War, all men must be given access to his parks for the good of humanity, and that arguments from society’s elite that increased use
of parks by the “less desirable” races and classes of American citizens would result in increased crime rates, had been proven statistically false (Olmsted, 1870).

2.3 The Urban Playgrounds Movement and the Olmsted Brothers

Julie Tuason (1996) reveals that Olmsted’s vision of equal access to these large urban parks was never realized. As figure 2.3 shows, the population expansion of the late 19th century rivaled that of the early 1800s. By 1900, assisted by the annexation of Brooklyn, New York City grew by over six times between 1850 and 1900. Boston and Baltimore expanded by almost four times during this period, while the population of Philadelphia exploded by over ten times.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Rank</th>
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<th>Population (1850)</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>City/State</th>
<th>Population (1900)</th>
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<td>12</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2 The growth of population centers during the late 19th century. By 1900, New York City and Philadelphia had annexed their smaller neighbors listed in figure 2.2. Source: United States Bureau of the Census, 1998.

As Olmsted predicted, it did not take long for expanding populations to completely overwhelm the parks he had designed just beyond the urban fringe. The results were predictable as well. As Tuason explains, property values around these green spaces quickly skyrocketed. This phenomenon actually proved to be part of the design
plans of Olmsted, Paxton, and other urban landscapers, as the taxes generated by land near the large urban parks helped to fund their development. As a more unfortunate result, the underprivileged classes found themselves pushed further and further away, into the same crowded, crime-ridden and disease-infested slums that Olmsted had hoped to eliminate by providing open space for all. As one German immigrant wrote home (though with some exaggeration likely) to her family in 1884, New York City’s Broadway alone “is more than 6 hours long, with about 300 side streets to the right and left and many many more streets, so you can’t go on foot much…” (Wiebusch, 1884, 595). By 1900, one downtown study of New York found that of forty eight schoolboys, few knew much about Central Park, and only three had actually visited it (Reiss, 1989).

As Tuason explain (1996) and Reiss (1989) explain, the solution to this problem originated in Boston during the 1880s and quickly spread elsewhere in the form of the Urban Playground Movement. Though only a fraction of the size and lacking the naturalistic feel of the earlier Picturesque-Era parks, these playgrounds could be spaced throughout an urban area, satisfying the recreational needs of many people. When Olmsted retired in 1895 due to senility, he left his firm to his sons, John Charles Olmsted and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. The new leaders of the Olmsted Brothers firm heartily embraced the Urban Playground Movement.

Peterson (1996) points out that while Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. spent much of his early life traveling the countryside and enjoying nature, his sons grew up in urban environments. Thus, while working to meet the recreational needs of all people, the Olmsted brothers did not agree that urban centers fostered evils in society that could only be cleansed with large, naturalistic parks. Instead, as Tippens (2000) shows in a case
study of Chicago, the Olmsted Brothers firm designed inner city parks with functionality in mind. These small parks contained playgrounds or central monuments, and were spaced out across the city in an attempt to grant access to all. As Tehranian (1995) explains, those smaller inner-city parks containing large monuments actually related more to the City Beautiful Movement which, while promoting park access to all, did so in order to instill visitors with a sense of patriotism, thus making them more loyal and productive to society. Only in the suburban environments or beyond did the Olmsted brothers design larger parks in accordance with their father’s vision.

2.4 The Olmsted Brothers and Baltimore

By the turn of the 20th century, Baltimore suffered from the same problems of urban expansion seen in other American cities. Only two significant urban parks existed within Baltimore by the year 1900. The first, and by far the largest, was Druid Hill Park, a massive 648-acre park established on the northern outskirts of the city in 1860. This naturalistic Olmsted-style landscape was complemented by the much smaller Patterson Park east of Baltimore’s inner harbor, acquired piece-by-piece from the heirs of William Patterson between 1835 and 1853 (Korth, 2005; Bowditch, 2004).

Though Carroll and Clifton Parks had been established during the early 1890s to provide green space access to other areas of the city, development upon these newly acquired lands proved slow. As outlined in one 1897 Baltimore News editorial, the policies of Mayor Alcaeus Hooper (1895-1897) caused this delay in development, as the mayor voiced his opinion that each city should have one great park, and devote all available resources to improving that park to perfection. In Baltimore, this meant that Druid Hill Park would be the one brought to “perfection.” As the editorial points out,
however, even a stunningly beautiful green space at Druid Hill would lay far too distant from many neighborhoods to give equal park access to all (W.A.E. 1897).

According to Olson (1980) and Korth (2005), the condition of Baltimore’s public park system began to improve after Mayor Hooper left office. With civic beautification and open space development in mind, wealthy citizens of Baltimore founded The Municipal Art Society in 1899. In 1902, the Society contacted and then hired Olmsted Brothers to develop a comprehensive plan for the improvement of Baltimore’s park system. After a thorough examination of the city and its surroundings, Olmsted Brothers agreed with those who felt that a drastic expansion of parkland was necessary. While Druid Hill and Clifton Parks contained substantial acreage, they were out of reach for residents, living in the center or southern portions of Baltimore, who lacked transportation.

The firm’s 1904 *Report Upon the Development of Public Grounds for Greater Baltimore* offered an ambitious, and still uncompleted plan for additional green space. Resembling Boston’s Emerald Necklace, constructed by Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. during the 1870s and 1880s, this plan called for the linking of current parks through the creation of green corridors stretching around the city (See Figure 2.4). For the purposes of both aesthetic beauty, and to keep the local watersheds somewhat free of pollution, these proposed greenways followed the major streambeds of Baltimore: Gwynns Falls in the west, Jones Falls through the city center, and Herring Run to the east. In addition, Olmsted Brothers recommended that Patterson Park be expanded and also added several smaller inner city parks for those truly unable to reach any of the peripheral greenways.
Figure 2.2 The Olmsted Plan for Baltimore, 1903. Existing parks at the time are shaded in red, with the major green spaces labeled. Proposed parkland is shaded in yellow. Source: Olmsted Brothers, 1904.

Though the 1904 report barely mentioned Carroll Park, except to explain its proximity to the proposed parkland corridor following the Gwynns Falls, the 2001 Master Plan for Carroll Park explains that Olmsted Brothers believed that the former Carroll family land should be transformed into an area for active recreation, including ball fields, a wading pool, playgrounds, and plenty of open grassland for festivals. The 20th century development of Carroll Park will be the focus of chapter four. Before that discussion, however, it is necessary to return to the 1870s. As urban expansion created more and more distance between residents and Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. ’s large picturesque parks, private ethnic organizations began creating their own parklands. As the next
chapter will describe, many of these organizations existed with the primary goal of establishing special zones in which members of a singular nationality could gather and temporarily socialize in their native language without the scorn of “native” Americans. Such was the case of the West Baltimore Schutzen Association, established on the Carroll Family land in 1871.
Chapter 3: The Schuetzen Period

3.1 Introduction

The paucity of historical documentation on Baltimore’s three Schuetzen Parks complicates reconstruction of the practices of the West Baltimore Schuetzen Association, which was headquartered on the Carroll Family Land from 1870-1889. Neither the local nor national centers for German-American history possess official records or publications of the different Baltimore Schuetzenvereins while they were in existence. The reason for this, as outlined by archives specialist Gregory Mobley, at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, may have been the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904, which destroyed the records of the Germania Turnverein (to be discussed later) and associated organizations.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. First, I provide a brief literature review on German-American organizations in general, exploring why and when they formed. Second, given the lack of detailed information relating to the Baltimore Schuetzenverein, I offer a general overview of Schuetzen associations around the country. Using archival and interview data, I focus on the circumstances that contributed to their establishment and the rules that governed use of their parklands. The focus will be both the reason for their founding and what requirements existed for use of their parklands. Finally, drawing upon examples from other parts of the nation, as well as existing newspaper articles, land deeds, and lithographs, I piece together what is known about the West Baltimore Schuetzen Association.
3.2 A Brief Literature Review of the Origins of German-American Organizations

Aside from publications produced by the organizations themselves, virtually no English language documents deal specifically with Schuetzen organizations. As a result, one must piece together their histories by examining sections of works devoted to related topics, such as histories of certain cities, sports, or German immigration in general. Of these, the history of German immigration proves to be the best place to start.

According to Rippley (1976) and Moltman (1985), reasons for German emigration from Europe have been as diverse as almost any other ethnic group. Dating as far back as the Jamestown Settlement of 1607, Germans left their homeland in hopes of financial gain, to escape the many wars fought on German soil, and to escape religious persecution. The Thirty Years War (1618-1648) and Seven Years War (1756-1763) provide two examples of this. Writing towards the tail end of heavy German immigration to America, Faust (1909) points to the ports of Baltimore and New York as the primary entry points of these new arrivals. By 1790, a full one third of Baltimore’s population possessed German roots. By the 1850’s, these first generation Germans made up a full one fifth of the city’s population, or over 33,000 people, not including second-generation children. Gems (1997), Adelman (1986), and Reiss (1989) give statistics for other cities around the nation. By 1850, the German accounted for one third of the population of Louisville, Kentucky. In Chicago, a city of 30,000 in 1850, over 5,000 of its citizens lived in Germany at some point in their lives. By 1870, New York contained over 130,000 German immigrants, or approximately fifteen percent of its total population.
Rippley (1976) explains why, despite extensive immigration from Germany in the 18th and early 19th centuries, very few social groups formed within this ethnic population. The reason for this can be traced to Germany’s deeply divided political structure. Coming from any number of German city-states in Europe, these immigrants possessed little in common outside of their language. Moltmann (1985) traces the beginning of German-American “clubs” back to the 1850s. Following the failed political revolutions across the German states during the late 1840s, the United States became a destination for educated, political refugees from Europe (the 48ers). These educated immigrants believed in a united German people and began establishing associations to help their fellow Germans pay for their voyage and initial living costs in America, no matter which region they came from. Soon, these associations expanded and created social clubs.

Adelman (1986) points to the Turnvereins, or gymnastic clubs, as the first German social clubs to be established on American soil. Emerging first in Cincinnati and New York in 1848, they expanded to over 150 cooperating organizations across the country by the end of the 1850s. The successes of the German-American Turners soon lead to the establishment of other social organizations for immigrant families.

While the Turners generally constructed indoor gymnasiums, which could exist almost anywhere, the needs of other sporting organizations required open green space. As Reiss (1989) explains, two serious problems confronted urban sports enthusiasts during the latter half of the 19th century. First, as discussed earlier, explosive urban expansion left the residents of many neighborhoods completely unable to reach the large, picturesque parks in their cities. Second, many urban areas, such as New York and Jersey
City, possessed stringent laws restricting what activities could be performed in public space. Even if an open green space was available, certain activities might still have been prohibited.

With the Urban Playgrounds Movement still decades away, Reiss goes on to explain that this need for unrestricted use of parkland lead to the creation of private green spaces for sporting organizations during the 1860’s and 70’s. Adams (1993) points out that ethnic groups owned many of these private recreational areas. Germans, like other ethnicities, wanted to be seen as productive members of American society. At the same time, they wished to maintain certain areas where they could occasionally socialize with people of their own heritage and speak their native language. Among these green spaces were Schuetzen Parks, areas for use by German marksman clubs (or Schuetzenverein), which had been popular in Europe for centuries.

3.3 A General Discussion of American Schuetzenverein

Though specific dates vary from province to province, the origins of the Schuetzenverein in Germany can be traced back to the 16th and 17th centuries. Sponsored by the local rulers of the many German states, these early marksman organizations effectively developed the archery skills of the German peasantry. In times of war, the German nobility hoped that the employment of ranged weaponry would help the commoners defend their territories more effectively against heavily armed horsemen (O. & R. Pscheidl, 2005).

As time progressed, archery gave way to the use of firearms, and the Schuetzen organizations developed some universal customs. The common legend behind the Schuetzenverein tends to involve a 15th century incident in which a nearby archer killed
an eagle attacking a young child, and in doing so, found himself proclaimed a hero and
king of the village (Spiess, 1967). To this day, in addition to more traditional marksman
contests, Schuetzenverein recreate this story by holding an annual (generally)
Schuetzenfest. At this celebration, members take turns firing bullets at a wooden or
plastic eagle, which is held together by dowel rods (see figure 3.1). The rods holding the
left and right wings are shot off first, followed by the head and then the legs. The shooter
who cuts off each body part receives a title: the left and/or right wingman for the wings,
and crown prince for the shot that causes the head to fall from the body. The marksman
who finally damages the legs enough to tip the body over wins the contest and becomes
king (a significant leadership role) of the Schuetzenverein for the next year (Lamping,
2005).

Figure 3.1 A partially restored wooden eagle used in one of the Schuetzenfests described above. Photo taken by author, courtesy of the Deutsch-Amerikanischer Schuetzenverein in Auburn Hills, Michigan. The plaque to the right denotes the current king of that organization: John Lamping.
Davenport

When Schuetzen organizations formed in the United States, the motivations for their creation sometimes mirrored those of Germany’s feudal period. The Davenport (Iowa) Schuetzengesellschaft, renamed the Davenport Schuetzenverein during the 20th century, provides one example of this. Though a similar, yet short-lived shooting association did exist in the city during the 1850’s, the Schuetzengesellschaft celebrates August 11, 1862 as the date of its creation (Jens, 2006a). This date roughly coincided with the Dakota Uprising in Minnesota that same month. Angered by broken treaties and false promises made by the U.S. Government, and taking advantage of the fact that most of the region’s young white men had gone to fight the Confederacy, the Dakota Indiana (a Sioux tribe) launched an offensive into the settled parts of Minnesota on August 18, 1862 (E-Museum, 2006). Though state militia units defeated the Dakota by the end of the month, many settlers had been killed and the town of New Ulm, Minnesota, had been completely destroyed (E-Museum, 2006). Despite living more than three hundred miles from the battles being fought in the north, citizens of the still small and frontier town of Davenport, Iowa, realized that a similar incident could quite possibly occur closer to home. Thus, the need to train everyday citizens in the use of firearms became apparent, should they need to defend themselves in the future (Jens, 2006a).

With this goal in mind, the German families in charge of Davenport’s Schuetzengesellschaft generally opened their club and facilities to anyone who wished to

* Both the terms Schuetzenverein and Schuetzengesellschaft relate to German-lead shooting associations with the customs described above. Vereins existed as the smallest of local German clubs, followed by the more organized Gesellschaft. Above the regional and national level existed Besirks and Bunds – associations of clubs within a certain geographical area, with Bunds covering the largest amount of territory. The Davenport Schuetzengesellschaft, for instance, served as a part of the Oberen (Upper) Mississippi Schuetzen Bezirk (Jens, 2006b).
join. In fact, several members are purported to have said: “Anyone can shoot, even the Irish, so long as they behave themselves.” (Jens, 2005c). By 1870, the organization had acquired a twenty-acre plot of land west of the city center, which was dubbed “Schuetzen Park.” Though privately owned, the open membership policy allowed any interested resident of the city to enjoy both the natural and man-made attractions of this landscape. Besides the shooting facilities, Schuetzen Park contained a zoo, music pavilion, bowling alleys, fields for a variety of activities, and even a roller coaster by the first decade of the twentieth century (Schuetzen Park, 2006a). These features existed alongside a variety of natural terrain, including hillsides, deep ravines, caves, and old growth forests (Schuetzen Park, 2006b).

The only segregation seen in the Davenport Schuetzengesellschaft seemed to be along racial, rather than ethnic lines. As the modern-day organization’s historian, Chris Jens, explains, it is not entirely known whether African Americans were allowed to join the shooting association. It is known, however, that while the Davenport Turnverein did allow African Americans to use their gymnastic facilities, they did not allow them to become members or officially be associated with the club in any way. As the Turnverein and Schuetzengesellschaft shared many common members and policies, it is likely that the shooting association treated non-Whites in a similar fashion (Jens, 2005c). Still, even without being full members, African Americans could enjoy other activities within Schuetzen Park until a combination of Prohibition and post-World War I anti-German sentiment forced its closure in 1923. The park is now a nature preserve, and the Davenport Schuetzenverein has moved its facilities elsewhere (Schuetzen Park, 2006a).
Chicago and San Francisco

While the Davenport Schuetzengesellschaft of the mid 19th century worked to create an effective citizens’ militia, other German shooting clubs took this one step further and actually turned themselves into regimented paramilitary organizations. Such was the case of the short-lived San Francisco Schuetzenverein, established in 1859 and boasting a rifle range at Hayes Park by 1861. With its membership comprised of the leading German men of the city, the San Francisco Schuetzenverein prided itself on military discipline and frequent parades, in uniform, throughout the city. Shortly before noise and safety issues forced the San Francisco Schuetzens to relocate to Berkeley, the organization proved its usefulness by standing guard against riots resulting from the assassination of President Lincoln in 1865 (The Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco, 2006).

While the Germans of the San Francisco Schuetzenverein used their training to show their loyalty to their new homeland, and to contribute to everyday law and order, the sharpshooters of Chicago took a very different route. The labor disputes in that city following the Civil War lead many poorer ethnic groups to form paramilitary organizations with the goal of securing worker rights through force if necessary. The local Turnverein aligned with the Bohemian Sharpshooters and the Lehr und Wehr Verein (education and defense society) and eventually opened all of their facilities to socialist workers in general (Gems, 1997). These facilities included the Der Nord Chicago Schuetzenverein’s 22-acre Sharpshooters Park, or Schuetzen Park, along the Chicago River (Sharpshooters Productions, inc., 2006). These worker’s-rights organizations participated in demonstrations, as well as violent riots throughout the
39

1870’s and 1880’s. Then, on May 4, 1886, a bomb exploded, killing eight city patrolmen who were involved in a standoff with a gathering of labor rights’ activists at Haymarket Square. In the ensuing governmental backlash, five Germans were sentenced to death, and several anti-conspiracy laws were passed that increased police power and effectively destroyed the various paramilitary organizations existing in Chicago (Gems, 1997).

Despite these upheavals, the Der Nord Chicago Schuetzenverein remained in existence until the turn of the 20th century, with the Schuetzen Park as their center of activity. Unless one could pay a rental fee, however, the park remained closed to all except the members of the Sharpshooters Association. After the disbanding of the Schuetzenverein in 1900, it served as a public picnic ground until 1904, when its owners constructed the famous Riverview Amusement Park, which would stay in operation until the mid-20th century (Sharpshooters, inc. 2006).

Cincinnati and Modern Day Schuetzen Parks

In contrast to the origins of the Davenport, San Francisco, and Chicago Schuetzen organizations, other German-American rifle clubs began simply as social clubs for people of similar backgrounds to come together and enjoy themselves. The Cincinnati Schuetzenverein, founded in 1866 by Civil War veterans, provides one example of this.

As early as the 1830’s, Cincinnati was a major destination for German immigrants. By 1860, 65% of Cincinnatians considered themselves to be German Americans. At the turn of the 20th century, this figure stood at 50% or roughly 150,000 people (Bowman, 1958; Sands, 1975). Settling mainly to the north of present-day downtown Cincinnati, these families gave their settlement the name of “Over The
Rhine,” by which the area is still known today. This affectionate name came from the nature of the nearby hills that overlooked the Ohio River, which reminded many immigrants of the hills overlooking the Rhine River in western Germany (Wolff, 1987).

Thus, it was on one of these hilltops west of Cincinnati that the Cincinnati Schuetzenverein placed their park, known as the Schuetzenbuckel, or shooting knob. By 1870, when it hosted the annual competition for the National Sharpshooter’s Society, the park’s facilities included picnic areas, a playground, dancing pavilions, and a large club house, which not only contained a shooting range, but also a dining/beer hall and a bowling alley (Spiess, 1967). While members of the Schuetzen Park Company, as the Schuetzenverein renamed itself after 1868, all possessed German heritage, the park itself remained open to the public, with all of its facilities available for rent.

The success of the Schuetzenbuckel proved ephemeral, however. During the late 1860’s and early 1870’s, competing resorts opened on other hillsides that proved more accessible from the city center. By 1875, the property was no longer profitable and was leased and later sold for use as the site of a summer hotel (Spiess, 1967). In 1912, the Dieterle Family donated the Schuetzenbuckel property to the Cincinnati Park Commission. Named Saint Clare Heights, citizens and businesses in Western Cincinnati hailed the new park as a badly needed playground to be constructed in an increasingly congested area (Mabel, 1912). Today, the park remains part of the Cincinnati urban parks system with a strong athletic focus, containing baseball and football fields, but also possessing hiking trails and views of the city below (see figure 3.2).
Modern-day Schuetzen Parks in America, as well as the organizations that run them, resemble the Cincinnati model. They are being private centers for recreation, and do not possess any kind of paramilitary agendas. The Davenport Schuetzenverein, now operating out of the neighboring towns of Princeton, Iowa and Milan, Illinois, continues its long-standing policies of allowing interested parties to become members and use the club’s facilities (DSA, 2006). The New York Schuetzenverein (Est. 1857), meanwhile, gradually amended its membership policies in the 20th century to the present condition of also allowing anyone interested in German culture and firearm practice to visit and potentially become a member at its North Bergen, New Jersey headquarters (Germany in NYC, 2006).

Finally, there are the Schuetzenvereins founded after the height of German immigration in the late 19th century. The Deutsch-Amerikanischer Schuetzen-Verein (German-American Marksman Club), founded in Detroit on January 22, 1939, is one such example. Established solely for the purpose of recreation, this organization has never promoted any political agenda except for environmental conservation. Initially, the
club suffered membership difficulties during the World War II draft. Relocating to its new location in Auburn Hills, Michigan during the late 1960’s, the Deutsch-Amerikanischer Schuetzen-Verein never imposed strict limitations on who could join the club. Previously, a person needed one German grandparent in their family to qualify (Pscheidl, 2005). Today, all that is needed is an interest in German culture and marksmanship, along with a sponsorship from one of the club’s approximately one hundred members, who are generally enthusiastic to receive guests at meetings (DASV, 2006). Otherwise, a variety of festivals, including the annual Schuetzenfest, allow the general public to enjoy the club’s Schuetzen Park facilities, which include a bar, two kitchens, indoor and outdoor rifle ranges, picnic grounds, and a multipurpose field (see figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 The Deutsch-Amerikanischer Schuetzen-Verein’s park today. Photo taken by author.

3.4 The Baltimore Schuetzen Associations

As mentioned earlier, Baltimore served as a major destination for German immigrants even before its 1796 incorporation as a city, with one third of its population containing German blood as early as 1790 (Faust, 1909). As with other American cities,
however, the German settlers in Baltimore did not develop their social organizations until after the arrival of the political refugees from Europe during the mid 1800’s. In common with other areas receiving high numbers of German immigrants, one of the first social clubs formed proved to be a Turnverein, which in this case was established in, 1849 later joining the national Turnerbund in 1850 (Metzner, 1989). Such organizations played a crucial role for Germans in Baltimore during the 1850’s, serving as a sort of barrier against the hostile masses. With the exception of some aristocratic families who immigrated to the American South, most Germans in America hated slavery and looked down upon the Southern way of life. This fact created often-violent tension between the German population in Baltimore and both of the political forces vying for control of the city; the pro-slavery Democrats and the anti-foreigner Know Nothing, or American Party (Olson, 1981).

This hostility came to a significant boiling point with the fall of Fort Sumter and the start of the Civil War on April 13, 1861. During the week that followed, under the orders of Mayor George Brown, every public building in Baltimore took down the flag of the United States and instead flew only the flag of the state of Maryland. The Baltimore Turnverein, however, refused to lower the Union flag. On April 20, amidst a riot against a Massachusetts militia company passing through the city, an angry mob also attacked the Turner gym and office buildings, completely destroying both (Metzner, 1989).

On May 13, the rebellious behavior in Baltimore ended when occupation forces arrived from the 6th Massachusetts Militia, and later, from the 1st Maryland Infantry, which threatened to raze the city to the ground in the event of more rioting (Rice, 2002).
Thus, Germans found themselves spared from more violence for the duration of the war and, with their political enemies crushed, began to prosper (Olson, 1981).

Belair Avenue

It is likely that the Schuetzen organizations of Baltimore followed the Cincinnati model and existed solely as social clubs for German families. The first Schuetzenverein in Baltimore dates back to the mid 1850’s, when it operated out of a small park (the Schuetzenhof) on Belair Road (present-day Gay Street), northeast of the city center in what was then a hub of German settlement and commerce. As the facilities at the small Schuetzenhof property were limited to a shooting range, the Baltimore Schuetzen Association began looking for additional land. In 1865, the association purchased 20 additional acres along Belair Road, from George Appold, for $40,000 (Rice, 2002; See Figure 3.4). By 1867, the rifle and beer stands of the Schuetzenhof were sold off to members of the Schuetzenverein, and replaced by the facilities at the new Schuetzen Park located on the former Appold family land (Baltimore Sun, 7/13/1967). The Schuetzens also purchased the 10-acre Darley Park in Baltimore County to the north, in 1869, though very little information exists on this location other than the fact that this property allowed one of the Schuetzen Parks to exist outside of the taxes, laws, and safety regulations imposed by Baltimore City (Olson, 1981). Due to its existence beyond city authorities, and until its closure in 1906, Darley Park existed as the most rowdy of the Schuetzen green spaces with serious riots involving firearms occurring in both 1872 and 1873. (Holcomb, 2005).
Figure 3.4 The Schuetzen Park in 1876 (outlined in red), and other nearby public green spaces (shaded in blue). Belair Avenue borders the park to the northwest, while the expanse of the Baltimore Cemetery lays to the east. Map created by author, using the Johns Hopkins Atlas of 1876.

The former Appold Mansion became the Schuetzen Association’s clubhouse, which contained shooting ranges, bowling alleys, billiard rooms, a bar and dining hall, and even housing for members and their guests. Nearby German breweries kept the bar well stocked at cheap prices. Outside, a visitor would find cottages, picnic grounds, pathways winding through wooded areas, as well as dancing and band pavilions (See Figure 3.5; Houston, 1950). While membership in this organization appears to have been for German families only, the Schuetzens opened their park to all on many different occasions. At the annual May Festival, for instance, marksmen or bowlers of any ethnicity could enter into competitions for $500 prizes (Baltimore Sun, 5/20/1967). The annual Schuetzenfest in August proved even larger. Inviting the general public at a cost of 50 cents per person, these multi-day festivals involved the annual eagle-shoot, other bowling and marksman competitions, magicians and clowns for children, dancing and music events, as well as a fireworks display each night (Requardt, 1873). The festival of
1867 provided additional entertainment by exhibiting a six-foot alligator found and caught in the city’s harbor (Baltimore Sun, 8/26/1967). Such events could draw more than 60,000 people over a three day period (Rice, 2002).

Figure 3.5 The Baltimore Schuetzen Park in 1867. The view faces south from Belair Avenue, with the harbor visible in the distance. The Baltimore Cemetery would have been visible to the east and off the left hand side of this picture. Image taken from Olson, 1981.

The West Baltimore Schuetzen Association

The facilities at the Schuetzenhof, Schuetzen Park, and Darley Park all existed on the northeastern periphery of Baltimore. Those Germans living on the west side of the city found themselves significantly isolated from the celebrations of their brethren in the east. William Wilkens, rifle enthusiast and employer of many Germans at the Wilkens Hair Factory on Frederick Avenue, decided to resolve this issue by founding the West Baltimore Schuetzen Association, in cooperation with the larger Baltimore Schuetzengesellschaft. In 1870, this organization leased fifteen acres of the Mount Clare property from James Carroll, Jr., including the mansion, for use as the West Baltimore Schuetzen Park (See Figure 3.6).
By February of 1871, the City Council of Baltimore had approved a proposal by the Schuetzen Association to construct a shooting range and bowling alley in the northwest corner of the new park, provided that proper embankments existed to protect the nearby railroad lines from stray bullets (West Baltimore Target Rifle Association, 1871; Lupus & Roby, 1871). On July 31 of that same year, the West Baltimore Schuetzen Association celebrated its grand opening by hosting its first annual festival (Scharf, 1874). Though the association’s approximately 800 members were limited to first and second generation German families, this first festival, and all those that followed, hosted a delegation of city government officials as well as thousands of members of the general public. In addition to the eagle shoot, which resulted in William Foerster becoming the association’s first king, the three-day 1871 celebration included many public speeches.
and toasts, circus acts, banquets, and lantern-lit walkways which allowed visitors to enjoy themselves well into the night (Baltimore Gazette, 1871).

While the original festival drew somewhere in the vicinity of 7,000 guests, subsequent public celebrations drew closer to 20,000, in addition to the growing membership of the West Baltimore Schuetzen Association itself. Needing to expand their facilities to accommodate this rise in visitors, the Schuetzens petitioned and received permission from James Carroll, Jr. to demolish the deteriorating eastern and western wings of the Mount Clare Mansion, which had gone unused for two decades. Having transformed the central mansion itself into a bar and meeting hall, the association proceeded to construct a larger kitchen wing, drinking hall, bowling alley, and dancing pavilion on and around this newly cleared space (Trostel, 1981; City of Baltimore, 1981).

Figure 3.8 on the following page consists of a lithograph that, according to the Master Plan for Carroll Park (2001), shows a picture of the West Baltimore Schuetzen Park at its height in 1875. Rice (2002), however, states that this image displays the Schuetzenhof on Belair Avenue in 1858, due to what appears to be a brewery in the background and the mansion of the Hopkins Estate rising above the trees in the upper left corner. Such discrepancy is an example of how little information exists relating to the Schuetzen parks and associations of 19th century Baltimore.
For reasons largely undocumented, neither the West Baltimore Schuetzen Association, nor the Schuetzenverein existing on Belair Avenue managed to survive into the Twentieth Century. By 1886, the Schuetzen Park on the Carroll Family land had closed down. When the Baltimore Parks Commission acquired the land from the heirs of James Carroll III in 1890, it was forced to demolish all Schuetzen structures on the property, which were found in complete disrepair. The commission also had to deal with roaming horses stripping the property’s trees of bark (Baltimore Sun, 1895; City of Baltimore, 2001).

While the next chapter will describe how the newly acquired Carroll Park proceeded to provide green space to the citizens of Baltimore, the story of the Belair Schuetzen Park ended not long after the failure of its western counterpart. Closing during the mid 1890’s, the Belair property quickly fell to urban expansion (Houston, 1950).
Figures 3.9 and 3.10 show the locations of the two Schuetzen Parks. No trace of any park exists along that stretch of Belair Avenue.

**Figure 3.8** A view from the vicinity of Mount Clare, facing northwest: the former center of Schuetzen activity on the property. Photo taken by author.

**Figure 3.9** The Belair Schuetzen Park today: roughly the same view as seen in figure 3.5. Photo taken by author.
Chapter 4: Carroll Park and the Segregation Era

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explain the history of Carroll Park from its origins in the 1890s through the end of the segregation era in the 1950s. While the City of Baltimore allowed anyone access to most of Carroll Park since its inception, regardless of race or ethnicity, the golf course on the western section of the property proved far more complex in terms of access. Between the time of its establishment in 1923 and the “official” end of segregation in the U.S. thirty years later, the Carroll Park Municipal Golf Course progressed through periods of white-only, black-only, and various levels of integrated use. As the first golf course in Baltimore to admit African American golfers, Carroll Park became the springboard from which advocates of desegregation continuously attempted to win the same rights at all of the city’s municipal golf courses.

4.2 A Brief History of Carroll Park, 1890-1924

James Carroll III, the last descendant of Charles Carroll to own the Mount Clare Estate for any significant amount of time, died in 1887. According to his Last Will and Testament, his properties were to pass to his wife, Mary Ludlow Carroll. After Mary’s death, James’ Will instructed that the property immediately surrounding the mansion be passed to her four daughters: Aschah, Catherine, Mary, and Sallie (Carroll, 1876). Mary’s death came in 1888, two years after the Mount Clare Estate had ceased functioning as the West Baltimore Schuetzen Park. With much of the property already overtaken by clay pits and brickyards, it seemed that the further division of land among the Carroll heirs
would finally doom the last green space in the area to becoming an industrial landscape (City of Baltimore, 2001).

Operating under the ideals of the City Beautiful Movement, and realizing that western Baltimore needed a park to complement Druid Hill in the north and Patterson Park in the east, the Parks Commission paid the Carroll heirs $45,000 for the Mount Clare Mansion and 20 surrounding acres in 1890. This proved to be roughly the same land previously occupied by the Schuetzen Association (Trostel, 1981). Throughout the 1890’s, General Superintendents Charles Latrobe and Francis Walters, as well as Park Commission President Charles Glendinen, set out to acquire all former Carroll Family land between Monroe and Bayard streets. Most of these acquisitions took place in 1898. The final purchase was made in January 1901, when Mary Mylander’s plot of land at the corner of Columbia Avenue (now Washington Boulevard) and Bayard Street was acquired for $34,000 (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 15 January 1901).

Despite the fact that land was still being bought, and that the recent acquisitions were partially scarred and polluted from the former brickyards, the new additions to Carroll Park were opened to the public in 1898. Charles Seybold, a professional gardener born and educated in Germany, transferred from Patterson Park to become the first Superintendent of Carroll Park. His plans for this new public green space proved ambitious, incorporating both passive and active recreation into its development (Baltimore News, 23 July 1898).

The tenants of the City Beautiful Movement manifested themselves in Seybold’s plans. Residing within the mansion, Seybold contracted the Wyatt and Nolting architectural firm to build two small wings on the eastern and western sides of the
colonial home to both provide offices for the Park Commission, and to enhance the visual appeal of the building (Trostel, 1981). Though these additions were not completed until 1908 (see figure 4.1), Francis Walters still referred to the Mount Clare Mansion in 1899 as “one of the best examples of colonial architecture in the city, the north portico being an exquisite bit of art.” (City of Baltimore, 2001, 28).

Figure 4.1 The Mount Clare Mansion as seen today, following the 1908 additions. Picture courtesy of the Mount Clare Museum (http://www.mountclare.org/).

To the south, below the mansion and its terraced gardens (which included the first clean water pump in any city park) existed the park’s first permanent baseball diamond. Plans for tennis courts were also drawn up (Baltimore News, 23 July 1898; Bowditch, 2004). As mentioned in Chapter Two, however, city officials at this time directed the majority of park funding primarily toward Druid Hill Park, sending many other urban green spaces into disrepair. Of a total city park budget of nearly $300,000 during the 1900 fiscal year, Carroll Park received only $41,197.53 (Baltimore News, 28 June 1901). By 1903, the baseball field and its dressing rooms had reportedly deteriorated substantially, while the park itself had grown increasingly unsafe. Responding to these issues, 75 men representing 17 different sporting clubs assembled in February of that year. Supported by Baltimore-native and Princeton-educated Olympic athlete Robert Garrett, those at the rally demanded that the Park Commission repair the baseball
facilities, increase police protection, and begin construction of basketball, track, and wrestling facilities, as well as a winter skating rink (*Baltimore News*, 7 February 1903). The Olmsted plan of 1904 reinforced these demands by recommending that the Carroll Park facilities be expanded to include more ball fields, outdoor gymnasiums for both men and women, basketball courts, and even a wading pool. The Park Commission agreed with most of these recommendations, though it would take more than a decade to complete them. By 1916, however, the commission hailed Carroll Park as “the finest public or private area of its kind in Maryland.” (City of Baltimore, 2001, 38).

Figure 4.2 represents Carroll Park and its surroundings in 1914, just prior to the completion of the new facilities. To the west and southwest of Mount Clare we find parkland acquired between 1906 and 1907. Badly scarred by open brick pits, little work had been done on this area by 1914 other than the trimming of vegetation in accordance with the Olmsted Plan (City of Baltimore, 2001). The strip of land between Monroe Street and the B&O Railroad line, outlined in blue on the map, served as the site of a World War I munitions factory. This fact, combined with its isolated location between the busy street and railroad, lead the park board to declare this parcel of land as unsuitable for park purposes (*The Baltimore Sun*, 12 August 1924). As a result, both Mayor Jackson and Park Board President J. Cookman Boyd agreed to sell the 10-acre plot of land to the Chicago-based Montgomery Ward Company in 1924, for $115,000 (*The Baltimore Sun*, 5 July 1924; Board of Public Park Commissioners, 8 August 1924). This proved to be the only occasion in Carroll Park’s history in which land was sold.
As negotiations between the City of Baltimore and the Montgomery Ward Company progressed during the early 1920s, a distinct possibility arose that all Carroll Park property lying west of Monroe Street might be developed. With nearly all of the athletic needs of western Baltimore fulfilled by the recent construction of facilities east of Monroe Street, there seemed to be no need for the remaining land. In 1923, however, the Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Baltimore, Charles Hook, solved this
dilemma by announcing plans to construct a 65-acre nine-hole golf course on the undeveloped property (City of Baltimore, 2001).

While the sport had been played in Europe for centuries, the first private golf courses in the United States only opened during the 1880s. The first public courses opened a decade later. Though late in coming to America, interest in the sport of golf spread very quickly. In 1910, only two dozen courses existed nationwide, primarily in the suburbs of New York, Boston, and Chicago. By 1930, this number had grown to well over 500. When asked why they enjoyed the sport so much, urban golfers from various social classes echoed the sentiments of other urban green space advocates - they simply enjoyed being able to temporarily forget about city life while exercising in a fresh air environment (Reiss, 1989).

Baltimoreans enthusiastically embraced the new sport. In his official statement announcing the plan, Park Board President J. Cookman Boyd expressed his belief that the course would not only satisfy the needs of Baltimore’s golfing community, which had overwhelmed the facilities at Clifton Park in recent years, but would also prove to be one of the best courses in the state (The Baltimore Sun, 10 April 1923). The course, which opened nearly a year late, did not live up to Boyd’s prediction. While the hills, swamps, and ravines at Carroll Park did offer a wider variety of terrain than the municipal courses at Clifton Park and Hillsdale/Forest Park, its deficiencies were glaring. The remodeling of a mill along the Gwynns Falls into a four-story clubhouse never occurred. The tee boxes and fairways were reported to be extremely rough and unkempt, especially after damage due to heavy rains. The greens were little more than groomed patches of sand. As a result, fewer than a dozen people signed up to play opening morning. While the Park
Board promised to rectify all of these problems, these conditions persisted into the 1930s and the course became known as the worst in Baltimore (*The Baltimore Sun*, 5 July 1924; Gibson and Yoes, 2004).

Like all other golf courses in Baltimore at the time, the Carroll Park course carried a “Whites only” designation during the first decade of its existence (City of Baltimore, 2001; Gibson and Yoes, 2004). In the early 1930s, however, the Monumental Golf Club of Baltimore, an African American organization under the leadership of Edward Lewis, challenged this trend through a campaign of public protests and newspaper articles. In August of 1934, Lewis’ club scored what appeared to be a victory when the Park Board declared that African-American golfers would be allowed to begin play at Carroll Park on September 1st. The reasoning for this apparently sudden declaration, according to J.V. Kelly, acting superintendent of the city’s parks during the brief absence of George Nichols, came in two parts. First, precedent had been set in both Washington D.C. and Philadelphia, as both cities allowed African Americans to use their municipal golf courses (*The Afro-American*, Week of 25 August 1934a). Indeed, many African American golfers were forced to travel to Washington D.C. in order to enjoy their sport (*The Baltimore Sun*, 15 August 1934). Second, the landscape surrounding Carroll Park remained predominantly industrial during the early 1930s. The Park Board did not feel that an increased African American presence in the area would adversely impact the white neighborhoods of southwestern Baltimore in any significant way (*The Afro-American*, Week of 25 August 1934b).

Residents of southwestern Baltimore, however, disagreed with the stance of the Park Board. With the support of three city councilmen, intense protests raged throughout
the city at the possibility of allowing African Americans to play golf within the City of Baltimore. Despite the fact that several colored baseball teams used the facilities on the east side of Carroll Park, the protestors insisted that prior to the Park Board’s action regarding the golf course, no African Americans used Carroll Park for any reason, and certainly should not be brought into the neighborhood by any government policies. Others even accused the advocates of desegregation of being communists. A representative of Morrell Park, a community to the southwest of Carroll Park, simply stated that no African Americans were welcome. In a blunt statement, directed toward both the Park Board and Mayor Jackson, Councilman Murray warned that “regardless of party affiliation, the people of South Baltimore are in revolt – and if you let this go through, it will be resented by ballot action.” (*The Afro-American*, Week of 22 September 1934a, 1).

Though police protection did allow African American golfers to play golf at Carroll Park without incident on September 1st and 2nd of 1934, the intense protests prompted Mayor Jackson to request that the Park Board revise their desegregation measures (*Gibson and Yoes, 2004; The Baltimore Sun, 29 August 1934*). After September 2nd, Baltimore’s African American population again found themselves without a golf course to play on until the Park Board reached a new decision at the end of the month. The compromise split golf course privileges into separate days for white and colored* patrons. White golfers received exclusive use of Carroll Park’s golf facilities on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and the second and fourth Sundays of each month.

* During the time period examined here, the term “colored” carried a neutral connotation and was used by both whites and non-whites to refer to African Americans. The term frequently appeared in the *Baltimore Sun* and *Afro-American*, as well as the meeting minutes of the Park Board. By contrast, the term “Negro” was almost entirely used by whites and very rarely appeared in the *Afro-American*.
African American golfers could use the course at all other times (The Afro-American, Week of 22 September 1934a; City of Baltimore, 2001). Though not satisfied at this outcome, the Monumental Golf Club temporarily accepted this resolution and backed off of its campaigning, as its leadership believed the Park Board supported the desegregation of Baltimore’s golf courses, and could revisit the issue at a later date (The Afro-American, Week of 22 September 1934b). This assumption proved correct to a point, as two years later, in 1936, African Americans gained total control over the Carroll Park Municipal Golf Course (Gibson and Yoes, 2004).

4.4 The National Strategy for the Civil Rights Campaign

Even before the Park Board reached its first decision to give the Carroll Park Golf Course over to Baltimore’s African American population in September 1934, advocates of equal rights were expressing their dissatisfaction with the expected outcome. As one editorial argued in mid-August, allowing colored golfers unrestricted access to Carroll Park, while totally barring access from the other municipal courses, amounted to a lesser form of segregation that was so close to the previous absolute segregation that the difference “is so slight that it is hard for liberalists to see where one is much improvement over the other.” (The Afro-American, Week of 18 August 1934, 4). This plan, however, was endorsed by many at the time as part of the national “Separate but Equal” policy of devoting separate public facilities to Whites and Blacks, so long as neither group’s facilities were superior to the other’s. This official line of reasoning dated back to the Plessy v. Ferguson Supreme Court Case of 1896, involving a Louisiana law that created separate railway passenger cars for white and non-white travelers. Though the terminology of “Separate but Equal” was never used in the court’s decision, the majority
of justices upheld the Louisiana law on the basis that it did not specifically state that the non-white carriages needed to be inferior to the white carriages. The existence of separate schools for different races was used by the court as precedent to support its assertion that simply because facilities were segregated did not necessarily mean that one group was being treated poorly compared to any another (International Information Programs, 2006).

Instead of attacking the court’s argument directly, leaders in the fight for African-American rights eventually developed a more effective strategy. Laid out in 1931 by the Lawyers for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the new plan called for an indirect attack on the “Separate but Equal” policies in America. At every opportunity, the inferior nature of African American facilities would be highlighted. These cases would be brought to court, and it was hoped that governments at all levels would eventually be forced to pay absurd amounts of money to ensure that non-white facilities equaled those of whites in every way. Essentially, the founders of this strategy, which they formulated at the height of the Great Depression, hoped to force integration by severely hurting the wallets of those who promoted segregation (Olson, 1981).

4.5 Carroll Park: Separate but Equal?

While lawyers for the NAACP focused primarily on schools, no aspect of society was left out. In particular, the battle for equal golf course facilities throughout Baltimore began to pick back up during the early 1940s. The catalyst that reignited the debate proved to be the visiting of Carroll Park by professional boxer Joe “The Brown Bomber” Louis. Louis, an African American from Detroit, had become a national hero in 1938
when he disproved Hitler’s theory of a superior Aryan race by swiftly defeating
German champion, Max Schmeling, in the first round of their boxing match. Though
Mayor D’Alesandro had presented Louis with the keys to the City of Baltimore as a
reward for his achievement, the boxer still found himself treated as a second-class citizen
when he learned he could only play golf at the inferior Carroll Park Golf Course. During
one round of golf in 1940, Louis advised wealthy businessman Willie Adams and others
present that they should take action to improve Baltimore’s facilities for African
American golfers. Though a clubhouse had been built at Carroll Park that same year, the
course retained its sand “greens” and still possessed only nine holes (Adams and
Wagandt, 1977; Gibson and Yoes, 2004).

Two years later, the fight began in earnest as part of the African-American
“Double V” campaign: victory for Americans in World War II and victory against racism
on the home front (Gibson and Yoes, 2004). On May 6, 1942 members of the
Cosmopolitan and Monumental Golf Clubs, representing 80 of the approximately 300
African American golfers in the city, confronted the Park Board. The clubs had
previously petitioned the NAACP for legal assistance, but received none. The NAACP
responded to the requests by stating “if you fellows are wealthy enough to play golf,
you’re wealthy enough to pay your lawyers yourself.” (Adams and Wagandt, 1977, I-1-
8). Instead, Attorney Dallas Nicholas, a member of the Monumental Golf Club who had
fought for the rights of Black golfers since 1934, served as the principal spokesperson at
the Park Board meeting. The two clubs made a formal request to the Park Board that all
four public golf courses in Baltimore (see figure 4.3) be completely desegregated. This
included giving whites unrestricted use of Carroll Park. If Black men could be taxed and
called into military service, Nicholas argued, then all civic facilities must be made open to them. While threatening legal action if refused, those present at the meeting did offer to ease slowly into desegregation by only playing on the Mount Pleasant Golf Course at first, and then only on certain days. While no permanent solution was offered, the park commissioners did agree to instruct ticket sellers at all public courses to accept Black customers for the immediate future (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 6 May 1942).

**Figure 4.3** The four Baltimore Municipal Golf Courses during the 1940s, set against a modern day satellite image of the city. Excluded are the short-lived practice course at Herring Run Park, as well as the Pine Ridge course, constructed in 1958 along the western shores of the Loch Raven Reservoir. Source: Google Earth, 2006.
The experiment with full desegregation lasted less than one month. As had been the case a decade earlier, the white community surrounding the golf courses protested vehemently. On June 3rd, a delegation of concerned citizens confronted the Park Board in much the same way that Dallas Nicholas and the golf clubs had nearly a month earlier. For a variety of reasons, these individuals demanded the immediate end of African-American use of any golf course other than Carroll Park. Property values surrounding the newly desegregated courses, the delegation claimed, would plummet as a result of an African-American presence in the area. In addition, it was feared that a combination of caddy resignations and physical altercations with colored golfers would drive whites away from all city courses (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 3 June 1942).

On June 9, the Park Board met to reassess its decision. The Mount Pleasant course was chosen as the object of examination because it was the municipal course most frequently played by African Americans after Carroll Park. Between May 28th and June 9th, only 60 tickets had been sold to non-whites. Further scrutiny revealed that of the approximately 300 colored golfers in Baltimore, only about one dozen used the course at all. In the meantime, white use of the course had dropped by 25% (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 9 June 1942). Armed with these statistics, the Board concluded that the Carroll Park facilities were adequate for the vast majority of African American golfers. At the insistence of Commissioner Baker, who wished to “protect white neighborhoods from colored invasion,” all Baltimore municipal golfing privileges to African Americans were revoked on June 10th, except for continued exclusive use of Carroll Park (The Baltimore Sun, 10 June 1942; Board of Public Park Commissioners, 9 June 1942, 380).
When Arnett and Marie Murphy, two colored golfers, attempted to buy tickets to play the Mount Pleasant Golf Course on the morning of Thursday, June 10, cashier William Tudor informed them that he had received orders not to sell any more tickets to non-whites. Hearing of this incident, local golf clubs turned to Baltimore’s Citizens Civil Rights Committee, which threatened immediate legal action against the City of Baltimore (The Afro-American, 16 June 1942). Judge Eugene O’Dunne, known for his 1935 ruling to desegregate the University of Maryland School of Law, presided over the trial, which ran from June 26th through June 29th at the City of Baltimore Superior Court (Gibson and Yoes, 2004). Dallas Nicholas again served as the attorney for the African American golfers, who united behind the plaintiff, Arnett Murphy.

Nicholas and his team set out to prove that the facilities at Carroll Park were not equal to the other three municipal golf courses. Murphy and other colored golfers took the witness stand to describe the deficiencies they saw in Carroll Park: “sand greens, no facilities for washing balls, no hazards, no shelters or drinking fountains, and the grass is filthy from the soot of passing trains.” (The Baltimore Sun, 27 June 1942, 9). Not only did the other courses exhibit none of these problems, they each possessed 18 holes. With respect to size, the courses varied tremendously. For instance, the Mount Pleasant Golf Course comprised of 130 acres, while the Carroll Park course contained just 35. In addition, of the over $1,000,000 spent on the four municipal golf courses since their openings, only $21,665 had been spent on Carroll Park (The Afro-American, 30 June 1942a).

When called to defend their actions, Commissioners Durkee (president), Kelly, and Cross all feigned ignorance. All three men claimed they did not even know what
bunkers or hazards were in golf terms, and therefore could not comprehend why these objects were crucial to improving courses (The Baltimore Sun, 27 June 1942). A review of Park Board meeting minutes for June 9th, 1942, undermines the commissioner’s defense. On that day, the board discussed a $20,000 plan to improve Carroll Park facilities by September and thus eliminate any grounds for a trial. This improvement plan included not only the transition to grass greens, but also the addition of sand bunkers (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 9 June 1942). The plan was never adopted.

At the conclusion of the trial proceedings, Judge O’Dunne assured the all-white jury that they were not deciding the absolute fate of segregation in Baltimore. Rather, their only role was to set aside any personal prejudices and simply determine whether or not Carroll Park possessed equal facilities to the other three city courses (The Afro-American, Week of 30 June 1942b). The verdict of the jury upheld the claims of African American golfers that their facilities were not equal. As a result, Judge O’Dunne ordered the Park Board to take appropriate actions. The Board begrudgingly did so officially on July 8, ordering cashiers at all city courses to once again accept African American customers (The Afro-American, Week of 30 June 1942a). At the same meeting, petitions from the Southwest Baltimore Civic Association to deny colored children the use of Carroll Park’s playground and wading pool facilities were also denied by the commissioners on the grounds that no second playground existed in the park which would allow for segregation (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 30 June 1942).

The city’s fight to overturn O’Dunne’s verdict began immediately, lead by City Solicitor F. Murray Benson. This move angered the African American community of Baltimore greatly, as Benson received an $8,500 salary (substantial during the 1940s),
paid with tax money from all citizens of the city. By June 30th, Benson challenged the verdict on technical grounds by pointing out that the judge had broken etiquette by not having been present when the jury presented its decision to the clerk of the court, despite the fact that this was common procedure within the City of Baltimore and elsewhere (The Afro-American, Week of 30 June 1942a). Though it took nearly six months for the Appellate Court to hear the case, the higher-ranking judges upheld Benson’s challenge in two separate cases.

In the meantime, white and colored golfers played on the same courses almost without incident. Though residents and associations in the neighborhoods surrounding the desegregated facilities strongly disagreed, many white golfers expressed their opinions that the sheer size of the golf courses allowed plenty of space for both whites and blacks to peacefully coexist and play together (Adams and Wagandt, 1977). In fact, one of the only instances of racial tension seen on the courses during the second half of 1942 proved to be a Coca-Cola vendor at the Mount Pleasant course who charged ten cents per soda for white customers and twenty cents for non-whites (The Afro-American, Week of 7 July 1942).

Nevertheless, on December 9, 1942, the Appellate Court overturned Judge O’Dunne’s earlier verdict on the technical grounds that he was not present when the jury presented its decision to the court. With respect to the primary issue of African American access to the city’s courses, the Appellate Court remanded the case for further trial. Writing the opinion of the court, however, Judge Bond did comment on the heart of the case. The power of the Park Board to enforce segregation at its own discretion, the opinion argued, should be upheld. In addition, Bond stated that the Court of Appeals
believed that arguments referring to the inferior nature of the Carroll Park Golf Course were “not effectively true” when one considered the needs of such a small African American golfing population in Baltimore (The Baltimore Sun, 10 December 1942, 7).

The second trial, also at the Appellate level, occurred early in 1943 and resulted in a second defeat for colored golfers when the court agreed with Judge Bond’s earlier assertions (Gibson and Yoes, 2004).

Before advocates for desegregation could develop up a new legal strategy, all parties involved struck a deal. In April of 1943, City Solicitor Benson met with representatives for both the black and white golfers of the city, Dallas Nicholas and Preston Piero, respectively. The compromise that these men worked out provided for the improvement of Carroll Park facilities to the standard of the other city courses. While the land available at Carroll Park simply did not allow for an additional nine holes to be constructed, yardage on existing holes would be increased as much as possible. In addition, grass greens and sand bunkers would be added to the course. Since this construction would close the Carroll Park course to all players, colored golfers would once again be granted unrestricted access to other municipal courses until the renovations were complete (The Baltimore Sun, 22 April 1943). When the solicitor presented the terms of this agreement to the Park Board for approval at the beginning of May, Commissioner Kelly argued that only one city course should be opened to colored golfers. Board President Durkee, however, cautioned that all historically white courses, and by association the neighborhoods that surrounded them, needed to be treated equally so as to avoid accusations of favoritism. In the end, the Board approved Benson’s
arrangement and began planning for its implementation (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 5/4/1943).

With additional materials and funding available to the city after the end of World War II, the renovations to the Carroll Park golf course were finally completed by late 1945. Almost without warning, African American golfers found themselves herded back to the improved, but still only nine-hole Carroll Park (Adams and Wagandt, 1977).

Having experienced full equality on Baltimore’s golf courses for over two years, however, it did not take long for the colored golfers of the city to become dissatisfied with even the new Carroll Park facilities. In 1947, African American golfer, Charles Law, brought a new case to trial with the intention of completely ending the segregation of Baltimore’s golf courses. Despite the improvements to Carroll Park, it was felt by colored golfers of the time that nine holes simply could not be equal to eighteen (Gibson and Yoes, 2004).

This time, the legal battle bypassed the authority of the City of Baltimore entirely and progressed straight to the United States District Court of Maryland, under Federal Judge Calvin Chestnut. The case became known as Charles R. Law v. Mayor and City of Baltimore and the Board of Recreation and Parks (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 6/29/1948). Though their services were not free, Law and the other desegregation advocates retained two of the NAACP’s best lawyers: Charles Houston and W.A.C. Hughes. In 1939, Hughes had argued before Judge Chestnut in a successful battle to grant equal pay to colored teachers in Maryland’s Anne Arundel County (Gibson and Yoes, 2004; Adams and Wagandt, 1977).
On June 18, 1948, the federal case came to an end, with Judge Chestnut ruling that a nine-hole golf course could not be equal to eighteen. The Park Board received orders to develop a plan to grant African American golfers access to all municipal golf courses. At the board meeting of June 29th, however, Commissioner Boone pointed out that this did not necessarily mean desegregation of the golf facilities. Rather, days could be assigned to each golf course that determined which race could play there on any given day. Boone favored this course of action, both to minimize reactions from neighborhood associations, and to ensure that Carroll Park, still considered the worst course in the city, remained in use. Dr. Bernard Harris, the first African American to serve on the Board, favored full desegregation, cited a statement by the Forest Park Golf Association that its members did not oppose the simultaneous presence of white and colored golfers on their course (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 29 June 1948).

On July 13, needing to make a decision with three of the park commissioners out of the city at the time, the Director of the Bureau of Parks, Robert Maxwell, as well as the general superintendent of Baltimore’s park system, August Hook, did allow full desegregation for all four golf courses within the city (The Baltimore Sun, 13 August 1948). Full desegregation lasted for only one week. On July 20th, the full Board of Parks and Recreation met again. With only Dr. Harris dissenting, the board produced a 4-1 vote to divide access rights to each course by days of the week. Colored golfers received the right to play at Mount Pleasant on Tuesdays, Clifton Park on Wednesdays, Hillsdale/Forest Park on Thursdays, and Carroll Park on all other days. White golfers, meanwhile, could not access any course on the day or days in which it was designated for African Americans (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 20 July 1948). This meant that
for the first time in over a decade, white golfers were allowed to play on the Carroll
Park Municipal Golf Course. The changes came into effect the next day, on Wednesday,
July 21, 1948.

4.6 Murder in Carroll Park and the End of the Segregation Era

From the beginning of this new system of golf course rotation, it became clear to
all parties involved that conditions remained far from ideal. As the comparatively small
number of African American golfers in the city could only play the predominantly white
courses in the middle of the workweek, there were many occasions on which not a single
player could be seen using those facilities (Adams and Wagandt, 1977). In addition, the
new laws still confined colored golfers to Carroll Park on the weekends. Members of the
Monumental Golf Club complained that due to the work schedules of its members,
tournaments needed to be held on Sundays, and therefore the club could never host an
event on more than nine holes. According to spokesperson Dr. Arnett Murphy in August
of 1948, this became an embarrassment when the club received guests from other cities
that granted far better facilities to its African American golfer population. Murphy cited
organizations from New York, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and Atlantic City as examples
(The Baltimore Sun, 8/13/1948).

Slightly more than one year later, an event occurred that severely undermined the
segregation policies of Baltimore’s Board of Parks and Recreation. On Sunday, October
2, 1949, 19-year-old African American, Linwood Matthews, died from a stabbing wound
received in a gang battle between whites and blacks on the public side of Carroll Park.
Although accounts of the clash vary, it appears that the conflict began when a white gang
chased a group of African American football players away from Carroll Park and across
Washington Boulevard by hurling sticks at them. Approximately 10 of the older colored children, mostly in their late teens, regrouped, armed themselves with sticks (some witnesses claimed to have seen broken bottles, but evidence of this was never found), and confronted the whites. With the blacks outnumbered at least two to one, heavy fighting began when one of the white boys took a stick from his opponent and hit him with it (Jenkins, 1949; *The Afro-American*, Week of 4 October 1949a; *The Baltimore Sun*, 3 October 1949). Towards the end of the clash, 18-year old huckster’s helper (street peddler), Robert Kurtz, by his own confession, used a switchblade to fatally stab Linwood Matthews just below the heart (*The Afro-American*, Week of 11 October 1949).

After the incident occurred, neighborhood residents and local police officers alike placed blame on the policies of the Park Board for inciting racial violence. While the eastern portion of Carroll Park had remained open to all since its founding, the city still put limited policies of segregation in place. The wading pool, for example, had always been white-only during its sporadic intervals of being open to the public for swimming (City of Baltimore, 2001).

More important, however, were the policies of the Park Board regarding the use of sports facilities. Unless a party requested a permit from the park office, all ball fields worked on a first come, first serve basis regardless of race or ethnicity. The point of serious contention proved to be that only one ethnicity could use a ball field at a time. The Park Board ordered park police officers to break up any interracial games. While some athletes of both races complained that they should be allowed to play sports together, this policy more often than not lead to whites incorrectly believing that they had a natural dominance over the park (*The Afro-American*, Week of 4 October 1949a). On
many occasions, whites would demand that the police chase off colored groups so that they could use the sport facilities instead. When the police refused, such incidents often lead to fights and, according to two officers interviewed the day after the stabbing, it was only a matter of time before a death occurred (The Baltimore Sun, 3 October 1949). The relatively poor white neighborhood to the north of Carroll Park, between Wilkens Avenue and Lombard Street, produced most of the gangs intent on driving African Americans from Carroll Park during the 1940s (Jenkins, 1949).

Sensing the possible extent of public outrage to the murder of Linwood Matthews, Mayor D’Alesandro convened a special closed-door session of the Park Board on the morning of October 3 to address the future of segregation in Baltimore and call for an “immediate and thorough investigation of this terrible tragedy.” (The Afro-American, Week of 4 October 1949b, 14). On the same day, however, the superintendent of Carroll Park, Henry Kues, called the event “regrettable,” but admitted that the segregation policies were still in place (Jenkins, 1949). Eleven days later, on October 14, a union of 116 local clergy members called for an end to racism in Baltimore. These church leaders, representing a wide variety of Christian faiths, blamed themselves in part for Matthews’ murder, stating that they had not campaigned hard enough for mutual peace and understanding among different races. These men added that they were not the only ones who were “guilty before God,” and that people everywhere must work to correct the inequalities between races seen not only in Baltimore, but across all of American society (The Afro-American, Week of 18 October 1949, 24).

These appeals by the clergy, while moving, did not serve to end segregation in Baltimore’s park system. The wading pool at Carroll Park remained white-only, mixed-
race teams still could not use the athletic fields and the golf course controversy continued throughout the city. In May of 1950, an unsuccessful attempt to end golf course segregation occurred within the Park Board, led by Commissioners Harris and Hammerman. Due to heavy white use of Carroll Park, the Park Board listened to a petition to allow more days for whites to use that course, while granting colored golfers additional time at Forest Park. Representatives of the African American Monumental Golf Club expressed their approval of this arrangement. The colored golfers also expressed their willingness to give up their exclusive days at Carroll Park and play alongside white golfers there on an experimental basis. If the races coexisted well on one course, it was hoped that this experiment would lead to the full desegregation of all municipal courses. While Commissioners Harris and Hammerman supported this proposal, the other board members rejected it in a 3-2 vote. Commissioners Robinson and Shriver explained that the present policy of rotating courses by day and race seemed to be pleasing most people, and they did not wish to rock the boat by supporting a premature end to segregation (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 9 May 1950; The Baltimore Sun, 10 May 1950).

Dallas Nicholas and the Monumental Golf Club again threatened legal action against the City of Baltimore in 1951, showing that the 1948 status quo of limited, rotating segregation on the golf courses could no longer remain unchallenged. This time, the Board of Parks and Recreation simply surrendered and voted to allow full access to all municipal golf courses regardless of race or ethnicity (Gibson and Yoes, 2004). The other facilities at Carroll Park, however, remained segregated for several more years.
In 1953, African American groups sued the City of Baltimore at the federal level in an attempt to open all public swimming pools to non-whites. As noted by Deputy City Solicitor, Edwin Harlan, in a September 1953 meeting of the Park Board, it appeared that no court at any level was willing to take a stand on segregation until the United States Supreme Court had ruled on the legality of separate schools for white and colored children (Board of Public Park Commissioners, 22 September 1953). Harlan’s words referred to the Brown v. Board of Education case before the Supreme Court at the time, which originated in 1950 as an NAACP legal challenge to the 18 elementary schools available to whites in Topeka, Kansas, as opposed to only four available to black children. For the sake of simplicity, the Supreme Court consolidated many similar cases dealing with segregation in schools, originating from Delaware, South Carolina, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. under the Brown v. Board of Education title. Finally, in 1954, the Supreme Court overruled the “Separate but Equal” legal standard set in the 1898 Plessy v. Ferguson Case, declaring that racial segregation “violates the 14th amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees all citizens equal protection of the laws.” (Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research, 2004, 1).

Although Brown v. Board of Education did not lead to instant desegregation of all parts of American life across the country, it did prompt Baltimore’s Park Board to end all segregation within that city’s urban green spaces. By the end of 1954, the board opened Carroll Park’s wading pool, as well as all of its ball fields for use by people of all races simultaneously. Initially, residents of local white neighborhoods reacted in disgust at being forced to share all of their facilities. In 1957, due to severe decline in usage, the
Park Board closed the wading pool at Carroll Park for the last time as the number white swimmers in the park dropped by almost 50% (City of Baltimore, 2001).

As the decades progressed, however, racial tensions within Carroll Park diminished. Today, both whites and blacks use the green space simultaneously and without complaint. Though numbers for general park usage are unavailable, it is known that the golf course today (see figure 4.4) is used by a ratio of approximately 60% African American and 40% white (Morton, 2005). The concluding chapter will describe the current state of Carroll Park in more detail, explain how the history of the park impacts the present day, and examine how battles for racial access to urban green space are still being played out across the nation.

Figure 4.4 A view of the nine-hole Carroll Park Municipal Golf Course today. In contrast to the early 20th century, the course now maintains grass greens, bunkers, and a well-groomed landscape. Photo taken by author.
Chapter 5: Conclusions

5.1 Carroll Park Today

More than five decades after the official end of segregation in Baltimore’s Park System, Carroll Park has, as stated in the 2001 Master Plan, “truly become a neighborhood park and is heavily used by those who work and live nearby.” (52). On a typical summer day, all of Carroll Park’s facilities can be seen in use. Aside from the golf course, these include basketball courts, baseball diamonds, a skating park, playground, and walking paths. The National Society of Colonial Dames of America maintains normal business hours at the Mount Clare Mansion, offering visitors the opportunity to tour the building and its restored 18th century furnishings.

While the museum at the Mount Clare Mansion does market itself as a tourist destination, it is not the only reason why a person from outside the neighborhood might visit the park. One major draw always proves to be the annual German Festival in August. Though there is no longer any Schuetzen organization within the City of Baltimore, and despite the fact that the neighborhoods surrounding Carroll Park have long since lost their German roots, the German Society of Maryland still attracts thousands of guests every year to what it boasts as the “Oldest Ethnic Celebration in the State of Maryland!” (The German Society of Maryland, 1). Dating back to 1900, the 2005 festival over the weekend of August 19-21 included ethnic foods, dancing, beer tents, live and recorded German music, and even the new addition of a climbing wall.

A more recent addition that draws people to Carroll Park is its central location along the Gwynns Falls Trail (see figures 5.1 and 5.2). This 15-mile greenway, to be
completed in 2007, links the extensive trail network of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park in western Baltimore to the Inner Harbor and Middle Branch of the Patapsco River. As the first section of the Baltimore greenway system proposed by the Olmsted Firm in 1904 (see figure 2.4) to be completed, the Gwynns Falls Trail links 32 neighborhoods together. Open for biking, hiking, and rollerblading, the trail will help to grant nearby residents access not only to distant green spaces and commercial areas, but also to each other’s neighborhoods. By allowing trail users to easily visit other communities, project leaders hope to promote a sense of citywide unity and help to reduce crime (Korth, 2005; Gwynns Falls Trail Council, 2006).

Figure 5.2 displays a map of the Gwynns Falls Trail as it will look at completion. As of March 2006, only the one mile stretch from Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park to the I-70 Park and Ride remains incomplete. The numbers on the map correspond to historic markers along the trail, of which three relate to the history of Carroll Park. At marker 8, one will find a plaque describing the gristmills and iron works owned by Dr. Charles Carroll in the area during the mid-1700s, as well as a note describing the German-owned Wilkens Hair Factory that dominated the neighborhood during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Marker 5 (see figure 5.3) explains the history of Carroll Park, including the original purchase and Olmsted designs, the sale of parkland to the Montgomery Ward Company, and the golf course controversy that eventually lead to the desegregation of all park facilities within Baltimore. Finally, marker 4 tells the history of the Mount Clare Mansion, from its construction in the mid-18th century, through the surrounding land’s use as a Civil War encampment in the 1860s (Gwynns Falls Trail Council, 2006).
Figure 5.1 The Gwynns Falls Trail as it enters Carroll Park west of the golf course. Photo taken by author.

Figure 5.2 The Gwynns Falls Trail (red) as it will appear at its completion. Yellow lines indicate other hiking and biking trails within Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park. Source: http://www.gwynnsfallstrail.org/images/pics/panels/Panel%20Map.html.
None of the historic plaques along the Gwynns Falls Trail mention the West Baltimore Schuetzen Park that occupied the Carroll Family land during the 1870s and ‘80s. Nevertheless, the Schuetzen Period and other eras of Carroll Park’s history are all considered to be very important to understanding Baltimore’s past. The City of Baltimore Department of Planning, the Carroll Park Foundation, and the National Society of Colonial Dames of America all work closely together to discover, document, and preserve as much of the history of the Mount Clare estate as possible (City of Baltimore, 2001). It is hoped that the research presented here will further this cause by providing local historians with a detailed analysis of the former Carroll Family land, from the Schuetzen leasing of that land in 1870, to the end of segregation in the early 1950s.
5.2 The Context of this Research in a Broader Perspective

As mentioned in the introduction, this research contributes to the larger Baltimore Ecosystem Study. In addition to the biological and physical aspects of the ecosystem study, the researchers involved with the project also study social processes within Baltimore. Combining this thesis with other historic green space research in Baltimore, such as Korth’s (2005) analysis of the formation of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, researchers can begin to uncover the full story of how modern-day patterns of park placement and access evolved, as well as how Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.’s vision of “green space access for all” held up over the course of history.

Beyond the City of Baltimore, the history of racial and ethnic access within Carroll Park can be used as a point of comparison when studying modern problems in other cities. It is important to note that green space access remains a serious problem in many American communities today. As recently as 1986, the ACLU and NAACP filed lawsuits against the city government of Dearborn, Michigan, for imposing a “residents only” restriction on all of its public parks. As African Americans accounted for only 83 of the city’s nearly 90,000 residents, this law resulted in ID checks for only non-whites. Wayne County Judge Marvin Stempien eventually ruled Dearborn’s green space restrictions as unconstitutional, though other wealthy suburbs of Detroit still possess similar yet uncontested regulations (Demott, 1983; Time Archive, 13 October 1983).

Other problems with racial and ethnic access within urban green spaces today are not so easily recognized. The findings of Wolch et al. (2005), for instance, show that inequalities of park access can be brought about by poor city planning, rather than any
official segregation policies. The white population of Los Angeles, on average, has access to over 17 park acres per 1,000 people. Meanwhile Latino neighborhoods possess 1.6 acres per 1,000 people, Asians 1.2 acres, and Blacks a mere 0.8 acres.

Other researchers have found differences in terms of what kinds of green spaces are preferred by different racial and ethnic groups. Both in Cleveland (Payne et. al, 2001) and Chicago (Gobster, 2002), researchers found significant differences between what kinds of activities Whites and Blacks prefer to enjoy in the parks they visit. Overall, Whites and Asians preferred quieter, wooded parks with recreational activities, while African Americans preferred open parks that provided space for a wide variety of active sports. Age and residential location also served as variables, but race remained the primary determining factor, statistically, in these opinions. Similarly, Carr and Williams (1993) found differences with respect to park preference between White and Hispanic residents in Southern California. Whites expressed a preference for places that removed them from the frenetic pace of city life. Hispanics, on the other hand, generally wanted a recreational area that could be enjoyed by members of the entire family. Gobster (2001) argues that such preferences must be taken into account at the neighborhood level when designing a successful park. Gobster’s research in the Chicago area found that far too many regional planners create green spaces that fail because they do not meet specific local needs.

Finally, as mentioned in the introduction, Wolch et al. (2005) also found that minorities may be reluctant to enter modern parks that are known to have had a history of segregation and racial violence. Thus, while the research presented in this thesis may not directly address contemporary issues, such findings show that it is important to consider
an area’s past before developing it to serve a present-day, public function, such as an urban green space. This case study of Carroll Park can be viewed by the entire nation as the successful transition of an urban park from privately owned beginnings, through the turbulent era of segregation, into the fully integrated and highly used green space seen today.

5.3 Topics for Further Research

Despite the extensive findings presented here, the history of Carroll Park is far from fully researched. This thesis primarily covered the time period from the 1870’s through the 1950s. The National Society of Colonial Dames and other historians have done an excellent job of uncovering the story of the Mount Clare Estate during the residency of the Carroll Family. Nevertheless, as the 2001 Master Plan for Carroll Park states, there is little information available about African-American slaves working on the Carroll Plantation and in the Baltimore Iron Works during the 18th and early 19th centuries. This topic is stated to be one of the primary interests of members of nearby communities visiting the Mount Clare Museum today. Unfortunately, as no Carroll Family or governmental documents relating to the purchase or ownership of slaves at Mount Clare have survived the passage of time, only extensive and logistically difficult archaeological research in Carroll Park and beyond would be able to uncover this particular story.

In regards to the description of the Schuetzen facilities on the Carroll Family land and elsewhere, the research presented here was somewhat hindered by language barriers. Hundreds of thousands of personal letters and diaries exist in collections both in the United States and Germany, detailing first-hand accounts of immigrant experiences
during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Max Kade Institute branches in Madison, Wisconsin and Indianapolis, Indiana are two places where one would find thousands of such resources. Only a relative handful of these letters and diaries have been translated into English, however, and none could be found that described Schuetzen Parks or associations in any detail. If a researcher fluent in German ever decides to take on the topic of Schuetzen Parks in America during the period of high immigration, this thesis will hopefully give them a stepping stone to work with while looking through the documents that I myself could not utilize.

In terms of recent history, the story of Baltimore’s battle over golf course desegregation could be better contextualized with regard to how it related to similar battles elsewhere during the same time period. In his 1977 interview, Willi Adams stated that not only was the fight for the desegregation Baltimore’s courses sparked, in part, by African American successes in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., but also that the victory in Baltimore lead to desegregation in Atlanta and elsewhere. While not the focus of this thesis, such an analysis could greatly benefit the history of the Civil Rights campaign as a whole.

Finally, an analysis could be done on visitors to Carroll Park today, along the lines of the studies done by Payne et al. (2001), Gobster (2002), and Carr and Williams (1993) described earlier. The opinions of visitors toward how well Carroll Park, with the addition of the Gwynns Falls Trail, meets their recreational needs could be researched, as could their opinions of what time period they would most like to see partially restored within the park. With such data, Baltimore’s Department of Recreation and Parks could
better ensure that Carroll Park remains the ideal and widely supported community
green space that it has become for the southwestern portion of the city.
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