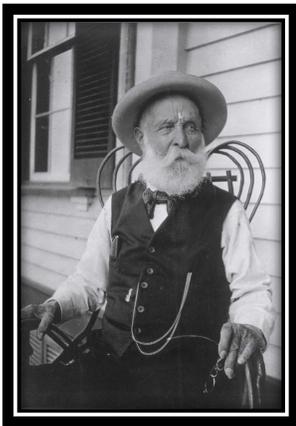


**Cochran Fleming's
Sewickley Dairy Company
& the Allegheny Country Club**

Fleming Brothers was once one of Pittsburgh's largest patent medicine manufacturers. Along with older brother John, Cochran Fleming operated the Wood Street business, supplying Dr. C. McLane's Celebrated Liver Pills to pharmacies across the nation. Profits from the business financed Cochran's land acquisitions in and near Sewickley Township.

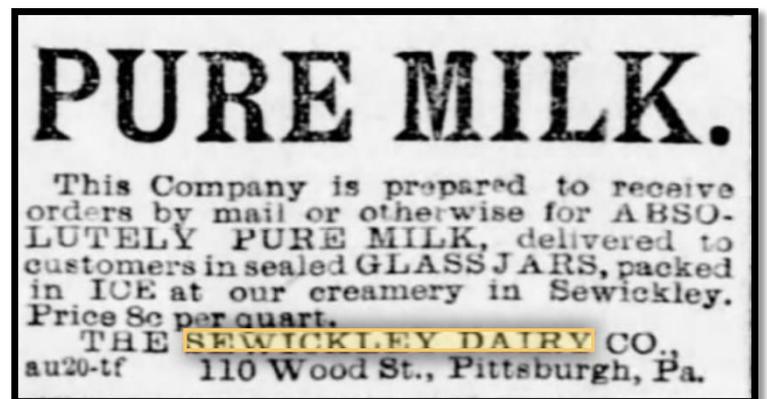
One of Fleming's more notable purchases was 2,000+ acres on the township's Little Sewickley Creek watershed, known as both the McKean Tract and Spanish Tract.



Revolutionary War soldier and former Pennsylvania governor Thomas McKean purchased the four-square miles of rough woodlands while serving on the state supreme court. In 1808, McKean gifted the property to his daughter who subsequently married a Spanish nobleman and moved to Spain. Over time, taxes were left unpaid and tenants abandoned what few farms stood on the property. The Marchioness died in 1841, willing the land to her daughter Narcissa who in turn willed the tract in far off Pennsylvania to her brother's children. With a sale price of fifty thousand dollars, Cochran Fleming (pictured left) purchased the vacant tract in the hills above Sewickley Borough from McKean's great-grandchildren (1881). It was here that Fleming and others would build the much anticipated, but ill-fated Sewickley Dairy Company.

The first Sewickley Dairy stockholders' meeting took place in October 1888. The group had purchased the 2,420 acres from Fleming for \$250,000 with plans of building a modern showcase dairy. By January 1891, however, stockholders were accusing company officials of mismanagement and demanded an independent receiver to prevent those same officials from pocketing proceeds from upcoming sheriff's sales.

The dairy began operating in August 1889 with no expense spared in designing and building the hilltop landmark. With a flag flying from its center dome, the white, cross shaped barn stabled fifty head of prime Vermont dairy cattle in each wing. The creamery's floors, walls and vats were covered with gleaming white tiles. Butter was kept in a marble lined room. The farm also included stables for up to twenty-five draft horses needed to work the fields. In addition to the manager's residence, a boarding house was provided for the dairy's seventy workers.



Never reaching its potential, the dairy soon folded. Equipment and stock were sold to pay creditors. At one point, the acreage was considered as a possible site for Pittsburgh's poor farm, but the city declined. Eventually, a small group of Sewickley businessmen formed the Tuxedo Land Company, which purchased and divided the tract into parcels on which country estates and the Allegheny Country Club would be built.



Construction of the Allegheny Country Club began in 1901 and opened in May 1902.

Golf arrived in Pittsburgh in 1894 and quickly became a favored pastime for many of the city's wealthier residents. The area's first golf club was the Allegheny Country Club, founded in 1895 on the old Walker Farm in in the Brighton Heights section of Allegheny City. The nine-hole course was framed by California Avenue, Benton Avenue and Brighton Road. The large farm house became the club house (see below). As golfing gained in popularity, the club soon outgrew the facility and a search was started for a more expansive location. In 1901, the club purchased 150 acres of the old Sewickley Dairy in rural Sewickley Township where construction of an 18-hole course, club house and tennis courts began almost immediately. (Right: Gentlemen's golf attire)



Prior to the ACC's arrival, Sewickley area residents were already enjoying rounds of golf at the Shields and Edgeworth clubs. Play began in the spring of 1897 on the Shields course that extended about a mile up the Little Sewickley Creek Valley from Beaver Road. The course was laid out on land belonging to the Shields and Oliver families with a club house or 'cabin' built on a hillside overlooking the new stone bridge.

While the 'cabin' proved a popular spot for parties and luncheons, the course itself was not well maintained, enough so that several members convinced the nearby Edgeworth Club to build a course.



A newly built nine-hole course on the Nevin and Way estates, adjacent to the Edgeworth Club, opened for play in the spring of 1900. Dues were ten dollars for men and five for women. Greens were maintained with a horse drawn mower. Gradually, residential property on which the course was built was sold lot by lot to where the course was forced to close in the 1920s for lack of space.



“One hundred fifty acres in the heart of a hilly farming district, offering the best of the beauties so typical of Western Pennsylvania, from this tract which the Country club purchased for its summer home. Absolutely wild and rural, no sign of urban civilization greets the eye in any quarter except where the homes of some of Pittsburg’s wealthiest men, crown the hills in the distance out beyond the first nine holes of the golf course. These homes, the owners of which are members of the club, for the most part, are so widely scattered as not to interfere with the rural harmony of the landscape, which otherwise presents nothing but wooded hills, ploughed fields, wormwood fences and grazing cattle.”

“Here within a little over a half hour’s time by train, speedy horse or automobile, the Pittsburg business men, who form the membership of this organization, can whirl away from the heat and bustle of the Smoky City and while the cries of the newsboy are still echoing in their ears, be accosted with the “want a caddie, mister” of the golf bag urchin.”

“Here the business man, who is also an ardent follower of the bewitching summer pastime which has made so many captive, will find something besides golf, raised to a plane of perfection never before enjoyed about Pittsburg. The summer home back on the hills—for home it will be for many during a long period of the summer’s heat, will offer advantages of country club life, such as never before enjoyed.”

“The club can also be reached by means of another road termed the “backbone” which is much steeper and approaches the club from the rear. This road continues out past the rear of the clubhouse to the beautiful Little Sewickley creek valley, which offers probably the prettiest drive about Pittsburg. The beautiful drives available to the members form one of the great features of the new location as the Little Sewickley road can be reached in about 15 minutes after leaving the clubhouse.”

(Pittsburgh Daily Post 12 May 1902)

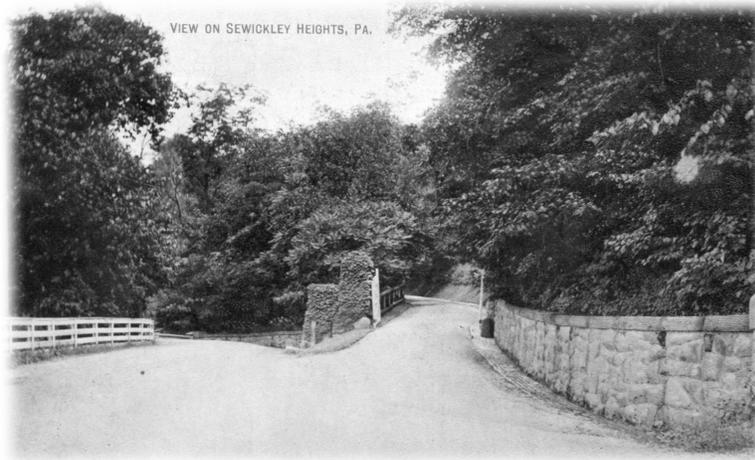


Stone bridge over Little Sewickley Creek. (1904)

With growing interest in creating a community of country estates, residents of the area known as Sewickley Heights petitioned the court for permission to cede from Sewickley, Ohio, Aleppo and Leet townships and create the new township of Sewickley Heights.

Elections were held in the fall of 1903 and winter of 1904 in the affected areas with a majority of voters approving the split. Sewickley Heights Township became a municipality in 1904 and continued as such until 1935 when it was divided into Sewickley Heights Borough and Sewickley Heights Township. The remaining township became Sewickley Hills Borough in 1958.

Cochran Fleming lived to see his former property become an enclave of wealthy Pittsburgh families looking to escape the city's grime and summer heat and where elegant seasonal 'cottages' were transformed into year-round residences with social life centered on the new country club.



Undated photos of early Sewickley Heights 'cottages'