

Robert E. Lee

Notes from: Mayor's Message & Report of City Officers (aka Annual Reports)
MDHS – MJS 13.B2 and Year

1862 - Water Engineer's Report, 1862 – J. S. Suter

Swann Lake

My attention has been principally directed to securing the embankments on the margin of the lake by rip-rapping with stone and securing a good sod, to preserve the purity of the water. Very near two-thirds of that portion of the margin most liable to wash from high winds or a strong current is now rip-rapped, and the banks clothed with grass, (principally white clover). A road has been made around the hill near the Relay House, which enables the visitors to procure a view of the lake from that eminence. I have planted a great number of trees on the banks and also around the carriage drives.

All the new embankments near the gate house have been sodded and are now secure. A boat house has been erected, and a gateway on the road leading to the cottage, so as to enclose the whole of the lands. Some embellishments have been made to the grounds in the vicinity of the gate house and the cottage. The water since May last has flown continuously over the dam.

In all particulars the lake is in good condition, and by no means liable to any damage which might be occasioned by the severity of the winter.

1865 - Water Engineer's Report, 1865 – J. S. Suter

Swann Lake

This noble sheet of water has been discolored less during the year than it has since the dam was finished; and during all the drought of last summer the water continued to flow over the dam. The rip-rapping stood the test of last winter's ice without damage. That portion of the embankments not rip-rapped has suffered some from the action of the water during high winds. The hills around the lake in consequence of now being covered with a good sod, have ceased to annoy us by washing.

The dam and machinery are now in good order, together with all the surrounding property. I recommend to the Board the removal of the fencing to the property line, as it may at some future day save trouble

1867 - Reports refer to Swann Lake

pg 278 lists property inventory as of 12/28/1867

1869 – House of keeper and gate-house were painted. Have received \$397.32 for hay at Lake land

pg 310 lists property at Lake Roland in charge of John Boon

1870 – Received from "Lake Roland" \$406.50; expenses \$1,784.06

Long and severe drought of last summer – supply kept ahead of use,
the overflow of Lake Roland being constant, though light
Shut off Loch Raven 49 days due to muddy water
Slopes and riprapping thoroughly overhauled and repaired
Gate house wainscoted and painted.
15 tons of unsold hay

- 1871** – Drought of unexcelled duration – Lake Roland drawn lower than ever and no overflow for 8 months.
Income \$415; expenses \$810.65
Grass cut oftener to improve sod
Screws on gates sent to lathe
In October six men passed through conduit and swept its entire length from Harper's waste Weir to Hampden Reservoir with hickory brooms (2.5 miles)
Property in charge of John Boon
- 1872** – Advantage taken of low water to remove large quantities of sand and earth accumulated at mouth of several streams. Removed 15,507 cubic yards. Work will continue until lake is restored to its original capacity. Cost \$3487.49.
April last erected a new iron bridge by Wendel Bollman to replace the one washed away in 1868 (bridge dated 1871). Cost \$8,544.44
Daily city consumption almost now equals the daily inflow into Lake Roland.
Looking into bringing water in from Gunpowder – leaning towards the recommendation from Mr. Sickels in 1854.
Suggests running line from Gunpowder, near Mine Bank Run, up valley of Mine Bank Run and over intervening ridge, passing to south of Towsontown and thence down valley of Towsontown branch to Lake Roland (6 3/8 miles total). Will take 9 months to construct.
November 1871 first time in 8 months had to shut off Lake Roland for muddy conditions.
December 1871 – Ice 11" thick
Repaired roadway around carriage drive west side of dam
Repaving roadway to Charles street avenue
- 1873** – November 1872 – still working on clearing out Lake Roland but interrupted very much in consequence of the horse disease.
Recommends purchase of a small dredging machine
648 panels of fencing put up around lake, whitewashing much more extensive on lake than usual
- 1874** – Erected 598 panels of fencing around lake during the year
- 1875** – To keep Lake Roland fish from going into Hampden Conduit he had a screen erected at the west weir near the lake. With the aid of waste gate in the conduit chamber, occasional flushings will discharge the collection of fish that is arrested by the screen into the falls.

Delay in getting proposals for dredging kept work from starting
Bridge painted, also boats
Cut about 40 tons of hay – that not consumed by the city's 3 mules and 2
Horses is sold.

1876 – Contract for dredging awarded in December but did not begin until July
The profile of ground near the gatekeeper house, being so irregular as to render
impossible the construction of some needed improvements, the Board is now
having a culvert erected to take in the branch in the vicinity, which will give
us a satisfactory grade over the masonry.

1877 – The unsightly run at the keeper's house has been arched over with a handsome
stone culvert and the additional land surface thus obtained has been improved
and the drainage diverted. Roads and slopes graded, a new fountain erected,
also an ice house.
The Temporary Supply was used for the first time
Masonry joints were pointed on gate house
New fence similar to outer one at Druid Hill, erected from steps near bridge
to the keeper's house
Masonry at Towsontown culvert completed
Keeper's house with 2 rooms on first floor, one of which is very limited, should
have an additional room.

1878 – Receipts \$123.43; expenses \$4,124.27; dredging \$28,144.62
Supply of water wasted constantly over the dam except Aug-Oct when there
was a slight falling off – for 8 months water was cloudy, at times very turbid (26
days), so objectionable that conduit was closed nine days in February.
Bridge at Hizer's and abutments to same were repaired; 168 panels of fencing
were erected between Mr. Carpenter's and the city property, and a new scow was
constructed for lake services.
Extension of sixteen feet was added to keeper's house, a much needed
improvement.

1879 – Lake Roland dredging \$23,797.24
Received from Lake Roland \$205.31; Expenses \$2,866.30
Repairs to road and drain-paving near Mr. Suttons
Riprapping around slopes and erected culverts at Towsontown branch
Sand-trap of 1,000 yards capacity erected on Towsontown branch
274 panels new fencing put up near Roland Run joining Mrs. Handy
1,031 square yards of sodding on lake slopes near Keeper's House
32 barrels of corn made on five acres of new land on Jones' Falls and divided
between Lake Roland, city's stable and Druid Lake.
New fencing being required along NCRR
Conduit not used 23 days this year due to muddy waters
Hay sales \$57; ice sales \$61.76; Wood \$10.50

- 1880** – Dredging \$3556.98; receipts \$148.53; expenses \$8553.65
Temporary pumps worked July 4-Nov 16 sending water from Gunpowder, at Meredith's Ford to Lake Roland
Permanent supply works drawing near completion
September started with laborers, horses and carts to remove the material which had been accumulating in the cove at Towsontown Branch, Sand Trap and Jones' Falls.
Extensive repairs and painting done on the four boats. Iron bridge, gate house, jacks, iron railing in gate house and iron railing near by were painted.
349 panels of new fencing erected along the NCRR north of bridge which crosses the lake, and 306 panels west of the Western Maryland RR bridge.
Sale of ice \$43.00; Hay \$68; old lumber \$7.78
- 1881** – Dredging \$13,730.36; receipts \$258.50; expenses \$3,525.21
Sales of Hay \$181.50; old mare \$30; corn \$45.50
Difficulty getting coal which accounts for the duty of pumps commencing in September. In October water seven feet low and it was deemed advisable to wagon coal from the city
Keeper's house and barn were painted; new spouting put up on house, and tin roofing on part of same.
New flooring placed on iron bridge and the bridge at Hizer's repaired
Material dredged from lake and distributed over the land has been under cultivation in corn in order to prepare it for grass.
Appendix at back of Part I has a good history of water in Baltimore
- 1882** – Expenses \$3892.55; receipts \$233.02;
Water at surface found to be good whilst that at bottom tasted bad – wastewater gates at bottom were opened and kept so whenever any water going over dam
Lake Roland: 225 A.M.T.; available capacity 400,000,000 gallons
- 1883** – Receipts \$309.71; expenses \$3,617.86
Old plank fence on the west side of the lake and in valley of Towson branch has been replaced by a wire fence (3,626 feet between WMR, now NCRR, and the lake; also 3,668 feet around the city property binding on Towson branch at six cents per running foot).
Suggested that old fence on the line between the lake and NCRR, and between Hollins and Lake Stations, be replaced with wire fence.
Interior of gate house has been repainted and the slate roof repaired.
Willow trees on margin of lake have grown to such size that the high winds have broken some of them, and many of the branches of others.
One hundred seventy-five barrels of corn raised on land adjoining the lake and distributed to our different stables.
Twenty tone of hay on hand.
- 1884** – Expenses \$4,041.02; receipts \$714.78; Hay, fodder sales \$524.79

Drought from Aug 10-Dec 7 – dam dropped 6 feet 7 ¼ inches below dam.
Used low water to remove large amount of sediment by carting from the several Approaches (14,130 cartloads).

The surroundings of Lake Roland have been much improved by the removal of some of the old willow trees and the erection of substantial wire fence. These trees were cut up into cord wood and sent to the High Service pump-house for fuel.

Good crops of corn, oats and hay were raised upon the city's land along the borders of the lake.

New wire fence constructed from near Lake Station, NCR, where a wire fence was finished in 1883, and also from below Brightside Station, NCR, on the east side, to Jones' Falls, below the dam. 7,257 feet of wire fencing built in 1884 and a total of 14,390 around the property.

135 barrels of corn raised; 300 bushels of oats.

- 1885** – Improvements have been the building of two hay barracks
Erection of 276 panels of wire and post, and rail fencing
Relaying of the wooden floor of the iron bridge near the dam
No water passed over dam from Aug 10-December 7
- 1886** – The water in Lake Roland did not fall below the crest of the dam during the year
There were 37 days when it was too muddy for use.
The conduit was flushed several times during the year
A new culvert and carriage road was completed in September, connecting Lake Roland with Charles street avenue. This road has been fenced through the city property.
- 1887** – A new bridge over Roland Run, plank and wire fencing at the upper end of the lake and a new shed in the barn-yard at the keeper's house are improvements made during the year.
Conduit has been repeatedly flushed
- 1888** – Flow was not enough in summer to supply the demand, except after heavy rains.
- 1889** - Water muddy 62 days; greatest flow in May;
August 15-Nov 28 water was ept 6 feet below crest to facilitate removal of mud deposit in Towson branch and Roland Run
- 1890** – Jones' Falls supply afforded less than one-half the amount of water it did in 1889
- 1891** – The rapid increase in the number of consumers upon the Jones' Falls supply, and the decreased flow of the tributaries supplying Lake Roland, rendered it necessary for the Board to discontinue furnishing water for elevator or motor purposes from that source.
- 1892** – Less flow than in 1891, muddy 16 days

14,439 cubic yards of material removed and there is a great amount of deposit in the lake that can only be removed by dredging, which should be gotten out as soon as possible. No dredging done since 1880.

Yearly increase in demand demonstrates the necessity of an immediate relief being given to Jones' Falls.

1893 – nothing new

1894 – Nothing new

1895 – Two drowning cases – Nathan Morgan, Miss Hush and Henry Hush on Jan 15 about 8 pm. were skating near the NCCR bridge when the ice broke. Mr. Charles McMahon rescued Mr. & Miss Hush but was unable to save Mr. Morgan.

Mr. John Boone, Superintendent of Lake Roland, secured the body by eight o'clock the next morning. The other may have been a suicide, and Mr. Boon again found the body the next morning(Nov 8/9)

Floor of bridge below dam was again renewed (cost \$423.88)

Repairs made to stable and wagon-shed (cost \$45.93)

A horse costing \$100 was purchased for use at Lake Roland

Two rooms of keeper's house were papered and spouting repaired.

241 panels of picket fence, ninety-eight of wire and fifty panels of board have been built during the year.

\$1,194.24 was realized from sale of hay, sand, fodder, old lumber, ice.

1896 – Keeper's house and outbuildings were painted (cost \$293.25)

1897 – Conduit to Hampden is brick

Lake Roland is rapidly filling up and in early 1897 the Water Board decided to dredge the reservoir. The plan was to remove the materials from the bottom of the lake to property owned by the city adjacent to the reservoir. A few days subsequent to the award of the contract an injunction was filed by Charles M. Ellicott, restraining the city from dredging. He was interested in another bidder. The road leading from the dam to Lakeside park has been repaired and is now in good condition.

It has been customary to allow ice to be cut from this lake, and also to permit skating upon it. This I consider dangerous, particularly at night, as large crowds gather upon it, and there being no lights, they cannot see the weak places. Signs are placed at various places, but these are pulled up almost as soon as they are placed.

The Roland Park Company was granted permission to use a portion of this property for golf grounds.

1898 – Injunction restraining city from dredging Lake Roland was withdrawn during October last. Work will commence as weather permits. Lawsuit was filed by Someone who wanted the proposal of an unsuccessful competitor.

- Necessity for dredging is urgent
 Muddy water 13 days
 October 18, water 10.3 feet below crest of dam
 No water passed over dam 8/19-11/23
 New steel fence erected at upper end of lake along Ruxton Road.
 12/4 during heavy gale several trees were uprooted and fence leveled, the
 corn-house demolished and barn and shedding damaged.
 Sale of Hay, wood, sand, etc \$627.47
- 1899** – Dredging began April 1 (161,032 cubic yards removed)
 Painters employed in the Department have painted the exterior and first floor
 interior of keeper's residence, barn, corn crib, wagon shed, iron fence, railing
 around dam, gate house and bridge.
 Receipts from sale of hay, sand, wood and fodder \$850.42
 There is a crack in the crown of the Jones' Falls Conduit about midway between
 "Clyburn" and Mt. Washington.
- 1900** – Dredging began March 1st and went continuously to end of year 230,000 cubic
 yards removed. (cost \$43,855.90). Still about one month's work to be done in
 spring. Still will not be down to original depth. The dredging company is
 required to trim up the slopes after dredging is completed.
 Painted interior of keeper's residence and overhauled gate screws in gate house.
- 1901** – Missing
- 1902** – The Towson Branch has been cleared of sediment from the NCR to the Sand Trap
 The Jones' Falls Branch has been cleaned out from the NCR to the limit of back-
 water.
 About 6,000 feet on both banks of the Jones' Falls arm of the lake have been
 rip-rapped.
 The banks made by deposits of material dredged in previous years have also been
 cleaned and dressed.
- 1903** – The new automatic water stage register has been erected. It will produce a
 graphic record on a ruled chart showing the height of water in the lake for every
 hour and minute during the day. The records are used to determine the amount of
 water flowing over the dam.
 Water too muddy for use 85 days and below crest of dam 44 days
 5,600 feet of riprap laid along the Jones' Falls and Roland Run Branches.
 The dwelling and outbuildings should be painted.
- 1904** – Water too muddy to use for 30 days.
 Erected a new wire fence along Ruxton Rd
 Repaired screen in front of the influent to the gatehouse
 Recommend dwelling, stable and outbuildings be painted
 Realized from sale of sand, corn, wood, hay, fodder, etc. \$1033.56

- 1905** – Water too muddy 49 days.
July 5 heavy rain of 4.77 inches washed away most of the bridges above the lake but did little damage at the Lake
Installed 10 stop planks in gate house which should enable us to turn the water into the city earlier, after a rain, than heretofore, as we can now draw from an elevation of five feet below the dam and will not have to wait until the basin clears.
\$1132.30 realized from sale of hay, wood, old lumber, fodder, corn, sand, etc.
- 1906** – Water too muddy 40 days –
Dwelling, barn, sheds and iron fence have been painted.
\$1260.03 realized from sales.
- 1907** – Too muddy for use for 28 days
Morning of August 3 the body of Mrs. Florence Caltrider was removed from the lake opposite the keeper's house. She had been missing from home since 2 p.m. the previous day. The coroner pronounced it a case of suicide.
- 1908** - Too muddy 39 days, below crest of dam 166 days
Wainscotting around the walls of the gate house has been removed and the entire walls replastered with a smooth finish white cement.
Realized from sales \$1314.60
- 1909** – Too muddy for use 10 days, below dam 193 days, no water passed over dam after June 28.
Iron rail along road from dwelling to dam as been painted by dept laborers
A new floor and timbers put in the bridge below the dam
Stable and shedding repaired.
Sales \$913.80
- 1910** - Too muddy for use 22 days, below dam 274 days (June 2-Dec 18)
Sept 13 began treating water with chloride of lime, using 5-20 lbs per million Gallons.
Wooden posts under the front of the boat-house have been replaced with concrete pillars.
Sales \$964.02
- 1911** - Not in the book, Water Dept not even listed in index
- 1912** - Too muddy for use 27 days, below dam 169 days, no water used from Lake between Sept 7 and Nov 28 during the prevalence of typhoid fever in Towson
- 1913** - Original capacity of Lake Roland four hundred million gallons. Largely reduced by deposits of silt, but by means of dredging its present capacity is about three hundred million gallons. Originally 40 square miles.
The sanitary condition of this source of supply is rapidly becoming a menace

To the city, but it cannot be completely abandoned until the new dam is Completed at Loch Raven.

The masonry aqueduct from Lake Roland to Hampden Reservoir is five feet Wide, six feet four inches high and about four miles long.

Too muddy for use 22 days, below dam 169 days.

1914 - Too muddy for use 16 days, below dam 237 days, no water passed over dam since May 8.

Ninety-eight tones of hypochlorite has been used in purifying the water
Sales \$655.25

1915 - No Water Dept report in book nor in index.

1916 - No Water Dept report in book, nor index

1917 – MdHS only has **Board of Fire Commissioners Report**

1918 - No Water Dept Report in book, nor index

1919 - No Water Dept Report in book, nor index