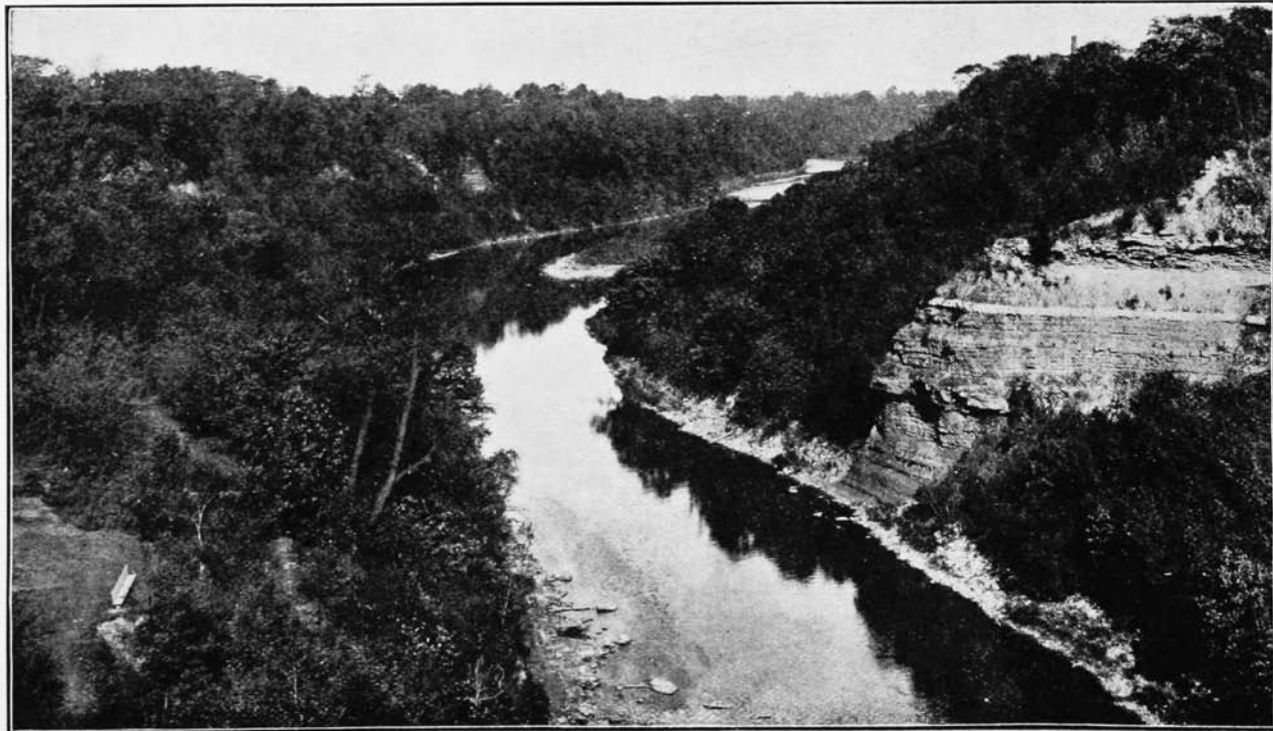


R  
qr712  
069c



3 9077 03551 7393



Gorge of the Genesee

The  
Origin & Development  
*of*  
Rochester's Park System

*By a Veteran Reporter*

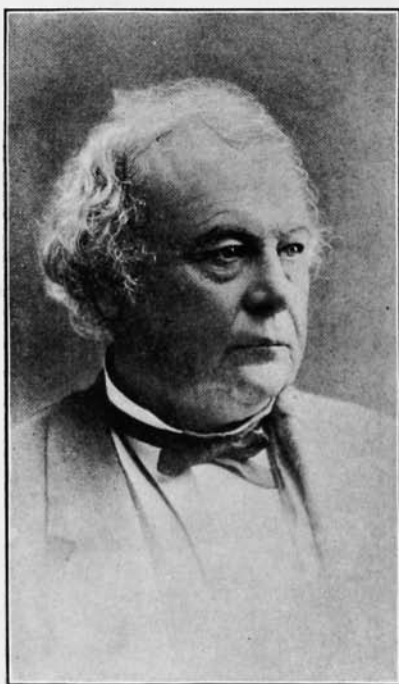


Nineteen Hundred and Eight

Union and Advertiser Press

1000-1884

ROCHESTER



Dr. E. M. Moore





R  
gr 712  
b695

## The Formative or Preliminary Period



THE ROCHESTER PARK SYSTEM, which is the glory and boast of our city to-day and the envy and admiration of visitors from distant parts of this country and Europe, is the achievement of persistent effort and unselfish zeal on the part of a group of patriotic citizens whose sole aim in their onerous labors was to provide pleasure and innocent diversion for the present and future generations, to add to the attractiveness of our beautiful city and by providing perpetual breathing places which might contribute to the moral uplifting, physical development and health of our inhabitants.

69-36-R-B-

The story of the origin and development of this park system is of deep interest to Rochesterians, containing as it does, many hitherto unpublished facts in regard to the early struggles of its champions, many of whom, have passed to the great beyond.

It was not until 1888 that the efforts of these patriotic citizens to provide parks for Rochester met with Legislative sanction and authority granted for the organizing of a Board of Park Commissioners with power to acquire \$300,000 for park purposes.

This seemed like the crowning success of long effort to obtain a park system for Rochester. It was, however, only the entering wedge of unparalleled difficulties.

For many years the park advocates had endeavored to mould public opinion in favor of the project but with small success. The people, for the most part, were opposed to the creation of parks, some from narrow minded reasons, such as fear of taxation and extravagant and useless expenditure in a city beautified by trees along its streets and many open spaces. Others regarded the creation of parks as a menace to the moral development of our youth. Others thought that the surrounding countryside afforded

Reynolds Library

1- 556171

all the opportunities needed for the recreation of our people. Others—in the early eighties—did not consider Rochester big enough to require a park system and gave no thought to the future when, as is the case now—our city became the center of enormous manufacturing and commercial activities having the greatest diversity of industries of any city of its size in the country. Others maintained that the advocates of a park system were actuated by selfish motives, or that they desired only to cater to the requirements of the rich.



Sheep at Genesee Valley Park

A vast number of people could not, or would not, realize that a group of our foremost citizens were acting solely for the benefit of the people at large and more particularly for the great army of industrials and work-a-day men, women and children who needed beautiful resorts in which to enjoy the delights of nature and breathe the pure air in seasons of respite from their daily toil. Yet this was exactly what the originators of the park system most earnestly desired.

These men were prophets. Although Rochester was small and insignificant then compared with its present industrial and commercial development—they had the business experience and acumen to foretell the coming increase in

our population. They foresaw the rapid influx of a cosmopolitan population crowded in tenements and congested streets—the building of countless factories, great blocks of business structures, colossal department stores, office buildings, theatres and hotels each contaminating the air with the foul gases of smoking chimneys and the health impairing effluvia of a vast sewage system to say nothing of the impurities arising from streets laden with mud and manure.

The opposition to the park system was not confined to the general public,—it was expressed by the officials and the Common Council. No encouragement whatever was given by the municipal government at the outset of the park commissioners' efforts.

Under such conditions the reader may readily realize the disheartening difficulties the commissioners had to contend against in selecting the most desirable lands and putting them in condition for park purposes.

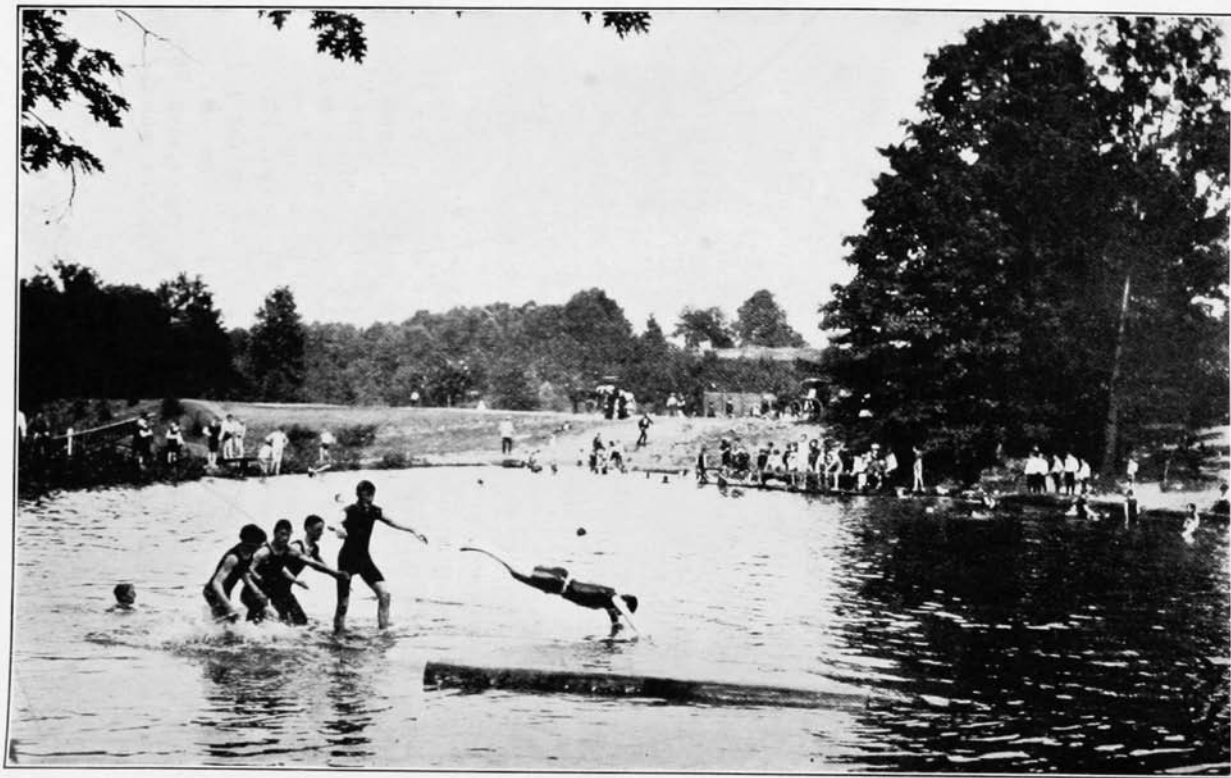
The legislative act of 1888 was entitled "An Act to authorize the selection, location and acquiring of certain grounds for public parks and parkways in and near the City of Rochester and to provide for the maintenance and embellishment thereof."

The first section of the Act reads:

William C. Barry, Henry Bartholomay, James H. Brown, John Ewing Durand, George W. Elliott, James S. Graham, Halbert S. Greenleaf, John Greenwood, James W. Gillis, Henry F. Huntington, Joseph Cauffman, William S. Kimball, Matthias Kondolf, Bernard J. McQuaid, Edward M. Moore, George H. Newell, Daniel W. Powers, Mortimer F. Reynolds, Hiram W. Sibley, William See and Alfred Wright are hereby appointed commissioners of the parks, parkways and approaches thereto which may be created pursuant to the provisions of the Act with the name and style of commissioners.

The said Park Commissioners shall hold office for the term of five years from the first of May 1888 and until others





Swimming Pool, Seneca Park

are appointed in their places. In case any of the persons above named shall not undertake the office of this commission, or in case of a vacancy in said Board occasioned by expiration of term of office or otherwise, such vacancy shall be filled by the Mayor of the City of Rochester, by and with the advice and consent of not less than two-thirds of all the members of the Common Council of the said city, and the person so appointed shall hold his office for the term of five years from the date of his appointment and until another is appointed in his place, except that when a person is appointed to a vacancy occurring before the term of office in which the vacancy occurs shall have been completed such person so appointed shall hold his office for the remainder of the said term of five years not completed by his predecessor and until another shall be appointed in his place.

The Act provides that by a four-fifths vote of the members of the Board a salary not exceeding \$1,200 per year may be given to the President of the Park Board.

The manner of swearing in the commissioners is given and the powers of the Board specifically defined. It says: "The said Park Commissioners shall have power to select and locate such grounds in and near the City of Rochester, as may, in their opinion be proper and desirable to be reserved, set apart or acquired for one or more public parks and parkways between such public parks and approaches thereto and streets connecting the said parks and for this purpose may take any part or parts of existing streets and change the lines thereof.

The said Park Commissioners for the purpose of performing the duties imposed upon them shall have power to supply a surveyor and necessary assistants at a yearly expense not exceeding \$5000.00 and the same when certified by the said Park Commissioners shall be a charge upon the City of Rochester and shall be paid out of the moneys hereby authorized to be raised for the purpose of this Act."

Provision is made in the Act for official notices of condemnation proceedings, awards and report, confirmation by Common Council, record, conflicting claimants, etc.

For the purpose of paying for the lands acquired by the Park Board see Act that authorizes the issuing of bonds to the amount of \$300,000 by the Treasurer of Rochester in such amounts from time to time as shall be required, said bonds to be known as the "Rochester Park



View in Genesee Valley Park

Bonds" and shall be signed by the Mayor and Treasurer and the seal of the City of Rochester affixed thereto and countersigned by the President of the Board of Park Commissioners and shall be payable in not less than ten or more than forty years from the date thereof and shall bear interest at the rate not exceeding four per centum per annum. The Act defines how bonds shall be issued and provides for the pledging of the lands acquired for park

purposes for the payment of the bonds which may be issued by virtue of the Act:

It provides for the payment of interest on the bonds by taxation of the City of Rochester at large.

The Act also provides for the rules of the Park Board, prohibits any member thereof being interested in the park property acquired; defines the powers of the Board—and its power to grant or withhold privileges to railroads, etc. It restricts the annual improvement outlay to \$20,000; confers on the Board the care, maintenance and control of all the public parks and public squares within the city with power to protect and preserve shade trees in the streets, park, squares, avenues and alleys of said city, etc.

Section 25 provides that "The Common Council of Rochester shall every year grant the said Park Commissioners such sum of money as they shall require and as to said Common Council shall appear reasonable and just for the maintenance of the said park or parks, parkways, approaches thereto and streets connecting the same and for keeping in repair the improvements and structures therein and for providing a suitable office for said commissioners and providing necessary police protection for the maintenance of small parks in said city and care of shade trees in said small parks and the streets, avenues and alleys of said city. The sum of money granted pursuant to this section shall be paid out of the general fund of said city not exceeding in any year the twenty thousand dollars."

The Act makes provision regarding the treasurer's receipts and payments, creating debts, shows how commissioner's office may be vacated, how real and personal property may be granted, bequeathed, devised or conveyed to the said City of Rochester for the purpose of park extension, etc.

The Act also provides that "All other lands acquired by the City of Rochester under the provisions of this Act, except lands received by gift whenever the Board of Park Commissioners shall determine the same or any parcel



Genesee Valley Park



thereof is unnecessary to be longer used for the purpose of the commission may be sold at public auction after twenty days' notice thereof in the official paper of the City of Rochester by the City Treasurer. The deed thereof shall be executed to the purchaser by the Mayor of the City and the purchase price thereof paid to the City Treasurer and put to the credit of the Park Improvement Fund as an addition thereto.

Provision is made for Park Ordinances, Penalties for Violation of the Park Ordinances, for proceedings in Supreme Court and makes city officials ineligible as Park Commissioners.

Some of the salient points in this enabling Act of the Legislature are given to show its general tenor. It was at this period that the venerable Dr. E. M. Moore was elected President of the Board of Park Commissioners which comprised the very flower of Rochester's citizenship and to them must be given the credit of having battled success-



Perennial Phlox

fully against so many adverse conditions and established what must be considered the preliminaries for the magnificent park system which Rochester possesses to-day.

The original Board was happy in its selection of lands for park purposes, but for years these lands remained unattractive for want of proper adornment, the process of which was slow and unappreciated by the public. This was natural, because, trees, shrubs and ornamental plants take a long time to grow into beauty, the leveling of ground, the removing of stones from the rough and uneven fields, the toning down of unsightly hummocks, the destruction of noxious weeds, the levelling and grading of roads and pathways are tedious and slow operations, and these, extended over wide areas of land, performed under the stress of inadequate income and short-handed labor required the patience

of the commissioners and demanded the forbearance of the critical public whose unsympathetic attitude was anything but encouraging to these pioneer commissioners.

The Board selected from a group of landscape architects who were invited to look over the acquired park lands, one of the most eminent in the profession, Mr. Olmstead. But strange to say this expert had different ideas of park service and utility to that of the then Park Commissioners, for instance, Mr. Olmstead was averse to the idea of creating parks for the entertainment of large crowds of people. There was a danger, he said, in large gatherings, which were liable to riot and disorder. This notion seems strange when it is remembered that of late years, when the parks are resplendent in their cultivated glory that as many as 20,000 people have gathered in more than one of our parks and that not the slightest symptom of disorder was anywhere apparent.

But Dr. Moore and his associates went bravely on with their plans to establish parks for the people and to lay the ground work for resorts that would accommodate vast masses who might go there for recreation.

Nearly all the members of the original Board of Park Commissioners are dead and have been succeeded by others equally enthusiastic in their labors to bring our park systems to perfection.

Their labors and that of subsequently appointed commissioners comes under the head of what may be called the cultured development of our park system.

The labors of Dr. E. M. Moore and his heroic associates of the Park Board cannot be too highly estimated. They laid the foundation of what was to be achieved in after years. They won the applause of the people and the confidence of the municipal authorities to a large extent. Their achievements belong to the formative or preliminary stage of Rochester Public Park System, but the credit for marvellous expansion, development and the exquisite culture, which characterizes our parks and which are the admiration of all to-day, must be given to those who came into control in later years.

## Part II

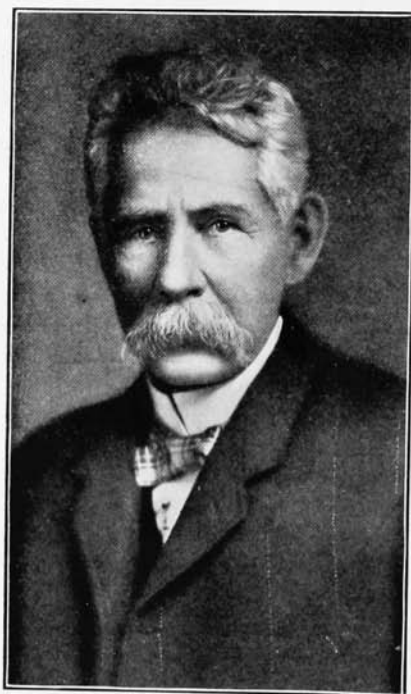
## The Economic Stage of Park History



FOLLOWING what has been termed the Formative or Preliminary Period of the Rochester Park System development is what may be designated as the economic stage. That which the pioneer commissioners had accomplished in the securing of farm lands and grazing fields for park purposes was only calculated to augment the popular antagonism against the creating of parks. "Who cares to trudge over those old nursery grounds and farms now that the city has purchased them, what attraction do they possess to induce people to visit them?" were questions asked. The parks at this time indeed, bore the nature of the proverbial "White Elephant" and it was not until 1894 that the Park Commissioners fully realized the responsibilities which confronted them in the matter of maintenance. At that date A. B. Lamberton was appointed Park Commissioner to succeed Charles H. Wright who resigned and he and some of his associates discussed from time to time the feasibility of not only obtaining an increase in the annual allowance for maintenance but for additional appropriations for improving and cultivating the grounds and erecting the necessary buildings for the comfort and entertainment of the people.

It did not take the commissioners long to perceive that if the parks were ever going to be made of practical benefit to the public, there would have to be a more liberal financial policy adopted toward them by the city than had ever been.

On February 28th, 1902 Mr. A. B. Lamberton was elected president of the Park Board pro tempore and on March 26th, 1902, he was elected president. A new era in the policy of the Park Board began with the coming.



A. B. Lamberton

into power of President Lamberton who now determined to follow out the plans which he and his associates had for some time been contemplating.

It was found that the park law provided two sources of revenue, the Common Council of Rochester and the State Legislature.

In November, 1903, the Park Commissioners informed the Board of Estimate and Apportionment that the time had come when the Park Commissioners felt that they could no longer neglect to ask for \$150,000 which had so long been needed in order that they might have placed at their disposal sufficient funds to make the necessary betterments throughout the parks.

It was urged that this sum of money was needed to enable the Park Board to finish some of the improvements decided upon by the landscape architect and approved by the commission some twelve years previously, and to care for other long neglected features. It was shown that some substantial buildings and other structures of character and pleasing architectural design were needed to replace old buildings which seriously marred the natural charm of the landscape and were sources of expense.

The Park Board was successful in obtaining a great increase of money which enabled it to carry out many of its contemplated improvements. The money, however, was doled out grudgingly and estimates for betterments, etc., submitted to the city authorities from time to time were vexatiously curtailed.

This story of obtaining the necessary money for park purposes is one of continual struggle on the part of the Commissioners to get funds with which to attain the standard of excellence which they had in view. Only by persistent efforts did the Park Board impress the city authorities with the wisdom and necessity of meeting, in part, its requirements.

By means of the increased resources the parks now began to assume some of the beautiful features planned by





A May Day in Seneca Park

the landscape architects, which year by year developed in a way to surprise and delight the public and which will be described later on in this paper.

But other discouragements than the matter of finance soon confronted the Park Commissioners. It was inevitable that, as the park system developed and won the approval of the citizens that the newspapers should insist upon presenting articles from time to time describing the improvements of the parks and that the people should flock to them and speak in commendatory terms of the grand progress that was being made by the Park Commissioners.

This aroused the jealousy of certain politicians who endeavored to curtail the efforts of the local press to keep the public informed of the grand work that was being performed by the Park Commissioners under the leadership of their intrepid and philanthropic president, Alexander B. Lamberton.

The politicians, endeavored by innuendoes and a mendacious propaganda to create a sentiment against the independence of the Park Board. They wanted to bring the parks into politics. But the Park Board was firmly entrenched by the provisions of the Legislature Act in its character as an independent body. And it is this fact that has kept the Park Board of Rochester free from the taint of politics and enabled it to achieve the splendid results which made our park system the admiration of all familiar with its present state of perfection.

It was not until failing in a supreme effort that the politicians lost all hope of engulfing our parks in the maelstrom of politics. Public declarations were made here and in other political centers that the Park Board was too unwieldy in its make up, that its membership was too large. It was declared that it was difficult to obtain quorums at its meetings and that it would be better to reduce the members to three or at most five members. The mendacity of the statement is apparent when the fact is stated that only on

very rare occasions has it happened that there was no quorum at any of its meetings since the organization of the commission.

One of the grandest features of Rochester park history is the fact that leading citizens of the community have, during so many years, devoted time and intellect to the creation of adequately equipped parks for the comfort, diversion, physical and moral culture of the people—that this service has been rendered without any pecuniary reward or political preferment. This gratuitous service by men of



Prairie Dogs in Seneca Park

large affairs and many responsibilities, who sacrificed a vast amount of time, performed many labors and endured many vexations gives a brilliant luster to the story of our park system, and crowns the commissioners past and present with the laurel of a people's gratitude.

The economic stage of park system forms a most important link in the chain of events which not only provided Rochester with one of the finest park systems in the country, but gave our city one of the richest assets as is shown in the following park inventory taken in 1906, since which there has been a rise in value which would add many thousands of dollars to the total specified in the inventory.

## Rochester's Park System

21

## PARK INVENTORY—JANUARY 1, 1906

## Genesee Valley Park

Acres		
355.48		
<u>79.6</u>	river	
435.08 acres	.	\$371,400.00
Estimated value of trees and shrubs planted	.	132,940.00
Permanent improvement and embellishment	.	48,435.28
Buildings constructed by Board		11,730.00
Estimated value of nursery stock	.	18,000.00
Tools	.	7,832.41
Sheep \$877.50, horses \$545.00, goats \$22.00	.	1,444.50
		<u>\$591,782.19</u>
Superintendent's horse	.	175.00
		<u>\$591,957.19</u>

## Seneca Park

Acres		
182.06		
<u>29.00</u>	river	
211.06 acres	.	\$187,860.00
Estimated value of trees and shrubs planted	.	12,843.60
Permanent improvement and embellishment	.	22,776.44
Buildings constructed by Board		13,741.71
Tools	.	4,268.63
Zoological collection	.	2,483.50
Horses \$380.00, cows \$87.00	.	467.00
		<u>\$244,440.88</u>
Amount forward	.	<u>\$836,388.07</u>



Lilacs at Highland Park



Greenhouses—Highland Park



## Rochester's Park System

23

Amount . . . . . \$836,398.07

## Highland Park

Acres		
54.69 acres	. . . . .	\$164,070.00
Estimated value of trees in pinetum	. . . . .	25,000.00
Estimated value of trees and shrubs	. . . . .	45,000.00
Estimated value of perennials and bulbs	. . . . .	7,500.00
Permanent improvement and embellishment	. . . . .	21,037.13
Buildings constructed by Board		21,380.81
Tools	. . . . .	3,400.79
Horses	. . . . .	570.00
		<hr/>
		\$287,958.73

## Maplewood Park

Acres		
114.91		
29.00 river		
	<hr/>	
143.91 acres	. . . . .	\$207,795.00
Estimated value of trees planted		2,280.00
Permanent improvement and embellishment	. . . . .	10,104.12
Buildings constructed by Board		11,055.99
Tools	. . . . .	2,640.72
Horses	. . . . .	100.00
		<hr/>
		\$ 233,975.83
Amount forward	. . . . .	\$1,358,332.63

Amount . . . . . \$1,358,332.63

### City Parks

	Acres	Lots	Value
Jones Park . .	6.722	36	\$102,572.02
Brown's Park .	4.500	24	43,205.94
Madison Park .	.843	6	12,722.25
Plymouth Park .	.750		15,585.12
Franklin Park .	1.610	16	76,999.99
Washington Park .	1.080		68,297.41
Wadsworth Park .	.844	8	39,624.25
Lake View Park .	5.177		86,788.38
Sumner Park .	.575		10,000.00
Douglas Triangle .	.054		13,091.30
Kelly Triangle .			132.80
Burke Terrace			
Park .	.101		1,100.00
Atlantic Circle .	.0253		1,000.00
River bank,			
St. Paul St. .	.383		1,000.00
Anderson Park .	.937		30,000.00
Tanner Park .	2.772		1,500.00
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	26.3733		\$ 503,619.46
Tools, City Parks . . . . .			2,102.47
Horse, City Parks . . . . .			140.00
Furniture, books, etc., in board rooms, .			2,299.09
			<hr/>
Total . . . . .			\$1,866,493.65

## Part III

## Period of Maturity and Demonstration



SO MUCH HAS BEEN DONE, so much achieved for the comfort and happiness of the people by the Rochester Park Commissioners that their names are inscribed upon this page, but should more fittingly be chiseled upon enduring marble and placed at a conspicuous point of our park system to commemorate their patriotic and unselfish labors.

ALEXANDER B. LAMBERTON, President

## Members of the present Board

(1907)

H. F. Atwood, Robert A. Badger, Edward J. Beir, William C. Barry, Henry Bausch, Charles T. Chapin, John E. Durand, Walter B. Duffy, Charles P. Ford, John Hall, Mathias Kondolf, Alexander B. Lamberton, Bernard J. McQuaid, Frank G. Newell, Erickson Perkins, William S. Riley, Frank Ritter, Alfred G. Wright, Edward Wallis.

Early in Mr. Lamberton's administration it was the policy of the Park Board to not only make our parks beautiful but to bring them into practical use in every conceivable way that would encourage our youth to seek and enjoy health giving pleasure and afford opportunities for out door diversion for citizens of all ages and conditions, and not only were these privileges contemplated, but also to render the park system educational by the introduction of departments in horticulture, floriculture, forestry and zoology which might be available for high school youth and the students and professors of our University. All these noble projects have been accomplished.



Flowering Shrubs at Highland Park

It will be interesting at this juncture to place before the reader a detailed description of Rochester's Park System and it may be well to begin with Highland Park situated on the south side of the city and about one and a half miles distant from the center of it. This park was the gift of Messrs. Ellwanger and Barry and will forever remain a monument to their generosity, patriotism and public spirited philanthropy. It is situated on a glacial moraine that runs east and west. Including the distributing reservoir for the city's water supply, it contains forty acres. From the



Lilacs at Highland Park

highest point one of the grandest views of the city and surrounding country is obtained. For a distance of thirty miles the eye is entranced by a panorama that thrills the soul with admiration. Looking to the north can be seen the silvery gleam of Lake Ontario situated eight miles away.

Highland Park has become famous for having the most beautiful collection of shrubs in the State. The collection includes about 1300 species and varieties and are generally planted in regard to their family relationships. One of the most important groups in the collection is the lilacs which contains one hundred and sixty varieties and every spring, when they are in bloom they are visited by twenty-five thousand people during an entire day.



The following resume of the main horticultural features of the park system by Mr. Dunbar will more fully describe the richness of Highland Park.

"The number of deciduous trees, shrubs and evergreens; including the paeony collection; in the park system, is about two thousand seven hundred species and varieties. The shrubs are all represented in the Highland Park shrub collection, and the coniferous evergreens are all included in the Highland Park Pinetum. The trees are represented throughout the park system, as there is no single area where all the known hardy trees of the north temperate zone



English Iris

could be properly segregated. The intention is to plant them where the conditions will suit them, and where they will correspond with their surroundings, so that an arboretum is practically being formed in the entire park system, without the

trees being grouped in their family relationships.

Amongst some of the most important features of this large collection, is the pinetum on the north side of Highland Park, which includes all the hardy pines, spruces, firs, yews, junipers, arborvitaes and others, and numbers about one hundred and seventy species and varieties. The nucleus of the pinetum was established in 1896, and many of them are now attaining considerable size and are of much interest to many students.

The lilac collection is perhaps the most popular feature in this extensive list, and it is looked forward to annually by many thousands of people, as one of the floral events of the year in Western New York. As soon as any new varieties are sent out, they are procured, and

added to the collection, and it contains at present about one hundred and ninety species and varieties.

The collection of rhododendrons, azaleas, and other heath plants, planted in specially prepared beds, in the ravines east of the pavilion in Highland Park, make a most brilliant display at the end of May and first of June, and whilst they are in bloom they are daily surrounded by crowds of people. These plants are difficult to grow successfully, and require much cultural care. This collection is the finest that can be seen west of the Hudson River, and embraces about sixty species and varieties.

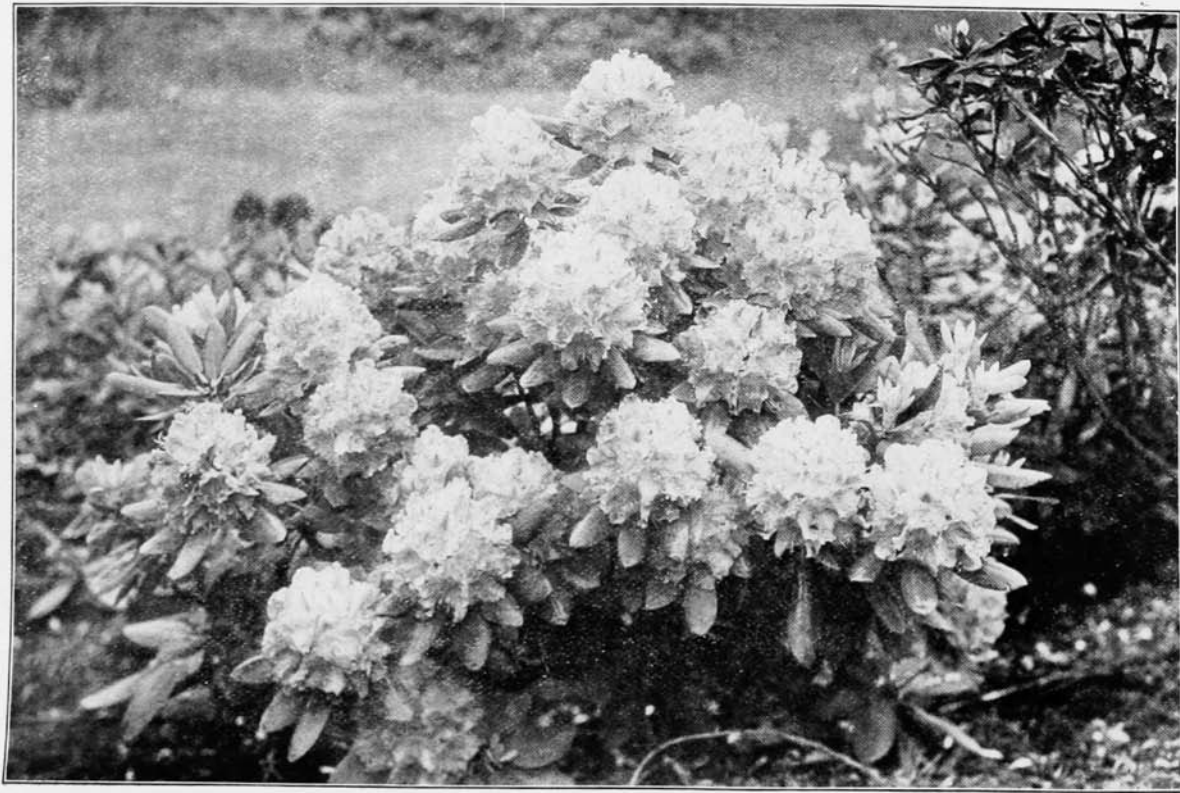
The collection of paeonies includes three hundred and fifty varieties. This has recently been established at the west end of Highland Park, and will, we believe, come to be as popular a feature as the lilacs, when the plants become fully established.



Tree Paeony

A very distinctive feature is ornamental planting, has been put into effect in the Seneca Park Boulevard on the river banks, south of the Ridge Road. Both sides of the Boulevard have been planted with thousands of the native wild roses, thickly massed together, and the effect of these in bloom is remarkably beautiful, and the showy fruit which follows in the fall is equally attractive. We speak of this because it is such an appropriate style of ornamental planting, seldom seen elsewhere.

The bulb display which produces such a cheerful effect in early spring in the parks is much enjoyed. From 100,000 to 130,000 mixed bulbs, including tulips, hyacinths, narcissus, crocuses, etc., are planted in the various parks, adjacent to appropriate surroundings; excepting Genesee Valley



Rhododendrons at Highland Park

Park, which on account of its simple pastoral scenery does not lend itself to brilliant floral displays. Twenty thousand tulips are planted in Jones Park; six thousand in Plymouth Park; four thousand in Anderson Park; nine thousand in Seneca Park, besides a number in other parks, and the largest number in Highland Park, and they make a most brilliant display in the months of April and May.

About 125,000 bedding and flowering plants are raised in the greenhouses to supply the park system. As soon as the bulbs are through blooming in the different parks, they are removed and their places filled with the summer occupants. A very attractive feature is made in Jones Park where ten thousand flowering plants are planted in the formal straight borders, forming ribbon lines, and for several years this has been a point of attraction to many people. Perhaps one of the most attractive of the parks is the Plymouth, where all the beds fit into the centre, and present somewhat the appearance of an English flower garden when the beds are filled for the summer. Every available nook and corner in the shrub collection in Highland Park is filled with thousands of annuals, biennials, perennials and summer flowering bulbs, in a more or less informal way, and a constant display of bloom is maintained from spring until fall.

From a horticultural and scientific standpoint, one of the most important things accomplished under the auspices and sanction of the Board of Park Commissioners, by their employes, has been the investigation, discovery and collection of American Hawthorns, throughout Western New York and Ontario, Canada. This has attracted world-wide attention. It could not of course have been accomplished without the aid and co-operation of Dr. C. S. Sargent, of the Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University. With the material and field notes supplied him, he has identified, and technically described the new species of hawthorns found elsewhere in North America, that he has been able to obtain. The American Hawthorns are amongst the most beautiful and characteristic of trees, and arborescent shrubs,

for the ornamentation of parks and gardens, and they add much dignity to all plantations where they are used.

The result of this is that we have now the largest collection of American Hawthorns of any park system in the world. A large number have been planted at the south end of Genesee Valley Park, Seneca Park Boulevard and Highland Park, and a large number are still in the park nurseries, and will be planted out when they attain sufficient size. On account of the assistance given Dr. Sargent, he has



Chinese Lilacs—Highland Park

very kindly supplied the Park Board with many new species of rare trees and shrubs from time to time. This is an asset which is almost priceless, as the Arnold Arboretum is the greatest repository in the world for rare hardy trees and shrubs.

The foundation for an important herbarium has been established, and it now includes all the dried flowers, fruit, and seeds of the native and foreign trees and shrubs in the park system. The complete native flora is being added as fast as it can be collected from around Rochester and elsewhere.



These various features show, that our park system has horticulturally and scientifically taken an important position amongst the park systems of the world."

The educational and interesting value of the varied collection of shrubs, evergreens and flowering plants to the people can hardly be estimated. It has exercised a powerful influence in the general beautifying of home grounds throughout the city, and it has fostered the care and cultivation of many beautiful plants. The people of Rochester point with pride and exultation to Highland Park.

### Genesee Valley Park

There are 355.48 acres of land and 79.60 acres of water or a total of 435.03 acres in Genesee Valley Park. It contains five and one-half miles of walks and about three miles of roadways.

There have been planted by Superintendent Laney many thousands of trees and shrubs, with a tree nursery on the west side of the river for all parks. \* It is an in-



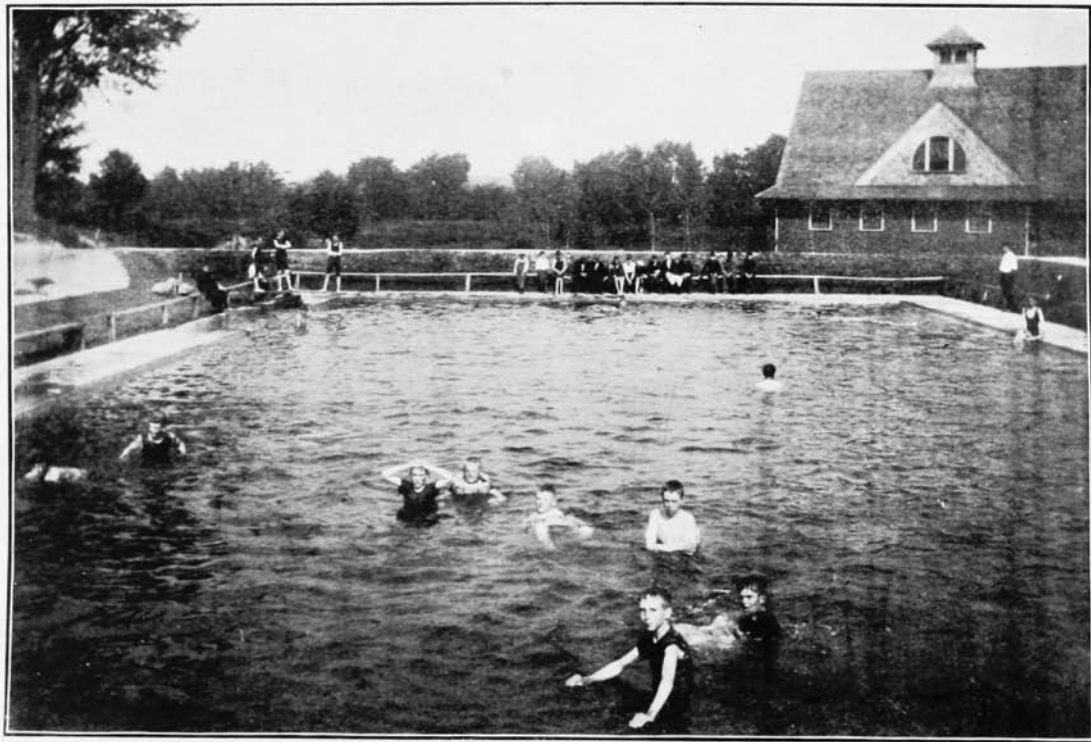
Play Grounds

teresting fact that scions of the "Charter Oak" and "Washington Elm" together with four tulip trees from Mt. Vernon and a memorial tree for Dr. E. M. Moore have been planted in this park. It is designed to add to this collection other trees from historical places as opportunity offers.

There are two refectory buildings for the use of the public, open both in summer and winter. The athletic grounds and stand are valuable features of this park. In winter the grounds are flooded and used for skating.

There is a commodious swimming pool with arrangements for the safety of bathers.





Swimming Pool—Genesee Valley Park

\* A baseball park has been laid out for the separate games, and the golf grounds are pronounced by experts as fine as any public golf course in the country. There is also a cricket field, tennis courts and a large space reserved for a children's play ground, containing a merry-go-round.

In the beautiful grove there is a band stand, and it is here that multitudes assemble to hear the band concerts.

Two suitable boat liveries have been established. In accordance with the Park laws, the commissioners have leased and permitted the erection of buildings to the Rochester Athletic Club, the Y. M. C. A. Athletic and Boating Club, Genesee Valley Golf Club and to about a dozen private boat clubs having a membership of twenty-five or more members.

This matter of leasing was inaugurated by the late Dr. E. M. Moore. It was a wise movement and has proved a valuable asset in drawing large numbers of young people to the use of the park and river.

Under these privileges there are over one thousand canoes and small boats used in this part of the river. A boat service has been established for the conveyance of passengers to a point about eight miles up the river.

There are in the meadows in summer a flock of one hundred twenty-five sheep under the care of a shepherd. Their presence gives a picturesque character to the scene suggestive of tranquillity and rural beauty. Stationary seats have been put along the river banks and at points in the parks where the best views may be obtained.

\* During the past few years, at the opening of the season, open field day sports have inaugurated both in athletics and boating, with an entire day and evening celebration which have attracted many thousands of our citizens. Polo and automobile races on the meadows and the illumination of boats and river at night were the features of these occasions.

These annual events are of a nature so unique, picturesque and exhilarating as to bring joy and gladness to the hearts of all who attend them.

It was in Genesee Valley Park that the first Sunday band concert was given.

The idea of Sunday concerts in the parks first came to the mind of Mr. Lamberton when he was president of the Rochester Chamber of Commerce. After giving the matter serious thought he matured plans for giving concerts in the parks on Saturday and Sunday afternoons under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce. It was not without anxiety as to the outcome of the Sunday concert ven-



May Day in Genesee Valley Park

ture that President Lamberton went to witness the giving of the first concert in Genesee Valley Park. Such a thing had never before been done in Rochester, and there were fears that the people might congregate in great numbers and become disorderly and that the innovation might meet with the disapprobation of the clergy.

To the delight of President Lamberton the people gathered in vast numbers to hear the music and were as quiet and refined in behavior as if they had been at a church service. There were not the faintest signs of disorder or of conduct unbecoming of ladies and gentlemen. The clergy of the city, seeing the orderly conduct of those attending

the Sunday afternoon concerts, and that the park music in no way interfered with the hours for holding divine service in the city, approved of President Lamberton's action.



Subway—Genesee Valley Park

At first these concerts were sustained by funds collected by the Chamber of Commerce through popular subscriptions and eventually the expense was defrayed by

the Park Board and contributions from the Rochester Railway Company and other sources. The Saturday and Sunday concerts have for years been conducted in the various parks and culminated in the holding of grand musical festivals, so that by the wise policy of the Park Commissioners, music of the highest class forms one of the most fascinating and elevating features of the park entertainment.

It will be the policy of the Park Commissioners to foster and encourage in every possible way the cultivation of music in the parks which has had such an uplifting and



View in Genesee Valley Park

spiritualizing influence in the past, and created a longing and earnest demand on the part of the people for its permanent continuance.

In 1905 Hemlock water was brought into use in the park from Genesee Street by the Department of Public Works. This added greatly to the comfort of visitors and enabled the Park Board to establish public convenience stations in various parts of the grounds.

Genesee Valley Park now ranks as one of the most beautiful pleasure resorts in the State. Its undulating meadows, lawns and richly wooded groves, dotted with its scores of dainty club and boat houses, its refectory and play ground appliances, through which meanders the broad



stretch of the silvery Genesee, forms a scene of beauty which captivates the hearts of visitors. Rochesterians have reason to rejoice that they possess such an earthly paradise and that its beauties, its enchantments, its entertainments, its fragrant breezes, its sunshine and shade, its moral influence are offered to all without money and without price.

### Seneca Park

The extraordinary diversity in the character of the various parks which make up the system of Rochester arouses the wonder and admiration of all. Highland and Genesee Valley Parks already described, are characterized by undulating meadow lands, horticultural displays, woods, groves and placid waters; In the northern part of the city is situated a park of an entirely different character. It is doubtful if any municipality in the world can boast of a more gorgeously romantic and entrancing pleasure ground than Seneca Park, which contains two hundred and fourteen acres of land on the eastern and western sides of the Genesee River. The music of the lower falls in diapason tones fills the air with rich vibrations, and the eye of the visitor is fascinated with the grandeur of the mighty gorge, into which the water falls from a height of ninety feet. The geological formation of the cliffs below the falls gives a history of past ages. In unmistakable language printed in layer and strata, it tells of the inconceivably vast periods of time that it required for the river to cut its way down to Lake Ontario. The gigantic character of the operation of nature can be best realized by standing on Driving Park Bridge, or by going to the foot of the falls and looking up at the wonderful geological formation of the cliffs on either side of the river.

The Park Commissioners have put an enormous amount of labor and skill in bringing this park to its present state of development as a pleasure resort.

Seneca Park is about three miles from the center of the city, but so excellent is the present street car service

**Reynolds Library**

**1- 556171**



that it is a very easy matter to get there. Cars run from St. Paul Street to the park on the east side at convenient intervals, while cars on Lake Avenue give a similar service to the park on the west side of the river.

As one alights from the cars on the east side, a little to the rear are the animals and bird houses and cages, where may be seen black bears, cubs, foxes, wolves, monkeys, baboons and a variety of other wild creatures.



Picnic Grove—Seneca Park

There is a large flying cage on which birds exercise themselves, thus giving the sightseer an opportunity to view them at any angle.

A large number of these birds have been donated by citizens of Rochester. Commissioner Bausch has presented a number of birds and animals and has been very active in rendering the zoological collection interesting and instructive. Commissioner Newell has also devoted much time to the Zoo, and the public is indebted to him for organizing many entertainments, such as pony exhibitions and shooting contests, besides the musical festivals held in

Seneca Park attended by twenty-five thousand people at a time. The amount of pleasure and instruction derived by children and grown people from visiting the Zoo is beyond calculation and it is hoped that the efforts of the Park Commissioners to add to the perfection of this zoological collection will meet with the generous co-operation of our wealthy citizens.

Another interesting feature of this romantic resort is the deer park, where, may be seen a male and female Buffalo and a yearling calf, and grand specimens of the American deer and elk. The elks are admired for their proud carriage, strength and activity, while the opposite is seen in the deer whose timidity causes them to fly across the field at the first sound.

Special care has been taken by the Park Commissioners to provide grounds and appliances for athletic sports, and in the northern part of Seneca Park, in the portion set apart for this, is a fine body of water fed by springs.

This lake has many attractive features for the children who sail their toy ships and boats in its quiet waters. A variety of swans, geese and ducks besport themselves there to the delight of the little people. There is also an artificial pool which is used for amusement purposes by the smaller children.

A charming feature of the park is the number of pathways which lead along side and down the precipitous cliffs amid the luxurious foliage, leading to many vistas and grand outlooks along the river. Bordering some of the roads near the deer park are magnificent displays of the rarest species of lily. The park is rendered very interesting from the fact that annually there have been planted in the grounds oak trees in honor of prominent citizens, veterans of the Civil War, etc. This function has occurred on Arbor days by the children of Public School No. 26, under the supervision of Colonel Moulthrop.

Up to January 28, 1904, there was Seneca Park East and Seneca Park West. At that date, however, the Park

Commissioners changed the name of the west side grounds to Maplewood Park.

The park embraces what has long been known as Maple Grove, and is historically interesting because it contains the relics of an old Indian fortification and traces of an ancient trail. What is known as Indian Day is cele-



Young Elk—Seneca Park

brated here annually, when Indians from Tonawanda reservation hold their festival. In October, 1907, a band of Seneca Indians initiated President Lamberton, Colonel Moulthrop and Engineer Henry Brown as members of the Seneca tribes in the presence of two thousand school children and citizens.

At the north end of Maplewood Park are two diamonds for baseball and an artificial lake. In winter time there is much coasting and skating and many gather there to enjoy the sport. There is a fine administration building, a refectory and a number of swings for the comfort of the public.

In 1895, through the generosity of two public spirited citizens, the Park Board acquired the land between Maple Grove and Driving Park Avenue. Seneca and Maplewood Parks are one by nature and only have separate designations for the public convenience and to make it clear which car route the visitor must take to get to the point desired.

It would seem to the reader that the creation of the park described constituted a work of sufficient magnitude and importance to entitle the Park Commissioners to every honor that the public could bestow upon them. But great

as the achievement was it forms but a part of what the commissioners have accomplished for the people of Rochester.

We have yet to speak of the conversion of many bare and unsightly spaces within the city, that for many years had been ugly eye sores, into exquisitely cultivated miniature parks and flower laden and foliage crowned squares.

These redeemed breathing spots which are now the glory of our city and the pride of the people are Jones Park, Franklin Park, Washington Park, Wadsworth Park, Lake View Park, Sumner Park, Douglas Triangle, Tanner Park, Brown's Park, Madison Park, Plymouth Park, Kelly Triangle, Burke Terrace Park, Atlantic Circle, River Bank St. Paul Street.

Nor is this all that the Park Commissioners, under the administration of President Lamberton, have performed.

For years past it has been the dream of President Lamberton to enrich Rochester with a magnificent park on the shores of Lake Ontario. He did not keep his strong desire on this point a secret. His idea took wings, and whether the vibrations of the Lamberton brain sped its way through the ether and touched a responsive brain wave or not, may never be known. Certain it is that years ago President Lamberton prophesied as follows:



Bald Headed Stork

"I confidently predict that Rochester will some day take in the lake front. The natural boundaries of the city are Lake Ontario and Irondequoit Bay, and it will not be many years before this land is taken in as part of a great city. Charlotte will be annexed first. Then every foot of the shore will pass to private ownership. I urge the acquiring of land now for breathing places, playgrounds and

parks. I predict that it will soon be too late for accomplishment."

It seemed like an answer to prayer when eventually there came to the Park Board a gift of about four hundred and eighty-four acres of land on the lake shore from Dr. Durand and George Eastman. The land presented is near Windsor Beach. It lies back of high bluffs and commands a fine view of the lake and the shores to the east and the west. There is a large piece of woodland, cut by ravines



Fallow Deer—Seneca Park

with running streams. Two dams could be constructed and artificial lakes would result, which would afford boating, bathing and fishing in the summer and skating in the winter. The hills are covered with wild plants and shrubs and need little training.

An expert in speaking of this magnificent gift says: "This property will make one of the finest parks in the United States and it does not require the gift of prophecy to foresee that in the near future, Durand Park will become the most attractive and most popular resort on the lake front. The site is ideal and the surroundings will require only slight changes. The land was laid out by nature for



a park and presents the finest opportunity for development of any section on the nineteen miles of lake and bay front from Manitou Beach to Glen Haven. The frontage of the lake shore is nearly a mile. The property contains nearly one hundred acres of forest and woodland. Its southern boundary is not much over two miles from the present city line, and there is little doubt that in the near future it will be connected with the city by means of boulevards and trolley lines so as to become the most accessible spot on the lake shore."

This expansive park is especially adapted as a resort for the elk and deer now kept at Seneca Park.

Following is a copy of the letter sent by Messrs. Durand and Eastman to the Mayor of Rochester and the Park Commissioners :

To the Honorable James G. Cutler, Mayor, and the Honorable The Park Commissioners of the City of Rochester :—

We, Henry S. Durand and George Eastman, hereby offer to give to the City, to be used as a public park forever, a tract of land of about four hundred and eighty-four acres situate in the Town of Irondequoit on Lake Ontario. Commencing at a point about one-half mile west of Sea Breeze this land fronts the lake shore for about three-quarters of a mile to one mile, comprising the following properties as laid down on the plat of the Town of Irondequoit contained in James M. Lathrop & Co.'s Plat Book of Monroe County, namely:

From Henry S. Durand

Hosea Rogers	. . . . .	30	acres
Henry S. Durand	. . . . .	214.87	"
J. P. Lacour	. . . . .	14.58	"
Jos. Bucher	. . . . .	10	"
		<hr/>	
		269.45	acres





Scene in Seneca Park

## Rochester's Park System

47

## From George Eastman

Ludwig Mengel	.	.	.	.	.	100	acres
Michael Larkin	.	.	.	.	.	16.75	"
William Delapp	.	.	.	.	.	25	"
Thomas Delapp	.	.	.	.	.	25	"
Chas. S. Baker Estate	.	.	.	.	.	47.8	"
						<hr/> 214.55	acres

The conveyance of this land to the City shall be subject to the following exceptions and conditions :

First. The stone house built by Henry S. Durand near the Weisner Road, together with twenty acres of land adjacent thereto, to be bounded and defined, shall be excepted and shall remain the property of Henry S. Durand during his life, for his personal use only.

Second. To give the public access to said property, the City or the Park Commissioners shall, as soon as practicable, and within three years, improve and macadamize the present so-called Weisner Road and the so-called "Hog-back" Road from the lake shore to the southern boundary of said property. Or they may, in their discretion, build equivalent macadam roads from the lake shore to said southern boundary. And the City or the Park Commissioners shall also within the same time build a new macadam road just south of the Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburgh Railroad tracks from the Weisner Road west to the Hog-back Road.

Third. No building shall ever be built, maintained or used upon the park lands except for public park purposes. No right, license or privilege shall be granted or created except for the enjoyment, benefit or service of the public at large, and no such right, license or privilege shall be granted or created for the enjoyment or benefit of any individual or group of individuals or club or association or corporation.

Respectfully,

(Signed)

HENRY S. DURAND,  
GEORGE EASTMAN.

Rochester, N. Y., January 28th, 1907.

Copy

## Action of the Park Commissioners

WHEREAS the Park Board has sought for some years to acquire lands on the shores of Lake Ontario of sufficient acreage to make a great healthful recreation park;

And whereas through the generosity of two of Rochester's public spirited citizens, there is now offered to the City through the Park Board, four hundred and ninety acres of land, possessing every essential feature necessary to form an extensive lake park, free and clear without cost to said city.

Therefore be it resolved, that the Park Board respectfully request the City Corporation Counsel to examine the section of the Charter of the said Board which authorizes the commissioners "for and on behalf of the said City of Rochester" for the purpose of a public park, to take by purchase, gift or by condemnation proceedings \* \* \* title to real estate in and near the City of Rochester, and the Corporation Counsel report to this Board his opinion, as to whether the language warrant the commissioners in this case to receive the munificent gift.

Be it also resolved, that if the said Corporation Counsel finds it to be his opinion, that it does not give the commissioners the power to receive these lands for the purpose of a park, then in that case, the commissioners request that an amendment be drawn amending the section so as to enable the Park Commissioners to accept on behalf of the City these lands, and to present the same to the Legislature as early in the session as possible.

Be it also resolved, That a certified copy of this resolution as adopted be submitted to his Honor, James G. Cutler, Mayor, for his consideration.

Adopted at a regular meeting of the Board, October 25, 1906.

M. O. STONE,

Secretary.

The tardiness—or what might be called the opposition of the city authorities to taking prompt measures to sustain the action of the Park Commissioners, who voted to accept this truly magnificent gift aroused the indignation of the people.

Instead of joyfully helping to remove any legal or technical obstacles to the acquisition of the lake side park, there seemed to be on the part of the city authorities a prevar-



View in Seneca Park

icating-dog-in-the-manger policy at work to thwart the efforts of President Lamberton and his Board of Commissioners to recognize the nobility and extraordinary munificence of this gift from Messrs. Durand and Eastman.

This attitude on the part of the city officials brought forth scathing editorials in the local press. The Democrat & Chronicle of January 14th, 1907, said: "There is some anxiety among citizens of Rochester over the delay in providing for the necessary legislation for the acceptance by this city of the splendid tract of land in Irondequoit on the lake



A Sunday in the Park

shore generously offered for park purposes by Dr. H. S. Durand and George Eastman. \* \* \* \* If this opportunity to secure a great lakeside park should pass unimproved, it would be a lasting reproach and injury to the city which its future population naturally would resent. \* \* \* \* It is important that the steps necessary at Albany and here toward the complete acceptance of this munificent offer made to the city should be taken at once."

The people of Rochester are familiar with the opposition to the Park Board's efforts and plans manifested by the city authorities at various times, particularly in regard to the application of park funds, which gave trouble and anxiety to the Park Commission, caused unnecessary friction and displayed a pettifogging and mean spirit on the part of certain ones clothed with brief authority.

It was natural that President Lamberton and his Board of Commissioners should finally triumph over the aggressiveness and secure for our city this great gift of a lakeside park for the people.

It has been the ambition of President Lamberton to make Rochester's park system not only beautiful from the material point of view, but so equipped with educational appliances and departments as to fascinate the people and create within their hearts a desire for a higher knowledge of the Divine order of creation manifested so abundantly in nature. Thus, there has been a vast amount of labor and skill displayed in the floral development of the park system, it being realized that flowers are suggestive of spiritual things, that they soften the hearts of even the most callous, and that their perfumes seem to touch the senses with lofty aspirations. These soul emotions could not fail of being enhanced by the sweet strains of music furnished on the Saturdays and Sundays. The stately forest trees, the countless varieties of herb and shrub, the specimens of wild animals and birds cause the beholder to reflect—to think of the goodness and inscrutable wisdom of the Most High.



In pursuit of these uplifting influences, President Lamberton and the Board of Park Commissioners have been united in their sentiments and efforts. These men have for years been creating for the people of Rochester the greatest of safeguards possible against the evil influences ever present in great communities. They have made it possible for the people of Rochester to enjoy the keenest delights, invigorating pastimes, healthful recreation apart from the alluring vices which lead the young to downward paths.

Conspicuous in the effort for upliftment of the young stands the Park Board's achievement in the creating of play grounds for the children of Rochester.

This was a matter of such vast importance as to absorb the earnest attention of the Park Commissioners. President Lamberton called a meeting of the city parks committee which was held on May 21st, 1902, when the subject of playgrounds within the city limits was fully discussed and Brown's Square was recommended as a fitting site for the initial movement.

The picturesque value of our parks is recognized by artists. Members of the Rochester Art Club have during many years frequented them for the purpose of getting themes for their paintings. Gruppe, Meyvis, Herdle, Dennis, Moore, Ella See, E. Lampert Cooper and others being among those who have found scenes in our parks worthy of study. Some of these scenes have been painted and exhibited in the Paris Salon by Gruppe and Meyvis and in our National Academy by Herdle.

In pursuit of these uplifting influences President Lamberton and the Board of Park Commissioners have been united in their sentiments and efforts. These men have for years been creating for the people of Rochester the greatest safeguards possible against the evil influences ever present in great communities. They have made it possible for the people of Rochester to enjoy the keenest delights, invigorating pastimes, healthful recreation apart from the alluring vices which lead the young to downward paths.

Conspicuous in this effort for the uplifting of the young, stands the Park Board's achievement in the creating of playgrounds for the children of Rochester.

This was a matter of such vast importance as to absorb the earnest attention of the Park Commissioners. President Lamberton called a meeting of the city parks committee which was held on May 21st, 1902, when the subject of playgrounds within the city limits was fully discussed and Brown's Square was recommended as a fitting site for the initial movement.

At a subsequent meeting of the Board of Commissioners the action of the committee was unanimously approved. On May 27th, 1902 the city parks committee held another meeting to hear the objections of property owners in the immediate neighborhood against taking Brown's Square for a playground. The objector's committee consisted of Commissioner of Public Works, T. J. Neville, Hon. Richard Gardiner and Alderman William Keneally and other citizens of the second ward.

After listening to the arguments presented by the objectors' committee, the Park Board or Committee were unanimous in its opinion that the reasons advanced were not sufficient to warrant it in not making the change and reaffirmed its determination to establish the playground as had been voted.

It is gratifying to state that upon mature consideration of the arguments set forth by the Park Commissioners, the objectors withdrew their opposition to the converting of Brown's Square into a public playground.

In 1903 systematic playing was taught in Brown's Square with such equipment as could be furnished. A commodious brick structure as shelter for the children and provided with a toilet and other conveniences for both sexes, was erected by the Park Board.

Later on, the equipment was further increased. A large wading pool was constructed, and sand beds were placed in convenient spots for the diversion of little tots.

In the meantime President Lamberton had conceived a plan for securing the co-operation of leading citizens. In the interval between the meeting of the Park Commissioners on May 21st and May 26th, 1902, he suggested that a society be formed independent from the Park Board or auxiliary to it, that would assume charge of the playground work.



Children's Playground

Accordingly in May, 1902, "The Children's Playground League" of Rochester was organized. It had its inception in a talk at the Brick Church Institute and among the citizens who helped to bring the society into being may be mentioned. President Lamberton, Winifred J. Smith, Misses Alida and Eleanor L. Lattimore, Caroline E. and Mary P. Milleman and others. The new organization took the name of the "Children's Playground

League." This organization became useful in co-operating with the Park Board in the developing of the playgrounds and assumed certain responsibilities for a time.

It is impossible in the brief space allotted for the presentation of facts to do adequate justice to a subject of such vast importance as this playground is. As an instance of its popularity it may be stated in 1906, the attendance of children numbered 61,287, while during the ten weeks of the previous summer there were 40,402. Of late years the attendance has increased to such an extent as to need special care in the management of the playground, and, supervising the athletic sports which consist of the simplest exercises to some of the difficult feats.

A very attractive feature is the wading pool which is an inestimable boon to the little folks who delight in paddling in the clear water. This is especially enjoyable and beneficial to the children during the heated term. This diversion is carried on under the watchful eye of a vigilant instructor. In wet weather indoor exercises are enjoyed in the shelter where the children are taught basket making, singing, etc. while those who wish can take shower baths.

Park Commissioner, John Hall, who is a member of the Playground Committee, in speaking of the Brown's Square playground said—"I feel that this work is the most important of any the Park Board has to perform. Its value to the city, to the commonwealth and to the nation is beyond our power to estimate."

In a report to the Park Board presented by Mr. White, Supervisor for the Children's Playground League spoke as follows:

"What then have been the results of all this expenditure of energy and money?"

1st—It is the united testimony of the neighbors, police and every one concerned around both Washington and Brown's Square playgrounds, that the neighborhoods are more orderly and the streets not infested with children who have no other place to go.

- 2d —The crap shooting which has for years been a curse to the neighborhoods as carried on weekdays and Sundays, on the lots now occupied by the playgrounds, has been eliminated and those who still hold to the gambling spirit are compelled to go outside the city line.
- 3d —Storekeepers around the playgrounds are no longer as much bothered as they once were by the children stealing their ware.



Maplewood Pavilion

- 4th—The freight station near Brown's Square, has not been infested by boys climbing on the cars, stealing loose articles, or trying the patience of the yard men. From the foreman to the switchman and gateman at the Brown street crossing, near the playground, I have the same story of greatly diminished bother with the juvenile element. Lastly; while there were several boys maimed last year, so far there has not been one this year.
- 5th—And lastly, I wish to call your attention to a signed report which I have obtained from Police Head-

quarters showing that whereas in 1904 in the First and Fourth Precincts, where we now have playgrounds, there were eighty juvenile arrests during the school vacation, since the establishment of the playgrounds there has been a marked decrease in the number of arrests, especially in the First Precinct where Brown's Square is situated."

A member of the Executive Committee of the Playgrounds Association of America recently remarked that—"a recreation center, will, if properly conducted, save a city more than its cost of construction and maintenance, in avoiding increased expenditure for departments of justice, police charities and correction."

The playgrounds having been established and placed in condition, President Lamberton's attention was next given to the proper development, under organized effort of athletics. Very little attention had been paid to physical recreation and athletic sports up to this time. It is true the Y. M. C. A. had a gymnasium and there were similar ones elsewhere, but there was no systematic training available for those who wished to enjoy a course of physical culture, and there were no opportunities in Rochester even if one so desired. It was therefore an important move on the part of President Lamberton, when he gave his aid and influence in organizing "The Rochester Physical Education Association," the objects of which are as follows:

- 1st—The promotion and control of physical recreation and sports in and about Rochester.

- 2d —The establishment of gymnasiums, playgrounds and athletic fields.

- 3d —The study of hygienic conditions in schools, shops, stores and homes.

- 4th—To study the physical deficiencies on the development of growing children.

- 5th—The dissemination of a knowledge of the laws of health by means of public addresses and published articles.



The object of the society was to unify the efforts of all organizations having in charge the several kinds of work mentioned above by affording a common meeting ground or forum where the work of such organization may be presented and freely discussed with a view of promoting mutual helpfulness and efficiency.

The Advisory Board of the Society was made very broad and included the following:



Scene in Maplewood Park

Chamber of Commerce, Department of Education, Mechanics Institute, University Athletic Council, State industrial School, University of Rochester Alumni Association, Jewish Clubs, New York State Armory, Monroe County Medical Association, Normal Training School, East High School, University Gymnasium, Homeopathic Association, Rochester Athletic Club, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Teachers

Association, Rochester Turnverein, Children's Aid Society, Social Settlement, Park Board, Playground League, Public Health Association, Department of Public Health, Y. W. C. A., Y. M. C. A., Brick Church Institute, Trinity Episcopal Church, Bradstreet's School, Hakes School, Sunday School Athletic League, Catholic Young Men's Association.

Mr. Lamberton became president of this society, and through his powerful influence and magnetic personality, a new movement in our city in the interests of athletics was

inaugurated. Outdoor sports became popular. Large sections of the parks were devoted to athletic games, and there were held contests in racing, boating, jumping and all manner of sports. Prizes were given by the Park Commissioners to the winners and every encouragement put forth to popularize the manly sports which so invigorate and develop man's physical structure. Not only were the outdoor sports held during the summer, but in the winter time also, when tobogganing, skating, coasting, etc., were enjoyed in various parts of the parks. Through the efforts of the Park Commissioners and the Rochester Physical Education Association combined, Rochester may now be said to contain the greatest advantages for Physical Culture of any city in the country.

A brief resume of the athletic and other diversions for children at Brown's Square playground will be of interest. Shower baths are taken daily in summer by an average of one hundred children per day. Children are organized to keep the grounds tidy. A series of athletic events, both field and gymnastic in their nature, are organized, including basket ball and relay leagues divided into three classes according to ages. Bronze and ribbon prizes were given in each event and trophy shields in the team events. A foot ball squad has been organized. A yachting enthusiasm sprang up around the pool and races encouraged by the instructor.

Supervisor White commends the work done by Miss Thompson, Miss Wiley, Miss Munson and Mr. McDowell and others. On rainy days the children take delight in playing on the piano in the shelter, and singing under the instruction of Miss Thompson. The boys and girls make much use of Indian clubs and dumb-bells.

The north triangle of the park has been depressed so that it can be flooded in the winter for a skating rink for girls. The inside banks have been adapted for track and relay running while the inside is used for tennis and croquet courts.

Around the Washington playground there are eight schools arranged in almost a circle with the playground and Washington school as a natural center.

Supervisor White has organized these schools whose daily attendance is approximately eight thousand pupils, into a school league for the control of athletics or whatever the schools and playground can co-operate in.

It has been proved in Rochester in its playgrounds, that organized play with competent supervision is the most popular and wins in the long run.

If children can be controlled and organized without their feeling the guiding hand which directs and controls, they will play longer and with more enthusiasm and more enjoyment than any other way. They also learn to organize for themselves and acquire that initiative which is so valuable to them in later life, the idea of fair play and the habit of respecting the rights of others, even though the instructor is not looking directly at them.

It is now fully recognized that the establishing of playgrounds in the various localities of our city, of which, that at Brown's Square takes the lead, is one of the greatest blessings that has been conferred upon Rochester by the Park Commissioners. The beneficent undertaking gave the death-blow to a vicious social condition which compelled the children of the city in congested sections to congregate in streets, alleys, vacant lots, etc., to seek amusement that often led to mischief and vice. Devoid of all supervision, their play often became quarrelsome, boisterous, rude and noisy, disturbing to neighborhoods and, what was worse than all, endangering the moral characters of the children by association with those of vicious tendencies. All this danger is being gradually eliminated by the introduction of organized recreation in our public playgrounds. The expenditure of \$50,000 per year for this department of the Park Board's work may be considered one of the very best investments of the public money that has ever been authorized.

The playground at Brown's Square is now so complete in its equipment that it can be considered a model by all progressive communities, and as the years go by it will doubtless be duplicated in every section. The Park Commissioners have organized a staff of Supervisors and Teachers for our playgrounds so that, apart from the physical pleasure and improvement that may be attained, the children can be directed to acquire habits of courtesy,



Genesee Valley Park

kindness and a spirit of justice and forbearance towards their playfellows.

In summing up the colossal achievements of President Lamberton and his noble band of co-workers, all fair minded and patriotic citizens must realize that by their labors and wisdom Rochester has been enriched to an enormous extent from the acquisition of public park lands, the rise in value of which, since their purchase, has been very great.

A large amount of money has been necessary to bring the park system to its present state of beauty and convenience. It has needed wise forethought, keen sagacity under straightened financial supplies to perfect the greatest of all boons for the people, and to safeguard our parks

from the encroachments and antagonisms of political factions. The victories achieved by the Park Commissioners is largely due to that section of the Park Legislation enactment that constituted them an independent body. The commissioners have literally fought their way through many dangers and difficulties—they have protected the parks from the encroachments of railways and the threatened marring of Genesee Valley Park by the proposed barge canal. They have pursued an honest course in all their proceedings, and during the whole history of the park system in Rochester, not one cent of the people's money appropriated for park purposes has been misapplied, nor has there ever been any selfish motive on the part of the commissioners in the selection of lands for the parks and their plans for improvement. Untrammelled by political bias and intrigue, possessing great powers granted by the State Legislature, and actuated by the highest motives, these commissioners, without pecuniary reward, have exemplified the noblest traits of American honor and citizenship in their administration of a great public trust.

To them must be given the honor of placing Rochester in the foremost ranks of American cities as a delightful place in which to live.

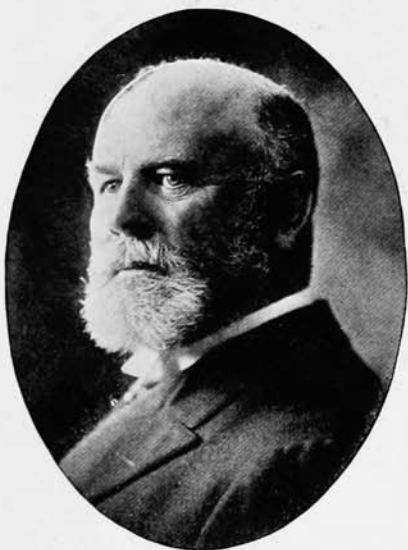
The creation of perhaps the finest park system in the country, the embellishing of parks and squares within the thickly populated sections—the creation of playgrounds for children—the training, culture and oversight of the thousands of trees which beautify our streets, have culminated in making Rochester "The City Beautiful."

From the material point of view this colossal work stands, unsurpassed in the annals of American city development.

From an ethical standpoint Rochester's park system has been of inestimable value. It stands as a mighty bulwark against the encroachments of evil influences. It has drawn the people nearer to nature, and, as a consequence, nearer to God.

## Faithful Public Servants

President Lamberton and the Board of Commissioners fully appreciate the value of the services performed by Superintendent of Parks and Engineer C. C. Laney who has had supervision of all park improvements since 1888.



C. C. Laney

By his skillful oversight and scientific knowledge the parks have been rendered not only beautiful but of the highest educational value to the student of botany, the scientist and the people at large.

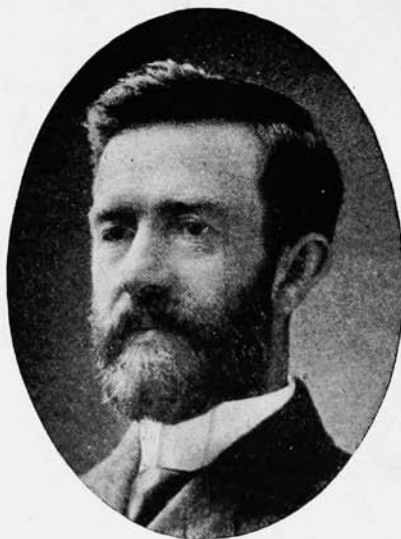
Mr. Laney's efforts have been most efficiently reinforced by his assistant superintendent John Dunbar, a botanist and horticulturist of note whose experience gained at Blenheim palace, England, and other great establishments fitted him peculiarly for his duties in the Park System in Rochester.

To these men is due a large measure of credit for their technical work in the development of the Park System.



making it attractive, educational and the peer of any in the country.

Martin O. Stone, grandson of Enos. Stone who built the first frame house in Rochester in 1810 has been secretary of the Park Board since 1895.



John Dunbar

---

## Addenda

The munificent gift of one hundred twenty acres of land adjoining South Park by Miss Frances A. Baker, will enable the Park Commissioners to carry out plans long contemplated by President Lamberton and his associates.

In addition to the gift of land Miss Baker has donated the sum of one thousand dollars for betterments. The noble spirit of philanthropy exemplified by this lady is being emulated by other prominent citizens who are arranging to provide a permanent fund for the continuation of Saturday and Sunday concerts in the parks as inaugurated by President Lamberton.



3 9077 03551 7393