

THE  
PUBLIC PARKS

OF THE  
CITY OF ALBANY, N. Y.

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*AN ILLUSTRATED PAMPHLET, CONTAINING A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE  
HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT OF THESE PLEASURE GROUNDS,  
AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION RELATIVE  
THERE TO.*

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ALBANY, N. Y.  
WEED, PARSONS & CO., PRINTERS AND ENGRAVERS.  
1892.



## P R E F A C E .

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Having received numerous inquiries from the citizens of Albany, from visitors sojourning in our midst, and more especially from officials and others connected with or interested in the development or maintenance of parks in other cities, for information of an illustrative and statistical nature concerning the parks of this city, I have been led to believe that this demand could be met by the illustrated pamphlet which is herewith submitted.

WM. S. EGERTON,

*Superintendent of Parks.*

*Albany, 1892.*



## WASHINGTON PARK.

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The early history of park development in this city was graphically portrayed in an article prepared by Mr. Wm. D. Morange, formerly the Secretary of the Board of Park Commissioners of this city, and by resolution of the Board printed in the minutes of Nov. 18, 1871. From this article the following extracts are taken :

“The duty of providing an ample park for the city of Albany was from time to time suggested in the history of the city, and occasionally some little effort was made to secure it. A number of newspaper articles appeared in 1859 and 1860, suggesting various localities and sundry appropriate designations for a new city park. The necessity of some movement in the direction of an extensive park was forcibly impressed upon the city authorities by the action of the Albany Institute in 1863. In a communication from that body to the Common Council, prepared by Prof. David Murray, they recount the benefits to be derived from a park with great force.”

“The paper shows that cleanliness, fresh air, the presence of vegetation are essential to health ; that private enterprise, even when aided by intelligence and wealth, cannot always in large cities obtain these ; that it requires the interference of public authority to provide open and accessible grounds for the enjoyment of these luxuries ; that a beautiful park in any city is a great moral power, and does more than criminal courts or policemen to repress crime. Men are wiser, better, more temperate and loving, when they have wandered amid trees and by waterfalls, and heard birds sing and children laugh and play. The slovenliness and filth which sometimes unnecessarily disgrace the tenements of the poor in cities, are put to shame by the sight of the beauty and freshness of nature.”

“The practical suggestion of the communication was, that Albany be provided with a park of 250 acres, to be laid out in the north-western section of the city, and a map was annexed and published in the Common Council minutes showing the location referred to.”

“The steps toward a park were delayed until the year 1869, when a law was passed entitled “An Act in relation to a public park in

the city of Albany," the area of the same extending over the Washington Parade Ground, the old State street burial grounds, the Alms-house farm and the Penitentiary grounds, with such other property as might be acquired by purchase or otherwise."

"Washington Square, or the Parade Ground, situate between State street, Madison avenue, Willett and Knox streets, ceded to the Commissioners by the law above referred to, was duly considered in the plan for a new park, and ground was broken early in July, 1870, for its improvement."

"The State street burying grounds were at this period surrounded by a common fence about ten feet high. Each congregation had its own gate for its funerals, and high steps on either side of the fence permitted egress and ingress to occasional visitors. In the earlier days these grounds were well kept, but the Rural Cemetery took away all the poetry from the willows and the elms and consigned it to the Troy road. There was a mouldy and neglected air about the place. The bodies had been removed to the Rural Cemetery, and the grounds subsequently were trespassed upon by vicious idlers."

From topographical maps prepared at this time, a plan for the extension of the park over the area of the burial grounds, and up the valley, now occupied by the lake in Washington Park, was submitted by Messrs. Bogart and Culyer, at that time employed as the landscape architects of the Board.

This plan is shown herewith, and can be compared with the completed plan of Washington Park, also submitted.

Subsequent purchases of contiguous real estate enabled the Board yearly to add to its area and to remove unsightly objects from the immediate surroundings of the portions improved.

This system of intermittent purchases and acquisition of contiguous property was found to be expensive and unsatisfactory, as values were enhanced by the successive improvements made, and property-owners were not to be cajoled or frightened into selling their property by increased assessed valuations or cumulative taxes. Each acquisition of new territory necessitated some modification of portions of the park area already defined, and still further advanced the value of lands ultimately found necessary to be taken for park purposes.

The narrow scope of the original design is made conspicuously apparent, when compared with that shown of the completed park. Even this is marred by the lack of symmetry, and by private proper-

ties surrounded almost entirely by the park improvement. Taken as a whole, however, Washington Park is unique in design, central in location, harmonious and natural in its treatment, and well deserving the many encomiums it receives.

To illustrate some of the many pleasing features within the limits of the park, several photographic views are reproduced and shown. The design has been to illustrate the landscape effects, showing the character of the topography and tree growth, the lake views and floral ornamentation, and not to present pleasing pictures of isolated or especially attractive corners of the park, or happy combinations of foliage and sky, which can be readily obtained by an expert photographer in any picturesque spot by the wayside or along the banks of the Normanskill.

To Albanians no description of the location or object shown is needed. For those unacquainted with the park, a short analysis of the views is affixed.

The Board of Commissioners of Washington Park proceeded to organize May 8, 1869, under the following:

## Chapter 582.

### "AN ACT IN RELATION TO A PUBLIC PARK IN THE CITY OF ALBANY."

PASSED May 5, 1869.

From which the following sections are taken:

SECTION 1. The property in the city and county of Albany known as the burial ground property, the penitentiary grounds and alms-house farm, are hereby set apart and devoted to the purposes of a public park, to be known as the Washington Park of the city of Albany. Lands set apart for Washington Park.

§ 2. The title to said property is hereby vested in a Board of Trustees, to consist of John Bridgford, Arthur Bott, George Dawson, Dudley Olcott, William Cassidy, John Fair, Rufus W. Peckham, Jr., Samuel H. Ransom and John H. Van Antwerp, who shall hold it in trust for the city of Albany, for the purposes of a public park as aforesaid. The Recorder of the city of Albany shall act as counsel of the Board of Trustees, without compensation. Board of Trustees. Recorder to act as counsel.

§ 6. The Board of Trustees of Washington Park of the city of Albany herein provided for shall meet within ten days after the passage of this act and organize by the election of a President and Treasurer from their number, and a Secretary who may or may not be a member of the Board, in its discretion, and shall receive such salary as the Board may deem just, not to exceed the sum of five hundred dollars.

§ 7. The Trustees named in the second section of this act shall be divided into three classes, who shall hold their offices as follows:

The first class for three years; the second class for six years, and the third class for nine years. The Trustees who are to comprise the respective classes shall be selected by said Board of Trustees by lot, and such selection shall be made at the first meeting for organization, as provided in section six. All vacancies for the unexpired terms in the Board shall be filled by the remaining members of said Board. The successors of said Trustees shall be appointed by the Mayor of the city of Albany and hold office for nine years.

The following citizens of Albany have been identified with the history of Washington Park from the date of its organization to the present time as Commissioners. A list of the administrative officers during the same period is also given:

May 8, 1869, to May 8, 1892.

ARTHUR BOTT <sup>3</sup> ,	JOHN FAIR <sup>6</sup> ,
JOHN BRIDGFORD <sup>3</sup> ,	DUDLEY OLCOTT <sup>6</sup> ,
WILLIAM CASSIDY <sup>9</sup> ,	RUFUS W. PECKHAM <sup>9</sup> ,
GEORGE DAWSON <sup>6</sup> ,	SAMUEL H. RANSOM <sup>9</sup> ,
JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP <sup>3</sup> .	

President — JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP.

Treasurer — DUDLEY OLCOTT.

Secretary — WM. D. MORANGE.

Chief Engineer — REUBEN H. BINGHAM.

Engineer in Charge — WILLIAM S. EGERTON.

Landscape Architects — Messrs. BOGART and CULYER.

The Trustees or Commissioners to comprise the respective classes designated by the act of incorporation were elected as follows (indicated by figures):

First class — JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP<sup>3</sup>, JOHN BRIDGFORD<sup>3</sup>, ARTHUR BOTT<sup>3</sup>, to serve three years.



Second class — DUDLEY OLCOTT<sup>6</sup>, GEORGE DAWSON<sup>6</sup>, JOHN FAIR<sup>6</sup>, to serve six years.

Third class — RUFUS W. PECKHAM, JR.<sup>9</sup>, WILLIAM CASSIDY<sup>9</sup>, SAMUEL RANSOM<sup>9</sup>, to serve nine years.

The terms of office of Messrs. Bott, Bridgford and Van Antwerp having expired by limitation May 8, 1872, the Mayor appointed Messrs. Robt. L. Johnson, John Bridgford and John H. Van Antwerp to fill the vacancies. The Board reorganized May 13, 1872 as follows:

JOHN BRIDGFORD <sup>9</sup> ,	ROBT. L. JOHNSON <sup>6</sup> ,
WILLIAM CASSIDY <sup>6</sup> ,	DUDLEY OLCOTT <sup>3</sup> ,
GEORGE DAWSON <sup>3</sup> ,	RUFUS W. PECKHAM <sup>6</sup> ,
JOHN FAIR <sup>3</sup> ,	SAMUEL H. RANSOM <sup>6</sup> ,
JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP <sup>9</sup> .	

President — JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP.

Treasurer — DUDLEY OLCOTT.

Secretary — WM. D. MORANGE.

Engineer — WILLIAM S. EGERTON.

Mr. Reuben H. Bingham retired as Chief Engineer, and the services of Messrs. Bogart and Culyer were dispensed with.

The Board reorganized June 14, 1875, the first regular meeting subsequent to the appointment of Commissioners by the Mayor (Mr. Edmund L. Judson) to fill the vacancies occasioned by the expiration of the terms of Messrs. Dawson, Fair and Olcott; the Mayor having appointed Messrs. Dawson, Olcott and James D. Wasson.

The Board reorganized as follows:

JOHN BRIDGFORD <sup>6</sup> ,	DUDLEY OLCOTT <sup>9</sup> ,
GEORGE DAWSON <sup>9</sup> ,	RUFUS W. PECKHAM <sup>3</sup> ,
ROBT. L. JOHNSON <sup>6</sup> ,	SAMUEL H. RANSOM <sup>3</sup> ,
* DANIEL MANNING <sup>3</sup> ,	JAMES D. WASSON <sup>9</sup> ,
JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP <sup>6</sup> .	

President — JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP.

† Secretary — WM. D. MORANGE.

Engineer — WM. S. EGERTON.

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\* Mr. Daniel Manning was elected by the Board Feb. 17, 1873, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Mr. William Cassidy.

† Mr. Wm. D. Morange resigned as Secretary Dec. 10, 1877. Mr. Alfred Egerton was appointed Secretary Feb. 11, 1878, to fill the vacancy.

The terms of Messrs. Peckham, Ransom and Manning having expired, the Mayor appointed Messrs. Rufus W. Peckham, John G. Farnsworth and Robert Lenox Banks to fill the vacancies in the Board.

The Board reorganized May 13, 1878, as follows:

ROBT. LENOX BANKS <sup>9</sup> ,	*JOHN BRIDGFORD <sup>3</sup> ,
GEORGE DAWSON <sup>6</sup> ,	DUDLEY OLCOTT <sup>6</sup> ,
JOHN G. FARNSWORTH <sup>9</sup> ,	RUFUS W. PECKHAM <sup>9</sup> ,
ROBERT L. JOHNSON <sup>3</sup> ,	JAMES D. WASSON <sup>6</sup> ,
JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP <sup>3</sup> .	

President — JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP.

Treasurer — DUDLEY OLCOTT.

Secretary — ALFRED R. EGERTON.

Engineer and Superintendent — WM. S. EGERTON.

On May 5, 1881, the Mayor (Mr. M. N. Nolan) appointed Messrs. Daniel Manning, Robt. C. Pruyn and John H. Van Antwerp to fill the vacancies occasioned by the expiration of the terms of office of Messrs. Manning, Ransom and Van Antwerp.

The Board reorganized May 9, 1881, as follows:

ROBT. LENOX BANKS <sup>6</sup> ,	DUDLEY OLCOTT <sup>3</sup> ,
† GEORGE DAWSON <sup>3</sup> ,	RUFUS W. PECKHAM <sup>6</sup> ,
JOHN G. FARNSWORTH <sup>6</sup> ,	ROBT. C. PRUYN <sup>9</sup> ,
DANIEL MANNING <sup>9</sup> ,	JAMES D. WASSON <sup>3</sup> ,
JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP.	

President — JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP.

Treasurer — DUDLEY OLCOTT.

Secretary — ALFRED R. EGERTON.†

Engineer and Superintendent — WM. S. EGERTON.

May 12, 1884, Mr. Daniel Manning resigned and Mr. Dudley Olcott, whose term had expired by limitation May 8, 1884, was elected by the Board to fill the vacancy.

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\* Mr. John Bridgford resigned as Commissioner Aug. 12, 1878, and Mr. Daniel Manning was elected by the Board to fill the vacancy.

† Mr. Grange Sard, Jr., was elected by the Board May 14, 1883, to fill the vacancy in the Board occasioned by the death of Mr. George Dawson.

‡ Resigned Nov. 14, 1881.

May 19, 1884, Mr. Rufus W. Peckham resigned, occasioned by his election to the Supreme Court of the State, and Mr. Erastus Corning was elected by the Board to fill the vacancy.

The terms of office of Messrs. Sard, Wasson and Olcott having expired May 8, 1884, Mr. John Swinburne, Mayor, appointed Messrs. Grange Sard, John H. Farrell and Charles J. Buchanan to succeed these gentlemen.

May 19, 1884, the Board reorganized as follows:

ROBT. LENOX BANKS <sup>3</sup> ,	DUDLEY OLCOTT <sup>6</sup> ,
CHAS. J. BUCHANAN <sup>9</sup> ,	ROBT. C. PRUYN <sup>6</sup> ,
JOHN H. FARRELL <sup>9</sup> ,	GRANGE SARD <sup>9</sup> ,
JOHN G. FARNSWORTH <sup>3</sup> ,	ERASTUS CORNING <sup>3</sup> ,
JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP <sup>6</sup> .	

President — DUDLEY OLCOTT.

Treasurer — JOHN G. FARNSWORTH.

Superintendent and Secretary — WM. S. EGERTON.

Mr. John Boyd Thacher, Mayor, appointed Sept. 7, 1887, Messrs. Robt. C. Blackall, Erastus Corning and Abraham Lansing to succeed Messrs. Banks, Corning and Farnsworth, whose terms had expired May 8, 1887, by limitation.

The Board organized Oct. 10, 1887, as follows:

ROBT. C. BLACKALL <sup>9</sup> ,	ABRAHAM LANSING <sup>9</sup> ,
CHAS. J. BUCHANAN <sup>6</sup> ,	DUDLEY OLCOTT <sup>3</sup> ,
ERASTUS CORNING <sup>9</sup> ,	ROBT. C. PRUYN <sup>3</sup> ,
JOHN H. FARRELL <sup>6</sup> ,	GRANGE SARD <sup>6</sup> ,
JOHN H. VAN ANTWERP <sup>3</sup> .	

President — DUDLEY OLCOTT.

Treasurer — CHAS. J. BUCHANAN.

Superintendent and Secretary — WM. S. EGERTON.

The terms of office of Messrs. Van Antwerp, Olcott and Pruyn having expired May 8, 1890, the Mayor reappointed these gentlemen. Mr. John H. Van Antwerp declined to serve. The Mayor appointed Mr. Thomas D. Coleman in his place.

The Board reorganized Oct. 23, 1890, as follows :

ROBT. C. BLACKALL <sup>6</sup> ,	JOHN H. FARRELL <sup>3</sup> ,
CHAS. J. BUCHANAN <sup>3</sup> ,	ABRAHAM LANSING <sup>6</sup> ,
THOS. D. COLEMAN <sup>9</sup> ,	DUDLEY OLCOTT <sup>9</sup> ,
ERASTUS CORNING <sup>6</sup> ,	ROBT. C. PRUYN, <sup>9</sup>
GRANGE SARD <sup>3</sup> .	

President — DUDLEY OLCOTT.

Treasurer — CHAS. J. BUCHANAN.

Superintendent and Secretary — WM. S. EGERTON.

The terms of Messrs. Buchanan, Farrell and Sard expire by limitation May 5, 1893.

The following is a tabulated statement of maintenance budgets and expenditures for the several areas under charge of this Board for ten years past (1882 to 1891), and a graphic statement of the several parks, etc., cared for :

YEAR.	Amount asked for.	Amount allowed.	Deficiency in amount asked for and allowed.	Maintaining Washington Park.	Maintaining smaller City parks.	Maintaining Western Avenue.	Maintaining Boulevard.	Aggregate Maintenance all Areas.	Deficiencies in Budget.	Balance unexpended.
1882.....	\$22,647 00	\$22,647 00	.....	\$15,720 31	\$1,009 93	\$552 89	\$2,074 64	\$19,357 77	.....	\$3,289 23
1883.....	21,500 00	21,500 00	.....	17,604 20	1,850 06	220 62	814 86	19,989 24	.....	1,510 76
1884.....	22,880 00	15,000 00	\$7,880 00	13,428 85	1,160 77	160 92	1,821 67	16,589 71	\$1,569 71	.....
1885.....	23,117 00	15,000 00	8,117 00	16,190 69	1,002 22	519 72	504 75	18,217 88	3,217 88	.....
1886.....	22,346 00	13,000 00	9,346 00	11,410 93	1,014 84	280 41	128 50	12,832 68	.....	524 85
1887.....	22,915 15	18,872 75	4,042 40	17,704 63	1,006 50	533 27	74 35	19,321 75	.....	508 90
1888.....	21,810 40	17,495 00	3,966 00	15,862 60	1,188 29	477 27	154 62	17,132 88	.....	1,648 32
1889.....	21,461 00	21,461 00	.....	20,093 21	3,650 00	464 95	67 05	24,275 21	.....	68 12
1890.....	21,440 00	21,440 00	.....	19,751 70	1,635 14	996 41	60 11	22,443 36	.....	220 83
1891.....	24,950 00	24,950 00	.....	23,773 70	1,587 91	472 44	337 46	26,171 51	.....	559 22
Average for ten years.....	.....	.....	.....	\$17,104 13	\$1,455 56	\$467 89	\$603 55	\$19,631 15	.....	.....

N. B. A revenue of a variable amount, usually less than \$1,000, is derived from rents, assessments, etc., in addition to the yearly tax budget. The aggregates above given include salaries and all expenses.

### ANALYSIS OF AREAS MAINTAINED.

AREAS.	Length of Drives.	Length of Walks.	Area of Lake.	Area of Lawns Mowed.	Total Area.	Character of Road-bed.	Summer care.
	Miles.	Miles.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.		
Washington Park.....	3	6.0	6	65	90	Gravel.	Sprinkle.
City parks.....	.....	0.8	.....	10	10		
Western avenue .....	1.6	3.2	.....	10	20	Granite block.	
Boulevard .....	1.05	.....	.....	10	15	Telford and Gravel.	Sprinkle.
Nursery grounds .....	.....	.....	.....	5	5		
	5.65	10	6	100	140		

The following extracts are taken from the Treasurer's Report dated January 1, 1892:

RECAPITULATION OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE YEAR 1891.

RECEIPTS.

Balance on hand January 1, 1891.....	\$220 82
Amount allowed by city for maintenance of city parks.. .	24,950 00
Amount received from rent of park buildings, pasture, etc.....	405 00
Amount received for maintenance of Englewood Place from adjoining owners.....	113 75
Amount received for maintenance of Thurlow Terrace from adjoining owners....	199 95
Amount received for labor, trees, manure, etc.....	698 91
Amount received for interest on deposits.....	142 80
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	\$26,730 73
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DISBURSEMENTS.

For maintenance of Washington Park.....	\$23,773 70
For maintenance of small city parks, viz.:	
Academy Park.....	\$632 49
Bleecker Park ....	127 64
Hudson Avenue Park.....	81 08
Clinton Square Park.....	121 48
Rensselaer Park.....	164 24
St. Joseph's Park... ..	383 60
Townsend Park.....	127 38
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	1,587 91
For maintenance of Boulevard.....	837 46
For maintenance of Western avenue.....	472 44
Balance.....	559 22
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	\$26,730 73
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Showing the total receipts and disbursements from the date of the organization of the Park Commission, in 1869, to January 1, 1892:

RECEIPTS.

Assessed upon the city at large.....	\$130,554 92
Bonds issued by the city as follows:	
On account of construction, \$537,000, in bonds sold, netting.....	\$566,541 02
On account of real estate purchased, and cost of acquiring title to same, \$521,000, in bonds sold, netting.....	537,625 62
	<hr/>
	1,104,166 64
Amount received from city for maintenance....	273,365 75
Amount received for interest on bank balances.....	3,830 18
Amount received from assessments for Robin street improvement.	3,145 85
Amount received from sundries..	28,002 80
	<hr/>
	\$1,543,066 14
	<hr/>

## DISBURSEMENTS.

Real estate purchased, including cost of acquiring title to same...	\$665,437 13
Construction of Washington Park, including Western avenue (old improvement).....	429,919 12
Construction of Academy Park. ....	4,306 30
Construction of Boulevard.....	80,513 66
Maintenance of Boulevard.....	9,886 25
Maintenance of Western avenue ....	5,816 12
Maintenance of small city parks.....	15,578 25
Taxes, drain and street assessments....	21,286 40
Improvement of Penitentiary grounds.....	19,324 95
Maintenance of Penitentiary grounds.....	330 70
Improvement of Robin street.....	4,624 09
Sundries.....	15,381 48
Maintenance of Washington Park.....	270,102 47
Balance.....	559 22
	<hr/>
	\$1,543,066 14

For this large outlay what has the city received in return and what benefits have the citizens derived from the improvements made? The Treasurer of the Board in his report to the Common Council, bearing date January 11, 1875, says:

“It may not be uninteresting, or out of place, for me in this report to make a few brief comparisons, in a pecuniary point of view, without regard to the social pleasures and healthful benefits derived by our citizens from the possession of the park (alluding to Washington Park).”

“The assessed valuation in the year 1868, one year prior to the organization of the Park Commission by the Legislature, of portions of the Ninth and Tenth wards — the wards most benefited by the park — was \$2,696,688. This exact area, now contained in parts of the Tenth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth wards, under the reorganization of the wards of the city, is assessed this year (1875) at \$4,843,440, being an increase of \$2,146,752.” The assessed valuation within the same bounds the present year (1891) is \$14,534,000, showing an increase of \$9,690,600 in sixteen years, or \$11,837,352 since the organization of the Board.

The assessed valuation of the “Englewood Place,” front on Washington Park, formerly called Robin street, was in 1875 \$9,500; it is now, as improved in 1891, \$175,800; the same comparisons could be made on State and Willett streets.

This increase in assessed valuations has been largely due to improvements and constructions prompted by the location of Washington Park, and the influence of the park has not ceased, as there

remains a large amount of frontage still unimproved, and contiguous territory available for building and improvement.

But aside from this pecuniary aspect of the case the city has an asset that is cumulative in interest to the citizens. Every year lends additional charm to the park.\* “The fundamental elements of any large park are not its roads, walks, bridges, buildings and other accessory features requisite for the public accommodation in the use of the grounds. These may rather be classed as necessary evils. The essential element is the landscape, its surface undulations of hill and dale or lawn; its trees, shrubs, flowers, single or in mass, in grove or copse; its deep woods or open glades, and its broad stretches of green sward or water. All of these in their endless combinations are constantly modified by the varying conditions of the point of view, the atmosphere, and the seasons. Many visitors, however, because they happen to have little knowledge of individual trees or shrubs, or little taste for landscape beauty, take in like proportion little notice of the ever-fresh, ever-changing features of the verdant landscape, and enjoy chiefly the accessory works of mechanical construction. But the true ideal of park recreation to persons worn by the harassing turmoil of city life, is the refreshing enjoyment of all that is beautiful and blissful that may be seen and felt amid the serene manifestations of nature embodied in the scene.”

There has been no attempt in Washington Park thus far to add, or possibly to detract, from the natural and pleasing effects presented by the combinations above referred to. The construction of buildings, bridges and “accessory works of mechanical construction,” have been limited to the requirements of the public convenience.

Art, other than landscape art, has not been represented except in the erection of the Burns monument; we are yet to see the results of the construction of the memorial fountain surmounted by the figure of “Moses Smiting the Rock.” The site is admirable, the surroundings every thing that could be desired, and it is to be hoped that a happy combination can be made of all these elements.

The charm of Washington Park is its simplicity. There are no obtrusive constructions, no bizarre effects in floral design or color, no glaring tones in the foliage, but the general impression made upon the visitor is that of a restful, pleasing landscape, well kept and tastefully arranged.

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\* “The Embellishment of Public Pleasure Grounds,” a paper by William Mc-Millan, Superintendent Buffalo Parks.



A departure from this motive in the design will not prove satisfactory to those of cultivated taste.

The park has proved itself a healthful vitalizing force to the people of this city, and its worth cannot be estimated pecuniarily; its uses stimulate the energies and quicken the pulses of thousands; its pervasive influence elevates the moral tone of the community, and its great mission is only entered upon and will be continuous.

The following Rules and By-Laws govern the administrative actions of the Board:

## RULES.

*First.* There shall be regular meetings of the Commissioners held for the transaction of all business, on the second Monday in each month, and as many adjourned or special meetings as may be necessary.

*Second.* The President shall have power to call a special meeting of the Commissioners whenever in his judgment it may be proper, and he shall also call one upon the written request of three members.

*Third.* At all special meetings no other business shall be transacted (unless by the unanimous consent of the members present) than such as shall have been stated as the object of such meeting in the notice calling the same.

*Fourth.* Any business may be transacted at any meeting which shall have been continued from the regular monthly meeting by adjournment.

*Fifth.* The Secretary shall send written notices of all regular, adjourned and special meetings to each Commissioner, through the mail, at least twenty-four hours previous to any such meeting. In the notice of any special meeting, a brief reference to its object shall be stated.

*Sixth.* The officers shall consist of a President, Treasurer and Secretary, who shall be elected at the first regular meeting immediately succeeding the appointment of three Commissioners by the Mayor to fill the places of the Commissioners whose terms shall have by law expired, and such officers shall hold their office for three years, unless sooner removed by the Board.

*Seventh.* The President shall preside at all meetings. In his absence a chairman *pro tem.* shall be named, who shall exercise the powers of the President during his absence. All committees shall, unless otherwise ordered by the Board, be appointed by the President, and shall consist of three members each.

*Eighth.* The Treasurer shall have the control and custody of the moneys belonging to the Board, and he shall pay the same upon vouchers, as hereinafter provided for.

*Ninth.* The Secretary shall keep a correct record of the proceedings of the Board at all meetings, give notices of all regular, adjourned and special meetings, and perform such other duties as may be devolved upon him by the Board. His books shall be open at all times for the inspection of any member of the Board.

*Tenth.* The following standing committees shall be appointed :

- (1) A Finance Committee.
- (2) An Executive Committee.
- (3) A Committee on Law, By-Laws and Ordinances.
- (4) An Auditing Committee.
- (5) A Committee upon Architectural Structures.
- (6) A Committee upon Roads, Avenues and Grading.
- (7) A Purchasing Committee.
- (8) A Committee on Planting and Shrubbery.

*Eleventh.* The duties of the several standing committees shall be as follows :

#### FINANCE COMMITTEE.

(1) The Finance Committee (to consist of the President and Treasurer *ex-officio*, and one member of the Board in addition) shall have the general charge of the finances of the Board.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

(2) The Executive Committee (to consist of the President as *ex-officio* chairman thereof, and two members of the Board in addition) shall see that all laws, rules or ordinances adopted by the Board for the government of the park and the employés therein are rigidly enforced. Such committee, during the recess of the Board, shall represent it so far as to see that all work ordered done by it at the

park is faithfully and expeditiously performed. The committee shall also exercise a general supervision over park work, and the engineers, employés and contractors.

#### COMMITTEE ON LAW, BY-LAWS AND ORDINANCES.

(3) The Committee on Law, By-Laws and Ordinances shall have referred to it for examination and report all subjects of a legal nature, and it shall propose from time to time such laws or ordinances as shall in its judgment be proper, and all laws or ordinances proposed by any other member shall first be referred to such committee for its examination and report.

#### AUDITING COMMITTEE.

(4) The Auditing Committee shall have charge of all bills and accounts against the Board. Such bills and accounts of an amount exceeding \$50 shall be first referred to this committee, who shall examine and report upon the same to the Board for final action. Those of an amount not exceeding \$50 may be paid upon receiving the approval of the committee, without receiving the sanction of the Board of Commissioners, with the usual warrant signed by the President and countersigned by the Secretary, as hereinafter mentioned. The Board shall not pass upon an account until it has first been reported from this committee, unless by unanimous consent. After such report the Board shall take final action upon the account. After an account is ordered paid by the Board, the Secretary shall issue a warrant, as hereinafter mentioned, which shall be signed by the President, indorsed by the Secretary and attached to the bill, and paid by the Treasurer.

The Engineers, or whoever they may designate, with the approval of the Board of Commissioners, shall, whenever the necessity arises to purchase materials for the construction or maintenance of the park, make a requisition upon the Purchasing Committee, setting forth in such requisition, in detail, the number or quantity of articles required, and for what purpose, whether for construction or maintenance of the park. The Purchasing Committee shall then, if they approve such purchase, draw their order upon such person or firms, either in or out of the city of Albany, as they may deem most advantageous, posting a complete transcript of said order on the stub of the order-book. There shall be printed across the face of each order above mentioned, the following: "*This order to be returned*

*attached to the bill when rendered for payment."* And said bill must be made out in detail and separate from other bills, that it may be compared by the Auditing Committee with their order attached, and the stub in their possession.

These orders shall be classified, and be noted on the face thereof, as follows: "*Construction Account,*" "*Maintenance Fund,*" "*Materials of Construction and Tools,*" "*Labor and Pay,*" "*Surveys, Maps and Draughting,*" "*Trees, Plants, Shrubs, Flowers and Seeds,*" "*Freight and Cartage,*" "*Stationery, Printing and Advertising,*" to aid the Treasurer in charging them to their proper accounts.

The Secretary shall keep a warrant-book. Upon the face of each warrant issued upon the Treasurer, shall be noted the following: "Amount of warrant," "its date," "to whom payable," "for what material or purpose issued," and also bearing the "Purchasing Committee number." This record shall also be kept on the stub of each warrant issued.

Any materials, of any character whatever, that may be required agreeably to the above, for the purpose of maintaining any portion of the park that up to the date of such order may be deemed by the Engineers as finished, shall be noted by them in their requisition upon the Purchasing Committee as follows: "For maintenance of the park." And the Purchasing Committee shall also, on their order, make the same note.

#### COMMITTEE ON ARCHITECTURAL STRUCTURES.

(5) The Committee on Architectural Structures shall have referred to it in the first instance, for its examination, all propositions for or questions in regard to the erection or location of all structures for use or ornament within the park limits, and it shall report to the Board its opinion thereon with its reasons therefor.

#### COMMITTEE ON ROADS, AVENUES AND GRADING.

(6) The Committee on Roads, Avenues and Grading shall have referred to it in the first instance, for its examination, all questions in regard to the laying out and proper construction and grading of roads, avenues and walks anywhere within the park limits, and for that purpose the committee may direct the Engineers to make any maps or plans which may, in its judgment, be deemed necessary to a proper understanding and an intelligent decision of the question.

To this committee, also, the question of any proposed park drive, its location, general direction and length, properly belongs and must be referred in the first instance for examination and report.

#### PURCHASING COMMITTEE.

(7) The Purchasing Committee shall purchase all materials, tools and other matters used in and about the construction and maintenance of the park; and no Engineer, contractor or employé shall, in any event, purchase any thing upon the credit of the Commissioners for park use, unless under the direction of this committee, or upon a special order of the Board.

#### COMMITTEE ON PLANTING AND SHRUBBERY.

(8) The Committee on Planting and Shrubbery shall have control and supervision over all planting, trees, shrubbery, and also over all the lawns in the park, and shall see that the rustic shelters and movable seats are kept in order and fit for use.

*Twelfth.* At all regular and adjourned meetings the order of business shall be as follows:

- (1) Reading of minutes of last meeting.
- (2) Presentation of accounts.
- (3) Reports of standing committees.
- (4) Reports of select committees.
- (5) Communications from officers or contractors employed by the Board.
- (6) Motions, resolutions and miscellaneous business.

*Thirteenth.* These rules, or any of them, may be altered or suspended —

(1) By a majority vote of the members present, where notice of the proposed alteration or suspension has been given at least one regular meeting prior to action upon it.

(2) By a vote of two-thirds of all the members at any meeting.

#### ORDINANCES.

The Board of Commissioners of the Washington Park of the city of Albany, at a meeting duly convened, held July 12, 1875, do hereby ordain and establish the following ordinances\* for the gov-

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\* Amended June 12, 1888, as to Rules 5 and 7. See note.

ernment of the park, and direct that the same be immediately published in the official papers of the city of Albany for ten consecutive days :

1. All persons are forbidden to enter or leave the park except by the gateways.

2. To discharge firearms, throw stones or other missiles, or play at ball or marbles within its limits.

3. To trample on the grass, handle or appropriate the trees, shrubs, flowers and plants, or injure or deface any of the buildings, fences or other constructions around or in the park.

4. To use indecent or profane language, or do any indecent or obscene act whatever, or post any bill, notice or advertisement upon any tree or structure in the park.

5. To drive over the paths devoted to foot passengers or to travel or drive on any of the carriage roads of the park, or ride upon any bicycle or tricycle at a rate faster than six miles per hour.

6. To stand upon the carriage roads, single or in groups, to the obstruction of the way, or for any animal or vehicle to do so.

7. To ride bicycles or tricycles on the paths or walks, or to trundle barrows thereon, or to obstruct the paths or walks in any manner. (This rule is not to exclude children under ten years of age from using tricycles upon said walks, while in charge of their parents, servants or nurses.)

8. To pass through the park with bundles of sticks, boards, ladders, wheelbarrows, or any unsightly objects.

9. To molest or frighten the animals, water fowl or fish.

10. To lounge on the settees or in the buildings to the exclusion of ladies and children.

11. No omnibus or express wagon, with or without passengers ; nor any cart, dray, wagon, truck or vehicle carrying goods, merchandise, manure or other articles, or solely used for the carriage of goods, merchandise, manure or other articles, shall be allowed to enter the park roads.

12. No cattle, horses, goats or swine, or poultry of any description, shall be allowed within the park grounds ; nor any dog, unless led by a chain or cord not exceeding six feet in length ; nor shall any person expose any thing for sale therein, unless by special permission from the Commissioners.

13. The park will be open to the public daily, except when special occasions may require it to be closed, and will continue open from

sunrise to eleven o'clock in the evening, in the months of May, June, July, August and September, and from sunrise to nine o'clock in the evening, during the other months of the year.

AN ACT SUPPLEMENTARY TO "AN ACT IN RELATION TO A PUBLIC  
PARK IN THE CITY OF ALBANY."

PASSED April 23, 1870.

SECTION 24. It shall be lawful for the Commissioners of said park, at any meeting duly convened, to pass such ordinances as they may think necessary for the use, regulation, protection and government of the park, the approaches thereto, the grounds, trees, shrubs, flowers, roads, pathways, fences and erections in and around it; and such ordinances shall, immediately upon their passage, be published in the official paper of the said city of Albany for ten successive days; and all persons offending against such ordinances shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be punished, on conviction before any court of competent jurisdiction in the city of Albany, by a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars, or by imprisonment at the discretion of the court.

Under this law the Commissioners have passed at various times rules and regulations governing the use of the lake for skating purposes in winter; the use of the tennis courts; the public use of Western avenue, the Boulevard, and the smaller city parks. These cover simply the requirements of a proper maintenance of these areas, without an annoying and an obtrusive restriction of their public use.

















Nos. 1, 2, 3. The following views, Nos. 1 to 22, present graphically some of the prominent features in Washington Park. References by map numbers refer to the colored map appended to this pamphlet and locate the points approximately from which the views were taken.

The series commences with a front view of the Burns statue, of which *The New Albany* says:

“Among the many objects of interest with which the city of Albany abounds, and in which its inhabitants take pardonable pride, there is none standing so absolutely above adverse criticism as the statue of Robert Burns, which was unveiled September 30, 1888, but not completed in all its features till the insertion in the pedestal of four tablets on the 20th of April, 1891. (Details are shown of these in No. 3 of the series.)

“It is easy to talk about statues, and so difficult to get them built; and the few which are finally erected are so apt to be disappointing, that the possession of one acknowledged to be almost, if not quite ideally perfect, is something well worth boasting. It is certainly a gratifying thing for us to be able to say that even the land of his birth does not contain so entirely a satisfactory figure of Robert Burns as does the beautiful Washington Park, in the city of Albany; and to reflect that so long as the enduring bronze shall last, its fame in this and other countries will be a loadstone to draw around it from all over the world the innumerable lovers of the Plowman Bard, to gaze upon its noble mien, and admire its graceful proportions. It is a statue which pleases alike the popular fancy and the artistic taste; the casual spectator sees in it every thing to admire; the *connoisseur* nothing with which to find fault.”

The statue is by Charles Calverley. The four panels represent the four distinguishing characteristics of Burns' poetry, namely, the fanciful, the sentimental, the religious and the convivial.

These panels are shown in detail in No. 3 of the series of views.









No. 4. This structure is of Moorish design and the details are elaborate and artistically worked out. The dome and finial are gilded, and bright colors are used to accentuate the details.

The superstructure is of wood ; the base of stone.

The intent of the building is to afford a cool, restful seat, or outlook, and cold, potable water for the thirsty during the heated months.

Water from the city mains is conducted through a long coil of pipe, entirely submerged in a deep well, near the Refectory building, and is conducted by pipes under direct pressure from the mains to the fountain shelter, where an ornamental iron drinking fountain is placed, with metallic cups, for the public convenience.







No. 5. This structure was erected for the public convenience of visitors to the park—and for the purpose of furnishing light refreshment to those desiring it.

The privileges incidental to the maintenance of this building and the Lake House in Washington Park for the public convenience, are leased by the Park Commissioners at a nominal rental, with no idea of making them a source of revenue, but simply to serve the interests of the public. No intoxicating drinks or liquors are allowed to be sold, and the sale of cigars or cigarettes to minors is prohibited.

The building is constructed upon a substantial stone foundation, and is roofed with slate, laid in parti-colors.

The detailed paneling of the sides and piazza ceilings are elaborate, and the general effect something like that of the Swiss chalet. The view from the front piazza, eastward, is one of the most pleasing in the park, and commands an uninterrupted view of 1,400 feet to Willett street. It is located in the center line of Lancaster street produced.









No. 6. This building was constructed for the public convenience, and is the most frequented and popular structure in the park.

In summer it is used as a resting place, and as a boat-house ; light refreshments are sold over the counter. The building is surmounted by a band-stand, for summer concerts ; the immediate surroundings of the structure being especially adapted to accommodate a large number of vehicles and pedestrians ; the terraces and hill to the north furnishing seating capacity to a large concourse of people. During the winter season the building is inclosed, heated, and open to the public as a skating-house ; the lake being cleared of snow at public expense, from a fund set apart in the park maintenance budget for that purpose.

The superstructure is of wood, placed upon brick piers.

The ground plan affords a retiring room for ladies, one for gentlemen, and a central general room, with refreshment counter.







No. 7. This is a level piece of turf (200x300 feet) set apart for the use of croquet players, and for competitive drills and parades of the boys' academies and militia. An attendant at the croquet-house furnishes the necessary implements for the game to those coming unprovided. The ground is free to those having their own mallets and balls; the wickets being supplied by the park authorities, who also maintain the turf in proper condition during the season. The encircling elms define the area devoted in the old cemetery days to the dead of one denomination, now devoted to the uses and enjoyment of all sects and creeds. This spot, during the summer season, when enlivened by the presence of many youthful players, of both sexes, presents a charming picture and adds materially to the life and varied attractions of the park.













Nos. 8 and 9. These views of the park lake are about as comprehensive as any that can be obtained of its general features. They show the character of the shore planting, the location of the beach walks, and the treatment of the marginal lines.

The park lake is 1,750 feet in length, with an average width of 150 feet, a little over six acres in area. The depth ranges from ten feet at the outlet gate to seven feet at the west end. The shore lines slope gradually for ten or twelve feet from the margins and then become more precipitous. The bottom slopes gradually from the western extremity to the outlet gate at the east end. It is feasible at any time to deplete the area by means of a gate valve, into a large trunk sewer.

The lake is supplied with water from the city mains, introduced at either end, by ornamental fountain jets with a head of from thirty to fifty feet.

The lake margins are treated naturally, having no stone or artificial encircling wall. The banks are well shaded, and provision is made at frequent intervals to reach the water, by circuit walks and expansive beaches.

At a narrow point about midway in its length, the lake is spanned by a pedestrian bridge of wrought iron, supported by massive stone abutments of ashlar masonry. The span is elliptical and 100 feet in length. Boating and skating are indulged in at their appropriate seasons. The lake is lighted at night by electric arc lights.

The water is well stocked with fish of several kinds, ranging in size from the German carp, nearly three feet in length, to the small sunfish.

















Nos. 10, 11 and 12 show a portion of the lake area as indicated on the colored plan of Washington Park, indexed as No. 21. This portion of the lake has been set apart for the display of hardy and tender aquatic plants. The hardy varieties are planted permanently in beds depressed about two feet below the water surface. The tender varieties are removed in the fall and remain dormant in the green-houses until the water is warm enough to put them in the lake the following summer. There is no feature in the floral display at Washington Park that has given such universal satisfaction as this aquatic-plant display, and none that, with ordinary care, will more fully recompense the care taker. It is a feature that is being introduced in every prominent park in the country, and in a great many private estates of prominence.

No. 10 shows the margin of the garden planted with the Egyptian lotus, the water hyacinths in two varieties, the water poppy, and lilies in red, white, blue and purple.

No. 11, the blending of the marginal growths with the aquatic plants by the introduction of exotic plants, such as reeds, bananas, caladiums, cannas and grasses.

No. 12, the bold effects secured by massing the Egyptian lotus as a marginal screen, and as a background for the recumbent water lilies.

The summer exhibit is made up of plants covering some fifty or more varieties.





















Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16, are views especially taken to give some idea of the mature tree growths, and the lawn effects in Washington Park. The elm tree flourishes here, and as yet has not been affected by the presence of noxious insects or parasitic growths. There are some beautiful specimens in the park.

The group in No. 13 is especially fine; the sky line in No. 14 is broken and picturesque; and No. 15 shows a combination of the elm and scarlet maple, well grouped in contrast, overhanging the rustic shelter which commands the lawn and a distant view of the Helderbergs and Catskills.

No. 15 also gives a good illustration of sunshine and shadow, as emphasizing the landscape effects it is desirable to secure by the detached grouping of standard trees.

No. 16 is given to illustrate the exterior border planting of Washington Park, with a view of screening from sight the constructions and streets that define it.

State street is about one hundred feet from the trees in the foreground of the picture. The sky line is broken and picturesque, and not arbitrarily defined by the obtrusive roofs of dwellings. A comforting sense of seclusion, and absence from the noise, dust, and traffic of the street is present; the restful and satisfying view of green turf and a varied foliage cannot but impress the visitor with a gratifying sense of relief from these disagreeable features of city life.

Washington Park is in the city and yet out of it in this sense.



























Nos. 17, 18, 19, 20. This series of views is given to illustrate the floral effects in Washington Park, and can be readily located by the indexed numbers, referring to the map.

No. 17. This portion of the park has been somewhat formally treated, with reference to the central effect ultimately to be obtained by the erection of the King Fountain, the basin of which will be about fifty feet in diameter and the apex of the central figure of a group, representing "Moses smiting the rock," about thirty feet above the grade of the surrounding walks.

The foliage bed in the center of the picture now occupies the site of the proposed fountain, and is shown more in detail in No. 18.

No. 19 shows some semi-tropical effects obtained by the grouping of exotics, enlivened by the introduction of ribbon work in design and color, as contrasted with the floral effects surrounding the King Fountain site.

No. 20 is simply a detached foliage bed, backed by a screen of evergreen foliage bringing out the colors and characteristics of the plants in bold relief.

The circular foliage bed shown in No. 18 is thirty feet in diameter, and twelve feet high. It is composed of *Altenanthera*, *Achyranthes*, *Caladiums*, *Cannas* and *Ricinus*, or castor oil plants, in combination of several varieties, and proved very effective, as a central group in the general design of the garden. The fountain to be erected on this site has been designed by Mr. J. Massey Rhind of New York, and will cost about \$30,000. The subject is "Moses smiting the rock."







No. 21 shows the only exception to a natural treatment of the turfed surfaces in Washington Park, and was occasioned by the topographical features of the site, existing at the time the park was constructed.

The effect, however, as contrasted with the natural treatment of the other surfaces, is marked and pleasing.

The shaded hill-top affords a breezy, restful outlook over the lake and flower garden, and pleasing views of the main lawn. It accommodates, in connection with the terrace walks, a large number of people, and is conveniently located to the band or music pavilion surmounting the Lake House.

The terraces are ornamented with vases of artistic design, filled with flowering plants during the summer months · with agaves, yuccas and palms forming an accessory decoration.

















Nos. 22, 23, 24. These views show different aspects of a group of three buildings constructed by the Park Board for the residence of the Superintendent, the storage of the necessary vehicles, tools, implements and materials, used in the maintenance of the parks, and a range of green-houses and propagating pits for the storage and propagation of plants used in the summer decoration of the several parks of the city.

Being located without the park, and yet conveniently accessible to it, all the disagreeable features necessarily incidental to the storage of fertilizers, and constructive materials are kept entirely secluded from view, and there is nothing within the limits of Washington Park to mar any portion of its area, or detract from the restful condition of the visitor's outlook and surroundings.









No. 25. This view is shown principally to exhibit the treatment of a portion of the north boundary, where private property abuts upon the park. The design has been to blend or merge the lawns upon the line common to both interests, without a distinctive or obtrusive line of demarcation, and to pose the dwellings naturally and gracefully, by proper shaping, upon the apices of the undulations.

A front view of this dwelling is shown in No. 27 — on the left of the picture.

It is not desirable, owing to the many combinations that arise with reference to the important questions of shaping, planting, drainage and access to and from dwellings so situated, to permit private property to abut against an urban park, without a street or public way interposed as a natural barrier. But when these conditions exist, and cannot be readily eradicated, the true policy would seem to demand, when feasible, a pleasing shading or merging of the topographical features of the common boundary, without formal constructions in masonry, or the planting even of hedges.

This treatment is graphically shown in the view here given.













Nos. 26 and 27. No. 26 shows a view of "ThurLOW Terrace," a short street connecting Western avenue with Washington Park. This street, or park-way, is maintained by the Park Board, the title being vested in it. The cost of maintenance is assessed upon the private property fronting upon both sides. The ground plan is shown upon the colored map of Washington Park. The sidewalk spaces are planted with elms, and the middle, park-like strips, are planted with flowering shrubs.

The dwellings are set back forty feet from the street line, presenting fine lawn effects along its margin.

The constructions are limited, by a clause in the deeds of conveyance, to dwellings of a certain character, and no objectionable fences or erections can be placed within the limits of the avenue.

No. 27 shows two of several dwellings fronting on "Englewood Place," a short park-way connecting State street with the park lake driveway. This street is not open to vehicles of all classes, except for the especial convenience of residents, in obtaining their necessary supplies. It is maintained by the Park Board, one-half the cost being assessed upon the private property fronting it on the west side.

The road-bed is a good specimen of a Telford-McAdam road, treated with a gravel surface. It is well drained and substantially constructed, and has proved for the class of traffic utilizing it, one of the best and most satisfactory surfaces for pleasure travel. The lawns in front of the dwellings are free from planting. Shrubs and flowers forming simply a border for the near decoration of the foundations of the buildings.

The effect is simple and exceptionally pleasing; a longitudinal view of the street showing an unbroken line of lawn, its entire length. As an example, for suburban villa treatment, there is no better in the State.

There are no fences dividing the several properties.

The whole front has been treated as one property for a general effect.





















Nos. 28, 29, 30, 31, are views of four of the seven small city parks maintained by the Park Board. These are all of small area, and are not parks in the proper meaning of the term. Three of them are inclosed, and in these more or less ornamental planting and floral decoration is possible and permissible. The others are traversed by walks, as direct as the lines of transit call for. In the case of the ground plan of Academy Park a happy solution of this very important feature was solved, very much to the gratification of pedestrians, and the satisfaction of those fronting upon the park, without giving stiff mathematically straight lines, and by treating the surfaces of the park in a simple manner, in keeping with the fine shade trees that ornament the grounds.

No. 28 is a view in St. Joseph's Park. This is a small inclosed area adjacent to St. Joseph's Church. It contains many rare ornamental trees and shrubs. The church adjoining the park lends architecturally an additional charm to the inclosure, and as a background to the park forms an unique setting. In the view shown, the church is to the right of the picture and is not seen.

No. 29, Rensselaer Park, on the north side of St. Joseph's Church, is another inclosed area, nicely shaded with detached trees, and is treated simply as a lawn, with some ornamental shrubbery confined to the exterior borders, and a little decorative planting introduced in the central part of the inclosure, during the summer months.

No. 30. Townsend Park is a small area formed by the intersection of two prominent avenues of the city — Central and Washington avenues. A straight walk gives direct transit longitudinally across the park, and other walks cross it at points called for by the location of the street crosswalks. It is simply treated as a lawn. A fine row of elm trees encircle the exterior border of the park.

No. 31 is a view of a portion of Academy Park fronting the Boys' Academy. This park is very centrally located. The State Capitol, the City Hall, the High School, the State Hall, and the Boys' Academy, all being visible and, with the exception of the State Capitol, directly fronting upon the park. The architectural features surrounding it are therefore unique, and are not surpassed by any park of its size in the country. The Academy building, shown in the view, is a structure pure in its style of architecture, and dear to the hearts and minds of many of the past graduates and the present aspiring youth within its classic portals.

This park was formerly inclosed by a high wrought-iron fence and the walks were laid out in a rectangular system without much regard

to the convenience or comfort of pedestrians. It was overcrowded with trees, some entirely unsuited to the soil and location.

The park was reconstructed in 1882, agreeably to plans and estimates prepared by the Park Superintendent, and for a sum within the limits specified, namely, \$4,500.

A large number of trees were removed to break up the formality of planting and to give pleasing effects of lawn, light and shadow.

The inclosing fence was removed and substantial flagged walks introduced on easy curved but direct lines of transit. The expenditure of \$4,500 was never more judiciously made in this city, judging from the effects obtained.

The other small parks of the city are Bleecker, Hudson avenue and Beaverwyck parks. The latter has not been improved, except in the matter of grading and seeding it down for the use of the boys as a base-ball ground, for which purpose it is in great demand.

The other areas cared for by the Park Board are Western avenue and the Boulevard between Western avenue and Central avenues.

The first, or Western avenue, is a street ninety-nine feet in width and a little over a mile and one-half in length. The roadway is forty feet wide and is paved with granite blocks. It is curbed, drained and flagged as to the sidewalks; the other spaces being occupied by two rows of Norway maples, and the turf spaces. Back of the flagged sidewalks, the gas, water and sewer mains are laid, and from the main sewers, branches are extended every forty-four feet, or less in many cases, to the property lines.

It is the best and most substantial piece of block paving, laid in black sand, in the city.

The turfed spaces are mowed, the trees trimmed, the drainage cared for, and the street cleaned at the expense of the Park Board and by the park employees.

The Boulevard, so called, is an avenue varying from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet in width, and as constructed a mile in length. The roadway is forty feet in width, flanked on either side by turfed spaces, bridle paths, walks and tree planting. The roadway is of Telford and McAdam construction with a gravel surface. When properly maintained, it presents a fine surface for speeding horses or pleasure traffic. No restrictions have been placed upon its use as a general thoroughfare. The turfed spaces, the planting, drainage and road surfaces, are maintained by the Park Board.

On the grounds surrounding the superintendent's cottage, a small nursery for ornamental trees and shrubs is maintained, about five acres being included in that portion of the Alms-House farm set apart for the purpose.

In addition to the areas improved and maintained by the Board of Commissioners of Washington Park, amounting as heretofore stated in the aggregate to one hundred and forty acres, the title to a much larger acreage of unimproved property is vested in the same

board. By recent legislative enactment the Dudley Observatory will be removed to the Alms-House grounds, six acres being set aside and deeded to the trustees of that institution for its future requirements. The present site in the northern section of the city will be vested in the Board of Commissioners of Washington Park, and when added to the lands lying immediately west of this acquisition, extending to Knox street, will make a future park for that section of thirty-eight acres. By chap. 134 of the Laws of 1892, title is now being acquired to what is to be known as Beaver Park, an area of sixty-eight acres. The title to the Penitentiary grounds and the Alms-House farm is vested, by chap. 582 of the Laws of 1869 in the Park Board. "Nothing in the act, however, shall be construed to confer upon the Board of Trustees (Park Commissioners), any title in or power over the Penitentiary and Alms-House buildings, and the grounds immediately adjacent thereto."

The Penitentiary grounds embrace an area of twenty-four acres. The Alms-House grounds cover an area of one hundred and twenty acres. Title is also vested in the Park Board to about twelve acres of unimproved boulevard in the northern section. As early as the year 1876, in the history of park development in this city, twenty-eight acres of land was acquired by the Commissioners of Washington Park, lying east of Knox street, adjoining the Dudley Observatory grounds.

The intent at that time was to form, in connection with the public use of these grounds a park of thirty-eight acres, to be connected by a boulevard extending westward through the Tivoli lakes or Waterworks property, and thence by a somewhat circuitous route to connect with the present terminus of the Boulevard as constructed at Central avenue.

Plans and estimates were submitted for the work of constructing these connecting driveways. Some work was performed, bringing the construction to the point of finished sub-grade. This work was undertaken during the winter season, and was called for by the demand for some relief to the existing distress at that time among the city poor. The estimates submitted for finishing and draining the roadways were so large, and relief being secured early in the following spring by constructive work in various parts of the city, the project was temporarily abandoned, and all work suspended.

The recent acquisition of the Dudley Observatory grounds may revive a sentiment for a park in the northern section.

The total acreage at present vested in the Board of Commissioners of Washington Park is as follows :

	Acres.
Improved as heretofore estimated (see tabulated statement).....	140
Dudley Observatory grounds, etc.....	88
Connecting Boulevard to Central avenue.....	12
Beaver Park.....	68
Penitentiary grounds.....	24
Alms-House grounds.....	120
Total acres .....	402

Six views are shown to illustrate more graphically the topographical conditions of that portion of the site of Beaver Park lying east of Swan street. It may, at some future day (not so far distant as the present conditions would seem to warrant), be interesting to compare these views with others to be taken when this area is improved.

The former topographical conditions of the site of Beaver Park were exceedingly picturesque. It is possible to restore these in a measure. The native thorn and azalea may bloom again upon the steep banks, and although the Buttermilk Falls may not be restored, for want of an adequate water supply, a ramble through the gorge formerly eroded by the stream, may, by proper treatment, and a judicious restoration of the indigenous flora, be made exceedingly attractive.

A stroll through improved public grounds, extending from Philip street on the east to Lake avenue on the west, a distance of one mile and a quarter, may not be one of the impossibilities of the future.

With the hope that an inspection of this illustrated pamphlet of the city parks of Albany may have proved sufficiently interesting to those acquainted with the gradual development of the city park system thus far completed, and that the statistical information given may answer, in a measure, the inquiries so often made as to these features of park administration, the author can safely say that he has taken pleasure not only in this effort, but the greater and more satisfactory one of being an humble instrument in the development of something that the city is proud of, and that he has received recompense for many years of painstaking effort in the visible evidence of his labor.

It cannot but be interesting to devise and watch the gradual development of a landscape, very much as the artist paints a picture.

First, the groundwork and constructive features, to be followed by the details of ornamentation. The artist must have a true conception of the subject he wishes to portray. He does not start in, in a hap-hazard manner, hoping that something artistic may develop as he advances with his work; but a well-defined idea must be conceived at the start, of the general effect to result from the many combinations of design and color.

When this idea is conceived and well established by a complete design, a park is not to be made in a month or a year. Nature cannot be forced, but assisted in the development of the somewhat complicated mantle she assumes.

It is this progressive work that pleases, and affords the interest and charm to the landscape architect. Nature responds so generously when she is understood, and the more intimate one becomes with her laws the closer become the ties that bind one to her.

It is a pleasure to plant and see the trees, shrubs and flowers develop with a continuous and intelligent oversight; to anticipate the requirements of the seasons and the resultant needs of the many growths ranging from the hardy to the exotic plants; to see daily results of your care develop with the advancing season, and know that thousands are enjoying the results of your labor, in addition to the pleasure you may derive from it yourself.

It is a pity that all individual effort in the many channels of life does not receive such a responsive throb as nature bestows, to repay one beyond the measure of a pecuniary recompense.























BEAVER PARK, 1892.  
Looking westward from









