

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE  
DURING FORMATIVE YEARS WITH  
EMPHASIS ON THE COLLEGE SWAMP LANDS**

"The day has forever gone by when an enlightened liberal education was deemed useless for the farmer. Agriculture has risen into a science, as well as a laborious art; a science, too, the most comprehensive of all others, and which demands not alone strong hands and bodily labor, but active, vigorous, cultivated intellect. \* \* \* \*No matter what be a man's business, the more varied his education, the better, as he thus enlarges the sphere of his mind, and multiplies the sources upon which he can draw through life, both for profit and enjoyment. But above all, an education which shall include the natural sciences, is especially important to the farmer, as in addition to their applications, they are the foundation of agriculture.\* \* \* \*

— Bela Hubbard  
January 1850 address  
before the Michigan  
Legislature

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EDUCATION

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The Congressional Act providing for the admission of the State of Michigan into the Union, granted to this state seventy-two sections of land, designated and known as "salt spring lands." Subsequent State legislation establishing an asylum for the deaf and dumb and the blind, and also an asylum for the insane, appropriated 25 sections of this salt spring land for the erection of suitable buildings. An additional 25 sections were appropriated to the support of the State Normal School at Ypsilanti.

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THE COLLEGE SWAMP LANDS

The Michigan State Agricultural Society had been organized at Lansing, the

Michigan State University was initially founded as the Agricultural College of the State of Michigan. Its establishment was in response to a requisition of the Revised Constitution of the State, adopted August 15, 1850.

Improvement of agriculture and its kindred arts throughout the State of Michigan.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION

An address by Hon. Edwin S. Loring to the Society at the first annual meeting

Article 13, Section 11, of this new Constitution provided: "The legislature shall encourage the promotion of intellectual, scientific and agricultural improvement; and shall, as soon as practicable, provide for the establishment of an agricultural school. The legislature may appropriate the twenty-two sections of salt spring lands now unappropriated<sup>1/</sup>, or the money arising from the sale of the same, where such lands have already been sold, and any land which may hereafter be granted or appropriated for such purpose for the support and maintenance of such school, and may make the same a branch of the university, for instruction in agriculture and the natural sciences connected therewith, and place the same under the supervision of the regents of the university."

Those in favor of the proposed school were able to secure from the Legislature of 1855, an act for the organization of the "Michigan Agricultural College."

On February 12, 1855 Governor Kinsley S. Bingham approved Public Act No. 130,

<sup>1/</sup> Act for the establishment of a State Agricultural School, in part as follows:

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DEMAND FOR SEPARATE INSTITUTION

The Michigan State Agricultural Society had been organized at Lansing, the capital of the State, March 17, 1849 under the leadership of a group made up of executive officers of the State and members of the Senate and House of Representatives. The objective of the society was "to promote the improvement of agriculture and its kindred arts throughout the State of Michigan." An address by Hon. Edwin H. Lothrop to the Society at the first annual meeting September 26, 1849 was one of the earliest in support of greater educational opportunities for farmers. It was in January 1850 that Bela Hubbard, in an address before the Senate and House of Representatives, presented a strong memorial for a State Agricultural College in Michigan. The records also show that at the annual meeting of the Society December 12, 1854 a resolution "That an Agricultural College should be separate from any other institution" was adopted. In brief, the State Agricultural Society, with J. C. Holmes its secretary, was the chief and most powerful advocate of an institution for teaching agriculture, and that this should be a separate institution.

ACT OF ORGANIZATION

Those in favor of the proposed school were able to secure from the Legislature of 1855, an act for the organization of the "Michigan Agricultural College." On February 12, 1855 Governor Kinsley S. Bingham approved Public Act No. 130, AN ACT for the establishment of a State Agricultural School, in part as follows:

Section 1. The People of the State of Michigan enact, That the President and Executive Committee of the Michigan State Agricultural Society, be and are hereby authorized to select, subject to the approval of the State Board of Education, a location and site for a State Agricultural School, within ten miles of Lansing; and subject to such approval, contract for and purchase for the State of Michigan, such lands, not less than five hundred acres,

in one body, for the purpose of an experimental farm and site for such Agricultural School: Provided, That the amount to be paid for such farm and site shall not exceed fifteen dollars per acre, and that the conveyance or conveyances be made to the State of Michigan.

Section 2. There is hereby appropriated twenty-two sections of Salt Spring Lands, or the money arising from the sale thereof, referred to in article 13, section 11, of the Constitution of the State of Michigan, for the purchase of land for such site and location, and the preparation thereof, the erection of buildings, the purchase of furniture, apparatus, library and implements, payment of professors and teachers, and other necessary expenses to be incurred in the establishment and successful operation of said school.

Section 4. Upon the purchase of such location and site, there shall be established on such site, under the direction and supervision of the State Board of Education, an Agricultural School, by the name and style of the Agricultural College of the State of Michigan, and the chief purpose and design of which shall be to improve and teach the science and practice of agriculture.

..... (The entire Act has 13 sections in all.)

SELECTION OF SITE

The committee of the State Agricultural Society devoted June 13, 14 and 15, 1855 to examining the ten locations that had been offered for the purposes of the Agricultural School. The choices were not many due to the restrictions specified by the above legislation. Certainly the fifteen dollar an acre limitation on the price that could be paid precluded the purchase of an improved farm. The committee met in Lansing on June 16 and specified the 676.57 acres known as the A. R. Burr farm about three and one-half miles due east from the Capitol, for the most part in Meridian Township of Ingham County, as their choice. The price was \$15.00 an acre, or approximately \$10,150. Only a small portion of the acreage had been cleared.

EARLY FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The first allotment of funds made by the Legislature in support of the new institution was \$56,320. This amount represented the 22 sections (14,080 acres) of Salt Spring Lands as specified in the Constitution of 1850 and in Act No. 130, Laws of 1855, valued at the minimum price of \$4.00 an acre.

After the land had been purchased for the Agricultural School and associated Experimental Farm, plans were secured, contracts let, and building operations begun. The first buildings consisted of a large brick structure known as College Hall (currently commemorated by the location of Beaumont Tower), a small boarding hall capable of accommodating about 80 students, and a small brick barn.

SCHOOL BEGINS

May 13, 1857, the buildings were dedicated. Hon. Joseph R. Williams was inaugurated as president and the College was opened. Fifty-nine young men were enrolled as students the first day.

On February 16, 1857 the Legislature had appropriated an additional \$40,000 for operations. Up to the time of the dedication of the institution, none of this amount had been touched.

In the June 1857 issue of THE MICHIGAN FARMER publication, Editor Robert F. Johnstone wrote, "The institution is the first of its kind, and should be fostered by the Agricultural community, not as a pet project, or a mere play-thing, but as a useful establishment, from which is to be obtained the results of a combination of science and practice, which no single farmer has either the time or the means to work out for himself." Also, "The farm and college

at Lansing belongs to no class -- every citizen of Michigan owns an equal share in it, and as it is agricultural wealth which most promotes the prosperity of the State, all should esteem it a duty to aid in establishing the success and usefulness of an institution of this kind."

FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

Some individuals, factions, institutions predicted that this new venture in higher education would not succeed. Perhaps they even hoped for its failure. Many supporters of the Agricultural College believed that the institution should be self-supporting; that it should not demand further appropriations from the State Legislature. They believed the sizeable farm with student labor should create adequate financial support.

The facts were that the first requirement was that the land be cleared and drained. Stumps had to be pulled and stones removed. And for an Experimental Farm of this type, it was desirable that the work be accomplished in a thorough manner. As with all ventures, there are perpetual and unforeseen expenditures. Furthermore, prices were high. The Hon. Ira Mayhew, Superintendent of Public Instruction, in his Annual Report for 1858 said:

"This institution (The Agricultural College) being recently established, in a comparatively new and unsettled portion of the State, on a tract of land entirely uncultivated, and on a basis essentially different from any existing College in the United States -- being in fact, the pioneer Institution of the kind in this country, and therefore, an experiment -- has been a source of great anxiety, and in its development has required the expenditure of an amount exceeding our anticipations.

"The amount appropriated to the Agricultural College for the purchase, clearing and improvement of land, erection of buildings, procuring stock, and maintaining the College, which has been in successful operation for nearly two years has been as follows:

Proceeds of Salt Spring Lands	\$ 56,320.00
Appropriation of Feb. 16, 1857	40,000.00
Expenditures, beyond appropriations	13,472.73
	<u>\$109,792.73</u>

....."This excess of \$13,472.73 in expenditures over receipts arose in part from erroneous estimates and unforeseen contingencies -- among which was the unprecedented inflation in value of all kinds of property and labor while the buildings were in progress and the improvements being made -- and in part from defects in the buildings, subsequently revealed, that could not be remedied without an unexpected outlay, for which no provision had been made."

President Joseph R. Williams' report for the same year contained the following on the subject:

"The Institution has met with serious calamities. There is great misapprehension, however, in the public mind relative to its cost. Of the aggregate cost of \$109,792.73, at which it will stand in January next, \$56,320 has been or will be derived from the Salt Spring Lands, which cost the people of Michigan nothing. The balance of \$53,472.73 would not be more than seven cents per capita upon the people of Michigan....."

"The Institution continues to attract intense interest in other States. It should be a subject of honorable pride in Michigan that her example in taking the lead in a great movement, indicative of education progress, is so generally applauded, and in fact imitated."

In February of 1859 the Legislature appropriated an additional \$37,500, making an aggregate of \$133,820 given in support of the establishment of the College and maintaining it up to January 1, 1861, a period of almost six years, nearly four of which the new institution had been in actual operation.

It is emphasized again that the \$56,320 derived from the Salt Spring Lands had cost the people of Michigan nothing, leaving the actual cost to the taxpayers but \$77,500 for the six years since the founding of the College February 12, 1855.

(President Williams resigned from the College in March 1859 after having served at the helm less than two years. He was succeeded by Lewis R. Fiske who served as Acting President until December 1862 when T. C. Abbot was elected President and began 22 years of important service.)

COLLEGE SWAMP LANDS

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Federal legislation, Chapter 87 of the Thirtieth Congress, approved March 2, 1849, granted the State of Louisiana the swamp lands therein. Section 1 reads, "Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That to aid the State of Louisiana in constructing the necessary levees and drains to reclaim the swamp and overflowed lands therein, the whole of those swamp and overflowed lands, which may be or are found unfit for cultivation, shall be, and the same are hereby, granted to the State."

Arkansas was the second State to request comparable legislation. The legislation, "Chapter 84 of the Thirty-first Congress, Session I" was approved September 28, 1850. Section 4 of this Act states, "And be it further enacted, That the provisions of this act be extended to, and their benefits be conferred upon, each of the other States of the Union in which such swamp lands and overflowed lands, known as designated as aforesaid, may be situated." See APPENDIX A.

STATE LEGISLATION

The Michigan Legislature did not take long to respond to this offer. During the regular session of 1851, Act No. 187 was passed "to provide for the sale and reclaiming of swamp lands granted to the State, and for the disposition of the proceeds." This act approved June 28, 1851, to take effect immediately, specified "That they adopt the notes of the surveys on file in the surveyor general's office, as the basis upon which they will receive the swamp lands granted to the state by an act of Congress of September 28, 1850." See APPENDIX B for Michigan Act No. 187 in its entirety.

The next pertinent legislation, and of greatest interest to the Agricultural College, was enacted in 1858. Act No. 31, approved February 4, 1858, reserved the Swamp Lands in four adjacent townships for the use of the College. The Act reads in part as follows:

Act No. 31

AN ACT to provide for the sale of the swamp lands and the reclamation thereof, and to secure the pre-emption claims of settlers thereon.

Section 1. The People of the State of Michigan enact, That the swamp lands granted to said State by act of Congress, approved September twenty-eighth, one thousand eight hundred and fifty, shall continue under the supervision of the Commissioner of the State Land Office, and subject to sale by him, as hereinafter provided; but none of said lands shall be offered for sale prior to the issue of patents to the State therefor.

.....

Section 16. All of said swamp lands situated in the townships of Lansing and Meridian, in the county of Ingham, and in the townships of DeWitt and Bath, county of Clinton, except such as have been occupied by persons entitled to pre-emption under this act at least thirty days next previous to the passage of this act, shall be reserved from sale by said Commissioner, and possession of the same shall be immediately delivered over to the Agricultural College for its use, and for the purposes of drainage and reclamation, in accordance with the provisions of the act of Congress donating the same to the State.

As early as 1852 Elijah Holmes Pilcher (doctor, lawyer, minister) had advocated that a part of the swamp lands be set apart for the purpose of a fund for the establishment of an Agricultural College in Michigan. He listed J. C. Holmes, A. Goodridge, M. Shoemaker, Robert F. Johnstone, and others as having the same opinion relative to the swamp lands.

The financial predicament of the new institution after two years of operation and the limited acreage of cleared land on the College farm prompted this action taken by the Legislature.

In his Annual Report for 1858 President J. R. Williams expressed the appreciation of the Institution for this inheritance. He advanced the idea that perhaps a tract of two thousand acres could be used for securing hay, corn, root crops, stock, animal feed, and so forth, and the balance of the acreage could be sold to provide a large fund for drainage.

Robert F. Johnstone, Editor of The Michigan Farmer, and later to become General Superintendent of the Michigan Agricultural College farm as well, wrote in the March 1858 issue of his publication:

"Section 16 of the SWAMP LAND ACT passed at the recent session of the Legislature speaks for itself.

"The land we understand embraces about 7,000 acres, exclusive of that which is claimed by right of pre-emption.

"We regard this as a most sagacious act on the part of the legislators. The Farm of the Agricultural College consists of 676 acres, mostly of forest land of the finest description. It must be obvious to every practical man that the number of students that can be maintained on such a tract, must for a long time be limited, especially if any timbered land is preserved.

"The number that the original farm would sustain, would probably not much exceed 200. The largest contiguous quantity of the land now granted to the College, lies at an average distance of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the College. It is a great natural meadow, capable of being completely drained, and brought under high cultivation. From 2,000 to 3,000 acres can be subdued in one mass. It will readily be perceived that dairy production, beef and other animal food for consumption can be eventually supplied at the lowest cost. Stock breeding and raising can be carried on independently and cheaply. Hay, corn, and so forth can be cultivated extensively and systematically so as to render the Institution independent of fluctuations.

"The tract cannot be cultivated from day to day by the students, but it will afford graduates and students during vacations, ample opportunities to study the effect of systematic drainage, the utility of planters, cultivators, drills, mowers, horse rakes, and other implements, in the cultivation of land rendered thoroughly arable. The comparative value of various kinds of grasses, corn and root crops can be tested. In fact no Experimental and Model Farm could be regarded as complete prospectively without such a tract.

"We do not see why the Institution with the great facilities this tract will afford for supplying cheaply all animals, and animal food may not at no very distant day embrace one thousand students.

"It is the more gratifying to find this advantage to our State Institution thus almost Profidentially supplied, at the moment when we perceive half a dozen States following closely in the footsteps of Michigan in the establishment of such Colleges, and most of them under conditions so much more propitious that they bid fair at once to prove more comprehensive and successful than our own, if they merely improve the superior facilities afforded. The enjoyment of the tract of land in question, will eventually place the Michigan Institution, in regard to an eligible and profitable estate, on a level with the most favored of them.

"How the remainder of land can be most judiciously used so as to promote the objects of the grant, remunerate the Institution for expenses incurred in converting the central tract to cultivation, and facilitating its early settlement, are questions for future consideration.

"Although it affords the College no immediate income, we yet regard the reservation and appropriation in question as an enlightened act, worthy of the highest commendation.

"We are gratified to learn, what we have always regarded as a certain and necessary result, that landed estates in every direction from the Agricultural College have risen in value from 10 to 100 percent according to distance."

#### ACREAGE ACQUIRED

Previously printed reports have not been consistent in the acreage of swamp lands reserved in the four adjacent townships for the use of the College.

President Williams' December 1, 1858 Report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction stated 6,961 acres. Another report estimated 6,500 acres. An article by the editor in the August 6, 1859 issue of The Michigan Farmer listed 7,101.4 acres. An exhaustive study now reveals that the exact acreage was 6,799.38.

In the effort to determine the facts, a photostatic extract copy of "Michigan Swamp Patent No. 1, Ionia," was obtained from the United States Department of

the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. The detailed descriptions were requested only for the lands included in the four townships where the swamp lands were ultimately reserved for the College.

The Patent is as follows:

The United States of America

"To all to whom these presents shall come Greeting;

"Whereas by the Act of Congress approved September 28th 1850, entitled 'An Act to enable the State of of (sic) Arkansas and other States to reclaim the Swamp Lands within their limits' it is provided that all the Swamp and Overflowed Lands made unfit thereby for cultivation within the State of Michigan which remained unsold at the passage of said Act shall be granted to said State; And Whereas in pursuance of instructions from the General Land Office of the United States the several tracts or parcels of Land hereinafter described have been selected as Swamp and Overflowed Lands emuring to the said State under the Act aforesaid being situated in the District of Lands subject to sale at Ionia, Michigan to wit:

Summary of Four Townships (Meridian, Bath, Lansing, De Witt)

T4N of R1W (Ionia District)	1,232.75 acres
T5N of R1W (Ionia District)	3,970.42 "
T4N of R2W (Ionia District)	517.33 "
T5N of R2W (Ionia District)	1,975.41 "
	<hr/>
	7,695.91 acres

"..... according to the Official Plats of Survey of the said Land returned to the General Land Office by the Surveyor General; And for which the Governor of the said State of Michigan, did on the thirty first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and fifty four request a patent to be issued to the said State as required in the aforesaid Act.

"Now therefore know ye That the United States of America in consideration of the premises and in conformity with the Act of Congress aforesaid Have Given and Granted and by these presents Do Give and Grant unto the said State of Michigan in fee simple subject to the disposal of the Legislature thereof the tracts of land above described, To have and to hold the same, together with all the rights privileges immunities and appurtenances thereto belonging, unto the said State of Michigan in fee simple and to be assigned forever.

"In testimony whereof, I, Franklin Pierce, President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent and the seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed"

Signed: February 26, 1857

A thorough check was made with the Lands Section of the Michigan Department of Conservation and with the Office of the Register of Deeds in Ingham County and in Clinton County to determine the descriptions occupied by persons entitled to pre-emption under Section 16 of Michigan Public Act No. 31, Laws of 1858, which reserved the swamp lands for the Agricultural College. The descriptions which finally became College property in each of the four townships are shown in APPENDIX C. A summary of the acreage is as follows:

State Board of Agriculture.

SWAMP LANDS TO MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE (acres)

TOWNSHIP	Approved List			Less Pre-emptive Rights	Net Acreage
	Oct. 27, 1853	June 9, 1866	Total		
Lansing Twp. (T4N-R2W)	554.50		554.40	80.0	474.50
Meridian Twp. (T4N-R1W)	1,210.88	40.00	1,250.88	120.0	1,130.88
De Witt Twp. (T5N-R2W)	1,975.38		1,975.38	520.0	1,455.38
Bath Twp. (T5N-R1W)	3,938.62		3,938.62	200.0	3,738.62
Total	7,679.38	40.00	7,719.38	920.0	6,799.38

STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

The opinion had gradually developed that it would be better for the Agricultural College to have its own governing board rather than continue under the direction and supervision of the State Board of Education.

In his annual report for 1859, John M. Gregory, Superintendent of Public Instruction said, "I would recommend that its (The Agricultural College) control be transferred from the Board of Education, already encumbered with sufficient other responsibilities, to a State Board of Agriculture, or to some special Board of Trustees. Each other institution in the State has its own Board of Control, and there is no sufficient reason for a departure from the general policy, in this particular case." In the same report the

State Board of Education recorded that while the members of the Board have sought to discharge the important and difficult duty imposed upon them, they have not ceased to regret from the outset that the Institution did not have a special Board of Trustees, chosen more especially from the agriculturists of the State who might have enlisted in its favor "the sympathies of the agricultural population." The Board of Education unanimously concurred in recommending that the Agricultural College's control be transferred to a State Board of Agriculture.

On March 15, 1861 Governor Austin Blair approved Michigan Act No. 188, Laws 1861 -- AN ACT to re-organize the Agricultural College of the State of Michigan, and to establish a State Board of Agriculture. Sections of this Act pertinent to our subject are:

Sec. 1. "The People of the State of Michigan enact, That a board is hereby constituted and established, which shall be known under the name and style of 'The State Board of Agriculture.' It shall consist of six members, besides the Governor of the State, and the president of the State Agricultural College, who shall be ex-officio members of the board. ....

Sec. 2. "The State Board of Agriculture shall be a body corporate, capable in law of suing and being sued, of taking, holding and selling personal and real estate, of contracting and being contracted with, of having and using a corporate seal, and of causing to be done all things necessary to carry out the provisions of this act.

Sec. 34. "All the swamp lands granted to the State of Michigan by act of Congress, approved September twenty-eighth, one thousand eight hundred and fifty, situated in the townships of Lansing and Meridian, in the county of Ingham, and De Witt and Bath, in the county of Clinton, of which no sale has been made, or for which no certificates of sale have been issued by the Commissioner of the Land Office, are hereby granted and vested in the State board of agriculture and placed in the possession of the State agricultural college for the exclusive use and benefit of the institution, subject only to the provisions relating to drainage and reclamation of the act of Congress donating the same to the State.

Sec. 35. "The State board of agriculture shall have authority to sell and dispose of any portions of the swamp lands mentioned in the preceding section of this act, and use the same, or the proceeds thereof, for the purpose of draining, fencing or in any manner improving such other portions of said lands, as it may be deemed advisable to bring under a high state of cultivation for the promotion of the objects of the State agricultural college. The terms and conditions of the sale of the portions of the above described lands thus disposed of, shall be prescribed by the State board of agriculture, and deeds of the same, executed and acknowledged, in their official capacity, by the president and secretary of the State board of agriculture, shall be good and valid in law.

Sec. 37. "Act number one hundred and thirty, session laws of eighteen hundred and fifty-five, being an act for the establishment of a State agricultural school, and all other acts or parts of acts in conflict with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed."

This was the legislation that authorized the transfer of title to all swamp lands described in Appendix C to the Agricultural College and gave authority to the State Board of Agriculture to sell and dispose of any portion.

Subsequent legislation (Act No. 269, Michigan Laws 1909 -- Section 12) can be interpreted as having broadened the use that could be made of funds derived from the sale of the swamp lands. It reads in part, "The State Board of Agriculture shall have authority to sell and dispose of any portion of the swamp lands mentioned in the preceding section of this act, and use the same or the proceeds thereof for the purpose of draining, fencing or in any manner improving other portions of said land, and for the promotion of the purposes of the Michigan Agricultural College."

(Underscoring added.)

COMMENTS REGARDING COLLEGE SWAMP LANDS

The Annual Reports of the State Board of Education and later by the State Board of Agriculture provide some comments as follows:

- 1860 -- "Considerable quantities of hay have been obtained for the College from the land, and the Board the past year authorized the expenditure of \$100 in drainage. Owing to the wetness of the season, the work was not done, but it is expected that it will be accomplished the next summer. When drained, these lands will make valuable meadows, and will enable the College to increase largely its amount of stock, which will then become a source of revenue. Should the Legislature see fit to vest the full title to these swamp lands in the College, and allow such as are not needed for meadows, to be sold, and the proceeds vested as a perpetual fund, they would yield a very considerable beginning of an endowment, which, increased from other sources, as occasion might offer, would at no distant day, relieve the State from all burdens of taxation for this object. In addition to the farm, the garden and nurseries, will, it is hoped, soon become sources of revenue to the funds of the institution, while they serve also their appointed uses in the improvement and teaching of horticultural science." --
- 1862 -- "Of the swamp lands given to the College by the Legislature two years ago, there are 3,000 acres in one tract, of this there are about 2,500 acres of clear, open marsh, covered only with grass. Since the last meeting of the Board, officers of the College have taken the level of that portion of the marsh situated west of the A.L. & T.B. R.R. (Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay Railroad), and found a descent of about two feet in a mile towards the west. Over the whole marsh there is known to be a gradual descent westward, and there is a very good outlet through Prairie Creek, which empties into the Looking Glass River, near the village of DeWitt.
- "We have examined the ditch made by the direction of the Board, and believe that in connection with the railroad ditches, it will remove the surface water quite effectually, from at least 1,000 acres, and to a great extent from the balance of the marsh. This being done, it is now in a condition to be thoroughly drained. As the scattered portions of land belonging to the College shall be sold, and the proceeds appropriated according to law, to draining and subduing the main body, it will be made one of the most valuable tracts in the State. This marsh can doubtless be drained sufficiently dry for a meadow or crops, to which the soil is adapted, for a sum less than one dollar per acre, which is much cheaper than the clearing of uplands." --L. R. Fisk, Chairman of Faculty and T. C. Abbot, Secretary of Faculty.
- 1863 -- "A job of ditching was let on the large marsh, but its extreme wetness has prevented its being done. Another job was let on land adjoining that sold to George B. Vanetta."
- "The farm in immediate connection with the College, contains 676 acres, the value of which cannot be placed at less than \$15,000. In addition to this, the Michigan Legislature has vested in the

College about 6,000 acres of swamp lands adjoining or in the vicinity of the farm. Those lands are believed to be worth, at present, at least \$30,000, and their value will rapidly increase."

1864 -- "The swamp lands belonging to the College are being sold, the proceeds of which are held for permanent investment, and for the improvement of unsold portions, by drainage. The sales, thus far, have been by detached lots, on time, the receipts from which are \$1,503."

1866 -- "The swamp lands granted by the State to the Agricultural College, comprise 6,849.09 acres, of which a tract comprising 3,326.46 acres, called the 'Big Marsh,' has been withheld from sale for the purpose of improving it by drainage before putting it on the market. Under the direction of the Farm Superintendent, there has been expended in ditching this tract, about \$1,750. It is proposed to extend these operations next year. A tract of about 30 acres has been so far reclaimed that it would have been seeded to grass in September last, had not the unusual wetness of the ground prevented. It will be done as the state of the ground will permit.

"Of the lands in market, the total sales effected, amount to 1,963.46 acres, and the aggregate sum for which they have been sold, partly on credit, is \$6,259.49, being an average of \$3.18 per acre. The minimum price received is \$1.50, and the maximum \$7.50 per acre."

1867 -- "But the appropriations lately made by the Legislature, have been only sufficient to defray current expenses, leaving no funds for the erection of buildings or for other improvements except what may have been derived from the sale of swamp lands; and though something has been realized from this source, it has chiefly been applied to relieving the more pressing wants of the Institution, in regard to the shelter of live stock, providing a green-house, the repair of buildings, etc."

and

"The improvements sometime since commenced on the swamp lands, have been continued. The main ditch through the 'Big Marsh' has been completed, allowing the waters of Mud and Park lakes to flow through. The result has been the lowering of the surfaces of those lakes, as well as settling of the marshy land along their shores, and along the line of the ditch. Seeds of the cultivated grasses have been sown on the reclaimed portion of the marsh. The grass from the first sowing was mostly destroyed by being flooded with water just as it was coming up; that from seed sown the past autumn looks well.

"The Ingham and Clinton State Road crosses the Big Marsh on the township line between De Witt and Bath, and is so far completed as to allow teams to pass across the marsh. Access is thus given

to the College lands without crossing the lands of individuals. The effect of these improvements will be to enhance the value of the land, which will be brought into a state more or less productive."

1870 -- "The new hall which was erected through the appropriation of \$30,000 by the Legislature of 1869, was nearly completed by the opening of the term of 1870. The total of cost over the appropriations was met by the sale of swamp lands."

These excerpts reveal that the initial enthusiasm over the potential of the College Swamp Lands as a source of income from crop production soon waned. Their wetness made crop production uncertain. The relative distance from the campus made operation with student labor difficult. The need for money, in excess of Legislative appropriations, for improvements encouraged the sale of the lands as the opportunity arose.

Revenue as a result of the Morrill Land-Grant College Act of 1862<sup>1/</sup> was not received until 1870. That year \$2,779.89 was received as interest. The Act demanded that the proceeds from the sale of the lands was to be kept in an endowment fund in perpetuity. Only the interest from the endowment could be used and this for operating expenditures only -- not for land or for capital improvements. There were no such restrictions on the income from the sale of swamp lands. Authority was vested in the State Board of Agriculture.

INCOME FROM SALE OF SWAMP LANDS

The Eleventh Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture (covering the period December 1, 1871 through November 30, 1872 presented a financial summary of the College from its very beginning up to December 1, 1872. The report revealed that income from the sale of the College Swamp Lands in the four townships of Clinton and Ingham counties up to that date totaled

<sup>1/</sup> See "The State of Michigan and The Morrill Land Grant College Act of 1862" by Herbert Andrew Berg.

\$36,996.04. In addition, the inventory value of unsold swamp lands as of that date was estimated as follows:

Swamp Land, being a portion of what is popularly called the "Big Marsh," 227 acres, worth probably, when a sale can be made, \$10.00 and acre.....	\$2,270.00
Swamp Lands adjoining "Big Marsh," 195.17 acres.....	1,561.36
Swamp Lands, detached lots -- in Bath township, 920 acres; De Witt township, 40 acres; Lansing township, 120 acres.....	3,240.00
Total	<u>\$7,071.36</u>

The same report states that since the interest from the Morrill Land Grant Endowment Fund, by the terms of its appropriation from Congress, cannot be used for the acquisition of land or for permanent improvements, the \$36,996.04 receipts from the sale of the Swamp Lands has been expended chiefly in building barns and other erections. Amongst the more prominent of these expenditures were the following:

For ditching and improving the swamp lands, in order to facilitate the sale of them.....	\$3,807.27
For museum of geological, mineral-orgical and conchological specimens.....	1,200.00
Erection of greenhouse and garden barn.....	2,400.00
Erection of farm house.....	3,150.00
Erection of sheep barn, about.....	2,000.00
Erection of cattle barn, about.....	2,000.00
Erection of cattle shed.....	1,187.47
Erection of bridge over Cedar River.....	750.00
New roofing of boarding hall.....	316.64
Extra construction and fixtures of new hall.....	14,700.00
Extra construction of chemical laboratory.....	1,507.13
Horse barn (1871) and piggery.....	2,500.00
Addition to Professor's house.....	771.06
Barn to Professor's house.....	300.00
Ash house to boarding hall.....	179.74

It was stated that "repairs and furniture on account of barns, houses and halls, more than consumed the balance of these receipts from the sale of swamp lands."

As shown in Table I, sale of the swamp lands continued through 1904 and the aggregate total income from the sales finally amounted to \$45,403.66.

TABLE I

INCOME OF THE MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE FROM SALE OF SWAMP LAND GRANT

A considerable portion of the College Swamp lands was purchased by Senator

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1861	\$ 152.25
1862	218.97
1863	407.80
1864	726.09
1865	1,156.61
1866	1,094.27
1867	7,608.38
1868	592.49
1869	17,559.00
1870	1,320.02
1871	4,135.72
1872	217.05
1873	10.13
1874	150.13
1875	144.53
1876	1,773.09
1877	979.06
1878	826.60
1879	712.22
1880	797.55
1881	461.95
1882	358.46
1883	391.95
1884	1,259.90
1885	187.50
1886	- -
1887	198.20
1888	144.20
1889	10.50
1890	238.50
1891	37.38
1892	137.38
1893	10.50
1894	433.59
1895	10.50
1896	- -
1897	- -
1898	- -
1899	705.00
1900	175.00
1901	- -
1902	- -
1903	- -
1904	61.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$45,403.66</b>

Washington, D.C.

## THE CHANDLER FARM

A considerable portion of the College Swamp Lands was purchased by Senator Zachariah Chandler with major purchases in 1867, 1869 and 1871. An early purchase was made on August 28, 1867. It was 880 acres at \$8.00 an acre. His acquisitions were within the area known as the "Big Marsh" in De Witt and Bath townships. Even today, local people refer to the area as Chandler's marsh. It seems appropriate to record some of the story here. First, a few words about the Hon. Zachariah Chandler, U.S. Senator from Michigan, March 4, 1857 - March 3, 1875.

"Zach" Chandler was born in Bedford, New Hampshire, December 10, 1813. His brother-in-law, Franklin Moore, was born in the same town. In 1833 these young men formed a partnership and embarked in a dry goods business on Jefferson Avenue, Detroit. Chandler soon entered politics. In the late forties he served as an Alderman. In 1851 he was elected Mayor of Detroit as a Whig. The next year he was a candidate for Governor, but was defeated. In 1857, as a Republican, he succeeded Lewis Clark as a United States Senator from Michigan. He held this office until March 3, 1875. Then effective October 19, 1875 he was appointed Secretary of the Interior by President Grant and served until March 4, 1877. He also became Chairman of the National Republican Committee. In the spring of 1879 the Michigan Legislature chose Mr. Chandler to serve in the Senate again, this time to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Senator Christy. Chandler himself believed he would be the Republican candidate for the Presidency in 1880. He died in Chicago November 1, 1879. Buried in Elmwood Cemetery, Detroit. His statue, along with one of Lewis Cass, is in Statuary Hall, The Capitol, Washington, D.C.

The book, "Life of Zachariah Chandler," by the Detroit Post and Tribune, Published 1880, relates the story of Mr. Chandler's interest in Michigan's swamp lands most interestingly:

"The marsh farm, which Mr. Chandler bought near the city of Lansing, and the experiments in extensive and systematic drainage which he made thereon, always received a generous share of his attention when he was in Michigan. The enterprise was one in which he unhesitatingly made large investments with the view of settling definitely questions of manifest public importance. In 1857 the State of Michigan gave to its Agricultural College the public lands in the four townships of Bath, De Witt, Meridian, and Lansing, which were designated on the surveyor's maps as 'swamp lands'; in the main the sections covered by the grant were marshy, although their rectilinear boundaries included some solid ground. Mr. Chandler purchased from the college and other owners a farm of 3,160 acres, located four miles (by railroad) from Lansing, in the townships of Bath and De Witt in Clinton county; it included about 1,900 acres of marsh meadow, 500 acres of tamarack swamp, and 800 acres of oak-opening uplands. The marsh was traversed by a slender water-course, deviously connecting some small lakes with a stream known as the Looking Glass river. The upland portion of the farm was thoroughly fertile, but its development and cultivation did not specially interest Mr. Chandler, except as furnishing the needed base for his experiments upon the marsh. He said: 'Michigan contains thousands of acres of precisely this kind of land. The drainage of this particular marsh is difficult, as much so as is the case with any land in this peninsula which is not a hopeless swamp. If this tract can be reclaimed, others can be, and I propose to give the experiment of reclamation a thorough trial. I have the money, and I believe I have the pluck. If I succeed, it will be a good thing for the State, for it will show how to add millions of dollars worth of land or its farms. If I fail, it will also be a good thing, for it will settle an open question, and no man need repeat my attempt.'

"He pushed this experiment vigorously from the time of its commencement until his death, and gave to it his frequent personal supervision. His investments in the marsh farm soon came to be counted by many tens of thousands of dollars. Originally, practical farmers were inclined to regard his operation as sheer folly, but as they saw the purpose, methods and thoroughness of his work, a just appreciation of its aim followed. Mr. Chandler never disguised the character of this enterprise. Repeatedly he said to visitors at the farm and to friends, 'I have a theory -- that is a remarkably expensive thing to have -- and I propose to test it here; it will make me poorer, but it will make others richer some time.' The public value of his experiment is believed to be great, and that fact he was quick to make prominent whenever it seemed necessary.

"The general plan of drainage operations consisted in connecting by a large ditch Park lake (which has an area of 235 acres) with the Looking Glass river. This main ditch was constructed by straightening the bed of Prairie creek, and possessed descent enough to insure a slow current in wet seasons. It is about four miles in length, and averages fourteen feet in width by four in

depth. At intervals of forty rods are constructed lateral ditches, as a rule five feet in width at the top by three in depth. This part of the work had not been completed at the time of Mr. Chandler's death, but still the lateral ditching had reached about fifty miles in aggregate length, and had well drained about 1,000 acres in the western end of the marsh near the outlet into the Looking Glass. In that portion of the farm the first results of the drainage -- the rotting down of the peaty surface of the marsh into a vegetable mold -- have already manifested themselves satisfactorily. The extent to which this decomposition will continue is not completely tested, nor does it yet appear what will be the full measure of the arability of the soil which will be created by this process, supplemented by the tile draining which will follow the subsidence of the marsh to a permanent level. This peaty surface varies from two and a half feet to a rod in depth and promises to become an enormously productive soil. The experiments thus far tried upon it have resulted hopefully. Much of the native grass furnished excellent hay, and stock fattened upon it thoroughly with no more than the usual allowance of grain. The tame grass sown was chiefly Fowl Meadow and Timothy. The former Mr. Chandler had seen growing in Holland on reclaimed land, and he determined to give it a trial; he was only able to find the seed in the Boston market, and there paid for it four dollars per bushel of eleven pounds. It is a species of Red Top, and soon yielded from one and a half to two tons of excellent hay per acre. For four seasons this seeding-down with tame grasses was tried with satisfactory results, and then other experiments followed. In the fall of 1878, twelve acres of marsh, then well seeded-down with grass, were thoroughly plowed by Superintendent Hughes, who, in the following season, raised thereon corn, potatoes, rutabagas and oats. The results conclusively showed that the marsh possessed general productiveness, although the experiment itself was marred by the unseasonable frosts in 1879. The corn looked well at the outset, but was severely injured in the end. The potato crop was a good one, and the yield of oats was also large. In the fall of 1879 another tract of twelve acres was plowed, and the same experiment was put in process of repetition. Superintendent Hughes is of the opinion that within another year, the reclaimed marsh will produce 100 bushels of corn to the acre. A short time before his death, Mr. Chandler said that, in view of the success which had attended the experiments already tried, he now felt confident that in time his farm would be pointed out as an ague-bed transformed into one of the most valuable pieces of property in Central Michigan, and would demonstrate the reclaimability of large tracts of swamp land in the State.....

"Outside of the interest attaching to it by reason of the drainage experiments, the Chandler farm would deserve notice as one of the most thoroughly equipped and stocked of the new farms of Michigan. It was traversed by a state road, and by the Jackson, Lansing and Saginaw Railroad which has established a signal station near the farm-house. Its buildings are located upon the highest ground. They are substantially constructed, and surrounded with all the evidences of thrift..... (there follows a description of the buildings and the livestock) .....

"Mr. Chandler's experiments were closely watched by the farmers of Michigan. Visits were frequent from them singly, in small parties, and in club or Grange excursions to the marsh, and they always met a hospitable reception.

Letters of inquiry also came from many parts of the State, giving evidence of the widespread character of the interest felt. Mr. Chandler himself when in Michigan visited the farm at least once a month, inspecting the work thoroughly, discussing plans with the superintendent, making suggestions, and giving orders. His experience as a farmer in his boyhood furnished ideas which were yet useful and a judgment which was well-informed; still he was ready to welcome all innovations that promised good results, and he closed many discussions with his superintendents by remarking, 'If you come at me with facts, that is enough; I never argue against them.' At the farm he also found the most congenial relaxation. He would come there jaded out with the excitement and labor of political contest and public life; in stout clothing and heavy boots he would scour the meadows, examining ditching, look up the stock, oversee labor, and work himself if there was an inviting opportunity. A day or two of this life would bring rest, hearty appetite, and sound sleep, would relieve his nerves from tension, and restore his vital powers to their natural activity. He always rated his visits to the marsh farm as a certain and delightful tonic."

With the exception of a few lots to square out his tract, the Chandler farm land had been purchased from the College Swamp Lands. At the time of his death in 1879, the marsh was beginning to repay the large outlay put upon it. If Mr. Chandler had lived, it is believed he would have pushed his experiment to a complete success.

#### LAND RETAINED BY COLLEGE

The Thirtieth Annual Report by the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture covered the fiscal year ended June 30, 1891. During that fiscal year 160 acres of swamp land were sold, leaving but 320 acres in Bath Township, Clinton County, all that remained unsold out of the original College Swamp Land grant of 6,799.38 acres. These 320 acres remain unsold as of today (July 14, 1966) and are identified as follows:

Bath Township, Clinton County (T.5N. - R.1W.)

Section 4	- W 1/2 of SW 1/4	----	80 acres
Section 5	- SE 1/4 of SE 1/4	----	40 acres
Section 11	- S 1/2 of SE 1/4	----	80 acres
Section 14	- N 1/2 of NE 1/4	----	80 acres
Section 14	- SE 1/4 of NE 1/4	----	40 acres
	Total		320 acres

The first two descriptions represent a relatively inaccessible 120 acre tract which has been left entirely to nature over the years. The other three descriptions (200 acres) are a portion of Michigan State University's Muck Experimental Farm under the supervision of the Soil Science Department.

#### COLLEGE SWAMP LANDS SOLD AND LATER REACQUIRED

Two hundred eighty acres of the swamp land, some of which was sold as long ago as 1864, has been repurchased and once again is included in Michigan State University's land inventory. One hundred twenty acres are incorporated in the Muck Experimental Farm in Clinton County and 160 acres are included in the Agricultural Experiment Station near the main campus at East Lansing.

#### Muck Experimental Farm (327.05 acres), Bath, Michigan

Two hundred acres of this research tract have been in possession of this institution ever since the initial transfer in 1858. These lands are described as:

#### T.5N. - R.1W. (Bath twp., Clinton County)

Sec. 11 - S 1/2 of SE 1/4	80 acres
Sec. 14 - N 1/2 of NE 1/4	80 acres
Sec. 14 - SE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40 acres

The transactions with regard to the reacquired 120 acres at the same location were:

Sec. 12 - SW 1/4 of SW 1/4                      40 acres

- 6/9/1882. State Board of Agr. sold to Addison Gardner for \$180.
- 2/24/1900 Addison Gardner sold to Clarence Parks for \$180.
- 6/17/1938 Clarence Parks sold to Leslie G. Brown.
- 5/10/1956 Leslie G. Brown sold to State Board of Agr.

Sec. 13 - W 1/2 of NW 1/4 80 acres

12/19/1899 (NW 1/4 of NW 1/4 only)  
State Board of Agr. sold  
to Clarence Z. Parks for  
\$175.

5/10/1956 (W 1/2 of NW 1/4)  
Clarence Z. Parks sold to  
State Board of Agr.

The 7.05 acres is a piece of upland that provides for ingress and egress to the muck lands and for a building site. Two and one-half acres were bought in 1941 and the balance in 1944. The 1941 acquisition is described -- "A certain piece of land being in the Township of Bath, County of Clinton and State of Michigan and described as follows, to wit: Located in the Northwest corner of the wooded Section on the North edge of the Northwest quarter of the Northwest quarter of Section 13, and extending from the center of the highway on the North edge of Section 13 Southward for a distance two hundred eighty-three (283) feet and Eastward along the highway for a distance of three hundred eighty-four and eight hundred five thousandths (384.805) feet."

The 1944 acquisition is described: "A parcel of land situate and being in the Township of Bath, County of Clinton and State of Michigan, and described as follows to wit: Land located on the East Half of the Northwest quarter of Section 13, Township 5 North, Range 1 West, described as: Commencing at the Northwest corner of the Northeast quarter of the Northwest quarter of Section 13, thence South on the quarter line between the West Half and the East Half of the Northwest quarter of Section 13, 283 feet, thence East 700 feet, to West line of land sold to grantee herein named on July 31, 1941, by deeds recorded in Liber 207 of Deed, Pages 281, 282, thence North along said line 283 feet to center of highway on the North of said Section 13, thence Westerly along the center of said highway 700 feet to the point of beginning, containing 4.55 acres, more or less, hereby reserving a right-of-way through the property to be designated by the grantee and all mineral and oil rights, provided, however, no drilling or mineral removal shall be done on said property to secure said rights. Grantee shall keep its property fences from grantors land."

Michigan State University Campus and Agricultural Experiment Station,  
East Lansing

Four forty-acre tracts of the swamp lands were situated in what now constitutes the Michigan State University property associated with the campus

and Agricultural Experiment Station at the East Lansing location. Little was it realized at that time that the Agricultural College of a century ago would ever attain the size it now represents.

All four of these "Forties" were sold. The first one in 1864. The last one in 1904. They have since been repurchased. Brief mention of these Ingham County transactions is as follows:

1. Meridian Township (T.4N. - R.1W.)

Sec. 31 - NE 1/4 of NE 1/4 - 40 acres

8/3/1864 State Board of Agr. sold to Charles Smith for \$200

3/1/1948 Charles W. Bachman sold to State Board of Agr.

2. Lansing Township (T.4N. - R.2W.)

Sec. 25 - NE 1/4 of SE 1/4 - 40 acres

3/19/1866 State Agricultural College sold to Alfred Bixby for \$100

4/12/1944 Michigan State College purchased entire N 1/2 of SE 1/4

Sec. 25 - NE 1/4 of NE 1/4 - 40 acres

4/9/1880 State Board of Agr. Sold to John P. Miller for \$200

6/22/1928 H. Redman sold to Michigan State College

Sec. 35 - NE 1/4 of NE 1/4 - 40 acres

4/13/1904 State Board of Agr. sold to Chas. W. Foster for \$100

6/7/1965 Board of Trustees, MSU, purchased 67 acres of E 1/2 of NE 1/4 (all except property acquired by Consumers Power Company and Michigan State Highway Department).

Following the purchase of the A. R. Burr farm (676.57 acres) in June 1855, no additional land was added to the East Lansing holdings until 1900 when a 13.2 acre parcel known as the Mason Farm was acquired. Over the subsequent years additional land has been acquired until now in 1966 there are 4,900 acres at East Lansing including 1,515 acres in campus and housing areas; 490 more acres in planned campus; with the balance of 2,895 acres devoted to agricultural research. All holdings of Michigan State University over the entire State adds to 18,100 acres. This includes Oakland University, the branch Experiment Stations (both agricultural and forest) and other properties. Great tribute must be paid the past governing boards of Michigan State University for having provided space in advance for the needs of today.

SUMMARY

Table II present a tabulation of the income of the Michigan Agricultural College from all sources from the date of its foundation February 12, 1855 through September 30, 1885. The total financial support for this 31-year period amounted to a very little more than one million dollars (\$1,000,265.12) or an average of only \$32,267 a year. Of this total cost, 63.3 percent came from the Michigan taxpayer through Legislative appropriations. The balance, 36.7 percent, was revenue from the sale of the Salt Spring and Swamp Land

Includes \$43,241.75 received from Swamp Land sales up to September 30, 1885. Ultimately Swamp Land sales totaled \$45,403.65 with 320 acres remaining unsold.

TABLE II

INCOME OF THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE FROM ALL SOURCES,  
FROM THE DATE OF ITS FOUNDATION THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 1885

Year	Appropriations for Current Expenses	Appropriations for Special Purposes	Land Sales Salt Spring and Swamp Land Grants	Interest on Morrill Land Grant Endowment	Total
1855			\$56,320.00 <sup>1/</sup>		\$ 56,320.00 <sup>1/</sup>
1856					
1857	\$ 40,000.00				40,000.00
1858					
1859	37,500.00				37,500.00
1860					
1861	6,500.00		152.25		6,652.25
1862	10,000.00		218.97		10,218.97
1863	9,000.00		407.80		9,407.80
1864	9,000.00		726.09		9,726.09
1865	15,000.00		1,156.61		16,156.61
1866	15,000.00		1,094.27		16,094.27
1867	20,000.00		7,608.38		27,608.38
1868	20,000.00		592.49		20,592.49
1869	20,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	17,559.00	\$ 58.96	67,617.96
1870	20,000.00		1,320.02	2,720.93	24,040.95
1871	18,250.00	10,500.00	4,135.72	3,785.84	36,671.56
1872	18,250.00	3,000.00	217.05	7,175.65	28,642.70
1873	21,796.00	15,602.00	10.13	11,059.06	48,467.19
1874	13,000.00	15,602.00	150.13	14,061.98	42,814.11
1875	7,638.00	7,755.50	144.53	14,446.14	29,984.17
1876	7,638.00	6,755.50	1,773.09	16,830.17	32,996.76
1877	6,150.00	30,686.80	979.06	15,172.86	52,988.72
1878	6,150.00	5,686.80	826.60	15,807.09	28,470.49
1879	4,971.80	16,068.32	712.22	16,978.22	38,730.56
1880	4,971.80	7,068.32	797.55	17,837.24	30,674.91
1881	7,249.00	43,720.50	461.95	20,935.25	72,366.70
1882	7,249.00	8,945.50	358.46	22,507.45	39,060.41
1883	8,385.00	23,793.00	391.95	30,749.60	63,319.55
1884	8,385.00	10,526.00	1,259.90	27,909.72	48,080.62
1885		35,103.00	187.50	29,770.40	65,060.90
Total	\$362,083.60	\$270,813.24	\$99,561.72 <sup>2/</sup>	\$267,806.56	\$1,000,265.12

<sup>1/</sup> Appropriation by the Legislature of 22 sections of salt spring lands for which the money was advanced by the State.

<sup>2/</sup> Includes \$43,241.72 received from Swamp Land sales up to September 30, 1885. Ultimately Swamp Land sales totaled \$45,403.66 with 320 acres remaining unsold.

Grants and from the interest on the Morrill Land Grant Endowment. Of the average annual appropriation from the State Legislature, \$11,680 was for current operating expenses and \$8,736 was for special purposes, principally building construction and other property improvement.

These early years were difficult. The institution was started in a woods nearly 30 miles from a railroad, and with no model to follow. Agriculture was the only course of study offered. There were continued efforts to make the College a school of the University. The repercussions of the Civil War were great. Not all of the faculty were well fitted for the work they attempted. Funds were limited.

However, the faculty, staff and students of the College persevered, and there were loyal supporters of the institution.

Theophilus Capon Abbot was President of the College during the last 22 years covered by Table II. In his last report as president he wrote:

"The college passed, owing to a faith in the general plan of it on the part of the people of the State, through the dark days of the rebellion. In 1860, it had no income except legislative appropriations, and had less than fifty students in all. The Congressional land grant of 1862 gave the College the strong defense of hope, but it was not until 1870 that the institution realized an income from the sale of lands. By scrupulous impartiality of treatment of political parties the College has passed from being called the expensive pet of one party, to being, I believe, one of the institutions of the state, whose interests all the people gladly combine to further, and in whose prosperity they all delight. I early laid it down as a rule that no opposition to the College should be held to be a ground of ill feeling against any person, and now I have the pleasure of seeing former opponents of the College among its warm friends, and the principal agricultural organization of the State among its best supporters. The State Agricultural Society, State Horticultural Society, and State Grange all endeavor to make known and recommend the College. Personally, I have cause to be very grateful for the patient encouragement which these organizations, and the several farmers, stockmen, and horticulturists have extended to me, as an individual, as well as to the College over which I presided.

"Now as I look abroad, I see where over three hundred graduates form the best of our strength, in the communities where they dwell, and a series of winter institutes. At home I look upon grounds which are a model of beauty, upon good buildings for nearly every department, upon stock and other equipments of an Agricultural College, second to those of no institution of a like character in the land.

"Surely, I can but carry out of the Presidency grateful memories of members of the Board and of previous Boards, of the officers of the College, its long succession of students, and of the citizens of the State whose encouragement and friendship I have so constantly enjoyed. Surely I can but wish for the College, under some new President, enlarged prosperity and success."

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That to enable the State of Arkansas to construct the necessary levees and drains to reclaim the swamp and overflowed lands therein, the whole of those swamp and overflowed lands, made unfit thereby for cultivation, which shall remain unsold at the passage of this act, shall be, and the same are hereby, granted to said State.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Interior, as soon as may be practicable after the passage of this act, to make out an accurate list and plats of the lands described as aforesaid, and transmit the same to the governor of the State of Arkansas, and at the request of said governor, cause a patent to be issued to the State thereof, and on that patent, the fee simple to said lands shall vest in the said State of Arkansas, subject to the disposal of the legislature thereof. Provided, however, That the proceeds of said lands, whether from sale or by direct appropriation in kind, shall be applied, exclusively, as far as necessary, to the purpose of reclaiming said lands by means of the levees and drains aforesaid.

Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That in making out a list and plats of the land aforesaid, all legal subdivisions, the greater part of which is "not unfit for cultivation," shall be included in said list and plats; but when the greater part of a subdivision is not of that character, the whole of it shall be excluded therefrom.

Sec. 4. And be it further enacted, That the provisions of this act be extended to, and their benefits be conferred upon, each of the other States of the Union in which such swamp and overflowed lands known as designated aforesaid, may be situated.

Approved, September 28, 1850.

July 14, 1966

Herbert A. Berg  
Cooperative Extension Service  
Michigan State University

## APPENDIX A

## United States Statutes

Thirty-first Congress, Session 1, 1850

## Chapter 84

AN ACT to enable the State of Arkansas and other States to reclaim the "Swamp Lands" within their limits, approved September 28, 1850.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That to enable the State of Arkansas to construct the necessary levees and drains to reclaim the swamp and overflowed lands therein, the whole of those swamp and overflowed lands, made unfit thereby for cultivation, which shall remain unsold at the passage of this act, shall be, and the same are hereby, granted to said State.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Interior, as soon as may be practicable after the passage of this act, to make out an accurate list and plats of the lands described as aforesaid, and transmit the same to the governor of the State of Arkansas, and, at the request of said governor, cause a patent to be issued to the State therefor; and on that patent, the fee simple to said lands shall vest in the said State of Arkansas, subject to the disposal of the legislature thereof: Provided, however, That the proceeds of said lands, whether from sale or by direct appropriation in kind, shall be applied, exclusively, as far as necessary, to the purpose of reclaiming said lands by means of the levees and drains aforesaid.

Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That in making out a list and plats of the land aforesaid, all legal subdivisions, the greater part of which is "wet and unfit for cultivation," shall be included in said list and plats; but when the greater part of a subdivision is not of that character, the whole of it shall be excluded therefrom.

Sec. 4. And be it further enacted, That the provisions of this act be extended to, and their benefits be conferred upon, each of the other States of the Union in which such swamp and overflowed lands, known as designated as aforesaid, may be situated.

Approved, September 28, 1850.

APPENDIX B

Legislature of the State of Michigan

The Regular Session of 1851

Act No. 187

AN ACT to provide for the sale and reclaiming of swamp lands granted to the State, and the disposition of the proceeds.

Section 1. The People of the State of Michigan enact, That they adopt the notes of the surveys on file in the surveyor general's office, as the bases upon which they will receive the swamp lands granted to the state by an act of Congress of September 28, 1850.

Sec. 2. The minimum price of said lands shall be seventy-five cents per acre, and shall not be sold for less. All the moneys received from the sale of said lands shall be and remain a fund for the purpose of reclaiming said lands in conformity to the provisions of the grant.

Sec. 3. The Commissioner of the State Land Office shall have the control and supervision of said land, and of the sale thereof, and shall, as soon as the title vests in the State, cause the same to be sold at public auction, at such times and in such quantities as he may think proper, and shall cause thirty days' notice of the time and place of sale to be published in all the counties of the State in which there is a newspaper published. After the public sale under said notice, the residue of said lands may be sold in the manner now provided by law for the sale of primary school lands, as near as may be, except in herein otherwise provided.

Sec. 4. On the sale of any of the said swamp lands, the Commissioner shall make out and deliver to the purchaser thereof a certificate, containing a description of the same, the amount paid therefor, the date of the sale, and the name of the purchaser, and setting forth that upon presentation thereof at the office of the Secretary of State, the purchaser shall be entitled to a patent, to be executed by the Governor, for the lands therein described.

Sec. 5. All moneys accruing to said fund from the sale of the lands aforesaid shall be loaned to the State, and the interest arising from the same shall be paid by the State and become a part of the fund aforesaid.

Sec. 6. Said lands shall only be sold in the legal subdivisions in which they shall be received by the State, nor shall any of said lands be subject to private entry until the same shall have been offered for sale at public auction as herein above provided.

Sec. 7. The Commissioner of the Land Office is hereby authorized to procure all necessary books or plats of such lands as may be required for the speedy and systematic transaction of the business of the office, and all proper charges for the same shall be paid out of the fund aforesaid.

Sec. 8. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved June 28, 1851.

LANSING TOWNSHIP, Ingham County (T. 4N. - R. 2W., Ionia District)

Sec. 1	NW 1/4 of NE 1/4	37.27 acres
	SW 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	NE 1/4 of SW 1/4	37.33
	SW 1/4 of SW 1/4	40.00
Sec. 12	N 1/2 of NE 1/4	80.00
	SE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	SE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 25	NE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	NE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 35	NE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 36	NW 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
		<u>474.50 acres</u>

APPENDIX C

MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE SWAMP LANDS

By: Federal Swamp Land Grant September 28, 1850  
 Approved List October 27, 1853  
 Swamp Land Patent February 26, 1857  
 Reserved for Agricultural College February 4, 1858  
 (Act 31, Mich. Laws 1858)  
 Transferred to Agricultural College March 15, 1861  
 (Act 188, Mich. Laws 1861)

LANSING TOWNSHIP, Ingham County (T.4N. - R.2W., Ionia District)

Sec. 1	NW frl 1/4 of NE frl 1/4	37.17 acres
	SW 1/4 of NE frl 1/4	40.00
	NE frl 1/4 of NW frl 1/4	37.33
Sec. 11	SW 1/4 of SW 1/4	40.00
	NE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 12	N 1/2 of NE 1/4	80.00
	SE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	SE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 12	SE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 25	NE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	NE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 35	NE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 36	NW 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
	SE 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
		<u>474.50 acres</u>

Sec. 17	NW 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 31	NE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
		<u>1,139.83 acres</u>

Approved List June 9, 1866. Swamp Land Patent December 26, 1866.

## MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP, Ingham County (T.4N. - R.1W., Ionia District)

Sec. 1	S 1/2 of NW frl 1/4	80.00 acres
	SE 1/4 of NE frl 1/4	40.00
	SW 1/4 of SW 1/4	40.00
Sec. 2	SE 1/4 of NE frl 1/4	40.00
	S frl 1/2 of SE frl 1/4	62.00
Sec. 5	N frl 1/2 of NW frl 1/4	76.84
Sec. 6	NE 1/4 of NE frl 1/4	38.33
	NW frl 1/4 of NW frl 1/4	47.93
Sec. 11	S frl 1/2 of NW frl 1/4	65.78
	NE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	NW 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	S 1/2 of SE 1/4	80.00
Sec. 12	SE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	NE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00 <sup>1/</sup>
	NW 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 14	NE 1/4 of SE 1/4	160.00
	N 1/2 of NW 1/4	80.00
	SE 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
Sec. 17	NW 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 31	NE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
		<u>40.00</u>
		1,130.88 acres

<sup>1/</sup> Approved List June 9, 1866. Swamp Land Patent December 26, 1866.

## De WITT TOWNSHIP, Clinton County (T.5N. - R.2W., Ionia District)

Sec. 22	SW 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00 acres
Sec. 24	NE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
	SW 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 25	NE 1/4 of NE 1/4	160.00
	NW 1/4 of SW 1/4	160.00
	E 1/2 of SW 1/4	80.00
Sec. 26	NW 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
	E 1/2 of SW 1/4	80.00
	SE 1/4	160.00
Sec. 26	W 1/2 of NE 1/4	80.00
Sec. 29	NE 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
Sec. 30	SE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	S frl 1/2 of SW 1/4	87.64
Sec. 31	N frl 1/2 of NW 1/4	87.74
Sec. 33	NW 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
Sec. 36	SW 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
	N 1/2 of SE 1/4	80.00
Sec. 12	NW 1/4 of SW 1/4	160.00
	NE 1/4	160.00
	SW 1/4 of SW 1/4	80.00
	E 1/2 of NW 1/4	80.00
Sec. 13	W 1/2 of SW 1/4	
	W 1/2 of NW 1/4	
	SE 1/4 of NE 1/4	
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		1,455.38 acres

## BATH TOWNSHIP, Clinton County (T.5N. - R.1W., Ionia District)

Sec. 1	W 1/2 of SW 1/4	80.00 acres
Sec. 2	SW 1/4 of SW 1/4	40.00
Sec. 17	NE frl 1/4 of NW frl 1/4	39.48
Sec. 3	SW 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	SE 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
Sec. 22	NE 1/4 of SE 1/4	
Sec. 4	S 1/2 of SE 1/4	80.00
Sec. 24	S 1/2 of SW 1/4	80.00
Sec. 27	NW 1/4 of SW 1/4	40.00
	NE frl 1/4 of NW frl 1/4	38.42
Sec. 5	SE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 8	S 1/2 of SW 1/4	80.00
Sec. 29	SW 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 9	N 1/2 of SE 1/4	80.00
Sec. 10	SE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 30	S 1/2 of NE 1/4	
Sec. 11	S 1/2 of SE 1/4	80.00
Sec. 12	NW 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
	SW 1/4 of SW 1/4	40.00
	SW frl 1/4 of SW frl 1/4	
Sec. 13	W 1/2 of SW 1/4	80.00
	W 1/2 of NW 1/4	80.00
	SE 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00

Sec. 14	NE 1/4	160.00 acres
	NE 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
	NE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 17	N 1/2 of NW 1/4	80.00
Sec. 20	S 1/2 of SW 1/4	80.00
Sec. 22	NE 1/4 of SE 1/4	40.00
Sec. 24	NW 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
Sec. 27	W 1/2 of NE frl 1/4	80.00
	SE 1/4 of NW 1/4	40.00
	W 1/2 of SE 1/4	80.00
Sec. 28	N frl 1/2 of NE frl 1/4	40.35
Sec. 29	NW 1/4	160.00
	SW 1/4	160.00
	S frl 1/2 of SE frl 1/4	61.95
Sec. 30	E 1/2 of NE 1/4	80.00
	SW 1/4 of NE 1/4	40.00
	SE 1/4	160.00
	E 1/2 of SW frl 1/4	80.00
	SW frl 1/4 of SW frl 1/4	48.52

Sec. 31	NE 1/4	160.00
	SE 1/4	160.00
	NW fr1 1/4	177.76
	SW fr1 1/4	179.08
Sec. 32	NW 1/4	160.00
	SW 1/4	160.00
	NE fr1 1/4	113.06
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		3,738.62 acres