

Old Stone Church

DCR DIVISION OF WATER SUPPLY PROTECTION



Symbol of resilience through a changing landscape. This landmark endured *fire, flood, and collapse.*

Serves as a monument to the buildings that were removed from the Nashua River Valley to create the Wachusett Reservoir. Today the Wachusett Reservoir, along with the Quabbin Reservoir and Ware River, are the unfiltered source of high quality water for the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority water supply system for over 3.1 million people.



First Baptist Church, Oct. 16, 1897

The Old Stone Church was built in 1892 as a replacement for the original wooden Baptist church that was destroyed by fire two years earlier.

The opening dedication was delayed two months due to a second fire that damaged the interior.

In just 5 years, the Metropolitan Water Board bought the church from the Baptist Society for the creation of the Wachusett Reservoir.

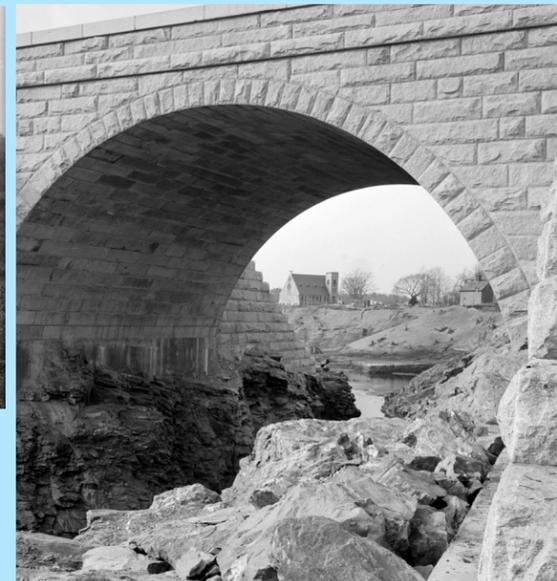


June 27, 1903

St. Anthony's Catholic Church stood next to the Old Stone Church. Built out of wood in 1890, it was destroyed in 1903 so that the structure would not deteriorate and contaminate the drinking water.

All wooden structures were removed to ensure a clean drinking water supply.

The Old Stone Church was the only building in the area allowed to remain because it was constructed of stone.



West Boylston Arch, Dec. 2, 1904

The Old Stone Church stands alone.

In 1973, the church was added to the National Register of Historical Places.

By 1975 the roof and major portions of the walls had collapsed.

The church was rebuilt to replicate the original as much as possible. Today it serves as a reminder of the past, offering comfort in its scenic value.



400 Cords of Wood, Mar. 12, 1902

The churches overlook the valley as it was prepared for flooding.

Church services were allowed to continue for one more month after this photo was taken.

Only remnants of the foundation of the dismantled St. Anthony's Catholic Church remain.

You may still see evidence of this today, in the footprint of stones showing through the grass.



Stripping Soil, Sep. 18, 1904

Clearing the land and stripping soil at the site of the Old Stone Church, today known as the Thomas Basin.

All structures and trees were removed before the valley was flooded.

Constructed of stone, only the Old Stone Church was allowed to remain.

The Massachusetts Metropolitan Water Works (MWW) Photograph Collection documents the construction of the Boston Metropolitan Water Supply. www.digitalcommonwealth.org