Retrieved from: ProQuest
This article actually talks about some of the engineering aspects of the building of the
dam for the reservoir. It discusses how dirt will be moved around, and how watchtowers
are being built so that work can be done at night. This article wasn’t hugely relevant to a
discussion on the development of the Quabbin Reservoir, but it is one of two articles I
located from the time of its development.

Retrieved from: ProQuest
The article talks about how in the year 2020, the Quabbin may not be able to supply
water for all of Boston’s needs. The choices were to divert more water from other rivers,
or to try to conserve current resources better. The decision was made for the latter, and
will begin by fixing 6400 miles of leaky pipes, which have been estimated at losing
between 7 and 25 percent of their water. Environmentalists were pleased that diverting
water was avoided, and argued that it would be very costly and would contaminate the
pure water from the Quabbin Reservoir.

Retrieved from: Boston Public Library
This article contains the opinions of some former residents of the towns displaced by the
Quabbin Reservoir. There was a feeling of sadness and nostalgia, in addition to some
bitterness. The article also mentions a ceremony the night before which gave about a
dozen former Quabbin residents a certificate commemorating their loss, from Secretary of State Michael Connolly.

There is an added insight to the history of the decision to build the Quabbin Reservoir. Residents felt it was done unfairly, with all the decision-making being down in Boston, and with people who would benefit from the reservoir making up a third of the Legislature.

Tying the Quabbin happening with current developments, Boston was recently looking west to find water again. Many residents, including some people displaced by the Quabbin, resisted, and it was found that a lot of water was being lost from the Quabbin through leaky pipes on its way to Boston. The fact that the pipes have been fixed and that the Quabbin is well taken care of has erased some of the bitterness felt by past residents.

Retrieved from: ProQuest
This is one of two articles I found dating back to the time of the actual Quabbin development. The article first discusses the towns that the reservoir will cover, including what they’re like and what important and well-known things came from them. The next section discusses water shortage, and how the other reservoirs used for the metropolitan area were being depleted. It mentions a series of investigations, hearings, and debates leading up to the decision to build the Quabbin. Next the cost and general plans are discussed. Finally, the last part is quite different from what articles today say about the situation. It reads, “The people of the valley of the Swift accept these facts with some resentment, but in the main with resignation and with dignity. And Greater Boston by no means is indifferent to the tragedy which the need of the city inflicts upon these innocent bystanders.”

This article describes the Quabbin region as a remote wilderness, rather than as an engineering triumph. The main success of the article is to give a feeling of what it might be like to wander around the Quabbin area today. It sticks to the idea that it is a beautiful site, but with a sad history. The article sums up its feeling about the four disbanded towns with this: “The subject of man books, stories, and legends, the towns over time acquired almost mythic status, transmuted from pleasant but ordinary country communities into symbolic rural Edens sacrificed to satisfy big-city needs for water.”

Retrieved from: Boston Public Library
This article depicts past residents as bitter about Boston just taking whatever it wants, and they’re resentful that “they can never really go home.” They recall the Enfield Ball in 1938, and mention that another blow was when 7613 dead were removed from the valley’s 34 cemeteries. The people resent the fact that most Bostonians don’t even know where the water comes from, and also mention the grievance that towns near the Quabbin can’t access its water.

Retrieved from: LexisNexis
This is a good article that has several anecdotes about some of the resistance and feelings had by people at the time that the development was going on. Article also discusses a bit about current problems with the reservoir, and the hope that it can maintain its usefulness so that four towns won’t have been destroyed for nothing. A lot of water is lost and the acidity of the water may be changing so that harmful metals are picked up.
Retrieved from: Boston Public Library
This article has another set of reflections by former residents of the disbanded towns, and mentions a ball being held in Amherst, exactly 50 years after the one held on the last night of the towns’ existence, at the Enfield Town Hall. In looking back, they mention how they called the workers “woodpeckers,” as they were just destroying and pecking away at the wood, and didn’t really know what they were doing.
There is a discussion of how this event (the removal of people from their towns) could have ever happened, and mentions that there wasn’t much organized protest. It “just wasn’t a popular course,” and in addition it was difficult for residents to get to Boston to speak against the proposal.
Again, the people were frustrated that most people in Boston don’t even know where there water comes from, and that if this plan was proposed today it would die quickly.

Retrieved from: LexisNexis
The article starts by addressing Boston’s arrogance, by ruining rural peoples’ way of life to solve their own problems, producing results that the rural people never benefit from.
The article discusses the proposed building of a prison in New Braintree, to help alleviate the state’s shortage of prison space, and relates this event to the building of the Quabbin Reservoir.

Retrieved from: LexisNexis
This article contrasts people living in the Quabbin area with those living in Boston. For the people around Quabbin, their use of water changes with the season, and the reservoir
is a preserve for fishing and recreation, anything but a source of water. For Boston the
Quabbin Reservoir is freely used and largely ignored, as most residents don’t know
where their water comes from.
The Quabbin development was compared to the current Big Dig, where Boston gets a
new road system while in rural areas, roads crumble.
Recalling the time that the reservoir was built, residents recall that it was good in some
ways. For one, if it hadn’t been built people may have started moving west for water, and
the people in the rural areas would rather not have that kind of development. Second, it
created jobs. Last, there is resentment that the government didn’t compensate very well
the people forced to move out of the valley.

Also mentioned:
Valley*. Athol, Mass.: Transcript Press.

Press.