

Water Surveys

- 1788 **JAN 5, 1944** Board of four consulting engineers reported on inadequacies and defects. No action.
- 1820 Water Commission thought existing sources too badly polluted to be treated with single filtration (some water is now double filtered); recommended abandonment of Schuylkill and use of Tockikon and Perkiomen creeks; leaned toward abandonment of Delaware if it could be financed.
- 1833 Army engineers recommended dam at Tock's Island on the upper Delaware.
- 1937 Commission appointed to elect a new source recommended, after a month's study, the upper Lehigh Valley and Poconos. Mayor Wilson stated the cost would be \$74,000,000. A revised estimate by a subcommittee of the Commission put the figure at \$173,000,000.
- 1939 Interstate Commission on the Delaware River Basin recommended that the city discontinue the Schuylkill, Schuylkill River Valley Restoration Association advocated cleaning the Schuylkill and continuing its use.
- 1940 Morris Knowles, Inc., consulting engineers, advised that "modern purification plants are capable of producing a safe and potable water" from either the Schuylkill or Delaware, and that the supply would be adequate for a population of 2,500,000 if waste were eliminated through metering and otherwise.
- 1944 Mayor Samuel proposes a commission to study "upland sources."

City to Complete Dredging in July

The work of dredging the rowing course on the Schuylkill will be completed in time to insure holding of scheduled regatta on the river this summer, Director John H. Neeson, of the Department of Public Works, announced yesterday.

The Director said the job got underway in June, but, because unforeseen delays, would be finished early in July. He said the course, extending a mile upstream from Columbia Bridge along the east bank, is in such shape it can be used pending completion of the work.

**4 LANES TO BE DREDGED**

The \$70,000 appropriated by City Council, Director Neeson explained, is sufficient to dredge only four of the six lanes. Each of the four lanes, he said, will be six feet deep and 50 feet wide when the work is concluded.

"The dredging, which is being done by the Conquist and Potation Corp. of Philadelphia," said the Director, "is confined to lanes three and two, which have been turned into mud flats due to dumping of silt in the river."

COULD 'ALTER POLICY'

"Now that the State Sanitary Water Board has prohibited further

PHILADELPHIA RECORD  
Pure Water

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By THOMAS P. O'NEIL

dumping of silt," continued Director Neeson, "we will be able to alter our policy of dredging merely to keep abreast of the silt and concentrate on actually cleaning up the river."

Meanwhile, as a further aid to citizens, the city—with its own maintenance men—is cleaning a channel in front of boathouse row to permit rowing shells to enter and leave the boathouse. This will be completed this month.

Upland Water Again

MAYOR SAMUEL'S inaugural address contains definite pledges of action along various lines of civic progress. It is so worded in its selection of priorities as to reflect Philadelphia's needs. Water, sewage disposal, transportation, highway improvement, efficient city planning—all these receive their due emphasis. The Mayor is also alive to the critical problems involved in the coming change to a peacetime economy.

There is just one fly in the ointment. The Mayor is going to appoint a Commission to study upland sources of water supply. This is a subject various Commissions have studied off and on for more than 50 years.

There is something perennially alluring about the idea of bringing water long distances through aqueducts to Philadelphia. It conjures up pictures of crystal-clear bubbling springs in virgin forests—and of fat and profitable contracts involving many millions. On the latter account there will always be some one to push such projects and sell them on the first account to administrators of unexciting probability. When the Delaware and the Schuylkill supplies of gravity-delivered water show signs of inadequacy to meet Philadelphia's needs it will be well to look upland. But when that time comes, if ever, let nobody imagine that pure, wholesome water can be delivered by artificial means to our reservoirs. We shall then import, at tremendous cost, a raw product for processing into a safe potable water.

Taxpayers who stop to think—do you realize that what they get they pay for—will not greet with three loud cheers any proposal that looks toward expenditure of fifty to a hundred million dollars for something we already have. The Mayor, to be sure, is not proposing such expenditure; he promises to spend the people's money where it will do the most good. But it is disturbing to feel that somebody is bent on reviving schemes which have repeatedly blown up in the faces of their proponents when spotlighted by informed public opinion.

Upland Water History

THE Commission promised by Mayor Samuel to study upland sources of water supply will be able to keep busy for quite a while simply reading the reports of other commissions and experts. A list of these, with brief summaries of their conclusions, appears elsewhere on this page.

A great deal of what is said in the reports of earlier times has no present applicability except that it gives valuable perspective. The Commissioners would learn the extent to which present notions of what should be done are mere survivals of past notions which have lost their validity through advances in water purification techniques.

Thus, early proposals for abandoning the Schuylkill and lower Delaware were predicated on the supposed impracticability of filtration.

If the new Commission examines the situation in the light of modern waterways and with an eye on the taxpayers' pocketbooks, it is more than likely to decide that after modernizing the waterways and cleaning up the water sources, and cash in on its good luck in having the fresh water so near right in its backyard.



New City Water Supply Is Pledged by Mayor

Mayor Samuel, inducted into a full four-year term yesterday, assured Philadelphians he intended to provide the city with a new upland source to supply adequate and pure drinking water.

The proposal was outlined in the Mayor's inaugural address at the Academy of Music as a part of a comprehensive and constructive post-war improvement program to provide better service for returning service men and women.

**WATER BOARD PLEADED**  
First step in the plan to provide the city with a new source of water supply will be the appointment of a Water Board by the Mayor and a Commission to survey sites and make recommendations, he asserted.

"While this is being done, the Mayor said that during his Administration he would complete the city's sewage disposal system, and extend underground drainage, in a move to end pollution of the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers so that more 'potable water' will be furnished the city's residents.

**1900 ATTEND CEREMONY**  
Samuel's oath of office was administered by Judge Raymond MacNeille.

observed inauguration day by taking time out between 9:40 A. M. and 9:50, because of the heavy and unexpected load brought on by the crowds that convened on the building to witness the induction of City Councilmen and their officials.

Despite the fact that Chief Bill said, "we have had the finest, greatest and best city in the United States." The people of Philadelphia chose wisely their Mayor, of our best city their Mayor, of our best city these 21 men as members of Council. It was then that the Mayor, attired in double-breasted suit of grayish blue, went to the speech, which covered 12 minutes, which required 25 minutes to deliver. Samuel spoke without attempts at oratory or to pause for applause. At the end, he received a cordial ovation.

At the beginning of his speech, the Mayor pledged himself and the 21 Republican members of Council elected with him to carry out their campaign pledges. "Those pledges were sincerely made," he said, "and we will dedicate ourselves to their fulfillment. We shall keep faith with the people of Philadelphia and with the help of Almighty God we shall not fail."

**Water Dominates Speech**  
It soon became apparent that water was uppermost on the Mayor's mind and that in his heart he was not convinced that the present sources of supply could be put in satisfactory plant. "There are, of course," he said, "two projects which stand out only as preferential in my administration but in the estimate of our citizens, as sorely need and our mutual best interest. The first, of course, is water. It is the earliest possible resumption and completion of our sewage treatment facilities and extension of our underground drainage system."

Occupying a place of honor at the ceremonies was the Mayor's wife, Mrs. Eleanor Samuel, who sported a rare orchid presented by Charles H. Grakelov, a florist who is Director of Supplies and Purchases. The flowers, in a mod low class as was described by Grakelov, was the only one of its kind in the world. It was of the Order of Cypridipedium and came from a valuable plant, the property of Grakelov, which produces one bloom a year.

City Hall lights and elevators