

Arthur W. Machen, in memory of their father.

DIED JANUARY 22ND, 1899

Col. L. A. Jordan, for many years an esteemed citizen of Macon and the owner of extensive farm interests in Southwest Georgia.

MAY 8TH, 1899

Thomas J. Carling donated to the city a two-story brick building to be used by the Price Free Library. This institution was formally opened to the public on January 6th, 1900, with Miss Sallie Boone as librarian.

DIED JULY 4TH, 1899

Thomas C. Dempsey, prominent citizen and capitalist. Death occurred at Ashbury Park, N. J.

DIED JULY 14TH, 1899

Walter B. Hill, a beloved citizen and a resident of Macon until he became Chancellor of the State University.

DIED NOVEMBER 22, 1899

At the Macon Hospital, Sylvester B. Price, for many years Mayor of Macon and closely identified with its commercial interests. He was usually called "Daisy" Price.

DECEMBER 3RD, 1899

Bridges Smith, City Clerk, and well known newspaper writer, named as Mayor of Macon at the general election following the death of Mayor Price.

DIED DECEMBER 19TH, 1899

Clifford Anderson, well known member of the Macon bar. He was former Attorney General of Georgia, one of the Codifiers of the George Code of 1895, and a Confederate Congressman.

APRIL 23RD, 1900

On this date The Macon Telegraph makes mention of an interesting relic presented to the city by Captain John A. Cobb, of Americus, Ga. This relic is a bell that was used on a river steamboat that plied the Ocmulgee in the thirties. It is suspended from an iron arch, appropriately lettered, that rests on a brick pedestal in the apex of Elk Park, at the intersection of Second street and Cotton avenue.

MAY 28TH, 1900

A phenomenon of world-wide interest was the eclipse of the sun that took place on the morning of the above date between the hours of seven and eight o'clock. As it was practically total here, Macon was one of the most favorable spots in the world from which to view it. Business was suspended and people generally availed themselves of the opportunity that comes to comparatively few to view (in a total degree) a weird and fascinating spectacle. As the light of the sun was slowly obscured by the dark disc that shadowed it, twilight seemed to be settling over the city and lights were turned on in most homes. Chickens

returned to their roosts; a few of the more superstitious were stricken with fear, and to all there came an indefinable sense of loneliness, ere the dark pall lifted.

OCTOBER 5TH, 1900

The new \$12,000,000 building of the Young Men's Christian Association at First and Cherry streets was opened with an informal reception. Dedication exercises were held in the main auditorium on Sunday afternoon, October 7th. Several prominent speakers participated in the program, including ex-Governor Northern of Georgia. This institution has maintained a steady growth in Macon and its further expansion and progress will be touched upon in later chapters of this narrative.

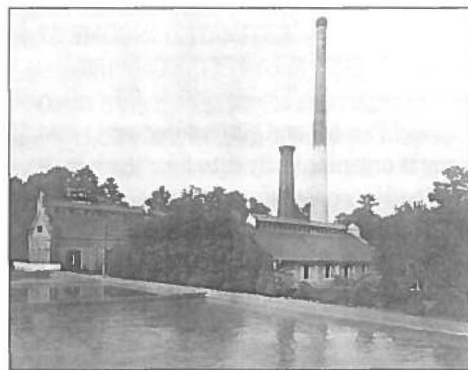
MACON'S WATER SYSTEM

As far back as 1893 concern was felt over Macon's water supply and far-seeing citizens were predicting municipal ownership. If this was the expression of a hope at that time, its realization was bounded by years, though many agreed that this eventuality alone could bring the assurance of absolute safety in that direction. Every public utility is an important factor in the economic life of the community that it undertakes to serve. Each, with its particular function to perform, is essential to the municipality that would be rated as well rounded, well ordered and well-balanced. Utilities vary in the degree of importance and usefulness in which they are held. Some might suspend for an indefinite period, resulting in discomfort and confusion, but people would continue to live.

We might get along without the telephone, but the sacrifice would be great and the cost greater. We might abandon street cars and other means of personal transportation, temporarily, and survive it, but

unless very temporary, our world would backslide to the middle ages. Suppose, however, our water system were to suspend for a period of one short week; what would be the condition of our city and its people at the end of the seventh day?

Late in October, 1900, this subject was taking on more tangible form and much was being said and written concerning it. The Macon Magazine, published by the Macon Chamber of Commerce, contains in its December, 1923, issue an article by City Clerk Osgood Clark, entitled "Macon's Water System, Chronologically." This article is a collaboration of facts taken from the minutes of the City Council, listed in order, and makes interesting, as well as authentic reading. The minutes of Council covering the period from 1823 to March, 1834, were destroyed by fire sometime prior to the Civil War. Therefore, the record given



First waterworks built on river, 1897.

below deals with the period from March 13th, 1834, down to and including October 2nd, 1911, when the city became the owner of the plant heretofore operated by the Macon Gas Light and Water Company, and turned it over to the Board of Water Commissioners as provided for by an Act of the Legislature (1910). Quotations from Mr. Clark's article follow:

May 1, 1834: "Resolved that the Commission on Pumps be and they are hereby authorized and directed to have or cause the hickory pump on Mulberry street to be repaired with as little delay as possible.

Oct. 17, 1834: "Ordered that Alexander McGreggor be appointed Pump Connector for the remainder of the year."

Jan. 25, 1839: "An Ordinance: Every owner or occupant of a building shall be provided with buckets to correspond with the number of fire places in dwelling, which, on every alarm of fire, it shall be the duty to repair with to such fire, etc."

May 13, 1840: "Resolution: Whereas, it is of the first importance that in case of fire in the City that an immediate supply of water should be had;

"Be it resolved that a reward of ten dollars be given to any drawman who shall furnish the first hogshead of water within 20 minutes of the alarm of fire, at the place of conflagration."

The second and third paragraphs offer \$5.00 and \$3.00 respectively for the second and third hogshead to reach the fire within 30 minutes.

1846: During this year a contract was made with Collins and Ellis, which provided that the cisterns should be kept full of water, carrying the privilege that they could sell the excess supply.

ESTIMATED INCOME \$7,400

July 9, 1857: Report of the Committee on Water on the project to organize a company to build a reservoir "in the rear of Colonel Ponds," and buy equipment to cost \$60,000. "If a company is organized, city is to take stock in the sum of \$25,000."

The Macon Gas Company was already operating and had 4,600 consumers so it was estimated that the net income from a water plant would be about as follows:

400 customers at \$25	\$10,000
Saving from discontinuance of pumps	1,000
Railroads and Gas	1,000..\$12,000
Expenses to include fuel for pumping wages of Engineer and firemen, superintendence and collection	4,600
Net income	\$ 7,400

Apparently the project failed to materialize, for on April 17, 1860, Collins and Ellis presented a petition to Council asking the use of any spring or springs in the Town commons; stating that the supply of water from sources used since 1846 was now so curtailed that it was difficult to keep the cisterns filled.

May 8, 1860: Council authorized certain ditches to be cleared so that Collins and Ellis could increase the supply of water.

July 23, 1861: Council approved petition of the Macon Gas and Light Co., for permission to sink a receptacle in front of the springs in the bottom "in front of the Female College,"

(Wesleyan) and run pipes to their plant, with the understanding that the city could place hydrants along the line.

Nov. 8, 1861: Macon Gas Co. took over the business of Collins and Ellis, asked permission to lay more pipes and to supply consumers heretofore served by Collins and Ellis. (Mention was made here of there being five cisterns in the city.) A contract was made with the Macon Gas Company to fill the cisterns.

CHARTER IS GRANTED

March 27, 1866: A charter was granted the "Macon Canal and Water Works," to conduct water from the river - to furnish water power for mills, for watering and cleansing the city, for fire purposes and apparently with the understanding that the city would take stock to the amount of \$25,000.

I am not sure that this concern had any connection with the Macon Gas Light Company, for on October 23, 1866, a contract was entered into with the latter concern "to increase the supply of water for fire purposes."

Mention is made in this new contract (as in the one of July 1861), of the right to collect the waste from the springs at the foot of College Hill in reservoirs, transmit it by pipes to the works of the company, to fill the cisterns and sell the excess to citizens. It was further provided that the "small lead pipes should be replaced with three inch iron pipes."

This contract was executed on the part of the City by Stephen Collins, Mayor, and for the Gas Company by J. M. Boardman, president.

Feb. 10, 1881: New contract with Macon Gas Light and Water Company. Provided for payment of \$5,180 or for fifty-three hydrants at \$60.00 each "to take effect on completion of reservoir (at Second and Boundary Streets) but not changing in any way the existing contract for filling cisterns" and then "for fire purposes" for the use demands of the fire department in its practicing and parades.

All hydrants were to be located below Spring street and any hydrant above was to be provided for by a future contract.

July 5, 1887: New contract with the Macon Gas Light and Water Company was signed by Mayor S. B. Price and President J. M. Boardman, to run for five years with privilege of renewal. Rates as follows:

Hydrants \$50.00 each, for as many as fifty.
For sewers and sprinkling, 10 cents per one thousand gallons.
Drinking fountains, \$50.00 each, taking place of pumps.
One faucet, \$10.00, each additional faucet \$3.00.
Meter rate 30 cents per 1,000 gallons.
Cost of meter rental \$3.00 per annum.

June 17, 1890: Council failed to approve water bill for \$2,000, giving as the reason; "contract violated, insufficient water pressure; supply inadequate; water from Tuft Springs not sufficient and while no reflection on management is intended we must look around and overcome difficulty."

June 24, 1890: Plan of Council to take action was endorsed by the Macon Board of Trade. George T. Kershaw, Secretary.

July 8, 1890: Communication from Macon Gas Light and Water Company asking for a new contract.

July 29, 1890: Macon Canal and Water Company gave notice

of its intention to bid for the new contract.

ENGINEER'S REPORT RECEIVED

July 7, 1891: Report of B. S. Church, Consulting Engineer, on the possible water supply from Tuft Springs, Peters Pond, the Swamp, Ocmulgee (this latter referred to as the City Engineer's plan, Hendrix), Swift Creek and Boggy Branch, was received.

July 21, 1891: Bill approved for the legislature to pass, authorizes the city to build "a separate system of water works," etc.

Nov. 24, 1891: Ordinance was passed, calling for an election to pass on the issuance of bonds for a water system.

Nov. 25, 1891: New contract with Macon Gas Light and Water Company, to become effective February 1, 1892, and to run for twenty years was signed by Mayor S. B. Price and W. A. Jeter, vice president of the water company, with the right for the city to purchase incorporated, provided the following rates:

Hydrants at \$40.00 each up to 200.

Sprinkling and flushing sewers 10 cents per 1,000 gallons.

To consumers - Single opening \$6.00 and then a long schedule providing a special rate for every possible use and by every class of users.

Meter rates 30 cents per 1,000 gallons with a sliding scale.

Jan. 26, 1892: Above contract was amended to provide scale of rates for manufacturing purposes on 25 cents per 1,000 gallons basis, with scale.

Jan. 26, 1892: Election pursuant to ordinance 11-24-91 held with this result: For Bonds 4, against Bonds 174.

Aug 30, 1892: Reported daily capacity of Tuft Springs was 1,400,000 gallons.

May 2, 1893: Mayor appointed Committee to remedy grievances; many complaints against the water coming in.

June 19, 1893: Contract amended, to furnish water for flushing sewers at 3 cents per 1,000 gallons in the event election for sewer bonds should carry. Reference made contract of 11-25-91.

July 11, 1893: Council gave notice to water company of city's intention to buy its plant.

July 25, 1893: Water company offers plant for \$550,000. Arbitrators were appointed.

March 13, 1894: Arbitrators reported and City decided not to purchase the plant or a 7-11 interest in it.

April 3, 1894: Bond election was called by Council.

MAYOR VETOES CALL

April 10, 1894: Mayor vetoed call for election.

April 17, 1894: Election was called off.

April 27, 1894: Water Company was directed to lay pipes of adequate size to prevent again having to tear up pavement.

July 21, 1908: During the administration of Hon. A. L. Miller, Mayor, resolution by alderman J. E. Hall was adopted, calling attention to the fact that on February 1, 1912, the contract with the Macon Gas Light and Water Company would expire and asking that the Mayor be authorized to appoint a Committee from Council and an advisory Committee of Citizens whose duty it should be to take steps to secure the passage of the necessary legislature to investigate systems of other cities of similar size and obtain all possible facts and figures as to the original cost as



Cherry Street, 1902.

well as the cost of maintenance and operation, etc., and to report in May, 1909, a complete plan by which the City could become owner of its water system.

As a matter of fact the Committee was directed under the resolution to investigate street lighting systems also and to include estimates of a light plant in their report. As is well known, however, nothing came of the effort made to start something in that direction.

October, 1909: Report of the above Committee was submitted and ordered printed, in order that, "at their leisure, the Citizens might read and decide as to whether they wanted the water works or not."

Nov. 9, 1909: Hon. John T. Moore was elected Mayor and Alderman, W. T. Anderson was appointed Chairman of the Water Committee of Council.

March 8, 1910: Resolution: Requested the water company to furnish the people of Macon through the Mayor and Council a proposition for the sale of their plant with an alternative proposition in the way of a new contract.

March 22, 1910: Mayor Moore addressed Council, referring to the above resolution and appointed the Water Committee headed by Hon. W. T. Anderson and three citizens, Messrs E. W. Stetson, O. E. Dooly and Chas. A. Caldwell, these to constitute a special committee to handle the matter.

THREE PROPOSITIONS CONSIDERED

Note - It should be kept in mind that the City was considering at that time choosing one of the following three propositions: (1) Purchase the plant now operated by the water company; (2) build a new one; (3) renew the contract with the Macon Gas Light and Water Company.

The first idea appealed to the people more than any other; a smaller number favored the second and a still smaller thought well of the last suggestion.

At that time paving on a large scale was in progress and an extension of the sewerage system to take in Vineville and North Highlands was about to begin. Bonds had been issued for these two projects. With another bond issue of \$900,000 needed for the purchase and improvements of the water plant, it simply meant that the total of bonds would be within \$30,000 of the city's bonding capacity as provided by law.

It was a matter of concern to those who favored the purchase of the old plant that the margin between the contemplated bond issue of \$900,000 and the \$699,000, the price finally agreed upon by the arbitrators, might prove insufficient to improve the plant to a point of proper efficiency.

It was generally conceded that the plant was more or less run down. It was natural that the water company would hesitate about making extensive improvements during the last few years of the contract with the possibility of having to turn over such improvements to the City on a second-hand basis.

It seems to me that it was a real man's job to decide what to do in these circumstances. There was a big responsibility on those in authority at that time and certain it is, the careful and systematic manner in which everything seems to have been handled, up to and including the purchase must needs excite the admiration of everyone.

June 28, 1910: The Mayor notified the Water Company of the intention of the City to buy the plant as authorized by resolution of Council.

July 13, 1910: Council approved charter amendment proposed by the City Attorney.

PIPES ARE EXTENDED

July 19, 1910: Extension of mains provided for, to be paid for by the City, sanitary sewers being laid. Water pipes were extended to meet the emergency in North Macon and Vineville.

September 15, 1910: Resolution of Council; City offered the water company \$500,000 for their plant. The water company through its secretary, Mr. W. G. Solomon, declined and said plant was worth \$800,000.

Oct. 19, 1910: the City appointed representatives on the Board of Arbitration, O. E. Dooly and E. W. Stetson. The Water Company named Nesbit Wingfield and A. W. McCallum. It was provided that these four men should select three additional members. They selected John W. Alvord, Leonard Metcalf and George W. Earl.

Nov. 21, 1910: The arbitrators met: John W. Alvord, Chairman, and Oscar E. Dooly, Secretary. The Honorable N. E. Harris was attorney for the Water Company and the Hon. A. W. Lane represented the City of Macon.

Dec. 2, 1910: The report of the Arbitrators (which is a voluminous document, and shows wonderful care and completeness) was filed and the amount agreed upon was \$699,000.00.

Dec. 20, 1910: Ordinance passed providing for the election to pass on the bond issue of \$900,000.00 (\$200,000.00 was needed for improvements.)

Jan. 3, 1911: Resolution provided for special registration for the bond election to be held March 18, 1911.

Jan. 17, 1911: Resolution passed asking the people to vote for bonds, said in part "It will be a great disadvantage if the opportu-

nity is not seized in view of the fact that another contract will have to made next year tying the city up for twenty years at a higher rate than they would be able to furnish to themselves through Commission management, will remove management as far as possible from politics."

March 18, 1911: Returns of election for bonds showed; For 1521, against 18. There were 1776 registered voters.

March 21, 1911: Council declared "Bonds carried."

May 16, 1911: Resolution was adopted by Council to advertise for bids for bonds, for only \$700,000.00.

May 16, 1911: Resolution: Provided for spending \$30,000.00 by Water Committee of Council, the Macon Gas Light and Water Company insisting that their contract was at an end. This money was spent for improvements needed in the water system.

July 10, 1911: Bids are invited for water main extensions.

BONDS ARE SOLD

July 27, 1911: Contract was awarded to J. B. McCrary and Company, of Atlanta.

Sept. 4, 1911: Bids for the \$700,000.00 bonds were received.

Sept. 12, 1911: The Finance Committee reports sale of bonds to A. E. Leach & Co., of New York, for \$702,661.00 and accrued interest.

Sept. 20, 1911: The election of Water Commissioners resulted as follows: Hon. W. H. Fetner for six-year term; Hon. W. A. Huff for four-year term; Hon. Cliff T. Williamson for two-year term. There were nine in the race.

Sept. 26, 1911: Mayor was authorized to pay the water company \$699,000 and to deposit the balance with Hon. A. R. Tinsley, Treasurer.

Oct. 2, 1911: Hon. John T. Moore, Mayor, reported transfer of property to the City of Macon and payment

therefor: \$479,905 to the Fidelity Trust Company, to settle outstanding bond issues of the Macon Gas Light and Water Company and \$219.095 to the Treasurer of the water company. Note - Mr. Fetner was succeeded in 1917 by Mr. B. L. Hendricks who, in turn, succeeded himself in 1923.

Mr. Williamson was elected in 1913, succeeding himself. In 1919 Mr. Anderson was elected to succeed Mr. Williamson.

Mr. Huff passed away before his term expired, having been reelected in 1915, and Mr. J. D. Kinnett succeeded him. In 1921, Mr. Williamson succeeded Mr. Kinnett.

DIED OCTOBER 30TH, 1900

O. G. Sparks, in the 88th year of his age. Mr. Sparks served as Mayor of Macon from December 16th, 1857, to September 11th, 1860. On account of ill health he resigned prior to the expiration of his term.

DECEMBER 31ST, 1900

During the months immediately preceding the above date



Pythian Castle, first public library and First Presbyterian Church along Mulberry Street, 1898.