

WATERWORKS SOLD

BELLEVILLE DEEP WELL WATER COMPANY SELLS OUT LOCK, STOCK AND BARREL TO AMERICAN WATERWORKS AND GUARANTEE COMPANY OF PITTSBURG.

NEW COMPANY ALSO OWNER OF EAST ST. LOUIS AND GRANITE CITY
WATERWORKS --- THIS MEANS WATER DIRECTLY FROM THE
MISSISSIPPI RIVER FOR BELLEVILLE.

New Company Incorporated Knoyn As the "Belleville Water
Supply Company," With C. M. Horner at the Head of List of
Incorporators—Transfer Will Be Made Without Delay—Belleville
and East St. Louis Water Systems Will Be United.

The Belleville Deep Well Water Company has sold its franchise, business and property to the American Waterworks Guarantee Company of Pittsburg, Pa., and the transfer of the holdings will take place immediately and without delay.

The source of supply of the present company will then be abandoned, and filtered and thoroughly purified Mississippi river water will be substituted for the present well water, which is being furnished. That means that the people of Belleville will get soft water from the hydrant, the articles which they have been clamoring for for some time.

In changing the source of supply for the Belleville water to the Mississippi river the dream of the ages and of the ages is being realized in this city. It will put an end to all water-controversy forever. The supply of that source will never be exhausted. It can be rendered unobjectionable, in fact perfect for all uses by proper treatment.

The objection to the present water is that it holds certain mineral ingredients in solution which render it what, in water, is called hard. They consist of lime, lithia and magnesia. It also holds from its solution, which creates turbidity in the color of the water, renders it unattractive and has the effect of tarnishing porcelain and enameled fixtures. The water has, however, the infinite advantage of containing no organic matter. It is therefore absolutely free from microbes or disease germs by proper

treatment. The objections could be eliminated.

Major Kern urged insistently that a softening plant be installed. The Mayor was advised of the feasibility of this plan by Professor Barlow of the State University of Illinois, who declared that a perfect water could be made out of the present well water by proper treatment. The cost involved in installing reservoirs, additional pumps and other equipment besides the necessity of chemicals and other operating expenses, would have risen to an enormous figure. Heavier than lead it the company is solved to sell out. Hence the important deal which has just been closed.

The auditors of the new company came to Belleville to examine the books and accounts of the old company about two weeks ago. A special message reached this newspaper Tuesday that the report of the auditors was favorable and that the transfer had been made. Incorporation papers have been taken out at Springfield by the new company. The new company will take charge of the business before the end of the present month.

The new company is the same company which owns the East St. Louis and the Granite City waterworks. As stated before, their offices are in Pittsburg, but they own and operate between forty and fifty water plants in so many different cities in the United States.

The Belleville supply will be furnished from the East St. Louis water works plant. The necessary connection can easily be effected in one month's time after the new company has taken possession.

The present pumping station of the Belleville system is located within the city limits of East St. Louis. Only about two and a half miles of additional twelve-inch pipe are necessary to unite the two systems ready for service.

The East St. Louis water is reported to be soft, perfectly clear and free from organic matter. The change will be welcomed by the people. Others who have gotten used to the present Belleville water will frown on the new arrangement. There is no doubt at all that the present Belleville water is a most pure and healthy drinking water. It is assumed, however, that the great majority of the people will rejoice over the change and will resolve this never in the future, in the spirit of mad tidings, Granite City also gets its water from the East St. Louis plant, and the people are highly satisfied with the quality of it.

The incorporation papers for the

new company were issued by Secretary of State James A. Hoag to C. M. Horner, M. J. Scanlan, B. Burwell, Mr. Clarke and Mr. Williams, Jr., under a nominal capitalization of \$5,000. These gentlemen are all connected with the East St. Louis office of the American system.

The name of the newly-born corporation is Belleville Water Supply Company. This company is one of the institutions of the American Waterworks Guarantee Company of Pittsburg. Of the parent company J. S. Kuhn is president; W. S. Kuhn, first vice president, and J. H. Purdy, general manager and second vice president. The old and soon to be defunct concern was owned by John A. Roehling & Sons Company of Trenton, N. J.

Whether there will be any changes in the personnel of the local staff incident to the big transfer it is too early to forecast at this time. No questions of policy have been definitely determined, except that the water for the supply will be taken from the Mississippi river. That fact is not in doubt. Mr. Tucker, the rental secretary and chief general manager of the old company, will have no connection with the new concern whatever.

The struggle for a public water supply in Belleville has been a heroic one, extending over a period of many years, with the Mississippi river in mind for the eventual source of supply from the beginning. Until the present wells were tapped, Belleville never enjoyed the advantage of a safe supply of water, even. During a protracted drought the artificial lakes north of the city would go dry. The deep wells in the Richland creek bottoms were unreliable and could not be depended on. They were like a match cow, all right for a while, but then they went dry. The increasing demand of the city sucked them dry and then some.

When the City Council decided to have recourse to the present source of supply it was the only thing that could be done to insure the city against the danger of annually recurring water famine. It was then predicted by the friends of the new project that if the water obtained failed to meet all of the requirements expected, no more than seven miles closer to the Mississippi river with our mains, and nearer by just that much, to the eternal solution of the knotty and perplexing problem.

The movement to furnish a public water supply was started in Belleville in 1884, or more than a quarter of a century ago. In September, 1911,

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year the City Council granted a franchise to furnish water for private profit to E. F. Fuller and his successors and assigns. He flunked. The result was no waterworks.

An ordinance was passed in December, 1890, granting a franchise for a period of twenty-five years to the Belleville and St. Clair Waterworks Company, with the Mississippi river designated as the source of supply. The vision proved to be a mirage instead of an oasis. The promoters were unable to make the man with the cash see the cat. The prospects went glimmering and the old town pump won another lease on its natural life.

In the merry month of June, 1892, a hopeful City Council voted a franchise to A. M. Farnum, William H. Wulverton and J. G. White of New York, J. J. Kennedy of Philadelphia and J. F. Porter of Woodbine, Iowa to build and operate waterworks. The rates were fixed at a hundred and a quarter a plug for 200 plugs, and the duration of the franchise was twenty-five years. The source of supply named was either the Mississippi or Kaskaskia rivers. It is needless to say what happened. It was another innocent air castle, a bubble blown into the air, as it were, which before it rose very high burst and wasted its sweetness on the desert air.

Two years later a franchise was granted to the same bunch, minus Mr. Porter, and they built the ponds north of town and sold water. It was the best that could be done at the time, but the ponds did not prove satisfactory. They would go dry in certain seasons of the year. The water tasted fishy or even stagnant, and was sometimes not clear.

So on July 6, 1896, a franchise was granted to Henry Leschen and associates for a new waterworks, with the deep wells as the source of supply. The water was good, but like so many other good things, it was scarce as hen's teeth, hence it gave out frequently and the company had to look for reinforcements at the old ponds. The mixture was not so palatable.

Then followed the invasion of the American bottoms as a first step to a final solution. The necessary ordinance was passed in June, 1907. In the phenomenally short space of sixty days the pipe was laid over a stretch of seven miles, penetrating the present city limits of East St. Louis. There the wells were sunk and the pumping station erected. Since then Belleville has had no water famine, nor fear of any.

The next step is announced in the above story. It is the report of an important and history-making event for Belleville.