

**REPORT OF THE JOINT SPECIAL  
COMMITTEE ON THE  
INTRODUCTION OF WATER: WITH  
REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND  
CHEMIST. SEPTEMBER, 1870**

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Report of the Joint Special Committee on the Introduction of Water: With Report of the Engineer and Chemist. September, 1870 by Various

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**VARIOUS**

**REPORT OF THE JOINT SPECIAL  
COMMITTEE ON THE  
INTRODUCTION OF WATER: WITH  
REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND  
CHEMIST. SEPTEMBER, 1870**



**REPORT**  
OF THE  
**Joint Special Committee of the City Council**  
ON THE  
**INTRODUCTION OF WATER**  
FOR THE CITY OF LYNN,  
WITH  
Reports of the Engineer and Chemist.

SEPTEMBER, 1870.



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E. D. Leavitt<sup>s</sup>

CITY OF LYNN.

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IN COMMON COUNCIL, *Sept. 9, 1870.*

*Ordered,* That the Committee on the Introduction of Water be, and hereby are, instructed to have printed three thousand copies of their Report, for general distribution, together with the Report of W. J. McAlpine, Esq., to said Committee, with his estimates of the cost of the same.

Sent up for concurrence.

RUFUS KIMBALL, Clerk.

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IN BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN, }  
*September 14, 1870.* }

Adopted in concurrence.

BENJ. H. JONES, City Clerk.

## REPORT OF THE JOINT SPECIAL COMMITTEE

ON THE

### INTRODUCTION OF WATER.

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*To the City Council of the City of Lynn :*

The Joint Special Committee, to whom was assigned the duty of reporting upon the sources for a water supply for the city, and estimates of the cost of introducing it, present the following

#### REPORT.

A water supply for our city from some adequate source, to meet, by a system of general distribution, the various uses for which it is constantly demanded, has, until last year, received but little consideration. The first attempt in this direction was from parties claiming the ownership of Sluice Pond. Having in view an early demand for a larger supply, and of better quality than can be afforded by the ordinary method of sinking wells, authority was obtained from the Legislature in 1865 to convey to the city proper the water of that pond for distribution and sale. Application was then made to the City Council for permission to lay

through the streets of the city the necessary pipes to provide such service. There appearing among our citizens an opposition to granting to a private corporation the privileges asked for, the prayer of the petition has thus far been refused.

The disastrous fires which occurred in the winter of 1868-9, by which a large amount of property was destroyed, the great danger to which the business interests of the city seemed exposed, and the high rates of insurance demanded upon all kinds of insurable property, drew public attention at once to the insufficiency of the water supply for the extinguishment of fires. The apprehensions of property owners, and the fears of our citizens generally, found expression in the following extract from the Inaugural Address of the Mayor of last year:

"The great calamity which has befallen our city, by which several of our largest and most beautiful buildings have been swept off by the devouring flames, casting a deep gloom over the community, depriving several of our most enterprising and worthy citizens of a large amount of property, and throwing nearly a thousand workmen out of employment, calls upon us most imperatively to see to it that all needed facilities be provided for preventing a like disaster hereafter. I think there is now but one opinion among our people, and that is in favor of the early introduction of an abundant supply of water into the city. No one who witnessed the recent fire could have failed to see how entirely we were at the mercy of the devouring element, and must continue to be, until we remedy this deficiency. We cannot neglect this duty without incurring the heaviest censure of the community. I do most earnestly beseech you to give your immediate attention to this important matter. Let a committee be at



once appointed to investigate the subject, and report how and in what way this can be brought about."

In pursuance of these suggestions, a Committee of the City Council was appointed to consider the necessities of the city in this regard. The Legislature was petitioned for authority to provide the city with a supply of water from one of the ponds in this vicinity. An Act was granted conferring the necessary powers, but requiring the assent thereto of the voters when submitted to them for approval. The acceptance of the Act was refused. So imperative, however, was the demand for a more abundant supply of water for use at fires, that the City Council authorized the expenditure of \$32,000 for the laying of pipes from Flax Pond to the centre of the city for this purpose. This work was accomplished before the close of the year.

The official communication to the City Council of the Mayor, at the commencement of the present year, invited the attention of the members to this subject in the following paragraph :

"The introduction of water into the city, from some one of the sources of supply near at hand, occupied the attention of the last City Council, invited thereto by the recommendation of my predecessor in office, in his Inaugural Address.

"Authorized by the City Council, a committee charged with the consideration of this important matter petitioned the Legislature for an Act conferring upon our city the usual powers granted for such purposes. 'An Act for supplying Lynn with pure water' was obtained, and received the approval of the Governor on the 23d of June. The sources of supply named in the act were Flax Pond, within our

own limits ; Humphrey's Pond, situated upon the borders of the towns of Lynnfield and Peabody, and Wenham Pond, by connection with the water-works of the city of Salem. The City Council was required to determine the source from which, in the event of the acceptance of the act, the city should take water, and met for this purpose on the 19th day of July. It being understood that no satisfactory arrangement could be made with the city of Salem, and consent to take the waters of Humphrey's Pond having been refused by the towns in which they are located, no option was left the City Council but to name the Flax Pond as the source of supply. On the second day of August following, the act was submitted to the people for approval, and failed by a vote of 326 in favor to 1,396 against. So decisive a vote, in the absence of any information explaining it, might be regarded as settling the question for some years to come. Yet I am satisfied that the people desire to have this subject further considered. The opinion prevails that many who voted against the acceptance of the Water Act did so for prudential reasons,—the want of full and satisfactory information regarding the quantity and quality of the water, the uncertainty attending the cost of introducing it, and, on the part of some, the fear that the City Council would regard the acceptance of the Act as instructions to proceed at once to carry out the project. I therefore recommend that the question of introducing water for general purposes be again considered, and that a sufficient appropriation be made to employ a competent engineer to make such surveys and estimates as will furnish full and reliable data, and that the committee having charge of the investigation be authorized to report in print, at the close of the year. If this plan be pursued, and either the Flax Pond or Humphrey's Pond be selected as the one best suited to the wants of the city, I have no doubt that the Legislature will readily grant all necessary powers."

So much of the address as relates to the introduction of water was referred to a Joint Special Committee, who subsequently reported as follows :

IN BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN, }  
April 12, 1870. }

The Joint Special Committee to whom was referred so much of the Mayor's Address as relates to the introduction of water, submit the following

#### REPORT.

The particular matter to which the attention of your Committee has been directed is the expediency of authorizing, the present year, an examination of the ponds and water courses in this vicinity which can be made available for furnishing our city with an abundant supply of pure water. Sufficient consideration has been given the subject to induce the belief that an investigation which shall determine, with scientific accuracy, the sources from which an adequate supply can be obtained, for the present and future wants of the city, and provide estimates of the cost of introducing and distributing it, cannot too soon be undertaken. The concentration upon a comparatively small portion of our territory of the main business of the city, where are centered nearly all of our large manufacturing establishments, peopled daily by hundreds whose occupations call them thither, and the increase of our manufacturing industry, which, year by year, adds to the numbers employed, furnish, in the opinion of many, an important sanitary reason why the introduction of water ought not to be longer deferred. The rapid growth of our city in population, the occupation for residences of substantially the same area by constantly increasing numbers, the superiority of soft, pure water for mechanical and manufacturing purposes, the necessity for cleansing the sewers, that no accumulation of filth shall remain, and the convenience and facility which attend its use for domestic purposes, all suggest that the time is not distant when this great want of our city will be supplied. As an examination of the capacity and purity of the water of the ponds in the neighborhood of our city is a necessary preliminary work, which must be performed under the supervision of a competent engineer, whose services, when rendered, must be com-