

## **The Municipal Water Department**

**By Tim Brick**

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Tonight I'm going to take you back to the early days of Pasadena and to the early settlers and visionaries who, in shaping our community, helped shaped Southern California. I'll be talking about "Pasadena's Last Mayor" and about a controversy that split Pasadena apart as much as much as any since (and there have been many), the establishment of the municipal water department at the beginning of the last century.

Pasadena's earlier settlers found an oasis, set on a mesa, rich and verdant. That mesa, set 600-1000 feet above sea level, is like a giant bowl sloping from northwest to southeast, with the Arroyo Seco and the San Rafael hills on the west, and Santa Anita Canyon in Arcadia on the east and the Raymond fault at its southern boundary. That bowl, filled with rock and gravel deposited over the ages by the mountains, is known as the Raymond Basin or the Raymond Aquifer. It collects water from our higher than average rainfall (4-5 inches a year higher than downtown Los Angeles) and stores it. Our early forefathers tapped the Arroyo Seco and piped water onto the mesa to feed a very productive agricultural output of oranges, grapes and other crops. And the richness attracted settlers....first the Indiana Colony in 1874 and later a major boom in 1885.

One such early settler was Harvey White Magee who came here about 1880. He said: "My first view of Pasadena was obtained from a point of observation to be had at the intersection of Orange Grove Avenue and Colorado Street. Looking north and east a landscape scene most charming and beautiful for situation presents itself to the eye. To the north, standing in majestic and mute silence are the Sierra Madre Mountains, with gleaming peaks 6,000 feet in height. Prehistoric Nature in its creative evolution cast them as a protection from the storms of the Mojave Desert to the fruitful and charming lands of the San Gabriel Valley, which sweeps gracefully down to the sea."

Magee was a prominent Republican banker and financier of Thaddeus Lowe's Railway, who ran against Abbot Kinney in 1882 for the Assembly. In 1894 he was appointed Bank Commissioner of California by his friend Governor H. H. Markham, Pasadena's only governor.

By that time, Pasadenans had bold dreams for their emerging city. They were fashioning an oasis of culture and enlightenment. This was the Athens of the West. But they realized that without one critical element all their dreams would dry up: Water.

Pasadena had already grown beyond a small settlement, and now numbered 15,000 people. The early water systems that had been part of the three major developments had served their purpose well, but now prices and service varied between the companies, and new requirements for water -- to water the streets, to expand the orange groves and vineyards, and to satisfy the thirst of the expanding population -- could only be met with massive new expenditures.

In 1898 any future of the city seemed unlikely because there wasn't enough water to support even the existing population. To make conditions worse, word about the trouble was sullyng Pasadena's reputation as a paradise on earth. The San Francisco Examiner had the indecency to print an article which the Associated Press circulated to major cities throughout the United States. It read:

"There is water in the pipes on the west side, but the pressure is not sufficient to reach the elevated sections such as Orange Grove and Grand Avenues with any regularity. The Residents are wroth. Some of them declare that they will refuse to pay their water rents and let the company sue them to test the law."

The Star, even though it had been running editorials decrying the same condition, replied huffily: "Most of Pasadena's people labor all day and every day to build up the city by telling of her beauties and advantages. Someone has given a stab in the back by exaggerating this thing."

Unfortunately there was no exaggeration. That year light rainfall, coupled with a number of brush and timber fires in the mountains ruined the watershed and greatly reduced the surface flow upon which Pasadena depended. This was the drought of 1898.

An additional factor was waste. There was a uniform rate of \$1.50 per family, ten cents for each additional adult; 25 cents for each bathub or water closet, ten cents for each cow, horse, mule or donkey. Also people didn't want to report leaks because it too so long to get them fixed. So they would turn on their faucets when the system was out, and later flooding would occur.

Faced with a persistent shortage, the City Council authorized a comprehensive review of water prospects by engineer J. P. Lippincott, who later opened up the Owens Valley for the City of Los Angeles. Lippincott's report made it clear that expensive and coordinated new steps needed to be taken and that a new source of supply was needed.

The desire for a unified water system, run by the city, swept the residents. In a sense it was a natural outgrowth, for the water rights and the water companies were held by the land owners. Support came from all the diverse elements of Pasadena civic life. The Board of Trade, predecessor of the Chamber of Commerce" was one of the earliest and most vocal of the advocates. In 1898 at their annual banquet in the Green Hotel banquet room, the Board of Trade heartily endorsed municipal ownership.

A committee, of which George A. Gibbs was chairman, was appointed to take up the question with the water companies and with citizens generally, in order to "ascertain the trend of sentiment," and to secure the cooperation of the City Council. Gibbs appeared before the council on September 5 and presented the resolutions adopted by the Board of Trade. He asked the Council to secure options upon lands on Glenarm Street in the southern section and on a piece of land near the well of the Painter & Ball Corporation for experimental wells. The action was duly taken, resulting eventually in the "Ohio" well.

By the turn of the new century, the situation had only worsened, but the city adopted a new charter that gave it an elected Mayor for the first time and greater control over the water supply. F. E. Twombly headed the new City Council committee on water, which negotiated with the private water companies.

## **Waterhouse & Fitzgerald**

It was not until 1905 in the administration of Pasadena's second elected mayor, W. H. Vedder, that agreement was reached as to the valuation of the companies. Vedder, a retired businessman, was extremely popular and defeated Pasadena's first mayor, Martin Weight, who had opposed the bond sales. The municipalization of water was a major issue in that election.

Vedder asked the three water corporations -- the Pasadena Land & Water Company, the Lake Vineyard Land & Water Company, and the North Pasadena Land & Water Company -- to submit proposals for consideration. The companies secured expert advice and negotiated with Matthew Slavin, head of the city council water committee, who forged an agreement with the stockholders of as to the price that the city would pay for their stock:

- Lake Vineyard Company \$382,500
- Pasadena Land & Water company \$245,000
- North Pasadena Land and Water \$80,000

For a total of \$707,5000

By 1905 the population has already grown to 24,000. On March 8, 1905 the City Council unanimously approved six measures which encompassed the agreements and set an election for March 23. Councilmen Slavin and F. E. Twombly, together with Mayor W. H. Vedder, fought tenaciously for voter approval of the \$1,000,000 bond issue needed to buy the systems. The Board of Trade also formed a dynamic committee, led by Harry Geohegan, to inform voters of the urgency of the measures.

Opposition arose to the measures led by Captain William Waterhouse, William Thum, E. H. Lockwood and others. Some felt the price was too high. Others charged that unscrupulous real estate agents had illegally acquired water rights by duping unsuspecting clients. These agents kept the water rights when they sold land to newcomers who were unaware that water rights were attached to the land they had purchased. At the time of these sales, the stock retained by the real estate agents was practically worthless, but they realized that this would not always be so. Judge Rossiter said that the city should not have to pay too much for something for which they had already paid. After all, the land and water companies had hardly had to pay for it at all. Other approaches favored included condemnation, a competing system, and donation of the water rights to the city.

William Waterhouse and his allies repeatedly proclaimed that they were for municipal ownership, but they fought the city purchase because they didn't want to enrich those with such ill-gotten wealth.

Captain Waterhouse was a larger than life figure, born in Hawaii to an influential family and he periodically went back there for vacations. Waterhouse had run a business and managed the Grand Hotel in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and now sold furniture in Pasadena. He had a dedicated corps of support from young people whom he sometimes took out on his yacht to entertain.

On March 23 1905 voters approved five of the six measures package by the 2/3s margin required. Purchase agreements for the three major water systems and for water rights to the San Gabriel River near Whittier Narrows were approved and a million dollars was appropriated for the purchases.

As he prepared to retire after the bond election, Mayor Vedder, along with most Pasadenans, considered the water bonds the crowning achievement of his term. Within ten days his hopes were shattered.

On April 3 bond supporter Matthew Slavin faced opponent William Waterhouse in the mayoral election. Slavin, confident in the resounding public support expressed in the water bond election, waged a low-key campaign touting the water victory and other achievements of the Vedder administration. Captain Waterhouse and his slate campaigned energetically in every part of the city.

Late on election night it was William Waterhouse who was proclaimed Pasadena's third mayor. Waterhouse: 1361; Slavin: 915. 445 votes made the difference. The same voters who had overwhelmingly approved the water bonds in March turned around and elected Captain Waterhouse and other water bond foes the next month.

Waterhouse's electoral platform did proclaim: "We pledge ourselves in favor of public ownership of utilities and the consummation of the water bond issue," but as soon as he was elected rumors started flying that he would undo the March election.

The first public slip occurred when Los Angeles announced that it would develop an aqueduct to transport water from the Owens Valley 250 miles to the north on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevadas. Two reporters asked Waterhouse what he thought of the Los Angeles Plan. He replied, "I have known this was coming all along. What was the use of our voting \$1,000,000 for water plants when we could share in this for much less money." The statement accentuated the belief that the new mayor would not sell the bonds and carry out the will of the people.

Waterhouse felt the voters had been bamboozled into voting for the water bonds and together with his handpicked City Attorney "Fighting" John C. Fitzgerald devised a plan to sink them.

The entire city was puzzled when soon after his election Mayor Waterhouse asked for a leave of absence from the city not to exceed thirty days. During that period work that had been begun by the Vedder administration to complete the sale of the bonds was suspended.

During Waterhouse's absence the belief that the mayor would defy the popular will continued to grow. People were curious as to why the mayor had taken the leave, where had he gone, and what was he doing. The question that dominated popular conversations, however, was: Would he or would he not sell the bonds? Civic groups, prominent leaders and the Board of Trade all strategized on how to ensure swift action on the bonds when he returned.

The silence was explosive on May 31, 1905 when Mayor Waterhouse stepped forward at the City Council meeting to deliver a formal report. During his absence, he announced, he had journeyed to New York to meet with the legal firm of Dillon & Hubbard, which made a business of certifying municipal bonds voted in the West. Since the money to purchase the bonds came from the East, without a Dillon & Hubbard certificate, investors simply would not purchase bonds from Western cities.

In his conference with the prestigious bond firm, Waterhouse had raised doubts about the legality of events leading up to and including the bond vote. Acting with caution befitting such a careful firm, Dillon & Hubbard refused to certify the bonds as being legally voted.

Twenty-six years later *Star News* journalist Harlan Hall summed up the situation:

“Had the mayor refused to sell the bonds, there would have been a mandamus action to force him to do so by the next day, but here was a different situation. The water bond supporters might mandamus him until steamships sailed up the Arroyo Seco and get court orders until they were black in the face. Without a certificate of legal regularity by Dillon & Hubbard, there would be no buyers.”

"There have been hot times in the old town before and since," Hall wrote in the *Star News* in 1931 "but none more heated than this climax of thwarted hopes and smart politics."

Pasadena was stunned, then outraged. Angry denunciations poured into the *Star* and the *News*. Community meetings were held in which the mayor was flayed and citizens agitated for the sale of the bonds.

Then crusader Waterhouse and Fitzgerald, another born fighter, counter-attacked with surprising tactics. City Attorney Fitzgerald summoned the advocates of the water bond sale to a formal public hearing where he challenged them to explain how they would go about selling the bonds.

It was a brutally clever stratagem. First Waterhouse and Fitzgerald ruined the bonds by raising questions about their legitimacy. Then they rubbed their opponents noses in the mess they had created and that they intentionally left ambiguous. Of course a willing administration could have sold the bonds, but now that they had been discredited by the taint of alleged irregularities, there was no way the bonds could be sold. The scheme was apparent to most citizens who felt the hearing was sure to be a farce. Many who had been summoned refused to attend, so Fitzgerald sent out police officers to arrest those who had been subpoenaed and drag them into the hearing.

Fitzgerald taunted and badgered the witnesses. Summoning all of his keen legal skill, he wrung from his foes the confession that indeed the bonds were no longer saleable

Fitzgerald's inquisition made for good theater, but it enraged the community and ensured that Mayor Waterhouse would serve only one term.

A petition campaign collected 1200 signatures. Citizens demanded the firing of Fitzgerald for refusing to carry out the public will. Finally a recall was initiated. Fitzgerald was blasted from office, but not before the City Council had rescinded the water bond vote.

Waterhouse tried to recoup public support by showing bold leadership in establishing the Municipal Light Department, but even those efforts became fraught with controversy. After tussling with Edison on high rates and deteriorating service for the street lighting system, Waterhouse put a \$125,000 bond issue on the May 3, 1906 ballot. The determination that \$125,000 was enough to start the municipal

lighting system apparently rested on Mayor Waterhouse's personal assessment. Then when Edison challenged the legality of that election, the bonds were held up until Waterhouse unilaterally increased the property tax rate to provide \$53,000 to get the plant started. Waterhouse's foes, who were looking for any opening to attack him for sinking the municipal water plan, blasted the assessment and the fact that it would not be paid back. Still by July, 1907 the Municipal Plant was lighting city streets. But not in time to help the embattled Waterhouse in the 1907 Municipal election.

## **THE 1907 ELECTION**

Factions have always been a part of Pasadena politics, but the 1907 mayoral election seems to be the first in which slates or tickets were formally organized. The Waterhouse forces looked insurmountable despite the water controversy. Motivated by that challenge, Thomas Earley stepped forward to lead the "Citizens" ticket of water bond supporters and Board of Trade leaders. Either wearied of the fight or forgetting the lessons of 1905, Waterhouse and his backers conducted a low-key campaign with no public meetings and limited electioneering.

Waterhouse inevitably was the focus of the campaign. Citizen Earley delivered long orations in which he blasted the Waterhouse administration for failing to carry out the will of the people. Earley's solution to the water question was a new vote on the bonds and the purchase of the private systems. The election tally was: Earley 1750; Waterhouse 1347.

Mayor Earley set out at once to fulfill his promise. The first step was to appraise the property of the three water systems: the Pasadena Land & Water Company serving the area west of Fair Oaks Avenue, the Lake Vineyard Land & Water Company, serving east of Fair Oaks, and the North Pasadena Land & Water Company, covering the north side. Note that each company united land and water in their title, a fact that enhanced Waterhouse's repeated charges of real estate swindle.

As the new water bond election approached, The anti-bond people drove trucks around town loaded with old, rusty water pipes of the stovepipe variety and loudly asserted that this was the kind of system the city was going to get for its money.

Earley tried to explain that outdated equipment had not been included in the appraisals and that all the equipment had been liberally depreciated. The appraisals, he pointed out, relied on the evaluations of expert engineers, and from their worth a generous deduction had been taken.

Still the Waterhouse claims succeeded in undercutting popular support for the bonds so that when the whistle at the Municipal Light plant shrilly announced the winner of the election on the night of September 24, 1908, it sounded three times, signifying No. The bonds fell just 36 votes short of the 2/3s required.

Waterhouse supporters were jubilant. Earley and his backers were disheartened, but the tenacious mayor lost no time in building the groundwork for another election by again appraising the three company's properties.

Since Earley's term ended the following spring, it was clear that a new bond election could not be held before then. Earley, aware of his failure, asked his backers to find someone to replace him. They picked the respected Judge H. W. Magee, a pioneer of the community, but at the last minute Magee balked, and Earley was pressed into service again.

If Magee had run, Waterhouse, who had always been a reluctant candidate, probably would have stayed out of the mayoral election, but now that Earley was going for a second term, the feisty Captain couldn't bear to sit on the sidelines. Despite his best personal judgment, he sought vindication of his 1907 defeat.

The election became another bloody battle in the seemingly interminable water war. Both Earley and Waterhouse were men of great dignity who refrained from personal bitterness, but there was enough bitterness and frustration about the water bonds to ensure a hard-fought encounter.

In the end Earley again triumphed and set out to complete his long-sought goal of the establishment of the municipal water department,

### **Election of 1910**

After the September 1908 bond defeat, Mayor Earley went to the some of the foes and tried to line them up. He didn't totally succeed, but he got some key civic leaders, including Kernaghan, Lockwood and Thum to tumble.

In those days the Council directed campaigns and even approved the literature for campaign.

Earley and his cohorts argued that the city will get water plants at a figure much below the appraised value, paying the appraised valuation of 1904

Martin Weight in Salt Lake City to take care of his gravely ill father in law...but was still running the campaign by letter and telegram....

Mayor Earley says there are four new for consideration:

- 1) complete Engineer's report
- 2) a report verifying the titles
- 3) certificates of title from the three companies
- 4) and finally the report of F. S. Wallace and William Thum showing that we are getting \$200,000 work of real estate free if we vote these bonds

The election was low-key....there were no rallies....campaign conducted through long written documents.....The 10,000 word argument approved by the City Council and mailed to voters was mainly the work of city attorney J. Perry Wood.

Headquarters open for water bonds – room 2b in the Union Savings Bank Building....WM Eason.....Citizens' Committee – Victor Marsh Building

The bonds were defeated in a light vote, winning a majority but falling short of two-thirds, 1848 – 1349. Mayor Earley was bitterly disappointed and lashed out.

Irony always ruled the water wars. Matthew Slavin, running in 1905 as the champion of the water bonds that had just won 2/3s voter approval, was defeated narrowly by bond foe Waterhouse. Thomas Earley, another bond champion, defeated Waterhouse twice at the polls on the water issue, but just could not deliver on the bond votes.

The jubilant opponents sent a telegram to Martin Weight in Salt Lake City “Bonds defeated, Your friends have stood by your principles.” The same message was sent to William Watershouse in Honolulu.

Immediately after election, Weight calls for consolidation of the three companies. H W. Magee also came out for merger.... suggest condemnation to get a proper valuation.

### **The Election of 1911**

After that heartbreaking election, on August 22, 1910 the Board of Trade set up a water committee of twenty-five to take up the water question in all of its details. Judge H. W. Magee was elected permanent chairman; William Thum was elected permanent secretary.

The Committee took up a rigorous examination of all the water issues, including supply, alternatives, value and municipalization in one more attempt to dispel any remaining objections.

For the election for mayor in 1911, it was proposed that a candidate acceptable to both factions be selected, the rancor that had characterized the past buried, and some common ground of agreement found. William Thum was proposed by some of the opponents in past fights, such as E. H. Lockwood and George F. Kernaghan, and he was accepted as the proper man by many because of his past opposition and personal diligence. Thum, who had made a fortune back east making fly paper, called Tanglefoot, was now retired from active business and stood well in the community.

In November 1910 Mayor Earley had asked E. H. Lockwood and Thum to serve on a committee to explore whether it would be possible to get some of LA's Owens' Valley waters.

Thum and Lockwood met with the Los Angeles consolidation Committee in LA Mayor Alexander's office in February 1911. At that meeting E. H. Lockwood stated that a majority of Pasadena voters were ready for consolidation, but would prefer a borough system.

As the April 4th election approached journalists and voters repeatedly asked William Thum about his views on consolidation with Los Angeles because he made no secret of the fact that he wanted Pasadena to share in the Owens Valley water.

Thum saw merit in consolidation under the borough system, but he didn't want Pasadena to be swallowed up. His platform read: “I am not in favor of political subordination to Los Angeles, but if it is found that the Owens River water supply is the most feasible for us to participate in, I shall be heartily in



favor of Pasadena entering into some business-like arrangement with the City by which we can take part in its great water and power enterprises.”

Pioneer H. W. Magee, a strong supporter of independence, took off the gloves and blasted William Thum, who he claimed, was for Owens Valley vs other development. Magee’s water program was to maximize local supply; dam the Arroyo Seco; and impound the flood waters. He criticized Thum for not supporting local development.

Mayor Early waded in on the side of local development and against consolidation “Even if I had to pay only half as much, I would not change because I like the local water so much.”

On March 25th Judge Magee unleashed a fierce attack on Thum at the meeting of the Board of Trade Water Committee. He attacked Thum’s report that outside sources were needed. At the meeting Magee brought forth Theodore P. Lukens, the father of forestry, to talk about reforestation of mountains and how to enhance the watershed. Lukens believed that if Pasadenas would manage their watershed properly they would never need to import water.

Around town, charges flew that Magee is “doing politics,” injecting issues to influence the election

Thum responded: “I am often referred to as the harmony candidate, and I presume that is true, as I seem to be creating harmony by drawing all the fire and leaving everyone else in peace.”

Then at the end of March a week before the election, a very damaging revelation was made about Metcalfe, Thum’s opponent. Metcalfe didn’t take city light. That’s right. He bought his electricity from Edison and not Pasadena.. Imagine! This was a major issue to all civic minded citizens.

4/1

On April 1, 1911 the banner headline in the Daily News read: “Consolidation or No Owens Valley Water - Mayor George Alexander of Los Angeles.” That same day the paper editorialized: “Vote Early and Vote for the Preservation of Pasadena.”

Meanwhile in Northern California a similar battle raged regarding San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda and their consolidation into one city. There SF’s Hetch Hetchy supply was the lure.

In a pre-election rally that Saturday night, P. E. Troy of San Francisco, billed as a municipal ownership expert, spoke of the absurdity of the view that getting pure water from outside sources means consolidation. This is simply ridiculous. He then went on to tell how Boston sold water to surrounding cities without absorbing them; in other words Troy articulately described the metropolitan water system which many Pasadenans preferred.

City Attorney W. J. Carr proclaimed that consolidation legally impossible because Pasadena has a freeholder charter.

That evening a Los Angeles paper was distributed gratis throughout Pasadena denying that Los Angeles wanted Pasadena.

4/3

PDN: “The most exciting municipal campaign in the history of Pasadena came to a close today.”

Metcalfé stated he is for the lighting plant, though he was clearly on the defensive. On election eve, Thum declared clearly, “I am emphatically against consolidation with or annexation to Los Angeles. This city cannot afford either.”

4/4

On election day, it rained. Bands Played in the streets that evening as Thum won the election against Metcalfe decisively 2265-1724. The Daily News editorialized: “In light of the large vote against Thum and his disavowal of Owens River water, there is new hope that the Mayor-elect will reach into the past, investigate and develop an independent water supply.”

“While he is frankly opposed to consolidation in any form, he has not lost his head or become prejudiced on the subject to the extent that he is unwilling to investigate the formation of a water district with Los Angeles.”

### **Under Mayor Thum**

Mayor Thum lost no time in pursuing the municipalization. Three days after his election, Judge Magee resigned as chairman of the Board of Trade’s Water Committee, and the new mayor personally took the helm as the temporary chairman. The subcommittee on Municipal Ownership of Water, which Thum chaired, on its own initiative began a detailed inventory of the property of the three water companies.

Six weeks later on May 27 the Pasadena Board of Trade Water Committee made its Final Report to the Board of Directors of the Pasadena Board of Trade.

The committee has worked long and hard to thoroughly evaluate the water situation and to restore the trust and confidence of Pasadena officials and voters. Through more than 22 meetings and excursions; more than 75 % attendance. They traveled to explore the site of potential supplies.

The Municipal Ownership subcommittee, chaired by Thum, had been particularly diligent.

Recommends:

**First:** properties of local water companies be purchased by the city at the following prices:

Pasadena Lake Vineyard Land and Water Co.	\$621,622.31
Pasadena Land and Water Company (Pasadena)	335,312.75
North Pasadena Land and Water Company	194,217.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,151,152.89</b>

Reasons:

- 1) present water plants are inadequate at the present time and for financial reasons must remain so under the present ownership;
- 2) pressure is unsatisfactory in several large districts of the city
- 3) many principal mains are too small for fire protection
- 4) better mains requiring less frequent renewal and repairs than steel riveted pipe should displace within ten years are paved streets are introduced;
- 5) with three, impossible to develop and produce water to best advantage; only under municipal ownership can necessary changes be made.
- 6) Revenues will pay off bonds so acquisition will work out more like a gradual absorption of the water companies by the city than an actual purchase; and cost of improvements can be met.

**Second:** not later than July 1 submit to voters a bond election for at least \$1,250,000;

**Third:** improvements be made to the present distributing system to furnish proper, uniform pressure with ample supply to all territory

**Fourth:** steps be taken to conserve the waters of the Arroyo Seco and the Pasadena underground water basin; that both surface and underground storage capacity be increased and improved.

**Fifth;** minimum of 650 miner's inches of the best quality be acquired for future. "This report proves beyond peradventure that Pasadena's future is not secure without an adequate supply of water."

**Sixth.** Pasadena cooperate with the largest possible area of adjacent territory in acquiring a joint supply of water to meet all future needs to the territory when fully developed.

**Seventh.** That a reasonable offer from the city of LA be accepted

**Eight:** if not Owens river water, we recommend that the sources of outside supply be taken up in the order of their desirability as rec by the subcommittees on additional water supply and independent water supply.

**Ninth.** All records be brought together and kept in safe place for future reference.

In November 1911 Mayor Thum secured the cooperation of the city council in establishing the water investigation and valuation department and placed it in charge of Engineer Burdett Moody and by 1912, Pasadena had finally established a municipal water department.

Mayor Thum brought in Samuel B. Morris, noted water engineer, to head the new Water Department. This is the same Morris for whom Morris Dam is named and who was later head of the Department of Water & Power in Los Angeles.

**Final Report**

On May 5th, 1913 Mayor William Thum made his final formal report to the City Council of Pasadena. He wrote:

“We shall long remember the extended siege carried on for the acquisition of our local water plants. In the fall of 1910 the Pasadena Board of Trade water committee began patiently to remove all misunderstanding and prejudice. Later, Engineer Moody carried on this work in earnest.”

“Indeed our water question is still the most important problem confronting the city, and we trust and believe that our successors will do their best to make it an unqualified success.”

Points out the need for an additional water supply. “Conjointly with a similar sub-committee the subcommittee above mentioned decided that no available supply seemed as certain, as feasible, or as economical as that of the Owens river, provided that Los Angeles could and would supply us on terms that could be accepted.”

A Word of Warning – It is my conviction that the loss to Pasadena during a series of dry years, even if no more than three or four, would be almost incalculable. Everyone knows the panic which affects a community when passing through a time of drouth.. “I have done everything I could to encourage and to keep up negotiations with Los Angeles regarding Owens river water.””

Thum pursued a consistent, friendly attitude towards Los Angeles.....without annexation.

“We did not make the slightest move toward annexation with Los Angeles; furthermore, we do not believe conditions justify such a union. Even many of the best informed citizens of Los Angeles agree with us that Pasadena should remain independent, believing that annexation is a question for the future.”

After Mayor Thum, the city commission form of municipal government was established in Pasadena and then in 1920 the city manager/city directors form without an elected mayor, so William Thum was Pasadena’s Last Mayor, until Bill Bogaard was elected in 1999.

The long tortorous campaign for a municipal water system that dragged on from 1898 to 1912 was a pivotal one for Pasadena. Not only did it solve an essential problem, but it cemented Pasaden’a determination to remain independent. And in the call for metropolitan cooperation to develop a new water supply, the seeds of the Metroplitan Water District and the Colorado River Aqueduct that came in the late 20s were planted.

And so you can see -- Pasadena’s pioneers not only shaped our community, they shaped Southern California.

Thank you.

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