

P E T I T I O N

Open to all signers, its *ultimate* purpose being a *public aqueduct*. Please preserve this copy till that object is attained.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

PETITION FOR A CHARTER FOR A CHARLES RIVER AQUEDUCT COMPANY.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled ;

THE Undersigned,—originally in favor of supply of wholesome water, by a public Aqueduct, owned by the city,—seeing now no prospect of its accomplishment in that way, ask leave (in common with other applicants for, or owners of, charters), by act of incorporation, to supply pure and soft water, from what *they* deem the most available source for an ample and economical supply,—viz: from Charles River, by exclusion of tide waters, by means of a dam, across its mouth ;—so that the river will flow down fresh to the new dam ;—having a sufficient lock for the navigation ;—the structure of the height only of a few inches above high tide, to consist of two solid piers, and a centre flow-dam between them, from near the western end of the Western Avenue, across the river to south Cambridgeport ;—to bring this source of supply so near to a hill in Brighton or BROOKLINE, as to dispense with laying costly iron pipes till the streets are nearly reached, where the extension can pay as it goes ;—and also create a new tide-mill river power, the rents of which may pay for raising this water for domestic uses by steam power, at the hill selected ; or remunerate, in a good degree, the cost of the new dam for rendering that portion of Charles River below Watertown fresh, which now ebbs and flows with the tide,—making a fresh flow, of a portion of the river water, nearly to the city lines ; if convenient through the Water Power Company's full basin, or through a short enclosed canal, to the hill reservoir :—The cost of elevating water with steam power, by improved engines, and their better application than formerly, being much less, for pumping daily any quantity necessary, in the capital required, than that of the many miles of iron main pipes, or brick conduits, requisite to obtain water from distant ponds ;—and *this* river water of far better quality for domestic purposes than any, unless it be that of the remote LONG pond, to which it is very similar—[“ in physical properties ;” but unlike this pond, containing “ no animalculæ,” and one-third less solid matter in a given quantity.]

The HEIGHT to which the water will be elevated, in the service reservoir, will be much greater than by other plans (except that for SPOT pond, the water of which, the engineers all agree, is alone deficient in quantity), the consequent security against fire will be greater, and necessary size of iron pipe used, can be less.—The people of Cambridgeport and of Roxbury, are as much in want of water at a proper elevation for extinction of fires, as the city; and could be most conveniently supplied from this river source, and from the same service reservoir. With reference only to the towns adjoining, without the city, the improvement will be worth attempting, by private charter.

The navigation will be facilitated, by keeping the river full at pleasure; so that vessels, after passing the lock, will not ground in getting up to old Cambridge; and the opposite solid piers, by contracting the broad spread of the stream, will enable the river to clear better its channel through the flats.—Many acres of comparatively worthless salt marsh bordering the river, will be reclaimed, by the proposed exclusion of the tide;—and by the new water power gained, the city will always have in its vicinity, mills applicable to the grinding of grain, should some neighboring water powers become extinct.

The dam proposed, at the elevation of high tide, will not back the water against the Watertown mills, nor flood the low lands on the river. At the point selected, a bridgeway has long been needed, to save a circuit of three miles: and the space from pier to pier, over the centre flow-dam between, will be so short, that a bridge can cheaply be thrown over, bringing vacant lands in south Cambridgeport very near to the Western Avenue.—Being nearest the city, the works, if ever taken at a valuation by the Councils, can be more immediately under their superintendence; and much the readiest means of adding to the scanty supply from Jamaica pond, should the works of that Aqueduct be purchased by the city, for present supply, by transfer of city lands, or other means which, in a short series of years it is quite possible, would be fully replaced by the profits at lower rates, with the aid of additional water.

Nature having brought this river nearer than any other source, other things equal, it may be inferred that it is the best;—and it is not easy to see how any material damages can accrue from the use of this source; while destruction of mill privileges dependent on pond sources, might occasion much litigation, there being numerous occupants, and some claimants beside the ostensible owners.—Concord river is covered up by distance, and if through an open canal purer than the well water of the city, as is alleged, it is scarcely a recommendation. The disadvantages of other water projects may be mentioned though not as doubting the policy of granting all the charters which have been asked for this object. The Middlesex canal plan is estimated at \$900,000, yet the elevation proposed to be attained at the service reservoir, is but sixty feet, only half a proper height. That for Spot and Mystic ponds, is given by Commissioners at \$850,000; their water, by chemical analysis not superior to Charles River water, which is derived from rains,—those ponds chiefly

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from springs. The Long pond scheme was set down at \$1,100,000; its height, if a Croton fall be allowed, will be found insufficient; the same length of brick conduit of the Croton must have cost about five millions.—[The last official estimate for Long pond is \$2,118,000.]

The applicants for a Charles River Aqueduct Charter are aware that the stock for a river-dam, road, &c. was once estimated at \$350,000,* (which is much above their own estimates;) but that sum, added to a capital of \$150,000 for fuel and steam engines, and \$50,000 for reservoir, &c., makes less than two-thirds the average cost of the other plans. From this is to be deducted the value of water-power gained; while the cost of more complicated plans will but too probably be increased in their progress above the estimates. It is therefore believed, that further injurious delays will be experienced, if the other plans are relied on.

[The Subscriptions, when all the books are opened, may best decide the preference. [What private company would subscribe its funds to an aqueduct from Long pond!!—if none, why should the city?]

THE WATER OF CHARLES RIVER, says the city's chemist [Mr. A. A. HAYES, in Report of 1837,] is of a very "brisk and sparkling" character, the presence of a very large portion of oxygen in this river water "an unusual fact," its "EXTREME PURITY" delayed the examination by requiring LARGE portions to be operated on.—A new river-dam will form a still deeper reservoir, for the water to settle and purify in than the successive mill reservoirs above.—The fact of a charter having been formerly granted, to the Mill Dam Corporation, to dam Charles River at its mouth (after due notice it is presumed), for the water-power and road only to be gained by it, without any reference to supply of water for domestic purposes; the great advantages to lands in south Cambridgeport, Brighton, and Brookline, of the structure proposed; security against the hourly danger of fires, which will evidently result from this plan carried out, and especially the injurious delays which the citizens have experienced for many years in obtaining pure water, it is hoped will obviate such new orders of notice to precede the granting of a charter, in this instance, as might adjourn, from this year to another, the bringing in of water, duly FILTERED from all impurities, and at a height sufficient to afford complete security, and convenience for use,—subject to whatever regulations the Legislature may deem consistent and suitable.—

CHARLES CROCKER, JOHN M. DEARBORN,

AND TWELVE OTHERS.

Boston, Feb. 1, 1844.

[* "The dam across Charles River can be built for \$150,000, by a responsible man ready to undertake it, and probably for a lower sum."—Boston D. Journal, April 23-45.
The cost of pumping 390,000 gallons per day, in price of fuel, was given at \$790 a year, in Report 1837, at \$10 for coal (now at \$6), and as requisite 650,000 gallons a day first ten years. By a recent invention, in Baltimore, five gallons for one it is said can be raised.
Conditional Purchases (practised by Mr. QUINCY),—of the best and nearest Reservoir site, PARKER'S HILL—would obviate any delays; next, of Jamaica pond, &c. (outlet at its base.)
The river Outlet Dam in the design of URIAH COTTING, was suggested to him by R. D. HARRIS, approved by JACOB PERKINS. Through its solid structure only could even pipes from Spot pond safely cross the channel (were that an object as it is not). A small pipe from that pond (paying old claims on it), may yet proceed through Malden and Chelsea to E. Boston.

ORDER OF NOTICE.

CHARLES RIVER AQUEDUCT.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In Senate, March 17, 1845.

ON the Petition aforesaid, ORDERED, That the Petitioners cause an attested copy of their Petition with this Order thereon, to be published in the Boston Daily Atlas, and in the Boston Daily Courier, four times a week for three weeks in succession, and serve a like copy on the City Clerk of the City of Boston, and on the Town Clerks of the Towns of Cambridge, Watertown, Roxbury, Brighton, and Brookline,—and on the President of Harvard University at Cambridge,—forty days, at least, before the first day of the next General Court, that all persons interested, may then appear, and show cause, if any they have, why the Prayer of said Petition should not be granted.

Sent down for concurrence.

CHAS. CALHOUN, *Clerk.*

In the House of Representatives, March 18, 1845.

Concurred.

CHAS. W. STOREY, *Clerk.*

A TRUE COPY.....ATTEST,

CHAS. CALHOUN, *Clerk of the Senate.*

BOSTON WATER QUESTION.—“All that has yet been accomplished is an act of the Legislature authorizing the city to take water from Long pond in Framingham, or of Charles river at Watertown, at a great, and as it is reasonably conceived, an unnecessary expense....If the passage of the tide water is obstructed by a dam, a fountain of as pure water as could be obtained from any other source, would naturally flow to the dam, which might be erected within one mile of the city, and a water power of twelve feet head might be secured, and used to raise a part of the same water....But the grand difficulty is to induce the people to attend to the subject, as one of the greatest secular importance”—&c.

The Patriarch of the Mill Dam, in Boston Journal, April 14, 23-45.

The Joint Special Committee of seven on the plan embraced in this Petition, of which Hon. R. Southwick was Chairman, were unanimous of its preference.

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