

### Some Recent Failures of Municipal Plants.

Alexandria, Va. Sold to private company; bad condition, service poor.  
 Atalla, Ala. Cost \$50,000; unsuccessful, sold to private parties.  
 Ballard, Wash. Leased because run at loss.  
 Beverly, Ohio. Leased because run at loss; to get better service and economy.  
 Brunswick, Mo. In private hands, bad management and service.  
 Buena Vista, Va. Sold because manager says, "It was too expensive."  
 Carrollton, Ga. Light plant bought, but, on account of protests of citizens, resold to private parties.  
 Casselton, N. D. Sold to private party.  
 Chehalis, Wash. Leased; municipal operation dishonest and unsatisfactory.  
 Dunkirk, Ind. Turned over to bond-holders. "Political changes in control."  
 Dunkirk, N. Y. Turned plant over to bond-holders to run. "Bitter experience."  
 East Grand Forks, Minn. Burned, not rebuilt. People voted to take light from a private company. Town while running plant compelled saloons to take municipal "juice" instead of from private plant, under penalty of revocation of license.  
 Flgin, Ill. Leased to private company. Bad management and service.  
 England, Ark. Leased to private company. "A losing game and could not afford it."  
 English, Ind. Sold to private company; unsuccessful and losing venture.  
 Escanaba, Mich. Cost \$70,000; contract made to close plant and take light from private company. Mayor says, "Excessive rates and unsatisfactory service."  
 Frankfort, N. Y. Made contract with private company.  
 Fulda, Minn. Mayor says, "Not sold but given away," account running behind so badly.  
 Galena, Ill. Sold to private company; bad service; run at loss; politics.  
 Gravesend, N. Y. Light plant, \$120,000, sold for \$31,110 to private company.  
 Greenwood, S. C. Plant shut down and light taken from private company; bonds still unpaid.  
 Hamilton, Ohio. Gas; leased to private company.  
 Harvard, Ill. Sold to private company; plant deteriorated; service unsatisfactory and expensive.  
 Hudson, Wis. M. O. plant built but never run by city; leased to private parties.  
 High Point, N. C. Sold and light taken from private company for economy.  
 Iuka, Miss. Leased, account, the mayor says, "Of difficulty in keeping a competent electrician."  
 Jonesboro, Ind. In private hands, M. O. tried but proved failure.  
 Kansas, Ill. Council voted to sell but unable to find purchaser.  
 LaGrange, Ill. In private hands. Cost \$160,000; sold to private parties who assumed out-standing indebtedness.  
 Lakewood, Ohio. Sold to private company; expensive; people twice voted down bonds for improvement.  
 Lebanon, Tenn. Plant shut down, light taken from private company.  
 Leighton, Pa. Sold because the chief burgess writes, it was run at a heavy loss, too much politics.  
 Leon, Iowa. Mayor says sold for half cost. "Because the city was getting in debt more every year on account of the plant."  
 LeRoy, N. Y. Plant bought from private company, but turned back as city made a failure of it.  
 Linton, Ind. Leased to private parties; run down and expensive.  
 Lowell, Ind. Sold because run at loss.  
 Madison, Ind. Sold for better economy.  
 Middletown, Pa. Discontinued and light taken from private company for economy.  
 Milford Center, Ohio. Light and water, advertised for sale; expensive and white elephant.  
 Millers Falls, Mass. Discontinued; light taken from private company for economy.  
 Mooresville, N. C. Discontinued; light taken from private company for economy.  
 Mohawk, N. Y. In private hands; M. O. expensive and deficit.  
 Moline, Ill. Sold; plant antiquated; no funds for renewal.  
 Montpelier, Ind. Turned over to private parties who assumed bonds; citizens lost money contributed to make repairs.  
 Muncie, Ind. Unsatisfactory and expensive; politics; private contract, getting better economy.  
 New Hampton, Iowa. Advertised for sale; unsatisfactory.  
 New York. Bridge Lighting. Abandoned, current taken from private company.  
 Northfield, Vt. Plant burned; taxpayers voted not to rebuild.  
 Park Ridge, N. J. Town failed to pay, plant seized by U. S. marshal.  
 Peoria, Ill. Water works sold to private company. "In sheer disgust."  
 Philadelphia, Pa. Gas; leased to private company for better management and economy.  
 Portsmouth, Ohio. Sold to private company; worn out, city unwilling to spend money for renewal.  
 Pullman, Wash. Voted to sell electric light plant; expensive and burden to taxpayers.  
 Santa Clara, Calif. Shut down and light taken from private company for economy.  
 Souix Falls, S. D. Cost \$75,000; shut down and light taken from private company. Unsatisfactory and expensive.  
 Shepherdstown, W. Va. Sold, account poor superintendence, too low rates, no fund for renewals.  
 Souderton, Pa. Discontinued, light taken from private company for economy.  
 Tipton, Iowa. Unsuccessful and when burned not rebuilt.  
 Trenton, Mich. Votes 142 to 18 to sell plant at one-third cost; run at loss.  
 Valley City, N. D. People voted three to one to sell but council trying to hold on.  
 Vancouver, Wash. Cost about \$70,000; sold for \$11,000; run at loss.  
 Waddington, N. Y. Sold by vote of people for less than half what it cost five years before. Manager says, "The village was sore on property."  
 Washington, Ind. Trying to sell on account of bad operation and condition.  
 West Newton, Pa. Sold to private company for improvement and better service.  
 West Seattle, Wash. Electric railway; sold to private company; service poor and expensive.  
 Wilmington, O. Plant sold for less than one-third its cost; unsatisfactory and expensive.  
 Wytheville, Va. Leased to private parties; citizens pronounced it a "Public scandal of costliness and inefficiency."  
 Xenia, Ohio. Plant discontinued and light taken from private company.  
 The following municipal light and water plants have been severely criticized, investigated, and in most cases sale recommended by city officials, boards or citizens:  
 Ashtabula, Ohio., Bellingham, Wash., Columbus, Ohio, Greenfield, Ind., Herington, Kan., Kirkwood, Mo., Marshall, Mo., Medford, N. Ore., Montpelier, Ohio, Peru, Ind., Sleepy Eye, Minn.  
 The following towns have turned down municipal-ownership by reports of investigating committees, action of councils and in most cases by direct vote of the people:  
 Baltimore, Md., Bellevue, Mich., Berrien Springs, Mich., Benton Harbor, Mich., Bryon, Ohio, Colorado City, Colo., Canon City, Colo., Council Bluffs, Iowa, Covington, Ky., Cridersville, Ohio, Dawson, Mich., Elyria, O., Faribault, Minn., Falls City, Nebr., Hancock, Mich., Henderson, Tenn., Holland, Mich., Lake Forest, Ill., Lynchburg, Va., Manitowish, Wis., Marengo, Ill., Natchez, Miss., Negaunee, Mich., New London, Mo., Omaha, Neb., Patchogue, N. Y., Pella, Iowa, Pine Bluff, Ark., Pittsburg, Kans., Pottersville, Mich., Richmond, Va., Roswell, N. M., Rutherford, N. J., Shelburne, Ont., Shullsburg, Wis., Sioux City, Ia., South Framingham, Mass., South Sharon, Pa., Sparta, Tenn., Stawberry Point, Iowa, Superior, Wis., Syracuse, N. Y., Towanda, Pa., Washington, Ind., West Orange, N. J., Wilksville, Ill., Winchester, Mass.  
 Syracuse, N. Y. "Instead of leaving the question to be settled by public clamor," appointed a committee of representative citizens, who devoted eight months to investigation of twenty-two cities having M. O. and unanimously recommended against it.  
 Rutherford, N. J., decided to keep out of municipal-ownership on the advice of a committee, who investigated for a year and reported adversely, stating that "there have been more failures than successes."

### MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE.

WILLIAM ZINT is down from DENVER.  
 MRS. EMERSON HANSON was down from DENVER, Sunday.  
 MISS SADIE EVERIST is in St. Joseph, Mo., this week.  
 J. L. MCPHEELY, the Minden lawyer of note, was a city visitor, last Saturday.  
 MRS. F. M. KIMMELL returned home, Tuesday night, from visiting her parents in Wellington, Kansas.  
 MISS STETTER and Miss Gertrude Kenagy of the teacher corps were Lincoln invaders, Saturday.  
 MISS EDITH WAITE is home from Crete where she is attending Doane college, on a vacation.  
 MRS. A. R. SCOTT is visiting at her former home in Geneva and other points in eastern Nebraska.  
 MISS MARY DUNGAN, teacher in the Hastings public schools, was a guest of her brother Will and family, Tuesday.  
 MRS. E. J. KATES came up from Lincoln, Saturday night last, and has been a welcome guest in the Campbell home, this week.  
 E. U. GALLATIN of Bartley was in the city, Monday, on his way home from inspecting land in Rawlins and Cheyenne counties, Kansas.  
 MR. AND MRS. WATER STOKES entertained the Thursday whist club, last week. Albert McMillen captured the honors, the consolation falling to Mrs. F. W. Bosworth.  
 W. M. MORRISSEY of Jacksonville, Ill., arrived in the city today. His father and Mr. Keating had preceded. They own and occupy the Holiday farm in southeast McCook.

EVANGELIST LYON, who conducted services in McCook about a year since, was in town, Monday. He is just well started on a campaign in Holdrege, where 40 responded to the first gospel invitation.  
 MR. AND MRS. VANIE MODRELL, Mrs. James Spaulding and Miss Ethel Stephens went up to Beverly, Thursday morning, to visit their brother Colonel Stephens, now engaged in business there.  
 GENERAL IRVING HALE of Denver is spending a few days in the city in the interest of the McCook Electric Light Co., of which he is secretary and which is now involved in the municipal campaign, the question of city ownership and bonds being at issue in next Tuesday's election.

MRS. L. A. BROWN has returned from her visit in Chicago and other points east. She states that she hopes soon to recover her private property replevined by J. H. Grannis, recently, during her absence and to place same in her home and resume house-keeping. That she will continue to rent of Miss Alice Jones. She also wishes to state that she has no standing bills with anybody in McCook. That her son H. S. Brown will soon join her and go into some kind of business in McCook.

### Weber Company's Claim Challenged.

McCook Electric Light Co.  
 McCook, Nebraska, April 3, 1908.  
 Weber Gas Engine Co.,  
 Kansas City, Mo.,  
 Dear sirs: The Water Consumers' League, who are working for a municipal water and light plant, have published your letter claiming that with your apparatus they should (you do not guarantee) furnish electric current to the switch-board, with anthracite coal at \$10 per ton, including attendance, at less than one cent per K. W. hour.

As you know, your guarantees to us on COAL ONLY for the operation of your plant under our conditions greatly exceeded the above claim; while the actual consumption greatly exceeds your guarantees.  
 To give you an opportunity to make good your statement, we submit the following proposition: You can send your best engineer and run our Weber plant for a week, with the assistance of our men or others whom you may furnish if you prefer. We will jointly measure all coal, water and oil used, adding the wages of the station men whom we have to employ to operate the Weber plant only, (omitting repairs and any other station incidentals,) and divide the total by the number of K. W. hours passing through the watt-meters on the switch-board, obtaining the cost of these items per K. W. hour.

If this cost does not exceed your figure we will pay you \$100; if it does, you pay us \$100.  
 Additional similar offer based on DOUBLE your claim.  
 Additional similar offer based on TRIPLE your claim.  
 Additional similar offer based on QUADRUPLE your claim.

If we do not win ALL of these propositions we will contribute \$100 to any charitable fund named by the mayor of McCook; if we do, you pay this contribution.  
 For the benefit of the public, as well as ourselves, we will take pleasure in publishing the results of this test in the McCook papers and engineering publications throughout the country, and you will be at liberty to insert them in your catalogues. Very truly yours,  
 IRVING HALE,  
 Secretary McCook Electric Light Co.  
 (Copies to McCook papers.)

### Letters Regarding Results of Municipal Ownership.

Mr. W. P. Hackett, lawyer, Winfield, Kan., writes as follows, March 31, 1908:  
 "Some years ago the city of Winfield embarked in the enterprise of and built an electric light plant, and water works. The electric light plant has been losing the city about ten thousand dollars a year, and the end is not yet, and the water project is in worse shape still. We have voted bonds twice to keep the electric light alive, and are now about to vote the second time for additional bonds for the water works. The whole scheme is a horrible failure and can end only in disaster to the people."

Beverly, O., March 30, 1908.  
 To Whom It May Concern:  
 The electric light plant at Beverly, O., was owned by private ownership—was taken over by the village. It was operated by the village for several years, at a considerable loss; the tax payers at last rebelled, and the plant has been sold to private parties.  
 Municipal ownership was clearly a failure here. C. R. APPELEGATE.

Another Beverly citizen, who would prefer not to have his name published for evident reasons, on account of criticism of the board of public service, writes as follows:  
 "Replying to yours of March 25, I will say that at no time during the municipal ownership of the plant was the business carried on satisfactorily. The board of public service was composed of business men that knew nothing whatever of electrical engineering. The city purchased this plant several years ago, and it has been a continual expense. Three years ago the plant was purchased by Mr. Geo. Walker, since that time the service has improved.  
 "I would sum up the difficulties in a municipal plant thus:  
 "First—It must have an experienced man at its head.  
 "Second—This man must be invested with power enough to do what he thinks is right and under no circumstances to let the B. of P. S. force him into doing something that he knows is against the system. This you will find being done in a great many places.  
 "The third great fault is letting repairs go too long and then putting in a new machine instead of repairing the old one. I have been in a great many places and I can truthfully say that I know of very few successful municipal plants."

A prominent citizen of Souderton, Pa., who desires his name omitted, writes as follows:  
 "The plant is managed by the council and they believe that it does not afford a manager, which is very true, under existing circumstances. All matters regarding the plant, such as line construction, repairs, and additional machinery, etc., must naturally come before the council for final consideration, and they decide if the work is to be done (also how it is to be done.) Our experience is that these councilmen are all good and conservative business people, but as a rule know no more about the electrical business, than the electrical man would know about selling calico, and for this reason no practical electrical man would lend his name as manager to a small municipal electric plant."  
 He then explains at length how the plant being over-loaded and the city not having money to build the proper increase, installed a 50 H. P. crude oil engine, finding it much too small, this experience costing the town \$5,000 additional. The council then concluded it would be cheaper to buy current, and therefore made a contract with a private plant. He concludes as follows:  
 "Kindly note that our councilmen are of our best and most conservative citizens, and do not believe we ever had a case of graft. The writer used to favor municipal ownership, but through experience can readily see why a municipal electric light plant can not be made a paying proposition in a small town. For the interest of your town, I sincerely hope the citizens will investigate thoroughly before they vote for municipal ownership of your electric light plant."

A. BARNETT arrived home last Friday night, from the Omaha hospital, quite recovered from an operation and improved in health.

Jack for Sale.  
 Good record, will trade for horses, cattle or land. I. M. Smith, McCook, Neb.—2 28-1f.

Don't wait until you are notified, call and advance your subscription up to January 1st, 1909. April 1st, 1908, all subscriptions delinquent one year, MUST BE DISCONTINUED. That's the law. We have no choice.

There was only one objection to that snow, last Saturday morning,—there wasn't enough of it. But it was helpful.

New "Carnegie Library" post cards at TRIBUNE office.  
 Scott has strawberries. Fone 30.

Successful Painting  
 can be done by using Lincoln A. P. Paint, and at less cost owing to its spreading capacity.  
 A. McMILLEN, Druggist.

## Do You Read Our Advertisements?

We try to tell you about good goods and from time to time about

### SPECIAL BARGAINS

For instance we now have  
**Sewing Machines, \$16.00**  
 with all attachments and fully warranted. And then our

### SPECIAL GRANITE WARE SALE

Cooking utensils of all kinds, with

## TEA KETTLES, 53 CENTS

and WASH BASINS, 15 cents. Other articles accordingly that you generally have to pay twice as much for. And then

### Warm Weather

will soon be here and you will need a

### REFRIGERATOR or a GAS or GASOLINE RANGE

We will fit you out with a DETROIT JEWEL Gas Range or a Quick Meal Gasoline Stove, or a Gas Water Heater so you can keep cool and take your SUMMER BATH WITH COMFORT. And comfort is really what we are all looking for.

**McCook Hardware Co.**  
 W. B. MILLS Phone 31 R. B. SIMMONS

## A Proposal.

To the Mayor and Council of the City of McCook, Nebraska.  
 GENTLEMEN:

We, the undersigned, hereby jointly and severally make the following proposal and offer to the city of McCook, to-wit:  
 If the said city will construct a combined water and light plant to cost not over \$165,000.00 according to plans of reputable engineers, and subject to the approval of the undersigned, we hereby offer to take charge of the power plant and do the pumping of water and generating of light, furnishing all fuel and supplies, all labor and care, and doing all usual running repairs to the machinery, for the sum of five cents per 1,000 gallons for all water pumped, and five cents per kilowatt for all electric current generated. The replacing or repairing of equipment where the damage or loss arises from fire, lightning, earthquake or cyclone, or from the unlawful acts of any person or persons not employed in the works, shall not fall upon the undersigned, but they shall repair and replace the same at the charge of the city. Said contract to be for the period of five years.  
 We further offer, in case your honorable body chooses to advertise and let the said pumping and generating to the lowest responsible bidder, to submit a bid for the said work at not over the price named in this proposal.  
 We further agree, in case the contract be given us, to publish at the end of each year, the quantity and cost of all fuel, labor and supplies used by us in the operation of the plant, as well as the quantities of water pumped and light generated.

Dated, McCook, Nebraska, April 2, 1908.  
 Signed: C. H. BOYLE,  
 G. E. THOMPSON,  
 W. W. McMILLEN,  
 R. B. SIMMONS,  
 JOSEPH ALLEN,  
 S. S. GARVEY,  
 E. H. DOAN,  
 S. D. McCLAIN.

I, H. W. Conover, clerk of the city of McCook, Neb., do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a proposal filed at my office this day.  
 Dated at McCook, Nebraska, this 2nd day of April, 1908.  
 H. W. CONOVER, City Clerk.

Any doubt as to whether a city plant for light and water can be successfully operated by the city of McCook is put at rest by the above proposition which was submitted to the city yesterday as shown by the clerk's certificate of filing. Such a method of letting out the operation of the power plant to responsible parties for a term of five years takes the matter entirely out of politics. It provides against frequent changes in the operation through political appointments as the water and light companies have said must be the case. It makes room for competition, too, at the end of each five-year contract. If the city uses as much water as in the year ending March 31, 1907, 150,000,000 gallons, it can make a rate of fifteen cents for water and its share per annum will be \$15,000 and no cost of pumping. The cost of electric light can be put at fifteen cents or twelve cents or ten cents and the cities share of the gross income and light rates is there any reason for citizens to fear the levying of taxes on account of the city owning its own plant, or that the plant would not be properly run and taken care of? There is also the point of publicity provided for in the proposal of Messrs. Boyle, Thompson, et al. That will post the public and keep it posted all along as to what the actual cost of producing the light and pumping the water is. Can any patriotic citizen of McCook neglect the present opportunity of securing for his family and his community the two staple necessities of life—water and light—at the lowest possible cost? The Water Consumers' League confidently expects every unbiased vote to be cast in favor of the bonds and for C. H. Meeker for city engineer. Voters, remember our ballot system is a secret ballot. That no boss or employer has any right or power over you. Do your duty by your family this time if never before or again.  
 The Water Consumers League.