

**BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY**

**SONGS**

**Celebration of Beginning of**

**Storage of Catskill Water**

**ASHOKAN RESERVOIR**

**October 11, 1913**

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# 1. Wait 'Till the Dam is Finished.

Tune: "Wait 'Till the Sun Shines, Nellie."

On an autumn day, Carleton went away,  
With his map-case by his side,  
Through each mountain lane, he tramped for fame,  
"We must do the job," he cried,  
"At the Tongore site, there's a snag or two,  
And at Olive Bridge a few,"  
So a plan he made, and it stayed,  
And we heard him softly say:

Chorus No. 1:

"Wait 'till the Dam is finished,  
And the water's rising high;  
We will be happy, Waldo, don't you sigh.  
Down Aqueduct we'll wander, Robert, you and I;  
Wait 'till the Dam is finished,  
Bye and bye."

"We must have," said he, "some topography,  
And some holes we must put down,  
Then on High Point old, place a signal bold  
To triangulate the ground."  
So by day and night,  
When the stars shone bright,  
Work was done without relief,  
And he whispered low: "Boys, keep on the go,"  
And reported to the Chief.

(Repeat Chorus.)

Now the dam is done and we have begun  
The big res-er-voir to fill,  
Down to Olive Bridge from each mountain ridge  
Let the floods come when they will,  
For we've shut the gate and if you will wait  
You can see the waters rise  
And we'll hold secure this water pure,  
As it fell down from the skies.

Chorus No. 2:

Now that the dam is finished  
And the water we will store,  
You can go strolling, Waldo, 'long the shore,  
Thru aqueduct goes water from the reservoir.  
Now that the dam is finished,  
Thirst no more.

Says C. E. to me, "I've come back to see  
All this old dam job of mine.  
Soon the pond you'll fill and the water spill  
Into Robert's big pipe line,  
On the Major's ground it will next be found  
And on down to Uncle Jake.  
Then the water clear will pass by Walt Spear  
On its way to Silver Lake."

Chorus No. 2.

Then up spoke our George, "We will flood the gorge,  
"Let the Chief turn on the juice,  
"For we've cleaned the muck from the aqueduct  
"And it should be put to use."  
'Well, now that's no lie," was the Chief's reply,  
"Old New York has waited long,  
Let the gate drop down and the valley drown  
And they'll get it good and strong."

Chorus No. 2.

## 2. Shall We Gather at Ashokan?

**Air: "Shall We Gather at the River."**

Shall we gather at Ashokan,  
Where the Catskill flood is stored,  
With its crystal waters shining,  
To the glory of the Board.

Chorus:

Yes, we'll gather at Ashokan,  
The wonderful, the mighty Ashokan.  
Drink with the Chief at Ashokan,  
To the health of the Water Board.

Soon the water of Esopus,  
Capped white with the silvery spray;  
We shall hold in that great basin  
In the mountains far away.

Chorus:

Underneath the silent Hudson,  
Thro's tube of massive stone,  
We will take the Catskill water  
Far, far from its mountain home.

Chorus:

Then 'twill reach the mighty city,  
On the River and the Bay,  
Soon there'll water be a-plenty,  
For the throngs on Old Broadway.

Chorus:

### 3. **Reservoir, My Reservoir.**

Air: "Maryland, My **Maryland.**"

The City's seal is on the plan,  
Reservoir, My Reservoir;  
The Board declares we'll take the land;  
Reservoir, My Reservoir;  
For water pure the Chief has planned,  
And surely it's in great demand.  
We'll give it to them at first hand,  
From Reservoir, My Reservoir.

Burr-Hering-Freeman paved the way,  
Reservoir, Our Reservoir.  
For the great work we see today,  
Reservoir, Our Reservoir.  
McClellan framed and passed the law,  
The Board was Simmons, Chadwick, Shaw;  
Then Bensel, Galvin, Straus stood for  
The Reservoir, Our Reservoir.

The conduit we have closed at last,  
At Reservoir, Our Reservoir.  
The water soon will we store fast,  
In Reservoir, Our Reservoir.  
Once more as in a time long past,  
Old High Point will its shadow cast  
Upon a lake of surface vast,  
'Tis Reservoir, Our Reservoir.

We've worked up here with skill and force  
At Reservoir, Our Reservoir.  
To turn Esopus from its course,  
To Reservoir, Our Reservoir  
Now water pure from mountain source,  
Down to New York will take its course,  
And merry is J. Waldo's force,  
At Reservoir, Our Reservoir.

#### 4. Lest We Forget. Tune: "My Last Cigar."

Up among the Catskill Hills-my hair has turned  
quite gray,  
I sit upon old High Point bold, and dream my  
cares away.  
Out there in the valley old, a lake spread o'er the  
land,  
Recalls the days we worked and sang to build  
Ashokan Dams.

To build Ashokan Dams, to build Ashokan Dams,

Recalled the days, etc.

How Carleton E. and Georgie G.  
Did push that job along;  
Oh! that the boys were *here* with me  
Once more to sing that song.  
We're scattered far and wide by now,  
Made famous every man,  
For people talk of when and how  
We built Ashokan Dam.

*We* built Ashokan Dams, we built Ashokan Dams,  
For people talk, etc.

Oh, boys, when life seems hard and drear,  
And cares come thick and strong,  
Remember how we engineers  
Helped work along with song,  
And if success comes to us boys,  
While comfort warms and cheers,  
Let's not forget that once we were  
Ashokan Engineers.  
Ashokan Engineers, *Ashokan* Engineers.  
Let's not forget, etc.

## 5. The Mayor.

**Tune:** "Auld Lang Syne."

Shall our young Mayor be forgot,  
Who put our project through,  
Who knew the unwashed City's need,  
And gave us work to do?

Chorus:

Oh, may his shadow ne'er be less;  
And may his income grow!  
He'll always be remembered where  
Esopus' waters go.

There'll be much drink, there'll be much wash  
For New York's familiee;  
So take a cup and drink it up  
To the health of Georgie B.

(repeat Chorus.)

**6. Every Reservoir Added to What  
You've Got.**

**Tune: "Every Little Bit Added to What You've  
Got."**

Every reservoir added to what you've got  
Makes just a reservoir more;  
That's the reason J, Waldo said  
"Let us now have four"--  
Schoharie, Lackawack and Catskill,  
Along with Ashokan, will fill the bill-  
Every reservoir added to what you've got  
Makes just a reservoir more.

**7. Far Away From Old Manhattan.**

**Tune: "Far Above Cayuga's Waters."**

Far away from old Manhattan,  
'Mid the mountains high,  
Flow the waters of Esopus,  
'Neath a cloudless sky.

Chorus:

Old Esopus! your fair water,  
Long its course has run;  
Now we'll change it to the southward,  
Ere our work is done.

We will chain your noble waters,  
With strong concrete bands,  
And, as in the days forgotten,  
Again a lake will stand.  
(Repeat Chorus)

Ties of friendship, we are weaving,  
Which each heart doth know  
Shall forever be unbroken,  
While your waters flow.  
(Repeat Chorus)

## 8. Dammin' Up the Stream.

**Tune:** "A Wearin' of the Green."

Now Waldo, dear, and did you hear,  
The news that's goin' 'round,  
How the natives all have prospered,  
Since the city took their ground?  
When we first came to this country,  
They were poor as poor could be,  
But since the city's paid them  
They're as grand as you could see.  
Oh, to see them as they're ridin'  
In their automobile cars,  
With their silks and with their satins,  
And their big five cent cigars.  
Sure they ne'er have been so wealthy,  
Not in their wildest dreams,  
Since that big New York City,  
Took to dammin' up the stream.

Now Waldo dear, and listen here,  
I'll tell you one thing more.  
In Schoharie up near Prattsville,  
There are natives who are poor,  
And their eyes are filled with envy,

And their heads are filled with schemes,  
To get old New York workin'  
And a dammin' up their streams.  
And while I'm hear a tellin'  
Let *me* whisper *soft and low*,  
There are others who are wishin'  
That it soon will be a go.  
Now just look around you Waldo,  
And beneath *the* bright lights gleam,  
You'll see the very boys who would be  
Dammin' up the *stream*.

Here's a welcome to you engineers  
Who come from "Down the Line,"  
To see the waters startin'  
On their climb up to flow line.  
We boys up here have done our best  
To make a first-class job;  
And your praises as we've shown you 'round,  
Sure make our proud hearts throb.  
But there's something I've been thinkin',  
And I'll tell it now to you,  
Widout drawin's from Headquarters  
Sure we'd not know what to do,  
And unless you'd built the aqueduct,  
And you conceived the scheme,  
New York would be no wetter  
For our dammin' up the stream.

## 9. While the Old Esopus Flows.

**Air: "Where the River Shannon Flows."**

And it's now we're all a' thinkin'  
Of a toast we'll be a drinkin'  
To the work at old Ashokan,  
Where be built the reservoir.  
For eight years we've been together,  
And we're all birds of a feather  
When we gather for a dinner  
And *to* spell it out once more.

Chorus:

Soon our reservoir 'll be finished,  
Where the old Esopus flows,  
And our squad will be diminished,  
Where we'll go, nobody knows.  
But the memory of the years past,  
In our minds and hearts we'll hold fast,  
Friendships formed here we will make last,  
While the old Esopus flows.

We have spent a good long time here,  
We have worked from Dam to Waste Weir,  
We have labored thro' each short year,  
Now there won't be many more.  
Soon the time will come when we'll part,  
Somewhere else we'll make a fresh start,  
There's regret in every man's heart,  
When we leave the reservoir.

(Chorus as before.)

## 10. Far, Far Away.

**Air: "Around Her Neck."**

We dammed the creek,  
And built a wall of concrete,  
We built a big gate chamber,  
And made a fine Spillway.  
And when we ask  
J. Waldo why we did it,  
He said, 'twas for the City  
That was far, far away.

Chorus:

Far away, far away,  
And he said, 'twas for the City,  
That was far, far away.

*Behind* the dam,  
We're storing up some water,  
Which comes down from September  
Until the month of May.  
And when they ask  
The reason why we store it,  
We say it's for the City,  
Which is far, far away.

Chorus:

Far away, far away,  
And we say it's for the City,  
Which is far, far away.

## 11. At the Head of the Big Pipe Line.

**Air:** "Trail of the Lonesome Pine."

In the valley of Esopus here we have built a dam,  
There it stands holding back the stream for the  
lake of Ashokan.  
The gate is closed and very, very soon 'twill be-  
gin to fill,  
For the autumn rains will swell every creek and  
kill.

Chorus:

In the tree clad mountains of the Catskills,  
At the head of the big pipe line,  
In the late spring time the water'll climb,  
Way up the face of our dam so fine.  
Oh, Chief, let us tell it to you,

That the work will stand steadfast and true,  
In the tree clad mountains of the Catskills,  
At the head of the big pipe line.

We can hear the tinkling water falls far among  
the hills,  
And the creek fed so noisily by the little mountain  
rills.  
They seem to say, "Hello, you reservoir, we'll come  
down some day,  
For we know the city by the sea wants us right  
away."

Chorus

## 12. Where We're Damming Up the Stream.

**Air: Chorus, "Down in Dear Old New Orleans."**

Working by the daylight, it's a fine sight,  
When morning shifts begin,  
Where derricks all are lifting and swinging  
Buckets to the concrete forms and then  
You'll see them dumping and spading  
In the walls of concrete,  
In the morning when it's daylight,  
Where we're damming up the stream.

Working by the search light on the big dike,  
A summer's night so fair,  
Where dinkies all are puffin' and pushin'  
Dump cars to the earthen bank from where  
You'll hear them shoveling and loading  
In the pits of gravel.  
In the evening by the search light,  
Where we're damming up the stream.

**13. Ode to Bishop's Falls.**

**Air:** Chorus of "*Good Bye, Rose.*"

Good bye, Falls, Esopus water's rising,  
No more shall your roarings reach our ears.  
Your wild calls and beauty we've been prizing,  
We'll admire you ne'er again.  
So good bye, Falls.

**14. Jump for the Shore, *Waldo.***

**Air:** Chorus, "**Pull for the Shore.**"

Jump for the shore, Waldo,  
Jump for the shore.  
Heed not the roaring creek,  
You've seen it before.  
Now the old stream bed, Waldo  
We'll ne'er see more,  
Shut the dammed old conduit tight,  
*And* Jump for the shore.

**15. This Old Job of Mine.**

**Air:** "**That Old Girl of Mine.**" Chorus.

Oh, today we're here to see the conduit closing,  
In that way to stay forever,  
On our laurels won we'll be reposing,  
For work we will pine.  
Now crowd, let's sing it loud,  
For the sake of auld Lang Syne,  
For the day's not far away that will be closing  
This old job of mine.

Soon the time will come when all the boys are  
leaving,  
J. Waldo we want to tell you,  
'Twill be hard to find a Chief so pleasing  
In **any other** clime.  
Up here year after year  
We have staid a good long time,  
And I bet I'll ne'er forget the day of leaving  
This old job of mine.

## 16. Flooding the Basin.

**Air: "Marching Through Georgia."**

Close the six foot conduit Chief,  
We'll bottle up the creek.  
Let Esopus water's rise,  
And higher levels seek.  
The U. & D. is all torn up,  
The clearing is complete,  
And we are flooding the basin.

Chorus:

And soon, and soon, we'll drown old Shokan town,  
And then, and then, we'll send the water down,  
For we'll fill the Aqueduct,  
'Ere one more year comes roun',  
Now we are flooding the basin.

## 17. Boating on the Basin.

**Air: "Floating Down the River."**

This day in September we will all remember,  
In the Catskills by the big dam site;

Here we gather now the job's completing,  
Up the banks the water slow is creeping:  
And the band is playing,  
*And* we all are saying,  
As each fellow takes a glass in hand:  
We're goin', we're goin',  
Boatin' on *the* basin, boatin' on the basin,  
'Cause we're flooding now at Ashokan.

## 18. There's Water in the Dam.

**Tune:** "There's Music in the Air."

There's water in the dam,  
Now that the iron gate is sealed.  
The giant wall stands firm,  
With all its mighty strength revealed.  
Higher now does rise the tide  
Up Esopus valley's side.  
Dare we did and dare we can,  
For the water in the dam.

There's water in *the dam*  
That will quench old New York's thirst.  
From Brown's to Kensico  
Is the road it travels first;  
Chambers, tunnels, siphons, all  
Filling each from wall to wall.  
Dare we did and dare we can  
For the water in the dam.

There's water in the dam,  
Who said that this job was done?  
For yet Schoharie calls us  
And Rondout bids us come.  
Conservation is the word  
That we love like coo-coo bird.  
Dare we did and dare we can  
For the water in the dam.

There's water in the dam,  
Soon upon its way to veer.  
Ere that time does come  
Let us give hearty cheer.  
Here's to Strauss and Galvin, too,  
Here's to Chadwick--then a few,  
For Alfred, George and Merritt, oh!  
Spell it out *for J. Waldo.*

## 19. Flow, Flow, Flow.

**Tune: "Row, Row, Row."**

Then it will flow, flow, flow,  
A mighty river it will flow, flow, flow,  
A way we'll give her  
Thro' the forest, field and town,  
Valleys up and down  
Deep under the ground and over ground  
Thro' mountains and around  
We'll make it go, go, go,  
Beneath the Hudson to the mighty Kensico  
From that limitless store,  
Ashokan Reservoir,  
You'll see it flow, flow, flow.

## 20. When the Catskill Waters Rise in Ashokan.

**Tune: "When the Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves  
for Alabam'."**

When the Catskill waters rise in Ashokan,  
There'll be some there--a lake for fair.  
Croton tastes like a rusty old tomato can  
And Sun-Ray costs a dollar.  
Hear them holler: Ashokan! Ashokan!

That's where you store your rain  
That slacks my thirst and pain  
And makes me young again,  
Where the Biggest Dam-am  
Should there be one good dry spell,  
Then you'll hear New Yorkers yell:  
Water Board! Water Board!  
Water Board and Ashokan!

## 21. What's That Noise.

**Air:** "Good Bye, Boys." **Chorus.**

What's that noise?  
I think it's the old creek a bawling  
As it tries  
To give our big dam a good mauling.  
No more flooding out the Kingston flats,  
No more going on its spring time bats,  
We'll hold it fast until  
The lake begins to fill  
So that's the noise.

## 22. Old New York Needs You.

**Air:** "That's how I Need You." **Chorus.**

Like the Board needs J. Waldo,  
Like the Rondout needs a dam,  
Like Manhattan needs a tunnel,  
Like a project needs a plan,  
Like the engineers need money,  
Like we all need work to do,  
Oh, you Catskill Mountain water  
Old New York needs you.

**23. Ashokan, We Greet Thee.**  
**Air: "O Come All Ye Faithful."**

Ashokan, we greet thee,  
Mighty lake of water  
All hail to the Catskill Reservoir,  
Built for the future  
Of old New York City.  
All hail to our Ashokan,  
All hail to our Ashokan,  
All hail to our Ashokan Reservoir.

**24. When it's Conduit Closing Time on  
Contract 3.**

**Air: Chorus of "When it's Apple Blossom Time  
in Normandie."**

Now it's conduit closing time on Contract 3,  
And you can see I want to be  
In that old Esopus gorge with you, George G.,  
When it's conduit closing time on Contract 3.  
The gate drops in to stay,  
In this state the gate decides the fate  
Of Esopus for aye.

**25. The Chief**

**Air: "Our Director." Chorus.**

Cheer the Chief once more, boys,  
Chief, here's to you.  
Now all *together*,  
For the job's most through,

*Safe* the dam of concrete,  
Strong in its might.  
Three cheers for Waldo,  
*For he's* all right

26.      B. W. S. Boating Song.

Old Noah built himself an ark,  
The dear old Christian soul,  
Put all his folks aboard and left  
His neighbors in a hole.  
When Noah pushed out in the stream,  
With all his kith and kin,  
The neighbors stood upon the bank  
And *merrily said to him:*

Chorus:

Go to hell then,  
Go to hell then,  
**Go** to hell then, now,  
With your damned old scow,  
For it ain't goin' to rain anyhow, anyhow,  
It ain't goin' to rain anyhow.

Old Noah dropped upon his knees,  
And prayed that they would drown,  
That the Lord in his almighty wrath  
Would destroy the whole damned town.  
The animals kicked up a row  
That would have raised your hair  
But still was wafted on the breeze  
This most ungodly air:

Chorus (same as first.)

For forty days and forty nights  
The rain came down like hell,  
The water stood 'steen thousand feet

Over every hill and dell;  
Old Noah, walking round the ark,  
Looked through a window pane,--said,  
"Now, where are those poor damn fools  
Who said it wouldn't rain?"

Chorus:

Gone to hell now,  
Gone to hell now,  
Gone to hell, I vow,  
While we right now are  
Floating round on the damned old scow,  
Floating round on the damned old scow.

## 27. Good Night, J. Waldo.

Air. "Starlight."

Good night, J. Waldo, Chief Engineer,  
We've had a time that we'll long hold dear.  
And while we're working, toil will seem light,  
As we recall our good time tonight

