

Fragment of wooden water supply pipe from Kraków's rurmus

AUTHOR

TIME AND PLACE OF CREATION

Place:
, Poland



TECHNICAL DATA

Dimensions:
height: 230 mm, width: 300 mm, length: 400 mm

OTHER

MIM 1369/IV/31

KEYWORDS

woda, higiena, hydrotechnika, Kraków

DESCRIPTION

The piece of wooden pipe presented here was used in a historic water supply line in Kraków. It is a pine trunk drilled internally using simple tools. The first hydroengineering solutions that can be considered to be a water supply network were built in Kraków in the 14th century. Before that, city dwellers had to draw water from public, municipal, or private wells, or use the services of water carriers who delivered water in tanks. Kraków's water supply came from water received through a rurmus (a machine supplying water at the appropriate pressure) from a branch of the Rudawa river. The rurmus operated as follows: the water wheel took the energy to move from the river flow and transferred water to a tank placed at a height, the purpose of which was to ensure adequate pressure in pipes supplying the city with water. Not only was the water supply system a major convenience for Kraków's inhabitants, but also, as its construction was expensive, it was a hallmark of the city's wealth. Unfortunately, the technical condition of the system deteriorated over time and the city's coffers lacked the funds for its overhaul. Kraków's first water pipeline was destroyed by the Swedes in 1655. The destruction of the rurmus by the raiders was

intended to deprive the defending town of access to water. After that, Kraków remained without a municipal water supply system until the early 20th century. The hygienic and sanitary condition of the city deteriorated significantly, which had a major impact on the inhabitants' health and life expectancy. On 14 February 1901, a modern water supply network was commissioned with a water intake at Bielany. Continually expanded and modernised, the network remains in use up until today. The piece of wooden pipe from Kraków's water supply system presented here was found during the earthworks of the Main Market Square redesign. References: R. Wierzbicki, Wodociągi Krakowa, Kraków 2011, book available in the Repository of the Kraków Technical University at: <https://suw.biblos.pk.edu.pl/viewResource&mId=444027> (Accessed: 9.05.2021).