Water in Bornova and Edward Whittall's Garden

The Bornova Water Commission, known in French as the Commission des Eaux de Bournabat, was established in 1851 by property owners in Bornova to distribute water to its members.

With reservoirs built on the Bornova Stream and infrastructure extending as far as İkiz Göl, one of the Commission's aims was to ensure an uninterrupted water supply, even during the dry summer months.

The Commission sold shares, measured in "masura" units, supplying the water through pipes of corresponding diameters. In the densely populated central neighbourhoods, water distribution towers were installed in the squares for communal use.

As municipal administration expanded in scope and budget, new infrastructure that would eventually become part of İZSU caused almost all traces of the old water system to disappear.



COMMISSION DES EAUX DE BOURNABAT

COMMISSION DES EAUX DE BOURNABAT

N° 435 MASSOURS 1½

CERTIFICAT DE PROPRIÉTÉ D'EAU

La **Commission des Eaux de Bournabat** certifie que, sous les conditions et obligations imposées par ses Règlements, M. Monsieur Edm. Giraud est enregistré dans ses Livres, suivant Transfert N° 437 comme Propriétaire de Un et Demi Massours N° 105/0.5 . 103/1 des **Eaux Courantes** dont elle a la gestion.

Le présent Certificat est émis et délivré en vertu et sur la base des Droits concédés à la dite Commission.

Le Titulaire a remis — Titres d'origine (1863 et antérieurs) à — Massours, N° pour la garde et la conservation collectives réglementaires.

Délivré à Bournabat sous le Sceau de la Commission le Seize août mil neuf cent vingt (1920.)

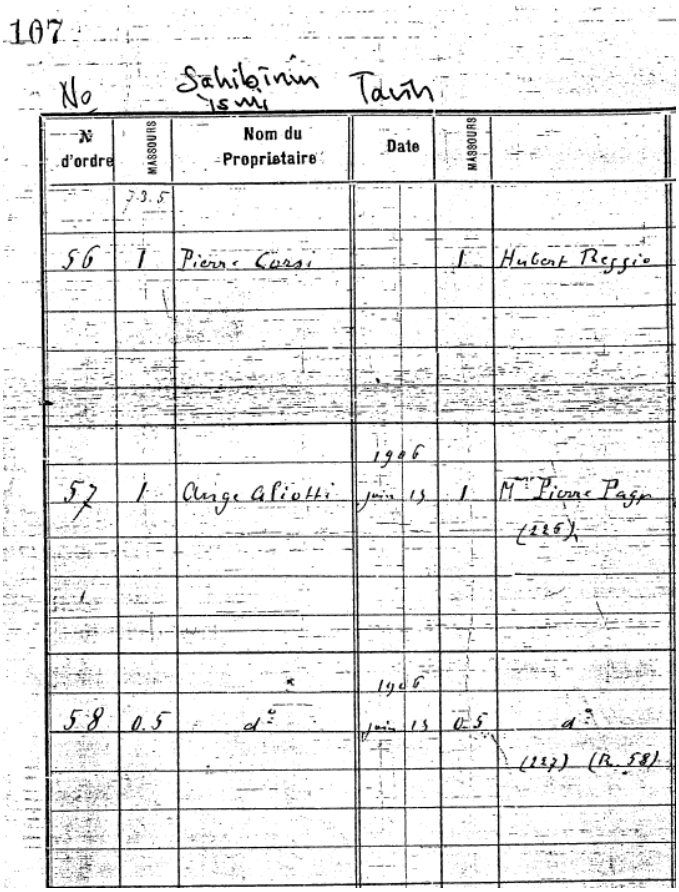
LA COMMISSION DES EAUX DE BOURNABAT

H.O. Whittall

Edw. D. Whittall

Nota. — Ce Certificat est Nominatif et ne peut être transféré.

Bornova Water Commission Agreement for One and a Half Masura of Water



107

No Sahibinin Tarih

N° d'ordre	MASSOURS	Nom du Propriétaire	Date	MASSOURS	
	73.5				
56	1	Pierre Corsi		1	Hubert Rossio
			1906		
57	1	Ange Aliotti	juin 15	1	Mme Pierre Pago (226)
			1906		
58	0.5	d°	juin 15	0.5	d° (227) (B. 58)

Extract from the Commission's Membership Register, Salvaged from the Municipal Archives



Commission Stamp Showing the Founding Year of 1851



Water Distribution Tower in the Masgana Square - 1920

At the time he purchased his house and garden, now at No. 2 Gençlik Caddesi, Edward Whittall (1851–1917) received five masura of water from the Commission, on whose board he also served.

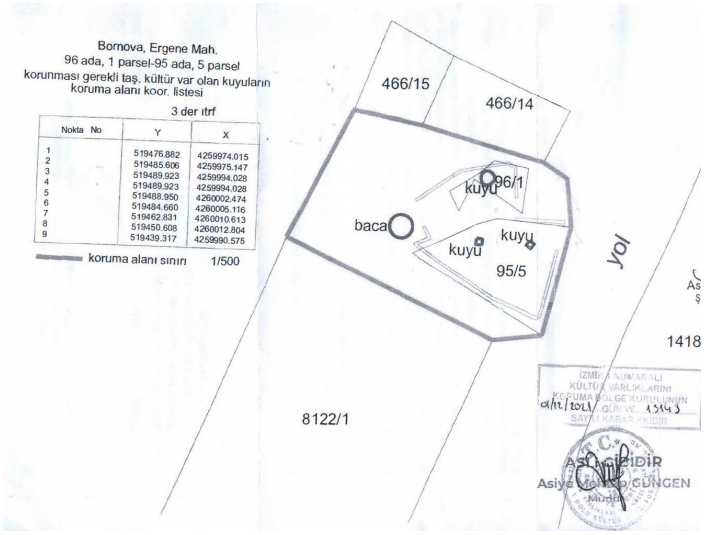
In addition to the water supplied by the Commission, Whittall had a private water supply system, known as the “Paterson Water”, which also served the garden. This remains the only historic water supply in Bornova to have survived in working order.

Gravity fed from three wells on plots 95/5 and 96/1 in the Havuzbaşı neighbourhood, water flows 1.5 kilometers down to the garden through four and three inch diameter cast-iron pipes.

Although the pipes have been repeatedly damaged during infrastructure works linked to Bornova’s rapid development since the 1970s, efforts have always been made to protect them; eventually securing their listing as historic monuments. (3330, 19.06.1987 and 660, 05.11.1999)



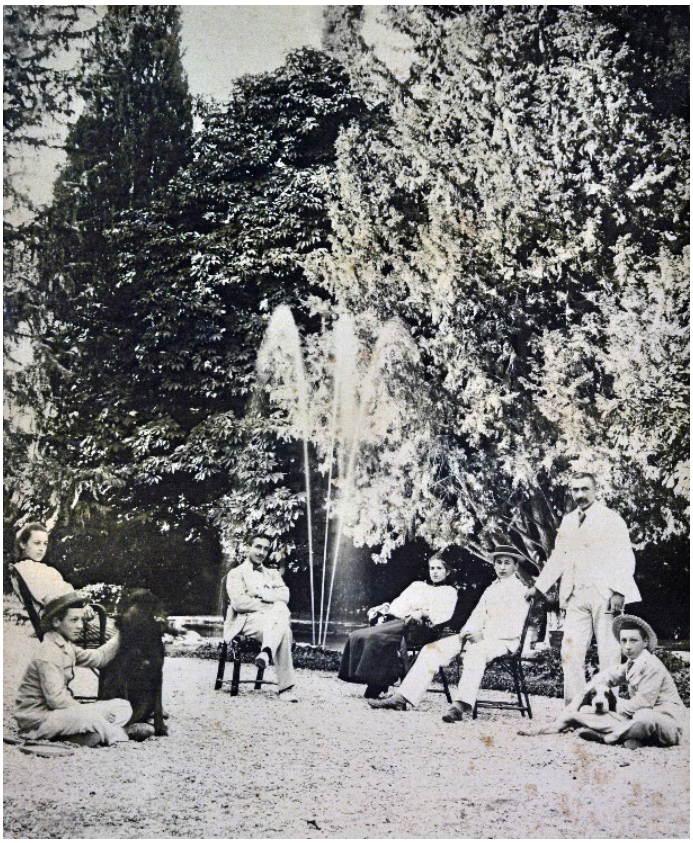
Water Reservoirs in the Havuzbaşı Neighbourhood – 1924



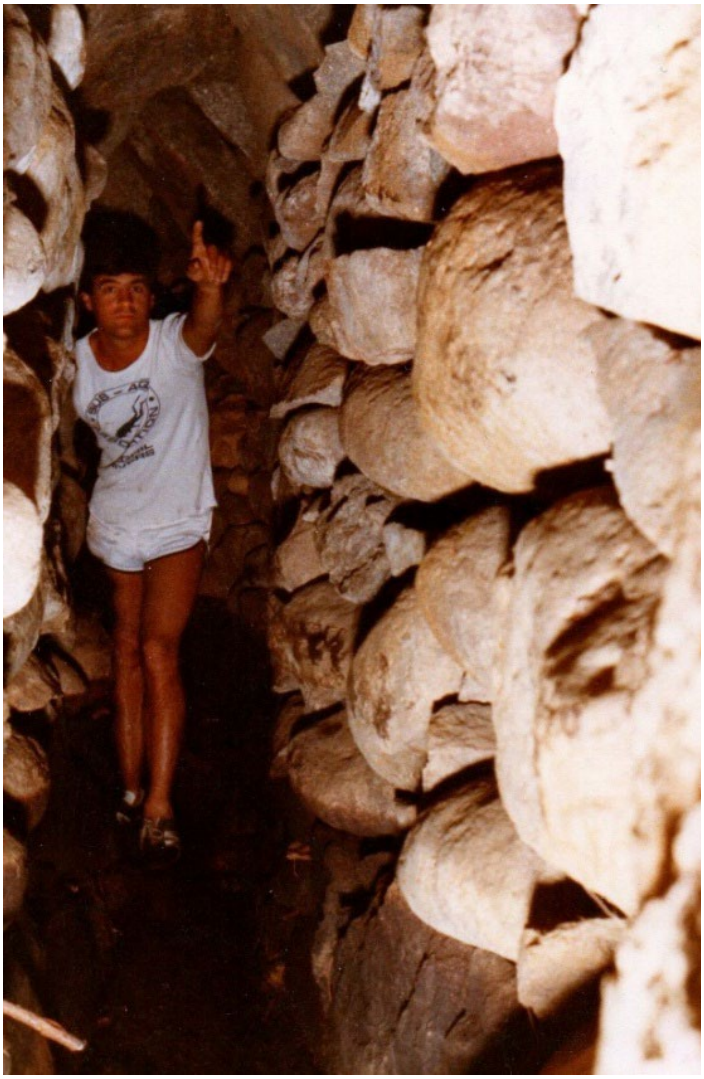
Registration Map of the Land Containing the Wells



Plan Showing the Pipeline and Various Points of Damage



Edward Whittall (standing) with His Family, in Front of the Fountain – c.1890



Brian Giraud Inspecting the Tunnels Connecting the Wells in the Havuzbaşı Neighbourhood – c. 1980

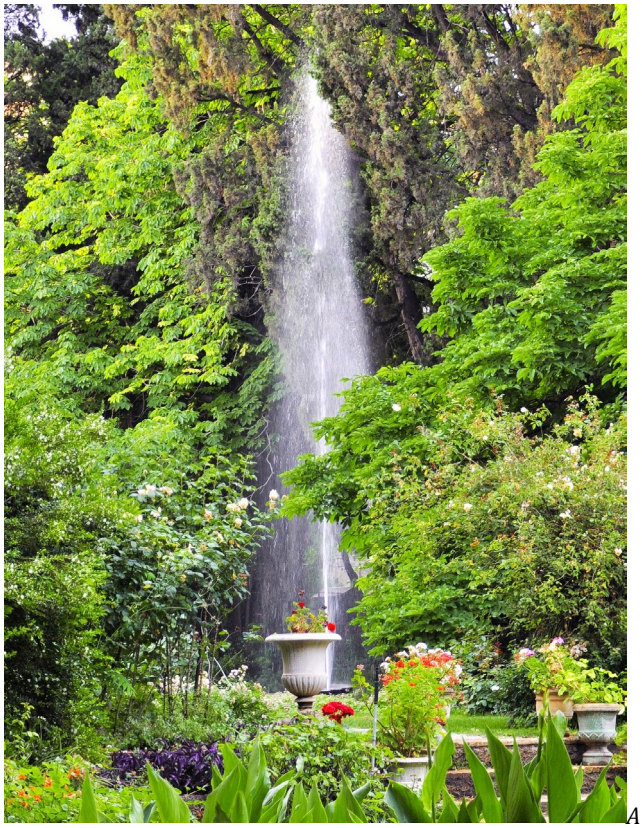
Representing an important part of Bornova's heritage, this water system is vital to the long-term survival of Edward Whittall's Garden, which continues to serve as a rare oasis amid the city's much diminished green spaces.

At a time when the climate crisis is deepening and water scarcity has become an inescapable fact of daily life, protecting even the smallest water sources should be a primary responsibility.

Preserving this historic resource for the future depends on the continued support of the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality and İZSU and the staff concerned remaining steadfast in the interest and support they have shown to date.

Mark Giraud
Rev. 04.11.2026

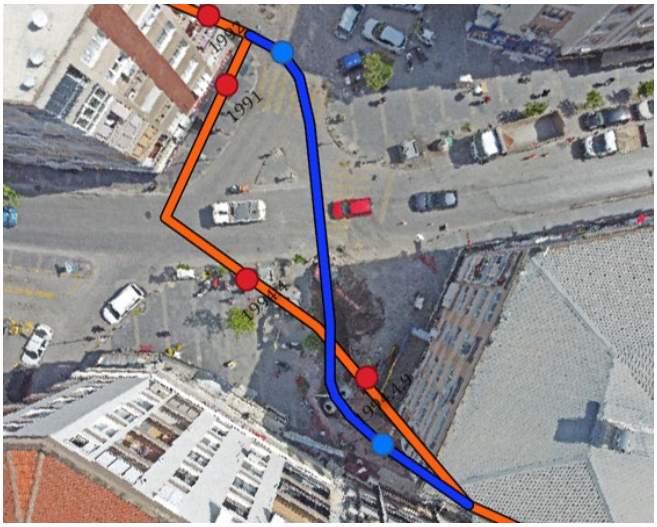
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Gençlik Caddesi No: 2, Bornova İzmir



Recent View of Edward Whittall's Garden



The Fountain, which ran dry following sewer excavations in 2025 Later restored with support from İZSU and its contractor



Newly installed bypass pipe (blue), installed following total loss of the original pipe (orange) during sewer construction