

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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RESOLVES

OF THE

SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

PASSED AT THE SESSION

WHICH COMMENCED ON THE THIRD DAY OF JANUARY, AND ENDED
ON THE TWENTY-SIXTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, ONE THOUSAND
EIGHT HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVEN.

Published agreeably to the Resolve of the 20th June, 1820,

FORTLAND.

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1827.

STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 25, 1827.

The Committee to whom was referred so much of the Governor's communication as relates to opening a road from the sources of the Kennebec River to the British Provinces of Canada, and also sundry Petitions and Memorials in relation to that subject, have had the same under consideration, and ask leave to REPORT :—

That the object to which the favorable attention of the Legislature is solicited, has for a long period been regarded worthy of public patronage by the government of Massachusetts, and of this State. By virtue of a Resolve passed by the Legislature of Massachusetts, in June 1817, the Commissioners for the sale and settlement of the Public Lands, caused a road to be surveyed during the same year, from the north line of the Bingham Purchase, in the County of Somerset, to the Boundary line between this State and Canada, in a direction toward the city of Quebec. The sum of five thousand dollars appropriated by the same Resolve, was soon after expended under the direction of the Commissioners, in opening the road which had been thus surveyed. Little more however was accomplished at that time, than cutting down the trees and smaller growth, and the erection of a substantial bridge across Moose River. Since that period, small appropriations have at different times been made by this State, to promote the accomplishment of the work ; the amount of which has not been sufficient to be productive of any essential benefit. The road yet remains unfinished, and although it has been occasionally used by drovers, who have found a favorable market in the British Provinces for horses and cattle, it is wholly impassable for carriages ; and the benefits anticipated from its establishment, have been but in small degree realized. If sufficient aid be not given to complete it in a durable manner, the expenditures that have already been made, will be of little if any benefit to the community, and the liberal designs of former Legislatures frustrated. Passing over a territory chiefly owned by the States of Massachusetts and Maine, it is obvious that the work cannot be accomplished, but at the expense of these States ; and it therefore becomes a question, worthy the serious consideration of the Legislature, whether adequate funds shall now be appropriated to ensure the completion of an object, the importance of which has never been doubted, or whether it shall be abandoned, to become the work of a future generation, as beyond the ability, the resources and the energies of the present.

The distance from Bingham's Purchase to the Canada line, over which the road is to be finished, is about twenty-three miles, passing over a township of land owned by Massachusetts, another by this State, and one other by the Sandy Bay Company, and over a small tract, still owned by Maine and Massachusetts in common. It is understood that the Sandy Bay Company are under obligation to make the road over their territory, as soon as it shall be completed by the States over the land owned by them. That Massachusetts will effectually aid in the completion of a great and valuable work, which had its origin in her liberal councils, we have unyielding confidence, as well from the interest which she has to be promoted by it, as from the generous support which she has uniformly accorded to every measure, having for its object the internal improvement of the country. With the assistance which may confidently be anticipated from these sources, the sum requisite to be appropriated by this State will be deemed small in comparison with the important benefits which must attend its completion. Of these benefits, a brief notice only can be necessary. That the sale and settlement of the Public Lands in the vicinity of the road, would be among its consequences, it is not difficult to anticipate. Possessed of so large a domain of uncultivated territory, a wise government will neglect no opportunity to spread over it a hardy and intelligent population, who will contribute to bear its burdens, and increase its strength. Of the value of such a population, the Legislature are duly sensible:

Its benefits would also be visible among the agricultural portion of the State, by presenting new markets for their productions. Under all the embarrassments which at present exist, a lucrative intercourse is nevertheless carried on between the frontier settlements and the British Provinces, confined, however, solely to live animals. If the road were made passable for carriages, it is not to be doubted that this intercourse would be extended to all other commodities which a grazing and agricultural country produces. The consequence would be an increased value of land, new springs and motives to industry, and the settlement of territory that is now a wilderness; consequences deeply important to the prosperity and wealth of a State. During the winter, the British Provinces would afford sure markets for large quantities of fish; and the intercourse of this description would be, in no small degree, beneficial to many of our citizens, and thereby to the State at large. It is well known that large numbers of persons from the southern and middle States, annually travel for pleasure or business, by the way of the

Lakes and the St. Lawrence to the City of Quebec, and who return by the same route, because no alternative is offered to their choice. When it is considered that the distance from Boston to Quebec through this State, is less by near one hundred miles, than any other existing route, it is reasonable to conclude, that a portion, and perhaps a considerable portion of this travel, would pass in this direction, if the roads are rendered safe and convenient.

The beautiful and interesting features of the country, which, in some instances, rise to scenes of grandeur and sublimity, would render it a desirable excursion to those who travel from motives of pleasure and curiosity ; while to others who journey on business, the shorter distance would give it the decided preference. In various ways, beneficial consequences attend the frequency of travel through a country ; the chief of which is, that its resources, its fertility and its advantages become known, and its character proportionally elevated abroad. It is understood that the British Provincial Government have manifested a strong desire to open a communication through this avenue with the United States ; and have accordingly completed a good road from the Boundary line, in continuation of that established in this State, to their settlements on the Chaudiere River. Of so much importance, even at the present time, is the limited intercourse existing, regarded by them, that preparatious have been made to keep the road open and passable during the present winter, to its junction with that on the American side. Exertions have also been made by individuals in the County of Somerset, to accomplish the same object in this State. There is already a road established, and in considerable degree completed, through the Bingham Purchase, in the County of Somerset, in continuation of the State road, to the flourishing villages, and through the fertile country bordering upon the Kennebec River. This road, the Proprietors of that Territory are under obligation to make ; and unless sufficient appropriations be made by the State, to accomplish the object had in view by the original Resolve of Massachusetts, the roads already established, and in some measure completed through the adjacent county, will be in a great degree useless. To a State possessed of abundant resources, of sites and territory unoccupied, and wilderness that may be made to flourish and bear the cheering marks of industry and wealth, its duty to the present and succeeding generations cannot be doubtful.

Impressed with these views, the committee recommend that a sum of money be appropriated, sufficient to complete the road, so far as it passes over the land of this State, and one

half of that owned by the two States jointly, and by the Sandy Bay Company, agreeably to a Resolve, which is herewith submitted. All which is respectfully submitted.

GEO. EVANS, *Per Order.*

CHAPTER XIX.

Resolve relative to the State Road north of the Bingham Purchase.

Resolved, That the Governor, with advice of Council, is authorized to appoint one or more Agents, to examine the road from the north line of the Bingham Purchase, in the county of Somerset, to the line of this State, laid out by virtue of a Resolve of the Legislature of Massachusetts, passed the twelfth June, one thousand eight hundred and seventeen; and to make such alterations therein, as may be beneficial; to mark the line of the road conspicuously on trees, or otherwise; and to make return of his or their doings in writing to the Governor and Council.

Resolved, That the Governor, with advice of Council, is authorized to appoint one or more Agents, to cause to be made so much of said road, as passes over land belonging to this State, and one half of so much of said road as passes over land belonging to this State and Massachusetts jointly, safe and convenient for travellers, with their horses, carts, sleighs and carriages: *Provided*, That the Legislature of Massachusetts will give to the Governor and Council assurance, to their satisfaction, that the Commonwealth will make, in like manner, that portion of said road, which passes over land belonging to that State; and the one half of that part of said road which passes over land belonging to this State and Massachusetts jointly. And it shall be the duty of said Agent or Agents to give public notice, by publishing in the Somerset Journal, and in one paper, at least, published in the County of Kennebec, four weeks successively, of the time, previous to which they will receive written and sealed proposals for making the whole or any part of such road, and the place where they will at such time meet to consider the same; and thereupon the said Agent or Agents shall contract with such person or persons as the interest of the State shall direct, to make the said road.

Resolved, That a township of land of six miles square, to be assigned and laid out from any of the unappropriated lands belonging to this State, (subject to the reservation contained in the eighth section of an Act to promote the sale and settlement of Public Lands, passed the twenty fifth day of February, one thousand eight hundred and twenty four,) to be selected within one year by the Agent or Agents to be appointed under this Resolve ; or so much thereof as may be necessary, be, and the same is hereby appropriated, to carry into full effect the provisions of the foregoing Resolve ; and a sum not exceeding five thousand dollars of the proceeds of the sale of said land is appropriated for that purpose. And the Agent or Agents appointed under this Resolve, may sell said township, in whole or in parts, as they may deem best, at public auction, after giving, at least, sixty days notice of the time and place of sale, by advertising the same in all the newspapers printed in the counties of Cumberland, Kennebec, Somerset, and Penobscot, upon such credit as may be best calculated to give effect to this Resolve : And such Agent or Agents shall be held liable for the proceeds of the sale of said land to be accounted for, to the Governor and Council : And if after making the part of the road contemplated by this Resolve, or expending five thousand dollars thereon, any balance of said proceeds shall remain, they shall pay the same into the Treasury of this State.

Resolved, That upon the Agent or Agents to be appointed under this Resolve, filing with the Land Agent of this State, a certificate stating to whom said township of land shall have been sold, pursuant to the provisions of the foregoing Resolve, and of the price at which it was sold, the Land Agent of this State is authorized and directed to make a deed thereof to the purchaser or purchasers of said township.

Resolved, That the Governor and Council are authorized to examine the contracts made, and the accounts rendered by said Agent or Agents, and to determine whether the same are correct and sufficiently vouched ; and just and reasonable in amount.

Resolved, That the Governor be requested to transmit a copy of this Resolve, to the Governor of Massachusetts, inviting the co-operation of that State to carry into effect the object herein contemplated.

[*Approved by the Governor, February 12, 1827.*]