

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1850.

Augusta:

WILLIAM T. JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1850.

THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE.

No. 17.]

[HOUSE.

PETITION.

To the honorable the senate and house of representatives of the State of Maine, in session at Augusta, A. D. 1850 :

THE undersigned, citizens of Maine, respectfully request, your honorable body, to cause to be surveyed and ascertained, the most practicable route for a railway from the city of Bangor, to the eastern boundary of the state, in the general direction of the city of St. John, New Brunswick, and to take such further action in the premises as will tend to favor the construction of a railroad from the city of Bangor, to some good harbor on the eastern shore of Nova Scotia, or Cape Breton, best fitted to become the entreport and terminus for the most direct line of trans-atlantic navigation.

From the easternmost point of Nova Scotia, Cape Canso, in latitude $45^{\circ} 17'$ north, and in longitude $61^{\circ} 3'$ west, to Galway Bay in Ireland, in latitude $53^{\circ} 15'$ north, and in longitude $9^{\circ} 13'$ west, the distance is about 2,000 miles. Assuming a speed of 17 miles an hour, in steam vessels, the atlantic ocean can be crossed between these points, in *five days'* time.

The nearest good harbor to Cape Canso, Whitehaven, in latitude $45^{\circ} 10'$ north, longitude $61^{\circ} 10'$ west, according to the authority of admiral Owen, in a report on the subject made to Sir John Harvey, September 5th, 1846, "is a most splendid and commodi-

ous port, at the nearest available point of North America to Ireland, its natural facilities greatly exceeding those of Halifax or any other point on the coast." Galway harbor is one of the finest in the world, having great advantages over that of Bristol or Liverpool.

The gut of Canso could probably be passed by a bridge, but upon this point there is at present no satisfactory information. By means of a ferry across the gut of Canso, the line could be extended to Louisburg harbor in Cape Breton, still further east, to a point less than 2000 miles distant from Galway bay, as will appear by the accompanying map or plan.

From Galway to Dublin, a line of railway is nearly completed across Ireland, and is in actual operation from Dublin to Mullingar a distance of 50 miles. From Dublin the distance of 63 miles across the Irish channel to Holyhead, is passed with steam packets at the rate of 18 miles an hour, to which place the Chester and Holyhead railway is already finished, connecting with Liverpool and London—crossing the Menai Straits by the BRITANNIA TUBULAR BRIDGE, which was opened for traffic on the 18th of March, 1850.

A speed of 17 miles an hour by ocean steamers, will reduce the passage between the continents of Europe and America to six days, and from New York to Liverpool or London the time required, will not much exceed that amount if railways are employed to the extent proposed.

The route of the steam ships from Liverpool to New York passes near to Cape Race in Newfoundland, Cape Breton and Cape Canso, and thence along the coast of Nova Scotia to Cape Sable, and parallel with the general line of the coast of New Brunswick and Maine. From Cape Canso to New York the distance can be passed in about the length of line by land as by water, and in one third the time.

From New York to Waterville, the railway is already finished, a distance of 410 miles. From Waterville to the city of St. John, the distance would probably be about 200 miles. And from St. John to Whitehaven, less than 250 miles further, making the entire

distance from New York to Whitehaven from 800 to 900 miles in all.

From Whitehaven to the head of the Bay of Fundy, at Sackville, a feasible route for a railway has been ascertained, passing near to Pictou, through the valuable coal districts, along the shore of the gulf of St. Lawrence, and it is believed that the legislature of Nova Scotia would cheerfully engage to construct that part of the line whenever the other portions are secured.

A line of railway from Halifax, passing in the vicinity of Truro, would be easily connected at some favorable point, with the main trunk, and it cannot be doubted that the enterprising citizens of Halifax would engage in its construction. At the present time they are urging the completion of a line from Halifax to Windsor, and a survey of the route has been accomplished.

From the city of St. John to Shediac Bay on the gulf of St. Lawrence, a line has been surveyed for a railway on the general line of the route to Sackville, and Provincial aid proposed to a large amount. The province of New Brunswick has recently appropriated £60,000 currency—\$240,000 to construct that portion of the distance between Shediac Bay and the bend of the Petecodiac river—the head of navigation on the Bay of Fundy. No doubt can be entertained that the Province would extend this line from a point of connexion with the Nova Scotia line, to the city of St. John, and it is believed that the local business of the country between the city of St. John and Whitehaven or Canso, would at the present time, pay a tolerable remuneration to the stockholders.

From the city of St. John to Bangor, it is regarded as certain that a line tolerably direct, can be found, without encountering serious obstacles. The necessary information on this point has never been ascertained, and it is for the purpose of asking that this service may be speedily accomplished, that we approach your honorable body.

From Bangor to Waterville, private enterprise has already demonstrated the fact, that either one of several cheap and practicable routes can be adopted.

The only grant asked of the legislature, or that will be necessary to obtain, is an appropriation sufficient to secure the completion of the remaining link in the line of surveys, and at a suitable time the necessary grant of a charter to carry the work forward—which from the progress of events, must soon claim the public attention.

The citizens of Maine are generally aware of the importance of this question, to the best interests of the state, but the work is generally regarded as too great for individual enterprise to undertake with our present means. The proper surveys completed, would place before the country, the great advantages of the position of our state for a leading part in the commercial movements of the age. Private enterprise ought not to be so largely taxed, as it must necessarily be without the grant of aid to the proposed survey in whole, or in part by the state, for the purpose of procuring valuable information, equally desired by, or at any rate, of equal importance to all.

Maine, ought not, either, to remain indifferent to the great advantages which may now be brought within her reach by a proper attention to the great movements in ocean steam navigation and commercial affairs.

The most strenuous efforts are now being made to revive the plan of the Quebec and Halifax line, and various projects are now engaging the attention of the British Provinces, with a view to secure in some form or other, the aid of the home Government. This movement is gaining favor in Great Britain.

From Halifax to Quebec, the distance, according to the survey for a line of railroad, by Major Robinson, is 631 miles, and this road is urged upon public attention with a view to draw over it a portion of the western trade and place the Lower Provinces, in the great line of communication between the grain growing regions of this continent and Europe.

Without going into an extended examination of the merits of that project, it seems to us, that it must strike every intelligent mind, that the most natural, cheapest, and best mode of obtaining a communication by railway, between the Lower Provinces, Mon-

treal, and the west, will by found by extending a line of railway, in the direction of Bangor and Waterville, Maine. From Waterville to Montreal, a distance of 300 miles, the entire line is finished, or under contract for completion in 1852—and a branch to Quebec from the line of the Portland and Montreal railway, at Melbourne, may be regarded as secured, within three years from the present time.

The highest importance therefore, attaches to every movement, having reference to the extention of railways east of Bangor, or from the Lower Provinces in the direction of the St. Lawrence river. *One great central line for the whole state and for European communication*, once laid down, into which the various branch lines could enter on either side as required, connected with the line extending to Montreal and Quebec;—a system of railways would be secured, surpassing in value and importance, any that has yet been proposed.

It is not our plan to urge any one to embark hastily in the construction of the proposed line, but to so far present the advantages of this route, for the great ends in view, over any other possible line, as to secure for it, such aid as in the progress of events, its advantages may call forth. If the practicability of the line were properly demonstrated, it is believed that it would command support from the great commercial interests of Great Britain, and the United States. If already built, no one can doubt the value of the undertaking as a mode of profitable investment.

Those who may incline to hesitate in yielding assent to the truth of this assertion, are invited to very carefully review the present condition of affairs.

The United States now embrace a territory of 2,187,490 square miles. If this whole territory was as densely populated as the state of Massachusetts, it would contain a population of over two hundred millions of people.

The same extent of territory in Europe, under similar climate, and with fewer natural advantages, contains a still greater population, while the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland has a

ratio of population to the square mile, more than twice as great as Massachusetts.

The increase of population in the United States, from 1790 to 1800, was at the rate of 35·01 per cent.—from 1800 to 1810, 36·45 per cent.—from 1810 to 1820, 33·35 per cent.—from 1820 to 1830, 33·26 per cent.—from 1830 to 1840, 32·67 per cent.

It is believed that the census of 1850, will show that from 1840 to 1850, the increase has been as great as at any former period of ten years. Causes now at work, tend rather to increase than diminish the ratio of increase. And many now alive, will see this nation numbering *one hundred and fifty millions* of people.

Commercial intercourse between the United States and Europe, has gone on increasing, more rapidly than the population of the country.

In the year 1820, the attempt was first made to establish a line of packet ships to Liverpool, to sail on certain stated days. Almost every one prophesied their failure, though embracing only *two* in number, and of 450 tons burthen. At this time there are lines of regular sailing packets from all our large Atlantic cities, embracing vessels of over 2,000 tons burthen, and reaching hundreds of ships in number.

About fifteen years ago, the scientific world listened with attention to the assertion of the learned doctor Lardner, that it was impossible to navigate the Atlantic ocean by steam. This theory was disproved by the arrival of two steamers, the **SIRIUS** and **GREAT WESTERN**, in New York harbor, one from Liverpool, the other from Bristol, on the twenty-third day of April, 1838—both on the same day. More than *twenty* steamships during the present year will run as regular packets between this country and Europe, while the number of sailing vessels is greater than at any former period. The number of emigrants which arrived in New York, in 1838, was 25,581. In 1849, the number reached 221,779. The number which left the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland for the United States, in 1848, was 188,223; and the whole emigration into this country in that year exceeded 250,000. In

1849, the number of emigrant arrivals reached 325,000; and it is estimated that the number will exceed 400,000 the present year.

Every year gives fresh impulses to the cause of emigration to the United States, and the disturbed condition of all commercial affairs on the continent of Europe, is operating to invite a better class of emigrants than heretofore,—embracing much of the skill and mechanical industry of Switzerland, France and Germany.

The most indifferent observer will admit that the increase of facilities for travel with Europe, must increase far more rapidly for the next ten years, than at any former period. The trade between the United States and Great Britain is rapidly increasing, and at the present moment beyond any former example.

The exports to England, in 1840, were \$24,599,666; in 1848, \$71,852,315.

The imports from England, in 1840, were \$22,755,040; in 1848, \$59,763,502.

Both exports and imports in 1847, exceeding those of 1848; but the extraordinary demand for food occasioned by the famine in Ireland, gave an unusual impulse to trade in 1847.

A route to Europe, which would enable the traveler to see an attractive portion of this continent—the best portion of Ireland, and the most extraordinary work of human skill, the BRITANNIA TABULAR BRIDGE, would of itself invite the pleasure tourist to take this route if no saving of time or expense were secured. But it is confidently asserted, that while, to the man of business the same attractions would be offered by the plan proposed, the expense of a trip to Europe can be largely reduced, while it shall save him much if not all uncertainty, as to the time of his arrival, and some days time for purposes of business.

From New York to Liverpool in the shortest line, is 3,100 miles; the route usually traversed is over 3,300 miles. By taking the railway from New York to Canso or Louisburg, employing the swiftest steam packets from thence to Galway—crossing the Great Midland railway from Galway to Dublin, a distance of about 120 miles, and from thence to Holyhead harbor, a distance of 63 miles,

and from thence to London, by the Chester and Holyhead, and London and Northwestern railways, a distance of 263 miles, the passage from New York to London, occupying about 1,200 miles of railway, and 2,000 miles of steam navigation, may be reduced to seven days time at all events, and possibly to six days within a few years.

This can only be achieved by shortening the sea voyage and dispensing with the vast weight of coal and other superfluous load, now carried. Vessels designed for crossing the ocean with speed, should be relieved of the load not requisite for steadiness and good carriage. Ordinary merchandize will always go more cheaply in sailing vessels. Valuable goods could be transferred to boats of still greater speed, from the ocean terminus, running if necessary to the various Atlantic cities if too bulky to go by the railway. In this way the safest and swiftest passage would be secured.

In a few years, instead of a semi-weekly, a daily arrival may be expected. One hundred *through* passengers a day, each way, by the railroad, would give a profitable business in addition to its local traffic and travel, and the highest price would readily be paid for the carrying of the mails. The British and the American governments would without doubt enter into a perpetual or permanent contract for this service, at rates of compensation representing a capital equal to one-third of the entire cost of the line.

If the proper surveys were now completed and the necessary charters granted for a continuous line from Bangor to Whitehaven, the scheme would offer inducements for the employment of capital unsurpassed by any enterprise of the age.

Looking forward but twenty-five years only, we shall see this government containing *fifty millions* of people. Its great rivers and inland seas—its mineral wealth and inexhaustible soil—within a latitude favorable to health of body and vigor of mind, all conspire to give the fullest development to the spirit of progress, requisite to supply means for the fullest gratification of every want known to the highest civilization.

Under any form of government known to civilized man, the pro-

gress of the race would, under such influences, be rapid and vigorous. When, therefore, an enterprising race in the possession of such physical advantages as this country possesses, are stimulated to exertion by the action of a free government, upon the energies of the whole people, we may confidently expect a higher development in the ideas and institutions of society, and a more practical application of knowledge to the wants and necessities of life.

Maine, from her frontier position and severe climate, has been regarded as the least favorable of all the states of the Union, while it has the power to become the great manufacturing and great ship owning state of the confederacy, if not the *first* in point of commercial importance. Our climate and our geographical position, generally spoken of as our misfortunes, are in fact the great elements of our strength. The increased necessities which our climate imposes upon us, beyond those of a warmer latitude, are far more than compensated by our superior capacity for labor—our greater power of endurance—and our extraordinary fondness for exertion. With a more extended line of sea coast than any other state in the Union, and more good harbors than all the other states together, Maine will present at some future day, along our bays and rivers, a line of cities surpassing those which are now found upon the shores of the English channel or the Baltic sea.

This result will be hastened by attracting into our state, the great stream of European business and travel, where it shall divide into two great channels, one flowing northward into the St. Lawrence valley and the West, the other flowing southward to the great commercial cities of the continent.

Without the fertile soil of the west, or the rich deposits of coal and iron of Pennsylvania, Maine for twenty years past has not kept pace with the ratio of increase of the whole country. From 1820 to 1830, the ratio of her increase was 33·9 per cent., or about the same as that of the whole Union. From 1830 to 1840, the rate of increase was only 26·2 per cent. Notwithstanding the healthfulness of our climate, the extent of our public lands, with all the facilities inviting emigration from the more densely populated

districts of New England, emigration into the state had become nearly stationary, and the tendency of our people to emigrate west, remained unchecked, till the movement was made to construct a line of railway from Portland to Montreal.

The effect of that movement is already apparent upon the character, the enterprise, and the business of the state. A small portion only of the energy which has been applied to that undertaking, will speedily accomplish the end now proposed—favorably affecting that great enterprise and all the leading interests of Maine.

The time is not regarded by most persons as particularly favorable for entering upon new enterprizes. The great interests of Maine, ship building and lumbering, for some time past, have been severely depressed, furnishing less returns even, than the investments in railways.

These in common with all other business interests are destined at times to suffer. Railway property will, however, advance in value with the growth and increase of business in the state, while it will also tend to foster industry and stimulate production in every department of labor, beyond any other mode of investment.

It is in vain to expect to retain the natural increase of our population, without holding out inducements for labor beyond what are offered by the pursuits of agriculture and lumbering: and we have failed so far, to attract to this state the most valuable class of emigrants—those that seek a climate and a soil, similar to that of Germany and Switzerland, which resemble our own. If proper encouragement was held out to them, we might expect the emigrants from the north of Europe to prefer the soil and climate of Maine, to that of the Mississippi valley. Instead of this, we have been, for a series of years, compelled to witness the gradual withdrawal of much of our capital, into enterprises of other states, and the departure from among us of many of the most enterprising men of Maine. Real estate has advanced but moderately in value for the last fifteen years, while the new states have grown up within that brief period, into wealth and importance. Our frontier position, and the want of a proper state pride, and a state policy, have been

pointed out as the principal hindrances to the growth of Maine. The opening of the great avenues already in progress, and proposed, placing Maine in the direct line of the great commercial intercourse of the Globe, will create new relations, in every department of business, and call into exercise such agencies as will soon give to Maine a strength and a position equal to that of any portion of the Union.

The present period seems to us favorable to the proposed movement. An experiment is now making to run steam ships from Galway to Halifax, aided by the great Midland railway company of Ireland. The capital of this company is £2,596,666 sterling, or more than 12,000,000 of dollars. This company has a direct interest to subserve, in inviting the travel between this country and Europe upon its road. The same is true also of the Chester and Holyhead, and the London and Northwestern railway companies. These companies with their various branch lines under one management, embrace nearly one eighth of the entire traffic of the United Kingdom. The London and Northwestern railway company, August 1st, 1849, owned four hundred and seventy-eight and one half miles of road already finished;—built at a cost of £30,617,620 sterling, or \$150,000,000,—and sixty and three fourths miles more in progress, and held leases of over 200 miles more, including the Chester and Holyhead railroad, representing a capital of at least \$200,000,000 of dollars.

Amid all the depressions of railway stocks and business for the last few years in England, the stock of this company has never been sold except above par, and by the recent advices from Europe, was selling at an advance.

The influence of this capital will be brought at once in aid of any line which should bring across Ireland to Dublin the travel of this continent.

The same motive which induced the British government to aid the construction of the Britannia bridge, to obtain the most direct route from London to Ireland, will lead them to favor the plan herein proposed.

Believing, therefore, that the state has only to display to the business community the practicability and advantages of this great route through Maine, to insure at the proper time its completion, we respectfully ask your honorable body to cause the line from Bangor to St. John, to be surveyed at the expense of the state, and such further measures adopted as will give proper encouragement to the undertaking.

JOHN A. POOR,
JOSIAH S. LITTLE,
JAMES B. CAHOON,
JOHN M. WOODS,
CHARLES Q. CLAPP,
FRANCIS O. J. SMITH,
LUTHER JEWETT.

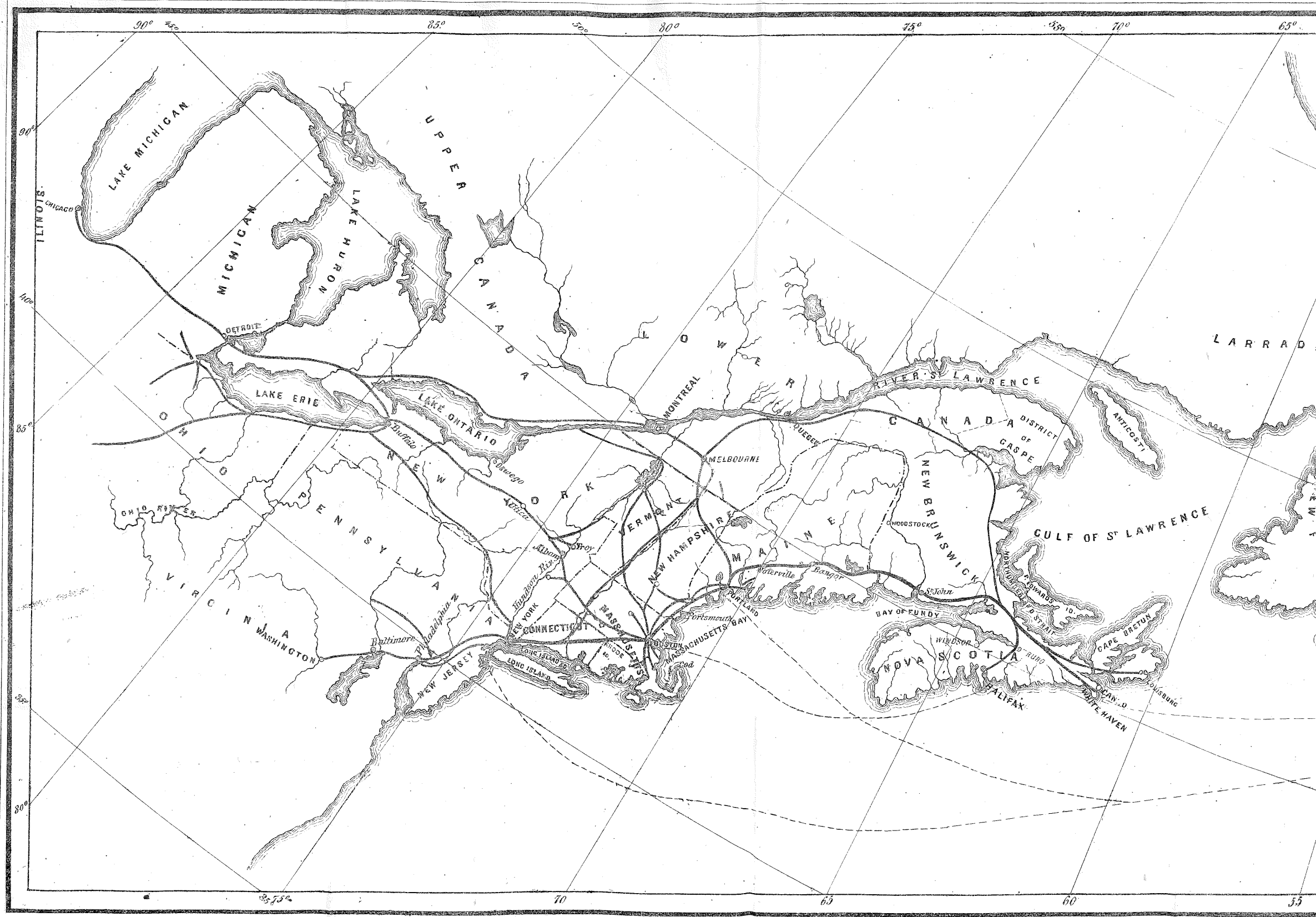
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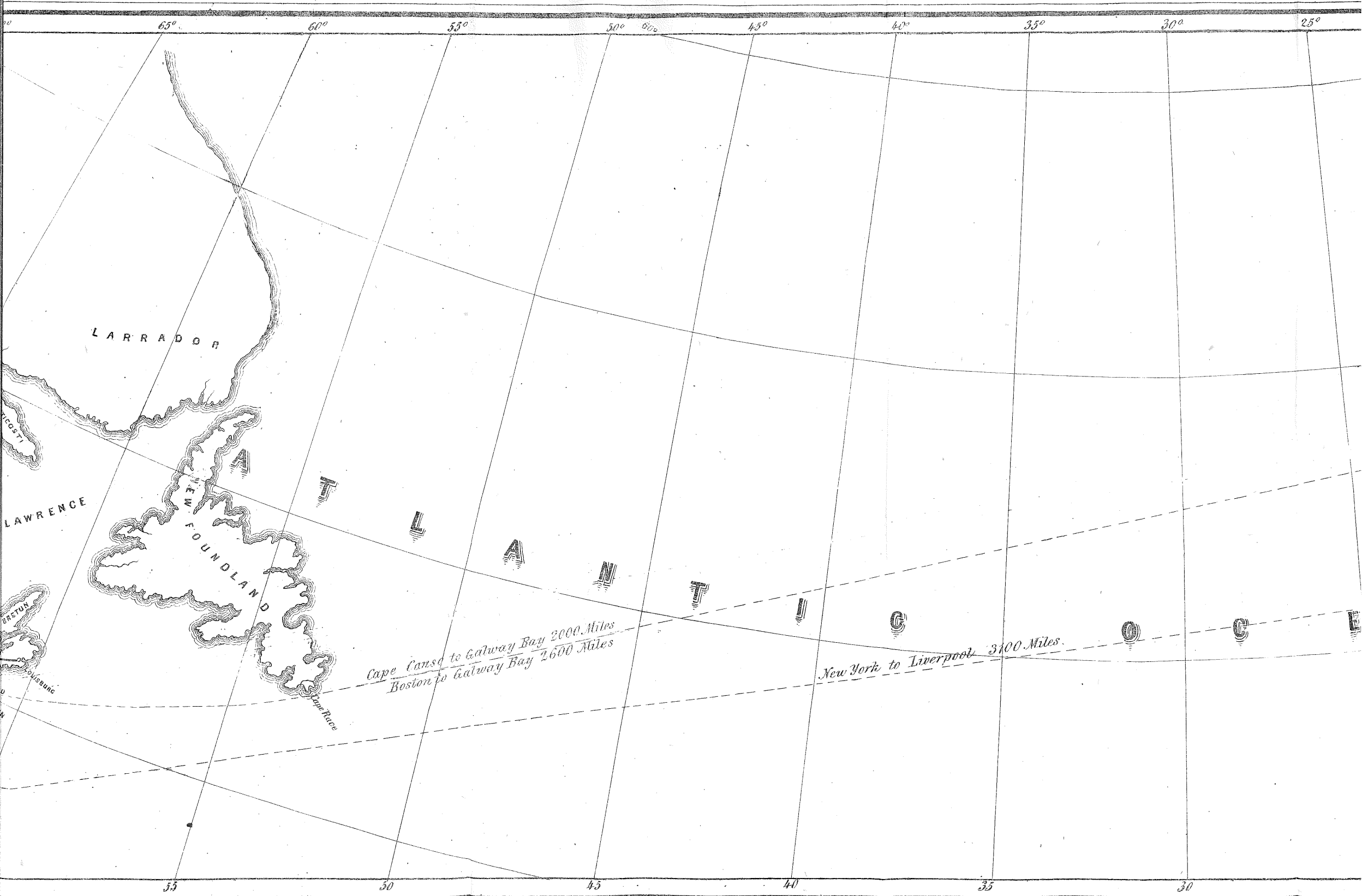
STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JUNE 15, 1850.

ORDERED, That 500 copies of the foregoing petition be printed for the use of the Legislature.

EDMUND W. FLAGG, *Clerk.*





LARRADOR

LAWRENCE

NEW FOUNDLAND

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Cape Canso to Galway Bay 2000 Miles
Boston to Galway Bay 2600 Miles

New York to Liverpool 3100 Miles

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