

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the  
**LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY**  
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied  
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

DOCUMENTS

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1857.

---

PART SECOND.

---

AUGUSTA:  
STEVENS & BLAINE, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.  
1857.

---

# THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE.

---

HOUSE.]

[No. 42.]

---

## MEMORIAL

OF

JOHN A. POOR, SAMUEL P. SHAW,  
JOHN M. WOOD, & OTHERS,

ASKING THAT MEANS MAY BE ADOPTED TO PROMOTE THE  
SETTLEMENT AND SALE OF THE

PUBLIC LANDS OF MAINE.

---

AUGUSTA:  
STEVENS & BLAINE, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.  
1857.



# STATE OF MAINE.

---

## MEMORIAL.

---

*To the Honorable, the Senate, and the House of Representatives of the State of Maine, in Legislature assembled :*

The undersigned, citizens of Maine, respectfully ask your honorable body that measures may be adopted more effectually to develop the resources of the State, and to promote the settlement of its public lands.

Maine has every possible advantage for commerce and manufactures, and great capabilities for agricultural production. With a line of sea coast extending hundreds of miles, indented with harbors unequalled for depth of water, ease of access, and completeness of shelter for vessels of the largest class ; with an amount of available water-power equal to the supply, for an indefinite period, of the entire manufacturing industry of the country ; with a soil of great natural fertility, capable of producing cereals, and eminently suited to grazing, and the raising of fruit ; with forests still valuable for the production of all descriptions of lumber, and with mineral wealth of very considerable value ; occupying a region that for healthfulness of climate has no superior—Maine is upon the natural route of trade and travel between the commercial centres of Europe and America.

Yet with all these natural advantages, our State has not for some years past kept pace with the growth of the nation, or maintained even her relative position with some of her sister states of New England.

It is easy to show the reason for this condition of things ; and

it is also easy to point out the remedy ; but it is far more difficult to bring about that system of policy that shall work the remedy. The present time seems to us to afford a most favorable opportunity to bring these matters to public attention, and to suggest some method for increasing public and private prosperity, by the inauguration of a proper state policy.

What Maine wants is, greater diversity of labor by the introduction of manufactures. In 1850, Maine had one third more persons engaged in agriculture than Massachusetts; while the population of the former was 583,169, and that of the latter 994,514. The real estate of Massachusetts was valued, in 1850 at \$349,129,932; that of Maine, in the same year, at \$64,336,110. In manufactures, the mechanic arts, commerce, and trade, Massachusetts employed more than four times as many as Maine—of free male population, above the age of 15 years. The capital employed in manufactures, in Massachusetts, in 1850, was \$83,357,642 to \$14,700,452 in Maine; and the product of that year in Massachusetts was \$151,137,145, to \$24,664,135 in Maine. The aggregate value of the property of Massachusetts, in that year, was \$573,342,286, to \$122,777,571 in Maine. In the year 1856, according to the report of the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, the aggregate value of the property of Massachusetts was \$597,936,995—while that of Maine was \$131,128,186. The population of Massachusetts in 1855 was 1,133,123, showing an increase of 138,609 persons in 5 years; a ratio greater, as we believe, than that of Maine for the same period, though no census of our state has been taken since 1850.

Up to 1835, the progress of Maine in population and wealth was about equal to that of the whole country, and far greater than that of Massachusetts. Our valuable water-power, the superior quality of our soil, our immense tracts of valuable timber, the numerous, safe and accessible harbors upon our coast, the cheap price of land, with its many valuable mineral resources, and above all the salubrity of our climate, invited the emigration of the most valuable classes of persons from all parts of New England, including many from Massachusetts.

The following tables show the comparative progress of Maine, Massachusetts and the United States for the periods named :—

# SETTLEMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS.

5

## PROGRESS OF POPULATION.

	1790	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1856
Maine . . .	96,520	153,719	228,705	298,335	399,455	501,793	583,669	660,000
Mass. . . .	378,717	423,245	472,040	523,287	610,408	737,699	994,449	1,133,123
United States	3,929,326	5,305,952	7,239,814	9,638,134	12,866,920	17,063,353	23,191,074	26,694,312

## RATIO OF DECENNIAL INCREASE.

	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1856
Maine . . . . .	57.1	50.7	30.4	33.9	26.2	16.6	13.
Massachusetts . .	11.7	11.5	10.9	16.6	20.8	34.8	13.9
United States . . .	35.01	36.45	33.35	33.26	32.67	35.80	15.10

The year 1835 was the turning point in the history of New England. Massachusetts opened three of her great lines of railway in that year—to Providence, to Worcester, and to Lowell; and the railway system of Massachusetts became firmly implanted upon her soil. Industry was thereby quickened, enterprise stimulated, and the price of labor enhanced. The tide of emigration throughout all New England was immediately turned upon Massachusetts. The financial and commercial revulsion which swept over Maine, and most other parts of the Union, with such disastrous consequences, from 1835 to 1840, was scarcely felt in Boston or in Massachusetts, except by indirect results from losses by debt. The price of real estate, the great criterion of value, was but slightly affected in Massachusetts, while in every portion of Maine it was vastly depressed.

The census of 1850 disclosed the astounding fact that Massachusetts, from 1840 to 1850, increased at the rate of 34.8 per cent., showing a density of population equal to 132 persons to the square mile; while Maine had only increased at the rate of 16.6 per cent., showing a population of only 17.8 persons to the square mile. The results of the census of 1850 were not generally anticipated by our own people, though many had perceived the silent but gradual withdrawal of much of the wealth and business talent of Maine to Massachusetts. There was also a strong tendency among the farming interest to emigrate to the West, and the agricultural portions of our state were making very little, if any progress, and some of them were diminishing in population.

The rapid growth of every portion of Massachusetts for the last fifteen years has given an increased value to all fixed property within the state, which increase of value has given still greater development to the industrial energies of her whole people, the fruits of which are

now seen in the railways which cover the state as with net-work—in her improved agriculture, and in her factories and workshops which make every valley resound with the hum of her industry.

The progress of population in our state is very nearly shown by the vote of 1856; and from the evidence this affords, we can fairly assume a population in that year of 660,000, or a gain of 76,331 since 1850. The following is a statement of the population of Maine at the several periods named:—

1636	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,450
1653	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2,100
1703	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5,500
1735	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	9,000
1743	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12,000
1761	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	17,500
1764	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24,000
1784	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	51,000
1790	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	96,540
1800	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	151,719
1810	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	228,705
1820	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	298,335
1830	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	399,995
1840	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	499,920
1850	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	583,190
1856	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	660,000

The population of 1856 is estimated from the vote of that year as compared with that of former periods.

The State election of 1856 disclosed other facts not only deeply interesting, but well calculated to excite surprise in the minds of the people of Maine, viz.: that some portions of the State are making very little progress, and that others are losing their population. The vote of that year was a very full one, more so than any vote since 1840. In September, 1840, 91,179 votes were thrown in Maine for Governor, and in November, 92,807 for Presidential electors—the population being 501,796, according to the census returns of that year. The U. S. census of 1840, however, included 1,876 persons residing on the north side of the St John River, all which territory fell to New Bruns-



# SETTLEMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS.

7

wick under the treaty of Washington. To speak accurately, therefore, the population of Maine in 1840 was 499,920.

Assuming the vote of Maine to be as full in 1856 as in 1840, or as holding the same ratio to population, it would give us, in June of that year, a population of 660,000. We have prepared a table, showing the population of the State in 1850, by counties, the full vote of each county in 1856, and the estimated population of each county :

	Pop. in 1850.	Vote in 1856.	Estimated Pop. in 1856.	Increase since 1850.	Decrease since 1850.
Androscoggin,	25,748	6,072	33,370	7,622	
Aroostook,	12,529	2,633	14,309	1,780	
Cumberland,	68,783	15,114	82,690	13,907	
Franklin,	20,027	4,401	24,000	3,927	
Hancock,	34,372	6,349	34,505	133	
Kennebec,	58,018	11,483	62,407	4,389	
Lincoln,	47,038	9,744	52,847	5,809	
Oxford,	35,463	8,112	44,582	9,119	
Penobscot,	63,089	13,868	76,216	13,127	
Piscataquis,	14,735	3,125	16,978	2,233	
Sagadahoc,	21,669	4,589	24,940	3,271	
Somerset,	35,581	7,366	40,003	4,422	
Waldo,	47,230	8,957	48,657	1,427	
Washington,	38,811	6,597	36,256		2,555
York,	60,098	12,561	68,266	8,168	
	583,190	120,971	660,026	79,348	2,555

Examining the vote of 1856 in detail, it will appear that the principal growth has occurred in those towns which are accessible to railways, while in the more agricultural counties, off those lines, there has been scarcely any increase. Waldo, Hancock, Washington and Aroostook counties—formerly exhibiting such rapid growth—have fallen far behind Oxford, York, Androscoggin, and others, where the railway has developed the business of the country.

The following table will show the population in the several counties

in Maine at this time, compared with the number in the same territory at the several periods named, from 1830 to 1856 :

	1830	1840	1850	1856
Androscoggin,	19,851	22,532	25,748	33,370
Aroostook,	2,399	7,193	12,529	14,309
Cumberland,	52,429	59,620	68,783	82,690
Franklin,	15,938	20,800	20,027	24,000
Hancock,	22,553	28,646	34,372	34,505
Kennebec,	38,929	51,384	58,018	62,407
Lincoln,	37,654	41,423	47,038	52,847
Oxford,	27,528	32,115	35,463	44,582
Penobscot,	22,963	46,049	63,089	76,216
Piscataquis,	8,499	13,138	14,735	16,978
Sagadahoc,	14,943	17,619	21,669	24,940
Somerset,	29,666	33,912	35,581	40,000
Waldo,	31,584	41,535	47,230	48,657
Washington,	20,140	28,309	38,811	36,256
York,	51,710	54,023	60,098	68,266

Although new counties have been formed at various times and many changes made of county lines, a careful compilation of the statistics from all the sources at command, gives the results above stated.

The loss of population in Washington county, and the small increase in Hancock, Waldo, Piscataquis and Aroostook counties, are striking facts, especially as viewed in contrast with the large gains in Oxford, Cumberland, and Androscoggin counties. Heretofore, or prior to 1845, the principal increase of population was in the eastern part of the State. More recently, it follows the lines of the railway, or is found in the shipbuilding districts of the seaboard.

With these facts before us, the inquiry naturally arises, What can be done to develop the resources and promote the growth of our population and our wealth ?

The answer suggests itself at once to every intelligent mind : Open up lines of railway to the Lower Provinces, and into the region of our public lands. Build a line of Railway from Bangor to Calais, and extend another line to Fish River, with a branch to Houlton and Woodstock, and the history of Maine is changed. The fertile valleys, lying in the basins of the Penobscot, the St. Croix and the St. John, will at once attract emigrants, and the eastern portion of the State would retain the population which, at present it is constantly sending out to

the new territories of the West. The vast public domain now lying unoccupied and neglected, would soon become valuable ; and instead of our aiding the sale of lands on the line of the Illinois Central Railway, our population would remain with us and occupy our own territory. Manufacturing industry follows the line of the railway, and the water power of the Penobscot, the St. Croix, and the Aroostook will become as valuable as that of the Androscoggin. The entire basin of the St. John within our State, is of limestone formation, capable of producing cereals. Its only market now is at home, on account of the great cost of transportation ; and even this market is cut off when the lumbering business is depressed. This accounts for the present emigration from the rich soil and beautiful lands of the Aroostook and the Allegash. Open a railway to Fish River, and the county of Aroostook will be as densely populated as the county of Kennebec.

Without going into an examination of the various arguments which influence our judgment in this matter, we beg leave at once to make the proposition that the State take measures to open up these lands for settlement and sale, and give further encouragement to manufacturing. To do this in such a manner as to secure the greatest possible benefit to the people of the State, the Legislature must take the initiative.

The public lands are at this time of but little pecuniary value, compared with their intrinsic worth ; while, by a wise economy, and a comprehensive State policy, they may be made valuable as a source of revenue, and abundantly pay the expense of opening them to a market.

To reach this result, the State should survey and locate the lines of railway above indicated ; and should loan its credit to a moderate sum in aid of their completion. To do this, we are aware, will require a change in the Constitution of the State, but this, we believe, will be cheerfully voted by the people. We believe, too, that the sale of lands lying in proximity to the proposed lines of railway, would bring a sum fully adequate to discharge any liability the State might thus incur.

The adjustment of our border troubles by the settlement of the north eastern boundary under the treaty of Washington, was the advent of a new era to Maine ; and the peaceful commercial intercourse which rapidly sprang up with our Provincial neighbors, suggested the plans which have resulted in the accomplishment of the Grand International

Railway, connecting Canada with the States of New England and the far West. The completion of this line is a vast benefit to Maine ; but its extension across the breadth of the State to the lower British Provinces, with a line also to the Aroostook, is required to perfect our railway system. This was prevented, a few years since, by the sudden disturbance to the commercial affairs of the world, occasioned by the recent European war, which diverted from the useful purposes of peace to the wasting and wasteful uses of war, the treasures of half a generation.

Though not directly involved in that eventful and terrific struggle, now, for a while at least, suspended, Maine, in common with the commercial world, has suffered from its effects. The sudden stimulus given to the commerce of this country, was followed by a necessary revulsion ; and the over-supply of ships, built in 1853 and 1854, has yielded but a poor return. The pursuits of our people are too exclusively commercial and agricultural, not to suffer from any revulsions in business. Other States of the Union have suffered far less than our own during the past two years. We need a greater variety of employments and more diversified industry, to ensure the permanent prosperity of our State. Notwithstanding all the discouragements enumerated, Maine has, on the whole, made respectable progress in population, business, and wealth, within the past few years ; and we have only to follow the lines of our newly built railways to see evidences of that prosperity to which our State is capable of attaining.

It is idle for us to expect that private enterprise will be equal to the task of carrying out a proper railway system in this State for many years. But with aid from the State to a moderate amount only, the accomplishment of this vast enterprise is within our reach.

It is known already that the routes of the proposed lines are of the most favorable character, so far as regards expense of construction, and with easy gradients, favorable for economical working of the lines ; and also that the cost of iron and equipments will be, at least, one-half the expense of construction.

While all other parts of the free States are busy in public improvements, Maine cannot afford to remain idle. Massachusetts loaned her credit to the amount of millions of dollars, to open her lines of railway,

and added ten times their cost to the wealth of the State. New York gave a gratuity to aid in the construction of the Erie Railroad, of greater amount than the entire sum required to complete the lines proposed by us. Our Provincial neighbors, on either side of us, are carrying out a still more liberal policy, on the part of their respective governments.

The undersigned, therefore, for the reasons above given, and for others which will readily suggest themselves to the minds of every member of the Legislature, respectfully but earnestly request that the question, whether such a change shall be made in the State Constitution, as to give the Legislature authority to aid, to a limited extent, not exceeding one-half the cost, or ten thousand dollars per mile, in the construction of the lines of railway herein proposed, may be submitted to the people. And they also request the Legislature to exempt from taxation, for a term of years, certain descriptions of machinery employed in manufactures, and also the capital therein embarked.

And as in duty bound, will ever pray:

JOHN A. POOR,  
SAM'L P. SHAW,  
J. M. WOOD,  
JEDEDIAH JEWETT,  
SOLO. THAYER,  
HENRY GODDARD,  
H. J. ROBINSON,  
J. B. OSGOOD,  
MOSES GOULD,  
SAMUEL TRASK,  
ROBERT J. ROBISON,  
H. CARTER,  
ASHUR WARE,  
J. L. FARMER,  
H. J. LITTLE,

EDWARD OXNARD,  
J. C. CHURCHILL,  
CHAS. HOLDEN,  
W. D. LITTLE,  
NATH'L S. MILLER,  
ISAAC DYER,  
WM. H. WOOD,  
NATH'L F. DEERING,  
JOHN C. BROOKS,  
GEORGE WARREN,  
NEAL DOW,  
BENJ. KINGSBURY, JR.,  
S. C. CHASE,  
ALLEN HAINES.

## STATE OF MAINE.

---

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }  
April 3, 1857. }

Laid on the table by Mr. Hammatt of Howland, and 3000 copies ordered  
to be printed for the use of the Legislature.

GEO. W. WILCOX, *Clerk.*