

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# DOCUMENTS

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# THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1867.

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1867.

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# FORTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE.

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SENATE.

No. 80.

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The Joint Standing Committee on Public Buildings, to whom was referred the joint order of the Legislature, directing them to "inquire into the expediency of legislative action upon the question of authorizing such extension of the State House Building as will give increased and improved accommodations for the two branches of the Legislature, in their Halls and Committee Rooms, the construction of fire proof rooms for the archives of the State and the State Library, and such repairs and improvements in the existing edifice as may be required," having given the subject matter thereof deliberate and careful consideration, by personal examination of the building and the public property contained therein; by receiving testimony from department officers conversant with the necessities of their departments, and by investigating and determining, according to their best judgment, the most feasible and advantageous means to provide the security and convenience contemplated by the order referred to, ask leave to

## REPORT:

That the value, present and prospective, of the public archives and other property of the State deposited in the capitol building, is vast in the aggregate, far exceeding any calculation not based upon personal examination and a knowledge of their character—a portion, such as original accounts and vouchers for expenditures of the State in the late war, comprising advances for raising, equipping and forwarding troops, &c., constituting the war claim of Maine now being prosecuted against the United States Government, have a present cash value amounting (together with bounties for volunteers upon which future claims will be based,) to millions of dollars, the destruction of which would vitiate or entirely annul the whole claim, no inconsiderable portion of which, it is believed, will ultimately be allowed and refunded to the State

by the National Government. A large portion, comprising the historical and documentary records and original papers, have a greater than mere cash value, the loss of which would be a great and lasting calamity to Maine which no amount of money could alleviate or repair. Another portion, comprising the Engrossed Laws, Public and Special, the original petitions and reports upon which the Acts and Resolves are founded, and the Manuscript Journals of the House and Senate, have a value partaking not only of both the foregoing classes, but one contingent upon their actual cost—for engrossing the Acts and Resolves, ninety-six thousand dollars have been paid from the Treasury of the State from the first volumes in 1820 to the last in 1866—for recording the Journals of the two branches, thirteen thousand eight hundred dollars have been paid in the same time: and these volumes, representing the labors of forty-five Legislatures and the legitimate expense thereof, have thus cost the State more than seven thousand dollars for each one of the two hundred and forty volumes resting upon the shelves in the Secretary of State's Office, and give an aggregate of more than a million and a half of dollars for the Engrossed Laws, Resolves and Legislative Journals. The Council Registers, Journals, reports and original papers which have received Executive action, are nearly as valuable and more voluminous than those of the several Legislatures. The State Library, already extensive, is becoming larger and richer every year, its present contents being estimated by the Librarian to be worth nearly two hundred thousand dollars, which, if correct, far exceeds the original cost of the whole capitol building.

All of this immense property, together with much which for lack of time your Committee have been unable personally to examine, is absolutely unprotected from the dangers of fire, and there is good reason to believe that its safety thus far has been secured by the extreme vigilance of the Superintendent of Public Buildings and assistants employed for that purpose; notwithstanding which, fires are known to have occurred in the building from time to time, which were providentially checked, and which under a less effective system of care and watchfulness might have destroyed the building and its contents. In a building where thirty fires are kept running through the winter months and containing in its cellar two furnaces in immediate proximity with large quantities of wood and coal and other combustible material, and so vast an

amount of inflammable matter throughout all its apartments, as is the case in this, the danger of fire is and will continue to be a subject of serious concern and should not be ignored at the present hour.

In volume, the property to which we have thus far alluded, is vast, overflowing all the apartments originally designed and set apart for their deposit, and absorbing for their storage every available portion of the building, and infringing to no inconsiderable extent upon the rooms set apart for legislative uses; the archives proper of the Secretary's and Adjutant General's Departments compactly fill several rooms outside of their offices, and at remote and inconvenient distance from them, where, in event of fire, their destruction, like that of the State Library, would be almost certain.

As regards the legislative conveniences referred to in the foregoing order, but little need be stated by your Committee, the pressing necessity for spacious and healthy committee rooms is so well understood by every member of the Legislature, that nothing need be added upon the subject, more than to quote the language of a gentleman whose experience in the legislative halls and position in the State as a Representative to Congress and its present Attorney General, is entitled to respect and consideration; in a letter placed before the Committee, he says: "There is not one single decent, healthy committee room in the whole building; the details of legislation are all discussed and settled in committee, and no reasonable places are provided for them. It is, in my mind, an almost denial of justice to carry on hearings, either two at a time in the Senate Chamber, or one in the noisy hall of the House, or singly anywhere in the building. Why not have an addition *now*, and let the present generation have some use of what sooner or later positively must and will be had?"

Upon this question there can be no difference of opinion, and your Committee forbear further remarks upon it.

More suitable and healthy accommodations are desired by the State Board of Agriculture, and their petition is worthy of consideration, located as they are during their sessions in a room half underground, and subjected not only to the fetid air that is found in all the low rooms in the building when in a crowded state or even partially so, but also subjected to the odor from the adjoining water-closets, which has destroyed the little value the room formerly possessed as a place of meeting for committees and their own Board.

At their first meeting for the consideration of the subject matter before them, the following order was received from the Governor and Council :

“STATE OF MAINE.

IN COUNCIL, February 7, 1867.

Whereas, in the opinion of the Council, the time has arrived when the construction of fire-proof rooms for the preservation and safe-keeping of the voluminous and valuable manuscript records, original documents and papers constituting the archives of the State, (deposited in the department offices, and stored in various rooms in the State House building,) ought not to be further delayed ; and

Whereas, other improvements and repairs are greatly needed in said building, and of such character and magnitude as to require legislative sanction and appropriations ;

*Be it therefore Ordered*, That the Deputy Secretary of State be directed to appear before the Joint Standing Committee on Public Buildings of the present Legislature, and present the importance of early measures for the protection of this most valuable of all the property of the State, the loss of which would be deplorable and irreparable.

HIRAM RUGGLES, *Chairman*.

IN COUNCIL, February 8, 1867.

Read and passed by the Council, and by the Governor approved.”

Attest,

EPHRAIM FLINT, *Secretary of State*.

In conformity with the foregoing order, Mr. J. H. Cochrane, the Deputy Secretary of State, appeared before the Committee and submitted verbal statements in regard to the question, which were duly considered by the Committee and corroborated by subsequent investigation. He also presented a series of plans for such alteration and enlargement of the building as would provide the accommodations for the Legislature and department officers heretofore referred to in this report. These plans comprise, by means of an extension from the centre of the building at the rear, a fire-proof, galleried library, a fire-proof office for the Adjutant General's Department, spacious and healthy committee rooms, and a conversion of the present office of the Secretary of State and that of the Adjutant General into one large fire-proof office in which the most valuable of the archives belonging to that department might be concentrated and preserved. These changes refer to the first floor. Upon the next floor, corresponding with that of the present

House and Senate, a spacious hall for the House of Representatives is presented, with committee rooms adjoining, on the front and rear of the hall, which receives its light from the ceiling above. Broad passage between the divisions of desks is given, and sufficient room for single and convenient desks for each member. The adoption of this plan would leave it at the option of the Senate to occupy their present Chamber or take the Representatives' Hall for a Senate Chamber in future. In either case the room vacated should be used as a depository for the State cabinet now scattered through the lower halls, and for the war trophies in possession of the State, which it is understood are to receive future and valuable additions. This room would also supply the wants of the Board of Agriculture, and be used for meetings of large committees. The cost of the additional building has been variously estimated by competent architects and builders from forty to fifty-five thousand dollars, the latter sum being in the judgment of Mr. Fassett, an experienced architect, (well known throughout the State for his judicious and careful estimates upon the cost of structures,) as ample in the extreme.

These plans present, in the opinion of your Committee, the best method of obtaining security for the public property, together with the accommodations which are so manifestly needed; and we unite in the expression that they should in general be adopted as the most practicable and advantageous as well as the cheapest method of carrying out the measures under consideration. In addition to the foregoing order of Council, the following petition from department officers was received and placed on file:

*To the Members of the Forty-Sixth Legislature of Maine:*

The undersigned, officers and employés in the several departments of the State, earnestly believing that measures should no longer be delayed for the preservation and protection of the voluminous and valuable manuscript records, original papers, documents and books constituting the archives and the library of the State—the destruction of which would be deplorable and irreparable—regard it their duty to the State to invite the attention of the members of the present Legislature to the urgent necessity of making such provision for the security of this property, as its immense value and the interests and welfare of the State unquestionably demand, by causing such enlargement and alteration of the present Capitol building as will provide rooms which shall be fire-proof and of such capacity as to enable the several departments to

concentrate and secure within them the records, papers, and other public property, properly appertaining to each.

EPHRAIM FLINT, Secretary of State.  
 JOHN L. HODSDON, Adjutant General.  
 ISAAC R. CLARK, Land Agent.  
 JOHN A. PETERS, Attorney General.  
 GEORGE G. STACY, State Librarian.  
 ISRAEL BOOTHBY, Treasurer's Clerk.  
 GILMAN TURNER, Supt. of Public Buildings.  
 JAMES H. COCHRANE, Deputy Secretary of State.  
 S. L. GOODALE, Sec. of Board of Agriculture.

Your Committee, therefore, in view of all the facts before them, are of the opinion that the present Legislature should not adjourn leaving the subject matter referred to in the foregoing order and report, in its present state, but should take immediate measures for carrying into effect the protection of its public property and other measures therewith connected as herein set forth. An appropriation from the Treasury, to be incorporated into a tax upon the people, would no doubt be objectionable to many, and should if possible be avoided, and this, your Committee believe, may be done by causing such sum as may be necessary to provide the desired improvements, to be set apart from any moneys which may be collected from the National Government as reimbursements to Maine for advances and expenses incurred in the late war, some portion of which it is believed will be refunded sometime during this or the coming year, and they therefore submit a resolve providing an appropriation for the foregoing purpose, contingent upon the claim of the State against the United States, together with a Resolve for the purchase of an Iron Safe in which to deposit such portion of the war accounts and vouchers as may be of the greatest value among them, to be placed in the charge of the Secretary of State.

EBEN WOODBURY,  
 J. W. PORTER,  
 M. R. LUDWIG,  
 JOHN R. PULSIFER,  
 CHARLES GORDON,  
 ISAAC PIERCE,  
 J. D. PARKER,  
 SAMUEL F. PERLEY,  
 OBADIAH WHITTIER.



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## STATE OF MAINE.

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RESOLVES for the enlargement of the capitol building  
and protection of the archives of the state.

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*Resolved,* That there shall be set apart and appropriated from any moneys reimbursed by the United States, on account of the claim of Maine for expenses incurred in the late civil war, such sum as may, in the opinion of the governor and council, be necessary to provide such enlargement of the capitol building as will furnish fire-proof rooms for the protection of the archives and other public property in the several departments, suitable committee rooms and other conveniences for legislative use, as in their judgment are required, together with such repairs upon the existing edifice as may be deemed necessary. And the governor and council are authorized to determine the best manner of providing the accommodations herein specified, to appoint one or more commissioners if deemed advisable to supervise in the construction of the same, whose contracts for labor and materials shall first be

18 submitted to the governor and council for approval,  
19 and all accounts for expenses incurred, shall be audited  
20 by the governor and council, and if allowed the gov-  
21 ernor with advice of council may draw his warrant  
22 upon the treasurer for payment of the same; *provided*  
23 that such sums, so drawn, shall not in the aggregate  
24 exceed thirty-five thousand dollars during the year  
25 dating from the commencement of the work herein  
26 directed.

*Resolved*, That in addition to the foregoing the gov-  
2 ernor and council are authorized, if deemed advisable,  
3 to procure and place in the office of the secretary of  
4 state a suitable iron safe in which to deposit such  
5 papers as may be determined by them to possess the  
6 highest value, until the fire-proof rooms herein directed  
7 shall be completed, and the sum of                    hundred  
8 dollars is hereby appropriated for the same.

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## STATE OF MAINE.

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IN SENATE, February 21, 1867.

Report accepted, and on motion of Mr. PERKINS, laid on the table and ordered to be printed.

THOMAS P. CLEAVES, *Secretary*.