

# 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)

# Public Documents of Maine:

BEING THE

## ANNUAL REPORTS

OF THE VARIOUS

## PUBLIC OFFICERS AND INSTITUTIONS

FOR THE YEARS

1871-72.

---

AUGUSTA:

SPRAGUE, OWEN & NASH, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1872.

# REPORTS

OF THE

BOARD AND COMMISSIONER

OF

IMMIGRATION.

1871.

---

AUGUSTA:

SPRAGUE, OWEN & NASH, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1872.



## REPORT OF THE BOARD.

---

*To the Senate and House of Representatives :*

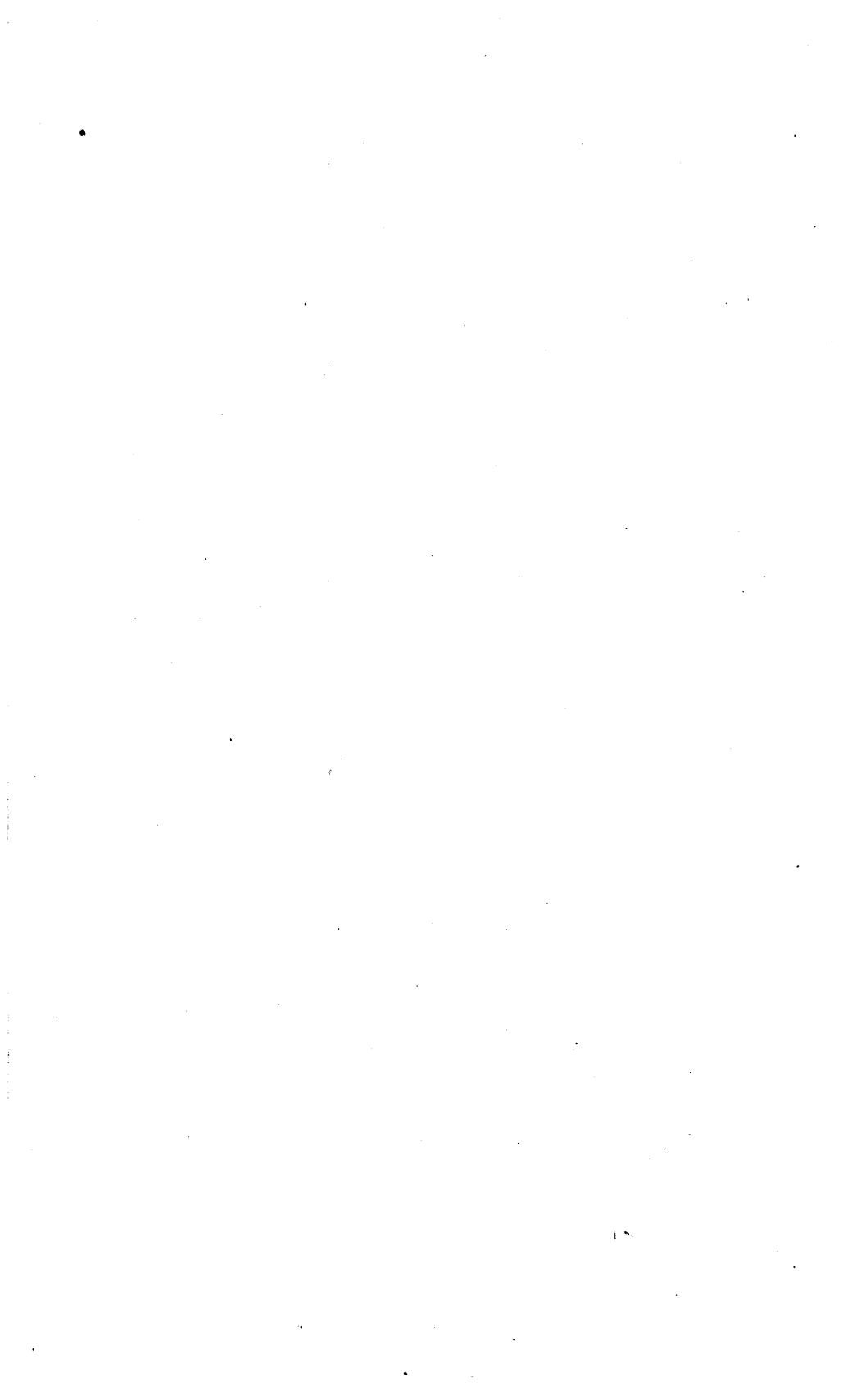
In accordance with the provisions of the act to promote immigration and facilitate the settlement of the public lands, approved February 24, 1871, the Board of Immigration therein named appointed W. W. Thomas, Jr., Commissioner of Immigration, and G. W. Schroder, Agent to reside in Gottenburg, Sweden, and Nicholas P. Clasé, Agent to reside in New Sweden.

A majority of the Board visited the colony in September last, and found its condition highly satisfactory.

The report of the Commissioner, which we transmit herewith, is so complete in its details of the work accomplished during the year, and the present condition of the colony, that we do not deem an extended report of the Board necessary.

SIDNEY PERHAM,  
FRANKLIN M. DREW.  
PARKER P. BURLEIGH.

AUGUSTA, December 30, 1871.



## REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER.

---

*To the Honorable Governor and Board of  
Immigration of the State of Maine:*

I have the honor to submit the following report on Scandinavian immigration.

The first Swedish colony of Maine settled in the forests of Northern Aroostook on July 23d, 1870. It numbered fifty souls. Before the close of the year it doubled in population. On January 1st, 1871, New Sweden contained one hundred and fourteen inhabitants, two hundred acres of partially cleared "choppings," twenty-six timber houses, and one spacious frame building—the capitol. The enterprise thus begun has been prosecuted throughout the present year; it is my duty to inform you with what results.

Anticipating an appropriation by the Legislature, a circular was printed in Old Sweden describing the voyage of the first colonists, their generous and honorable welcome at the American border, the attractions, healthfulness and fertility of their new homes, the location, extent and productiveness of the settling lands of Maine, the advantages our State offers to settlers, interesting letters from the Swedish colonists already on our soil, and every other fact and suggestion which seemed appropriate, or advantageous. This circular, comprising four times the reading matter of this report, was issued early in December, 1870; a month in advance of the circulars of any other State or association. Five thousand copies were distributed, and the information they contained read and discussed at thousands of Swedish firesides during the most opportune time of all the year—the Christmas holidays.

The Legislature of 1871 made liberal provision for promoting Scandinavian immigration and enabled a vigorous prosecution of the enterprise.

Capt. G. W. Schroder was appointed agent in old, and Capt. N. P. Clasé in New Sweden. Large editions of circulars were struck off and distributed in the old country in quick succession;

two columns of the "Amerika," a weekly emigrants' paper, were bought for six months and filled every week with new matter relating to Maine and her Swedish colony; advertisements were also inserted in all the principal newspapers taken by the agricultural and other working classes, and a brisk correspondence carried on with hundreds intending to immigrate to Maine.

A special agent was employed to travel and distribute information in the most northern provinces of Sweden, their population being deemed best fitted for our northern State; and another agent, Mr. Carl Johan Ek, one of our first colonists, was sent back from New Sweden to the old, well equipped with maps, plans, specimens of Aroostook wheat, rye, corn and potatoes, also maple sugar made by the Swedes in New Sweden; for many in the old country had written "if one could only return to us and with his own lips tell us what you narrate on paper, we would believe." This last agent was sent out without expense to the State, he charging nothing for his services, and the Inman Steamship Line generously furnishing him with a free passage out and back. A condensed circular was printed in Swedish, at Portland, placed in the hands of the pilots of that harbor, and by them distributed on board the trans-Atlantic steamers, while yet miles away from land.

Seed thus well and widely sown was soon followed by a harvest. With the first opening of navigation, Swedish immigrants began to arrive in New Sweden; first, in little squads, then in companies of twenty, thirty and forty, till the immigration of the year culminated in the last week of May, when one hundred Swedes arrived *via* Houlton and Presque Isle, followed within five days by two hundred and sixty more by the St. John river.

The total Swedish immigration for the year is over nine hundred souls; which, with the one hundred and fourteen settled last year in New Sweden, gives an addition to our State of over *one thousand inhabitants* from the Swedish enterprise alone. These immigrants have not come to us empty handed; they not only paid their own passage to our State across four thousand miles of sea and land, but brought with them huge chests of clothing, tools and household goods, and \$40,000 in cash.

The value of this influx may be readily ascertained. One-half or five hundred of the Swedes are working men; the average value of a man to the State is generally estimated at \$1,000; \$500,000 will then represent the aggregate present gain to Maine, an amount nearly twenty times greater than all our State has expended for



this object. The future advantages our State will derive from this immigration, if we rightly improve our present opportunity, are too vast to be readily estimated in figures.

Provisions and tools for the colony and its expected accessions, were shipped in March direct to Fredericton, New Brunswick, and thence with the first opening of navigation up the river St. John to Tobique landing. From this latter place the goods were hauled into New Sweden, a distance of but twenty-five miles. Seed, consisting chiefly of wheat, rye, barley, oats, corn, beans and potatoes, was early purchased in the neighborhood of the colony and hauled in on the snow. A span of young, powerful draught horses were bought in the early spring to help on the work. They were employed in harrowing in the crops, grubbing out and plowing the roads, hauling logs and timber, until November, when they were sold for \$425, the exact sum paid for them in the spring.

A stable, thirty by forty feet, was erected on the public lot, one hundred feet in the rear of the capitol; the capitol itself painted, the first floor, comprising the store-house and offices, lathed, plastered, finished and furnished, and the hall above lathed and provided with benches and a pulpit. The stable was erected and the capitol completed before the snow was off. This work was almost exclusively done by Swedes, at the rate of one dollar a day, in payment of supplies already furnished them by the State.

The snow lingered late. Weeks after it had disappeared in the nearest villages, it still covered our new clearings in the woods. As soon as the black burnt ground showed itself in considerable patches, we commenced putting in wheat, sowing it partly on the melting snow; rye followed, then came oats and barley. The State horses harrowed in the grain. Then men, women and children were busy from morning till night hacking in potatoes among the stumps; and last of all, each Swede cleared still a little piece more of land and put in turnips. A small experimental orchard was set out upon the State lot, and promises well.

One hundred and sixty-five acres of land in all were cleared and put into a crop, including the one hundred and twenty-five acres on which the trees were felled the year before by the State.

All this while the immigrants with their ponderous chests of baggage were pouring in. They filled the hall of the capitol, the stable, and one squad of fifty, from Jemtland, camped under a tent of boards. The late snows delayed the lotting of the township as well as the sowing of crops. Albert A. Burleigh, Esq., the effi-

cient surveyor of the township, with an able corps of assistants, arrived at New Sweden as soon as it was practicable to commence surveying in the woods, and pushed on his part of the work with vigor and ability throughout the season. Roads were first laid out in all directions from the capitol, then lots laid off to face them. Straight lines were not deemed essential to these ways, an easy grade was everywhere maintained, and hills and swamps avoided. Working parties of newly arrived immigrants, each in command of an English speaking Swede, were detailed to follow the surveyors and cut out the roads. Thus avenues were opened up in all directions into the wilderness. Bands of immigrants eagerly seeking their farms followed the choppers, and lots were taken up as fast as they were made accessible. Some enterprising Swedes did not wait for the working parties, but secured choice lots by ranging the woods in advance; the principal of "first come first served" having been adopted in the distribution of these prizes of land.

Thus the stream of immigration that emptied itself at the capitol, was continually disappearing in small rills throughout the forest. A party of one hundred crowding our accommodations on Monday, would vanish before Saturday night. A walk along any wood road soon revealed them; the blows of the axe and the crash of falling trees led to the men, and the smoke curling from a shelter of poles and bark near by, to the women and children.

It is eight miles to Caribou and the road thither is our only means of communication with the outside world. For three miles from New Sweden the road was merely cut through the woods to let in the first company of immigrants a year ago. The heavy immigrant wagons and supply teams had since worn away the earth, and protruding stumps and deepening ruts rendered the road almost impassable, yet not a day's labor could be spared to it, till the crops were all in. The last of June however a force of fifteen men and four horses were put upon this highway, and work upon it progressed uninterruptedly until October. The entire three miles were grubbed out full width of thirty feet through a heavy growth of standing trees; two miles of this turnpiked in as thorough a manner as any county road in the State, and a substantial bridge of hewn cedar thrown across the east branch of Caribou stream. The road is three-quarters of a mile shorter than the old one by which the first colony entered New Sweden, curves around instead of over the hills and maintains an easy grade

throughout. It was built under the immediate supervision of Jacob Hardison, Esq., than whom no man in Aroostook is better acquainted with everything that pertains to frontier life in the woods of Maine and who in one capacity or another has assisted the Swedish colony from its foundation.

Meanwhile branch roads were being cut through the woods by smaller parties of workmen. One road was made west six miles through Woodland into Perham, another east toward Lyndon, a third northeast four and one-quarter miles to the Little Madawaska river, a fourth seven and one-half miles to the northwest corner of New Sweden, besides still other shorter connecting roads.

Every working party, whether on branch roads, main road, public buildings, or other public works, was in charge of its own special foreman. Each foreman called the roll of his crew every evening, and entered the time of each man in a book provided for the purpose. These time books were handed in once a week to the State store-keeper, and each workman credited with one dollar for every day's work, payable in the provisions and tools he was receiving from the State.

Thus the money appropriated by Maine in aid of the Swedish colony is accomplishing a two-fold good. It first supplies the Swedes with food and tools, enabling them to live until they harvest their first crop. Second, it is worked out to its full value by the Swedes, on the roads or other public works, which are a permanent public benefit, and worth to the State all they cost. The State aid to the Swedes, is rather, a temporary loan, which they repay in full, the State having already gained one thousand citizens by the transaction. On December first the Swedes had repaid to the State \$2,238.00 in labor and crops for the supplies advanced them, and were indebted to the State in the further sum of \$7,687.13, to be paid in cash, crops or labor whenever called upon by the proper authority.

All summer and fall new choppings opened out on every hand; the old clearings were rapidly enlarged; shelters of poles and bark gave way to comfortable timber houses; barns were built near the growing grain, and everywhere trees were falling and buildings rising throughout the settlement.

So many people flocking into the woods soon created a demand for various trades and crafts. A variety store was opened in Au-

gust by a Swede, in a commodious timber building near the center. A blacksmith, a shoemaker, a tinman, and a tailor, set up shops near by, and were overrun with business. A saw-mill was commenced at a good water power on the Beardsley brook, four miles from the capitol, and on December first was nearly completed. The foundations for a grist-mill were also laid on a small brook, centrally located.

The crops grew rapidly. Wheat averaged five and rye six feet in height; some stalks of rye were seven feet and five inches tall, and many heads of wheat and rye were over eight inches in length. Harvest time came early. Winter rye was ripe and cut by the middle of August: wheat, barley and oats early in September.

Crops were raised by thirty families. These arrived last year. The new comers could only clear the land of its trees this first season. Of the thirty families, seventeen had built barns in which they stored their grain. The crops of the others were securely stacked in the field, and though the autumn was rainy, the harvest was uninjured.

As soon as the grain was dry a machine was obtained to thresh it. *Three thousand bushels of grain* were threshed out, of which twelve hundred were wheat, one thousand barley, and the remainder principally rye and oats. Wheat averaged twenty, and yielded up to twenty-five, and rye averaged thirty-five, and yielded up to forty-two bushels to the acre. The season was late and wet, and much of the wheat was nipped by the rust. In an ordinary year a maximum yield of forty bushels of wheat to the acre will undoubtedly be attained.

An unusually heavy frost the middle of September, which prevailed throughout New England, killed the potato tops and stopped all further growth of the potatoes, diminishing the yield one-third. Three hundred bushels to the acre of those earliest planted was nevertheless obtained, and *five thousand bushels of potatoes* secured, besides several hundred bushels of beets, turnips and other roots.

On September thirtieth all those who had harvested a crop were cut off from further receipt of State supplies. These colonists now are not only self supporting, but have delivered to the State, in part payment of their indebtedness, five hundred bushels of potatoes, which are being sold to the later arrived immigrants.

On November fifteenth, State aid was also cut off from every immigrant of this year who had not wife or children with him. For all such, work for the winter was provided among the farmers,

in the lumber woods, at the tanneries, quarries, or railroads. The State will thus be at no expense for these men during the winter, and in the spring they will return to their clearings with money in their pockets, and English on their tongues.

A free public school was opened in the hall of the capitol, on November thirteenth. The Swedish pastor, Herr Axel Wiren, who has resided four years in the United States, and speaks our language fluently, is teacher. The school numbers seventy scholars, and will continue four months. The chief study pursued in this school is the English language. The Swedish is not taught, and no other branches are pursued, until they can be studied in English text-books. The scholars are all between the ages of five and sixteen, are prompt and constant in their attendance, and they and their parents manifest the liveliest interest in the school. So great is the desire to learn our language, that pastor Wiren has been compelled to hold an evening English school for adults.

Divine service has been held in the public hall both forenoon and afternoon, every Sunday throughout the year, and the Swedish Sabbath-school has continued its weekly meetings without the omission of a single Sunday. The attendance upon these religious exercises is almost universal; no member of the colony is ever absent from church, and no scholar is absent from the Sabbath-school except for sickness or other good cause.

New Sweden settlement has outgrown the boundaries of the township of that name and spread over the adjacent portions of the town of Lyndon and the plantations of Woodland and Perham. The settlers however occupy an unbroken succession of lots, and the settlement, though situated on four townships, forms one unbroken block.

Two hundred lots of one hundred acres each, or twenty thousand acres are taken up by the Swedes. Upon this area two thousand acres of trees are felled, five hundred acres cleared, and eighty houses and seventeen barns built.

The colony numbers two hundred and four men, one hundred and twelve women, and two hundred and thirty-seven children under twenty-one years of age; total, five hundred and fifty-three souls, eleven-fold the little colony that founded the settlement only last year.

There are owned by the colonists, fifteen horses, four oxen, thirty-four cows, and forty-two swine.

This entire settlement, with its settlers, clearings, roads, houses, crops and stock, was an unbroken forest in June, 1870.

The population of New Sweden by no means represents the total of Swedish immigration to Maine. The enterprise contemplates not only the founding of an agricultural colony, but the furnishing of labor throughout our State wherever needed.

In accordance with this plan, a large number, principally mechanics and laborers, were provided with work outside the colony. Many of the farmers too, with little or no means were encouraged to work out for a year or more, until they could lay by money sufficient to take a fair start in the woods. Employment was secured for these immigrants in the great tanneries at Kingman and Medway, at the slate quarries of Brownville and Williamsburg, on the European and North American and Boston and Maine railroads, among the farmers, millmen and lumbermen of Aroostook county, in families as house servants throughout the State; and a considerable number, principally skilled artisans, are at work in shops, or have commenced business on their own account in Portland, Bangor, Houlton, Fort Fairfield, Presque Isle, and Caribou.

About five hundred Swedes are employed in Maine outside New Sweden. One-half of these will eventually take up State land near their countrymen, the rest will probably remain in their present situations.

Thus, besides the grand nucleus of New Sweden, we have in Maine independent nuclei in Penobscot, Piscataquis and Cumberland counties. These nuclei will each draw its appropriate class of immigrants from old Sweden, and the aggregate immigration will be larger than could be the case were all our Swedish population settled on one spot and engaged in one pursuit. Each locality and each avocation will now attract independently of every other.

Not every Swede coming to Maine has had his anticipations realized. All have not been satisfied, neither have all remained within the borders of our State. The number of malcontents is however exceeding small. They have all left the State and nearly all gone west. They do not amount to over two per cent. of the immigration or twenty out of one thousand; while on the other hand some forty Swedes have come from the West and settled in Maine. The remaining ninety-eight per cent. are well content with our State and its people.

The great majority of settlers in New Sweden are now for the first time land owners, and now for the first time feel that

however hard they may toil, they are toiling for themselves and their little ones. Since the first crop was harvested they have been enthusiastic in their praise of the soil and their situation, and have pushed forward their clearings with redoubled energy. To illustrate how highly they prize the lots given them, it may be stated that one acre of land (a corner lot to be sure) was sold the past summer for fifty dollars, cash.

Even Old Sweden, the mother country, that cannot but regret the loss of her children, still looks with a favoring eye upon the New Sweden of Maine. This will be seen from the following admirable letter written to the chairman of your Board by the editor of a prominent Swedish newspaper, an ex-member of the Swedish parliament, and one of the first thinkers and writers of the Kingdom :

*To the Honorable Governor of the State of Maine :*

SIR,—You must not wonder, sir, that a Swedish patriot cannot regard without feelings of sadness the exodus of emigrants, that are going to seek a better existence in the great republic of North America, leaving the homes of their ancestors and giving their fatherland only a smiling farewell. It will not surprise you, sir, that this must be a very melancholy sight to the mind of the Swedes, and that it must become yet more so on the thought that many of these emigrants are meeting destinies far different from the glowing prospects that were held forth to their hopeful eyes. Not only Sweden will lose her children, but they will be lost to themselves in the distant new field.

The sons and daughters of old Sweden, will they maintain among your great nation their national character? Will they retain, at least, some remembrance of their native land?

We know well, sir, that every nationality, strong as it may be, will be gradually amalgamated in the new, common, all-absorbing nationality of the new world, and it would certainly not be of any advantage, either to America or to civilization, if the different nationalities of Europe were to continue their individual life, with their peculiarities and enmities, on the soil of their adopted country. We regard it, on the contrary, as a special mission of America to absorb and amalgamate all these different European elements.

But, sir, will they lose also, these American immigrants, the remembrance of their fatherland? Must the Swedish inhabitants of your country necessarily forget the language and customs of their ancestors? Will they forget the struggles and victories of their native land, its good times and hard times? Will they forget the mother who has borne her children with heavy and self-denying sacrifices, and will they have no feelings left for her love and regret?

No, sir, they will not do so, and the great people of America will not require it. You have not received the children of Sweden as outcasts, who will be adopted into the new family only at the price of denying their father and mother. On the contrary, sir, you have given a special impulse to the Swedes, whom you have invited to colonize your State, to hold their native land in

honor and remembrance, by giving the new colony, founded in the northern part of your State, the name of "New Sweden;" you have given them also in Swedish books opportunity for recalling their fatherland.

Your commissioner, Mr. W. W. Thomas, Jr., one evening last summer, assembled his little colony of immigrants to partake of a collation, where good wishes and kind words were exchanged. We, the remaining friends, left with confidence our brethren and sisters in his care; his last and firm assurance was, "All that has been promised will be kept."

Yes, sir, these promises have been kept; but not only that, they have been far surpassed by your generosity. The poor immigrants, landing on your shores, have been received and greeted with the most friendly welcome. Their homes established, their future secured, they have not been disappointed in their hopes by the difficulties and grievances of the real state of things.

The young colony will probably be the nucleus of an extended colonization, and you will not, sir, I feel sure, find the hardy Swedes ungrateful and unworthy of your kindness; they would then, surely, be unworthy of their origin.

The colony of "New Sweden" has requested and authorized the writer of this letter to convey to you, Honorable Governor of the State of Maine, the expression of their sentiments of deep gratitude, and you will kindly allow me, sir, to add thereto the expression of the same sentiments of many other Swedes, who have followed the immigrants with their sympathies.

Allow me at the same time to express to the people of Maine, who have received their new brethren with so much cordiality, the thanks of the colonists, who have mentioned more especially two gentlemen, Mr. W. W. Thomas, Jr., and Mr. P. P. Burleigh, Land Agent, as objects of their gratitude and high esteem.

May the young colony of "New Sweden" grow and flourish, not only in material strength, but even in developing their moral and intellectual faculties. And may the new population thus add to your State and to your great republic a good and healthy element of moral power from the old world, and, becoming imbued with the spirit of your free institutions, reflect that spirit on their native land!

What we have lost, at present, in the old fatherland will then not have been lost to humanity; on the contrary, the trees have only been transplanted on a fresher soil, where they will thrive better and give richer and more abundant fruits. God bless the harvest! God bless your land!

I am, sir, with the highest esteem,

Your obedient servant,

G. A. HEDLUND,

Chief Editor of Gothenburg Shipping and Mercantile Gazette.

Gothenburg, March 25 1871.

The immigration of Swedes is not the only benefit our State has derived from this enterprise. It has indirectly advertised Maine throughout the Union, and turned public attention to our wild lands and new settlements. The files of the Land Office show a



greatly increased inquiring about our public lands, and several old settlers of Aroostook, located at different points in the county, have informed your Commissioner that the number of American immigrants the present year, exceeded that of the last ten years put together.

One instance among many of the effect of the Swedish enterprise on American immigration, may perhaps not be out of place in this connection. Two gentlemen from Massachusetts of wealth and business experience and ability, have this year purchased a water-power, and already invested \$2,000, at Caribou, eight miles from New Sweden. Next spring they will erect and put in operation an extensive starch factory. These gentlemen informed your Commissioner, that their attention was first attracted to Aroostook by reading a newspaper notice of the Maine Swedish colony.

Swedish immigration has furthermore enhanced the value and quickened the sales of real estate in northern Aroostook. One farm in Presque Isle has been sold to a Swede for twenty-five hundred dollars, several abandoned farms have been bought by the Swedes for cash, and much of the land lying near the colony has doubled in value since the arrival of the first Swedish immigrants.

## RESULTS.

One thousand Swedes, bringing with them \$40,000 in cash, have been settled in Maine; twenty thousand acres of land taken up; two thousand acres of trees felled, and five hundred cleared ready for a crop.

Eighty houses and seventeen barns have been built; three miles of road grubbed; two miles turnpiked; twenty-five miles cut out through the woods, and one bridge constructed.

Three thousand bushels of grain and five thousand bushels of potatoes have been harvested.

The attention of the entire emigrating population of Sweden has been attracted towards our State, and the American immigration upon our wild lands and frontier settlements increased many fold.

THE FUTURE.  
*Population of Maine.*

Year.	Population.	Gain.	Loss.
1790.....	95,540	.....	.....
1800.....	151,719	56,179	.....
1810.....	228,705	76,986	.....
1820.....	298,335	69,630	.....
1830.....	399,455	101,120	.....
1840.....	501,793	102,338	.....
1850.....	583,169	81,376	.....
1860.....	628,279	45,110	.....
1870.....	626,915	.....	1,364

Maine has suffered a check in her growth. The uninterrupted progress, that marked our career from 1790, when the first census was taken, till 1860, has deserted us; and the census of 1870 found us with a population less by more than a thousand, than that which claimed our State as its home ten years before. This unfortunate result is all the more unpleasant, since with the single exception of New Hampshire, Maine is the only State in the Republic, that has not increased in numbers during the last decade.

Shall this check be but a momentary pause in our advance, or is it the beginning of our decline? is a question of the utmost importance to every citizen of Maine. States like men cannot stand still; they must grow or decay.

If Maine is to increase in population, wealth and importance in the immediate future, it must be largely by foreign immigration. With a wilderness territory larger than the entire State of Massachusetts, covered by a stately forest of valuable trees, possessing a soil of unusual depth and fertility, and watered by plentiful brooks and noble rivers, Maine has yet gone backward in population the last decade, since with few exceptions her own sons will not accept these lands as a gift if compelled to make their homes upon them.

The Swedish immigration enterprise has been the most successful measure ever undertaken by our State for peopling our wilderness domain and converting it into a producing and tax-paying area. A township has been settled with unexampled rapidity, the first crop has been harvested and gladdened the settlers with unexpected abundance, and an extensive acreage cleared for the

crops of another year. The Swedes too have proved to our citizens that they are the best class of immigrants. Honest and industrious, moral and God-fearing, intelligent and law-abiding, they come from the only civilized land (Scandinavia) the Arctic rigors of whose climate make that of northern Maine seem genial by contrast. Some of our new colonists were born and reared within the Arctic circle, and many of them drove in sledges over frozen lakes on the ninth of last June on their way to the coast to take steamer for America. Such men will not be disheartened by the cold and snows of an Aroostook winter.

This Swedish enterprise, successful beyond our hopes, a matter of just pride to ourselves and honorable mention abroad, deserves well of the State. The facts of its past, the promise of its future demand that it be not abandoned. So great is the progress already made that we are now able to see our way clearly through to the time when the movement will be self-sustaining and advance without further aid. One more liberal appropriation will place the undertaking upon so secure a basis that little or no help will be needed in the future. If this appropriation is withheld, the entire enterprise in spite of its uninterrupted success will be left in an exceedingly critical condition.

A colonist's first year in our woods must be spent in felling trees and burning them up—clearing the land. However hard he may work, the result of his season's labor will be a blackened field with blackened stumps, and not a kernel to eat. During the winter he can build his house and barn; the spring comes on and he sows the acres cleared the year before, and the following autumn, the *second* autumn, he harvests his *first* crop. During all the intervening time he cannot cease eating to live. If rich, he can buy his provisions; if poor, they must be furnished him or he must do one of two things, starve or come out of the woods. About four hundred of the colonists in New Sweden are in this latter condition. Over one hundred—the first settlers—have been safely tided over the critical first year. They have received no provisions from the State since the close of last September. They have harvested their first crop. This will support them through the year and furnish them with seed next spring. But the four hundred new comers must be supplied in like manner with the simplest necessities of life until next autumn, or they must leave the settlement. True, they have some funds with them, but these are all needed for clothing, household utensils, and domestic animals.

The immigration of this year has been unexpectedly large. The most hopeful friends of the measure predicted that the liberal provisions made by the last Legislature would increase the Swedish population of Maine to five hundred souls. They number now over one thousand. The appropriation, liberal for five hundred, proved insufficient for double that number. All supplies were exhausted before even the first colonists had reaped their harvest. In this exigency your Commissioner, after consultation with your Board, purchased with his own funds, and at the lowest rates, supplies sufficient for the immediate prosecution of the work, and for maintaining the colony through the winter.

On December first, there was stored at New Sweden, or Tobique and Caribou, in readiness to be hauled into New Sweden, two hundred and fifty barrels of flour, one hundred and twenty-five barrels buckwheat meal, one hundred and twenty-five barrels of herring, thirty barrels of pork, nine hogsheads of molasses, and five hundred bushels of potatoes. These provisions were either purchased in the neighborhood, or forwarded up the St. John river before the close of navigation, and are adequate to meet the wants of the colony until the opening of spring.

Your Commissioner asks to be reimbursed the amounts expended for supplies, the purchase of which was a necessity that admitted of no delay; and would earnestly recommend a further appropriation sufficient to provide the new colonists with seed in the spring and food till they reap their first harvest. This is not asked as a gift. Everything furnished the colonists is charged to them. The price is fixed by adding the cost of transportation to the original price of the goods, plus ten per cent. for breakage, leakage, &c., and every dollar thus charged has been or will be paid or worked out by the Swedes on State roads or other public improvements.

Our main highway on which most of the Swedish labor has been expended, has already been laid out as a county road, and is one of more than local importance. If continued in the same general north-west direction across the thoroughfare of the Little Madawaska lakes, thence between the Cary and McCluskey brooks, across the thoroughfare connecting Long and Cross lakes and thence north-westerly to Fort Kent, near the junction of the St. John and Fish rivers, it will unite this important point with Caribou by a road only *forty-five* miles in length, the shortest practicable road between the two points and varying but little from a

straight line drawn between them. The present road follows the windings of the river St. John easterly, forty-eight miles to Van Buren; thence runs southerly twenty-two miles to Caribou, making the distance from Fort Kent to Caribou *seventy* miles. The extension of the New Sweden road, will therefore shorten the distance by *twenty-five* miles from Fort Kent and other settlements of the upper St. John to Caribou, Fort Fairfield, Presque Isle, Houlton railroad communication, Bangor, Portland, and the "outside" world generally: Eight miles of this proposed road, from Caribou to the Capitol at New Sweden, are already grubbed out and more than half of it turnpiked, seven miles additional are cut through the woods, carrying the road to near the north-west corner of New Sweden, (No. 15, Range 3.) At the other end of the route the French squatters have slowly advanced their settlements from Fort Kent and Frenchville to the thoroughfare between Long and Cross lakes and have maintained a passable line of communication along their route.

The breadth of forest separating the approaching termini of the Swedish and French roads is but twelve miles across. When this is cut through, a winter road following substantially the route proposed, will connect Fort Kent and Caribou. The territory to be crossed is all good settling land, and favorable for road building.

This highway is a State necessity, it can be built in great part by the very appropriations, which will enable the Swedes to live till they hew themselves a home out of our wilderness, and when completed will render certain the speedy settlement of that vast block of forest lying between the Aroostook and St. John rivers. of which Presque Isle, Van Buren, Fort Kent and Dalton (Ashland) are the four corners, and which contains 600,000 acres of the best land in New England. The inhabitants of northern Aroostook are alive to the importance of this road and petitions for laying it out are being extensively circulated and signed.

For the past two years Maine has had a homestead bill. By its provisions one hundred acres of land has been given every actual Swedish settler. With this bill the most eastern State of the Republic has been able to compete successfully for Swedish immigration with the States and Territories of the west.

*The Maine homestead bill should be continued in force.* This is the only aid your Commissioner would recommend the State to extend to the immigrants of the future. It will not be necessary

nor expedient to assist immigrants hereafter arriving with provisions, tools or other aid, except this gift of land. But this must be granted. Maine must still continue to offer "*free homes to the homeless.*"

The township New Sweden, and the State lands adjacent, have been so largely taken up by Swedes that we must look elsewhere for land on which to locate the immigrants who will pour in upon us with the opening of spring. Your Commissioner would suggest that the State lands in townships F, and No. 8, Range 5, w. e. l. s., be lotted for this purpose, under the direction of the land office. Township No. 15, Range 5, w. e. l. s., granted by the State to the European and North American Railway Company, lies but six miles from New Sweden, contains good settling lands, and will soon be accessible by a road laid out through the northern portion of Perham plantation. It seems, therefore, advisable that the proper legal notice be given this railroad corporation to survey the township into lots, and place it in the market for settlers.

Other retrenchments besides restricting supplies to the colonists already in New Sweden may now with safety be effected. One thousand dollars have been expended the present year in printing and distributing information in regard to Maine throughout Scandinavia. This expenditure may hereafter be wholly cut off, for we have now one thousand letter-writing Swedes among us who cannot but advertise our State in every letter they write to their old home.

For a like reason the office of agent of Maine resident in Sweden may henceforth be dispensed with, saving to the State a further sum of five hundred dollars a year. And here it is but justice to state that the incumbent of this office, Capt. G. W. Schroder, of Gothenburg, has performed the arduous and delicate duties of his agency with distinguished zeal, ability and success. His own efficiency has rendered his further services unnecessary, and the first suggestion of the discontinuance of his office came from himself.

It is the opinion of your Commissioner that the immigration policy of the State should be—

1st. To do economically and judiciously whatever may be necessary to root the present colony firmly in our soil.

2d. To let future immigration flow on of itself, *naturally*, without hindrance, and with no other help than the Maine homestead bill, granting one hundred acres of land to every actual Swedish settler.

Every Swede in Maine is a leading string to one hundred friends in old Sweden, and the string will draw sooner or later, if we but make fast our end. The colony of New Sweden will not only attract Swedish immigration, but will retain by ties of race and kindred our floating Swedish population within our borders. It is to this colony, the heart of the enterprise, that the fostering care of the State should be especially extended. The one thing imperatively necessary is, that every member of it should be furnished with food, seed, and tools, till he gets his first crop.

If the Legislature of 1872 follows up the work of its predecessors, and appropriates a sum sufficient for this purpose, your Commissioner deems that little or no further State aid will be required; that the present colonists having obtained a foothold on our soil will draw their relatives and friends to them; that each will extend to his own through the first hard year of frontier life, the same helping hand the State has extended him; that the colony will increase until a large portion of our vast wilderness domain is converted into well tilled farms and thriving villages; that an important and numerous class of laborers and artizans will be distributed throughout our towns and cities, and that Maine will experience all the advantages which a steadily growing industrial population is sure to confer upon a State.

W. W. THOMAS, JR.,  
*Commissioner of Immigration.*

NEW SWEDEN, Dec. 15, 1871.