

**REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF
THE SENATE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY ON THE
ENCROACHMENTS UPON THE BAY
AND HARBOR OF NEW YORK**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649234516

Report of the Joint Committee of the Senate and General Assembly of the state of new jersey on the encroachments upon the bay and harbor of new york by Various

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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JOINT COMMITTEE'S REPORT

ON

NEW YORK

HARBOR ENCROACHMENTS.

N.J. - Legislative Joint comm. on N.Y.
harbor encroachments.

REPORT
OF THE
JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE
AND
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
ON THE ENCROACHMENTS UPON THE
BAY AND HARBOR OF NEW YORK,

WITH THE REPORT OF

EGBERT L. VIELE,
STATE TOPOGRAPHICAL ENGINEER.

WITH ACCOMPANYING MAPS.

TRENTON:
PRINTED AT THE "TRUE AMERICAN" OFFICE.

1855.

18.55.3

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1918

REPORT.

THE Joint Committee of the two Houses, appointed in conformity with a communication from His Excellency Governor Price, communicating an invitation to meet the Governor and the committee of commerce of the legislature of New York for the purpose of viewing and considering the encroachments upon the bay and harbor of New York,

REPORT :

That on the thirtieth day of January last, your committee, accompanied by His Excellency Governor Price, and E. L. Viele, Esq., the engineer of our state geographical survey, proceeded to New York, and at the time appointed met His Excellency Governor Clark, of the state of New York, the committee of commerce of said state, the state engineer, with other gentlemen occupying important offices under the government of that state.

That your committee, in connection with the above-mentioned authorities of the state of New York, the Governors of New Jersey and Connecticut, accompanied also by officers of the Government in charge of the Navy Yard, with other persons representing the commercial interests of New York, proceeded to examine certain encroachments made, and in progress, and contemplated upon the Brooklyn side of the East river.

Your committee upon the first views of the matter regarded such encroachments as matters with which New Jersey had no interest, and should not express any opinion; but upon reflecting they came to the conclusion that such encroachments

were prejudicial to her : inasmuch as they jeopardized the interests which New Jersey has, in common with every other state of the Union, in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and the immense government expenditures at that point.

And secondly, the effect of these encroachments at this point upon the Sandy Hook channel, in which New Jersey possesses, through her extended water front upon the Hudson river and New York bay, an undeveloped interest one-third as large as that of the state of New York, an interest that should be diligently cared for, by early and careful legislation, protecting herself alike from the rapacity of her own citizens, and the aggressions of New York.

The committee on viewing these encroachments, and from various other sources of information, find that the East river has been encroached upon on the New York side, more than one thousand feet, while on the Brooklyn side the encroachments have not been much less, if they shall be used to the full extent contemplated by those claiming to have rights or grants for that purpose.

These encroachments have narrowed the East river between New York and Brooklyn to a strait one-half of its original width, through which contracted channel the tide flows and ebbs like a millstream, in fact, running six miles an hour, in which shipping can only be handled safely by steam tow-boats. So narrow is the channel of the East river, and so inadequate to pass, the tides flowing into and from the sound, that the water is raised about one foot above or below the point of greatest encroachment, as the tide may be flowing in and out. The extent and character of these encroachments may be estimated by the fact that they so far impede the free flow of the tide into the East river, that the tide comes in from Long Island Sound and meets the tide coming in from the East river more than six miles this side of the natural point of meeting.

At the Navy Yard, your committee find, that by a grant of the New York land commissioners, they have authorised one Henry

Ruggles, who owns a small triangular piece of land adjoining the Navy Yard, to extend piers into the river in continuation of his shore line, which, if insisted upon and carried out, will impair, if not destroy, the usefulness of the Brooklyn Navy Yard; and Mr. Ruggles is now holding this grant, alleged to have been obtained from the land commissioners of New York by mistake and fraud, over the interest belonging to the United States Government at the Navy Yard, and is demanding exorbitant sums from the government for his right under a grant thus obtained, a matter calling for remonstrance upon the part of New Jersey, and for some kind of action, either legislative or judicial, from the state of New York or the federal government.

The committee also find that the encroachments from the Battery inland, are more than one thousand feet, and that vessels of large burthen and capacity have unloaded upon the site of streets, that are now densely populated. Similar encroachments upon the Jersey side would produce the same deplorable results now experienced by encroachments now existing in the East river.

Your committee have mentioned these facts for the purpose, among others, of illustrating the necessity of timely establishing along our New Jersey shore a water line, outside of which no encroachments shall be made, a proposition that seems to be self-evident, in order to restrain individual cupidity from inflicting similar injuries along the Jersey shore.

It is not now denied by any one, even the most interested, that the encroachments in the East river are of vital injury to the port of New York and to the navigation of the East River, and that the more glaring encroachments on the Brooklyn side should be removed. It is much easier to restrain encroachments than to remove those that have been made, as it is alleged that it would cost at least six millions of dollars to remove the encroachments on the Brooklyn side, and this would but partially remedy the injury that has now been done.