

**COMMERCIAL, RAILWAY, AND  
SHIP BUILDING, STATISTICS, OF  
THE CITY OF PORTLAND, AND  
THE STATE OF MAINE; PP. 1-47**

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Commercial, Railway, and Ship Building, Statistics, of the City of Portland, and the State of Maine; pp. 1-47 by John A. Poor

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**JOHN A. POOR**

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COMMERCIAL,  
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THE CITY OF PORTLAND, AND THE STATE OF

MAINE.

PREPARED TO ACCOMPANY THE SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS  
ON PORTLAND HARBOUR,

BY

JOHN A. POOR.

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PORTLAND:  
DAVID TUCKER, PRINTER.  
1855.

## THE COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE OF PORTLAND.

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The Harbor of Portland has been known, from the first discovery and settlement of North America by Europeans, as one of the best, if not the most commodious, safe and accessible, of any on the Atlantic coast. It was well described by Christopher Levett, who visited it in 1621, and it was sailed into by the great French Navigator, Du Monts, as early as 1603. As the principal seaport of all the region east of Massachusetts, during the period of colonial dependence, and latterly, as the Commercial Capitol of the State of Maine, it has been well known, in the commercial history of the country. As a harbor of refuge in case of storms, or severe weather, it is probably more resorted to, than any Northern seaport of the United States. On the approach of an easterly gale, hundreds of vessels drop into it, for shelter, as naturally as ships in the British channel seek the harbor of Portsmouth,

or Southampton, or those of the North Sea make the port of Sunderland.

Portland harbor is so easy of access at all conditions of the tide, and with any direction of wind; and withal, is so capacious, deep and well sheltered, that the largest ships may enter and securely ride, at all times and under all conditions of the weather. This will be quite apparent, by reference to the charts of the United States Coast Survey.

For reasons which are very readily understood, the City of Portland has not heretofore attained that commercial success, to which her position seemed to entitle her. She has, however, grown rapidly into importance within the last few years, and is attracting attention as the terminus of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada, the European Packet Station for the Valley of the St. Lawrence and the West, and the route for the trade and travel between the Upper and Lower British Provinces. Her commercial importance may be considered as first established, when measures were entered upon, to open a more direct line of communication by Railway between the St. Lawrence at Montreal and the Atlantic Ocean at Portland, and to extend these lines so as to connect the several British Provinces with each other and the United States across the breadth of the State of Maine.

The Railway System of Maine, as it may be called, including its Provincial connections, embraces an aggregate length of more than two thousand miles, built or in process of construction.

This system of Railway has a gauge of 5 1-2 feet, which gives it a character peculiar to itself, and one that makes it independent of the narrow gauge lines of New England and New York.

The first practical effort to carry out this Railway system, was commenced in 1844. As soon as this movement was understood, and the commercial position of Portland made known through the public journals of the United States and Canada, an immediate enhancement of the value of the real estate of the City took place. This was followed by a corresponding increase of business. The extent of this will be readily perceived by the following table showing the population and valuation of the City at different periods, as follows :



|      | Population. | State valuation. | City valuation. |
|------|-------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1790 | 2,240       |                  |                 |
| 1800 | 3,677       |                  |                 |
| 1810 | 7,169       | 91,295           |                 |
| 1820 | 8,581       | 1,695,185        | 2,634,427       |
| 1821 |             |                  | 2,635,620       |
| 1822 |             |                  | 2,612,910       |
| 1823 |             |                  | 2,594,675       |
| 1824 |             |                  | 2,678,989       |
| 1825 |             |                  | 2,757,352       |
| 1826 |             |                  | 2,547,087       |
| 1827 |             |                  | 2,632,254       |
| 1828 |             |                  | 2,647,503       |
| 1829 |             |                  | 2,692,476       |
| 1830 | 12,601      | 2,362,643        | 2,757,179       |
| 1831 |             |                  | 2,962,036       |
| 1832 |             |                  | 3,144,572       |
| 1833 |             |                  | 3,326,624       |
| 1834 |             |                  | 3,465,596       |
| 1835 |             |                  | 3,991,529       |
| 1836 |             |                  | 4,389,013       |
| 1837 | 15,637      |                  | 4,177,673       |
| 1838 |             |                  | 3,999,484       |
| 1839 |             |                  | 4,018,735       |
| 1840 | 15,218      | 3,106,514        | 4,054,095       |
| 1841 |             |                  | 4,112,946       |
| 1842 |             |                  | 4,158,046       |
| 1843 |             |                  | 4,168,122       |
| 1844 |             |                  | 4,365,788       |
| 1845 |             | 4,061,303        | 4,634,738       |
| 1846 |             |                  | 4,959,959       |
| 1847 |             |                  | 5,270,525       |
| 1848 | 19,013      |                  | 5,945,330       |
| 1849 |             |                  | 6,392,664       |
| 1850 | 20,819      | 7,311,561        | 13,364,009      |
| 1851 | 22,064      |                  | 15,694,247      |
| 1852 | 23,277      |                  | 16,467,699      |
| 1853 | 24,557      |                  | 17,656,612      |
| 1854 | 25,418      |                  | 18,962,514      |
| 1855 | 27,000      |                  |                 |

This rapid growth of the City from 1844 to 1854 was mainly attributable to the extension of its Railways.

An account of the system of Railways of which Portland is the terminus, seems essential to the purposes of this paper. We therefore proceed to speak of

### THE RAILWAY SYSTEM OF PORTLAND.

There are four distinct and independent lines of Railway extending or radiating from Portland.

I. **THE SOUTHERN LINE** is the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth Railroad, extending as a Trunk line from Portland to South Berwick Junction, 38 miles, where it branches into two lines, one extending to Portsmouth, N. H. where it unites with the Eastern Railroad reaching to Salem, and Boston, a distance of 107 miles from Portland, the other extending to Dover, Haverhill and Boston, a distance of 111 miles from Portland to Boston. This line was completed from Boston to Portland by the way of Portsmouth, Nov. 23, 1842, and the connection between Boston and South Berwick Junction by the way of Dover, N. H. was made, July 24, 1843.

2. **THE WESTERN LINE** is the York and Cumberland Railroad, extending from Portland to Saco river, at Buxton, a distance of 18 miles, to which place it was opened in February, 1853. It is in contemplation, by the friends of this line, to extend it westward so as to connect with the Railways of New Hampshire and unite with the Boston and Maine Railroad, in the neighborhood of Dover.

III. **THE NORTHERN LINE** is the Portland and Montreal Railroad, formerly called the Atlantic and

St. Lawrence Railroad, but now known, as the Portland Section of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada. This line is completed to Montreal, 292 miles, with a Branch to Quebec of 100 miles. The plan for building this road was first entered upon in the fall of 1844. This movement was the commencement of a new era in Maine. The charter for the line in Maine was granted February 10, 1845, the work commenced July 4, 1846, the road opened to Yarmouth, 12 miles, July 4, 1848, to Mechanic Falls, 36 miles, in February, 1849, to Paris, 47 miles, on the 8th of June, 1850, to Bethel, 70 miles, in March, 1851, to Gorham, N. H., 91 miles, July 23, 1851, to Northumberland, N. H., 122 miles, July 12, 1852, and to Island Pond Junction, 149 miles, January 29, 1853, and to Montreal, 292 miles, July 18, 1853. Island Pond is the halfway Station, and the line is worked in two sections from this point,—one from Island Pond to Portland, and the other, from Island Pond to Montreal.

This Trunk line has the following branches, or connecting lines :

1. The Androscoggin and Kennebec Railroad, which branches at Fanville Junction, 27 miles from Portland, and extends to Lewiston, Winthrop and Waterville, 55 miles ; to which place it was opened December 1, 1850. From Waterville, East, extends the line of the Penobscot and Kennebec Railroad, already opened to Pittsfield, 25 miles, in the direction of Bangor, to which place it will be opened in the summer of 1855, a distance of 56 miles from Waterville, or 138 miles from Portland. At Bangor, commences the line of the pro-