

**REPORT OF THE GUN FOUNDRY
BOARD ORGANIZED BY THE
PRESIDENT IN ACCORDANCE
WITH, ACT OF CONGRESS
APPROVED MARCH 3, 1883**

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Report of the Gun Foundry Board Organized by the President in Accordance With, Act of Congress Approved March 3, 1883 by Various

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VARIOUS

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*Recd
April 15/84*

REPORT

*W. H. Handberg
Capt. U.S. Army*

OF THE

U.S.
GUN FOUNDRY BOARD

ORGANIZED BY

THE PRESIDENT

IN ACCORDANCE WITH

ACT OF CONGRESS APPROVED MARCH 3, 1883.



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REPORT OF GUN FOUNDRY BOARD.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

A report of the Board of Army and Navy Officers relative to the best location for establishing a Government foundry.

FEBRUARY 20, 1884.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

I transmit herewith to the House of Representatives the report of a Board of Army and Navy Officers, appointed by me in accordance with the act of Congress approved March 3, 1883—

For the purpose of examining and reporting to Congress which of the navy-yard or arsenals owned by the Government has the best location and is best adapted for the establishment of a Government foundry, or what other method, if any, should be adopted for the manufacture of heavy ordnance adapted to modern warfare, for the use of the Army and Navy of the United States; the cost of all buildings, tools, and implements necessary to be used in the manufacture thereof, including the cost of a steam-hammer or apparatus of sufficient size for the manufacture of the heaviest guns.

CHESTER A. ARTHUR.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
February 18, 1884.

GUN FOUNDRY BOARD,
1727 Pine Street, Philadelphia, Pa., February 16, 1884.

To the President:

In accordance with your instructions of April 2, 1883, issued under the provision of section 1 of the "Act making appropriations for the naval service for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1884, and for other purposes," approved March 3, 1883, the Board, composed of six officers selected from the Army and Navy, "for the purpose of examining and reporting to Congress which of the navy-yards or arsenals owned by the Government has the best location and is best adapted for the establishment of a Government foundry, or what other method, if any, should be adopted for the manufacture of heavy ordnance adapted to

modern warfare, for the use of the Army and Navy of the United States; the cost of all buildings, tools, and implements necessary to be used in the manufacture thereof, including the cost of a steam-hammer or apparatus of sufficient size for the manufacture of the heaviest guns," has the honor to submit herewith its report and the record of its proceedings.

In order to reply satisfactorily to the act of Congress, it was necessary for the Board to seek information in Europe, and visits were made to England, France, and Russia. It is appropriate to state that your Board was received by both Government officials and by private companies with much cordiality, and every assistance was rendered in its investigations in those countries.

It was the desire of the Board also to visit the large German steel works at Essen, but the permission to do so, which was requested of Mr. Fried. Krupp, was not granted for reasons that will be found stated in the copy of correspondence attached to this report.

The Board, having completed its duties, has adjourned *sine die*.

Very respectfully, for the Board,

E. SIMPSON,

Rear-Admiral, United States Navy, President of the Board.

REPORT
OF THE
GUN FOUNDRY BOARD.

The act of Congress, approved March 3, 1883, under which the Gun Foundry Board was organized, calls for a report on the following points:

1st. Which of the navy-yards or arsenals owned by the Government has the best location, and is best adapted for the establishment of a Government foundry.

2d. What other method, if any, should be adopted for the manufacture of heavy ordnance adapted to modern warfare, for the use of the Army and Navy of the United States.

3d. The cost of all buildings, tools, and implements necessary to be used in the manufacture thereof, including the cost of a steam-hammer or apparatus of sufficient size for the manufacture of the heaviest guns.

The first question presupposes the establishment of a Government Gun Foundry, properly so called, the establishment to be under the absolute control of the Government, and the details of all work to be supervised and directed by Government officers.

The answer to this question involves simply an expression of opinion as to the superior adaptability, for the purposes of a gun foundry, of any navy-yard or arsenal now owned by the Government.

The second question imposes no limitation, and calls upon the Board to suggest "any other method" (apart from a Government foundry, pure and simple) by which the purposes of the act of Congress can be achieved. The Board is evidently called upon to consider the subject of joint action between the Government and private parties for the accomplishment of a national purpose.

The Board decided that there were three points of view from which this subject should be considered, viz:

1st. That the Government should supplement the plants of some of the steel workers of the country with such additional tools and implements as would enable them to turn out finished steel cannon.

2d. That the Government should give contracts of sufficient magnitude to enable the steel workers of the country to supply the finished guns without its direct aid.

3d. That the Government should establish on its own territory a plant for the fabrication of cannon, and should contract with private parties to such amounts as would enable them to supply from the private industries of the country the forged and tempered material.

The course of the investigation being thus indicated, the Board addressed circular letters to several of the steel manufacturers in the country and to the two companies employed in the fabrication of cannon. These letters and the replies thereto will be found in the correspondence attached to the record of proceedings of the Board, and copies are appended to this report. The replies were unsatisfactory, the subject being a new one to the parties addressed. The expense to be incurred could not be calculated upon any known basis, and the