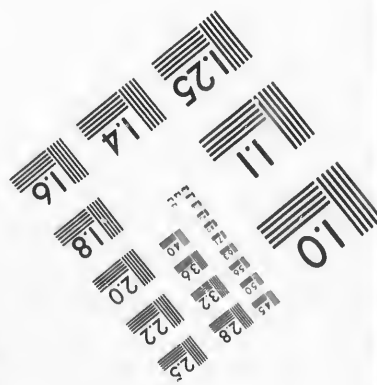
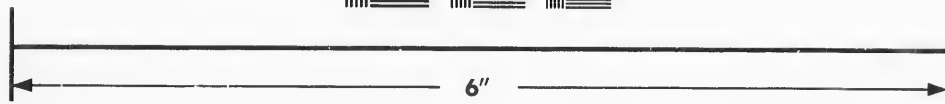
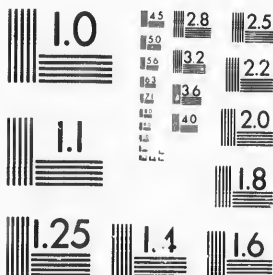


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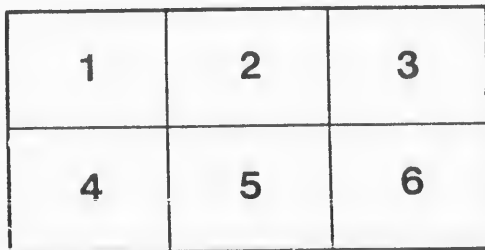
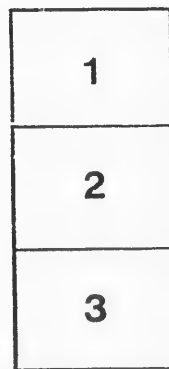
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RELATING

To the defence of the northeastern frontier of the United States.

FEBRUARY 22, 1839.

Submitted by Mr. BENTON, to accompany Senate bill No. 200, and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *January 7, 1839.*

SIR: I have had the honor to receive your communication of the 2d instant, enclosing two resolutions of the Senate, in reference to the defence of the maritime frontier of the State of Maine, and requesting of this department such information on the subject as it may be able to give.

In compliance, I have the honor to transmit a report of the Chief Engineer, dated the 4th instant, which contains all the information possessed by the department on the subject of the first part of the resolutions; and in regard to the second part, I beg leave to refer to the report of this department, of the 31st ultimo, on the same subject, made in compliance with the resolution of the Senate of the 22d December last.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

J. R. POINSETT.

HON. THOMAS H. BENTON,

Chairman Committee on Military Affairs, Senate.

ENGINEER DEPARTMENT,

Washington, January 4, 1839.

SIR: I have the honor to present the following report on so much of the resolution of the Senate of the 28th ultimo, this day referred to this office, as relates to "the expediency of constructing fortifications or establishing other defences at important and exposed points on the maritime frontier of the State of Maine, especially at Portland harbor, at the entrance of Kennebeck river, and at the Narrows of the Penobscot river."

In 1818 a board of engineers was organized for the special purpose of considering the subject of the military defences of the country; and for years the board was assiduously employed either in making a personal examination of the sea coast, or in devising the means of defending its exposed points. During this period reports were made by the board of their views on the subject, as applied to the portions of the coast coming successively under examination; and when the personal examination was finished, a

single report, in a form as condensed as possible, was presented of the whole matter.

The report, made in 1826, may be found in document No. 153 of the House of Representatives, 19th Congress, 1st session.

A reference to this report will show that the board considered it necessary to fortify the roadstead of Mount Desert island, the Narrows of the Penobscot, the Sheepscot, the Kennebeck, Portland harbor, and Portsmouth harbor. In a report, made in 1836, Eastport and Machias are brought forward as places that will need attention in this way, ere long; and Castine, St. George's bay, Broad bay, Damariscotta, Saco, Kennebunk, and York, are also enumerated, as calling, more or less urgently, for similar protection.

Portland, the mouth of the Kennebeck, and the Narrows of the Penobscot, being positions of great importance, have received much attention. The harbor of Portland has been surveyed, and the principal defences carefully planned: these are, a new fort on Fort Preble point, estimate \$155,000; and works on House island, estimate \$48,000. The security of Hog island channel may cost, say \$135,000.

A survey of the mouth of the Kennebeck was begun in 1819 or 1820, but owing to the assignment of the surveying officers to other duty, was never finished.

It is many years since the survey of the Narrows of the Penobscot, and the plan of the proposed defences, estimated cost \$150,000, was handed in to the department.

Portsmouth harbor, important on many accounts, and of the greater national importance from being the site of a navy yard, lies partly in the State of Maine. This harbor deserves immediate attention. The survey begun many years ago, was broken off by calls to other duty of the surveying officer, and has never been resumed.

The fort at the Narrows of the Penobscot, a fort at the mouth of the Kennebeck, Fort Preble, in Portland harbor, and forts in Portsmouth harbor, were placed, by the last condensed report of the Board of Engineers, in the class of works first to be begun, the progress made since 1826 in the construction of the fortifications comprised in the original first class having advanced these works from the second class.

This office is unable to afford information on the other subject embraced in the resolution of the Senate.

All which is respectfully submitted.

JOS. G. TOTTEN,

Lt. Colonel Engineers, brevet Colonel, and Chief Engineer.

Hon. J. R. POINSETT, *Secretary of War.*

WAR DEPARTMENT, *February 21, 1839.*

SIR: I have the honor to lay before the Committee on Military Affairs an extract of a report of the board of engineers on the subject of the points at which the erection of proper defences, for the frontier of the State of Maine, is necessary. The department concurs in the opinions of the board, and respectfully recommends an appropriation of the sum estimated by it, \$100,000, for operations during the present year; and that, in conformity with its suggestion, it be made unspecified.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

J. R. POINSETT.

Hon. T. H. BENTON,

Chairman Committee on Military Affairs, Senate.

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Extract from a report of the Board of Engineers to the Secretary of War, on the subject of the defence of the frontier of Maine, dated February 20, 1839.

In the view of the subject, there is needed—

1. A military establishment at the junction of Dead river and the Kennebeck.
2. A military establishment at the junction of the Mattewamkeag and Penobscot.
3. A military establishment at Calais, with collateral works at Eastport.
4. A central arsenal at Bangor.
5. A fort on the Penobscot opposite Belfast.

To which are to be added advanced works as occasion may call for them.

We must here remark that not only is it impossible for us to indicate, in the present state of our knowledge, the proper form or magnitude of the establishments above enumerated, but we must insist on the importance of very careful and deliberate examinations of the ground before the exact positions even be determined. Of course, estimates made at this moment cannot pretend to be more than mere conjectures of the amount that may, probably, be expended with judgment within the year. It would be a great advantage if the sum allowed for these objects should be granted without apportionment to them severally. In that case it is thought that \$100,000 might be applied during the year to *military works at the head waters of the Kennebeck; on the head waters of the Penobscot; on the St. Croix river; at Eastport; at Bangor; and on the Penobscot opposite Belfast; all in the State of Maine.*

Under the disadvantage of not having personally inspected the frontiers of Maine, the preceding remarks are offered with diffidence, not doubting that actual examination and surveys may lead to important modifications, if not radical changes.

IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
December 28, 1838.

On motion by Mr. Ruggles :

Resolved, That the Committee on Military Affairs be directed to consider and report upon the expediency of constructing fortifications or establishing other defences at important and exposed points on the maritime frontier of the State of Maine, especially at Portland harbor, at the entrance of Kennebeck river, and at the Narrows of Penobscot river; and that they consider the subject with reference to the claim of that State to an equal and just participation with the other States of the Union in the benefits of the system of national defence embraced by the constitutional duties of this Government, and more especially with reference to the existing controversy, so greatly prolonged, in which the territorial rights of Maine are involved, a large portion of her territory having been usurped by a foreign power, and being now held in subjection thereto; with leave to report by bill or otherwise.

Resolved, That the same committee further consider, with reference to the same subject of controversy and the right which every State has, under

the federal constitution, to protection for its territory from foreign aggression, whether any and what further provisions are necessary to be made for the greater security of the inland frontier of Maine, and the staying of encroachments; with leave to report as aforesaid.

Attest :

ASBURY DICKINS, *Secretary.*

