

"America's Sunrise Gateway"



PORT OF PORTLAND STATE OF MAINE and its Hinterland

BEING AN ORDERLY LISTING OF ALL
PORT AND TERMINAL FACILITIES,
INCLUDING WHARFAGE, DEPTH
OF WATER, WIDTH OF CHANNELS,
TOWING, BUNKERING, LIGHTER-
AGE, STEVEDORING, STORAGE, BULK
AND GENERAL CARGO HANDLING
EQUIPMENT, DRY DOCKS AND SHIP
REPAIRS, PORT CHARGES, ADMINIS-
TRATION AND LAWS, ETC., ETC.

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The close of the year, 1922, sees the completion of a project which owes its inception primarily to the Portland Chamber of Commerce and which it is believed by those conversant with the situation, will be of direct and lasting benefit not alone to Portland but to the whole state of Maine, namely the building of the new Maine State Pier at the Port of Portland.

Doubtless, many there are who look back to the inception of the project some six or eight years ago with the feeling that it has come forward very slowly and until recently some may have wondered if the State Pier would really materialize at all. Indeed, at one time it seemed as though the project might be dead.

In due time, however, all obstacles were overcome and early in this year construction was started with a rush and a determination to spare no efforts to complete the pier in season to take full advantage of next winter's business through this port.

In reality, however, the progress of the State Pier project has not been slow as compared with the inception of public works generally. Usually a public undertaking to the State of Maine can only be realized after some years of agitation and public discussion. As a matter of fact, the State is to have its first state-owned, modern waterfront terminal at an earlier date than could reasonably have been expected by its proponents at the outset.

Largely, through the efforts of the Portland Chamber of Commerce, the Legislature of the State, at its 1917 session, passed a resolve creating a State Harbor Commission to investigate and report upon the advisability of building a public pier at the Port of Portland. This special commission appointed by the Governor, engaged engineering advisors and made a thorough economic and engineering investigation of the wisdom of building a state pier at this port. In its report to the next session of the Legislature in 1919, the State Harbor Commission presented forcibly the need of a new and modern waterfront terminal at Portland, gave the reasons why this terminal should be publicly owned and administered, and recognized the fact that the provision of such a terminal would not merely benefit the Port of Portland alone but would have a far reaching effect and be intimately connected with the development and prosperity of the entire state.

The report of the State Harbor Commission was so convincing and complete that the 1919 Legislature passed, without opposition, legislation creating a permanent state board to be known as the Directors of the Port of Portland, and a resolve referring to the voters of the State at large, by referendum, the question of the advisability of the State building a public pier at Portland.

The voters passed this referendum by an overwhelming majority at the election held in September 1919.

At the special session of the Legislature in November, 1919, further legislation was passed creating Portland State Pier Site District, charged with the duty of providing a site for the State Pier, and additional legislation to perfect the organization of the Directors of the Port of Portland and provide for the construction of the pier by the State and its administration after construction. The winter and spring of 1920 were spent by the Port Directors and their engineers in a thorough study of the waterfront of Portland Harbor to determine the most available site for the new pier. In this investigation, the Directors profited by the advice of the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors of the United States Army, which sent its representatives to Portland and conducted an independent investigation of this matter. After a most thorough investigation, the Directors and their engineers, as well as the engineers of the United States Army, unanimously agreed that the site selected, consisting of Galt Wharf, the most westerly wharf of the Grand Trunk terminal, and Franklin Wharf, owned by the Eastern Steamship Lines, Inc. was pre-eminently the best location for the new pier.

It is hardly necessary to call the attention of shipping men to the advantages of Portland Harbor. They must appreciate that the Port of Portland possesses one of the finest natural harbors to be found in this county or abroad, of ample area, well protected, open throughout the year, with its principal waterfront only three and one half miles from the open ocean and reached by a deep channel so direct that vessels regularly using this port can enter or leave it day or night with minimum inconvenience.

The site of the State Pier is most accessible to shipping as it lies at the head of the 35-foot improved ship channel, which at this point has been dredged to this depth for a width of 1800 feet from the present Grand Trunk piers toward the South Portland shore.

Not only can the site be reached by the largest vessels entering Portland but there is ample room and depth for maneuvering such vessels on entering and leaving the new pier. The site is in close proximity to the freight yards of both the Grand Trunk Railway and the Portland Terminal Company. As all railroads entering Portland have access to the pier on equal terms, the transfer of freight by rail to and from all these roads may be effected economically and expeditiously. Because of its close to the Grand Trunk Railway terminal, it has been possible to provide at the State Pier for the loading of ships with grain by means of a grain gallery connecting with the elevators of the Grand Trunk. Arrangements already have been made between the Directors and that railway, by which grain will be delivered to ships on the State Pier on exactly the same terms as it is delivered to ships on the Grand Trunk Pier. This applies not only to grain brought to Portland over the Grand Trunk but also to grain which may be brought in by other roads.

As the site is in close proximity to the business district of Portland as well as to the passenger station of the Grand Trunk Railway, its location is favorable for handling passengers as well as freight and for conducting coastwise as well as overseas shipping business.

The selection of this site was made contingent upon the re-location of the Harbor Line so as to provide a modern pier of adequate length. Formerly the Harbor Line passed along the outer ends of Franklin Wharf and of Galt, Atlantic and the other wharves constituting the Grand Trunk terminal. This permitting a series of wharves only 500 feet in length which are inadequate for the largest vessels now using this port. Upon application of the Directors of the Port of Portland, the Secretary of War has granted a re-location of the Harbor Line by moving it approximately 500 feet out into the harbor, thus making possible the construction of piers in this vicinity 1000 feet in length. A pier 1,000 feet long will accommodate the largest vessels which are likely to come to Portland for many years in the future, and along one side of such a pier can be berthed two ordinary vessels such as are commonly found in overseas or Pacific coast service.

During the year 1921, the cities of Portland and South Portland, constituting the Portland State Pier Site District, purchased the site and deeded it to the State of Maine. Late that fall, the preliminaries had been compiled with and the Directors were in position to proceed with the preparations for the construction of the pier itself. Contracts for the creosoted southern pine piles, required for the construction of the pier, were let in November 1921.

Late in December a contract was made for removing Galt Wharf, dredging the site and building the retaining wall at the inner end of the new slip. During March 1922, the contract for the construction of the pier itself was let and work under this contract is practically completed. During the spring and summer contracts were let for the pier sheds, grain gallery and grain handling machinery. Contracts for the freight handling equipment of the pier have also been awarded.



The new construction for the State Pier is built of creosoted southern pine piles. It was necessary to creosote these piles to ensure their durability and because of their great length (most of the piles being from 75 to 90 feet long), it was necessary to get them from the southern yellow pine district as northern piles cannot be secured locally in sufficient lengths.

The new pier is located so as to provide a slip 250 feet wide between its easterly fact and the Atlantic Wharf of the Grand Trunk. The provision of a slip of suitable width made necessary the removal of Galt Wharf, and the width of 250 feet affords a slip ample for berthing vessels at the same time at Atlantic Wharf and the new pier. Along the easterly side of the pier the slip is dredged to a depth of 35 feet at Mean Low Water, the depth of the present main ship channel. Provision is made for deepening the slip to 40 feet in the future whenever additional depth may be needed.

The present needs of the Port of Portland call for a pier which will accommodate both overseas and coastwise shipping, and the new pier is constructed to meet theses special conditions. Provision for trans-Atlantic shipping is made on the easterly side of the new pier and primarily at its inner end. Here the pier is of most permanent construction with a concrete deck and a permanent steel shed 90 in width and two stories in height, the second story of the shed being devoted to passenger business, and the lower story or main wharf deck to freight. Along this portion of the pier will be carried the new grain gallery connecting with the Grand Trunk elevators so that ships may be readily loaded with grain.

The outer end of the new pier will be devoted solely to freight business. It has a timber deck and single story sheds 60 feet in with on two sides. The berth on the easterly side at the other end is designed for either overseas or Pacific coast shipping, that on the westerly side has been leased by the Eastern Steamship Company for its coastwise line to New York. The westerly side of the old Franklin Wharf will continue to be used by the Eastern Steamship Lines, Inc. for its Boston Line. Thus the new pier will accommodate at one time two ships for overseas service on the easterly side, two coastwise ships on the westerly side and in addition there is at the other end for berthing smaller boats such as those now used by the United States Army as tenders for the harbor forts.

The two-story pier shed at the inner end of the easterly side of the new pier, as has been stated, is for the accommodation of both trans-Atlantic passenger and freight business. Particular attention is being given to provision of suitable quarters for handling the immigration business at this port. The greater portion of the second story of this pier shed will be devoted to immigration work and will contain waiting rooms, examination rooms, detention and board rooms, railway and steamship ticket offices, lunch counter and other features of a modern immigration station. In the layout of this portion of the pier, the Directors have consulted with Immigration authorities at Washington and at Portland as well as with representatives of the trans-Atlantic steamship lines and the railroads concerned.



While particular attention is being given to immigrants who make up the larger part of the passenger traffic to this port, provision will also be made at the new pier for the comfortable handling of saloon and second cabin passengers.

Inasmuch as railroad tracks are to extend along the pier for its entire length, it will be possible for passengers of all classes to pass directly from the trans-Atlantic pier shed to trains standing on the pier alongside the shed and be taken thence to their destinations. It will not be necessary to transfer passengers across Commercial Street to the Grand Trunk Station or across the city to the Union Station.

The modern freight handling equipment selected for the new pier is far better than any now found at this port and is well abreast of present day needs. Mention has already been made of the grain gallery by which trans-Atlantic vessels will be loaded with grain directly from the Grand Trunk elevators. In addition, package freight will be handled by means of cargo hoists such as are almost exclusively used at the port of New York, by locomotive crane for handling heavy packages, and by electric storage battery tractors and trailer trucks for the movement of freight within the pier sheds. Provision is also made for the installation of gantry cranes in the future whenever business develops to an extent sufficient to warrant their use. The new pier will have ample trackage for handling railroad freight cars. Beside a number of tracks near the middle of the pier, there will be a track extending the entire length of the pier on the easterly side between the pier shed and the edge of the wharf. This will enable heavy freight to be taken by car alongside the ship and loaded by pier crane.

A few statistics may be of interest; - The total area of the new pier construction is 180,000 square feet or over four acres. Added to this is the area of the existing Franklin Wharf and the existing land used as a part of the new State Pier, containing 160,000 square feet or three of seven and one-half acres. That is, there is a total of seven and one-half acres of pier structure and land devoted to the business of the pier. The total floor area of the pier sheds is over three and one-half acres. The length of railroad tracks on the pier is 6,250 linear feet or 1 ¼ miles.



Showing Outward Length of State Pier / construction

SOUTH PORTLAND IN DISTANCE



Interior of Coastwise Shed *etc*
SHOWING FIRE DICKS, WHARF DROPS, ESCALATORS ETC.



Coastwise Freight Shed on West Side of Pier



Coastwise Shed under Construction
WITH WHARF DROPS READY FOR INSTALLATION



Dockbuilder Working
FINISHING FENDER
PILES



Electrical Escalator
QUICK AID IN HANDING
CARGOES