

**CITY DOCUMENT. - NO. 105, CITY OF  
BOSTON: REPORT BY THE COMMISSION  
APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE  
THE SUBJECT OF THE ANNEXATION OF  
CERTAIN NEIGHBORING CITIES AND  
TOWNS TO THE CITY OF BOSTON**

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City Document. - No. 105, City of Boston: Report by the Commission Appointed to Investigate the Subject of the Annexation of Certain Neighboring Cities and Towns to the City of Boston by Henry L. Pierce & S. F. McCleary

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**HENRY L. PIERCE & S. F. MCCLEARY**

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APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE THE SUBJECT

OF THE

*Boston (Mass.)*

**A N N E X A T I O N** *Commission*

OF

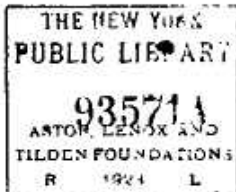
CERTAIN NEIGHBORING CITIES AND TOWNS

TO THE

CITY OF BOSTON.

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## REPORT OF THE CITY COMMISSIONERS.

MAYOR'S OFFICE, Sept. 18, 1873.

*To the Honorable the City Council of the City of Boston:—*

GENTLEMEN,—I have the honor to submit, for your information, the Report of the Commissioners appointed under an order approved January 2, 1873, upon the subject of the annexation of certain neighboring Cities and Towns to the City of Boston.

HENRY L. PIERCE, *Mayor.*

NEW YORK  
CLERK  
1873

APR 1873

CITY OF BOSTON.

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Jan. 2, 1873.

Whereas, Certain citizens of the City of Charlestown and the Town of West Roxbury have given notice of their intention to apply to the next General Court for an act to annex said city and town to the City of Boston; and, whereas, in the opinion of many of our citizens it is only a question of time when the cities of Cambridge and Somerville and the towns of Brookline and Brighton will also apply for such an act, it is therefore

Ordered, That His Honor the Mayor be requested to appoint a Commission of three discreet and intelligent persons, who shall carefully examine the subject in all its bearings, and report to the City Council, in print, as soon as may be, upon the financial, industrial and sanitary questions concerned in the matter; provided that the investigation shall be attended with no expense to the City of Boston, except the expense of printing the report.

Passed in Common Council. Came up for concurrence. Read and concurred. Approved by the Mayor, January 2, 1873.

A true copy. Attest:

S. F. McCLEARY, City Clerk.

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## CITY OF BOSTON.

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IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Feb. 3, 1873.

*Ordered,* That the Committee appointed under an order of the City Council approved January 2, 1873, to report upon the financial, industrial and sanitary questions concerned in the annexation of certain cities and towns to the City of Boston, be authorized to procure such clerical services and such surveys and plans as they may require for the prosecution of their investigation; the expense to be charged to the appropriation for Incidentals.

Passed in Common Council. Came up for concurrence. Read and concurred. Approved by the Mayor, February 4, 1873.

A true copy. Attest:

S. F. McCLEARY, *City Clerk.*



## CITY OF BOSTON.

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The majority of the Commissioners appointed by His Honor the Mayor, in pursuance of the foregoing order, respectfully submit their

### REPORT.

TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF BOSTON:—The Commission appointed January 3d, 1873, was not organized until the 29th of the same month, in consequence of the resignation of J. Tisdale Bradlee, Esq. On this latter date an organization was effected.

At various times subsequently meetings were held, and committees from the towns of Brookline, Brighton and West Roxbury, and a Commission from the City of Charlestown, appointed to advocate the annexation of their towns and city, were received and heard. Statistical tables, calculated to give all pertinent information concisely, and yet as fully as possible, were made up. As the City of Boston had no map that would convey a comprehensive idea of the geography of our city and surrounding towns, the Commission early prepared one, under the direction of the City Surveyor, Thomas W. Davis, Esq., representing all the territory embraced in the order, which your commissioners offer herewith, as affording valuable assistance in the consideration of the subject under advisement. The several towns and cities reported upon have been visited on different occasions, and inquiry has been pushed in every avenue of research open to us, in order

that all the light attainable might be thrown upon the questions involved in the scheme presented.

Hamilton A. Hill, Esq., appointed on the Commission in place of J. Tisdale Bradlee, Esq., resigned, having made arrangements to engage in business in England, left this country in the latter part of April. Before going he strenuously urged the Commission to make their report in full immediately; but as no action had been taken in the matter, and important legislation on the subject was at that time pending at the State House, and time had not elapsed sufficient to obtain a knowledge of the facts requisite to an advised conclusion, and no opportunity having been offered of visiting the towns and cities under consideration, and particularly as no decisive action could be taken in the premises before fall, the majority of the Commission deemed any report at that time premature and injudicious. But Mr. Hill, having written a report, submitted it to the Board, and this, so far as it recommends the annexation of Brookline, Brighton and West Roxbury, the undersigned unqualifiedly approve. The majority of the Commission, however, feel constrained to say, that, having entered upon their duties without bias or prejudice, they justify any conclusions in which they may differ from Mr. Hill, as the result solely of the investigation they have given the subject.

The question of the advantage or disadvantage of the consolidation of several cities and towns, or the annexation to any one of them of all the rest, is not one which in the abstract admits of much profitable discussion; and the circumstances peculiar to individual instances will almost solely direct the judgments of men, whenever the proposition for or against attracts their notice.

It may be said in general, that consolidation means strength, independent existence, rapidity of action; consolidation increases the importance and powers of the city, but diminishes those of the citizen; divides the number required

to legislate, but enlarges the force necessary to execute ; subrogates officers to their offices ; renders abuses of power rare but momentous ; affords opportunities for great, rather than many breaches of trust ; nullifies the influence of small factions, and destroys many facilities for petty tyrannies and wrongs. But of these things it is not our duty to treat. The task assigned to us is specific : "To carefully examine the subject of the annexation of certain towns and cities to the City of Boston, in all its bearings, and to report upon the financial, industrial and sanitary questions concerned in the matter."

In the furtherance of this object, a copy of the statistical tables before alluded to was sent to the clerk of each of the following cities and towns : —

Cambridge,	Charlestown,
Somerville,	West Roxbury,
Brookline,	Brighton ;

and, though not included in the order, to the town clerks of

Everett,	Medford,
Revere,	Winthrop,
Malden,	Chelsea.
Watertown,	

Accompanying the questions was the request that the clerk would fill out the answers and return them to the Commission. In most instances this was done, and we take this early opportunity of expressing our thanks, not only to the clerks, but to the other officials whom we have been obliged to consult, and that frequently, and in busy hours, both for the indispensable information they have given, and the uniform courtesy with which they have rendered us every assistance in their power.

The questions and answers, with such other relevant matter as could be incorporated in the tables, are appended.