

GANGWAY ROCK

PJ # Jan 80 -- Gen Thom, engineer corps, was in this city on Friday to consult in reference to the contemplated removal of the beacon ledge or Gangway rock in this river on which several naval and other vessels have been damaged. It was decided that some sub-marine blasting would be necessary, and it was estimated that the cost of removal of dangerous obstruction would not be far from \$85,000.

PJ 14 Feb 80 -- A petition has been circulating in this city and among masters who sail to and from this port, asking for a larger sum than that already appropriated, as necessary for the removal of obstructions in this river, more especially of Gangway Rock, so called.....

PJ 7 Aug 80 --

—Gen. Thom makes the following report relative to improvements in this river:—For Portsmouth Harbor the project is, first, closing the side channel between Great and Goat Islands, so as to prevent the current running through, with a rubble breakwater 800 feet long; second, removal of Gangway Rock, lying in the channel between South Beacon shoal and the Navy Yard, so that there shall be over it 20 feet of water at mean low water. This will increase the width of the channel to 370 feet; third, the removal of part of ledge at the southwest end of Badger's Island;

so as to secure, instead of 135 feet of it with a depth of 4 feet, a depth of 10 feet of water at mean low water. The total cost of the project is \$150,000. The \$10,000 appropriation of 1879 was applied to placing 122,000 tons of rubblestone in the projected breakwater, completing it from shore to shore with a two-foot elevation above low water. The projected thickness and stability will require 2000 or 3000 tons more stone. The \$25,000 appropriated this year will be applied in part to completion of this breakwater and in part to removal of Gangway Rock.

PJ 10 Sept 81

—The government buoy to which the U. S. S. Lancaster was attached broke adrift Sunday afternoon about five o'clock the rapid current sweeping the vessel up river, both anchors, which were quickly let go, failing to hold her. The vessel was finally secured and steamed up to the wharf at the yard, however, after the platform over Gangway Rock was run in to and knocked into pieces, and a new steel steam drill which had only been placed in position a day or two before was lost. It is not probable that work can be resumed in the removal of this ledge this season. An examination was made of the bottom of the Lancaster on Monday, by a diver, who found that a small portion of her shoe had been displaced, and some of the copper thereon loosened. This was probably done by the ship "scraping over" one of the stay-chains attached to the platform at the ledge, as there was too great a depth of water over the rock to have struck the latter.

PJ 17 Sep 81 -- The contractors for the removal of G.R. in this river, claim, it is said, \$5,000 from the government as damages sustained to their appurtenances by the Lancaster colliding therewith two weeks ago.

PJ 19 Nov 81-- Work suspended until spring

PJ 12 April 1884 -- Work to be resumed in few days. Congress appropriated \$50,000 and whole sum to be spent on the job.

28 Aug 80

—The following were the bids received by Gen. Thom for work to be done in this harbor :—Portsmouth Harbor—2000 tons rubble stone (for the breakwater not yet completed)—Joseph F. Curate & Hugh Bowen 77 cts. ; Joseph R. Holmes, Portsmouth, 98 1-2 cts. ; Isaac Hamilton & Gardner Floyd, \$1 ; Joseph H. White, Hyde Park, Mass. \$1.04. Contract awarded to Curate & Bowen. Portsmouth Harbor —(Gangway Rock)—700 cubic yards—Isaac Sylvester, \$27.90 ; Geo. W. Townsend, Boston, \$39 ; James Andrews, Biddeford, \$40 ; Geo. L. & Hiram W. Phillips, Quincy Point, Mass. \$40 ; Chas. A. Trumbull, Lawrence, Mass. \$42.37 ; Isaac Hamilton & Gardner Floyd, \$47. Contract awarded to Sylvester.

PJ 23 oct 80 -- Work preliminary to the removal of Gangway Rock has completed. The staking out has been done, and speedily the booming will be gin. Mariners are referred to the notice by the contractor, under our marine news.

PJ 6 Nov 80 -- Work on Gangway Rock put off until spring because of the strong currents.

PJ 23 Oct 80

Notice to Mariners.

ON and after this date, a submarine party will be employed by the U. S. Government in the removal of Gangway Rock lying in the channel between "South Beacon Shoal" and the Navy Yard in Portsmouth Harbor, N. H. Either a sloop or drill platform or both will be moored there day and night; and during the night the usual lights will be exhibited. Vessels should give them a wide berth to avoid fouling their anchor lines.

GEO. THOM,

Col. of Engineers, Btl. Brig. Gen., U. S. A.

U. S. ENGINEER OFFICE,

Portland, Maine, Oct. 23, 1880. }

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gangway

PJ 2 Apr 81 -

Work on Gangway Rock to begin on 8 April.

PJ 7 May 81 -- Blasting is going on at Gangway Rock, and at the present rate of blows must soon succumb.

PJ - 4 June 81 -- The breakwater recently placed by the government around the drill platform on Gangway Rock as a protection to the diver from the full force of the strong tides while at work removing that dangerous ledge, was carried away recently.

This item should follow those on next page

PJ 24 Sept 81 --

—The *Chronicle* says that a persevering but unavailing search has been made by the diver in the employ of the contractors for the removal of Gangway rock, to find the new steam drilling machine which went adrift at the time the U. S. S. Lancaster knocked over the "band-stand." The track which it made along the bottom was followed a distance of several hundred feet from the ledge, the stick of timber to which it was bolted having evidently not been quite able to float it. The timber was found some days ago above the Portsmouth bridge, and it is quite likely the drilling machine was torn from its fastenings when the timber went through the bridge.

PJ 31 Jan 1885 -- Owner of schooner Satellite found not liable for damage done when schooner ran into drill platform at Gangway Rock on 28 April 1883. Plaintiff was contractor Solon S. Andrews; defendant, Josiah M. Aderton.

PJ 2 May 1885 -- DRill plaform in position and work is resumed.

PJ 9 May 1885 -

—On Wednesday morning, while Mr. A. J. Leavitt, keeper of Hoon Island light, was going down the river on his return from Portsmouth, with his wherry loaded with coal and other articles, the force of the current carried his boat against the Gangway-Rock stand, capsizing it, and throwing Mr. Leavitt into the water. Regaining the boat, he clung to it and was carried down the river some distance, when it sunk under him, leaving him struggling on the water. At the time he struck the stand two divers were down, and signals were given for them to come up, when a boat was sent to Mr. Leavitt's rescue, picked him up and carried him on board the schooner Yankoe, in an exhausted condition, where he was well provided for. The boat went to the bottom, discharged her cargo and came up near the Narrows, bows first, with the snort of a puffing pig. Everything was lost except a few pick-nicks in the cuddy.

PJ 23 May 1885 -- Estimate 157 yards of rock has been excavated so far this year.

PJ 18 Jul 85 -- 1,000 yards of Gangway moved so far. 700 by Andrew & Sylvester; 300 this season by Mr. Townsend. 700 more to be excavated.

23 May 85

--The case of Solon S. Andrews of Biddeford vs. schooner Satellite was heard in the U. S. District court at Portland last week before Judge Webb. The case has had one trial with a verdict given in favor of the defense, but on appeal of the plaintiff a new trial was granted. Andrews sued the owner of the Satellite for damages sustained from that schooner running against a drill stand which was built over the Gangway rock in the Piscataqua river for the excavation of it, and the loss of an anchor in the collision. The defense stated that they took every possible precaution to keep clear of the stand and that the accident was unavoidable under the circumstances. Hon. W. Lunt conducted the case for Andrews and Hon. Thomas B. Reed for the defense. No decision had been announced at latest accounts.


PJ 29 May 1885 -- Drill platform carried away by British schooner Belvedere. She came up river under sail, but wind died after passing the Narrow (Henderson) and vessel became unmanageable in the full tide. No one hurt, drilling crews escaped to the contractor's schooner and the diver wasn't down.

PJ 26 June 1886 -- Excavation complete. Drill platform and schooner have been removed.

PJ 18 Dec 1886 -- Army Engineer report shows 608 cubic yards removed in past fiscal year. It's needed to take 632 more yards to get clearance of 20 feet at low water. \$25,000 needed to complete the project. \$33,000 recommended for Harbor of Refuge at Little Harbor; \$10,000 appropriated.

PJ 27 August 87 -- Work has ceased at Gangway for the the summer; contractor has complted his contract.

PJ 4 July 1891 --



—The steam tug International, of Philadelphia, arrived at this port on the 25th inst. with the coal barge Sontag in tow. The tug is a twin screw steamer of enormous power, fitted with all modern improvements, including a complete installation of electric lights and search lights. In coming up the river the barge, although drawing only 18½ ft. touched, and hung upon Gangway rock ledge, but came off on the rising tide in less than an hour. It is evident that the contract which guaranteed a uniform depth of 22 feet at low water over this ledge was not properly fulfilled, and the engineer in charge of river and harbor work should re-survey this place and determine whether the depth guaranteed has been obtained on all portions of the ledge. We are informed on good authority that the Sontag is not the only vessel drawing not over 20 feet of water which has touched on this rock since the dredging contract was finished.