Copy.

Portland, Maine.
June 2nd 1837

Sir.

I arrived here last evening & have now the honor to report the result of my examination of "Ram Island" as a site for the erection of a Light House.

This Island is situated off the mouth of Somerscotta river, & bears from Burnt Island Light (Townsend) N.W. ½ miles distant, cuckolds W. by S. ½ S. miles, Squirrel Island W. ½ S. 2½ Miles, Damiscove Islands S.W. by S. ½ S. 3 miles, Seguin Light S.W. by W. ½ W. 10 miles. It is near a group of other Islands which form a sound, through which all vessels bound going in, or coming out of Townsend Harbor. This is well known as one of the most important harbors upon the whole coast. It is easy of ingress & egress. Large ships in gales from any point of the compass, deep, with good anchorage in any part of it. It is a harbor which, all vessels bound east or west, when met by head winds or unfavorable weather, endeavor to make, being a sort of rendezvous for coasters; and more than three hundred sail have been seen anchored there at one time. The question then is, what works will give to navigation the greatest facilities & where shall they be placed.

Any one, much acquainted with nautical affairs in going into Townsend Harbor from the west, & from it, through the eastern passage, would be struck with the advantages a Light at the entrance of the eastern passage would give, & there is no point in my opinion so well adapted to that end as Ram Island.

But, when the fact is stated that, from that Island there are in view four Light Houses, & within the compass of twelve or fifteen miles, seven Lights, viz, Seguin -

Pond

Pond Islands, Hendricks Head, Burnt Island & Monhegan;
One of two conclusions seems to me inevitable, either, that some
of these lights are not judicially located, or, that no more
are required in that vicinity. I am strongly inclined to
the former conclusion. The light on Hendricks head for instance,
might be mistaken for Townsend light, indeed this has been
the case during its short duration, & the consequences have
been most disastrous to property & life; Were that light
removed further out, this evil would be remedied.

I am inclined to believe, that the erection of a Light-
House upon Ram Island, & fixing a more conspicuous
location for Hendricks head light, that would answer
as a guide for both Sheepscot river & Townsend, would
render that at Townsend useless, & that at Pemaquid, of
but little service; as the former would be an unerring
guide to Damariscotta river & Townsend harbour,
& would also be very beneficial to avoid the cuckolds,
two dangerous rocks almost directly in the passage, that,
as persons whose opinions have weight, are opposed to
the discontinuance of any existing light, I would not
recommend such a measure without a more minute
& particular examination than I have
been able to make, But, while the present lights are
supported, it would not, I think, be judicious to es-
tablish another upon Ram Island.

It cannot, it seems to me, escape the observation
of any, who will take a glance at the Chart of that
section of the Coast, that some of the lights have
been placed, with a view to local, rather than
the general interest.

In support of the expediency of a Light upon
Ram

"Ram Island" I have the honor to forward herewith the written opinions of William M. Reed Esq, a gentleman of great experience & well acquainted with the waters in this region, and of several Gentlemen who are Ship owners, masters of vessels & pilots, whose judgment is to be relied upon, as I am sure their Statements are, although, they may not accord with some of the views I have expressed in this report.

A Buoy upon Bontam ledge, I consider a necessary and indispensable work. This reef lies outside & to the westward of Ram island, & S. S. W. 3/4 Mile distant from Samiscove Islands harbor, It is hidden from view except at low water, & its situation very dangerous, & many vessels have been wrecked upon it, & there is no beacon or other guide by which it may be shunned, I was myself near being cast away upon it, many years ago, having struck it in the day time at high water,

I respectfully suggest the propriety of causing a buoy to be placed upon this ledge, & the cost would not exceed two hundred dollars.

A Monument upon the Eastern Cuckold would also be of advantage, that is one of two low rocks, as has before been mentioned, lying between Pegan & Townsends Harbor, which are so sheltered by the high land upon the Main as to be discovered with difficulty by vessels passing the Sound,

A substantial Monument, to answer the purpose designed, would not cost more than fifteen hundred dollars.

If however, the location of Hendricks head Light shall, at any future time, be changed, it will probably, be near to the place named for the Monument,

8

and in that case, would supersede the necessity of the latter

I am
Very Respectfully
Sir,
Yr. Obt. Servt.

(Signed) Jos. Smith
Cap. Navy

To the Presidt. of the Board of
Navy Commissioners
Washington
D.C.

Navy Board. Orders