**Abstract**
The Boston and Albany Railroad was formed between 1867 and 1870 from the merger of three existing lines, the Boston and Worcester (chartered 1831), the Western (1833), and the Castleton and West Stockbridge (1834). The corporation was a primary east-west transit through the Commonwealth, with branches connecting towns including Athol, Ware, North Adams, and Hudson, N.Y.

The nineteen atlases comprising this collection include detailed plans documenting the location and ownership of rights of way, land-takings, and other land transfers to or from the railroad company. Dating from the early years of operation for the corporation to just after the turn of the century, the atlases include maps of predecessor lines (Boston and Worcester Railroad Corporation and Western Railroad), as well as the Grand Junction Railway Company (Charlestown, Somerville, Everett, and Chelsea), the Ware River Railroad, and the Chester and Becket Railroad.

**Background on Boston and Albany Railroad**
The Boston and Albany Railroad was formed by a series of mergers beginning in 1867 that subsumed both the first commercial line in New England, the Boston and Worcester Railroad (chartered 1831) and the Western Railroad (1833), the most important line in Western Massachusetts. The expansionist Boston and Albany began extending lines eastward and westward at the same time, absorbing the Castleton and West Stockbridge Railroad (incorporated in 1834 and renamed the Albany and West Stockbridge two years later) and the Hudson and Berkshire Railroad, creating a powerful corporation that established the first continuous rail line across the Commonwealth.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Boston and Albany prospered, absorbing a number of branch lines and extending its reach both northward and southward. By the 1880s, it claimed the distinction of operating one of the most efficient commuter operations, connecting Boston through Brookline and Newton Highlands to Riverside, eventually extending commuter service to Worcester. The line was noted, too, for Director Charles Sprague Sargent’s initiative to beautify rail travel, hiring the architect Henry Hobson Richardson to design aesthetically pleasing stations.

**Contents of Collection**
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The collection includes frequent citations of legislation, references to actions with respect to county commissioners, boards of selectman, registries of deeds and deed books, and to the state Board of Railroad Commissioners (later Public Service Commission). Plans regularly specify location of
subject properties in relation to the properties of identified abutters.

Collection inventory

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Administrative information

Provenance
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Processing Information

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Search terms

Subjects
- Becket (Mass.)--Maps.
- Boston (Mass.)--Maps.
- Chester (Mass.)--Maps.
- Framingham (Mass.)--Maps.
- Natick (Mass.)--Maps.
- Newton (Mass.)--Maps.
- Railroads--Massachusetts.
- Railroads--New York.
- Springfield (Mass.)--Maps.
- Ware (Mass.)--Maps.
- Wellesley (Mass.)--Maps.
- Worcester (Mass.)--Maps.

Names
- Boston and Albany Railroad Co.
- Boston and Worcester Railroad Corporation.
- Chester and Becket Railroad Corporation.
- Grand Junction Railway Co.
- Ware River Railroad Co.
- Western Railroad Corporation.

Genre Terms
- Maps.