

# Boston and Albany Railroad Engineering Department Map Collection

1870-1920 1833-1910

19 vols. (6 linear feet)

**Call no.:** MS 130

## Read collection overview [Collection overview](#)

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 Rail-Road), as well as the Grand Junction Railway Company (Charlestown, Somerville, Everett, and Chelsea), the Ware River Railroad, and the Chester and Becket Railroad.

See similar SCUA collections:

Massachusetts

Transport

## 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.

## Scope of collection

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 Rail-Road), as well as the Grand Junction Railway Company (Charlestown, Somerville, Everett, and Chelsea), the Ware River Railroad, and the Chester and Becket Railroad.

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

---

Grand Junction Railroad: Plan of locations of the several railroads connecting the East Boston freight railroad	1837-1867	19 maps	Vol. 1
Also includes Charlestown Branch Railroad (1837) and Fitchburg and Lowell Railroad.			
Boston and Albany Railroad: Location of the Grand Junction	1890	10 maps	Vol. 2

Branch in Charlestown, Everett, Somerville, Chelsea

Boston and Albany Railroad: Scrap book no. 2: Back Bay Park, Brighton	1845-1909		Vol. 3
Includes Old Colony and Newport Railway Co.; Boston Terminal Co.; Boston, Revere Beach, and Lynn RR; Boston and Providence RR; and Boston Elevated Railway Co.			
Boston and Worcester Railroad: Brookline	ca.1840-1905	30p.	Vol. 4
Includes Roxbury, Faneuil to Riverside.			
Boston and Albany Railroad: Plan of locations of the several railroads connecting the East Boston freight railroad	1833-1908	36p.	Vol. 5
Includes maps of Newton, West Newton, Newtonville, Auburndale, Riverside; Charlestown Branch Railroad (1837), Grand Junction RR (1949), Chelsea Branch RR, and Eastern RR.			
Boston and Albany Railroad: Wellesley, Newton, Natick	1833-1900	36p.	Vol. 6
Boston and Albany Railroad: Plan of new locations of the Boston and Albany Railroad in the town of Wellesley and County of Norfolk	1888-1893	15p.	Vol. 7
Boston and Albany Railroad: Additional land taken for railroad purposes in the county of Norfolk	1894-1914	10p.	Vol. 8
Alternate title: Plan of a new location of the Boston and Albany Railroad in the town of Wellesley and County of Norfolk, Mass.			
Boston and Albany Railroad: Plan of a new location of the Boston and Albany Railroad in the town of Natick and County of Middlesex	1887	4p.	Vol. 9
Western Railroad: Route from Worcester to Springfield	1839-1842	72p.	Vol. 10
Includes maps of Worcester, Brookfield, Palmer, Warren, Chicopee, Springfield. Includes Hartford and Springfield RR (1849); Northampton and Springfield RR; 1842 plan between Chestnut and Main Streets.			
Boston and Albany Railroad: Springfield to Albany Scrapbook no. 1	1882-1908	35p.	Vol. 11
Plans for Pittsfield, North Adams, West Springfield.			
Boston and Albany Railroad: Springfield to Albany Scrapbook no. 3	1903-1910	58p.	Vol. 12
Boston and Albany Railroad: Plan of a new location of the Boston and Albany Railroad in the County of Hampden West of the Connecticut River	1881	63p.	Vol. 13
Boston and Albany Railroad: Route from Westfield to Chester	ca.1900	34p.	Vol. 14
Includes maps of Westfield, Russell, Montgomery, and Chester. Maps numbered 30-63.			

Boston and Albany Railroad: Plan of the location of the Chester and Becket Railroad in the towns of Chester, Hampden County, and Becket, Berkshire County, Mass.	1896	15p.	Vol. 15
Boston and Albany Railroad: Notice plans Includes maps of Becket, Cambridge, Chester, Framingham, Hinsdale, Ludlow, Natick, Newton, West Springfield, Worcester.	1895-1910	23p.	Vol. 16
Ware River Railroad: Land plan of the Ware River Railroad of Massachusetts	1874	51p.	Vol. 17
Ware River Railroad: Land taken for railroad purposes in the County of Hampshire "These plans were traced from the book of original land plans of the Ware River R.R. The original plans were in such poor condition that they were unfit for use. Jan 1, 1919." Show line from Palmer to Winchendon.	1912	6p.	Vol. 18
Ware River Railroad: Land taken for railroad purposes in the County of Hampshire	1912	6p.	Vol. 19

## Administrative information

### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Language:

English

### Provenance

Provenance unknown.

### Copyright and Use (More information )

*Cite as:* Boston and Albany Railroad Engineering Department Map Collection (MS 130). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

### Processing Information

Processed by I. Eliot Wentworth, December 2012.

### Related Material

The records of the Boston and Albany Railroad are housed at the **Baker Library of the Harvard Business School** (Mss:724 1831-1898 B747).

# 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.

Link to similar SCUA collections

[Massachusetts](#)

[Transport](#)



**Special Collections & University Archives**  
**University Libraries : UMass Amherst**

154 Hicks Way : Amherst, Mass. 01003-9275 : Ph. 413-545-2780