Boston and Maine Railroad

Authority for Expenditure

Numbers 1 – 39,757

selected and Annotated

1920 – 1970

V2500 bm 1920-1970 2004.36.250

Boston and Maine Railroad

Authority for Expenditures

Numbers 1 - 11550

(1920 - 1929)

Immediately following federal control, the Boston and Maine Railroad (B & M) started a new series of Authority for Expenditures (A. F. E.) Numbers. The first beginning with number 1, were approved early in March 1920.

In conformity with federal regulations, each number represented a project that would either increase or subtract from the total value of the railroad property. The worth of the B & M, including its leasehold properties, went up or down at the close of each accounting year. The total value of the railroad was to be a component in calculating the percentage called "Fair Rate of Return".

Once the project was approved by the proper authority, the Bureau of Roadway Accounting issued a number. The date of A. F. E. Project was approved, when it was placed in the register and when it was carried out might run over a span ranging from days to years. Sometimes a project was canceled or superseded by another one.

The information herein contains selected annotation of the A. F. E. Numbers 1 - 11,550 (1920-1929). The projects shown are believed to be a good representation of the period.

Each project shown gives the year it was placed in the A. F. E. register. If the reader is would like more detail, the valuation section numbers are shown. They can direct the interested researcher to the "Roadway Completion Reports", which are stored at North Chelmsford. A copy of the A. F. E. register containing more information is also available, covering these numbers.

The roadway completion reports provide starting and finishing dates for a project. Anything retired usually gives the age of the item. Sometimes there could be a sketch or plan. If the structure listed was in existence as of June 30, 1914 (Date of Valuation for B & M), a plan and brief synopsis would be found in the "Engineering Valuation Reports". These are by valuation section and our house in the Society's Lowell collection.

The Roadway Completion Report volumes appropriate for the series of A. F. E. numbers shown are not a complete collection. The ones extant are: Valuation Section - 1, 2 ME, 6 M, 6 NH, 6 ME, 7.1, 7.2, 7.5, 7.11, 7.16, 7.18, 9, 10, 12 (see V.S. 1), 13.1, 13.3, 13.4, 15 NH, 16, 21, 24.2, 28, 32.1, 35 (see V.S. 1), 36.2, 37 M, 37 NY, 37 VT, 38.1 NY, 38.1 VT, 40.1, 43, 46, and 47. There are no system A.F.E.s during the 1920 - 1929 time period.

April 23, 2015

Boston and Maine Railroad

Authority for Expenditure

World War II Era

Number 18501 – 24000

(1939 – 1945)

Selected Projects

Retirement of track and facilities continued into the early 1940’s, especially with the demand for steel and other metals for the U.S. war effort. This included the continuation of line abandonments.

Even with the first orders of road diesels for cross country freights, used electric locomotives were purchased for the use through the Hoosac Tunnel. The years saw an increase in mechanized ballast applications and color light signals replaced semaphores.

The war effort brought about the addition of industrial sidetracks. One branch line in Massachusetts was returned to service after more than a decade of being idle.

One parallel line was abandoned with the rail scrapped for the war effort. The remaining line received nearly 11 miles of double track on the main, a last of its kind project for the Twentieth Century.

December 27, 2016

Boston and Maine Railroad

Authority for Expenditure

Post World War II Era

Numbers 24001 – 31589

(1945 – 1955)

Selected Projects

The post war effort focused on complete dieselization of the railroad. The purchase of passenger diesels to pull new passenger equipment was also included. Within a few years suburban commuter service would also be transformed with large-scale orders of self-propelled passenger cars.

Engine facilities underwent drastic changes with the conversion from steam to diesel. Entirely new facilities would have to be built to accommodate the self-propelled units.

Heavier rail and stone ballast installations continued on various main and branch lines. The replacement of semaphore units by color signals was virtually completed. Many industrial sidetracks were installed and placed into service. Automatic highway crossing protection rapidly replaced gate tenders. The first large-scale single tracing projects went into service.

Freight cars were replaced by new equipment orders. Dozens of used passenger coaches and sleepers were purchased to be converted into baggage cars.

December 28, 2016

Boston and Maine Railroad

Authority for Expenditure

The McGinnis Era

Numbers 31590 – 34428

(1955 – 1959)

Selected Projects

With the arrival of the final self-propelled passenger units, the last of the steam engines were retired. General purpose diesel units replaced road freight engines.

Extensive purchases were made for new freight cars. Facilities were added for piggyback service and the RDC self-propelled units.

Rock ballast and heavier rail were installed on various mainlines. Applications of stone ballast was essentially complete.

The program of single tracking continued, especially with less passenger trains. Industrial sidetracks were built, though at a slower rate.

The decline of passenger service saw the sale of many passenger stations during this period. Freight houses were also disposed of.

Automatic highway crossing protection continued to be installed. Many private and farm crossings were closed.

December 29, 2016

Boston and Maine Railroad

Authority for Expenditure

The Final Years

Numbers 34429 – 37200

(1960 – 1964)

The mass sell-out of passenger stations and freight houses is reflected in this time period. The last new locomotives were delivered for freight service.

Improvements to track continued, but stone ballast installations and new rail were on a smaller scale. Expenditures continued for a mechanized track maintenance operation. Much of the rail obtained was relay yielded from single-tracking projects.

Investment continued in piggyback facilities. Money was still spent on the mechanized operations in the classification yards in Boston and Mechanicville despite a drop in traffic. Industrial sidetrack construction continued at a moderate pace.

March 5, 2017

Boston and Maine Railroad

Authority for Expenditure

The Road to Bankruptcy

Numbers 37201 – 39765

(1964 – 1970)

The sale of passenger stations and freight houses were virtually completed and done so at a greatly diminished pace. Midway through the period most of the main lines had been stone ballasted, though investment in mechanized equipment continued for maintenance purposes.

Sidetrack installations had greatly slowed. The investment continued in piggyback operations. Single-tracking projects produced more relay rail. Some freight cars were purchased.

On March 12, 1970, the company was petitioned into bankruptcy. The issuing of expenditure numbers in this series ceased promptly the day bankruptcy was declared.

March 6, 2017

What You Can Do with This Spreadsheet

Excel isn't just a bunch of columns and rows. It can work as a sorting (alphabetizing or ordering by number) tool, a log-keeping tool (e.g., list of ebooks, by author, title, etc.), a record-keeping tool (list of advertisements on a website, active and expired, together with ad owner, their contact information, etc.). You can also generate complex financial formulas, graphs, extracts, and so on.

What you *can* do with an Excel spreadsheet depends on what you *want* to do.

....And by how you set it up to receive the data you enter into it.

You have five columns across the top of your spreadsheet: (A) RE Number, (B) Year, ( C ) Location, (D) #, (E) Action, (F) Item (acted upon), (G ) Amount. You can block out any column or columns you wish and view only those you want to look at. You can also filter (extract items you specify into a list of their own) within a column so that you can view:

- only the year 1924

- a range of years

- a range of RE numbers

- #

- all items improved, by filtering for all entries with the verb "improve" in the Action column. The same can be done for any of your verbs (e.g., "retire", "add", etc.).

Any sort or filtered extract you set up to view you can also print out, exactly as it appears on the screen. You will not have affected your original data, you are only hiding it temporarily. You might print out all entries for 1922, all RE numbers within a range you specify, all items retired, etc.

You can sort and filter on multiple criteria, by column. For instance, all items retired on #6ME. All items added in 1923. You can also generate money totals, by year, by items in the Action column or by # (perform the sort, then total the entries where money amounts appear).

What is less precise is extracting a list of (for instance) all tracks retired in 1923. You can exclude all years except 1923, you can further exclude all entries in the Action column except Retired, and include all instances in the resulting Item columns where the word "track" appears. *Any* entry which fits the first two criteria and has the word "track" in the item column, regardless of context, will appear. This means that entries for (for instance) "**track**ing system" will also appear in your sort. This is because the listings in your Item column greatly vary. In order to produce an accurate sort for all tracks retired during 1923, you would have had to break up the item column into Item (one word, such as "track", "shanty", "structure", "equipment", etc.) and Description (multiple words, such as "400 feet", "crossing", "storage", "milk cars", etc.).

I considered doing this, but as I've said, the range of items in the Item column varies considerably, unlike the Action column, and may actually make understanding the spreadsheet more difficult. A listing for 400 feet of side track retired is more difficult to understand when rendered as (Action) "retire", (Item) "track", (Description) "400 ft., side".

You will need someone who is knowledgeable in Excel 2010 to do these things for you (Excel 2013 or later are also fine; editions of Excel that *precede* 2010 that may or may not be able to display the data correctly). That person can also suggest other things you can do with the spreadsheet, types of sorts, filtering and so on. I am not well enough versed in the program to do this and can't print it out for you anyway.

Whatever you wind up doing with the spreadsheet, be sure and keep one original copy that hasn't had anything done to it. That way, if mistakes are made, they will not forever after affect your original data. Rule of thumb: WORK OFF A COPY, NOT THE ORIGINAL.