

Guide to the Old Colony and Fall River Railroad Company Records

MS 378



compiled by Janet Elaine Gertz

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 378

CREATOR: Old Colony and Fall River Railroad Company

TITLE: Old Colony & Fall River Railroad company records

DATES: 1836-1893

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 5 linear feet

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The records date largely from the merger period and include correspondence, reports, financial and legal papers, diagrams relating to the railroads and miscellaneous printed matter such as passes, tickets and clippings. Included in the correspondence are several family letters of Alexander Holmes, president of the company. Other correspondents are Julia Ward Howe, George Stillman Hillard and Samuel Hill. Of the two account books, one lists the shareholders and the other tabulates revenues for stations along the railroad.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0378>

Requesting Instructions

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To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from R. S. Wormser, 1941.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation

Old Colony & Fall River Railroad Company Records. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

The Old Colony & Fall River Railroad Company was based in Massachusetts, and originally called the Old Colony Railroad Company. In 1846 it merged with the Fall River Railroad Company. It returned to its original name in 1872.

Scope and Contents

These papers of the Old Colony Railroad Company are composed of correspondence, legal and financial papers, and other business papers. The Old Colony, a Massachusetts based company, consolidated in 1846 with the Fall River Railroad Company to form the Old Colony and Fall River Railroad Company. In 1862 this company consolidated with the Newport Railroad Company and was renamed the Old Colony and Newport Railroad Company; the incorporation included a steamboat company. In 1872 the company returned to its original name, Old Colony Railroad Company.

The correspondence covers the years 1847 to 1876, the bulk being from the 1860s. Topics discussed included negotiations for the various mergers, purchase of land and equipment, routine business matters, and meetings of the board of directors. There are also letters presenting gifts to the officers of the company and requests for passes, one of which is from Julia Ward Howe (1866 Mar 28). Other notables who have letters in this collection are George Stillman Hillard, who writes regarding a book left on a train (1865 Nov 1), and Samuel Hill, a famous Boston shipbuilder, who discusses financial matters (1867 Jul 3). The correspondence also includes several family letters of Alexander Holmes, president of the company, from his wife and sons.

Among the business papers are two account books. One from 1861 has a list of shareholders and number of shares held by each; the other, 1865-1866, tabulates finances for stations along the railroad. Other business papers include minutes, reports, and briefs of directors' meetings; lawyers briefs, testimony, evidence, and notes; by-laws of the company; lists of the directors; various financial papers; and a large number of freight bills. There are also printed legal papers and forms, tickets, passes, newspaper clippings, diagrams of iron bridges and of a train turn-table, and thirteen maps of train routes, station yards, and so forth. Finally, the

collection contains two profiles of train beds, one of the road from Fall River to Newport, the other showing the road along the dock at Fall River.

These papers were formerly the personal property of Alexander Holmes. They were purchased from R. S. Wormster for Yale University in 1941.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Business
Railroads -- Massachusetts

Geographic Names

New England

Genres / Formats

Account books

Names

Hall, Samuel, 1800-1870
Hillard, George Stillman, 1808-1879
Holmes, Alexander
Howe, Julia Ward, 1819-1910

Corporate Bodies

Fall River Rail Road Co
Old Colony and Fall River Railroad Company
Old Colony Railroad Company