

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

DOCUMENTS

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF

THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1865.

AUGUSTA:

STEVENS & SAYWARD, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1865.

FORTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 4.

STATE OF MAINE.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, }
Augusta, January 20, 1865. }

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

I have the honor herewith to transmit the Report of the Board of Railroad Commissioners for the year A. D. 1864.

SAMUEL CONY.

RAILROAD COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

*To His Excellency, the Honorable Samuel Cony,
Governor of the State of Maine:*

The Railroad Commissioners respectfully submit the following Report of the examinations made by them of the different railroads in this State.

By an act of the Legislature of 1864, the time for the examination of railroads in this State was changed in order that the Commissioners might commence their inspection at an earlier day, and continue it through all the working months of the season, or so long as the weather would admit of outdoor operations. Heretofore the examinations were limited to the three summer months, and it was found impossible to perform in a proper manner the duties required of them, and give the railroad companies sufficient time to perfect the needed repairs. By the amendment of the act the time for commencing the inspection is fixed for the first day of April, and extending to the first of November of each year. This change has proved of great advantage, as it enables the Commissioners to examine carefully the different railroads, and allow the companies ample time, after being notified, to comply with their requirements.

We are satisfied that in most instances during the past season the officers of the different railroad companies in this State have endeavored to put their roads in safe repair and have complied with the directions of the Commissioners so far as it was in their power to do so; yet much remains to be done, and years of patient toil, unceasing effort and large expenditure will be required before our roads will be entitled to rank as first class.

The great difficulty with the railroads in this State is in their original imperfect construction, and the present managers have a double task to perform, viz: to keep the roads in safe condition for the passage of trains, and at the same time remedy the faults of their predecessors.

In an anxiety to secure the benefits of these great lines of communication, the question of permanency and durability has been generally lost sight of or ignored, frail and perishable structures have been built, where strength and durability should have been the only consideration and the one object to be attained. Owing to these faults of construction, and the constantly increasing business of the roads, it is of the utmost importance that the State officers, and the managers of the various lines of railroads, should exercise the most unceasing vigilance in order to prevent accident until the necessary repairs and improvements can be perfected. Notwithstanding the exercise of all possible care and precaution, accidents will occur, as it is utterly impossible to discover all the imperfections of timber and faults of construction in many of the structures to which allusion has been made; and the only safe plan is constant watchfulness, to note the changes and variations that occur and be prepared to apply the remedy.

We believe it to be a part of the duty of the superintendents and roadmasters of railroads to travel over their roads occasionally, either on foot or by hand-car, and note the conditions of the road for themselves—a duty which no man can perform satisfactorily by riding over the track in a passenger car. As a general thing the men employed upon the track as section men, bridge repairers, &c., are faithful in the discharge of their duties. Still, if month after month they never see the face of their employer or his agent, except at stated intervals at a station or on the rear end of a passenger car, and never receive his personal commendation or advice, they will be very likely to feel that their employer has no interest in their labors, and as a consequence will lose all interest themselves.

The large proportion of clay and clayey loam in the soil over and from which our railroads are built, together with the action of frost on soil of this description, render it very important that the gravelling and drainage of the road-bed should be fully perfected.

There should be at least two feet of gravel on the road-bed as a protection against frost, and the side ditches in the excavations should be thoroughly cleared out every season, and until this is done a good and smooth-riding track cannot be maintained. Very little gravel has been put on the road-beds in this State, hardly one of which will average one foot in depth, and on a large proportion of the whole length of some of our railroads the sleepers

still lie on the clay or in their original position as laid when the track was first put down. It is very evident that under these circumstances, a road-bed without gravel or necessary ditching, the wear and tear of machinery must be very largely increased, the rails bent, and sleepers broken, thus adding largely to the running expenses of the road and requiring constant renewal. The iron and sleepers on some of the important lines of road are badly worn and rotted and a large outlay will be required the coming season to remedy these defects. The transportation of passengers and freight over the railroads in this State has largely increased during the past year, and large additions to the rolling-stock are required to enable them to perform satisfactorily the labor required of them. The expenses of operating have increased in full proportion to the expanding business—in some cases the running expenses for the past year equalling the gross receipts of any preceding year. Under these circumstances the railroad managers have been under the necessity of increasing the tariff of rates for the transportation of passengers and freight, and it is questionable whether, with the present high scale of fares, the business is more remunerative than it has been in former years.

The importance of a thorough yearly examination of our railroads by the State Commissioners is becoming more and more apparent each succeeding year, and although after the most searching inspection, accidents will and do occur, still it is believed that their occurrence in this State is less frequent than in other States. The question to be considered is, not how many accidents do occur, but how many are prevented by this system of investigation.

With the view of gaining full information in regard to the condition of the railroads, one of the Commissioners has during the past summer walked the entire length of each road, examining with care the rails, sleepers, bridges, culverts and road-bed, and the result has been that extensive repairs were found to be necessary to insure the safe transportation of passengers over these several roads.

The examinations were commenced on the 11th day of April, beginning with the Maine Central Railroad, one hundred and ten miles in length from Bangor to Danville Junction. The repairs on this road during the past season have been as follows, viz.: The long trestle bridge at Kendall's Mills has been thoroughly repaired,

by renewing the stringers, caps, bolsters, plank, and a few of the posts, and putting in additional lateral braces. This is a very important structure, and requires close attention and great care. The pile bridge, near Clinton depot, has been partially renewed. The long pile bridge at Etna Bog has been repaired with new stringers, caps, bolsters and tie plank. It is to be hoped that before many years the Company will fill this bog, thus doing away the necessity of keeping in repair a wooden bridge over one thousand feet in length, and demanding extreme care and watchfulness. A proper regard for economy and safety would certainly warrant the building of a permanent roadway at this place. Bridges at Harvey's stream, Sowadabscook river, between Carmel and Hermon and Shaw's bridge, near Bangor, have all been repaired.

That portion of the road across the bog below Carmel, and known as the Carmel sink, has been made permanent and safe by filling with gravel—a vast amount of labor and great expense has been required to overcome the difficulties at the last named point.

On that portion of the road between Waterville and Danville the following named repairs have been made: Overhead road bridge at Marston's road has been rebuilt. The flooring of the long bridge over the Androscoggin at Lewiston has been raised, and the bridge fully strengthened and repaired. In addition to the above, thirty-nine farm-passes, culverts, cattle-guards and water-ways have been repaired or rebuilt. The number of sleepers required was about forty thousand, and nine and one-half miles of new iron; about three and one-fourth miles of new rail, and about the same number of mended rails have been procured and laid, and twenty-four thousand sleepers. Notwithstanding the large amount of money expended on this road the past season, much still remains to be done; an amount of iron fully equal, perhaps, to the requirements of the past year will be needed the coming season, and the officers would do well to make seasonable arrangements for complying with future demands. This Company has, the past season, erected a neat and commodious passenger station and freight depot at Auburn, and made needed repairs at several other stations on the road.

Mr. C. M. Morse, the gentlemanly and worthy Superintendent of this road, is entitled to great credit for the energy with which he has pushed forward the repairs of his road, and for his ready compliance with and strict attention to the suggestions and direc-

tions of the Commissioners, so far as he had the power to do ; and we doubt not, under his management, the road will retain, what it has always possessed, the full confidence of the public.

Portland and Kennebec Railroad, from Augusta to Portland, 60 Miles, including Bath Branch, 70 Miles.

Under the efficient management of the President, Judge Rice, and the lately appointed Superintendent, Edwin Noyes, Esq., of Waterville, is rapidly assuming an improved appearance, and will undoubtedly soon be put in good condition and repair. The rapidly increasing business and consequent importance of this line of communication, demand that every effort should be put forth by the managers to secure the safety and comfort of its patrons. It is believed that great improvements are in progress which, when completed, will enable the Company to transact their business with greater ease to themselves and more satisfactorily to the public. The present officers of the road commenced their duties under circumstances of great embarrassment. The rolling-stock of the road had been over-tasked and run down ; the track had been kept in such a state of repair that its safety was sometimes questionable. During the past summer the Company purchased and laid about six miles of new iron and about fifteen thousand sleepers. About one mile was laid on the new line of road around the west end of the city of Portland, and the remainder put into the old track between Portland and Augusta.

The approaches to the bridge across the Androscoggin at Brunswick have been rebuilt, and the bridges at Sewall's creek and New Meadow, on the Bath branch, repaired. A new and convenient machine shop has been built at Augusta, and is now in successful operation. A large and commodious passenger station, a freight depot and engine house have been erected near the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth depot at Portland, and a new track built around the city. Two good engines and a number of new freight cars have been added to the rolling-stock of the road.

Many of the culverts, cattle-guards and water-ways on this road need rebuilding. Some of them have been repaired the past season, and more will be required the coming summer. The road-bed needs a large amount of gravel, and can never be kept in proper condition until this need is supplied. About seven miles of

new iron, and at least forty thousand sleepers or ties, will be required next summer to put the track in good repair.

Notwithstanding the great losses and discouragements to which this Company has been subjected the past season, by the burning of the depot and cars at Augusta, and from other causes, still the gentlemen who control the affairs of this road are determined in their efforts for its improvement; and we doubt not that the well known energy and business tact of the President and Superintendent will overcome all obstacles and accomplish the desired result.

It is understood that this Company will make application to the present Legislature for leave to extend their road from Woodford's Corner, in Westbrook, and running west of the Deering farm, connect with the present line near the crossing of Congress street, Portland. The great advantages of this line will be found in its directness and saving of distance, the avoidance of the present heavy grades and sharp curves, also the continual risk of passing over and maintaining two long pile bridges across Back Cove, and the constant crossing and recrossing of the trains over the streets of Portland, between Back Cove and P. S. & P. depots. This change of line would conduce to the safety and convenience of the public at large, and greatly improve the road. It is to be hoped that no obstacles will be allowed to prevent a consummation so much to be desired.

Somerset and Kennebec Railroad, from Augusta to Skowhegan,
37 $\frac{3}{4}$ Miles.

This road is now operated by the Portland & Kennebec Railroad Company, it having been leased to them for the term of twenty years. This arrangement we have no doubt will prove of great advantage to both companies, as the business and interests of the two roads are so closely connected that they can be managed with better economy and greater safety under one head, than by separate organizations.

As was intimated in the Report of last year, this road, by the mistaken economy as to the necessity of making repairs, had been allowed to deteriorate to a great extent, and it was suggested at that time that the new management would immediately commence the needed repairs, a large amount of which would be required to put the road in proper condition. These repairs have been pressed for-

ward under the present Superintendent, Edwin Noyes, Esq., who upon taking charge of the road saw at once the necessity for extensive repairs. During the past summer and fall the following improvements have been made : The bridge over Water street, at Augusta, and the trestle approaches to the main bridge over the Kennebec have been rebuilt. The bridge at Ellis Stream, three hundred feet in length ; that over Seven Mile Brook, four hundred feet in length ; that over Lovejoy's Road, fifty feet in length ; that at Capen's Gully, two hundred and ninety (290) feet in length ; that over Drummond's Brook, ninety feet in length, have all been thoroughly rebuilt. A temporary bridge just north of Vassalborough station has been removed, a culvert built in its place, and embankments made over the culvert. The bridge over the Sebasticook at Winslow has been strengthened by putting iron rods and bolts throughout its entire length. A temporary trestle bridge has been erected at Martin Stream in the place of the truss bridge destroyed last summer by a tornado. Stone abutments are nearly completed at the same point for a more permanent structure to be built the coming summer. In addition to the above, a large amount of gravel has been put upon the road-bed, and about one mile of new iron laid in the track. The depot buildings and platforms have been repaired, and new and convenient cattle yards built at various points on the line. A large and increasing business is being developed on this road, and it is believed that the contemplated repairs next season will put the road in good condition, second to no other in the State. One mile of iron and a large number of sleepers will be required on this road next summer.

Atlantic and St. Lawrence or Grand Trunk Railroad, from Portland to State line at Gilead, 82 Miles.

Notwithstanding all the efforts put forth by the Commissioners the preceding year, it was evident upon the first examination of the road last spring that not much improvement had been made. Under these circumstances, the Commissioners came to the determination to adopt vigorous measures to induce the officers to make the necessary repairs. Notice was served on the Managing Director, Mr. Brydges, detailing the defects in the road, and requiring him to make the repairs, or show cause why they should not be made. Mr. Brydges replied by letter of June 20th, stating

the difficulties and embarrassments under which the Company were laboring in their efforts to obtain the iron and sleepers for the track. Shortly after, Mr. Brydges passed over the track, and made a personal examination into the condition of the track.

On the arrival of Mr. Brydges at Portland, he was met by two of the Commissioners, to whom he expressed himself as being convinced of the justice of the demands made, and pledging himself to carry out the wishes of the Commissioners without unnecessary delay. At this interview, Mr. Brydges stated that large contracts had been entered into with several parties to furnish iron and sleepers, but they had repeatedly disappointed him by failure to fulfil their agreements. Under these circumstances, he asked that time might be given him to make other arrangements, which was cheerfully acceded to by the Commissioners.

We will do Mr. Brydges the justice to say, that previous to his examination we believe he could have had no correct idea of the very bad condition of the track; for certainly, since that time, the repairs have been pressed forward very energetically. Large quantities of iron have been sent to Toronto, six hundred miles, re-rolled, brought back and laid in the track. Other portions have been distributed to the various repair shops along the line, there mended and returned to the track, and at least one cargo of new iron received. New track timbers have been laid over the open culverts and cattle-guards, and several points where embankments had washed out repaired. The pile bridge at Royall's river, Yarmouth, has been sufficiently strengthened to insure its safety until next summer, when it is proposed to build a new bridge. The Commissioners are happy to state that Mr. Brydges has, during the past summer and fall, made every effort to put this road in good condition, and believe that he will continue his exertions through the coming season until the track is made equal to the great service required of it.

Androscoggin Railroad, from Brunswick to Farmington, 67 Miles, including the Lewiston Branch, 72 Miles.

On the examination of this road it was found that several of the bridges and many of the cattle-guards and open culverts needed repairs, the planking at the road crossings were rotten and worn-out. The Superintendent, S. W. Eaton, Esq., was directed to repair the trestle bridges at Farmington, East Wilton, Mosquito

brook, Shybridge, between Livermore and East Livermore, Snelling's bridge, Dead Stream bridge and the bridge just north of Crowley's Station. In addition to the above, many of the cattle-guards and open culverts needed new timbers and the walls rebuilding. At the second examination it was found that a considerable portion of the repairs had been made. The track on this road is in good condition, iron not much worn. One mile of new iron and fifteen thousand sleepers next season will keep the track in excellent repair. The timber abutments at the several bridges are not such as should be built on the line of an important railroad, and must be replaced with substantial stone-work. The fences on the northern portion of the road are almost worthless; in fact, for a long distance, the road is not fenced. At many of the road crossings there are no cattle-guards. The usual notice, specifying all the above-named defects, has been served on the Superintendent of the road, and we hope that during the coming summer these defects will be repaired.

The business of this road is rapidly increasing, and under the good management of the Superintendent, Mr. Eaton, the affairs of the road are skilfully and economically conducted.

Portland, Saco and Portsmouth Railroad, from Portland to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 55 Miles.

This road, under the efficient management of Francis Chase, Esq., Superintendent, still maintains its well earned reputation as a safe and well conducted line of travel. The road is leased for a term of years by the Eastern and Boston and Maine Railroads, but is controlled by a Board of Directors and Superintendent, independent of the above named companies. At South Berwick it connects with the Boston and Maine and at Portsmouth with the Eastern Railroads—both first class roads, well managed and equally deserving the full confidence of the public. The cars of each of these roads are run over the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth road to Portland, but the motive power is furnished by the last named company. No pains nor expense are spared by these several companies, that will promote the comfort and safety of their patrons, as all can attest who have occasion to travel between Portland and Boston.

The track of the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth road was found in good condition, and the bridges, culverts and cattle guards

requiring but slight repairs. Most of the defects noted by the Commissioners last year had been repaired; among these were the draw in the bridge over the Piscataqua river, new abutments at the Kennebunk river, the Maryland stream in Wells, and the stream east of North Berwick; some of the culverts and cattle guards should be rebuilt the coming season. The Superintendent has been notified of the locations where such repairs are needed.

The importance of this line of road can hardly be estimated, as it is the only connecting link between the railroad system of Maine, and that of the other New England States, and we believe that the Managers intend to maintain the road in such state of efficiency and repair as shall equal all the demands made upon its resources.

Boston and Maine Railroad, Two Miles within the Limits of this State, from South Berwick Junction to Salmon Falls.

The two miles of this road within the limits of this State have been kept in equally good repair with other portions of the line, and it is sufficient to say that the Railroad Commissioners of this State have never found any defects in the road requiring any action or suggestion by or from them. There is one important bridge on this line which has been carefully examined each year by the Commissioners, and found to be well protected from the weather, and to all appearance sound throughout.

The Boston and Maine Railroad is one of the best finished and well constructed roads in the country, and the road and its officers are well worthy the patronage bestowed and the confidence reposed in them.

Great Falls Branch Railroad, Three Miles within the Limits of this State.

This is a branch road, leaving the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth Railroad at a point in South Berwick, called Brock's Crossing, and extending to Great Falls, N. H., and there connecting with the Great Falls and Conway railroad.

Upon examination of this road it was found that some few repairs were needed, and directions were given by the Commissioners for the rebuilding of a trestle bridge near South Berwick village, and for five hundred new sleepers to be put into the track. These repairs have been made, and the road is now in good

condition. Mr. A. A. Perkins, the Superintendent of the whole line, manages the road with great economy and care.

York and Cumberland Railroad, from Portland to Buxton, 18 Miles.

Some considerable improvements have been made on this road during the past summer—a large number of new sleepers have been put into the track, and a portion of the iron repaired. At the annual examination it was found that a large number of sleepers would be required, and that some of the culverts and cattle-guards must be rebuilt, and new track-timbers laid over them. The officers of the road have exerted themselves to make the necessary repairs, and succeeded so far as to get the track in a safe condition for the winter. Some of the iron is badly worn, and will not be safe for use another year, particularly that portion between Westbrook Station and Woodford's Corner.

While it is understood that this road has been, and is now laboring under great embarrassments, still it is important that measures be taken to secure the needed amount of iron, and laying it in the track early the coming season. The Commissioners required one and one-half miles of iron and sixteen thousand sleepers the past season. A large proportion of the sleepers have been laid, and a small amount of the iron. Dan Carpenter, Esq., is Superintendent of this road.

Portland and Oxford Central Railroad, from Mechanic Falls to Sumner, 16 Miles.

This road branches from the Grand Trunk Railroad at Mechanic Falls, running thence to Buckfield and Sumner. Efforts are being made to extend the road from the last-named point to Dixfield, but owing to the high price of labor and material, but little progress has been made. The iron on this road is in good condition, not much worn; but many of the sleepers were found to be unsound and worthless. Defects were also discovered in several of the bridges and culverts. The Commissioners notified the Superintendent, Mr. A. S. Adams, of the defective bridges and sleepers, and directed him to make the needed repairs. At the time of the second visit of the Commissioners the work had not been completed; but Mr. Adams has since informed us by letter that the directions had been carried out. Five thousand sleepers

were required to be laid, and that number has been put into the track the past summer.

Bangor, Oldtown and Milford Railroad, 13 Miles.

The examination of this railroad disclosed no great defects, and judging from the appearance of the track and the interest manifested by the officers great care is taken to keep the track in such condition as to insure the safe passage of trains. Some suggestions were made by the Commissioners in regard to strengthening the bridge at Stillwater and laying new sleepers the coming season. This road is owned and operated by Gen. S. Veazie of Bangor, and, we think, is managed with good care and economy.

From the facts stated in the foregoing report, it will be seen that great improvements have been made during the past season, upon the most important lines of railroad, and the Commissioners feel deeply interested in their continued improvement and advancement until they are made equal to other New England railroads. This by judicious management and economical expenditures, can be accomplished, and we trust that the report of next year will show that greater advances have been made and improvements developed than in any preceding year.

The Commissioners would most respectfully suggest that the clause in the railroad law of this State whereby the different companies are obliged to maintain the present large and unwieldy signs at the common road crossings, should be repealed, and the companies be relieved to some extent of their expense and inconvenience. Owing to their height and the large surface exposed to the action of the wind, it is almost impossible to keep them in position. In addition to the above, they obstruct the highway, for instance, when buildings are being moved, or large loads of hay. A single post at the side of the road with an arm upon it, similar to the old-fashioned guideboard, with the words "Railroad Crossing" distinctly painted upon it, would accomplish the same object and do away with the objections to the larger signs.

In this connection, as a compensation for the relief afforded by the removal of this very unnecessary burden, the Commissioners express the hope that our railroad companies will at once adopt the system of semi-four signals. Having witnessed their opera-

tions on the Great Western Railway of Canada—a model road under model management—they were deeply impressed with their value as a means of preventing serious casualties, and would most earnestly recommend their adoption by the railroads in Maine.

All of which is most respectfully submitted by

A. W. WILDES,

For the Board of Railroad Commissioners for Maine.

AUGUSTA, January 7, 1865.

STATE OF MAINE.

The Committee on Railroads, Ways and Bridges, to which was referred the Report of the Railroad Commissioners for the year 1864, have had the same under consideration, and ask leave to report recommending that the same be printed and the number of copies be fixed at 350.

GEO. W. WOODMAN, *Per Order.*

IN SENATE, January 26, 1865.

Read and accepted. Sent down for concurrence.

THOMAS P. CLEAVES, *Secretary.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
January, 27 1865. }

Read and concurred.

HORACE STILSON, *Clerk.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
January 31, 1865. }

Ordered, That the Clerk of the House cause to be printed for the use of this House 350 additional copies of the Report of Railroad Commissioners for the year 1864.

HORACE STILSON, *Clerk.*