

**BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE  
RAILROAD COMMISSIONER  
OF THE STATE OF  
VERMONT, 1881-82**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649315031

Biennial Report of the Railroad Commissioner of the State of Vermont, 1881-82 by Various

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**VARIOUS**

**BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE  
RAILROAD COMMISSIONER  
OF THE STATE OF  
VERMONT, 1881-82**



BIENNIAL REPORT

cf

OF THE

Railroad Commissioner

OF THE

STATE OF VERMONT, *Public Services*  
*Commission*

FOR

1881-82.

*Storage*  
*HE*  
*2771*  
*.V5*  
*V47a*  
*1881-82*

RUTLAND:  
TUTTLE & CO., OFFICIAL PRINTERS,  
1882.

Adm  
351.2  
VT  
881.982

~~Trans~~ from 9/35  
in Law Lib.

Ut. St. Lib.  
Ex.  
4086

224/15/32+

1.1.0

Boh

5/27/52

# REPORT.

STATE OF VERMONT.

RAILROAD COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,  
RUTLAND, JULY 31, 1882. }

To His Excellency, Roswell Farnham, Governor of Vermont :

SIR :—In conformity with the laws of the state, I have the honor to submit my report as railroad commissioner for the two years ending July 31, 1882.

## DUTIES OF COMMISSIONER.

Chapter 159 of the revised laws of Vermont, makes it the duty of the railroad commissioner to enquire into, examine and report biennially to the governor certain facts in relation to the management of the several railroads in this state, among the more important of which are, "any neglect or infringement of the laws for the regulation of railroads, by officers, employes, or agents of such road"; the condition of each railroad, its state of repairs, and that of its carriages, engines, furniture and equipment, and its conduct and management for the public safety; the causes of the failure of proper railroad connections, if there has been any, and wherein such failure consists; the pecuniary condition and financial management of the railroads, for each of the two preceding years; whether a railroad corporation has within the two years previous exceeded its legal powers, or incurred a forfeiture of its franchises; what further legal provisions should, in his (the commissioner's) opinion, be adopted in relation to railroads. The law also provides that the commissioner may establish a uniform system of keeping railroad accounts so as to conform, as far as practicable, to a uniform system adopted by the states of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York.

This last provision was, in my opinion, a wise and thoughtful one, for, from the nature of the subjects to be acted upon and the magnitude of the interests to be considered, to properly frame the necessary questions, and classify the various items that go to make a report, would require much thought and a more thorough knowledge of railroad business and affairs, as well as a larger amount of time than is usually allotted to the members of the general assembly for the consideration of any one subject.

76 c 7 4 3

This matter having been left to the commissioner to establish in conformity with the several other states, your commissioner, four years ago, after corresponding with the commissioners of other states, prepared a blank somewhat similar to the one approved by the convention of railroad commissioners, held at Saratoga in June, 1879, when this very question was under consideration and thoroughly discussed by the various members of the convention, many of them having had large experience in railroad affairs and who had made this subject a study for years. The blanks thus prepared had been in use but two years when I came into office and, as the roads had but so recently began to keep their accounts in conformity with them, it seemed better to me to make no radical change in the form of questions, and I have used the same form.

#### BIENNIAL REPORTS.

The commissioner has made all possible effort to secure complete and perfect returns from the various roads, still several reports are incomplete, rendering it impossible to state results as absolutely correct, but the facts furnished are sufficient to enable me to state such as are believed to be substantially true. I have, as required by law, from time to time gone over and personally inspected all the roads of this state, as to their state of repairs, the condition of their carriages, engines, furniture and equipment, as well as their conduct and management for the public safety, and I have found them, in my judgment, not only safe, but the older and principal roads in excellent condition, comparing favorably with any in the country, while the others, and these include several that are new and as yet incomplete, are in a very satisfactory condition.

The very few accidents that have occurred on the several lines in this state, within the last two years, indicate the excellent condition and management of the roads.

By the reports received from the roads, and from what knowledge I have been able to obtain by personal inspection, as to their management as required by law, I find no neglect or infringement of the laws for the regulation of railroads in the state by officers, employes, or agents of said roads.

Reports have been received from twelve companies operating railroads in this state. The following are the names of companies from which reports have been received :

- Atlantic and St. Lawrence.
- Bennington and Rutland.
- Boston, Hoosac Tunnel and Western.
- Central Vermont.
- Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers.
- Missisquoi.
- Montpelier and Wells River.
- Newport and Richford.
- Rensselaer and Saratoga.
- St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain.
- Vermont Valley.
- Woodstock.



The Delaware and Hudson Canal company operate about thirty-six miles of road in Vermont, known as the Rensselaer and Saratoga, in two divisions, one from Rutland to Eagle Bridge, the other from Whitehall to Castleton. By their mode of keeping accounts, the fiscal year ends September 30. As only a small per cent of the business done by the company is in Vermont no separate account is kept, and, as the fiscal year for 1882 ends September 30, only the report for 1881 appears. About ten per cent of the entire amount of this report is the estimate of the company for the business done in Vermont. Several other lines in the state are operated by companies outside of Vermont and the same difficulty applies to them as to the Delaware and Hudson Canal company in keeping and making their report.

#### EXPRESS COMPANIES.

The United States and Canada, National, and American Merchants' Union express companies do the bulk of the express business on these roads.

#### GAUGE.

All the roads of this state are of uniform gauge, except the Brattleboro and Whitehall railroad; this is three feet. I am informed by the officers having control of this road that it is very satisfactory, and, in their opinion, one-half of the business done on the various roads in the state could be more economically and as satisfactorily done by this kind of road as by the ordinary gauge. This road has been very much improved within the last year.

#### LENGTH OF TRACK.

The total length of all railroads in the state as now operated by the various companies, as far as I have been able to ascertain, is eight hundred and fifty eight miles (858) of main line and branches, and eighty-eight miles (88) of sidings and other track.

#### STATIONS.

The total number of stations in Vermont, as reported by all the roads, is two hundred and fifty-five (255). The number used jointly with other roads is thirty (30).

#### BRAKES.

At the last session of the general assembly of this state a law was enacted requiring all passenger trains to be provided with brakes operated from the engine by the engineers. This was a wise provision, tending in a measure to secure the traveling public against serious accidents. This law has been cheerfully complied with by all the roads in the state.

The Westinghouse air, and the Smith vacuum brakes are in general use on the roads. On the Central Vermont road the Westinghouse air is being replaced by the automatic.

## COUPLERS.

The Miller platform and coupler is in use on eight of the roads.

## SLEEPING CARS.

Sleeping and drawing room cars are run on day and night passenger trains on all the principal lines.

## TAXATION.

In 1874 a law was passed taxing railroad corporations to a certain extent; under that system the road bed and track could not be assessed at a valuation exceeding two thousand dollars for every mile of the main line. The legislature of 1880 passed an act entitled, "An act to equalize taxation," by which the restriction as to the valuation of the road bed and track was removed. By the present system the roads bear more nearly their proportionate burden of taxation. The amount, as returned to me, for the two years past, ending on the thirty-first day of July, 1882, being twenty-nine thousand, eight hundred and forty-eight dollars and ninety cents (\$29,848.90). Only part of the roads have reported as to the taxes paid.

## MILEAGE AND TONNAGE.

Total number of miles run by passenger trains.....	2,794,460
Total number of miles run by freight trains.....	7,132,790
Total number of miles run by construction and other trains .....	716,023
Total number of miles run by all classes of trains.....	10,643,273
Total number of tons of freight carried one mile.....	489,869,283
Total number of passengers carried one mile .....	66,255,066
Total number of passengers carried.....	2,314,037

## EARNINGS AND OPERATING EXPENSES.

Total receipts from all sources, as reported by the several roads, amount to the sum of seven million four hundred and ninety-eight thousand five hundred and eighty-four dollars and fifteen cents (\$7,498,584.15), received as follows: From passengers, three million nine hundred thirty-five thousand two hundred forty-eight dollars and nineteen cents (\$3,935,248.19); freight, two million eight hundred thirty-five thousand two hundred sixty-five dollars and sixteen cents (\$2,835,265.16); mails, one hundred seventy thousand four hundred thirty-one dollars and ninety-four cents (\$170,431.94); express, eighty-six thousand six hundred ninety dollars and forty-four cents (\$86,690.44); other sources, four hundred sixty-six thousand nine hundred forty-eight dollars and forty-two cents (\$466,948.42).

Total operating expenses, five million eight hundred fifteen thousand two hundred fifty-three dollars and sixty-six cents (\$5,815,253.66); taxes, twenty-nine thousand eight hundred forty-eight dollars and ninety cents (\$29,848.90). Total operating

expenses and taxes, five million eight hundred forty-five thousand one hundred two dollars and fifty-six cents (\$5,845,102.56).

The total amount of business for the two years last passed shows quite an increase over the two preceding years, both in the number of passengers carried and amount of freight transported; yet, while the total receipts are increased largely, the total expenses are increased to a still larger amount, making the net earnings even less than for the preceding years.

#### DIVIDENDS.

Dividends to the amount of two hundred and twenty-eight thousand six hundred and ten dollars (\$228,610) have been paid by the roads, as follows:

The Vermont Valley road of 1871, a dividend of four per cent on common stock, amounting to forty thousand dollars (\$40,000); the Bennington and Rutland, three per cent on common and preferred stock, amounting to thirty thousand one hundred and twenty dollars (\$30,120); the Connecticut and Passumpsic rivers railroad, of six per cent on the preferred stock, amounting to one hundred and fifty-eight thousand four hundred and ninety dollars (\$158,490).

#### COMPLAINTS.

In August, 1881, complaint having been made to me that the bridge over the St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain railroad at the south end of Railroad street in the village of St. Johnsbury was not in conformity with the laws of the state in regard to railroad bridges, I immediately visited the place and after inspecting the bridge and looking at the law in relation to the matter I came to the conclusion that where the highway passes over the railroad such a bridge does not come within the provisions of the statute. I also submitted the question to several of the best lawyers in the state and they were of the same opinion. This is the only complaint that has been made to me for the two years past as to the failure of the railroad companies operating lines in this state to comply with the provisions of chapter 157 of the revised laws of Vermont as to the regulations respecting railroads.

#### SUGGESTIONS.

I would suggest the necessity of some legislation in regard to these bridges, for as they now are they are not of sufficient height to allow men to safely pass under them while standing on the tops of cars.

There should be a law, in my opinion, making it the duty of all railroads where an accident has occurred resulting in the loss of life to immediately report it to the commissioner that he may enquire into the cause.

A law requiring all trains carrying passengers to have suspended in some convenient and accessible place in each passenger car axes and bars ready to be used in case of accident might frequently be the means of preventing the loss of life, and should, I think, find a place on the statute book. The law as it stands to-day makes it the