Goings On at Seashore -

The season has drawn to a close somewhat early. The regular seasonal activities ended with the last day of main line operations on October 31 and the night photo shoot of the bus fleet on November 14. December activities had been scheduled for a Drive Thru Santa and Christmas Prelude Trolley Ride events.

Unfortunate changes occurring in COVID-19 transmission rates in the state, community spread in York County, and state policies regarding travel restrictions for Massachusetts (where most of the volunteers that help with the winter events reside), made these unwise. The difficult choice to remain closed to the general public and cancel all December events was made. The safety of the museum’s guests, volunteers and staff are paramount, and with these changing pandemic conditions, Seashore was no longer able to confidently do so if the museum remained open in December.

The work continues on trolley restorations, infrastructure improvements, and 2021 season preparation. At this writing, Opening Day is planned for Saturday, May 1st. However, should the operating challenges brought on by the pandemic improve by April, it is hoped to offer a first-ever Easter event.

New track work was progressing nicely at the Restoration Shop as of the start of the last week in November.
**Do You Recognize?**

**Correction:** September’s “mystery line” as revealed in October was the Keene Electric Railway. In the writeup there was a photo of a Birney acquired in 1923. In the photo ID line I in error identified it as #24. As correctly identified in other images #24 was one of four c.1900 closed 20 ft. Wason cars. The Birney in the image was #106, a 1923 Wason product. Apologies - I was just having too much fun writing “24”. My thanks to Paul Schneble for catching my brain cramp.

Last Month’s Do You Recognize -

Our line in question, The Roby & Northern Railroad, was constructed to link its namesake community (Roby, TX) with the Texas Central Railroad at N. Roby a distance of some four miles.

Roby, Texas was laid out in 1886, incorporated as a city in 1916, and is the county seat of Fraiser County. Fraiser County is named after a Pennsylvanian who settled in the area in 1830 and in the late 1830s was Secretary of The Navy of the Texas Republic.

Located in the rather sparsely settled West Central Texas, Roby suffered from lack of water until the mid-50s when a lake was created some 45 miles south of the city as a power plant lake, also providing a water supply to be piped to the city. The city had a population of between 700 and 800 when our line was established, reached about 900 as our line closed in 1941, peaked at slightly over a thousand in 1950, and has since declined to about 600.

The Roby & Northern Railroad was chartered in 1915 with capitalization of $10,000 to build north to connect with the Texas Central Railroad that had bypassed the community. The steam road been leased the previous year to a Class 1 steam road, the M-K-T railroad. The Roby & Northern was frugal from the start with rails and other materials acquired from the abandoned Estacado and Gulf Railroad chartered some seven years earlier to build from...
Roby. By 1911 the Estacado and Gulf had constructed about five miles of track. Then efforts stopped and the engine and other equipment lay for a few years where the tracks had ended and was sold for scrap or salvaged to be used on our railroad. The Roby & Northern entered into agreement with Roby’s citizens for them to haul the track and other material to the new site. Our line’s initial rolling stock consisted of two steam locomotives, a passenger car, and two box cars. The intent of the Roby & Northern was to ship cotton north to the connection with the M-K-T and bring various material and merchandise back. Service began in January 1916 with a four-and-a-half mile line. By the early 1920s the Roby & Northern was in bankruptcy and threatening to close. Local businessmen convinced the West Texas Utilities Company to take over the line in 1923 and electrify it. By this quirk of fate the Roby & Northern became an extremely small component of the vast Insull empire. With electrification came two second-hand electrics No’s 6 and 7.

No. 6 was built c.1918 as a large gas-electric motor car (59’ x 10’) by the Electric Car and Locomotive Corporation (West Orange, NJ?) for the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway and rebuilt as an electric car when acquired by our line in 1923. No. 7 was rebuilt by the American Car Co. in 1924 from a city car built for a city operation in Abilene. The rebuild included changing the car from a single truck Birney to a double truck passenger/baggage car reconfigured to add a large baggage section. A drawbar was also added so the car could haul freight cars when needed.

In 1931 the state railroad commission listed the Roby & Northern as a Class III road having one locomotive, one freight car, and three passenger cars. One locomotive and one freight car seemingly having disappeared with the passage of time. It appears that the steam engine was seldom if ever used.

Three round trips were operated daily to meet the two trains operated by the steam road as well as a mid-day trip. Passenger traffic was always minuscule. The round-trip fare was 25 cents. In the later years of operation #7 was generally operated by one individual with only two employed on the line.
The road petitioned the ICC to discontinue operations in November 1941, permission was granted in November, operations were discontinued on December 31, 1941, and was abandoned the following year with the rails etc. scrapped for the WWII metal drive.

For those seeking more detail there is a brief story on the Roby & Northern in the CERA Bulletin #38 of June 1942.

This Month’s Do You Recognize -

If anyone is looking for a severe challenge this month’s selection probably isn’t it as it has enough unique features to make it somewhat stand out.

Our railroad of interest this month got its start with the incorporation of a “city name” City Railroad by a local entrepreneur in 1863. The impetus for this construction was the earlier (1854 - 1858) construction of a government-built railway to link the city, the regional capital, with other other communities. Unfortunately, apparently driven by an attack of ill advised parsimony, it was determined to build the railway terminus some three miles from the center of the city. The connecting roadways were unpaved mud wallows on a good day and local cabmen happily charged exorbitant fares to cover this distance. Many less fortunate rail travelers simply had to slog the distance on foot.

The 1863 incorporation did not bring immediate relief as most of the area merchants, the likely investors, had their money invested in operating blockade runners trading with the Confederate States during the Civil War. The surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia in April of 1865 followed by the remaining major military units of the Confederacy and the capture of Confederate President Davis in May put an end to the blockade running business and its high profits.

In 1866 as investment monies became available construction was started from the somewhat remote railway station into the city proper including a combined stable and car barn. This initial development was apparently broad gauge (5’ 6”) as a locomotive for the local steam railroad was moved over the City Railroad’s rails. On June 11 of that year an official opening of the line took place attended by what the press described as an immense gathering including the band of the 4th Regiment of the Line that garrisoned the city’s citadel, the Lt. Governor, and other dignitaries. Two additional short lines were built in 1869.

Cars ran a weekday headway of 15 minutes between 6AM and 10 PM. With the acquisition of larger cars in 1874 service was increased to every 10 minutes between 10AM and 8PM.

In 1876 a decision was made by the government-owned steam road to extend closer to the city center including the construction of a new station. This required building over part of the routes of our City Railroad. The steam road offered to pay all expenses of moving the city
railroad’s track to an adjacent street. The owner refused and abruptly in mid-May 1876 shut down the line and shortly thereafter sold his, cars, horses, and rails. For the next decade local transportation was by private carriage, on foot, or a minimal omnibus service. By the middle 1880s the idea of streetcars propelled by electricity was being discussed and a group of prominent citizens obtained a charter in mid-April 1884 for an electric railway line. Obtaining a charter is one thing and obtaining investors yet another. The new company named the “city name” Railway Company made no progress. In 1886 yet another company, the “city name” Street Railway was formed to build a horse-powered street railway. A charter was obtained in early May 1886 and at the end of that month the rights of the previous Railway Company were transferred to the new Street Railway. Fifteen cars were purchased from the John Stephenson Company and the former Railroad Company’s buildings were purchased for a stable and carbarn. An existing omnibus company was purchased to eliminate competition. The new line officially opened on October 21, 1886 with a large crowd, speeches, and a luncheon reminiscent of the opening of the City Railroad twenty years before. A new branch was built to reach major hotels and businesses. New suburbs were growing to the northwest and equipment of the old omnibus company was used to provide service. This proved unsatisfactory and although the Street Railway began laying new track to service the area financial difficulties intervened.

In 1889 yet another company emerged - this time a Power Company chartered to produce and sell electrical power and also to acquire and electrify the Street Railway. In 1891 the new Power Company completed the new branch started in 1886 but for lack of capital made no effort to electrify any of the lines. By 1893 the branch originally built in 1886 to reach the major hotels and businesses had to be discontinued with the above 1891 branch also had to close in 1895.

Some stability came to the scene with the incorporation of the “city name” Electric Tramway Company in March of 1895. The new, and for a change, well capitalized firm purchased the bankrupt Street Railway and the Power Company. Also acquired was an “illuminating and motor company that had a powerhouse. The new Electric Tramway Company had both capital and power generating capacity to finally electrify the system. A new thirty-car carbarn was constructed with
connections to the existing track of the old Street Railway. Fourteen closed cars and twelve opens were ordered from Rhodes, Curry & Company with another six closed and two opens acquired later from the same firm. Trucks, motors and electrical equipment were swapped between open and closed cars for the first couple of years and then it was decided impractical and additional trucks, etc. were acquired. Additional new and second-hand cars were acquired from several manufacturers including the Ottawa Car Company, Silliker Car Co. and its successor, and J.G. Brill through 1919.

The first two cars arrived on February 3, 1896 and a demonstration run was made on the 12th of the same month. Initially the electrics only ran on a portion of the line as the old horse line track was still being replaced with heavier rail. A new route was opened in early May and by the end of the month the entire system had been rebuilt. May 31, 1896 saw the operation of the last horse car. Expansion of routes and adding to existing infrastructure went on through the outbreak of the First World War with a new forty-two car car barn being added in 1916.

In early 1917 the company was reorganized and the name changed to a Tramway and Power Company.

December of 1917 saw a massive tragedy befall the city, its citizens, and the tramway. A collision in the city’s port resulted in a massive explosion and subsequent fire. Over 25 percent of the city’s population was killed or injured. The tramway had about a fifth of its closed fleet damaged with two cars totally demolished (nothing found but the trucks). A great deal of the company’s poles and overhead were also destroyed. Rebuilding of the lines was hindered by the devastation to both property and workers. The north end of the city was so totally destroyed that portions of the tram system in that area were never restored. For perspective the explosion resulted in ten-times the number of deaths and over double the injuries as this year’s huge ammonium nitrate explosion in Beirut. Our line’s city having one sixth the population in 1917 as Beirut does today.
The year 1919 saw wartime activity ended and the company left with a badly worn system including a number of cars damaged in the explosion and only having received minimal repairs. The year 1919 also saw a controlling interest in the company purchased by Stone & Webster. This controlling interest was held until 1924 when the controlling interest was sold to a brokerage firm headquartered in our line’s home city. Subsequently the brokerage house sold shares in the company to the public at large.

Beginning with a 1920 purchase of 24 new Birneys from American Car Company our line went to 100% Birney for future acquisitions with most of the earlier cars scrapped or sold by 1927 other than a few converted to work or sand cars. The 1920 purchase from American was also the last acquisition of new cars with a total of 84 Birneys in the fleet. One slight oddity in the career of the first 24 Birneys was that in 1924 the rules of the road changed from left-side to right-side and these cars required extensive conversion as their steps were suddenly in the wrong place. The older cars mostly had steps on both sides and were easier conversions.
In 1926 there was an extensive rehabilitation of old track-work and overhead. By the end of 1927 the infrastructure work was complete and the Birney fleet at full strength so the older cars could be scrapped.

World War II arrived in 1939 and the city’s prewar population of around 60,000 jumped to 120,000 by 1941 and ridership jumped from the normal nine million riders to an astonishing thirty one million. The pre-war fleet of 59 Birmey's was crushed by this demand and the company added another 23 as quickly as possible with still intense crowding.

At war’s end the company found itself with a worn out fleet, rails, and overhead. New or good used cars were almost non-existent and it was ultimately decided to scrap the trolley system. The last Birney in revenue service operated on March 26, 1949. With motor buses used to fill the gap while the overhead was reworked the system was converted with 65 new trolley buses. The population leveled off at about 100,000 but demand remained high with 28 million riders by 1952 and 12 more trolley buses were added with a total of 87 ultimately operated. Trolleybus service was supplemented with motor buses starting in 1963. Ridership was declining and street congestion worsening during the 1960s and the decision was made to replace the trolleybuses. On January 1, 1970 trolley bus service ended in favor of diesel buses and on the same date the city government took over the transit routes. A regional metropolitan transit agency was established in 1981 to serve the city and surrounding communities.
A Library Committee meeting was held through Zoom on November 7, 2020.

The next Library Committee meeting will be held through a virtual Zoom meeting on January 9, 2020 at 10 AM. Materials and login information will be distributed.

Our community partner York County Community College is entered its Fall Semester with a revised schedule due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On site hands-on instruction is only occurring where absolutely essential - other instruction is through virtual sessions.

The Library Committee’s meetings on Saturdays (10AM) will tentatively be virtual meetings on a bimonthly basis on the odd months. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Saturday - Workshops only (10AM - 2 PM) are still cancelled

The Wednesday Evening Workshops are still cancelled - hopefully resumption in the future.

For further information/questions concerning the Library please contact Randy Leclair (207-641-9324 - text preferred) or Karen Dooks (781 799-5868).

By Karen Dooks, Chair

Links:

More than 1000 of the images are accessible online = https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_images/

Facebook page = https://www.facebook.com/groups/44932548777/

Seashore Library On-Line Resources -

A library resources page originally developed by Amber Tatnall dealing with useful and interesting resource material including among other things links to some three decades of
the Street Railway Journal and the Electric Railway Journal on line is located at on line resources:  https://virtual.yccc.edu/c.php?g=238406&p=3225494&preview=7b52901d1f51db2b76cb2a141ca8589c

or this handy tinyurl works as well: http://tinyurl.com/zwhndoe

The Library continues to upload material to the various sections of DigitalMaine - The DigitalMaine Repository is a partnership of the Maine State Library, Maine State Archives and community institutions around the state.

The uploads to the new documents area are quite fascinating as they allow you to literally leaf through the documents.

https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_museum/
https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_blueprints/
https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_images/
https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_documents/

Please remember when sending donations for the library to note that it is for Library Development – Fund 951.

How To Close A Street Railway - Those of us who are fond of the history of street railways can all recite when particular railways were motorized or simply abandoned. We know this happened but do we ever think, or for that matter care, about the how? By the time that many railways were closing (1920s - 1940s these were regulated carriers with state and sometimes community granted franchises as well as being business corporations. Short of outright financial collapse these entities couldn’t just “go away”. In my personal collection I have some amount of material related to The Portsmouth Electric Railway (PER) and the subsequent Boston & Maine Transportation Company (BMT), primarily because of my father’s employment with both entities. In looking through some of this material for some equipment information related to Seashore’s B&M bus #784 I happened across a copy of the original agreement where the BMT contracted with the Boston & Maine Railroad to replace the PER trolley routes in Portsmouth with buses.

As many of the readers will already know the PER and the BMT were both subsidiaries of the Boston & Maine Railroad although slightly different in the ownership arrangement. The PER was set up as an electric division of the railroad while the BMT was a separate corporation operating buses and trucks and wholly owned by the railroad.
By the mid-1920s the railroad wanted out of the electric railway business both because of declining traffic and a badly worn infrastructure resulting from the demands of the period of the First World War. At the start of 1925 the BMT was formed and in early March it filed a petition with the New Hampshire Public Service Commission to substitute motor coach service for the streetcars of the PER. A hearing was held in late March and with little or no opposition the authority was granted for bus operations to begin as of May 17, 1925. The railroad did not seek to immediately abandon the PER but only to suspend service while the acceptability of the replacement bus service was demonstrated to the public and the communities involved. The NH Public Service Commission agreed to the suspension and set May 1, 1926 as the date by which the railroad had to decide whether or not to resume streetcar service. Consequently the overhead and track were left intact during the suspension period. A part of the car barn was converted to use as a bus garage. Shortly after the appointed decision date the railroad applied to abandon the lines of the PER and permission was granted in August 1926. The only real complaint being a squabble with the affected communities over the removal of rails and ties from the public highways. I can remember as late as the ‘50s and ‘60s road crews being surprised by rails, ties and in one instance a complete turnout being discovered during road repair.

So much for the regulatory niceties, now to the business end of things. As mentioned I discovered the agreement between the railroad and the BMT for the assumption of the former PER routes. An interesting thing to note is that the agreement is, to throw some Latin around, an ex post facto document (after the fact). B&MRR President Hustis and BMT President Fritch signed the agreement on June 3, 1925 - however the provisions of the agreement are stated to take effect the 17th of May 1925 (the day bus service started). A slight cart before horse problem but not so potentially troublesome when control all ultimately rests with the same company. The agreement in which the BMT agrees to assume to operation of the routes outlined insurance and tax responsibilities and also includes the railroad agreeing to lease the BMT seven buses (4 Whites and 3 Brockways, all with Brown Body Corporation city bodies) to operate the system and also permitting the BMT free use of the former PER Portsmouth car house. I don’t seem to have any copies of later leases but other notes indicate that the railroad continued to own the buses operated by the BMT and lease them to the transportation company until some time in 1938 when the practice was discontinued and the equipment sold to the BMT. By the end of 1925 the BMT was operating 29 buses including Whites, Brockways, and Yellows.

The B&MRR and BMT agreement regarding the PER routes follows-

Note: In the March 2014 issue of The Main Line there was included a scan of the 1927 contract that transferred the joint trolley/highway bridge over Sagamore Creek to the City of Portsmouth for the sum of one dollar as part of the closeout of the Portsmouth Electric.
THIS AGREEMENT made in duplicate this 3rd day of June 1925, by and between the BOSTON AND MAINE RAILROAD, a corporation duly organized by law, hereinafter called the "RAILROAD", and the BOSTON & MAINE TRANSPORTATION COMPANY, a corporation duly organized by law, hereinafter called the "TRANSPORTATION COMPANY", both parties having usual places of business in the City of Boston and Commonwealth of Massachusetts,

W I T N E S S E T H:

That WHEREAS the RAILROAD has heretofore operated a street railway in and about the City of Portsmouth in the State of New Hampshire, said railway being known as the Portsmouth Electric Railway, the operation of which railway has for many years resulted in a substantial annual loss to the said RAILROAD, and

WHEREAS the RAILROAD wishes to enter into an agreement with the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY to substitute bus service in lieu of railway service in said Portsmouth in order to avoid the loss which it has been incurring,

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties mutually agree as follows:

1. The RAILROAD leases to the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY the following described motor busses, to wit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Motor Number</th>
<th>Frame Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>50 A</td>
<td>GR 10379</td>
<td>119430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>50 A</td>
<td>GR 10369</td>
<td>119376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>50 A</td>
<td>GR 10376</td>
<td>119429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>50 A</td>
<td>GR 10445</td>
<td>119720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brockway</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>6-B-281</td>
<td>12099</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brockway</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>6-B-279</td>
<td>12097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brockway</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>6-B-275</td>
<td>12096</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. As rent for the use of the above described busses the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY promises to pay the RAILROAD as follows:
(a) For the first year that said busses are used by
it, an amount equal to 6% of the purchase price of said bus,
and for each year thereafter, an amount equal to 6% of the
purchase price of said bus less any amounts paid in under
section (b) of this paragraph.

(b) In addition to the rental provided in section (a),
the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY agrees to pay to the RAILROAD for
five
a

amount equal to 20% of the purchase price of each bus.

(c) The TRANSPORTATION COMPANY agrees to reimburse the
RAILROAD for the property taxes paid by it on said busses
and for all insurance premiums paid by it on insurance for
fire and theft as well as for any amounts that the RAILROAD
may in the first instance pay for premiums in connection with
liability insurance that may be taken out by the TRANSPORTATION
COMPANY.

The rental referred to in Sections (a) and (b)
hereof shall begin on July 1, 1925, and shall be payable monthly
in arrears, the first payment being due July 31, 1925. The
amounts to be paid by the RAILROAD for taxes and insurance as
provided in Section (c) shall be repaid to the RAILROAD by the
TRANSPORTATION COMPANY in equal monthly payments, the first
payment on each amount paid by the RAILROAD to be made by the
TRANSPORTATION COMPANY thirty (30) days after each of said
amounts has been paid by the RAILROAD.

3. It is agreed that if the net income of the
TRANSPORTATION COMPANY from the operation of the busses covered
by this agreement and other similar agreements with the RAILROAD,
providing either for the transportation of passengers or freight,
for the year ending June 30, 1926, or for any other yearly
period thereafter ending June 30, shall exceed six per cent
(6%) on its paid in capital stock after the payment of all
necessary expenses, including those provided for in this con-
tract, and a reasonable amount to be reserved for surplus, said
net income in excess of six per cent (6%) shall be paid to the BOSTON AND MAINE RAILROAD.

In the event that an accounting for the year ending June 30, 1926, or for any other yearly period ending June 30, shows a net loss to the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY from the operation of busses covered by this and other agreements with the RAILROAD referred to above, said loss shall be assumed by the RAILROAD, provided, however, that the RAILROAD shall have the right to be reimbursed for any amounts paid on account of any of said losses from any future net earnings of the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY from the operations covered by this agreement.

4. The TRANSPORTATION COMPANY agrees to furnish transportation service in substitution for the street railway service now furnished by the Portsmouth Electric Railway in and about the City of Portsmouth.

It is understood and agreed that the motor busses covered by this agreement may be used by the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY for additional bus service in and about the City of Portsmouth or vicinity, if at any time it shall desire to furnish such additional service.

5. It is agreed that the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY may have the right to place upon said busses the name "Boston & Maine Transportation Company", and such other designation or signs as may be deemed by it necessary. It is understood and agreed, however, that there shall be placed upon each bus a metal plate bearing the words "Boston & Maine Railroad, owner" in plain letters and affixed on each of said motor busses so as to indicate plainly that said BOSTON AND MAINE RAILROAD is the owner of said busses. In case any of said plates or marks shall at any time be removed, defaced or destroyed, the RAILROAD may immediately restore and replace the same so that each bus shall always be plainly marked with the above words.
6. The TRANSPORTATION COMPANY agrees that it will not attempt to sell, mortgage, lease or dispose of the busses covered by this agreement, and that it will use said busses with the greatest care and keep the same fully repaired and in good condition at its own expense. The TRANSPORTATION COMPANY also shall be responsible for and satisfy every claim for damage arising out of its use of said busses, and no loss thereon or damage thereto shall release the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY from the performance of the provisions of this agreement. It is understood and agreed that the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY shall carry liability insurance policies in such companies and in such amounts as shall be satisfactory to the RAILROAD, said policies to cover both the RAILROAD and the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY. It is understood that the busses covered by this agreement shall at all times be at the risk of the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY, but the RAILROAD agrees to carry sufficient insurance protecting said busses against loss by fire and theft.

7. The RAILROAD agrees to pay all property taxes levied or assessed on said busses, and the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY agrees to pay all license fees or any other municipal assessments aside from property taxes that may be assessed upon said busses.

8. The RAILROAD agrees to allow the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY during the term of this agreement to use for the storage of said busses, free of charge, its car house located in said Portsmouth.

9. In case of the failure on the part of the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY to pay its rent on said busses when due, or to perform any of the terms, conditions and obligations in this agreement contained, the RAILROAD or its assigns shall have the lawful right to take possession of the busses covered by this agreement and remove and retain the same without legal
process, and without liability for trespass or damages therefore, and to retain all payments made as rent for the use of said busses, and the RAILROAD or its assigns in case of the failure on the part of the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY to observe the terms of this agreement, shall have the right to sell or otherwise appropriate, use or dispose of said busses on its own account, free from all equity, if any, which the TRANSPORTATION COMPANY may have, and said RAILROAD or its assigns shall be released from all further obligations under this agreement.

THIS AGREEMENT shall take effect on the 17th day of May 1925, and shall continue in force for the term of one (1) year, and thereafter until terminated by either party upon any day by giving ninety (90) days’ written notice to the other party of its intention to terminate this agreement, but it is understood and agreed that this agreement may at any time be altered or amended by mutual consent of the parties hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have hereunto signed this agreement the day and year first above written,

BOSTON AND MAINE RAILROAD
By
(Signed) J.H. Hustis
President.

BOSTON & MAINE TRANSPORTATION COMPANY
By
(Signed) H.F. Fritch
President.

Form approved
G.F. 
G.E.K.
Execution approved
A P M
The image below is a panoramic image of part of the fleet at Portsmouth, probably in 1926. A gasoline pump has been installed and although the overhead appears still in place it appears the tracks have been removed except to the furthest one or two bays.

Closeups of segments from left to right:

Three (3) White 50 A coaches with Brown Body Corporation (Cleveland) city bodies, a Brockway H coach with a brown body, and another White 50 A with a Brown body.
Three Yellow model Y coaches with deluxe bodies (104, 110, & 107 - this type of coach came in 1925-26 for the intercity routes), and two more White 50 A with Brown bodies.

A White 50 A, a Brockway H, and two more White 50 A all with brown bodies.
So that is how one electric railway slipped into history although it briefly stuck its head up about 25 years later. The downtown terminus for the various BMT city routes was Market Square where the Portsmouth Electric had stopped and for that matter where Coast Transportation stops today. In the early '50s a conflict arose between the city and the BMT about the number of buses stopping in Market Square at any one time. There were 9 or 10 city routes terminating in Market Square. Most of these routes were five or six trips a day but a couple ran hourly headway and half-hourly during rush hours. The B&M’s intercity bus service also called at the square along with that of Greyhound. Often the buses would be two abreast and sometimes two or three deep. The square was quite wide and double parked buses were really not a great problem. However, egged on by a local businessman who will remain unnamed, the city decided to “fix the bus problem”. It was announced that only two buses could be in the square at one time with no double parking. Attempts to discuss this with the city proved fruitless. Fortunately the city to its amazement found that the Public Service Commission (maybe by then the Public Utilities Commission - it changed to PUC in 1951) was of the opinion that as the BMT had received authority to assume the routes of the PER and that the PER had loaded and unloaded on double track down the middle of the square and as the BMT held the same residual right it could remove the stop to the middle of the square. This caused the made-up crises to recede and buses continued to stop at the curbside bus stops.

The BMT provided service in Portsmouth until March 3, 1957 when the Interstate Passenger Service of Rochester, NH took over the city lines.

In the same search that revealed the B&M bus lease I found a guide of the Boston Auto Show of 1926 (108 pages) at the Mechanics Building and the Automobile Salon at the the Copley Plaza. Tucked into this guide were several little (2.5”x8.5”) card cutouts advertising the Boston & New York Coach Company. Apparently these were handed out at the show as there were also various promotional items that would be picked up wandering through a show. I like to think I know a little bit
about intercity bus history in the Northeast but I didn’t have a clue on this carrier. Searching through city directories and newspaper files using 1926 and Boston as known points revealed that Boston & New York Coach seems to have existed in 1925, 1926, and 1927. Ads in ’25 and ’26 show them at the Copley Square Hotel and then in 1927 a small joint ad with Victoria Coaches running out of the Victoria Hotel in Boston - then nothing. Should anyone care, Victoria was sold to the New England Transportation Company (New Haven Railroad) around 1932 and in turn an agreement to sell New England’s Boston - New York route to Greyhound was reached in 1937 and actually approved by the ICC in 1939.

‘nuff about motor coaches.

Main Line - Availability

If you are not on our direct distribution list and would like to be please drop a note to TheMainLine@ramsdell.com.

Regards,

Ed Ramsdell, Editor
The Main Line
TheMainLine@ramsdell.com http://www.trolleymuseum.org