

# NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND RAILROADS

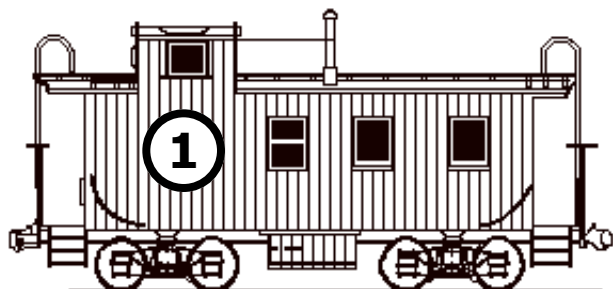


PRESENTED BY  
MIKE MCNAMARA

NEW JERSEY DIVISION  
MID-EASTERN REGION-NMRA



FEATURING THE SLIDES OF  
GLENN SALVATORE



HUDSON-BERKSHIRE DIVISION  
NORTHEASTERN REGION-NMRA

---

DIVISION MEET  
FEBRUARY 21, 2003

My clinic and slide presentation will focus on the railroads in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. I will mainly cover the time period around 1980 as this is the setting for my model railroad and most of my research has focused on this era. I will occasionally make references to earlier or later time periods.

For me, the time period of the late 1970s through the early 1980s represented quite an interesting time in New England railroading. Earlier periods featured more trackage, more trains and of course steam locomotives. Today there is significantly less trackage and less railroads that operate them.

But the time period around 1980 remains very interesting to me as railroads struggled to survive and adapt to new trends in transportation. New short lines took over marginal trackage that the larger railroads couldn't keep profitable. And the larger railroads weren't really that large at all, providing lots of interesting trains and operations that were not to be found on larger Class I railroads elsewhere.

Unlike the standard boxcar red of the 1950s and the conservative practices of today, all of the New England railroads at this time had colorful paint schemes on a wide variety of motive power and freight cars, some new, some older. And the infusion of colorful Incentive Per Diem boxcars to the rails from throughout New England and the rest of the country really livened things up. Add to this the charm and beauty of New England, especially in the Fall, and you have a varied and interesting area and time period worthy of model railroading.

I am fortunate to have the slides of the late Glenn Salvatore available to draw upon. Glenn, a former New Jersey Division member, was able to record on film a lot of the railroading that I never was able to see in person.

I'll cover the railroads by state, starting in Vermont, then New Hampshire and ending up with Maine. Below is a list of the railroads that operated by state during the time around 1980.

### Vermont

Central Vermont  
Vermont Railway  
Green Mountain Railroad  
Clarendon & Pittsford RR  
Springfield Terminal Railway  
Canadian Pacific  
Lamoille Valley RR  
Montpelier & Barre  
Boston & Maine  
Maine Central  
Grand Trunk

### New Hampshire

Boston & Maine  
Maine Central  
Berlin Mills Railway  
North Stratford RR  
New Hampshire Northcoast  
Conway Scenic  
Claremont and Concord Railway  
Grand Trunk  
Goodwin RR

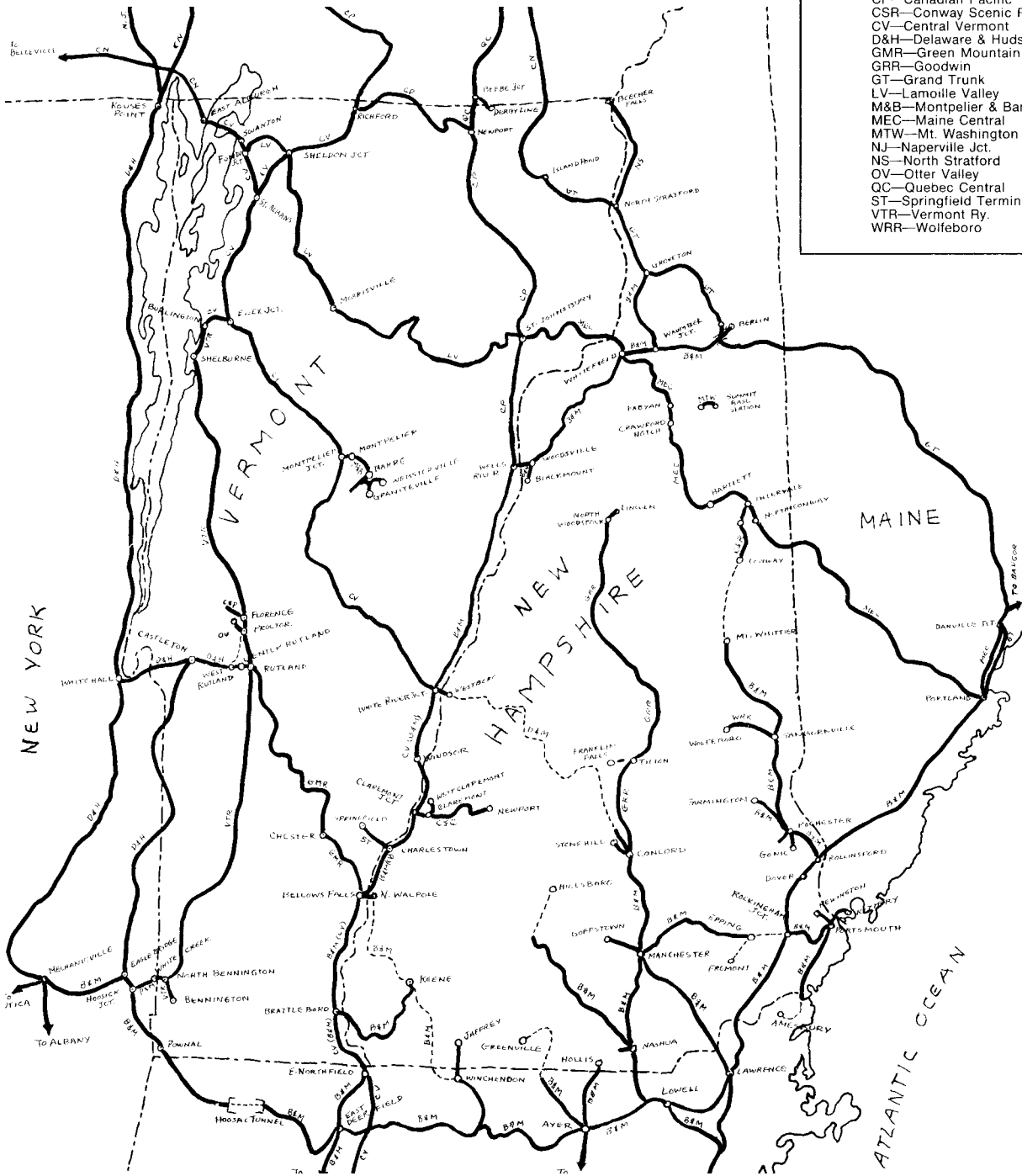
### Maine

Maine Central  
Grand Trunk  
Bangor & Aroostock  
Boston & Maine  
Aroostock Valley  
Belfast & Moosehead Lake  
Canadian Pacific  
Portland Terminal

The following pages are a compilation of my notes, observations, research and information I have read about each particular railroad. Also included is information about particular magazine articles, books and other resources that are helpful when researching that particular railroad.

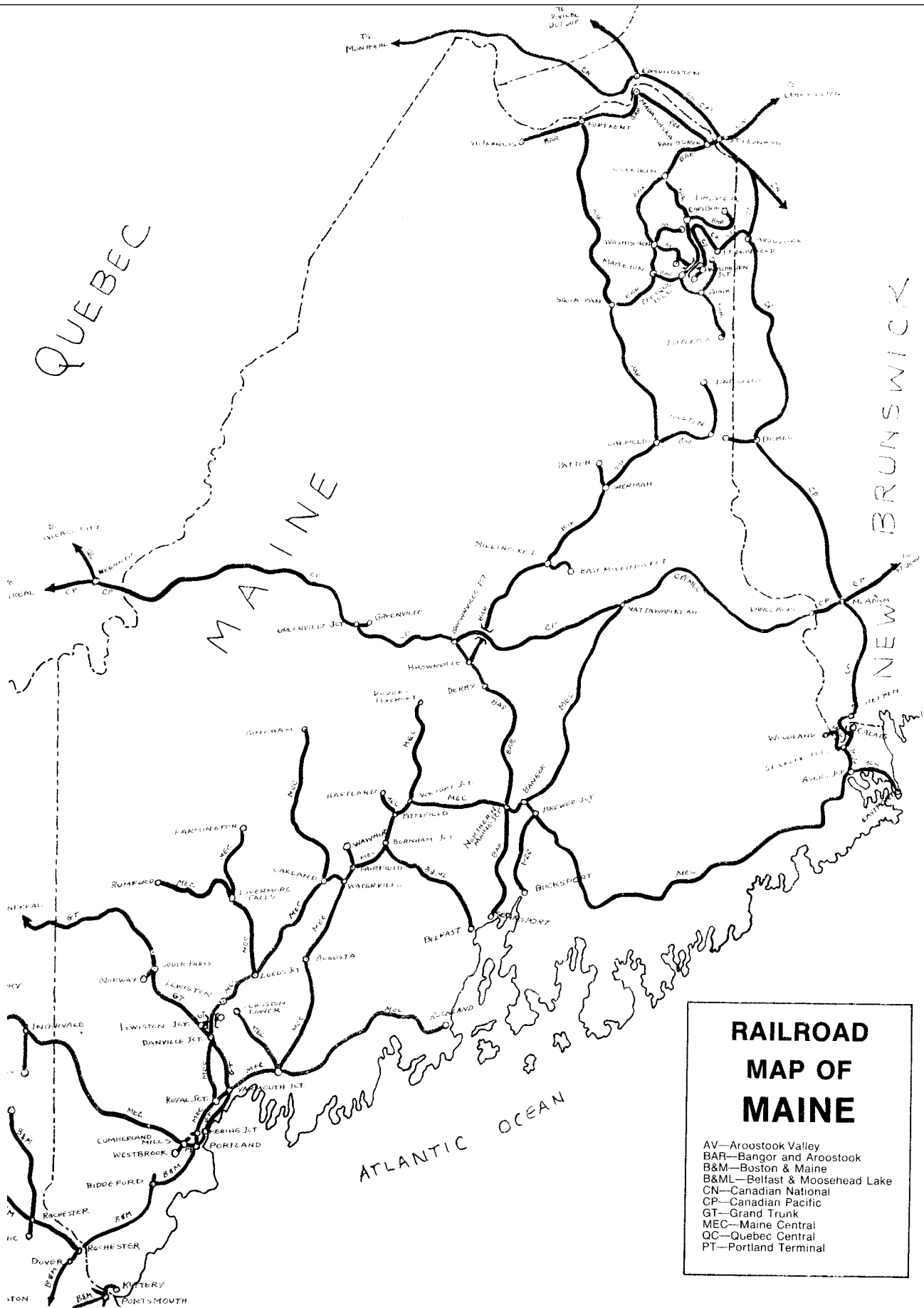
**RAILROAD MAP OF  
NEW HAMPSHIRE  
AND VERMONT**

B&M—Boston & Maine  
 C&C—Claremont & Concord  
 C&P—Clarendon & Pittsford  
 CN—Canadian National  
 CP—Canadian Pacific  
 CSR—Conway Scenic R.R.  
 CV—Central Vermont  
 D&H—Delaware & Hudson  
 GMR—Green Mountain  
 GRR—Goodwin  
 GT—Grand Trunk  
 LV—Lamoille Valley  
 M&B—Montpelier & Barre  
 MEC—Maine Central  
 MTW—Mt. Washington Cog  
 NJ—Naperville Jct.  
 NS—North Stratford  
 OV—Otter Valley  
 QC—Quebec Central  
 ST—Springfield Terminal  
 VTR—Vermont Ry.  
 WRR—Wolfeboro



Maps on p. 3-4 from the 1978 publication "Northern Rails" by the 470 Club (out of print)

RAIL MAP OF MAINE CIRCA 1978



**RAILROAD  
MAP OF  
MAINE**

AV—Aroostook Valley  
 BAR—Bangor and Aroostook  
 B&M—Boston & Maine  
 B&ML—Belfast & Moosehead Lake  
 CN—Canadian National  
 CP—Canadian Pacific  
 GT—Grand Trunk  
 MEC—Maine Central  
 QC—Quebec Central  
 PT—Portland Terminal



The Central Vermont has (until 1995) operated as a U.S. subsidiary of Canadian National (CN) since 1922. Other similar railroads operating like this are the Grand Trunk Western and the Duluth, Winnipeg & Pacific.

The 353 mile CV primarily serves as a north-south bridge route with some small branches and local customers along the mainline. But it is the large number of through cars that kept the CV profitable and well maintained. Many of these cars contain newsprint from Canadian mills destined for printing in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S.

The CV runs primarily north and south in Vermont, and also has trackage in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York and Quebec. The Northern Division is the track north of Brattleboro, Vt. up to St. Albans, Vt. The Southern Division is the track south of Brattleboro, ending at the coastal port of New London, CT on Long Island Sound. Important interchanges on the Southern Division include Conrail in Palmer, MA, the Providence & Worcester in Willimantic, CT (ex-NH/PC) and again with Conrail in New London.

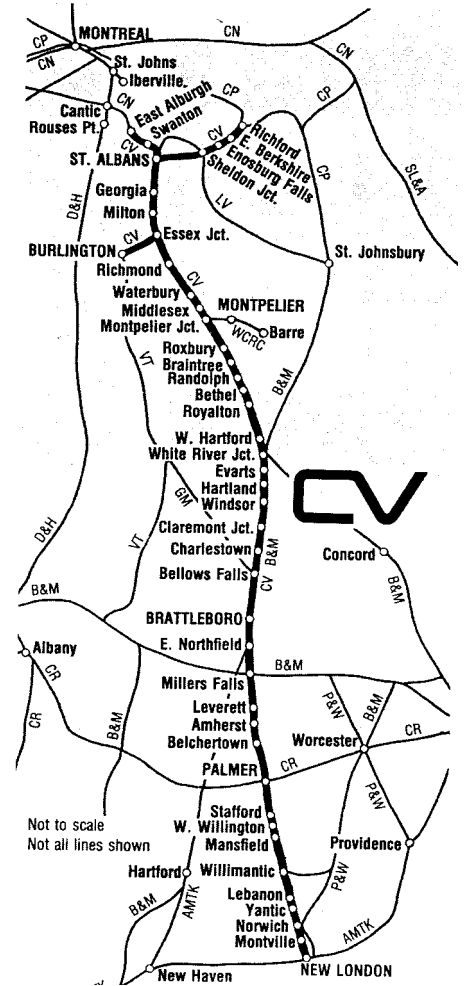
In southern Vermont, the CV swaps trackage rights with the Boston & Maine between Brattleboro and White River Junction. South of Brattleboro, the B&M uses 10 miles of trackage rights from their rails in East Northfield, Mass. North of Brattleboro, the CV uses 50 miles of trackage rights to get to Windsor, NH. This then switches back to CV trackage with the B&M having trackage rights for the remaining 14 miles to White River Junction. Got that?

In 1987, the Guilford owned B&M trackage deteriorated to such a point that Amtrak was able to forcibly purchase these 50 miles and sell it to the CV who in turn upgraded it back to 59 mph passenger standards]

At White River Junction, the B&M continues north along the Connecticut River, while the CV swings west and north through Montpelier, Essex Junction and then into St. Albans, the CV's Northern Division headquarters. St. Albans also features a large yard (Italy yard) and full engine service facilities including a roundhouse.

From St. Albans trains travel north, crossing Lake Champlain on a wooden trestle into New York and then into Quebec. The track becomes CN, and usually CN power is used for the run from St. Albans to Montreal.

There are a few small branches on the CV in Vermont. The 27 mile Richford branch leaves St. Albans to interchange with the Lamoille Valley (ex-St. Johnsbury & Lamoille County) and



Map from the 1991 *Trains* article

terminates with a CP Rail interchange in Richford. The 8 mile Burlington branch diverges from Essex Junction, passes through a tunnel and interchanges with the Vermont Railway (ex-Rutland) in Burlington, Vermont's largest city (counting only people, not cows!).

Interchanges along the CV main line in Vermont are with the Montpelier & Barre (ex-Montpelier & Wells River, ex-Barre & Chelsea) in Montpelier and the Green Mountain (ex-Rutland) in Bellows Falls.



### Operations in 1981

The B&M and CV not only operate each other's trackage, they also operate pooled motive power on trains. The B&M also pooled motive power with CP Rail between Massachusetts and Newport, Vt. In addition, the CV would use locomotives from its parent and sister roads, CN, GT and DW&P. This made it possible to find all kinds of motive power and caboose combinations along the CV in southern Vermont.

From Montreal, a daily train, #444, leaves Montreal in the early hours and arrives in St. Alban's at 6 am. All available CV power and any B&M pooled power is placed on the train (usually 90 or more cars and 5 locomotives) and if needed some of the CN power will stay on the train as well. A CN caboose (van) also remains on the train. From St. Albans to Massachusetts, the train changes to #390 and stops for a crew change in White River Junction. The symbol changes again to B&M JS-4, runs to Brattleboro to pickup and setout local cars and then continues on to Massachusetts.

The CV, Boston & Maine and CP Rail work together to move trains from Massachusetts to points north. Typically, three trains enter into southern Vermont each day. First is the CV/B&M train destined for St. Albans, with CN power continuing to Montreal. This train starts out as SJ-3 and changes to #447 at White River Junction. A second train is the B&M/CP train destined for Newport, VT via White River Junction, Wells River and St. Johnsbury. The third is a B&M freight destined for the paper mill in Berlin, traveling via White River Junction and Wells River and into New Hampshire.

Two locals operate out of St. Albans, each utilizing sets of ex-GTW SW1200s. The 537/538 runs the Richford branch and back each day. The main traffic is interchange with the LVRC and CP as well as on on-line feed mill. The 539/540 operates daily north of St. Albans to perform switching and pickup cars from Cantic, Quebec and occasionally the D&H at Rouses Point.

Also operating out of St. Albans is the daily 510 covering the line south to White River Junction. This local also covers the Burlington branch and the interchange with VTR. Its counterpart, the 511, operates north out of White River Junction. These two locals meet somewhere along the line. Power for both trains is usually two road units (i.e. GP9s or RS11s).

Locals operate on the Southern Division of the line between Brattleboro and Massachusetts. The 745 comes north to Brattleboro while the 744 handles duties in Brattleboro before heading south.

Yard switchers also classify cars in the yards at St. Albans and White River Junction.

In the past, as many as 30 passenger trains a day passed through White River Junction, the hub of Vermont and northern New England railroading at the time. In 1981, only the Amtrak Montrealer (today called the Vermonter) from Washington D.C. to Montreal operates a train each way daily over the CV main line through Vermont.

An innovative train was created in 1978. A 5-day-a-week piggyback train, The Rocket, was instituted to haul TOFC traffic between Montreal and Palmer, MA. What was special about this was the use of a single GP9 or RS11 locomotive, a 2 man crew and no caboose, unusual in the early 1980's. Also interesting was the fact that this train picked up business that the CV did not already move, trailers loaded mainly with beer and cottage cheese that was moving exclusively by truck on highways. This didn't sit too well with the truckers but eventually a deal was worked out to let the trains roll. The CV leased 32 85' flatcars, lettered them for CV and operated a single engine 15 car train in each direction (2 flats were kept as backup).

### Selected Post-1981 Operations

In 1984, a unit train was created to move wood chips between East Swanton and Burlington for Burlington Electric power generation. A dedicated set of 22 huge woodchip hoppers was used for this service, dubbed the "Chip Train", operating 2-3 times a week. This service received an award from *Modern Railroads*.

In 1985, a company called Quaboag Transfer contracted with the CV to move building products between St. Albans and Palmer, MA in a unit train of flatcars. Quaboag Transfer leased 2 CV RS11s and repainted them for this dedicated service. These were later replaced with a pair of ex-Conrail GP38s. This 3 times a week train operated until 1988 when the building industry experienced a downturn. This service also received an award from *Modern Railroads*.

In 1988, the CV started another "mini" unit train of GATX TankTrain tank cars loaded with oil for a St. Albans dealer. The train of 2 3-car sets plus 3 single cars operated in a 7-day round trip service moving in regularly scheduled freight trains.

### Motive Power

Motive power on the CV consists of EMD SW1200s, EMD GP9s, Alco RS11s and a lone Alco S4. Other S2 and S4 units were all sent to GTW by 1967. Four RS3s also used to be on the roster but were all retired by 1973. Original green and gold was replaced by CN black in the 1960s. The CV started applying it's own identity to their locomotives in the late 1970's with an attractive green and yellow scheme. GP9 4450 was repainted in 1976 into a blue bicentennial scheme and renumbered 1776. GP9 4924 was painted into a special white Coast Guard sheme in 1977.

Run through CN power includes wide cab M420s and GP38-2Ws.

Later in the 1980s, a handful of GTW GP38ACs began to arrive, augmenting and replacing the aging CV units. These were painted in blue with red ends and white lettering. A pair of ex-Rock Island GP18s was acquired in 1984.

### Today

The CN sold CV to Railtex in 1995, which created the New England Central to operate this line

basically the same as the CV operated it, but with a new fleet of locomotives and a new paint scheme. The last CV train operated on February 3, 1995. The first NECR train operated on February 6, 1995. A big snowstorm between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> followed by a 10 day CN employee strike gave the new railroad even more of a challenge. But the railroad has done well since its startup and continues the fine tradition of the CV.

### Selected Resources

CV Railway Historical Society  
\$15.00 per year  
*Ambassador* published quarterly  
[www.cvrhs.org](http://www.cvrhs.org)



The Central Vermont In Color, Morning Sun Books  
The Central Vermont, Volume VII, Robert C. Jones, 1995  
Green Mountain Rails, Robert W. Jones, 1994  
Northern New England Guide to Freight & Passenger Equipment, Morning Sun Books, 1994  
New Englands Colorful Railroads Vol. 1, Four Ways West, 2000

The Central Vermont - March 1979 Railfan, p. 45-56  
"The Trunk", B&M, CV and CP, pt. 1 - January 1982 Trains, p. 35-43  
"Northeast Kingdom", B&M, CV and CP, pt. 2 - February 1982 Trains, p. 22-32  
CV's Rocket - February 1983 Trains  
CV's White River Jct. Switcher - November 1985 Prototype Modeler, p. 19  
Central Vermont, A Survivor - February 1991 Trains, p. 30-42  
Dazzling Uncertainty - October 1993 Trains, p. 38-39

CV In the 1950s, February 2000 Model Railroader, p. 108  
CV's ex-GTW GP38AC locomotives in HO, May 1993 Model Railroader, p. 148

### Videos

CV In Steam - \$29.95 - 57 min, color  
CV In Steam Vol. 2 - \$29.95 - 58 min, color  
CV In Steam Vol. 3 - \$29.95 - 70 min, color  
A & R Productions  
[www.a-and-rproductions.com](http://www.a-and-rproductions.com)  
800-246-5898

New England Central - 120 min, color  
Clear Block Video Productions  
Marion, OH (614) 389-6091

CV RS11 3604 in the Green and Yellow scheme. This RS11 was ex-DW&P and came to the CV in 1977. It was photographed by Glenn Salvatore in August 1980.





The Vermont Railway started operations in 1964 operating a large portion of the old Rutland Railroad. The Rutland ceased operations in 1961 and the state took over the rail lines, seeking operators. The Vermont Railway, along with the Green Mountain Railroad, were new railroads created to provide service to the customers abandoned by the Rutland.

The Vermont Railway operates the north-south trackage between Burlington and Bennington, with a stop in Rutland to interchange with the Green Mountain and Delaware & Hudson.

At the start, the VTR used ex-Rutland RS1s, but these were soon supplanted by RS3s, a brand new SW1500 and GP38-2s. All of these continued to operate through the 1970s. The RS3s were retired and sold one at a time by 1984. GP9s and rebuilt versions designated GP16 and GP18 were picked up in the 1980s to replace the RS3s. The SW1500 was sold in 1996. The GP38-2s still survive today and have been joined by various used GP40s, GP40-2s and GP60s.

The VTR also got into the intermodal business, and Vermont Railway (VTRZ) trailers are still a mainstay on highways and TOFC trains.

The VTR acquired the Clarendon & Pittsford in 1972. Then the VTR changed into the Vermont Rail System in the 1990s with the acquisition of the Green Mountain RR and the Washington County RR.



### Operations

Operations mainly originate from Rutland, where the VTR is headquartered. A daily local switches the yard and provides service to industries up the line to Florence. The southern end from Rutland down through Danby and into Bennington see less service, just once a week. An interchange is made with the B&M (Guilford) at Hoosick Junction, NY. [This has been inactive since 1992, but may reopen again in the future. Currently boxcars are stored on this portion of the line]. A daily train is scheduled to run from Rutland west to Whitehall, NY and an interchange with the D&H (later CP). This is usually a big train with 3 or more locomotives and up to 100 cars. Up north, a local operates out of Burlington and interchanges with the Central Vermont (later NECR).

### Selected Resources

New England Shortlines 1970-1980, Tom Nelligan (available from amazon.com)  
Green Mountain Rails, Robert W. Jones, 1994

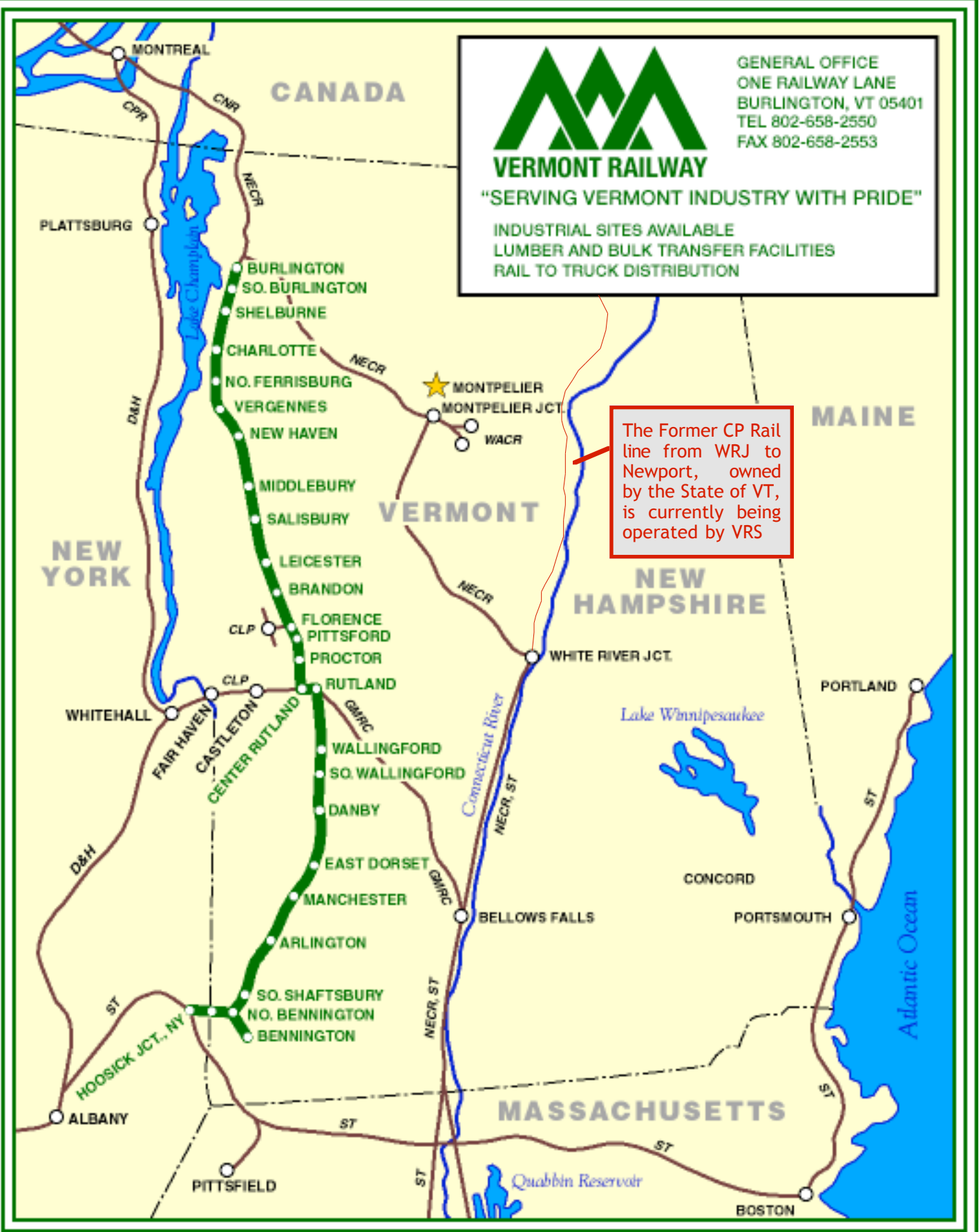
Autumn Action In Northern New England - November 1993 Railfan & Railroad, p. 66-70  
VTR Diesels, June 1992 Model Railroading  
VTR Rolling Stock, September 1991 Model Railroading  
HO Scale Vermont Railway, May 1986 Railroad Model Craftsman  
Burlington on the Vermont Railway, April 1981 Prototype Modeler

The Clarendon & Pittsford RR: Part 1, January 1995 Railroad Model Craftsman, p. 96-104  
The Clarendon & Pittsford RR: Part 2, February 1995 Railroad Model Craftsman, p. 96-101

Website: [www.vermontrailway.com](http://www.vermontrailway.com)

Discussion List: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/VRSandRutland>

VERMONT RAIL SYSTEM MAP



From Vermont Railroad web site: [www.vermontrailway.com](http://www.vermontrailway.com)