

## Chapter Six

### CENTRAL VERMONT RAILROAD

The first ground broken in Vermont for a railroad was in Windsor. It was December 15, 1845 on a farm formerly owned by Elijah Paine. It was for the Central Vermont Railroad. The first rail was laid at White River Junction on the farm of Col. Samuel Nutt early in 1847.

Regular passenger trains first passed over the tracks from White River Junction to Bethel on June 26, 1848. This was the first railroad and passenger train to run in Vermont. One year later on June 20, 1849 the railroad run extended to Burlington. Later the run extended to Montreal. The Boston and Maine Railroad extended up to Windsor thus forming a connection from Boston to Montreal.

Other railroads were soon built, converging at White River Junction thus making White River Junction the most important junction in northern New England.

### THE WOODSTOCK RAILROAD

The Woodstock Railroad made its first run from White River Junction to Woodstock on August 13, 1875. The next day nearly 3,000 people met in Quechee to celebrate the event. Four brass bands were on hand and that evening a grand ball was held in Quechee village.

To withstand the additional weight and strain of the train a new type of bridge was built over the Quechee Gulf. William Howe of Massachusetts designed a wooden bridge using iron rods and bolts. This was known as the Howe Truss Bridge. The bridge was 250 feet long and the deck was 163 feet above the stream. The bridge was completed on August 12, 1875.