

2 Union Station

10 Vernon Street, Brattleboro, Vermont



Located in downtown Brattleboro, Vermont, Union Station was one of the last major railroad stations constructed in Vermont, as the new technology of the 20th century swept over the nation and slowly began to decrease the use of railways.

Construction of Union Station began in 1915 by the H. Wales Lines Company, which was a prosperous masonry and construction business out of Meriden, Connecticut. One year and \$75,000 later, there stood the magnificent new train station serving Central Vermont and Boston and Maine Railroads.

The station was constructed of stunning quartzite stone quarried from Wantastiquet Mountain, which sits across the Connecticut River in New Hampshire. The baggage room and passenger waiting area were covered by a hipped-slate roof, giving the station a touch of elegance. The sturdy materials used to build Union Station allowed this three-story structure to stand tall and strong in the heart of its city.

Brattleboro, nestled in the quaint hills of Southern Vermont, is located approximately ten miles north of the Massachusetts border on the banks of the Connecticut River. This prime location allowed Brattleboro to become one of Vermont's major cities with the construction of paper mills and various other lumber related industries. Transportation of these products out of Brattleboro initially relied on river barges, but as the popularity of the railroad system increased during the 19th century, trains took over as faster and more reliable means of shipping. The use of railroads impacted the United States in profound ways, but unfortunately for most technology, time has a way of changing things and the railway business was no exception.

In 1966, a discussion occurred to consider tearing down the station for a parking lot. Plans for demolition were never executed due to the protests by residents and the Town of Brattleboro. Although not destroyed, Union Station was void of passenger rail travel until 1972 when new passenger routes were established and Amtrak began to use the bottom floor of Union Station as a pick up and go station for the new Vermont railroad system. And, the top two floors of Union Station were converted into the Brattleboro Museum and Art Center.

To this day, efforts of preservation and improvements continue with the hopes of increasing the use of the building while still keeping the historic charm and appearance of the station.

Sources:

<http://www.greatamericanstations.com/Stations/BRA>

http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM4WW5_Union_Station_Brattleboro_Vermont

<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h2161.html>