

17 Saxtons River Historic District

Route 121, Village of Saxtons River, Vermont



The Village of Saxtons River, within the town of Rockingham, was settled along the river of the same name in 1783. While the Village began as an agricultural center during the later 18th century, the settlement site served as an ideal location to capture the water power along the half-mile stretch of river.

During the early 1800s the first gristmill and sawmill were in operation at the middle falls, utilizing an abrupt 20-foot drop in elevation. Lower falls was the location of the first woolen mill by 1815. Over time, 155 buildings, structures and sites would encompass what is seen in today's historic district. In his Gazetteer of Vermont, published in 1828, Zadock Thompson records the buildings at the time:

"The village contains an elegant meeting-house, a post office, two carding machines, one grist, two saw, and two fulling mills, one tannery, one forge, one furnace, one distillery, two woolen factories, one tavern, two stores, one law office, and forty-five dwelling houses. The grist mill in this village was built by Allbee and Russell, and is equal to any in the state."

Visitors will see a range of architectural styles, including Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate Revival, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival, with a high degree of historical integrity maintained throughout the years. Minimal changes throughout the years included a 1959 fire at the Middle Falls sawmill, which transformed the location into an automobile service station, a 1960 post office built across the street, and a restaurant built in 1968, which displaced a 19th century home.

Saxtons River Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

Sources:

<http://www.crjc.org/heritage/V06-50.htm>