

Colebrook River, Thumbnail Sketch

Height of prosperity was when the Sawyer Cotton Mill was in operation (1840-1890)

Scythe works erected by Eliphalet and Daniel Mills in 1804/05

Timothy and Elihu Parsons (Per-sons) operated a tannery on the east bank of the river near the Mass. line; it was mainly for sheepskin. The brothers lived across the river, Timothy in Conn., Elihu in Mass.

On the west side of the river, north of the road leading to the George Whipple property, was a carding mill run by Chauncey Perry. Above the bridge was a clock shop operated by Lewis & Ives, and north of that, a gristmill and saw mill.

William Manchester had a sawmill and turning shop on Slocum Brook.

Over the state line, near the DuBois farm, was a silk mill, which was later a turning mill. Daniel Mills conducted a store on the corner, north of the Tolland Road. Later this was remodeled into a dwelling.

Daniel DeWolf had a store at the same time as the Mills' store. It stood opposite, across the road. This building burned down.

Henry Sawyer built the store that is remembered by later generations. It had been in operation for more than 100 years when torn down in 1944.

The cotton mill was in operation for about 40 years and employed as many as 200 people, although the number averaged closer to 100. Cotton was shipped to Winsted by horse and wagon. Both heavy and fine cotton duck, bags and belting were made. This also was carted to Winsted and shipped by train from there.

The ladies' Aid Society of the church made money by hemming these bags, receiving one cent for each.

The building south of the bridge (the factory, or iron bridge) was connected to the mill by a tunnel under the road. The north part of the mill was a gristmill in 1840, operated by Charles Sawyer, brother of Henry. Later it became part of the cotton mill. The mill closed down about 1890. Many of the workers moved to Torrington

The parade ground was in front of Union Church (planned at the first meeting of the Union Society of Colebrook on April 26, 1815.) Loren DeWolf was in charge of the military company.