National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2021



Slater Mill Historic Site

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

Table of Contents

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Concurrence Status

Geographic Information and Location Map

Management Information

National Register Information

Chronology & Physical History

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Condition

Treatment

Bibliography & Supplemental Information

Cultural Landscape Summary & Site Plan

Cultural Landscapes in the Cultural Resources Inventory System:

The Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS)

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources and cultural landscapes. The set of CRIS records for cultural landscapes is referred to as CRIS-CL.CRIS-CL records conform to a standardized data structure known as the Cultural
Landscapes Inventory (CLI).
The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CRIS are: Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, NPS Management Policies (2006), Director's Order 28 (Cultural Resources) and Director's Order 28a (Archeology).

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI)

The CLI is the data structure within CRIS used to document and evaluate all potentially significant cultural landscapes in which NPS has, or plans to acquire any enforceable legal interest.
Each CRIS-CL record is certified complete when the landscape is determined to meet one of the following:
Landscape individually meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria for evaluation; or,
Landscape is a contributing element of a property that is eligible for the National Register; or,
Landscapes does not meet the National Register criteria, but is managed as cultural resources because of law, policy or decisions reached through the park planning process.
Cultural landscapes vary from historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes to historic ethnographic landscapes, but may also fit within more than one type. Those eligible for the National Register have significance in the nation's history on a national, state or local level, as well as integrity or authenticity.
The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are:
National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)). Each Federal agency shall establish…a preservation program for the identification, evaluation, and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places…of historic properties…

Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(a)…Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall prepare an assessment of the current status of its inventory of historic properties required by section 110(a)(2) of the NHPA…No later than September 30, 2004, each covered agency shall complete a report of the assessment and make it available to the Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior…

Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(c) Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall, by September 30, 2005, and every third year thereafter, prepare a report on its progress in identifying… historic properties in its ownership and make the report available to the Council and the Secretary…

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Standard 2: An agency provides for the timely identification and evaluation of historic properties under agency jurisdiction or control and/or subject to effect by agency actions (Sec. 110 (a)(2)(A) Management Policies 2006. 5.1.3.1 Inventories: The Park Service will (1) maintain and expand the following inventories…about cultural resources in units of the national park system…Cultural Landscape Inventory of historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes,… and historic sites…

Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22 issued pursuant to Director's Order #28. As cultural resources are identified and evaluated, they should also be listed in the appropriate Service-wide inventories of cultural resources.

Inventory Unit Description:

Located on the banks of the lower Blackstone River in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, Slater Mill Historic Site is a component of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, a park unit established in December 2014. The park preserves, protects, and interprets the nationally significant resources that exemplified the industrial heritage of the Blackstone River Valley. The 4.23-acre property includes two historic mills and a cottage, a partially reconstructed raceway and tailrace, old stone and concrete river walls, remnant foundations, and a footbridge. These features are set amongst tree-shaded lawns and paved walkways that provide passive recreational space and offer views of the fast-flowing Blackstone River and roaring Pawtucket Falls.

Slater Mill Historic Site is a designated National Historic Landmark, and recognized as the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. The core of the site preserves three historic buildings: Samuel Slater's 1793 mill, Oziel and David Wilkinson's 1810-1811 mill, and Sylvanus Brown's 1758 cottage (moved to the site in the 1972). The Old Slater Mill was modeled after English cotton spinning mills and is the first water-powered cotton spinning mill in North America. The Wilkinson Mill played a critical role in the history of textile technology, in steam power generation, and in the development of the machine tool industry. The Brown House is where Brown's pattern-making and carpentry skills helped him produce mechanized textile machinery with Samuel Slater between 1789 and 1791.

The Old Slater Mill Association (OSMA) acquired the Old Slater Mill property in 1923 with the intent of transforming the mill into a museum to commemorate Samuel Slater's role in opening the country's first water-powered textile mill. Although funding shortages delayed the museum's opening until 1955, the OSMA restored the mill and two other buildings, and with the City of Pawtucket, created public open space on the adjacent lots for passive recreation and special events. The OSMA owned the site until March 2021, when the property was acquired by the National Park Service.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Slater Mill Historic Site, part of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, is nationally significant under National Register Criterion A in the areas of Industry and Invention. The site's primary significance is its association with the English immigrant Samuel Slater, who perfected America's first successful water-powered spinning machinery in 1790 and, together with the Providence merchants William Almy and Smith Brown, built this country's first successful cotton mill in 1793 on the Blackstone River's Pawtucket Falls. This partnership, and the machine-building skills of local craftsmen who had earlier erected forges and mills for lumber and grain at the falls, launched the American textile industry. In addition to the Old Slater Mill (1793), Wilkinson Mill (1810), and Sylvanus Brown House (1758, moved to present location in 1972), the site also possesses significance for extant landscape features associated with the Old Slater Mill and Wilkinson Mill, and the other mills and factories at the site, including a raceway, stone tailrace and arch, stone and concrete river walls/foundation walls, foundation remnants, and a footbridge.

The site's period of significance is 1793-1925. The period begins when Old Slater Mill and the raceway was completed and operational, and ends when the Old Slater Mill Association (OSMA) completed the Colonial Revival restoration effort at the mill and cleared the remaining buildings and structures on the Slater Lot (core area of the site).

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

Historical integrity as defined by the National Register of the Historic Places is the ability of a property to convey its significance by physical resources. The physical integrity of the Slater Mill Historic Site landscape is evaluated by comparing the landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance (1793-1925) with those of the existing landscape as assessed in 2021. The historic integrity of Slater Mill Historic Site is communicated through three historic buildings – Old Slater Mill, Wilkinson Mill, and Sylvanus Brown House – and historic associated structures that include the Great Flume raceway, stone tailrace and arch, stone and concrete river walls/foundation walls, foundation remnants, and the bridge over the Great Flume. The property's significance is also conveyed by the

adjacent Blackstone River, Pawtucket Falls, and dams. However, the remainder of the current landscape at Slater Mill Historic Site – dominated by lawns, plantings, walkways, and a parking lot – does not possess historic integrity, as it bears little resemblance to the industrial scene that was present at the end of the historic period. Rather, the landscape has been developed to serve as a contemporary setting for the site's historic resources.

The condition of the overall landscape is "good." This evaluation indicates the property shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The property's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Site Plan

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Slater Mill Historic Site
Property Level:	Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	976197
Parent Landscape:	976197

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park - Slater Mill Historic Site - BLAC
Park Organization Code:	1715
Park Administrative Unit:	Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

CLI Hierarchy Description

To date, Slater Mill Historic Site is the only federally-owned cultural landscape in the Blackstone Valley National Historical Park.

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

This CLI is based in the 2021 draft, “Cultural Landscape Report for Slater Mill Historic Site, Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, Pawtucket, Rhode Island” prepared by staff at the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation: Jeffrey Killion, Historical Landscape Architect; Clelie Fielding , Conservation Associate; Maryrose Kulick, Cartographer; and Eliot Foulds, Senior Project Manager. Field work was completed in 2020 and 2021 by Killion and Fielding.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence: Yes

Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: 06/15/2021

National Register Concurrence: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

Date of Concurrence Determination: 07/21/2021

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

In an email dated July 6, 2021, the Rhode Island SHPO requested clarification on the status of the upper and lower dams, and agreed with the addition of the following statement in the Constructed Water Features section of the Analysis and Evaluation chapter.
"Note: The two dams just above Pawtucket Falls – now called the lower dam or Main Street Dam, and the upper dam or Slater Mill Dam – are not currently owned or managed by the National Park Service and are therefore not included in the feature table below. However, the two dams are key historic resources at Slater Mill Historic Site. They contribute to the property's historic character, as well as the property’s areas and period of significance documented in the National Register of Historic Places."

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Attachment File Path

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY
CONCURRENCE FORM

Slater Mill Historic Site
Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park concurs with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for the Slater Mill Historic Site, including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for the Slater Mill Historic Site is hereby approved and accepted.

WILLIAM BREITKREUTZ Digitally signed by WILLIAM BREITKREUTZ
Date: 2021.06.15 13:27:35 -04'00'

Superintendent, Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park Date

Superintendent's concurrence was received on June 15, 2021.

United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Interior Region 1
North Atlantic-Appalachian
1234 Market Street, 20th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1.A.2. (IR1-RSS)

May 12, 2021

J. Paul Loether
Executive Director, SHPO
Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
Old State House
150 Benefit Street
Providence, RI, 02903

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) for the Slater Mill Historic Site at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. We seek your concurrence on the status of previously evaluated and unevaluated resources identified in this CLI for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The report has been prepared by a team of historical landscape architects with the National Park Service (NPS) Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation and staff at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. The CLI program and the enclosed report continue the NPS efforts to update our cultural resource inventories.

Through the CLI program, the NPS is currently undertaking a nationwide effort to inventory its cultural landscapes. The CLI is conducted in accordance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended). It is an inventory of baseline information for all historically significant cultural landscapes within the national park system, and it examines multiple landscape features that contribute to the significance of historic properties. The CLI process includes gathering information from existing secondary sources and conducting on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the property's overall significance. For landscapes found potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the evaluation describes their character-defining features and assesses the landscape's overall historical integrity. It also raises questions about the landscape that need further study.

It is important to note that the CLI reports are not intended as comprehensive inventory reports for any one property, although for some properties they provide fuller documentation than for

SHPO's concurrence was received on July 21, 2021, page 1 of 7.

others. For example, the reports do not include a full architectural description of structures, but document structures as elements of the overall landscape, and similarly documents other characteristics such as vegetation, spatial organization, and views and vistas. The CLI is one component of the NPS inventory effort that also includes cultural resource inventories for historic structures, archeological sites, ethnographic resources, and museum objects. For example, the NPS Historic Structures Inventory (formerly List of Classified Structures) includes structural features of cultural landscapes, but the CLI takes a more encompassing approach to the properties, inventorying all above-ground features in each park in which the NPS has a legal or mandated interest.

Previous Historic Property Evaluation:

Slater Mill Historic Site is part of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, established in 1986 and 2014, respectively. However, designation of the property as a National Historic Landmark and listing of the property in the National Register of Historic Places occurred in the 1960s. The Slater Mill Historic Site was acquired by the National Park Service (NPS) in March 2021.

On November 13, 1966, "Old Slater Mill" was designated a National Historic Landmark under NHL Criterion 1, Theme XVII-b, "Commerce and Industry." The 1965 NHL documentation form described Samuel Slater's early training and relocation to America, his establishment of the mill in Pawtucket, and his successful career that peaked in 1829. The form also described the mill's original construction and later additions, and restoration of the building in 1924-1925 by the Old Slater Mill Association (OSMA) to the "way it appeared in about 1840." No specific period of significance for the property was identified. The form did not describe any other resources, but according to correspondences with the NHL Program Office for this CLI, the designation also included the Wilkinson Mill, the Sylvanus Brown House (moved to the lot north of the mill in 1962), and surrounding park land that collectively became known as the 4.23-acre Slater Mill Historic Site. At the time of the NHL designation, obtaining these lands (North, South, and East Lots), which were then privately owned and partially filled with buildings, was under consideration by the OSMA in conjunction with the city's Slater Urban Renewal Plan.

As an NHL, Old Slater Mill was automatically listed in the National Register on November 13, 1966, and was the first property to be listed in the National Register. However, it was not until March 12, 1976, that a documentation form for "Old Slater Mill/Slater Mill Historic Site" was prepared and accepted by the Keeper of the National Register. The documentation form identified national significance in the areas of Industry and Invention under Criterion A for the periods 1700-1799 and 1800-1899, with the specific date of 1793, the year the original mill was completed and began production. In addition to describing Old Slater Mill, the form described the Wilkinson Mill (1810), Sylvanus Brown House (1758, moved to present location in 1972), and the two dams (1718, 1792), and noted that "extant parts of the early waterwheel machinery under the mill structures are important features associated with the Slater Mill and form a complex which well illustrates the work done there." The Slater Mill Historic Site was classified as a 4.23-acre district comprised of around "four acres of parkland" surrounding the two dams built at the falls of the Blackstone River. These lands included spaces around the three buildings, as well as Hodgson-Rotary Park (South Lot), Slater Mill Park (East Lot), and a

SHPO's concurrence was received on July 21, 2021, page 2 of 7.

parking lot (North Lot). However, except for the three buildings, the documentation form did not evaluate the significance of the landscape, or describe or evaluate any specific landscape features within the property.

Several National Register-listed resources are located near the Slater Mill Historic Site. Those that are the visible from the site are the 1858 Main Street Bridge (local level of significance, November 18, 1983) and the 1893-1894 South Bridge Mill Power Plant (state level, November 18, 1983) to the south; the 1867 Pawtucket Congregational Church (state level, September 18, 1978) to the east; and the 1935 Pawtucket City Hall (state level, November 18, 1983) to the north. To the west is the Downtown Pawtucket Historic District (state level, April 5, 2007), encompassing part of Pawtucket's central business district where the greatest concentration of historic buildings still survives, and where the streetscapes still provide a strong sense of a late nineteenth and early twentieth century urban center despite the loss of some buildings and the intrusion of some modern structures.

Current Findings:

The enclosed CLI for the Slater Mill Historic Site fully evaluates the cultural landscape, particularly the associated landscape characteristics and features, and finds that several site features retain integrity in the areas of Industry and Invention, but the landscape as a whole is not significant. As noted previously, three of the property's features compiled on the attached list have already been listed on the National Register. The CLI identifies ten resources and features related to natural systems and features/topography, spatial organization, buildings and structures, constructed water features, and circulation, that contribute to the significance and historic character of the property. Other features have been evaluated as noncontributing because they are not historically significant.

We call your particular attention to the Landscape Description, Boundary Description, National Register Information and the Statement of Significance, and Analysis and Evaluation Summary in the enclosed CLI.

Based on the CLI, we seek your concurrence on the status of previously evaluated and unevaluated resources and features identified in this CLI:

- The Slater Mill Historic Site is nationally significant under National Register Criterion A in the areas of Industry and Invention. The site's primary significance is its association with the English immigrant Samuel Slater, who perfected America's first successful water-powered spinning machinery in 1790 and, together with the Providence merchants William Almy and Smith Brown, built this country's first successful cotton mill in 1793 on the Blackstone River at Pawtucket Falls. This partnership, and the machine-building skills of local craftsmen who had earlier erected forges and mills for lumber and grain at the falls, launched the American textile industry. In addition to the Old Slater Mill (1793), Wilkinson Mill (1810), and Sylvanus Brown House (1758, moved to present location in 1972), the site also possesses significance for extant landscape features associated with the Old Slater Mill and Wilkinson Mill, and the other mills and factories at the site, including a raceway, stone tailrace and arch, stone and concrete river walls/foundation walls, foundation remnants, and a footbridge.

SHPO's concurrence was received on July 21, 2021, page 3 of 7.

- The site's period of significance is 1793-1925. The period begins when Old Slater Mill and the raceway was completed and operational, and ends when the Old Slater Mill Association (OSMA) completed the Colonial Revival restoration effort at the mill and cleared the remaining buildings and structures on the Slater Lot (core area of the site).
- The 4.23-acre landscape as a whole does not contribute to the property's National Register listing and historic character and is not eligible for listing on the National Register. The three extant historic buildings and several individual landscape structures contribute to the site's historic significance and character. However, other landscape features that dominate the site – walks, lawns, and plantings – do not contribute, but rather serve as a contemporary setting for the site's remaining historic features.
- The categorization of contributing and non-contributing landscape characteristics and features (see attached list).

If you concur with these findings, we ask that you please sign on the space provided and return this letter to Jeff Killion, CLI Coordinator (Address: National Park Service, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 15 State Street, 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02109). We would appreciate your response in **45 days**, if possible. Thank you for your attention to this inventory. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Killion at 617-223-5053. Upon your concurrence, a copy of this letter will be sent to the National Historic Landmarks Program.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Meade

Jonathan Meade
Associate Regional Director
Resource Stewardship and Science

Enclosure

cc:
Superintendent, Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

I concur with the National Park Service categorizations of the landscape resources and features for the Slater Mill Historic Site, as contributing and non-contributing.

INTERIM Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Officer

7 July 2021
Date

SHPO's concurrence was received on July 21, 2021, page 4 of 7.

NPS Cultural Landscapes Inventory – Slater Mill Historic Site
Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park
List of Contributing and Non-Contributing Features
May 2021

Contributing Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

The following landscape characteristics and associated features contribute to the property's historic character, though not all are considered countable resources according to the National Register of Historic Places. Those marked with an (*) are described in the National Historic Landmark and National Register of Historic Places documentation accepted on March 12, 1976.

Natural Systems and Features, Topography
Blackstone River / Pawtucket Falls
Landforms Slope to River

Spatial Organization
Lot Boundary Lines

Buildings and Structures
Slater Lot
* Old Slater Mill
* Sylvanus Brown House
North Lot
Stone River Wall
South Lot
* Wilkinson Mill
Stone River Wall / Foundation Walls
East Lot
Stone and Concrete River Wall / Foundation Wall
Remnant Foundation Wall

Constructed Water Features
Slater Lot
Tailrace
Great Flume
South Lot
Great Flume

Circulation
Slater Lot
Bridge over Great Flume

SHPO's concurrence was received on July 21, 2021, page 5 of 7.

Non-Contributing Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

Buildings and Structures
Slater Lot
Boiler House
Garden Shed
Stone River Wall
Concrete-Stone Retaining Walls and Steps
Granite Retaining Walls – Herb Garden
North Lot
Concrete Retaining Wall – Parking Lot
South Lot
Concrete Retaining Walls and Steps
East Lot Overlook
Steps
Lower Stone Walls

Constructed Water Features
Slater Lot
Penstock and Inlet/Gate

Circulation
Slater Lot
Walkways – Paved
Walkways – Pea Gravel
Patio – North Side, Slater Mill
Patio – Central
North Lot
Parking Lot
South Lot
Walkways – Paved
Steps, Accessible Ramp
Patio and Steps – Cogswell Monument
Driveway
East Lot
Overlook

Vegetation
Slater Lot
Maintained Trees, Shrubs, Lawns
Vegetable and Herb Garden, Brown House
Textile Garden

SHPO's concurrence was received on July 21, 2021, page 6 of 7.

North Lot
Maintained Trees, Shrubs, Lawns *South Lot*
Maintained Trees, Shrubs, Lawns
East Lot
Maintained Trees, Shrubs, Lawns

Small-Scale Features
Slater Lot
Iron Fencing on Great Flume
Iron Fencing on River Wall (west side of mill)
Iron Fencing – Perimeter (Roosevelt Avenue and Slater Avenue)
Bell
Bollards
Wayside Signs
Picnic Tables
North Lot
Slater Avenue Sign
Trash Bin and Fence
Lights – Acorn Fixtures, Parking Lot
South Lot
Iron Fence on Stone River Wall / Foundation Walls
Lights – Acorn Fixture
Lights – Flood Lights
Flagpole
Benches
Cogswell Monument
Hodgson-Rotary Memorial Tablet
Wayside Signs
Trash Cans
Francis Turbine Display
East Lot
Iron Fence Rail on River Wall
Lights-Square Fixtures
Sculpture Pad
Benches
Wayside Signs

bcc:
Susan Hollister, Region 1 Historic Architecture Program
Dennis Montagna, Region 1 History Program
Robert Page, Director, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

SHPO's concurrence was received on July 21, 2021, page 7 of 7.

Geographic Information

Geographic Information & Location Map

State and County:

State: Rhode Island

County

Size (Acres) 4.23

Land Tract Number(s)

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the 4.23-acre Slater Mill Historic Site are coterminous with the boundaries of the Old Slater Mill National Historic Landmark District. The site straddles the Blackstone River, with the three historic buildings, Hodgson-Rotary Park, and a parking lot on the river's west bank, and Slater Mill Park on the east bank. For purposes of this report, the west side of the site is comprised of three parcels that are named Slater Lot, North Lot, and South Lot, while the east side is named the East Lot. The boundaries of the lots are based on nineteenth century plat maps as well as current property boundaries available from the City of Pawtucket. Additionally, although the orientation of Old Slater Mill is north-northwest to south-southeast, it is referenced as north-south to facilitate descriptions of the building and the other features that surround it.

Boundary Coordinates:

Source:

Type of Point:

Latitude:

Longitude:

Narrative: West Side

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.878477

Longitude: -71.382615

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.878216

Longitude: -71.381714

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.877711

Longitude: -71.38187

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.877362

Longitude: -71.382319

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.877327

Longitude: -71.382549

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.876705

Longitude: -71.38337

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.876852

Longitude: -71.383508

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.877998

Longitude: -71.382843

Narrative:

Source:

Type of Point:

Latitude:

Longitude:

Narrative: East Side

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.877048

Longitude: -71.38163

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.876781

Longitude: -71.381437

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.876464

Longitude: -71.38231

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.876402

Longitude: -71.383058

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.876869

Longitude: -71.382212

Narrative:

Source: Aerial Photograph

Type of Point: Area

Latitude: 41.87687

Longitude: -71.382068

Narrative:

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

The Blackstone Valley was formed by glacial action during the Laurentide Glaciation, around 15,000 years ago. As the mile-thick glacier moved south it pushed aside rocks and earth, creating a wide trench. With the glacier's retreat, meltwater flowed through the trench to begin a long process of erosion that gradually shaped the river's course, which today covers 48 miles and drops 438 feet in elevation. Beginning in Worcester, Massachusetts, the river heads southeast through Millbury, Sutton, Grafton, Northbridge, Uxbridge, Millville, and Blackstone, and then into Rhode Island through North Smithfield, Woonsocket, Cumberland, Lincoln, Central Falls, and Pawtucket. Just below Pawtucket Falls, the fall line, the Blackstone River becomes a brackish tidal estuary and flows into the Seekonk River just north of Providence, which empties into Narragansett Bay. (Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment 1998: 4)

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

Paleamericans arrived in the area about 12,000 years ago, by which time the bare and gouged post-glacial landscape had given way to spruce forests. Over the next 2,000 years the climate warmed and the landscape transitioned to a pine-oak forest. From around 8000 BCE to 1000 BCE, the early Americans followed the seasons, traveling the area in search of food. From 1000 BCE to the time of contact with European explorers and settlers, the early Americans introduced pottery, the bow and arrow, and agriculture. (CLR 2021: 15)

The Native American groups were loosely organized under local leaders called sachems, and lived in semi-permanent villages where they cleared fields for the annual planting of corn, beans, squash and tobacco, and fished from the clean waters of the river. In their search for food and fertile soil, they developed a major trail along the length of the river and a number of minor trails throughout the valley. By the early seventeenth century, this pattern of life had already been severely disrupted as a result of infectious diseases unknowingly introduced by early explorers, fishermen, and fur traders. A large part of the population may have been wiped out as early as 1616-1617 and another major epidemic passed over the area in 1633-1634. (CLR 2021: 16)

William Blackstone was the first European to settle along the river in 1635, and others followed in subsequent decades. The transition from a sparsely populated spot on the river to the village of Pawtucket is credited to Joseph Jenckes, Jr., who in October 1671 purchased sixty acres of land on the west side of the river from Abel Potter, building a forge, saw mill, and carpenter shop, and later operating an iron furnace and foundry. (CLR 2021: 16-17)

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Slater Mill Historic Site is located in the heart of downtown Pawtucket, Rhode Island, established as a village in 1671 and incorporated as a city in 1885. Pawtucket has a population of 71,148 (2010 census) and is both urban and suburban in nature, containing areas of dense development as well as vast open or vacant areas. Pawtucket lies along a metropolitan corridor that stretches along Interstate 95 from Boston 40 miles to the northeast, to New York City 200 miles to the southwest.

The site is bisected by the Blackstone River and bound by city streets: Leather Avenue, Roosevelt Avenue, and the Main Street Bridge on the west side of the river, and the Main Street Bridge and Broadway on the east side of the river. To the north of Leather Avenue is Pawtucket City Hall and an attached police and fire station. To the west of Roosevelt Avenue is a building housing businesses, a pet food company, and the visitor center for the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, as well as a parking lot. To the south of Main Street are office and retail buildings. To the east of Broadway are office buildings, parking lots, and a funeral home. Immediately surrounding these areas are a mix of commercial, residential, religious, and civic buildings, some dating to the nineteenth century.

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 06/15/2021

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

Slater Mill Historic Site meets the criteria of the management category, “Must be Preserved and Maintained” because the preservation of the property is specifically legislated. The 4.23-acre property was included in the legislated boundaries of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor in 1986 (Public Law 99-647) and the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park in 2014 (Public Law 113-291). In March 2021, Slater Mill Historic Site was acquired by the federal government.

As stated in the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park enabling legislation, “The Park shall include…the following resources, as described in Management Option 3 of the study entitled ‘‘Blackstone River Valley Special Resource Study—Study Report 2011’’: Old Slater Mill National Historic Landmark District…” (Public Law 113-291, 19 December 2014)

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement:

Type of Agreement: None

Type of Context:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Narrative: North, Slater, and South Lots acquired in March 2021. East Lot status is pending as of June 2021.

Located in managed wilderness?: No

Public Access:

Type of Interest: Other Restrictions

Explanatory Narrative:

The Old Slater Mill operates as a museum and exhibit area, while the Wilkinson Mill and Sylvanus Brown House are accessible during guided tours. The grounds are open dawn to dusk.

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

Adjacent Land Narrative:

Adjacent lands are lands outside the cultural landscape boundary, including lands inside or outside the park.
The resources that retain historic integrity and convey the National Register significance of the Slater Mill Historic Site are located within the current 4.23-acre property.

National Register Information

Documentation Status:

Entered Inadequately Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Slater Mill Historic Site is part of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, established in 1986 and 2014, respectively. However, designation of the property as a National Historic Landmark and listing of the property in the National Register of Historic Places occurred in the 1960s. The Slater Mill Historic Site was acquired by the National Park Service (NPS) in March 2021.

On November 13, 1966, "Old Slater Mill" was designated a National Historic Landmark under NHL Criterion 1, Theme XVII-b, "Commerce and Industry." The 1965 NHL documentation form described Samuel Slater's early training and relocation to America, his establishment of the mill in Pawtucket, and his successful career that peaked in 1829. The form also described the mill's original construction and later additions, and restoration of the building in 1924-1925 by the Old Slater Mill Association (OSMA) to the "way it appeared in about 1840." No specific period of significance for the property was identified. The form did not describe any other resources, but according to correspondences with the NHL Program Office for this CLI, the designation also included the Wilkinson Mill, the Sylvanus Brown House (moved to the lot north of the mill in 1962), and surrounding park land that collectively became known as the 4.23-acre Slater Mill Historic Site. At the time of the NHL designation, obtaining these lands (North, South, and East Lots), which were then privately owned and partially filled with buildings, was under consideration by the OSMA in conjunction with the city's Slater Urban Renewal Plan.

As an NHL, Old Slater Mill was automatically listed in the National Register on November 13, 1966, and was the first property to be listed in the National Register. However, it was not until March 12, 1976, that a documentation form for "Old Slater Mill/Slater Mill Historic Site" was prepared and accepted by the Keeper of the National Register. The documentation form identified national significance in the areas of Industry and Invention under Criterion A for the periods 1700-1799 and 1800-1899, with the specific date of 1793, the year the original mill was completed and began production. In addition to describing Old Slater Mill, the form described the Wilkinson Mill (1810), Sylvanus Brown House (1758, moved to present location in 1972), and the two dams (1718, 1792), and noted that "extant parts of the early waterwheel machinery under the mill structures are important features associated with the Slater Mill and form a complex which well illustrates the work done there." The Slater Mill Historic Site was classified as a 4.23-acre district comprised of around "four acres of parkland" surrounding the two dams built at the falls of the Blackstone River. These lands included spaces around the three buildings, as well as Hodgson-Rotary Park (South Lot), Slater Mill Park (East Lot), and a parking lot (North Lot). However, except for the three buildings, the documentation form did not evaluate the significance of the landscape, or describe or evaluate any specific landscape features within the property.

Several National Register-listed resources are located near the Slater Mill Historic Site. Those that are visible from the site are the 1858 Main Street Bridge (local level of significance, November 18, 1983) and the 1893-1894 South Bridge Mill Power Plant (state level, November 18, 1983) to the south; the 1867 Pawtucket Congregational Church (state level, September 18, 1978) to the east; and the 1935 Pawtucket City Hall (state level, November 18, 1983) to the north. To the west is the Downtown Pawtucket Historic District (state level, April 5, 2007), encompassing part of Pawtucket's central business district where the greatest concentration of historic buildings still survives, and where the streetscapes still provide a strong sense of a late nineteenth and early twentieth century urban center despite the loss of some buildings and the intrusion of some modern structures.

According to research conducted for this CLI, and the categories of National Register documentation outlined in the "CLI Professional Procedures Guide," the areas of significance of the property are adequately documented, but the period of significance and several important landscape features have not been documented. Therefore, for purposes of the CLI, Slater Mill Historic Site is considered "Entered – Inadequately Documented."

Concurrence Narrative:

In an email dated July 6, 2021, the Rhode Island SHPO requested clarification on the status of the upper and lower dams, and agreed with the addition of the following statement in the Constructed Water Features section of the Analysis and Evaluation chapter.
"Note: The two dams just above Pawtucket Falls – now called the lower dam or Main Street Dam, and the upper dam or Slater Mill Dam – are not currently owned or managed by the National Park Service and are therefore not included in the feature table below. However, the two dams are key historic resources at Slater Mill Historic Site. They contribute to the property's historic character, as well as the property's areas and period of significance documented in the National Register of Historic Places."

Name in National Register: Old Slater Mill

NRIS Number: 66000001

Primary Certification Date: 03/12/1967

National Register Eligibility

National Register Concurrence: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

Contributing/Individual: Contributing

National Register Classification: District

Significance Level: National

Significance Criteria: A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

Period of Significance:

Time Period: CE 1793 - 1925

Historic Context Theme: Developing the American Economy

Subtheme: Manufacturing Organizations

Facet: Textile and Apparel Industries

Other Facet: None

Time Period:	CE 1793 - 1925
Historic Context Theme:	Developing the American Economy
Subtheme:	Manufacturing Organizations
Facet:	Machinery And Instruments
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	CE 1793 - 1925
Historic Context Theme:	Creating Social Institutions and Movements
Subtheme:	Social and Humanitarian Movements
Facet:	Historic Preservation Movement
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	CE 1793 - 1925
Historic Context Theme:	Expanding Science and Technology
Subtheme:	Technology (Engineering and Invention)
Facet:	Industrial Production Processes (Including Agriculture)
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	CE 1793 - 1925
Historic Context Theme:	Transforming the Environment
Subtheme:	The Industrial Revolution
Facet:	Industrial Innovations
Other Facet:	None

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Industry

Area of Significance Category: Invention

Statement of Significance:

The Slater Mill Historic Site, part of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, is nationally significant under National Register Criterion A in the areas of Industry and Invention. The site's primary significance is its association with the English immigrant Samuel Slater, who perfected America's first successful water-powered spinning machinery in 1790 and, together with the Providence merchants William Almy and Smith Brown, built this country's first successful cotton mill in 1793 on the Blackstone River's Pawtucket Falls. This partnership, and the machine-building skills of local craftsmen who had earlier erected forges and mills for lumber and grain at the falls, launched the American textile industry. In addition to the Old Slater Mill (1793), Wilkinson Mill (1810), and Sylvanus Brown House (1758, moved to present location in 1972), the site also possesses significance for extant landscape features associated with the Old Slater Mill and Wilkinson Mill, and the other mills and factories at the site, including a raceway, stone tailrace and arch, stone and concrete river walls/foundation walls, foundation remnants, and a footbridge.

The site's period of significance is 1793-1925. The period begins when Old Slater Mill and the raceway was completed and operational, and ends when the Old Slater Mill Association (OSMA) completed the Colonial Revival restoration effort at the mill and cleared the remaining buildings and structures on the Slater Lot (core area of the site).

Landscape Evaluation:
The landscape at Slater Mill Historic Site has undergone dramatic change, beginning with the removal of buildings and structures on the Slater Lot by 1925 and on the property's other three lots (North, South, and East) by the late 1960s. These decisions forever changed the site's historic character from a crowded and bustling industrial riverfront to a passive recreational greenspace. The OSMA's initial intent was to landscape the open spaces to improve the restored mill's setting, which was consistent with the Colonial Revival movement of the time that encouraged Americans to visit sites connected with their Colonial heritage. However, the OSMA's shortage of funds, and fundraising challenges during the Great Depression, limited the scope of such efforts to installation of lawns, several trees and shrubs, and a single path. There are no known landscape plans or designs for the area, and except for a portion of the Great Flume raceway, tailrace, and stone river walls, no traces of past buildings and structures were saved. When the OSMA relocated the Sylvanus Brown house to the site in the early 1970s, it reiterated the sole intent of the landscape was to enhance the setting of the three historic buildings in the core; "Under no circumstances is the exterior site work an attempt to recreate the original site of the Wilkinson and Slater mills. The Slater Mill site does not attempt to recreate an historic village of any sort." Since the 1970s, the OSMA has periodically installed and updated walks, retaining walls, plantings, site furnishings, and wayside signs to improve accessibility and interpretation, and with the City of Pawtucket has developed the site's North, South, and East lots into greenspace and parking. (The Flyer, December 1971: 3-6,11)

This CLI has concluded that the 4.23-acre landscape as a whole does not contribute to the property's National Register listing and historic character, and is not eligible for listing on the National Register. The three extant historic buildings and individual landscape structures (Great Flume raceway, stone tailrace and arch, stone and concrete river walls/foundation walls, foundation remnants, and the bridge over the Great Flume), as well as the adjacent Blackstone River, Pawtucket Falls, and dams, contribute to the site's historic significance and character. However, other landscape features that dominate the site – walks, lawns, and plantings – do not contribute, but do serve as a contemporary setting for the site's remaining historic features.

CRITERION A
Industry and Invention:

Slater Mill Historic Site is significant under Criterion A in the areas of Industry and Invention. Samuel Slater was born on June 9, 1768, and grew up on a farm in England. At the age of fourteen and through his father's business connections, Slater began learning about management of a water-powered textile mill owned by Jedediah Strutt, a partner of the prominent inventor Richard Arkwright. In 1789 Slater immigrated to the United States and learned of Moses Brown and his family business, named Almy and Brown, in Pawtucket. The business was trying to start a working water-powered mill but were unsuccessful in development of power spinning machinery until Brown invited Slater to Pawtucket. A year later Slater and other local blacksmiths, machinists, and pattern makers, among them Oziel and David Wilkinson, and Sylvanus Brown, had the first working water-powered textile mill in the United States. During 1791 and 1792 Slater worked to establish the policies of industrial management that he had learned in England. He insisted, for example, that a successful mill must operate its machinery at its fullest capacity at all times. To operate the mill, Slater hired and trained children to operate the machinery under his supervision. Called the "Rhode Island System," this approach was based upon the ones used in England, which used the entire family as working parts in the mill, but adapted to the customary patterns of family life in New England villages.

In 1793 Slater partnered with Almy and Brown to construct a larger mill, waterwheel, and waterway just upstream from Pawtucket Falls to house and operate the machines. Manufacturing at the new building was based on Arkwright's cotton spinning system, which included carding, drawing, and spinning machines. Slater also built several other mills in the area, including Slatersville, the country's first planned industrial community that he developed with his brother John. Slater continued building and financing mill villages all across southern New England until his death in April 1835.

By 1832 the mill building had undergone three expansions, but by this time it was no longer the dominant factory it had been; several other mills with greater space capacity and reliable water power were operating in southern New England, including Slatersville and others in Smithfield, Warwick, Scituate, and Cumberland, shifting the focus of the cotton textile innovation and industry away from Pawtucket. Among the reasons for this change was the introduction of steam-powered looms that streamlined the productivity of newer mills and outpaced that of the Pawtucket Falls mill. Almy and Brown decided not to install the power looms in Pawtucket, likely due to the restrictions imposed by the supply of waterpower at Pawtucket Falls and to the lack of physical space to adapt the mill to large-scale manufacturing. These constraints, and an economic collapse in 1829, brought Slater's partnership with Brown and Almy to an end in August 1829, at which time he sold his portion of the mill property to the two men.

The core of Slater Mill Historic Site preserves three restored historic buildings: Samuel Slater's 1793 mill, Oziel and David Wilkinson's 1810-1811 mill, and Sylvanus Brown's 1758 cottage (moved to its current location in 1972). The Old Slater Mill was modeled after English cotton spinning mills and is the first water-powered cotton spinning mill in North America to utilize the Arkwright method of spinning cotton. The Wilkinson Mill played a critical role in the history of textile technology, in steam power generation, and in the development of the machine tool industry. The Brown House is where Brown's pattern-making and carpentry skills helped him produce mechanized textile machinery with Samuel Slater between 1789 and 1791.

The Slater Mill Historic Site also includes features that assisted in the development and operation of the mills and factories, chief among them the Great Flume and tailrace that harnessed and processed water to power Old Slater Mill and Wilkinson Mill, as well as factories located downstream. The Great Flume and tailrace were built in 1793, and the tailrace was enlarged in 1828-1832. The flume began along the riverbank east of the mill and channeled river water under the east side of mill where it turned the waterwheels. The water would then either exit the mill through a tailrace on the southwest side of the mill or flow south through the flume until it narrowed through the so-called "Swift Flume" and then into Sargeant's Trench, which passed under Main Street and supplied water power to the factories below Pawtucket Falls. The floors of the flume and tailrace were covered in wood planks and reinforced with stone walls. Gates were erected to control the flow of water through the flume, while the outlet of the tailrace was reinforced with a stone arch as a buttress against the flow of the river. The Great Flume and tailrace were restored in 1924-1925, and although part of the raceway has been filled in, the remaining open sections, and the tailrace, have been maintained since that time.

The river walls/foundation walls protected the factories and workshops from the waters of the Blackstone River.

The stone walls were in place by c.1840, and in the South and East Lots these walls were incorporated into the foundations walls of the mills alongside the river. After the historic period, the portion of the river wall in the North Lot and Slater Lot (east of mill) was rebuilt by the Works Progress Administration by 1940. When factory buildings in the South and East Lots were removed, the foundation walls were retained to continue their roles in protecting the riverbank.

The remnant foundation in the East Lot is the only above ground representation of the many buildings and structures that filled this part of the site during the historic period. The foundation has been backfilled and planted with grass, but is clearly discernible in the landscape. There are likely other buried foundations and possibly the raceway in the East Lot, as well as in the three lots on the west side of the river.

The bridge over the Great Flume was the primary means of crossing the raceway in the Slater Lot during the historic period. This crossing was present by c.1869, but may have existed as early as c.1823 to provide access over the raceway that was bordered by buildings and structures. The bridge was retained after other buildings were removed on the Slater Lot in 1925, and would have been the only practical way of reaching the river in this area.

State Register Information:

Identification Number:	0
Name:	Old Slater Mill Historic Site National Historic Landmark District
Listed Date:	11/13/1966 12:00:00 AM

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Historic Site

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function:

Primary Current Use:

Other Use/Function	Other Type of Use or Function

Current and Historic Names:

Name	Type Of Name
Slater Mill Historic Site	Current
Old Slater Mill	Current
Slater Mill National Historic Landmark District	Current

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
CE 1500 - 1635	Established	The Native American name of the Blackstone River was “Kittacuck,” which meant “the great tidal river.” The river served as a boundary among the Narragansett, Wampanoag, and Nipmuc. The falls at “Pawtucket,” an Algonquian name for “river fall,” was a particularly important river crossing as well as a gathering place to harvest salmon and smaller fish.

Physical History:

INTRODUCTION

The following section provides information on the physical development and evolution of the site, organized by time periods. It is extracted from the 2021 draft, “Cultural Landscape Report for Slater Mill Historic Site, Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, Pawtucket, Rhode Island” prepared by Jeff Killion, Historical Landscape Architect. The narrative below describes the site as four lots: Slater, North, South, East (see Location Map).

EARLY SETTLEMENT AND EARLY INDUSTRY, TO 1793

The Blackstone River is named after the area’s first European settler, William Blackstone, but its earlier Native American name was “Kittacuck,” which meant “the great tidal river.” The river served as a boundary among the Narragansett, Wampanoag, and Nipmuc. The Narragansett controlled the southern Rhode Island part of the valley, including the river mouth. To the north and east lay the western boundary of lands dominated by the Wampanoag, whose major territories lay in southeastern Massachusetts. The Nipmuc occupied the northern and western reaches of the river and most of the remainder of Worcester County, Massachusetts.

In the lower Blackstone Valley, Native Americans hunted, fished, and camped, as evidenced by lithic technologies and wampum (shellbeads). The falls at “Pawtucket,” an Algonquian name for “river fall,” was a particularly important gathering place to harvest salmon and smaller fish. Early maps of the river depict a large rock outcropping downstream from the falls, variously named “Fisher Rock” and “Fishing Rock.” Several Native American paths converged at Pawtucket Falls, with stepping stones connecting the two riverbanks across a ford below the falls.

At the long-established Native American fishing spot, ironworker Joseph Jenckes, Jr. built a forge and mill in 1671 and founded Pawtucket Village. Beginning in the 1710s, a dam and several raceways were built at the falls to harness the Blackstone River’s water, while a longer channel known as Sargeant’s Trench was dug originally as a fish passage and later utilized to power Jenckes’s anchor shop and other mills (Figure 1). The Jenckes businesses were successful, and spawned other

industrial development on both sides of the river, including sawmills, grist mills, oil mills, potash manufacturers, and shipyards. Among those arriving in Pawtucket during this period of growth were Sylvanus Brown, a pattern-maker and carpenter, Oziel Wilkinson, a blacksmith, and his son David, a machinist.

Following the Revolutionary War, there was growing interest in using machines to manufacture textiles. Anxious to reduce the young country's dependency on England, merchants and mechanics attempted to replicate British textile machines, among them Moses Brown in Providence, who with son-in-law William Almy and cousin Smith Brown aimed to turn textile production into a large-scale operation powered by water. Moses Brown, and Almy and Brown, modified existing hand-powered machines in a small fulling mill on the west side of Pawtucket Falls, just above the original Jenckes forge. Sylvanus Brown, the Wilkinsons, and others helped build these experimental models, but were unsuccessful.

The breakthrough came with the arrival of 21-year old Samuel Slater in January 1790, who immigrated to the United States after training under Jedidiah Strutt, who was a business partner with Richard Arkwright, the English inventor of water-powered textile machines. At Moses Brown's invitation, Slater worked with Almy and Brown, rebuilding much of their previously-purchased machinery with new parts fabricated by the Wilkinsons and Sylvanus Brown. By the end of the trial period he had an operational water-power spinning frame using the Arkwright technology. After signing a contract with Almy and Brown, Slater developed the carding and preparatory machines required in the final steps of the spinning process, and in December 1790 began spinning cotton.

Within a year of successful operations and production at Almy & Brown, Moses Brown backed construction of a new water-powered cotton spinning mill, located just upstream from the falls. The new wood-frame, post-and-beam building measured 43 feet in length by 29 feet in width, and was 2-stories high on a stone foundation (Figure 2). To power the mill, a second [upper] dam was constructed upstream from the earlier [lower] dam at the falls, which impounded water that fed a series of new raceways named the Great Flume and Swift Run that connected to Sargeant's Trench. The raceways were lined with stone walls, as was a tailrace that conveyed some of the water from the mill's wheels back to the river under a stone supporting arch. In July 1793 the new mill was essentially complete and production began in August. By this time Almy and Brown formed a separate firm with Samuel Slater (Figure 3).

Landscape Summary, 1793:
An analysis of the sketch maps from 1796 as well as a later sketch map from 1823 verify the locations of the original section of Old Slater Mill, Sargeant's Trench, Swift Flume, and the Great Flume, all located north of the Main Street Bridge. These features are within the boundaries of the Slater Lot and the South Lot. Water impounded behind the upper dam flowed through these raceways and powered Old Slater Mill. In the coming decades this area would be densely filled with a variety of factories drawing upon the water power. The 1796 map indicates a tree at a turn in Sargeant's Trench. The extent of other woody vegetation at Pawtucket Falls is unknown, as some areas were cleared for building sites and construction of the raceways. Land uses in the North Lot and East Lot are unknown at this period in time.

In the 1796 map, Sargeant's Trench passed under Main Street and continued south of the Main Street Bridge, supplying additional manufactories along its course before draining into the river. Opposite this outlet and in the middle of the river was the "Fishing Rock." Two smaller concentrations of mills sat on both river banks just below the falls, powered by smaller raceways that drew water retained in the mill pond behind the lower dam.

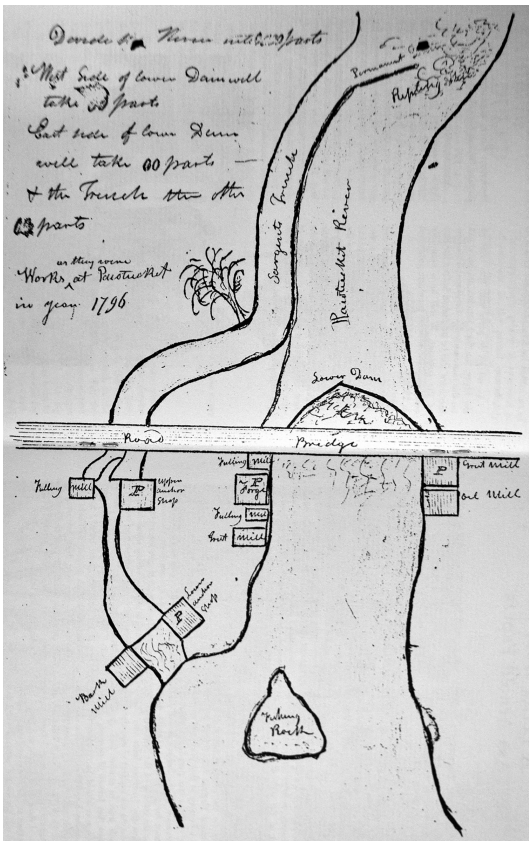


Figure 1. Sketch map of Sargeant's Trench, possibly showing conditions in 1796 and the locations of the two Jenckes anchor shops. A survey map from 1823 confirms similar locations (see Figure 4). (The Flyer, August 1973: 8-9)

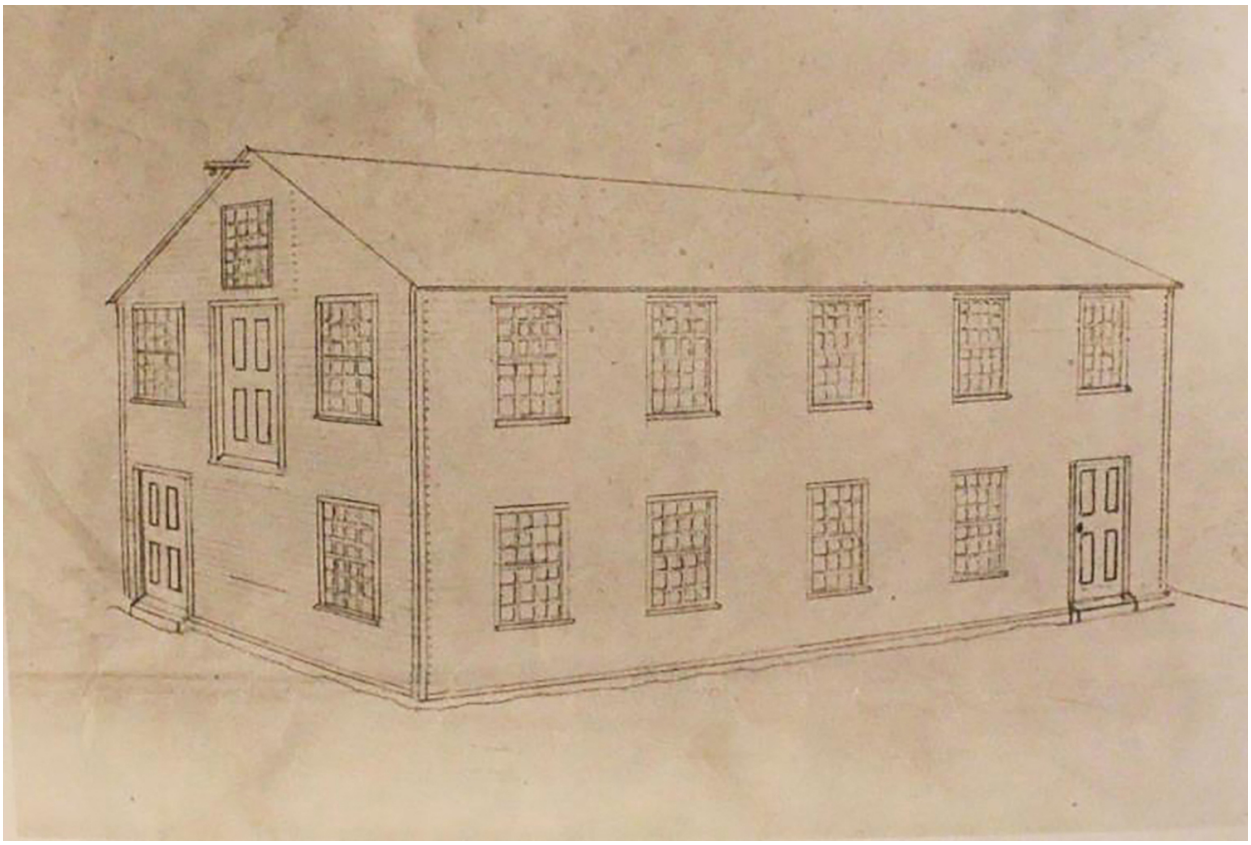


Figure 2. Original section of Slater Mill in 1793. (OSMA Archives, from LeeAnne Brooks and Lauren Laham, Slater Mill, Historic Structure Report [hereafter HSR], Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, Pawtucket, Rhode Island, 2018: D-11)



Figure 3. Samuel Slater. (OSMA Archives)

ALMY, BROWN & SLATER'S MILL, 1793-1832

The opening of Almy, Brown & Slater's mill established the country's first successful water-powered cotton spinning mill. Spinning had previously been a small-scale activity, but now machines could transform bales of cotton into finished yarn. With such accomplishments, the firm expanded the mill three times: a 2-story, 57 x 30-foot extension to the north in 1801; a 2-story, 40 x 30-foot extension to the south in 1818-1820; and a 2.5-story, 20 x 18-foot stairtower topped with a cupola in 1828-1832. The last addition introduced a second water wheel and allowed the mill to power more machinery.

Concurrently, land around Almy, Brown & Slater's mill began to fill in with other factories connecting to the raceways (Figure 4). One of the most imposing new buildings was the 3-story stone-constructed Wilkinson Mill, built in 1810-1811, but even it was dwarfed by the White Mill, Yellow Mill, and Great Stone Mill on the east riverbank, massive structures also powered by raceways. The increased demands for water power instigated years of litigation amongst mill owners regarding water rights. Other structures built in these early years included a house for Slater and a wood-truss bridge over the falls. For his part, Samuel Slater continued to expand his business interests, including construction of a much larger mill with his brother John around twenty miles upstream in 1806, which included the first planned textile mill village in the country, named Slatersville.

As Slatersville and other factories with large capacities were opening up along the Blackstone River, the influence of Almy, Brown & Slater's Pawtucket mill waned. Some of these mills made use of more efficient steam-powered looms, but at Old Slater Mill the limited water supply and lack of physical space prevented new large-scale manufacturing.

In 1829 an economic collapse forced David Wilkinson to sell his mill, and consequently ended Slater's partnership with Almy and Brown as Slater had to sell his share of the company to pay off Wilkinson's loans that he had cosigned. Slater avoided financial disaster, however, and at the time of his death on April 21, 1835, at the age of 66, he was a successful, prosperous, and well-known industrialist who had built successful spinning mills all over Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut.

Landscape Summary, 1832:
The earliest maps showing accurate building footprints at the site date to 1870 for the west side of the river and 1848 for the east side. A comparison of these maps with that of the 1823 sketch map reveal the rapid growth of industrial land uses at Pawtucket Falls. The 1823 map shows Almy, Brown & Slater's mill with its north and south extensions, the Wilkinson Mill, and numerous other factories owned by Almy, Brown & Slater, the Wilkinsons, and others lining the length of the Sargeant's Trench, Swift Run, and Great Flume raceway. Shorter raceways powered factories on both sides of Pawtucket Falls and on the east side of the river. Other features known to have existed at this time were Samuel Slater's home just northwest of his mill, and the wood-truss bridge carrying Main Street over Pawtucket Falls.

The same tree shown at a turn in Sargeant's Trench in the 1786 map was indicated again in 1823, and labeled as an elm. A second unnamed tree is noted just upstream. It is not known if both were still present in 1832. It is likely there was considerably less vegetation at the falls than in 1793, due to the number of new buildings and raceways.

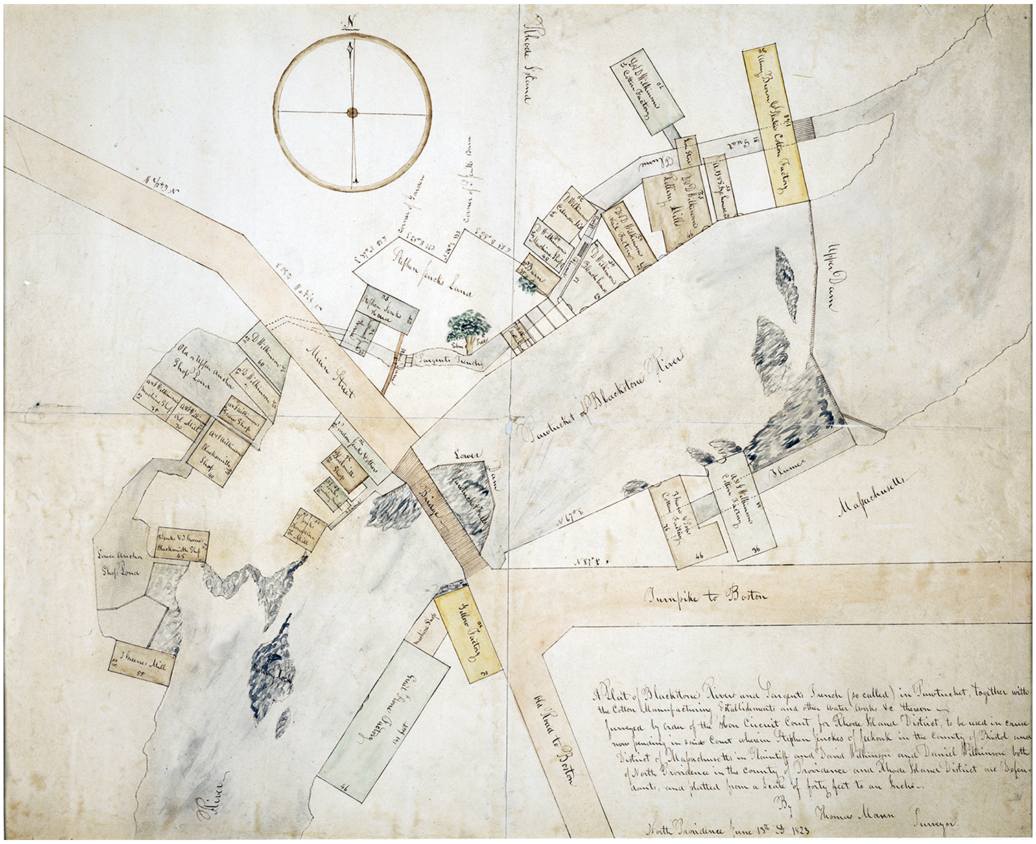


Figure 4. Map of Sargeant's Trench and surrounding mills, c.1823. Old Slater Mill is at image top right. (Thomas Mann, Plat of Blackstone River and Sargent's Trench in Pawtucket, June 13, 1823. OSMA Archives, from HSR 2018: D-25)

COTTON WEAVING AND OTHER INDUSTRIES, 1832-1876

After Slater's departure, Almy & Brown became Almy & Jenkins, who operated the mill from 1833-1856, followed by Henry and Edwin Jerauld in 1856-1865, and Francis Pratt and Job L. Spencer/Gideon L. Spencer in 1865-1876 (Figure 5). The mill was again expanded during this period, in c.1850, c.1869, and c.1872, resulting in a three-story addition on its west side, which also helped make the building's former attic space usable (Figure 6). The building's foundation was also raised in 1855 to heighten the ceiling on the first floor. These changes allowed the owners to rent space to other businesses engaged in textile and non-textile pursuits, including the manufacture of sheeting, shirts, yarn, twine, and thread.

Similar business models were employed by owners of other factories nearby, as the roster of tenants changed over the years. New buildings were constructed, occupying available spaces along Mill Street (now Roosevelt Avenue) and other new streets connecting to the stone arch bridge built in 1858 across Pawtucket Falls. Although the riverbanks featured pockets of vegetation, most of the riverfront was characterized by buildings, alleys, and workyards (Figures 7, 8).

Landscape Summary, 1876:
When contrasted with the 1823 plat map, the increase in the number of buildings around Old Slater Mill was exponential. Hemmed in by the surrounding city streets and the Blackstone River, workyards and alleys separated the numerous structures, leaving little space for vegetation to grow except along the riverbanks. Mixed in with the factories were new buildings housing commercial businesses and residences, especially along Mill Street (now Roosevelt Avenue) and other streets laid out during this period. By this time, Old Slater Mill had its foundation raised and was expanded with a 3-story addition on its west side. The Sargeant's Trench, Swift Run, and the Great Flume raceway, as well as the raceway on the East Lot, continued to provide water power to the mills.

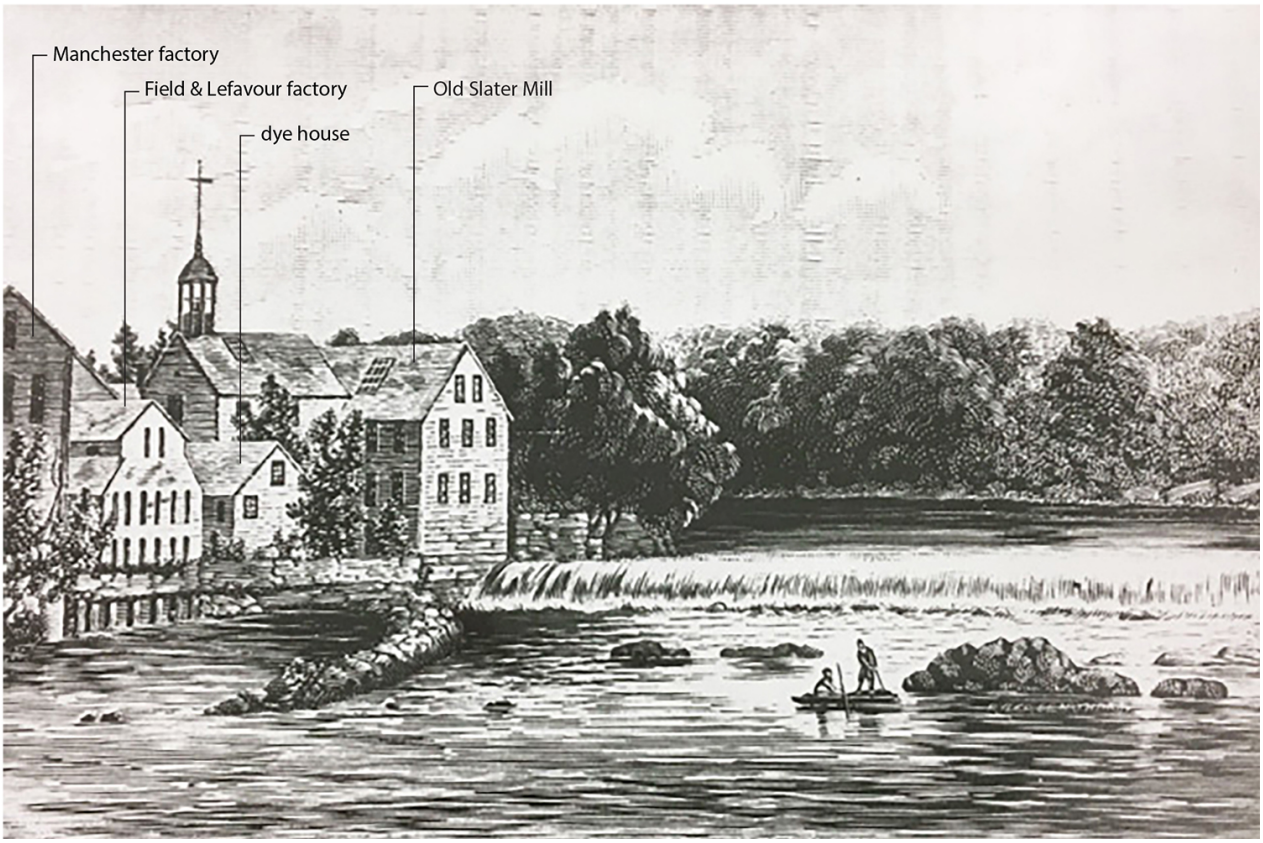


Figure 5. Woodcut of the south and west sides of Old Slater Mill from the Main Street Bridge, by 1840. (C. Ryder, "View of the Old Slater Mill in 1840, Looking North From Main Street Bridge." OSMA Archives, from HSR 2018: 40. Annotated by Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation [hereafter OCLP] 2021)

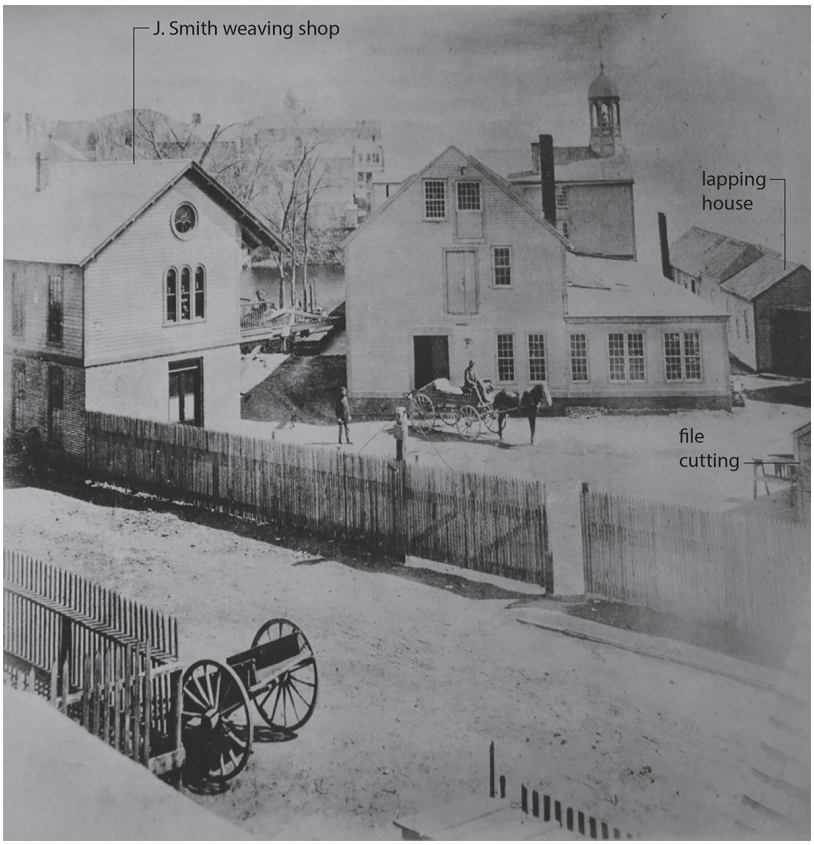


Figure 6. View looking southeast at the north side of Old Slater Mill, c.1869, showing the full one-story west addition on the east side. Note the work yard and fencing and similar fencing in the North Lot. (HSR 2018: 48, annotated by OCLP, 2021)

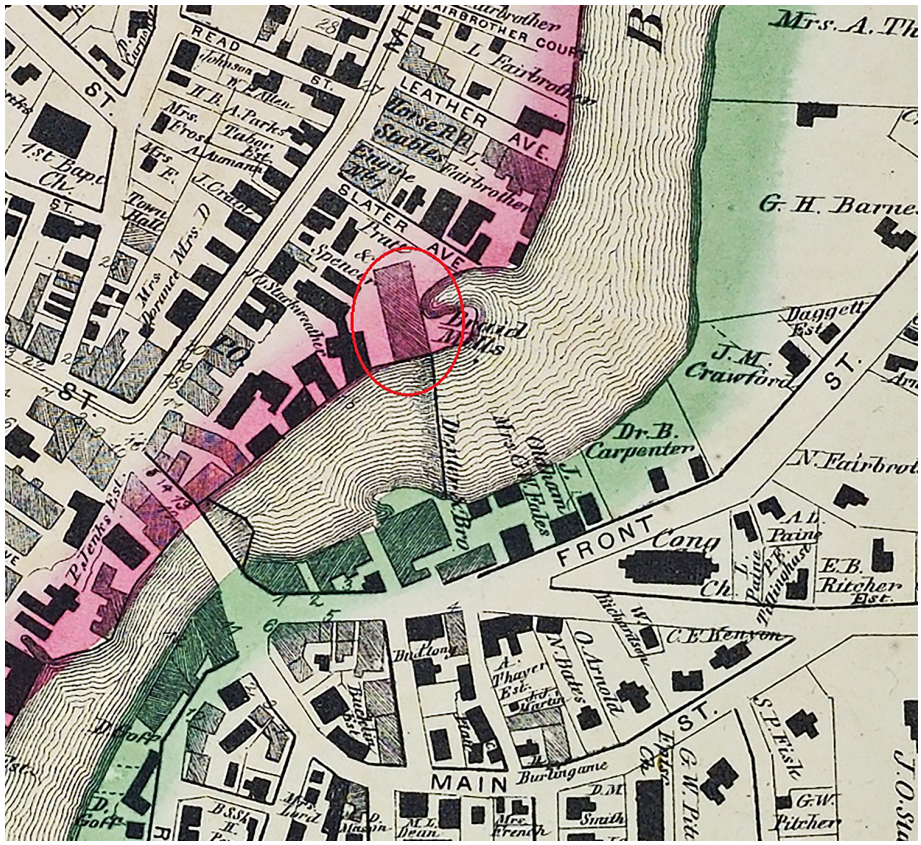


Figure 7. Map of Pawtucket Village, dated 1870, with Old Slater Mill circled in red. (D.G. Beers & Co., Map of the Village of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, 1"=330 feet. Pawtucket, Rhode Island, 1870. Pawtucket Public Library, from HSR 2018: D-41)



Figure 8. Oblique aerial view looking west, c.1869, from the Congregational Church spire. (OSMA Archives, from HAER RI-1, 1991. Annotated by OCLP 2021)

FROM PRODUCTION TO PRESERVATION, 1876-1925

Over the next five decades, new owners were introduced and old partnerships were renewed: Erastus B. Sampson operated the mill from 1876-1886, Gideon L. Spencer returned in 1886-1902, and Job L. Spencer and S. Willard Thayer owned the mill from 1902-1923 (Figures 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14). In 1895 Job L. Spencer stopped weaving cotton, ending a 103-year history of cotton production at Slater Mill. But the diversity of tenants was at its peak, and included makers of twine and thread, afghan robes, steam carriages, jewelry tools, hats, and shoe strings. The mill even hosted a business that rented bicycles. The diversity of uses at the mill and in the surrounding properties reflected a shift in New England's textile industry, as production began to move first to the South, and ultimately offshore. The one-time industrial dominance of the Blackstone Valley – and New England in general – faded dramatically; half of the mill buildings in the North Lot were gone by 1902. However, many local firms were able to adapt for a time by concentrating on specialized niches in the textile industry, or by diversifying into other industries. During this transition, Old Slater Mill fell into disrepair and suffered from deferred maintenance.

A major shift in the use of Old Slater Mill came in the early 1920s. S. Willard Thayer had purchased the mill and Slater Lot on behalf of the Old Slater Mill Association (OSMA), a group of local businessmen with long ties to the textile industry. The OSMA was one of the first American organizations to focus on the preservation of the country's industrial history. Their purpose in restoring the mill and opening it as a museum was to commemorate the country's first cotton mill and the beginning of the American Industrial Revolution. With the framework of the mill in good condition, the OSMA decided on a c.1835 appearance, thus removing the west wing but keeping the north, south, and stairtower additions that extended from the original 1793 core, as well as the raised brick foundation. Thayer transferred the property to the OSMA in 1923, and these changes, and the removals of all other buildings on the lot, including Samuel Slater's house, were completed in 1925 (Figures 15, 16). The Great Flume, tailrace and arch, and footbridge were retained, but only as vestiges of a former industrial area transforming into a tourist attraction.

Landscape Summary, 1925:
When compared with the conditions in 1876, the most dramatic change at the site occurred in the Slater Lot, where all buildings were removed except for Old Slater Mill, which was reduced in size by 1925 with the removal of the west addition. In the other three lots, the density of buildings had increased through expansions to previous structures, either by building on previously unbuilt spaces or adding floors, ells, and in some cases cantilevered additions. The exception to this was the east half of the North Lot where mill buildings were removed and not replaced. All buildings and structures continued to house a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential activities. The use of Sargeant's Trench, Swift Run, and the Great Flume raceway, as well as the raceway on the East Lot, for water power declined, as many businesses had converted to electricity.

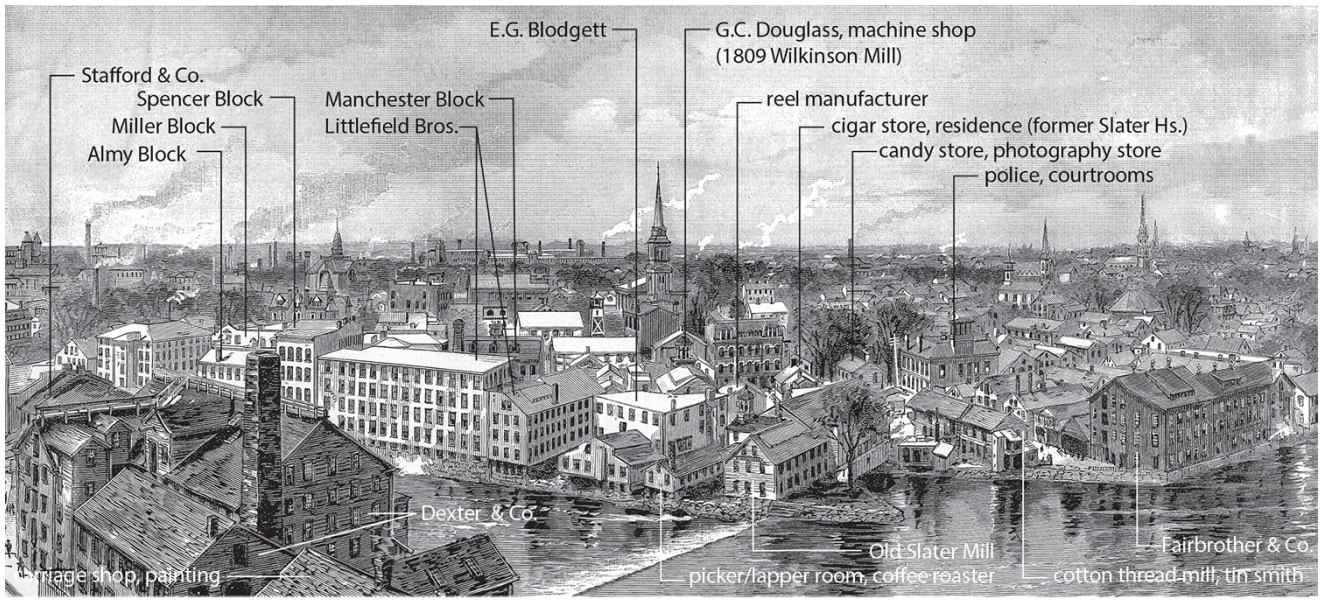


Figure 9. Drawing looking west from the East Lot, 1880. ("Drawing from 1880 photograph." OSMA Archives, from HSR 2018: D-48. Annotated by OCLP 2021)



Figure 10. View looking south at the north and east sides of Old Slater Mill, c.1886. This is the first view showing the second and third story west addition and the rope pulley elevator. Note the fence that once bordered Slater Avenue is gone. (OSMA Archives, from HAER RI-1, 1991)

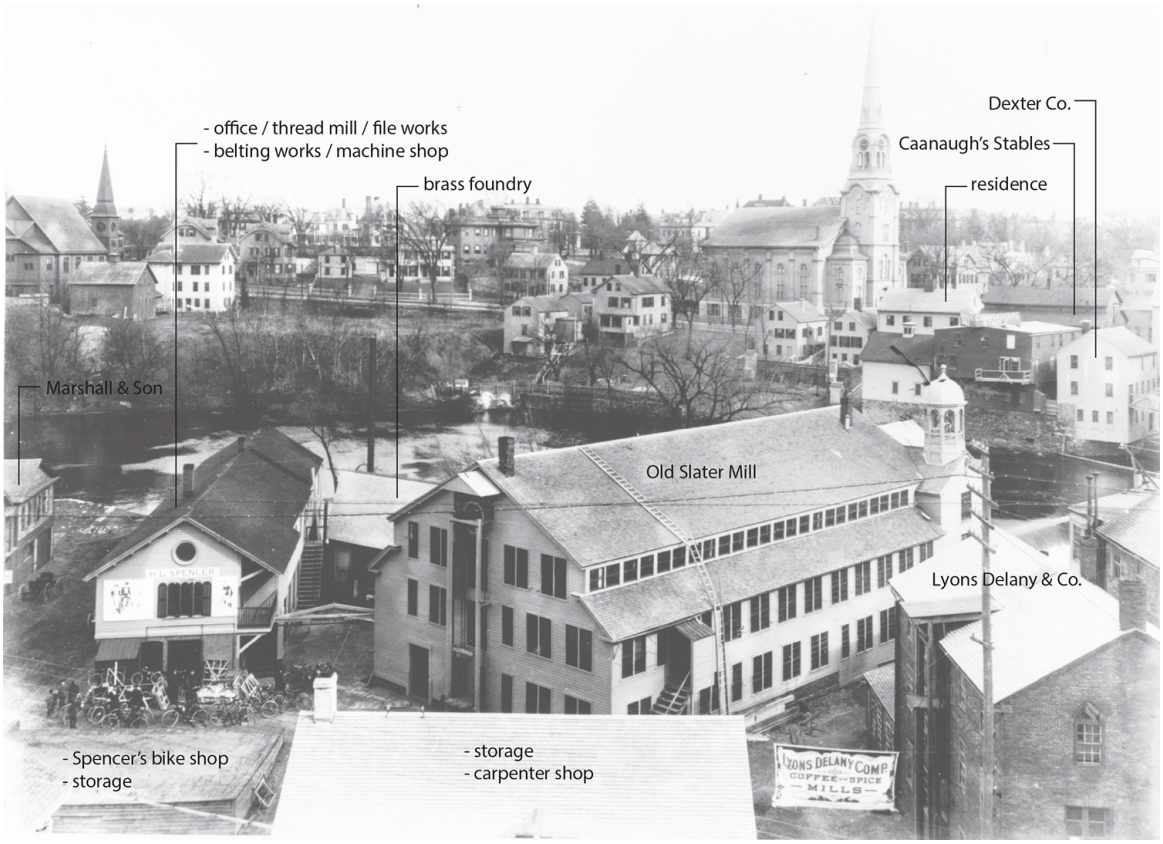


Figure 11. View looking east at the north and west sides of Old Slater Mill, 1895-1900. (Spaulding House Research Library, from HAER RI-1, 1991. Annotated by OCLP 2021)

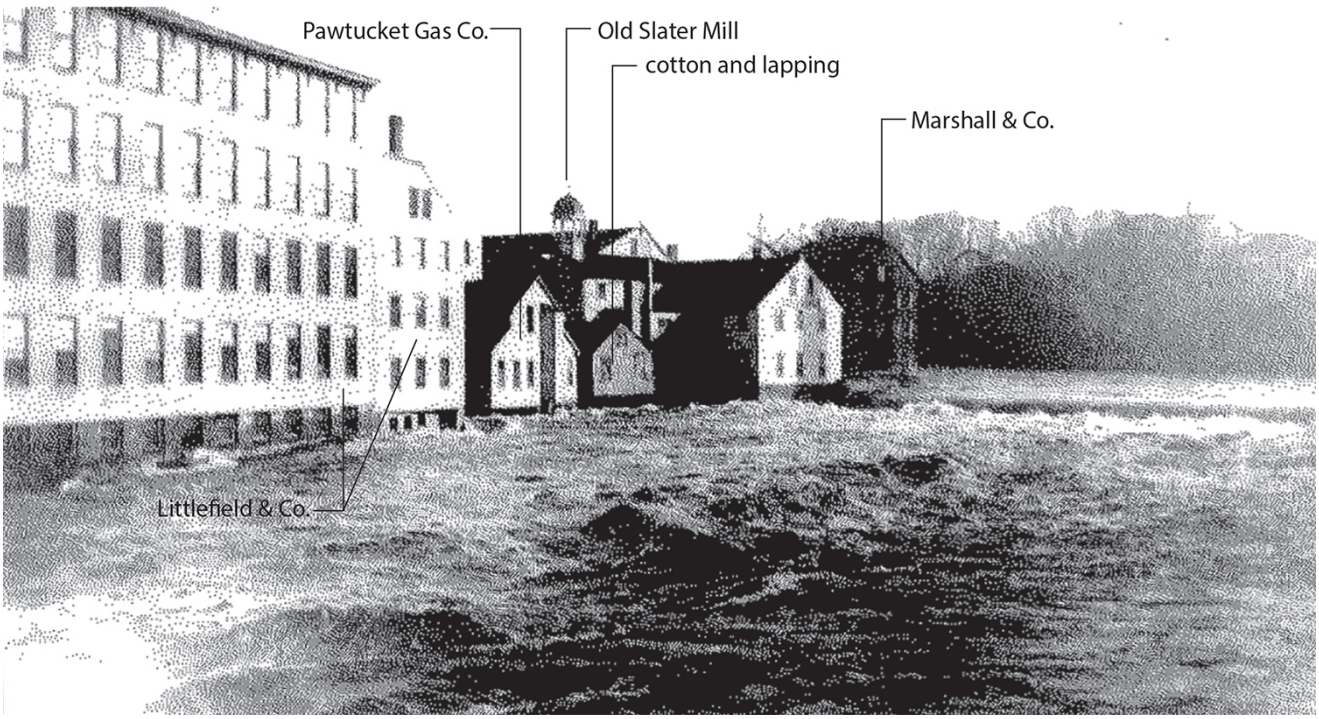


Figure 12. View looking north at mill buildings along the west side of the Blackstone, 1890. (Sarah Leavitt, Images of America: Slater Mill, Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1997: 34. Annotated by OCLP 2021)

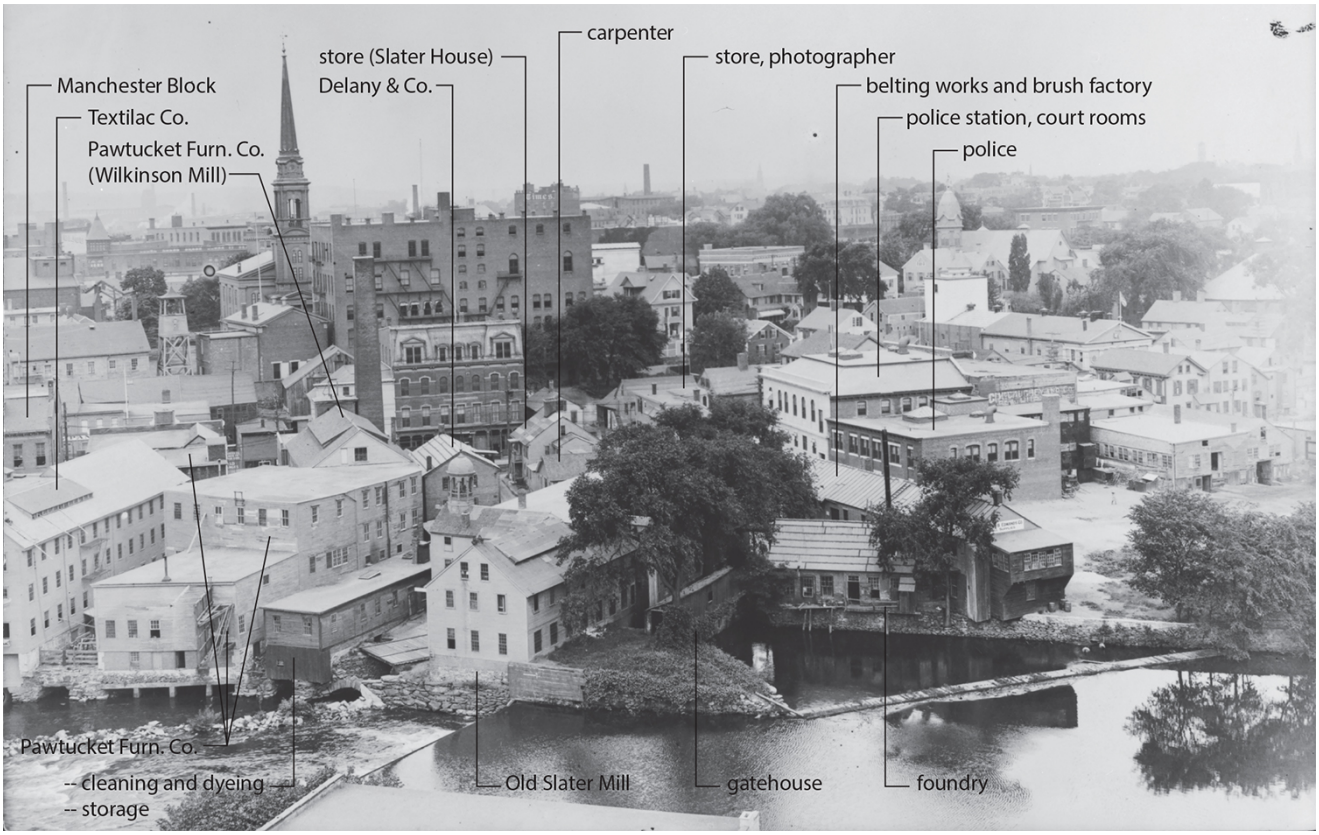


Figure 13. View looking northwest at the south and east sides of Old Slater Mill, c.1913. Note the vegetation on the peninsula and the footbridge/trash screen at the Great Flume inlet. (Spaulding House Research Library, from HAER RI-1, 1991. Annotated by OCLP 2021)

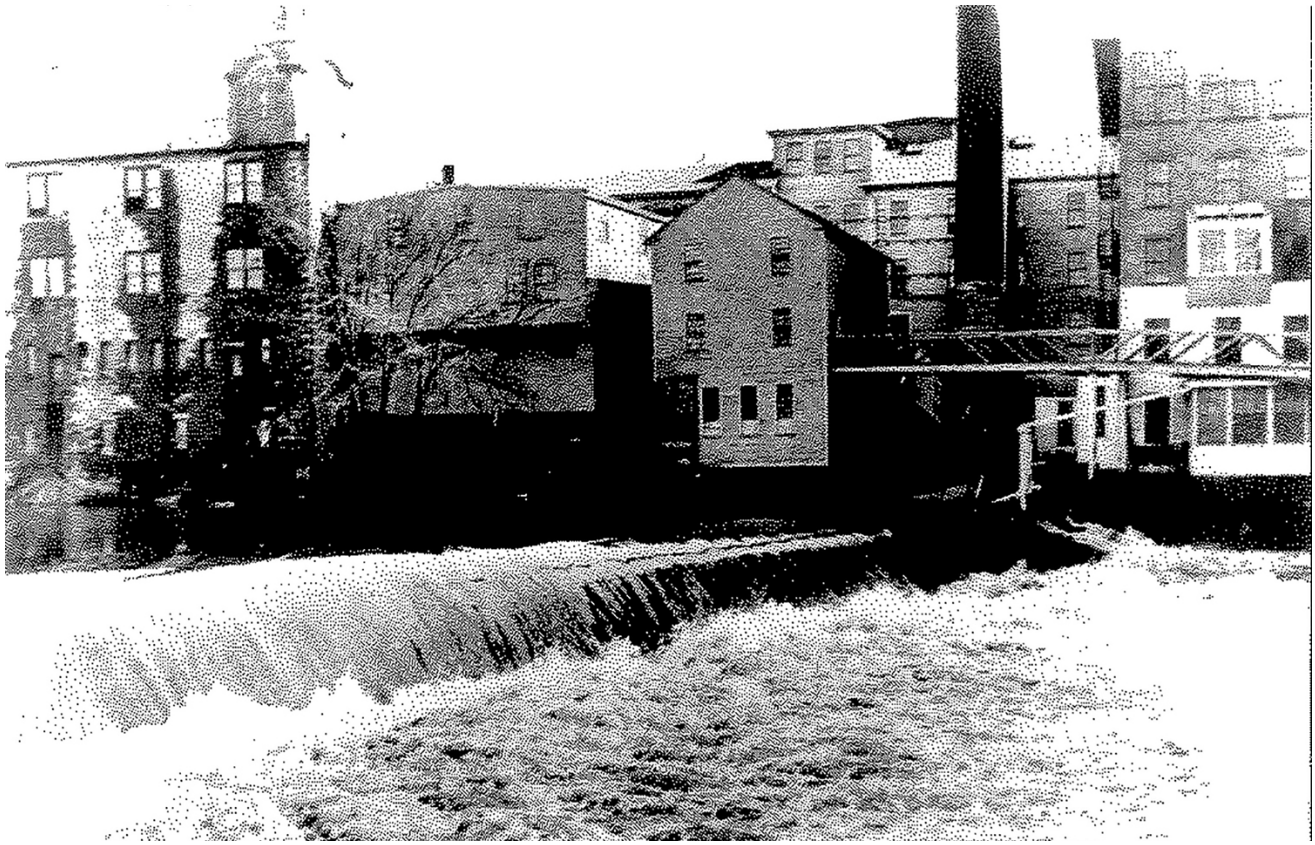


Figure 14. View looking east at the Dexter Yarn Co. complex on the east side of the Blackstone River, c.1910 -1923, opposite Old Slater Mill. (Leavitt 1997: 37)

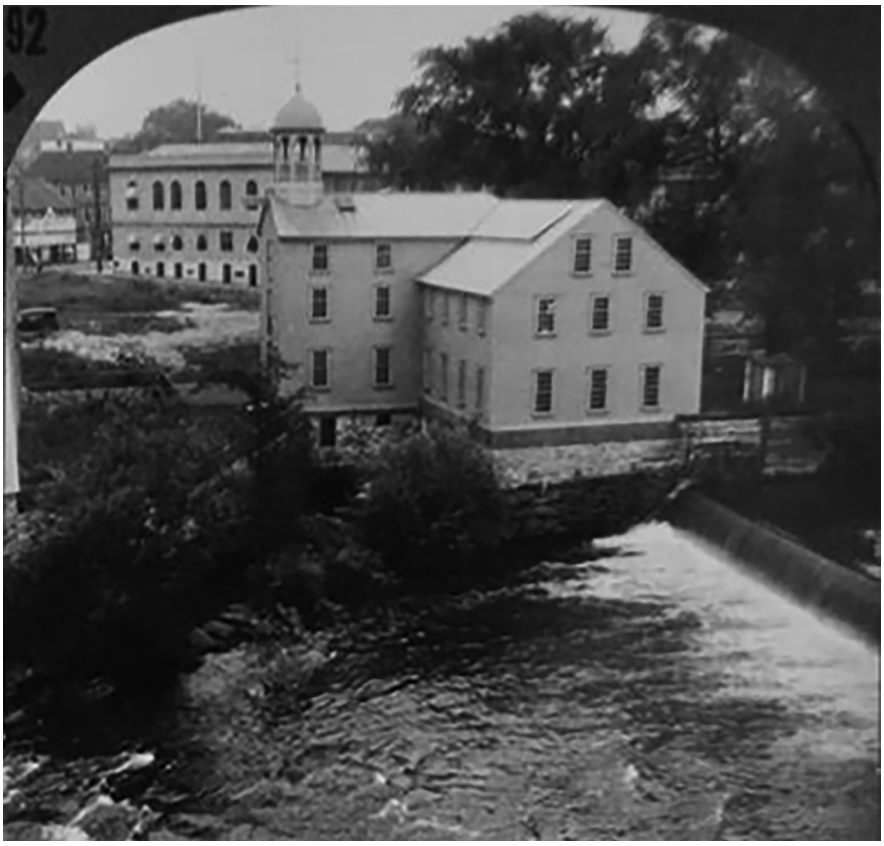


Figure 15. View looking northwest at the cleared land at the Slater Lot, c.1925. Note the sloping topography of the lot from North Main Street to the Old Slater Mill. (OSMA Archives, from HSR 2018: D-86)



Figure 16. View looking east at the north and west sides of Old Slater Mill, c.1925, after the building's restoration but before landscaping was completed. (OSMA Archives, from HSR 2018: D-86)

OLD SLATER MILL MUSEUM AND GROUNDS, 1925-1973

The OSMA directed their remaining funds to landscaping the now empty Slater Lot with lawns, trees, and a path from 1925 to 1940, but after this effort there was not enough money to develop and open the site as a full time museum. Fundraising lagged during the Depression and World War II, but several changes were completed to the grounds, including rebuilding the river wall, filling in a portion of the Great Flume east of the mill, and constructing a boiler house to heat the building (Figure 17). Meanwhile, factory owners in the North, South, and East Lots began repurposing or removing some of their buildings, many of which became informal parking areas (Figure 18). In 1955, the museum opened to the public, with attendance bolstered by special exhibits, outreach programs, and the involvement of local clubs (Figure 19).

The next major change occurred in the 1960s as part of urban renewal, when the construction of the nearby Interstate 95 corridor prompted the City of Pawtucket to reconsider the future of their riverfront and downtown. At this time historic Old Slater Mill, as well as adjacent lands comprised of the North, South, and East Lots, were designated a National Historic Landmark. With the vision of creating a riverfront park, the city and OSMA demolished the remaining buildings and structures on the three lots and replaced them with new lawns, trees, and walks (Figure 20). Of all of the factories razed, only the Wilkinson Mill was saved and restored. The historic cottage of Sylvanus Brown, located south of downtown, was saved and eventually moved to a permanent location between the two mills in 1973, creating the site's three-building core area (Figure 21). The North Lot became a parking lot, while the open spaces in the South and East Lots became known as Hodgson-Rotary Park and Slater Mill Park, respectively (Figure 22). At this time, a contemporary landscape of new walkways, patio spaces, and plantings was installed to unify the core area and connect it to the rest of the 4.23-acre site, which became known as Slater Mill Historic Site.

Landscape Summary, 1973:
When compared with conditions is 1925, the most dramatic change at the site occurred in the North, South, and East Lots where all buildings were removed except for the Wilkinson Mill, which was restored, and the widening of Roosevelt Avenue, which reduced the size of the Slater, North, and South Lots. By this time the OSMA had relocated the historic cottage of Sylvanus Brown from its temporary location at the east end of Slater Avenue to a permanent location on the Slater Lot, between the two mills. These three-buildings became the core of the site. The previous layout of paths and landscaping was updated with new walks, patios, and plantings to unify the core area and connect to a new parking area in the North Lot, and the paths and lawns in the South Lot, named Hodgson-Rotary Park. The East Lot became known as Slater Mill Park and featured an overlook built into the existing river wall and steps accessing the riverbank below. Although no traces of the raceway in the East Lot were saved, several foundation remnants were preserved to hold the steep slopes. On the Slater Lot, the eastern portion of the Great Flume was partially filled in and watered by a penstock pipe leading from the rebuilt river wall to the raceway. The western part of the Great Flume featured stone walls in the vicinity of the Old Slater Mill, but at this time continued to the Wilkinson Mill only as a ditch. The old stone foundations of the mills along the river in the South Lot were partially retained to serve as a river wall.



Figure 17. View looking southwest at construction of the boiler house on the former peninsula, 1954. (OSMA Archives, from HSR 2018: D-109)

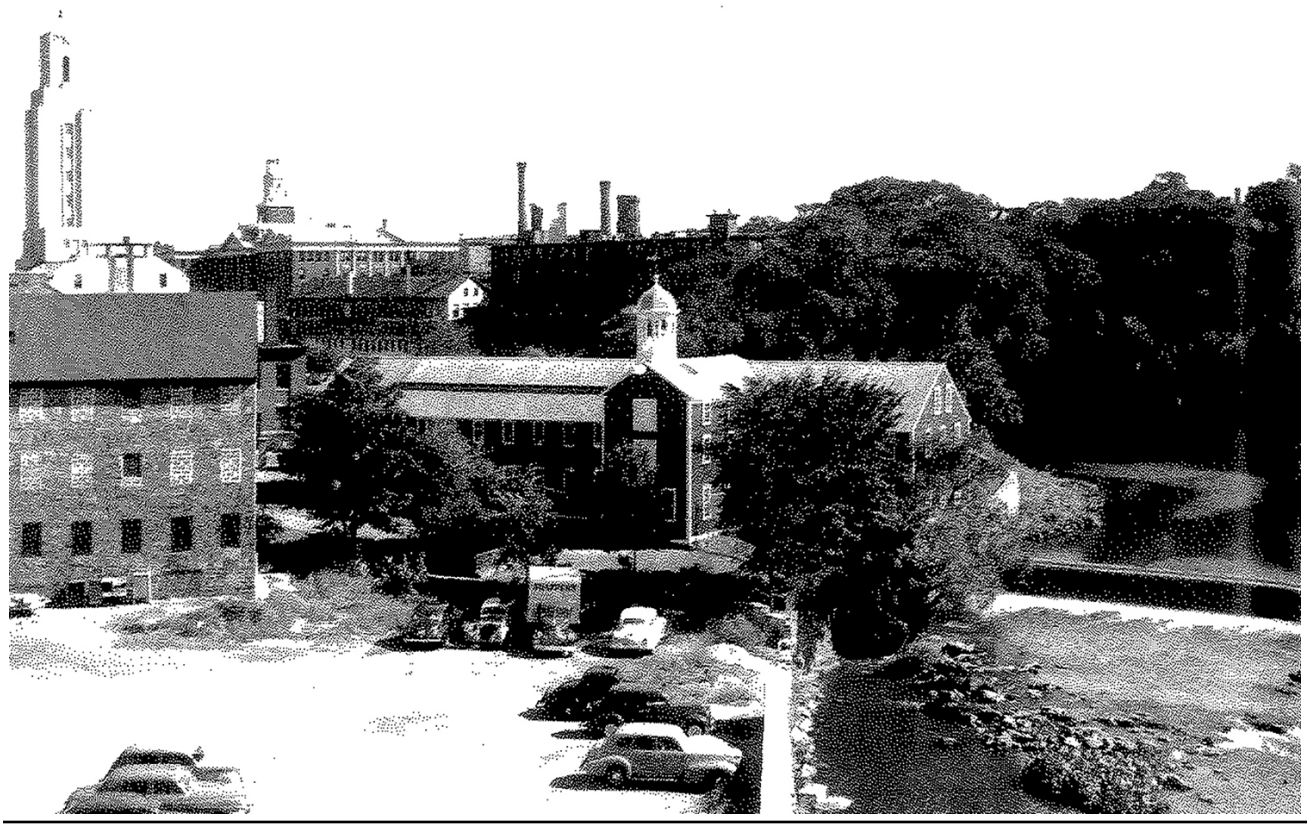


Figure 18. View looking northeast at the South Lot, c.1949, after the former Textilac Co. buildings were removed and replaced with a parking lot. (OSMA Archives, from Leavitt 1997: 62)



Figure 19. View looking south at the partially demolished Dexter Yarn Co., 1954, on the East Lot. (OSMA Archives, from HSR 2018: D-106)

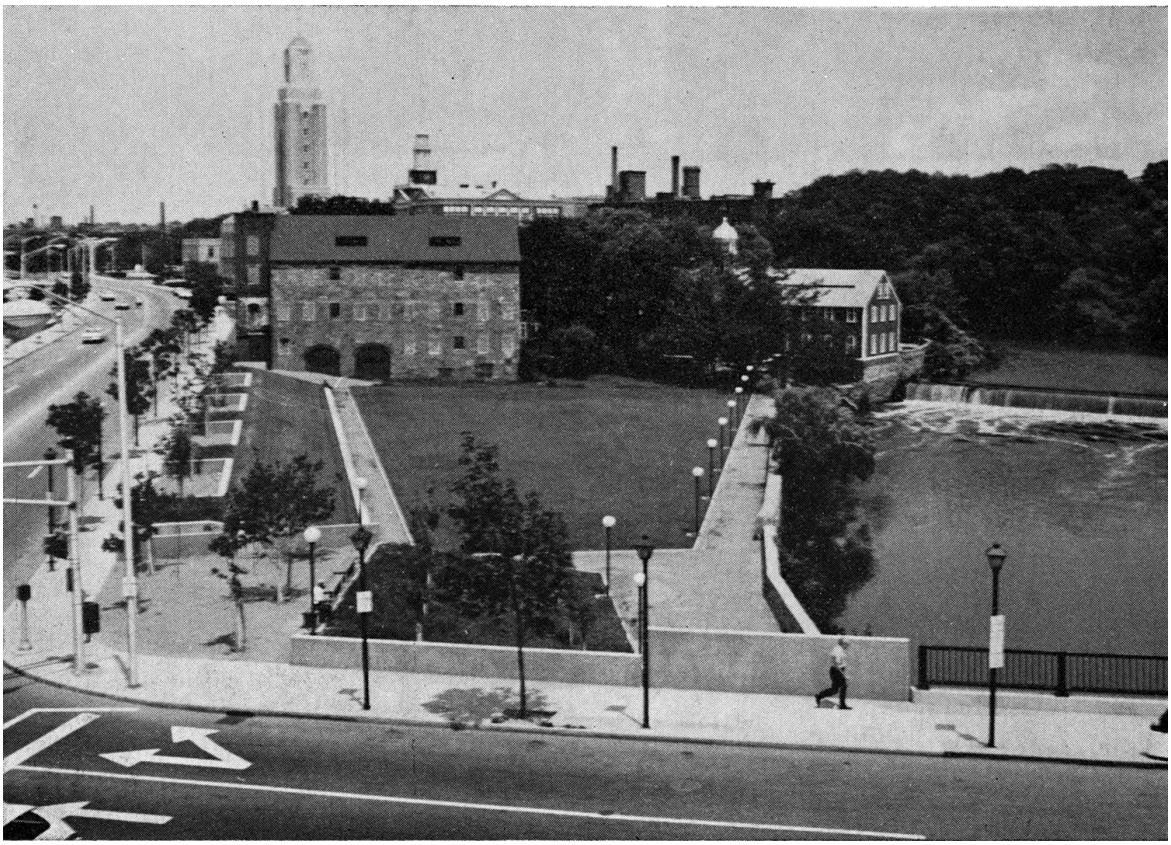


Figure 20. View looking northeast at Hodgson-Rotary Park, 1970. ("Hodgson Rotary Park," from www.flickr.com/photos/pawtucketlibrary/albums/72157705896995034)



Figure 21. View looking southeast at the Slater Lot, 1973, soon after site work was completed. In the background are the bridges associated with Interstate 95. (NR 1975)

SLATER MILL HISTORIC SITE, 1973-2021

The first substantial loss of industrial buildings in the vicinity of Old Slater Mill had occurred by 1902, and again in 1925 when OSMA cleared the Slater Lot. The removal of all other buildings in the adjacent lots in the late 1960s left Old Slater Mill standing alone on the riverbank, and along with the contemporary landscaping, erased much of the context of the former industrialized area. However, this did not affect the site's inclusion within the boundaries of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, established in 1986 to preserve and interpret the region's pivotal role in the early industrialization of America.

In 1982 archeological investigations allowed the OSMA to continue the Great Flume into and around the Wilkinson Mill. Raceway water, and tailrace water from the Wilkinson Mill, was channeled to an underground pipe that exited through an outlet in the river wall (Figure 23). A portion of the river wall to the south was lowered around 2016 to improve views of the water (Figure 24). The grounds surrounding the Great Flume and surrounding core area were redesigned in 2001 to enhance interpretation and improve visitor accessibility, and included new walks and patios, demonstration gardens, and additional trees, shrubs, and lawns. In 2014 Slater Mill Historic Site became part of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, a partnership park established to help preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally significant resources that exemplified the industrial heritage of the Blackstone River Valley. In 2021, the OSMA ended its century-long ownership of Old Slater Mill, transferring it and the 4.23-acre property to the National Park Service.



Figure 23. View looking east at the extension of the Great Flume and the small dam, 1991, around ten years after it was built. (Photograph by Joseph E.B. Elliott, HAER RI-1, 1991)



Figure 24. View looking northeast, 1991. Note the height of the river wall/old foundation blocks. In c.2016 the highest part of the wall was lowered and the benches were reoriented to the river. (Photograph by Joseph E.B. Elliott, HAER RI-1, 1991)

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Landscape characteristics identified for the Slater Mill Historic Site landscape include natural systems and features, topography, land use, spatial organization, buildings and structures, constructed water features, circulation, vegetation, views and vistas, and small-scale features. Several landscape characteristics have associated features that contribute to the site's overall significance and integrity, as well as features that do not contribute.

INTEGRITY

Historical integrity as defined by the National Register of the Historic Places is the ability of a property to convey its significance through physical resources. For Slater Mill Historic Site, integrity is evaluated by comparing existing conditions (2021) with conditions at the end of the historic period (1925). The historic integrity of Slater Mill Historic Site is communicated through three historic buildings – Old Slater Mill, Wilkinson Mill, and Sylvanus Brown House – and historic structures that include the Great Flume raceway, stone tailrace and arch, stone and concrete river walls/foundation walls, foundation remnants, and the bridge over the Great Flume. The property's significance is also conveyed by the adjacent Blackstone River, Pawtucket Falls, and dams.

The remainder of the current landscape at Slater Mill Historic Site does not possess historic integrity, as it bears little resemblance to the industrial scene that was present at the end of the historic period. In 1925 the Old Slater Mill Association (OSMA) only owned the Slater Lot and had restored the Old Slater Mill to its 1830s appearance for use as a museum. The OSMA removed all remaining buildings on the lot, including Samuel Slater's residence, and by 1940 had filled these open spaces with lawns, several plantings, and a path. No plans have been found for this work, but it was likely guided by the Colonial Revival movement of the time that aimed to create aesthetically pleasing environments around historic buildings. At this time the lands adjacent to the Slater Lot, which would become the site's North, South, and East lots, were crowded with productive mills, factories, and workyards.

In the early 1970s the OSMA expanded the site, restoring the c.1810 Wilkinson Mill and relocating the 1758 Sylvanus Brown House from off site to a new location between the two mill buildings. Within this core area of three historic buildings, the OSMA reconfigured the existing landscape to improve access and aesthetics, as reported in the organization's newsletter; "This treatment will work well with our park development and many aspects of our exterior environment. But, beyond this, the outdoor spaces will also be durable and usable. The spaces will enhance the historic structures but respect the urban nature of the museum." (The Flyer, December 1971: 3-6,11)

Concurrent with these efforts, the OSMA acquired the North, South, and East lots, thus creating the 4.23-acre Slater Mill Historic Site. As part of Pawtucket's downtown urban renewal project, all remaining buildings in the three lots were razed. The South Lot and East Lots were laid out with paths, lawns, and trees and became known as Hodgson-Rotary Park and Slater Mill Park, respectively, while the North Lot was developed into a parking lot. Like the open spaces on the Slater Lot, the OSMA intended the two new park areas to enhance the setting of the three historic buildings; "Under no circumstances is the exterior site work an attempt to recreate the original site of the Wilkinson and Slater mills. The Slater Mill site does not attempt to recreate an historic village of any sort." Since the early 1970s, portions of the landscape at Slater Mill Historic Site have been periodically updated with installations of additional walks, retaining walls, site furnishings, and wayside signs to improve accessibility and interpretation. (The Flyer, December 1971: 3-6,11)

Landscape Characteristics and Features:
The next section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding List of Classified Structures names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (1793-1925), contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource. If a feature is non-contributing, it is evaluated as "compatible" (visually congruent with the historic character of the landscape) or "incompatible" (visually incongruent with the historic character of the landscape).

Landscape Characteristic:

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Natural systems and features are the natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of the landscape, and can include geology, geomorphology, hydrology, ecology, climate, and native vegetation. Topography is the three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features (such as slope and articulation) and orientation (such as elevation and solar aspect). The glaciers that once covered the Blackstone River Valley left behind a landscape of gently rolling hills and rocky acidic soils. The valley lies within two major physiographic regions, the Narragansett Basin and the New England Upland Region. Topography ranges from the low hills and plains of less than 200 feet above sea level in the Narragansett Basin (located in the southern portion of the valley) to elevations ranging from 300 to over 1,000 feet above sea level in the New England Region (located in the northern portion). The soil profile in the valley is typically fine deposits (flood plains only) underlain by glacial outwash or till, and bedrock. The fine deposits are a loose mixture of clay, silt, and sand that may or may not be sorted. The outwash and till are dense heterogeneous mixtures of clay, silt, sand, gravel, cobbles, and boulders.

Flowing through the valley is the Blackstone River, which begins at an elevation of approximately 1,300 feet at the confluence of the Middle River and Mill Brook in Worcester, Massachusetts, and then travels southeasterly into Rhode Island and eventually empties into Narragansett Bay at Providence. Along its 48-mile course the river drops 438 vertical feet as it passes through the second and third largest population centers in New England – Worcester and Providence, respectively. The last 50 feet of drop occurs in the river's final two-mile run through Pawtucket, most of which is at Pawtucket Falls, after which the river becomes tidal.

The Blackstone Valley includes areas of farmland and forests. Commonly occurring tree species include red maple and white pine, as well as lesser amounts of white cedar and black spruce. Understory vegetation includes high bush blueberry, arrowwood, common elder, swamp azalea, skunk cabbage, and cinnamon fern. Riparian habitat in the valley is primarily dominated by red maple, with white pine and oak common in drier locations. Typical species in scrub-shrub riparian habitat include alder, dogwood, willow, and buttonbush.

Indigenous habitation in the valley likely altered the natural systems and topography through development of trails, fisheries, shell middens, and other features. Beginning in the late 1600s, these landscape characteristics were manipulated by European settlers. At Pawtucket Falls, vegetation was cleared away to build workshops and factories, and the river was impounded by dams that diverted water into raceways dug into the riverbanks. These conditions and events led to the birth of the American Industrial Revolution.

Slater Lot. The Slater Lot sits astride the Blackstone River, which flows over the upper dam, dropping around six feet in elevation. At the dam the river edge is defined by the stone foundation of Old Slater Mill (Figure 25). Above the dam the river is bound by a stone retaining wall, as well as an earthen bank covered in riparian vegetation that slopes from the wall down to the river. Below the dam the river is bound by the stone walls and arch of the mill's tailrace. The overall landform of the Slater Lot gradually slopes northwest to southeast, from an elevation of around 36 feet at Roosevelt Avenue to 30 feet at the land side of the river wall on the east side of the mill, and 20 feet at the land side of the river wall on the west side of the mill. In the western part of the lot the landform is bowl shaped, sloping down to an elevation of around 25 feet. The OSMA created this topography in the early 1970s by cutting into the fill slopes created by the widening of Roosevelt Avenue. This regrading project provided access to the basement level of the relocated Sylvanus Brown House and also revealed the lowest level of the adjacent Wilkinson Mill. The restored segments of the Great Flume raceway west of Old Slater Mill are around six feet below the adjacent grades, while the filled in portions of the flume east of the mill vary in elevation, sloping from 30 feet to around 24 feet. The fill in the raceway has hidden a unique topographic feature at the site – the peninsula-shaped landform that extended east from the mill and separated the raceway from the river.

North Lot. The North Lot sits along the Blackstone River, which at this point in its course is characterized by flat water conditions created by the pool above the upper dam, located just downstream. The river edge is defined by a stone retaining wall fronted by an earthen bank covered in riparian vegetation, as well as weed trees such as Ailanthus altissima (Figure 26). The overall landform of the North Lot generally slopes west to east, from an elevation around 38 feet at Roosevelt Avenue to around 32 feet at the land side of the river wall. On the west side of the lot, a portion of the landform is depressed around three feet for the parking lot. This condition was created in the early 1970s by cutting into the fill slopes associated with the widening of Roosevelt Avenue.

South Lot. The South Lot borders the Blackstone River, which at this point in its course is characterized by fast-moving water conditions created by water flowing over the upper dam just upstream and over the lower dam, which stands just above Pawtucket Falls. The river edge is defined by a stone retaining wall, itself comprised of remnant foundations of former mills and factories (Figure 27). The overall landform of the South Lot generally slopes northwest to southeast, from an elevation of around 32 feet along Roosevelt Avenue to between 22-27 feet at the land side of the river wall. Most of the lot features level topography except along the south and west edges, where the sloped topography is defined by sets of steps associated with the patio around the Cogswell Monument, a sloped planting bed set within two retaining walls, steps and an accessible pedestrian ramp, and a sloped vehicular driveway. The restored segment of the Great Flume that enters the South Lot is around 6-8 feet below the adjacent grade, but there are no longer any above-ground traces of the Swift Flume or Sargeant's Trench raceways that tracked through the South Lot.

East Lot. The East Lot borders the Blackstone River, which flows over the upper dam, dropping around six feet in elevation, and the lower dam at the top of Pawtucket Falls, dropping another 30 feet. Above the upper dam the water flows slowly, but quickens after flowing over the upper dam and then tumbling over the lower dam and through the falls (Figure 28). The river edge is defined by a stone retaining wall and a small overlook with built-in steps. The portion of the wall from the steps to the lower dam is fronted by an earthen bank filled with riparian vegetation. The bank itself is comprised of two barely discernible lines of large stones. The overall landform of the East Lot generally slopes southeast to northwest, from an elevation ranging from 35-50 feet along Broadway to around 30 feet on the land side of the river wall. The slopes of this lot average approximately 20 percent. At the far east end of the lot, remnant foundation walls of one of the Dexter Yarn Company buildings retains the hillside just above the river wall. There are no longer any above-ground traces of the raceway in the East Lot.

Character-defining Features:

Feature Name: Blackstone River / Pawtucket Falls

CLI Feature ID: 191846

Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature Name: Landforms Slope to River

CLI Feature ID: 191847

Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 25. View looking west at the Slater Lot, 2019. The Old Slater Mill's stone foundation, stone retaining walls, and earthen banks define the river edge. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5478)



Figure 26. View looking north at invasive trees close to the stone retaining wall in the North Lot. (OCLP 2021, P1010007)



Figure 27. View looking southwest at the stone river wall / foundation walls that define the river's edge in the South Lot. (OCLP 2021, P1010011)



Figure 28. View looking east at the upper dam and the river's edge on the East Lot. Note the dense riparian vegetation along the riverbank. (OCLP 2020, IMG-20200223-130935)

Landscape Characteristic:

Historic Condition (to 1925):
Land uses are the principal activities in a landscape that form, shape, and organize the landscape as a result of human interaction. Through the seventeenth century, Pawtucket Falls was an important trail crossing for Native Americans and gathering place to fish and hunt. The river's abundant water power and wooded banks then attracted European settlers, including Joseph Jenckes, Jr. who arrived in 1671 to establish a forge, saw mill, and carpenter shop. The falls proved to be an ideal site for inventors like Samuel Slater, who with his partners built the country's first successful water-powered roller spinning textile mill in 1793. Other artisans and craftsmen followed, building their workshops and factories alongside the river and falls, and growing the small village of Pawtucket into a thriving city. Commercial and residential buildings sprang up along new streets extending from the Main Street Bridge, creating a densely-packed collection of manufactories and businesses.

In the early 1900s many of the factory buildings had fallen into disrepair, and some, such as those in the east half of the North Lot, were removed. At this time there was interest to preserve the Old Slater Mill as a local landmark before it too deteriorated any further. In 1920 S. Willard Thayer bought the mill to save it, and in 1923 the Old Slater Mill Association took possession and removed all the other buildings and structures on the Slater Lot, including Samuel Slater's former home. The mill itself was envisioned as a museum commemorating the accomplishments of Samuel Slater. On the other three lots, however, industrial, commercial, and residential activities continued.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
The OSMA added paths and landscape around Old Slater Mill, but plans to open the building as a museum were delayed until 1955. In the early 1970s, the Slater Mill Historic Site expanded their interpretive programming to include the Wilkinson Mill and the relocated Sylvanus Brown House, all of which were set in a landscape of lawns, trees, gardens, and paths. In the three adjacent lots, land use change was even more dramatic, as industrial, commercial, and residential uses gradually gave way to recreational uses by the late 1960s and early 1970s. The new park spaces and parking lot improved access to the river itself, which had for centuries been obscured by industrial uses.

Slater Lot. The Slater Lot represents the core of the Slater Mill Historic Site. Old Slater Mill houses a museum and gift shop on the first floor and event and exhibit space on the second floor. The building is normally open March through November for museum tours, and by appointment during the winter months. A portion of the restored Great Flume passes under the mill and is watered for interpretive purposes. The Sylvanus Brown House is typically open as part of the guided museum tour, and contains a loom, spinning wheels, and other tools used to make cloth by hand. Period herb and textile gardens are on display west and south of the Brown House.

North Lot. The primary use of the North Lot is parking for visitors to Slater Mill Historic Site, as well as patrons conducting business at Pawtucket City Hall just to the north. The parking lot covers the entire lot and features marked parked spaces along the north, west, and south sides, and spaces perpendicular to the three interior islands oriented north-south.

South Lot. The Wilkinson Mill houses a replica breast wheel in the basement and an interpretive workshop on the first floor that includes all the belts used to power the equipment. The offices and archives of the OSMA occupy the upper floors. A portion of the restored Great Flume terminates on the east end of the Wilkinson Mill, and is watered for interpretive purposes. The remainder of the South Lot is occupied by Hodgson-Rotary Park and is open to the community for passive recreation and special events. A series of walkways lead to various lawn areas and benches, which provide views of the Blackstone River. The sidewalk along Roosevelt Avenue currently includes a bus shelter and also serves as a segment of the Blackstone River Bikeway. The South Lot has also been the site of the City of Pawtucket's annual Christmas display, which included a creche for about 40 years. This led to the 1984 U.S. Supreme Court Case, Lynch v. Donnelly, about the legality of including a religious symbol in a city sponsored Christmas display.

East Lot. The East Lot is also known as Slater Mill Park, a passive recreational area. Unlike Hodgson-Rotary Park, there are no paths or seating areas. The overlook and steps to the riverbank are currently closed, but there are still views available to the river. This area's primary purpose is to provide views to Old Slater Mill, and to block views from the mill to the buildings to the south and east

with masses of evergreens.

Landscape Characteristic:

Historic Condition (to 1925):
Spatial organization is the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in a landscape, including the articulation of ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces. The layout of built features and spaces around Pawtucket Falls was driven by the course of the Blackstone River and adjacent raceways, which supplied water power to the various buildings erected alongside them. Beginning in 1713, the Main Street Bridge that spanned the falls became another early organizing feature, as new turnpike routes and local streets were built to connect to the bridge. These roads were generally oriented parallel and perpendicular to the river and the bridge, and in between them lot lines were laid out, including those of the Slater, North, South, and East Lots by 1856. Together, the roads and lot lines shaped the sizes and designs of subsequent buildings and structures at the falls, and the workyards and alleys between them. Spatial organization became less defined beginning in 1902 when the east half of the North Lot was cleared, and again in 1925 when the Slater Lot was cleared (except for Old Slater Mill).

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
From the end of the historic period to the late 1960s and early 1970s, the masses of buildings and structures in the North, South, and East Lots were gradually removed and replaced with lawns and trees, leaving Old Slater Mill and Wilkinson Mill as the site's only built vertical elements. By 1973, the Sylvanus Brown House was added to the site, creating a core of three buildings that exists today. Beyond this core the most predominant vertical elements today are trees, while lawns and paths define the ground plane. Like the buildings that once stood here, these public open spaces are oriented toward the river.

Slater Lot. The Slater Lot is bound by the former alignment of Slater Avenue and the North Lot to the north, the Blackstone River and the upper dam to the east, the South Lot and Wilkinson Mill to the south, and Roosevelt Avenue to the west. The Slater Lot, and Old Slater Mill in particular, serve as the focal points of the historic site. The 2.5-story Old Slater Mill is generally oriented north-south, aligned with the upper dam and perpendicular to the river's edge and the Great Flume. The 1.5-story Sylvanus Brown House stands northwest of the mill and is generally oriented northeast-southwest, parallel to Roosevelt Avenue and perpendicular to Slater Avenue. The Old Slater Mill and the Brown House are two of the three buildings that comprise the core area of Slater Mill Historic Site. The third building is the 3.5-story Wilkinson Mill (in the South Lot), which marks the south edge of the Slater Lot and stands perpendicular to Roosevelt Avenue. A series of walkways and patios aligned orthogonally with the buildings direct visitors through the core area. Lawns and demonstration gardens border the walks, along with scattered trees and shrubs. The varying heights and massing of the three buildings, and the configuration of walkways, lawns, and vegetation, combine to create narrow and focused viewsheds in the Slater Lot.

North Lot. The North Lot is bound by Leather Avenue to the north, the Blackstone River to the east, the former Slater Avenue to the south, and Roosevelt Avenue to the west. The layout of the North Lot reflects its use as a parking lot, defined by an asphalt surface marked with parking stall lines around its perimeter and within its interior. Panels of grass with scattered trees separate the parking lot from the two adjacent streets, the stone river wall and riparian vegetation delineates the east edge, and a sidewalk defines the south edge along what was once Slater Avenue.

South Lot. The South Lot is bound by the Slater Lot and Old Slater Mill to the north, the Blackstone River and the lower dam to the east, Main Street and the Main Street Bridge to the south, and Roosevelt Avenue to the west. The 3.5-story Wilkinson Mill stands at the north edge of the South Lot and is perpendicular to Roosevelt Avenue. The mill is one of the three buildings that comprise the core area of Slater Mill Historic Site. The layout of the remainder of the site features walkways and retaining walls in Hodgson-Rotary Park that parallel the river and the two roads. Between these

features are lawn areas of various sizes, dotted with trees. At the corner of Roosevelt Avenue and Main Street, the Cogswell Monument and its surrounding patio serves as a focal point and entrance to the park. The presence of the Wilkinson Mill to the north, and the shrubs and trees along the west and south edges of the park (as well as street trees on Roosevelt Avenue) contrasts with the open conditions along the east side of the lot.

East Lot. The East Lot is bound by the Manning-Heffern Funeral Home to the north, Broadway to the east, Main Street and the Main Street Bridge to the south, and the Blackstone River to the west. The East Lot is known as Slater Mill Park, and features a retaining wall that parallels the river and separates the lot into two distinct areas. Above the wall is a mix of lawns and trees; the northern half is more open with trees and shrubs confined around the north and east edges, while the southern half is primarily trees. Below the wall and accessed by steps are two earthen banks roughly separated by boulders and filled with riparian vegetation.

Character-defining Features:

Feature Name: Lot Boundary Lines

CLI Feature ID: 191848

Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic:

Historic Condition (to 1925):
Buildings are elements constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activity in a landscape, while structures are elements constructed for functional purposes other than sheltering human activity. The sheer number of buildings and structures at the site was indicative of the Blackstone River's capability in delivering water power. Mill and shop owners crowded their operations around the falls, riverbanks, and raceways, and over time added new floors and ells to buildings to increase production capacity or accommodate new tenants. Almy, Brown & Slater's mill reflects this timeline: after constructing their original 2.5-story building in 1793, the partners extended it to the north in 1801, to the south in 1818-1820, and added a stairtower in 1828-1832. Subsequent owners of Old Slater Mill added a 1-story west wing in c.1850, raised the entire building's foundation in 1855, extended the 1-story west wing in c.1869, and added a second floor to the west wing in c.1872. In 1925, the OSMA removed the mill's west wing, and restored the building to its c.1830s appearance. All other buildings on the Slater Lot were razed, including the home of Samuel Slater, dating to the 1790s, and the mill's gatehouse, built as a gangway by c.1823 and a gatehouse by c.1869.

While a majority of the buildings at the site were of wood construction, several others featured more fire-resistant materials, including the 3.5-story Wilkinson Mill, built in 1810-1811 with stone rubble. Like the Old Slater Mill, this mill was expanded with a stairtower in 1840, a chimney by 1902, and large multi-story wood-frame additions to the east. Stone was also used to build sturdy walls along both sides of the riverbank. These walls also served as foundation walls for the mill buildings abutting the river.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
Slater Lot. Old Slater Mill was painted red in 1949 and then back to its original yellow color in 1975 (refer to the 2018 Historic Structures Report for a full description of projects at the mill) (Figure 29). The OSMA constructed a boiler house on the former peninsula on the east side of the mill in 1955. The wood-frame structure measures 15 by 12 feet and features a gable roof and yellow siding (Figure 30). In 1962 the OSMA relocated the 1758 Sylvanus Brown House to the site to save it from

demolition, and moved it again 1972-1973 to its current location on a new foundation between the two extant mills. The 2-story house measures 30 by 20 feet and features a gambrel roof and red siding (Figure 31). In 2001, a small garden shed was built at the herb garden. It measures 13 by 8 feet and features a gable roof and red siding. The stone river wall east of the mill was rebuilt in 1940 by the Works Progress Administration (see Figures 25, 26). In 1973 several retaining walls and steps were constructed in conjunction with new paths. Some of the walls were modified in 2001 and constructed with mortared stone (see Figure 29). Retaining walls in the herb garden area are comprised of large granite blocks, while smaller walls constructed with dimensional lumber are positioned on the hillsides above them to hold the slope and plantings (see Figure 31).

North Lot. All remaining buildings were removed in the late 1960s. The stone river wall was rebuilt by 1940 by the Works Progress Administration, and in 1971 concrete retaining walls and a set of steps were constructed in the west edge of the lot to accommodate a parking lot. In 2020 the retaining wall was shortened and the steps were removed as part of a redesign of the parking lot (Figure 32).

South Lot. The Wilkinson Mill's chimney and additions were removed in the 1930s and 1940s, and the building was restored in the early 1970s (Figure 33). As for the other South Lot buildings, around half were removed in the 1930s-1940s and the rest between 1967-1969. The stone foundations of factories that abutted the river were retained for use as a river wall (see Figure 27). A gap in the river wall was filled with new stone wall in 1970-1971, and a small segment of the river wall was lowered to meet the grade of the adjacent walk in 2014 (as part of a Federal Emergency Management Agency project). As part of the development of Hodgson-Rotary Park, concrete retaining walls and steps were built along the west edge of the lot to address the grade change between the park and Roosevelt Avenue (Figure 34). Additional concrete retaining walls were built at the north end in 1991 for an accessible ramp between the park and street. That same year, the existing retaining walls were modified for the installation of new concrete retaining walls and steps around the Cogswell Monument (Figure 35). Walls were reconfigured along Roosevelt Avenue to provide more space for a bus stop.

East Lot. The middle portion of the building and structures in the East Lot were removed by 1955, and the remainder were taken down by 1969 for the creation of Slater Mill Park. However, foundation walls incorporated into the river wall were retained. The foundations associated with one of the Dexter Company buildings were also retained to hold the steep grade at the north end of the lot (Figure 36). At this time repairs were made to the stone river wall, except for a section abutting the east end of the upper dam that was removed for a curved stone wall overlook, which included a set of stone steps leading down the riverbank (Figure 37). Two low stone walls were built parallel to the riverbank but are barely discernible today.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 29. View looking southeast at the west side of Old Slater Mill. Note the retaining wall, steeping stone path, and two concrete pads that once supported benches. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5351)



Figure 30. View looking southeast at woody vegetation in the Great Flume, the outlet of the penstock pipe, and the boiler house on top of the former island peninsula. (OCLP 2021, P1010020)



Figure 31. View looking northeast at the Sylvanus Brown House and the garden shed. The textile garden is at image right and the herb garden fronts the shed. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5451)



Figure 32. View looking north at a portion of the parking lot concrete retaining wall in the North Lot. The entrance to the lot is in the background at image right. (OCLP 2021, P1010001)



Figure 33. View looking north at the Wilkinson Mill. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5415)



Figure 34. View looking north at the concrete retaining walls and brick walkways in Hodgson-Rotary Park. Note the park's mature vegetation. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5440)



Figure 35. View looking west at the concrete retaining walls and steps at the Cogswell Monument. (OCLP 2020, IMG-20200223-130908)



Figure 36. View looking southeast at part of the remnant foundation wall in the East Lot. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5338)



Figure 37. View looking northeast at the overlook and steps in the East Lot. (OCLP 2021, IMG-20210111-144804)

Landscape Characteristic:

Historic Condition (to 1925):
Constructed water features are built features and elements that utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions in the landscape. In 1714 Joseph Jenckes, Jr., along with his sons or others, constructed Sargeant's Trench, a raceway that originated just upstream from Pawtucket Falls and flowed southeast under Main Street. In 1718 a dam (now the lower dam) was constructed atop the falls to create a mill pond and improve the flow of water through Sargeant's Trench. The Jenckes family then extended the trench further upstream in the 1730s to increase the raceway's available water power. In 1793 Almy, Brown & Slater built a second dam (now the upper dam) around 300 feet upstream from the first (lower) dam for their new textile mill. This dam created an impoundment that fed two new connected raceways called the Great Flume and Swift Run, which then drained into the existing Sargeant's Trench. A short tailrace exited the southeast side of the mill and drained into the river, and was enlarged in 1828-1832 to accommodate a second water wheel. There was also a raceway built on the east end of the upper dam in 1797-1798 to power mills in the East Lot.

The floors of the Great Flume and tailrace were covered by wood planks and the sides were armored with stone walls. Additional reinforcement was built at the end of the tailrace in the form of a stone arch, which buttressed the tailrace walls against strong river currents during high water events. No details are known about the treatment of the floors or sides of the other raceways. A photograph from 1923 shows a footbridge across the inlet to the Great Flume, likely the top of a trash rack that intercepted river debris. As part of Old Slater Mill's restoration in 1925, the OSMA repaired some of the stone walls of the Great Flume and tailrace, and the stone arch. At this time the Great Flume ended at the Slater Lot/South Lot property line. It is not clear if water exited the raceway through a pipe, or if water was allowed to simply pool in the flume.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
Slater Lot. By 1940, in conjunction with reconstruction of the stone river wall, much of the Great Flume east of Old Slater Mill was filled in with soil. The grade of the fill at the river wall matched the

grade of the adjacent Slater Avenue, and then beginning at around 60 feet from the east side of the mill, the fill gradually sloped down to meet the original grade of the flume (Figure 38, see also Figure 30). At the same time, a penstock was installed from the river into the flume to control the amount of water into the still-exposed portion of the raceway. The pipe was replaced in the 1980s and in 2012-2013 the inlet was rebuilt by creating an insert in the river wall to accommodate the machinery and trash rack (Figure 39). The stone walls and stone arch on the tailrace have been recently restored (Figure 40).

North Lot. No constructed water features were present historically in the North Lot.

South Lot. Historic maps indicate short sections of the Great Flume, Swift Run, and Sargeant's Trench raceways in the South Lot after the historic period, but their uses and configurations are unclear. It appears portions of the raceways were altered after 1923, and most were filled in by 1949, which corresponds to the first phase of buildings removals, after which the vacant land was used for parking. In 1981 archeologists confirmed the location of the Great Flume from the Slater Lot/South Lot property line to the Wilkinson Mill, allowing for the reconstruction of the raceway and tailrace stone walls. This made it possible to have water in the Slater Lot portion of the Great Flume to flow into the new section, which via a check dam could be directed into the Wilkinson Mill or around it. Water exiting the raceway and Wilkinson tailrace was then directed into a new underground pipe that headed to the river (Figures 41, 42).

East Lot. Documentation regarding the raceway on the East Lot is minimal, but it appears that it was removed or filled in by 1955, likely around the same time that the first group of buildings had been razed. Some of the machinery associated with the raceway inlet is still visible, but the dates of its installation require additional research (Figure 43).

Note: The two dams just above Pawtucket Falls – now called the lower dam or Main Street Dam, and the upper dam or Slater Mill Dam – are not currently owned or managed by the National Park Service and are therefore not included in the feature table below. However, the two dams are key historic resources at Slater Mill Historic Site. They contribute to the property's historic character, as well as the property's areas and period of significance documented in the National Register of Historic Places.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 38. View looking northeast at the partially filled in Great Flume, and the stone headwall around the outlet of the penstock pipe (image mid-right). (OCLP 2021, P1010015)



Figure 39. View of the trash rack and gate at the inlet of the penstock pipe. (OCLP 2021, IMG-20210111-140514)



Figure 40. View of the tailrace stone walls and stone arch. (OCLP 2020, IMG-20200105-121104)



Figure 41. View looking northwest at part of the restored Great Flume as it enters the Wilkinson Mill. (OCLP 2020, IMG-20200105-120440)



Figure 42. View looking southeast at the pipe inlet that carries water from the Great Flume and the Wilkinson Mill tailrace back to the river. (OCLP 2020, IMG-20200105-120816)



Figure 43. View looking northwest at the remnants of the raceway inlet on the East Lot. (OCLP 2021, IMG-20210111-144655)

Landscape Characteristic:

Historic Condition (to 1925):
Circulation refers to the spaces, features, and applied material finishes that constitute systems of movement in a landscape. The Native American crossing at Pawtucket Falls became the site of the village's first bridge in 1713. It was replaced by wood-frame structures in 1735-1741, 1817, 1842, and by a two-span stone arch structure in 1858. The Main Street Bridge was crucial to the development of Pawtucket Village and to the larger transportation network that connected the village to Providence and Boston. The Norfolk & Bristol Turnpike (later Front Street, now Broadway) was built on the east side of the bridge by 1803. Mill Street (later North Main Street, now Roosevelt Avenue) and Slater Avenue were constructed on the west side of the bridge by 1835, followed by Leather Avenue by 1870.

Connected to the local streets were numerous workyards and alleys that developed in the open spaces between the many buildings and structures. One of the earliest sketches of Old Slater Mill, from c.1840, shows a rough path leading to the stairtower, while a photograph from c.1869 shows a workyard on the north side of the mill and a wood footbridge on the west side of the mill spanning the Great Flume. Some of the alleys were named, including Spice Mill Way in the Slater Lot and Wilkinson Place and Spencer Court in the South Lot.
When buildings were razed the workyards and alleys between them also disappeared, as was the case in the east half of the North Lot by 1902. By 1925 all buildings and structures in the Slater Lot (except for the Old Slater Mill) were taken down, erasing all traces of circulation features except for a footbridge on the west side of the mill that spanned the Great Flume.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
The Main Street Bridge was rehabilitated and widened in 1968, adding a second span on the downstream side of the stone arch bridge, thus preserving its upstream stone façade. The total length of the bridge is 124 feet with its longest span being 40 feet and a width of 63 feet.

Slater Lot. Although the museum in the Old Slater Mill did not officially open until 1955, the OSMA laid out a series of pea gravel walkways in 1925-1949. However, the paths only offered access within the Slater Lot, as the adjacent North and South Lots were still occupied by private businesses. In 1973 the configuration of walks in the Slater Lot was modified in response to the addition of the Sylvanus Brown House to the site. At this time, two patio areas were created, a small one on the north side of the Old Slater Mill, and a larger central patio located roughly in between the three buildings. As part of accessibility improvements in 2001, some paths were rebuilt to eliminate a set of steps on the walk near the Brown House. At this time, pea gravel surfaces were replaced with several types of paving material including concrete pavers, Belgian blocks, and bluestone bordered with bands of small mortared cobblestones (Figures 44, 45, 46). Paths in the herb and textile gardens remained as pea gravel and grass, respectively. In 2020 the brick walk along Roosevelt Avenue was replaced with a concrete sidewalk.

North Lot. In 1967-1969, the buildings in the west half of the North Lot were demolished, and by 1971 the informal parking lot that had occupied the east half of the lot was expanded west, at which time the entire lot was paved and striped. In 2020 the lot was redesigned, relocating the lot's ingress/egress from Roosevelt Avenue and Slater Avenue to two locations on Leather Avenue (see Figure 32). The new configuration essentially eliminated Slater Avenue (although a street sign remains). Landscaped islands divide the lot into 82 marked spaces, five accessible parking spaces, and several unmarked spaces along the river wall. The project also replaced brick walks along the former Slater Avenue and Roosevelt Avenue with new and slightly reconfigured concrete walks (Figure 47). Note: along the north side of the North Lot is a paved segment of the Blackstone River Bikeway that was built as part of the parking lot project. It is a continuation of the paved trail section on the east side of Pawtucket City Hall that opened in 2015.

South Lot. As with the North Lot, alleyways and workyards in the South Lot remained intact until buildings were removed. The first period of building removals was over by 1949 when the east half of the lot was cleared and made into parking. The remaining buildings were gradually removed in the 1950s and 1960s, and in their place the parking area was expanded. The last of the buildings (except Wilkinson Mill) were taken down by 1969. The parking lot in the South Lot was replaced in 1971 with Hodgson-Rotary Park. Circulation in the park was through a series of pea gravel paths laid

out parallel the river and Roosevelt Avenue. The path along the river connected to the Main Street Bridge to the south and the path system in the Slater Lot to the north, which allowed visitors to easily move from one area of the site to another. At this time a short driveway was built on the south side of Wilkinson Mill to provide service access from Roosevelt Avenue down into the park. This driveway generally followed the route of the Wilkinson Place alley. By 1991 an accessible ramp was built next to the driveway and a granite block patio was constructed around the new Cogswell Monument. At this point all pea gravel surfaces in the park were replaced with brick pavers (see Figure 34).

East Lot. Of all lots that comprise Slater Mill Historic Site, the East Lot likely had the least number of workyards and alleyways due to the tightly-packed arrangement of buildings and the steep topography. Rather, circulation was likely by way of footbridges and boardwalks, some of which appear in historic Sanborn maps. The lot's first buildings were removed by 1955, after which these areas became an informal parking lot until the lot's last buildings were razed in 1969. At that time the parking was removed and entire lot was planted with lawns and trees as part of the new Slater Mill Park. In 1970-1971 part of the stone river wall at the east end of the upper dam was removed for a walled overlook area and staircase that accessed the riverbank below. The overlook and stairs remain as the only constructed circulation feature in the East Lot. Scouring from river water flow is evident at the bottom of the overlook walls.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 44. View looking northwest at the walk and wood footbridge on the west side of Old Slater Mill, as well as a red maple and lilacs next to the Wilkinson Mill. (OCLP 2020, IMG-20200105-120946)



Figure 45. View looking southwest at the patio and bollard on the north side of Old Slater Mill. The Fuller bell is at image right. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5368)



Figure 46. View looking north at the central patio area, in 2019. (OCLP 2019 DSC-5353)



Figure 47. View looking south the new sidewalks and trees along the former alignment of Slater Avenue. In the background is the rehabilitated fence that surrounds part of the Slater Lot. Note the remnant street sign on the light post and the new bollard. (OCLP 2021, P1010004)

Landscape Characteristic:

Historic Conditions (to 1925):
Vegetation includes deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and herbaceous plants and plant communities, whether indigenous or introduced in the landscape. The riverbanks at Pawtucket Falls were likely covered in vegetation when Joseph Jenckes, Jr. arrived in 1671, but eventually much of it was cut down for building material and firewood. Jenckes himself probably downed trees to build his forge and other structures, and to make way for the Sargeant's Trench raceway. Almy, Brown & Slater, as well as the Wilkinsons, likely removed vegetation to construct their mills and the Great Flume and Swift Run raceways. However, sketch maps from 1796 and 1823 show that at least one tree was saved – a large elm at a bend in Sargeant's Trench, in what is today's South Lot. It is unknown how long this tree survived.

Several sketches of Old Slater Mill from the 1840s show trees and shrubs along the edge of the river. Although the artists may have added some plantings for effect, the presence of vegetation is confirmed in an 1856 photograph. Over the next seventy-five years, trees and shrubs grew along the river edges, at the tailrace stone arch, on an adjacent stone jetty, and on the peninsula. These were the only spaces where plants could grow, as the rest of Pawtucket Falls area was occupied by streets, buildings, alleys, and workyards.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
Slater Lot. After removing the buildings and structures, the OSMA planted lawns and trees on the Slater Lot to improve the setting around Old Slater Mill. For a brief period there were lilacs planted along the mill's foundation. Volunteer vegetation was periodically allowed to grow at the tailrace arch and in the Great Flume where the fill slope met the water. A large tree on the peninsula that likely dated to the late 1800s was removed in 1955 to build the boiler house. A demonstration garden was planted on the east side of the mill in the 1950s, but was removed in the early 1970s, around the same time plantings were updated in conjunction with new walks and patios. The plantings were updated again in 2001 when the circulation system was improved for accessibility. At this time OSMA installed two new demonstration gardens on the south and west sides of the Sylvanus Brown House, focused on textiles and herbs, respectively. Today, shrubs and shade trees that include yellowwood, ash, red maple, beech, cedar, pear, crabapple, and lilac dot the well-maintained lawns, while the two gardens are thriving and carefully maintained (Figure 48, see also Figure 31). The park has recently removed some of the vegetation in the Great Flume, mostly weedy ailanthus and rose.

North Lot. Ornamental trees, red maples, white pines, and grass were planted on the edges of the parking lot around 1970. Reconfiguration of the parking lot in 2020 included removal of trees that had declined in health and stumps of previously cut trees, but several mature trees on the north and west edges of the lot were retained. Additional young trees were planted along the north and west edges, as well new trees and shrubs in the newly built parking lot islands, along Roosevelt Avenue, and along the former alignment of Slater Avenue (see Figure 47).

South Lot. The South Lot was void of vegetation until trees, shrubs, and lawns were installed as part of Hodgson-Rotary Park in 1970-1971. The park's landscape was laid out with large areas of lawn that could accommodate special events, with trees generally planted around the edges. Several trees at the south end of the park were removed in 1991 to install the Cogswell Monument. Plant species present today include red maple, juniper, birch, holly, and lilac. Today, the lawns are in good condition but many of the shrubs are in fair condition, and some trees are missing along Roosevelt Avenue (Figure 49, see also Figure 34).

East Lot. The East Lot became Slater Mill Park in 1970-1971. The lot was predominantly turf, but featured extensive plantings of white pine, red oak, red maple, and masses of shrubs along Broadway to screen the buildings and parking lots across the street. Today the white pines and red maples remain but most understory plants are gone, except for several abelia. Planting plans show the riverbank area below the stone river wall was intended to be mostly open but today it is overgrown with riparian vegetation (Figures 50, 51).

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 48. View looking southwest at the yellowwood tree on the east side of Old Slater Mill. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5377)



Figure 49. View looking south at plantings in the South Lot, known as Hodgson-Rotary Park. At image right is a restored turbine from Old Slater Mill. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5408)



Figure 50. View looking northeast at lawns and trees in the East Lot, known as Slater Mill Park, and riparian vegetation below the wall. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5461)



Figure 51. View looking north at plantings in the East Lot. (OCLP 2019, DSC-5468)

Landscape Characteristic:

Historic Conditions (to 1925):
A view is the expansive and/or panoramic prospect of a broad range of vision that may be naturally occurring or deliberately contrived. A vista is a controlled prospect of a discrete, linear range of vision, which is deliberately contrived. Views and vistas were not a consideration at the time Samuel Slater and his partners constructed their mill at Pawtucket Falls. However, after Slater left and his legacy grew, the Old Slater Mill became the subject of many sketches, paintings, and photographs. Most views of the mill were from the Main Street Bridge and the East Lot, showing the river and upper dam in the foreground and other mills in the background. The OSMA's decision to remove all buildings on the Slater Lot in 1925 was aimed to improve the setting around the mill, which at that time was flanked by old and dilapidated structures.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
With the last of the buildings and structures removed on the North, South, and East Lots, the crowded industrial scene that had defined the Pawtucket waterfront since 1793 was replaced by open park land. The new park spaces provided new views of Old Slater Mill and the Blackstone River that had long been obscured by industrial buildings. Since 1973, these views have essentially remained unchanged except for the growth of riparian vegetation along the riverbank in the East Lot (Cover photo, see also Figure 28).

Landscape Characteristic:

Historic Conditions (to 1925):
Small-scale features are elements that provide detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in the landscape. Details regarding small-scale features during the historic period is limited to historic photographs, which indicate fencing, signs, and other items used by building tenants. Most of these features were transient; they came and went depending on the needs of the various workshops and factories. By c.1869 a wood picket fence and gate defined the Slater Avenue side of the workyard at Old Slater Mill, while a similar fence ran along the other side of the street. Both were gone by 1886 and 1910, respectively. A post and rail briefly existed atop a portion of the Great Flume walls by 1923. Signs were attached to many of the buildings, as were several billboards oriented so they would be visible from the Main Street Bridge. For a time, letters spelling out "Old Slater Mill" were found on the side of the mill.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
Slater Lot. Iron fencing was installed on top of the walls of the Great Flume and on the river wall on the west side of the mill by 1949. They are extant today, but some are bent or are in need of new paint. Ornamental fencing was also erected on the property line along Roosevelt Avenue and part of Slater Avenue by 1973. In 2017-2018 they were refabricated, and additional sections were added (see Figure 47). Coinciding with the museum's opening in 1955, a flagpole and entrance sign were erected. The flagpole was removed in 1972 for the relocation of the Sylvanus Brown House, but the date of removal for the entrance sign is not known. Granite bollards built into the center of the walks that intersect Slater Avenue were installed in 2001 as part of site improvements (see Figure 45). Wayside signs can be found throughout the lot, which feature two supports that hold panels displayed vertically or at an angle. Wood picnic tables are located on the east side of the mill. Two benches stood along the north side of the central patio until 2017, but their concrete pads are still visible (see Figure 29). Lastly, a 3-foot diameter bell with the inscription "F Fuller 1871 Providence RI" rests in the lawn strip alongside Slater Avenue (see Figure 45). The bell may have been hung in the bell tower of one of the mills in this area.

North Lot. Small-scale features in the North Lot include single and double acorn-style light posts in the parking lot islands and industrial-sized trash bin and wood enclosure fence at the southeast corner of the parking lot. These features were added in 2020-2021 as part of the parking lot

improvement project, as was a new granite bollard on the new pedestrian entrance along Roosevelt Avenue (see Figure 47). The same project also removed several small-scale features: two wood and concrete benches at the steps in the northwest corner of the lot, a park entrance sign at the northwest corner, and a parking sign on the south entrance of the parking lot. A street sign that identifies the location of Slater Avenue is still attached to an acorn-style lamp post (see Figure 47).

South Lot. In 2011-2012 a Francis turbine was salvaged from Old Slater Mill and restored, and placed on a concrete pad near the Wilkinson Mill. Today, this object is painted black (see Figure 49). Other small-scale features in the Slater Lot are associated with Hodgson-Rotary Park. Part of the iron fencing atop the stone river wall/foundation walls was installed in 1970-1971. When the top of a portion of this wall was lowered in 2014, additional iron fencing was erected. The original globe fixture lights were installed in 1970, and replaced with acorn style fixtures in the 1980s. Four massive floodlights dating to 2004-2005 are located next to the Main Street Bridge and are positioned to light the river and two dams. The flagpole at the south end of the park dates to 1970-1971, and the wood and steel benches to the 1980s. Some of the benches are missing slats. Wayside signs were installed in the 2000s. The most prominent small-scale feature is the Cogswell Monument, installed in 1991 at the southwest corner of the park (see Figure 35). This Temperance-era feature was moved from another location in the city, and features a triangular base that supports a column, on top of which is a bronze sculpture of a heron (that replaced a figure of the designer). On each side of base are bas-relief figures of animal heads, a horse, a frog, and a dog, set above the basins of small fountains. Numerous inscriptions can be found on the monument, including “Presented By, H.D. Cogswell D.D.S. of San Francisco, To The Citizens Of, Pawtucket And Central Falls, And Their Descendants Forever.” A smaller memorial tablet once located at the southeast corner of the park is now located on the west retaining wall and acknowledges the establishment of Hodgson-Rotary Park (Figure 52). The tablet is set at an angle on a granite base and is flanked by two overgrown spruce trees.

East Lot. Small-scale features in the East Lot include wayside signs installed in 2000 and square fixture light posts dating to the 1980s, which replaced the original globe fixture lamps from 1970-1971. Many of the current lights are missing their lamps. The iron pipe rail fence atop the stone river wall and around the overlook dates to 1970-1971. Sections of this fence were missing for years until they were replaced in 2020. Two benches manufactured with recycled plastic are located in the lawn near the overlook. Lastly, a square concrete pad is located on the hill near the overlook. The pad once supported a piece of sculpture that has since been removed.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 52. View of the Hodgson-Rotary Park Tablet. (OCLP 2020, IMG-20200223-130556)

Condition

Assessment Interval (Years): 10

Next Assessment Due Date: 06/15/2031

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 06/15/2021

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:
The condition of the overall landscape at Slater Mill Historic Site is "good." This evaluation indicates the property shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The property's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Stabilization Measures:

Impacts

Type of Impact:	Inundation (Flooding)
Other Impact:	
External or Internal:	External
Impact Description:	Seasonal flooding along the Blackstone River has flooded the western portions of the site in the past.
Type of Impact:	Vandalism/Theft/Arson
Other Impact:	
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Loitering is an issue in the South Lot (Hodgson-Rotary Park), as well as littering. The planned relocation of city's bus hub along Roosevelt Avenue may alleviate these problems. Site visits revealed ongoing vandalism of the site's light fixtures and benches.

Stabilization Costs

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Undetermined

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

The selection of a treatment approach is consistent with guidance typically set forth in a General Management Plan or other approved planning documents, and is based on factors pertaining to enabling legislation, management objectives, and proposed uses. The Secretary of the Interior has approved standards, policies, and guidelines for four distinct, but interrelated, approaches to the treatment of historic properties: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Collectively, these standards serve as the philosophical basis for achieving long-term landscape preservation. In general, the amount of physical intervention in a landscape increases from preservation to reconstruction.

Defining a primary treatment is important because it ensures consistency in treatment activities. This is emphasized in The Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Treatment of Cultural Landscapes. In selecting a primary treatment, each treatment action is evaluated on the basis of the landscape's value as a cultural resource. One goal of the primary treatment is to ensure that the historic features contained in the landscape actually existed together. A landscape's period of significance provides the best frame of reference for evaluating the congruity of treatment actions.

To date, a GMP has not been completed for Blackstone River Valley NHP, nor has a treatment approach been identified for Slater Mill Historic Site or any of the other historic districts or sites identified in the park's enabling legislation. Because of this status, the 2021 "Cultural Landscape Report for Slater Mill Historic Site" has developed preliminary treatment recommendations focused on improving the visitor experience at the site.

Approved Treatment Completed:

Approved Treatment Costs

Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:

The selection of a treatment approach is consistent with guidance typically set forth in a General Management Plan or other approved planning documents, and is based on factors pertaining to enabling legislation, management objectives, and proposed uses. The Secretary of the Interior has approved standards, policies, and guidelines for four distinct, but interrelated, approaches to the treatment of historic properties: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Collectively, these standards serve as the philosophical basis for achieving long-term landscape preservation. In general, the amount of physical intervention in a landscape increases from preservation to reconstruction.

Defining a primary treatment is important because it ensures consistency in treatment activities. This is emphasized in The Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Treatment of Cultural Landscapes. In selecting a primary treatment, each treatment action is evaluated on the basis of the landscape's value as a cultural resource. One goal of the primary treatment is to ensure that the historic features contained in the landscape actually existed together. A landscape's period of significance provides the best frame of reference for evaluating the congruity of treatment actions.

To date, a GMP has not been completed for Blackstone River Valley NHP, nor has a treatment approach been identified for Slater Mill Historic Site or any of the other historic districts or sites identified in the park's enabling legislation. Because of this status, the 2021 "Cultural Landscape Report for Slater Mill Historic Site" has developed preliminary treatment recommendations focused on improving the visitor experience at the site.