

Graniteville Historic District
National Register of Historic Places
Waterford, Connecticut

Situated along Rope Ferry Road (Route 156) in Waterford, Connecticut, is the Graniteville Historic District, which is comprised of 23 mid-19th-century houses, several barns, a ca. 1878 two-room schoolhouse, and two former granite quarries. Granite-quarrying was a major



industry in Waterford and an important part of the town's history for over 200 years. The houses within the district were the residences of quarry owners, stone-cutters, and blacksmiths who worked at the quarries, and are predominately of plain Greek Revival style with few decorative architectural details, including pilaster-and-lintel entrance treatments, full cornice returns, and corner pilasters. Some houses and buildings have Italianate bracketed cornices and Gothic

scroll-sawn vine and leaf ornamentation. Two former granite quarry sites are also part of the district and include large depressions, discarded stones, and the remains of cables and hoisting mechanisms. In 1860 one quarry owner annually employed an average of 30 to 40 people and produced 2,000 tons of finished granite worth \$8,000; 2,000 tons of rough-cut stone worth \$4,000; and a like quantity of "wall stone" worth \$500. Graniteville, like Waterford's other quarries, produced stone for railroads, lighthouses and fortifications along the Atlantic Coast as far south as Florida. The quarries provided the building stones for New York City's old reservoir, as well as paving blocks for Mexico City's Grand Square. Waterford's quarries also introduced a measure of ethnic diversity in town, including a good number of Irish, English and Scottish workers who brought their labor and skills by the Civil War, who were followed by families from Italy and Scandinavia in the late 19th century. Active ca. 1860-1930, the Graniteville Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2002.