

S. Léger smithy

The blacksmith was one of the most important persons in the village, being a jack of all trades, able to make or fix anything. The blacksmith is such an essential handyman that very few villages could not rely on at least one of these iron workers, and in the Memramcook area around 1865, five smithies could be found.

As for the shop itself, it is not the best-looking building in the village. In fact, it often looks like a neglected shed. Smithies did not necessarily have a sign, but it could be readily identified from sight and, more often, from the noise. Inside, amid an anarchic disarray, the shop appeared as an inexhaustible warehouse.

A blacksmith's economic fortunes fluctuated around a seasonal cycle. In the spring, the harrow and the plow might need shaping up for the farmer. At harvest time, farmers brought in farm tools broken during the harvesting. In the fall, the blacksmith fixed butchering tools like knives and scrapers. In the winter, he repaired sleds and carts. In addition, all through the year the blacksmith had to shoe the horses and sometimes the oxen. As regards the work of Sylvain Léger, he was reputed to be a master in the art of "beating an axe". He used a special solution and a technique peculiar to him.

The Village Historique Acadien purchased the old Sylvain Léger smithy in 1976 and then proceeded to restoring it to its original condition. The smithy represents a typical smithy in a rural part of New Brunswick in the mid-1860s.

Distinctive features:

- Wide double doors
- Outdoor stairway leading to the loft
- Siding of vertical boards
- Hard-packed earth floor
- Hewn stone fireplace with two working fires

