



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Pat McCrory
Secretary Susan Kluttz

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

July 20, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Shelby Reap
Office of Human Environment
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Renee Gledhill-Earley *Renee Gledhill-Earley*
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Historic Structure Survey Report for the Replacement of Bridge 126 over Mill Race and Bridge 119 over Haw River, B-5239, PA 10-12-0012, Alamance County, ER 15-1545

Thank you for your letter of July 6, 2015, transmitting the Historic Structure Survey Report for the above-referenced undertaking. We have reviewed the report and offer the following comments.

For purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act we concur that:

Altamahaw Cotton Mill Office (AM0486) remains eligible for listing in the National Register; and

Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam (AM2409); Altamahaw Cotton Mill (AM2411); and Claudie and Pauline and Simpson House (AM2410) are not eligible for listing in the National Register.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579 or environmental.review@ncdcr.gov. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr, NCDOT

mfurr@ncdot.gov

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCE REPORT
INTENSIVE EVALUATION FOR THE
ALTAMAHAW MILL COMPLEX, THE ALTAMAHAW MILL DAM
AND SLUICE GATE DAM, AND THE CLAUDE AND PAULINE
SIMPSON HOUSE**

Replace Bridge No. 126 over Mill Race and Bridge No. 119 over Haw River
Alamance County
WBS# 42841.1.1

Prepared for:
Human Environment Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina, 27699

Prepared by:
Mulkey Engineers and Consultants
6750 Tryon Road
Cary, North Carolina, 27518

July 2015

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July 2015



Sarah Woodard David, Principal Investigator

July 2, 2015

Date

Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor
Historic Architecture Group
North Carolina Department of Transportation

Date

Management Summary

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes replacing Bridge No. 126 over Mill Race and Bridge No. 119 over Haw River on North Carolina Highway 87 in Alamance County (Figure 1). The NCDOT identified three previously undocumented architectural resources within the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE): the Claude and Pauline Simpson House, the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam, and the Altamahaw Mill Complex. Although several buildings associated with the Altamahaw Mill have been documented, these three resources have not been documented in any previous architectural survey.

NCDOT defines the APE as 75 feet on either side of the bridges and 300 feet from each end and 75 feet from the center line (Figure 2). NCDOT Architectural Historians reviewed the properties within the APE and determined that three properties greater than 50 years old warranted further evaluation:

- Altamahaw Cotton Mill Complex (AM 2411)
- Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam (AM 2409)
- Claude and Pauline Simpson House (AM 2410)

Alamance Bridge No. 126, which spans the mill race, was evaluated in 2005 for the Historic Bridge Survey and found to be not eligible for National Register listing. Alamance Bridge No. 119, which spans Haw River, was not included in the 2005 Historic Bridge Survey; however, the bridge appears to be identical to Bridge No. 126 in construction and materials. Both bridges were constructed in 1949. NCDOT determined that Bridge No. 119 does not warrant further evaluation.

In April 2015, NCDOT requested that Mulkey Engineers & Consultants (Mulkey) complete research, an intensive-level historic field survey, and an NRHP evaluation of the Altamahaw Mill Complex, the Altamahaw Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam, and the Claude and Pauline Simpson House. Mulkey Architectural Historian Sarah Woodard David visited the site, completed photo-documentation and conducted a windshield survey for comparable examples of similar resources in Alamance County on May 2, 2015. The investigator undertook research at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office and the North Carolina State Archives. The investigator also used online research tools and resources, including the Alamance County

Register of Deeds online index. Additionally, the investigator spoke with representatives of Glen Raven, the current owner of the mill and dams.

During the fieldwork associated with the evaluation of the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam, which spans the Haw River on the west side of N.C. Highway 87, the investigator discovered a second dam: the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Sluice Gate Dam. The dams are situated in a north-south line that suggests they may be connected, with that connection located beneath the earthen berm between the Haw River and the mill race. Regardless of a structural connection, they are related in their purpose and history and this reports treats them as a single resource. The survey site number that the State Historic Preservation Office provided for the site is applied to both dams together, and together, the dams are called the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam. For organizational purposes, the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam and the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Complex, which also includes a third dam, are evaluated together in this report.

Mulkey conducted all fieldwork, research, and evaluations to meet the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR 800, as well as NCDOT's *Guidelines for the Survey Reports for Historic Architectural Resources*.

Based on the field survey, background research, and the evaluation documented in this report, the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Complex, the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam, and the Claude and Pauline Simpson House have been determined ineligible for the NRHP.

Resource Name	Altamahaw Cotton Mill Complex
HPO Site #	AM 2411
Street Address	3726 Altamahaw-Union Ridge Rd
PIN	118557
Construction Date(s)	ca. 1880 with later alterations
NRHP Recommendation	Not Eligible



Resource Name	Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam
HPO Site #	AM 2409
Street Address	Spanning the Haw River and mill race, 300' west of NC 87
PIN	110953
Construction Date(s)	ca. 1880
NRHP Recommendation	Not Eligible



Resource Name	Claude and Pauline Simpson House
HPO Site #	AM 2410
Street Address	2942 Old NC 87
PIN	110950
Construction Date(s)	ca. 1927
NRHP Recommendation	Not Eligible



Methodology

On May 2, 2015, Mulkey Architectural Historian Sarah Woodard David visited the Claude and Pauline Simpson House, the Altamahaw Cotton Mill, and the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam, completed photo-documentation, and conducted a windshield survey for comparable examples of similar resources in Alamance County. The investigator also undertook research at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office and the North Carolina State Archives. Additionally, the investigator spoke with representatives of Glen Raven, Inc. (owner of the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Complex), and used online resources, including the Alamance County Register of Deeds, Alamance County online tax mapping, and the subscription websites, ancestry.com and newspapers.com.

Mulkey conducted all fieldwork, research, and evaluations to meet the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR 800, as well as NCDOT's *Guidelines for the Survey Reports for Historic Architectural Resources*.

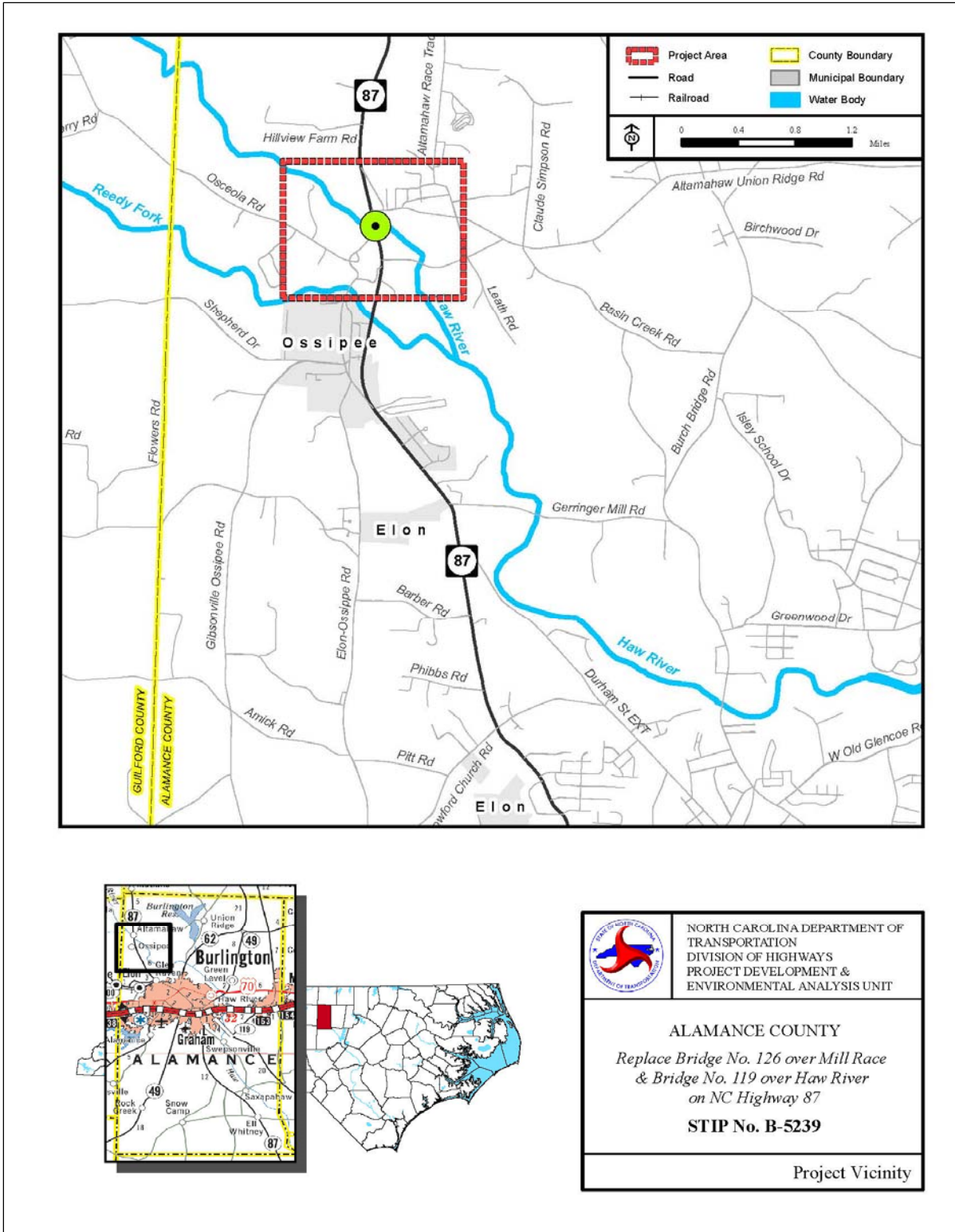


Figure 1: Project Vicinity

Historic Architectural Resource Report
 Replace Bridge Nos. 126 and 119 on NC 87
 Alamance County

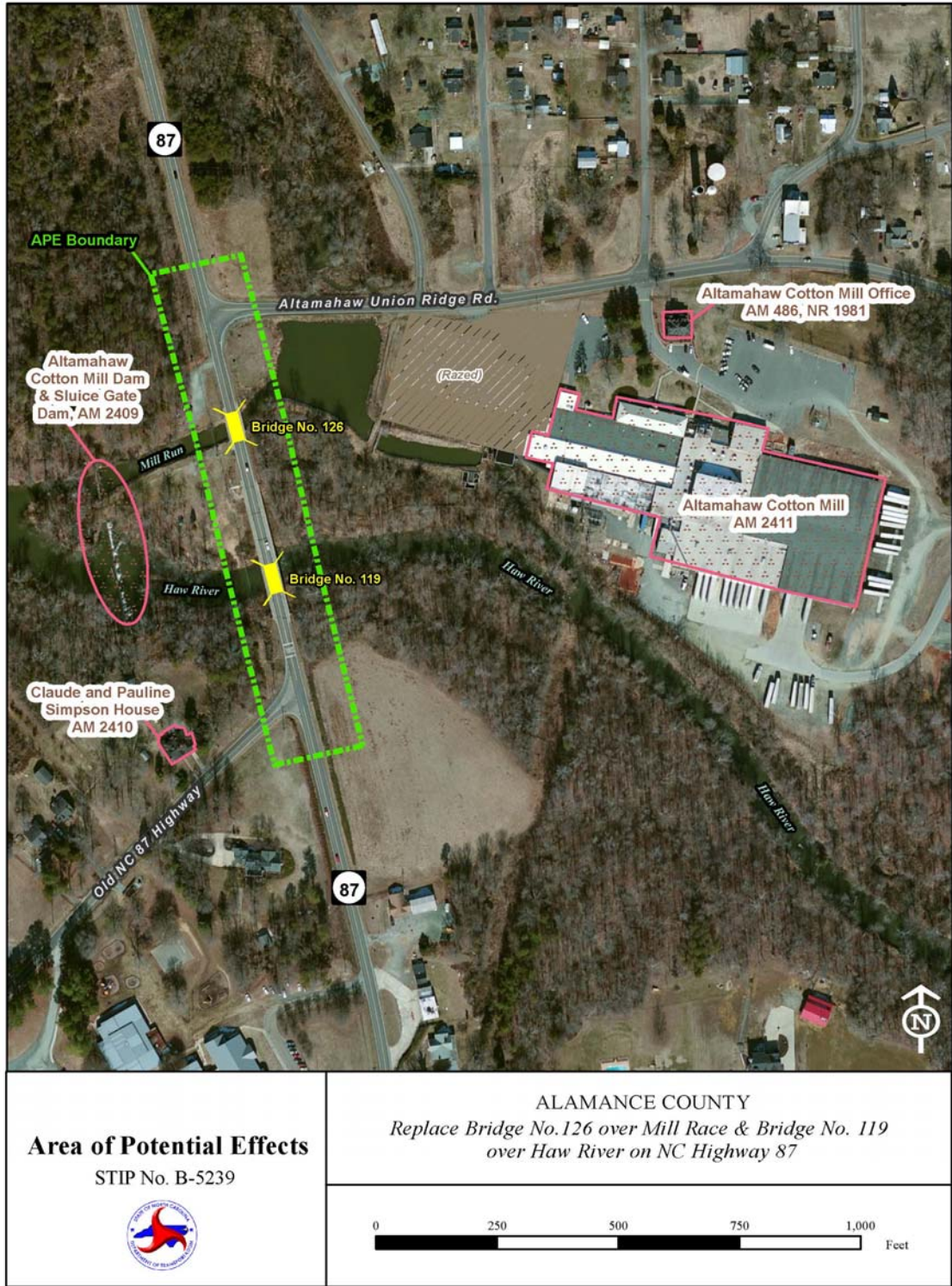


Figure 2: Area of Potential Effects

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Property Evaluation: Altamahaw Cotton Mill Complex and Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam

Resource Name	Altamahaw Cotton Mill Complex
HPO Site #	AM 2411
Street Address	3726 Altamahaw-Union Ridge Rd
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NRHP Recommendation	Not Eligible



Resource Name	Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam
HPO Site #	AM 2409
Street Address	Spanning the Haw River and mill race, 300' west of NC 87
PIN	110953
Construction Date(s)	ca. 1880
NRHP Recommendation	Not Eligible



Physical Description

The Altamahaw Cotton Mill Complex spans NC 87 and includes the mill building, three dams, a mill race, and the mill office building. The Altamahaw Cotton Mill and a small sluice gate dam are located east of NC 87. The Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam are situated to the west of NC 87. These two dams are situated in a north-south line that suggests they may be connected, with that connection located beneath the earthen berm between the Haw River and the mill race. Regardless of a structural connection, they are related in their purpose and history and this reports treats them as a single resource. The dams, race, and mill are situated on the Haw River while the office building stands on a hill overlooking the complex.

The APE (Figure 2) runs through the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Complex property. The site is located in rural Alamance County, northwest of Burlington, in the northern section of North Carolina's Piedmont region. The terrain is generally rolling, crisscrossed with creeks that cut through deep ravines or meander through flat floodplains.

The mill building (AM 2411) is east of Bridge Nos. 126 and 119 on NC 87 in Alamance County. To the west of NC 87 are the mill's Haw River dam and sluice gate dam (AM 2409). Bridge No. 126 spans the mill race that originally powered the mill. Bridge No. 119 crosses the Haw River. The mill's well-preserved and restored Queen Anne-style office building, situated to the north of the mill building, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1981. The company store and village are located north of the office, across Altamahaw-Union Ridge Road.

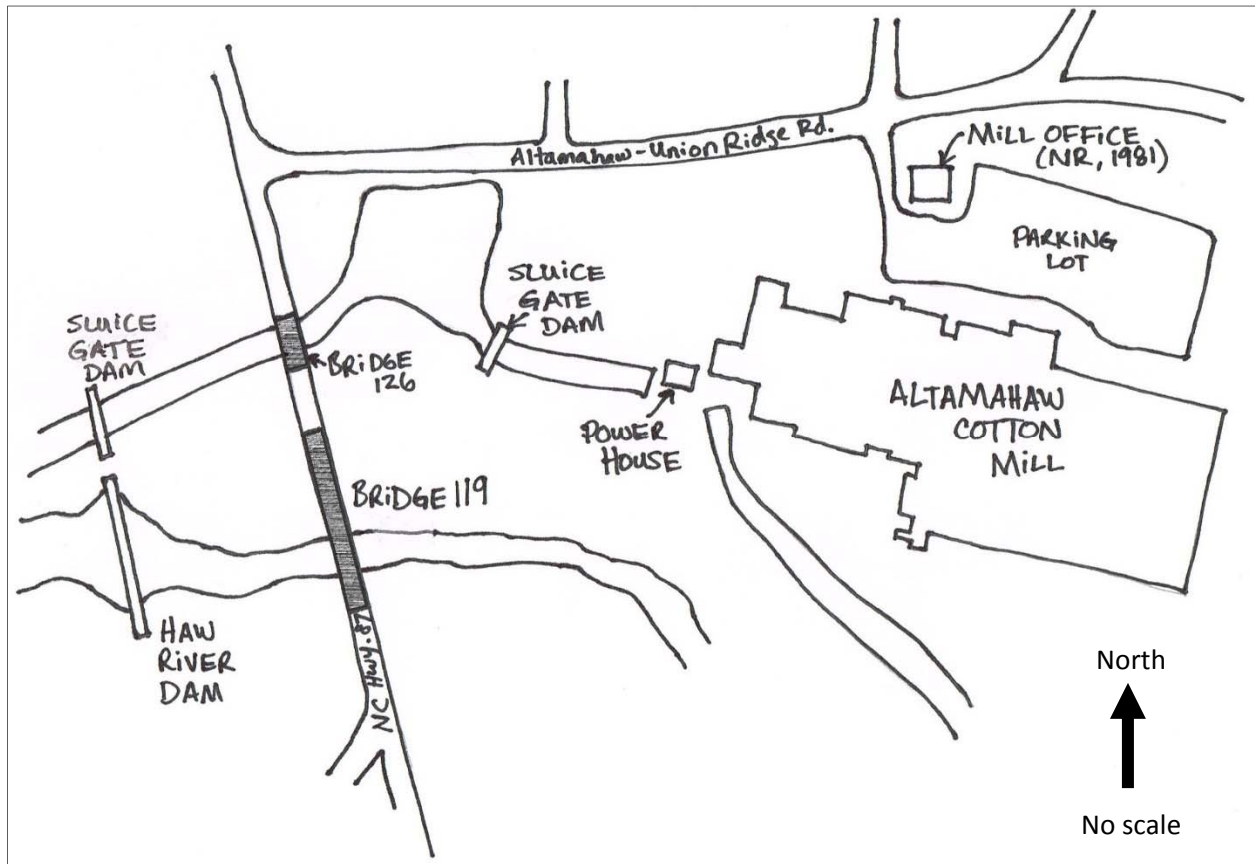


Figure 3: Altamahaw Cotton Mill site plan

Today, the mill building retains only a few vestiges from its early working years. Most of the existing architectural fabric dates from the factory's post-World War II development in the late 1940s and 1950s and from expansions in the mid-1990s.¹ Originally, the mill appears to have

¹ Building evolution compiled from notes made by Glen Raven, Inc., Project Manager, Mike Harrington and shared via email with the author on May 21, 2015, and from Margaret Elizabeth Gant, *The Raven's Story* (Glen Raven, NC: Glen Raven, Inc., 1979), 42.

been a one-story, brick building with the large, multi-light windows typical of late-nineteenth-century mill buildings.

Of the original mill building, the powerhouse and one section of the original or early mill remain, but only the powerhouse and one end of the original section closest to the powerhouse is visible. The powerhouse continues to generate electricity for the mill. It is clad in a veneer of modern brick as is the western end of the original section (the only portion not obscured by additions). The north elevation of the original mill section has been painted, but it displays original brick corbelling along the cornice. The remainder of the original one-story portion has been completely encased in twentieth century additions.

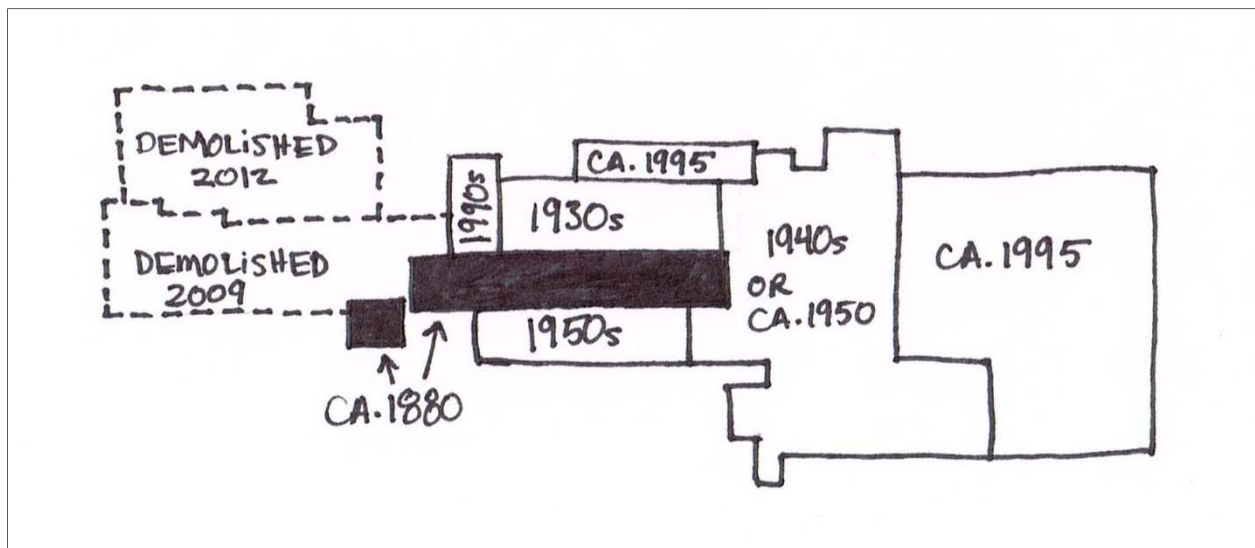


Figure 4: Altamahaw Cotton Mill building evolution

Covering most of the north elevation of the original section is a brick, windowless, one-story addition with a nearly-flat shed roof dating from 1930s and 1990s. This addition is connected to a tall one-story block with a hip roof. The form, tall blank panels (meant to suggest window openings), and hip roof suggest an earlier construction date, but this block was built in the mid-1990s to house offices for Glen Touch, a specific component of the Glen Raven company.

To the east, three primary blocks compose the building. The nearly-square section adjacent to the east end of the original portion of the mill building includes a two-story core. This component was constructed from dark red brick around 1950. Farther east is a mid-1990s

warehouse wing. This is a metal-clad structure with no significant architectural detailing. To the south, a brick and concrete block shipping bay added at an unknown date adjoins both the ca. 1950 section and the ca. 1995 warehouse.

Significant portions of the complex were demolished in 2009 and 2012. This included a large one-story building, possibly dating from the late-nineteenth or early twentieth century, with a monitor roof stretching west from the powerhouse. The other demolished portion was parallel and adjoining the monitor-roof building. This structure probably dated from the 1950s. These two demolished sections occupied what is now a grassy meadow between the existing mill buildings and the pond. The loss of this wing resulted in the loss of about half of the nineteenth century fabric.

The mill complex also includes a well-maintained and restored office building. The red brick office building is residential in appearance, but the word “office” created from cream-colored bricks fills a band that encircles the building between the first and second floors. Cream colored bricks also highlight window and door trim and create a wide cornice.

A tall hip roof flares slightly at the eaves and is covered in slate. Hipped dormers occupy the west and north roof slopes. A gabled stoop with turned posts and balusters shelters the west-facing entrance. Most windows are one-over-one sash windows, but banks of windows are located at the first and second floor of the west elevation and an oval window is located above the gabled stoop. This office is listed in the NRHP; its boundary is outside the APE, but it stands on a parcel that the APE crosses.

Three dams were used at the Altamahaw Cotton Mill: the main dam and two sluice gate dams. All three dams appear to date from the late-nineteenth-century.

One of the sluice gate dams is located on the mill race, on the east side of NC 87, about 200 feet west (upstream) of the powerhouse. This dam was not accessible to the investigator, but it appears to be constructed of stone, similar to the other two dams.

The other two dams (referred to as Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam in this report) are located on the west side of NC 87, farther upstream from the mill building. The main dam spans the Haw River and is approximately 250 feet across. Directly north, in a straight line extending from the main dam, a sluice gate dam controls the water flow into the mill race.

Between the two dams is a narrow berm. It is neither known, nor is it apparent at the site, if the dams are two separate structures or a single structure that continues under the berm.

The main dam is approximately fifteen feet tall. It is constructed of stone and is about four feet wide at the top of the structure.

The sluice gate dam also features stone construction, with a span of sixty feet and a width of approximately four feet. Approximately nine feet of the dam was visible above the water line on the day of the survey. On the dam's west elevation, three square, iron sluice gates were visible. Two iron I-beams extend vertically from the west elevation several feet above the dam. Two more I-beams extend vertically from the top of the dam. These four vertical members carry a horizontal I-beam above the dam. This super-structure supported the raising and lowering of the sluice gates.



Figure 5: Altamahaw Cotton Mill and Office



Figure 6: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, facing south



Figure 7: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, facing south



Figure 8: Altamahaw Cotton Mill Office (NR, 1981), northwest corner



Figure 9: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, facing south



Figure 10: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, powerhouse, north elevation



Figure 11: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, original section and powerhouse



Figure 12: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, facing east from NC Hwy 87



Figure 13: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, facing east toward 2nd sluice gate and power house



Figure 14: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, aerial view from 2010 with north half of west section standing



Figure 15: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, aerial view from 2014 after demolition of western section

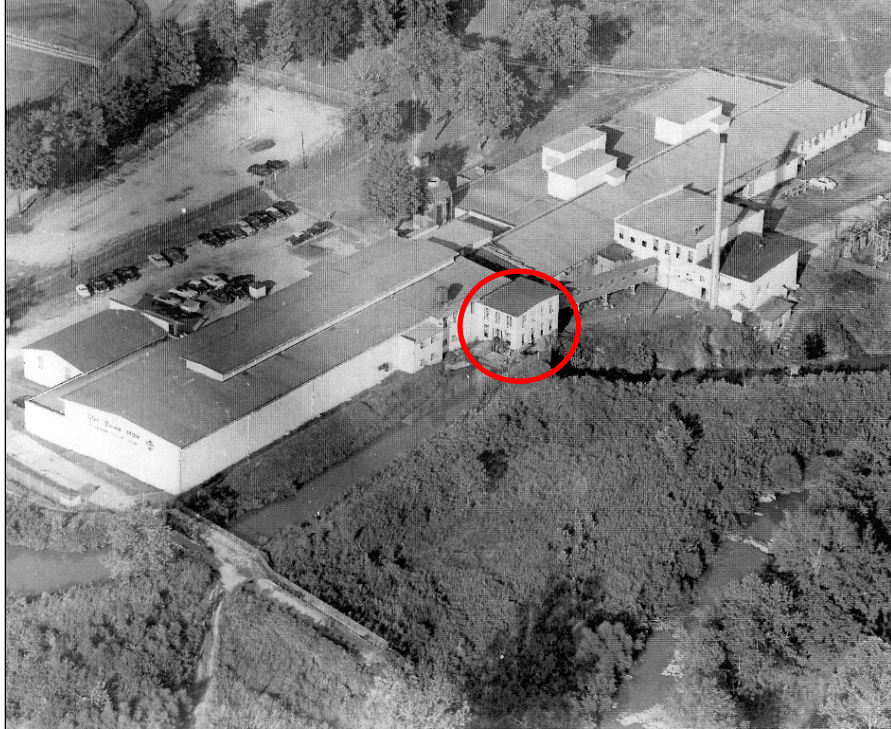


Figure 16: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, undated photo from textilehistory.org; existing powerhouse circled in red



Figure 17: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, mill race and west side of Bridge No. 126



Figure 18: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, mill race, facing west toward sluice gate



Figure 19: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, berm between Haw River dam (left) and sluice gate dam (right)



Figure 20: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, sluice gate, east elevation



Figure 21: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, sluice gate, east elevation



Figure 22: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, sluice gate, facing north



Figure 23: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, sluice gate, west elevation



Figure 24: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, facing east from sluice gate

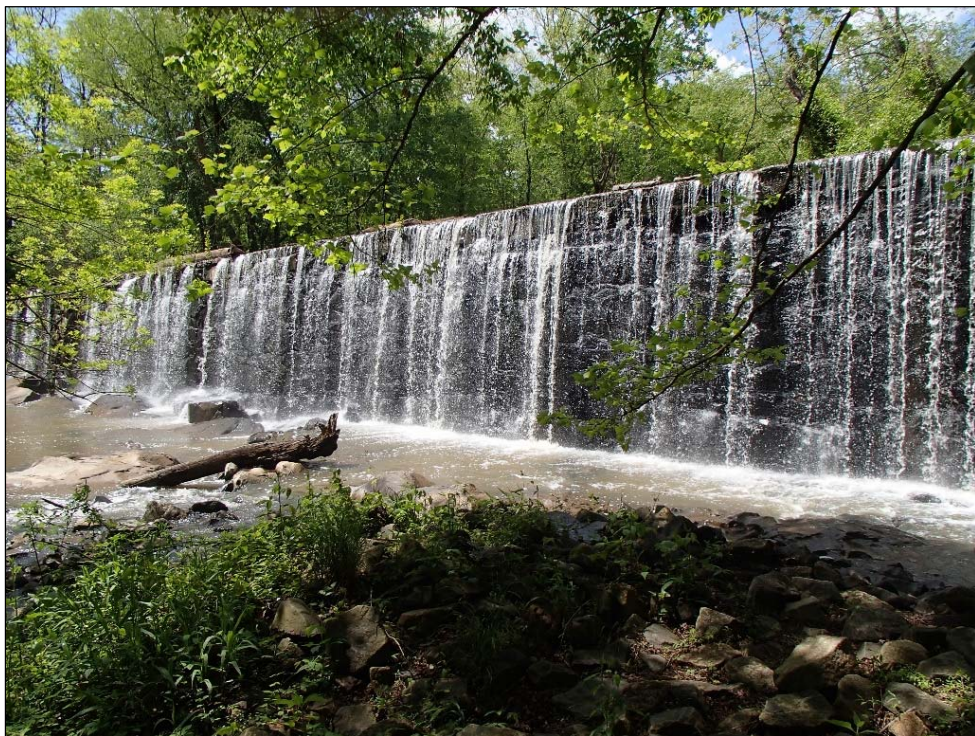


Figure 25: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, Haw River dam, east elevation



Figure 26: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, Haw River dam, east elevation



Figure 27: Altamahaw Cotton Mill, Haw River dam, facing south across the top of the dam

Historical Development

The Altamahaw Cotton Mill was constructed during the heyday of textile mills in North Carolina generally and Alamance County specifically. During the 1830s, Edwin M. Holt and other entrepreneurs began establishing cotton mills along the Haw River and its tributaries. The Holt family's mills continued operations during the Civil War. With access to the North Carolina Railroad available at Company Shops (Burlington), the Holts and other investors were well positioned for post-war prosperity.²

By 1879, over 15,000 spindles, nearly 300 looms, and almost 300 employees turned out yarn and fabric in the county's six cotton mills.³ Within seven years those statistics had doubled, and in the case of looms, quadrupled.⁴ In 1892, as the *Raleigh News and Observer* used editorial commentary to ask North Carolinians to bring the mills to the cotton, the paper stated, "We wish every county in the State was an Alamance."⁵

Like most textile mills in Alamance County, the Altamahaw Cotton Mill sprang up near the site of an earlier grist mill. In the first half of the nineteenth century, a man named Julius Bracken built a water powered grist mill in this vicinity. In 1845 Bracken sold it to two investors, a man named Lovick and his business partner, Andrew Lambeth. The Lambeth family sold the concern to Berry Davidson in 1876. Davidson, an experienced mill operator in Alamance and Orange counties, in turn formed a partnership with John Q. Gant, a mentee of Edwin M. Holt, the pioneer textile magnate of Alamance County.⁶

By 1880, Davidson and Gant had built a textile mill and the associated dams and race just downstream from the old grist and saw mills that had been located near the current dam site. The new textile mill initially produced only yarn. In 1884, E. M. Holt's sons, L. Banks and Lawrence, purchased Davidson's interest in the mill. The Haw River dam was constructed in

² Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 239.

³ Walter Whitaker, *Centennial History of Alamance County: 1849-1949* (Burlington, NC: Alamance County Historical Association, second printing, 1974), 164.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 239.

⁶ Old Mills of the Haw River Watershed, "Altamahaw Mill," accessed via hawrivermills.pbworks.com/w/page/17141607/Altamahaw%20Mill; Orange County Deed Book 31, page 318; and Alamance County Deed Book 6, page 520.

1886, and in 1887, the investors added 100 looms to make plaid fabric.⁷ At that time, Altamahaw Cotton Mill was one of thirteen cotton factories owned by the Holt family in Alamance County. No other county in the state had more spindles, looms, and textile machinery than Alamance County.⁸

By 1888, Altamahaw Cotton Mill housed over 2,000 spindles and 100 looms. It expanded again in 1891, but a lightning strike destroyed at least a portion of the facility in 1896. By 1900, the Altamahaw plant was one of 23 textile mills the Holt family operated in Alamance County.⁹ In 1913, the factory switched from water to electricity (generated by water) for its power.¹⁰

The Altamahaw Cotton Mill ran until 1927. During the 1920s, strikes and economic changes pushed many mills to close, go into receivership, or otherwise restructure significantly even before the onset of the Great Depression. By the late 1920s, the Gant and Holt families had formed Holt, Gant, and Holt Company, but the corporation announced plans to dissolve in 1928, liquidating the Altamahaw Cotton Mill in 1930.¹¹

During the closure, the complex fell into disrepair and a Burlington *Daily-Times News* reporter painted a sad image:

Once prosperous and ranking with leading industries along the river Haw, the business of the former mill was caught in the current of changing conditions in the textile world, along with many others, and finally closed down. The machinery was carried away. With their source of earning gone, a majority of the tenants moved to other fields to find employment. A few of them, driving to nearby points to work, continued to reside in the village while about them windowless houses became like stark mockery from a happy past.¹²

⁷ Textile Industry History, "Alamance Water Powered Mills" and "Alamance County, N.C.," accessed via textilehistory.org; *Alamance Gleaner* (Graham, NC), December 18, 1884, page 3; Margaret Elizabeth Gant, *The Raven's Story* (Glen Raven, NC: Glen Raven, Inc., 1979), 42; and *North Carolina Prohibitionist* (Archdale, NC), September 2, 1887, page 3.

⁸ *The Mirror* (Wilson, NC), October 19, 1887, page 7.

⁹ *The Messenger* (Wilmington, NC), February 12, 1888, page 3 and April 26, 1896, page 4; and Bishir and Southern, 239.

¹⁰ Textilehistory.org/AlamanceWaterPoweredMills.html.

¹¹ *The Alamance Gleaner*, December 13, 1928, quoted in Linda Marquez-Frees, "Altamahaw Mill Office" National Register Nomination, 1981, page 8-1; *The Bee* (Danville, VA), February 26, 1930, page 4; *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, NC), August 10, 1933, page 2; and Bishir and Southern, 239.

¹² *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, NC), August 10, 1933, page 2

By 1933, however, the Gant family had regained control of the mill and created a new company called Glen Raven Silk Mills, Inc. Glen Raven began manufacturing “Canton Crepe,” a silk-like rayon dress fabric, in the Altamahaw plant. In 1936, Glen Raven fitted Altamahaw with hosiery equipment and expanded the factory the following year. In 1939, the company built another addition to accommodate knitting for duck material used by the U.S. government for tents.¹³

After World War II, Glen Raven produced nylon hosiery at Altamahaw. As the company continued innovating, it launched production of Sunbrella, an outdoor fabric, in 1960, and the company believes its fabric was used to make the flag planted on the moon’s surface in 1969.¹⁴

In the mid-1990s, an office with a hip roof and design reminiscent of nineteenth century mills was added to the front elevation. At the same time, a large warehouse was added to the east elevation. In 2009 and 2012, the western-most section of the mill was demolished. The powerhouse remains, however, and is still used to generate electricity.

Today, Glen Raven manufactures Sunbrella outdoor fabric and other material. The company uses the Altamahaw plant for shipping and storage and maintains the old mill office building as a conference center. No manufacturing continues at this mill.

Architectural Context

Because much of the original Altamahaw Cotton Mill has been demolished or surrounded by newer buildings, its historic architecture is difficult to discern. Based on historic photographs and the small sections of original construction still visible, it was likely a typical late-nineteenth-century mill.

As mills increased in capacity and as investments in mill buildings and machinery increased, mill designers focused on creating buildings that could accommodate heavy machinery, hundreds of workers, and survive a fire. Tall windows and monitor roofs lit the vast interior spaces. Brick walls, heavy timber framing and thick, multi-layered floors supported looms and spindles while suppressing or slowing the spread of fires. The tall brick towers usually seen on mill buildings concealed water tanks or cisterns used to supply hoses and hydrants in the event of a fire.

¹³ Textile Industry History website, <http://www.textilehistory.org/GlenRavenInc.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.textilehistory.org/GlenRavenInc.html>

Most late-nineteenth-century textile factories in Alamance County were three or four stories in height. That allowed for operations, such as opening bales of cotton, to occur on one floor with spinning and weaving on others. Other processes and needs were sometimes accommodated on additional floors or in separate wings or buildings. These included storage of raw materials and unused machinery, and warehousing of the finished products.

Another building common to almost every mill in Alamance County was the powerhouse or turbine house. This building was usually a square brick structure located on the edge or over the mill race. In the powerhouse, the flowing water was used to turn gears or a turbine. That movement directly powered the mill's machines or a dynamo that provided electricity to the machines.

Dams were used to control the amount and velocity of water flowing to the powerhouse. Usually, as is the case at the Altamahaw factory, a dam slows the flow of a primary water source (here, the Haw River) to divert some water into a mill race. At some point along the race, another dam (two dams at the Altamahaw Cotton Mill) with sluice gates further regulates the flow of water to the powerhouse. Upstream of the powerhouse, the mill race is typically called a head race. Downstream of the powerhouse, the channel is called a tail race.

Most mill complexes also included a mill office and store. At some mills, a single building housed both these functions while at others, two or more buildings were used. Another common accessory of the region's cotton mills was the village. Mill owners usually built a collection of houses and cottages that they rented to their workers. Many owners subscribed to paternalist notions of caring for and providing for workers so as to limit union infiltration, striking, and unrest.

Altamahaw Cotton Mill followed most of these norms. It was a brick building, presumably constructed using slow-burn technologies, but the complex does not appear to have had a signature brick tower. Rather than having several stories, Altamahaw appears to have spread out in a one-story configuration with at least one section having had a monitor roof. Tall windows, typical of the era's mills, appear to have illuminated the interior. The factory's powerhouse is a two-story, square brick building situated on the north bank of the mill race. Although a modern brick veneer has covered or replaced the original exterior brick, the building retains segmentally arched window openings (with modern replacement sash).

The prominent mill office stands above the factory. It's finely finished exterior combines Victorian and Romanesque Revival elements to create a striking edifice seldom seen in the county's countryside. Across Altamahaw-Union Ridge Road from the office and mill, the village spreads out along several streets. The village contains a two-story, Victorian-era company store with brick corbelling and a cast iron façade. Its design is typical of late-nineteenth-century commercial buildings seen in small and large towns across North Carolina. The village's houses are one-story, gabled-ell cottages, one-and-a-half-story saddlebag houses, and two-story I-houses. Most have been altered with the addition of vinyl or aluminum siding and replacement windows, but most of the house forms remain intact and significant changes in footprints or mass appear to be rare.

Comparable Examples

Alamance County's textile industry history is long and rich. As a result, its stock of nineteenth-century mill buildings, mill complexes, and associated dams is deep and wide. The county's best-preserved mill complex is probably Glencoe Mill, just north of Burlington and a few miles downstream from Altamahaw. Glencoe Mill Village Historic District (AM 3), which includes the mill building, was listed in the National Register in 1979. The Carolina Mill (AM 1585), listed in North Carolina's Study List in 2010, is a shuttered but little-altered factory that still retains its village on the hill above the mill. Both of these mill buildings remain intact and retain far more historic fabric and communicate the area's textile mill history more effectively than the Altamahaw Cotton Mill. Glencoe is significant for its association with the history of the post-Civil War textile industry in North Carolina, for its association with the Holt family, and for its classic mill architecture. Presumably, the Carolina Mill is also significant for its association with the history of textile manufacturing in North Carolina and for its relatively unaltered, traditional mill design. While the Altamahaw Cotton Mill is a contemporary of these mills and shares an association with the Holt family, its architecture has been severely compromised.

Today, nine dams still span the Haw, with at least five of those in Alamance County. Over 150 dams slow tributaries in the Haw's watershed, although it's unclear how many of those are in Alamance County. In short, mill dams are common features of the landscape in Alamance County. Most of them date from the nineteenth century and most feature stone construction like those at the Altamahaw Cotton Mill. The Haw River dam and sluice dam at Glencoe Mill are contributing resources to the Glencoe Mill Village National Register Historic District.



Figure 28: Carolina Mill, northeast elevation



Figure 29: Carolina Mill, southeast elevation



Figure 30: Carolina Mill, facing northwest



Figure 31: Glencoe Mill, northeast elevation



Figure 32: Glencoe Mill, sluice gate, southeast elevation

National Register Evaluation

The Altamahaw Mill Office remains listed in the National Register and it retains its integrity. Its designated bounds include three acres around the building, but the lots have been recombined so that it stands on the same parcel as the other mill buildings. The APE does not encroach on the National Register boundary, but it does encroach on the parcel on which the office stands.

The Altamahaw Mill Office is listed in the National Register under Criteria A for its association with the development of the textile industry in Alamance County in the late nineteenth century and particularly with the Holt family textile interests; Criteria B for its association with the Gant and Holt families; and Criteria C as a well-preserved example of Queen Anne industrial architecture.

Integrity

The Altamahaw Cotton Mill and the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam retain their integrity of location because they have not been moved. They retain integrity of setting and association because they stand along the banks of the Haw River with the other related

buildings, including the mill office, mill race, company store, and mill village. The Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. However, the Altamahaw Cotton Mill does not retain integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling because a significant portion of the original mill has been demolished and the remaining early portions have been altered and encased with mid-twentieth-century and early-twenty-first-century brick veneer and additions.

Criteria Evaluation

The Altamahaw Cotton Mill and Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because the mill complex does not retain enough historic fabric to communicate its association with the history of the textile industry in Alamance County. The dam does retain integrity, but its association with the county's textile industry is unremarkable. Only the mill office conveys its association with the textile industry in Alamance County.

The Altamahaw Cotton Mill and Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B because the mill does not retain enough historic fabric to communicate its association with John Q. Gant, Berry Davidson, the Gant family, or members of the Holt family. Additionally, several mills, including Glencoe and Carolina, are better preserved and are associated with the Holt family. Glencoe has a particularly strong association with the Holt family. The dam is a typical form in the county and does not communicate a particular association with any person of historical significance. Only the mill office conveys its association with the Gant and Holt families.

The Altamahaw Cotton Mill and Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C because they do not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, nor do they represent the work of a master, possess high artistic value or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. The mill has been significantly altered and about half of the nineteenth or early-twentieth-century portions of the building were demolished in 2009 and 2012. Almost all other early or original fabric is now obscured with later additions and changes. Its original and early design features have been severely compromised so that it no longer has the distinctive characteristics of traditional textile mill design. Glencoe Mill and Carolina Mill both retain outstanding architectural integrity. While the Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam retain good integrity,

they are very typical of the many dams found along the Haw River and its tributaries. The dams do not utilize any significant technological innovation or display design features that meet the architectural or technological distinctiveness that the National Register requires. The sluice gate dam at Glencoe Mill is still operational, and Glencoe, too, has a large dam across the Haw River. It is not known if Carolina had an associated dam, race, or sluice gate dam. At the Altamahaw Cotton Mill complex, only the mill office retains its architectural significance.

The Altamahaw Cotton Mill and Altamahaw Cotton Mill Dam and Sluice Gate Dam are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D because the property has not yielded, and does not appear to be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Property Evaluation: Claude and Pauline Simpson House

Resource Name	Claude and Pauline Simpson House
HPO Site #	AM 2410
Street Address	2942 Old NC 87
PIN	110950
Construction Date(s)	ca. 1927
NRHP Recommendation	Not Eligible



Physical Description

The Claude and Pauline Simpson House is a one-and-a-half-story side-gable, Craftsman bungalow that retains many original features, despite the application of aluminum siding. The house is situated in a shaded yard on a knoll above the Haw River.

The APE (Figure 2) crosses the eastern edge of the Simpson House property, located southwest of Bridge Nos. 126 and 119 on N.C. Highway 87 (NC 87) in Alamance County. The Simpson House stands on the north side of Old NC 87, just west of Old NC 87's intersection with NC 87. Mature trees shade a verdant, rolling lawn that is flat immediately adjacent to the house, but slopes away from the house downward to the south, east, and west. A concrete walk leads from the roadside to a set of concrete steps. The steps lead to another length of sidewalk that joins the front porch steps. A concrete driveway rises from the road, up the sloping terrain and through the porte-cochère. The Haw River bounds the north side of the property, and the steady sound of water cascading over the Altamahaw Mill Dam provides an auditory component to the property's setting.

This one-and-a-half-story, side-gable bungalow has an engaged, full-width front porch that extends beyond the house to encompass a porte-cochère on the east elevation. A section of porch on the southwest corner does not have a roof, but it connects the front porch to a partially-enclosed, shed-roof side porch that occupies the west elevation. The porches and porte-cochère all feature square, battered posts on square brick piers. Most window openings contain original six-over-one sashes, but some have nine-light, original casement windows. The house also retains an original, multi-light, single-leaf front door. Exposed rafter tails enrich the

eaves, and kneebraces are located in the gable ends. A bank of windows at the upper level of the northwest corner suggests that corner was originally a sleeping porch.

A gable-front dormer punctuates the front roof slope. At the back of the house, two-story hip-roof wing extends off the back roof slope so that the back of the house is two-stories in height. Asphalt shingles cover the roof. The house stands on a full brick foundation, and two brick chimneys pierce the rear roof slope. Aluminum siding covers the exterior.

The interior was not made available to the investigator and subsequent telephone calls to the current owner were not returned.

A well house with a batten door and at least two wells (one concrete and one stone) stands just off the house's northwest corner. Aluminum siding covers this structure and 5-V crimp metal covers the roof. The well house also has exposed raftertails.

Behind the house is a barn covered in vertical wood siding. The barn features a central drive-through bay.



Figure 33: Claude and Pauline Simpson House

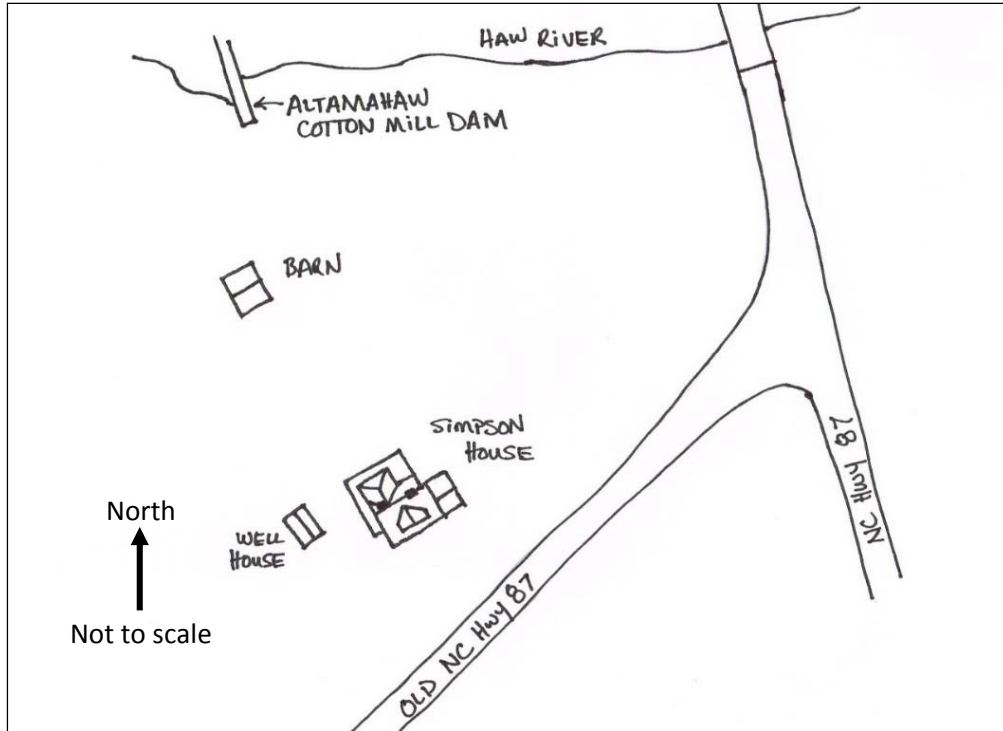


Figure 34: Simpson House Site Plan



Figure 35: Simpson House, south elevation



Figure 36: Simpson House, west elevation



Figure 37: Simpson House, southwest corner



Figure 38: Simpson House, northeast corner



Figure 39: Simpson House, west yard



Figure 40: Simpson House, barn, south corner



Figure 41: Simpson House, southwest elevation



Figure 42: Simpson House, well house, southeast elevation



Figure 43: Simpson House, well house, south elevation



Figure 44: Simpson House, well house, northeast corner



Figure 45: Simpson House, facing east toward the intersection of NC 87 and Old NC 87

Historical Development

Alamance County had evolved into a textile industry powerhouse by the early 1900s, but during the 1920s, workers began striking and the industry entered a period of upheaval that ultimately closed many mills, including the Altamahaw plant. During this period in the early 1920s, Alamance County native Claude L. Simpson married Luna Saul, and the couple had two children. Mrs. Simpson died in 1927, and, in 1929, Mr. Simpson married Pauline Sutton.¹⁵

In the 1920s, Mr. Simpson purchased three pieces of land. His purchase from 1927 appears to be the parcel on which this house stands, making it likely that Mr. Simpson built this house shortly before Mrs. Simpson's death, sometime during his widowhood, or around the time of his second marriage in 1929.¹⁶

The house stands between the Altamahaw and Ossipee mills, both of which were built around 1880. Because cotton factories had become the area's primary economic engine, mill life and the ebb and flow of textile prosperity was likely omnipresent even for those who were not employees, like the Simpsons. Although the 1930 census describes Claude Simpson as an auto mechanic, he appears to have been a farmer most of his life. They farmed two tracts, one of 20 acres and another of 119 acres, located about two miles away, and lived in this house, a tidy, Craftsman bungalow on a picturesque site from which they led lives that included public involvement through clubs, civic organizations, and public office.¹⁷

Claude and Pauline Simpson appear frequently in the local newspapers as club members and leaders, social hosts, and as participants in home and farm demonstrations in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, including a 1937 contour tillage demonstration on their land a few miles away.¹⁸

During World War II, because the Simpsons had one of the area's only telephone lines, the Altamahaw mill manager gave Claude Simpson the factory's old and unused bell (originally used to wake workers and signal shift changes and mealtimes) to signal air raid drills and blackouts.

¹⁵ Headstone inscriptions for Claude Simpson, Luna Saul Simpson, and Pauline Sutton Simpson at Bethlehem Christian Church, Altamahaw, N.C., and *North Carolina Marriage Records, 1741-2011*, accessed via ancestry.com.

¹⁶ John T. Kernodle to Claude L. Simpson, August 1, 1924, Alamance County Deed Book 82, page 113; Luther Isley and wife to C. L. Simpson, February 28, 1927, Alamance County Deed Book, 86, page 596; and A. L. and Lillie Styers to C. L. and Pauline Simpson, October 14, 1929, Alamance County Deed Book 96, page 219.

¹⁷ U. S. Census, population schedule, Alamance County, 1930 and 1940, and Renunciation and Qualified Disclaimer by W. Howard Troxler, May 13, 1997, Alamance County Deed Book, 1080, page 302.

¹⁸ "Contour Tillage Demonstration to be Held Thursday," *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington), September 7, 1937, page 7.

Civil Defense officials from Burlington would call the Simpson family with news of a drill or blackout. The Simpsons would use the bell and a lantern to alert the Altamahaw mill manager just across the Haw River, and the mill would use its steam whistle to signal a blackout to the community. In 1962, when Western Alamance High School was completed, Mr. Simpson, who served on the Alamance Board of Education for several years beginning in 1956, donated the bell to the new school.¹⁹

Claude Simpson died in 1984 and Pauline died in 1996. Both are buried at Bethlehem Christian Church in Altamahaw along with Claude's first wife, Luna. After Pauline's death, the house passed to the couple's son-in-law, Howard Troxler. Sean Wesley Gilliam and Kelly Crowder Gilliam are the current owners of the house. The relationship is unclear, but it appears Sean Gilliam may be a descendant of Claude Simpson.²⁰

Architectural Context

The Claude and Pauline Simpson House was executed in a simplified but well-finished interpretation of the Craftsman bungalow. The Craftsman style emphasized carpentry, craftsmanship, and workmanship through exposed structural components and decorative elements meant to reference structural components.

Craftsman design was extremely popular from the 1910s through the 1940s, and was well-suited for the scores of modest homes built across the country during the 1920s. At the Simpson House, the builder created a façade that appears to be only one story but with a rear elevation that is two stories in height. The house is a typical Craftsman bungalow with individualized features such as a taller rear elevation and the use of some casement windows.

The property's two outbuildings, the well house and barn, are also typical features of rural dwellings where families depended on well water and continued producing at least some of their own sustenance. It is likely the family used the barn to house limited livestock, such as a cow and chickens that the family would have used for their own food and milk. Both of these

¹⁹ "Old Bell Finds a New Place," *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington), October 10, 1972, page 11, and "History of Western Alamance High School," published on the Western Alamance High School website and accessed via abss.k12.nc.us/wah.

²⁰ Renunciation and Qualified Disclaimer by W. Howard Troxler, May 13, 1997, Alamance County Deed Book 1080, page 302; Rockie Davis and Mary Lou Troxler to Fran Jo Havoline Troxler Gilliam, September 5, 1997, Alamance County Deed Book 1107, page 910; Fran Jo Havoline Troxler Gilliam and J. Wesley Gilliam to Sean Wesley and Kelly Crowder Gilliam, August 28, 2009, Alamance County Deed Book 2846, page 82.

outbuildings are typical of the barns and well houses found across Alamance County dating from the nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century.

Comparable Examples

While the Claude and Pauline Simpson House is an altered but originally-well-executed Craftsman bungalow, it is one of many examples in the county. Just west of the Simpson House and situated in the Town of Ossipee is another well-executed Craftsman bungalow (AM 1532), which is likely the work of the same builder. Like the Simpson House this example also retains its Craftsman design elements, but the application of replacement siding (vinyl in this case) significantly reduces its integrity. Its clipped gables, entrance with sidelights, and use of stone on the front porch make it a more sophisticated design than the Simpson House, but both houses have porte-cochères and upstairs sleeping porches.

Additionally, the investigator saw many other bungalows of a similar size with varying levels of sophistication across the county. The bungalow at the National-Register-listed Kerr Scott Farm is a 1919 example of the form with Craftsman and Queen Anne references.



Figure 46: Craftsman house in Ossipee, AM 1532



Figure 47: Kerr Scott Farm, Haw River vicinity, NR listed, 1987



Figure 48: Craftsman house, 2409 Old NC 87 in Ossipee



Figure 49: Side-gable bungalow, N.C. Highway 49, Green Level



Figure 50: Craftsman house, 2810 Union Ridge Road, Glencoe vicinity

National Register Evaluation

Integrity

The Claude and Pauline Simpson House retains its integrity of location because it has not been moved. The introduction of vinyl siding has a modest negative impact on the property's integrity of architectural design, materials, and workmanship. The house retains many signature features, including windows, kneebraces, and porches that contribute positively to its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. The house retains its setting on a rise above the Haw River with two outbuildings. It retains its association with Craftsman design and its outbuildings retain their association with their historic domestic uses. Although the Simpsons farmed, this property was never farmed and thus, is not associated with agricultural history. Additionally, the house was always privately owned and the Simpsons did not work at either the Ossipee or Altamahaw mills, so it is not associated with the area's textile industry.

Criteria Evaluation

The Claude and Pauline Simpson House is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because it does not have notable associations with events or broad patterns of history aside from its use as a typical residential property. The property was associated with local air raid alarm during World War II, but the primary structure related to that association (the old mill bell) was donated to the local high school decades ago. The property retains a relatively small barn almost certainly used for the family's milking cow, chickens, and possibly a tractor, but the Simpson farm was located about two miles away.

The Claude and Pauline Simpson House is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B because it is not associated with the lives of persons of significance. Their participation in local civic clubs and Mr. Simpson's tenure of the county board of education are typical avenues of community service and neither Claude nor Pauline Simpson were historically significant figures.

The Claude and Pauline Simpson House is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C because it does not embody the distinctive characteristics of the local application of the Craftsman style. The house retains much architectural integrity and many Craftsman features, including kneebraces, original windows and doors, and porch posts, but aluminum siding covers the exterior. Additionally, twenty-five bungalows are documented in the county-wide architectural survey and dozens of other examples, including those without

aluminum or vinyl siding, are scattered across the county. The Kerr Scott Farm is listed in the NRHP and includes an earlier bungalow dating from 1919.

The Claude and Pauline Simpson House is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D because the property has not yielded, and does not appear to be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

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