

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 31 1979

DATE ENTERED SEP 10 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Tanner's Mill

AND/OR COMMON

Same as above

**2 LOCATION**

S of Gainesville on SR 3

STREET & NUMBER

Route 3

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Gainesville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

9th - Jenkins

STATE

Georgia

VICINITY OF

CODE

13

COUNTY

Hall

CODE

139

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: vacant

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

James V. Jones

STREET & NUMBER

Route 3

CITY, TOWN

Gainesville

VICINITY OF

STATE

Georgia 30501

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hall County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Gainesville

STATE

Georgia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE (1) Historic Structures Field Survey: Hall County, Georgia  
(2) Historic American Engineering Record: Inventory of Sites in Georgia, 1975-75

DATE (1) October, 1975  
(2) October, 1975

2 FEDERAL 1 STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS (1) Historic Preservation Sec., Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources  
(2) Div. of Prints & Photographs, Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN (1) Atlanta, Georgia  
(2) Washington, D.C.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE <u>1918</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

## Contributing Buildings and Structures

Tanner's Mill is a rural industrial complex located approximately three miles northeast of the intersection of Georgia Highways 53 and 211 in Hall County. Situated on Walnut Creek, a fork of the Middle Oconee River, the complex is no longer operational, and extensive repairs would be necessary to put the mill site in operating condition.

The Tanner's Mill complex consists of a grist and flour mill, a cotton gin, the ruins of a textile mill, a dam with watergate and raceway, a mill-pond, an iron truss bridge, an owner's house with a barn and several outbuildings, a miller's house, and a storage building. The complex was largely developed between the mid- and late-nineteenth century.

The largest and most impressive structure in the industrial complex is the three-story grist and flour mill, which dates from ca. 1886. It is an unpainted, clapboard building constructed of pine which was sawed on the site. The grist mill is without architectural ornamentation. On the north and south facades of the mill are connecting one-story sheds of grooved weatherboard. The sheds are later additions, since they are supported by concrete of local fieldstone rubble. Corrugated tin forms the steeply sloping roof of the central portion of the mill as well as the more moderately sloping roofs of the sheds. The north and south facades are nearly identical, and are marked by their weatherboard siding and nine-over-nine windows. Two nine-over-nine windows light either side of the second story, while a series of three nine-over-nine windows allow light to enter the first-story sheds. The west facade, accessible by way of the gravel road, has a corrugated tin shed roof which protects the service entrance into the mill. Flanking this doorway are single nine-over-nine windows. Above the shed roof are two six-over-six windows, and a centrally placed nine-over-nine window lights the mill's third floor. Framing this window are the steep gable and its returns. Architecturally, the second and third stories of the east facade are identical to those on the western face. The first floor necessarily differs because of purpose. There, a breast shot waterwheel is attached to the mill. The wheel is over twenty feet in diameter, and it has five-foot-wide metal floats. Over the years, the wooden spokes of the wheel have rotted, and consequently, operation of the wheel would be dangerous. Originally, a wooden-trough raceway connected the mill with the dam and channeled water to feed the wheel. During the past thirty years, segments of the wooden-trough raceway were replaced so that it no longer exists. Today, leading from the mill to the cotton gin is an iron-and-steel penstock which is supported by masonry and concrete block. The middle segment of the raceway is now a large steel pipe, and it connects to an iron pipe which was originally used as a smokestack at a local factory.

[continued]

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1830-1920 BUILDER/ARCHITECT David and Moses Tanner

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Historical Significance

Tanner's Mill is historically significant in the areas of architecture, engineering, industry, and commerce as a fine and rare surviving example of the integrated rural industrial complexes that once played a prominent role in the history of Georgia from the early-nineteenth century through the early-twentieth century. Tanner's Mill is an architectural and technological record of the history of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century rural industry in Georgia, and is important as well for the role it played in the social and economic life of Hall and neighboring counties.

Like many of the rural industrial complexes in Georgia, Tanner's Mill includes a combined grist and flour mill and a dam, millpond, watergate, and raceway. Dating from 1886, the architecture of this mill -- a weatherboarded, wood-framed, gable-roofed building with shed additions set on fieldstone-masonry piers -- is representative of nineteenth-century rural mill architecture in Georgia and is virtually intact. The construction of the waterworks, while less intact due to the ravages of floods, nevertheless illustrates nineteenth-century rural hydraulic engineering.

Although typical in its design and construction, the grist and flour mill is unusual in that much of its late-nineteenth-century milling equipment is still in place. This equipment includes two runs of stones (one domestic granite, the other European quartzite), a corn-shucker, several sifters, a duster, a packer, and several enclosed elevators. The pulleys, belts, shafts and gears of the power-distribution machinery are also present. The breastshot water-wheel on the east side of the mill, although no longer operational, is one of a few of its kind remaining in Georgia. This milling equipment operated regularly until 1961.

At its peak in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the grist and flour mill ground more than 12,000 bushels of product per year. Two millers were employed to supervise this production. Products such as Tanner's

[continued]

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- U.S. Bureau of the Census Manufacturing Schedules, 1820, 1880.  
 Jeane, Donald G. The Cultural History of Grist Milling in Northwest Georgia, 1974.  
Georgia State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1896, 1888, 1898.  
 McRay, Sybil. This 'n That: History of Hall County, Georgia, 1963.

[continued]

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY App. 33-1/2 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Chestnut Mountain, Ga.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	7	2	4	3	3	6	0	3	7	8	5	0	8	5
ZONE	EASTING							NORTHING						

B 

1	7	2	4	3	2	2	0	3	7	8	4	8	6	0
ZONE	EASTING							NORTHING						

C 

1	7	2	4	2	9	2	0	3	7	8	5	2	0	0
ZONE	EASTING							NORTHING						

D 

1	7	2	4	3	0	3	5	3	7	8	5	7	7	0
ZONE	EASTING							NORTHING						

E 


F 


G 


H 


## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

That part of Parcel 33, Block 29, Tax Map A-01-15, Hall County, Ga., that is situated northwest of Tanner's Mill Road (State Route 211) and outlined by a heavy black line on the enclosed map entitled "Tanner's Mill, Hall County, Georgia."

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Richard Cloues, architectural historian; Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Preservation Sec., Ga. Dept of Natural Resources

June, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

270 Washington St., S.W.

TELEPHONE

(404) 656-2840

CITY OR TOWN

Atlanta

STATE

Georgia 30334

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Elizabeth A. Lyon*

TITLE

Acting Elizabeth A. Lyon  
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

7/20/79

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Carol Shull*

DATE

9-10-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*Carol A. DUBB*

DATE

9/8/79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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Inside the mill, an elevator moved the grist between the mill's floors. This elevator consists of funnel-shaped cups attached to a belt which raised or lowered the grist. The device is encased in a wooden box and is driven by pulleys and belts. The first floor contains the gasoline-engine mill, as well as two sets of ferreled millstones. One set, of local granite, was used to grind corn, while a set of European quartzite stones ground wheat. Also located on this floor is a corn-shucker. On the second floor is a swing sifter which filters the grist. A sieve again sifted the grist on the third floor. Also on the third floor is a bran-duster, type #1, which filtered the grist for a final time. After this, the elevator carried the grain back to the first floor, where it was packed. The equipment in the mill was patented by the B. Nordyke and Marmon Company of Indianapolis in 1897 and manufactured by that firm in 1907. It replaced earlier equipment located within the mill.

Forty yards above the grist mill is a two-story, overlapping-weather-boarded cotton gin. Like the mill, it has no architectural detail. Once connected to the building was an overshot waterwheel which powered a hand-fed gin. Engineering history places the development of the overshot waterwheel before that of the beastshot wheel, indicating that the gin antedated the mill, perhaps as much as four decades. The gin is in a general state of disrepair and has not been used since operated in a 1958 demonstration.

Upstream from the grist mill and cotton gin are "foundation" columns which once supported the Walnut Factory. A wool-carding and spinning mill, the Walnut Factory operated from 1835 to 1870. Other than the columns, little remains of this facility. Since the exact nature of the "foundation" columns is not known, the precise location of this factory is uncertain.

Fifty yards upstream from the cotton gin is a dam which runs sixty feet across the rock-bottomed Walnut Creek. The dam is constructed of wood. Although there are several leaks in the dam, the wooden braces are in good condition, and, with repair, the dam could be made to function efficiently. The watergate at the west end of the dam was originally of stone masonry, but concrete blocks support the gate today. This gate channels the water into the iron pipe, which then directs it to the two wheels.

Below the grist mill, a forty-foot-long bridge spans Walnut Creek. The bridge is a single-span riveted Warren pony truss with wood decking. It was built by the Tanner family in 1914. No bridge plate was found.

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One hundred and fifty yards below the iron truss bridge is the Tanner house. Built in the mid-nineteenth century, and perhaps as early as the 1830s, the Tanner house is one and a half stories high, one-room deep, and three bays wide, with a gable roof. The front facade is symmetric around a trabeated, side-lighted front doorway. An exterior end chimney of massive granite blocks rises at the north end of the house. Originally built on lower ground along Walnut Creek, the Tanner house was moved to higher ground nearby in the early-twentieth century (probably 1918) to lessen the danger of flooding. Since then, the house has been remodeled; front windows have been doubled, asbestos siding overlaid, and the south chimney removed. A recent addition in a contemporary style has been made to the south side of the house.

Associated with the Tanner house is a large, two-story, gable-roofed barn. The barn is framed with heavy timbers and surfaced with weatherboards. It has numerous doors and windows of various sizes. The barn is located slightly uphill to the northeast of the house. There are several smaller, wood-framed agricultural outbuildings around the house and barn; two of these are located in the vicinity of the original location of the Tanner house.

Eighty yards northeast of the mill complex is the miller's house. This house is situated among large deciduous trees on a rise of ground at the edge of a field. The house itself is small, one and a half stories high, with a gable roof that slopes into a shed roof in the rear. A one-story shed room has been added to the front of the house. The front door opens onto a simple wooden deck, possibly the remains of a shed porch. The house is built of frame construction surfaced with severely weathered clapboards and rests on crude stone piers.

### Non-contributing Buildings and Structures

One non-contributing building is present at Tanner's Mill: a mid-twentieth-century storage building. This storage building is located south of the mill and west of the bridge at a corner in the road. It is a one-story, wood-framed building with a low gable roof and board-and-batten siding.

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### Archaeology

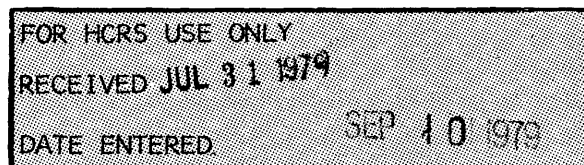
Tanner's Mill is archaeologically unknown. However, there are indications of archaeological resources in the area. As mentioned above, upstream from the extant industrial complex are remnants of the foundations of the Walnut Factory. The present 1886 grist mill replaced an earlier one on the same site about which little is known. Details of George Lumpkin's development prior to David Tanner's 1833 purchase are scanty. The Tanner house was moved in the early-twentieth century, and its original location on the property is known. Also, often associated with such industrial complexes are the residences of employers and employees; while the Tanner house and the miller's house have survived, there are no other structural remains of such a community. Although the archaeology of Tanner's Mill has not been investigated, archaeological potential is inferred from the site and its historical documentation.

### Boundaries

Boundaries for Tanner's Mill are drawn to include all the important buildings and structures: the grist and flour mill, the cotton gin, the site of the Walnut Factory, the dam with its watergate and raceway, the mill pond, the truss bridge, the Tanner house, and the miller's house. The boundaries also include enough land around the complex to illustrate its rural setting. As a convenience, the boundaries have been adjusted to correspond with the legal boundaries of the property northwest of Tanner's Mill Road (State Route 211). These legal boundaries have apparently been intact since 1882. No resources, known or inferred, are believed to exist on the southeast side of Tanner's Mill Road.

### Photographs of Machinery

Machinery and equipment at Tanner's Mill have been described above. At the owner's request, photographs of this machinery and equipment were not taken.



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Mill Corn Meal were sold throughout Hall and neighboring counties; by implication, raw material for the mill was drawn from the same market. Because of its capacity and diversity, Tanner's Mill became a center for local commerce in this area.

Even more unusual than the milling equipment and the breastshot waterwheel is the cotton gin at Tanner's Mill. Built during the 1830s, this cotton gin is one of a very few waterpowered gin mills surviving in Georgia. It operated off an overshot waterwheel (now disconnected) with water from the raceway shared with the grist and corn mill. The cotton-gin building is now decaying, and the extent and condition of the ginning equipment has not been appraised. The cotton gin was last operated during a demonstration in 1958.

Ruins, mostly subsurface, are all that is left of a small textile factory known as the Walnut Factory at Tanner's Mill. Between 1835 and 1870, wool was carded and spun into yarn at this facility. During the Civil War, it produced material for the Confederate armies. Little is known about its architecture and equipment. A contemporary of the grist and flour mill and the cotton gin, the Walnut Factory represents further diversification of industry and trade at Tanner's Mill.

The bridge at Tanner's Mill is significant in terms of its engineering and for the desperate commercial venture it represents. A single-span, riveted, Warren pony truss with wood decking, it is a good example of early-twentieth-century bridges in rural Georgia. Built by the Tanner family in 1914, the bridge was an attempt to meet the regional competition of larger consolidated mills in Gainesville by accommodating the increasingly heavy automobile and truck traffic. The attempt was largely futile, and Tanner's Mill was destined to serve a steadily shrinking local market in the twentieth century.

Complementing the industrial buildings at Tanner's Mill are two residences. The Tanner house, a variation of the plain-style Georgia farmhouse, was built by mill owner David Tanner in the mid-nineteenth century, perhaps as early as the 1830s, and was occupied by mill owners into the twentieth century. Although remodeled in the twentieth century, the original part of the house retains its identity through its overall proportions and some of its detailing, including a fine chimney; although moved a short distance uphill to escape the danger of flooding, the house at its current location effectively illustrates the relationship between a rural mill and its owner's resi-

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dence. Associated with this house are a large barn and several smaller out-buildings, providing mute testimony to the agricultural imperatives of rural life in nineteenth-century Georgia. The miller's house, built nearby in 1895, is a much more modest dwelling, although typical of its type. It illustrates the relationship between a rural mill and the residence of its foreman. Together, the Tanner house and the miller's house suggest the development of a mill village in the vicinity, of which no other traces are known to exist.

Archaeological Significance

Archaeologically, the few hints supplied by the Walnut Factory remains and the historical sources suggest that the Tanner's Mill complex may be more elaborate than the surviving structures indicate. Indeed, a small community may have existed in the vicinity. Archaeological investigation of the Walnut Factory site and the inferred mill village would add to our knowledge about the development and decline of these seemingly simple rural industrial communities. Similar investigation of the mill site itself would provide information about earlier or destroyed structures on the site. Investigation of the original site of the Tanner house would supply information about its original situation. If a full understanding of the development and decline of rural industrial complexes such as Tanner's Mill is desired, then all of the resource potential -- inferred as well as observed -- must be recognized.

Historical Narrative

Tanner's Mill is located on a portion of land deeded to Zachariah Coxe in the late-eighteenth century. George Lumpkin purchased some 670 acres of this property and established the first grist and saw mills here by the early-nineteenth century. In 1833, David Tanner bought the property. During the 1830s, he built the cotton gin and the Walnut Factory; he undoubtedly made improvements to the waterworks, and he may have built the Tanner house during this decade as well. In 1886, Moses T. Tanner, one of David's nine children, replaced the earlier grist mill with the combination grist and flour mill presently located on the site; he also equipped it with the breastshot waterwheel. In 1895, he built the miller's house. At the turn of the century, most, if not all, of the equipment inside the mill was replaced. In 1914, the truss

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bridge was erected. In 1918, the Tanner house was moved uphill to lessen the danger of flooding. The Tanner family continued to own and operate the industry until 1955, when the property was sold to J.V. (Buck) Jones. The cotton gin was last used in a demonstration run in 1958. In the winter of 1961, a flood damaged the dam and weakened the raceway; the mill has not operated since then. In recent years, additions have been made to the south side of the Tanner house, and a storage building was built near the mill. At some time, the original wooden-trough raceway was largely replaced by a steel-and-masonry penstock. Floods continue to inflict damage on the dam, watergate, and raceway.

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Atlanta Journal and Constitution Magazine, May 12, 1974.

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July 22, 1964.

Samford, Charles. Unpublished report on Tanner's Mill complex, 1974.

Russell, Scott, and Morton McInvale. Draft of National Register nomination  
form, September, 1977.

### Other Sources

Mr. Henry Kidd, Tanner's Mill Road, Gainesville, Ga.

Mrs. Jessie Saye, Gainesville, Ga.

Mr. Milton Tanner, Gainesville, Ga.

Mr. Marvin Tanner, Tanner's Mill Road, Gainesville, Ga.

Dr. James Brittain, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Ga.