

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Tallassee Falls Manufacturing Company
other names/site number Tallassee Mills (preferred); Barnett, Micou & Company; Mount Vernon Woodberry Cotton Duck Co.; Mount Vernon Mills, Inc.; Barnett & Marks

2. Location

street & number 1844 Old Mill Road

N/A	not for publication
N/A	vicinity

city or town Tallassee
state Alabama code AL county Elmore code 051 zip code 36078

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national x statewide local

Elsaund H. Stinson
Signature of certifying official/Title

March 7, 2010
Date

Alabama Historical Commission (SHPO)
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

See above
Signature of the Keeper

4/26/10
Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

☒ private
☐ public - Local
☐ public - State
☐ public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4		buildings
		district
6	4	site
	4	structure
		object
10	8	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility

INDUSTRY: warehouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone

walls: Stone

roof: Wood

other:

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(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and Significant features.)

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Located on the west side of the Tallapoosa River, the Tallassee Mills Manufacturing Company was first chartered by the Alabama Assembly on December 31, 1841 "at the great falls of Tallassee" in Elmore County, Alabama. The first mill structures were built on a rise overlooking the river, but later structures were erected on the side or at the bottom of the hill. The buildings constructed on the rise and on the hillside are no longer extant. The five stone buildings and ruins at the bottom of the hill, constructed between 1844 and 1888, remain as testament that the Tallassee Mill was one of the great 19th century textile complexes of the South. Remnants of the original 1844 water raceway that extended from the Duck Mill to the river also survive. The site of Warehouse No. 2, constructed c. 1886, and the site of the Wheel House/Machine Shop, constructed 1884-88, are located within the boundaries of the property.

The mill complex includes approximately 4.9 acres of property owned by the Historic Talisi Preservation Society. It is still the most prominent landmark in Tallassee with its stone structures visible from many points along the river, across the bridge, and from the downtown commercial district. The following resources are included within the Tallassee Mill complex:

Narrative Description

- 1) **Duck Mill Ruins (Contributing):** The Duck Mill is now in ruins but was once the most impressive structure of the Tallassee Mills complex. Constructed between 1852 and 1854 of native blue granite and virgin pine, the building originally had four stories and was shaped like a "T" (a long, rectangular north-south section measuring approximately 219'4" X 44'9" with a smaller section projecting 46'3" from the east façade). Improvements were made between 1878 and 1880 including a fifth story added to the 1852 core and a four-story east rectangular wing (113'0" X 71'9") (1) A small one-story brick structure believed to date from c. 1945 projects from the east wing. Once the improvements were completed, the duck mill contained 122,000 square feet of floor space and over a million cubic feet of enclosed space. (2)

The walls of the 1852 section are approximately four feet thick at the base and two feet thick at the fifth floor. The building had been topped with a low-pitched hip roof but it collapsed in recent years due to lack of maintenance, the elements and, most important, the removal (c. 1993) of the internal floors that made up the five floor levels. Fenestration included over 450 rectangular windows, each originally double-hung with 12 panes of glass in each sash. Each window opening still displays stone lintels and sills. Most of the original windows have been removed, although a few survive in a deteriorated condition. Two exterior staircases rise to the fifth level on the north and south facades. A stone belt course visually separates the first and second levels and the fourth and fifth levels. Italian stone masons were employed to help with the construction of the duck mill and their handiwork is evident throughout the massive structure. Among the masons who came to work on this construction was Isaac Pienezza. After his work on the mill, he made his home in Tallassee until his death about forty years later. Bill Anthony of the Talisi Historical Preservation Society describes some of the engineering feats and monumental features of the Duck Mill building:

"The classical stone masonry Roman arch, as found in the coliseum and aqueducts of ancient Rome, can be found in several places throughout the main (Duck) mill building. There is one archway which measures the span of over 36 feet and is built in a wall that is a full five feet thick. From the bedrock of the river, the eight foot thick foundations were laid up of hand-cut stone blocks to support walls that rise five stories above ground level to a height of over 70 feet. While perfectly plumb on the outside, the inside walls gradually taper from their eight-foot thick bases to about 20 inches at the very top of the 5th story wall. The floors are supported by a post and beam system that was in itself a masterpiece of engineering, given the fact that modern day machinery was not available for its construction. All the posts and beams were held together by large hand cut, wooden pegs. A typical ground floor support beam measured 14 inches across by 18 inches deep and is 24 feet in length. Each of them represented one third or one fourth of a whole tree that was cut from the virgin long-leaf pine forests that surrounded Tallassee during the 1800's. The subflooring, too, was made of virgin heart-pine...Each floor board (was) three inches thick by 12 inches wide and averaging 24 feet in length (and) each was

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tongue and grooved to its neighbor and again held in place by large wooden pegs driven into holes bored into the beams below..." (3) (photos 15-21, 23)

2) First Textile Mill/Confederate Armory (Contributing): This was the first mill building constructed at the Tallassee Mills. It was under construction in 1844 when the Pepperell mills were being established in Maine and at a time when there were fewer than fifty mills in operation in the entire South. (4) Built in 1844, this original mill building is an L-shaped one-story structure with a raised basement and an attic. The northeast façade faces the Tallapoosa River. An attached two-story wing is located to the southeast. Crowned with a gable roof, the building is constructed of locally quarried blue granite. Fenestration includes small dormers at the attic level and evenly spaced rectangular window openings, some still retaining their early frames and 12 over 12 sash. The window openings display stone lintels and sills. A concrete (c. 1940) ramp leads to the main entrance of the building. Much of its interior is still intact including its open plan, and virgin heart-pine floors, beams and columns. The attic still contains numerous mill documents contained on shelves and in cabinets. According to local tradition, the first machinery for the mill was bought from an ironworks in Prattville, Alabama. Early on, this building was used as a museum for early Tallassee relics. Future plans also include a museum after it has been restored. (5) A bell tower that once stood atop the armory has been removed and restored. It bears the following inscription on one side: "Tallassee Falls M'fg. Co. Ala." McShane Bell Foundry Henry McShane & Co., Baltimore Md. 1886. (6) The bell tower will be reinstalled after the mill building has been restored.

This building served as Tallassee's first textile mill from 1844 until 1853 when the mill was expanded. During the Civil War, while the 1852 Duck Mill continued to produce cotton duck for tent and cot cloth, uniforms, and other clothing, the original mill building became the Confederate Armory. Carbine rifles used by the Confederacy were manufactured here. In 1864, over 500 muzzle-loading carbines (.58 caliber) were manufactured under its roof. (7) (photos 1-8)

3) Picker House Ruins (Contributing): Located north of the Duck Mill, the 1888 Picker house was originally a one-story stone building used to process the raw cotton. The structure had measured approximately 60 feet wide by 100 feet long. In recent years, the roof collapsed and it is now in ruins. Only the basic outline of the building and a small portion of the east wall survive.

4) Boiler Room (Contributing): In 1844, a small stone building was constructed about 150 feet southwest of the armory. It was used as a boiler room for the operation. Crowned with a central, small projecting stone vent, the one-story blue granite building is rectangular in shape and displays decorative stone quoins. The building was recently restored for use as a meeting room. Some of the original electrical wiring was retained and is now visible under glass. Two arched entrances are located on the front (east) façade; another arched entrance is located on the south façade. A new wood ramp, stairs and deck have been added to the east and south facades. (photos 9-11)

5) Office Warehouse (Contributing): Located at the southwest corner of the mill, this 1884 building is built of native stone. Its dimensions are 40 feet wide by 90 feet long. Crowned with a gable roof (gable ends facing north-south), the warehouse displays decorative stone quoins. On the east façade, three concrete steps lead to a central entrance. This entrance is flanked by another two openings that are now enclosed. A more recent small projection is located near the northeast corner. Additional fenestration includes three rectangular windows (now with one over one sash) on the east façade, five evenly spaced rectangular windows (now with one over one sash) on both the north and south façades. (photos 12-13)

6) Site of Raceway (Contributing): The raceway that carried the water to drive the mill's turbines was the heartbeat of the mill. A portion of this stone raceway is still visible although the section extending to the river is now covered by the Alabama Power Company building. According to Bill Anthony of the Talisi Historical Preservation Society, the raceway, like the mill, is another fine example of the stone cutter's art. "It is somewhat reminiscent of a cobblestone roadway, 24 feet in width, with stone walls five feet thick and laid up four feet high on the lower side and over seven feet in height on the upper side. It at one time extended from a point near the present day hydro-electric dam, past the first mill and all the way to the center of the main duck mill. The raceway was originally designed in 1844 to carry water to the wheel of the first mill (the later Confederate Armory) and was extended in the 1856 expansion to channel an enormous flow of water into a huge tubular conduit made of riveted boiler plate iron, a part of which may also still be seen inside the mill. This great iron tube some nine feet in diameter was connected directly to the first turbine in the new larger mill." (8)

"From this point, the water rushed through the turbine and began its exit back to the river, flowing through yet another architectural stone wonder, the tailrace. The tailrace is a huge manmade stone tunnel somewhat over 13 feet wide and tall enough for a six foot man to walk through it. This tunnel is over 150 feet long with a barrel-vaulted ceiling that forms a

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continuous stone arch for its entire length. At its beginning point, it junctures with the area where the great turbine still lies resting from the tremendous task it once performed, opening into a room that is more like a cave than a manmade structure. The walls again are of hand cut stone laid up to support a ceiling that rises to a height of over 40 feet. At the top of these walls, huge blocks of granite continue to arc gracefully upward from both sides towards the center, eventually meeting to form the great stone arch that is spread across this man-made cavern like a giant bridge. . . There is also another turbine located in the tailrace tunnel that was positioned to take advantage of the last bit of energy from the flowing water as it exited the tailrace on its return trip to the river." (9)

"The water from the headrace fed two still existing turbines that are located beneath the Main Mill. The turbines, using a system of flywheels and large belts, drove the spindles and looms used in the production of cotton duck, one of the main products of the mill. The turbines are located in an almost subterranean chasm carved out of the granite extrusion on which the mill is built and will hereafter be referred to as the "chunnel". Some wooden scaffolding and a latrine are located above the primary turbine and allow access to the chunnel by way of a ladder. The chunnel was responsible for the outflow discharges, from the turbines to the Tallapoosa River. The chunnel is almost 270 feet long and is characterized by carved granite block and granite block arches ten to fifteen feet in diameter. There are two additional "rooms" adjacent to the chunnel, both were accessible from the Duck Mill extension." (10)

7) Site of the Wheel House/Machine Shop (Contributing): The 1993 Historic American Building Survey (HABS) identified the location of the wheel house/ machine shop constructed between 1884-1888 (demolished before 1913). This two-story stone structure contained a blacksmith shop, foundry, gristmill, and carpentry shop. (11) A gin was located on the upper floor of the machine shop. The ginner hauled the baskets of seeds cotton upstairs for ginning and afterward lowered them to the ground for manufacture. (12) This structure was located between the original mill building and the 1878-80 duck mill addition just south of the picker house.

8) Site of the Weave Shed (Contributing): The 1993 Historic American Building Survey (HABS) identified the location of the one-and-a-half story frame weave shed "with clerestory", which was constructed in 1886 (demolished before 1930). (13) Before it was a weave shed, a gristmill had been at this site. (14)

9) Site of Dye House/Packing Building (Contributing): The 1993 Historic American Building Survey (HABS) identified the location of the two story stone Dye House and Packing building , which was constructed c. 1860. (15)

10) Site of Warehouse No. 2 (Contributing): The one-story warehouse, built c. 1886, was standing until a fire demolished it in 2006.

11a-h) Ruins or Partial Ruins of "Fire Projection" Stations (Non-Contributing) The ruins (4 structures) or partial ruins (4 structures) of eight small "fire projection" stations are located throughout the mill complex. Believed to have been constructed during the 1940s of wood and metal, these structures served as look-out stations for possible fires within the complex. Today, these stations are covered in vegetation and are in full or partial ruins. (photo 22)

Historic District Expansion Component

Although no formal historical survey of Tallassee has been completed, the potential for expanding the Tallassee Falls Manufacturing Company district is high. Areas around the site, and especially throughout the city of Tallassee, may include additional resources related to the history of the mills.

FOOTNOTES SECTION 7

- 1 Sheet 5, HABS documentation, drawn by Douglas J. Hervey, 1993.
- 2 Page 6, A Wake-Up Call: Is History Worth Saving? Tallassee's Time is Slipping Away! Bill Anthony, The Talisi Historical Preservation Society, unpublished document, 2008.
- 3 Page 4-5 A Wake-Up Call: Is History Worth Saving? Tallassee's Time is Slipping Away! Bill Anthony, The Talisi Historical Preservation Society, unpublished document, 2008
- 4 Page 18, A History of Tallassee, Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949

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- 5 Page 18 A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949
- 6 Page 18-20 A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949
- 7 General Fact Sheet, William E. Goss, Historian, Talisi Historical Preservation Society, January 30, 2009.
- 8 Page 6-7, A Wake-Up Call: Is History Worth Saving? Tallassee's Time is Slipping Away! Bill Anthony, The Talisi Historical Preservation Society, unpublished document, 2008
- 9 Page 7, A Wake-Up Call: Is History Worth Saving? Tallassee's Time is Slipping Away! Bill Anthony, The Talisi Historical Preservation Society, unpublished document, 2008
- 10 Page 8, A Wake-Up Call: Is History Worth Saving? Tallassee's Time is Slipping Away! Bill Anthony, The Talisi Historical Preservation Society, unpublished document, 2008
- 11 Sheet 5, HABS documentation, drawn by Douglas J. Hervey, 1993. Note: Virginia Noble Golden in A History of Tallassee (see page 34) states that the machine shop was 3 stories instead of 2 as stated on the HABS site plan.
- 12 Page 34, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949
- 13 Sheet 5, HABS documentation, drawn by Douglas J. Hervey, 1993.
- 14 Page 34, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden
- 15 Sheet 5, HABS documentation, drawn by Douglas J. Hervey, 1993.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☒ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHAEOLOGY: Historic Non-Aboriginal

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1844-1888

Significant Dates

1844; 1852-1854; 1864; 1884; 1888

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

American (Southern)

Architect/Builder

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the Tallassee Mills complex extends from 1844-1888. This includes the 1844 construction of the first mill building and the boiler room to the 1888 construction of the Picker House (now in ruins), which was the last major building erected at the *original antebellum mill complex* on the Tallassee side of the river. Significant dates also include: 1864, the date when the first mill building became the Confederate Armory; 1852-54 when the Duck Mill was constructed; and 1884 when the office warehouse was built.

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Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance And applicable criteria.)

Tallassee Mills has statewide significance under **Criterion C: Architecture**. The Tallassee Mill complex in Tallassee is significant as the only surviving pre-Civil War cotton textile mill in Alabama and one of only eight *known* antebellum cotton textile mills in the Southeast. (1) By 1860, there were 27 cotton mills in Alabama. Most of these were rather small establishments such as the Cabaniss Company mill in northern Madison County which only produced yarn. The only antebellum cotton mill in Alabama that may have rivaled the Tallassee Mill Complex in terms of size, scale and architecture was the Bell Factory in Huntsville, but, unfortunately, it is no longer extant. The Tallassee Mill complex, therefore, is Alabama's sole example of antebellum cotton mill architecture. The original 1844-52 Tallassee Mill complex is a rare visual link to the antebellum cotton textile industry of the Old South. Its original 1844 building is remarkably intact and the 1852 duck mill is one of the largest ruins in the South.

Tallassee Mills has statewide significance under **Criterion D: Archeology**. Although no formal archaeological survey has been made of this property, the potential for subsurface remains is high. The 1993 Historic American Building Survey (HABS) identified additional buildings constructed between 1860 and 1886 that are no longer standing. Buried portions of these structures, and perhaps others, may contain significant information that may be useful in interpreting the entire property.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

With 159 mills constructed in the Southeast by 1860, these facilities were built during a period of rising southern nationalism, which occurred during the late antebellum period. (2) Southern leaders believed that industrial development – especially *cotton*-related industry – had to go hand-in-hand with the expansion of the region's traditional agrarian society if the South was to lessen its dependence on the northern states. In this sense, construction of cotton mill complexes, such as those at Tallassee during the 1840s and 1850s, represented a sort of declaration of southern industrial independence. Furthermore, the 1844 Tallassee Mill armory (originally the first building constructed at the Tallassee Mill) is also significant as one of only three surviving Confederate armories in the country, as well as being the most intact of the three.

Developmental history/additional historic context information

The Tallassee Falls Manufacturing Company was first chartered by the State Legislature on December 31, 1841, "at the great falls" to Barent DuBois and his associates and "on the East side" to Hickerson Burnham and his associates. However, Thomas Meriwether Barnett was believed to be the driving force behind the building of the Tallassee Mills. Family tradition has it that after he rode through this area in the late 1820's, he came upon the falls and realized their industrial potential. (3) The land around the falls on both sides of the river belonged to Barent DuBois and on January 24, 1844, a deed was recorded at the Tallapoosa County Courthouse in Dadeville, Alabama, whereby DuBois and William M. Marks received permission "to erect a dam on the Tallapoosa River from the west side to the island above the falls and to construct a race or canal-way over and above what may be sufficient to propel the machinery necessary for cleaning, spinning and weaving cotton and bleaching and dyeing the same in a factory about to be erected by said Thomas M. Barnett and William M. Marks." Three years later, in 1847, Barnett and Marks purchased, for the sum of \$7,000.00, extensive additional lands on the east and west banks of the river from Barent and Milly DuBois.(4)

The first Tallassee mill was under construction at the time when the Pepperell mills were being established in Maine and at a time when there were fewer than fifty mills in operation in the entire South. The mill at Tallassee was the second to be established in the state for the manufacture of cotton cloth; the first was the Bell Factory in 1832, on the Flint River north of Huntsville, Alabama. Although the Cabaniss Company of Huntsville had a mill as early as 1818, it manufactured only yarns. (5)

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The first mill building was built on the falls and constructed of native stone around 1844. A small stone boiler room was also constructed during this year. Tradition has it that the first machinery for the mill was bought from an ironworks in Prattville, Alabama, possibly from Daniel Pratt's. The building contained 1000 throstle spindles, 600 mule spindles, 36 looms, and other supporting machinery. The factory, first known as Barnett and Marks, was able to process 1000 pounds of cotton per day, and the water power, according to owners, Barnett and Marks, was "sufficient to supply several factories." (6) The Tallassee Mill began full production in 1845 with a capital investment of only \$30,000, completely funded by Barnett and Marks. Within a few years, the cotton mill reported a 15 per cent return on the capital invested. Local cotton from nearby plantations was often purchased by the mills. Tallassee first manufactured high quality cotton yarns that went mostly to Northern markets. In time, however, merchants from Mobile, Montgomery, New Orleans, and inland towns and cities began to praise the Tallassee cloth for its superior durability and uniform quality. (7)

While Thomas Barnett hired experienced supervisors from the North to train the workers and oversee the different operations of the mill, the overall management remained in his hands until his death in 1857. (8) Through their connection with the Barnetts, the families of MiCou and Gilmer (after whom streets in Tallassee are named) came to the city of Tallassee and put capital into the mills. In 1851, the interest held in the mill by W.M. Marks (who quit the enterprise to return to cotton planting) was bought out by Thomas M. Barnett's son, Thomas, Jr., his nephews, James J. and William B. Gilmer, and Frederick W. Jordan. The company name changed to Barnett, Gilmer and Company. Under a new act of the legislature, the company was incorporated in 1852 as the Tallassee Falls Manufacturing Company. During this year, the new owners began expanding the mill with the construction of a second building, the "Duck Mill", which was four stories and executed in native stone. Italian stone masons were known to have been involved with the construction of this impressive and monumental building. In 1854, the interests of the Gilmers and Jordan were bought out and Nicholas Barnett and Benjamin MiCou took over the company. (9) The Tallassee Mills then became known as "Barnett, MiCou and Company.

From 1861-1864, the Tallassee Mills – then known as "Barnett, MiCou and Company" – not only escaped destruction from the Civil War but also played an important role in the Confederate War effort. While the 1852 Duck Mill continued to produce cotton duck for tent and cot cloth, uniforms, and other clothing, the original 1844 mill building became the Confederate Armory. In 1864, over 500 muzzle-loading carbines (.58 caliber) were manufactured under its roof. There were two unsuccessful attempts to locate and destroy the Tallassee Confederate armory. The first, known as Rousseau's Raid, took place in 1864 but the attempt to reach Tallassee was not successful. In 1865, 13,000 Union soldiers under General J. H. Wilson were sent to Alabama to destroy "manufactories, army stores, and ironworks in Alabama." (10) A detachment from this command set out to destroy the Tallassee armory but this attempt was also unsuccessful. The old 1844 mill building is among the most intact Confederate armories still standing in this country. (11)

The Tallassee Mills continued to run and prosper until 1872. However, mill owners and investors (some of whom were mill employees who invested in company stock) suffered greatly during the financial panic of 1872. The property went into the hands of receivers who operated the mills until 1874 when it was sold at auction in Montgomery. The Tallassee Mills (still known as the Tallassee Mills Manufacturing Company) were then purchased by David Clopton, J. Rhodes Browne, John W. Durr, and D.S. Troy, who made many additions and improvements to the complex. (12) A New York Times article dated February 26, 1877, stated that the South was becoming "the workshop of the world" with "the largest cotton factory in Alabama" being the "Tallassee Manufacturing Company in Tallassee." (13)

Beginning in 1878, a fifth story and large four-story addition was added to the main duck mill. A stone warehouse was constructed in 1884 and a frame "weave shed" on the old gristmill site, a one-story warehouse and a three-story machine shop were constructed in 1886. In 1888, a one-story picker house was also erected on the mill complex. During the years between 1895 and 1900, the Tallassee Mills embarked on a large expansion program. This included the construction of a railroad – chartered in 1895 as the Tallassee and Montgomery Railroad – to connect Tallassee with the Western Railway of Alabama at Milstead, a bridge across the river at Tallassee, a new and larger dam, a new power plant, and a new mill on the other side of the river. (14) Constructed between 1897 and 1898, the new mill, known as the East Tallassee mill or "number two", was a four-story stone building measuring 450 feet long and 125 feet wide and connected by a bridgeway with a smaller "picker building" also of four stories in height. (15)

Since this compound now has a different owner from the original Tallassee Mill (and because it is in a different location across the Tallapoosa River in East Tallassee, Tallapoosa County), it is not being included in this National Register nomination.

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In 1900, the Tallassee Falls Manufacturing Company became a part of the Mount Vernon-Woodberry Cotton Duck Company. This company was formed by the consolidation of the Columbia Duck Mills of Columbia, South Carolina; the Mount Vernon Company and the Woodberry Manufacturing Company of Baltimore, Maryland; and the Tallassee Falls Manufacturing Company of Tallassee, Alabama. (16) For over sixty years, the Tallassee Mills produced cotton duck cloth, wool and other products on both sides of the river. During the late 1960s, however, the Mount Vernon Corporation closed the original mill, thus creating an entire complex of empty buildings. The East Tallassee mill operated until 2005 when Mount Vernon closed its doors for good. This was the final chapter for an institution touted in the last decade as the nation's oldest continuously running textile mill. (17)

In 1991, a consortium purchased the original mill complex with plans to rehabilitate the five-story duck mill. Instead, the group removed the window sash and gutted the interior, including much of its heart-pine floors, and salvaged the materials for commercial resale. The consortium then abandoned the project altogether. With the mill building depleted of its interior structural system – along with damage from a severe thunderstorm in 1999 - the central portion of the roof collapsed taking down sections of the upper floors. Today, the duck mill is a spectacular ruin awaiting stabilization. Preservationists and city officials are working together to save this ruin so that it can be the focal point of a community park. The other mill buildings will also be preserved, with current plans calling for the original 1844 mill/Confederate armory to be converted into a museum.

Note: The "number two" mill complex today sits empty and will soon be partially dismantled by a salvage company the upper floors.

Cotton Mills in Alabama and Throughout the South

Alabama's first cotton mills were small enterprises located along the falls of the Tennessee River tributaries and mostly limited to the spinning of yarn for regional consumption. The 1810 census reported 22 cotton mills in the Mississippi Territory. The first record of a cotton mill in the state of Alabama was that of the Charles Cabaniss Factory on Barren Creek in north Madison County. (18) However, the most significant development of Alabama's textile manufactures during this time was the transformation of Joseph Harding's spinning mill near Huntsville into a "well-managed, rapidly expanding" cotton and wool factor. (19) After Harding's death, the new owners incorporated the mill in 1832 as the Bell Factory. Some historians believe that the success at Bell Factory made it "the state's foremost industrial establishment until it was eclipsed by the Daniel Pratt enterprises in the 1840's." (20) The mill operated until 1885. Other operations followed, including David Scott's 1837 cotton mill complex at Tuscaloosa.

The cotton mill industry in Alabama and throughout the South grew steadily in the early 19th century. By 1850, there were one hundred fifty-nine (159) factories in eleven southern states. The number was the same in 1860, but expansion of these factories resulted in a 43% increase in the value of their product. (21) In 1860, Georgia had 35; Tennessee had 13; Virginia had 27, North Carolina had 28, Maryland had 24, South Carolina had 18 and Alabama had 27. (22) On the eve of the Civil War, these mills employed 9,906 people, of whom approximately two-thirds were female, and the average wage was \$145.41 per year. The South at the time produced one-third of the national output of yarn. (23)

The Southern states had at least three advantages in the early development of cotton mills: an abundant water source along the fall line; a procurement of cheap white labor and the availability of clean, freshly-picked cotton, undamaged by shipping and exposure. (24) Still, many Southerners preferred northern textiles over local products until a growing nationalism encouraged liberation from Northern exploitation. One of the most influential voices advocating Southern economic nationalism was DeBow's Review of the Southern and Western States. This periodical reflected the interests of the merchants, the planters, and the businessmen of the South. Hoping to stimulate interest in cotton manufactures, industrial reformers recounted the benefits which local cotton mills offered planters. (25)

One of the most influential promoters of the Southern textile industry was William Gregg of Charleston, South Carolina. In 1846, Gregg built a model cotton mill at Graniteville, South Carolina, near Augusta, Georgia. It was built of granite, along with the eighty-five Gothic-style houses for his workers. Today, the Graniteville complex is a National Historic Landmark (1978).

In Alabama, Daniel Pratt emerged as the leading voice for industrialization, and his own well-publicized experiment using poor white labor in a cotton factory became the model for much of Alabama's cotton mill expansion through the early

Tallassee Mills

Name of Property

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1850's. (26) A native of New Hampshire, Pratt started his manufacturing career in Alabama when he moved to Autauga County in 1833. He founded the new town of Prattville for the workers in his first venture, a cotton gin factory. This operation quickly became the largest producer of cotton gins in the world, and Alabama's first major industry. As his business grew, he branched out into other enterprises including erecting an 1850's textile mill. On September 10, 2002, a tragic fire destroyed the mill, which had been one of Alabama's two remaining antebellum cotton mills--the other being the Tallassee Mill in Tallassee.

Although the South had 159 cotton textile mills on the eve of the Civil War, the number may be no more than 8 that survive today either intact or in ruins. (27) The original 1844-52 Tallassee Mill complex is a rare visual link to this antebellum cotton textile industry that once dominated the Old South. Its original 1844 building is remarkably intact and the 1852 duck mill is one of the largest ruins in the South.

Documentation supporting the claim that the 1844Tallassee Mills building is one of only three surviving Confederate Armories (the other two are located at Columbia, SC and Athens, GA):

According to a December 1864 report by Confederate Ordinance Bureau Chief Gorgas to Secretary of War Seddon in *Official Records: Correspondence, Orders, Reports, and Returns of the Confederate Authorities from January 1, 1864, to the End, Series IV – Vol. III*, (manuscript at Cornell University), page 987, five armories were producing arms: Richmond, VA; Fayetteville, NC; Columbia, SC; Athens, GA; and Tallassee, AL. Henry P. Beers' guide to Confederate archival sources shows more armories and arsenals than appear in Gorgas' report: Asheville, NC; Fayetteville, NC; Holly Springs, MS; Macon, GA; Richmond, VA; and Tallasee, AL. The Beers' guide does **not** include the Athens, GA, facility and he lists the Columbia, SC facility as an arsenal and not an armory.

The following contains current (May 2009) information on the above armories:

Richmond, VA: known as the Virginia Manufactory of Arms, no longer exists (John Coski, May 13, 2009)

Columbia, SC: the three-story Palmetto Iron Works and Armory, c. 1850, was partially destroyed by Union forces in Feb. 1865; the 1st floor still stands today at the corner of Laurel and Lincoln streets and has been remodeled (May 2009) as a recreation center

Asheville, NC: burned by U.S. troops, April 1865 (John Preston Arthur's *Western North Carolina: A History, 1730-1913*, publ. 1914, pg. 603)

Fayetteville, NC: burned 1865 by Gen. Sherman's army, March 14, 1865 (Fayetteville, NC, Military Sites tour map)

Athens, GA: Cook and Brother Confederate Armory, 1862, purchased by the Athens Manufacturing Co. in 1870; converted into a weaving mill; later part of University of Georgia; remodeled as offices and now used as the Business Outreach Services building and Small Business Development Center.

Macon, GA: at time of its construction in 1863, this was the largest armory in the Confederate States; started to be dismantled in 1873; completely removed by 1879 (information from Macon Armory page, internet, May 14, 2009)

Tallassee, AL: 1844 mill building is the oldest and most intact Confederate armory

Holly Springs, MS: – burned by Gen. Earl Van Dorn (Marshall County Museum, May 13, 2009)

(Credit is given to John Coski, Historian and Director of Library and Research of The Museum of the Confederacy, Richmond, VA, May 13, 2009, for valuable information on Confederate Armories).

Documentation supporting the claim that the Tallassee Mills complex is one of only a few (less than 10) surviving antebellum textile mills in the country:

According to A. E. Parkins in the *Antebellum South: A Geographer's Interpretation*, (1931), there were 159 southern cotton textile mills in 1860. An informal survey of the SHPO offices from Virginia to Mississippi, along with other research, indicates that today (2009) there may be no more than 8 that survive either intact or in ruins.

Tallassee Mills

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A sampling, by state:

Virginia: it appears as though there are no surviving antebellum textile mills (none appear in a listing of the National and Virginia registers; internet search; preliminary research)

North Carolina: Randolph Manufacturing Co., Franklinville, 1836; Salem Manufacturing Co., 1837, now renovated as the Brooktown Inn, Winston-Salem

South Carolina: Graniteville Mill complex, Graniteville, 1847, NHL 1978

Georgia: New Manchester Mill, 1849, Sweetwater Creek State Park, Douglas Co. (RUINS); Scull Shoals Manufacturing Company, 1834, Oconee Co. (RUINS); Roswell Manufacturing Co., 1838, 1854, managed by NPS as part of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, Fulton Co. (RUINS); Concord Bridge Woolen Mill in Cobb CO., 1847 (RUINS) (info. from Steven Moffson, Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources, March 27, 2009)

Alabama: Tallassee Mills, 1844-1854, 1888, Tallassee (Elmore Co.)

Mississippi: no antebellum textile mills survive today (according to Narvell Strickland in *A History of Mississippi Cotton Mills and Mill Villages*, October 1998, the state's four textile mills at Woodville, Jackson, and Penitentiary were destroyed by General Grant in 1863; the Bankston mill was destroyed later)

Additional research in the future may uncover the locations of other surviving antebellum textile mills in the above states or other southern locations, but as of May 2009, there appear to be only four intact mills (2 in North Carolina; 1 in South Carolina; and 1 in Alabama) and four (Georgia) mills in ruinous conditions.

FOOTNOTES SECTION 8

- 1 See Section 8 Attachment A, Page 17-19, for a national comparison of Confederate armories and antebellum textile mills
- 2 A History of the Old South. Clement Eaton, The Macmillan Company, NY, 1949, page 428. Also, Encyclopedia of Southern Culture, Vols. 1-4. Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris, Anchor Books, Doubleday, NY, 1989. Pages 514-15.
- 3 Page 17, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949
- 4 A History of the Old South. Clement Eaton, The Macmillan Company, NY, 1949, page 428.
- 5 Page 18, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949
- 6 Page 18, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Page 86, Montgomery Tri Weekly Flag and Advertiser, July 29, 1848, as appeared in The Cotton Mill Movement in Antebellum Alabama. Randall M. Miller, Edition: 2, Ayer Publishing, 1978 (Originally presented as the author's thesis, Ohio State University, 1971)
- 9 Page 20, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949
- 10 Page 29, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949; also, History of the Tallassee Mills-Part Three, Tallassee Mills From 1860-1870, William E. Goss, Historian, Talisi Historical Preservation Society, 2009
- 11 See Section 8 Attachment A, Page 17-19, for a national comparison of Confederate armories
- 12 Page 20, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden
- 13 "On Foot in the South: The Cotton Mills of Alabama." The New York Times. Feb. 26, 1877.
- 14 Page 40, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden.
- 15 Page 42, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden
- 16 Page 59, A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden
- 17 "Alabama textile mill, oldest running in U.S., to close", The Associated Press, June 15, 2005.
- 18 The Cotton Mill Movement in Antebellum Alabama. Randall M. Miller, Edition 2, Ayer Publishing, 1978 (Originally presented as the author's thesis, Ohio State University, 1971), page 9.
- 19 The Cotton Mill Movement in Antebellum Alabama. Randall M. Miller, page 18.

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- 20 The Cotton Mill Movement in Antebellum Alabama. Randall M. Miller, page 28.
- 21 The Antebellum South: A Geographer's Interpretation. A.E. Perkins, Annals of the Association of American Geographer's Interpretation, Vol. XXI, No. , March 1931, page 15.
- 22 A History of the Old South. Clement Eaton, The Macmillan Company, NY, 1949, page 428.
- 23 The Antebellum South: A Geographer's Interpretation. A.E. Perkins, The Annals of the Association of American Geographer's Interpretation, Vol. XXI, No. , March 1931, page 15
- 24 A History of the Old South. Clement Eaton, The Macmillan Company, NY, 1949, page 424..
- 25 The Cotton Mill Movement in Antebellum Alabama. Randall M. Miller, page 28.
- 26 The Cotton Mill Movement in Antebellum Alabama. Randall M. Miller, page 38.
- 27 See Section 8 Attachment A, Page 17-19, for a national comparison of antebellum textile mills

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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The Cotton Mill Movement in Antebellum Alabama. Randall M. Miller, Edition 2. Ayer Publishing, 1978 (Originally presented as the author's thesis, Ohio State University, 1971).

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December 1864 report by Confederate Ordinance Bureau Chief Gorgas to Secretary of War Seddon in *Official Records: Correspondence, Orders, Reports, and Returns of the Confederate Authorities from January 1, 1864, to the End, Series IV - Vol. III*, (manuscript at Cornell University).

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A History of Tallassee. Virginia Noble Golden, Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, Inc., 1949

Tallassee Mills

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County and State

History of the Tallassee Mills – Part Three: Tallassee Mills From 1860-1870. William E. Goss, unpublished document, n.d

"On Foot in the South: The Cotton Mills of Alabama." The New York Times. Feb. 26, 1877.

The Rise of the Cotton Mills in the South. Broadus Mitchell, Series XXXIX No. 2 John Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science Under the Direction of the Departments of History, Political Economy, and Political Science viii, 9-281 p., ill, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1921.

Tallassee – Images of America, by William E. Goss and Karren Pell, Arcadia Publishing, April 2008.

"Tallassee Mill Warehouse Fire in Alabama". Travis Jones, Firehouse.com online, posted Jan. 26, 2006.

A Wake-Up Call: Is History Worth Saving? Tallassee's Time is Slipping Away! Bill Anthony, The Talisi Historical Preservation Society, unpublished document, 2008

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☒ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # 956
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.9 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	604190	3600040	3	16	604090	3599900
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	16	604310	3600000	4	16	604280	3599870
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the Tallassee Mills complex are the legal description of the property as recorded at the Elmore County Courthouse, Wetumpka, Alabama:

Commence in the Northwest corner of Section 19, Township 18 North, Range 22 East, having coordinates of North 740692.31 and East 479066.5B: advance south 84 (degrees) 46' 57" East 3306.10 feet to a concrete reference point at coordinates North 740391.66 and East 482358.98; thence South 03 (degrees) 30' West 50.0 feet; thence North 86 (degrees) 29' West 257.3 feet; thence South 01 (degrees) West 148.7 feet; thence South 86 (degrees) 29' West 257.3 feet to the East boundary of River Road, said point having coordinates of North 740179.21 and East 482154.65; thence

Tallassee Mills

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run Southerly, Westerly and Easterly along the meanderings of said River Road to a point having coordinates of North 739450.36 and East 482618.15 said point being the point of beginning of the tract of land to be conveyed herein:

Thence North 05 (degrees) 28' 00" East 141.98 feet; thence North 0 (degrees) 32' 30" West 156.61 feet; thence North 14 (degrees) 56' West 255.96 feet; thence North 71 (degrees) 48' 22" West 53.11 feet; thence North 35 (degrees) 02' 18" West 40.55 feet; thence North 60 (degrees) 10' 37" West 105.28 feet; thence South 55 (degrees) 04' 12" West 165.60 feet; thence South 06 (degrees) 10' 49" West 527.88 feet to a point on the North boundary of River Road, said point having coordinates of North boundary of River Road, said point having coordinates of North 7394.77.98 and East 482206.54; thence run Easterly along the North boundary of River Road 415 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning and containing 4.90 acres, more or less, and located in Elmore County, Alabama.

There is attached hereto and made a part hereof a map or plat prepared by Howard M. Barnes, Registered Land Surveyor, of the lands herein above described. If a differential exists between the written verbiage of this instrument and the map or plant, the map or plat shall control...

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Tallassee Mill complex include the contributing properties of the original antebellum mill complex (located on the Tallassee side of the river). This property is now owned by the Talisi Historical Preservation Society. However, the Tallassee Falls Manufacturing Company district may be expanded in the future after a comprehensive survey is completed of the cities of Tallassee and East Tallassee. Areas around the mill site, and especially throughout the city of Tallassee, may include additional resources related to the history of the Tallassee Falls Manufacturing Company.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Melanie A. Betz, Architectural Historian, & Susan Enzweiler, National Register Coordinator

organization Alabama Historical Commission

date 01/13/10

street & number 468 S. Perry St.

telephone 334-242-3184

city or town Montgomery

state AL

zip code 36130

e-mail s.enzweiler@preserveala.org

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Tallassee Mills

Name of Property

Elmore, Alabama

County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600X1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Tallassee Mills (preferred)

City or Vicinity: Tallassee

County: Elmore

State: Alabama

Photographer: Susan Enzweiler (4-5, 7, 9-10, 12-14, 16-17, 19-21) and Ann Christian (1-3, 6, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22-24)

Date Photographed: February 2009 (Susan Enzweiler) and May 2009 (Ann Christian)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 24:** Original c.1844 Mill/Confederate Armory, looking east
- 2 of 24:** Original c.1844 Mill/Confederate Armory, looking northeast
- 3 of 24:** Original c.1844 Mill/Confederate Armory, looking north
- 4 of 24:** Original c.1844 Mill/Confederate Armory, looking northeast
- 5 of 24:** Original c.1844 Mill/Confederate Armory, interior, looking north
- 6 of 24:** Original c.1844 Mill/Confederate Armory, interior, looking south
- 7 of 24:** Original c.1844 Mill/Confederate Armory, interior, looking southwest
- 8 of 24:** Original c.1844 Mill/Confederate Armory, view from bridge, looking southeast
- 9 of 24:** Boiler Room, c. 1844, looking west
- 10 of 24:** Boiler Room, c. 1844, looking northwest
- 11 of 24:** Boiler Room, c. 1844, looking southwest
- 12 of 24:** Warehouse/Office, c. 1884, looking northwest
- 13 of 24:** Warehouse/Office, c. 1884, looking southwest
- 14 of 24:** Warehouse/Office, c. 1884, looking northeast
- 15 of 24:** Duck Mill, c. 1852-c. 1880, looking northeast
- 16 of 24:** Duck Mill, c. 1852-c. 1880, looking north
- 17 of 24:** Duck Mill, c. 1852-c. 1880, looking northwest
- 18 of 24:** Duck Mill, c. 1852-c. 1880, with ruins of c. 1888 Picker House in front, looking south
- 19 of 24:** Duck Mill, c. 1852-c. 1880, stone arch, first level north façade, looking southwest

Tallassee Mills

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Elmore, Alabama

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20 of 24: Duck Mill, c. 1852-c. 1880, interior, lower level, looking west

21 of 24: Duck Mill, c. 1852-c. 1880, looking south

22 of 24: Fire Station (1 of 8), NC, looking west

23 of 24: Duck Mill, c. 1852-c. 1880, and Boiler Room, c. 1844, looking southeast

24 of 24: View of entire Tallassee Mill complex, looking southeast

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Talisi Historical Preservation Society, Inc.

street & number P. O. Box 780022

telephone 334-283-2163

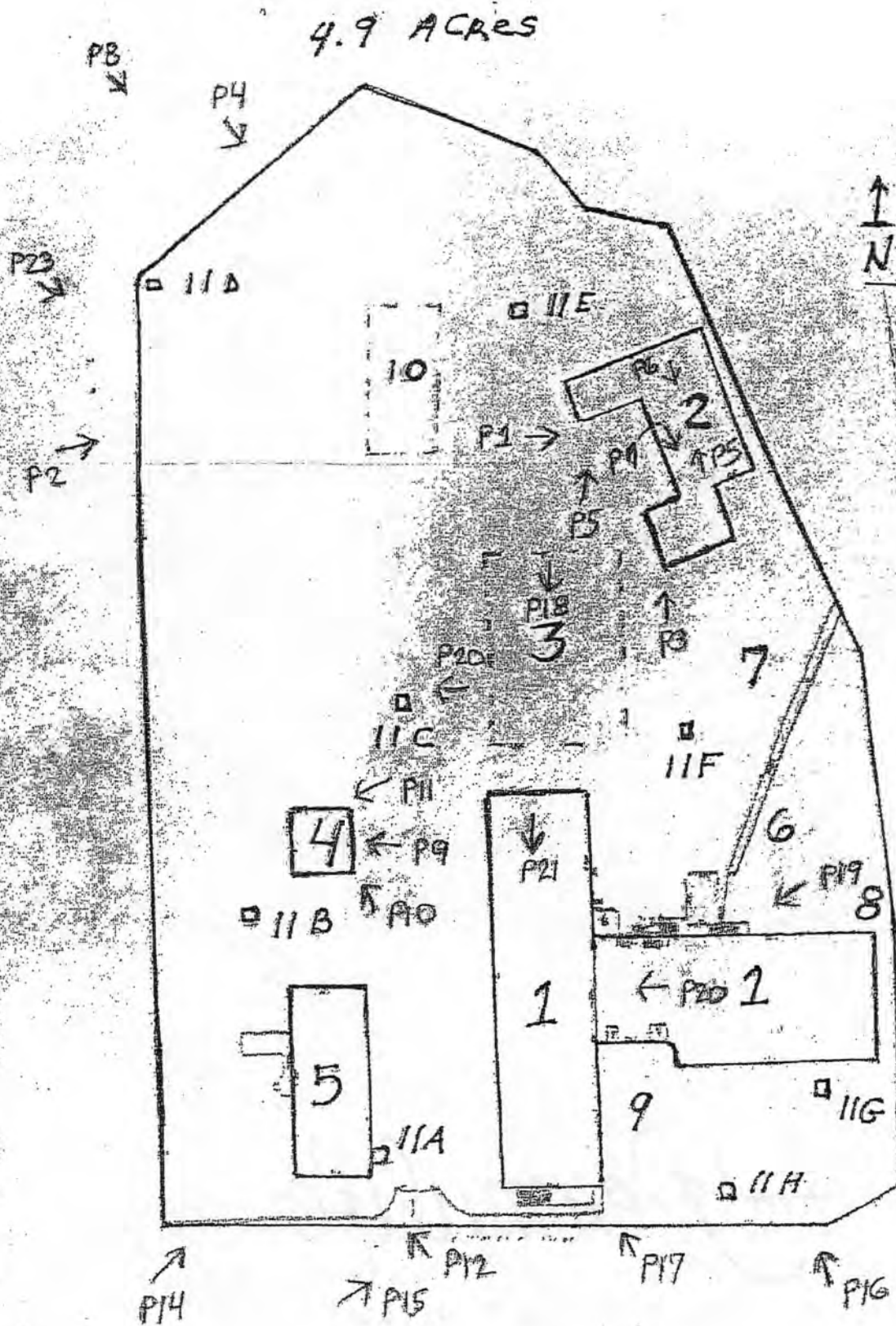
city or town Tallassee

state AL

zip code 36078

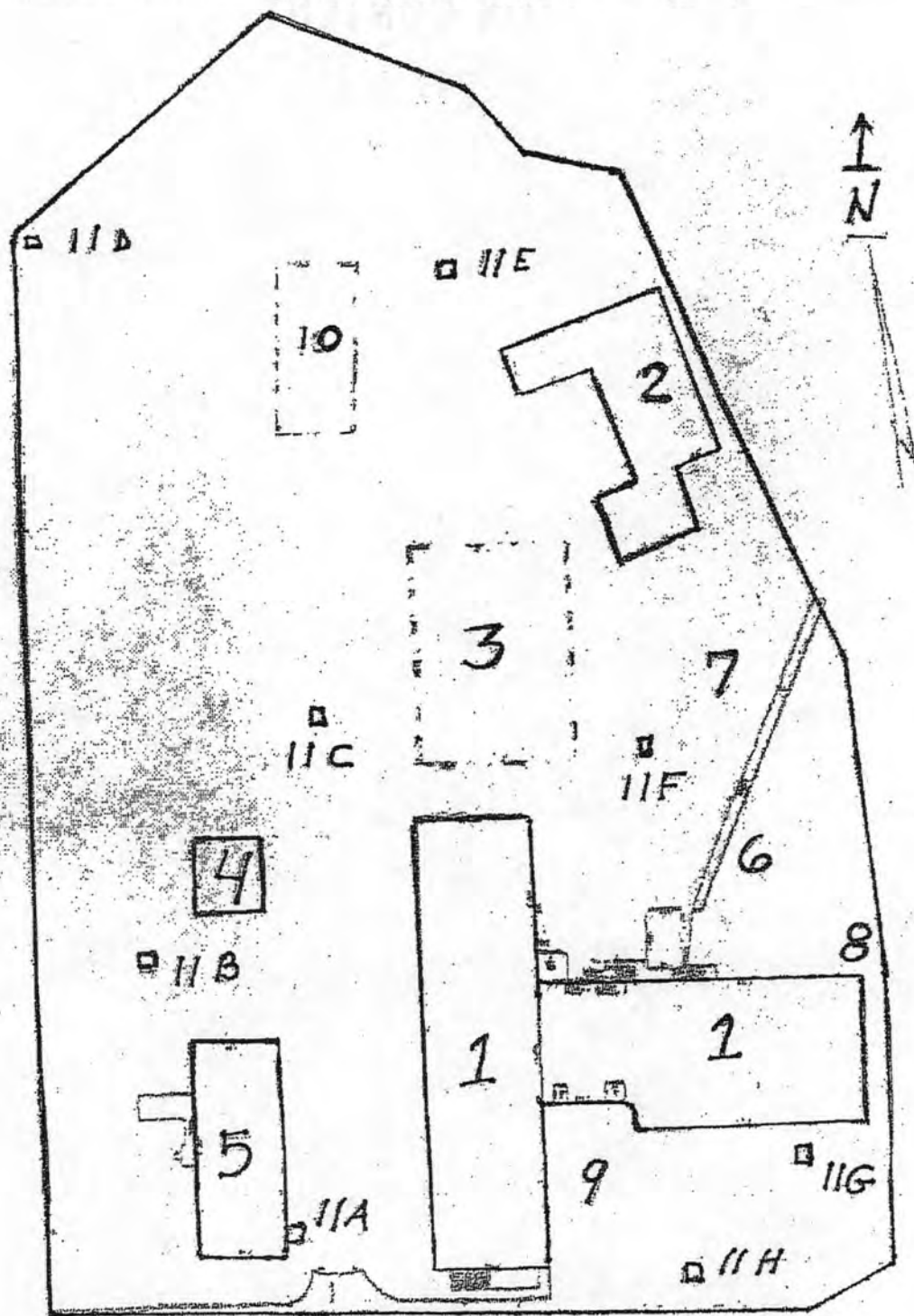
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Tallassee Mill Complex
Tallassee Alabama

4.9 ACRES



Tallassee Mill Complex
Tallassee Alabama

Bing Maps

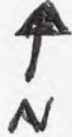
Tallassee, AL

Tallassee Mill complex
Elmore Co., AL

My Notes

FREE! Use Bing 411 to find movies,
businesses & more: 800-BING-411

NOT TO SCALE



Bing Maps
Tallassee, AL

Tallassee Mill Complex
Elmore Co., AL

My Notes

FREE! Use Bing 411 to find movies, businesses & more: 800-BING-411

NOT TO SCALE



THE TALLASSEE MILLS



UTM REFERENCE 16 604230 3000
ADAPTED FROM USGS MAP - TALLASSEE, ALABAMA - TALLASSEE QUADRAHLE - 7.5 MIN. SERIES

LOCATION MAP

DURING THE LATE 19TH CENTURY, THIS WAS AMONG THE LARGEST COTTON TEXTILE MANUFACTURING COMPLEXES IN THE SOUTH. IT WAS THE SECOND MILL IN ALABAMA TO BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE PRODUCTION OF COTTON CLOTH. SITUATED TO EITHER SIDE OF THE FALLS OF THE TALLAPOOSA RIVER, THE STONE MILL DATE FROM CA. 1844 TO 1898. THE OLDEST STRUCTURES LIE ON THE WEST BANK OF THE RIVER. THE TWO-STORY ORIGINAL MILL, BUILT IN 1844 FOR THE TALLASSEE FALLS MANUFACTURING CO., AND A T-SHAPED FOUR-STORY STRUCTURE (LATER HEIGHTENED TO FIVE-STORIES) ERECTED 1892-94. AS THE COMPANY EXPANDED, THE BUILDING BECAME KNOWN AS THE NO. 1 MILL WHEN ANOTHER LARGE MILL, NO. 2, WAS CONSTRUCTED ACROSS THE RIVER IN 1897-98.

DURING THE CIVIL WAR, CLOTH FOR CONFEDERATE UNIFORMS WAS MADE HERE. IN 1863 THE ORIGINAL MILL, CA. 1844, BECAME AN ARMY FOR THE PRODUCTION OF THE TALLADEGA CARBINE FOR THE SOUTHERN ARMIES. THE TALLASSEE COMPLEX WAS ONE OF THE FEW CONFEDERATE ORDINANCE FACILITIES TO ESCAPE DESTRUCTION.

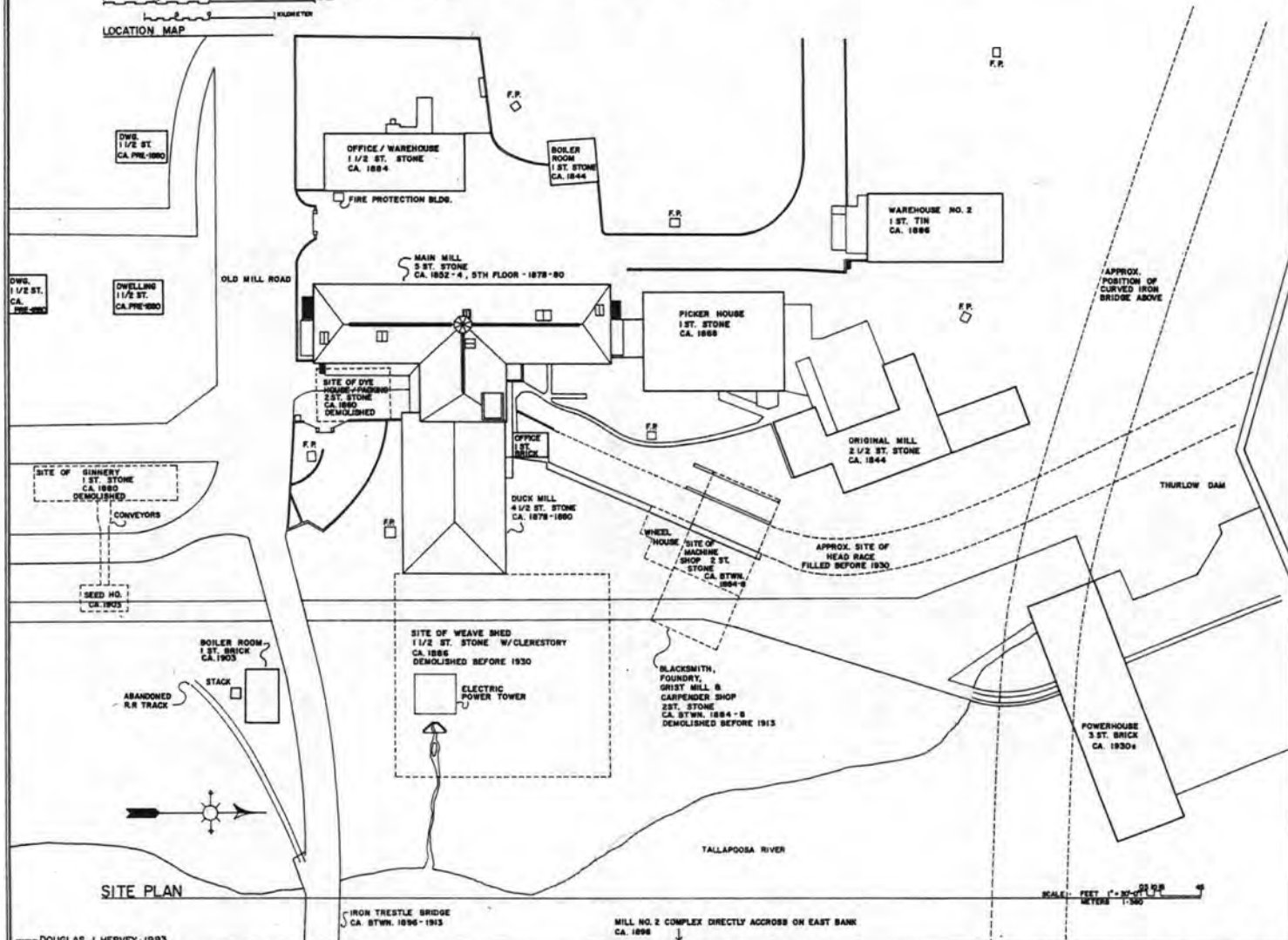
THE MILL RESUMED NORMAL OPERATION DURING THE LATE 1860s. BETWEEN CA. 1878-80, WHEN A FIFTH FLOOR AND FOUR-STORY DUCK MILL WERE ADDED TO NO. 1 MILL, AND BETWEEN CA. 1896-98, WHEN A WEAVE SHED AND PICKER HOUSE WERE ALSO ADDED, THE COMPLEX WAS GRADUALLY ENLARGED.

IN 1900 THE ORIGINAL COMPANY WAS ABSORBED BY THE MOUNT VERNON MILLS CONGLOMERATE. TEXTILE USAGE OF THE FACILITIES ON THE WEST BANK CEASED IN THE 1960s, AND IN 1991 THE OLDEST

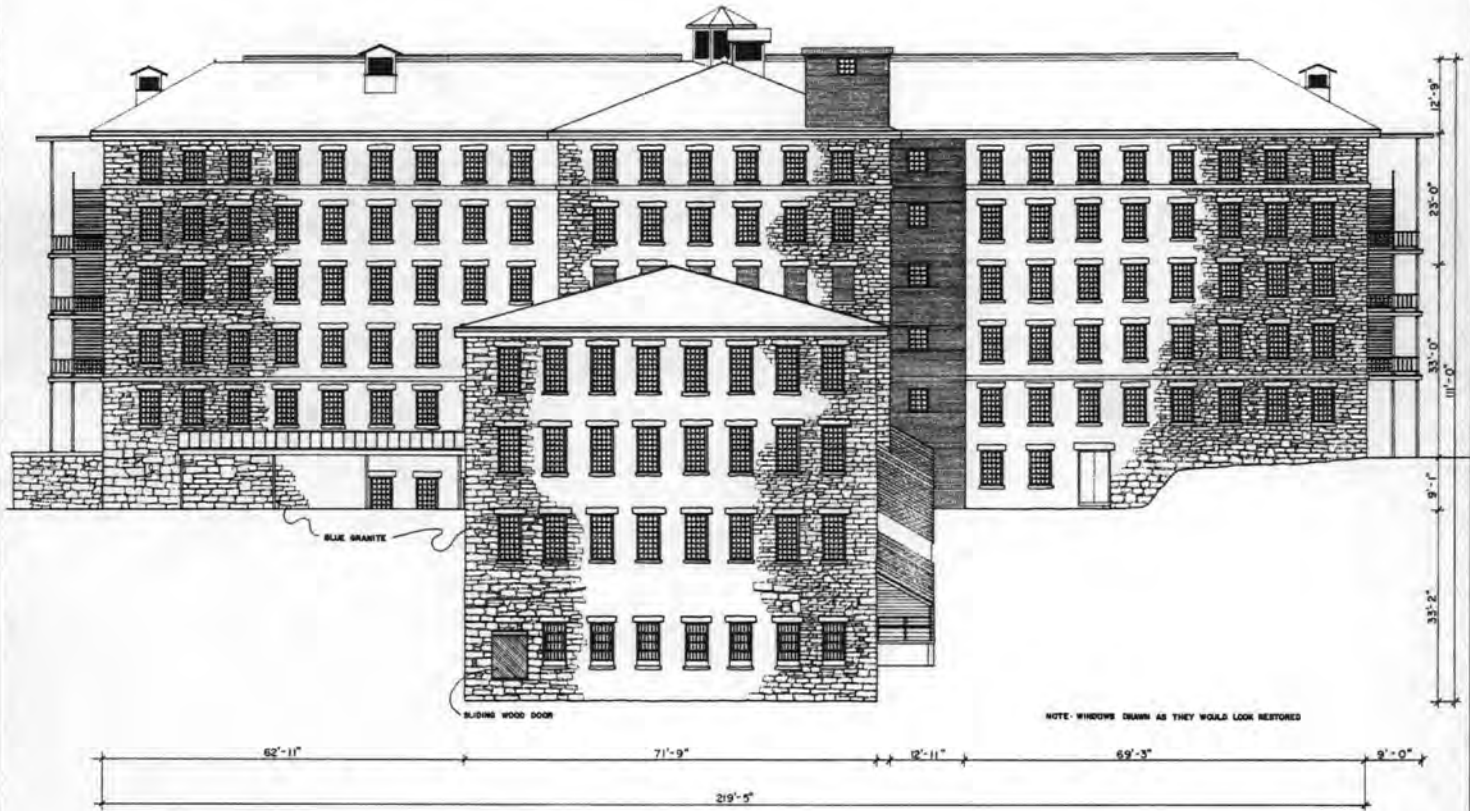
STRUCTURES WERE SOLD TO A GROUP OF MONTGOMERY, AL.-BASED SPECULATORS. THE MAIN MILL, NO. 1, HAS SINCE BEEN GUTTED OF BOTH ITS ORIGINAL HEART-PINE SUBSTRUCTURE AND WOODEN WINDOW SASH.

THE TALLASSEE MILLS PROJECT WAS UNDERTAKEN BY THE ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION FROM JULY OF 1992 TO JUNE OF 1993. PRINCIPALS INVOLVED WERE LARRY OAKS, DIRECTOR OF THE A.H.C.; OVERALL SUPERVISION WAS PROVIDED BY ROBERT GAMBLE, STATE HISTORIAN, AND BY KIM HARDEN, STATE ARCHITECT. THE RECORDING WAS UNDERTAKEN BY DOUG HERVEY, INTERN ARCHITECT, AND KEVIN SINGLETON, INTERN ARCHITECT.

NOTE: SITE PLAN INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM DRAWINGS PROVIDED BY BORDEN & MOORE ARCHITECTS

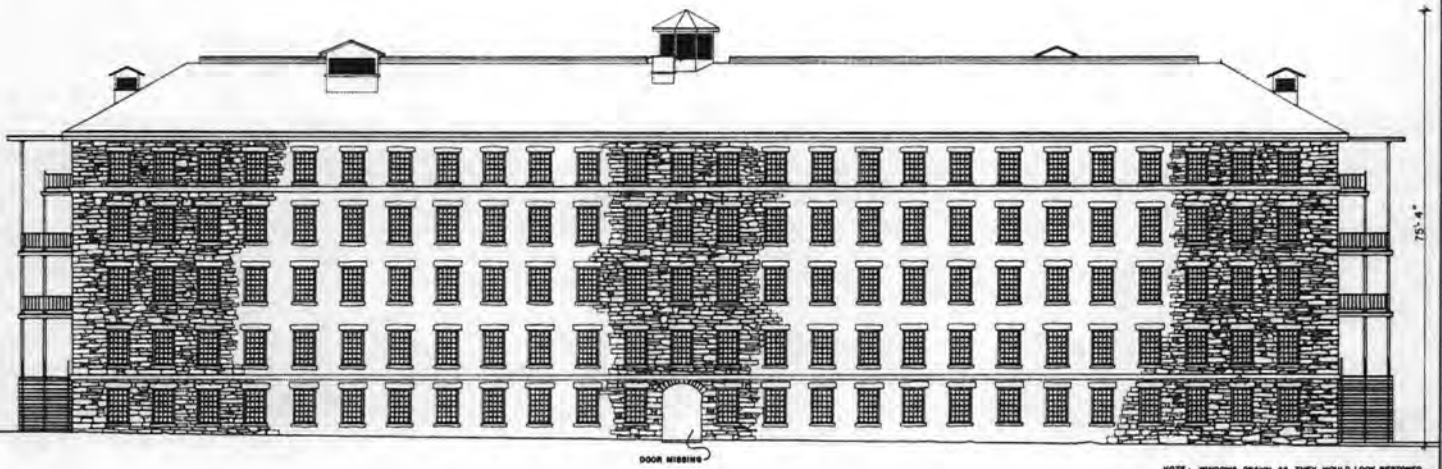


SITE PLAN



EAST ELEVATION

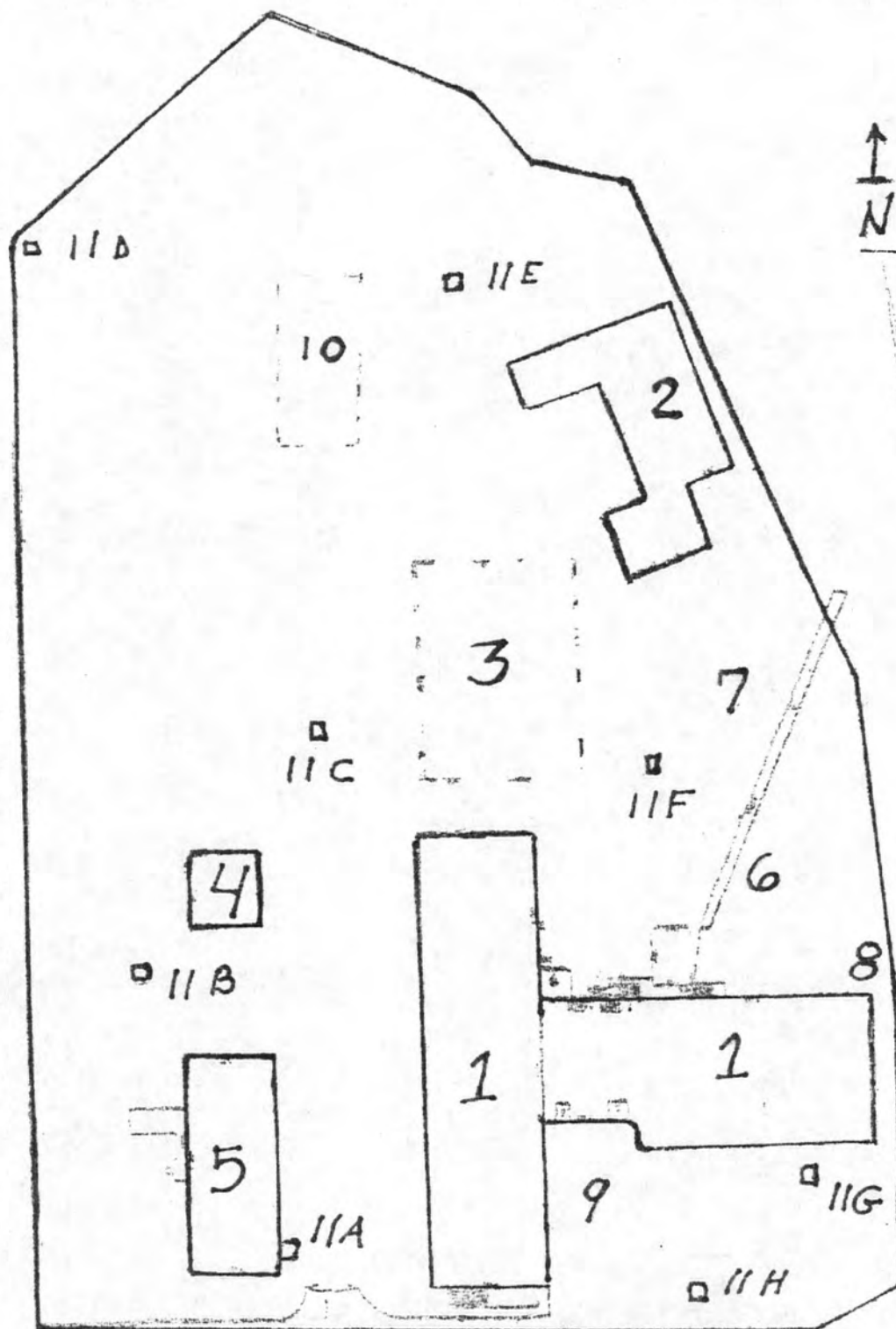
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METERS 1:125



WEST ELEVATION

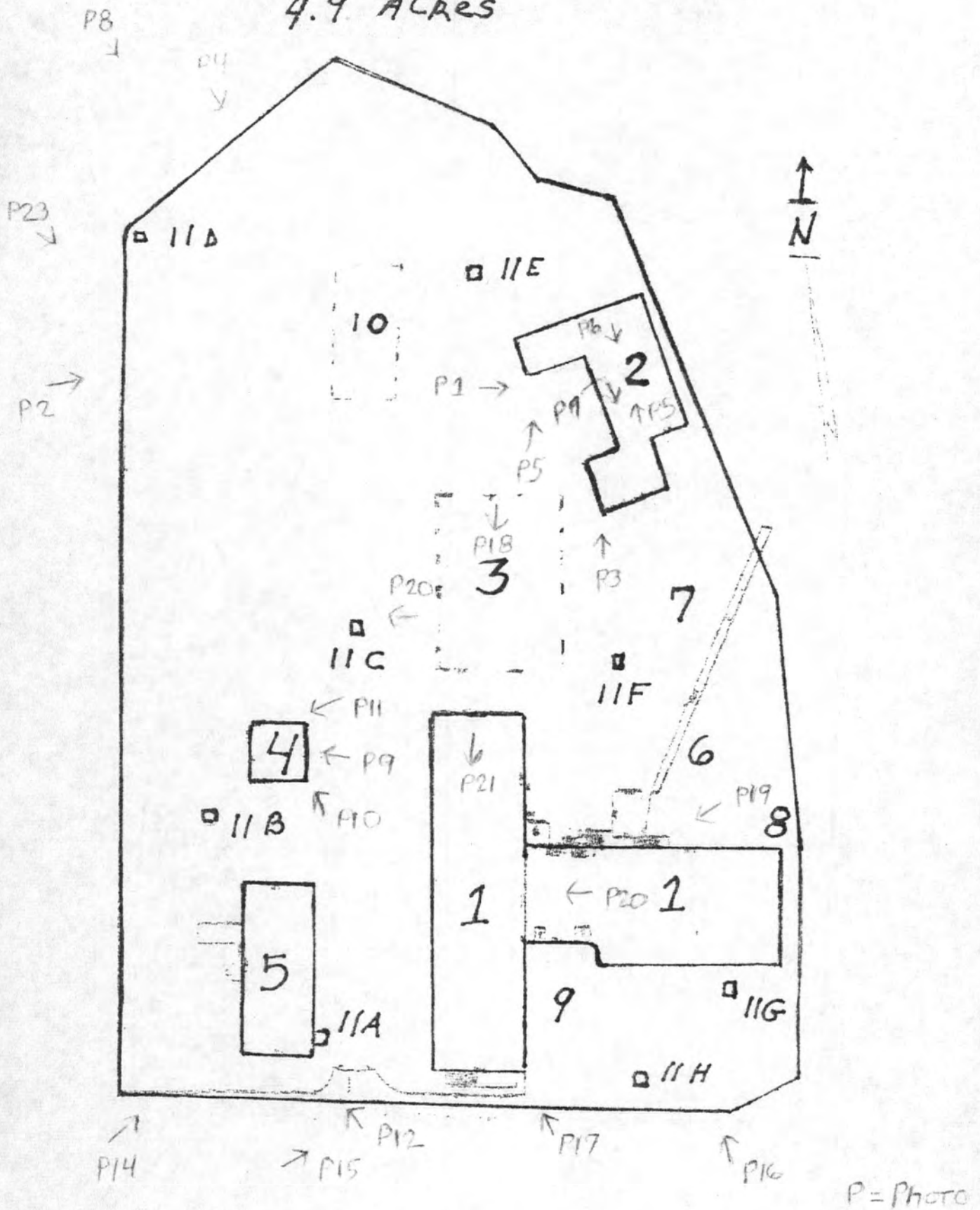
SCALE: FEET 1/8" = 1'-0" 0.125
METERS 1:125

4.9 ACRES



Tallassee Mill Complex
Tallassee Alabama

4.9 ACRES



Tallassee Mill Complex
Tallassee Alabama

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Tallassee Mills
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ALABAMA, Elmore

DATE RECEIVED: 8/14/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/03/09
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/18/09 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/27/09
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09000734

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

 ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 9/25/09 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

see return comments.

RECOM./CRITERIA *[Signature]*

REVIEWER *[Signature]*

DISCIPLINE *[Signature]*

TELEPHONE

DATE 9/25/09

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Tallassee Mills
Property Location: Tallassee, Elmore County, AL
Reference Number: 09000734
Date of Return: 10/15/2009
Reason for Return:

The nomination for the Tallassee Mills is being returned because the nomination hasn't adequately established a national level of significance, under industry, and the period of significance and boundaries identified appear arbitrarily selected and drawn. Issues concerning the resource count and classification of resources also need to be addressed.

The following comments reference the specific sections of the National Register nomination form:

Section 5. Classification.

The nomination describes historic resources that have been excluded from the resource count. Depending on the updated nomination boundary and period of significance, the resource count needs to be revised. The Duck Mill, although severely deteriorated, can be classified as a "building" since a section of the roof survives and enough of the exterior walls remain to recognize the scale and massing of the mill. Structures that are in ruins are considered historic sites. Refer to the National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, page 15, for definitions and examples of resource types.

Section 7. Description.

Depending on clarification of the property boundaries, additional descriptions of historic and nonhistoric resources need to be addressed. On page 9, the paragraph on the archeological component is sufficient for meeting Criterion D. We recommend moving this paragraph to Section 8 (since Section 7 sufficiently describes the resources that are contributing sites) and indicate that the property meets Criterion D – Area of Significance: Archeology/Historic for the potential to yield information important in our history.

Section 8. Statement of Significance – Criterion A.

On page 10, the nomination indicates the area of significance as industry, at the national level of significance, with a period of significance of 1844 – 1888. Additional contextual research is needed to substantiate this property at this level. This information is needed to understand the contributions of the mill complex and its significance in the establishment of Southern *antebellum industrial development* and independence. Depending on the mill's placement within this framework, the appropriate level of significance can then be established. Also, during this period, explain the use of "conscripted labor." Was

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Evaluation/Return Sheet**

Property Name: Tallassee Mills
Property Location: Tallassee, Elmore County, AL
Reference Number: 09000734
Date of Return: 10/15/2009

Reason for Return:

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this a typical practice as a labor source? Information under "textile industry," found in the 1993, *Encyclopedia of the Confederacy*, (Richard N. Current, Editor in Chief), provides some background on the role mills (and lucrative contracts) played during this antebellum and war mobilization period. While the nomination does provide some background on cotton mills, in Alabama that the South, how does *this* mill fit within this industrial context?

On page 12, the nomination mentions the production of "cotton duck for tent and cot cloth, uniforms, and other clothing..." Provide further information on production levels during the War and how this fits within a local, state, or national level of significance, compared to other textile mill war efforts.

The brief period (less than one year) of a c. 1844 mill building used as an armory does not substantiate the property's significance at the national level as "the oldest and most intact Confederate armory." The nomination indicates only 500 carbines were manufactured. According to the *Encyclopedia of the Confederacy*, the carbines that were produced remained in storage and any use is unknown. Explain the terms of "armory" and "arsenal" and their uses during the Civil War. What happened to the carbine production machinery that was originally from the factory in Richmond, VA? Was this c.1844 building converted back to textile production? When? The Tallassee Mills' carbine production was only part of the war effort. What were the textile production levels for the rest of the mill during this time period?

Since this community has a rich history of textile manufacturing, it is strongly recommended that the Tallassee Mills nomination extend the period of significance up to 1960; the 50-year cut-off mark. Again, depending on the additional documentation provided, this will help determine the district's level of significance.

Add Criterion D. Please provide a paragraph on industrial archeology as explained above in Section 7. Add Archeology/Historic-Non-Aboriginal to the area of significance on the nomination form.

Section 10. Geographical Data.

The nomination includes a mill complex map; however, the boundaries appear arbitrarily drawn, cutting through the site of the raceway and excluding other potential contributing resources. Is the old mill road included within this district? Depending on the period of significance, provide a district map with boundaries including all of the historic resources associated with the Tallassee Mills operation. Indicate the acreage of the property and the UTM references on the nomination form. Please update the Boundary Justification and provide the heading for the Verbal Boundary Description. Refer to the National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, pages 54-58, for additional information.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at 202-354-2239 or email at Lisa_Deline@nps.gov.

Lisa Deline, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
October 15, 2009

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY Tallassee Mills
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ALABAMA, Elmore

DATE RECEIVED: 3/12/10
DATE OF 16TH DAY:
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/26/10

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09000734

DETAILED EVALUATION:

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 4/24/10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*POS - 1844-1888.
pre Civil War cotton textile mill. Significant
in architecture & industrial ruins (archaeology)*

RECOM./CRITERIA C + D

REVIEWER David L. L...

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 4/24/10.

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



AL - Elmore Co. - Tallassee Mills -
0001





AL-Elmore Co.-Tollasse Mills
0002



AL-Elmore G.-Tallasee Mills.
0003





AL-Elmore Co.-Tollassee Mills-
0004



AL - Elmore Co. - Tallapoosa Mills -
0005





AL-Elmore Co.-Tallapoosa Mills
0006



AL Elmore Co. - Tallapoosa Mills
0007



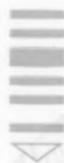


AL-Elmore Co.. Tullahoma Mills -
0008



AL - Elmore Co. - Tallapoosa Mills
0009





AL - Elmore Co. - Tallasse Mills
00010 —



AL. Elmore Co. Tallapoosa Mt.
0011



AL-Elmore Co.-Tollasee Miss.-0012



AL Elmore Co.. Tollasee Mink. 003





AL Elmore Co. Tollassee Mills.
0014



AL-Elmore Co.-Tollassee Mills-0015



AL-Elmore Co.-Tallahassee M.Ks.-0016



AL. Elmore Co. - Tall Horse Mills -
2017



AL. Elmore Co. - Tallahassee Mills -
2018



AL-Elmore Co.-Tollace Mktg.
0019





AL-Elmore Co.-Tollassee M.Kr-
0020



AL. Elmore Co. - Tallassee Mills -
0021





AL-Elmore Co.-Tollfree Milk-
0022



AL- Elmore Co.- Tallapoosa Mills-
OO 23



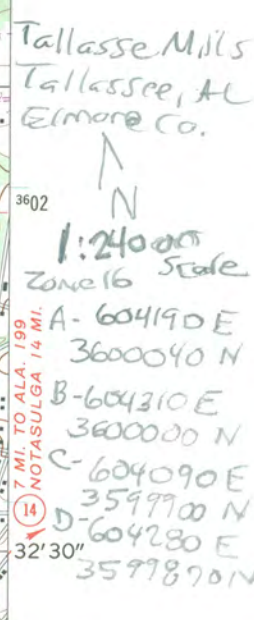


AL-Elmore Co.-Tollagsee Mills-
0024

3749 II NE
(ECLECTIC)

TALLASSEE QUADRANGLE
ALABAMA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

3849 III NE
(PONDERS)



1971
PHOTOREVISED 1983
DMA 3849 III SW-SERIES V844



STATE OF ALABAMA
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
468 SOUTH PERRY STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-0900



FRANK W. WHITE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 5, 2010

TEL: 334-242-3184
FAX: 334-240-3477

Ms. Carol Shull
Keeper of the National Register
U. S. Department of the Interior, NPS
Cultural Resources
National Register, History & Education Programs
1201 "I" Street NW (2280)
Washington, D. C. 20005

RE: Reference #09000734

Dear ~~Ms. Shull~~: *Carol*:

Enclosed please find the nomination and supporting documentation to be considered for listing the following Alabama resource in the National Register of Historic Places:

Tallassee Falls Manufacturing Company
Tallassee, Elmore County, Alabama

Your consideration of the enclosed National Register of Historic Places nomination is appreciated.

Truly Yours,

Elizabeth Ann Brown
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

EAB/sme/nw

Enclosures