

PH0688479

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED NOV 27 1978  
DATE ENTERED MAR 7 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 Rex Mill

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER on the north side of Rex Road where it crosses Cotton Indian  
Creek, 1 1/2 miles east of Georgia Highway 42

CITY, TOWN Rex VICINITY OF  
STATE Georgia CODE 13 COUNTY Clayton CODE 063

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Jerry and Gayle Beddingfield

STREET & NUMBER P.O. Box 819

CITY, TOWN Rex STATE Georgia

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Clayton County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Jonesboro STATE Georgia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Survey of Clayton County

DATE 1977-78  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Historic Preservation Section Department of Natural Resources  
CITY, TOWN Atlanta STATE Georgia

# 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Rex Mill is located in the center of the small, unincorporated town of Rex, Georgia, on the east bank of Cotton Indian Creek. A 1 1/2 story frame structure, it is situated on a downgrade slope and raised on the west side by stone piers. Additional support has been provided by new cement pillars.

The middle section of the structure is the oldest, the one-story shed additions on the north and south having been attached after the sale of the mill in 1887. The south addition houses two rooms and a porch while the north shed extends the size of the main room to provide additional storage space. Most of this northern addition has been replaced in recent years due to deterioration. The east end of the dam extends into the northwest corner of the mill, resulting in considerable moisture transference.

The original building has a pitch roof with a boxed cornice on the gable ends. The roofing and weatherboarding, with the exception of recent repairs, is said to be the same material on the mill at the time of the 1887 sale.

The first floor of the mill is a single large room, extended to the north by the shed and divided only by the placement of the milling equipment and machinery. The construction of the building is clearly visible on the interior. The main support beams and uprights are pegged and some of the original flooring is in place, although deteriorating and being replaced. The straight staircase is located in the northeast corner of the center section of the mill and is simple in construction, utilizing treads without risers and having a steep incline. The second floor also consists of a single room which is lighted by two gable windows on the east and west ends. All the windows on the west side of the building are covered with wooden shutters, although none are located on other sides.

There are two entrances to the mill. A single door opens onto the small, shed-roofed porch which is a part of the south addition and was formerly reached by a single wooden step which has since been removed. The large double doors on the east side through which the corn was unloaded slide open on runners. They have been temporarily replaced by the present owners. In addition, there are two small doors on the west side which overlook the water wheel and sluice, one located in the main part of the building and one in the north shed.

The original turbine water wheel was replaced after the 1887 sale with the present vertical one, an overshot metal wheel which works on the principle of the water striking the blades from above. The sluice is wood with metal supports. The present stone dam was built in 1919, utilizing a zig-zag pattern for strength after several collapses had taken place. The original dam was wooden.

(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 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 type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      c.1820-1860      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      I. L. Hollingsworth

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

An architectural reflection of early industry in Georgia, Rex Mill has been significant in the community for over a century as both a visual and commercial landmark. One of only two grist mills remaining in Clayton County, it remained in operation until recent years.

While little is known of the property on which the mill is located until after the Civil War, it is probable that the mill was built by a member of the Hollingsworth family, prominent early settlers of the county and long-time owners of the mill property. No definite date for construction has been assigned to the mill, although speculation runs from the 1820's to the 1860's, but the likely builder appears to be I. L. ("Touch") Hollingsworth. Hollingsworth was the owner of the mill in 1880 when the manufacturing census collected information concerning the mill and its production.

According to the Census, one eighth of the business of the mill was "custom work." This involved the grinding of grain raised by a farmer while he waited for his meal. A portion of the grain by weight was then deducted as toll, the payment received by the miller. As this was by far the most common practice in rural areas, one eighth seems a very small percentage. The Hollingsworth mill was idle for four months of the year and operated on three quarters capacity for the remaining eight months, with an estimated maximum capacity of sixty bushels of grain per day. The 4,000 bushels of grain processed by the mill in 1879 resulted in 192,000 pounds of corn meal and 32,000 pounds of feed.

In 1887, Hollingsworth sold the mill property to J. H. and W. C. Estes. The Estes brothers made the additions to the mill structure noted in the description and replaced the mill wheel and dam. J. B. Milam was hired as miller soon after the purchase and held that position until 1939, receiving one third of the mill's profit as payment.

Through those years the mill saw a decline in custom grinding with a corresponding increase in merchant work, or the purchase of large amounts of grain by the mill owner which was then ground and sold to local merchants. This practice was almost entirely in use when state Senator Walter Estes inherited the mill from his father.

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Personal Inspection, Victoria Reeves Gunn, March 1, 1977  
 Information supplied by Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Beddingfield  
 Clayton County Deed Books  
 U.S. Population and Manufacturing Census  
 Jeane, Donald Gregory, The Culture History of Grist Milling in Northwest Georgia, PhD, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1974.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY app. 1 1/2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 6	7 5 3 4 4 0	3 7 2 0 1 9 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Boundaries as described in part in a deed, June 2, 1976 from Walter Estes to Jerry C. and Gayle V. Beddingfield, to wit: land in Land Lot 153 12th Dist., Clayton Co., recorded in Plat Bk. 16, p. 66 (in part). Beginning at a point on the west bank of Cotton Indian Creek directly underneath the west end of the steel bridge (Rex Road) crossing the creek and running thence N.E. following the creek bed directly underneath the north edge of said road and up the east bank to the west line of the lands of Rex Furniture Company and thence N.W. along said boundary 170 ft thence north 61 degrees west 115 ft., to the water line of the pond when flowing over

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

the dam. Here the boundary of the nominated property will be a continuation of the same line across the creek to the west bank and along said water line south to beginning.

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

Kenneth H. Thomas Jr., Historic Preservation Section, Historic

NAME/TITLE Victoria Reeves Gunn - Historical Consultant

Elizabeth A. Lyon, Consultant, Historic Preservation Section

ORGANIZATION Historic Preservation Section; Department of Natural Resources, June 1978

STREET & NUMBER 270 Washington Street SW TELEPHONE 404/656-2840

CITY OR TOWN Atlanta STATE Georgia

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL      STATE      LOCAL X

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 DATE 10/11/78

TITLE Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

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

DATE 3/7/79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 3/5/79

ATTEST: [Signature]

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Local legend tells that the structure has always been painted red with the exception of one brief occasion when it was painted silver. At that time public outcry caused the owner to go back to the traditional red paint.

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By 1948, when Estes sold the mill to O.R. Longino, it had entirely supplanted the previous custom grinding procedures.

Although the mill was sold several more times, the property reverted eventually to Senator Estes from whom the present owners purchased it. Plans are being made to restore the mill to working order and resume grinding.

Rex Mill remains today a viable and visible part of the local community reflecting the architectural and industrial history of the county. Architecturally it is typical of many grist mills built in a utilitarian/functional style without frills and without particular style/ motif prevalent during the era of its construction. In industrial history it stands as a landmark to the local, independent business man who ran this grist mill as part of the economic interdependence of an agrarian world characterizing the South during these years. If and when it becomes a museum, it will reflect these aspects of earlier days in the history of the rural south.

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*on 2-7-79*

CONTINUATION SHEET

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AMENDMENT

*P. 11.27.78*

REX MILL

REX, CLAYTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

*TRA 12.6.78*

Description

The interior arrangement and outfitting of the Rex Mill is typical of late nineteenth century Georgia grist mills. The ground level (basement) is given over to iron shafting and gearing mechanisms which transfer power from the horizontal waterwheel shaft to the various horizontal and vertical driveshafts. The main floor houses the primary and secondary milling operations; grinding, bolting, and bagging equipment is found here. A walk-in ice box, converted to mechanical refrigeration in the early twentieth century, runs along part of one wall. The attic is devoted to preliminary milling operations and still houses a John Deere "snap corn" which shucks, shells, and separates corn. The two floors are connected by elevators, blowers, and chutes. Power is distributed throughout the mill by a system of iron shafts (both horizontal and vertical), pulleys, and belts.

Most of the milling equipment is still in place and visible in the photographs. The mill also contains numerous spare parts and other pieces of machinery. The mill is more or less in operating condition, although there is a bad bearing in the waterwheel and some equipment, notably the grinding mechanisms, has been partly disassembled. The owner is contemplating a thorough restoration and believes that most of the necessary parts are to be found somewhere in the mill.

Preparer

Richard Cloues  
Architectural Historian  
Historic Preservation Section  
Department of Natural Resources  
270 Washington Street, S. W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
January 26, 1979

*Elizabeth A. Lyon*  
Elizabeth A. Lyon, Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 1/26/79