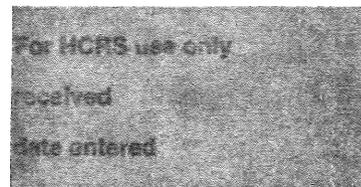


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Altamahaw Mill Office

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number S side SR 1002 at jct. with SR 1567 not for publication

city, town Altamahaw vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state North Carolina code 037 county Alamance code 001

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 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 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
	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Glen Raven Mills

street & number Roger Gant, Jr., President

city, town Glen Raven vicinity of state North Carolina 27215

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alamance County Courthouse

street & number Elm and Main Streets

city, town Graham state North Carolina

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Alamance County Architectural Heritage, Carl Lounsbury, 1980.  
title has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh state North Carolina

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## 7. Description

---

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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		

---

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Altamahaw Mill Office sits atop a small hill surrounded by shops, residences, and a textile mill in the quiet community of Altamahaw. The late-nineteenth century office is a handsome, well-preserved Queen Anne building which was erected as the office for Altamahaw, later Glen Raven, textile mill. When the office was constructed it was one of the most modern structures in Alamance County. It was also among the first buildings in the county to have a telephone.

The irregularly shaped two-and-a-half-story brick structure rests on a high stuccoed brick base below a molded water table. It is covered by an intersecting bell-cast roof pierced at the rear by a decorative chimney. The most pronounced feature of the Queen Anne style--a rich combination of materials--appears in the decorative use of bricks, particularly in a wide band of brown and cream-colored bricks acting as a string course encircling the office separating the first and second stories. Within the frieze, on the north elevation, projecting bricks spell out "OFFICE." A multi-colored checked design appears within the band on the west (front) elevation.

The numerous openings are double-hung sash with simple stone lintels and sills. Exceptions are: an arched two-story window arrangement on the north elevation with two large three-part windows and a round window on the second story elevation, above the porch.

The front elevation contains a narrow, recessed entry behind a frame pedimented porch. Smooth, round columns resting on square-in-section newels support a simple entablature. A second porch, with a shed roof and square piers, is located on the south elevation. An attic dormer with one-over-one double hung sash is on each elevation except the rear.

The interior, characterized by spaciousness and simplicity, follows an irregular floor plan with two large rooms (a main office and a private one) and a bathroom on the first floor and three bedrooms on the second floor. The walls and twelve feet high ceilings are plaster. The walls in the main office have waist-high wainscot. Floors throughout are maple although rubber tile has been laid on top of the wooden floor in the main office. First floor fireplaces have decorative tiles, plain mantels and smooth tapered columns. Second floor fireplaces are similar although here the columns and tiles are simpler.

Rising along the north wall is a handsome pine staircase with heavy square banisters and newels. The long, initial flight begins near the front entrance and winds the final few steps to the second floor. The attic stairs, access to which is through a small door off the second story hallway, are narrow and steep, resembling a ladder rather than a stairway. The Altamahaw Office has been very well-preserved. The building has undergone only one major structural change: the original front entrance stairs rotted and were replaced. The other non-structural change was the removal of gas fixtures and their replacement by electrical lights. Most of the original hardware and many of the furnishings remain in the office.



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With the real beginnings of North Carolina's Industrial Revolution in the 1870s, the cotton textile industry mushroomed. By 1880 the \$2,500,000 output doubled that of the previous twenty years. The last two decades of the century saw the average mill increase its spindles by nearly 5,000; its output nearly tripled; and the average number of textile workers jumped from sixty-six to 175. By 1900, eleven mills housed more than 20,000 spindles each.<sup>1</sup> Aided by an influx of northern capital and spurred to greater commercialization by growing national competition, the North Carolina textile industry moved away from the tradition of local enterprise and took on the characteristics of a nationally oriented industry.

The rapid growth of the textile industry generated volumes of business records and necessitated increased personnel to maintain them. No longer could a corner or small room in the mill suffice as an office. The larger firms found it necessary to build separate structures exclusively for the business end of their operations. The Altamahaw Cotton Mill Office was one of those structures. It was built about 1890 to serve a growing mill complex that had begun nearly ten years earlier.<sup>2</sup>

In 1880 John Q. Gant, Sr. and Berry Davidson formed a partnership to operate a cotton mill. Gant's interest in textiles stemmed from his earlier employment by E. M. Holt, Alamance County's pioneer textile manufacturer. Davidson was an experienced saw and gristmill operator. They built their plant along Haw River in Altamahaw. The mill opened for business in 1881 with a complex consisting of the mill, a company store, and several mill houses.<sup>3</sup> Two years later Berry Davidson, who apparently had lost interest in the venture, sold his equity in the manufacturing plant to Banks and Lawrence Holt, two of E. M. Holt's sons.<sup>4</sup>

The Holt brothers supplied two-thirds of the operating capital and John Gant one-third. Gant also managed the mill.<sup>5</sup> About 1890 the business was expanded and a large, stately office building was constructed on a knoll overlooking the complex. At the time it was the most modern structure in the Altamahaw community. Hot and cold running water and gas fixtures highlighted the structure. Many local residents believe that the office was the first building in the county constructed with central heating.<sup>6</sup> The office primarily served as the center of daily business, but long working hours often prevented John Gant from returning home so a room was provided for his sleeping quarters. For a few years between 1890 and 1900 Gant held the position of local postmaster, thereby adding to the history of the building brief service as a United States post office.<sup>7</sup> The office also enjoyed the distinction of being one of the first businesses in Alamance County equipped with a telephone. Gant, a telephone enthusiast, reportedly installed the equipment himself.<sup>8</sup>

In the mid 1920s, the Holt brothers and Gant saw the future of the mill from different perspectives. Their differences of opinion regarding objectives and operations weakened the partnership. Production was suspended and on December 13, 1928, an article appeared in the Alamance Gleaner announcing the intention to dissolve the partnership:

Be it resolved, that, in the judgement of the Board of Directors of Holt Gant and Holt Cotton Mfg. Company, it is deemed advisable and for the benefit of such Company that it be dissolved, and they recommend such dissolution. . . .

Though their business association ceased, John Gant and the Holt brothers remained friends.<sup>9</sup>

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The Great Depression began while the mill remained closed and the office vacant. In 1933 Roger and Allen E. Gant, sons of John Q. Gant, Sr., purchased the mill.<sup>10</sup> They converted the operation into a plant manufacturing rayon fabrics on the silk system.<sup>11</sup> The Gants modernized the facilities and renovated the mill houses. In the office the original front entrance stairs, which had suffered serious decay, were replaced. Except for exchanging the old gas fixtures for electric lights, this was the only alteration in the office building.<sup>12</sup>

The Gant family still owns and operates the plant at Altamahaw, since 1965 a part of Glen Raven Mills. With headquarters established at Glen Raven, the office at Altamahaw was closed after more than seventy years of service. For about eleven years the structure housed records of the company.<sup>13</sup> Since 1976 it has stood vacant but has been well maintained by the Gant family.

The structure, of course, is closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

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## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome. The History of a Southern State: North Carolina (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, third edition, 1973), 505, 508-509.

<sup>2</sup>For comparison see Jerry L. Cross, "The Manufacturers' Building With a Brief History of the Textile Industry in Richmond County." (National Register nomination, January 31, 1979.) Copy in Research Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh. For construction date see notes of Linda Marquez-Frees taken in an interview with Roger Gant, Jr., December 19, 1980, hereinafter cited as Gant interview; and Margaret Elizabeth Gant, The Raven's Story (privately printed, 1979), 45, hereinafter cited as Gant, Raven's Story. The book is a history of Glen Raven Mills, which now includes the Altamahaw Mill, owned and operated by the Gant family.

<sup>3</sup>For purchase of property see Alamance County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Alamance County Courthouse, Graham, Deed Book 8, p. 126, hereinafter cited as Alamance County Deed Book. For opening of mill see Julian Hughes, The Development of the Textile Industry in Alamance County (Burlington: Burlington Letter Shop, 1965), 90-92, hereinafter cited as Hughes, Textile Industry; and Don Bolden, Alamance in the Past (Burlington: P. N. Thompson Printing Co., 1979), 55-56.

<sup>4</sup>Alamance County Deed Book 9, p. 348.

<sup>5</sup>Gant interview.

<sup>6</sup>Gant interview; and Gant, Raven's Story, 45.

<sup>7</sup>Gant interview.

<sup>8</sup>Hughes, Textile Industry, 92; and Gant, Raven's Story, 45.

<sup>9</sup>In addition to Alamance Gleaner, see Gant interview.

<sup>10</sup>Alamance County Deed Book 105, p. 323.

<sup>11</sup>Gant interview.

<sup>12</sup>See notes on architectural description by Linda Marquez-Frees in Altamahaw Mill Office File, Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

<sup>13</sup>Gant interview.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Bolden, Don. Alamance in the Past. Burlington: P.N. Thompson Printing Co., 1979.  
Gant, Margaret Elizabeth. The Raven's Story. Privately printed, 1979.  
Hughes, Julian. The Development of the Textile Industry in Alamance County.  
Burlington Letter Shop, 1965.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approx. 3 acres

Quadrangle name Ossipee

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

### UMT References

A 

1	7	6	3	4	2	2	0	4	0	0	5	1	7	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** The property being nominated consists of the lot on which the Altamahaw Mill Office sits, approximately 3 acres. See plat map enclosed.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
-------	-----	------	--------	-----	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Linda Marquez-Frees (consultant) and Jerry L. Cross and Davyd Foard Hood  
Division of Archives and History

organization Division of Archives and History date December 23, 1981

street & number 109 East Jones Street telephone (919) 733-6545

city or town Raleigh state N. C. 27611

## 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. Price

title State Historic Preservation Officer date April 14, 1982

### For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Alamance County Deed Books

Alamance Gleaner, December 13, 1928.Bolden, Don. Alamance in the Past. Burlington: P. N. Thompson Printing Co., 1979.

Cross, Jerry L. "The Manufacturers' Building With a Brief History of the Textile Industry in Richmond County." National Register nomination, January 31, 1979. Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

Gant, Margaret Elizabeth. The Raven's Story. Privately printed, 1979.

Gant, Roger. Interview by Linda Marquez-Frees, December 19, 1980.

Hughes, Julian. The Development of the Textile Industry in Alamance County. Burlington: Burlington Letter Shop, 1965.Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Newsome, Albert Ray. The History of a Southern State: North Carolina. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, third edition, 1973.

Altamahaw Mill Office

Morton Plat Map Book  
Sheet 4-7, Lot 22

Scale 1" = 200'

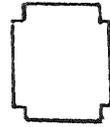
Date 1959

HILLSIDE

1500'±

22

17.33Ac.±



(531.84)

600'

No. 1002

20

18.3Ac.

(531.84)  
310'

172.5'

33'

1030'± (1056)

HAW

RIVER

477.10

875.82

23

12.45Ac.±

558.73

23A

20A

160'

STATE HWY. 87

470'

670'

170'±

(205.2')

24

100'

185.0'

(200) 100'

243'±

25A

193.10

144.33

250.12

25

100'

143.87

(230) 200'

233'±

62.0

35'

(263.58)

