

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Shelby Cotton Mill

Shelby, Cleveland County, CL0577, 12/15/2015

Nomination by Heather Fearnbach

Photographs by Heather Fearnbach, March 2015



East elevation, looking northwest



West elevation, looking northeast

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Shelby Cotton Mill

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 500 South Morgan Street

N/A not for publication

city or town Shelby

N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Cleveland code 45 zip code 28150

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Shelby Cotton Mill
Name of Property

Cleveland County, NC
County and State

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 count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	1	structures
0	0	objects
5	1	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: Industrial Storage

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY: Manufacturing Facility

INDUSTRY: Industrial Storage

VACANT: Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Heavy-timber mill construction

Other: Cast-iron post, load-bearing-brick-wall mill construction

Other: Steel-framed, load-bearing-brick-wall mill construction

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

CONCRETE

WOOD: Plywood

roof SYNTHETICS: Rubber

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Industry

Period of Significance

1900-1965

Significant Dates

1901, 1909, 1920, 1921, 1924, 1938, 1948

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Mauney, Marcus M., builder

Biberstein, Richard C., and successor firms, architect

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Cleveland County Library, Shelby

Shelby Cotton Mill
Name of Property

Cleveland County, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 5.67 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

See Latitude/Longitude coordinates continuation sheet.

1
Zone Easting Northing

2

3
Zone Easting Northing

4

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Heather Fearnbach
organization Fearnbach History Services, Inc. date 4/31/2015
street & number 3334 Nottingham Road telephone 336-765-2661
city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27104

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

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

name David W. Royster III, president, Capitol Funds, Inc.
street & number 720 South Lafayette Street telephone (704) 487-8547
city or town Shelby state NC zip code 28150

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 listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Section 7. Narrative Description

Setting

Located approximately one-half mile southwest of Shelby's courthouse square and the surrounding commercial district, Shelby Cotton Mill occupies a 5.67-acre tax parcel bounded by Live Oak Street to the west, Gardner Street to the north, South Morgan Street and the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks to the east, and McClurd Street to the south. The nominated area encompasses four contributing buildings, one contributing structure, and one noncontributing structure erected from 1900 through the late 1960s. The industrial complex covers the parcel's north two-thirds, while the south section, which is at a lower grade and includes remnants of a water reservoir, is open. A one-story, brick, hip-roofed, 1920 office, connected to the mill's 1920 addition by a flat-roofed canopy, stands at the complex's northeast corner. The concrete municipal sidewalk abuts the north elevations of the mill and office. A tall chain-link fence with gates on South Morgan Street and Live Oak Street borders the lot's west, south, and east elevations. Deciduous and evergreen shrubs and vines line some sections of the fence.

The area between South Morgan Street and the mill's primary façade (east elevation) contains a grass lawn punctuated with large elm trees planted soon after the completion of the mill's 1901 addition. The site's gently sloping topography, which decreases in elevation to the west and south, allows the basement to be partially above grade. Two two-stage stair towers, one at the center of the 1900 mill's east elevation and one to the north at the 1920 addition's center, served as the main entrances for most of the twentieth century. Concrete sidewalks extend from the municipal sidewalk lining Morgan Street to the north tower entrance as well as a larger loading dock entrance near the east elevation's center. East of the loading dock, a sliding chain-link gate in the fence at the sidewalk provides access to the lot.

Two sliding chain-link gates in the fence bordering Live Oak Street open to short gravel drives leading to gravel parking lots, loading docks, and service areas west and south of the mill complex. The cotton waste house, erected in the 1910s and later enlarged, stands west of the 1920 picker house addition. The two-story brick boiler house and its tall smokestack are to the south at a slightly lower grade.

Houses constructed for Shelby Cotton Mill employees and updated by later owners flank streets to the west. An electrical substation occupies a 0.6-acre lot on Live Oak Street's west side adjacent to the mill parcel's northwest quadrant. Warehouses owned by Capitol Funds, Inc., and Royster P & M Warehouse Company, Inc., fill most of the two blocks north of Gardner Street.

One mill house remains on McClurd Place at the southeast corner of its intersection with Live Oak Street. To the south, similar dwellings front Live Oak and South Morgan streets. Late twentieth-century industrial buildings and warehouses replaced some residences on South Morgan Street's west side. The

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area east of South Morgan Street and the railroad, once also part of the mill village, contains late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century industrial buildings and warehouses.¹

Site evolution

The June 1900 Sanborn map illustrates the original mill footprint and the railroad spur line that ran north-south west of the mill. By October 1909, two additions—the picker house erected in 1901 at the mill's southwest corner and the two-story 1909 expansion at the mill's north end—had been completed. A one-story, three-part cotton warehouse stood on the railroad's west side near the center of the 1900 mill. A loading dock wrapped around the warehouse's east and south elevations, crossed the railroad, and connected to the 1901 picker house. The railroad spur line terminated southwest of the one-story, 1900 machine shop, boiler house, and slasher room at the mill's south end.

A round, 120,000-gallon reservoir south of the boiler house and a 12,000-gallon water tank at the entrance tower's top level supplied the mill's sprinkler system. By 1909, seven small, square, one-story buildings—three east of the mill, two west of the mill, one south of the mill, and one at the cotton warehouse's northeast corner—housed fire hoses. A one-story, twelve-foot-square cotton waste house and a smaller rectangular shed stood south of the reservoir. A ten-foot-long rectangular cotton waste house and a smaller square building were north of the cotton warehouse. The site remained the same in 1916 other than the construction of a one-story, square, open-sided cotton shed, likely the original section of the extant cotton waste house, south of the cotton warehouse.

New structures depicted on the March 1921 Sanborn map include the mill's 1920 addition that extends north from the 1909 addition to Gardner Street, the office at the complex's northeast corner, and a cotton warehouse expansion. The map shows the proposed two-story addition to the picker house's west end that resulted in the railroad spur line running through the picker house wing's first story. A smaller rectangular shed had been erected west of the one-story square cotton shed, which by then had walls, and the picker house.

By April 1926, the company enlarged the cotton shed to two stories. That Sanborn map also notes that the excavation of a large rectangular reservoir at the round reservoir's southeast corner increased water storage capacity to 350,000 gallons. The mill's 1924 addition, a wing extending west from the 1920 addition's west elevation, was north of the railroad spur line. A long, rectangular roof monitor with three-foot-tall side walls and windows illuminated the second story. A rectangular one-story automobile shed stood at the lot's west edge between the 1924 addition and the cotton warehouse, which had been expanded to comprise three large rectangular sections.

¹ The March 1921 Sanborn map indicates that a rectangular building on South Morgan Street's east side (northeast of the 1900 mill's entrance) contained a first-floor grocery store and a second-story meeting hall that also served as a school.

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The May 1947 Sanborn map illustrates the three-story 1938 addition projecting from the mill's west elevation as well as the two-story brick boiler house and smokestack to the south. A rectangular seven-bay automobile garage stood southwest of the boiler house and a 300,000-gallon reservoir excavated east of the garage and south of the boiler house. South of the reservoir, two one-story, L-shaped dwellings with front porches faced the McClurd Place extension, which ran north-south and intersected the east-west street with the same name. The houses first appear on the March 1921 Sanborn map, indicating that they were likely constructed in conjunction with the 1920 facility improvements. The roadbed and the two houses that faced it are no longer extant.

Shelby Cotton Mill, 1900, 1901, 1909, 1920, 1921, 1924, 1938, 1948, early 1950s, late 1960s, early 1970s, Contributing Building

Shelby Cotton Mill's two-story-on-basement 1900 mill included a one-story-on-basement machine shop and slasher room as well as a boiler house at the mill's south end. The company expanded the plant with a series of additions through the mid-1960s that comprised processing, manufacturing, and storage space; restroom and stair towers; and loading docks. System updates included humidification and HVAC installation.

M. M. Mauney, whose many areas of expertise included building construction, erected the 1900 mill. Shelby contractor A. P. Weathers executed carpentry elements such as two-inch-thick wood floor board installation.² The heavy-timber-frame edifice features brick walls executed in six-to-one common bond with segmental-arched window openings. The lintels comprise two courses of headers. Most tall, narrow, triple-hung, multipane windows were removed and the openings enclosed with running-bond brick in conjunction with air conditioning system installation in the late 1960s. The resulting brick infill is inset in the window openings. After the window removal, masons added concrete stucco on the exposed interior walls of the window openings and formed concrete window sills on the east elevation. The east wall's foundation has also been parged with concrete. A mid-twentieth-century sliding loading dock door with a brick lintel fills the lower sections of two first-story window openings near the 1900 mill's north end. The door opening has been enclosed with plywood.

Two courses of corbelled brick top the south wall's slightly stepped parapet. Historic photographs illustrate that the very low-pitched-gable roof system originally included projecting rafter ends that created deep eaves.³ However, contractors removed the rafter ends and overhanging eaves in conjunction with a later roof installation. The roof retains its low pitch, but metal coping now caps the walls and

² *Asheville Citizen*, August 7, 1899, p. 2; *American Wool and Cotton Reporter*, August 24, 1899, and November 16, 1899; *Charlotte News*, September 1, 1899, p. 7; *Asheville Daily Gazette*, October 6, 1899, p. 2; "County Lost Valuable Man in Death of Hord," *Cleveland Star*, March 9, 1920, p. 1.

³ Albert Y. Drummond, ed., *Drummond's Pictorial Atlas of North Carolina* (Charlotte, N. C.: Albert Y. Drummond, 1924), 116.

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aluminum gutters and downspouts control water run-off. Several square, windowless, asbestos-shingle-sheathed, frame roof monitors containing large vents project above the roof.

The two-story entrance and stair tower that projects from the façade at the 1900 mill's center initially rose in four stages to a metal-clad pyramidal hip roof. A flat metal roof protects the remaining two stories. The tower's round-arched door opening once framed a double-leaf door surmounted by an arched multipane transom. An early twentieth-century, wood-paneled, double-leaf door and mid-twentieth-century translucent glass block now fill the door opening. Brick laid in diagonal courses replaced the arched multipane transom. Large, faded, painted, capital letters, likely remnants of a sign advertising the mill's name, spell "cotton" on the wall above the transom. Glass block encloses the second-story window opening above the door, while brick fills the windows on the tower's north elevation. The tower's original upper level contained a 12,000-gallon water tank that supplied the building's sprinkler system.

Contractors completed a two-story-on-basement, seventy-by-ninety-foot addition at the mill's north end in early 1909. The addition's structure matches the 1900 mill, but the brick that masons utilized is slightly redder in color and laid in five-to-one common bond. The ten-bay-long addition, the end of which is marked by the projecting 1920 stair tower, continues the same window fenestration and has no exterior doors.

The 1920 addition that extends north from the 1909 addition to Gardner Street is executed in variegated reddish-brown brick laid in six-to-one common bond. The 1920 tower's round-arched east door opening originally contained a double-leaf door surmounted by an arched multipane transom, but mid-twentieth-century translucent glass block now fills the opening and brick laid in diagonal courses replaced the arched multipane transom. The door opening on the stair tower's south elevation, which was a mid-twentieth-century addition, has been enclosed with plywood.

The 1920 addition's north elevation, which abuts the Gardner Street sidewalk, contains six bays of tall, segmental-arched window openings enclosed with brick. Most of the openings retain original concrete sills, but the first-story's four west openings have replacement brick sills. The site slopes slightly to the west, allowing for three metal basement vents above grade.

The north elevation of the two-story-on-basement, eight-bay-deep and twenty-bay-long, 1924 addition that extends west from the 1920 addition also abuts the Gardner Street sidewalk. There are no entrances on the north elevation. The structure, executed in red brick laid in five-to-one common bond, features large rectangular window openings on the upper two levels. Reflecting the grade's downward slope to the west, the square basement window openings are several feet taller at the elevation's west end. All of the window openings, likely originally filled with steel-frame sash, are enclosed with running-bond brick and retain concrete sills. The brick infill is slightly recessed. When the eight second-story window openings

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on the 1924 addition's west elevation were filled with brick laid flush with the wall plane, the concrete sills were removed.

A roof monitor with three-foot-tall side walls and windows originally illuminated the second story. The monitor, which extended almost the addition's full length, was removed, likely in conjunction with the 1960s HVAC installation. A square, asbestos-shingle-sheathed, frame roof monitor containing large vents projects above the low-pitched gable roof near its west end.

A one-story, windowless, flat-roofed, running-bond brick, late 1960s, air conditioning room addition projects from the 1924 building's northwest corner. A roll-up metal garage door on the west elevation's north end provides interior access. Southeast of this addition, a straight run of steel steps with a steel-pipe railing leads to the upper level of the 1948 addition that connects the 1924 wing to the 1938 addition.

The two-story-on-basement 1948 addition has red brick walls laid in five-to-one-common bond with shorter window openings than those in the mill's earlier sections. The west elevation's fenestration is irregular, with a section of blind wall at its south end. The south elevation is six bays wide. Six steel-frame windows with operable central sections and concrete sills remain at its first-story level, but the five second-story window openings have been enclosed with running-bond brick, as have the square basement window openings. All retain concrete sills, but the brick in the second-story windows is slightly recessed, while the basement window brick infill is flush with the wall plane. A single-leaf steel door provides access to the basement.

In the early 1950s, Shelby Cotton Mill erected a one-story rayon opening room at the 1948 addition's southwest corner. Like the 1948 addition, the flat-roofed building has tall flat parapets topped with concrete coping. On the south walls of each structure, the parapet's west end steps out, projecting beyond the west walls. The three steel-frame windows on the rayon opening room's west elevation are intact, although most glass panes are missing and plywood sheathes each opening's exterior. Only one steel-frame window remains on the south elevation east of the loading dock, which contains two bays, one several feet taller than the other, both with roll-up metal doors. A corrugated-metal-roofed canopy supported by steel I-beams shelters the concrete loading pad.

The 1938 wing extends eight bays (east-west) to a projecting two-bay-wide and one-bay-deep restroom tower at the intersection of the mill's 1900 and 1909 sections. Masons laid the red brick walls in a distinctive common bond consisting of seven courses of stretchers followed by a course of alternating headers and stretchers. Tall, rectangular, forty-two-pane, steel-frame windows, some with operable eight-pane lower sections, light the first floor. With the exception of the three tower windows, the second-story windows have been removed and enclosed with slightly recessed brick. Seven retain concrete sills. The basement window brick infill is flush with the wall plane.

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A one-story, frame, early 1970s loading dock addition connects the 1938 wing's south elevation to the 1900 mill's west elevation.⁴ The short north section extends straight south from the 1938 addition and the longer section, which contains six loading dock bays, angles to the southeast. Plywood panels sheath the exterior walls and four frame, sliding, loading dock doors. The south two bays have metal roll-up doors. Metal panels cover the low-pitched gable roof. The building has a formed-concrete foundation. A straight run of wood steps and railings in poor condition lead to the single-leaf steel door near the addition's north end. North of the door, a jalousie window with three horizontal panes illuminates the interior. The addition's east elevation contains identical windows.

East of the loading dock, a straight run of steel steps with steel railings provides access to the single-leaf, steel, second-story door near the 1938 addition's east end. The concrete abutment for the railroad spur line is visible from the stair. Vegetation now fills the space between the loading dock and the 1900 mill's west elevation, where a tall concrete-block freight elevator tower rises. South of the elevator tower, three one-story additions of various heights, all executed in five-to-one common-bond brick, surround the 1900 mill's original restroom tower. A tall one-story, windowless, flat-roofed, late 1960s air conditioning room addition projects from the 1900 mill's west elevation. Two high, square, metal-louvered window vents and a single-leaf replacement door that is smaller than the original door opening pierce the addition's west wall. South of the 1960s addition, the three-story brick restroom tower at the 1900 mill's center has a flat metal roof. The short one-story, flat-roofed, early 1950s brick addition on the restroom tower's west elevation has a single-leaf door surmounted by a three-pane transom and a square, steel-frame, four-pane window with a concrete sill. A taller one-story, flat-roofed, early 1950s brick addition with one high, square, steel-frame, six-pane window with a concrete sill projects from the restroom tower's south elevation.

Six bays of the 1900 mill's west elevation are exposed between the restroom tower and the 1901 picker room wing, which was enlarged to encompass a second story and a new western section in 1920. The 1901 picker house spanned the distance between the 1900 mill and the railroad spur line. The two-story-on-basement addition resulted in the railroad spur line running through the center of the picker house. In the mid-twentieth-century, the wide, tall, first-story opening that accommodated the spur line was enclosed with brick, along with the two windows above it. The tall concrete lintel that spanned the opening is intact. A wide segmental-arched door opening and a tall, narrow window opening mark the west end of the wing's earlier east section. The double-leaf paneled door is a replacement. A compressed-wood panel covers the transom and brick fills the window above. East of the door and window, a tall, square elevator equipment tower with a single-leaf wood door hung in segmental-arched first-story opening rises to roof height.

⁴ An undated, likely mid-1960s, Factory Insurance Association of Hartford, Connecticut, map indicates that a three-part cotton warehouse occupied this site until the late 1960s.

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The picker house's western section (two-thirds of the wing), like the 1920 addition at the mill's north end, is executed in variegated reddish-brown brick laid in six-to-one common bond with concrete window sills and lintels. Only one of the two tall, thirty-five-pane, steel-frame, first-story windows remains exposed on the north elevation. The sash has operable six-pane sections at the top center and near the bottom. West of the windows, an eighteen-pane steel-frame transom surmounts a double-leaf, raised-wood-panel door accessed by wood steps that rise to a brick stoop. The two second-story window openings and two short basement window openings have been infilled with brick. The central second-story window opening was widened to create a loading dock door now enclosed with frame studs and plywood panels. Terra-cotta coping caps the flat parapet that extends above the flat roof.

A straight run of steel stairs with a steel-pipe railing rises to the end of the picker house's north elevation and wraps around the corner, leading to a single-leaf steel door that provides access to the second story on the west elevation. A steel-frame, flat, corrugated metal canopy shelters the door. The rest of the picker house's west elevation, which is effectively three stories tall, is blind.

On the south elevation, two tall, rectangular, thirty-five-pane, steel-frame windows, each with two operable six-pane sections, remain on the first floor. A matching window to the west has been partially enclosed with brick, as has the spur line opening, which retains its tall concrete lintel. Five second-story windows and three very short basement windows have been removed and enclosed with brick, but retain concrete sills and lintels. A single-leaf, wood-panel door provides access to the basement west of the window openings.

South of the picker house, a brick retaining wall ameliorates the change in grade and creates a level path to the machine shop entrance southeast of the picker house. The one-story-on-basement brick machine shop was part of the 1900 mill. By October 1909, a one-bay-deep partial-width addition extended from the machine shop's west elevation. Brick color variation clearly indicates the addition's original three-bay width and shorter height. The west wall retains a cluster of three original, tall, triple-hung, wood-sash windows east of the tall loading dock door that was likely added when contractors expanded the addition in the 1950s. The lower two sash of each window contain twelve panes and the upper sash eight panes, with the exception of the south window's middle sash, which was removed to allow for a fan's installation.

The one-story, shed-roofed, brick room that extends from the machine shop's south elevation at a lower grade originally served as the boiler house, but became the machine shop annex upon the freestanding boiler house's 1938 completion. The tall north firewall parapet, capped with terra-cotta coping, slopes down to the west and steps out at its west end, projecting beyond the boiler house's west wall. The building has two wide door bays on its west elevation. The doors have been removed and the openings enclosed with plywood, but multipane wood-frame transoms and segmental-arched lintels surmount the door. Two original, tall, triple-hung, wood-frame windows, each with three sets of twelve-pane sash,

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pierce the south elevation's west side. An identical window to the east has been replaced with two smaller windows, a double-hung sash at the lower level and a higher six-pane sash offset to the east. All the windows have segmental-arched lintels.

East of the machine shop and annex, contractors expanded what was originally a one-story slasher room in 1900 to its current two-level configuration. The exact date of this change is unknown, but it was after 1947 and may have occurred in conjunction with the early 1950s finishing room addition. Two courses of corbelled brick top the south wall's slightly stepped parapet. On the west elevation, high, square window openings containing twelve-pane wood-frame sash light the upper level. The elevation is otherwise blind. Four original, tall, triple-hung, wood-frame, rectangular windows, each with three sets of twelve-pane sash, pierce the south elevation's upper level. Metal panels cover two short windows in the basement rooms. A steel I-beam and post support the wide opening east of the windows.

An open outside corridor leads to entrances in the basement of the adjacent buildings. On the corridor's west side, paneled wood doors secure storage rooms and offices. On the east side, segmental-arched lintels surmount two original, double-hung, wood-frame, eight-over-twelve-sash windows. At the corridor's north end, on its east side, high, square, six-pane, wood-sash windows light a large shower room for mill employees. The slasher room's southeast corner is offset, extending one-bay farther south to include a single-leaf replacement steel door at the lower level. A segmental-arched lintel tops the door. The offset's south elevation is two bays wide and all of its windows have been enclosed with brick.

A one-story, windowless, flat-roofed, brick, early 1950s finishing room addition executed in five-to-one-common bond projects from the 1900 mill's southeast corner. A large, rectangular, asbestos-shingle-sheathed, frame roof monitor containing square vents projects above the roof. A four-bay, shed-roofed, concrete-block, early 1970s loading dock extends from the addition's south end along the slasher room's east elevation. Each loading dock bay is angled to the southeast to facilitate truck access in the small asphalt-paved parking lot adjacent to South Morgan Street. The loading dock has a formed-concrete foundation. A straight run of matching concrete steps with a metal pipe railing leads to the single-leaf steel door at the dock's north end. Wood rafters support the deep eaves that shelter the roll-up metal doors. Steel I-beams carry the building's load.

When roof replacement was necessary, rubber membrane and tar and gravel roofs proved to be the most serviceable options. Flush-board roof decking is intact in most locations.

Interior

The mill's open plan and interior finishes original to each construction phase are substantially intact. Painted brick walls are typical, although some walls in the 1900 to 1924 sections have been plastered. The floor plan remains predominately open. In a few areas, frame partition walls create office and storage

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space. Wood-panel, vertical-board, or steel doors hang in some interior doorways, but between most sections metal fire doors slide on steel tracks and are held open by weighted pulleys. In a few areas updated or erected after the mid-twentieth century, metal fire doors are mounted above door lintels and roll down.

Wood floors originally spanned wood joists and beams in all pre-1948 buildings, but the mill's later additions as well as earlier first-story areas such as the 1900 to 1924 sections renovated during the mid-twentieth century have concrete floors. The original floor system, a thick plank decking topped with hardwood floors, is substantially intact throughout the second floor. The undersides of the wide plank floor and roof decking are visible in the spaces below. In a few locations, water damage has resulted in areas of roof decking collapse.

Contractors dropped fluorescent lights and sprinkler system pipes from the ceilings throughout the complex. Rigid metal ductwork and sizable air handling units remain from the air conditioning systems configured for the plant in the late 1960s. Surface-mounted metal conduit houses electrical wiring.

An acoustical tile ceiling was installed in the 1901 picker house's first story in order to facilitate the space's use as a sample sale room. The interior otherwise matches that of the 1900 mill, with painted brick walls, wood floors, and chamfered heavy-timber posts and wood beams beneath wide flush-board roof decking. In the 1920 picker house addition to the west, round cast-iron posts secured to chamfered wood beams with steel collars and plates carry the building's load. A freight elevator rises on the north elevation just east of the double-leaf exterior door. The picker house's second-story is completely open.

As the main mill expanded north, the north walls of the 1900 mill and the 1909 addition were removed in order to allow for unimpeded flow between the 1900, 1909, and 1920 sections, all which retain chamfered square wood posts and substantial wood beams. Heavy-timber framing members that were at least twelve inches square with chamfered edges effectively slowed the progress of fire, as evidenced by their survival in the 1900 mill, where a 1959 fire did not destroy the posts and beams. Steel collars and plates secure posts directly to beams. Throughout the mill, long rows of posts divide the interior into three bays on each level, a width that accommodated sizable machinery.

A kalamein door secures the single-leaf steel door into the stair tower at the center of the 1900 mill's east elevation. The opening was originally larger and topped with a segmental-arched lintel. Its depth is visible from the east side. The frame stair has a plastered half-wall enclosing the lower run and matching full-height walls at its upper level. The stair treatment in the tower at the 1920 addition's center is almost identical, with the addition of metal-pipe railings. Also, the exterior walls in the 1920 tower are not plastered.

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The north end of the 1920 addition's west wall was removed upon the completion of the 1924 addition to its west. In that building, round cast-iron posts secured to chamfered wood beams with steel collars and plates carry the building's load. Wood floors remain, but have suffered some water damage. Loose plywood sheets cover weak spots in the floor.

Engineers specified the installation of steel posts and beams to provide supplementary support and as replacements in the early sections, and as original structural systems in warehouses and additions built from 1938 through the early 1970s. Post replacement or removal is minimal and does not have a significant negative effect on the mill's historic integrity. Steel braces and girders reinforce areas throughout the mill to compensate for equipment weight and vibration.

The west wall of the two-story-on-basement 1938 addition was removed in conjunction with the 1948 addition's construction. The interior is open on all three levels. A rectangular office fills the first floor's northeast corner. Double-leaf steel doors on the north and south elevations allow exterior access. A window opening west of the exterior door on the south elevation was enlarged to create a door opening into the early 1970s loading dock. A sliding vertical-board door secures the opening.

On both levels of the 1948 addition's east elevation, single-leaf steel doors with glazed single-pane upper sections and matching sidelights provide access into two offices. Two restrooms and a freight elevator are south of the offices. On the lower two-thirds of the restroom walls and the stall partition walls, black bullnose and base tiles frame square white-glazed ceramic tiles. Blue-green and grey hexagonal mosaic floor tiles and white porcelain toilets and wall-mounted sinks are also intact. The restroom towers in the mill's earlier sections were updated in a similar manner.

The 1920 addition at the mill's northeast corner has a low-ceilinged basement with a dirt floor that contains some mechanical system equipment. The basement under the 1920 picker house addition is also a low-ceilinged space with a dirt floor. The basements of the 1924, 1938, and 1948 sections are finished like the rest of the mill. Standing water has caused the wood floor boards in the 1924 and 1948 buildings to buckle and warp. The 1938 addition's basement has a poured-concrete floor.

The following list enumerates extant auxiliary buildings in order of significance based on age and function.

Office, 1920, ca. 1948, Contributing Building

The architecture firm operated by Richard C. Biberstein and his son Herman Von Biberstein designed the one-story, brick, hip-roofed office that stands at the complex's northeast corner. The original building, as rendered in a set of 1917 floor plans and elevations, was three bays wide and five bays deep. An

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expansion planned in 1944 and likely erected at the same time as the 1948 mill addition provided another three bays of width, one bay on the original building's north side and two bays on its south side.⁵

A shallow shed-roofed porch with a pedimented gable above the entrance projects from the east elevation in the third bay from the north end. The porch's truncated square corner posts rest on a concrete-capped brick kneewall. All of the windows and doors on the north, east, and south elevations have been boarded up, but cast-stone window sills and lintels ornamented with slightly raised keystones are intact. The 1917 plans illustrate one-over-one, double-hung, wood-sash windows. The primary entrance at the east elevation's center was a double-leaf wood door with glazed upper sections above two raised panels in each leaf. A rectangular transom surmounted the door.

The west window on the north elevation is high and square, indicating the restroom location. The south elevation contains a central door flanked by two windows. Three formed-concrete steps lead to the door. Hip-roofed dormers containing louvered vents rise from the roof's north and south slopes. An L-shaped exhaust pipe pierces the south dormer.

Interior access was not possible. However, the paired, one-over-one, double-hung, wood-sash windows in the covered breezeway between the office and the 1924 addition are intact and offer a glimpse of the interior. It appears that plaster walls, simple molded wood trim, and raised-horizontal panel doors are intact. Acoustical tiles have been attached to the ceiling at its original height.

The 1917 floor plan comprised two large and two small offices as well as a restroom. The general office at the building's northeast corner contained an L-shaped service counter by 1944. The addition provided four more offices and a conference room flanking a central corridor.⁶

Cotton Waste House, 1910s, early 1920s, early 1950s, Contributing Building

Between 1909 and 1916, carpenters erected a one-story, square, open-sided cotton shed west of the picker house and south of the cotton warehouse. By March 1921, the cotton shed's walls had been enclosed and a smaller rectangular lumber shed stood to the west. By April 1926, the company had expanded the cotton shed to two stories, creating what is probably the east end of the existing cotton waste house. The footprint of the cotton shed and the adjacent shed remain the same through 1947. An undated, likely mid-1960s Factory Insurance Association plan depicts the rectangular cotton waste house footprint.

⁵ "Office of Shelby Cotton Mills," December 1917, and H. V. Biberstein, "Floor Plan of Offices for Shelby Cotton Mills," September 19, 1944, Biberstein, Bowles, Meacham, and Reed Records, J. Murrey Atkins Library Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

⁶ Ibid.

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The two-story, side-gable-roofed, German-sided, frame building has an open, two-level, central bay on the north elevation between the two-story structure and the two-story addition. To either side, wide, open bays without doors provide access into both sections. In the east end, a large multipane wood-sash window above the north elevation's door opening has been boarded-up, as have most windows elsewhere. Smaller window openings pierce the west section's first story east of the door opening and the center of the west section's second story. The west elevation contains four second-story windows and three first-story windows and a south door opening. The east elevation is similar, but has three second-story windows and a south door opening. The south elevation comprises three second-story windows and three first-story windows. Metal panels sheath the roof. German siding remained popular through the early 1950s, and it appears that the building was resided when it was expanded during that time.

The interior features exposed heavy-timber posts and beams and exterior stud walls. Most windows retain single twelve-pane wood sash visible from the interior. There is no sheathing on the wall studs, but flush horizontal wood boards clad the interior walls between sections. A poured-concrete floor has been installed. Wood steps without railings rise on the east elevation in a straight run to the second floor. As the building is partially collapsed, second-floor access was not possible. However, the undersides of the second story's wood floor boards are visible from below.

Boiler House, 1938, Contributing Building

The two-story, flat-roofed boiler house stands southwest of the picker house and west of the machine shop. Like the 1938 mill addition, masons laid the red brick walls in a distinctive common bond consisting of seven courses of stretchers followed by a course of alternating headers and stretchers. Terra-cotta coping caps the flat parapet.

The building footprint comprises a five-bay-wide (north-south) by seven-bay-long (east-west) east section and an offset three-bay-wide by one-bay-deep section at the west end. Most window openings have been enclosed with brick, but retain projecting brick header sills. Some tall, rectangular, eighteen-pane, steel-frame windows with operable six-pane lower sections remain at the second-story level. The main block's west elevation retains one second-story single window in its north bay and an adjacent pair of windows. Remnants of a straight-sloped aluminum canopy shelter the double-leaf, steel, first-story door on the offset section's west elevation.

A double-leaf steel door occupies the south elevation's central first-story bay. A tall, wide, single-leaf steel door in the east bay opens into the boiler room. Two pairs of second-story windows are intact at the south elevation's east end.

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Two tall, wide, garage door openings on the east elevation's first story allowed for equipment installation and maintenance. The north opening retains a metal roll-up door; the south has been enclosed with plywood. At the second-story level, two single windows flank three pairs of windows.

The north elevation retains a tall, wide, single-leaf steel door in the first story's east bay. A double-leaf steel door fills the second-story's second bay from the west end. Two single windows flank the second-story door and three paired windows pierce the wall east of the brick hyphen that connects to the smokestack. Interior access was not possible.

A fire hydrant and water pressure valve are located near the boiler house's northeast corner.

Smokestack, 1938, Contributing Structure

A tall, tapered, round smokestack executed with glazed square terra cotta blocks rises between the 1930s cotton waste house and the 1938 boiler house. Metal bands reinforce the structure above and below the corbelled cap. Concrete caps the one-course-thick water table that encircles the smokestack's base. A poured-concrete pad wraps around the base. The segmental-arched cleanout opening at the base on the west side has been filled with spray foam and the hinged metal door removed.

Air Conditioning Water Tower, late 1960s, Noncontributing Structure

The water tower that serves the air conditioning system installed in the late 1960s rests on a formed concrete foundation. Corrugated metal sheathes the steel frame surrounding the unit.

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Section 8. Statement of Significance

Shelby Cotton Mill meets Criterion A for industry and Criterion C for its local architectural significance. The concern's contribution to the local economy as a manufacturer, employer, consumer of local goods and services, and taxpayer, was enormous. Cotton sheeting demand escalated rapidly following the factory's April 1900 opening, resulting in equipment quantity doubling in 1901 to encompass 8,784 ring spindles, 250 broad looms, and 14 carding machines. By 1916, the company employed 250 laborers. Shelby Cotton Mill remained Cleveland County's largest textile manufacturer through the early 1920s, generating yarn and "pajama check," a lightweight gingham or plaid woven cloth.

The operation remained solvent during the Great Depression and expanded in the late 1930s, but 1940 equipment numbers—20,832 spindles and 579 looms—represented only a slight change since 1930. However, in the early 1950s, Shelby Cotton Mill installed new equipment to spin and weave synthetic fibers such as nylon and rayon. Approximately five hundred workers facilitated this diversified production. Many employees lived in 145 residences in the adjacent company-owned mill village. The LeGrand family sold the industrial complex to United Merchants in 1965. The New Jersey-based manufacturer retained Shelby Cotton Mill employees who continued to generate the same textile products until around 1992.

Shelby Cotton Mill is architecturally significant due to its collection of intact early to mid-twentieth-century buildings that manifest the evolution of industrial design during that period. The nominated area encompasses buildings and structures erected from 1900 through the late 1960s. The 1900 mill features a heavy-timber interior structural system in conjunction with load-bearing brick exterior walls executed in five-to-one common bond. Segmental-arched window and door openings embellish the building. These elements, in conjunction with original interior features such as double-thickness wood floors are representative of fire-resistant industrial architecture commonly employed through the early twentieth century. The 1901, 1909, and 1920 additions and the 1910s cotton waste house display the ongoing prevalence of heavy-timber construction. The 1924 addition utilizes cast-iron posts for structural support, while the 1938 and 1948 additions employ structural-steel framing systems, as commonly seen during the mid-twentieth century. The period of significance begins in 1900, with the original mill's completion, and continues to 1965. The plant's industrial function and physical expansion after 1965 are not of exceptional significance.

Historical Background and Shelby's Textile Industry Context

North Carolina's early textile operations depended on waterpower, making locations along the Haw, Deep, and Catawba rivers, where slate formations create falls and rapids, ideal for manufacturing. German merchant Michael Schenck erected a sawmill, gristmill, and several ironworks in Lincoln County before hiring ironworkers Absolom Warwick and Michael Beam to construct North Carolina's first cotton

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mill in 1813. Only a few other entrepreneurs attempted textile production before the late 1820s, when the North Carolina legislature approved the incorporations of approximately fifteen new companies. Henry Humphreys was the first North Carolina textile mill owner to experiment with steam power, installing a system in 1828 at his Mt. Hecla Cotton Factory near Greensboro that inspired others to invest in the technology. However, it was not until the late 1830s that industrialists such as Benjamin Elliot, Francis Fries, Edwin Michael Holt, Charles Mallet, John Motley Morehead, and John Trollinger capitalized on the piedmont's available sites, transportation, and labor force to establish spinning mills.⁷

Most nineteenth-century inhabitants of Cleveland County, created in 1841 from portions of Lincoln and Rutherford Counties, operated subsistence farms, in some cases generating enough agricultural yield for surplus to be sold at regional markets. Others engaged in manufacturing endeavors to generate supplementary income, processing raw materials such as corn, wheat, flax seed, and logs to produce meal, flour, linseed oil, and lumber. Given that many land grants and property acquisitions encompassed sizable tracts, residents typically lived at great distances from each other, meeting at churches and in crossroads communities and small towns to socialize, purchase goods, and address business matters. Shelby, incorporated in 1843 and again in 1849, has functioned as the county's commercial and governmental center since its establishment.⁸

Retail concerns proliferated in the county seat but it was not until the Carolina Central Railway extended service to Shelby in 1874 that industrial endeavors garnered significant investor interest.⁹ Benjamin B. Babington opened Shelby Foundry and Machine Shop in 1875. Twelve years later, Shelby entrepreneurs A. C. Miller, Burwell Blanton, and James Rush Oates capitalized on the county's increasing cotton production and established Belmont Cotton Mill south of town. The company engaged H. G. Hall to supervise the operation. In June 1887, the mill was equipped with "eight [freight] car loads of machinery" and contractors bid on the installation of electric lights. Engineers completed the electric

⁷ Holland Thompson, *From the Cotton Field to the Cotton Mill* (Norwood, Massachusetts: Norwood Press, 1906), 45-49; Brent D. Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina: A History* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1992), 4-10, 14. "Humphreys" is also spelled "Humphries" in various sources, but as period documents use "Humphreys," that spelling is repeated here.

⁸ William S. Powell, *The North Carolina Gazetteer* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 109, 449.

⁹ The Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherfordton Railroad became Carolina Central Railway on April 10, 1873. The entity operated as such until 1876, but financial difficulties resulted in foreclosure and reorganization in 1880 as Carolina Central Railroad. The Seaboard and Roanoke Railroad assumed the company's control in 1881 and the Seaboard Air Line Railway purchased the line, which by then extended west into Rutherford County, in 1892. "Carolina Central Railway" and "Carolina Central Railroad," http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_carolina_central_railway.html (accessed April 2015).

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power plant in early October, allowing for twenty-four-hour operation, and the company installed one thousand additional spindles in its 2,080-spindle factory.¹⁰

In July 1887, E. A. Morgan, T. F. Cline, H. Cline, and E. A. Wright organized Morgan, Cline, and Company with the goal of erecting the community's second cotton mill. In August, the concern engaged Spartanburg, South Carolina, builder Samuel McGee to construct a one-story, brick, steam-powered mill; C. H. Fromm to supply the pressed brick; and M. A. Grigg to execute the woodwork. Laborers began the foundation excavation for the factory known as Shelby Cotton Mill on October 13 and masons started building the walls on November 2. The site, purchased from D. D. Suttle, was adjacent to the Carolina Central Railroad, which agreed to run a spur line to the factory. Newspaper articles indicate that the first Shelby Cotton Mill failed in 1895. However, A. C. and R. B. Miller continued to operate Belmont Cotton Mill.¹¹

Craftspeople and tradesmen who facilitated Shelby's late nineteenth-century prosperity included blacksmiths, gunsmiths, silversmiths, tinsmiths, harness and saddle makers, building contractors, house painters, and flour, corn, and lumber millers. Belmont Cotton Mill was the sole textile manufactory with a Shelby address functioning in 1895. The plant's 65 employees utilized 3,100 spindles and 1,000 twistors to create yarn. Laura Glenn Mill, owned by John E. Hurst of Baltimore and R. B. Miller, stood three miles south of Shelby. J. G. Brown supervised the concern's 70 workers who produced yarn and twine with 3,000 spindles and 1,000 twistors. At H. F. Schenck's Cleveland Cotton Mills near Lawndale, 130 operatives made cotton twine and warp on 5,184 spindles. F. Dilling and H. S. Chadwick's Dilling Cotton Mills in Kings Mountain employed 175 laborers to run 5,568 spindles and 350 looms. At Enterprise Cotton Mill, also in Kings Mountain, C. C. Randleman managed 100 operatives of 2,688 spindle and 80 looms that generated yarn, warp, and brown sheeting. In 1896, T. D. Lattimore completed the construction of Buffalo Manufacturing Company in Stubbs, four miles east of Shelby, and Durham Shoals Manufacturing Company, headed by J. A. Carroll and H. D. Wheat, was in the process of erecting Irene Mill on the Broad River near Boiling Springs, approximately nine miles southwest of Shelby. Its employees produced warp and yarn on 2,440 spindles and 30 carding machines by 1897. Cleveland County's seven cotton mills then altogether contained 19,228 spindles and 130 looms.¹²

¹⁰ "Local Happenings," *New Era*, June 22, 1887, p. 3; "New Cotton Mills," *New Era*, July 27, 1887, p. 3; "Cotton Factory Dots," *New Era*, October 5, 1887, p. 3; *A Brief Sketch of Shelby: A Thriving Town in the Piedmont Section of North Carolina* (Shelby, N. C.: C. P. Roberts, 1889), 9.

¹¹ "Factory Notes," *New Era*, August 10, 1887, p. 3; "The New Factory Located," *New Era*, August 31, 1887, p. 3; "Cotton Factory Notes," *New Era*, August 31, 1887, p. 3; "Cotton Factory Dots," *New Era*, September 28, 1887, p. 3, and October 12, 1887, p. 3; *New Era*, November 2, 1887, p. 3; "Mill Schemes Collapse," *Gastonia Gazette*, June 20, 1895, p. 1.

¹² "Summary of the 184 Cotton Mills in Operation in North Carolina," [Raleigh] *News and Observer* Cotton Mill Edition, November 28, 1895, p. 26; *Charlotte Observer*, February 28, 1896, p. 3; *Morganton Herald*, April 9, 1896, p. 7; *Carolina Watchman* (Salisbury), April 23, 1896, p. 1; *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1896* (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1896), 193; North Carolina Department of Labor and Printing, *Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Guy V. Barnes, 1898), 17, 27, 31.

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Shelby's populace dropped slightly from 1,894 residents in 1890 to 1,874 inhabitants in 1900. As the municipality was not one of North Carolina's largest urban industrial centers, federal census reports did not enumerate its manufacturing statistics separately that year. However, overall returns indicate that 154 Cleveland County entrepreneurs managed 114 manufacturing establishments and generated products valued at approximately \$1,026,481.¹³

It was in this auspicious economic climate that W. A. Hamrick, C. D. Hunter, J. D. Lineberger, M. M. Mauney, J. J. McMurry, J. F. Williams, and H. D. Wilson capitalized the town's second concern to be called Shelby Cotton Mill with \$99,900 in stock. Mauney, whose many areas of expertise included building construction, erected the two-story brick mill at an estimated cost of \$150,000. Work began in late August, with manufacturing of approximately one million bricks occurring on site. Masons completed the building's first story by early October. Shelby contractor A. P. Weathers executed carpentry elements such as two-inch-thick wood floor installation. Gastonia industrialist George A. Gray ordered \$50,000-worth of equipment for the Shelby plant to be delivered in January 1900.¹⁴

Residents celebrated Shelby Cotton Mill's April 1900 opening not only due to potential employment opportunities and economic benefits, but also because the industrial complex was to include a power plant that would generate electricity for area homes and businesses under the auspices of Shelby Light and Power Company. The concern, chaired by A. C. Miller, contracted with individuals as well as the town to service residential and commercial buildings as well as street lamps.¹⁵

In 1900, Shelby Cotton Mill was one of fourteen Cleveland County cotton manufacturers, three of which were located in or near Shelby. In October of that year, the concern's directors announced that a plant expansion would allow for the installation of four thousand additional spindles, which doubled its capacity. The new equipment arrived in April 1901, when brick making for an addition, likely the one-story picker house that extended west from the mill's southwest corner, was underway. M. M. Mauney then superintended a complex that included 8,784 ring spindles, 250 broad looms, and 14 carding machines used to generate sheeting. E. E. Lemmond served as the company's bookkeeper. Shelby Cotton Mill improved the appearance of its factory and village by planting two hundred elm trees on the

¹³ William R. Merriam, director, *Twelfth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1900, Manufactures, Part II* (Washington, D. C.: United States Census Office, 1902), 664; William R. Merriam, director, *Twelfth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1900, Population, Part I* (Washington, D. C.: United States Census Office, 1901), 467.

¹⁴ *Asheville Citizen*, August 7, 1899, p. 2; *American Wool and Cotton Reporter*, August 24, 1899, and November 16, 1899; *Charlotte News*, September 1, 1899, p. 7; *Asheville Daily Gazette*, October 6, 1899, p. 2; "County Lost Valuable Man in Death of Hord," *Cleveland Star*, March 9, 1920, p. 1.

¹⁵ Shelby Cotton Mill continued to generate the electricity provided by Shelby Light and Power Company after A. W. McMurry and Hugh G. Miller purchased the plant in March 1902. *Gastonia Gazette*, April 19, 1900, p. 2; "Electric Light Plant Sold," *Cleveland Star*, March 19, 1902, p. 3.

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property in early June 1901.¹⁶ The company also fostered employee well-being by sponsoring social events and educational opportunities. Mill workers participated in sports teams, a musical band, and Sunday school led by prominent local residents, including Shelby Baptist Church deacon W. P. Beam.¹⁷

Prominent Shelby businessman and First National Bank president Charles C. Blanton purchased \$25,000-worth of Shelby Cotton Mill stock in 1903, bringing his total investment in the company to \$40,000. He became a director and the concern's president in late October of that year. The board also elected J. J. McMurry to serve as the company's secretary and treasurer. J. C. Smith acquired a sizable interest in the business in 1905 and assumed the roles of Shelby Cotton Mill secretary, treasurer, and mill manager on November 1, 1905. He had previously functioned in the same capacity at Newton Cotton Mill. Soon after his arrival in Shelby, fire damaged the mill's cotton waste house for the second time that fall. Production remained strong, however. The mill had the capacity to process 900,000 pounds of cotton annually.¹⁸

In October 1906, J. C. Smith purchased Belmont Cotton Mill from A. C. Miller. By the end of that year, two railroads, the Seaboard Air Line and the Southern Railway's Carolina Division, served Shelby residents and facilitated the operation of textile mills as well as other manufacturing concerns such as Cleveland Iron Works, Shelby Bottling Works, Shelby Ice and Fuel Company, Shelby Marble Works, Shelby Roller Mill, Shelby Woodworking Company, and Thompson-Branton Company (a building material purveyor). As Shelby Cotton Mill's production increased, Charles S. Smart moved from Durham to Shelby in 1907 to undertake its management, but held the position for only a short time before being replaced by T. L. Saunders in 1908. The plant then contained 8,500 ring spindles, 1,512 twisting spindles, and 250 looms.¹⁹

The company began planning another expansion in 1908. Engineers designed a two-story, seventy-by-ninety-foot addition at the mill's north end to accommodate 6,500 more ring spindles and 3,000 twisters. The intended completion date was March 1, 1909, with manufacturing in the new portion of the facility slated to begin in early May. The project proceeded according to plan. The company hired W. T. Bain to

¹⁶ E. L. Jenkins and J. H. McBrayer had executed plans for a fourth Shelby textile plant, but its construction had not yet begun in May 1901. "Good Cotton Mill Showing," *People's Paper*, September 14, 1900, p. 1; *Progressive Farmer*, October 23, 1900, p. 3; *Charlotte News*, January 31, 1901, p. 8; *Charlotte Observer*, April 12, 1901, p. 3; *Pocket Edition of "The Blue Book" Textile Directory of the United States and Canada* (New York: Davison Publishing Company, 1901), 144.

¹⁷ *Cleveland Star*, October 28, 1903, p. 5, and September 12, 1911, p. 1; *Charlotte Observer*, May 22, 1906, p. 1.

¹⁸ *Charlotte News*, October 31, 1903, p. 4; *Charlotte Observer*, October 28, 1905, p. 1; *Cleveland Star*, September 6, 1905, p. 1, November 1, 1905, p. 1, and November 29, 1905, p. 8; North Carolina State Board of Agriculture, *The Bulletin*, Volume 26, Number 8, January 1905, p. 5.

¹⁹ "Belmont Cotton Mills Change Hands," *Cleveland Star*, October 5, 1906, p. 5; *Shelby Aurora*, December 14, 1906, p. 5; Textile World Record, *A Directory of the Textile Establishments in the United States and Canada* (Philadelphia: Lord and Nagle Company, 1907), 172; Textile World Record, *A Directory of the Textile Establishments in the United States and Canada* (Philadelphia: Lord and Nagle Company, 1908), 148-149, 151.

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replace J. H. Hunt as weaving department supervisor in 1909. The following year Shelby Cotton Mill reported that 275 employees operated 15,000 ring spindles, 3,000 twister spindles, 250 looms, and 26 cards. Facility improvements in 1910 included humidifier installation. New York agents Wilson and Bradbury marketed the company's cloth and yarn.²⁰

Shelby Cotton Mill entered a long period of administrative stability in March 1914 when the company hired Richmond County native Richard Torrance LeGrand to serve as the plant's superintendent. LeGrand's previous experience included overseeing carding and spinning at Highland Park Mill in Charlotte, selling and erecting mill equipment, marketing yarn, and supervising textile mills in Palmetto, Georgia, and Concord, North Carolina. He remained at Shelby Cotton Mill in positions of increasing authority until his death in 1961.²¹

Given the business acumen of Shelby's leaders, local industries successfully weathered the economic challenges wrought by World War I. Beginning in 1915, the federal government engaged textile manufacturers nationwide to fulfill military and medical needs. Cannon Mills' New York and Philadelphia sales offices marketed Shelby Cotton Mill's fabrics. In 1916, the company employed 150 men, 65 women, and 35 children who processed 1,600,000 pounds of cotton. Male operatives earned between \$0.90 and \$3.25 per week, while women's wages ranged from \$0.90 to \$2.00. Facility improvements that year included planting evergreen shrubs and fruit and shade trees around the factory and in the village. A fire damaged the cotton waste house in April 1916, but the rest of the complex was not harmed.²²

Shelby Cotton Mill's reputation as an equitable employer was well-known throughout the region. In 1916, the company began hosting an annual barbeque for employees and their families. The following year, the mill employed approximately three hundred workers under the direction of J. C. Smith and R. T. LeGrand. Village residents occupied three- to six-room houses powered by the mill's electric power plant. The youngest children attended a school in the village, while older youth enrolled in Shelby's graded and high schools. The village school building also housed a Union Sunday school. The company provided basic health care and during the influenza epidemic hired nurses including Mayme Hardin to care for stricken employees. Shelby Cotton Mill operatives organized a baseball team that competed against other mill teams. They also supported charitable causes. Shelby Cotton Mill and its workers

²⁰ "Textile World Record, *A Directory of the Textile Establishments in the United States and Canada* (Philadelphia: Lord and Nagle Company, 1909), 158; *Pocket Edition of "The Blue Book" Textile Directory of the United States and Canada* (New York: Davison Publishing Company, 1910), 156-157; *Charlotte News*, July 30, 1910, p. 2.

²¹ *Charlotte Observer*, March 11, 1914, p. 2; James R. and Marjorie W. Young, *Textile Leaders of the South* (Columbia, S. C.: The R. L. Bryan Company, 1963), 125, 776.

²² *Charlotte Observer*, March 14, 1916, p. 3, and April 4, 1916, p. 11; North Carolina Department of Labor and Printing, *Thirtieth Annual Report of the Department of Labor and Printing* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1916), 41, 55, 67.

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contributed \$520, more than any other Cleveland County industrial concern, to the Red Cross War Relief Fund campaign that concluded in May 1918.²³

The steady growth of Shelby industries required additional laborers, resulting in a population increase to 3,609 residents in 1920. Early that year, Shelby Cotton Mill became the county's largest textile plant upon the installation of 5,000 spindles, 80 looms, and carding equipment in a just-completed two-story 83-by-75-foot addition that extended north from the 1909 addition. The \$125,000 expansion included a second stair tower that projected from the mill's Morgan Street façade, a restroom tower on the west elevation opposite the new entrance, and an addition that elongated and added a second story to the picker house that projected from the mill's southwest corner. The factory then comprised 20,800 spindles and 400 looms. The company also erected a one-story hip-roofed office east of the 1920 mill addition at the intersection of South Morgan and Gardner Streets. In late March 1920, administrators initiated village improvements such as landscaping and a playground, plumbing eighty-four houses for bathrooms, and erecting ten residences. The infrastructure required to provide plumbing on this scale was extremely expensive. The city issued \$37,500-worth of bonds to extend municipal water and sewer lines to the village and subsidized the construction of a pumping station and water treatment plant. Shelby Cotton Mill was then the only textile mill within the city limits, and thus the only such concern to receive this service. Contractors completed the project in January 1921. In September of that year, the company announced plans for an addition to the slasher room at the mill's south end.²⁴

In 1922, Cleveland County industrialists operated twenty-three cotton mills, eight of which received mail at the Shelby post office. Eastside Manufacturing Company had only recently commenced production, joining established concerns including Belmont, Ella, and Lily Mills in 1920. Industrial plant construction escalated as owners executed improvements to meet demand. Engineers from Lockwood, Greene, and Company's Charlotte office designed a two-story addition built in 1921 by Fisk-Carter Construction Company of Greenville, South Carolina, for the Lily Mill and Power Company. Shelby entrepreneurs J. R. Dover, Fred R. Morgan, Charles C. Blanton, Max Gardner, E. B. Hamrick, Earl Hamrick, and Jack Dover engaged architect and engineer Joseph E. Serrine's Greenville, South Carolina-

²³ *Charlotte News*, February 21, 1917, p. 26; *Charlotte Observer*, October 27, 1918, p. 16; *Cleveland Star*, February 23, 1917, p. 5, August 20, 1918, p. 2, and May 13, 1919, p. 4; "10,000 Given to Red Cross Fund in Cleveland County," *Cleveland Star*, May 21, 1918, p. 1.

²⁴ Charlotte architect Richard C. Biberstein's firm prepared plans for an addition to Shelby Cotton Mill in 1917. *Manufacturers Record*, July 17, 1919, p. 107, and August 18, 1919, pp. 108 and 117; "Prosperity for Cleveland in 1919," *Cleveland Star*, December 30, 1919, p. 1; *American Wool and Cotton Reporter*, February 5, 1920, p. 601; *Cleveland Star*, March 26, 1920, p. 1, September 20, 1921, p. 1, and May 16, 1922, p. 12; "Shelby Mill Water System Nears Completion," *Cleveland Star*, January 7, 1921, p. 4; "Town Will Issue \$75,000 in Bonds," *Cleveland Star*, May 17, 1921, p. 5; "Shelby Cotton Mills - Drawings 1917," Biberstein, Bowles, Meacham, and Reed Records, J. Murrey Atkins Library Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

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based firm to prepare plans for the county's first steel and concrete industrial building, the three-story Dover Mill completed by Fisk-Carter Construction Company in 1923.²⁵

Shelby Cotton Mill remained the county's largest textile plant in 1922, manufacturing yarn and "pajama check," a lightweight gingham or plaid woven cloth. R. T. LeGrand oversaw production on 20,832 ring spindles, 3,600 twister spindles, and 400 looms. The company commissioned additional housing for its increasing number of employees, engaging Shelby contractor J. W. Branton to construct twenty-five dwellings and Cherryville contractor P. P. Self to erect forty residences. A new railroad spur line facilitated building material deliveries.²⁶

Textile-related industries also prospered. R. T. LeGrand and other investors incorporated Planters and Merchants Warehouse Company on August 31, 1922. The concern soon erected a 10,000-square-foot warehouse just north of Shelby Cotton Mill adjacent to the railroad to store raw materials and products for Cleveland County textile manufacturers. In 1924, LeGrand assumed the role of Shelby Cotton Mill's secretary and treasurer, replacing J. C. Smith. Charles C. Blanton remained the company's president.²⁷

In 1930, Shelby's dramatic 233 percent population increase to 10,789 residents reflected the town's industrial strength as well as the expansion of its city limits. Shelby then encompassed almost 21 percent of Cleveland County's overall inhabitants. The county's 45 manufacturing operations employed 4,604 laborers who generated products valued at \$18,885,572. In Shelby, 1,731 workers operated twenty-two industrial plants.²⁸ Nine of those enterprises were textile mills: Belmont Cotton Mills, Cleveland Cloth Mills, Consolidated Textile Corporation's Ella Division, Dover Mill Company, Eastside Manufacturing Company, Lily Mill and Power Company, Ora Cotton Mills, Shelby Cotton Mill, and Shelby Hosiery Mills Company. Shelby Cotton Mill operatives utilized 20,882 spindles and 512 looms to produce sateen and "fancy" fabric.²⁹

²⁵ News and Observer, *North Carolina Yearbook* (Raleigh: News and Observer, 1922), 88; "Contracts Let for Dover Mill," *Cleveland Star*, February 13, 1922, p. 1; *American Wool and Cotton Reporter*, May 18, 1922, p. 1264; "Dover Mill on Hamrick Farm," *Cleveland Star*, August 25, 1922, p. 1; *Cleveland Star*, September 19, 1922; "First Cotton Put in New Dover Mill," *Cleveland Star*, July 31, 1923, p. 1.

²⁶ "Contracts Let for Dover Mill," *Cleveland Star*, February 13, 1922, p. 1; Textile World, *Official American Textile Directory* (Philadelphia: Bragdon, Lord and Nagle Company, 1923), 422.

²⁷ The complex grew to 422,600 square feet of warehouse space on thirteen acres by 1973. "Planters and Merchants Warehouse Company," <http://www.secretary.state.nc.us/corporations/> (accessed April 2015); "P & M Warehouse Company, Inc.: 50 Years of Service," framed narrative and photographs on the wall of the company's Blanton Street office.

²⁸ LeVerne Beales, supervisor, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: Manufactures, 1929, Volume III* (Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1933), 383-384; Leon E. Truesdell, supervisor, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population, Volume III, Part 2* (Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1932), 352.

²⁹ News and Observer, *North Carolina Yearbook* (Raleigh: News and Observer, 1930), 87.

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Diversification was particularly important during the early 1930s as the textile industry faced challenges nationwide. Mechanization transformed manufacturing operations and more efficient equipment resulted in mill employee layoffs. Job loss, decreased pay, and poor working conditions thus made unions more appealing to mill workers. The depressed economy further contributed to pay cuts and job losses and set the stage for mill employees across the South to participate in the General Textile Strike of 1934, which closed down textile mills throughout the region. On Labor Day, September 3 of that year, 65,000 North Carolina mill employees organized in support of union causes and refused to work. In Shelby and Kings Mountain, eleven plants were unable to open and 2,800 non-union operatives joined the protest.³⁰ Many mill owners fired known union members and sympathizers. Union efforts were not in vain, however, as the Roosevelt administration's social and economic reform programs eventually resulted in the institution of a forty-hour work week and increased worker pay.

Although Shelby Cotton Mill sales and profits decreased during the early 1930s as a result of the economic depression, the corporation remained solvent and invested in a two-story, brick, 1938 addition that extended west from the intersection of the original mill and the 1909 addition. Masons executed the freestanding boiler house and the tall adjacent smokestack at the same time. A late 1930s recession slowed the country's recovery from the Great Depression, but military contracts to support the United States's participation in World War II soon spurred burgeoning industrial production. America's goal to become "the arsenal of democracy" benefited large corporations—more than half of the \$175 billion-worth of government contracts awarded between 1940 and 1944 went to thirty-three nationally-known firms who had demonstrated their capacity to produce large quantities of quality goods—as well as small businesses, finally remedying the high unemployment rates that lingered after the recession. Industrial jobs increased by seventy-five percent in the South over the course of World War II, with traditionally underemployed groups such as women, African Americans, and the elderly receiving invaluable education, training, and experience. Output soared after May 1943, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Office of War Mobilization to coordinate a diverse array of support endeavors including manufacturing, scientific research, and agricultural production.³¹

Shelby's industrial trends during this period reflected those of the nation. In 1940, twenty-eight manufacturing establishments operated in the city, which had grown to encompass 14,037 residents. Cleveland County then contained twenty-four textile mills. The following year, Shelby Cotton Mill utilized 20,832 spindles and 579 looms, representing only a slight change since 1930. The mill product, dobbie fancies (geometric-figured woven fabric), also remained constant.³²

³⁰ *New York Times*, September 4, 1934.

³¹ Marilyn M. Harper, et. al. *World War II and the American Home Front* (Washington, D. C.: The National Historic Landmarks Program, October 2007), 3, 13-16.

³² Thomas J. Fitzgerald, supervisor. *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Manufactures, 1939, Volume III* (Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1942), 745, 753.

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Labor shortages ensued when mill employees enlisted in the armed services during World War II, but companies attempted to attract and retain workers including women by raising wages. Many North Carolina textile manufacturers executed agreements with the War Department whereby plants supplied the military with vast quantities of woven goods. War production statistics for Shelby Cotton Mill are unavailable. It appears that the company remained profitable, however, as the Charlotte architecture firm headed by Herman Von Biberstein and William Andrew Bowles began developing plans for factory updates and an addition in 1944. That year, the board of directors elected R. T. LeGrand to serve as Shelby Cotton Mill's president. The addition completed in 1948 on the plant's west side has a north/south orientation and connects the 1924 and 1938 additions.³³

In the early 1950s, Shelby Cotton Mill installed new equipment to spin and weave synthetic fibers such as nylon and rayon. The company erected a one-story rayon opening room at the 1948 addition's southwest corner and a finishing room at the 1900 mill's southeast corner. The plant then employed approximately five hundred workers, many of whom lived in 145 residences in the company-owned mill village. Shelby Cotton Mill also maintained a company store and a club house. By 1955, employment had dropped to 324 operatives, making the plant Shelby's fifth-largest industrial concern after Cleveland Cloth Mills (500 employees), Hudson Hosiery Company (492), Dover Mills (473), and Esther Mill Corporation (417). Neisler Mills in Kings Mountain, Cleveland County's largest industrial plant, utilized 1,032 workers.³⁴

In 1957, R. T. LeGrand became chairman of Shelby Cotton Mill's board of directors and relinquished his role as company president to his eldest son, R. T. LeGrand Jr. The elder LeGrand suffered a series of strokes beginning in 1958 and died on May 14, 1961.³⁵ R. T. LeGrand Jr. guided the company through challenges including a fire during the graveyard shift on December 2, 1959, that resulted in significant destruction in the mill's original section. Likely caused by faulty electrical wiring, the conflagration resulted in the plant's temporary closure. Despite an estimated \$100,000 of losses due to fire and water damage, the company's six hundred employees were soon able to resume operations.³⁶

The LeGrand family sold the industrial complex to United Merchants and Manufacturers, Inc., in 1965. The New Jersey-based manufacturer retained Shelby Cotton Mill employees who continued to generate the same textile products. Most windows in the original mill and the additions erected through 1924 were enclosed with brick when air conditioning was added in the late 1960s. Bookkeeper Joe Anthony, who began working at Shelby Cotton Mill in 1954, remained on staff until 1975 and remembered that United

³³ "Shelby Cotton Mills - Project files 1944-1948," Biberstein, Bowles, Meacham, and Reed Records, J. Murrey Atkins Library Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

³⁴ "Shelby Cotton Mills," *Shelby Daily Star Pictorial Review of Shelby and Cleveland County*, ca. 1953, vertical file, Cleveland County Memorial Library, Shelby; Shelby Chamber of Commerce, *Shelby, North Carolina: Facts and Figures* (Shelby: Shelby Chamber of Commerce, 1955), 19; "Shelby Loses a Builder," *Shelby Daily Star*, May 15, 1961.

³⁵ "Richard Torrance LeGrand," death certificate; "R. T. LeGrand Rites Today," *Shelby Daily Star*, May 15, 1961.

³⁶ "Heavy damage is reported in mill fire," *Index Journal*, December 2, 1959, p. 13.

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Merchants disposed of all early records related to the factory's operation as part of the administrative transition. The company ceased production at the Shelby plant around 1992.³⁷

The current owner, Capitol Funds, Inc., acquired the property from Universal Manufacturing Corporation on January 8, 1997. The mill has since been used primarily for storage. Shelby Fibers, LLC, which is, like Capitol Funds, headed by David W. Royster III, uses a minimal amount of space to reconstitute damaged cotton bales for the customers of a related business, Royster P & M Warehouse Company, Inc. The occupied square footage has a leasehold improvement in the form of equipment, specifically a ginning machine that recombines cleaned cotton into bales.³⁸

Industrial Architecture Context

Many of North Carolina's early textile producers adapted existing frame buildings to serve as their first mills. Such structures, which usually had rough-sawn wood floors and wood-shingle roofs, often resembled large residential or agricultural buildings as they were typically located in rural settings along the rivers and streams that generated their power. Since frame mills were extremely susceptible to fire and rarely had interior firewalls or other fire safety features, few nineteenth-century North Carolina factories survive.³⁹

In purpose-built industrial buildings, designers strove to accommodate machinery in a manner that allowed for efficient access to power sources as well as the utilization of natural light and ventilation. Most industrial buildings erected by the mid-nineteenth century were of "slow-burn" masonry construction, with load-bearing brick walls, exposed heavy-timber framing, thick plank floors, gabled roofs, large operable windows and transoms, and metal fire doors. Heavy-timber framing members that were at least twelve inches square with chamfered edges effectively slowed the progress of fire, particularly when used in combination with a floor system that encompassed three- to four-inch-thick plank decking covered with waterproof paper and topped with hardwood floors. The floor system was left exposed underneath in order to avoid the use of flammable ceiling materials and finishes. Chamfering the corners of beams, posts, and girders removed splinters that could ignite easily.⁴⁰

³⁷ Joe Anthony, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, March 24, 2015; "United Merchants and Manufacturers, Inc.," <http://www.secretary.state.nc.us/corporations/> (accessed July 2015).

³⁸ Cleveland County Deed Book 1058, p. 163; Deed Book 1192, p. 35; Jamey Davis, email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, July 15, 2015.

³⁹ Historian William Pierson, analysis by Betsy Hunter Bradley in *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), VIII, 16-17.

⁴⁰ Sara E. Wermiel, "Heavy Timber Framing in Late-Nineteenth-Century Commercial and Industrial Buildings," *APT Bulletin: Journal of Preservation Technology*, Volume 35, No. 1, 2004, 56.

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During the late nineteenth century, steam and electric power availability encouraged factory movement to urban areas in close proximity to railroad lines and a large potential employee pool. Textile mill construction evolved from a vernacular process whereby owners worked with builders who erected edifices based on mutually understood norms to a field dominated by professionally-trained mill engineers who designed industrial buildings and supervised their construction.⁴¹ Standards imposed by machinery manufacturers and insurance companies also guided industrial architecture's evolution. Roof monitors provided mill workers with abundant light and ventilation. In order to minimize fire risk, stairwells, which could serve as conduits for fire movement between floors, were located in projecting stair towers. Brick interior walls and galvanized-sheet-metal-clad, solid-core-wood doors, known as kalamein doors, separated the mill sections where fires might start or spread rapidly.⁴² These heavy doors would automatically close in the case of a fire, as the heat would melt a soft metal link in the door's counterweight assembly and the door would slide shut on the sloped metal track. As an additional precaution, water reservoirs and elevated water tanks supplied automatic sprinkler systems in many industrial complexes.

It is not known who designed the two-story brick Shelby Cotton Mill, but newspaper articles indicate that Marcus M. Mauney, a Confederate veteran whose many business endeavors included farming, flour mill operation, and road, bridge, and mill building, served as the general contractor. Mauney's 1917 obituary noted that during his twelve-year service as county commissioner, he supervised the Cleveland County courthouse's construction in 1907-1908 and erected the county's first steel bridge over Broad River. The article credits him with South Carolina projects such as erecting Milford Cotton Mill in Fort Mill and a dam that spanned the Catawba River at Indian Hook Shoal. It also states that a chest injury that he sustained while erecting Shelby Cotton Mill resulting in ongoing complications and may have contributed to his death.⁴³

In addition to relying on the expertise of builders such as Mauney, North Carolina industrialists benefited from the contributions of architects and engineers who disseminated specifications dictating best practices in mill layout and design. South Carolina native Daniel A. Tompkins, sent by the Pittsburgh-based Westinghouse Engine Company to Charlotte in the early 1880s to sell and coordinate the installation of the company's equipment in the region, became a driving force in the southern textile industry. Tompkins partnered with Charlotte grain merchant R. M. Miller in 1883 to establish the D. A. Tompkins

⁴¹ Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States*, 15-21; "Piedmont Manufacturing Company," http://www.nps.gov/history/nhl/DOE_dedesignations/Piedmont.htm, accessed in February 2011.

⁴² Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 38.

⁴³ Mauney's death certificate lists his name as "Matthew Marcus Mauney," but his gravemarker, census records, and other sources use "Marcus M. Mauney." "Marcus M. Mauney of Cleveland County Dead," *Charlotte Observer*, November 11, 1917, p. 1; "Mr. M. M. Mauney Dies at Age 73," *Cleveland Star*, November 11, 1917, p. 1.

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Company, an engineering firm. The company created plans for over one hundred mills in addition to other industrial buildings.⁴⁴

Thomasville, North Carolina, native Stuart Warren Cramer, who began his career with the D. A. Tompkins Company, was another highly-influential mill engineer. Cramer set up his own Charlotte firm in 1895, and by 1915 had designed almost one-third of the new mills erected in the South during that period. In addition to preparing plans for mills, Cramer equipped facilities with textile production machinery of all types, some of which he invented. Cramer's projects in Shelby included designing Ella Manufacturing Company's original mill, which housed 5,000 spindles and 126 looms. Construction of the 77-foot-wide and 356-foot-long building with a concrete floor began in 1905. Cramer's innovations in textile mill climate control garnered him international recognition, and he is credited with conceiving the term "air conditioning."⁴⁵

Talented architects and engineers such as Richard C. Biberstein of Fredericksburg, Texas, worked in Stuart Cramer's office. Biberstein, born in 1859, attained a mechanical engineering degree from the Worcester (Massachusetts) Polytechnic Institute in 1882. He found employment at U. S. Electric Lighting Company in Newark, New Jersey, and Atlas Engine Works in Indianapolis before moving to Charlotte in 1887 to undertake a draftsman position at industrialist John Wilkes's Mecklenburg Iron Works. H. S. Chadwick offered him a similar job at the Charlotte Machine Company, which manufactured mill equipment, in 1897. Biberstein accepted the offer and remained on staff until 1902, when he became Stuart Cramer's employee, thus garnering valuable experience that prepared him to launch an independent firm specializing in mill design three years later.⁴⁶

Richard C. Biberstein's son Herman Von Biberstein matriculated at North Carolina State University and began working with his father after completing a civil engineering degree in 1914. The firm undertook its first project for Shelby Cotton Mill, a two-story addition on the original mill's west side, in 1917. Architect William Andrew Bowles became a partner in 1930. Following the senior Biberstein's 1931 death, the practice bore his name until around 1940, when H. V. Biberstein's name appears on plan sheets. The company often worked with clients for decades, as evidenced by their return to plan factory

⁴⁴ Thomas W. Hanchett, *Sorting Out the New South City: Race, Class, and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875-1975* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 50.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 107; Thomas S. Morgan, "Stuart Warren Cramer" in William Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, Vol. 1* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 455; Catherine Westergaard, "Stuart W. Cramer," *North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary*, <http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000275> (accessed December 2014); Textile World Record, *A Directory of the Textile Establishments in the United States and Canada* (Philadelphia: Lord and Nagle Company, 1905), 158.

⁴⁶ Thomas W. Hanchett, William H. Huffman, and Catherine W. Bishir, "Richard C. Biberstein," *North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary*, 2009, accessed in November 2013; "Biberstein, Bowles, Meacham, and Reed: Biographical/Historical Note," Biberstein, Bowles, Meacham, and Reed Records, J. Murrey Atkins Library Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

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improvements and an addition to Shelby Cotton Mill completed in 1948. Biberstein and Bowles operated as principals until Louis Hunter Meacham achieved partnership in 1948. Biberstein, Bowles, and Meacham subsequently elevated Charles Harmon Reed to full partnership between 1956 and 1959. Mechanical engineer William Ernest Stowe Jr. became a principal by 1962.⁴⁷

Although architects and engineers designed structural systems for late nineteenth-century industrial buildings that included cast-iron or wrought-iron columns or steel posts and beams, high cost greatly limited the materials' use until the early twentieth century. The ability to withstand the weight and vibrations of heavy machinery without failing contributed to the popularity of structural-steel construction, as did the ease of fabricating framing systems from standard factory-generated components. Typical elements include I-, T-, H-, and box-shaped posts and beams as well as reinforcing plates, angles, and webs. Steel posts and beams could be riveted together, creating strong connections, and tended to be smaller and lighter than heavy-timber or iron framing members. This allowed for wider and taller buildings with more square footage for equipment. The popularity of flat roofs and sizable roof monitors also resulted in structural-steel framing prevalence. In order to reduce oxidation and achieve fire resistance, steel members were coated with intumescent paint; sprayed with a thin mixture of cement, sand, and water called gunite; or encased in concrete.⁴⁸

Mid-twentieth-century architects employed new building materials, technology, and forms as they planned structures that manifest efficiency, modernity, and economic progress. Labor and materials were in short supply during World War II, but when construction resumed after the war's end, industrial architecture often incorporated steel framing with masonry curtain walls and large steel sash. In these buildings, engineered brick, concrete, or tile curtain walls provided structural bracing but did not carry any weight. Steel truss roof systems spanned open interiors that accommodated sizable equipment and allowed for flexibility as manufacturing needs changed.⁴⁹ Industrial buildings such as the 1948 addition to the Shelby Cotton Mill utilize a cost-effective combination of steel interior framing and load-bearing brick exterior walls that was particularly popular during the post-World War II era.

Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Cleveland County Textile Mills

In order to take advantage of lower land prices and allow for unfettered expansion, most Shelby industrialists erected mills and worker housing on the town's outskirts. Although several of these mills received mail at the Shelby post office, Shelby Cotton Mill was the only complex within the municipality until a late 1920s city limits expansion encompassed concerns including Eastside Manufacturing

⁴⁷ "Biberstein, Bowles, and Meacham: Biographical Note," Guide to the Biberstein, Bowles, and Meacham Records, 1944-1954, MC 00222, North Carolina State University, Raleigh.

⁴⁸ Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States*, 144-147.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

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Company and Belmont, Ella, and Lily Mills. By the time that historian Brian R. Eades completed the Cleveland County architecture survey in 1998, many late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century cotton mills had been demolished or encapsulated within later additions. Other than Shelby Cotton Mill, the earliest examples that Eades surveyed and featured in the 2003 publication *Architectural Perspectives of Cleveland County, North Carolina* were Double Shoals Cotton Mills in Double Shoals and Cleveland Cotton Mills in Lawndale. Both are comparable to Shelby Cotton Mill in that the extant buildings began functioning during the late nineteenth century and were subsequently expanded.

Double Shoals Cotton Mills (NR 2009), located about eight miles north of Shelby in the Double Shoals community, is Cleveland County's oldest extant textile mill. Around 1880, Elias A. Morgan commissioned the construction of the two-and-one-half-story heavy-timber-frame structure that features load-bearing brick exterior walls executed in five-to-one common bond that rise above a granite foundation. Corbelled hoods ornament the large, segmental-arched window and door openings. Exposed rafter ends support the low side-gable roof's deep eaves. A three-stage stair tower with a lancet-arched door projects from the south elevation. The original section is structurally intact, although most windows openings have been enclosed with brick and the plant increased in size over time.⁵⁰ Shelby Cotton Mill, erected twenty years later, manifests the same heavy-timber-frame and load-bearing-brick structural characteristics, but exhibits less architectural embellishment.

Cleveland Cotton Mills in Lawndale also expanded through the twentieth century in response to changing production needs and technology. Established by industrialist Henry Franklin Schenck in 1874, the company grew significantly by 1888, when masons erected the oldest extant portion of the complex, a two-story, twenty-bay-wide and nine-bay-deep mill sheltered by a low side-gable roof. A pyramidal-hip-roofed, two-bay-wide and one-bay-deep brick stair tower projects from the northwest corner. The tower's segmental-arched door opening originally contained a double-leaf door and transom. Segmental-arched, double-hung, multipane, single and paired windows embellished with corbelled hoods pierce the upper stages.⁵¹ The 1888 mill still stands, but is now encapsulated within a series of later additions that occupy almost two acres. To the south, a series of expansive concrete manufacturing buildings and warehouses erected during the second half of the twentieth century fill approximately fourteen acres.⁵² Cleveland Cotton Mills, like Shelby Cotton Mill, displays the evolution from heavy-timber-frame and load-bearing-brick construction to steel framing as the twentieth century progressed.

⁵⁰ Brian R. Eades, *Architectural Perspectives of Cleveland County, North Carolina* (Shelby: Cleveland County Historic Preservation Taskforce, 2003), 102-103; Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1896, 193; "Double Shoals Mill is Sold," *Cleveland Star*, July 11, 1919, p. 1; Sybil H. Argintar, "Double Shoals Cotton Mill," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 2009.

⁵¹ *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1896, 193*; Eades, *Architectural Perspectives of Cleveland County*, 19, 98-99.

⁵² "101 West Main Street, Lawndale," 2010 aerial photograph, <http://arcgis.webgis.net/nc/Cleveland/> (accessed April 2015).

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The three-story Dover Mill, designed by architect and engineer Joseph E. Surrine's Greenville, South Carolina-based firm and erected by Fisk-Carter Construction Company of Greenville, South Carolina, also epitomizes new technology as it was the county's first steel and concrete industrial building. Construction began in late fall 1922 under the supervision of Fisk-Carter engineer W. G. Perry and the plant commenced production on July 27, 1923. Reinforced-concrete floors, ceilings, and columns carried the structure's weight, allowing for expansive windows. During the twentieth century's second half, the original structure was obscured by a series of manufacturing and warehouse additions on its east, west, and north elevations. A three-story, tan brick, circa 1965 addition extends the west elevation's full length, increasing the original mill's square footage by a third. Matching veneer sheathes the south elevation and a shorter addition projects from the wall's west half. Doran Mill Company operated the complex from the 1980s until 2001. Initially located west of Shelby, the property is now within the municipal limits.⁵³ Most of the additions to the north were demolished between January and April 2014, revealing the 1923 Dover Mill's north end.

Shelby Cotton Mill is the city's most intact early to mid-twentieth-century textile manufacturing complex. The simply-executed, utilitarian factory reflects the design principles espoused by Tompkins, Cramer, and Biberstein as well as the transition from heavy-timber to cast-iron and structural-steel framing. The mill's 1900, 1901, 1909, and 1920 sections feature common-bond load-bearing brick walls, very low-pitched gable roofs, and segmental-arched window and door openings that are representative of industrial architecture during that period. Steel collars and plates secure posts directly to beams. Large, double- and triple-hung, wood-sash windows and roof monitors provided ample light.

Fire-proofing measures include chamfered heavy-timber posts and beams, thick plank floor decking topped with hardwood boards, metal-clad kalamein doors, and projecting stair towers. The early to mid-twentieth-century Sanborn maps show that the complex included other fire safety features such as a water tank at the top of the 1900 mill's stair tower, a sprinkler system, a reservoir, and small structures containing fire hoses. Due to the propensity for combustion associated with cotton storage and blending, fire insurance providers suggested that warehouses, picker rooms, and boiler houses should be located a short distance from manufacturing areas. Shelby Cotton Mill's site layout reflects this practice. The 1900 boiler house at the mill's south end is separated from the factory by a machine shop and a tall firewall. The 1938 boiler house and smokestack are freestanding.

⁵³ "The Mill Location," *Cleveland Star*, August 22, 1922, p. 4; "Dover Mill on Hamrick Farm," *Cleveland Star*, August 25, 1922, p. 1; "Contracts Let for Dover Mill," *Cleveland Star*, February 13, 1922, p. 1; "First Cotton Put in New Dover Mill," *Cleveland Star*, July 31, 1923, p. 1; "101 West Main Street, Lawndale," 2010 aerial photograph, <http://arcgis.webgis.net/nc/Cleveland/> (accessed April 2015).

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Cleveland County, NC

In the 1924 addition, round cast-iron posts secured to chamfered wood beams with steel collars and plates carry the building's load. Shelby Cotton Mill's 1938, 1948, and early 1950s additions display a cost-effective combination of steel interior posts and beams and load-bearing brick exterior walls. Throughout the mill, long rows of posts divide the interior into three bays on each level, a width that accommodated sizable machinery. The open plan allowed for flexibility as manufacturing needs changed. The structure remains intact, as do some of the large, metal-frame, multipane windows that supplied maximum light and ventilation.

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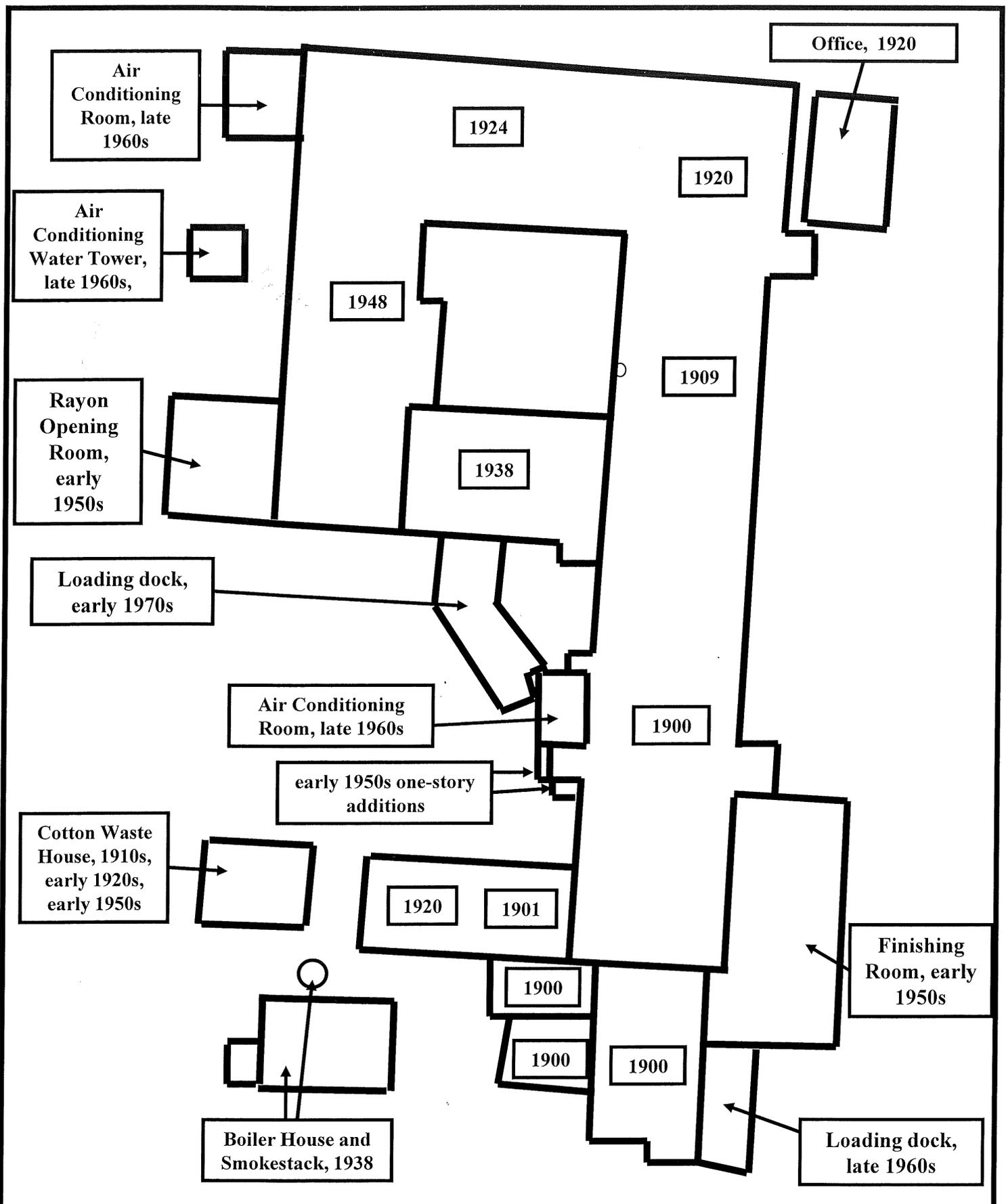
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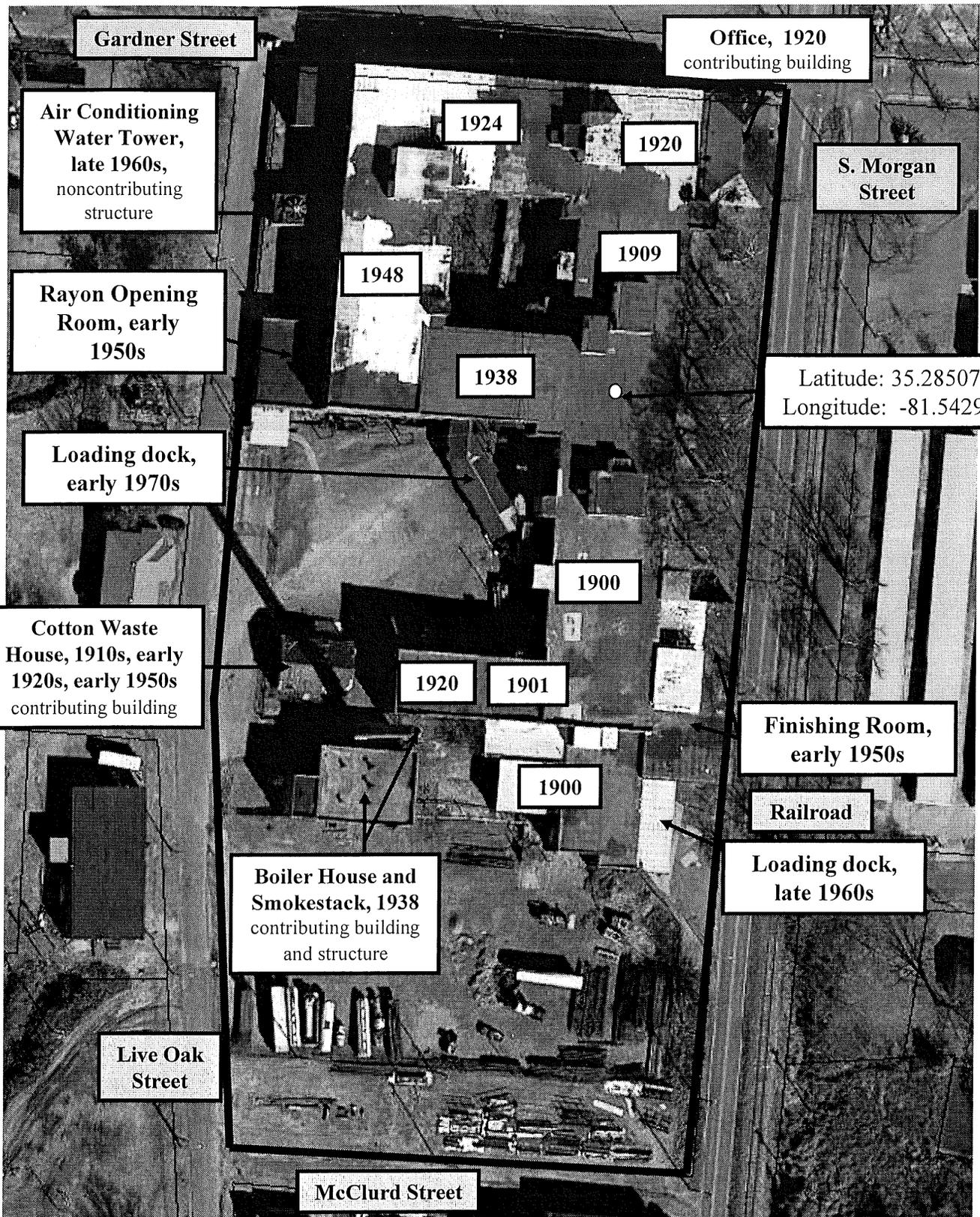
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Shelby Cotton Mill, 500 South Morgan Street Shelby, Cleveland County, North Carolina





Gardner Street

Office, 1920
contributing building

Air Conditioning
Water Tower,
late 1960s,
noncontributing
structure

1924

1920

S. Morgan
Street

Rayon Opening
Room, early
1950s

1948

1909

Latitude: 35.285070
Longitude: -81.542906

1938

Loading dock,
early 1970s

1900

Cotton Waste
House, 1910s, early
1920s, early 1950s
contributing building

1920

1901

Finishing Room,
early 1950s

1900

Railroad

Boiler House and
Smokestack, 1938
contributing building
and structure

Loading dock,
late 1960s

Live Oak
Street

McClurd Street

Shelby Cotton Mill

500 South Morgan Street (5.67 acres; PIN #2546181265)

Shelby, Cleveland County, North Carolina

National Register Boundary = heavy dark line, Scale 1" = approximately 70'

