

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Sidney Cotton Mill

Graham, Alamance County, AM1236, Listed 08/02/2024

Nomination by Heather M. Slane, Architectural Historian, hmwPreservation

Photographs by Heather M. Slane, October 2022



1907 Stair Tower Exterior facing north



1886 Weaving Building & 1892 Weaving, Quilling, Beaming, and Twisting Addition
Exterior facing southwest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Sidney Cotton Mill

Other names/site number: Sidney Hosiery Mill, Scott Hosiery Mill, Griffin Hosiery Mill

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 909 Washington Street

City or town: Graham State: North Carolina County: Alamance

Not For Publication: n/a

Vicinity: n/a

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

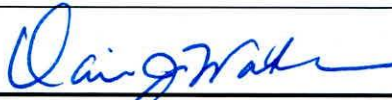
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A B X C D

	<u>6/27/24</u>
<p>Signature of certifying official/Title: State Historic Preservation Officer Date</p>	
<p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

<p>In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>Date</p>
<p>Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry: manufacturing facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Italianate

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

North Main Street, toward which the earliest part of the mill was originally oriented, extends northwest from downtown Graham toward the railroad right-of-way and Burlington, North Carolina, just beyond the railroad tracks. Main Street influenced the street grid to its west and building arrangement along both sides of the street. As a result, the Sidney Cotton Mill is rotated approximately thirty degrees from true cardinal directions. However, this document is written as though the building has a true east-west orientation.

The Sidney Cotton Mill is among the smallest of Alamance County's late-nineteenth-century textile mills and only the second mill to be constructed in the town of Graham. The one- and two-story mill building is located on the east side of Washington Street, approximately 0.9 miles northwest of the Alamance County Courthouse in downtown Graham. It is sited less than 300 feet south of the Southern Railway right-of-way, which partially defines the boundary between the present-day cities of Graham and Burlington. A former spur of the railroad extended along the east side of the mill, south to College Street. The roughly rectangular 1.25-acre tract is bordered by Washington Street on the west, industrial development on the north, the former railroad right-of-way and the Providence Cemetery on the east, and residential development on the south.

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The Sidney Cotton Mill was constructed in at least six stages from 1886 to ca. 1945, illustrative of the continuous operation and physical modification of the building through the mid-twentieth century. The two largest portions of the building, built from 1886 to 1907, were constructed in the Italianate style utilizing slow-burn, heavy timber frame construction. Later, smaller wings are a combination of timber-framing and load-bearing masonry. Brick corbelling on the east elevation, facing the railroad spur, indicates the earliest parts of the building were oriented to the east. By 1907, a stair tower on the south elevation of the 1907 addition points to a reorientation of the building toward downtown Graham.

Narrative Description

The Sidney Cotton Mill stands on the east side of Washington Street, less than 300 feet south of the Southern Railway right-of-way which, in this location, defines the boundary between Graham and Burlington. It is located approximately 0.9 miles northwest of the Alamance County Courthouse in downtown Graham. The mill is bounded by Washington Street to the west; industrial development to the north, particularly a steel-framed warehouse building immediately adjacent to the mill; a railroad spur and Providence Cemetery to the east; and housing to the south, including the remnants of a mill village that originally extended south of the mill but appears to have been largely dismantled in the 1930s.

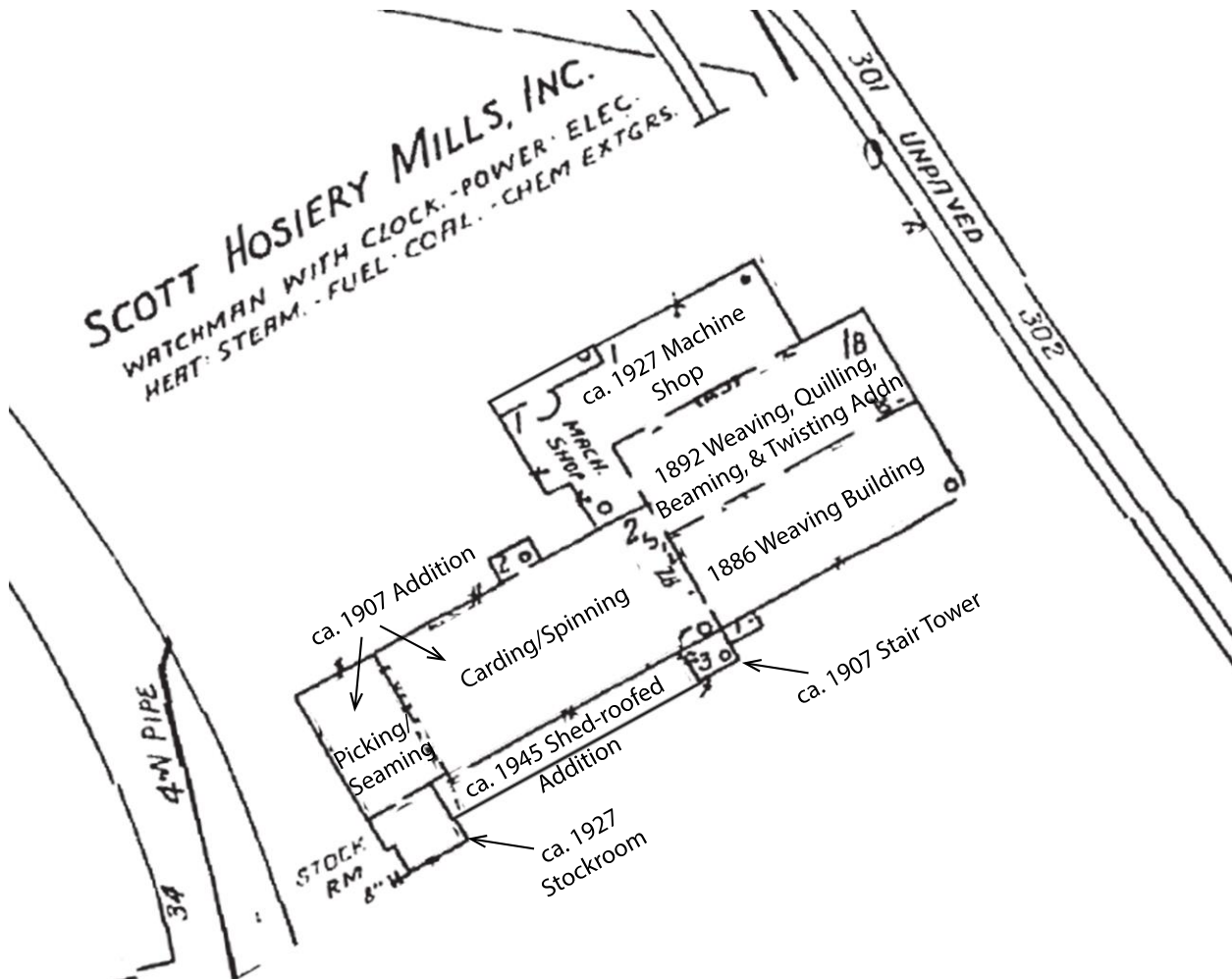


Figure 1: Sidney Cotton Mill Floor Plan (created from 1937 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map)
Section 7 page 5

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The roughly rectangular 1.25-acre tract features terrain that slopes down to the west. As a result, the lower half of the east end of the building is largely below grade. The site is industrial in character and much of the land not occupied by buildings is paved with concrete or gravel. Small grassy lawns are present at the west end of the building, along Washington Street, and at the northeast corner of the building. A strip of grass roughly ten-feet-wide is located immediately adjacent to the south, east, and north elevations. Mature trees along the south property line provide a visual buffer between the mill and the adjacent worker housing to the south.

The Sidney Cotton Mill is described in the order in which it was constructed: the 1886 Weaving Building; 1892 Weaving, Quilling, Beaming, and Twisting Addition; the 1907 Carding and Spinning Addition and Stair Tower; ca. 1927 Stockroom; ca. 1927 Machine Shop; and a ca. 1945 Shed-roofed Addition on the South Elevation. Dates of construction were derived from Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps and newspaper clippings. Small-scale projecting bays, loading docks, and other alterations are described within the narrative for the portion of the building to which they are attached.

1886 Weaving Building

The oldest portion of the Sidney Cotton Mill is the weaving building at the southeast corner of the mill. Constructed in 1886, it is smaller than other mills of the era, the original one-story building measuring only 53' x 105'. This section of the building is four bays wide on the east elevation and twelve bays deep on the north and south elevations. It is constructed of red brick laid in a five-to-one common bond and has a low-sloped shed roof concealed by a parapet on the east gable end. (The roof was likely originally constructed as a gable and may have been altered as early as 1892 when the first addition to the building was completed). The parapet features a highly decorative corbelled cornice with corbelled modillions below corbelled dentils. The dentil course, with metal coping, flares slightly at the south end. Segmental-arch window openings are located on the east and south elevations, all with header-course brick sills and a double-row of rowlock brick forming the lintels. All of the windows have been infilled with brick and glass-block windows roughly one-third the size of the original openings. However, the infill brick is inset slightly, leaving the size and shape of the original openings evident. The later glass-block windows on the east elevation have been covered with steel screens. A small, shed-roofed, brick bay at the west end of the south elevation was constructed prior to 1937. It is without fenestration, accessible only from the interior of the mill.

The interior of the weaving building is partially below grade. As a result, the window openings that appear on-grade on the exterior of the building are located on the upper half of the interior walls. The interior is a single open space without interior supports. It has a poured concrete floor and exposed brick walls. The roof is supported by wood trusses that rest on wood pilasters attached to the brick walls between each of the windows. Electrical and mechanical systems are suspended from the ceiling. A five-panel wood door on the south elevation opens to a shallow, shed-roofed brick bay that projects from the southwest corner of this part of the building. A segmental-arch loading bay on the south elevation has also been infilled with brick. Two pedestrian doors on the north elevation open to the 1892 addition.

1892 Weaving, Quilling, Beaming, and Twisting Addition

A one-story-with-basement weaving, quilling, beaming, and twisting addition, completed in 1892 on the north side of the 1886 building, doubled the footprint of the mill. Constructed at grade, the basement level has low ceilings, resulting in a cumulative building height that is only two to three feet taller than the

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original mill building to its south. The 1893 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map indicates that the addition housed quilling (winding fill yarn onto bobbins or quills), beaming/warping (winding warp yarns onto a beam), and twisting operations at the lower level and weaving at the upper level. Like the earlier building to the south, the load-bearing brick addition was constructed in a five-to-one common bond and features a decorative corbelled parapet on the east elevation that is identical to that of the 1886 building. Segmental-arch window openings at both levels have been infilled with brick, but retain lintels of a double row of rowlock brick. Openings on the upper level of the north elevation have a combination of glass block, aluminum double-hung windows, and louvered metal vents, all smaller than the original openings. Openings at the upper level of the east and west elevations have had fans installed in the upper portion of each opening to vent the interior. One of the bays on the four-bay east elevation has been widened to accommodate paired metal loading doors that open to a poured concrete loading dock on a concrete-block foundation. Barely visible above the ca. 1927 machine shop addition is a painted, arched sign on the west end of the north elevation that reads "Sidney." The stepped parapet on the west elevation, a plain parapet with metal coping, is partially obscured by the 1907 carding and spinning addition.

The interior of the weaving, quilling, beaming, and twisting addition has a poured concrete floor and exposed brick walls at the basement level. The upper level has exposed brick walls with the original segmental-arch window openings visible on all four elevations. The gabled roof is supported by exposed wood trusses with flush wood boards in between. The floor was raised, likely in the mid-twentieth-century, and currently intersects the original main-level window openings. The plywood floor rests on wood and steel beams running north-south that are supported by square wood posts. The beams intersect the bricked-in window openings of the 1886 building. A plywood ramp slopes down toward the loading dock on the east elevation of the building.

1907 Carding and Spinning Addition and Stair Tower

A two-story addition to the west elevation of the 1892 weaving, quilling, beaming, and twisting addition was completed in 1907, again nearly doubling the footprint of the mill. The addition is constructed of load-bearing brick laid in a five-to-one common bond and has a partially exposed basement at its west end. It is six bays wide on the west elevation, facing Washington Street, and sixteen bays deep on the north and south elevations. Windows, described below, vary but all of the openings retain sills consisting of a projecting double-row of header-course brick and a double-row of row-lock brick forming the lintels. The building is topped by a low-sloped gabled roof concealed on the west elevation behind a plain brick parapet. Modest curved brackets support the roofline along the north and south elevations, located between each of the window bays. According to the 1910 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map, the addition housed carding on the first floor and spinning on the second floor. The west end of the building, separated by a brick fire wall (indicated on the exterior by a brick parapet), contains a four-bay-deep room, first identified on the 1924 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map as a picker room and on the 1931 map as a seaming room.

Steel-sash windows are set in segmental-arch brick openings at both levels, replacing original wood-sash windows. Replacement vinyl windows have been installed at the first story of the west elevation and the second story of the north elevation where nine of the windows are vinyl and two openings have been boarded; the lower portions of these replacement windows are covered by screens. On the south elevation, the steel windows are twenty-one-light, containing an operable six-light sash above the bottommost fixed lights. Elsewhere the steel-sash windows are twenty-four-light with operable four- and two-light sashes. Every other second-story window on the south elevation has been covered with plywood, as have the

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basement windows on the west elevation. Most first-story door and window openings on the north elevation have been infilled with brick, some with smaller glass-block windows installed within the openings. First-story windows on the south elevation were removed when the shed-roofed wing was constructed on that elevation about 1945. A loading bay near the west end of the north elevation retains paired two-light-over-two-panel wood doors in a segmental-arch brick opening. A window opening near the center of the north elevation was altered to allow for paired metal doors that lead to a concrete loading dock on a brick pier foundation. The loading dock, near the center of the north elevation, is sheltered by a metal shed roof supported by metal posts.

The most distinctive feature of the 1907 addition is the three-story stair tower projecting from the east end of the south elevation. A round-arch entrance bay at the base of the tower has been infilled with a modern door and vinyl siding but retains a four-light wood fanlight. Second-story windows on the east, south, and west elevations are eight-over-eight-over-eight wood-sash windows in segmental-arch brick openings. The top eight-pane sash is fixed while the lower sashes are double-hung. A corbelled sillcourse below the third story windows aligns with the stepped parapet on the east elevation of this addition. Third-story window openings retain eight-over-eight wood-sash windows below with a four-light fanlight above that is partially covered by a plywood panel. A corbelled cornice below the hipped roof has small brick dentils. Exposed rafter ends appear in the deep eaves.

The northwest corner of the carding and spinning addition rises several feet above the rest of the building, creating a space that likely held a water tank. Each side of the top level of this bay, which is roofless, has an empty, round-arched opening and a band of brick dentil corbelling at a short, flat parapet. The projecting roofline corresponds to small rooms on the first and second floors. Nine-light glass-block windows on the north elevation of the shaft were likely added in the mid-twentieth century. A frame elevator shaft on the east end of the picking/seaming room, likely constructed in the mid- to late-twentieth century, extends above the roofline, though is not visible from the street; it appears on aerial photos as early as 1993.

Near the east end of the north elevation is a two-story, shed-roofed bay. It features a small, segmental-arch window opening at the first and second stories of its east elevation, each boarded. An original, segmental-arch entrance bay to the east of the projecting shed-roofed bay has been bricked in. A metal shed roof that sheltered the entrance remains in place.

The first-floor interior features a concrete floor and painted brick walls. A row of heavy-timber, octagonal columns extends the length of the building from east to west, supporting timber beams that in turn support the second floor, the underside of which is sheathed with flush boards. Electrical and mechanical systems are suspended from the ceiling. A rounded-arch opening at the east end of the south wall originally led to the stair tower, but was infilled with brick, likely when the ca. 1945 addition was built on the south elevation. A matching round-arch entrance separates the first-floor space from the picker room/seaming room on the west end of the building. Paired six-light-over-two-panel doors remain in this opening, but the round-arch fanlight has been filled with wood boards. A rectangular opening between the carding/spinning rooms and the picker room/seaming room is located near the center of the firewall separating these rooms. On the south elevation, between the building and ca. 1945 addition, a single eight-light wood window sash remains; all others on this elevation have been removed. The first floor of the picking room/seaming room on the west end of the building has wood floors with concrete only along the far west end of the room.

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With the exception of the wood floors, the interior finishes of the second floor match those of the first floor. A round-arch opening at the south end of the firewall opens to the picking room/seaming room on the west end of the building, matching the opening on the first floor. Finishes in the west room match those in the main part of the building, though with beaded-board wainscot on the lower part of the walls. A six-panel wood door leads to the former elevator shaft in the northwest corner of the building. Wood-sheathed partitions enclose a later elevator shaft that projects from the east wall of the picking room/seaming room; while the shaft extends above the roofline, it has been removed at the first floor with the first-floor ceiling patched in the location of the elevator.

The interior of the stair tower features a concrete floor and painted brick walls at the first-floor level. A wood staircase is enclosed within a frame wall covered with vertical wood sheathing. The staircase appears to have been added or reconfigured after the initial construction as the stairs project into an enclosed window opening on the east elevation of the tower. At the second floor, the tower has wood floors, and beaded-board walls. A wood ladder that led to the third floor was recently replaced with a plain wood stair with railing. The third floor, which likely contained a water tank for fire suppression, features painted brick walls, a wood floor.

ca. 1927 Stockroom

Located at the west end of the building's south elevation, flush with the west elevation that faces Washington Street, is a one-story stockroom that, according to Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, was constructed between 1924 and 1931. The addition was constructed of load-bearing brick laid in a five-to-one common bond. The low-sloped gabled roof has a stepped parapet on the south gable end. There are two segmental-arch openings on the west elevation; one infilled with brick and glass block, the other infilled with a later six-panel door that opens to a concrete dock with concrete steps. There are matching openings on the east elevation: the southern opening is infilled with brick and glass block; the northern one is fully open to allow passage to the ca. 1945 addition. All of the door and window openings retain rowlock sills and a double-course of rowlock brick forming the lintels. What was likely a loading bay on the south elevation has been infilled with aluminum-framed, single-light fixed windows.

The interior of the stockroom has wood floors, exposed brick walls, and exposed wood trusses supporting the roof sheathed in flush boards. A segmental-arch brick opening centered on the north elevation of the stockroom opens to the first floor of the 1907 picking room/seaming room. It is flanked by segmental-arch window openings, both infilled with brick.

ca. 1900-1927 Machine Shop

This one-story wing, added to the north side of the 1892 addition and wrapping around its northwest corner, was built in stages, beginning ca. 1900. Sanborn maps indicate that by March of 1904, a narrow, engine room had been constructed along the west wall of the 1892 building, extending north to adjoin a "dry room" (labeled on the 1943 Sanborn map as a boiler room). This configuration remained until an eight-bay machine shop addition was constructed along the north side of the 1892 building between 1924 and 1931, abutting the engine room to its west. At the same time, a shallow five-bay addition was constructed on the west elevation of the engine room, giving the west elevation the stepped appearance it has today. After 1943, the dry room/boiler room was largely demolished and a new parapet wall, flush with the north wall of the machine shop, was constructed on the west end of the north elevation, leaving only a narrow section of the dry room/boiler room within the current machine shop.

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The resulting one-story, machine shop wing is seven bays wide on the west elevation, facing Washington Street, with the south two bays of the west elevation, constructed ca. 1900 as the one-story engine room. Both are infilled with concrete block and glass block, but retain segmental-arch lintels comprising two courses of rowlock brick. The northern five bays project slightly, likely constructed about 1927 when the machine shop was also enlarged to the east. The elevation has a five-to-one common bond brick exterior and segmental-arch windows surrounds with lintels comprised of two courses of rowlock brick. One of the window openings has been altered to allow for the installation of a wide, overhead metal garage door opening to a concrete loading dock that spans the west elevation of the addition. On the north elevation, a vertical seam in the brick marks the separation between the ca. 1900 dry room/boiler room at the west end and the ca. 1927 machine shop to the east. The west end of the north elevation is marked by an unadorned parapet and painted brick. A door opening with segmental-arch lintel has been infilled with brick. A window or loading bay is covered with a corrugated metal shutter. The east end of the north elevation is seven bays wide and the east elevation is four bays wide, both with matching five-to-one common-bond brick and segmental-arch window openings infilled with brick, glass block, and louvered vents. The window openings retain rowlock sills and a double-course of rowlock brick forming the lintels. An entrance on the north end of the east elevation has a later metal door with boarded sidelights in a segmental-arch surround. A flat brick parapet rises above the roof on the east elevation.

Interior walls that resulted from the additions to the machine shop over time have been removed with the exception of the original south wall of the dry room/boiler room, which remains at the northwest corner of the wing. Additionally, a portion of the north wall of the 1892 building has also been removed and the first-floor space incorporated into the machine shop. The wing features a poured concrete floor, painted brick walls, and square timber columns supporting wood beams. Wide flush boards sheathing the underside of the roof, visible above the beams of the wood trusses, appear to have been added later, suggesting that the roof has been reconstructed. Electrical and mechanical systems are suspended from the ceiling. A paneled door with a four-light transom near the northeast corner of the building leads to the remaining portion of the ca. 1900 dry room/boiler room, before it was incorporated into the machine shop.

ca. 1945 Shed-Roofed Addition

In the mid-1940s, a one-story, shed-roofed wing was constructed along the south elevation of the 1907 carding and spinning addition, between the stair tower and the ca. 1927 stockroom addition. It has a five-to-one common-bond brick exterior with regularly spaced, rectangular, sixteen-light steel-sash windows with rowlock sills. A stepped parapet marks a firewall that separates the addition into two interior spaces. The east space is accessed by a six-panel wood door on the south elevation that is sheltered by a metal shed roof.

The interior of the ca. 1945 addition has concrete floors and beaded-board ceilings. The west half of the addition has plaster covering the brick walls. A closet, accessed from the first floor of the 1907 picking room/seaming room, projects into the northwest corner of the addition. The east end of the addition has exposed, painted brick on the interior walls. Windows between the addition and the 1907 carding/spinning rooms to the north have been fully removed, resulting in openings between the two spaces. A rectangular opening on the east end of the addition opens to the 1907 stair tower.

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Integrity Assessment

The Sidney Cotton Mill retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The underutilization of the Sidney Cotton Mill building in the late twentieth century may have contributed to its high material integrity. While operational mills often had windows bricked in, stair towers truncated, and veneers added to give a streamlined, modern appearance, the Sidney Cotton Mill retains many of its original window openings, its full three-story stair tower, decorative brick corbelling, and other detailing throughout. Original wood windows were likely replaced with steel-sash windows in the 1940s or early 1950s, while the date of the vinyl windows is not known. Interior features of the mill building, including wood and concrete floors, brick walls, and exposed wood roof trusses, remain in place and illustrate typical late-nineteenth-century, slow-burn construction methods.

Located on its original site, the building retains its historically industrial character with paved and gravel parking, a corbelled upper façade facing the former railroad spur, and a three-story stair tower facing downtown Graham. Elements of the complex that have been removed include a dye house, most of the boiler house, and an office that appear north of the mill on the 1893 Sanborn map. All were removed while the mill was still in operation: the dye house and office between 1931 and 1937 and the majority of the boiler house sometime after 1943. A one-story cotton warehouse and one-story general storage building are also shown on Sanborn maps as early as 1910, but were demolished between 1931 and 1937.

Despite the removal of secondary buildings, the largely intact mill conveys the site's industrial feeling and association as a late-nineteenth-century textile mill that was expanded throughout the early-to-mid twentieth century.

Statement of Archaeological Potential

The Sidney Cotton Mill complex is closely related to the surrounding environment and landscape. Archaeological deposits, such as debris that accumulated during operation of the mill, underground infrastructural components such as water pipes and drainage features, materials associated with former mill housing areas to the south of the mill complex, and other remains which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the property. Information concerning worker health, nutrition, and quality of life, environmental transformations during industrial development, and the effects of technological change on work culture and daily life, as well as details of construction processes and the operation of the mill can be obtained from the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the property. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1886-ca. 1945

Significant Dates

1886

1892

1907

ca. 1927

ca. 1945

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Sidney Cotton Mill is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as a largely intact example of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century, Italianate-style, industrial architecture and of slow-burn industrial construction. Developed in the late-nineteenth century and codified by insurance companies, slow-burn construction was developed to as a cost-effective means of protecting textile mills from loss due to fire.¹ The Sidney Cotton Mill was among the earliest steam-powered mills to be constructed in Alamance County and was only the second steam-powered mill, of at least five mills in total, to be constructed within the town of Graham.² The architecture of the Sidney Cotton Mill is typical of turn-of-the-twentieth-century textile mills constructed in the North Carolina piedmont; it features Italianate-style detailing, including segmental-arch window openings and corbelled brick cornices, as well as an intact, three-story tower on the south elevation. The period of significance extends from 1886, the date of the earliest part of the mill, to ca. 1945 to incorporate its last addition.

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

Architectural Significance

The expansion of the textile industry in North Carolina, and especially the introduction of steam-powered mills, corresponds with the emerging popularity of the Italianate style. Architectural historian Catherine Bishir notes that, “trends in factory architecture and industrial housing that had begun in the 1870s and 1880s and continued through the 1920s reached their fullest development during the period from about 1890 to 1910.”³

Textile manufacturing required factory buildings to be of sturdy construction, have ample natural lighting, and be fire resistant. Looms and other machinery necessary for textile production tended to be very heavy, and successful factories had many looms and spindles in operation at any given time. For this reason, heavy-timbers, and later steel beams, were necessary to support upper floors. In the case of the Sidney Cotton Mill, a row of heavy-timber, octagonal columns extends the length of the 1907 carding and spinning addition, running from east to west and supporting timber beams that, in turn, support the second floor.

Early steam mills were constructed without electricity, the energy for the manufacturing processes being produced by boilers and furnaces onsite. Even after the introduction of electricity, electric lights both added to the cost of utilities and increased the heat in buildings already humming with large machinery. Thus, large operable windows were essential not only to provide lighting, but also to cool the buildings

¹ 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): 55.

² The mill may also be eligible under Criterion A for industry. Production information and employment statistics were rarely reported for the mill, making it difficult to discern how the small-scale mill fit into the larger textile manufacturing economy of Graham and Alamance County. Pending additional information, the nomination could be amended.

³ Catherine Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture (Portable Edition)* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 431.

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and provide fresh air for the workers. When air conditioning was introduced in the 1960s, most textile mills bricked in the windows to make the buildings more airtight and better able to retain the cool air. The Sidney Cotton Mill is a rare example of a Piedmont cotton mill that did not have all of its windows fully bricked-in when air conditioning was introduced. While the windows in the 1886 and 1892 weaving buildings have largely been infilled, the 1907 carding and spinning addition retains most of its twenty-four-light steel-sash windows set in segmental-arch brick openings at both levels and multi-light wood-sash windows remain in the stair tower.

The flammability of cotton, specifically cotton fibers that were constantly in the air, made cotton mills especially susceptible to fire. Yet, in the late 1800s, fully fireproof buildings—constructed with noncombustible materials—were expensive to construct. Instead, New England fire insurance companies developed slow-burn technology that utilized traditional building materials in a way that would slow the spread of fire and protect the structural integrity of the building in the case of fire.⁴ Components of slow-burn construction included thick plank floors and heavy timber columns and beams that would “char but retain their structural strength instead of collapsing as iron did in heat.”⁵ In larger mill complexes, the individual manufacturing processes were compartmentalized into different buildings, specifically separating picker rooms and boiler rooms that were especially susceptible to fire. However, even in smaller factories, these spaces were separated by thick brick firewalls with each space equipped with fire extinguishing apparatus and openings fitted with sliding metal doors designed to contain a fire.⁶

In the Sidney Cotton Mill, brick firewalls are used to separate the various manufacturing processes. The 1886 and 1892 weaving buildings are separated by a full-height brick wall, the north elevation of the 1886 building that served as a firewall when the addition was built. The picker room at the west end of the 1907 carding and spinning addition is separated by a brick firewall. The stair tower at the southeast corner of the 1907 addition, in addition to being a decorative element on the front of the building and providing circulation between floors, could be closed off in the event of a fire, utilizing its brick walls to contain the fire to a limited area of the mill.

Most of the brick industrial buildings constructed in the North Carolina Piedmont from 1880 to 1920 were constructed with Romanesque or Italianate detailing. These include round- and segmental-arch door and window openings, corbelled beltcourses and cornices, and a low-sloped hipped roof on the towers. The utilization of brick was for more than just fire-suppression; brick buildings had a sense of permanence and illustrated the financial strength of the company. The decoration of the nineteenth-century portions of the building, unrelated to the industry within the building, symbolized the prominence of the company within the community and the forward-thinking sensibilities of the mill owners. The early- and mid-twentieth-century additions mimicked the stylistic detailing of the earlier wings. Decorative brickwork included, “corbelled, turned, and tilted brick courses” that “dramatized the walls, doorways, and windows.”⁷ In most mills, the decorative brickwork was generally concentrated on the tower, which itself served as circulation and often held a water tank for additional fire protection. The Sidney Cotton Mill features a parapet with a highly decorative corbelled cornice with corbelled modillions below corbelled dentils on the east end of the 1886 and 1892 weaving buildings, facing the railroad spur. Segmental-arch window openings are located throughout the 1907 carding and spinning

⁴ Wermiel, 56.

⁵ Bishir, 431.

⁶ Wermiel, 56.

⁷ Bishir, 431-432.

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addition and the 1907 stair tower features a round-arch entrance, corbelled sillcourse below the third-story windows, and a corbelled cornice with small brick dentils below the hipped roof.

Other extant textile mills in Graham include the 1882-1898 Oneida Cotton Mills and the ca. 1900 Scott-Mebane Manufacturing Company (NR2014 as the Oneida Cotton Mill and Scott-Mebane Manufacturing Company Complex); the 1902 Voorhees Manufacturing Company; and the 1902 Trevora Manufacturing Company. Oneida Cotton Mills and Scott-Mebane Manufacturing Company were rehabilitated into affordable housing in 2017. Voorhees Manufacturing Company and Trevora Manufacturing Company are used only as storage.

The Oneida Cotton Mills was constructed in 1882 by James Sidney Scott and W. Calvin Donnell, the later developers of the Sidney Cotton Mill. The complex stands roughly three-quarters of a mile south of the Sidney Cotton Mill, just northeast of downtown Graham. Scott and Donnell sold the mill in 1887 to E. M. Holt, who enlarged the mill in 1898. The oldest portions of the Oneida Cotton Mills Complex retain stepped and corbelled brick cornices, segmental-arch brick window openings, and wood brackets at the roofline. While the original towers on the 1882 part of the building were shortened in the 1950s, the 1898 portion retains a distinctive round tower at the southeast corner.⁸ The Scott-Mebane Manufacturing Company was constructed about 1900 and stands immediately south of the Oneida Cotton Mills. The two-story, load-bearing brick building featured a full width monitor at the gabled roof, though the monitor was removed after 1943. Like most late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century textile mills, the Oneida Cotton Mills and Scott-Mebane Manufacturing Company have undergone alterations and additions as changes in operations and textile technology evolved. Yet, both retain sufficient material integrity to convey architectural significance as representative examples of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century textile mills.⁹

The 1902 Voorhees Manufacturing Company stands one-half mile southeast of the Sidney Cotton Mill, at the southeast corner of Cannon and Pomeroy Streets, and the 1902 Travora Manufacturing Company is located immediately east of the Voorhees Manufacturing Company, at Cannon and White Streets. Though they began as separate enterprises, by 1910, Voorhees Manufacturing Company was acquired by the neighboring Travora Manufacturing Company and operated as a finishing mill.

Both the Voorhees and Travora mills have been altered through a series of expansions and acquisitions. Both mills retain two-story-with-basement forms with loadbearing brick construction and gabled roofs with exposed brackets at the roofline. The majority of the segmental-arch window openings have been bricked in. A two-story addition obscures the west elevation of the Voorhees Manufacturing Company, and a two-story circulation tower is on the south elevation, both likely constructed in the 1960s.¹⁰ A large, one-story, brick building, roughly the size of the original mill, extends from the east elevation of the Voorhees mill. The Travora mill is almost entirely wrapped by later one- and two-story brick wings, leaving only the façade of the three-story tower exposed. While the complex has industrial significance, the buildings are substantially altered, deteriorated and damaged by recent fires, and obscured by later additions.

⁸ Jennifer Martin Mitchell and Cynthia de Miranda, "Oneida Cotton Mills and Scott-Mebane Manufacturing Company Complex" (National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2014), 12.

⁹ Mitchell and de Miranda, 12.

¹⁰ Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc, "Phase II Architectural Resources Survey Report: Graham-Haw River Siding and Main Line Relocation, Alamance County, North Carolina" (Prepared for the North Carolina Department of Transportation, December 19, 2005), 12.

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Historic Background and Industry Context

Early Textile Industry in Alamance Counties: 1830-1881

Throughout the nineteenth century, Alamance County was largely rural with an agrarian economy. However, the county had ample waterways and in the 1830s, industrialists began utilizing the available waterpower to build an economy around an emerging textile industry. The earliest mill in Alamance County was Trollinger's Mill, constructed in the present-day village of Alamance in 1832, followed by the Holt and Carrigan cotton factory, constructed on Alamance Creek in 1837.¹¹ By the opening of the Civil War, there were four cotton mills in operation in Alamance County.¹² While even small creeks and streams could be dammed to provide power, without the infrastructure to distribute power, nineteenth-century mills were relegated to the shores of these creeks and streams.

The post-Civil War years saw both a gradual increase in cotton production in the state and a shift toward a full-scale, industrialized economy in Alamance County, a direct result of the growth of textile manufacturing. Even as plantations and large farms were divided after the Civil War, resulting in smaller acreage that was able to be farmed with fewer laborers, the amount of cotton grown in the state increased from 145,000 bales in 1860 to 460,000 bales by 1900.¹³ During the same period, Alamance County had abundant labor, inexpensive hydro-electric power, and access to rail lines, making the area well suited to textile and other types of manufacturing.¹⁴ White farm tenants seeking higher wages provided labor for mills, and mill villages offered a sense of community and, in some cases, social, recreational, and educational opportunities for residents. Railroad construction in the post-Civil War era connected farmers and their raw materials with mills and, in turn, connected mills with markets for their yarns and woven and knitted fabrics.

Together these factors drove the development of textile manufacturing in the North Carolina Piedmont. In Alamance County, the textile industry became the primary economic engine during this period, building and sustaining communities throughout the county.¹⁵ As early as 1879 there were six cotton mills operating in Alamance County, a number that grew to thirteen by 1886, seventeen cotton mills by 1890, and twenty-two cotton mills by 1923.¹⁶ However, before 1881, textile mills were still reliant on water power, requiring mills to be located in isolated rural areas where the mill owners typically constructed small villages around their factories, which typically included worker housing, a company store, recreational facilities and, in some cases, a school.¹⁷

¹¹ Carole Watterson Troxler and William Murray Vincent, *Shuttle & Plow: A History of Alamance County, North Carolina*, (Burlington, N.C.: Alamance County Historical Association, 1999), 344; Sallie Walker Stockard, *The History of Alamance*, ([Original publisher and place of publication not identified, 1900] reprinted by Alamance County Historical Museum, Inc., 1986), 91. The precise location of the Holt and Carrigan cotton factory is not known; Alamance Creek flows west to east across the southern part of Alamance County, ultimately flowing into the Haw River near Swepsonville.

¹² John William Harden, *Alamance County: Economic and Social* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1928), 41.

¹³ William S. Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 417.

¹⁴ Harden, 43.

¹⁵ Walter E. Whitaker, *Centennial History of Alamance County, 1849-1949* (Burlington, N. C.: Burlington Chamber of Commerce, 1949), 163.

¹⁶ Whitaker, 164-165.

¹⁷ Patricia S. Dickinson, "Belmont Mill Village Historic District" (National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1987), Section 8, 3.

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Steam Power and the Holt Family in Alamance County

The period between 1881 and 1915 marked a significant transition in the textile industry from waterpower to steam. Prior to the development of steam-powered mills in the early 1880s, a cotton mill's site was largely determined by the availability and location of waterpower. Utilizing steam power, mills could be constructed near rail lines instead of water sources, reducing the time and cost of transportation, and near larger cities rather than rural areas, in closer proximity to a larger workforce. The transition to steam power in the county was largely promoted by Lafayette Holt, who built the county's first steam-powered mill, Lafayette Mills in Company Shops (present-day Burlington), in 1881.¹⁸ After the establishment of Lafayette Mills, the transition to steam power was swift and thorough. The last water-powered mill constructed in the county was Glencoe Mill, northeast of Company Shops, completed in 1882.¹⁹

Without the need to locate mills on suitable water sources, mill construction proceeded at an unprecedented rate in Alamance County. Nine new mills were constructed between 1886 and 1894, and another four were constructed between 1901 and 1904 following a lull in construction due to the economic depression of 1893.²⁰ The textile industry was a major economic driver in Alamance County, with approximately 2,600 people, or one-fourth of the white population, employed in the county's nineteen cotton factories in 1896.²¹

It was within this context that James Sidney Scott established the first cotton mill in Graham in 1882. Alamance County was formed in 1849 from the west part of Orange County, and in 1850, Graham was established as the county seat, named for William A. Graham, who served as the governor of North Carolina from 1845-1849. One- and two-story brick commercial buildings were constructed in the 1850s and 1860s on Main and Elm streets, adjacent to the courthouse, to house retail businesses and professional services that served local farmers. In 1855, the North Carolina Railroad laid track through Alamance County to connect Goldsboro to Charlotte via Greensboro.²² At the time, public officials in Graham refused to allow the construction of railroad tracks or repair shops in the town, so instead the rail line was built through Company Shops, about three miles northwest of the courthouse.²³

James Sidney Scott was a native of Orange (later Alamance) County, having been born near what is now Graham in 1827. In 1851, twenty-four-year-old Scott married Margaret E. (Betty) Donnell and the couple settled in Graham, the newly incorporated county seat of Alamance County. Capitalizing on the growth of the new town, Scott and his brother-in-law, W. Calvin Donnell, went into the general mercantile business together, opening Scott and Donnell Store in 1868, which "when court was in session trade was unusually good and the ruralites bought heavy of supplies."²⁴ In the 1880s, the store name was changed to Scott, Donnell, and Scott to reflect the incorporation of Scott's son, John Levi "Jack" Scott, into the business.

¹⁸ Troxler and Vincent, 366.

¹⁹ Troxler and Vincent, 362.

²⁰ Dickinson, Section 8, 4.

²¹ Carl Lounsbury, *Alamance County Architectural Heritage* (Alamance County, N. C.: Alamance Historic Properties Commission, 1980), 18.

²² Barry Jacobs and Jerry L. Cross, "Southern Railway Passenger Station (Burlington)." (National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1979), Section 8, 1.

²³ Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 239.

²⁴ Julian Hughes, *The Development of the Textile Industry in Alamance County: Evolution of Warp and Weft in Alamance* (Burlington, NC: Burlington Letter Shop, 1965), 74 and 77; Mitchell and de Miranda, 13.

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Familial connections were strong within North Carolina's textile industry with most of the state's late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century mills operated by families that had been in the textile business for generations. Historian William S. Powell notes that of the state's forty-nine textile mills in 1880, at least twenty were in operation before the Civil War, fifteen were "built by men who had been connected with earlier mills, and several others were constructed by those who had married into families with prior industrial connections."²⁵ Illustrating this association, the Scott family was connected socially, professionally, and also by marriage to the Holt family, who dominated the textile industry in Alamance County in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.²⁶ John Scott (Sidney's father) and Michael W. Holt (father of E. M. Holt) were both early landowners in the Graham area and were among of small group of men who, in the early years of the county, formed Graham Presbyterian Church, to which both families belonged.²⁷ In the early 1880s, Jack Scott learned the cotton mill business by working with Lafayette Holt at the Lafayette Mill in present-day Burlington. By the 1880s, the families were "progressive businessmen in Graham and religiously and socially they were congenial."²⁸ In 1892, the families were further connected with the marriage of Henry William "Buck" Scott (son of James Sidney Scott) to Fannie Y. Holt (daughter of Lynn Banks Holt).

With their strong business sense and clear connections to the Holt family and their textile enterprises, it is no surprise that James Sidney Scott and his sons, Jack Scott and Buck Scott would find success in the textile industry. While Lynn Banks Holt and Lawrence Holt had constructed a mill south of Graham just a few years earlier, that mill could not supply enough yarns to keep up with the many looms that the Holt family had in operation. Thus, by the early 1880s, James Sidney Scott and W. Calvin Donnell realized they could construct a mill that would supply the Holt mills with warp (lengthwise yarn) and filling (crosswise yarn) for weaving. To that end, they constructed the Scott and Donnell Mill, which included a main building with a picker room at the first floor and a warping room at second floor, a dye house, beaming and quilling rooms (for winding the warp and filling in preparation for weaving), and, by 1883, cotton spinning machinery.²⁹ The Holts purchased warp and filling yarn from the Scott and Donnell Mill and in 1887 purchased the mill itself.³⁰

Sidney Cotton Mill: The Early Years, 1886-1900

After the construction of the Scott and Donnell Mill (later Oneida Cotton Mill), and perhaps in anticipation of its success and eventual sale, Scott went on to build the Sidney Cotton Mill, the second mill in Graham, completed in 1886. For this mill, Scott chose a location nearer the railroad. In 1856, the North Carolina Railroad extended east-west across the county, just three-quarters of a mile north of the courthouse in downtown Graham, the result of a deliberate decision by town leaders to exclude the

²⁵ Powell, 407.

²⁶ By 1919, the family owned twenty-three of the county's twenty-seven mills, including Bellemont (1879), Altamahaw (1880), Glencoe (1882), Aurora (1882, 1885), Ossipee (1882), E. M. Holt Plaid Co. (1884), Elmira (1886), and Granite Mill (1844, 1880); Troxler and Vincent, 351; Dickinson, Section 8, 1.

²⁷ Durward T. Stokes, *A History of the Graham Presbyterian Church: 1850-1983* (Burlington, NC: Meredith-Webb Printing Company, Inc., 1984). Accessed via https://archive.org/stream/historyofgrahamp00stok/historyofgrahamp00stok_djvu.txt

²⁸ Hughes, 83.

²⁹ Mitchell and de Miranda, 13.

³⁰ Hughes, 79.

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railroad and its perceived negative affect on the town.³¹ A depot was located just west of Washington Street, less than a quarter mile from the Sidney Cotton Mill. The location of the railroad affected the location of the Sidney Cotton Mill in 1886, as well as that of the Voorhees Manufacturing Company and Travora Manufacturing Company in 1902, all located adjacent to the rail line and accessed by rail spurs.

Like the Scott and Donnell Mill in Graham and the E. M. Holt Plaid Mill in nearby Burlington, the Sidney Cotton Mill would focus on only one stage of textile production, the weaving of fabrics. To accomplish this, the company purchased their warps and their filling (perhaps from their earlier Scott and Donnell Mill/Oneida Mill), dyed the materials in their own dye house, and wove them on large looms.³² The looms, beaming machinery (used to wind warp yarns onto a beam in preparation for weaving), and quillers (for winding filling yarns onto bobbins or quills) were purchased from Lowell Machine Shops, of Lowell, Massachusetts, based on the recommendation from Lafayette Holt.³³ The first part of the mill, the Weaving Building, was completed in 1886. A September 29, 1886, note in the *Progressive Farmer* indicated that “the brickwork on the new Sidney Cotton Mill, near the depot, is done and the roof is on. It is a handsome two-story building.”³⁴ By February of 1887, the factory was producing checked fabrics, “for which this county has grown famous.” The mill was operating fifty-four looms and planned to have the remainder of their approximately one hundred looms operational soon after.³⁵

The Sidney Cotton Mill was producing “coarse gingham apron goods” and, because their production was small compared to other mills in the county, they had no trouble selling all of it. In some cases, the cloth may have been sold in the Scott, Donnell, and Scott mercantile store, which W. Calvin Donnell continued to operate.³⁶ Donnell held a financial interest in the Sidney Cotton Mill, but the operation of the mill was left to James Sidney Scott and his sons. In 1892, a weaving, quilling, beaming, and twisting addition was constructed on the north side of the building, doubling the size of the mill and housing fifty-two looms. In 1893, Buck Scott, who had graduated from the University of North Carolina and had recently married Fannie Holt, was brought into the family business.³⁷

The late 1890s brought changes to the company structure of the Sidney Cotton Mill. An 1894 notice in *The Alamance Gleaner* listed the “Valuable Cotton Mill” for sale, including two acres of land, a two-story mill building, dry house, tenant houses, and office. The mill was being sold by the mortgage holders, which included Jack Scott.³⁸ It is unclear how and why the sale happened; perhaps it was to recover debts incurred by the 1892 expansion. However, the mill ultimately remained under the ownership of the Scott family. In early 1897, James Sidney Scott’s first mill, the Scott and Donnell Cotton Mill, was sold to

³¹ Catherine Bishir, Peter Kaplan, Jo Ann Williford, Jerry L. Cross, and Durward T. Stokes, “Graham Historic District,” (National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1983), Section 8, Page 1.

³² Hughes, 80.

³³ Julian Hughes, “Three Scott Brothers Make Major Contributions to County Progress,” *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, North Carolina), January 30, 1958. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

³⁴ *The Progressive Farmer* (Winston-Salem, North Carolina), Wednesday September 29, 1886. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

³⁵ *The Alamance Gleaner* (Graham, North Carolina), Thursday, February 17, 1887. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

³⁶ Julian Hughes, “Three Scott Brothers Make Major Contributions to County Progress,” *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, North Carolina), January 30, 1958. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

³⁷ Hughes, 83.

³⁸ “For Sale! Valuable Cotton Mill!” *The Alamance Gleaner* (Graham, North Carolina), August 30, 1894. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

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Lynn Banks Holt, son of textile pioneer E. M. Holt, who renamed it Oneida Cotton Mills (NR2014). At the same time, perhaps because of the company restructuring, the Sidney Cotton Mill was operating at half capacity. An April 1897 newspaper notice indicated that the “Sidney Cotton Mills, which have been running on half time for several months, will run on full time again.”³⁹ However, by late 1897, the mill structure changed again. James Sidney Scott, who had for a number of years left the operation of the mill to his sons, died in September of 1897. In October of 1897, Buck Scott partnered with his brother-in-law, J. K. “Jinks” Mebane, to open the Scott-Mebane Manufacturing Company, located immediately adjacent to the Scott and Donnell Cotton Mill that had been sold to Lynn Banks Holt earlier that year.⁴⁰ This left Jack Scott and his son, Don Sidney, to manage the operation of the Sidney Cotton Mill, though Buck Scott remained a financial partner.⁴¹

Sidney Cotton Mill: 1900-1939

Throughout the early twentieth century, the Sidney Cotton Mill continued to produce woven fabrics, while also expanding to produce their own yarns. In 1901, the mill was shut down for several weeks while new machinery was installed.⁴² In 1907, the company erected a large two-story, brick addition on the west end of the mill. Carding operations — the process of separating fibers to ensure they lie flat and parallel to one another — were on the first floor and spinning—the process of twisting the fibers together to form a continuous yarn — on the second. The west end of the addition, separated by a brick firewall, contained a picker room per the 1924 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map; by 1931, this space was shown as a seaming room. Elsewhere in the mill, production was expanded to include the preparation of warp and filling.

In 1924, following the death of Jack Scott, his son Don Scott assumed the management of the mill. Under Don Scott’s leadership, the mill was further expanded with a stockroom at the southwest corner of the building and a machine shop along the north elevation. In late November of 1925, Scott offered a “feast” which included barbeque and Brunswick stew for two hundred mill employees and their families to show appreciation for workers and a “close spirit of cooperation” between employer and employee.⁴³ In 1929, Scott changed the name of the mill from Sidney Cotton Mill to Sidney Hosiery Mill, likely reflecting a shift in production.⁴⁴

The economic impact of the Great Depression proved too great for the Sidney Cotton Mill to overcome. In April of 1933, the company declared bankruptcy, citing an inability to meet its financial obligations. The company listed \$39,384 in debts, and though they had assets totaling \$198,609, the majority of that value was in machinery and real estate, with less than \$1,500 in cash, accounts receivable, and personal property.⁴⁵ Once again, the company appears to have been restructured and the name changed from Sidney Hosiery Mill to Scott Hosiery Mill; it appears, however, to have remained under the control of

³⁹ *The Alamance Gleaner (Graham, North Carolina)*, April 8, 1897. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

⁴⁰ Hughes, 85; Mitchell and de Miranda, 15.

⁴¹ Hughes, 87.

⁴² “New Machinery in the Sidney Mill – The Graham Academy,” *Charlotte Daily Observer (Charlotte, North Carolina)*, July 11, 1901. Accessed via www.newspapers.com.

⁴³ “Cotton Mill Manager Feasts His Workers,” *The News and Observer (Raleigh, North Carolina)*, November 29, 1925. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

⁴⁴ Mitchell and de Miranda, 17.

⁴⁵ “Bankruptcy Petition by Graham Concern,” *The Daily Times-News (Burlington, North Carolina)*, April 24, 1933. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

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Don Scott.

By the late 1930s, the company was once again successful enough to warrant expansion. In 1939, the *Daily Times-News (Burlington)* reported rumors of additions to the Scott Hosiery Mill that would result in the hiring of seventy-five to one hundred additional employees.⁴⁶ It was during this period, perhaps to accommodate increased production during World War II, that the shed-roofed addition was constructed on the south side of the 1907 carding and spinning addition.

Sidney Mill: 1940s to Late Twentieth Century

In January of 1945, Don E. Scott, who had risen to the rank of Brigadier General during his service in World War II, sold the Scott Hosiery Company to the May-McEwen-Kaiser Company. This was the first time since its construction in 1886 that the mill was not under the control of a member of the Scott family. It is not clear why Scott chose to divest himself of the company, though the local newspaper speculated that no clarity would be reached until the end of the war and Scott's return from his post in Virginia. The May-McEwen-Kaiser Company was well known in the area, operating mills in nearby Burlington. The company established the Sidney Knitting Mills corporation, which operated as a subsidiary of the larger May-McEwen-Kaiser Company.⁴⁷

Within four years, the mill had been sold again, this time to Griffin Hosiery Mill in August of 1949. The mill was to be remodeled and used as a finishing mill by the company, which also operated a larger knitting mill in Burlington.⁴⁸ While the Griffin Hosiery Mill Company continued to grow throughout the 1950s, buying machinery from and eventually buying out the Louise Mills in Durham, thirty-five miles to the east, it appears to have used the Sidney Cotton Mill building only briefly.⁴⁹ A 1953 newspaper notice indicated that the "mill whistles have been silenced" at both the Oneida and Sidney Mills.⁵⁰

Little is known about the use of the mill after 1953. A 1957 plat of the property indicates it was owned by J & L Textiles, although it is not clear what products they manufactured or for whom. Deed records indicate that J & L Textiles retained ownership of the building through 2003, although a 1962 newspaper article notes that the building was occupied by a unit of Western Electric.⁵¹ Except for utilization of the machine shop, the building has been largely vacant since at least 2003. Plans for the rehabilitation of the mill are underway.

⁴⁶ "Record Year for Graham in Industry is Prediction of the Town's Attorney Today," *The Daily Times-News (Burlington, North Carolina)*, January 6, 1939. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

⁴⁷ "May, McEwen, Kaiser Purchase the Scott Hosiery Mill Plant," *The Daily Times-News (Burlington, North Carolina)*, January 5, 1945. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

⁴⁸ "Griffin Hosiery Mill Purchases Sydney Plant," *The Daily Times-News (Burlington, North Carolina)*, August 31, 1949. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

⁴⁹ "Time Now for Flowers, Grandchildren," *The Daily Times-News (Burlington, North Carolina)*, April 6, 1975. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

⁵⁰ "Do You Remember?..." *The Daily Times-News (Burlington, North Carolina)*, July 23, 1953. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

⁵¹ Alamance County Register of Deeds, Book 1950, Page 704; "Mr. Scott Prominent Citizen," *The Daily Times-News (Burlington, North Carolina)*, April 23, 1962. Accessed via www.newspapers.com

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Whitaker, Walter. *Centennial History of Alamance County: 1849-1949*. Burlington, NC: Burlington Chamber of Commerce, 1949.

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 # _____

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Sidney Cotton Mill

Alamance County,
North Carolina
County and State

Name of Property

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): AM1236

Sidney Cotton Mill

Alamance County,
North Carolina
County and State

Name of Property

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.25 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 36.081372 Longitude: -79.407282

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

The National Register boundary is shown by a black line on the accompanying map, drawn at a 1"=100' scale and aligning with the boundary of the tax parcel (#8874986746).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated boundary contains the entirety of extant resources associated with the industrial operation of the Sidney Cotton Mill. A mill village located south of the property was largely dismantled between 1931 and 1937, the street pattern altered, and eleven new houses and a commercial building constructed on the block. As a result the mill village does not retain sufficient integrity for inclusion within the boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Heather M. Slane, Architectural Historian
organization: hmvPreservation
street & number: P. O. Box 355
city or town: Durham state: NC zip code: 27702
e-mail heather@hmvpreservation.com
telephone: 336.207.1502
date: April 15, 2024

Additional Documentation

Sidney Cotton Mill

Alamance County,
North Carolina
County and State

Name of Property

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Sidney Cotton Mill

City or Vicinity: Graham

County: Alamance

State: North Carolina

Photographer: Heather M. Slane

Date Photographed: October 2022

Location of Negatives: State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, North Carolina

1. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Stair Tower
Exterior
facing north
2. Sidney Cotton Mill
1886 Weaving Building
Exterior
facing southwest
3. Sidney Cotton Mill
1886 Weaving Building & 1892 Weaving, Quilling, Beaming, and Twisting Addition
Exterior
facing southwest

Sidney Cotton Mill

Alamance County,
North Carolina
County and State

Name of Property

4. Sidney Cotton Mill
1892 Weaving, Quilling, Beaming, and Twisting Addition and ca. 1927 Machine Shop
Exterior
facing south
5. Sidney Cotton Mill
ca. 1927 Machine Shop
Exterior
facing northeast
6. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Carding and Spinning Addition
Exterior
facing southeast
7. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Carding and Spinning Addition
Exterior
facing south
8. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Carding and Spinning Addition and ca. 1927 Stockroom
Exterior
facing northeast
9. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Carding and Spinning Addition, ca. 1945 Shed-roofed Addition, and 1907 Stair Tower
Exterior
facing northeast
10. Sidney Cotton Mill
1886 Weaving Building
Interior
facing northeast
11. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Carding and Spinning Addition
Interior, first floor
facing southwest
12. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Carding and Spinning Addition
Interior, first floor
facing southeast

Sidney Cotton Mill

Alamance County,
North Carolina
County and State

Name of Property

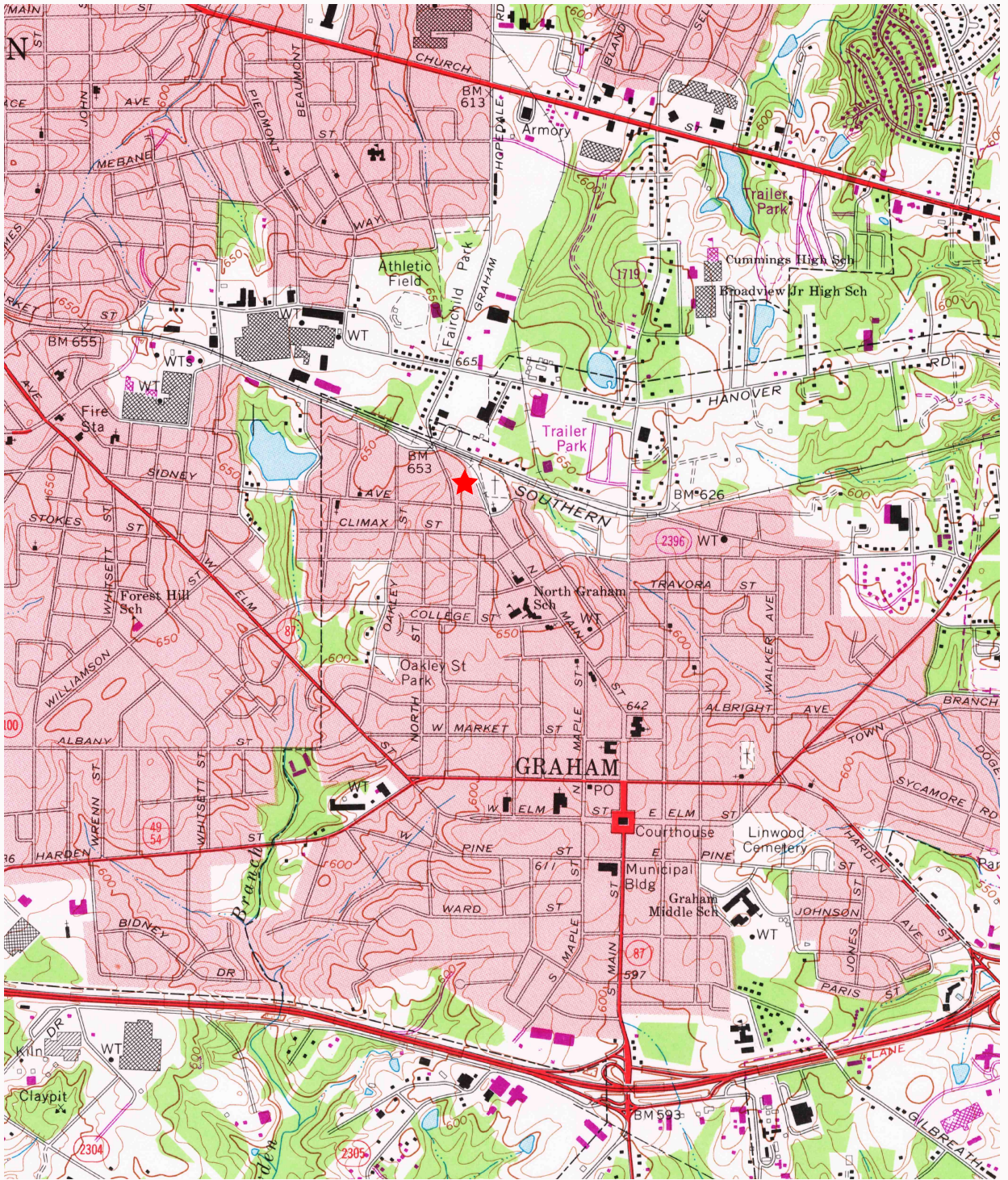
13. Sidney Cotton Mill
ca. 1927 Stockroom
Interior
facing northwest
14. Sidney Cotton Mill
ca. 1945 Shed-roofed Addition
Interior
facing southwest
15. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Stair Tower
Interior, second floor
facing west
16. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Carding and Spinning Addition
Interior, second floor
facing northeast
17. Sidney Cotton Mill
1907 Carding and Spinning Addition
Interior, second floor
facing south
18. Sidney Cotton Mill
1892 Weaving, Quilling, Beaming, and Twisting Addition
Interior, second floor
facing southwest
19. Sidney Cotton Mill
ca. 1927 Machine Shop and 1892 Weaving, Quilling, Beaming, and Twisting Addition
Interior, first floor
facing northeast

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.



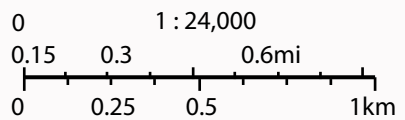
National Register of Historic Places Nomination

Sidney Cotton Mill

909 Washington Street, Graham
Alamance County, North Carolina

National Register Location Map

Prepared by hmwPreservation 6/1/2023 utilizing the Burlington 1969 USGS 7.5minute map



★ Location of NR Property





Sidney Cotton Mill
909 Washington Street
Graham, Alamance County, NC

Tax Map with National Register Boundary
National Register Boundary

Lat/Long Coordinates:
1. Latitude: 36.081372 Longitude: -79.407282

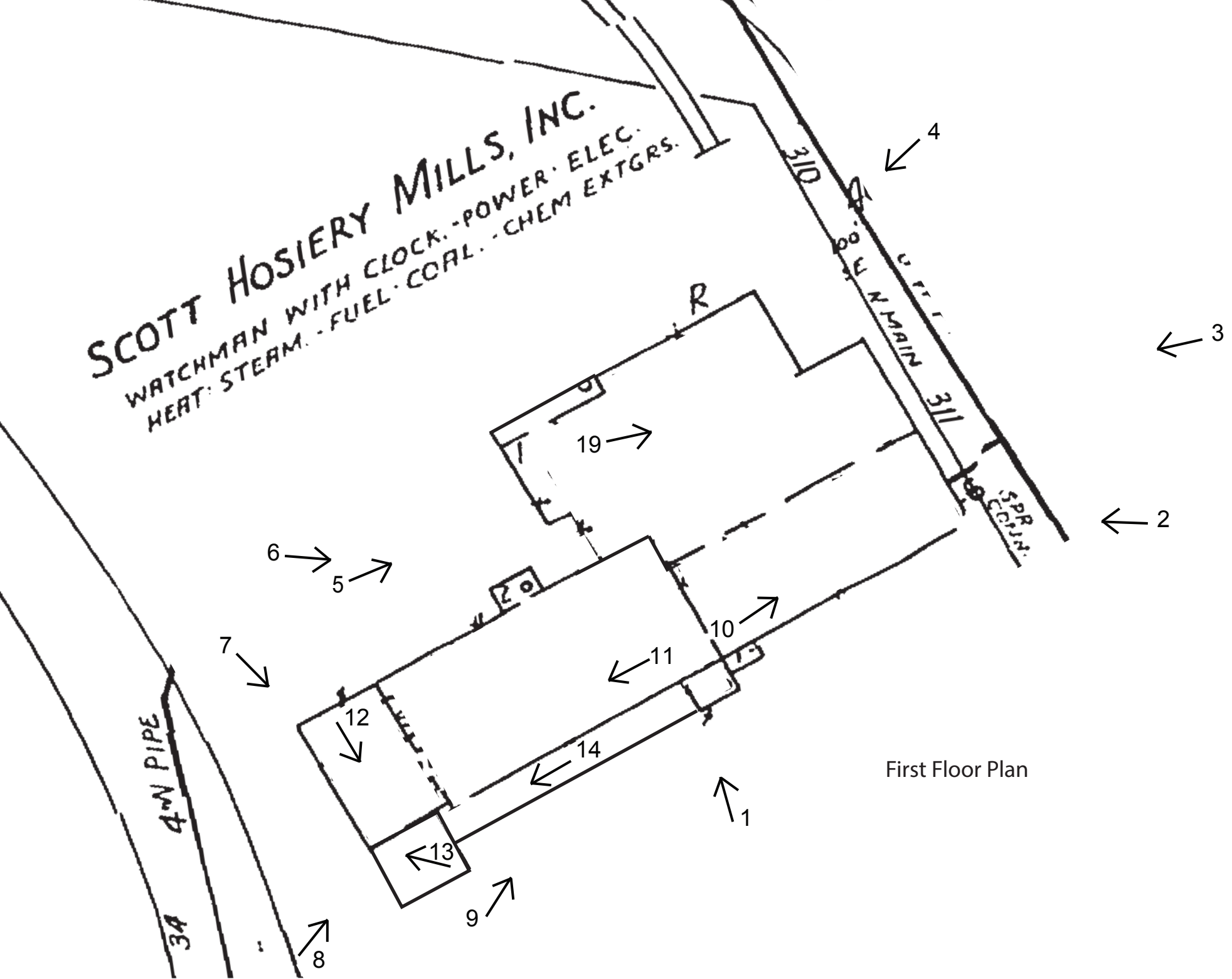
Prepared by hmwPreservation 8/1/2023 utilizing the background imagery from Alamance County GIS



Scale: 1" = 100'



2



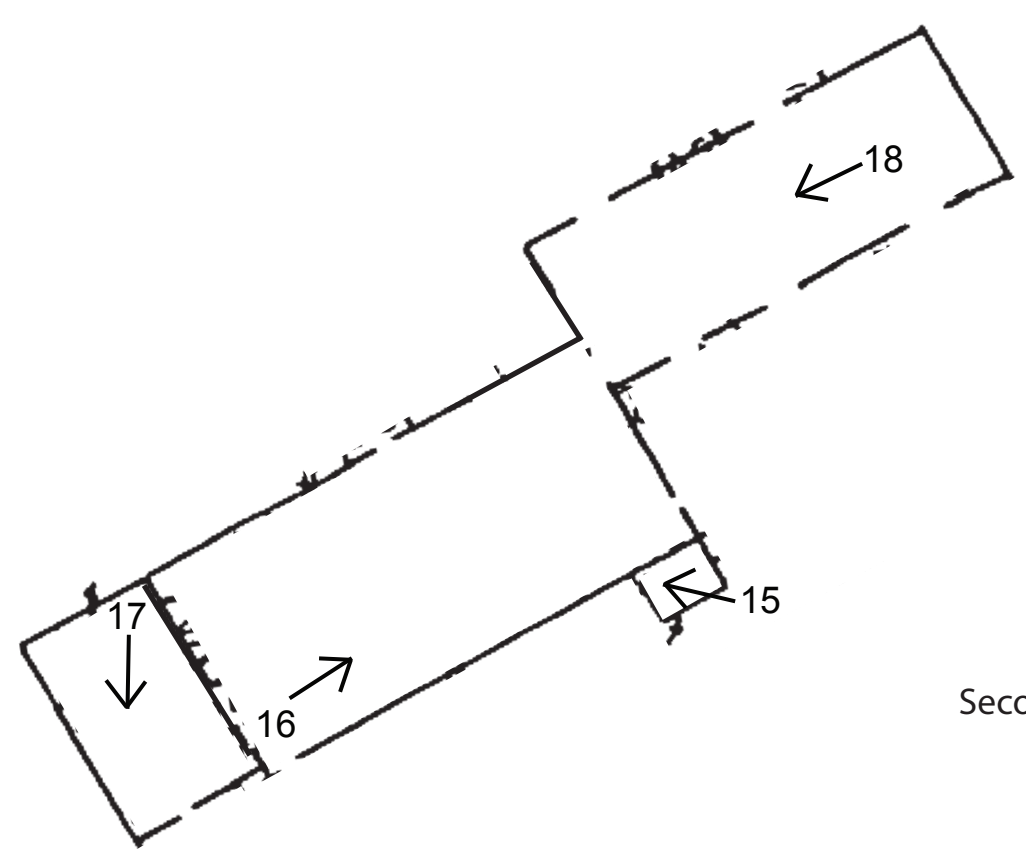
First Floor Plan

Sidney Cotton Mill
 909 Washington Street
 Graham, Alamance County, NC

National Register Photo Key

← 1 National Register Photo Numbers

Prepared by hmwPreservation 8/1/2023 utilizing the background imagery from 1937 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map

Second Floor Plan

SCOTT HOSIERY MILLS, INC.

WATCHMAN WITH CLOCK. - POWER. ELEC.
HEAT: STEAM. - FUEL. COAL. - CHEM EXTGRS.

301 UNPAVED

302

