NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

709

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

RECEIVED 2280
AUG 21 2015
Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Converse Mill
Other names/site number: Clifton Mill #3
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: 200 High Street
City or town: Spartanburg State: SC County: Spartanburg
Not For Publication: [ ] Vicinity: [x]

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**

Elizabeth M. Johnson 8/17/2015

Elizabeth M. Johnson, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer **Date**

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Converse Mill
Name of Property

Spartanburg County, SC
County and State

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

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Joe Edson H. Beall 10.5.15

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [X]

Public – Local [ ]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [X]

District [ ]

[ ]

Site

Structure ☐

Object ☐

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
2	0	Total

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

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
VACANT/Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_OTHER/ Textile Mill_____

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: __Brick, Granite_____

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

The Converse Mill property, located at 200 High Street in Spartanburg, South Carolina, is an approximately eleven acre site bounded by Oakland Street on the west side, US Highway 29 on the south side, the Pacolet River on the east side, and High Street on the north side.

The mill site contains the main mill building, which is rectangular building of four stories with additions. Designed by Lockwood, Greene, and Company, the mill was built in the latter half of 1903 as a replacement for an earlier mill destroyed by a flood in June of 1903. This brick building comprises approximately 204,500 square feet. A one-story brick addition, built between 1949 and 1952 and comprising approximately 35,000 square feet is located on the west side of the building. An additional modern corrugated metal infill building is located off the brick addition. Also located on site is a metal water tower which is situated on the north side of the building.

Properties related to the mill (but not contiguous to the site) include: a small concentration of approximately twenty-five two story, saltbox style mill houses in varying states of disrepair along with several infill modular homes, located north of the mill complex; the original mill pond located on the east side of the Pacolet River; the granite dam wall and portion of the

original mill's foundations, located at the edge of the river, on the far east side of the mill; and approximately fifty one- and two-story single family and duplex style homes, churches, and institutions located further south of the mill, across U.S. Highway 29.

Narrative Description

1. Main Mill Building (1903). Converse Mill is an early twentieth century industrial mill that was operated by the D.E. Converse Company. Originally designed by Lockwood, Greene, and Company, the mill comprises approximately 204,500 square feet over four floors sitting on a partial brick basement. The building is a rectangle thirty-four bays in length and eleven bays in width. The building is oriented to the south and fronts onto U.S. Highway 29. The south side of the building features a stacked tower at the midpoint of the façade, and a decorative bell tower at the corner of the south and east façades. The tower features bricked in arches and a flat roof with cornice work. The mid-point tower was of similar design and rose to the top of the building originally. It was struck by lightning in 1992 and a fire was ignited. Damage to the top of the tower was significant enough to remove, leaving the current configuration. Restrooms were added to this tower during the middle of the 20th century.

The main entrance of the building is located at the east end of the north façade. The arched door features decorative brick work and a granite door header carved with the building's date of 1903. On the north side, approximately eighty-six of the 317 original, six-pane windows are bricked in or feature small inset glass windows that open for ventilation. Two windows have also been converted to double doors on the second and third floors.

On the south side, sixty-five of the original 317 windows have been bricked up. A brick loading dock is located on the east end of the south façade and features two sets of double doors. On the basement level, next to the restroom stack, is a small single story addition with a set of double doors. On the west side of the restroom stack is a two story metal framed and enclosed machinery stack.

On the east side, there are eleven window bays, with nine of the original windows being bricked in. One window has been converted into a double door on the third floor. There is a single metal door located at the basement/ground floor level.

There are two window bays on the west side, both of which have been bricked in. Instead there is a solid brick wall with nine linear posts that are reminiscent of stripped down, engaged pillars. There are two double doors on the south side façade, and one double door on the west side.

All windows and doors feature decorative flat brick arches at the headers. The window sills are made of granite. All bricked in windows no longer have their frames or glass panes.

The interior of the main mill building is largely open on all floors with circular and square wooden posts dividing the room into bays. On the ground floor, the main room is twenty-six bays long and seven bays wide. A parallel secondary room is also twenty-six bays long but is divided into two distinct spaces by one row of circular posts, making the room approximately four bays wide. Adjacent to these spaces is another room at the east end of the building that is eight bays long and eleven bays wide. This room also houses the entry to the stair tower on the southeast corner of the building and the main entrance to mill located at the northeast corner.

On the first floor, the main room is twenty-seven bays long and eleven bays wide. There is a small room located on the north side of the floor that is fifteen bays long and four bays wide. Much like the ground floor below, there is separate open space at the east end of the floor that is eight bays long and eleven bays wide and contains entrances to the stair tower and main entry stair hall.

The same configuration, an open space approximately twenty-seven bays long and eleven bays wide can be found on the second, third, and fourth floors as well. All these floors also feature the separate open space located at the east end of each floor with access points to the stair tower and main entrance stair hall. Starting on the second floor, a loading ramp located just west of center, rises to the fourth floor. All of the main floors feature stained, pine floorboards and whitewashed, plank wood ceilings. Walls are exposed brick either in the natural red or whitewashed, or plaster over brick painted white or in some cases, teal blue.

The 1949 addition building features a ground floor and two stories. Separated from the main building by a fire wall, the brick walls are exposed and there are very few window openings. Because this addition was primarily for modern machinery, light was not a key consideration during the design and construction of this building. Ventilation, however, was important and vented metal frames over window openings provided for circulation. The spaces on all three floors are open and approximately four bays wide and twelve bays long.

To the south of the 1949 addition, a 1952 office building addition sits. It is a single story addition that houses two rooms for office operations. It features a flat roof and four horizontal windows.

2. Water Tower (1903). The metal water tower appears to date to the 1903 construction of the main mill building. The tower appears in a postcard from 1908. The tower is approximately eighty feet tall and stands on the north side of the main mill building. The cylindrical tank holds approximately 80,000 gallons and has crenellation around the roof edge. An observation deck is located around the perimeter of the tank.

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.)

- [x] 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.
- [x] 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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Industry
Architecture

Period of Significance
1903-1965

Significant Dates
1903
1949
1952
1965

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Lockwood, Greene, and Company

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.)

Converse Mill is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the mill industry in Spartanburg County from 1903 to 1965, at which time the mill was sold to Dan River Mills Incorporated; and Criterion C for architecture as an intact example of a turn of the century industrial complex. Originally constructed in 1896 as Clifton Mill No. 3, the mill contributed to the Clifton Manufacturing Company, which was helmed by Dexter Edgar Converse. Clifton No. 3 was one of the largest mills in the United States with 34,944 spindles and 1,092 looms by the year 1900. Completely destroyed in June of 1903 by a flash flood, Converse Mill was rebuilt by late 1903 as a five-story mill complex with adjacent cotton warehouses by the famed Boston mill engineering and architectural firm Lockwood, Greene, and Company. The architectural style of the building is typical of most multi-storied textile mills in South Carolina, and throughout the Southeast, as it is built entirely in brick with arched window openings and granite sills.

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

Industry

Converse Mill, originally known as Clifton Mill No. 3, is an example of the textile mill South Carolina's industrial landscape in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The upstate of South Carolina was particularly successful in the textile field, with Spartanburg County being a leader with dozens of mills by the early 20th century. The Spartanburg District was a largely rural area with a small town of twenty-six commercial buildings when Philip and Lindsay Weaver arrived. The Weaver brothers were native Rhode Islanders but a textile depression in the northeast led them and many others south in pursuit of more opportunity.[1] They found Spartanburg to have abundant water resources and roads in fair condition. More importantly, cheap labor and low taxes were also available. The South Carolina Cotton Manufactory was born in 1816 but it was not the only enterprise in the area. George and Leonard Hill, also Rhode Islanders with a profusion of textile knowledge, were hard on the Weavers' heels and soon established the Industry Cotton Manufacturing Company.

The textile industry was shaky during those early years as financing was always a problem. The first successful venture in Spartanburg County was the Bivingsville Mill. Founded by James Bivings in 1832 and located along Lawson's Creek, the mill was an imposing affair and

[1] Jeffrey Willis, "Textile Town Pioneers: 1816 to 1879"" in *Textile Town* (Spartanburg: Hub City Writer's Project, 2002), 15.

contained the most modern equipment possible, all manufactured in Patterson, New Jersey. The mill operation originally had 1,200 spindles and twenty-four looms, which was small by late 19th century standards, but it was the first "modern" textile mill operation in the county. Unfortunately, Bivings had a falling out with his investors and he left the operation just before the Civil War.[2]

Following the war, and the immense upheaval it brought, Spartanburg's agricultural past that provided for a boom in textiles following the war. As plantations were subdivided, the market was flooded with goods from both small and larger farmers alike. Where farming used to provide a solid income, it was now a hard scrabble life for many poor white and African American sharecroppers. By industrializing the county, many were provided stable, but grueling work in the textile mills; and investors made dividends that were in turn used to build new mills.[3]

Dexter Converse, owner of Clifton Manufacturing and the D.E. Converse Company, was one of the textile pioneers in Spartanburg County. He was not a native as he grew up in Vermont with close family ties to the woolen textile industry. After spending five years as the employee of a New York textile mill, Converse moved south and worked in a mill in Lincolnton, North Carolina before settling at James Bivings' mill in 1855.[4] The initial success of that mill had devolved into petty squabbles amongst investors, and by 1870, the mill was in bankruptcy.[5] Converse purchased the mill and quickly set about expanding it, which was renamed "Glendale" by his wife Helen. The D.E. Converse Company was very successful; during this time Glendale Mill was expanded to include 17,280 spindles and 518 looms. In 1880, the company pooled together the resources for a new textile mill to be operated under the newly created Clifton Manufacturing Company. Two hundred acres of land along the Hurricane Shoals portion of the Pacolet River was purchased, and by spring 1881, the first mill at Clifton was producing cloth. The new mill attracted a great many people from the countryside; the town contained 1,000 people by 1882.[6] The complex was expanded to include a second mill in 1888. In 1896, Converse moved a mile upstream to establish Clifton Mill No. 3. It was a five story brick building situated on the banks of the river and a scant four years following its opening, the mill was considered the largest in the country with 34,944 spindles and 1,092 looms.[7]

At the same time that Converse was expanding his holdings, another developer in the textile industry of Spartanburg County came in the form of Captain John Montgomery. Born and raised in Spartanburg County, Montgomery was the principal founder in the Pacolet Manufacturing Company. Located several miles downriver from the Glendale and Clifton Mill operations, the first Pacolet Mill was completed in 1881.[8] Pacolet expanded rapidly and by 1887, the mills

[2] J.B.O. Landrum, *History of Spartanburg County* (Atlanta: Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, 1900), 163.
[3] Phillip Racine, "Boom Time in Textile Town: 1880-1909" in *Textile Town* (Spartanburg: Hub City Writer's Project, 2002), 37.
[4] Ibid, 84.
[5] Jeffrey R. Willis, *Spartanburg, South Carolina* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 1999), 91.
[6] G.C. Waldrep III, *Southern Workers and the Search for Community: Spartanburg County* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 2000, 10-11.
[7] *Textile Town*, 309.
[8] "John Henry Montgomery," Textile Industry History, accessed April 28, 2015, http://www.textilehistory.org/JohnHenryMontgomery.html

contained 26,224 spindles and 840 looms. Further expansion in 1894 resulted in 57,000 spindles and 2,200. In an effort to extend his holdings, Montgomery was also a partner and investor in several other Spartanburg County mills including Whitney Mills (a division of Pacolet Manufacturing), Drayton Mills, and Clifton Manufacturing. In 1888 Montgomery became the president of Spartanburg Manufacturing Company and oversaw the construction of its first mill in 1890 and the second in 1896.[9]

The rapid growth of the textile industry in Spartanburg County would not have been possible without investors, and Seth Milliken was the financier to have on board. Milliken was born in Maine and was involved in the mercantile business initially. He eventually moved into wholesale and partnered with William Deering to form the Milliken Deering Company. Though the partnership ended when Deering moved to Chicago to begin what would eventually become the International Harvester Company, Milliken continued to do well. It was his interest in brokering cotton fabric that landed him in the sights of John H. Montgomery.[10] He invested $10,000 in Pacolet Manufacturing and was also the selling agent for the company beginning in 1884. It was the first of many investments in the upstate. Milliken's son and successor, Gerrish, became pivotal in keeping the mills open during the Great Depression. Milliken Deering eventually acquired Pacolet Manufacturing and Drayton Mills, while the Montgomery family retained ownership of Spartan Mills, Beaumont Mills, and Startex Mills.[11]

Unlike many mills that faltered during the national economic depression of the 1890s, Converse Mill continued to thrive. Following Dexter Edgar Converse's death in 1899, his brother-in-law, Albert H. Twichell, was named president of both Glendale and Clifton Mills.[12] Like Converse, Twichell was born and raised in the northeast, and came to Bivingsville as a clerk and bookkeeper in 1859. After serving in 13th South Carolina Regiment during the Civil War, Twichell returned to Bivingsville and became a partner in the D.E. Converse Company when it took over the mills at Bivingsville. He was also pivotal in the creation of the Clifton Manufacturing Company. He served as secretary and treasurer for some years until taking over the company. Twichell was interested in expansion, investing in the Inman Mills operation in northern Spartanburg County in 1900, and adding a second mill at Glendale in 1902.

Despite the advances made during his tenure, there were also epic losses. On June 6, 1903, compounded by several days of rain and a freak cloudburst upstream, the Pacolet River flooded and ruined millions of dollars of mill operations. It was Converse Mill that suffered the most. Due to the fact that the mill had been constructed on the west bank of the river, there was little to shield the buildings from the torrential downpour and resulting flood. Around 4:30 that morning, the night watchman observed a large tree come over the dam. It fell on the roof of the boiler

[9] Karen L. Nutt, "John H. Montgomery: Father of Textiles" in *Textile Town* (Spartanburg: Hub City Writer's Project, 2002), 67.
[10] Karen L. Nutt, "Seth Milliken: The Money Behind the Mills" in *Textile Town* (Spartanburg: Hub City Writer's Project, 2002), 70.
[11] Textile Industry History. "Milliken & Company, Spartanburg, South Carolina," accessed May 4, 2015, http://www.textilehistory.org/MillikenandCo.html.
[12] "D.E. Converse Co. and Glendale Mill Presidents," Rev. Clarence Crocker, accessed December 5, 2014, http://glendalesc.com/presidents.html.

room, and water immediately came flooding in. What seemed like only seconds later, the dam burst and the powerhouse was swept away. A corner of the five story mill began to crumble and soon the smokestack collapsed. Less than two hours from the time the dam broke, the entire mill was washed down the river.[13] Downstream, Clifton No. 1 and No. 2 were heavily damaged or partially washed away. The tramway tracks that carried mill workers to the mills and into Spartanburg were twisted in half and many of the mill houses along the river were washed away, unfortunately with their occupants. Some residents were stranded in the trees by the rising waters near mill No. 2. Fifty lives were lost in the flood and the three mills suffered $1,750,000 in damages.[14]

The flooding continued on down river to cause damage at Glendale Mills and Pacolet Mills, the latter of which was completely destroyed. A total of seven of Spartanburg County's major mills were affected with a total of $300,000,000 in damages. Seventy homes were swept away by the flood waters, which left 600 people homeless. While the mills were being repaired or rebuilt, 4,000 workers were left without jobs.[15] But Clifton No. 3, known as Converse Mill since D.E. Converse's death in 1899, was quick to rebuild. The concrete cast plaque above the main entrance reads "1903" signaling that it took roughly six months to begin rebuilding the mill. The result is the current four-story brick building. In addition to this building, a large seven bay cotton warehouse and a smaller four bay warehouse were built along with a cloth house, a new powerhouse at the dam (which was rebuilt), a waste house, and a laundry house. With the exception of the new dam and powerhouse, these additional buildings no longer exist.

Once rebuilt, Converse Mill was able to rebound. Records indicate that an order for 1,000 Northrop-Draper automatic looms was placed in 1904. The manufacturing company also used Whitin looms. The one-story additions on the west side of the building are the result of expansions in 1949 and 1952. But Spartanburg County's hold on the textile industry began to loosen by mid-century. In 1965, the Clifton Manufacturing Company was sold to Dan River Mills, a large textile firm based out of Virginia. It was the beginning of the end as the company shut down all three mills between 1968 and 1973. Converse Mill was used as a warehouse for many years while Clifton No. 2 was still operated in limited capacity by Tuscarora Yarns until the 1990s. Clifton No. 1, also used as storage after it ceased operation, was demolished in 2002.[16] Clifton No. 2 was demolished in 2013. The only remaining vestige of the vast Clifton Manufacturing Company is Converse Mill.

Architecture

Converse Mill is significant in that is an excellent example of the prevailing design of industrial facilities and the methodology of mill management. The mill, and its sister mills at Clifton, were all designed by Lockwood, Greene, and Co., and were three of the eleven textile mills designed

[13] "The Pacolet Flood of June 6th, 1903," Wofford College, accessed December 5, 2014, http://www.dept.wofford.edu/geology/pdfs/pac1904.pdf.
[14] Michael Hembree and David Moore, *A Place Called Clifton: A Pictorial History of Clifton, South Carolina* (Clinton, SC: Jacobs Press, 1987), 178.
[15] Teter, *Textile Town,* 77.
[16] Ibid, 309.

by that company in Spartanburg County (by 1912).[17] Converse Mill is one of two extant mills in Spartanburg County designed by Lockwood Greene.

From 1898 to 1902 the Greenville office of Lockwood Greene was headed by Joseph Emory Sirrine (1872-1947), and during this period Sirrine oversaw the construction of approximately twenty textile mills in North and South Carolina. Sirrine had left Lockwood Greene by the time that Converse Mill began construction, but the building still exhibits many of the hallmark characteristics of other projects in which Sirrine was involved, including Drayton Mill (Spartanburg Co. – NRHP Listed October 24, 2012) and Brandon Mill (Greenville Co. – NRHP Listed September 3, 2014).

Converse Mill plant was comprised of the main building along with cotton warehouses, a waste house, and a laundry house. Following the reconstruction of the dam in 1903, a powerhouse was also built. These buildings (excepting the powerhouse) have since been demolished.

Throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the prevailing theory was that industrial architecture should follow function and not aesthetics. While textile buildings were not strictly utilitarian, architectural style was often not fully expressed. Generally industrial buildings fell into the middle ground of the two processes; they were neither high style or completely devoid of any detail.[18] Converse Mill fits into this category perfectly. Very little decoration can be found in its design, and this style was mimicked in the ancillary buildings as well. A postcard from the early 20th century shows the cotton warehouse as a miniature of the main mill building as it had a brick bell tower with arched windows at the top while the waste and laundry houses were simply brick buildings.

The design of southern textile mills was derived from the northeast. The textile industry began in the last quarter of the eighteenth century; following America's War for Independence, English immigrants with textile knowledge began settling in the northeast. Samuel Slater was one of these men. He built a successful spinning mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island using water power, a technology previously unknown.[19] The basic New England textile mill form was a rectangular, brick, multi-storied building with a "double roof" and cupola, and an exterior stair tower.[20] In the north, construction materials often varied based upon location, but the mills of late 19th century and early 20th century Spartanburg County are entirely rendered in brick.

The firm of Lockwood Greene was heavily influenced by the design of textile mills in the northeast. Amos D. Lockwood was born in New England and became familiar with textile mills at an early age. He was employed as a factory superintendent at the Slatersville, Rhode Island mill where the modern textile industry was born. He soon formed A.D. Lockwood and Company with his brother and brother-in-law, and they began to re-design mills around the northeast. He

[17] Lockwood, Greene, Co, ed. *A Record of Lockwood, Greene, and Co.'s Contribution to Industrial Engineering* (Boston, 1912), 8.
[18] Bradley, 201-202.
[19] David Macaulay, *Mill* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1983), 6.
[20] John S. Garner, ed., *The Company Town: Architecture and Society in the Early Industrial Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 123.

soon became the consulting engineer to some of the most famed mill operations in the country. In 1882 and at the advanced age of 71, he joined forces with Stephen Greene to form Lockwood, Greene, and Company.[21]

Amos Lockwood was very interested in the interiors of the mill buildings he designed. He found beauty in the vast rows of machinery employed in textile manufacture. For many years he engaged not only in the design of textile mills, but also in how they functioned and the machinery that allowed them to be successful. But as the 20th century marched on and the textile industry began to reform, style began to become more important. In response, Lockwood Greene developed an architectural department in 1918 in an attempt to improve the look of mills and other industrial facilities.[22] Because many of the textile mills in Spartanburg and Greenville Counties were designed before aesthetics took precedence, stripped down design sensibilities can be found in many of them. There is little decorative detailing to be found in the many Lockwood Greene designed mills including Spartan Mills and Arkwright Mills, in Spartanburg County; and Monaghan Mill and Brandon Mill in neighboring Greenville County.

Before styling became important, light and ventilation and location were key components of a successful mill operation. The need for light and ventilation is expressed in the banks of large windows incorporated into the design. Naturally, access to power, and thus water, was of paramount consideration as well.[23] The original 1890 Converse Mill was located adjacent to the Pacolet River in order to maximize this concept. Unfortunately, this proved to be a downfall when the June Freshet of 1903 hit the area and completely destroyed the mill. By this time, technology had begun to favor electricity and this allowed the new mill to be built safely upon a high hill to ensure that it was never washed away again.

These industrial buildings were not wholly devoid of architectural merit or styling. Typically, style would be expressed in the design of the bell towers attached to the main mill buildings. The original mill at Converse featured an Italian Renaissance Revival style tower. The 1903 mill's tower is a bit more stripped down though. While Converse's stair tower is not particularly high style, its sister mills, Clifton No. 1 and No. 2, had Romanesque Revival towers. An elaborate Queen Anne Style porch marked the main entrance to the plant at Clifton No. 2 as well. Edgar Converse deliberately planned for high style towers, using elements of the Romanesque and Beaux Arts styles. He wanted these towers to be landmarks (and lookouts) in his communities. His thoughts were perpetuated in many of the other mills in Spartanburg County. The Tucapau Mill in Startex also featured a Romanesque Revival stair tower while the tower at Inman Mills featured a steeply pitched roof to accommodate a belfry.

During the re-building phase following the June Freshet of 1903, the mill at Pacolet, located just down the river from Converse Mill, was also designed by Lockwood Greene and is nearly identical to the mill at Converse. Ancillary buildings to the mill often expressed more

[21] "A Brief History of Lockwood Greene," Georgia Tech, accessed April 22, 2015, http://www.library.gatech.edu/gtbuildings/french/lockwood.htm.
[22] Bradley, 20.
[23] Betsey H. Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 87.

architectural exuberance. The mill office at Pacolet was designed in the Renaissance Revival style with terra cotta roof tiles and concrete pergolas shading the long row of steps leading up to the building. Similarly, the Lockwood Greene designed Drayton Mill had Tudor Revival/French Eclectic style office building that was designed by Joseph Sirrine in 1919.[24] Why the mill at Converse was so plain in comparison to its contemporaries is not known. But as the twentieth century progressed, the architecture of these mills would also change to favor stripped down additions. As technology advanced, sophisticated machinery was needed to keep production profitable and efficient. The advent of indoor air conditioning necessitated the infill and "loss" of the many windows needed for ventilation in the early part of the century.[25] Many of the windows at Converse Mill were bricked over in response to this need. This occurred either in 1949 or 1952, when the mill underwent a renovation and expansion. A brick two-story building was added to the west side of the mill during this period. Instead of the tall, elegant windows gracing the façades of the 1903 mill building, the windows of the new building were simple metal slots used to ventilate the rooms that housed complicated machinery. Another one story addition was added off the front of the two-story section as well. It was meant to serve as a modern office building and features high horizontal windows. All these additions are exceedingly plain and reflective of the push towards the modern architecture of the mid-century.

The mill underwent significant changes when Clifton Manufacturing sold out to Dan River Mills in 1965. The company streamlined and then eventually closed the original mills (with the exception of mill no. 2 that was used by Tuscarora Yarns) in the early 1970s. Converse Mill was used as a warehouse for many years until it was bought a local owner interested in preserving its history in 2006. The complex is now slated for redevelopment by a preservation sensitive firm.

[24] National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for Drayton Mills, Spartanburg County, South Carolina (Columbia, SC: South Carolina Department of Archives and History, 2012).
[25] Ibid.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:
_x___ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property __11 acres_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 34.992820 Longitude: -81.838117

2. Latitude: 34.994050 Longitude: -81.837906

3. Latitude: 34.994303 Longitude: -81.837551

4. Latitude: 34.994613 Longitude: -81.837091

5. Latitude: 34.994913 Longitude: -81.835219

6. Latitude: 34.994423 Longitude: -81.834880

7. Latitude: 34.993510 Longitude: -81.834885

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

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

The boundary coincides with the black red line on the accompanying Spartanburg County tax map drawn at a scale of one inch equals 200 feet. The boundary encompasses all of parcel 3-13-00-309, which includes the mill building, and parcel 3-13-12-034, which includes the water tower. The property is bounded on the south by E. Main St. Extension, on the west by Oakland St. and High St., on the north by High St., excepting where the boundary jogs north to pick up the water tower parcel. There are no natural or man-made boundaries on the eastern side, but the boundary follows the parcel lines.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include the entire parcel that encompasses the historic Converse Mill and the water tower, which is included in the nomination as a contributing resource.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: __Caroline Wilson_____
organization: __Upstate Preservation Consultants_____
street & number: _203 North Miller Street_____
city or town: Greer_____ state: ___SC_____ zip code: __29650 __
e-mail_upstatepreservation@gmail.com_
telephone: 864-266-8350_ _____
date: January 20, 2015_____

Additional Documentation

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: Converse Mill

City or Vicinity: Converse

County: Spartanburg County State: South Carolina

Photographer: Caroline Wilson

Date Photographed: October 16, 2014

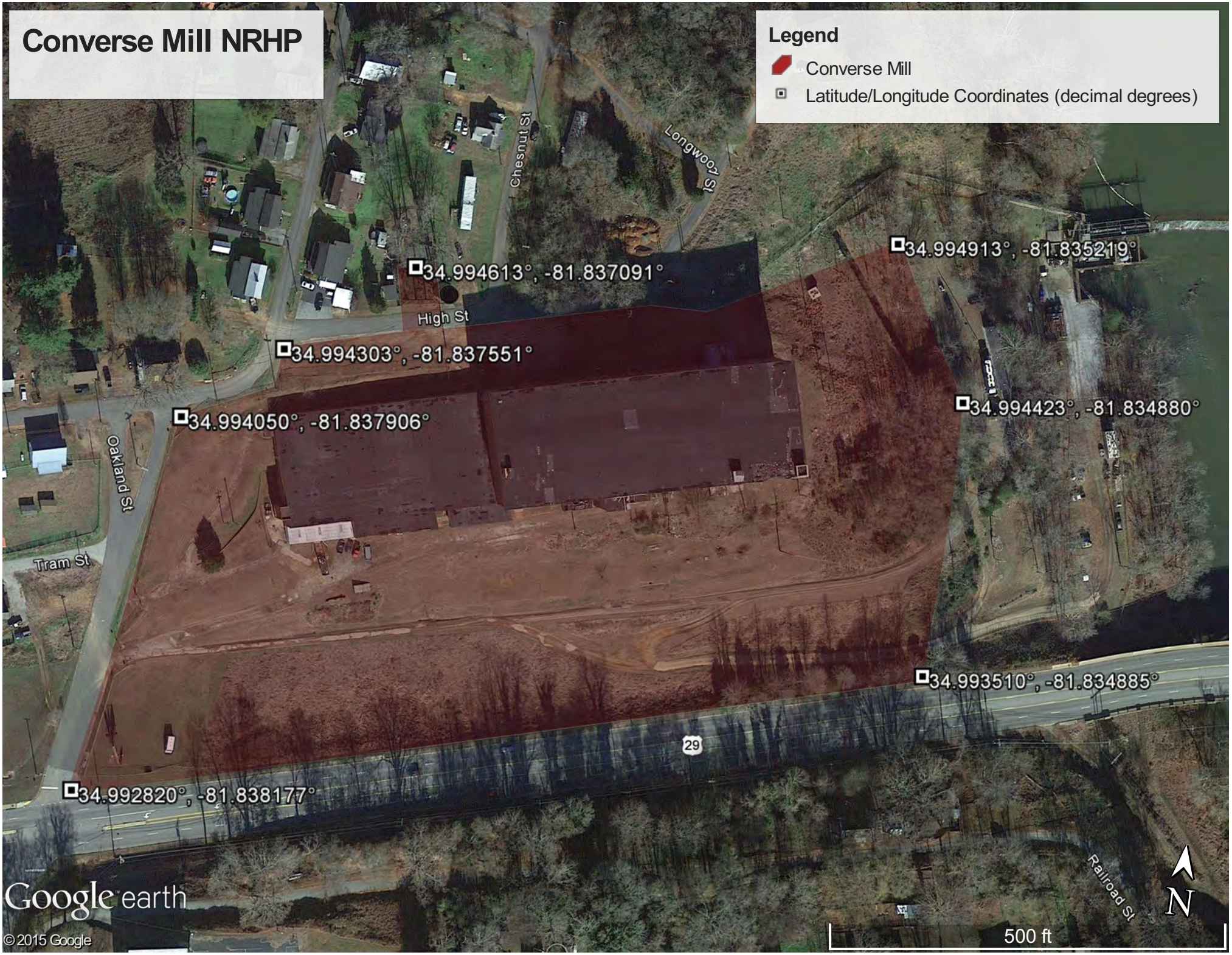
1. Converse Mill, North View from across Highway 29
2. Converse Mill, North and West View from the Highway 29 Bridge
3. Converse Mill, South Tower (Bathroom Stack)
4. South Tower Sub Storage Entrance
5. South Façade Storage Room, Adjacent to South/Bathroom Tower
6. South Façade Loading Dock, Facing West
7. South Façade Facing East
8. East Façade Upper Loading Door
9. North Façade Main Entrance
10. North Façade Facing West
11. North Façade Storage Shed
12. Ground Floor facing Northeast
13. Ground Floor Facing South
14. Ground Floor Window Detail
15. Ground Floor Hexagonal Support Column
16. Ground Floor Loading Dock Door
17. Ground Floor Elevator Shaft
18. Ground Floor Supervisor's Office
19. Ground Floor Stairway Detail
20. Stairway, View from First Floor to Ground Floor

21. First Floor, Northeast View
22. North Façade Storage Shed Interior view
23. First Floor Steel Door
24. Second Floor, Facing Northeast
25. East Stairway, From Second to Third Floor
26. East Stair Detail
27. Third Floor Facing East
28. Fourth Floor, Facing West
29. Fourth Floor Office
30. Fourth Floor Support Beams
31. Loading Ramp between the Fourth and Third Floors
32. Quality Board Located on Fourth Floor
33. Water Tower

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

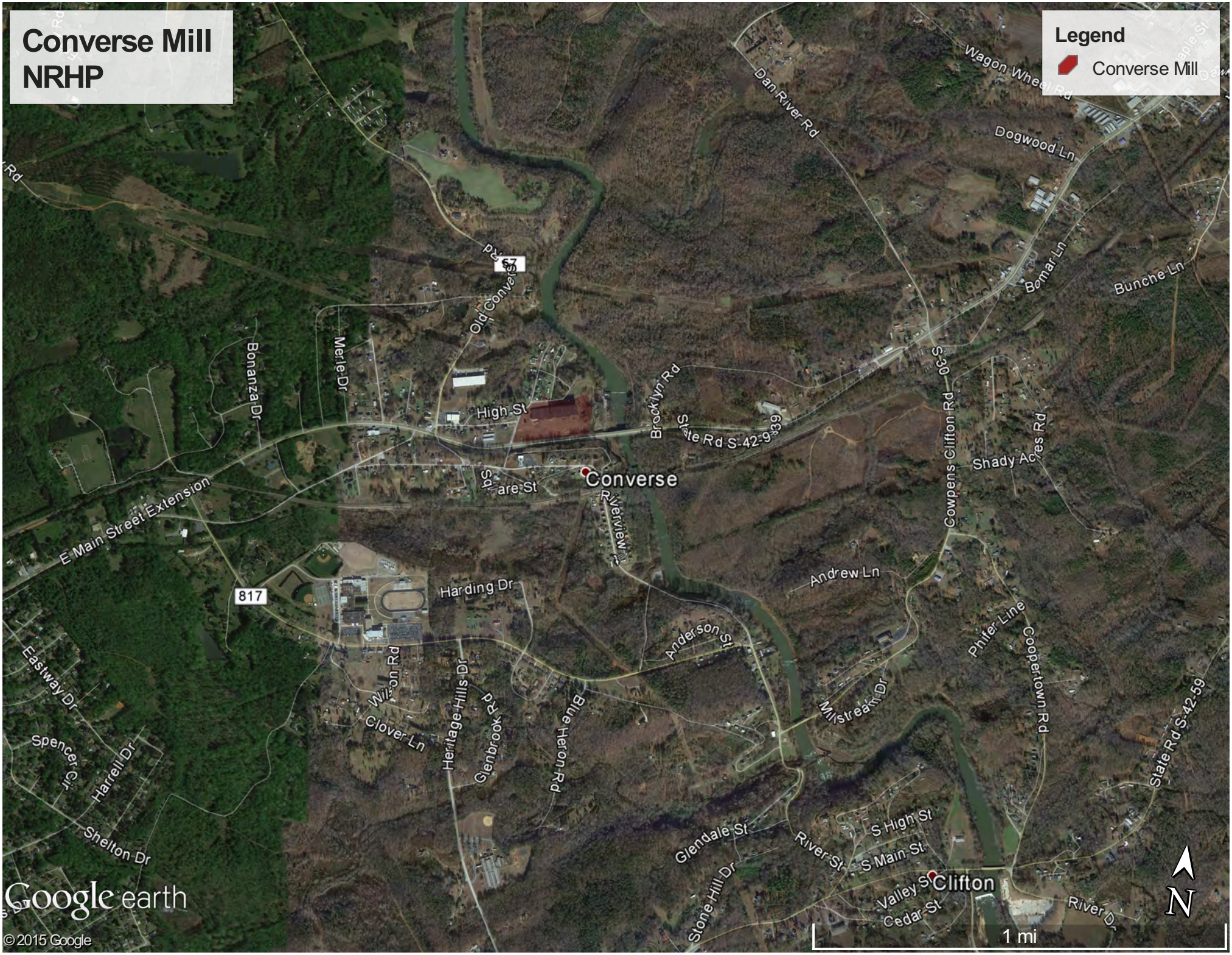
SPARTANBURG CO. TAX MAP, CONVERSE MILL

Converse Mill NRHP



Converse Mill NRHP
Legend
Converse Mill
Chesnut St
Longwood St
High St
Oakland St
Tram St
29
Railroad St
N
500 ft
Google earth
© 2015 Google

Converse Mill NRHP



Arten

1903

EXIT

EXIT

EXIT

MATER
US
ON

QUALITY BOARD

WEEK ENDING 5-28-67

HIGHEST PRODUCTION

WEAVER & FIXER

Helen Howell 91.7

Jack Fowler 91.3

LOWEST SECONDS

Louise Grant 8.2

John Jolcuf 9.8