

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 1900 South Boulevard not for publication
city or town Charlotte vicinity
state North Carolina code NC county Mecklenburg code 119 zip code 28203

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination, request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Cliffey Brown 3/2/01
Signature of certifying official Date
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____

(Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop
Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: private Category of Property building

Number of Resources within Property

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
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Cat: INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION- Sub:
manufacturing facility

Current Functions

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE - business Sub:
COMMERCE/TRADE - restaurant

7. Description

Architectural Classification

NO STYLE

Materials

Foundation	Concrete
Walls	Brick
	Stucco
Roof	Asphalt
Other	

Narrative Description : See Continuation Form Section 7, page 1

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- X 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 a grave.
- d a cemetery.
- e a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- f a commemorative property.
- g less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance 1905 -1929

Significant Dates 1905
1911

Significant person(s): Tompkins, Daniel A.

1914
1929

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance: See Continuation Form Section 8, page 1

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7. Narrative Description

Constructed in 1904 and 1905, the (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop is located at 1900 South Boulevard in the Dilworth neighborhood of Charlotte, North Carolina. The building occupies a rectangular lot of 1.426 acres, in the middle of a block bounded on the east by South Boulevard, on the west by the former Southern Railway corridor and Camden Road, to the south by East Tremont Avenue, and to the north by East Boulevard. This former industrial building was part of a linear industrial zone that developed between the 1890s and the 1960s along the Southern Railway spine as the manufacturing area of Dilworth, Charlotte's first streetcar suburb. The east side of South Boulevard is lined with small-scale commercial buildings dating from the late nineteenth century to the present, beyond which are the residential streets of Dilworth. The west side of the Southern rail corridor also emerged as a manufacturing district by the early twentieth century, and Wilmore, a residential neighborhood begun in the 1920s, lies to the west and north. Industrial, warehousing, and commercial properties still line South Boulevard and nearby side streets, and many have been rehabilitated into offices, stores, and restaurants. The former Tompkins Machine Shop building is currently undergoing certified rehabilitation.

The (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Machine Shop is a two story, brick factory building with a rectangular plan and a small, one story ell (which incorporates a portion of the original boiler house) projecting from the south elevation. The original Tompkins Company complex consisted of the large machine shop building and detached foundry and boiler house buildings to the rear. By 1911, the machine shop had been extended to the rear, and a hyphen had been added, which connected the once detached boiler house to the south elevation of the machine shop building. An office section was added across the front (east) elevation along South Boulevard between 1911 and 1929, and during the same period, a concrete freight platform was built across the rear, for easy rail access. Since 1929, a truck loading dock, covered by a metal shed roof, has been added to the rear of the side (north) elevation.

The two story office section has a brick exterior that was stuccoed probably before World War II, a stepped parapet, glass block windows, and a replacement metal and glass, single leaf entrance. The long north and south elevations of the brick factory building have an arcaded effect created by brick pilasters, corbelled cornices, and a belt course between the stories. These elevations have segmental arched window openings on the first floor and flat arched openings on the second, but the windows have all been brick infilled. Several loading bays on the north and south elevations have also been infilled. There is a raised basement in the rear section of the building, and because of the slight slope of the lot, the segmental arched basement windows are visible at the back of the building. The rear elevation has a stepped parapet, a hollow terra cotta tile wall, and concrete block infilled windows. An original wooden sliding door and a modern overhead door open onto the concrete freight dock. The flat roof is punctuated by both flat and gable roofed monitors, as well as corrugated metal penthouses that shelter the freight elevator machinery.

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The small ell from the rear of the south elevation includes a portion of the original boiler house, the hyphen built to connect the boiler house and the machine shop, and an L-shaped storage area or dock added to the east elevation. Much of the original boiler house was constructed of brick and hollow tile, but with the postwar addition for loading and storage and what appears to be fire damage in the older boiler house, the ell is now primarily concrete block. As part of the certified rehabilitation, the largely modern ell is scheduled to be removed.

The Tompkins machine shop interior is typical of turn-of-the-century factory design. Behind the front office are two large, open rooms, which provided flexible production areas. The front production area was originally used for machine manufacturing, the rear space was the pattern shop, and the second story was used as a warehouse.

The two story office section has a roughly twelve foot tall first story and a shorter second story, approximately eight feet in height. The first floor has been remodeled in recent years with added partition walls, wood panel and sheetrock walls, and dropped acoustic tile ceilings. However, much of the original fabric is intact underneath the modern materials, and the original beaded board ceiling is visible in some areas. The second floor is intact, and is reached by an enclosed staircase, positioned against the interior wall. The staircase has flushboard walls, and the second floor offices and storerooms have plaster outer walls, original interior partition walls of tongue-in-groove paneling, beaded board ceiling, and horizontal panelled doors.

The office section is elevated roughly five feet above the rear work areas, and a wooden staircase leads down to the machine shop. The tall segmental arch of the original entrance is evident in the front wall of the machine shop (the original exterior wall which now separates the office and machine shop) indicating that the entrance was oversized to accommodate the large machinery components.

The tall machine manufacturing area has both the heavy timber piers associated with mill construction, reinforced with steel piers and I-beam girders to carry the heavy loads of upper floor storage areas. The connections between the piers and girders are braced with steel brackets. The machine production room has the tall space needed for heavy machine production, and the open room is broken only by the thick wooden piers or steel poles. In recent years, a small room has been partitioned from the northeast corner of this production room. A brick fire wall, with a sliding fire door, separates the front manufacturing room from the rear pattern shop.

Added between 1905 and 1911, the rear pattern shop was constructed only with steel I-beams and girders, eliminating the mill construction found in the front room. The shop has the same tall, open work space as the machine shop, but at the rear of the room, a raised platform provided both the vertical clearance needed for the partial basement and the on-grade access to the boiler house and the rear loading docks. The pattern shop also has two enclosed staircases. One, open on the first floor but enclosed by a staircase of vertical board siding with a batten door, is located in the southeast corner of the pattern shop, while the other was built in the center of the rear platform. There are several loading bays along the north, south, and rear elevations. An original sliding, batten

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door is found on the south elevation, and modern overhead doors are located along the north elevation. Along the north and south elevations, there are several chimneys, with stove pipe openings. At the southwest corner of the rear pattern shop, a fire door leads to the hyphen connecting with the boiler house.

The second floor has the same two open rooms as the first floor, separated by a sliding fire door. The front room has two entrances leading to the office staircase, and a small room has been constructed in the northeast corner. This open storage room has hardwood floors and steel I-beam piers and girders. The larger rear storage room has a hollow tile rear wall and a portion of the north has been repaired with newer brick. The roof monitors are intact but covered.

The boiler shop is in poor condition and has been partially rebuilt with concrete block. Only the brick north and east walls, now opening into the hyphen addition, appear original. The interior is a single, windowless room, now used for storage. The flat roof of the boiler house is a replacement, supported by a series of small trusses. The thick, steel covered boiler room door appears original. The addition along the east elevation consists of a concrete dock and windowless concrete block walls.

This former machine shop building retains its architectural integrity with few significant alterations. As is common for industrial buildings, the windows on the side elevations have been brick infilled, and several loading doors were added to accommodate truck transport. The modifications to the office section are additions and coverings primarily, and the original fabric of this portion of the building is intact beneath the sheetrock and panelling. The former boiler house has required modern repair.

The 1.426 acre parcel on which the (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop sits contains only one resource, the machine shop building.

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8. Statement of Significance

Constructed in 1904 and 1905, the (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop is recommended for the National Register under Criterion A for industry and under Criterion B in the area of industry for its associations with founder and owner, Daniel A. Tompkins. Under Criterion A, the (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop is an important example of the textile-related industries established in Charlotte, and the surrounding North Carolina Piedmont, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when the city emerged as a leading center of cotton production. Makers of textile machinery, supplies, and equipment, the D.A. Tompkins Company was one of many allied manufacturing firms established to serve the needs of the rapidly multiplying cotton mills. By the early twentieth century, Charlotte had become the leading producer of textile machinery in the Southeast, with the D.A. Tompkins Company dominating the field.

The company machine shop also exemplifies the early industrialization of Charlotte, which emerged as the hub of the burgeoning Southern textile industry. With its mills and auxiliary industries, Charlotte epitomized the New South City. By the early twentieth century, Charlotte boasted not only cotton mills but also a true urban infrastructure that included banks, department stores, the Southern Power Company (later Duke Power Company), and other manufacturing and warehousing concerns. Located in Dilworth, Charlotte's first streetcar suburb, the D.A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop was among the earliest factories built in the Dilworth industrial district. This once-thriving manufacturing zone developed along the Southern Railway corridor and South Boulevard, and in the early years of the twentieth century was the principal industrial corridor in the city.

The property also has significance under Criterion B in the area of industry for its associations with founder and company owner, Daniel A. Tompkins (1852-1914), an industrialist of national reputation, New South promoter, newspaper owner, author, and educational proponent. A tireless booster of Charlotte's, and the South's, manufacturing potential, Tompkins's importance in the formation of modern Charlotte would be hard to overestimate. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Tompkins was one of the principal builders of modern Charlotte, playing a pivotal role in transforming Charlotte from a small market town into the leading center of textile production in the United States. Trained as a mechanical engineer, Tompkins began his career in Charlotte as a manufacturer's representative for the Westinghouse Company, but in 1887, Tompkins, along with two partners, organized the D.A. Tompkins Company to manufacture the textile machinery and equipment needed by the expanding cotton industry and such associated industries as fertilizer works and cotton seed oil processing plants. At the same time, Tompkins designed, built, and often financed the construction of cotton mills throughout the South, creating a ready market for his machines and equipment. The D.A. Tompkins Company became the leading manufacturer of textile machinery in the Southeast. Soon after the turn of the century, Tompkins acquired the Fairmont Machine Works of Philadelphia, which gave Tompkins control of a number of patents and patterns for producing specialized looms, mill equipment, and machinery. The acquisition provided new avenues of growth for the company, but also created a need for larger manufacturing facilities. In 1901, the D.A. Tompkins Company purchased a site in the new suburb of Dilworth, and between 1902 and 1905, built the foundry and machine shop

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complex, which was known as the Dilworth Shops of the D.A. Tompkins Company. Tompkins delegated much of the daily operation of his company, freeing himself to consult on industrial construction projects and to write works on cotton mill and mill housing construction, many of which became standard texts on the subject. As part of his crusade for progressivism in the South, in 1892, Tompkins acquired the nearly bankrupt *Charlotte Chronicle*, hired editor, J.P. Caldwell, and the two established the *Charlotte Daily Observer* as the major daily newspaper in the region and an instrument for Tompkins's New South doctrine. Furthermore, Daniel Tompkins promoted technical education and helped to establish schools of textile education at N.C. State University, the University of South Carolina, and the University of Mississippi. Tompkins's prominence was national. President William McKinley named Tompkins to the National Industrial Commission, and President Grover Cleveland insisted that Tompkins be made a director of Equitable Life in 1905 to keep the insurance company out of bankruptcy. Tompkins died in 1914, leaving Charlotte a very different place from when he arrived. In the early 1880s, Charlotte was still a small town struggling to recover from war and reconstruction, but within a few years of his death, Charlotte had emerged as the largest city in the two Carolinas. Despite Tompkins's importance to the history of Charlotte, few landmarks remain as testaments to his prominence. The former machine shop is the sole survivor of the D.A. Tompkins Company manufacturing facilities.

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Historical Background and Industry Context

Built in 1904 and 1905 in the Dilworth neighborhood of Charlotte, North Carolina, the (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop is significant as a tangible reminder of the flourishing textile industry that transformed Charlotte, and the surrounding Piedmont region, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. With the development of the cotton industry, allied manufacturing firms, like the Tompkins machine shop, were established to serve the needs of the rapidly multiplying cotton mills, and as Charlotte became the principal center of textile machinery production in the Southeast, the D.A. Tompkins Company dominated the market (Arthur 1992: 15; Glass 1992: 57).

The Tompkins machine shop stands as one of the symbols of Charlotte's position as the hub of the booming Piedmont textile industry. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Charlotte was transformed from a small market town to a premier cotton manufacturing center, and by the 1920s, Charlotte had become the largest city in the two Carolinas. After the Civil War and Reconstruction, local and regional leaders, led by the indomitable Daniel A. Tompkins, pushed for what became known as the New South. The movement touted the benefits of industrialization, good transportation, education, and urban growth as a way of fostering regional self-sufficiency and prosperity and ending the dependency and hardships associated with Southern agriculture (Lefler and Newsome 1954: 474-489). Tompkins and other New South missionaries promoted the construction of cotton mills as the manufacturing complement to the cotton farms which defined the region, and as historian, C. Vann Woodward, asserted, "The mill was the symbol of the New South, its origins, and its promise of salvation" (Woodward 1951: 31). Charlotte embraced the new industrialization enthusiastically, and by 1906, city boosters bragged that "within the radius of 100 miles of Charlotte, there are more than 300 cotton mills, containing over one-half of the looms and spindles in the South" (Hanchett 1985: 70; Lefler and Newsome 1954: 474-489). By the 1920s, the Southern Piedmont had surpassed New England as the leading textile center in the world, and Charlotte had emerged as its center (Mitchell and Mitchell 1930). As the capital of this textile mini-state, the population of Charlotte soared from roughly 7,000 citizens in 1880 to over 82,000 by 1929, the largest urban population in the Carolinas (Sixteenth Census 1940).

By the early twentieth century, the city had developed a diversified industrial base, one created not only by the dynamic textile economy but also by Charlotte's good rail system, expanding work force, and plentiful and inexpensive power. In the 1920s, the city could boast that its 141 factories manufactured eighty-one different products (Hanchett 1993: 202). This broadening manufacturing economy was fostered, in part, by the nature of textile production, which had been largely automated by the second half of the nineteenth century, and the need for machinery, equipment, and supplies spurred the establishment of industries to serve the vast new cotton economy. In addition, the textile industry fostered a number of industries that specifically processed cotton by-products, and this array of allied manufacturers helped to increase and diversify the manufacturing base of the region. Machine shops, pump and elevator manufacturers, iron works, engineering firms, mattress factories, fertilizer plants, and cotton oil processors were just some of the industrial operations that followed in the wake of the textile boom.

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Indeed, so many of these auxiliary manufacturers had operations in Charlotte that the city became not only the center of the textile industry but also the leading producer of textile mill machinery and equipment in the South (Glass 1992: 57). By the first decade of the twentieth century, the (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company was one of twelve mill machinery and equipment manufacturers with operations in Charlotte, but of these factories, only the Tompkins machine shop remains (Charlotte City Directory 1907). The Textile Mill Supply Company (N.R. 1999), built later in 1922, also survives in its original location on South Mint Street.

The (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop is also important as one of the finest and earliest factories built in Dilworth, Charlotte's first streetcar suburb. The machine shop was constructed in 1904 and 1905 as the principal manufacturing building for a complex known as the Dilworth Shops of the D.A. Tompkins Company. The company manufactured textile machinery and equipment primarily, but also supplied machinery for cotton seed oil processing plants, waterworks, and saw mills. The Tompkins company was flourishing by the 1890s, and the Dilworth machine shop was built as part of an expansion campaign undertaken by the Tompkins company soon after their acquisition of the Fairmont Machine Works of Philadelphia. The strategic purchase gave Tompkins a number of patents and patterns for specialized textile equipment including duck looms, drop-box looms, dobbins, elevators, shafting pulleys and hangers, and dye house machinery. Illustrating the southward shift of the textile industry and its related sectors, the purchase allowed Tompkins to boast that his company then had the largest and best line of textile machine patterns in the South (*Charlotte Daily Observer* 5 February 1905: 3). The increase in, and diversification of, his business forced Tompkins to expand his manufacturing operations away from its original downtown location, and in 1901, the company purchased a large site in Dilworth.

The *Charlotte Daily Observer*, a newspaper owned by Tompkins, reported the land purchase,

The D.A. Tompkins Company will, during the coming year, build an extensive plant at Dilworth for the manufacture of cotton mill machinery and supplies, and cotton seed oil machinery... The building of the new machinery plant at Dilworth will be the biggest thing that has occurred in the history of that town. The new plant will adjoin the lands of the Atherton Mill, and with its shops, offices, and tenements, will add immensely to the life and prosperity of that already thriving community. More than that, it will mean the location of a depot and post office at that place. The new station will probably be called Atherton (*Charlotte Daily Observer* 27 December 1900, quoted in Huffman 1987).

Dilworth had been established in 1891, south of the center city, by another of Charlotte's leading businessmen of the era. Edward Dilworth Latta (1851-1925). Also a South Carolina native, the Princeton-educated Latta came to Charlotte in the mid-1870s and achieved considerable success as a merchant and manufacturer before forming a construction company in 1890. The Charlotte Consolidated Construction Company (known locally at the 4 Cs) had

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been established to transform a 422 acre parcel south of the center city into a suburban development. The plan called for a grid system of streets, wide boulevards, served by streetcars and reserved for grand dwellings, a recreation park and boating lake, and a factory district along the north-south Southern Railway and South Boulevard, one of the principal boulevards within the new suburb. As the *Charlotte Daily Observer* noted, "It does one good to go out to Dilworth and see the signs of prosperity and progress. The factories draw the people. Dilworth is beginning to be not only a social but an industrial center" (*Charlotte Daily Observer* 31 January 1896).

Daniel A. Tompkins had been intimately involved in the development of Dilworth. In 1892 and 1893, Tompkins had built a model cotton mill called the Atherton (renovated in the early 1990s) along the Southern Railway corridor with a nearby mill village. Sales in Dilworth initially had been slow, but the construction of Atherton Mill spurred both residential and industrial development. With the expansion of the cotton industry, the South Boulevard corridor quickly developed into Charlotte's first outlying industrial zone and that part of Dilworth was given the moniker of the "Manchester of Charlotte". By the turn of the century, the area contained the Atherton Cotton Mill (which at the time abutted the Tompkins foundry property), Charlotte Trouser Company, Southern Card Clothing Company, Charlotte Pipe and Foundry, a sash cord plant, Charlotte Shuttle Block Factory, Mecklenburg Flour, Meal, and Feed Mills, and the Park Elevator Company, makers of pumps, heaters, and elevators (Morrill 1980, Morrill 1985: 302-304; Hanchett 1986; Sanborn Map Company, 1896).

Tompkins's 1901 purchase in Dilworth flanked both sides of South Boulevard, and the following year, construction on the new machine works began with the erection of a foundry building (now demolished). Late in 1904, construction on the machine shop began, and in November of that year, the *Charlotte Daily Observer* announced details of the plans:

The D.A. Tompkins Company has begun the erection in Dilworth of a new machine shop, which will be 75 feet wide, 150 feet long, and two stories high. His shop will be located immediately next to the foundry now being operated by the company in Dilworth, and will be ready for occupancy about January 1st. This extension of shop facilities is made necessary (by the increased) business of the company. The company is now building an extended list of cotton mill and cotton oil machinery. Much of the new machinery that the company is now building is heavy work, and in locating the new shops near the foundry, drayage will be saved.

This extension of machine shop facilities necessarily means more castings and more machine shop work, which in turn means an increase in population that is most valuable to a city. The Atherton-Dilworth section is picking up very considerably. Since the starting up of the Atherton

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mill, there has been more life in that section and business will continue to grow better as new manufacturing interests, such as the Tompkins Company's new waste mill and batt mill extension are put into operation. The company will continue to operate its city shop, the Dilworth shop being an increase of capacity, necessary to take care of extending business (*Charlotte Daily Observer* 8 November 1902, quoted in Huffman 1987).

The original complex consisted of three detached, brick buildings: the large machine shop building, a foundry, and a boiler house. A small, frame tool shed stood south of the foundry, and coal sheds were sited along the rail line at the rear of the property. The foundry building, which stood south of the machine shop, was enlarged between 1905 and 1911, but demolished sometime after 1929, while the boiler house was made contiguous with the machine shop when the shop building was extended to the rear between 1905 and 1911. Before 1911, a raised, concrete freight platform was also added across the rear to facilitate loading the trains. The two story machine shop building housed machine manufacturing on the first floor, a warehouse on the second, and the rear addition was used as the pattern shop. A small office section was added across the front (South Boulevard) elevation between 1911 and 1929. With the exception of the foundry demolition, the complex has not had significant additions or demolitions since 1929 (Sanborn Maps 1905, 1911, 1929).

D.A. Tompkins died in 1914, and in 1917, the company which bore his name was dissolved, and within a few years, company properties were sold by the heirs of various investors. The D.A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop was purchased by the American Machine and Manufacturing Company, but by 1929, the property had been subdivided, and the foundry building had been sold to the Soule-Hoffman Ornamental Iron Company, and the Tompkins machine shop was being used as a loft building by various manufacturers. In recent years, the machine shop has housed the Piedmont Sewing Machine and Supply Company, but the building is currently undergoing rehabilitation for commercial and office use.

Criterion B: Daniel Augustus Tompkins (1852-1914)

The D.A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop has significance in the area of industry for its association with owner and founder, Daniel A. Tompkins. A South Carolina native, Daniel Augustus Tompkins had moved to Charlotte in 1882 as a manufacturer's representative for the Westinghouse Corporation, after receiving a degree in mechanical engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic University in Troy, New York. When Tompkins arrived in Charlotte, Reconstruction was only recently over, and the town, which had survived the war with its rail system largely intact, proved fertile ground for the New South ethos. Espousing industrialization and urbanization as a way out of the poverty and boom and bust cycles of agriculture, Tompkins became one of the leading proponents of the New South movement, setting out to prove that the South could manufacture products as well as any other region of the

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country. He believed that producing textiles as well as raising cotton would stabilize and benefit the regional economy, and with his zeal and vision almost single-handedly transformed Charlotte, and the surrounding Piedmont, into a major manufacturing center. By the 1920s, the city had become the leading producer of textiles in the world (Powell 1952).

Tompkins had been born in 1852 on a plantation in Edgefield County, South Carolina, where he gathered a practical knowledge of blacksmithing and carpentry. After attending the University of South Carolina, his professors encouraged him to study at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, from which he was graduated in 1873. With a degree in mechanical engineering, Tompkins found employment at the Bethlehem Iron Works in Philadelphia where he rose to the position of head draftsman and then assistant to the head machinist. After working on a special project installing American machinery in a factory in Westphalia, Germany, Tompkins returned to the United States, moving to Missouri where he spent two years in construction. Despite personal success, Tompkins was concerned by the South's transformation from relative self-sufficiency during the antebellum period to postwar indebtedness, and in his own words, Tompkins became a "missionary of cotton", making himself an indefatigable proponent of a new South built on industrialization, skilled labor, reliable transportation, and education (Lawrence 1939).

Tompkins came to Charlotte in 1882, one year after the first textile plant, the Charlotte Cotton Mills, had opened, and he set himself up in business as an engineer, machinist, and contractor. He soon acquired a franchise for selling Westinghouse engines throughout the cotton states, and by 1884, Tompkins also had begun promoting the construction of cotton mills, illustrating for audiences the value added to cotton through manufacturing. Part of his promotion was financial, and Tompkins devised an installment plan so that localities could borrow the capital needed to build a cotton mill and pay the funds back incrementally. Tompkins's energy in promoting textile mill construction was prodigious. He was responsible for constructing mills from Maryland to Texas, including more than 350 in Georgia and the two Carolinas, often raising the capital, supervising construction, manufacturing the machinery, installing equipment, and hiring superintendents. (Huffman 1987: 1).

In 1887, Tompkins, along with partners R.M. Miller, Sr., a local gold mine owner and capitalist, and R.M. Miller, Jr., organized the D.A. Tompkins Company, consulting and contracting engineers and dealers in machinery. With offices at 36 South College Street, the Tompkins Company furnished machinery and supplies to cotton, oil, and fertilizer industries as well as to power plants, saw mills, and waterworks (Charlotte City Directory, 1899-1900). The Tompkins Company soon dominated the field, and Charlotte became the leading market for textile machinery in the Southeast. Two years after formation of the company, Tompkins built his second, third, and fourth cotton mills (the Alpha, the Ada, and the Victor) in town, and became one of the principals in the newly formed Charlotte Supply Company, which became another supplier of textile machinery and equipment throughout the Piedmont textile belt (Huffman 1987: 1).

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Starting out as the South's pioneer machinery agent, Tompkins quickly developed into an astute businessman as well as a visionary. While he designed, built, and financed cotton mills and cotton seed oil processing plants, the D.A. Tompkins Company produced the machines, tools, and other equipment needed by these mills and processing plants. Because of his New South campaigning and his business success, the National Association of Manufacturers heralded Tompkins as "the foremost citizen of the South" (Arthur 1992: 14). In addition to his work in machine manufacturing and mill construction, Tompkins is also credited with transforming cotton seed oil, then considered industrial waste, into an economically viable product. After forming his own Southern Cotton Oil Company, Tompkins eventually built more than 200 processing plants (Lawrence 1939).

An excellent promoter, Tompkins saw the need for Charlotte to garner good publicity, and in 1892, he purchased a nearly defunct *Charlotte Chronicle*, hired J.P. Caldwell as editor, and the two established the *Charlotte Observer* as the major daily newspaper in the region. As he said himself, "The one thing I wanted a newspaper for was to help preach the doctrine of industrial development" (Arthur 1992: 15). Together, Tompkins and Caldwell made the *Charlotte Observer* a liberal, nonpartisan voice for progressivism, and the two later published the *Greenville (S.C.) News*.

Tompkins sold portions of his companies and ventures to other shareholders, thereby freeing himself from daily operations. With company operations largely delegated to others, Tompkins was free to consult on industrial construction projects and to write textbooks on cotton mill development, many of which became standard references on the topic. Among his publications were *Cotton Mill: Commercial Features*, published in 1899, several works on the construction of mills and mill housing, as well as a history of Charlotte. As part of his commitment to industrialization and progressive ideals, Tompkins became a tireless proponent of education, devoting much energy to formation of schools of textile at North Carolina State University (where he served as trustee for nineteen years), Clemson University, and the University of Mississippi.

In his late fifties, Tompkins suffered a stroke and retired from his prodigious work to Montreat, North Carolina where he kept a summer home. D.A. Tompkins died in 1914 at age sixty-two.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is lot 4, block 23 of Mecklenburg County Tax Map, Book 121, Page 02 in the city of Charlotte, North Carolina.

Boundary Justification

The property being nominated consists of the current tax parcel on which the (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop is sited. The original parcel was larger, but the portion south of the machine shop was subdivided and sold before 1929. The existing 1.426 acre parcel has remained unchanged since the pre-1929 subdivision.

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(Former) Daniel A. Tompkins
Company Machine Shop, Mecklenburg
County, N.C.

Section number Photographs

The following information pertains to each of the photographs:

Name of Property: (Former) Daniel A. Tompkins Company Machine Shop

Location: Charlotte, North Carolina

County: Mecklenburg

Name of Photographer: Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc.

Location of Negatives: Survey and Planning Branch
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
109 E. Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2807

Date of Photographs: August 1998 and October 1999

Photographs:

- A. Front (Southeast) and Northeast Elevations, View Looking South.
- B. Front (Southeast) Elevation and Surrounding Development along South Boulevard, View Looking South.
- C. Southwest Elevation, View Looking North.
- D. Southwest Elevation and Boiler House, Looking North.
- E. Interior, First Floor, Pattern Shop, Showing Elevated Rear Platform and Loading Bays Along Northeast Elevation.
- F. Interior, Second Floor, Warehouse Room, Looking Towards Rear Freight Elevator.

(Former) Daniel A
Tompkins Co.,
Hardware Shop

E 512740
N 3996240

Charlotte East
Road

12'30"

GASTONIA 20 MI.
0.2 MI. TO U.S. 29
3897
3896
3895
4854 III NW
CHARLOTTE WEST
ROCK HILL, S.C. 24 MI.
PINEVILLE 7 MI.



