

Great Falls Mills ^[1]

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Great Falls Mill Ruin,
Rockingham, North Carolina,
1961. Image courtesy of NCSU

by John L. Bell, 2006libraries.

^[2]

Great Falls Mills, chartered by the [North Carolina General Assembly](#) ^[3] on 10 Apr. 1869, was located in Rockingham ([Richmond County](#) ^[4]) at the falls of Falling Creek and along railroads lines from [Wilmington](#) ^[5], [Charlotte](#) ^[6], and Rutherfordton. The company acquired its property in November 1868 from the Richmond Manufacturing Company, whose textile mill had been burned by Union general [William T. Sherman](#) ^[7]'s troops in March 1865 near the end of the [Civil War](#) ^[8]. The superintendents' and workers' houses, storehouses, and a church survived. [Walter Francis](#) ^[9] Leak, John Wall Leak, and Robert Leak Steele rebuilt the textile mill, acquired by Claude Gore in 1901. The mill engaged in the whole manufacturing process, from carding and spinning to dyeing and weaving. When it closed in 1930, the facility included a five-story building, a dye house, 6 warehouses, 2 office buildings, 42 spinning frames, and 205 looms. The mill burned in 1972, but much of the ruins remained.

Reference:

James E. and Ida C. Huneycutt, *A History of Richmond County* (1976).

Image Credit:

Great Falls Mill Ruin, Rockingham, North Carolina, 1961. Image courtesy of NCSU libraries. Available from <http://d.lib.ncsu.edu/collections/catalog/bh0142p04> ^[2] (accessed October 3, 2012).

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[World War II \(1941-1945\)](#) ^[16]

Authors:

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Origin - location:

[Richmond County](#) ^[18]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[19]

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