

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 10 1985

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Namehistoric Historic Resources of Old Hickory (Partial Survey of Historic and Architectural
Resources)
and/or common**2. Location**

street & number See Inventory Forms N/A not for publication

city, town Old Hickory, Lakewood N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Davidson code 037

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership - See Inventory Forms

street & number N/A

city, town N/A N/A vicinity of state N/A

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Davidson County Courthouse

street & number Public Square

city, town Nashville state Tennessee

6. Representation in Existing Surveystitle N/A has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate N/A ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent
☒ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Old Hickory Multiple Resource Area is located northeast of Nashville in Davidson County, Tennessee. Situated in Hadley's Bend, a large loop of the Cumberland River, the landscape is characterized by flat, undulating terrain with few changes in elevation. In the 19th and early 20th century the area was one of large prosperous farms but in 1918 the land was purchased as the site of a major industrial development. Since 1918 the bend has been the site of the DuPont Company Powder and Rayon Plants and accompanying residential and commercial areas. An additional major alteration to this area occurred in 1954 when the northeast corner of the bend was submerged beneath Old Hickory Lake with the impoundment of the Cumberland River.

The Old Hickory Multiple Resource Nomination contains one residential historic district, one commercial historic district and three individual properties in the communities of Old Hickory and Lakewood, Tennessee. All of the buildings in the nomination were constructed between 1918 and 1934 and are associated with the development and growth of the DuPont Powder and Rayon Plants and company village of the early 20th century. The residential district is located in the village of Old Hickory and includes 316 residences and the Presbyterian Church. The commercial district is located in Lakewood along the corner of Old Hickory Boulevard and 22nd Street and contains five buildings. Nominated individually are the Old Hickory Fire Hall (1918), the Old Hickory United Methodist Church (1928) and the Old Hickory Post Office (1934).

The DuPont Powder Plant was constructed to respond to the need for smokeless gunpowder during World War I. The powder plant was designed to be one of the largest in the world and required housing and public buildings to support a peak worker population of 35,000. Throughout the summer of 1918 construction crews erected hundreds of one and two-story frame houses in the "Permanent Village" and "Temporary Village." Both permanent and temporary villages were built approximately one-half mile southeast of the plant site. The temporary village was located to the west of Hadley Avenue and consisted of frame structures covered with a surface of "rubberoid," an asphalt compound, which was nailed on by vertical battens. These houses and apartments in the temporary village were simple gable roofed structures with no decorative detailing. All were torn down during the 1920s and 1930s.

In the permanent village east of Hadley Avenue the frame houses were much more substantial and showed greater variety of design and detailing. These homes were built for the foremen, supervisors and other workers in managerial capacities. Ten house types were designed for the village and each was given an identifying name and design. The majority were designed in the Colonial Revival styles of the period which others reflected the influence of the Bungalow style. All of the houses were built of pine and most had an exterior sheathing of asphalt shingles. Almost all of the homes have had the asphalt shingles removed and various types of siding such as frame, wood shingles and vinyl siding added.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	landscape architecture	religion
1400–1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500–1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	education	military	social/
1700–1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
1800–1899	commerce	exploration/settlement	philosophy	theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	politics/government	transportation
		invention		other (specify)

Specific dates 1918–1934

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Old Hickory Multiple Resource Area is being nominated under criteria A and C. The properties included in the nomination are significant in the historical, architectural, industrial and commercial development of Middle Tennessee. Located in Old Hickory and Lakewood, Tennessee, this nomination includes one residential historic district, one commercial historic district and three individual historic buildings. These districts and individual buildings all pre-date 1935 and represent an important example of company town planning of the early 20th century and are an important architectural and historical resource.

Old Hickory and Lakewood lie in a bend of the Cumberland River which is commonly known as Hadley's Bend. The bend was originally known as Jones' Bend after Samuel Jones, who in 1786 received a large land grant in the bend of 3,000 acres. Jones sold his property in the bend soon after receiving his grant but the area continued to be known as Jones' Bend until the late 19th century. The bend contained rich farm land and it attracted some of the earliest and most prominent settlers of the county. In 1783 the John Donelson family settled in the bend and built a log house called Donelson's Station. The Donelson family later built a large brick home known as Cleveland Hall which is listed on the National Register and is out of the survey area.

In the late 1780s Andrew Jackson purchased 330 acres of land in the bend from his brother-in-law John Donelson. By May of 1794 Jackson had built a house in the bend which he called "Poplar Grove". This house was located in what is now Rayon City. Thomas Overton and Edward Bondurant were also early notable settlers in the bend. Bondurant developed a sizable plantation and was one of the largest landowners in the bend in the 1800s. The Bondurant home, which has been greatly altered, now houses the Old Hickory Golf and Country Club. To the south of Lakewood is the Donelson home known as Cleveland Hall which is listed on the National Register. These two houses are the only homes remaining which are associated with early settlers within or adjacent to the area purchased by DuPont.

The bend acquired the name Hadley's Bend from Dr. John Livingston Hadley who was born in North Carolina, studied medicine in Philadelphia and fought in the War of 1812. He purchased 1,171 acres of land in the bend in 1826 and built a large brick home known as "Vaucluse" meaning "place of plenty". The house served as office space and housing during construction of the 1918 munitions plant, and again during the Rayon Plant construction. The house was demolished in 1924.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property See Inventory Forms

Quadrangle name Nashville East - Goodlettsville

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References See Inventory Forms

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See inventory forms

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Philip Thomason, James Draeger

organization Thomason and Associates

date November 29, 1984

street & number 1700 Hayes Street, Suite 202

telephone 615-320-5732

city or town Nashville

state Tennessee

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Boyer

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 4/2/85

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

J. Beth Groover
for Keeper of the National Register

date 5/29/85

Attest: See Continuation Sheet for Duties date
Chief of Registration

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The houses in the permanent village were located on rectangular blocks with a rear alleyway. The houses were grouped six per block with the exception of houses along Riverside Drive which were sited along irregular intervals. Each block was divided by streets which averaged 45' in width. Because of the level site, a rectangular grid was used in the layout of the community with only Riverside Drive following contours of the landscape.

The majority of houses in the permanent village were built of two basic patterns, the most popular of which was the "Haskell" (Photo #1, #2). The Haskell is a two-story vernacular style structure with a gable roof and one-story porch facing the street. Of the 316 structures remaining in the village, 114 are Haskell. The second most popular style was the Dutch Colonial design known as the "Georgia" (Photo #3, #4). The Georgia featured a gambrel roof, second story shed roof dormer and one-story porch. Within the village 74 Georgia houses remain. Haskell and Georgia house types are often found on the same street with concentrations located on Clarke and Lawrence Streets. Interspersed in the residential area were designs such as the "Arlington" (Photo #11, #12) and the "Cumberland" (Photo #9, #10) of which 25 of the former and 16 of the latter are extant. Also within the permanent village several dozen of the the one-story "Denver" (Photo #5, #6) and "Florence" (Photo #7, #8) house types were constructed. These very simple designs were built throughout the areas to the north and west of the permanent village during the 1920s and 1930s and many examples can be found along the 1000 blocks of Jones and Clarke Streets.

The best designs in the permanent village were reserved for the housing along Riverside Drive to accomodate the upper echelon managers of the plant. These designs included the Colonial Revival styled "Davis" (Photo #18, #19), "Bay Tree" (Photo #16, #17), and the vernacular styled "Ketchum" (Photo #13, #14) and "Wellford " (Photo #15). The lots were also somewhat larger for many of these houses which were sited overlooking the Cumberland River. The Davis and Bay Tree styles were the largest and most decorative of these designs and are excellent examples of Colonial Revival homes.

Along with the residential buildings, many public buildings were also constructed in 1918 such as public mess halls, YMCA and YWCA facilities, and government facilities. Only two buildings, the fire hall and one of the early hospitals are still standing. The hospital building is located on Donelson Avenue and has been altered with a modern front. The fire hall, located on Hadley Avenue, was erected in 1918 and is a frame structure with a hipped roof (Photo # 30). Asbestos tile siding has been added over the original asphalt shingles, but few other alterations have occurred. This is the only building remaining of the original public buildings along Hadley Avenue.

With the signing of the armistice in November of 1918, work at the plant quickly came to a halt and construction ceased for several years. In 1923 the DuPont Company returned to Old Hickory to raze much of the old Powder Plant

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site and construct a modern "artificial silk" or rayon factory. DuPont officials renovated all of the original housing in the permanent village and erected new one-story frame houses following the Denver and Florence plans to the west of Hadley Avenue and north of Eighth Street. The original DuPont plant was a vernacular industrial complex almost all of which has been obscured or modified by later additions and alterations.

As the population of Old Hickory grew, it became clear that this was to be a permanent community and plans were made to erect churches and public buildings. Several churches were erected in the community between 1925 and 1930. These include a Baptist church built in 1925, a Presbyterian church built in 1927 (Photo #22), and a Methodist church built in 1928 (Photo # 31, #32). The Presbyterian church is a late Gothic style building whose exterior has not been greatly altered and is contributive with the residential district. The Methodist church is a good example of Neo-Classic design and displays its original appearance. Alterations occurred to the Baptist church, and it is not considered eligible.

As the community of Old Hickory grew, other areas adjacent to the plant and village were developed. A residential and commercial area known as Rayon City evolved north of the plant and the commercial and residential area of Dupontonia, later renamed Lakewood, grew to the south of Old Hickory. In Lakewood a sizeable commercial area developed during the late 1920s along 22nd Street and Old Hickory Boulevard. Five buildings in this commercial row are extant, are of vernacular design, and have not been significantly altered (Photo #23-29). These buildings are of brick construction and feature glazed brick decoration and pressed metal ceilings. They represent the only concentrated area of early 20th century commercial architecture in Hadley's Bend.

Since 1930, new construction has occurred in other areas of the Hadley's Bend communities, but few changes have taken place in the older residential and commercial areas. In 1934 the Public Works Administration constructed a Colonial Revival style post office facing Donelson Avenue (Photo #33, #34). Very few new homes have been built in the residential historic district and substantial alterations have been made to only 40 of the 316 original structures. In addition to the original homes, many of the original garages and outbuildings also remain. In many aspects, the appearance of the district has not changed in 60 years. The commercial district in Lakewood also displays its original appearance with the exception of storefront remodeling. These areas and individual buildings represent an important architectural and historical resource of the Hadley's Bend area of Davidson County.

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Survey Methodology

This nomination includes properties considered eligible following a survey of structures in the communities of Rayon City, Lakewood and Old Hickory. The survey was undertaken by Thomason and Associates, an historic preservation consulting firm, on behalf of the Hadley's Bend Historical Association. The survey only examined architectural resources; no archaeological investigation was performed. The survey was restricted to these areas due to their association with the DuPont Powder Plant and the Rayon Mills of the early 20th century. No area of Hadley's Bend was examined outside of these three communities. The survey sought to identify all pre-1930 structures in these communities which had not been significantly altered and displayed their original character. A windshield survey was conducted in these areas using a 1930 base map by the Sanborn Map Company to determine age. Following the windshield survey a building by building analysis was performed in the districts and for individual properties which noted architectural features and completed 35mm photography on selected structures.

The survey determined that Rayon City is composed primarily of post-1930 structures with limited architectural significance. The study revealed that Old Hickory had a large concentration of buildings associated with the development of the DuPont Powder Plant. The majority of these buildings are located east of Hadley Avenue between Eighth and Fifteenth Streets. Areas to the north, west and south of these buildings were found to have been constructed in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Many of these homes were found to have been altered and were therefore not considered eligible for the Register. The community of Lakewood also contained a collection of homes built from the late 1920s to the 1940s. These homes did not appear to meet the criteria for eligibility due to their age and alterations. The commercial area of Lakewood did contain significant buildings and a section along Old Hickory Boulevard is included in the nomination.

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Throughout the 1800s the Hadley's Bend area was owned by only a few landholders. The 1871 Davidson County Map shows that the Hadley, Bondurant and Dismukes family were the major families located in the bend. In addition to the houses there were two schools and two churches located in the bend. The land continued to be regarded as some of the best cotton land in Middle Tennessee with large quantities of corn and tobacco also produced. Hadley's Bend retained its rural, pastoral setting into the early 20th century. In 1914 the name of Jones' Bend was officially changed to Hadley's Bend by the Davidson County Court.

With the coming of World War I the United States found itself in the position of supplying arms and munitions to Britain, France and Russia. One of the major suppliers of explosives and gunpowder during these early years was the DuPont Company which operated numerous factories in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The demand for munitions plants caused the DuPont Company to seek out suitable locations for the establishment of factories and gunpowder plants. In 1916 Hadley's Bend was examined by surveyors and it was deemed an excellent site due to the availability of land, water, nearby transportation and power supply.

With the declaration of war by America on April 6, 1917 the demands for explosives and munitions greatly increased. The DuPont Company entered into a number of agreements with the federal government to provide smokeless gunpowder from its plants in operation and erect new plants to meet the increased demand. One of the sites chosen was the previously surveyed area of Hadley's Bend. Government and DuPont agents quickly began planning to purchase the land and the negotiate the construction of a smokeless gunpowder plant.

From April, 1917 to January, 1918 the United States Government purchased 5,600 acres of land in the bend at an average cost of \$105 per acre. The largest landowner was Livingston Hadley and once he agreed to sell all other landowners in the bend followed suit. This large amount of acreage was necessary because of the size and scope of the plant which was to be the largest self-contained munitions plant in the world as well as an accompanying self-contained community. The area purchased comprised all of Hadley's Bend and was enclosed on all sides by a tall wire fence, topped with barbed wire. Sections of the fence on the southern boundary are still standing.

The United States Government signed a contract with the DuPont company on January 29, 1918 for construction of the munitions plant and town. The plant was to be comprised of nine units, each with a daily capacity of 100,000 pounds of smokeless gun powder. The estimated cost of construction was \$75,000,000 but rising costs increased this figure to \$90,000,000. DuPont's construction fee was one dollar and production profits came to about 1% of the value of production output. Despite this seemingly low amount the DuPont Company realized profits on its expenditures for the plant and its operation.

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Securing labor for such a massive undertaking proved difficult and recruiting covered twenty states. In addition to white laborers many blacks, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Navajo Indians were employed in the construction and at the plant. Plant and town construction was very rapid. A DuPont historian described Hadley's Bend on March 18, 1918, two days after ground breaking, as "a little neighborhood of half a score of farms - a sedate, slow moving, old fashioned and somewhat aristocratic cluster of country families". This changed quickly as materials and laborers poured into the site. The railroad from Hermitage Station to Old Hickory, a seven and one half mile single track, took a mere thirty days to complete including a trestle nearly a half mile long. This spur was soon double tracked to handle seven trains per day. At the height of construction 300 carloads of materials were brought in per day.

On July 2, 1918, three months after the contract was signed and three months ahead of schedule, the first unit began producing smokeless powder. At the center of the plant were the nine large brick smokestacks which stood 200 feet high. Construction of housing also progressed rapidly under a sub-contract to Manson and Hangar. A vast amount of materials were needed to construct the village which would soon hold 30,000 people. Included in the public buildings and housing were 65,000,000 board feet of lumber, 18,000,000 square feet of wallboard and 10,000,000 square feet of building paper. The first housing units completed were large bunk houses for laborers and were located west of Hadley Avenue. By August 31, 1918, 871 buildings were completed in the "Temporary Village" west of Hadley and bounded by Donelson Avenue to the north and past 16th Street to the south. These buildings were quickly constructed, a six room Bungalow taking only nine hours to build and all were sided with "rubberoid", a cheap building paper.

To the east of Hadley Avenue in the "Permanent Village", more substantial homes were built of long-leaf yellow pine and were of ten different designs. These designs reflected the building styles of the period and were one to three story homes with indoor plumbing and electricity. The largest homes constructed were the three story Colonial Revival structures called "the Davis" and "the Bay Tree". The Davis displayed a gambrel roof, dormer windows and classical decoration while the Bay Tree featured a gable roof and a segmental pediment over the main entrance. Other large house styles included "the Wellford" which displayed a jerkinhead roof and "the Ketchum" which had a flaired roof eave reflective of the Dutch Colonial style.

The majority of homes in the permanent village were simple one and two story homes with simple details reflecting the Colonial Revival and Bungalow styles. House types such as "the Arlington", "the Cumberland", "the Georgia" and "the Haskell" were simple rectangular forms with multi-light sash windows, square and round Doric motif porch columns and exposed eave rafters. One story homes such as the gable roofed "Florence" and hipped roof "Denver" were also built in the permanent village.

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The lots in the "Permanent Village" were rectangular with the streets laid out on a grid pattern. Riverside Drive which ran along the top of the bluff overlooking the river was the only street which curved to follow the terrain. Most blocks contained six homes on each side of the street with a lot width of fifty to sixty feet. Usually at least two different house types were located on each block. The housing in the village is similar to company housing built in other communities during this period and reflects the designs and planning philosophy of its day.

By August 31, 1918 houses completed in the permanent village included 3 Cumberlands, 2 Arlingtons, 16 Georgias, 45 Haskells, 48 Florences and 36 Denvers. The workers rate of pay determined the type of housing he or she obtained. Company employees such as foreman and supervisors were located in the permanent village while laborers resided in the temporary village. In addition to these areas a Mexican community was built to the north of the plant and contained 41 buildings which housed 3,000 workers. A substantial black community also developed west of Hadley Avenue along Ninth and Tenth Streets. No structures from the Mexican or Black communities remains extant.

Many community buildings were erected including a hotel accommodating 400 people, a hospital, churches, city hall, police station, three first aid stations and one of the best equipped fire halls in the state. YMCA buildings were built for both black and whites as well as a YWCA for women. Also constructed was an open air theatre seating 5,000, 11 mess halls and 3 restaurants, a bank building and a commissary. By the end of this construction phase a total of 3,867 buildings accomodating 35,000 people were built. Of the public buildings only the fire hall has survived unaltered and retains its original character. The fire hall is a one-story frame hipped roof structure and is the oldest building in Old Hickory located on the west side of Hadley Avenue.

On June 18 the post office was officially opened and the community called Jacksonville, named for Andrew Jackson. Throughout the summer tens of thousands of workers were employed by the plant and lived in either the permanent or temporary housing nearby. Despite the crowded conditions the community appears to have operated with relative harmony. There were extensive recreation facilities such as gymnasiums and theatres and in the plant newspaper local sports and entertainment news were prominently displayed. In the Mexican village an orchestra was formed under the leadership of Cecilio Gomez which played at dances throughout the village. To serve the daily needs of the workers many mess halls and commissarys were located along Hadley Avenue.

Because of the security concerns for the safety of the plant working conditions were above average for its time. There was a strong emphasis given to being responsive to worker's needs including housing and health care. This was partly

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due to the need for keeping the plant community as insular as possible due to security considerations. Sabotage at the plant was always a major concern and there was a careful screening process for all job applicants. Security guards constantly patrolled the area and there was a ban against bringing matches into the plant itself. The emphasis at the plant was towards safety and speed and loafing was cause for dismissal after the third offence. Despite the vast number of employees necessary for the plant's operation there does not appear to have been any shortage of labor. In addition to workers who lived in the village thousands of additional workers were brought in by seven trains which ran daily between Nashville and the plant. One of these trains was reserved for women employees and was known as the "Powder Puff Special".

On September 28, 1918 an influenza epidemic broke out in Old Hickory. Public buildings were closed and temporary hospitals were opened in various locations. The YMCA basement became a temporary morgue for hundreds of bodies. Fifty extra physicians were sent from Nashville in addition to fifty nurses and volunteers. The Mexican village was especially hard hit with many succumbing to the disease.

Despite the epidemic which lasted through October, work steadily progressed at the plant to bring it to full capacity. By early November the plant was producing 700,000 pounds of gunpowder daily which was sent by rail and ship to Europe. The plant was 93% complete, mechanical equipment was 99% complete and all but 100 of the proposed 1,112 plant buildings were occupied. The plant included a steam generator, the largest refrigeration plant in the world, sulphur burners with a capacity of 528,000 pounds per day, nitric acid houses and a diphenylamine plant. Housing was also nearing completion at this time with almost 300 buildings erected in the "Permanent Village" and over five hundred in the "Temporary Village". Total expenditures for the plant and community were \$85,000,000 and many acclaimed the plant as the greatest engineering feat of the war.

The sudden collapse of the axis powers resulted in the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918. Despite the armistice the federal government kept the plant in operation for several more months in the event hostilities broke out again and to stockpile reserves of powder. Many workers who saw their source of employment in jeopardy began leaving the area in late November. Work continued on several projects at the site including the completion of the suspension bridge over the Cumberland River on November 30 and the rebuilding of the burned Old Hickory school in December.

The last issue of the "Old Hickory News" was published on December 14, 1918. The paper describes the large numbers of people who are leaving the village and the uncertainty for those who remained. In January of 1919 it became clear that operations at the powder plant were no longer needed and the plant closed its doors. With the plant ceasing operation people moved away from the village in search of other work and the population dropped from a peak of about 35,000

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to approximately 500 by late 1919. Only 15% of the houses were occupied, train service ceased, streets were left unmaintained and the federal government left only a skeleton force to police the area.

On November 22, 1920 the U.S. Army sold the plant site to the Nashville Industrial Coporation. This group of businessmen from Denver, Colorado and Nashville were interested in promoting the site as an industrial park. Led by prominent Nashville businessman H.G. Hill, the Nashville Industrial Corporation and bought the plant and community for approximately \$3,500,000. The Nashville Industrial Corporation salvaged the machinery and equipment from the plant for resale to other states and countries and began to look for a buyer for the plant site and village. The corporation produced a number of publications extolling the virtues of the plant site and describing in detail the existing housing and public buildings available for reuse.

In the early 1920s the DuPont company began examining sites for their new southern plant which was to manufacture "artificial silk" later known as Rayon. Rayon, a yarn made from wood pulp, was one of the first artificial fibers produced in America and its popularity for clothing and other uses was on the rise. On July 14, 1923 DuPont signed a contract purchasing 500 acres from the Nashville Industrial Corporation for \$650,000. This purchase included the powder plant site and the Old Hickory community to 15th Street on the south. The purchase did not include the present communities of Lakewood and Rayon City. Under the direction of engineer J.P. Hannum rehabilitation of the buildings took place. The residences were repainted and repaired where needed on the exterior with new wallpaper and paint added on the interior. The basic designs and appearance of the buildings were not altered during this rehabilitation.

On April 30, 1924 ground was broken for the new rayon plant. The plant was estimated to cost as much as \$4,000,000 and to employ at least 1,500 to 2,000 people. While the old powder plant housing in the "Permanent Village" was rehabilitated many of the old "Rubberoid" apartments and bungalows on the west side of Hadley were demolished and new frame Florence and Denver house types were built. Streets were repaved, trees planted, and sidewalks were built. A ladies dormitory with a capacity of 350 was also built by Riverside Drive.

In 1923 the community name of Jacksonville was changed to Old Hickory to avoid confusion with other cities named Jacksonville in America. The Rayon plant began producing its products on January 24, 1925 and by February 329 workers were employed at the mill. In March the plant was officially named the DuPont Rayon Plant. In 1928 DuPont purchased the remainder of the site for \$800,000 and continued to build the small Denver and Florence house types as well as some larger duplex units. Access to the plant was improved with the construction of the Old Hickory bridge across the Cumberland River west of Rayon City. By 1929 500 workers were employed in the plant. Houses were rented to workers based upon their status or job in the company with the larger

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houses going to those in supervisory and foreman positions. DuPont's service organization provided continuous maintenance such as floor sanding and painting.

In addition to the maintenance of housing DuPont also provided lots for community churches. Between 1926 and 1930 the Baptist, Presbyterian, Church of Christ and Methodist churches were erected in the village. Of these the Neo-Classic style Methodist church and Gothic Presbyterian Church have retained their original character. In addition to the churches modern schools were built in 1927 and 1930 for high school and grade school students. Both buildings have been destroyed by fire.

Access to the Old Hickory plant and village was improved in April 1928 with the dedication of a permanent bridge over the Cumberland near the site of the earlier suspension bridge. As the village of Old Hickory grew around the plant two new communities also developed adjacent to the village in the 1920s. To the north of the village arose the community of Rayon City while to the south was Dupontonia (later renamed Lakewood). Rayon City was primarily a residential area with some scattered commercial structures and few of these early buildings remain today.

Dupontonia became a business district serving Old Hickory and a small commercial area grew up along Old Hickory Boulevard between 22nd and 27th Streets. These early commercial buildings were concentrated at the corner of 22nd and Old Hickory and consisted of one-story brick buildings. The earliest building was constructed by Mr. L. Alford who ran a dry goods store at the corner. Other businesses which have occupied this row include the Moore drugstore, Greer's barbershop and the Dupontonia market. These buildings continue to display their original designs, decorative brickwork and interior pressed tin ceilings. Other buildings that developed in Dupontonia included the Hillcrest Hotel built in 1927 which still stands at 26th and Old Hickory although altered. A sizeable residential area also developed in Dupontonia in the 1930s.

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s Old Hickory was a model company town and the size of the work force and residential areas steadily increased. A plant magazine known as the "Rayon Yarns" was produced between 1939 and 1952 which outlined plant activity and worker life during these years. In 1946 DuPont decided to end its ownership of the village and offered to sell the residential properties to the workers. A construction crew renovated nearly 900 housing units, then sold them to employees. In addition, almost 500 of the remaining one-story "Rubberoid" homes and Florence and Denver house types west of Hadley Avenue were sold and moved by the H.A. Youngblood Company. Many of these homes were moved to the growing area of Madison and as far away as Gallatin and White House. The small six-room houses were sold to employees for \$500 while the larger two-story homes were sold for \$2,400.

Further changes to the area occurred in 1954 with the construction of the Old Hickory dam and impoundment of Lake Hickory which impacted the area

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northeast of the plant and village. The DuPont plant gradually expanded its operations and size and in the early 1960s began producing a variety of products. Today DuPont continues to be an important industry and employer in Davidson County. Surrounding communities have also grown with Lakewood incorporating in 1959 and rivaling Old Hickory in population. Despite the changes to the area the village of Old Hickory continues to be the an active residential area and the home to many of the 2,250 employees of the present day DuPont plant.

Old Hickory is the only planned company town in middle Tennessee and its old residential community dates to the 1918 powder plant development. The village was designed to be as insular as possible due to security precautions during wartime. The village contained its own hospital, bank, stores and recreational facilities to supply the needs of its workers. Within the original "Permanent Village" are 316 buildings of which 276 retain their original designs and characteristics. The similarity of designs, uniformity of lots and landscapes creates a unique appearance in Middle Tennessee. The Old Hickory Multiple Resource Area is significant because of its role in the historical, industrial and commercial development of Davidson County and Tennessee.

In 1984 the Hadley's Bend Historical Association was formed to promote the preservation of the Hadley's Bend area. In addition to funding this survey and nomination the Association is concerned with the preservation of buildings in all sections of the bend. Historical research, publications of historic materials and other activities are planned for the future.

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Historic Resources of
Old Hickory

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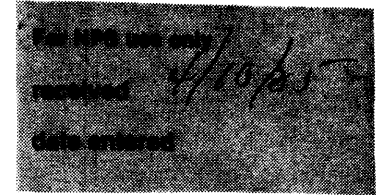
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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Old Hickory Multiple Resource Area
State Davidson County, TENNESSEE

Nomination/Type of Review

1. Old Hickory Post Office

Cover form Carol D Shuck
8-6-85
Keeper

Date/Signature

A Schlager
Carol D Shuck 8-6-85

Attest

2. Old Hickory Historic
District

Keeper

Beth Grosvenor 5/24/85

Attest

A Schlager 5/15/85

3. Dupont Fire Hall

Keeper

Beth Grosvenor 5/24/85

Attest

4. Lakewood Commercial
District

Keeper

Beth Grosvenor 5/24/85

Attest

5. Old Hickory Methodist
Church

Keeper

Beth Grosvenor 5/24/85

Attest

6.

Keeper

Attest

7.

Keeper

Attest

8.

Keeper

Attest

9.

Keeper

Attest

10.

Keeper

Attest