

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Borden Powdered Milk Plant other names/site number

2. Location

street & number South Main Street N/A not for publication city, town Fayetteville N/A vicinity state Tennessee code TN county Lincoln code TN103 zip code 37334

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal. Category of Property: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 1 buildings, sites, structures, objects. Total 1. Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination (checked) 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 (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: Robert L. Byers, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission. Date: 6/8/88.

In my opinion, the property meets ( ) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: State or Federal agency and bureau: Date:

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register (checked). See continuation sheet. determined eligible for the National Register ( ). See continuation sheet. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:). Signature of the Keeper: Melvyn Byers. Date of Action: 7-14-88.

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
VACANT/NOT IN USE

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Industrial

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
walls BRICK, CONCRETE  
roof ASPHALT  
other GLASS

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Borden Powdered Milk Plant at Fayetteville, Lincoln County, Tennessee constructed in 1927 by the Borden Southern Company, a division of the Borden Milk Company, is an example of early twentieth century industrial architecture related to the "New South" movement. The plant is located several blocks south of the Lincoln County Courthouse on South Main Street. The plant located south of Tanyard Branch, a small creek, and is in a primarily industrial area that developed after the Borden Powdered Milk Plant was built. The property occupies a large part of a city block and is bounded on the east by South Main Street (the Huntsville Highway), on the south by Mayberry Street, on the west by Lincoln Street, and on the north by Tanyard Branch. The building is surrounded by a partially paved and gravel parking lot.

The factory building is of brick and concrete block construction covered with a veneer of pale red bricks laid in lime mortar. The factory is rests both a concrete block foundation and on a poured slab. The majority of the building is covered with a flat composition roof. The original portion of the factory was built in 1927 with additions built as the powdered milk and butter production increased. The plant was originally to have cost \$250,000 with additional units added as needed. However, by the opening date in June of 1927 the building reportedly cost \$500,000 and appeared to have already been constructed in sections. Additions appear to have been constructed as early as circa 1928. In circa 1948 the plant expanded with more additions to accommodate increased production and distribution. (See Map 1)

The oldest section of the irregular shaped building includes a rectangular central two-story core built in 1927 (Section A). This section housed the evaporatory and cooling rooms on the first level and the refrigeration machinery on the second. Located on the east wall is a large loading bay opening onto a shipping dock on a railway spur. The original door has been removed and the opening covered with corrugated metal panels. A matching opening in the adjacent bay has been bricked in. On the second floor, huge paired multi-light steel awning windows are located on the north, east, and south sides. The flat roof supports a large metal cyclone collector. The interior of this section contains two cooling rooms with tile floors and tiles along the walls to a height of six feet. Rooms are long and narrow with windows and braced plywood doors which are probably replacements. At the east or front by the loading bays is a long cross hall with the two

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aforementioned sealed openings. Upstairs is a large machinery room, an open room well-lit by the large windows on all walls. Most of the machinery has been removed.

To the south of the two-story section is a long one-story wing (Section A-1). This portion, also constructed in 1927, appears to have been built in phases, although it was completed by the opening date in June. This section is distinguished by its monitor roof with clerestory windows. North and south walls feature the same large steel awning windows as those on the center block. One window on the south wall has been filled in and changes have occurred in the freight door on the east end. The interior of this section is a large open work space, used at one time for storage and shipping. The floor is a poured concrete slab, walls are exposed brick and the monitor roof is supported by an exposed truss of riveted steel girders.

To the west of the two-story center block is a wing that was constructed in 1927 (Section A-2) but has had successive one-story additions and alterations to the north (Section D) and west (Section E) that probably date from the 1948 plant renovation. Except for a newer brick in some areas, this section has retained most of its original features including a series of large steel awning windows. This section contains two more cooling vaults, a cross hall, and a smaller corner refrigeration room, all with brick or tile floors and tiles around the walls. The circa 1948 additions are of cinderblock construction, faced with a brick veneer, and rest on a poured concrete foundation. Part of this section, the center of the north addition, is below grade. The flat composition roof is hidden behind a short brick parapet topped by clay tile coping. Access to this section is by a roll-up metal door at the northwest corner and by two wood-and-glass-panel doors on the west. A tall round metal stack extends from this corner and is guy-wired to the roof. This section contained a cannery and a second shipping area, this one for trucks. The cannery occupied the large subterranean section in the center, with concrete block walls, central concrete and steel piers supporting the ceiling, and exposed pipes and ducts running just under the ceiling. Most of the windows in the room have been sealed, but several glass-block windows remain intact. The second loading area at the west end has concrete block walls, a poured concrete floor, and three large loading bays, two of which have been bricked-in.

On the north side of the two-story center block is another one-story wing (Section B). This wing was built after the first phase of construction in 1927, but the west end of the wing appears to be contemporary to the 1927 construction and was probably constructed by 1928. The east wing appears to date from circa 1948 (Section C). The west end of the wing contains two

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rooms with tile floors and walls, is constructed on a poured concrete foundation and has large rectangular steel awning windows matching those on the main block and southeast wing. Windows located on the north have been boarded up or bricked-in. The eastern most portion of the wing, or the circa 1948 section has brick veneer walls, smaller steel awning windows on the north and south sides and a replacement double-leaf wood-and-glass panel door with sidelights on the east end. The north wall has a modern steel door in the center. The interior of this portion of the wing contains small rooms that were apparently used as offices.

On the southwest corner of the original factory is an addition, also built in circa 1948 (Section F). This one-and-one-half story section is distinguished by a canted corner, possibly a later cut, with double-leaf metal doors, a flat roof with tall round metal flue and several large metal cyclones and, along the east wall, a series of eight windows openings now bricked in or boarded up. This section of the building contains insulated storage rooms arranged around two cross halls. Floors in the eastern portion of the wing are of brick and the walls are covered with cast composition insulating panels. Floors in the southwest section are of brick with yellow and brown tiles on the walls. Windows, some of which were of glass blocks, have been sealed. This section apparently had an extension to the west at one time. Although removed, the ghost of this addition is quite visible. The remaining part of the addition is extended to the southeast by a long brick connecting wing. This section has three steel windows on the south side, partially boarded up, and on the north side, facing the railway loading area, a shipping dock covered with a shed roof. The interior is occupied by a corridor and additional storage area. At the extreme east end is concrete block section with a gabled roof (Section G).

Off the northwest corner of the factory is a small non-contributing one-story brick gatehouse, built circa 1948. The gatehouse is approximately six-by-eight feet in dimension, with a hipped composition shingle roof and a wooden panel single leaf door.

The Borden Powdered Milk Plant, which appears to have been constructed in phases, has had additions and alterations during its period of operation. These additions and alterations reflect the rapid growth of the powdered milk and butter processing in the area. The circa 1948 additions and changes to the plant reflect the diversification of the plants main operations to include food processing, manufacturing of barrels and distribution. The additions and alterations to the factory are a vital part of the plants function and history and do not detract from its historical significance as Borden Milk Company's first powdered milk plant

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Borden Powdered Milk Plant

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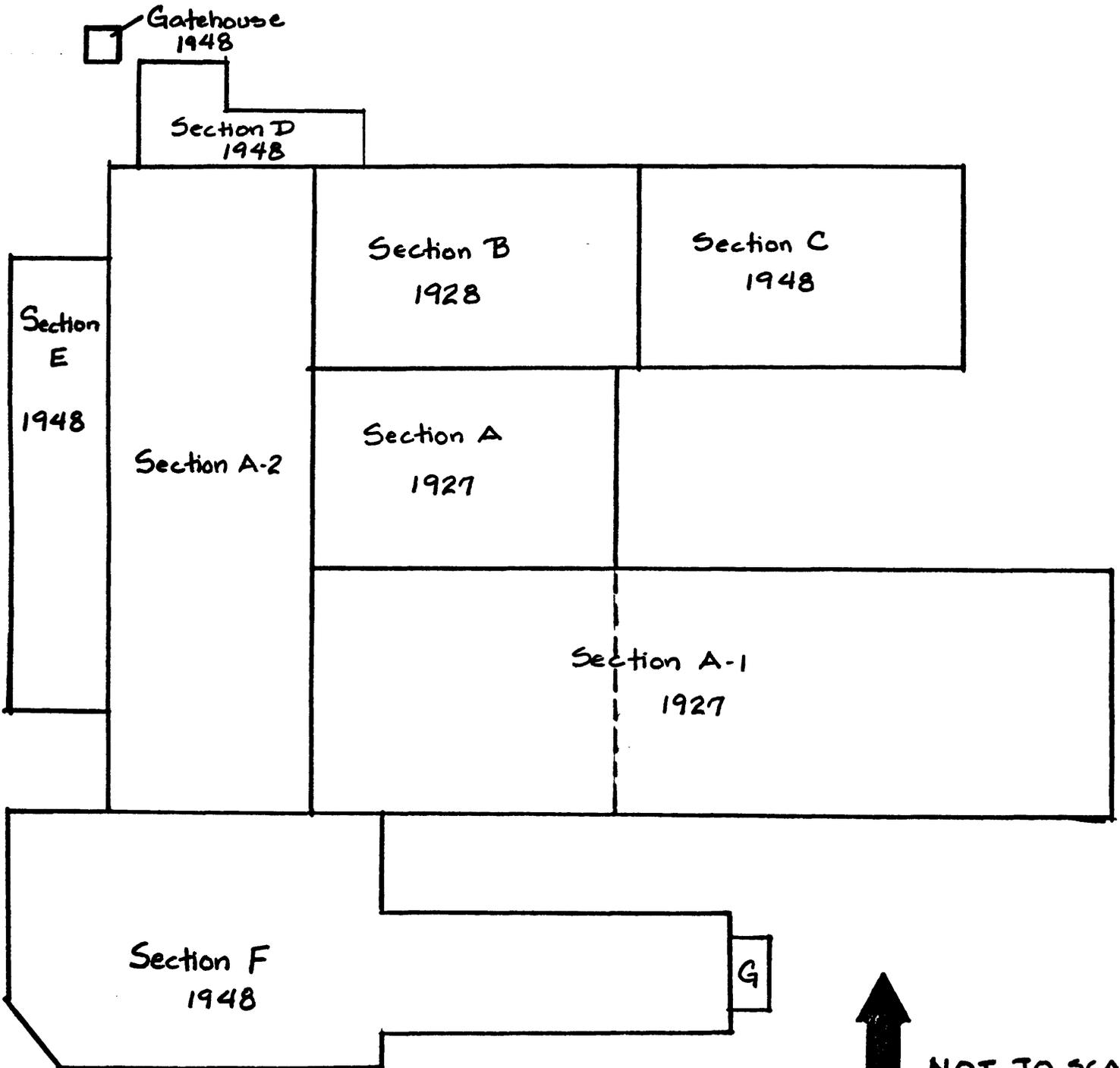
in the country and as part of an important movement by the Borden Southern Company to begin processing milk in the south.

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Map 1



**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1927-1938

Significant Dates

1927

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

**State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.**

The Borden Powdered Milk Plant at Fayetteville, Tennessee, is nominated under criterion A for its role in the industrial and economic growth to the Lincoln County, Tennessee area. Construction of the plant in 1927, marked a new phase in the development of the national dairy industry with its first entry into the South, successful recruitment by local officials of industry from outside the South, and diversification of the Lincoln County economy. The Great Depression, which began in 1929, was particularly disastrous for the agrarian South. Many who lived in Lincoln County during that era credit Borden's with providing the only cash income for company employees and farmers in Lincoln, Marshall, Bedford, Maury, and Giles counties. Development of the Borden Powdered Milk Plant marked the first successful industrial development in twentieth century Lincoln County. The Borden Powdered Milk Plant was a major factor in the economic development of the southern Middle Tennessee region and the southern dairy industry.

Construction of the Borden Powdered Milk Plant in 1927 provided economic stimulus to the Lincoln County between two agricultural depressions. In post-World War I Lincoln County, as in many communities in the rural South, officials were looking for means to diversify the county's economy, improve the lot of the farmers, and to increase population. "Industrialization" and the "New South" became by-words for newly organized Chambers of Commerce and other booster organizations throughout the south. Opposition to these efforts to industrialize the South were also voiced, most notably the essays of the Vanderbilt University 'Agrarians' in I'll Take My Stand, published in 1930. The period between the close of World War I and the beginning of the Great Depression was characterized by rural Southern communities' adoptions of the "New South" credo, and the Borden Powdered Milk Plant was an example of successful implementation of these industrial goals that are still the subject of regional and national debate. Lincoln County boosters advertised the advantages of their community in newspapers in New York, Chicago, and Cincinnati in 1924. In 1926 the Ohio-based Borden Milk Company considered a Middle Tennessee location for some of its first dairy operations in the south. The two Fayetteville newspapers reported in

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A  
 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:  
 State historic preservation office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 1.8 acres

UTM References

A 

16	358260	38890000
Zone	Easting	Northing

  
C 

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B 

Zone	Easting	Northing

  
D 

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See continuation sheet

Fayetteville, TN 37-NE

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for the Borden Powdered Milk Plant are irregular and roughly described as follows: bounded east by South Main Street, south by Mayberry Street, west by Lincoln Street and north by Tanyard Branch and adjacent property lines.

See continuation sheet

See Map 2.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include all land historically and currently associated with the Borden Powdered Milk Plant, and includes sufficient land to protect the resources.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jim Leonhirth/Richard Quin  
organization Lincoln Co. Museum Assoc./SCTDD date May 1988  
street & number P.O. Box 54/P.O. Box 1346 telephone (615)381-2040  
city or town Fayetteville/Columbia state TN zip code 37334/38402

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August, 1926 that Borden officials had been in town five times looking for a plant site.

In late 1926, the company formally announced its plans to build its first evaporation plant in Fayetteville, along with a butter plant. The Fayetteville facility was to be built simultaneously with a plant in Starksville, Mississippi. The dairy industry in Tennessee is a twentieth century phenomenon. Prior to the 1920s, dairies were primarily local operations. Borden was the first major dairy operation to move to the South. Borden's plants in Mississippi and Tennessee were the first to be built in the Southern region. The Fayetteville plant was to cost between \$235,000 and \$250,000 to construct with additional units to be added by the company as needed. It was built to service five counties; Lincoln, Marshall, Bedford, Maury, and Giles counties. The factory was promoted as the most ambitious dairy enterprise attempted in the United States. The plant's opening marked a diversification of the community's agricultural economy with less reliance on cotton and tobacco, both of which were declining in profitability for farmers. Banks, newspapers, and community leaders encouraged farmers to build dairy herds and encouraged others to enter the dairy business. Although the Borden Plant was an agricultural processing plant, it was considered an industrial diversification for the community. At the time that the Borden Plant opened, other industries in Fayetteville were Elk Cotton Mills, Allen Shirt Co., and Byron Novelties.

The importance of diversification was known to community leaders in 1926, and greater involvement in the dairy industry was considered both a means of recovery from the post-war agricultural recession and a hedge against any future depression. Community leaders hoped to follow the example of Wisconsin, which had weathered the post-war recession well. Their concerns in 1927 seemed prophetic with the coming of the Great Depression after the stock market crash of 1929. Those who lived through that period speak in terms of survival, and credit Borden with that survival.

The Borden Powdered Milk Plant in Fayetteville was one of five factories that the Borden Southern Company was opening simultaneously on June 10, 1927 in Middle Tennessee. The other four milk plants were located in Lewisburg, Shelbyville, Columbia and Pulaski. The Middle Tennessee location was chosen for its Blue Grass and the quality of milk produced. Following Borden's lead, Carnation and Pet opened plants at Murfreesboro and Greeneville, respectively.

The Fayetteville plant was constructed to make powdered milk from the skimmed milk by-product of butter. The Fayetteville Powdered Milk Plant represented ". . .the pioneer effort of the Borden Co. in the manufacture

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of Powdered Milk, being an entirely new product of the company. . ." The factory was ". . .the first Powdered Milk Plant built and operated. . ." by Borden (Fayetteville Observer, June 2, 1927). The formal opening of the factory was on June 10, 1927. The opening was proceeded by a county holiday, "Borden Day," which included a parade, brass bands, barbecue, and speeches by Borden officials from Chicago and New York, and Congressman Ewin L. Davis. At the time of opening the completed plant reportedly cost \$500,000 and may have been larger than originally planned.

Milk for the processing plant was purchased from local farmers in Lincoln and surrounding counties. Borden officials paid area farmers \$25,000 for a million pounds of milk during the first month of operation. A large percent of the local farms soon sold milk and, at the peak of production in the 1930s, Borden was purchasing milk from over 1,200 farmers. Over 100,000 pounds of milk per day were delivered to the plant which employed approximately seventy-five people to process the butter and its by-product, powdered milk. Satellite plants established at Pulaski, Columbia, Shelbyville and Decherd were primarily dairy depots and distribution centers. From these feeder stations, milk was sent to either Lewisburg (evaporated milk plant) or Fayetteville (powdered milk) depending on what product was in greatest demand.

In 1948 several additions were added to the plant including a large wing to the south. This section was originally used for the manufacture of barrels for shipping the powdered milk. After the powdered milk production was halted (circa 1955) when the drying equipment became obsolete, this addition was used for the manufacture of cottage cheese. As the demand for butter declined, sweet cream was shipped from the plant.

In 1962, the manufacturing portion of the Fayetteville plant was closed, and that operation relocated to Franklinton, Louisiana. The Fayetteville facility remained open as a receiving station and milk was sent on to Lewisburg for processing. On December 15, 1967, Borden's ceased all operations in Middle Tennessee. This was due mainly to the decline in the amount of milk available for processing. At the time, two other dairies were in operation in Lincoln County - Kraft, which still produces 'Swiss' cheese, and Avalon Dairies, which has since closed. Lincoln County now ranks third in the state in dairy production.

The old plant building was offered for sale and purchased by CFW, a local contracting company, on November 28, 1969. The company used sections of the building as a shop and part for storage; for a while a portion was rented out for a meat processing plant. Local businessman William R. Carter bought the building on December 30, 1970, from CFW. In the ensuing

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years, the building stood mostly vacant. Mr. Carter donated the property to the Lincoln County Museum Association in December, 1986. The property will be renovated as a county museum and cultural center. Plans include an auditorium, theater, art gallery, tea room, and office space.

The Borden Powdered Milk Plant represents an important movement in the economic and industrial growth of the pre-World War II south. The Borden Powdered Milk Plant was the first fruit of the local "New South" movement to industrialize Lincoln County by bringing in industries from other regions of the country. The plant provided important cash income to employees and farmers during the economic upheavals of the Great Depression.

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1927; February 3, 1927; May 2, 1927; May 5, 1927; June 1, 1927; June  
9, 1927; February 9, 1928.

Manchester (TN) Times. March 22, 1928.

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Robinson, John L. Living Hard: Southern Americans in the Great  
Depression. Washington, D. C.: University Press of America, 1981.

Interviews

Bolles, Dick, former Borden employee. Interview, Fayetteville, August 22,  
1987.

Clayton, James, former Borden employee. Interview, Fayetteville, August  
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Jennings, Sam, former Borden employee. Interview, Fayetteville, August 22,  
1987.

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Interview, Nashville, January 8, 1988.

McMillen, Sally. Department of History, Middle Tennessee State University.  
Interview, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, August 14, 1987.

Norman, Ocie, former Borden employee. Interview, Fayetteville, August 22,  
1987.

Pinkston, Mary, former Borden employee and plant secretary at its opening.  
Interview, Fayetteville, August 22, 1987.

Shouse, Sarah, Department of History, Alabama A&M University. Interview,  
Huntsville, Alabama, August 4, 1987.

Thomas, Jack, former Borden employee. Interview, Fayetteville, August 22,  
1987.

Tilton, Chris, public relations manager, Borden Company, Columbus, Ohio.  
Interviews, August 15, 1987 and January 8, 1988.

Young, Sarah, retired newspaper owner. Interview, Fayetteville, August 22,  
1987.



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Borden Powdered Milk Plant  
South Main Street  
Fayetteville, Lincoln County, Tennessee  
Richard Quin  
Date: February, 1988  
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission  
Northeast corner, looking southwest  
#1 of 8

Southeast corner, looking northeast  
#2 of 8

North elevation, looking south  
#3 of 8

Northwest elevation, looking southwest  
#4 of 8

Southwest elevation, looking northeast  
#5 of 8

Interior detail  
#6 of 8

Interior detail  
#7 of 8

Interior detail  
#8 of 8