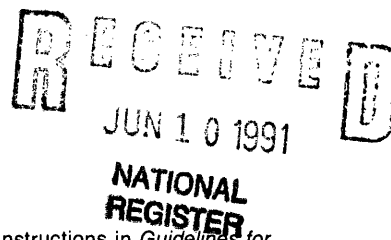


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form



This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. 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. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

Cement Construction in Richard City, Tennessee

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

Development of the Cement Industry 1907-1940

**C. Geographical Data**

This nomination is for properties related to the cement industry located in what was formerly Richard City, Marion County, Tennessee and the adjacent plant property. This area was annexed into South Pittsburg, Marion County, Tennessee in 1985 and is presently bounded by 16th Street on the north, and the city limits on the east, west, and south.

See continuation sheet

**D. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Herbert L. Argo  
Signature of certifying official

6/5/91  
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer/ Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Patrick Adams  
Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

7/25/91  
Date

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## E. Statement of Historic Contexts

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Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

### Introduction and Organization

The multiple property group for Richard City is referenced to one historic context which serves as the basis for exploring the history and architecture of Richard City, the development of the cement industry in Richard City between 1907 and 1940. It provides a broad reference for the comparison of properties.

### Geographical Information

Richard City is located within the present city limits of South Pittsburg, Marion County, Tennessee. The area is roughly bounded by the South Pittsburg City limits on the south, east and west and by 16th Street on the north. Richard City lies near the Alabama/Tennessee State line in the southern part of the Sequatchie Valley.

The Tennessee River is to the East of the city flowing into Alabama below Richard City. The river served as an early transportation route for people and industry through Marion County. U. S. Highway 72 runs east of Richard City from the Alabama state line to Interstate 24 about 4 miles north of the town.

### Prehistoric Richard City

The Tennessee Valley has a strong association with the Cherokee Indians. They owned the lands Richard City stands on until the treaties of 1817 and 1819, when the Indians gave up all claims on lands North of the Tennessee River. The prehistoric resources of Richard City, if any, have not been recovered or researched, and are not included in this nomination.

### Development of the Cement Industry 1907-1940

The cement industry, particularly Dixie Portland Cement Company, of Nazareth, Pennsylvania, was attracted to this area of Tennessee by a 1905 United States Geological Study on areas suitable for cement processing in Tennessee. In 1907 the Richard City cement plant (extant) opened and started production, the first portland cement plant to begin operation in the state.

Already in place when the cement industry came to Richard City was the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad which had gone to South Pittsburg, a spur line was then built to the cement plant and finished in 1907 to transport the heavy equipment needed for the plant.

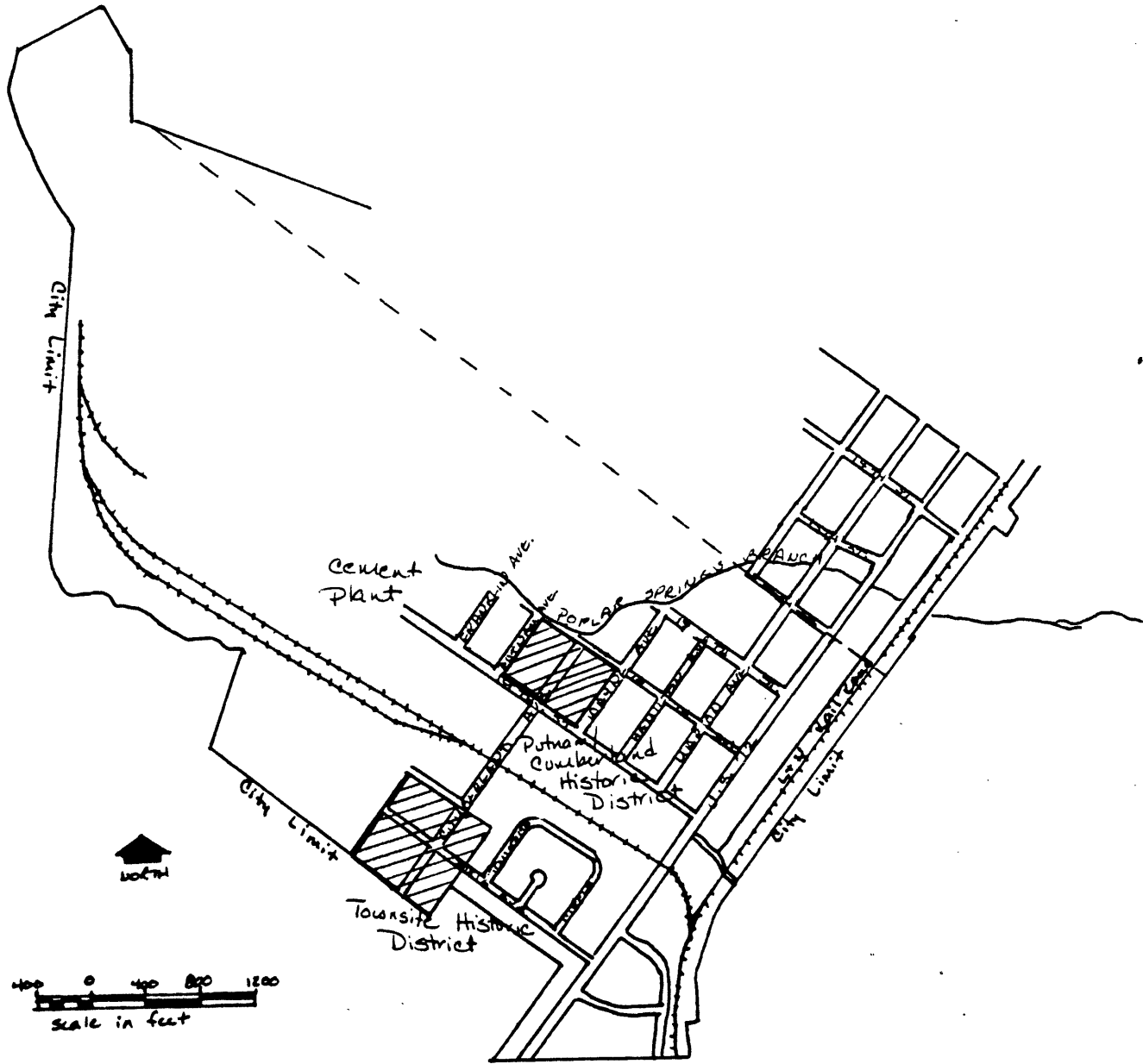
While the industrial buildings were being built workers lived in a temporary camp (non-extant), or they lived in the neighboring communities of Copenhagen (which was absorbed into Richard City) or South Pittsburg (South Pittsburg Historic District, NR 10/25/90). There was a shortage of housing for workers at this time. Throughout Richard City's history workers have lived in other communities such as Copenhagen and South Pittsburg. The

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supply of housing for workers in Richard City was inadequate for the labor force.

The first stage of development in Richard City followed a plan by Thompson & Hall Engineers for a community called Deptford. Surveyed in 1890, the Deptford plan called for a 68 block community with an electric car line to South Pittsburg. The plan called for a seven block commercial district to include a hotel, five blocks were reserved for manufacturing, and the remainder of blocks were divided into 20 lot residential blocks. The community was to have 60 foot wide streets. The Jasper branch of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad formed the east boundary, the Alabama/Tennessee state line the south boundary and the City of South Pittsburg the north boundary of the town, the west boundary is not shown on the map.

A 1925 tracing of this map shows property owned by Dixie Portland Cement Company. They owned all lands between Twentyfirst Street, Wayne Avenue and Fifteenth Street to a western boundary not shown on the map. This area includes what was known as Richard City. Deptford did not evolve as its planners hoped. A 1945 United States Geological Study map shows development in the Richard City area limited to the Townsite area (Dixie and Lee Hunt Avenues crossed by Cumberland Avenue), and between Nineteenth and Seventeenth Streets, except where the cross streets did not extend from Nineteenth to Seventeenth (Franklin and Putnam dead end off Nineteenth, Cumberland stops at Eighteenth).

The Townsite location was planned by Lee Hunt Engineering, the same group that developed the plans for the Dixie Portland cement plant. The area was referred to as the new townsite and the nickname stuck with the area, it has always been referred to as Townsite in the city. In 1907 it had been staked off and construction of houses began. Along with the houses concrete sidewalks and streets were built; a year later the distinctive cement fences were built. In recognition of that Lee Hunt Avenue is named after the company. The other east-west street in Townsite is named Dixie Avenue (it is also called Twenty first Street) in honor of the Company. Cumberland Avenue extends south from the area around the plant entrance to Townsite, and was the only road to link the two areas.

In the 1970's and 80's development occurred around Townsite and south of Nineteenth Street, this area is filled with modern dwellings. One street in this new development was named Townsite Circle in recognition of the history of Richard City.

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Between 1907 and 1911 the Richard City plant was the only producer of portland cement in Tennessee. During these years the plant grew; by 1909 it employed over 600 men, and was shipping an average of 50 rail cars of cement daily. In 1911 the Clinchfield Portland Cement Plant opened in Kingsport, Tennessee, and until 1923 these two plants were the only producers in the state.

In 1926 the Dixie Portland Cement Company and the Pennsylvania Cement Company merged to form the Penn-Dixie Cement Company. The plant continued to grow and in 1928 began a modernization program. Two rotary kilns for burning cement were installed at the plant. They were, according to the Chattanooga Times, "the largest and most modern equipment for cement burning in existence." Each department of the plant had been modernized to have the highest possible standard of efficiency.

The depression hit the cement industry in Richard City, which relied heavily on construction, very hard. The decrease in the demand for cement led to stockpiles of clinker, an unprocessed cement, at the Richard City plant. The plant closed for almost 12 months in 1932. When the plant reopened in 1933 it had only enough orders to keep the plant operational for six months, however orders continued to arrive and the plant remained in operation, although at a reduced rate, through the rest of the depression.

In 1945 the plant was again part of a modernization program to meet the needs of the expected post-war building boom. The owners installed new clinker coolers and unit coal mills. It was expected that there would be a demand for cement from the construction of housing, roads and industrial projects.

As the plant went through its various modernization programs it required fewer workers, and produced more cement. From 1907 to 1940 the growth of the plant required that more people be hired to run the machinery, but the machines were doing more of the work. After 1940 the industry continued to modernize and required fewer workers. The population of Richard City reflects this trend falling from a high of over 1000 in 1940 to a low of 86 in 1980. Part of this decline is due to the fact that workers at the cement plant lived in neighboring South Pittsburg as well as Richard City.

In 1982 Penn-Dixie sold the Richard City plant to Florida Mining and Materials, which merged later that year with Moore McCormick.

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Resources Corporation. Moore McCormick had plans to expand and modernize the plant. However they wanted the plant, which was a union plant, to give up the union. The workers would not give up their union and in 1982 Moore McCormick closed the plant and withdrew all its personnel.

In 1984 Moore McCormick began to sell the houses which it owned, that Dixie Portland Cement had built, in Richard City to their former employees and retirees because they had left no reserve personnel at the plant to collect rents.

In 1985 Richard City was annexed into South Pittsburg, which had grown to completely surround the town.

Conclusion

The resources of Richard City are linked by a common thread, they were all built by Dixie Portland Cement Company while they were developing the cement industry in Marion County, and were important in the development of that industry. Several of the buildings remain true to their original material and maintain the feel that the city is unique.

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**F. Associated Property Types**

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I. Name of Property Type Residential Historic Districts

II. Description



III. Significance

IV. Registration Requirements

See continuation sheet

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See continuation sheet for additional property types

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**G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

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Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.



See continuation sheet

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**H. Major Bibliographical References**

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See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State historic preservation office | <input type="checkbox"/> Local government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other State agency                            | <input type="checkbox"/> University       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal agency                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other            |

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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**I. Form Prepared By**

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street & number 216 W. 8th St., Suite 300 telephone (615) 266-5781  
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## F.II--Description--Residential Historic Districts

Richard City's founding and development coincided with the development of the cement industry in that part of Marion County. The town reflects its growth with the cement industry.

Buildings in Richard City are primarily constructed of a cement stucco finish applied to a wire mesh frame. The buildings were built by the Dixie Portland Cement Company.

Subtype--Houses

Most cement buildings in the city are one of two major styles, although there are examples of four styles in the city. The first major style is the Pyramid Cottage style. This house is a square, one-story building with a steeply pitched pyramid roof and a central chimney, and hipped roof dormer with attic vent. A shed roof porch is across the width of the front facade, there is a central door with a window on each side. Roofs on the houses were originally slate and have been changed to asphalt or composition shingles. Additions have sometimes been built on the rear of the house, rarely on the front. Additions are the same stucco finish as the house and were added prior to 1940.

The second major style is a rectangular cottage, the Dixie Cottage. This type of house has a cement finish, a full front porch, and a gable roof is parallel to the main facade. There is a central entrance with one window on each side and a full width front porch with a shed roof. The main facade on this style is the long side of the rectangle.

There are a few cement finish two story Four Square style house in Richard City. They have a steeply pitched pyramid roof with central chimney, and a one story shed roof porch. These building were originally used as boarding houses.

The plant managers house is a 1 1/2 story cement stucco Tudor Revival house located in the Townsite area of Richard City. It has a cross gable roof and a gable roof porch supported by two cement Tuscan columns.

Subtype--Outbuildings

There are numerous garages and sheds in Richard City constructed of the cement stucco. They have a rectangular plan with gable or

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shed roofs, usually standing seam metal. Outbuildings are located near the rear property lines, garages open onto alleys behind the property. Sheds have wood doors with windows on at least 1 facade of the building. Garages frequently have batten barn doors, windows on at least one facade, and a wood door opening onto the property.

Subtype--Street Furniture

Street furniture can be found in residential historic districts. Cement utility poles were built throughout Richard City by Dixie Portland Cement Company. Utility poles are cement obelisks with metal foot rungs and a wood board near the top to string wires on. They are located near the front or rear property line of associated properties.

Cement fences were built in the Townsite area of Richard City. They are reinforced cement with square posts and fourteen rectangular balusters between posts. The fence lines are interrupted occasionally for alley entrances and driveways.

## F.III--Significance--Residential Historic Districts

Residential Historic Districts are eligible under criterion A in the area of community planning and development. The collections of buildings are a reflection of the cement industry's attempts to provide housing for the workers and managers of the plant. Richard City was first planned in 1890 as Deptford, and was then partially replanned in 1907. The residential area near the plant entrance is characterized by a linear plan, broad streets, similar scale houses and uniform materials. The Townsite area is characterized by large broad, tree lined streets, cement fences lining the streets, and buildings of similar scale and material.

Residential Historic Districts are eligible under criterion C as the most intact examples of workers housing using cement construction. They are also good examples of company designed workers housing.

## F.IV--Registration Requirements--Residential Historic Districts

Residential Historic Districts in Richard City are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places if they possess a cohesive collection of residential properties that reflect the growth of

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Richard City with the cement industry. Districts must retain a high degree of integrity and reflect the period of growth from 1907 to 1940.

Districts are eligible under criterion A if they are associated with the cement industry by being the residences of workers at the cement plant and by being built by Dixie Portland Cement Company, and if they follow the plan for the community.

To be eligible under criterion C districts must be good examples of Dixie Portland Cement Companies method of construction and styles used in building. Buildings must retain their cement finish and integrity of materials, design and workmanship to be eligible.

Individual buildings will be considered contributing (c) to a district if it is significant to the history and architecture of the district and maintains the scale, use and texture of the district. Individual buildings will be considered non-contributing (nc) if they fall outside the period of significance or if they do not retain integrity of materials, workmanship, setting or feeling. Associated outbuildings and street furnishings will be contributing if they were built by the cement company.

District boundaries are chosen to reflect the best extant portions of the original plans for the community and may include a large number of non-contributing resources to include parts of the plan.

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Buildings in Richard City were surveyed during a survey of Marion County funded by the Tennessee Historical Commission in 1986. Using this survey as a basis a windshield survey was conducted in Spring 1990 to determine how many buildings retained their integrity. All roads in Richard City were driven and surveyed. Buildings which retained integrity were noted on a map and concentrations of buildings were identified to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as historic districts.

Requirements for listing in the National Register were based on the National Register criteria and their standards for integrity. Since integrity was the key threat to the historic properties it was decided that any building which had a cement exterior and retained its pattern of fenestration, roof shape, and porch, and conveyed the feeling of a unique form of construction would be considered to retain its integrity. Buildings which were part of a unit that could show the cement industry history of the town were and retained their integrity were determined to be eligible as historic districts. Since there are numerous individual properties which retain integrity it was decided to nominate buildings as districts instead of individual properties.

Industrial buildings are currently unoccupied but could be considered within the same context in the future when the owners show interest in nomination.

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