

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Dixie Mercerizing Company
Other names/site number Dixie Mill
Name of related multiple property listing N/A
(Remove "N/A" if property is part of a multiple property listing and add name)

2. Location

Street & Number: 951 S. Watkins Street
City or town: Chattanooga State: Tennessee County: Hamilton
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A Zip: 37404

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official: **Date**

Title: **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**
Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	1	buildings
0	0	sites
3	0	structures
0	0	objects
7	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/
MANUFACTURING FACILITY

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/ ART DECO

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE, BRICK

Narrative Description

The Dixie Mercerizing Company is located in Chattanooga (2016 population, 177,571), Hamilton County Tennessee and sits on a central 5.01-acre industrial lot bound by South Lyerly St. to the west, South Watkins to the east, and East 12th Street to the South. The mill building faces southeast on Watkins Street towards the headquarters building on a 4.14-acre lot, now used by the City of Chattanooga Parks and Recreation. The mutual risk building sits north of the mill with a non-contributing industrial metal-sided building to the east on a 2.44-acre lot. Residential homes surround the mill to the north and west, with parking lots to the south. The site features a parking lot, brick smokestack, a water tower, cooling pond, a concrete creek bed, and a concrete shed built for caustic tanks.

The mill is a concrete and brick building, primarily constructed in 1920-1925 in the Art Deco style. The winding and twilling section, mercerizing and spinning section, water tower and brick smokestack, among other outbuildings for mechanical use in the yarn process were constructed in 1920. In 1925, an addition for winding and shipping was added to the two main buildings, connecting the two into a U-shaped plan. Between 1929-1951, the central courtyard was filled-in with a dye house and warehouse along with a

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cafeteria onto the mercerizing building. This warehouse is thought to be constructed circa 1948 based on a newspaper article mentioning the "erection of a new warehouse... approximately 100 x 125 feet."¹

The Art Deco exterior of the mill features stepped concrete parapets, concrete reliefs, inset geometric designs, large window bays, and columns and concrete bands that delineate the floors and bays. The majority of the original metal windows with central hoppers have been replaced with glass blocks throughout the building. Based on photographs, it is thought that this alteration occurred in the 1940s. The interior features large open rooms with concrete columns and original 3 1/2" maple wood, and concrete flooring. The second floor of the winding and twilling section of the building includes a central raised area of clearstory windows, noted on the sanborn maps as "raised sidelights."²

The Dixie Complex retains a high degree of integrity in setting, design, location, feeling and materials. The architectural style and design remain intact and reflects the plants desire to have a new modern facility for its time. The Art Deco style along with the later introductions of mid-century design have few modifications, maintaining the original materials, industrial feels and interpretation of the changing design styles over the company's time at the complex. The complex still sits in its original location in an area that speaks to Chattanooga's textile and industrial history. In fact, Standard Coosa Thatcher Mill, another textile mill sits a few blocks down, also on Watkins Street.

1. Mercerizing Mill Building- ca. 1920-1925 with 1948 additions (Building, C)

The façade/west elevation has a three-story central projection that serves as the main entrance. It is three-bays wide and two-bays deep, with a stepped parapet roofline and a central "Dixie Mercerizing Company" crest concrete relief on each elevation. The central bay is flush with the parapet, while the north and south bay's concrete siding is projected and stepped along the top. A concrete accent band wraps the building above the third-floor windows. The third-floor windows are six-over-three metal awning windows with a deep inset. The center window is an eighteen-light metal window with an eight-light hopper. Below each concrete windowsill are rectangle reliefs. A row of three, square relief designs are featured below the center window. The second floor features a large central window bay with a thirty-six-light metal window with an eight-light hopper. To the north and south are two smaller six-light metal windows with a rectangular relief between each. The first floor has a central glass double-door with metal mid-century detailing. The door lintel depicts "Dixie Mercerizing Company" written in concrete relief under a slight gable detail that steps inward as a relief. Above this is a "RL Stowe Company" sign. Flanking the entrance on each side are concrete pilasters with angled projecting caps and 6-light metal windows with deep insets.

¹ "Wilson Builds Dixie Addition; Mercerizing Company Plans Expenditure of \$300,000 in Alterations; Warehouse Affects Both Plants; Enlarged Laboratory, New Cafeteria in Program to Improve Efficiency," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, January 31, 1948.

² Sanborn Fire insurance Map 1917-1931 volume 2; revised 1929, 258.

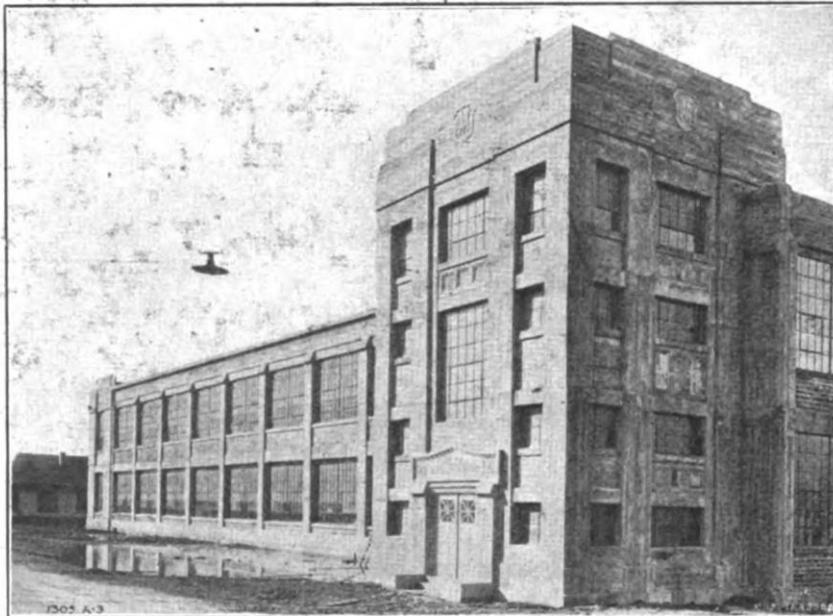
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Figure 1 Installing sign with new “Dixie Yarns” name in 1965³

The north and south elevations of the projection have six-over-three and an eighteen-light, eight-light hopper deep inset metal windows on the third floor with square reliefs below that match the front facades geometric detailing. The second floor features a six-light and a twelve-light with an eight-light hopper deep inset metal windows with three vertical rectangle relief detailing below the twelve-light window. The first floor has matching windows to the second floor but has a panel of three square relief detailing below the twelve-light window. Square reliefs of the same width of the bays run below.



Winder Building of Dixie Mercerizing Co.; Locker Rooms Are Located in Stair Tower; at Top of Tower Is First Aid Room

Figure 2 Plant building in 1921 before 1925 additions to right.⁴

To the north and south of the central projection are nine bays with large openings of glass block windows with concrete sills that are thought to have replaced the original metal windows with central hoppers circa 1945 shown in figure two. The roof has an extended parapet with diamond relief detailing above concrete

³ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*. Kingsport, TN: Quebecor World Book Services, 2005, 35.

⁴ Clark, Walton C. “A New Southern Mercerizing Plant: Dixie Mercerizing Company Erects Up to Date Buildings at Chattanooga, the Center of a Great Number of Knitting Mills Using Mercerized Yarns.” *Textile World*, 26 Feb. 1921, pp. 31–35.

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columns with angled projecting caps that divide the bays. A band runs the length of the building delineating the floors with a brick knee wall above. This band, along with the columns, create a grid pattern appearance across the elevation. Six of the window bays on the north side of the central projection have been closed in. A few of these closed bays have large louvered vents incorporated. The north and south corners of the building are flanked by a projecting single-bay. These bays have glass block windows, stepped concrete pilasters, and an extended stepped parapet with a central diamond relief design. The north end of this elevation has a one-story metal shipping bay/porch that has been replaced and enclosed with modern metal siding and roof material.

The south elevation is three-bays wide flanked with a single-bay projection on each end and a concrete foundation. The roof has an extended parapet with diamond relief detailing above concrete columns with angled projecting caps that divide the bays. A band runs the length of the building delineating the floors with a brick knee wall above under the windows openings. This band, along with the columns create a grid pattern appearance across the elevation. The large window bays have all been replaced with glass block and have a concrete sill. The central bay on the second story has a single-light metal door and metal staircase that leads down the elevation to the west. On the single-bay projection to the west, the window bay has been altered outside of the period of significance to also include a garage door with a concrete lintel surrounded by the glass block windows. The eastern corner has a projecting concrete entrance with concrete steps and an inset single-door. A transom of glass block windows is above.

The west elevation of the 1920's winding and twirling building is three bays wide with the corner projecting bay wrapping around from the south elevation. The west elevation continues with glass-block window bays, concrete sills, a band runs the length of the building delineating the floors with a brick knee wall under the windows openings and a concrete column with angled projecting caps dividing the bays. A one-story brick addition that was constructed sometime between 1951 and 1955 runs the length of the elevation, covering the bottom half of the first-floor windows. This addition is to be demolished during the rehabilitation of the building. The bays of glass-block windows remain behind the addition.

Around 1948, a central brick warehouse was added to the rear of main 1920s winding and twirling building after the third window bay. Its south elevation is brick construction and is five-bays wide with a flat roof. The second floor has five-window bays with pilasters between the second and third, and fourth and fifth window bays. The windows are ten-light steel windows. The first floor as a large central garage bay.

A two-story brick addition with a flat roof was added after 1955 and attaches to the 1948 warehouse and cafeteria to the north. The addition's east elevation has two louvered metal vents and a double-door entrance with a flat concrete awning with a slight flare. The south elevation has a stepped parapet and a central first floor entrance. The double-garage bay entrance has a flat concrete awning. A large metal duct sits above. The west elevation of this addition sits flush with the circa 1948 cafeteria addition with a flat roof and metal coping and a small metal louvered vent towards the top north corner of the elevation. The brick cafeteria and machine shop addition to the north has a flat roof and a metal cornice with brackets with an integrated gutter system. The cafeteria and machine shop has two large bays of three windows, two with forty-two-light metal windows with an eight-light hopper and a central thirty-five-light metal window with a six-light hopper. The bay of windows to the south has been altered with the addition of central, single-light, metal, double doors, and a metal hood vent added on the top of the southernmost window. The two bays are separated by a concrete column. The first floor/basement level of the cafeteria addition has three window bays with twelve-light metal windows.

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Moving north of this addition on the west elevation is the original 1920 concrete Mercerizing and Dyeing section of the building. Here, the flat roof continues with an extended parapet and two large bays of glass block windows. Each bay is divided by concrete columns with angled projecting caps. Below each bay are two bays of glass block basement windows. The basement level of this nineteen-twenties section of the building projects slightly to delineate the floors.

To the north is a two-bay wide projection that is one-bay deep with an inset concrete parapet. The projection has steel frame windows in each bay with concrete sills with brick knee walls with concrete sills below. The bays are divided by a concrete column. The first floor of the projection has concrete block window bays in the basement. The first floor and basement window bays to the south have been enclosed with concrete block.

Continuing north, the elevation continues with the concrete parapet and one of the original large bays with glass block windows. Below the window bay is a one-story concrete block addition with a metal staircase on top that leads to the roof. The addition has two window openings and a doorway that are boarded up. Connected to the addition is another concrete block addition that is two-bays wide and projects two-bays from the elevation.

North of the projection addition is a wooden ramp that is elevated over the concrete creek bed with metal railings to a metal, single glass door. The elevation continues here with the concrete parapet and four bays divided by concrete columns with angled projecting caps. Above each column is a diamond relief design and a decorative concrete band running along the elevation. The first bay to the south has been infilled with glass block and a concrete sill and brick knee wall below. Below this window bay on the basement level, is a concrete ramp leading down to a single basement door with metal railing. The basement window opening to the north has been enclosed. Continuing north, the next window bay on the first floor has been enclosed and now houses vents and pipes leading to the boiler building. Above this bay is a raised portion of the roof made of concrete block for equipment. The next two bays to the north are glass block with the addition of louvered vent openings. All of the basement window openings in these bays have been in-filled with concrete block and a maze of piping leading to the boiler building. Here, the elevation then projects out one bay wide to the west and continues with the same concrete parapet design. The west elevation of the projection is two-bays wide divided by concrete columns with a concrete block knee-wall under the concrete windowsills. The window bay to the north is now in-filled with a grid of louvered metal vents. The window bay to the south is split with four metal louvered vents to the north and glass block infill to the south. The same concrete parapet continues along this projection. The north elevation of his projection is one-bay wide with its window bay being infilled with a grid of twelve louvered vents.

The north elevation begins to the west as a one-story building and connects to the projection ending on the west elevation. Here the corner parapet is extended and stepped parapet with a central diamond relief design. The large steel frame enclosed bridge that runs to the mutual risk building butts into this corner parapet with metal sheathing and a metal gable roof. The first floor in this corner bay has a single window bay with glass block and fans added. The remainder of the elevation in this bay is covered by a concrete surround with a metal railing along the top. Moving east, the first floor is now enclosed where the former open shipping bay/porch was originally. The roof of this porch attaches to the top of the window bay openings. It is believed that was later expanded and enclosed with new modern metal siding and a shed roof. A metal garage door is located on the west elevation of this enclosed shipping bay. A corner extended stepped

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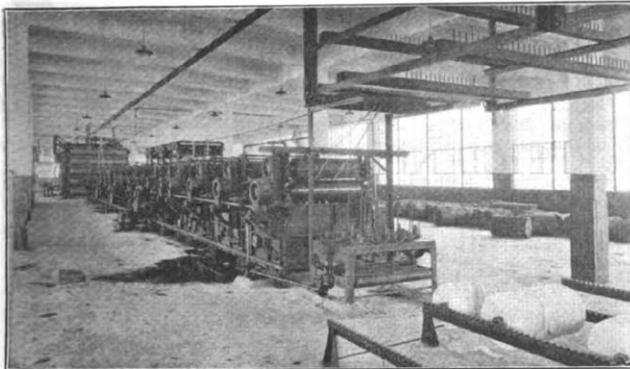
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parapet with central diamond relief is located at the end of the mercerizing and spinning building before the elevation continues with its warehouse and shipping section of the building that is two-stories tall. The second-floor elevation has six bays of large openings of glass block windows with concrete sills. The roof has an extended parapet with diamond relief detailing above concrete columns with angled projecting caps that divide the bays. A metal bridge connects to the elevation in the fourth bay from the east below the second-floor window bay. A concrete band runs the length of the building delineating the floors with a brick knee wall above. This band, along with the columns create a grid pattern appearance across the elevation.

Two large window bays with glass block windows and central metal frames, concrete sills, a band runs the length of the building delineating the floors with a brick knee wall under the windows openings and a concrete column with angled projecting caps dividing the bays. The third window bay has been enclosed with concrete block and has a large metal hood vent. The corner of the north facade is flanked by a slightly projected single bay. This bay has a bay of glass block windows, stepped concrete pilasters, and an extended stepped parapet with a central diamond relief design.

Interior:

The main winding and twilling section built circa 1920-1925 features large open spaces, maple wood and concrete flooring throughout, and exposed concrete structural systems and columns. The second floor of this section of the building has two central blocks of raised sidelights. The circa 1920 mercerizing and spinning section of the building continues with the exposed concrete structural systems and columns. The flooring is a mixture of maple wood and concrete flooring. (See attached flooring plan). It is unknown when the maple wood flooring was installed. There is heart pine wood floor underneath. A portion of the pine floor was revealed under a section of buckled water damage flooring. The maple wood flooring is used throughout the first and second floor of the main building. It is unknown if the heart pine is underneath throughout, but it is assumed that the maple floor was added to support the heavy equipment used. Sections of the flooring have been damaged by water and buckled on both floors. Later additions such as the cafeteria continue with concrete flooring and structural systems but have round, metal support columns.



Mercerizing Machine; Creel and 16-Spindle Winder in Foreground



Wide Center Aisle in Winder Room, with Spiral Conveyor at End

Figure 3 Textile World Magazine Interior images in 1921⁵

2. Boiler Building with Smokestack ca. 1920 (Building, C)

The boiler building is two stories and made of concrete and terracotta tile masonry that were used in “fireproof construction,” with a concrete foundation and parapet. The boiler building elevation mimics the

⁵ Ibid, 33.

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design of the main mill building with vertical concrete pilasters delineating the bays, and a concrete accent band below the parapet.

The south elevation is five bays wide, with the fifth bay to the west being a concrete addition to the west, post 1955. The four bays to the east have large second floor window openings with concrete sills. While the two windows to the east have been enclosed, the third still has the original thirty-six-light steel frame window with a central hopper. The first floor of the eastern bay has a window opening covered in plywood and a single door opening also enclosed in plywood in the second bay to the east. The fourth bay has a small window opening with a twelve-light metal window with two, four-light upper hoppers. The addition to the west continues with an enclosed concrete block window with a concrete sill and two louvered vents below the top what and a first-floor garage opening and single wood door.

The western elevation of the addition to the boiler building continues the concrete parapet, decorative concrete band and vertical concrete pilasters that extend through the parapet to delineate the two bays. Both window openings have been enclosed with concrete block but still have the original concrete sills. The window opening in the bay to the south is larger and has a louvered vent added in the opening.

Moving north, the building wraps around the brick smokestack to a 1951 addition to the boiler room and is made of steel frame construction. This addition has a form of ribbed fiberglass siding with two metal single-light double doors and louvered vent on the southern elevation facing the smokestack. The brick smokestack is in a cylinder form made of brick headers with five decorative metal bands along the top of the smokestack and a concrete capstone. The western elevation of the 1951 addition depicts sheets of the siding material in three levels. The second floor, and top level of the siding, has two window bays with paired two-light metal awning windows window openings on the first-floor window openings are linear to the second-floor windows but have been enclosed. The north elevation of this addition has first floor sliding metal doors with a metal header above and shed awning.

Attached to both the 1951 addition and the 1920 boiler building is a new modern/non historic addition attached to the east. The northern elevation of this one-story addition has modern metal siding and two large modern metal garage doors. The flat metal roof with two large utility shafts on the roof, both enclosed in the same modern metal siding with a flat roof. This addition sits in the location a previous forty-eight-foot coal silo.⁶

The north elevation of the 1920 boiler building is four bays wide and the concrete columns, parapet a concrete accent band continue around this elevation. The first two bays to the east have had the window openings filled with concrete block. The third bay has a first-floor door opening and a smaller glass block window on the second floor. The remainder of the second-floor opening has been in-filled with concrete block and terracotta tile masonry. The fourth and final bay has a metal garage door and the new modern metal addition covering the elevation. The east elevation of this building has no openings but has the same terra cotta masonry used on its exterior. The south elevation of this section of the building is two-bays wide and delineated by concrete columns and has a concrete addition on the roof, assumed for equipment. The windows with concrete sills in each bay have been infilled with concrete block. The wall material is made of terra cotta tile masonry. The first floor has a door opening to the west and an enclosed window bay to the west.

⁶ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1955 volume 2 page 258.

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The east elevation of the boiler/caustic tank building as noted on the sanborn, is located to the south of the 1920 section of the building.⁷ It is two bays wide filled with brick and separated by concrete columns. The building has a concrete parapet and accent band running along the top of the building. The bay to the east has a first-floor window of glass block with a brick sill and the second bay has a large second floor opening.

3. Headquarters Building ca. 1951 with ca. 1965 addition (Building, C)

The original headquarters building was demolished in 1950 and the current mid-century modern building constructed in 1951.⁸ The elevation facing Watkins street is part of a large ca. 1965 brick addition that has replaced the front of façade of the 1951 building to expand the headquarters.

Large sections of concrete make up a cornice that wraps the building with a cantilevered second floor and concrete band that also delineates the floors. The second floor has three sets of window bays of metal casement windows. The first window bay to the north is a ribbon of 5, followed by a ribbon of 16 and a ribbon of 3. The first floor is separated into five bays that are each set back under the cantilevered second floor, divided by sections of brick walls that sit flush with the second floor. The brick wall furthest south is only two bricks wide in comparison to the other two walls of equal size. The foundation extends on the first floor to include an elevated brick planter that is tied into the building under the cantilevered second floor. The first-floor windows match and align with the second-floor windows.

The north elevation of the ca. 1965 addition continues with the concrete cornice with two ribbons of casement windows below. The ribbon to the west is 15 windows wide and the ribbon to the east only being five. The concrete belt-course and cantilevered second floor wraps from the north elevation. The second-floor fenestration pattern is repeated on the first floor divided by a bay brick that extend to the edge of the cantilevered second floor. The east and west ends of the building as extensions of the exterior walls on the east and west elevations that meet the bottom of the cantilevered second floor. The built-in first-floor planters under the cantilevered second floor continue across this elevation.

Moving east, the north elevation recesses back with a two-story projection/hyphen to the east that serves as a connector to the 1951 one-story headquarter building. The top floor continues with a ribbon of nine casement windows, a concrete cornice and a cantilevered belt-course made of concrete. The first floor is a glass curtain wall with a center glass vestibule.

The one-story 1951 headquarters' west elevation attaches to the recessed 1965 addition to the north. The building has a concrete foundation and capstone. The west elevation has a ribbon of ten, three-light metal awning windows with a flat metal awning above that stretches the elevation. The north elevation of the building extends east with six bays of fixed and one-over-one metal awning windows with a central single-light door and window between. Moving east is a metal garage bay followed by a fixed window and single-light metal door entrance with a metal awning and five more bays of one-over-one metal awning windows.

The east elevation moving from north to south has a ribbon of three one-over-one metal awning windows followed by two single one-over-one metal awning windows, a pair of two, another pair of two, a ribbon of three, and another ribbon of three across the elevation. To the south of these windows is a single light

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

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recessed metal entry door and transom with flat metal awning and a pair of one-over-one metal awning window to the south. All the windows continue on this elevation with flat metal awnings above.

The southern elevation of the circa 1965 building continues with the concrete cornice with two ribbons of windows below. The ribbon to the west is fourteen windows wide and the ribbon to the east is only three. The concrete belt-course and cantilevered second floor wraps from the western elevation. The second-floor fenestration pattern is repeated on the first floor divided by bays of brick that extend to the edge of the cantilevered second floor. The built-in first-floor planters under the cantilevered second floor continue across this elevation.

To the east, the building recesses to a one-story, single bay metal storefront that serves as a connector to the 1951 building. Between this one-story connector/hyphen and the two-story one on the north façade, is a central courtyard. Moving east, the west elevation of the original entrance bay with a slightly angled flat roof and brick feature wall in a stack bond pattern of stretchers with a slight curve and metal clearstory windows projects to the south, extending past the wall of the south elevation. The south elevation attaches to this feature wall with a bay of three metal storefront style windows and three clearstories above. The stacked bond pattern is repeated on the east side of the bay, slightly projecting to the south to delineate the bay. The elevation then continues east with a continuous ribbon of metal one-over-one metal awning windows with a concrete awning above stretching the entire elevation of the building. A two-bay projection with no windows then projects from the elevation with a single-door entry to the east with a flat metal awning. The elevation continues with a bay of five metal one-over-one awning windows and flat metal awning above on the east of the elevation. A central two-story utility level sits in the middle of the 1951 building with three lights metal awning windows and vents.

4. Dixie Mercerizing Company Mutual Risk Building ca. 1948 (Building, C)

The circa 1948 Mutual Risk Building is a two-story brick building in the five-course common bond pattern with a concrete foundation and a flat tar and gravel roof. A central concrete belt-course divides the building's floors with a matching concrete cornice. The west elevation is four bays wide and is delineated by a vertical band of concrete with the building corners in concrete as well. Each bay has two windows on each floor with poured concrete sills that connect. The windows are placed to the top of each bay against the poured concrete beltline and cornice on the second floor. The windows have been replaced with glass block with a central, metal, two-light, hopper window or louvered vent. The first floor of the southernmost bay features two smaller window openings that do not have a connecting sill, but still feature glass block and a central casement window.

The north elevation faces Vance Avenue and a large concrete parking lot. The north elevation is five-bays wide and is delineated by a vertical band of concrete with the building corners also in concrete. Each bay has two, two-light metal awning windows on each floor with poured concrete sills that connect. The poured concrete cornice with metal coping continues on this elevation, along with the beltline and vertical concrete bands that delineate the bays and floors. The second floor has two window bays of glass block windows with central two-light metal awning windows in each bay. The two bays to the west also have louvered vents incorporated to the west of the window openings as well. The first floor continues with these window bays except for the third bay that has a metal roll-up garage door and single window bay also filled with glass block. A flat concrete roof with round metal columns stretches between the second and fourth bay of the elevation, in line with the beltline that runs across the elevation. A metal staircase on the east side leads to the top of the metal roof where there is metal railings and a single metal door directly under the second

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window bay in the second bay of the elevation. The shipping bay has an elevated concrete block platform with metal railing and a central set of concrete steps.

To the east of the building is a large metal warehouse that is non-contributing to the complex. It, however, connects to the mutual risk building and encloses the entirety of the eastern elevation.

The south elevation is five-bays wide and is delineated by a vertical band of concrete with the building corners also in poured concrete. Each bay has two windows on each floor with poured concrete sills that connect. The poured concrete cornice with metal coping continues on this elevation along with the beltline and vertical concrete bands that delineate the bays and floors. A concrete roof of an exterior open porch/shipping bay extends from the top of the beltline across the entire south elevation held up by round metal columns lining up with each bay separation. The porch has a raised concrete platform with a metal railing. This is original to the building.⁹ The second floor continues with the same fenestration of window openings filled with glass block and central awning window. The third bay from to the east extends past the roofline approximately five feet and is constructed on brick and concrete block as it extends back into the building. The bay is split in half with the west half including a large window opening filled with glass block, two, two-light awning windows and a central louvered vent. The window has a concrete still and is framed by brick. Below the window is a concrete knee wall. The east side of the bay has a central covered bridge with metal sheathing entering the building with a concrete surround. The cornice of this extension remains concrete with metal coping. Moving east, the final two bays continue with the same fenestration pattern and windows. A single-metal door is located on the final bay to the east under the last window opening. The first bay to the west on the first floor has a small window opening filled with glass-block windows with a central two-light metal awning window. To its east is a single-metal door and metal roll-up garage door. The center, or third bay to the east on the first floor also has central metal roll-up garage door flanked by two small window openings with glass block and a central double-hung metal window to the east and west of the bay. The fifth bay to the east matches the third with a central roll-up metal garage door flanked by a smaller glass block window on each side.

The interior of the building features poured concrete structural elements with exposed utilities and an open floorplan, typical of a factory building. Poured concrete columns with angled concrete capitals are used throughout along with the ceilings and floors being poured concrete systems. The exterior walls feature the brick structural walls in the common bond pattern original to the space.

5. Warehouse Building ca. 1971 (Building, NC)

A warehouse building was built in connection to the Mutual Risk building and is currently being used by a pallet company. The building is made of steel construction with a concrete foundation with a combination of brick and metal siding. The only windows on the building are on the south elevation and are 6-light metal windows. The roof is gabled with standing seam metal. This was built outside of the period of significance and uses modern materials, therefore is non-contributing to the complex. A metal bridge connector leads from this building to the main mercerizing building. It is non-contributing and is slated for demolition in future design plans.

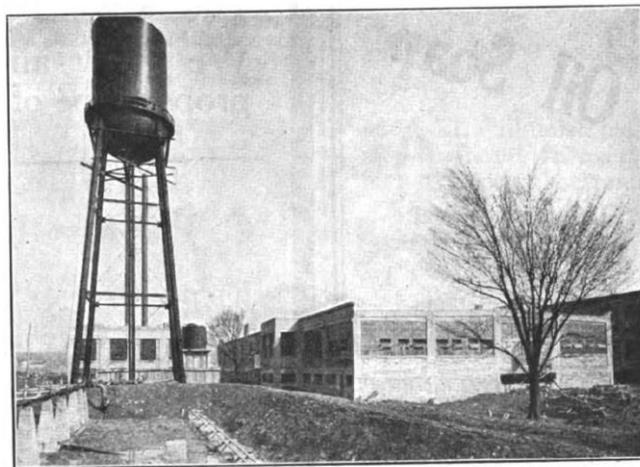
6. Water Tower ca. 1920 (Structure, C) The water tower is an elevated, hemispherical bottom tower type and is best identified as a “tin can” tank. The tank sits atop four canted truss legs with diagonal tie rod

⁹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1951, volume 2, page 250

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suspension bracings. Riveted, rectangular panels form the tank. Conical roof overlaps the tank that is enclosed by balcony. The tank sits atop a steel structure with tension cables between the elevated posts. Dixie Mercerizing Co. is painted on the tower.



Rear of Mercerizing Building; Cooling Pond and Double Tank for Soft and Hard Water to the Left

Figure 4 1921 Textile World article¹⁰

7. Concrete Shed ca. 1920 (Structure, C)

Poured concrete structure with rebar support that was built to hold caustic tanks for the mercerizing and dyeing process. Each side is held up by seven square poured concrete columns with a cantilevered poured concrete platform.

8. Cooling Pond ca. 1920 (structure, C)

An in-ground poured concrete rectangular cooling pond located in the northwest corner of the property boundaries. Because the pond is a life and safety issue, it is slated to be removed with the upcoming rehabilitation of the mill property.

¹⁰ Ibid, 33.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- 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.)

Property is:

N/A

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1920-1967

Significant Dates

1920, 1925, 1948, 1951, 1967

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Lockwood Greene and Company

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Dixie Mercerizing Company complex is locally significant under Criteria C for architecture, as well as Criteria A for its local significance in the textile industry in Chattanooga, TN. The Dixie Mercerizing Company is unique in its architectural style and building construction. Dixie is the only mill or factory in Chattanooga that is of concrete construction and a good representation of the Art Deco style.

The mill building served as the yarn mercerizing building for Dixie, with the spinning mill located across town in Lupton City. The headquarter building built 1951, is located across Watkins Street from the mercerizing building. The company went on to expand into 14 yarn spinning and finishing plants in locations across the country. The City of Chattanooga has always been a hub for the textile industry and Dixie Mercerizing Company played a large role in its development. This continued well into the mid-century with Dupont building its plant, one of the first nylon factories in the world in Chattanooga in 1948-49. Dixie Yarns became the first to be licensed by DuPont to produce yarn from core spun Lycra Spandex. In 1970, Dixie Yarns Inc, was reported to be the nation's largest producer of "yarns only" for the textile industry, and in 1988, Dixie became the largest locally based manufacturer in the City of Chattanooga.

The period of significance includes the initial construction of the mill in 1920 through the construction of the new headquarters building in 1951 with a later 1967 addition which symbolizes the company's growth and success. Additions and buildings after 1967 do not lend to the architectural or historical significance of the mill or company. These later additions include a small addition to the cafeteria, along with a metal warehouse building connected to the mutual risk building that is now used by a pallet company.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The textile industry expanded southward to increase the manufacturing for southern cotton at the turn of the twentieth century. With the introduction of electricity, the old water powered mills in the northeast were becoming obsolete. The diversification of resources in the Tennessee Valley, and transportation provided by the railroads, gave Chattanooga the resources to manufacture finished products and distribute them across the nation.¹¹ Chattanooga emerged as a textile-manufacturing center, particularly for cotton hosiery during this time. In 1938, the Chattanooga Times wrote a review of the industries in the city stating:

“The year of 1937 was one of the most remarkable years in Chattanooga’s history, for in it textile manufacturing, now the city’s largest single field of industry, began and plants were established, which were the forerunners of some of the most important manufactories of the future.”¹²

Other mills in Chattanooga included the Signal Knitting Mills, built in 1916 (NR listed February 4, 1999); the Davis Hosiery Mill, later called the United Hosiery Mills ca. 1904; the Chattanooga Knitting Mill, later known as the Richmond Hosiery Mill, and the Standard Coosa Thatched Mill ca.1922. (NR listed December 29, 2014).¹³

¹¹ Standard Coosa Thatcher Mills, Chattanooga, Tennessee. National Register Nomination. On file at the Tennessee Historical Commission, 2014.

¹² Ibid

¹³Signal Knitting Mills, Chattanooga, Tennessee. National Register Nomination. On file at the Tennessee Historical Commission, 1999. Standard Coosa Thatcher Mills, Chattanooga, Tennessee. National Register Nomination.

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After World War I, the textile industry expanded with new possibilities for cotton. This included the new process that was termed “mercerizing.” Mercerizing is a process that puts cotton under tension with caustic alkali. Products that used mercerized cotton were stronger, silkier, wore longer, washed better, and were more comfortable because they were more absorbent. Dixie, along with Standard Coosa Thatcher, took on this new mercerizing technology and built new-age mercerizing plants on Watkins Street.

The Dixie Mercerizing Company was organized in the fall of 1919 with plant operations beginning in February of 1920. The plant was designed by Lockwood Greene and Company of Newburyport, Massachusetts, and was built and equipped in 1920 at a cost of \$840,334.¹⁴ The plant went into operation on December 29, 1920.¹⁵ The plant, reported to be one of the largest and best equipped in the world, could employ 125 men at full capacity. The mercerizing facilities in the building were equipped to produce between 85,000 to 100,000 pounds of cotton a week.¹⁶ The plant had an original capacity for only a moderate amount of poundage of cotton, but with successive additions to the building, it became the largest mercerizing installation in the industry nationally, while also bleaching and dyeing a considerable quantity of yarn in its dyehouse.¹⁷ The Company’s officers when the plant opened in 1920 were: J.H. Wilson, president; W.B. Davis, vice president; T.H. McKinney, secretary-treasurer and general manager; P.M. Glennon, general superintendent; and Jesse Evans Jr., assistant general superintendent.¹⁸

With a rocky start to the venture because of unexpected construction and startup costs, the company was reorganized under the new leadership of John T. Lupton. In 1921 the plant was completed, and Lupton became president of the company. Lupton, a local entrepreneur and industrialist, also had a family bottling business that was transformed by his grandson, John T. Lupton II, into one of the largest bottling operations in the world through sales of a single brand: Coca-Cola.¹⁹ In 1927, Carter Lupton took over as president from his father, John T. Lupton, and ran the business until 1933. In 1933 George R. West became president of the company, followed by J. Burton Frierson in 1947 until 1964.²⁰

In 1923, a spinning plant was constructed across town along the Tennessee River in what would be called, “Lupton City,” named after John T. Lupton. The spinning plant, at that time, had the largest single units for the manufacture of fine yarns in the country. Here, Dixie built a community for the company that included company homes and a large community center that included a department store, a drug store, a grocery store, a gymnasium, swimming pool, community hall, barbershop, beauty parlor and post office. There was also a clinic, a kindergarten, primary school and churches.²¹ In the summer of 1927, a second mercerizing line and dyeing and bleaching departments were added to the finishing plant.²² Lupton City housed about 50% of the

¹⁴ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 7.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 7.

¹⁶ “Wheels Turning at Dixie Plant.” *Chattanooga Times Free Press*. December 30, 1920.

¹⁷ *Controlled Manufacture in Action*, Dixie Yarns Inc, date unknown, p 1.

¹⁸ *Ibid*

¹⁹ Goodman, Peter S. “John T. Lupton, Creator of a Coke-Bottling Empire, Dies at 83.” *The New York Times*, May 19, 2010. <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/19/business/19lupton.html>.

²⁰ “Dixie Yarns is Looking to 2nd Half Century.” *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, February 15, 1970.

²¹ *Controlled Manufacture in Action*, Dixie Yarns Inc, date unknown, p 1.

²² Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 94.

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spinning mill's workers, with other employees living in the rural district where they could have access to large tracts of land for farming and gardening.²³

Many of the workers came to Dixie from the farming industry because of the pay incentive. Workers would often work 55 to 65 hours a week due to the constant upkeep of machinery and were given Saturday pay if they had to go in to attend to equipment on the weekend. While some enjoyed the move to becoming a middle-class worker living in Lupton City from a rural farm life, some did not. Lupton City reported to be generally safer than the City of Chattanooga itself, and residents were said to not even lock their doors.²⁴

While the majority of the mill village homes remain and are occupied today in "Lupton City," the plant and many of the community buildings lay in rubble. The remaining community buildings such as the gymnasium are vacant and falling into disrepair.

In 1931, during the heart of the great depression, Dixie claimed to have operated more than any other local firm. George R. West Jr. was elected as president of Dixie in 1933.²⁵ Dixie acquired additional spinning facilities in Mebane, North Carolina in 1936, along with mills in Hope Mills and Cumberland, North Carolina. The three mills were known as the Rockfish-Mebane Yarn Mills Inc., a wholly owned Dixie Subsidiary that produced quality combed cotton yarns.²⁶

1942 brought with it the "miracle" man-made fibers for the war effort and led to the construction of the "nylon plant" at Lupton City. Demolition of this plant began in 2012 after closing in 2009.²⁷ Early experience with the product led to Dixie taking a dominant role in spinning of chemical fiber yarns.²⁸ Seventy percent of Dixie's output went into yarns for military applications including blackout curtains, parachutes and GI shoelaces of nylon.²⁹

Nylon pushed the textile industry to new levels in Chattanooga continuing well into the mid-century with the construction of the DuPont plant. This plant was one of the first nylon factories in the world and was located only a few miles down the road from Dixie's spinning mill. Dixie Yarns became the first to be licensed by DuPont to produce yarn from core spun Lycra Spandex.³⁰

In 1946, Dixie established its first medical insurance plan, paying a then adequate \$6.00 per day and \$60 for hospital extras. Premium holiday pay also started that year. In 1947, J. Burton Frierson was elected president

²³ Controlled Manufacture in Action, Dixie Yarns Inc, date unknown, p 19.

²⁴ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 12.

²⁵ "'Workin' Together' Highlights Dixie employees have been 'workin' Together' since 1920. Here is a review of some of our accomplishments.'" Flyer, date unknown.

²⁶ "Let's visit Dixie; What-why-when-how-where-how," *When We Started*, 1962.

²⁷ Rainwater, Kendi A. "Land Owner of the Dixie Yarns Demolition Site Fined." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, 15 May 2015.

²⁸ "'Workin' Together' Highlights Dixie employees have been 'workin' Together' since 1920. Here is a review of some of our accomplishments.'" Flyer, date unknown.

²⁹ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 94.

³⁰ "New Name More Appropriate for Dixie Yarns, Inc.: Cotton, Wool, Other Fibers Used to Make Specialized Lines." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, January 27, 1965.

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of Dixie and the Cumberland and Hope Mills plants were also purchased. In 1948, Dixie began paid vacation plans, shift premiums and attendance awards. Camp Dixie, a year-round lakeside retreat in north Hamilton County for employees and their families, was also constructed.³¹

From 1950-1951, a new chemical fiber spinning plant was constructed in Lupton City with a later installation of new equipment for a major expansion program in 1959. In 1952, Dixie acquired a tufting yarn spinning facility in Dalton, Georgia along with additional properties at Royston, Georgia in 1955. These Georgia facilities were operating as Candlewick Yarns Mills, Inc., a wholly owned Dixie subsidiary producing volumes of chemical fiber and cotton yarns.³² This purchase marked Dixie's entry into tufting yarns and later led to the nation's first chemical fibers (rayon) for tufting being spun there.³³ Also in 1955, Dixie sold its 203 village houses at Lupton City to employees residing there. That year, the community store and drug store closed after the Red Foods supermarket was built on Hixson Pike.³⁴

The late 1950's brought more benefits to Dixie employees with paid holidays, retirement plans, daily overtime, and improvements of group insurance plans. The 1960's brought yarn development and core spinning to Lupton City and the Company name was changed to Dixie Yarns, Inc. in 1965. New plants including the Chemical Fibers plant in Ringgold and the Chatsworth plant were constructed. In 1969 the Stanfield plant was purchased, and education and training assistance programs began. The Roanoke plant was purchased in 1972 and in 1976 Ringgold Chemical fibers changed to Candlewick Division and construction started on another Lemoore, California plant.³⁵

From 1921 through 1978, Dixie sold \$2.2 billion in yarn, had net earnings of \$83.7 million, paid dividends in every year from 1922, provided \$21 million in cash profit sharing for employees, and contributed \$32 million to retirement plans.³⁶ In 1970, Dixie Yarns Inc, was said to be the nation's largest producer of "yarns only" for the textile industry.

In 1986 Dixie Yarns Inc. sold its Dalton, Ga., plant to Shaw Industries Inc. This was done to shift emphasis to specialized yarns based on the company's long-range plan for profitability. At this time, Dixie employed 3,500 people and had twelve plants. The Dalton plant employed 350 people.³⁷ By 1988, Dixie Yarns Inc, had become the largest locally based manufacturer in Chattanooga and the largest producer of sales yarn in the U.S.³⁸ This came after the acquisition in April of 1987 of Tri-Caro, a North Carolina-based firm and the previous acquisition of China Grove Cotton Mills Company that made Dixie Inc the leader in the four major markets for yarn. Along with leading Dixie Yarns Inc through these acquisitions CEO James C. Fry also

³¹ "'Workin' Together' Highlights Dixie employees have been 'workin' Together' since 1920. Here is a review of some of our accomplishments.'" Poster, date unknown.

³² "Let's visit Dixie; What-why-when-how-where-how," *When We Started*, p 3.

³³ "'Workin' Together' Highlights Dixie employees have been 'workin' Together' since 1920. Here is a review of some of our accomplishments.'" Poster, date unknown.

³⁴ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 95.

³⁵ "'Workin' Together' Highlights Dixie employees have been 'workin' Together' since 1920. Here is a review of some of our accomplishments.'" "Poster, date unknown

³⁶ "Dixie Maintains It Is a People-Building Business." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*. June 24, 1979.

³⁷ "Dixie Yarns to Sell Dalton Plant to Shaw." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*. May 12, 1986.

³⁸ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 98.

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served as the president of the American Textiles Manufacturers Institute.³⁹ Operations re-structured in 1987 into four business groups: Dixie/Tri-Caro Yarns, Tri-Caro Knits, Threads USA and Candlewick.⁴⁰

The original general offices of the Dixie Mercerizing Company, located across the street from the mercerizing factory on Watkins Street, were demolished with a new office constructed in 1951.⁴¹ This building is being used today by the City of Chattanooga Parks and Recreation Department. In the spring of 1988, the company relocated its 40-person headquarters of its new Dixie/ Tri-Caro Yarn Group from its Watkins Street location to the fifth floor of the James Building in downtown Chattanooga. The yarn group operated thirteen textile plants across the United States and accounted for thirty percent of Dixie's annual sales at that time, with Dixie Yarns being the largest producer of yarn and thread with plants in six states and Puerto Rico.⁴²

In the 1990's, the textile industry began to struggle to regain balance. A U.S. Office of Technology Assessment in 1987 stated that the spiraling cost of new manufacturing technology and the relentless competition from abroad were driving the industry through its "most profound transformation since the Industrial Revolution."⁴³ As the industry began to change, Dixie Yarns began to suffer losses, with an all-time low in 1995.⁴⁴

Although the textile industry was suffering, the flooring industry, based in nearby Dalton, GA. continued to forge ahead through the 1990's. This industry not only yielded better profits, but offered certain competitive advantages not found in the labor-intensive industry of textile manufacturing.⁴⁵ In August 1999, the company sold its remaining operations in Tennessee and Mebane, North Carolina to R.L. Stowe Mills Inc., including the Chattanooga properties. This was the final and largest of four separate transactions allowing the Dixie Group to exit the textile industry to focus exclusively on the growing floorcovering industry. The four transactions totaled in excess of \$65 million.⁴⁶ The transition to flooring from textile manufacturing was easy for Dixie, as they had supplied yarn to the carpet industry since 1952.⁴⁷ Dixie's leap from dying textile maker to fifth-largest U.S. carpet maker took place over only six years.⁴⁸

R.L. Stowe Mill, who were yarn makers and suppliers to the apparel, furniture, automotive and other industries, closed business in 2009 when they were no longer able to sustain business. The company

³⁹ "Dixie Yarns Becomes Largest Locally Based Manufacturer." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*. July 24, 1988.

⁴⁰ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 98.

⁴¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1955 volume 2 page 258.

⁴² "Dixie Yarns Relocates, Announces Promotions." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*. March 12, 1988.

⁴³ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 63.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁴⁶ "Dixie Group Sells Remaining Textile Operations." *Textile World*, 1 Aug. 1999, <https://www.textileworld.com/textile-world/textile-news/1999/08/dixie-group-sells-remaining-textile-operations-3/>.

⁴⁷ Vass, John. "There's A New Dixie Based Here. New ID Heralds a Dramatically Changed Company." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, 10 May 1998.

⁴⁸ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 77.

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employed 350 people in Chattanooga, Tennessee and owned both the mercerizing plant on Watkins Street and the Lupton City spinning plant.⁴⁹

The mill was purchased for redevelopment in May 2018. Plans for the mill are to create a multi-use space with housing and commercial spaces. It is hoped that the Mutual Risk building may be used as a business incubator for the community.

Chattanooga has historically been known for its vast number of factories, foundries and overall manufacturing jobs, and was appropriately nicknamed, the Dynamo of Dixie. Though they had many types of manufacturing facilities, the textile industry emerged as the largest in the city. Dixie went on to lead the industry as the largest locally based manufacturer in Chattanooga and the largest producer of sales yarn in the U.S.,⁵⁰ This, along with its high-tech facility, mill community, and adaptation to changes in the textile industry with the introduction of the mercerizing process and nylon made Dixie a huge part of Chattanooga's manufacturing success and the city's role in the textile industry.

Architecture

The Dixie Mercerizing Company Building is locally significant under criterion C for its Art Deco style with additional mid-century style buildings in the complex. The complex retains its original setting and location in the Ridgedale neighborhood, its original materials and design are still depicted throughout, and the buildings still exhibit the craftsmanship and construction of the time period, as little as been modified to the complex. The Dixie Mercerizing Company is unique in its architectural style and building construction from all other mills in Chattanooga.

The Art Deco style, which gained popularity in the 1910s, was a style of decoration that was applied to jewelry, cars and buildings among other things. Art Deco ornamentation consists of low-relief geometric designs, parallel straight lines, and fountain motifs. Concrete and smooth face stone materials were characteristics of the exterior architecture forms were simplified and streamlined to look more futuristic and modern.⁵¹ The futuristic design element of the Art Deco era is even referenced in the cars in the architectural renderings for the building. Although the drawings show glass block on the first floor, photos of the building early in its operation along with other drawings on promotional material show the steel frame windows with hoppers used throughout.⁵²

⁴⁹ "Yarn Supplier R.L. Stowe Mills to Close." Furniture Today, 9 Feb. 2019, www.furnituretoday.com/business-news/yarn-supplier-rl-stowe-mills-to-close/.

⁵⁰ Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 98.

⁵¹ Poppeliers, John C., and S. Allen. Chambers. *What Style Is It?: A Guide to American Architecture*. New York: John Wiley, 2003, 122-126.

⁵² Longwith, John. *Bound and Determined: the Dixie Group, 1920-2004*, 8.

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Figure 5 Architectural renderings of Dixie Mills⁵³

The Dixie complex retains a high degree of integrity and is the only mill or factory in Chattanooga that is of concrete construction and that is completed in the Art Deco style. Other extant textile mills in Chattanooga are of brick construction, unlike Dixie which is primarily concrete construction. The use of Dixie's concrete construction lends to the smooth finish that is associated with the Art Deco style. Overall, the window bays and length of the building lend to the streamline rectilinear form with projections that provide opportunities for additional design features in the Art Deco style. On each projection, there are stepped extended parapets that create geometric shapes with a layering effect. Additional geometric motif insets are placed throughout the building's exterior with an inset diamond design that is placed above each column on the building's parapets. Inset rectangular and square designs are used on the central entrance projection, all representational of the Art Deco style. The mill also embodies industrial architectural design with its large window bays and wide-open floor plan. Steel windows with central hoppers along with glass block such as those on Dixie were frequently used in industrial design.

Standard Coosa Thatcher Mill is located a few blocks down Watkins street from Dixie. This mill is similar in form, with its use of large window bays, divided linearly by concrete columns and brick knee walls horizontally. There are also similarities in form with the corner decorative parapet detailing. These corner details at Standard Coosa Thatcher, however, reflect the a more traditional early 20th century industrial style with brick and concrete coping verse the more modern Art Deco style at Dixie. Overall, the massing on Standard Coosa Thatcher is much larger than Dixie. It five-stories tall and is primarily brick, unlike the concrete construction of Dixie.

⁵³ Controlled Manufacture In Action Brochure, Dixie Yarns, date unknown, p 21-22.

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**Figure 6 Standard Coosa Thatcher Mill, Chattanooga
January 2020.**

Signal Mill, ca. 1916, differs drastically from both Standard Coosa Thatcher and Dixie Mercerizing with brick construction, double hung wood sash windows with jack arches on the first floor, along with twenty-five-light metal windows with central hoppers, and a gable roof with exposed rafter beams. Signal Mill has interior wood structural supports throughout as opposed to the poured concrete exposed structure at Dixie. One of the only similarities to Dixie is that there are columns separating the window bays.



Figure 7 Signal Knitting Mill, Chattanooga, TN January 2020

Dixie Mercerizing Company's mercerizing and finishing plant is unlike any other textile mill in southeast Tennessee, making it architecturally significant for its intact Art Deco style and construction. With its

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construction in 1920 continuing through 1925, it shows that Dixie Mercerizing Company was ahead of its time, creating a modern and efficient mill to move their company forward into the future. A 1965 news article called the building, “one of the most modern in the industry.”⁵⁴ Over time, very little has been altered to modify the original architecture. The construction of additions to adapt to the growth of the company is seen in the center and rear of the plant, but it did not change the overall feeling and style of the building. Based on photos, it is believed the glass-block windows were added in the 1940’s. These windows; however, being shown in early renderings still lend to the time period, feeling and style of the plant as originally interpreted.

Other contributing buildings to the complex show the evolution of styles moving to mid-century modern, while still maintaining a modern aesthetic for a new age plant. The mutual risk building built in 1948 shows the shift in styles with its brick and concrete construction and flat concrete awnings. These flat awnings and the lines they create, begin to reference the later popular mid-century modern style. The later construction of the headquarters building in 1951 and ca. 1965 reflects the mid-century style with its low rooflines, linear lines, ribbons of metal awning windows and bricks laid in a stack bond pattern on the original entrance to the building.⁵⁵ The ca. 1965 addition again references the mid-century style, while also depicting changes in the design trend as it moved towards the 1970’s. Those changes featured a cantilevered second floor, integrated low-level planters, linear lines across the elevations and an asymmetrical façade.

⁵⁴ “New Name More Appropriate for Dixie Yarns, Inc.: Cotton, Wool, Other Fibers Used to Make Specialized Lines.” *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, January 27, 1965.

⁵⁵ McAlester, Virginia, Suzanne Patton. Matty, and Steve Clisque. *A Field Guide to American Houses: the Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding Americas Domestic Architecture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2017, 629-633.

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Signal Knitting Mills, Chattanooga, Tennessee. National Register Nomination. On file at the Tennessee Historical Commission, 1999.

Standard Coosa Thatcher Mills, Chattanooga, Tennessee. National Register Nomination. On file at the Tennessee Historical Commission, 2014.

Vass, John. "There's A New Dixie Based Here. New ID Heralds a Dramatically Changed Company." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, 10 May 1998.

"Wheels Turning at Dixie Plant." *Chattanooga Times Free Press*. December 30, 1920.

"Wilson Builds Dixie Addition; Mercerizing Company Plans Expenditure of \$300,000 in Alterations; Warehouse Affects Both Plants; Enlarged Laboratory, New Cafeteria in Program to Improve Efficiency," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, January 31, 1948.

"'Workin' Together' Highlights Dixie employees have been 'workin' Together' since 1920. Here is a review of some of our accomplishments." Flyer, date unknown.

"Yarn Supplier R.L. Stowe Mills to Close." *Furniture Today*, 9 Feb. 2019, www.furnituretoday.com/business-news/yarn-supplier-rl-stowe-mills-to-close/.

Dixie Mercerizing Company
 Name of Property

Hamilton, Tennessee
 County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	<input type="checkbox"/>	State Historic Preservation Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously listed in the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other State agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously determined eligible by the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	designated a National Historic Landmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local government
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	<input type="checkbox"/>	University
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):			

Dixie Mercerizing Company
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 11.59 **USGS Quadrangle** Chattanooga 105SE

(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 35.026658 | Longitude: -85.272919 |
| 2. Latitude: 35.028797 | Longitude: -85.271749 |
| 3. Latitude: 35.025524 | Longitude: -85.269968 |
| 4. Latitude: 35.026873 | Longitude: -85.269282 |
| 5. Latitude: 35.027431 | Longitude: -85.270848 |
| 6. Latitude: 35.028301 | Longitude: -85.270392 |

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the property follow the boundaries of Hamilton County parcel numbers 156C C 001, 146N U 015, and 156C C 012. The parcels are bounded by E 12th Street to the south, Vance Avenue to the north, and S Lyerly Street to the west. Parcels 156C C 001 and 146N U 015 are bound to the east by S. Watkins Street with parcel 156C C 012 located on the east side of S. Watkins Street.

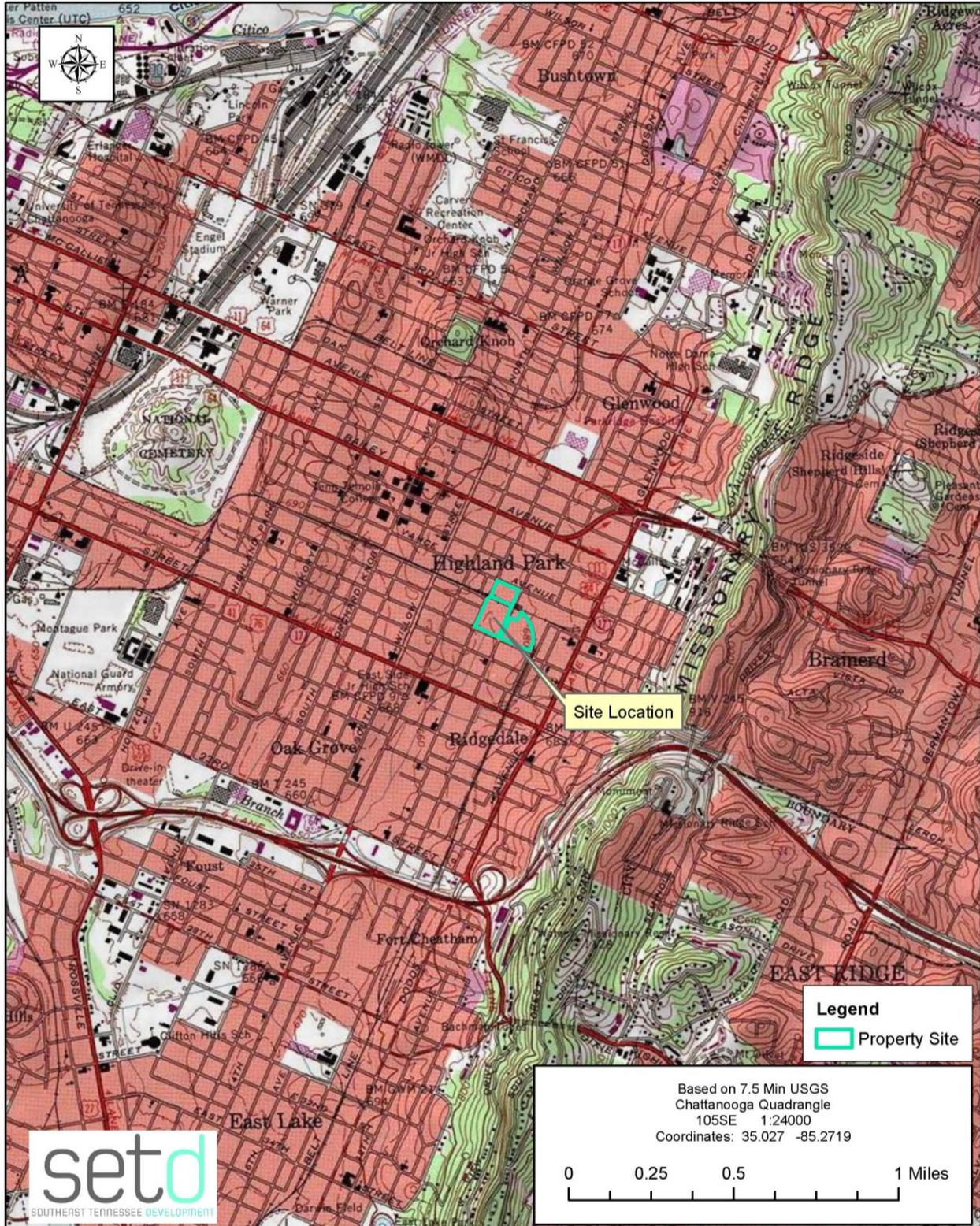
Boundary Justification

The boundaries were selected to follow the original parcel's boundaries for the Dixie Mercerizing Company complex to include the main plant parcel of 156C C 001, the headquarters building on parcel 156C C 012 and the warehouse and Mutual Risk building on parcel 146N U 015.

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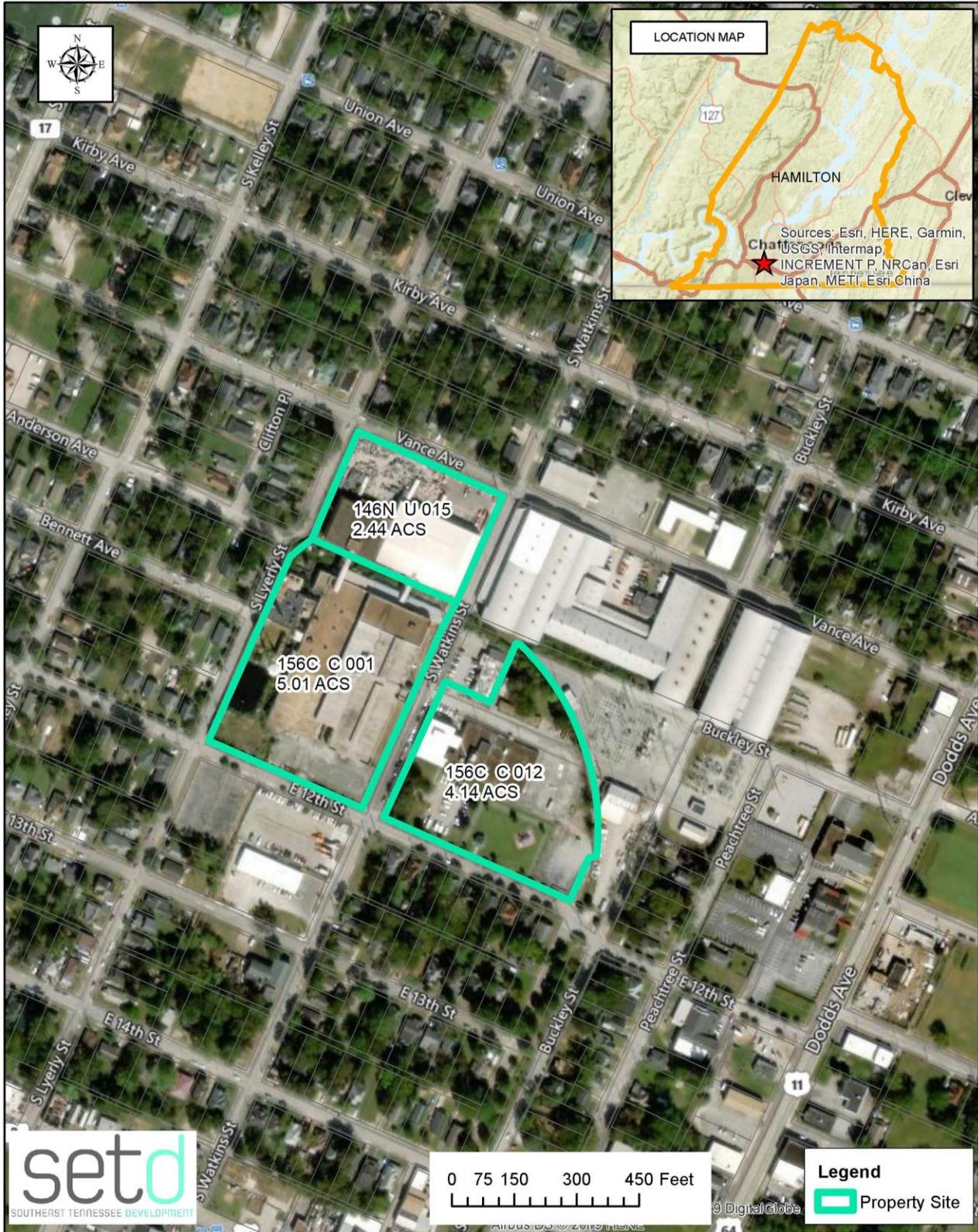
USGS Topographic Map



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Boundary Map



Dixie Mercerizing Company
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11. Form Prepared By

Name Melissa Mortimer
Organization SETD
Street & Number 1000 Riverfront Parkway Date 1/30/2020
City or Town Chattanooga Telephone 423-424-4266
E-mail mmortimer@sedev.org State TN Zip Code 37402

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. should be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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National Park Service

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Dixie Mercerizing Company
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Photo Log

Name of Property: Dixie Mercerizing Company
City or Vicinity: Chattanooga
County: Hamilton State: Tennessee
Photographer: Melissa Mortimer and Anca Radar
Date Photographed: October 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 25 Aerial shot of complex. Photographer facing northwest.
- 2 of 25 Southeast oblique. Photographer facing northwest.
- 3 of 25 Entrance tower, east façade. Photographer facing west.
- 4 of 25 Northeast oblique. Photographer facing southwest.
- 5 of 25 North elevation of mercerizing building. Photographer facing southeast.
- 6 of 25 West elevation and concrete shed. Photographer facing southeast.
- 7 of 25 South elevation. Photographer facing north.
- 8 of 25 First floor, winding and twilling. Photographer facing south.
- 9 of 25 First floor, winding and twilling. Photographer facing southeast.
- 10 of 25 Second floor, winding room, photographer facing northwest
- 11 of 25 Second floor enclosed clearstory windows, winding room. Photographer facing northeast.
- 12 of 25 First floor interior, mercerizing and dyeing, Photographer facing north.
- 13 of 25 Second floor interior, winding room. Photographer facing south.
- 14 of 25 Water tower, cool pond, boiler building, and western elevation, Photographer facing north.
- 15 of 25 First floor interior, mercerizing and dyeing. Photographer facing south.
- 16 of 25 Boiler Building/caustic tank building interior, Photographer facing west.

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Dixie Mercerizing Company

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- 17 of 25 First floor interior windows, cafeteria. Photographer facing southwest.
- 18 of 25 Mutual Risk Building south elevation. Photographer facing northwest.
- 19 of 25 Mutual Risk Building west elevation. Photographer facing east.
- 20 of 25 Mutual Risk Building north elevation. Photographer southeast.
- 21 of 25 Mutual Risk Building interior second floor. Photographer northwest.
- 22 of 25 Headquarters Building, north elevation. Photographer facing west.
- 23 of 25 Headquarters Building, west elevation. Photographer facing north.
- 24 of 25 Headquarters Building, northeast oblique. Photographer facing southeast.
- 25 of 25 Headquarters Building, south elevation. Photographer facing northeast.

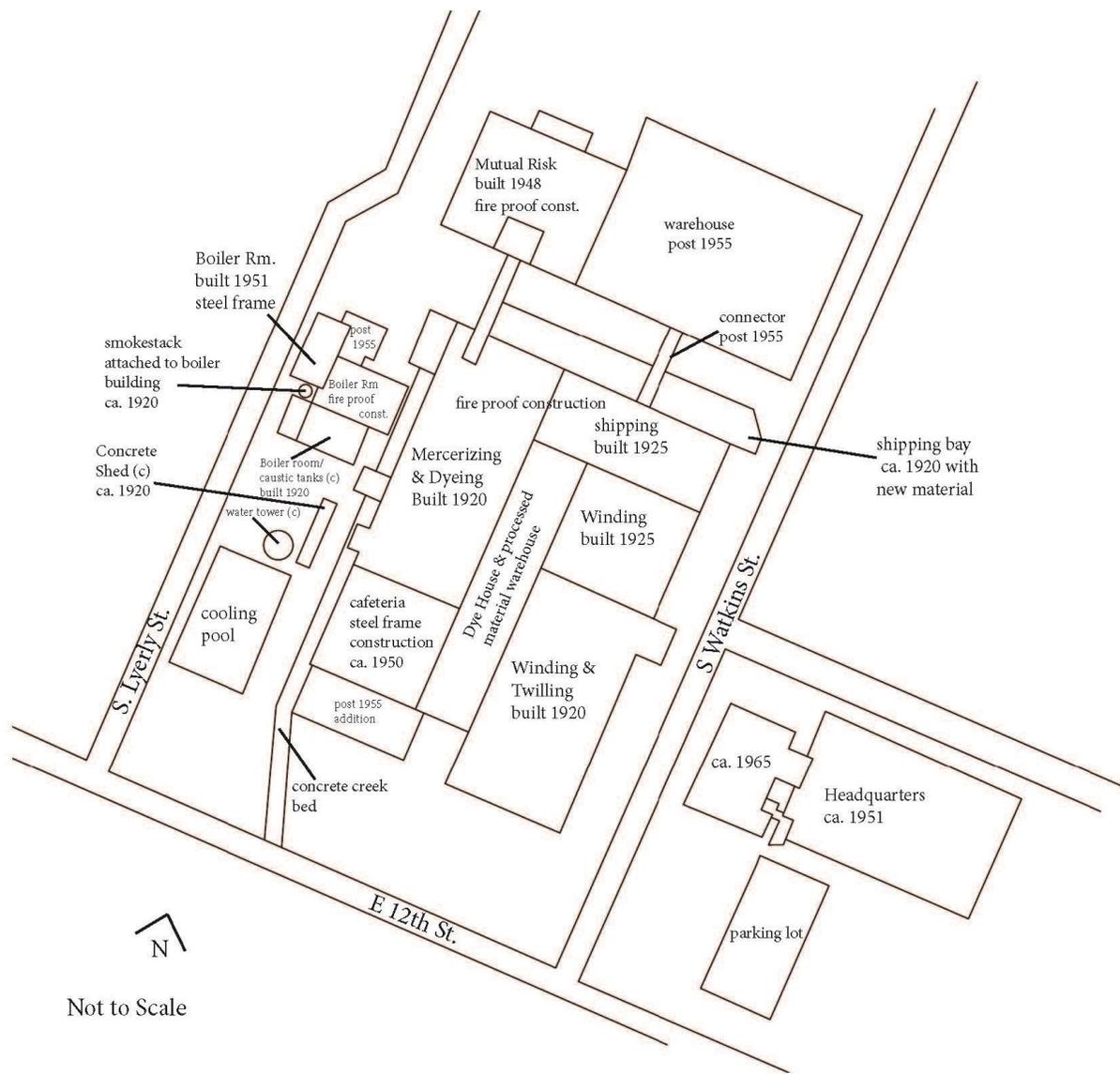
United States Department of the Interior
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Site Plan



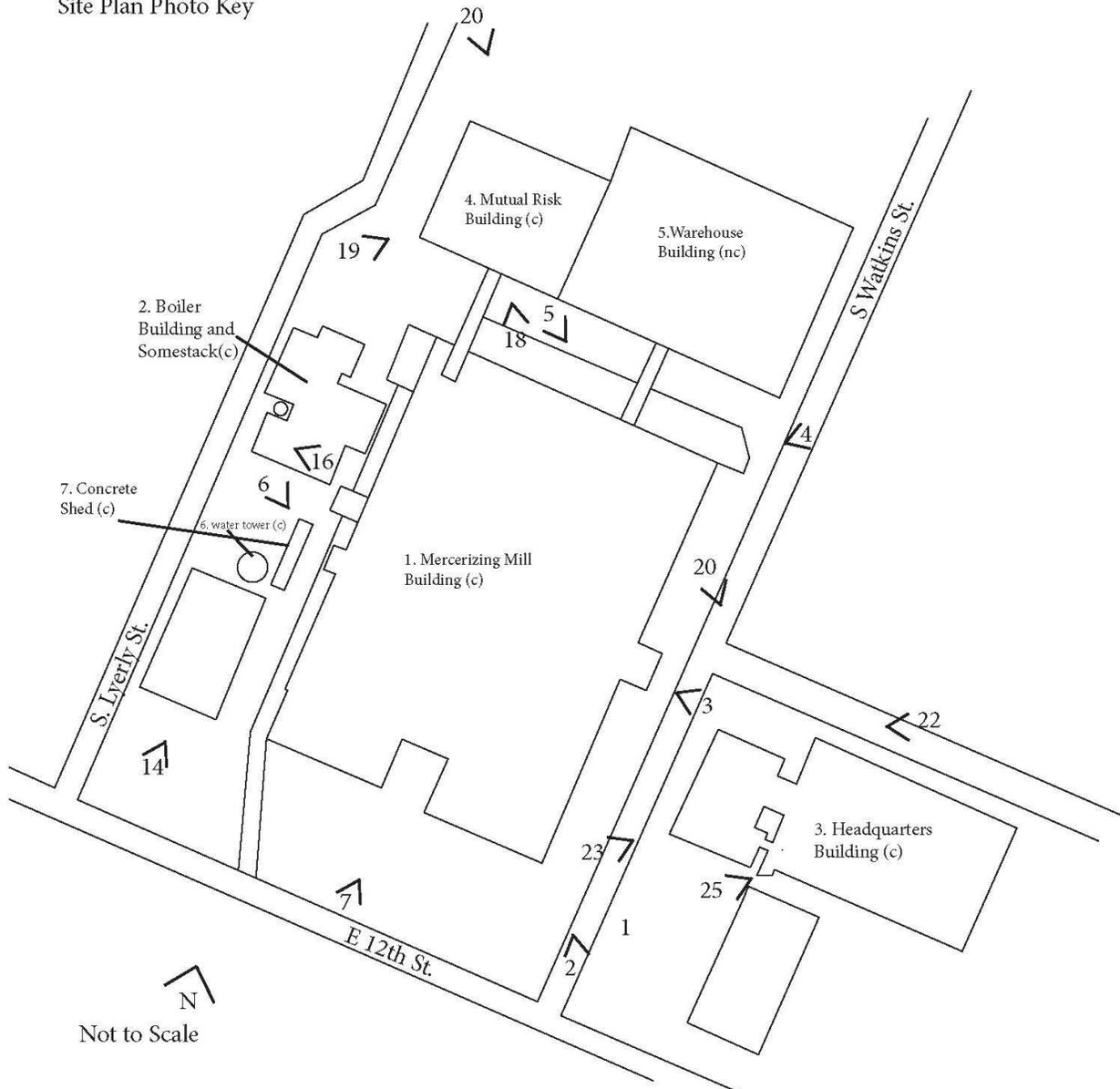
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Site Plan Photo Key



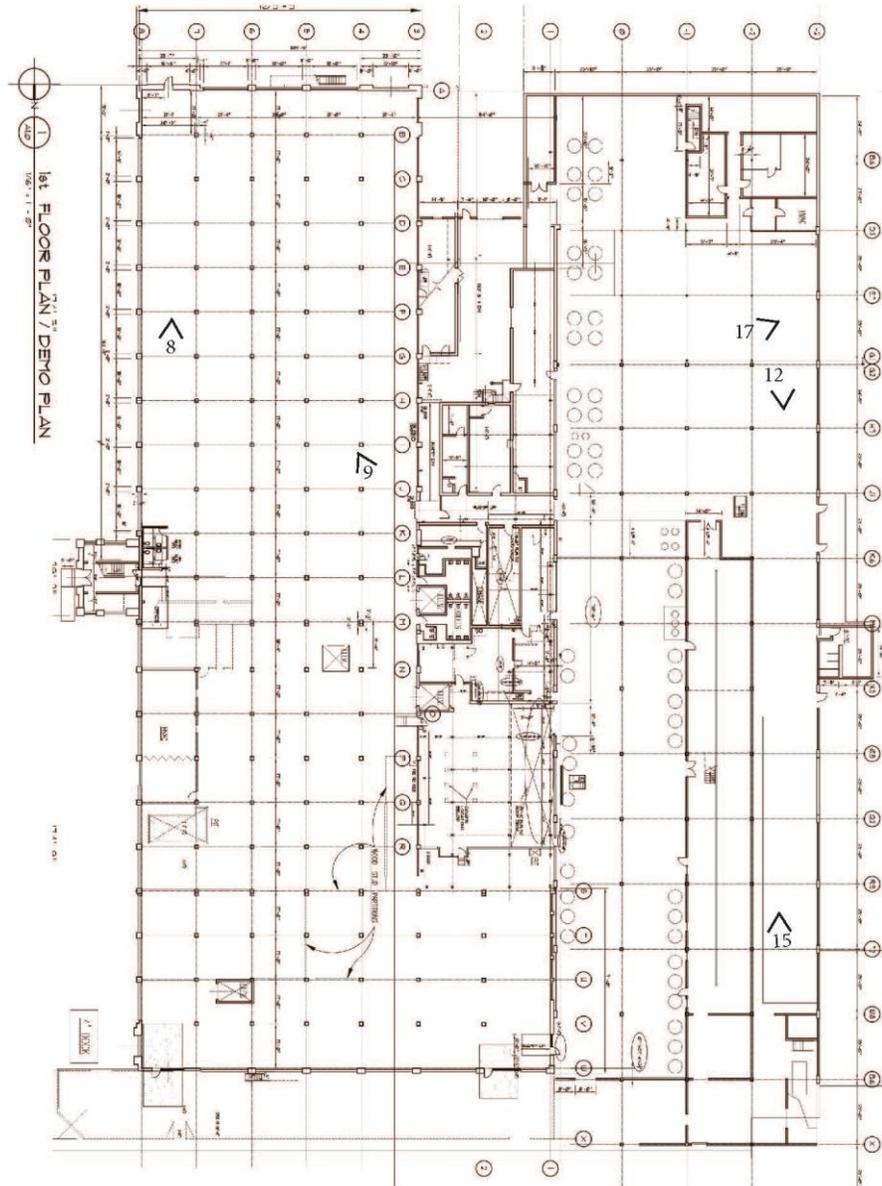
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Floor Plan

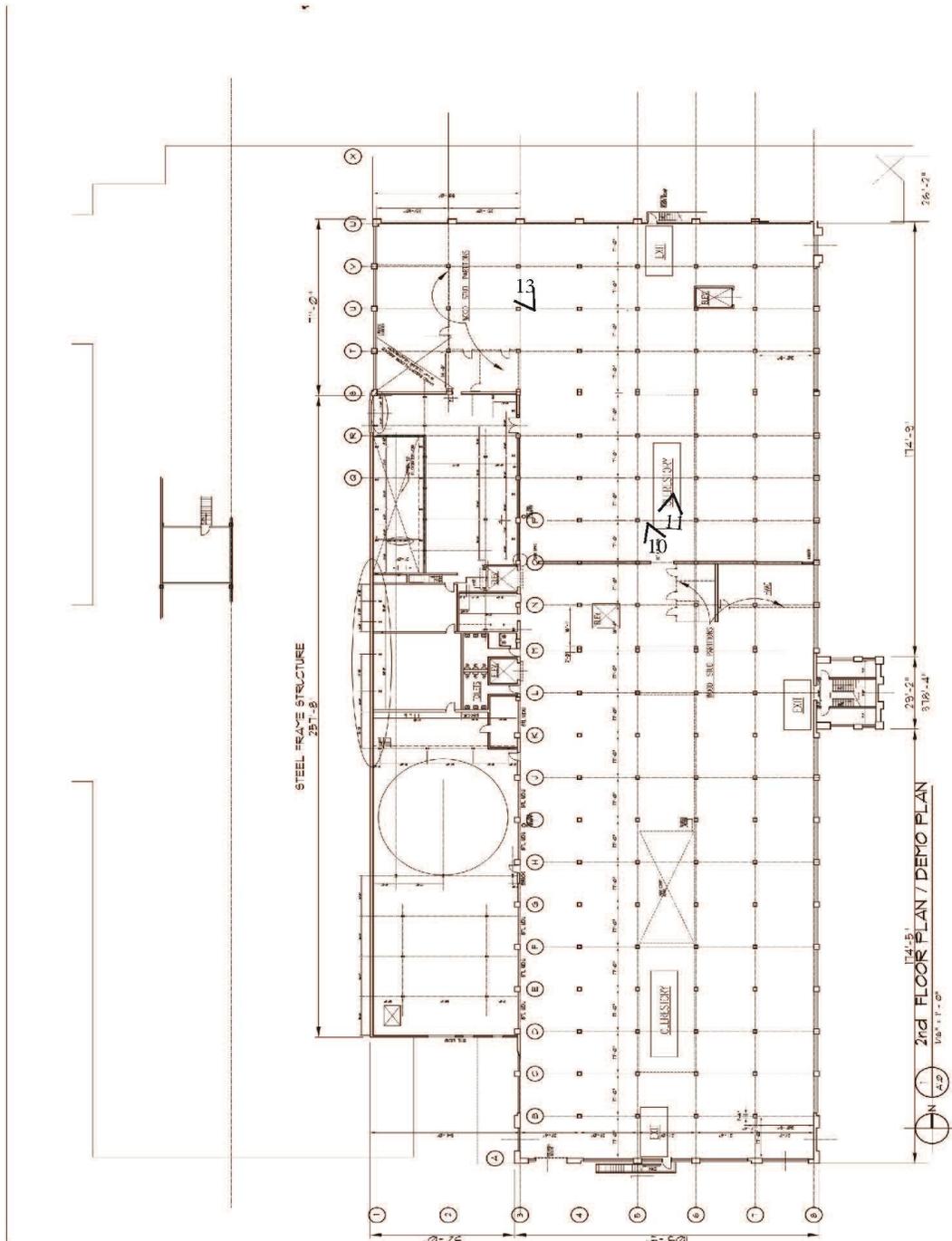


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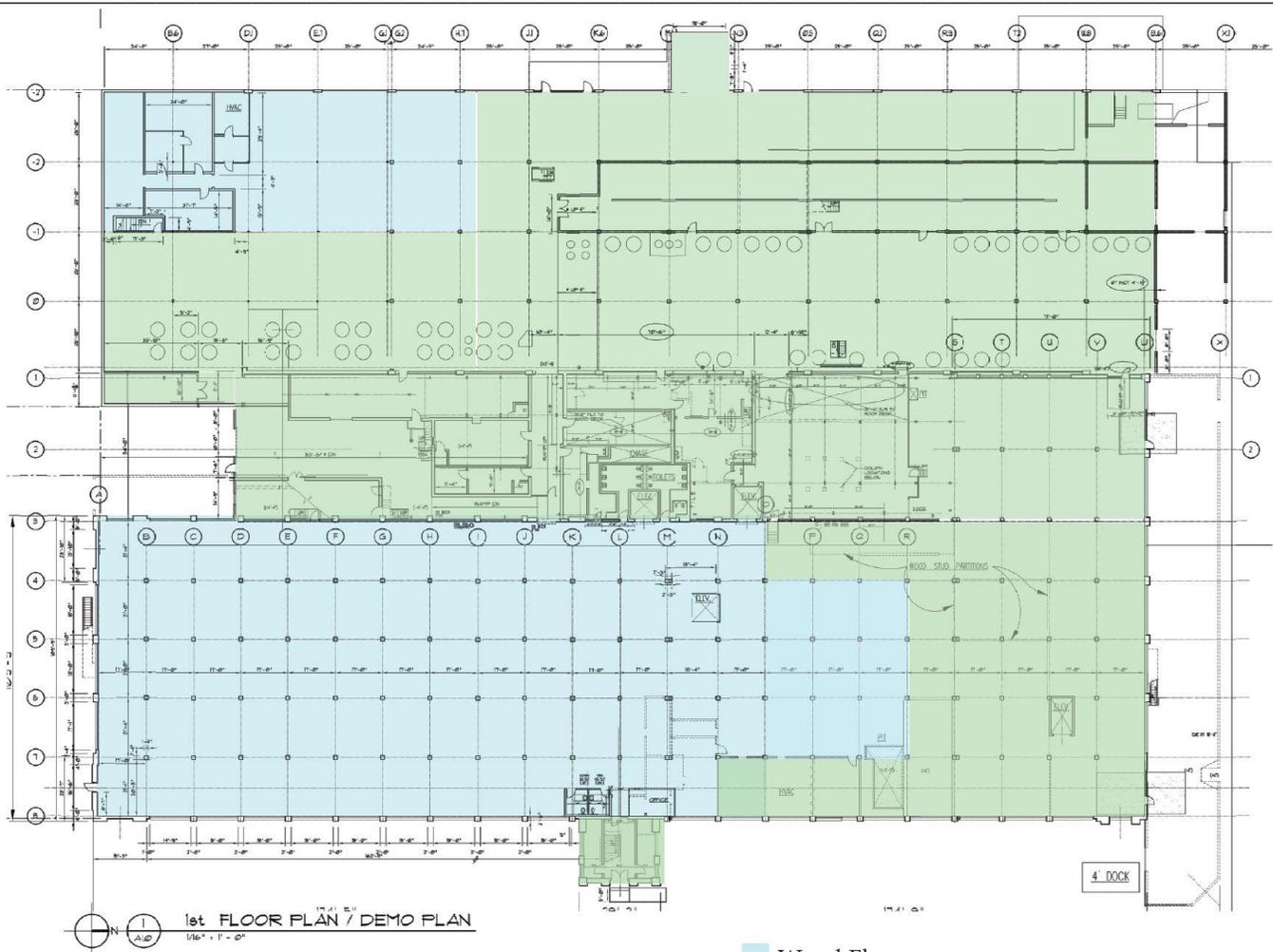


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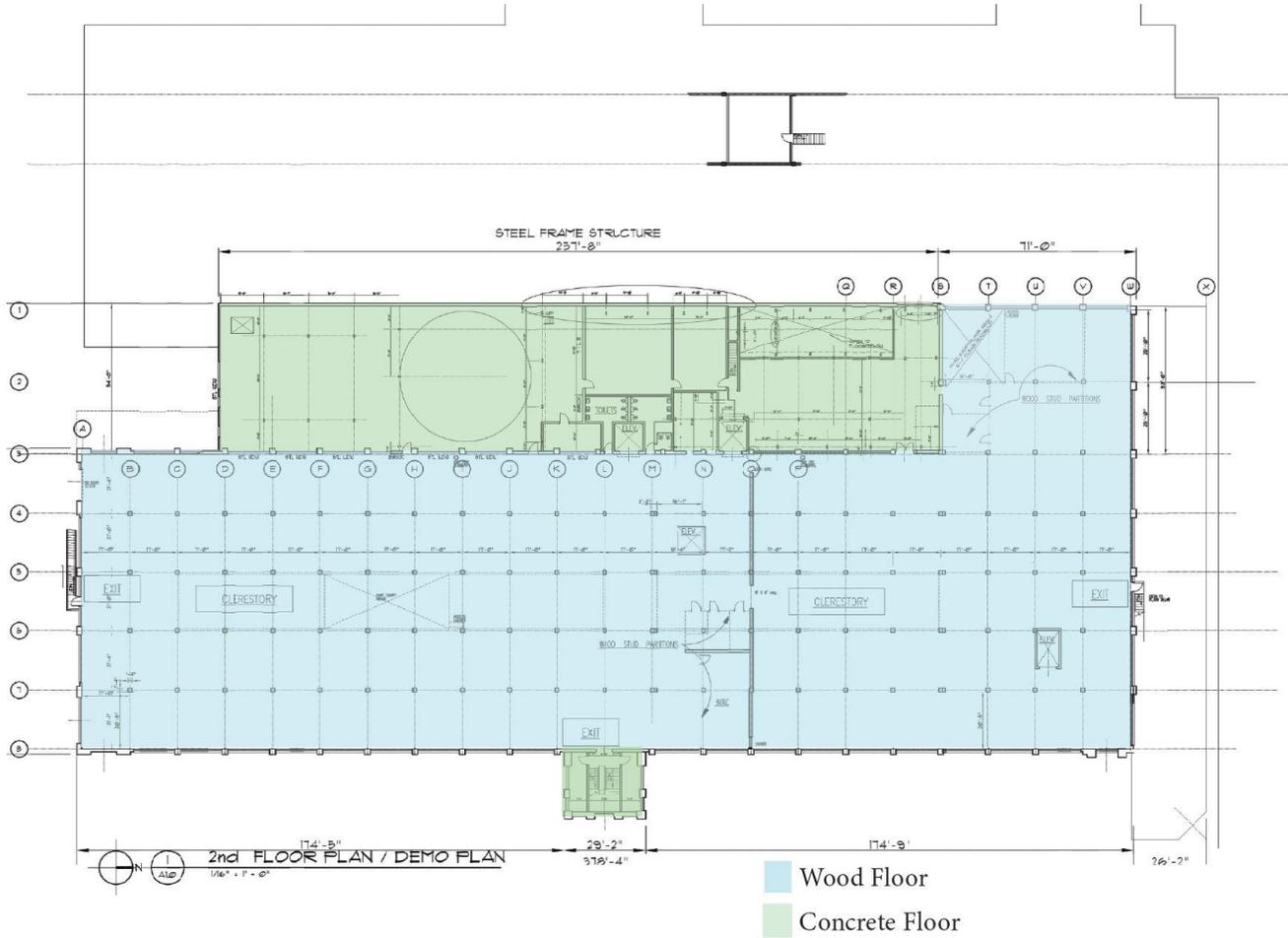
Flooring plan 1st Floor

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Dixie Mercerizing Company
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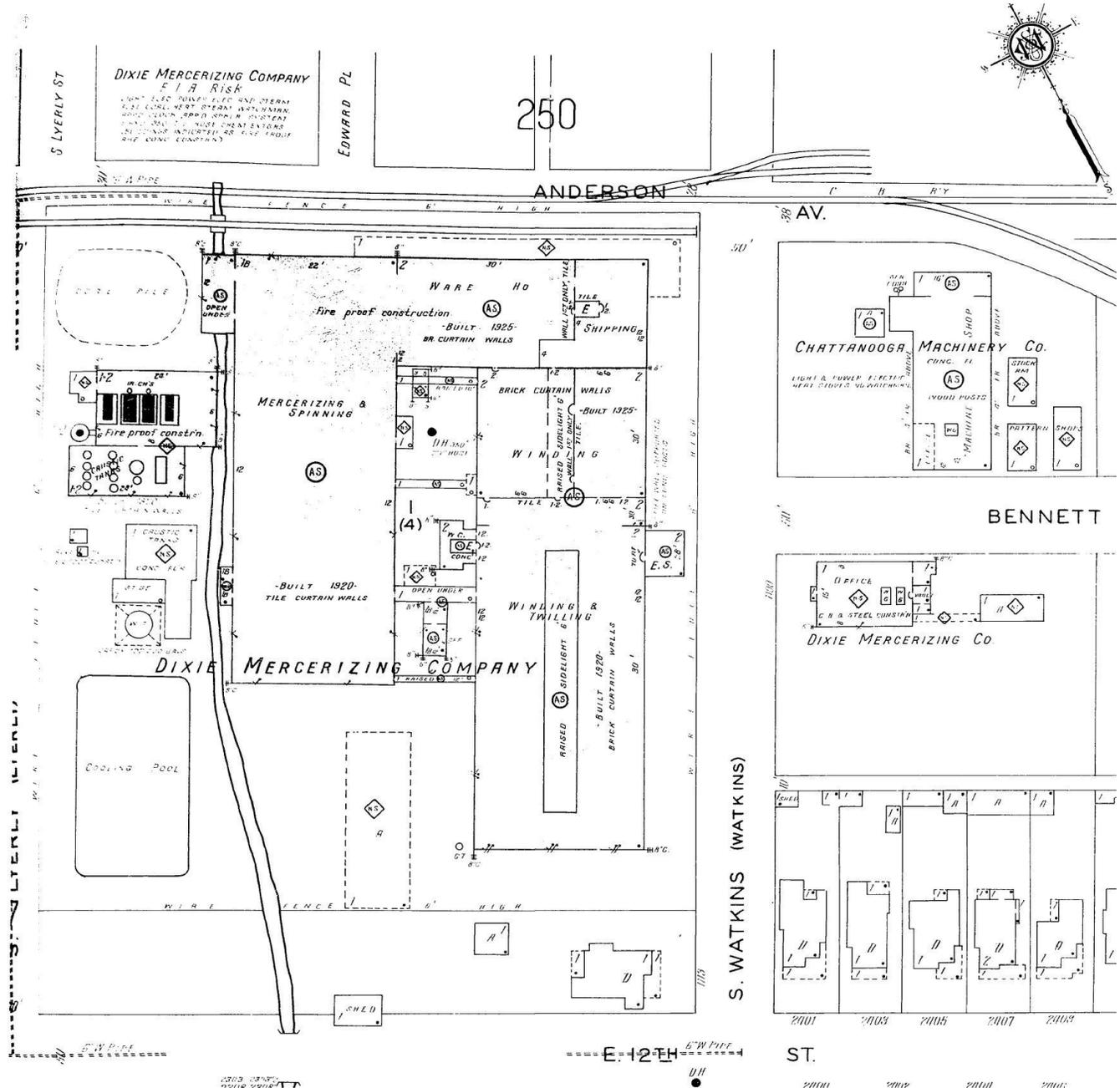
Flooring plan 2nd floor

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1917-1931 vol 2; revised 1929, page 258

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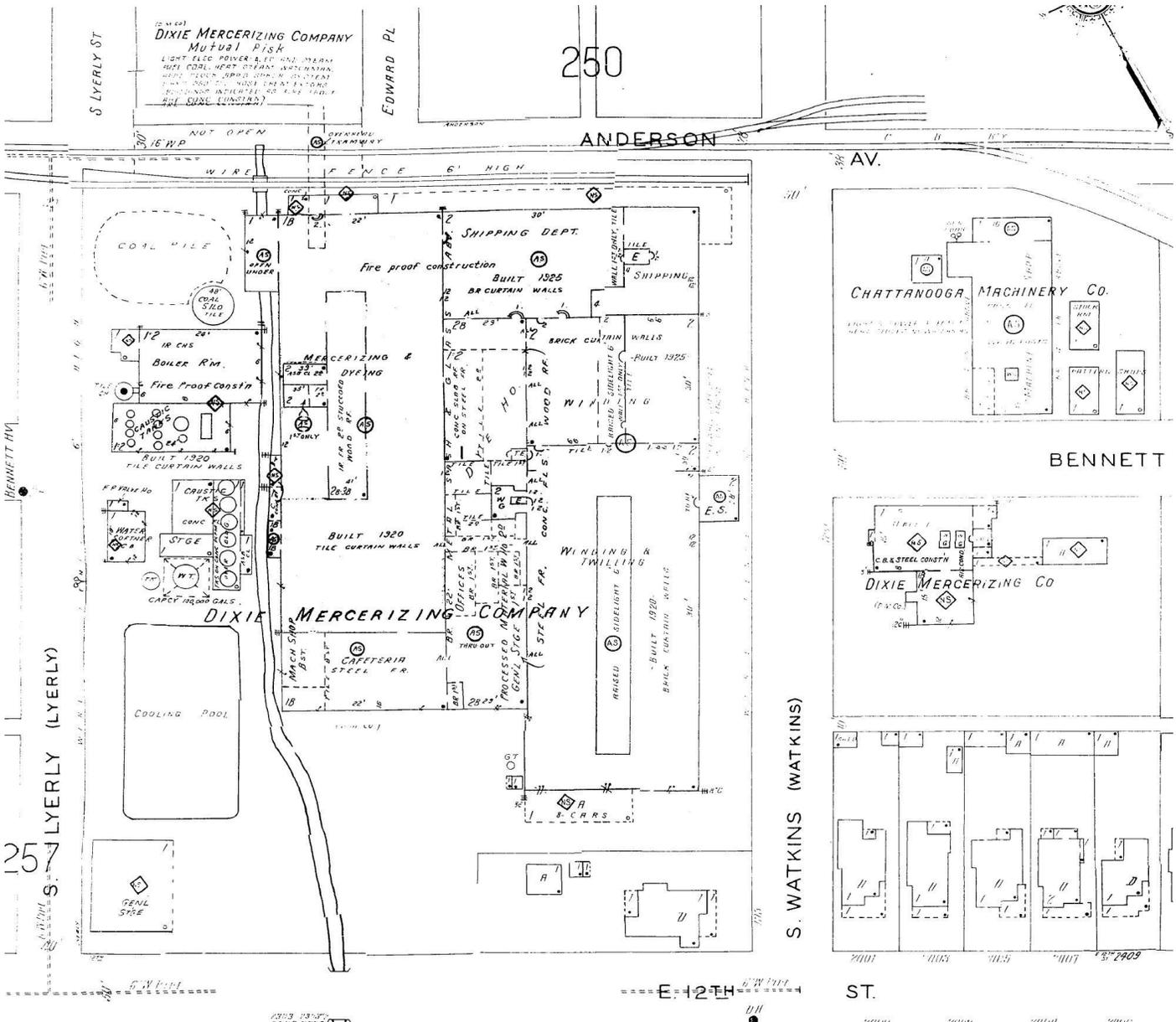
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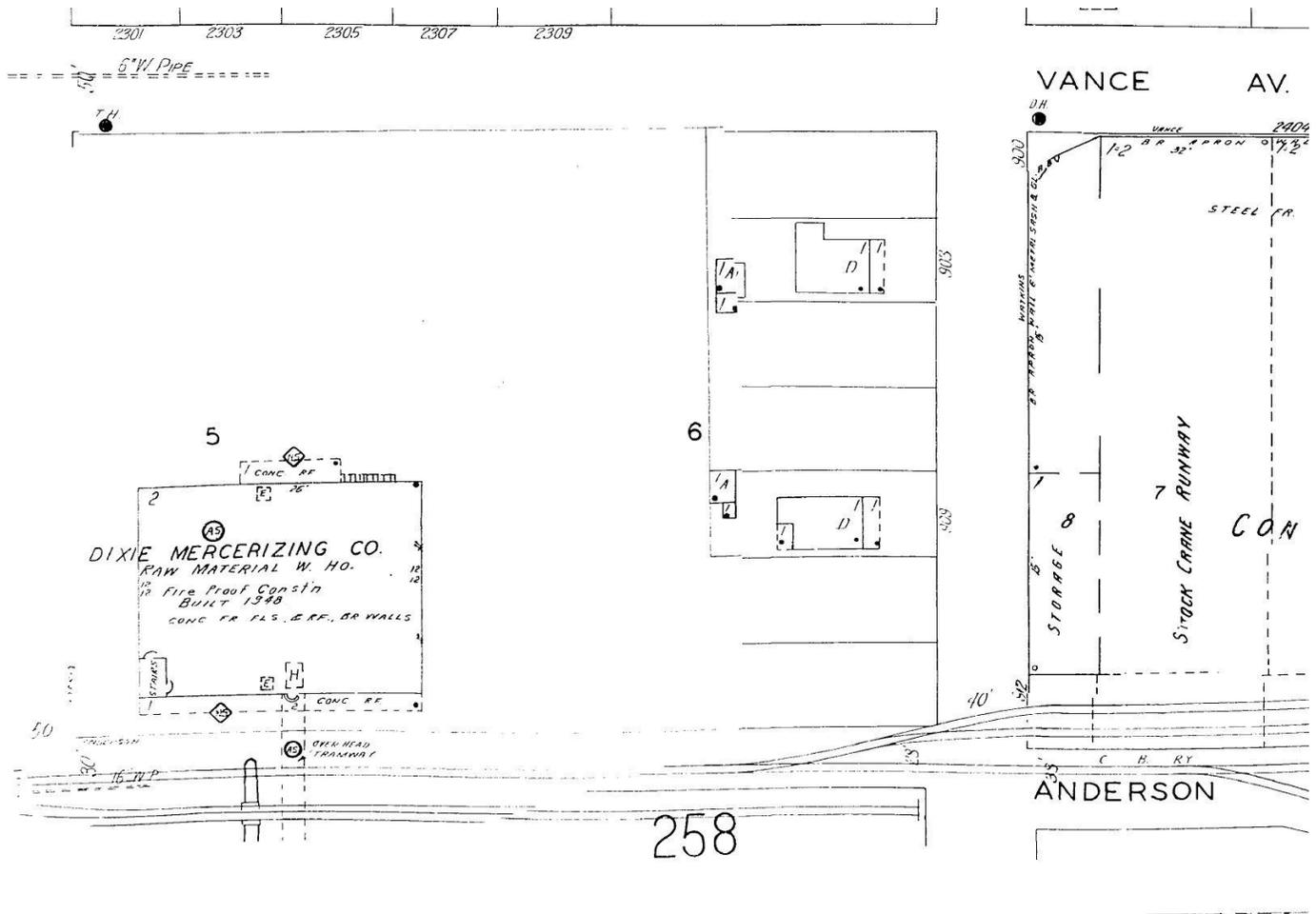
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1951, volume 2, page 258

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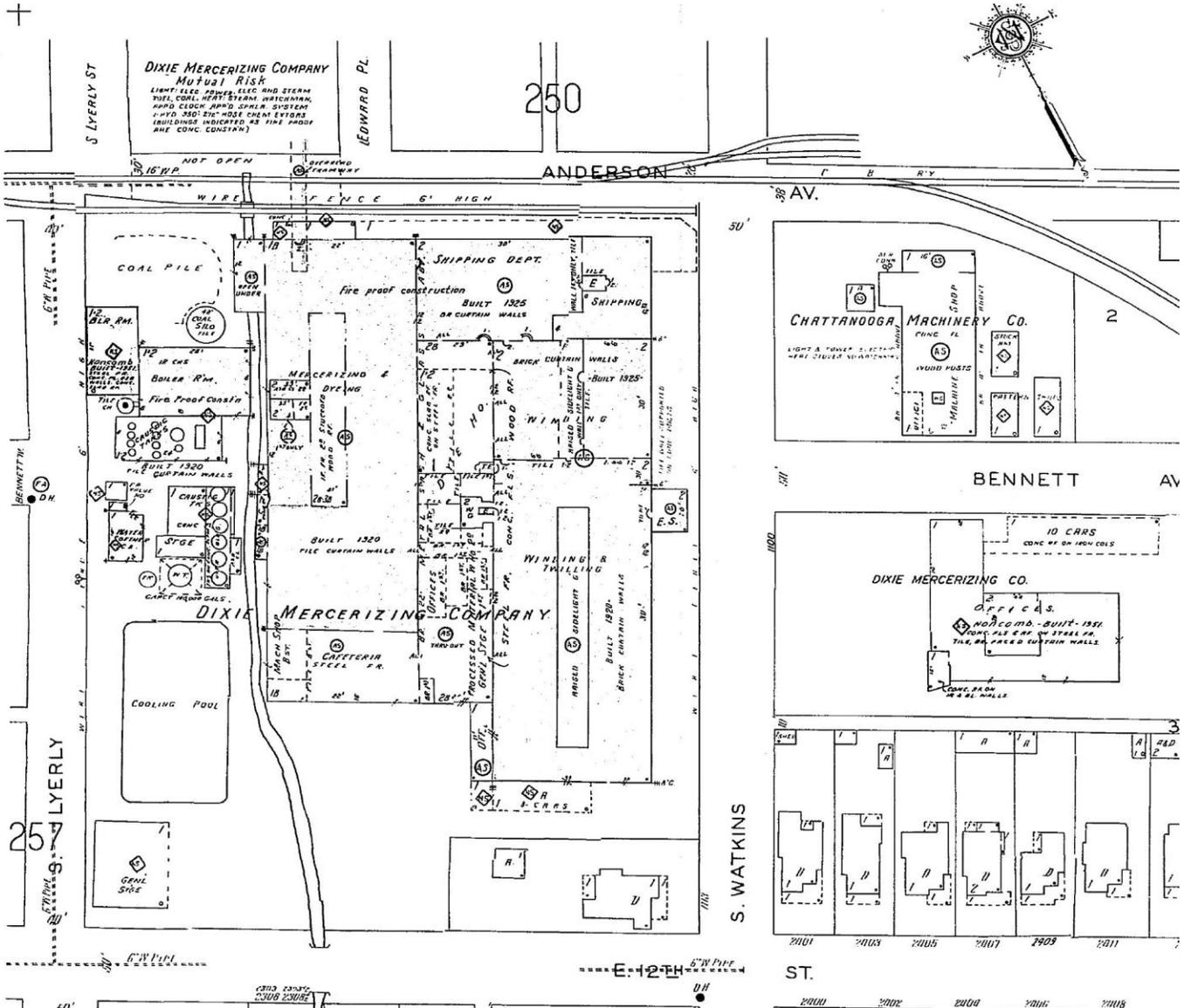
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1951, volume 2, page 250

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1955 volume 2 page 258

