

Building our Village...

The historic neighborhood of Old Hickory has been called Nashville's "best kept secret," but it was anything but secret when it was built 88 years ago. In January 1918, as the "Great War" raged in Europe, the U.S. government contracted with the E.I. DuPont de Nemours Co. to build the world's largest gunpowder plant on 5,600 acres in the hairpin turn of the Cumberland River known as Hadley's Bend. By the time the war ended on Nov. 11 - *barely 10 months later* - more than 3,800 buildings had been constructed, with housing for 35,000 people.



Plant Manager's house—"The Special Davis"

The end of the war meant there was no longer any reason for Old Hickory to exist. By 1920, Old Hickory was a virtual ghost town, despite having many modern conveniences not available in other neighborhoods,

like a water and sewer treatment plant and its own fire and police force. A group of investors called Nashville Industrial Corp. bought Old Hickory from the government and, after selling off much of the plant's equipment, sold the town and plant to the DuPont Co. in 1923. DuPont built many more homes over the next decade, using the same basic floor plans it had used as the government's contractor on the original construction.

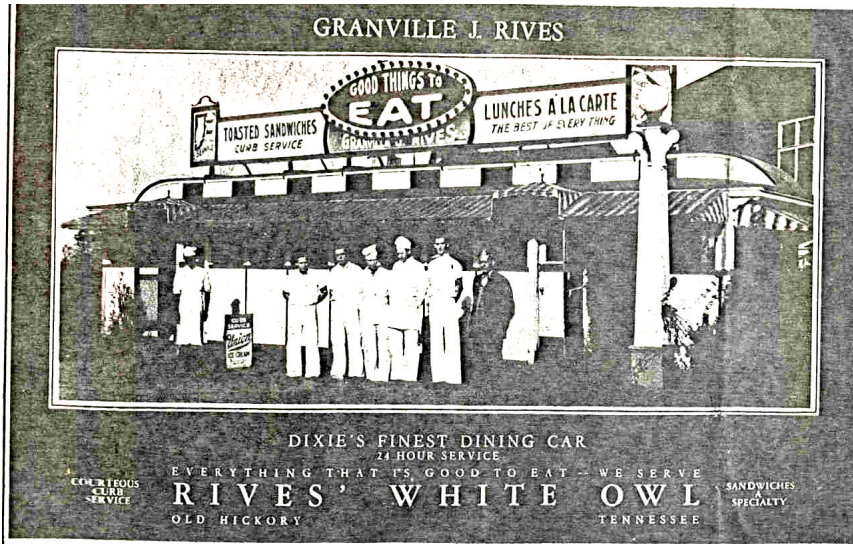
WHITELEY'S POP CORN STAND

Hot Buttered Pop Corn 5¢
 Hot Roasted Peanuts 5¢
 Salted Peanuts 5¢
 Candies 5¢
 Drinks 5¢
 Fruits and Hot Buttered Pop Corn

M. A. WHITELEY, Owner

WHITELEY'S POP CORN STAND
 OLD HICKORY, TENNESSEE

There were 11 original floor plans for single-family frame houses in Old Hickory, and they were built in a distinct "caste system." The largest, most architecturally interesting homes for top-level managers were built on Riverside Road on the eastern edge of the village, overlooking the



stretch of the Cumberland River that was later dammed to become Old Hickory Lake. These floor plans are named Davis, Baytree and Ketchum and a single Welford. The plant manager lived in a "Special Davis" overlooking the river (photo on previous

page). Middle Managers lived in smaller homes called Arlington, Cumberland, Georgia and Haskell, and laborers were able to rent one-story homes called the Florence, the Denver, and a 6-Room Bungalow known as the "Old Hickory" model. DuPont maintained Old Hickory as a company town, repairing and renovating the homes on a regular basis, for the next quarter-century.

In the late 1940s, as company towns fell out of corporate favor, DuPont sold hundreds of the Old Hickory houses to the employees who had been renting them. Hundreds of other "temporary" houses, most of them then 30 years old, were razed. Floor plans on this year's Historic Old Hickory Village Tour include the Cumberland, Georgia, Haskell, Ketchum, and Arlington, plus two lakefront homes – an amazing 60s Contemporary and the Sugar Bowl house.



Riverside Road circa 1918