



**State of Tennessee
Department of State
Tennessee State Library and Archives**

DuPont (Old Hickory, Tenn.) Collection, 1931-2004

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator:

E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company. Old Hickory Plant

Inclusive Dates:

1931-2004, bulk 1939-2004

Scope & Content:

Consists primarily of employee publications from DuPont's Old Hickory location including *Rayon Yarns* (1939-1952), *The Old Hickory Rayon Record* (1951-1958), and *The Old Hickory Record* (1959-2004). The collection also includes DuPont safety certificates, memorandums, newspaper clippings, newsletters, brochures, magazines and programs, and other employee publications.

The *Rayon Yarns* newsletters were published monthly or every two months with themed, colored covers and pages. It was published for and with the assistance of the employees of the Rayon Division in Old Hickory. The newsletters include service milestones, plant news, company baby announcements with pictures, local Old Hickory plant league sports teams such as baseball, volleyball, and basketball, company news, short advice columns for maladies such as colds, and tracking company employees deployed during World War II.

The Old Hickory Rayon Record employee newsletters were published bi-weekly at the Old Hickory, Tennessee, Rayon Plant. The black and white newsletters included a question box for commonly asked questions such as "How much do DuPont directors receive," a "Just Us Girls" section that offered recipes and household hints, a "This is my job section," company sports league updates, and a classified section. Of note, the 1958 newsletters chronicle the beginnings of the Dacron and DMT plants.

The Old Hickory Record was an employee publication of the Textile fibers and DMT plants. The newsletter reflects the change in masthead with the name change from the *Rayon Record* in January 1959 to reflect new products of the location. The newsletters continue to feature company news, local announcements, service milestones, short editorials, and classifieds. Of note, an issue from 1969 discusses the company producing materials used on the spacesuit of Neil Armstrong to walk on the moon. Additionally, an issue from 1985 documents the Dacron plant shutdown and the impact on its employees. In 1987, the publication shifts to a seasonal printing schedule for the four seasons. The 2002 issues celebrate the company's 200-year anniversary and includes historical information about the development of the company and Old Hickory location.

The oversize bound newsletters feature *The Old Hickory Rayon Record* and *The Old Hickory Record* newsletters in reverse chronological order within each bound item.

Three DuPont certificates, issued from 1941-1943, to Elmer C. Tidwell recognize health and safety. The safety certificate mentions 3000 consecutive days without an injury at the Old Hickory Plant in Tennessee. Two health certificates, also issued to Elmer C. Tidwell, certifies he was not absent for more than two workdays because of an illness or an off-the-plant injury from January 1, 1941-December 31, 1941 and then from January 1, 1943-December 31, 1943. The DuPont safety materials include yearly booklets specifying the annual goals from the plant manager and colorful charts, some of which illustrate safety priorities at the Old Hickory Plant.

Other folders include items related to the company, apart from employee newsletters. The brochure folder includes DuPont company brochures highlighting specific products like DMT. The memorandum folder includes marketing to employees regarding the DuPont "Dacron" polyester fiber for men's winter suits in 1960 and announcing DuPont's commitment to employees for reducing plastic waste in 1989. The newspaper clippings include Old Hickory's sheet metal workers safety achievement in 1967 and an advertisement for Old Hickory's Dupont that manufactures Dacron polyester, DMT Polymer Intermediates, REEMAY Spunbonded Polyester, TYPAR Spunbonded Polypropylene, and SONTARA Spunlaced Fabric. The Fisk Scholarship Dinner program lists DuPont as a sponsor for the university, and the 25-year Dinner program highlights long-term employees. It lists employees' departments and length of employment from 25-50 years in the company. The Sontara folder includes pictures of employees who worked on the product along with information on the product.

For historic information related to the company, former employee Paul Hall's *Old Hickory: Reflections from the Past* chronicles the history and stories of DuPont at the Old Hickory location along with the company published *Our Old Hickory Heritage*.

Other folders include items connected to Old Hickory and Tennessee. The programs folder includes items from local Tennessee events such as Relay for Life. The magazine and newsletters folders have assorted items such as *Tennessee Motorist* or *Family Safety and Health Magazine*.

Physical Description/Extent:

2 cubic feet

Accession/Record Group Number:

2020-209

Language:

English

Permanent Location:

XVIII-M-5-6

Repository:

Tennessee State Library and Archives, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37243-0312

Administrative/Biographical History

DuPont Company

DuPont Company, in full E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company, is an American corporation engaged in biotechnology and the manufacture of chemicals and pharmaceuticals. The company was founded in 1802 by French immigrant Éleuthère Irénée du Pont in Delaware to produce explosives. In the 20th century, the company began to manufacture other chemicals as well. This development included synthetic materials: Teflon, Lycra, Orlon, Mylar, Tyvek, and Dacron polyester. In the 1980s, DuPont acquired Conoco, Inc., in what was then the largest merger in corporate history. Additional mergers were undertaken in DuPont's effort to diversify further. In 1986, the company's stain resistant Stainmaster carpets became the best-selling carpet brand in the United States. DuPont entered the global seed market in 1999 with its acquisition of Pioneer Hi-Bred International. DuPont subsequently became one of the world's largest producers of hybrid and genetically engineered seed plants. DuPont now makes a broad array of industrial chemicals, synthetic fibers, petroleum-based fuels and lubricants, pharmaceuticals, building materials, sterile and specialty packaging materials, cosmetics ingredients, and agricultural chemicals. It has plants,

subsidiaries, and affiliates worldwide. Its headquarters are in Wilmington, Delaware.

(Adapted from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/DuPont-Company>)

DuPont company's Old Hickory Location

With the entry of the United States into World War I in 1917, the U.S. War Department purchased nearly the entirety of Hadley's Bend in Davidson County for the construction of a gunpowder plant. DuPont received the contract to construct the facility and to produce smokeless gunpowder. DuPont transformed the farmland of Hadley's Bend, nestled in a bend of the Cumberland River, into a major industrial center as railroads, rendering plants, storage facilities, and housing for workers popped up in weeks. At its height, the DuPont operation was the largest smokeless powder plant in the world and employed nearly thirty thousand people. The facility closed in early 1919. After the war, by 1926, DuPont chose Nashville as a permanent location because it was near the south's growing textile industry, had transportation facilities, ample water and power supply, and availability of suitable land. For the rest of the 20th century, the Old Hickory location focused on manufacturing several synthetic materials in the plants including Rayon, Cellophane, Dacron, Corfam, REEMAY, TYPAR, and Sontara.

Focusing on Rayon from 1925-1961, Old Hickory used two plants to produce over one billion pounds of Rayon. Besides Rayon, Old Hickory produced Cellophane, a transparent wrapping material, for 35 years until 1964. By 1964, employees transferred to manufacturing Corfam, REEMAY, or Dacron. Dacron began production in 1960. Dacron yarn and staple became the two areas of textile manufacturing in the 1970s. To meet the demands of this new material, DuPont built a Dacron polyester plant in 1958, including a DMT unit that furnished dimethyl terephthalate, one of the basic raw materials for the fiber. In 1973, a new DMT plant was built. Sontara, spunlaced technology, began operation at Old Hickory in 1973. The first commercial fabrics were of 100% polyester and wood pulp/polyester blends. In 2002, Old Hickory was the largest spunlacing facility in the world. It was often used in medical environments of surgeons and nurses in medical rooms. Other products include ventures into Crystar and Biom

Hadley's Bend of the Cumberland River. At the time of its construction, it was the largest industrial facility in terms of employees and sheer scope in the state's history. To house the thousands of workers needed at the factory, DuPont designed a permanent village, initially called Jacksonville to honor Andrew Jackson, which had over three hundred dwellings by November 1918. The DuPont village was designed to be self-sufficient, providing a hospital, churches, gymnasiums, city hall, police station, first aid stations, fire hall, theaters, bank, commissary, mess halls, and a restaurant. DuPont acquired a large part of the factory village and changed the community name to Old Hickory, again in honor of Andrew Jackson. By 1925 the DuPont Rayon Plant was in production; for the next twenty years the corporation operated Old Hickory as a company town. Not until 1946 did DuPont begin to sell its homes to employees, ending the tradition of company control over the townscape. The village remains as the only example of a planned company town in Middle Tennessee.

(Adapted from Tennessee Encyclopedia,
<https://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entries/old-hickory/>)

Organization/Arrangement of Materials

The collection is arranged in alphabetical order by document type.

Conditions of Access and Use

Restrictions on Access:

No restrictions.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:

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Index Terms

Personal/Family Names:

Hall, Paul, active 1963-1990
Tidwell, Elmer Clemore, 1913-1983

Corporate Names/Organizations/Government Bodies:

E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company
E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company. Old Hickory Plant

Subjects:

Chemical industry -- United States -- History
Dye industry -- United States -- History
Factories -- Tennessee -- Old Hickory
Industrial safety -- Tennessee -- Old Hickory
Plant shutdowns -- Tennessee -- Old Hickory
Rayon industry and trade
Synthetic fibers industry -- Tennessee -- Old Hickory
Textile fibers, Synthetic -- Periodicals

Geographic Names:

Old Hickory (Tenn.) -- History -- 20th century -- Sources
Wilmington (Del.) -- History -- 20th century -- Sources

Document Types:

Brochures
Certificates
Clippings (information artifacts)
Magazines (periodicals)
Memorandums
Newsletters
Programs (documents)
Serials (publications)

Acquisition and Appraisal**Provenance and Acquisition:**

The collection was donated by Sontara Old Hickory, Inc. in March 2020.

Processing and Administrative Information**Preferred Citation:**

DuPont (Old Hickory, Tenn.) Collection, 1931-2004, Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Processing Information:

Processing was completed by TSLA Archives Collection Services intern Jacqueline Devereaux in November 2020. Duplicates were removed from the collection.

DETAILED COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

CONTAINER LIST

Contents/Item Title	Date	Box	Folder
Certificates	1941-1943	1	1
Memorandums	1960, 1989	1	2
Newspaper clippings	1976, undated	1	3
Programs	1990-2004	1	4
Program -- "DuPont Old Hickory 25- year dinner," -- Old Hickory, TN	2002, 2004	1	5
Program -- Fisk Annual Scholarship Dinner	2002	1	6
Program -- General membership meeting for Old Hickory Chamber of Commerce -- Old Hickory, TN	2002	1	7
Publication -- DuPont brochure about DMT	undated	1	8
Publication -- "DuPont Fiber Facts"	undated	1	9
Publication -- <i>DuPont Magazine</i>	1999	1	10
Publications -- DuPont Safety Materials	1967-1989	1	11
Publication -- <i>Flashes from Cellophane</i>	1945	1	12
Publications -- Magazines	1996, 2002	1	13
Publication -- <i>Milestones in the DuPont Company's Textile Fibers History</i> -- Wilmington, DE	1976	1	14

Publication -- <i>Rayon Yarns</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1950	1	32
Publication -- <i>Rayon Yarns</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1951	1	33
Publication -- <i>Rayon Yarns</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1952	1	34
Publication -- “Solid waste: a DuPont perspective”	undated	1	35
Publication -- Sontara	1993, 1995	1	36
Publication -- <i>The Bridge</i> -- Wilmington, DE	1960	1	37
Publication -- <i>The Cellophane Observer</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1959	1	38
Publication -- <i>The Cellophane Observer</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1961	1	39
Publication -- <i>The Cellophane Observer</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1962	1	40
Publications -- <i>The Old Hickory Rayon Record</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1951	1	41
Publications -- <i>The</i>			

Publications -- <i>The Old Hickory Record</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1971	2	12
Publications -- <i>The Old Hickory Record</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1972	2	13
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Publications -- <i>The Old Hickory Record</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1999	2	34

Publications -- <i>The Old Hickory Record</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	2001	2	35
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Oversize -- Publications -- <i>The Old Hickory Record</i> -- Old Hickory, TN	1970s	3	
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