

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NOV 29 1989

2145

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Lancaster Cotton Oil Company
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number South Main St at Lancaster & Chester Railroad not for publication
city, town Lancaster vicinity
state South Carolina code SC county Lancaster code 057 zip code 29720

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>6</u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources of Lancaster Co., c. 1745 - c. 1940
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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. See continuation sheet.
Mary W. Edmonds 11/8/89
Signature of certifying official Date
Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, SC Department of Archives & History, Columbia, SC
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Processing
Agriculture/Storage
Agriculture/Agricultural Outbuilding
Commerce/Business

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Storage
Agriculture/Storage
Vacant/Not in Use
Commerce/Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Early 20th Century/Industrial

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Brick
Metal
roof Metal
other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Lancaster Cotton Oil Company complex is located on the west side of South Main Street in Lancaster. Many of the buildings date from the the company's organization in 1907. This industrial complex contains eleven contributing resources and one noncontributing resource.

Additional Information

Contributing Resources:

1. Seed and Hull House, c. 1937: Corrugated metal building with exaggerated hip roof with gabled monitor on its crest. This Muskogee-type seed house replaced an earlier, smaller, frame building.
2. Cotton Seed Processing Plant, c. 1907: A one-story five-course American bond brick building with large segmental-arched openings and large frame monitor with asphalt siding. The building is parallel to the railroad tracks. This main industrial building contained the seed cleaning room, the linter room, the linter press room, press room, cake room, and the dynamo engine room. Most rooms still contain their historic processing equipment. The dynamo engine room has partially collapsed due to a recent fire. The building is connected to the seed and hull house by a conveyor belt.
3. Oil Storage Tanks and Shed, c. 1907: Six upright, cylindrical, metal tanks erected to store cotton seed oil. A small gable-front frame shed is located by the tanks.
4. Cotton Gin, c. 1907: Two-story, front gable, frame building with clapboard siding. Large shed overhangs on north and west facades. Connected to the seed and hull house by conveyor belts.
5. Office, c. 1907: one-story, hipped roof building with clapboard siding. Three bay west facade with central entry. Full facade hipped roof porch with turned posts and a slat balustrade. Shown as dwelling on the Sanborn maps through 1930 but used as the company's office after the new seed house was built.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Industry _____	1907 - c. 1939 _____	_____
Architecture _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	Cultural Affiliation	_____
_____	N/A _____	_____
_____	_____	_____
Significant Person	Architect/Builder	
N/A _____	Unknown _____	

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

The Lancaster Cotton Oil Company complex is significant both as an intact collection of early twentieth century industrial buildings, and for its associations with the cottonseed and cotton oil industry in Lancaster County, one of the most important industries tied to cotton production in the county from 1907 to c. 1939.

Cottonseed and cotton oil products were developed early in the nineteenth century, partially as a result of problems in disposing of cottonseed. The small industry began to flourish in the Southeast in the 1880s and 1890s, in large measure due to the growth of cotton production, overoptimistic estimates of profits, and aggressive sales of cotton oil machinery salesmen. Another factor in the industry's growth was the relatively limited transportation system. Cotton oil mills were established not only in centrally located or populous areas such as county seats, but just as often in small towns and unincorporated rural areas. These smaller mills were always near railroads and the cotton crops themselves. In South Carolina the number of mills rose from none in 1879 to 17 in 1889 and to 50 in 1899.

The major products, produced by crushing the cottonseed, were oil, cottonseed cake and meal, cottonseed hulls, and linters. Oil, the most significant product of the cottonseed and cotton oil industry, was refined and used for baking and cooking, and for making lard and salad oil compounds, margarine, and soap. Cottonseed cake and meal were used for fertilizer and cattle feed; cottonseed hulls were used as fuel for oil mills, as fertilizer, and as packing material; and linters, or products created from cotton lint, were used for stuffing, wadding, low-grade yarns, and the manufacture of explosives during World War I.

The cotton oil boom was an artificial one, however, and the industry declined as rapidly as it had grown; one historian noted that it "caused hundreds of mills to be built for which there was no need and which brought about disastrous competition throughout the South. The press capacity was far in excess of the available supply of seed . . .

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

SC Department of Archives & History, Columbia, SC

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.3 acres

UTM References

A 117 52113410 384111610
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is shown as the black line on the accompanying Lancaster County Tax Map 81-A, Parcel 18, drawn at a scale of 1" = 100'.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the seed and hull house, cotton seed processing plant, oil storage tanks and shed, cotton gin, office, and their immediate surroundings as the Lancaster Cotton Oil Company complex.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title J. Tracy Power, NR Historian/Frank Brown III, NR Architectural Historian
 organization SC Department of Archives & History date 5 July 1989
 street & number PO Box 11669 telephone (803) 734-8610
 city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29211

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Noncontributing Resource:

6. Brick Shed: c. 1950, one-story, two-room shed.

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in 1901 so many of them were in financial difficulties that the Southern Cotton Oil Company, then having nine large mills, had no trouble in buying sixty-six well-equipped mills at the best locations. From then on mill after mill failed and changed hands or became unsightly wrecks."(1) The decline in the cottonseed and cotton oil industry was due both to decreased cotton production, particularly after the advent of the boll weevil in 1919, and improved transportation systems which allowed mills to be centrally located instead of near the cotton crops. The number of mills in South Carolina declined from its peak of 103 in 1909, to 97 in 1914, to 81 in 1919, to 38 in 1929, and to 30 in 1939. Those mills which remained in operation were usually the larger and more centrally-located mills, with larger production capacities.(2)

The Lancaster Cotton Oil Company was established in 1907 by John T. Stevens of Kershaw, prominent Lancaster County businessman who later served as president of the South Carolina Cotton Seed Crushers Association. He had established the Kershaw Oil Mill, later described as "the largest independent oil mill in South Carolina," in 1902.(3) The Lancaster Cotton Oil Company office and seed house burned in 1913 and were replaced, but the company continued to grow.(4) After the post-World War I decline the Lancaster and Kershaw cotton oil mills were among South Carolina's larger and more centrally-located mills which survived into the 1930s and 1940s. The two mills together produced some \$1.6 million worth of cotton oil and cottonseed products in 1921, for example, employing over one hundred people and operating seven months out of the year.(5)

NOTES

(1) B.F. Taylor, Early History of the Cotton Oil Industry in America (Columbia: n.p., 1936), pp. 19.

(2) Taylor, pp. 17-20; Leebert Lloyd Lamborn, Cottonseed Products: A Manual of the Treatment of Cottonseed for its Products and Their Utilization in the Arts (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1918), pp. 16-40; Maurice R. Cooper, "History of Cotton and the United States Cottonseed Industry," in Alton E. Bailey, Editor, Cottonseed and Cottonseed Products: Their Chemistry and Chemical Technology (New York: Interscience Publishers, 1948), pp. 22-42; O.H. Alderks, "Handling and Storage of Cottonseed," in Bailey, pp. 567-581; A. Cecil Wamble, "Mechanical Pretreatment of the Seed," in Bailey, pp. 588-614; and John F. Moloney, "Economics of Cottonseed Crushing," in Bailey, pp. 651-656.

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(3) Secretary of State of South Carolina, Dead Domestic Corporations, File # 4657, Lancaster Cotton Oil Company; Secretary of State of South Carolina, Live Domestic Corporations, File # 2595, Kershaw Oil Mill; South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.; Ernest A. Beaty and Carl W. McMurray, Lancaster County: Economic and Social, Bulletin of the University of South Carolina, No. 132, November 15, 1923, Issued Semi-Monthly by the University (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1923), p. 21; South Carolina: Special Limited Edition (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1920), p. 165; Geddings Hardy Crawford, Editor, Who's Who in South Carolina: A Dictionary of Contemporaries Containing Biographical Notices of Eminent Men of South Carolina (Columbia: McCaw of Columbia, 1921), pp. 185-186; and Ralph E. Grier, Editor, South Carolina and Her Builders: A Work for Newspaper and Library Reference and Home Reading (The Carolina Biographical Association, Inc., 1930), pp. 194, 338.

(4) Ibid.; Lancaster News, 12 August 1913.

(5) Beaty and McMurray, pp. 17, 21, 34; Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps, Lancaster, S.C., April 1910, February 1916, November 1924, and July 1930.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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Name of property: Lancaster Cotton Oil Company
(Historic Resources of Lancaster County
multiple property submission)

Location of property: Lancaster County, South Carolina

Photographer: Staff, South Carolina Department of Archives and History

Location of negative: South Carolina Department of Archives and History

Date of photograph: June 1989

1. Office at left, Seed and Hull House on right
Facade, left oblique
2. Cotton Seed Processing Plant at left, Seed and Hull House on right
Rear elevation of Seed and Hull House
3. Cotton Seed Processing Plant
Facade
4. Cotton Gin at left, Oil Storage Tanks and Shed at right
Right elevation of Cotton Gin
5. Office
Facade

SOUTH MAIN STREET



Lancaster Cotton Oil Company, Lancaster
Historic Resources of Lancaster County, c. 1745 - c. 1940

- 1) Seed and Hull House
- 2) Cotton Seed Processing Plant
- 3) Oil Storage Tanks and Shed
- 4) Cotton Gin
- 5) Office

Not to Scale

