

TOWN OF STANDARD
H.C. Frick Coke Company
High Street and SR819
Standard
Westmoreland
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-290

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65-STAN,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
TOWN OF STANDARD

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HAER No. PA-290

Location: High Street and State Route 819, Standard, Mt. Pleasant Township,
Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania

Date of Construction: 1878, 1900

Builder: unknown

Present Owner: individuals

Present Use: housing

Significance: The town of Standard consists of approximately 100 company-built houses of
predominantly two types: the standard two-story wood-frame double house
with a gable roof, and a two-story wood-frame double house with a saltbox
roof. Located on the corner of Diamond and High Streets is the former
Union Supply company store, one of the best preserved Union Supply stores
in the region.

Project Information: In February, 1987, the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) and
the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) began a multi-year historical
and architectural documentation project in southwestern Pennsylvania.
Carried out in conjunction with America's Industrial Heritage Project
(AIHP), HAER undertook a comprehensive inventory of Westmoreland
County to identify the region's surviving historic engineering works and
industrial resources.

Compiler: Gray Fitzsimons and Kenneth Rose, Editors

DESCRIPTION: The town of Standard is composed of the company store and approximately 100 company-huilt houses, most of which are located along Route 819 and High Street. The company-huilt residences are primarily of two types: one is the standard two-story wood-frame double house with a gable roof; and the second type comprises a two-story wood-frame double house with a saltbox roof. Located on the corner of Diamond and High streets is the former Union Supply company store, now used by an automobile-parts retailer. It is one of the best preserved Union Supply stores in the region. Built about 1900, this two-story building has common-bond red-brick walls (the main facade faces west and is painted white) with a three-story brick elevator shaft on the north wall. The building measures 109' x 52' and features a gable roof covered with slate, a pedimented gable across half of the main (west) facade, and large one-over-one-light double-hung sash windows with wooden lintels. The interior contains a vaulted ceiling with decorative plaster work. The building rests on a stone foundation. No structures remain from the slope mine which was located east of Shupe Run.

HISTORY: In 1878, A. A. Hutchinson & Brothers of Pittsburgh opened Standard No. 1 mine on the northern outskirts of Mount Pleasant. This mine consisted of a shaft and a slope opening, and a large beehive coke works containing over 500 ovens. Hutchinson & Brothers also constructed 150 houses just west of the Standard mine No. 1 and named the community Standard. The Mount Pleasant Branch of the Southwest Pennsylvania Railroad served the mine and community. In December 1883 the H. C. Frick Coke Company acquired the Standard property from A. A. Hutchinson & Brothers and soon after developed this works and the nearby Standard Shaft No. 2 (see entry above) into the largest coal and coke operation in the region. Frick appointed Robert Ramsay as superintendent of the Standard operations.

A fire in October 1886 destroyed most of the surface structures at Standard No. 1. No fatalities resulted from the blaze that originated underground, and after the fire was extinguished the mine was drained and reopened. However, coal was removed exclusively from the nearby slope entry rather than the shaft. Another fire occurred in 1889 at the slope mine, destroying all of the buildings, including the boiler and engine house. These structures were rebuilt with brick and iron. By 1890 the Frick Coke Company was extracting over 51,000 tons of coal from the slope entry.

By 1900 the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad also served the Standard mines. James S. Mack of Mount Pleasant was the superintendent of both the slope and shaft mines. In 1900, the slope mine employed 116 men and boys, who produced 72,000 tons of coal. By 1906 production at the slope mine grew to more than 121,000 tons of coal. However, soon after 1906 the company decreased the amount of coal it removed from the slope mine. In addition Frick constructed a No. 3 shaft north of the No. 2 shaft, and much of the coal from the Standard mines was removed through the No. 2 shaft. Through much of the 1910s production at the slope mine was extremely modest, averaging 1,000 or less tons each year. This arrangement apparently changed in the 1920s when large amounts of coal were removed from both the slope and shaft mines. (For several years in the 1920s production levels recorded for the shaft and slope mines were combined.) By 1928 the slope mine was producing about 105,000 tons of coal and employing 123 persons. H. C. Frick closed the Standard slope and shaft mines in 1931.

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