

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Other names/site number McGraw-Edison Company Warehouse

Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

2. Location

Street & number Second and Vine Streets

N/A

not for publication

City or town Boonville

N/A

vicinity

State Missouri Code MO County Cooper

Code 053

Zip code 65233

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x 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 x 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 x local

Applicable National Register Criteria: x A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources

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

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

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory
Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Federal |

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Object |

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1 | 0 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 1 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 1 | 1 | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

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.)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American
Movements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Reinforced concrete
walls: Brick
Concrete masonry units
roof: Composite
other:

☒ NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory
Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri
County and State

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:

- ☐ 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.

☒

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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 # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Areas of Significance

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1912-1953

Significant Dates

1912

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory
Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.52 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | <u>38.973257</u> Latitude: | <u>-92.747728</u> Longitude: | 3 | _____ Latitude: | _____ Longitude: |
| 2 | _____ Latitude: | _____ Longitude: | 4 | _____ Latitude: | _____ Longitude: |

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

____ NAD 1927 or ____ NAD 1983

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------|------------------|---|--------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1 | ____ Zone | ____ Easting | ____ Northing | 3 | ____ Zone | ____ Easting | ____ Northing |
| 2 | ____ Zone | ____ Easting | ____ Northing | 4 | ____ Zone | ____ Easting | ____ Northing |

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elyse McBride and Michael Allen, Architectural Historians

Organization Preservation Research Office

date 24 June 2019

street & number 3407 S. Jefferson Avenue #207

telephone 314-920-5680

city or town Boonville

state MO

zip code 63118

e-mail michael@preservationresearch.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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 18 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.

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

City or Vicinity: Boonville

County: Cooper State: Missouri

Photographer: Michael Allen

Date

Photographed: July 29, 2018

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

- 1 of 13: Exterior view toward the northeast.
- 2 of 13: View of south elevation toward northwest.
- 3 of 13: Exterior view toward northwest.
- 4 of 13: Exterior view toward southeast.
- 5 of 13: Exterior view toward southeast.
- 6 of 13: Exterior view toward freight door on west elevation, looking northeast.
- 7 of 13: First floor interior view toward northwest.
- 8 of 13: View inside of 1968 addition toward original building wall toward northwest.
- 9 of 13: Interior view of 1968 addition toward north.
- 10 of 13: Second floor interior view toward south.
- 11 of 13: Second floor interior view toward north.
- 12 of 13: Third floor interior view toward south.
- 13 of 13: Third floor interior view toward exterior wall and windows toward southwest.

Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

1. Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory Boundary Map. Page 20.
2. Context map showing location of property in Boonville, Missouri
3. Site plan photographic key.
4. First floor plan with photographic key.
5. Second floor plan with photographic key.
6. Third floor plan with photographic key.
7. Elevation drawings.
8. Elevation drawings.
9. The Phoenix-American Cob Pipe Factory as it appeared on the 1929 Sanborn fire insurance map.
10. Postcard view, unknown date.
11. Postcard view, unknown date.
12. Postcard view, unknown date.
13. Laborers working inside of the factory.

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

14. View inside of the first floor office area..
15. Google Earth Map.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Summary

The Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory is located at the northeast corner of Second and Vine streets in Boonville (Cooper County), Missouri.¹ One contributing building consists of the historic three-story mill method manufacturing facility completed in 1912, and a one-story concrete masonry unit addition wrapping two sides and dating to 1968. The building's character is defined by the repetition on all elevations of window bays containing wooden double-hung sash still present, along with the industrial loft interior spaces that are largely still in historic condition. Although the addition necessitated the removal of a previous one-story boiler house, the original portion of the factory has changed little since its original construction. The most consequential alteration has been the modification of the first floor office area and the construction of a partitioned area at the south side of the second floor. The exterior and interior are remarkably well-preserved, and the factory retains integrity in all seven aspects. A non-contributing yard and paved areas to the east contains areas cobs were stored, but lacks any evident features to convey historic use. The yard is counted as a non-contributing structure due to the presence of the paved area.

Setting

The site of the factory is on the western edge of the historic center of Boonville, which is marked by a gridiron street plan (see figure 2). The topographic slope downward from the commercial core to the western end is notable, and a historic reason for the location of railroad infrastructure and heavy industry here. The factory site is located immediately adjacent to where historic freight rail spurs from the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad ran along Second Street and also on a dedicated right-of-way just west of Second Street (see figure 9). Along the rail spurs, several manufacturing businesses located. Just south of the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory is the Kemper Military Academy campus (now State Fair Community College), which also was served by the railroad line. Immediately east of the factory are historic single dwellings. North of the building across Chestnut Street are three self-storage warehouse buildings.

While most of the center of Boonville possesses historic sidewalks and tree lawns, at the factory site there are no sidewalks, and the pavement of the streets and pavement around the factory building have no real separation. The gravel area at the west was the bed for the rail spur serving the building. The railroad infrastructure is now gone, and Second Street is paved in asphalt. To the west, where a railroad right of way once existed, is a trail and a public park. The historic factory yard to the east no longer retain any of the cob storage sheds, but the remainder of the historic site is open and devoid of built features save the paved area (see figure 1; page 20). Small paved areas at the north and south of the building run from the building line to the street, and served as loading areas for later use of the building after the period of significance.

Factory Yard

¹ The building does not have a numbered street address. The Cooper County Assessor records its legal address as "Second and Vine Streets."

National Register of Historic Places
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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Historically, the sloped land to the east of the factory was the site of three corn cob storage sheds (see figure 9). Today, the site is planted as a grass lawn around a non-historic asphalt-paved parking area. Since the sheds are no longer standing, and the site provides no sense of past use, it is non-contributing due to lack of integrity of materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association. The paved area is a non-historic structure.

Factory Building

Exterior

The main building has a narrow, elongated form, and rests on a reinforced concrete foundation. (The addition will be described separately after.) The building's historic main elevation faces south, and has fenestration arranged into seven symmetrically distributed bays grouped in a 2-3-2 configuration (see photographs 1 and 2 and figure 8). There are two square small chimneys rising at this elevation. The main entrance historically was located in the blind area between the two window openings at the center of the first floor (see figure 11). A concrete parking area slopes down from the front elevation toward Vine Street. However, the smooth-faced exposed foundation is visible here and on the western elevation. There is no basement.

Currently, there is a non-historic projecting frame vestibule at the east end of this elevation that opens into the building. The vestibule has a modern metal-framed door, lapped siding and glass block windows on each side. The window openings on the main elevation have painted wooden sills, double rowlock segmental headers and historic double-hung 4/4 wooden windows behind storm windows. All other window openings on the building are the same. First floor windows are boarded on this and the western elevation.

The long exposed west elevation has 39 bays of historic windows divided into groups of 8 by prominent rounded galvanized downspouts (see photographs 1 and 4 and figure 7). On the first floor, the pattern is broken by three loading doors infilled now with metal material, but historically containing wooden paneled doors opening at car level on a rail spur (see photograph 6 and figure 10). Near center, in the nineteenth and twentieth bays from the north, is a steel external fire escape. Between the first and second and second and third floors on this elevation are painted blocks covering old painted signage.

The fenestration on the north and east elevations follow the patterns of corresponding elevations, and most of the first floor windows are in place even where now part of interior space created by the addition (see figure 12 and photograph 3). There is a large parged box chimney on the east elevation close to the north side of the building. The roof drains both to the east and west, with continuous galvanized gutter pans on each elevation.

On the north and east is a 1968 flat-roofed addition built on a reinforced concrete slab with painted concrete block walls (see photographs 3, 4 and 5). There is an entrance on the south elevation, along with four window openings separated by a buttress (see photograph 3 and figure 8). The window openings contain partially-covered steel sash, have jack arches and cast-stone sills. On the main run of the east elevation, there are 15 large window openings of a similar kind, with one person door set into the wall (see figure 8). North of this, there are eight boarded-over smaller same-sized window openings high on the wall.

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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

On the north elevation, there are five window openings like those on the north end of the east elevation; they also are boarded up. There also is a boarded person door opening, and a wooden roll-up door in a vehicle opening (see photograph 5 and figure 7). On the west elevation is a large truck-in concrete loading dock with metal-clad enclosure shelter. There is a wooden roll-up door in a garage bay behind the shelter. Six windows like those on the north elevation, also boarded up, are also on this elevation (see photograph 5 and figure 8).

Interior

The interior of the factory is largely open industrial loft space throughout. The first floor of the original building retains the original office block at its south end, accessible through the vestibule addition (see figure 4). In this space, which is difficult to photograph at present due to the lack of electric light and the board-up over the windows, there is a finished appearance with late 1960s paneling, wood slab doors, acoustic tile ceilings and fluorescent overhead lights and wall-to-wall-carpeting (see figure 14). The area is divided into non-historic smaller offices through partitions. Just north is an open office area (see photograph 7). Exterior walls in this area are painted. Windows have historic stools but are cased into wall cladding. The office area extends past loading docks on the west elevation, so although no historic floor plans have been located, the preparer assumes that the spaces adjacent to loading docks would have been open processing areas and not finished office spaces. Although historically offices were located in this area, none of the existing layout nor the partitions seem historic.

In the addition, besides several small offices at the south end, the space is entirely open (see photograph 9). The floor is smooth-finished exposed concrete. The exterior walls are painted, with inset cast stone aprons beneath the steel windows. Overhead, the trusses and decking of the roof is exposed and painted, along with conduit and piping suspended here. The former exterior walls of the original building are painted white, and certain openings (with and without doors) have been made for circulation between this area and the rest of the first floor. Otherwise, historic window sash is still hung in openings (see photograph 8).

The second and third floors are mostly completely open and show few signs of change since construction, save the removal of all manufacturing equipment and workstations (see figures 5 and 6 and photographs 10, 11 and 12). Here the building shows its unfinished mill method construction, with exposed plank floors, joists, beams and braced columns. On the second floor, a nonhistoric plywood partition encloses a staircase from the first floor and an adjacent set of rooms (see photograph 10). The original freight elevator was removed and replaced with a fire-rated elevator shaft enclosed in concrete masonry units (see photograph 11). The date of the elevator work is unknown, but the exposed walls do not pose a significant impact on the space. A historic beadboard partition wall also remains on the second floor (see again photograph 11).

On the upper floors, columns and header beams are mostly painted, although not consistently (see photograph 12). The floors show some patching, while largely retaining original material. Overhead, fire suppression and florescent lighting systems are modern and suspended directly from joists. The exterior walls are painted. Windows have exposed headers and sills, but otherwise no casing (see photograph 13). The historic character of the upper two floors is especially strong.

National Register of Historic Places
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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Integrity

Despite the addition to the building, and the removal of the boiler house, the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory evinces sufficient integrity for eligibility. The addition's placement on the inferior eastern and southern elevations minimizes its visual impact, allowing the primary view of the original building to show its largely unaltered west and south elevations. On the interior, despite some remodeling to the first floor in historic office areas, most of the historic spaces retain historic unfinished industrial loft appearances. The extension of the office space into the north loading areas is the biggest change inside.

The significance of the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory under Criterion A in the area of Industry mandates clearly legible interior spaces evincing the historic manufacturing use of the building during the period of significance, as well as an exterior retaining a historic appearance. Despite the addition, the exterior demonstrates its historic character. The interior retains its historic appearance as a manufacturing area on the second and third floors, where workers would have been assembling cob pipes (see figure 13). The first floor bears the most change, although its office spaces contains spaces historically used as the factory office. The extension of office space into northern areas around the freight loading doors is mitigated by the presence with office spaces of brick exterior walls and largely open plans. The office infill could be removed and the bare loft space would be present and legible.

The removal of cob storage areas outside is offset by the fact that the historic site is largely open, so the footprint of the operation is still legible. Overall, the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory demonstrates its association with a significant manufacturer of corn cob pipes. The factory building retains integrity of location, setting, association, design, materials, workmanship and feeling.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Section number 8 Page 5

Phoenix-American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Summary

The Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory at Second and Vine Streets in Boonville, Cooper County, Missouri, is locally significant under Criterion A for INDUSTRY. From completion in 1912 until 1953, the factory housed the capacious production of the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company, one of Missouri's three largest manufacturers of corn cob pipes by the late 1940s. Since Missouri was then responsible for the world's corn cob pipe production, this made the factory one of the three largest global producers as well. Even before the factory was opened, the corn cob pipe was a peculiar product of Missouri, spawned by advances in techniques for transforming abundant agricultural byproducts into affordable smoking devices. German immigrant Charles Oscar Strutz had manufactured pipes in Chicago before relocating to Missouri and becoming majority owner of the nascent Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company. Under Strutz' leadership, the company relocated away from Washington Missouri, rich with competitors, to Boonville, where the locals raised capital and labor was more readily in supply. In Boonville, the company truly hit its stride, launching popular new products, raising output and thriving in an industry where most small competitors were defunct by the middle of the Great Depression. In 1953, the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company merged into a competitor, and production of corn cob pipes at the factory ended. Today, the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory remains the only extant building associated with the company, and demonstrates its association through its retention of historic material integrity.

The Early Corn Cob Pipe Industry

Events that occurred in Enschede, Holland in 1862 precipitated the origination of the corncob pipe industry in the United States. Enschede is near the German border and in the 1800s its principle industry was spinning and weaving. In May of 1862, a large fire consumed the town, including the spinning wheel factory owned by Henry Tibbe.² Tibbe, along with his wife and son, moved the United States, arriving in New York in January of 1866.³ He settled in Missouri, where he had two brothers, Fritz and Willem, ending up in Washington, Missouri in 1869. There, Tibbe set up a wood working shop producing spinning wheels, handles and furniture.⁴

According to legend, a local farmer, John Schnarnke, came into Tibbe's shop one day and asked him to use his lathe to bore a hole in a corn cob and smooth the exterior, so that he could use it as a pipe without having to make the cavity by hand with a pocket knife. Henry Tibbe produced additional corn cob pipes using his foot-powered lathe and sold them in his shop. He found that there was a demand for the product.⁵ A St. Charles, Missouri man, Wilson "Doc" Carr, in the mid nineteenth century, had been the first to manufacture corn cob pipes as a commodity, using all hand-crafted methods.⁶

² "Symbol of the Simple Life – The Corn Cob Pipe," *Tobacco* (January 1970), p. 59.

³ Family history compiled by Antonia Tibbe, in the Missouri Meerscham files at the Washington Historical Society, Washington, Missouri.

⁴ "Tibbe's Triumph," *American Heritage* (October/November 1980), copy in Missouri Meerscham archive at Washington Historical Society, Washington, Missouri.

⁵ "Streamlining Corncobs: Corn Cob Pipes are as Missourian as Tobacco is American," *Missouriana* (March 1939), p. 12.

⁶ "The "Daddy" of the Corn Cob Pipe Industry of Missouri," *St. Louis Post Dispatch* (September 21, 1902), p. 60.

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Phoenix-American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

By 1872, Henry Tibbe was exclusively making corn-cob pipes and established H. Tibbe & Son, the company that was the foundation of the US mechanized corn cob pipe industry.⁷ Tibbe experimented with the manufacturing procedure in order to develop a better pipe. One issue corn cob pipes had were that they had a limited lifespan because the process of smoking them caused them to burn through. Tibbe consulted with the local apothecary, Ludwig Muench, to find a material that would fill the interstices of the cob and render the pipe impermeable to destructive power of the fire within the pipe bowl itself. Muench suggested a plaster of Paris like substance that could be used to coat exterior of the cob.⁸ Tibbe also added a wood plug that fit snugly into the bottom of the pipe to offer a firm substrate to attach the pipe stem. In May of 1878, Tibbe applied for a patent for his process of corn cob pipe manufacture utilizing a "plastic self-hardening cement" allowing the pipe to be smoothed on the exterior and to be more durable, and a method of fastening the pipe stem to the bowl utilizing a wooden disc. He was granted the patent in July of 1878 and assigned to both Henry Tibbe and his son Anton Tibbe.⁹

H. Tibbe & Son moved to a former foundry on Front Street in Washington, Missouri in 1878 and purchased a steam engine to power the lathes used to shape the cob pipes. Although this company is not related to the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory, it is a significant predecessor. In 1879, George H. Kahmann, Upton L. Meirick, and Guy F. Kahmann became stock holders in the company with Henry Tibbe and his son Anton A. Tibbe, changing the company name to H. Tibbe & Co.¹⁰ In January of 1883, Henry Tibbe registered the trademark "Missouri Meerschaum" with the U. S. Patent Office. The name Meerschaum was chosen because of its allusion to the highly decorated carved pipes made from Meerschaum, a fine white clay-like mineral found in Asia Minor.¹¹ Due to the increased demand for the product, H. Tibbe & Co., decided to build a new factory at the corner of Front and Cedar streets in Washington. They hired Theodore Link of St. Louis to design the building. He created a building with a multitude of windows so each lathe operator could set-up in front of one allowing sufficient light during working hours, which were typically sun-up to sundown.¹² In 1887, the company was officially incorporated in the State of Missouri, adopting the name Missouri Meerschaum Company. The new company officials included U.L. Weirich as president, Anton A. Tibbe as vice president, Guy F. Kahmann as secretary and treasurer and George H. Pike as superintendent.¹³ In 1898 the company produced over 6 million corn cob pipes, showing the quick rise in popularity of the pipe style.¹⁴

⁷ "Corn Cob Pipes Not Invented Here, but This is the Industry's Birthplace," undated copy of newspaper article in the Missouri Meerschaum archive at the Washington Historical Society, Washington, Missouri.

⁸ "Corn Cob Pipe Manufacturers," *Celebrating 175 Years, Washington, MO, 1839-2014* (Washington, Missouri: Washington Historical Society, 2013), p. 30. "Symbol of the Simple Life – The Corn Cob Pipe," *Tobacco* (January 1970), p. 60.

⁹ United States Patent Office, Patent #205,816

¹⁰ "Symbol of the Simple Life – The Corn Cob Pipe," *Tobacco* (January 1970), p. 60.

¹¹ Quirk, Paula McNeill, "The Missouri Meerschaum Pipe," *Missouri Historical Review* 78 (October 1983,) p. 16.

¹² Tibbe, Madeline, "Keeping the Record Straight," p. 4, undated manuscript in the Missouri Meerschaum archive at Washington Historical Society, Washington, Missouri.

¹³ Gregory, Ralph, *A History of Washington, MO*, Washington Preservation Inc. and Washington Historical Society, Washington, Missouri, p. 26-7.

¹⁴ Copy of an undated page from *The St. Louis Manufacturer* in the Missouri Meerschaum archive at the Washington Historical Society, Washington, Missouri.

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Phoenix-American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Process of Cob Pipe Manufacture and Size of Industry

When the industry was young, there were numerous declarations of astonishment that there were actually companies that wanted corn cobs. But just any cob would not do. To be made into a pipe, the corn cob needed to be 1 ¾ inch in diameter and very hard, and typically required a 140-day growing season. The cobs could be either red or white but the kernels needed to be white to ensure that the cob would be hard enough for use. The soil and climate of the Missouri River valley in central Missouri were ideal for growing this type of corn.¹⁵ Cob pipe corn was “native” to Missouri in the area around Washington and was sometimes called Collier corn after the man who developed it. This corn was open pollinated and was used by most manufacturers through the mid-twentieth century. By mid-century, hybrid corn was being introduced and was inadequate for pipe production. Most pipe factories were contracting with farmers to grow corn throughout the twentieth century. In 1947, M.S. Zuber with U.S. Department of Agriculture began a program at the University of Missouri to develop a corn hybrid suited to the corn cob pipe industry.¹⁶

Factories kept several million cobs on hand that were dried up to two years prior to their being turned into pipes. Once of sufficient dryness the cobs were cut to length, sorted and taken to the appropriate boring machine where the centers were drilled out by hand using a powered lathe, then the filling material was applied to seal the interstices of the cob. After that, they were dried for a couple of days, then sanded smooth and varnished. Then the stem holes were bored, stems placed and labels affixed. Once complete, they were packaged and shipped.¹⁷

Production numbers show that Missouri was the center of the corn cob pipe industry by the start of the twentieth century, due to the availability of the raw materials needed. The number of corn cob pipes produced in Missouri for 1904 was 25 million, worth \$417,881. The 1908 worth of output for the counties where cob pipe factories were located totaled \$418,816, with Franklin County's four factories producing a total worth of \$401,643, Gasconade County \$23,621, and Warren County \$913. Franklin County, again with four factories, produced 23,268,156 corn cob pipes, Gasconade 1,384,416, and Warren 18,888. This translates to 14 million corn cobs.¹⁸ The 1912 output of corn cob pipes in Missouri was worth \$519,970, translating to a total number of pipes equal to 28,171,872. These were produced by six factories, three in Franklin County, one in Boonville (the nominated factory), one in Union and one in Owensville.¹⁹ The 1919 figures for corn cob pipe production reported that the 6 factories in Missouri produced 27,591,840 corn cob

¹⁵ “Farming for Corn Cob Pipes,” *Everybody's Magazine*, 55.4 (October 1926), p. 38.

¹⁶ “Specialty Corn,” *Corn: Origin, History, Technology and Production*, C. Wayne Smith, Javier Betran, E.A.C. Runge, eds. (Hoboken, N.J.: John C. Wiley, 2004), p. 917.

¹⁷ Carl Avery Werner, “The Calabash, Corncob and Clay,” *Tobaccoland* (New York: The Tobacco Leaf Publishing Company, 1922), pp. 300-302.

¹⁸ Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Surplus Products of Missouri Counties for the Year Ending December 3, 1908, supplement to Annual Report issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics* (Jefferson City, Missouri: The Hugh Stephens Printing Company, 1909), p. 46, 48, 109.

¹⁹ Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Annual Report 1912/1913* (Jefferson City, Missouri: Hugh Stephens Printing Company, 1914), p. 129.

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pipes, employed 425 individuals, consisting of 315 men and boys and 110 women and girls, earning a total of \$260,674.²⁰

Corn Cob Pipe Industry Expansion, 1895-1905

Upon the expiration of Tibbe's patent at the end of the nineteenth century, numerous corn cob pipe manufacturers began making pipes in midwestern states. These were often small operations, and little is known about most of them. Prior to 1895, references can be found to 6 other factories. Two located in southeast Kansas, at Elk Falls²¹ and Sedan,²² one located in southeast Nebraska, at Greenwood,²³ and three located in Missouri, at Potosi,²⁴ Rich Hill,²⁵ and St. Louis.²⁶ The factory with the most attention given was in Sedan, KS. In March of 1890, the Sedan factory was manufacturing a new style of pipe, employed 22,²⁷ and was receiving cobs from western Kansas.²⁸ In January of 1892, the St. Joseph Herald stated that there were only three cob pipe factories operating in the United States, one each in Nebraska and Kansas, and one at St. Louis. Together these factories produced 10,000 cob pipes per day.²⁹ It is unclear whether these factories utilized different methods than H. Tibbe & Co., as Tibbe usually sued those companies that were manufacturing a similar product. It is also unclear whether the St. Louis company referred to may, in fact, be Tibbe & Co., as their products were exclusively handled by Hirschl & Bendheim, a tobacco products wholesaler located at 419 N. 4rd in St. Louis.³⁰

After 1895, the number of cob pipe manufacturers rose dramatically, including across Illinois. In 1895, factories at Bement (13 men employed with a capacity of 5000 pipes per day),³¹ Forrest (5 men and 5 boys to operate the machines with a capacity of 5000-6000 pipes per day),³² Varna (12 men employed),³³ and Roodhouse (5 men and 3 boys employed with a capacity of 6000 pipes per day) began operations.³⁴ Kansas and Missouri followed suit with factories at Lyons, Ottawa, and Quenemo, Kansas, and Charleston, Marthasville, Shelbyville, La Grange, and Mokane, Missouri opening in the next few years.³⁵ The factory at Quenemo closed in 1898,

²⁰ "Missouri Meerschauts," *Tobacco*, 69.9 (January 1, 1920), p. 4.

²¹ "Corn Cobs," *Douglass Tribune*, Douglass, KS (January 3, 1890), p. 4.

²² *The Sedan Graphic*, Sedan, KS (February 12, 1890), p. 3.

²³ *The St. Joseph Herald*, St. Joseph, MO (January 10, 1892), p. 4.

²⁴ "Southeasterings," *Ironton County Register*, Ironton, MO (March 22, 1883), p. 1.

²⁵ *The Daily Advocate*, Clinton, MO (August 31, 1886), p. 2.

²⁶ *The St. Joseph Herald*, St. Joseph, MO (January 10, 1892), p. 4.

²⁷ *The Cedar Vale Star*, Cedar Vale, KS (March 28, 1890), p.2.

²⁸ *The Weekly Times-Star*, Sedan, KS (March 7, 1890), p.3.

²⁹ *The St. Joseph Herald*, St. Joseph, MO (January 10, 1892), p. 4.

³⁰ *Gould's St. Louis Directory*, p. 716.

³¹ *The Decatur Herald*, Decatur, IL (August 16, 1895), p. 2.

³² "Cob Pipe Factory," *El Paso Times*, El Paso, IL (July 26, 1895), p. 8.

³³ *The Paxton Record*, Paxton, IL (October 3, 1895), p. 1.

³⁴ *The Paxton Record*, Paxton, IL (May 9, 1895), p. 1.

³⁵ "A Good Thing," *The Lyons Republican*, Lyons, KS (July 3, 1896), p. 4; *Salina Daily Republican-Journal*, Salina, KS (February 17, 1896), p. 2; *Quenemo Republican*, Quenemo, KS (January 9, 1896), p. 3; "Wealth in Corn Cobs," *Darlington Record* (Darlington, MO) September 9, 1897, p. 3.; *Marthasville News*, Marthasville, MO (August 12, 1897), p. 1; *Shelby County Herald*, Shelbyville, MO (June 9, 1897), p. 4. *Shelby County Herald*, Shelbyville, MO (March 11, 1896), p. 1; *Henry County Democrat*, Clinton, MO (January 12, 1905), p. 5.

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citing lack of business and a rise in the price of cobs due to the Dingley Tarriff Act.³⁶ Illinois added another at Mason City in 1897 that produced between 4000 and 5000 pipes per day,³⁷ and one opened at St. Anne, IL prior to 1898.³⁸ The Great Central Manufacturing Co. was organized in Mattoon, Ill in 1898 by Frank Kern, James Kitchin and F.N. Henley to manufacture "Illinois Meerschaums." The company employed 20 machines and produced 46 different types of pipes and had set up shop in Mr. Kitchin's Elevator.³⁹

There were undoubtedly additional small factories, and newspaper editorials across the Midwest encouraged the establishment of corn cob pipe factories as a way to improve the economy of small farming communities. It was declared in newspapers across the country in 1899 that many would-be cob pipe factory owners had been defrauded by a group of men operating out of Washington, Missouri, who solicited the mayors of small towns with the promise of enormous profits from these factories and the offer of a good deal on the machinery need to start a factory. The machinery was then sold at an inflated price, and the factory rarely succeeded because the corn cob pipe market was already saturated.⁴⁰ The prospective operators were contacted by mail under the letterhead of the Miller Brothers and were promised substantial profits and a man to superintend the factory for the first 6 months for a percentage of the profits. The scheme operated across the country, but the majority of the letters were sent to prospective buyers in Missouri, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, South Carolina and Louisiana.⁴¹ While regrettable, the incident showed the national scope of the cob pipe industry.

The 1900 edition of the *Thomas Grocery Trades Reference Book* listed eighteen corn cob pipe manufacturers in the United States, along with the amount of capital that each employed in the operation of their factories. The American Cob Pipe Co. of Washington, Missouri, Degen-Breckenkamp of Washington, Missouri, Hirschl & Bendheim of Washington, Missouri, and H. Tibbe & Son Manufacturing Co. of Washington, Missouri reported the highest capitalization.⁴² By 1905, the number of manufacturers in neighboring states had decreased but the number in Missouri increased.⁴³ By 1910, all corn cob pipe manufacturers listed by the *Thomas Register of American Manufacturers* included only Missouri companies, and all were located in Franklin or Gasconade Counties. Corn cob pipe manufacturers now numbered five, Union Pipe Co. of Owensville, Missouri, Degen-Breckenkamp Manufacturing Co., Hirschl & Bendheim, Missouri Meerschaum (formerly H. Tibbe & Son), and the Phoenix American Pipe Works, all of Washington, Missouri.⁴⁴ Phoenix American reported \$50,000 in capital in 1910.⁴⁵

Phoenix and American Pipe Works

³⁶ *Osborne County Farmer*, Osborne, KS (January 20, 1898), p. 4; *The Springfield News-Leader*, Springfield, MO (February 10, 1898), p. 4.

³⁷ *Decatur Daily Republican*, Decatur, IL (May 28, 1897), p. 6.

³⁸ *Gibson City Courier*, Gibson City, IL (March 25, 1898), p. 1.

³⁹ "Cob Pipes," *Mattoon Gazette*, Mattoon, IL (June 24, 1898), p. 1.

⁴⁰ "Four Men Found Guilty," *St. Joseph Gazette Herald*, St. Joseph, MO (November 16, 1899), p. 1.

⁴¹ "Accused of "Corn Cob" Fraud," *Chicago Tribune* (January 7, 1899), p. 9.

⁴² "Pipe," *Thomas Grocery Trades Reference Book 1900 Edition* (New York: Thomas Publishing Company, 1900), pp. 308-9.

⁴³ "Pipes," *Thomas Register of American Manufacturers: The Buyer's Guide 1905-1906*, (New York: Thomas Publishing Company, 1906), pp. 766-7.

⁴⁴ "Pipes," *Thomas Register of American Manufacturers* (New York: Thomas Publishing Company, 1910), p. 1759.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

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The American Pipe Company began in 1893 as a partnership between J.L. Bryan and J.L. Calvin, both of Washington, Missouri. In 1894, the company moved to an old hotel located at Main and Jefferson in Washington (no longer extant), transforming it into one of the larger manufacturing facilities for corn cob pipes in the city. At the time they were producing 100 gross pipes per day, that all found ready sale.⁴⁶ Little could be found about John L. Bryan, other than he was involved with several cob pipe manufacturers, and may have worked at the Tibbe factory for several years learning the trade. John L. Calvin was born in Union, MO in 1865, but spent most of his life in Washington. Calvin signed with the St. Louis Browns in 1890, but was let go after missing too many practices.⁴⁷ He was a county judge from 1925 until 1927 and was involved in the Democratic party, as was his son George B. Calvin, who received letters of condolence from both Truman and Roosevelt upon his father's death.⁴⁸ John Calvin built the Calvin Theater in Washington in the 1910s and was the first to bring motion pictures to the city. He founded a bus line, the Washington Union Bus Co., that offered service to St. Louis.⁴⁹ When he was elected vice-president of the Phoenix American Pipe Co. in 1926, the paper announced that he had eight jobs.⁵⁰

In January of 1901, J.L. Calvin sold the building at Main and Jefferson to the Phoenix American Pipe Works, a corporation that had been founded by Charles Oscar Strutz.⁵¹ Calvin became a co-owner of the company at the same time. Strutz was born in Dresden, Germany in 1846 and came to the United States at age 18. He fought in the Civil War under General Custer. Strutz began making pipes in Chicago in 1893 and came to Washington in 1900.⁵² After operating in Washington, Missouri for 10 more years, the company sought another location to build a new factory. Calvin sold his interest in the company to Strutz on January 1, 1909.⁵³ Both Boonville and North Kansas City sought to have the new factory relocate to their town.⁵⁴

In February 1911, Strutz announced that the company would move to Boonville, Missouri, as the residents of that town had banded together to come up with enough money to fulfill the necessary \$25,000 subscription needed to convince the owners of the Phoenix American to move to their city. The next task was to find a site for the three-story brick building.⁵⁵ Prior to this vote, Strutz was seen talking to the local farmers trying to convince them to plant the type of corn that the new factory needed to use in the manufacture of pipes, indicating that they could

⁴⁶ Copy of page from unknown book in the Phoenix American archive file at the Washington Historical Society, *Die Washington Post* (August, 10, 1894).

⁴⁷ *Union Record* (April 11, 1890), p. 1.

⁴⁸ "John L. Calvin Died Wednesday at the Hospital," *Washington Citizen*, Washington, MO (November 17, 1944) p. 1; Letter from Harry S. Truman, U.S.S. to George B. Calvin dated November 17, 1944 and Telegram from Franklin D. Roosevelt to George B. Calvin dated November 17, 1944, Phoenix American archive at the Washington Historical Society, Washington, MO.

⁴⁹ "John L. Calvin Died Wednesday at the Hospital," *Washington Citizen*, Washington, MO (November 17, 1944), p. 1.

⁵⁰ *Washington Citizen*, Washington, MO (February 19, 1926), p. 8.

⁵¹ Warranty Deed dated January 5, 1901 in the Phoenix American archive at the Washington Historical Society, Washington, MO.

⁵² "C.O. Strutz Dead," *Washington Citizen*, Washington, MO (August 6, 1926), p. 8.

⁵³ *Washington Citizen*, Washington, MO (January 7, 1949), p. 3.

⁵⁴ Melton, E. J., "Boonville Leads the World in the Cob Pipes," *Melton's History of Cooper County Missouri* (Columbia, Missouri: Press of the E.W. Stephens Publishing Company, 1937), p. 347.

⁵⁵ "Boonville Gets a Cob Pipe Factory," *Fair Play*, Sainte Genevieve, Missouri, p. 1.

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get an additional \$10 per acre for the cobs.⁵⁶ On February 18, 1911, the stockholders met and agreed to change the location of operations of the Phoenix American company to Boonville.⁵⁷

Information about the new factory building comes through several newspaper and journal reports, as plans have not been located. The designer and builder of the plant remain unknown. However, the design of the facility is firmly within the convention of the mill method factory type that was prevalent between 1890-1920. The plain reinforced concrete slab, lack of basement and plan red brick walls are all in the utilitarian tradition of this factory construction, as is the exposed internal structure where bearing members are also fire-rated timber. Although Boonville has only one other major mill method factory, the Hamilton-Brown Shoe Company Building (built 1919-20; NR 3/16/1990) on First Street, this type of factory is common in Missouri and the United States.⁵⁸

When completed in 1912, the factory had 38,000 square feet of floor space and warehouse space to store the equivalent of 151 carloads of corncobs, and was the largest corn cob pipe factory in Missouri by square footage. This likely made the factory largest in the nation as well. The families of 69 workers moved from Washington to Boonville to keep their jobs and provide experienced help to get the factory going.⁵⁹ The company also began hiring workers from Boonville at this time. In 1915, it was reported that the factory produced 50,000 pipes per day.⁶⁰ The Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company grew to an output of \$750,000 by 1926, and sold its wares across the country.

Boonville would have been alluring to the company due to improvements in railroad access. The first railroad to reach Boonville was the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad, which arrived in 1873 on a line linked to both Tebo and Neosho, Missouri.⁶¹ That railroad, however, did not build a passenger depot – the city's first – until 1912.⁶² The first railroad that linked Boonville to markets in St. Louis was the Boonville, St. Louis and Southern Railway, incorporated in January 1878 and built by 1880. Upon completion, the new railway leased itself to the Missouri Pacific Railroad for 30 years, then in 1910 for 99 years, and renegotiated again in 1917 to extend until 1955.⁶³ The Missouri Pacific Railroad lease in 1910 provided security to industrial companies that Boonville would have a long-term connection to larger markets, because it provided a link not only to St. Louis, whose hinterland reached to the southwest and southeast, but to Kansas City, whose hinterland extended across the Great Plains and the west.

The Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company introduced the first bone stem pipe, the "Dewey," in 1915, which proved to be very popular. In 1935, the company introduced the "Mel-O-Cob" and the "Ima-Cob," both had the appearance and performance of the more expensive briar pipe but

⁵⁶ "Pipe Corn," *Henry County Democrat*, Clinton, Missouri (January 5, 1911), p. 2.

⁵⁷ Affidavit dated July 16, 1913, Phoenix American archive at the Washington Historical Society, Washington, Missouri.

⁵⁸ See Preservation Planning Section, Missouri Historic Preservation Program, *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Hamilton Brown Shoe Factory* (1989).

⁵⁹ Melton, p. 347.

⁶⁰ *The Shelby Torchlight*, Shelby, MO (March 26, 1915), p. 6.

⁶¹ Preservation Planning Section, Missouri Historic Preservation Program, *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad Depot* (1989), p. 8-1.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ *Poor's Manual of Railroads* vol. 56 (1923), p. 973.

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were much more affordable. These pipes featured a thicker exterior molding compound, later known as bakelite, to give a smoother appearance.⁶⁴ When the “Mel-O-Cob” was introduced the factory was operated 120 hours a week to keep up with demand.⁶⁵ The Mel-O-Cob concealed the cob with an outer painted meerscham clay layer, so that it looked more like clay and wooden pipes more fashionable in urban areas. Sales were outstanding, with round-the clock production reported in 1937.⁶⁶ In 1934, prior to the launch, the Phoenix American Cob Pipe company successfully recruited the inventor of the bakelite cob pipe, Edwin J. Steutermann, to relocate to Boonville to work for the company.⁶⁷ The company officers had interviewed Steutermann about the process previously.

E.J. Melton’s *Melton’s History of Cooper County, Missouri* (1937) reported that the chief industries of Boonville at the time of writing were the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company factory, a shoe factory employing 600 people (first operated by Hamilton-Brown Shoe Company of St. Louis, then merged into International Shoe Company), a chick hatchery shipping to every state, a flour mill, a sand company, two ice-cream factories, a soda water bottling plant, a monument manufacturing factory, a harness manufactory, two machine shops, a lumber mill and numerous smaller manufacturing shops.⁶⁸ Melton claimed that the Phoenix American factory was the largest of its kind in the world.

As the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory thrived, Cooper County, Missouri changed as a result of the Great Depression. In 1930, the county recorded 19,308 people in the Census, compared to 18,075 in 1940 and 16,608 in 1950. The predominant occupation of county residents was in farm work, and in the Great Depression farms failed and county residents relocated to cities for industrial employment. A 1936 drought, following the nationally-devasting 1934 drought and a 1935 rainy year, proved to be a major factor in relocation within Missouri.⁶⁹ Topsoil loss was a major problem in Cooper County.⁷⁰ As a local industrial employer, the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory benefitted from a larger supply of ready laborers, but also had been benefitting from an ample supply of corn cobs produced by local farmers whose cobs could be transported affordably to the factory. In 1945, the Cooper County Extension introduced a “balanced farming” program to discourage farmers relying on single crops such as corn, and this program ultimately may have affected the costs of making cob pipes in Boonville.⁷¹

By the late 1930s, the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company had played a major role in industrializing Boonville. Boonville’s efforts to lure the Phoenix American company in 1912 and the Hamilton Brown Shoe Company in 1920 boosted the local workforce, and population growth followed. Boonville’s population rose from 4,252 in 1910 to 4,665 in 1920 and 6,435 in 1930.

⁶⁴ “Corn Cob Pipe Factory,” *Memorabilia of Cooper County*, Mary Weimholt, ed. (Boonville, Missouri: Curtis Media Corporation, 1990), p. B29.

⁶⁵ Melton, p. 345.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ “Edwin J. Steutermann,” *The Washington Citizen* (February 14, 1947), p. 9.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Bernhard Ostrolenk, “Missouri Farms Hurt by Drought,” *New York Times* (July 26, 1936), p. 10.

⁷⁰ *Cooper County Extension 100 Year Celebration, 1913-2013: Past - Present – Future*.

<http://extension.missouri.edu/cooper/documents/ec_council/anniversary/cooper_county_extension.pdf>. Accessed 23 June 2019.

⁷¹ *Cooper County Extension 100 Year Celebration, 1913-2013: Past - Present – Future*.

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The Hamilton Brown Shoe company surpassed the Phoenix American Company as Boonville's largest employer in 1927, but both remained significant pillars of the local economy.⁷²

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Missouri's Phoenix American, Missouri Meerscham or Hirschl & Bendheim companies continued to rival each other in product innovation, output and distribution. Most sources on production carry local biases, with Washington claiming its makers as the largest, and Boonville claiming Phoenix American. A more level examination of the prowess of these three corn cob pipe manufacturers can be found in an issue of *BusinessWeek* in 1944, which plainly stated that "The Missouri Meerscham Company, the Hirschl & Bendheim Company of Washington, Mo. and the Phoenix American Pipe Company, Boonville, Mo., produce virtually all of the world's supply of corncob pipes."⁷³

C.O. Strutz died in August of 1926.⁷⁴ Earlier that year, at a stockholders' meeting in February, F.M. Strutz, one of C.O. Strutz's sons, was elected president and J.L. Calvin was elected vice-president.⁷⁵ In 1929, F.M. Strutz was president and Leo Strutz was the Secretary-treasurer.⁷⁶ The 1937 executive board consisted of F.M. Strutz, president, L.B. Schmidt, treasurer, and Carl Gurbich, Secretary.⁷⁷

The End of the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company

In 1953, the Missouri Meerscham Company of Washington purchased the machinery, material stock and trademarks of the Phoenix American Pipe Works. At that time, Reginald M. Strutz, C.O. Strutz's grandson was the president of the company. At the peak of its production in the 1920s, the factory employed 170, but by the early 1950s only 50 or so were employed.⁷⁸ The declension in workforce partially was due to increased automation of the production line, not necessarily lack of productivity. However, this was the era of peak popularity of corn cob pipes, and the era would end. The factory building itself was purchased by McGraw Electric in 1954 to be used as regional executive offices and an experimental lab.⁷⁹ McGraw-Edison Company, the renamed McGraw Electric, occupied the building through the 1980s, when the company sold the building to Toastmaster Corporation.

In 1968, the McGraw-Edison Company remodeled the building's first floor. The office area was gutted and rebuilt with then-contemporary finishes like wall paneling, suspended acoustic tile ceilings and wall-to-wall carpeting. The office area was extended into the first floor manufacturing area at the north as well (see photograph 7). Furthermore, the company simultaneously removed the boiler house wing and constructed a large one-story addition wrapping the north and east sides of the building. This addition has concrete masonry walls, steel windows, and a flat roof. Although of a different era and material, it has an industrial

⁷² Preservation Planning Section, Missouri Historic Preservation Program, *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Hamilton Brown Shoe Factory* (1989), p. 8-1.

⁷³ "Three Big Makers," *BusinessWeek* (July 1, 1944), p. 38.

⁷⁴ "C.O. Strutz Dead," *Washington Citizen*, Washington, MO (August 6, 1926), p. 8.

⁷⁵ *Washington Citizen*, Washington, MO (February 19, 1926), p. 8.

⁷⁶ *The Macon Republican*, Macon, MO (March 19, 1929), p. 4.

⁷⁷ Melton, E. J., , p. 347.

⁷⁸ "Local Firm Buys Boonville Pipe Factory," *Washington Missourian*, Washington, MO (May 28, 1953), p. 1.

⁷⁹ *Moberly Monitor-Index*, Moberly, MO (January 8, 1954), p. 4.

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appearance like the original building. Inside, the exterior first floor wall of the east elevation is exposed and retains most of its original windows.

In 1982 a Multiple Property Area (MRA) nomination was approved for Boonville as the Boonville, Missouri MRA (MC64000389). Although 59 properties were nominated in the MRA, only six districts and the MRA were listed (1-24-83); the remainder were returned. In 1990 Additional Documentation (AD) was submitted for the Boonville MRA, including information on the properties that had not been listed with the first submission. Several more listings resulted from the AD submission (list date 3-16-90). The Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory was not listed with the original submission (it was returned by NPS) or the 1990 AD submission (the SHPO omitted it because the owner objected). This nomination is the first to present a thorough documentation and evaluation of the building.

The Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory has been vacant for the last several years, although remains in good condition. The setting around the factory has changed as the railroad spurs no longer exist, and part of the railroad track bed to the west is now a recreational trail.

Conclusion

As the only factory purpose-built by, and only remaining building utilized by the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company, the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory has a significant role in the history of one of Missouri's most endemic industrial stories. The period of significance spans the operational years of the factory, beginning with its opening and ending when the building ceased to be used for cob pipe production. The factory itself is testament to the company's ability to navigate the early years of the corn cob pipe industry in Missouri, where many competitors foundered or ended up merged into expanding larger concerns. Phoenix American instead became one of the growing manufacturers in the twentieth century, a position strengthened by moving away from the saturated market of Washington to Boonville, and by the company's continual development of new products. While utilizing the factory, the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Company was one of the state's three major cob pipe producers who produced almost every corn cob pipe sold across the entire world. The factory remains an important part of Missouri's manufacturing heritage.

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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Section number 9 Page 18

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Section number 10 Page 20

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Boundary Description

The boundary of this property bounds all of the parcel recorded by Assessor of Cooper County, Missouri as parcel number 05-7.0-35-002-021-002.000. The parcel's legal description is thus: POB, SE COR 2ND & CHESTNUT, NE 205', SE 275', SW 80', SE 80', SW 127.5', NW 355', POB, (2ND & VINE).

Boundary Justification

This parcel is the entire site used by the Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory during the period of significance, and the company's only site of operations between 1912 and 1953.

Figure 1: Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory Boundary Map

Source: Google Maps



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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

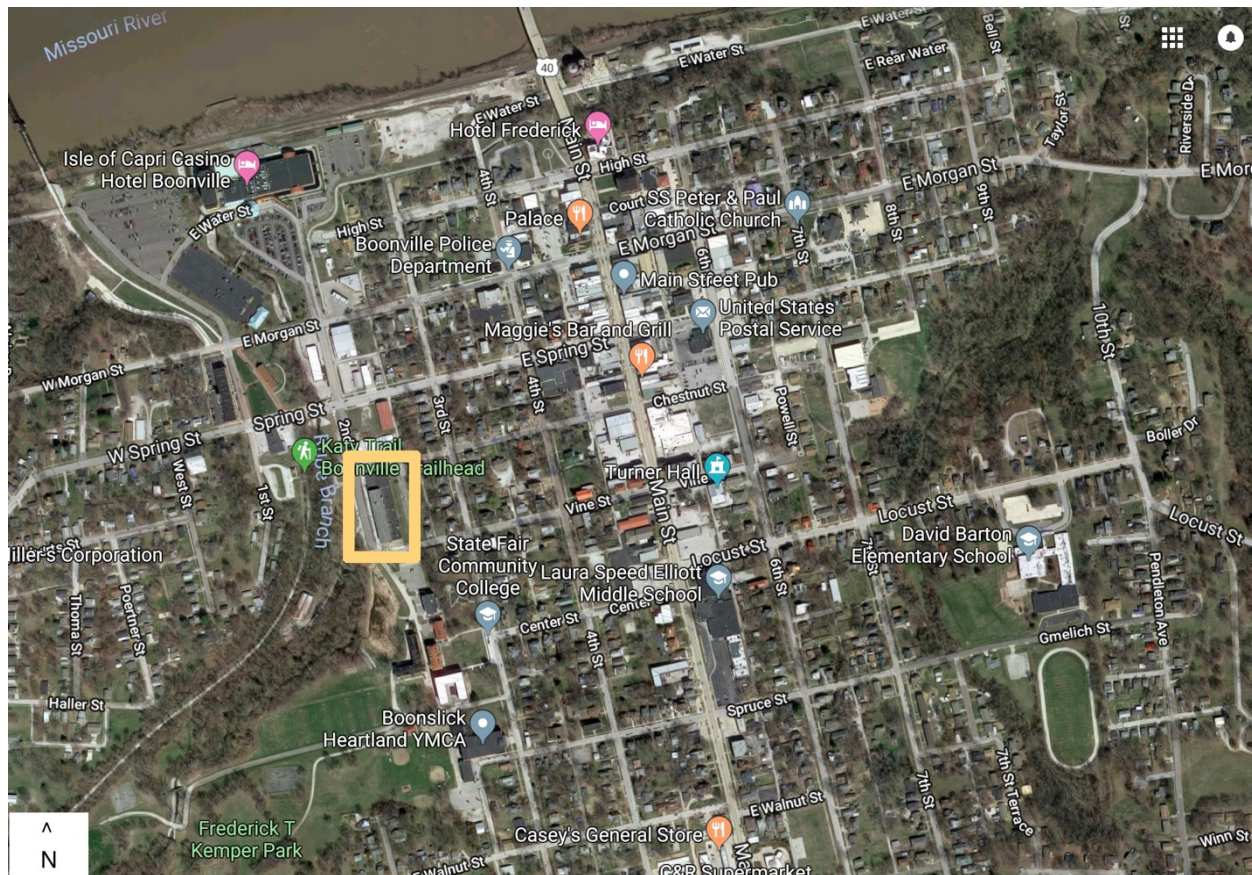
Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 2: Context map showing location of property in Boonville, Missouri. Source: Google Maps data, 2019.



National Register of Historic Places
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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

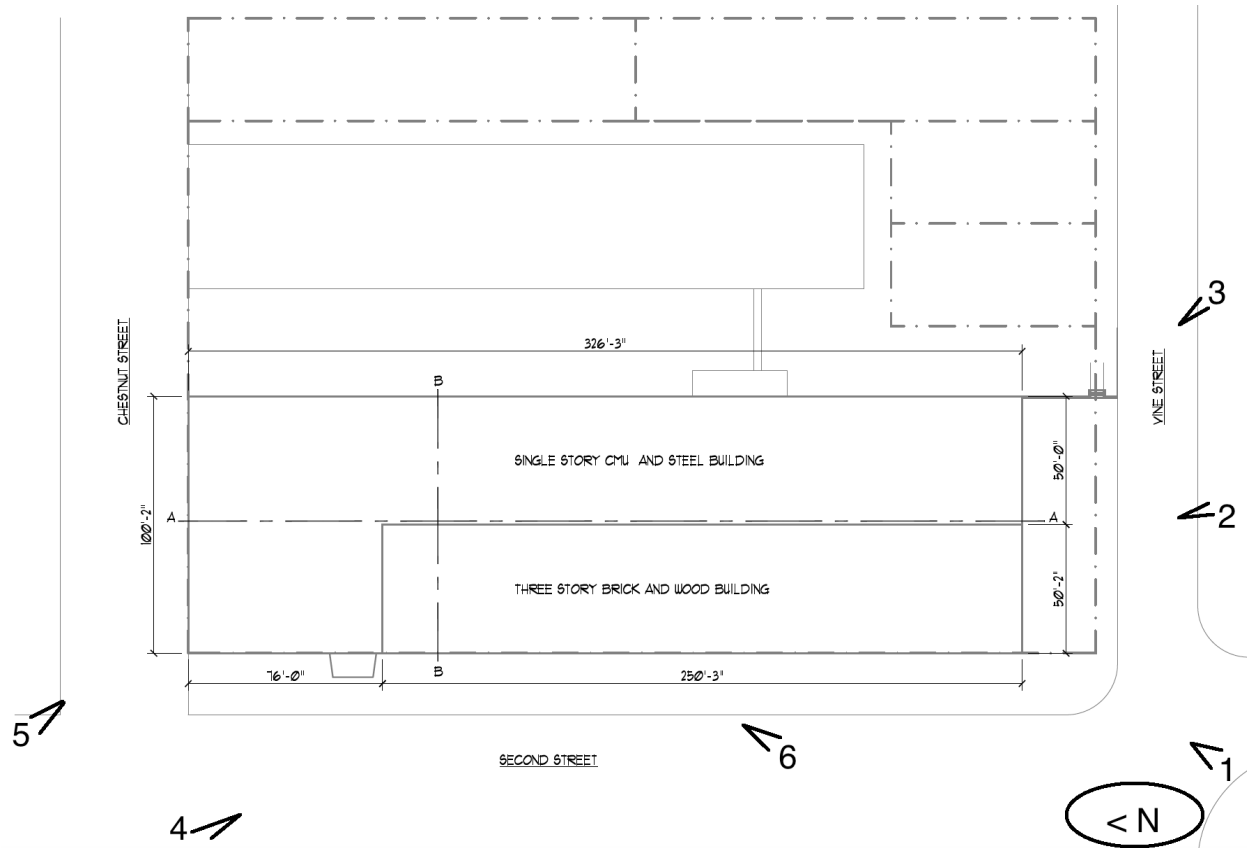
Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 3: Site plan photographic key. Source: Levine Associates, 2018.



National Register of Historic Places
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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

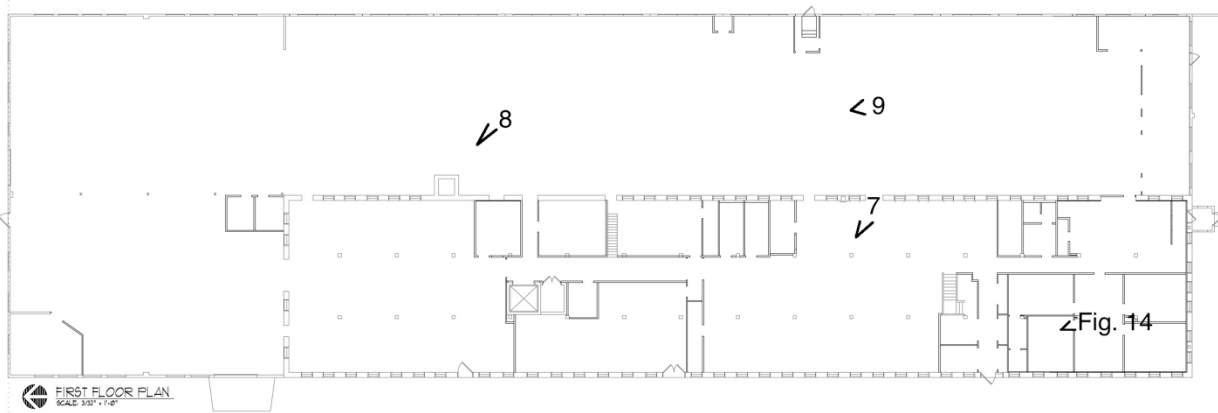
Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 4: First floor plan with photographic key. Source: Levine Associates, 2018.



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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

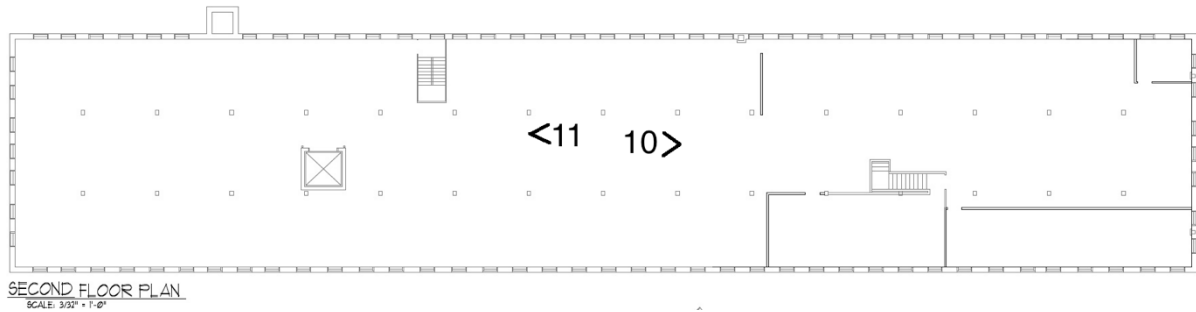
Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 5: Second floor plan with photographic key. Source: Levine Associates, 2018.



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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

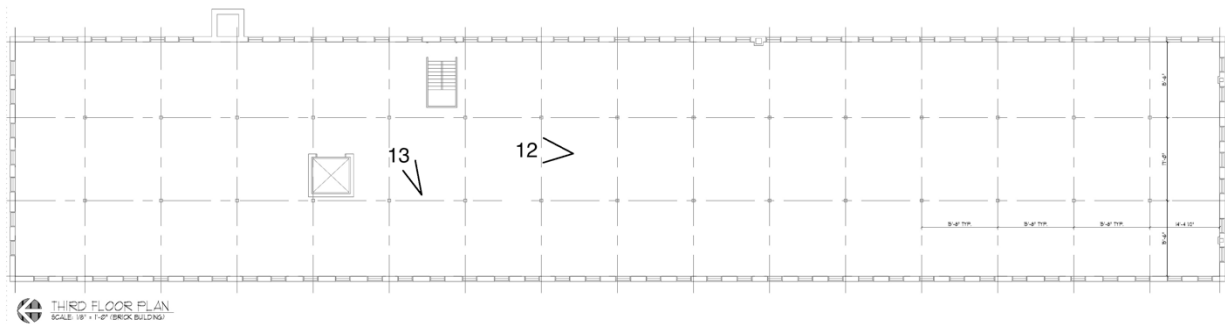
Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 6: Third floor plan with photographic key. Source: Levine Associates, 2018.



National Register of Historic Places
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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

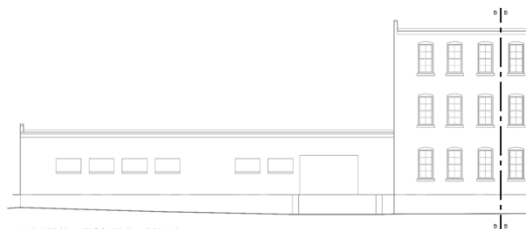
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

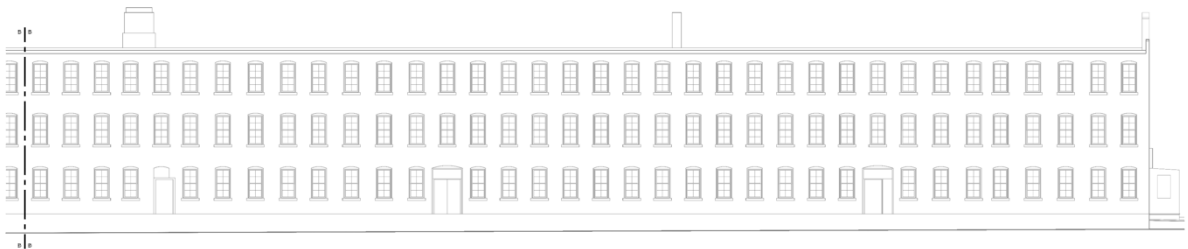
Figure 7: Elevation drawings. Source: Levine Associates, 2018.



NORTH ELEVATION
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"



PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"



PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 27

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 8: Elevation drawings. Source: Levine Associates, 2018.



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Section number Figures Page 28

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

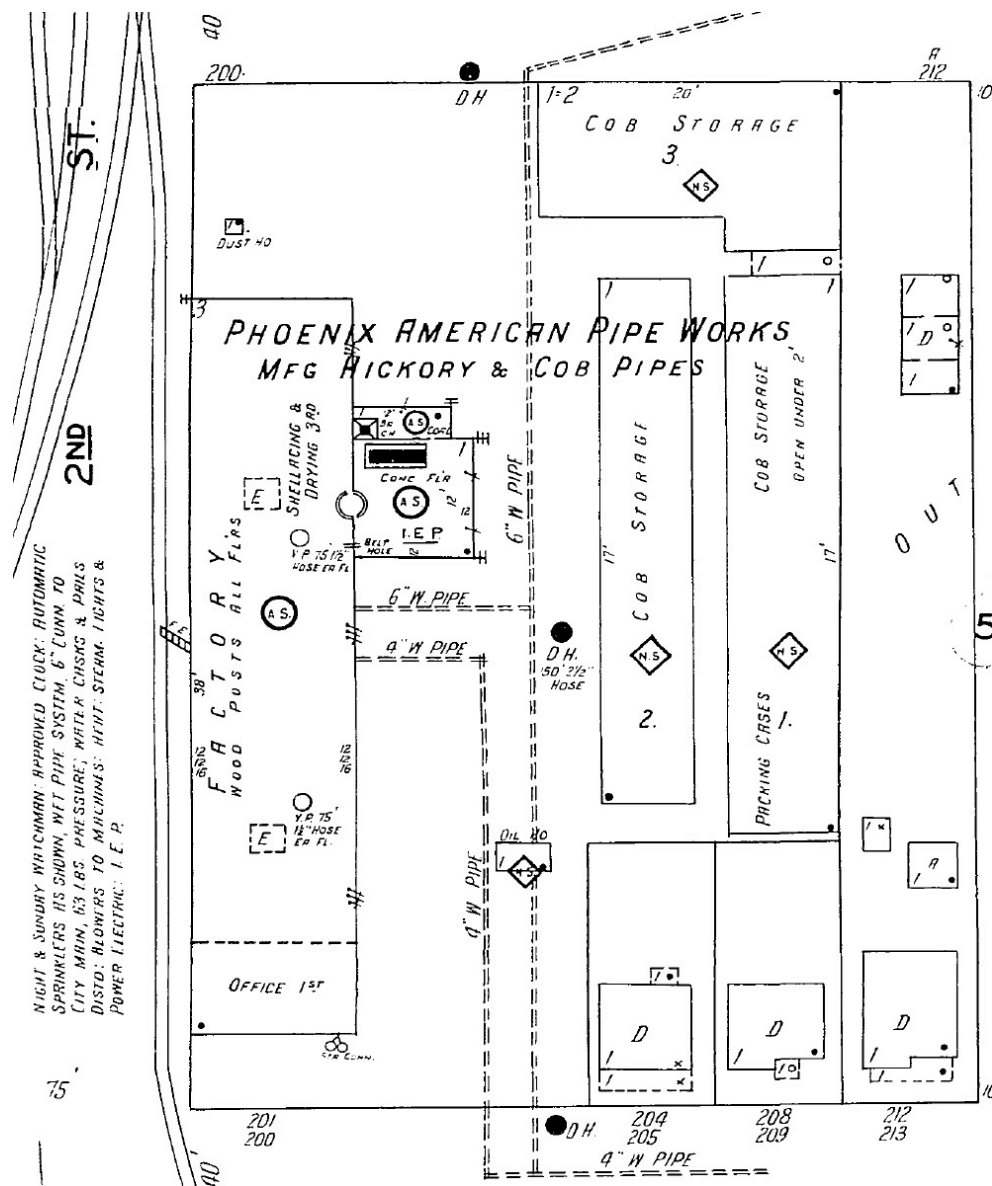
Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 9: The Phoenix-American Cob Pipe Factory as it appeared on the 1929 Sanborn fire insurance map. Source: UMI Serials.



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 29

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 10: Postcard view, unknown date. Source: John D. Hopkins Pinterest page, 2019.



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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 11: Postcard view, unknown date. Source: Washington Historical Society; Washington, Missouri.



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Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

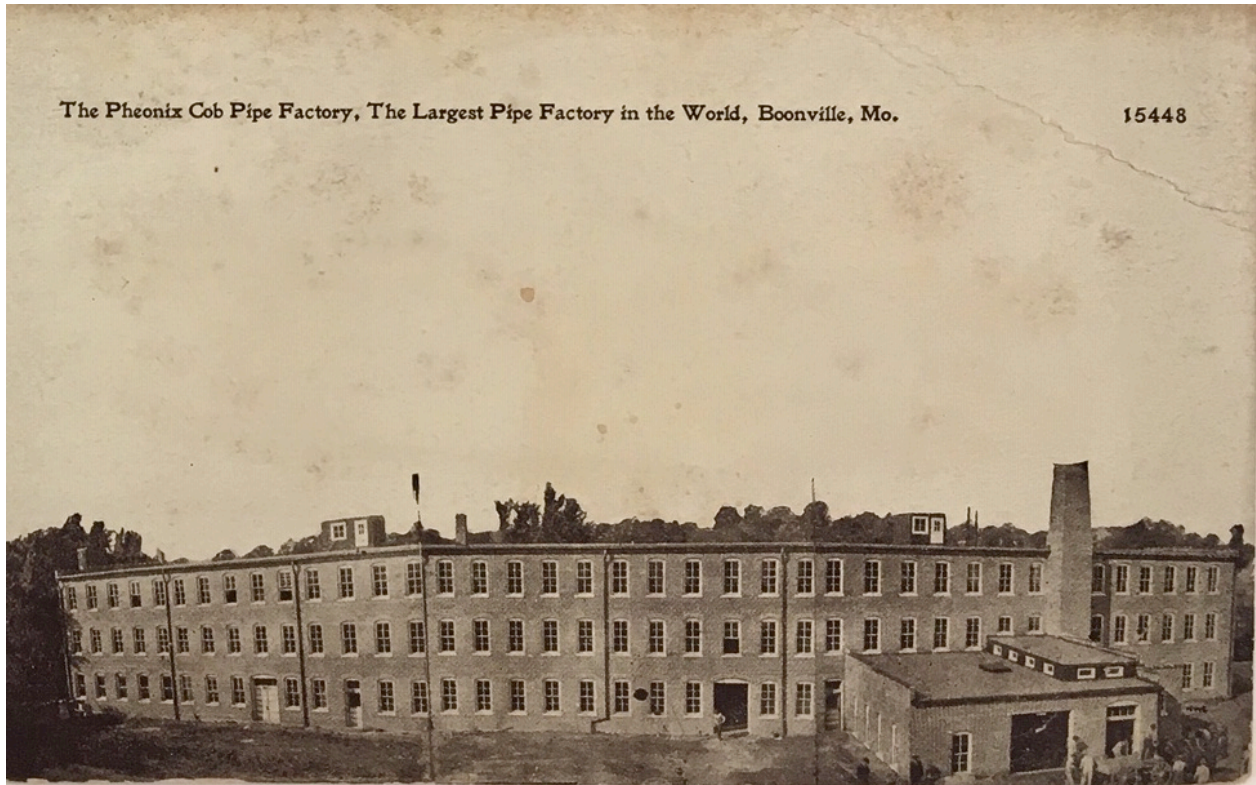
Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 12: Postcard view, unknown date. Source: Washington Historical Society; Washington, Missouri.



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Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 32

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 13: Laborers working inside of the factory. Source: *Memorabilia of Cooper County*.



National Register of Historic Places
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Section number Figures Page 33

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 14: View inside of the first floor office area. Photograph by the preparer, January 2019.



National Register of Historic Places
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Section number Figures Page 34

Phoenix American Cob Pipe Factory

Name of Property

Cooper, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 15: Google Earth Map.

Latitude: 38.973257

Longitude: -92.747728



























