



Hercules (Images of America)

Jennifer Posedel, Stephen Lawton

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The history of explosives manufacturing in Hercules began in 1879, when the California Powder Works acquired a site on San Pablo Bay, 20 miles northeast of San Francisco. The powder works, subsequently owned by Dupont and the Hercules Powder Company, produced one of the first internationally branded products: Hercules dynamite. It became the world's leading producer of TNT during World War I. The town of Hercules was incorporated in 1900, and for nearly 75 years its population remained under 300. The company-owned village had no retail district, but its employee clubhouse was the anchor for the city's social life. After the explosives plant closed, buildings comprising a small historic district were restored, while a diverse residential suburb grew rapidly around it. Hercules chronicles the city's industrial past and a vanishing way of life.



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