

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received SEP 15 1987  
date entered OCT 15 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic T. Jeremiah Beam House

and or common

2. Location

street & number East side of Big Level Rd., approx. .2 miles N. of junction with L & N Railroad Tracks not for publication

city, town Clermont vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Bullitt code 029

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name James B. Beam Distilling Company

street & number 500 North Michigan Avenue

city, town Chicago vicinity of state Illinois

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bullitt County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Shepherdsville state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Resources of Kentucky has this property been determined eligible? yes  no

date 1986 federal  state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The T. Jeremiah Beam House is a two-story weatherboarded, double-pile, T-plan house situated at the crest of a low hill at the center of the Jim Beam Distillery Complex in Clermont, Kentucky. Clermont is located on Long Lick Creek where the stream emerges from a narrow valley into an open valley at the western edge of the Bullitt County Knob country.

Bullitt County is located at the western edge of Kentucky's Knob country directly south of Louisville. During the 19th and early 20th century, Bullitt County was a sparsely settled area due to the poor quality of its arable lands. Much of the county is knob country, an area of low-shale hills not useful for productive agriculture. Major north/south transportation routes cross the county, including the mainline of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad and Interstate 65. Clermont is located on the Bardstown line of the Louisville & Nashville, two miles east of its junction with the mainline at Bardstown Junction. Four other bourbon distilleries are located along this railroad in Nelson and Bullitt Counties between Bardstown and Bardstown Junction. Two Bullitt County houses are listed in the National Register, the Solomon N. Brooks House (BU-24, listed April, 1980) and the Henry Crist House (BU-43). The Crist House was included in the Early Stone Buildings of the Outer Bluegrass and Pennyryle (listed in the National Register on January 8, 1987).

The T. Jeremiah Beam House is a simple vernacular, two-story frame, T-plan house. The primary facade is divided into three bays. It has a low-pitched, gable-end roof resting on a simple cornice and the windows are six-over-six wooden sash. The main entrance is a simple one without transom or sidelights. A one-story, concrete-floored porch protects the entrance and right bay and continues along the right side of the house. On the west side of the house, a large uncoursed limestone chimney was added, probably in the 1930s. The interior utilizes a standard T-plan room organization with three rooms to the left of the long central hall and a parlor and dining room behind on the right side. An interior chimney between the front parlor and dining room serves both rooms which have modest craftsman style mantels.

A frame, two-story garage and workshop with two sleeping rooms on the second floor is located approximately thirty feet from the northwest corner of the house. Although the interior of the garage has been extensively remodeled, the exterior retains its original appearance. Behind the garage is a 5 x 7 feet frame privy.

The grounds surrounding the house retain the feeling of a country residence in spite of being surrounded by a modern industrial complex. The T. Jeremiah Beam House retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship and association. The integrity of setting and feeling have been impacted but not compromised as a result of the construction of distillery buildings on all sides. These larger industrial structures are sufficiently distant and lower in elevation to have limited impact on the Beam House.

The nomination contains three contributing buildings--house, garage and privy--and no non-contributing features.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
1934–1936	Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The T. Jeremiah Beam House is significant at the local level under Criterion B during the period of 1934–1936. Jeremiah Beam lived in the nominated property during a critical period in the reconstruction and expansion of the bourbon whiskey industry after the repeal of National Prohibition in 1933. While living here Jeremiah Beam directed the construction of a modern distilling operation on the site of a smaller obsolete distillery. The new distillery was to become the largest American producer of sour-mash bourbon whiskey by the 1970s. Beam played a major role in the revitalization of a major Kentucky industry during a period of economic stagnation.

T. Jeremiah Beam was the fifth generation of the Beam family involved in the bourbon distilling business. Jacob Beam, the first Beam to migrate to Kentucky, began producing and selling whiskey in Washington County, Kentucky, in 1788. Two generations of the family continued to produce whiskey there before David Beam moved to Nelson County and started a larger operation. His Beam and Hart Distillery was later sold by James B. Beam, who with his brother Parker built a new distillery at Clear Spring near Nazareth in Nelson County. They produced the Old Tub, Jefferson Club, Pebble-Ford and Clear Spring labels at Clear Spring until the passage of National Prohibition in 1917.

During Prohibition, James Beam, father of T. Jeremiah Beam, sold the Clear Spring Distillery. The family was involved briefly and unsuccessfully in the coal mining and stone crushing business during the Prohibition Era. During this period, the Murphy-Barber Company Distillery, a small complex at Clermont, was purchased by James Beam. The Murphy-Barber Distillery had operated at Clermont from 1891 to 1918. At the center of the small Murphy-Barber Company operation was the two-story frame house which later became the home of Jeremiah Beam. Built originally in 1911 it functioned within the Murphy-Barber Company operation as a boarding house for coopers, gaugers, and salespeople who visited the plant. When the Murphy-Barber Company closed in 1917, the rooming house became a farm house.

When Prohibition ended, James B. Beam formed a partnership with Harry Blum to build a modern distilling operation. The Murphy-Baker Company site at Clermont was chosen as the site for the new operation and T. Jeremiah Beam, son of James B. Beam, was put in charge of the on-site management of the new operation. Jeremiah Beam moved into the refurbished boarding house which became the focal point of the operation during the 1930s. Beam lived in the house until 1946 when he moved to Louisville and began commuting to the plant. Except for the old boarding house, all of the other structures from the Murphy-Baker Company operation were removed as the modern Jim Beam Distillery Company plant developed over the next three decades. Numerous nine-story storage warehouses were built on the sides of the low hills. Lakes were created to store water for the operation, and a modern stillhouse and operation buildings were also constructed. Other buildings have been added in the last fifty years including one-story storage warehouses. Extensive changes to the structures built in the 1930s plus the addition of other buildings in the last fifty years prevent the nomination of the entire complex to the National Register. The T. Jeremiah Beam House, which remains the focal point of the complex, is the building most significantly associated with the early critical years when the planning and development of the post-Prohibition distillery at Clermont took place.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1.4

Quadrangle name Shepherdsville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	6	1	8	3	6	0	4	1	9	8	8	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert M. Polsgrove, Historic Sites Program Manager

organization Kentucky Heritage Council date March, 1987

street & number 12th Floor, Capital Plaza Tower telephone 502/564-7005

city or town Frankfort, state Kentucky

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *David L. Meyer*

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date September 8, 1987

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*J. Allen Byars* Keeper of the National Register **Entered in the National Register** date 10-15-87

Attest: Chief of Registration date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

T. Jeremiah Beam House, Clermont, Bullitt County, Kentucky

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"History - James B. Beam Distilling Company, Clermont, Kentucky." July 1, 1983. Anonymous.

Kroll, Harry Harrison, Bluegrass, Belles and Bourbon, A Pictorial History of Whiskey in Kentucky.  
A. S. Barnes and Company, London, 1967.

Nally, Flaget, "Beam History." A letter and report submitted to the Jim Beam Distilling Company  
on January 19, 1981.

Nehin, Frank, "A Proposal to James B. Beam Distilling Company from Johnson Hehr Nehin, Inc.,  
on Beam's American Outpost." Undated, 7 pages.

Seay, Betty, "Interview with Earl Hatfield," August 18, 1986.

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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Verbal Boundary Description & Justification

The nominated area is a rectangular area measuring 200 ft. by 300 ft. beginning at a point 100 ft. southeast of the southeast porch corner of the house. The nominated area includes the house, the garage, the privy, and the lawn surrounding the house. The boundaries have been drawn to exclude new buildings and areas occupied by warehouses which surround the house.