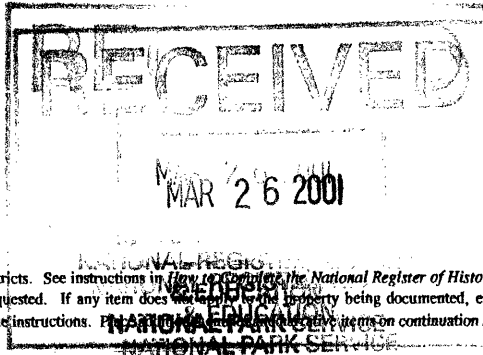


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



450

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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Enter additional information on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name George T. Stagg Distillery  
other names/site number Buffalo Trace Distillery; Ancient Age Distillery; KHC file no. FR-218

2. Location

street & number 1001 Wilkinson Boulevard N/A not for publication  
city or town Frankfort N/A vicinity  
state Kentucky code KY county Franklin code 073 zip code 40601

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David L. Morgan, Executive  
Director and SHPO

3-13-2001

Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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

5.2.01

**5. Classification****Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

**Number of Resources within Property**

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
50	3	buildings
0	0	sites
10	1	structures
1	3	objects
61	7	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category	Subcategory
INDUSTRY	manufacturing facility
INDUSTRY	waterworks
INDUSTRY	energy facility
INDUSTRY	industrial storage
DOMESTIC	single dwelling
DOMESTIC	secondary structure
SOCIAL	clubhouse
LANDSCAPE	park

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category	Subcategory
INDUSTRY	manufacturing facility
INDUSTRY	waterworks
INDUSTRY	energy facility
INDUSTRY	industrial storage
DOMESTIC	secondary structure
SOCIAL	clubhouse
LANDSCAPE	park

**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque  
 Other: Arts and Crafts  
 Other: Rustic  
 Colonial Revival  
 Moderne

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	Stone
walls	Brick
	Terra cotta
roof	Asphalt
other	Concrete
	Metal
	Wood

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
X B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X 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 a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past fifty years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

Ca. 1880-1951

Significant Dates

1920
1930

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Blanton, Albert Bacon

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Leo L. Oberwarth & Sons
Blanton, Albert Bacon

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property approximately 50 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
	17	686220	4232020	3	686860	4231930
16	2	17 686690	4232270	4	17 686570	4231750

X See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title J. Daniel Pezzoni  
organization Landmark Preservation Associates date November 30, 2000  
street & number 6 Houston St. telephone (540) 464-5315  
city or town Lexington state VA zip code 24450

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Mark Brown, President and CEO (contact), Buffalo Trace Distillery, Inc.  
street & number 1001 Wilkinson Blvd. telephone (502) 223-7641  
city or town Frankfort state KY zip code 40601

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

Section number 7 Page 1

---

## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

### Summary

The George T. Stagg Distillery adjoins the city of Frankfort in Franklin County, Kentucky, located in the state's central Bluegrass region. The approximately fifty-acre nominated parcel occupies a level terrace at an elevation of approximately five hundred feet above sea level that was first settled as the community of Leestown in the late colonial period. The nominated parcel is framed by the Kentucky River on the west, a high undeveloped wooded ridge and a stream known as Penitentiary Branch on the north, a lightly developed grassy hill on the south, and the four-lane Wilkinson Boulevard and associated development on the east.

Of the sixty-eight resources contained in the nominated parcel, sixty-one or 90% are classified as contributing resources; that is, they were built or utilized by the distillery during the period of significance (ca. 1880-1951) and they retain architectural integrity. The contributing resources range in date from the 1790s to 1950 (see inventory number 27 for a discussion of the 1790s date), and most are classified as buildings. The majority of resources played a direct role in the production of bourbon, historically the principal function of the distillery. Of the seven noncontributing resources, four are small buildings or structures and three are objects (sculpture).

Several discrete subsets of resources can be defined. Clustered along the river are facilities such as the stillhouse, mash house, fermenting building, and so forth for the conversion of raw ingredients into new whiskey, the first step in the production of bourbon. These date primarily to the 1930s and 1940s but incorporate considerable fabric from earlier periods, including the well preserved mashing and fermenting facility known as the Dickel Building (inv. no. 20), built in 1881, and the residence known as Riverside (inv. no. 27), which may date as early as the 1790s and was later used as a distillery dwelling, laboratory and clock room. A second and larger group of buildings--primarily warehouses used for maturing the new whiskey into bourbon--extend eastward from the first group. The oldest warehouses, which cluster nearest the river, date from the 1880s to the first decade of the twentieth century and are of brick construction. Warehouses erected from the mid-1930s to the early 1940s occupy the east end of the nominated parcel and typically have reinforced concrete frames with tile-block infill or are entirely of tile-block construction. A third group of resources served the distillery in a social, domestic, and entertainment capacity. These date mainly to the 1930s and include the home of the distillery president during the 1930s (Rock Hill, inv. no. 2) and a clubhouse with associated buildings and landscape features.

The architectural character of the distillery resources is varied. Some buildings, typically later ones dating from after the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, are relatively utilitarian in design.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

Section number 7 Page 2

---

### Description (continued)

However, a number of buildings that are utilitarian in their overall appearance have architectural accents such as decorative quarry-faced stonework that relate them to other, more stylish buildings in the complex. Stylistic features may be as subtle as corbeling details on warehouses from the 1880s that relate them to the Romanesque Revival 1883 stillhouse, which survives in part (inv. no. 21). Or they may be as fully expressed as the sophisticated Rustic styling of the 1935 clubhouse and associated resources (inv. nos. 9-15). The complex and significant relationship of architecture and industry at the George T. Stagg Distillery is discussed in the Architectural Analysis section of the Statement of Significance.

### Inventory

1. Frankfort & Lewis Ferry Turnpike (former; section). 19th c. Contributing structure.

Two-lane paved road leading from Wilkinson Blvd. to the distillery. The road originally linked Frankfort to its hinterland (including the distillery), but in the late 20th c. a new public road was built farther east so that the public no longer needed to pass through the distillery complex. The abandoned public road bed continued to serve as an access road to the distillery. A board fence modeled on a fence that appears in 19th-c. photos has been built along it. Stone gates were recently erected near the intersection of the road with Wilkinson Boulevard.

2. Rock Hill (Bldg. 80). 1933-34. Contributing building.

Two-story Arts and Crafts house of frame construction with a stone veneer. The house has an unusual three-part form with slightly angled gable-fronted elements flanking a wider, side-gabled center section. The roof is covered with asbestos shingles with copper flashing and lightning arrestors, and there are round-arched windows in the gables. The front entry has sidelights with oval-pattern muntins, a transom, a reeded surround with dentil moldings, and a modern door. The entry is sheltered under a small one-story porch with stone pillars and walling. Other exterior features include a stone and concrete foundation, two rear-elevation chimneys with sloped shoulders and diamond-shaped stone accents on the stacks, 6/6 windows with stone jack arches and vinyl shutters, metal-barred basement windows (some in concrete wells), cornice returns, a projecting course at the first-floor floor level, and a corner stone inscribed "A. B. Blanton".

The interior has random-width wood flooring, plaster wall and ceiling finishes, and natural-finish molded woodwork. The transverse front hall contains a single-run stair with a paneled spandrel,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

Section number 7 Page 3

---

**Description (continued)**

a slight flaring and tapered square-section newel at its base, and delicate turned balusters. Bi-fold French doors open at each end of the hall. The left-hand doors open into a living room with a carved Georgian Revival mantel flanked by fluted Ionic pilasters and with a floating shelf, ornamental overmantel, architrave fireplace surround, brick jack arch over the fireplace opening, and basketweave brick hearth. The fireplace is flanked by glass-fronted cabinets, and there are panels under the windows. Other interior features include first- and second-floor bathrooms with original fixtures and tilework, single-panel doors with crystal knobs, radiators set into the walls, old light fixtures, and quarter-round strips at the bottom of the baseboards that are studded with metal snaps, probably attachment points for former wall-to-wall carpeting.

Rock Hill was designed by Frankfort architects Leo L. Oberwarth & Sons with input from Albert B. Blanton. The house served as Blanton's residence until his death in 1959, and it now provides office and meeting space for the distillery.

**3. Garage. 1930s. Contributing building.**

One-story limestone-faced concrete garage set into the bank behind Rock Hill, with two vinyl garage doors under stone jack arches and a flat concrete roof with a railing formed by stone piers and metal piping and used as a patio. Abutting the garage on the south side is a now roofless greenhouse of concrete construction. Stone steps with iron gates rise on each side of the garage and storage room; the north gate has a plaque inscribed "A. B. Blanton".

**4. Cellar. 1930s. Contributing building.**

Grotto-like semi-subterranean building for the storage of vegetables and fruits with an irregular front built with small limestone blocks and two rooms of concrete and tile-block construction. The rooms have beaded matchboard doors; one houses a stone and concrete firebox served on the exterior by a stone flue.

**5. Smokehouse. 1930s. Contributing building.**

One-story v-notched log building with a stone foundation, an asphalt-shingled hip roof, and a batten door. The interior is divided into a larger front room for salt-curing meat and a smaller rear compartment for smoking meat (evident from soot residues). The salt-curing room features a salting table, hewn ceiling joists with wood peg hooks for hanging meat, and secondary joists with metal hooks.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 4

---

**Description (continued)**

6. Garden shed. 1930s. Contributing building.

One-story frame building with board-and-batten siding, a concrete foundation, an asphalt-shingled shed roof, six-light windows, and evidence of construction in two phases. A concrete planting bed extends along the south elevation.

7. Planting beds. 1930s. Contributing structure.

An extensive system of planting beds and walks defined by low stone and concrete curbs. The main group extends in an arc behind the garage; another group, which may include the foundation of a former barn, lie to the west of the Rock Hill domestic complex.

8. Garden terraces. 1930s. Contributing structure.

Set of three stone terraces extending down slope in front of Rock Hill. The terraces are linked by stone steps and are adjoined by a rock garden with cascading pools and a stone bench.

9. Clubhouse (Bldg. 17). 1935; late 1930s. Contributing building.

Two-story Rustic building of v-notched log construction with a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles but possibly originally wood-shingled. The logs, salvaged from area buildings, have projecting ends and are faced with circular-sawn boards that increase their apparent width. Both logs and boards are stained a dark brown color, and they have concrete chinking. Wrapping around three sides of the building (the rear west elevation is set into a bank) is a two-tier veranda with a limestone foundation. The east (front) and north sections have painted log posts and brackets and railings constructed of branches. The south end, which is an addition dating to the late 1930s, has posts and railings in the same pattern but constructed of dimensional lumber, and its first tier is screened. Other exterior features include rear second-story (but ground level) wings with hip and shed roofs and entry porches with log posts and wood-shingle roofing, stone chimneys with sloped shoulders and caps, old wall-mounted light fixtures, Rustic porch furniture, and 6/6 and casement windows with woodwork painted Cherokee red.

The first-floor interior has a dining room with natural-finish wood paneling set vertically as a wainscot and horizontally above. Other features of the room include cased posts, a linoleum floor, Rustic furniture, and a modern vestibule enclosing two stairs to the second floor. On one side of the room is a free-standing stone chimney with front and back fireplaces and flanked by



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 5

---

**Description (continued)**

Rustic screens created by branches arranged in decorative patterns. Behind the screens and chimney is a modern cafeteria line.

The second floor is largely taken up by a ballroom with paneling similar to that in the downstairs and rough-edged sawmill slabs used as door and window surrounds. The room has cased exposed trusses from which ornate cast-metal light fixtures hang. A band stand set into an exterior wall (evident as a projecting bay on the outside) has a log railing with sawtooth pickets. The stone fireplace is more elaborate than the one directly below it, with a segmental-arched fireplace opening with voussoirs and a keystone, corbels at the top and supporting a thick wooden shelf, a stone hearth, and old iron implements. The south end of the second floor (part of the late 1930s addition) is occupied by a bar and a meeting room, the former with a long picture window set into an arched surround with slabs of bark used to create voussoirs, keystone and flanking columns. Flanking the window and surround are cabinets with doors hung on wooden hinges. The bar itself is faced with bark and has a log foot rest. The meeting room has a stone fireplace similar to the others, exposed log or false log walls, and ceiling beams with false projecting pegs.

Designed by Leo L. Oberwarth & Sons of Frankfort, the clubhouse originally contained an employee cafeteria and dining room on the first floor and a ballroom on the second floor, uses that continue. A few years after the building was erected in 1935 the south end was added.

**10. Water features. 1930s. Contributing structure.**

The principal landscape feature of the clubhouse grounds, consisting of two sets of cascading pools, one of which feeds directly into a stone-lined stream that flows across the grounds. The smaller set incorporates a rock garden, stone paths and bridges, and a wall-like stone monument with a segmental-arched niche from beneath which the water flows. The monument is inscribed: "This Tablet erected by the employees of the George T. Stagg Co. to the Executives of Schenley, in appreciation of their interest and efforts in making this recreational center possible. May 1936." Around the grounds stand log light posts.

**11. D.A.R. monument. 1931. Contributing object.**

Constructed of two mill stones with a bronze plaque commemorating the Leestown settlement. Erected by the Susannah Hart Shelby Chapter of the N.S.D.A.R., Frankfort, and dated July 16, 1931.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

Section number 7 Page 6

---

**Description (continued)**

12. Burgoo house (Bldg. 16). 1939. Contributing building.

One-story stone building with an asphalt-shingled front-gable roof, three rear-elevation stone chimneys, and 6/6 windows. The interior features a flagstone floor, an exposed ceiling structure, a brick platform with two large iron kettles above fireboxes, and a sign with a recipe for "Col. Blanton's Burgoo."

13. Wishing well. 1930s. Contributing structure.

Well with circular stone curb and stone pillars supporting a conical wood-shingled roof.

14. Springhouse. 1930s. Contributing structure.

Small structure constructed of stone with a stone front-gable roof, a gable-end entry with a beaded batten door, entry jambs spiked to the stone, and an iron lintel.

15. Guest house (President's office; Bldg. 29). 1939. Contributing building.

One-story v-notched log dwelling with a stone and concrete foundation and an asphalt-shingled gable roof. The gabled entry porch has rough-finished tapered wood posts and log railings. The construction of the house evokes the dog-trot form, and there are projecting log ends on each side of the beaded batten entry door, two log ends carved into decorative corbel-like elements. Other features include two front bow windows, 4/4 windows, and a south gable-end log addition with an entry porch supported by log posts.

16. Guard house (Bldg. 70). Ca. 1940. Contributing building.

Booth-like building with a concrete foundation, stretcher-bond brick walls to the bottom of the windows, and a slate-shingled pyramidal roof with Spanish tiles over the ridges. Set into the walkway next to the building is a stone bearing the name "Carlisle" that formerly formed a part of the Carlisle stillhouse, erected in 1879-80 and demolished in the 1940s.

17. Fire control system. Mostly 1930s. Contributing structure.

Scattered throughout the complex are hose houses, small structures used to store fire hoses which could be connected to nearby hydrants in the event of fire. Most of these structures are of frame

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 7

---

**Description (continued)**

construction with corrugated metal siding, metal-sheathed shed roofs, continuous or pier concrete foundations, and double doors of wooden construction with or without metal sheathing. Exceptions include a hose house near Building 50 (inv. no. 44), which has an asphalt-shingled pyramidal roof, and one to the southwest of the clubhouse, which is of brick-faced cinder-block construction with an asphalt-shingled gable roof. The most architecturally sophisticated of these structures is the 1930s hose house on the clubhouse grounds, which shares with the clubhouse v-notched logs augmented with boards and also features an overhanging asphalt-shingled front-gable roof supported on log posts. More numerous than the hose houses themselves are the fire hydrants, cast-iron features often enclosed within protective concrete and steel pens. Most of these are stamped "Grinnell", although at least one is identified as the product of the Traverse City Iron Works in Traverse City, Mi.

**18. Cisterns. 1940s. Contributing structure.**

Two concrete reservoirs of rectangular plan capped by flat concrete roofs with small housings and metal steps.

**19. Carpentry shop (Bldg. 24). 1940s. Contributing building.**

One-story frame building with corrugated- and sheet-metal siding and an asphalt-shingled gambrel roof with a gabled monitor on its ridge. The partial basement has a series of garage doors on its north side. Other features include a foundation and front loading dock of concrete, side and rear wings, fixed and awning windows with a variety of muntin patterns, four-panel doors, and a wood sign over the main entry that reads "The Geo. T. Stagg Co., Inc'd, Employees Only." The interior has exposed wall and ceiling structures.

**20. Dickel Building (Bldg. 14). 1881; 1933. Contributing building.**

Two-story building with a stone first story and five-course American-bond brick second story ornamented with corbeled facade piers. The parapeted gable roof has built-up asphalt roofing and is reached from ground level on the east side by a steel truss foot bridge. Above the roof rises a two-story iron-clad frame section of 19th c. date and unknown original function that features 6/6 and 8/8 windows with molded lintels. The 8/8 windows have double-course segmental arches, and there is an entry with a round-arched transom on the south gable end. Attached to the west or river elevation is a 1933 concrete pump house addition with modifications dating to 1935 and 1941. The first-floor interior has a concrete floor with a gutter along the west side and

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 8

---

**Description (continued)**

cast-iron columns. Approximately half of the columns are original and have molded capitals that are Doric in inspiration. The other half appear to be replacements, with simple bracketed tops. The second floor has thick board floors (partially removed) and original slender cast-iron columns with trumpet-mouth capitals.

Built in 1881, the Dickel Building housed the mashing and fermenting functions of the O.F.C. Distillery. From 1940 to 1958 the Schenley-owned Geo. A. Dickel Distilling Co. utilized the building, which since 1958 has served principally for storage.

21. Boiler house (Bldg. 13). 1883; 1930s. Contributing building.

Two- and three-story brick building that incorporates walls from the 1883 O.F.C. stillhouse and boiler house. Blind arcading from the north and west elevations of the 1883 stillhouse is evident, as are corbeling and soldier houndstooth panels from the front (east) elevation of the one-story boiler house. Most of the exterior appearance of the building dates to the 1930s rebuilding, with seven-course American-bond brick walls with large metal industrial windows and random ashlar stone walls with stone jack arches and segmental arches over 6/6 windows. The building has several cylindrical tile-block bins and a coal off-loading area.

22. Grain elevators. 1940s. Contributing structure.

Six tall cylindrical concrete elevators joined at the top by a concrete housing. A truck loading area with a green fiberglass enclosure extends across the front.

23. Mash house (Bldg. 10). 1937. Contributing building.

Multi-story four-course American-bond brick building of utilitarian design rises to eighty feet in height with an east elevation divided into four bays by slightly projecting piers, a parapeted flat roof with composition roofing, a foundation of concrete caissons on spread footings, and a stone "wainscot" and stone jack arches over windows similar to treatments of the stillhouse (see below). When it opened in 1937, the 6,600-bushel daily capacity of the new mash house made the distillery one of the most productive in the state.

24. Dry house (Bldg. 61). 1943; 1953. Contributing building.

Three-story five-course American-bond brick building of utilitarian design rises to fifty-eight feet

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 9

---

**Description (continued)**

in height with a concrete foundation and large metal industrial windows. A truck loading area with a corrugated metal enclosure extends across the front.

25. Fire equipment house (Bldg. 6). 1951. Contributing building.

One-story tile-block building with a concrete foundation and a sliding door on one end.

26. Shed (Bldg. 7). Ca. 1940. Contributing building.

One-story frame building with corrugated metal siding, a shed roof, and three matchboard doors.

27. Riverside (Landmark House; Bldg. 15). 1790s?; ca. 1900. Contributing building.

Two-story dwelling with an original stone first story, a ca. 1900 weatherboarded frame second story, and an asphalt-shingled gable roof. Other exterior features include 2/2 and 6/6 windows, a four-panel back door, a two-light transom over the front entry, a bricked-up former front entry (perhaps evidence of an original hall-parlor plan), evidence of a former one-story rear wing in the form of a gable ghost, and a small opening in the rear wall at grade. The center-passage-plan interior dates almost entirely to the ca. 1900 period with mostly circular-sawn woodwork, wire nails, and some cut nails. A single-run stair with square-section balusters and molded newels rises in the center passage. The south first-floor room has a stone chimney breast with a fireplace opening with a segmental brick arch and wood nailers to each side for the attachment of a former mantel. The north first-floor room was made into a laboratory (probably in the 1930s) and has counters and paperboard wall and ceiling finishes. Both second-floor rooms have simple Greek Revival-inspired mantels with cast-iron coal grates, and plaster-and-lath walls and ceilings, four-panel doors with pottery knobs, remnants of old wallpaper, and matchboard cabinets and other laboratory-related built-ins are typical. The exterior is in fair condition and the interior, especially the first floor, is in bad condition.

The one-story stone house was built by Capt. Richard Taylor and named Riverside. Most accounts date construction to 1792, the year Taylor moved to Leestown. Another possibility is that the house was built ca. 1811 in conjunction with a three-story stone warehouse that stood only several yards away nearer the river. Presumably the house was occupied by an overseer or other employee of Taylor's, and in the early 19th c. it was surrounded by small log slave cabins. It is sometimes identified as Taylor's Tavern. In the 1850s the house was associated with Daniel Swigert's distillery, operated in a wing of the adjacent warehouse, and it has remained a part of

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 10

---

**Description (continued)**

the distillery complex since. Sanborn maps from the late 19th and early 20th centuries show the house occupied and vacant at different times, and in conjunction with photographs show a succession of alterations and additions, including the second story added about 1900 and a rear wing that was torn off in the late 20th c. After repeal the building was converted into a general laboratory and clock room, and it remained in use until about 1980.

28. Wash room (Bldg. 18). Ca. 1932; 1943. Contributing building.

One-story brick building with a concrete foundation and an asphalt-shingled hip roof.

29. Stillhouse (Bldg. 21). 1936. Contributing building.

Multi-story four-course American-bond brick building rises to eighty-seven feet in height with a parapeted flat roof, stone jack arches over metal industrial windows, and a stone "wainscot" at grade. An enclosed corrugated-metal catwalk crosses an alleyway to the maintenance shop (Inv. no. 30).

30. Maintenance shop (Bldg. 75). 1948. Contributing building.

Two-story building of stretcher-bond orange-red brick with a parapeted composition roof, concrete foundation, metal industrial windows, a continuous ribbon window on the first-story south elevation, garage-type doors on the east and west ends, an angled southeast corner, and a third-story bulkhead at the east end.

31. Fermenting building (Bldg. 25). 1936. Contributing building.

Two- and three-story building of stretcher-bond brick construction or facing with large glass-block windows, quarry-faced stone details, and a concrete and brick skywalk to the mash house (inv. no. 23). Set into the north elevation is a decorative stone archway with diamond-shaped accent blocks, buttresses, and a cast-stone keystone bearing the date "1936".

32. Bottling house (Bldg. 26). Ca. 1950. Contributing building.

Four-story building of brick and asbestos-sided frame construction, an asphalt-shingled hip roof with metal ridge ventilators, and wood and metal windows. The building may incorporate fabric from the ca. 1880 O.F.C. Warehouse 113A.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 11

---

**Description (continued)**

33. Case shipping building (Bldg. 27). 1934. Contributing building.

One-story frame building with corrugated metal siding with a low-pitched gable roof and a concrete foundation.

34. Blending and processing building (Bldg. 33). 1930s. Contributing building.

Two-story frame addition of irregular form with asbestos-shingle siding, a concrete foundation, and shed-, gable- and pyramidal-roofed elements. A cinder-block wall in front of the building is painted with a mural.

35. O.F.C. Warehouse 113B (Glass storage building; Bldg. 28). 1881. Contributing building.

Two-story six-course American-bond brick building with a metal-sheathed gable roof with ceramic-coped gable parapets and four gabled ventilation housings along the ridge. The building is distinguished by facade piers with quarter-round arched flarings at their tops. Other exterior features include a stone foundation, a mid-20th c. concrete loading platform under a corrugated metal awning on the south elevation, east gable-end entries with paneled embrasures, segmental-arched 6/6 windows (many with pintels for former shutters), an enclosed corrugated-metal catwalk crossing to the free warehouse (inv. no. 39), and a painted inscription on the north elevation that reads "OFC erected 1881". The interior has concrete floors, stout wood posts on the first floor and more slender posts on the second, and exposed dimensional wood common rafters.

Built as a warehouse for the O.F.C. Distillery, the 10,000-barrel capacity building was designated Warehouse 113B in 1886, a designation it retained into the 1920s. In 1925 it was described as having no racks (ricks), and it was supplied with steam heat.

36. Albert B. Blanton Bottling Hall (former boiler house; Bldg. 39). 1890s; 1907; 1936. Contributing building.

One-story six-course American-bond brick building with an asphalt-shingled gable roof with one gable parapet. The building's north elevation has facade piers with quarter-round arched flarings at their tops. Other features include a concrete and stone foundation, a south entry with a gabled stoop supported by decorative wood brackets, and exposed wood roof trusses on the interior.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 12

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Description (continued)**

The building was built as a boiler house to provide steam heating for the warehouses. The 1907 Sanborn map labels the building "Ascety'n Plant" and, unaccountably, "From Plans". In 1936 it was remodeled to serve as a recreation building, and it now serves for bottling Blanton's Bourbon Whiskey.

37. Reooperage shop (Bldg. 106). Ca. 1935. Contributing building.

One-story tile-block building with a flat roof, a ceramic parapet coping, and a wraparound porch with metal supports.

38. P.I.V. No. 19. Ca. 1940. Contributing building.

One- and two-story six-course American-bond brick building with a large vehicle bay on the south side with one wood and glass door.

39. Free warehouse (Bldg. 3). Ca. 1880. Contributing building.

Two-story six-course American-bond brick building with a metal-sheathed gable roof with gabled and stepped parapets. The building is distinguished by facade piers with quarter-round arched flarings at their tops. Other features include barred 6/6 windows, substantial 20th-c. brick repairs, concrete floors, I-beam posts, and exposed dimensional wood common rafters.

40. Dock (Carlisle cistern room; Bldg. 2). Ca. 1880; ca. 1935; ca. 1950. Contributing building.

Two-story five-course American-bond brick building with a concrete and stone foundation and a metal-sheathed gable roof with a partial gable parapet on the south end. The building is distinguished by facade piers with quarter-round arched flarings at their tops that form two facade bays. Other features include major 20th-c. additions, a loading dock on the east side with a corrugated-metal awning supported on metal poles and served by a system of concrete ramps.

Built to serve as a cistern room for the Carlisle distillery, with an elevated whiskey pipe connecting it to the stillhouse, the original section of the building appears in an aerial perspective in the 1885 *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*. It remained in use as a cistern room in the 1910s. Later it was used as Schenley's stock room and cost accounting office, and the loading dock was added in 1950.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 13

---

**Description (continued)**

41. Warehouse B (Bldg. 101). 1884. Contributing building.

Three-story six-course American-bond brick building with an asphalt-shingled gable roof. The building is distinguished by facade piers with quarter-round arched flarings at their tops. Other features include barred segmental-arched 6/6 windows and steel ramps to the first and second stories on the south side. Labeled on Sanborn maps "Carlisle Bonded W. Ho. No. 2 B," the warehouse had a 20,000 barrel capacity and originally iron-clad shutters and an elevated barrel run connecting to the Free Warehouse (inv. no. 39).

42. Warehouse D (Bldg. 103). 1907. Contributing building.

Seven-story five-course American-bond brick building with a stone foundation and a parapeted gable roof. A one-story shed-roofed gauging room extends on the south elevation, and a brick beehive cistern projects above grade on the north side. Other features include segmental-arched 6/6 windows with metal-sheathed shutters on iron strap hinges (the windows are mostly arrayed on the gable ends) and a concrete plaque in the west gable that reads "OFC 1907". The building was identified as "being built" on the September 1907 Sanborn map, and was labeled "O.F.C. Bonded Ware. Ho. No. 113-D." Its capacity was 22,500 barrels, making it the largest capacity warehouse in the complex until the construction of the 50,000-barrel-capacity Warehouse I in 1935.

43. Warehouse C (Bldg. 102). 1885; 1934. Contributing building.

Four-story building with a stone first story and six-course American-bond brick upper stories with facade piers with corbeled tops. The gable roof has ceramic-coped gabled parapets and a decorative plaque in the west gable reading "OFC". The first story has window and door openings with segmental arches of smoother stone and large keystones, and metal-sheathed wooden shutters. The upper windows have three-course brick segmental arches with stone keystones and concrete sills. All windows are 6/6, and the first- and second-story windows are barred. The upper levels have smooth stone quoins on the west corners and brick quoins on the east corners. An elevator and stair tower rises on the south elevation; like the warehouse proper it has a stone first story and brick upper stories with smooth stone quoins, and it has an entry with stone pilasters and a corbeled brick entablature, brick facade piers at the fourth-story level, and a utilitarian mid-20th c. fifth story with a metal-framed window. Other exterior features of the warehouse proper include iron tie rod ends (some star form), stone- and brick-filled openings under the first-story windows on the east gable end, and a concrete "turn dock" at the tower

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

Section number 7 Page 14

---

**Description (continued)**

entry linked by steel barrel runs to two other concrete docks (an "entry dock" at the west end and a "load out dock" at the east end). A guard rail constructed with railroad rails from the site extends in front of the west gable end.

The building is filled with heavy timber barrel ricks supported on concrete footers and nailed and bolted together, with walkways on the perimeter and crossing so as to divide the ricks into quadrants. The floors of the walkways are formed by thick wooden boards with gaps between them for ventilation. Each three tiers of barrel runs within the ricks (three to a floor) have stencilled numbers along the walkways, and large numbers corresponding to each floor are painted on the walls of the warehouse proper and in the elevator and stair tower. Steam pipes under the ricks at ground level survive from the original heating system. The elevator shaft is contained within a slatted enclosure and the stairs have crude railings. Other interior features include lights operated by outside switches (to minimize sparks that might cause fire), mid-20th-c. steam unit heaters, a plumb bob for keeping the ricks level near the elevator, and a sprinkler system.

Labeled on Sanborn maps "O.F.C. Bonded W. Ho. No. 113 C," the warehouse originally had a capacity of 18,680 barrels. By the mid-1920s a "hot house" had been created on the first floor for the quick aging of bourbon. The building's capacity was increased to approximately 24,000 barrels later in the 20th c. As originally constructed the warehouse had skylights and a gabled ventilation and lighting monitor along the ridge. The fifth story of the elevator and stair tower, which had a pyramidal roof with an ornamental finial, was replaced with the present more utilitarian fifth story during a 1934 renovation.

**44. Cistern building (Bldg. 50). 1937. Contributing building.**

Two- and three-story six-course American-bond brick building of utilitarian design with a parapeted flat roof with ceramic coping, a concrete foundation, metal industrial windows with multiple small panes, and a large garage-type door on the east end. The building originally contained two receiving cisterns and a distilled water tank and is now used for storage.

**45. F&C Bourbon Line Depot (Bldg. 45). 1933. Contributing building.**

One-story stretcher-bond brick building with an asphalt-shingled hip roof, a concrete foundation, a bracketed entry stoop, a modern wooden handicap ramp to the rear, 6/6 windows on the front (west) end, and glass-block windows on the east end, which may be an addition. The building

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 15

---

**Description (continued)**

originally served as a depot for the Frankfort & Cincinnati Railroad's "Bourbon Line," a spur that served the distillery. The railroad bed is still evident nearby, and some of the rails have been made into an automobile guard rail in front of Warehouse C (inv. no. 43). Rail traffic was discontinued in 1970, and in the 1980s the building was used as the master distiller's office. In the early 1990s it was used as a bottling hall for the Blanton's Single Barrel, Hancock's Reserve, and Rock Hill Farms bourbons, and it now serves as a visitor center.

46. Water tower. Ca. 1935. Contributing structure.

Steel supports on concrete footers with a cylindrical steel reservoir painted with the Buffalo Trace buffalo emblem.

47. Firehouse (Bldg. 55). 1950. Contributing building.

One-story tile-block building with a parapeted composition gable roof, a concrete foundation, metal-framed windows, and a large sliding metal door on the north side. The building presently houses a 1964 Ford F-350 pickup truck used as a fire truck.

48. Warehouse I (Bldg. 105). 1935. Contributing building.

Nine-story tile-block building with a low-pitched gable roof with stepped parapets on the ends, metal-frame industrial-type windows, a corner elevator tower, and approximately 50,000-barrel capacity.

49. Barrel storage and cooperage (Branding shed; Bldg. 47). 1936. Contributing building.

One-story frame building with corrugated metal siding, a shed roof, a poured concrete foundation, sliding wooden doors, 6/6 wood-framed and metal-framed windows, and a covered loading dock.

50. Tax-paid regauge room (Bldg. 52). 1940. Contributing building.

One-story building of tile block laid in a four-course American bond with a parapeted gable roof, a concrete foundation, two wooden sliding doors, and metal industrial windows.

51. Cistern room (Bldg. 49). 1936. Contributing building.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 16

---

**Description (continued)**

Two-story building of tile-block laid in a four-course American bond, with tile-block buttresses to provide added wall rigidity. The building has flat roof with a concrete-coped parapet, barred windows and a gabled steel-frame barrel shed. Cylindrical metal tanks cluster around the building, and a mechanized barrel lifter stands at one corner.

52. Regauge room (Bldg. 100). Ca. 1910; 1936. Contributing building.

One-story brick building with a gable composition roof and barred 6/6 windows with metal-sheathed wood shutters. The two-story 1936 addition to the south side is of salmon-colored six-course American-bond brick construction with a shed roof, concrete foundation, and metal-frame windows with metal-sheathed wood shutters.

53. Warehouse office (Bldg. 79). 1950. Contributing building.

One-story building of salmon-colored stretcher-bond brick with a flat roof, a cinder-block foundation, metal-frame windows, and a covered outdoor eating area.

54. Warehouse H (Bldg. 104). 1935. Contributing building.

Four-story frame building with corrugated metal cladding, a gable roof, a one-story shipping room with an elevator tower along the west gable end, 6/6 windows (the lower ones with metal-sheathed wood shutters, and an approx. 15,000-barrel capacity. Col. Blanton, distillery president from the 1920s to the 1950s, is said to have preferred bourbon that had matured in this building.

55. Warehouse P/Q (Bldgs. 112 & 113). 1941 (P); 1942 (Q). Contributing building.

Warehouse P is a five-story building of reinforced concrete frame construction with tile block infill, a low-pitched gable roof, metal windows and an elevator tower. Warehouse Q, added to the east end of P, is similar in form and size but has an outer surface of tile block only.

56. Warehouse L/M (Bldgs. 108 & 109). 1942. Contributing building.

Five-story double warehouse (built in two phases in 1942) of reinforced concrete frame construction with tile block infill, a flat concrete-slab roof, metal windows and elevator towers.

57. Field restroom (Bldg. 76). 1949. Contributing building.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 17

---

**Description (continued)**

One-story building constructed of salmon-colored stretcher-bond brick with a parapeted flat roof and metal-framed windows.

58. Warehouse K (Bldg. 107). Ca. 1935. Contributing building.

Six-story building of tile block construction with a low-pitched gable roof, stepped gable-end parapets, tile-block buttresses, an elevator tower, and metal windows.

59. Warehouse N/O (Bldgs. 110 & 111). 1937. Contributing building.

Five-story double warehouse (built in two phases in 1937) of reinforced concrete frame construction with tile block infill, a low-pitched gable roof, metal windows and elevator towers.

60. Garage (Bldg. 73). 1948. Contributing building.

One-story cinder-block building with a shed roof, concrete-coped parapet, cinder-block buttresses, and sliding garage doors.

61. Propane shed (Bldg. 59). Ca. 1950. Contributing building.

One-story frame building with metal siding, an asphalt-shingled front-gable roof, a concrete foundation, a metal-sheathed wooden door, and an open side shed.

62. Warehouse V (Bldg. 118). 1952. Noncontributing structure.

One-story building of salmon-colored stretcher-bond brick and cinder-block construction and a flat concrete roof. A plate-glass display window with a wave-pattern aluminum Art Deco grating looks onto the building's contents: a single barrel of Buffalo Trace bourbon filled December 30, 1999. In front of the building are a stone and concrete terrace, steps, and planters. Designed by the architectural firm of Schwartz & Elliston in collaboration with the Cincinnati, Oh. engineering firm Hall, McAllister & Stockwell, this diminutive warehouse was built to showcase the distillery's two-millionth barrel produced since repeal. The building has been described as the "only officially bonded single barrel warehouse in the United States." Some sources date the building to 1953.

63. Break room (Bldg. 72). Early 1950s. Noncontributing building.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 7 Page 19

---

**Description (continued)**

The George T. Stagg Distillery retains these functional components, and in several instances it retains successive generations of key building types. For example, the 1930s stillhouse and boiler house survive with a high degree of integrity. The 1880s O.F.C. stillhouse and boiler house survive in more fragmentary form. Virtually pristine buildings for mashing and fermenting survive from both the 1880s and 1930s. The warehouses too date from throughout the period of significance.

The distillery also possesses buildings that were important to its function but not essential, including facilities for grain processing and milling, a dry house, separate cistern rooms, and support buildings (garages, sheds, and so forth). The well-preserved 1930s clubhouse and associated features are amenities rarely encountered at historic distilleries and constitute an enhancement to the integrity of the overall site. Col. Blanton's Rock Hill residence represents a stylish yet traditionalist domestic complex that retains most of its elements from the 1930s including the main house, auxiliary buildings, and planting beds and terraces. Scattered throughout the distillery complex are historic features such as barrel runs and barrel lifting machinery, hose houses and fire hydrants, overhead steam lines, and a railroad bed.

The George T. Stagg Distillery possesses good to excellent integrity of setting. Most vistas have changed little from the period of significance when the facility was located amid rural surroundings and the diffuse settlement of Leestown. In particular, the Kentucky River setting and the high ridge to the north of the complex remain wild and wooded (perhaps more wooded than they would have been in the nineteenth century). The most prominent adjacent "modern" construction is two state government office towers that are remodeled distillery warehouses that retain their mid-twentieth-century form and materials; in other words, the buildings do not detract from the historic character of the distillery. A southeast quadrant of the distillery property once occupied by agricultural fields was sold off and developed with several one-story buildings in recent decades. These buildings are most visible from the approach road and from the Rock Hill house during the winter. However, from most locations within the extensive complex the distillery's surroundings--historic or otherwise--do not intrude.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 8 Page 20

---

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**Summary and Statement of Applicable National Register Criteria**

Historically, Frankfort, Kentucky's George T. Stagg Distillery, now known as the Buffalo Trace Distillery, stands at the nexus of significant social and industrial forces in Prohibition-era America. The distillery manufactured several popular brands of bourbon whiskey, a product reviled by prohibitionists but esteemed by the drinking public as a quality alcoholic beverage and dispensed by pharmacists and physicians as medicine. Before Prohibition went into effect in 1920, the distillery led a profitable and colorful existence. Established in 1857-58, the distillery was acquired in 1870 by famed distiller and promoter E. H. Taylor Jr., who refurbished it as one of the most extensive and best equipped facilities in the industry. A stone and brick mashing and fermenting building, a virtually complete set of brick warehouses including the architecturally sophisticated Warehouse C, and fabric from a Romanesque Revival stillhouse survive from the 1880s, a period when control was split between Taylor and George T. Stagg.

Prohibition nominally ended the production of beverage alcohol at Stagg, but President Col. Albert B. Blanton--who, like Taylor, cultivated a reputation as a sagacious and hospitable "bourbon aristocrat"--guided the distillery through the dry years by operating it as one of the few concentration warehouse locations in the nation, where whiskey stocks were concentrated under the watchful eye of armed government agents, and by bottling bourbon for the medicinal trade. Whiskey was an officially sanctioned remedy for influenza and other ailments during the era, but criminal diversion of the liquor represented a significant national problem that frustrated law enforcement and embroiled the medical profession in controversy. The medicinal trade slowly depleted national whiskey stocks, and in 1930 the George T. Stagg Distillery numbered among a handful of distilleries reopened for production.

Acquired by the precursor to the Schenley Distillers Corporation in 1929, the distillery prospered during the period that followed repeal in 1933, adding a large warehouse complex of concrete and tile-block construction and new mashing, fermenting, and stillhouse buildings. In 1934 Col. Blanton built Rock Hill, a stone house on the hill overlooking the distillery that served as Blanton's residence until his death in 1959. The distillery also erected a Rustic log clubhouse amid landscaped grounds that provided a nostalgic stage set for promotional celebrations and employee gatherings and that related to the definition of a corporate identity based on notions of tradition and quality. The clubhouse and grounds also illustrate Schenley's enlightened approach to employee welfare during the period. The George T. Stagg Distillery converted to industrial alcohol production during World War II but after the war it returned to producing high-end bourbon brands. Named Ancient Age Distillery in 1969, the property was purchased by the Goldring family in 1992 and rechristened Buffalo Trace in 1999 with a renewed

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number 8 Page 21

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

commitment to the stewardship of its historic and architectural heritage.

---

The George T. Stagg Distillery meets National Register eligibility Criterion A and is nationally significant for its association with Prohibition, an important period in the social history of twentieth-century America. As noted above, the George T. Stagg Distillery was one of the few in the nation during the period to supply a product--bourbon whiskey--that supported a legitimate medicinal whiskey trade but through criminal diversion also helped fuel wide-spread subversion of the law, one of the primary negative effects of the social experiment of Prohibition. Also under Criterion A at the national level of significance, the George T. Stagg Distillery is significant within the bourbon industry for its innovation and standing during the late nineteenth century, for its role in bridging the chasm between Prohibition in 1920 and repeal in 1933, and for its association with the revival of the industry after repeal. These aspects of the property's significance are supported in the Statement of Significance historic context sections entitled "Taylor/Stagg Period, 1870-1920," "Prohibition, 1920-1933" and "Post-repeal and War, 1933-1951." (To avoid redundancy due to the number of areas of significance, the historic context section of the Statement of Significance is organized in a chronologically integrated way rather than as separate thematic contexts.)

Under Criterion B at the state level of significance the property is eligible for its association with Col. Albert B. Blanton, president of the distillery from 1921 into the 1950s and resident beginning in 1934 of the Rock Hill residence on the distillery grounds. Blanton is significant for his role in the survival and resurrection of an important Kentucky industry during and after Prohibition. He was acknowledged in his lifetime by induction into the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels. Blanton's significance is treated in the three sections cited above. (Another important figure in bourbon history, E. H. Taylor Jr., was connected with the George T. Stagg Distillery. However, his association is not cited as a basis for eligibility under Criterion B; he retained only partial control of the distillery at the time most of its nineteenth-century buildings were erected, and he is more closely associated with the Old Taylor Distillery in Woodford County.)

Lastly, also at the state level of significance, the George T. Stagg Distillery meets Criterion C as the embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type (Kentucky bourbon distilleries) and for the architectural sophistication, high degree of integrity, temporal range, and functional



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

Section number 8 Page 22

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

completeness of its extensive and varied complex of buildings. The property's architectural significance in the context of Kentucky bourbon distilleries was highlighted in an assessment undertaken for the Kentucky Heritage Council and the National Historic Landmark office in early 2000 (J. Daniel Pezzoni, "An Evaluation of Kentucky's Historic Distilleries"). The distillery's significance under Criterion C is supported in the section entitled "Architectural Analysis."

Two additional sections are included in the Statement of Significance. "Prologue: Early History, 1773-1870" discusses the many events that occurred at the distillery site prior to the period of significance, including several--such as the pioneer settlement of the location, the establishment of the Leestown warehouse in 1811, and the beginning of industrial-scale distilling in 1857-58--that had a bearing on later events and on the architectural evolution of the property. The early period does not contribute directly to the property's significance due to the paucity of resources from before ca. 1880, the date selected as the beginning of the period of significance. "Epilogue: Recent History, 1951-2001" covers the years that followed the end of the period of significance in 1951. Ca. 1880 marks the approximate begin date of a major rebuilding initiated by E. H. Taylor Jr. and George T. Stagg and a date marking the construction of the earliest surviving distillery-related resources. Continuing the period of significance to 1951 embraces periods of construction that prepared the distillery for the disruptions of World War II and that marked the return to normal operations after the war, events that contributed to the property's industrial significance, and includes Col. Albert B. Blanton's continued association with the property.

**Historic Context**

*Prologue: Early History, 1773-1870*

The George T. Stagg Distillery site figured prominently in Kentucky history even before the initiation of industrial-scale bourbon production during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Early maps and traveller's accounts refer to a buffalo crossing on the Kentucky River at or near the site, hence the present name of the distillery: Buffalo Trace. Settlers were attracted by the location's accessibility (by trail and river) and its fertile low grounds, and in 1773 surveyor Hancock Taylor surveyed 400 acres including the distillery site for Robert McAfee, among the first land surveys made in Kentucky. McAfee moved on, but in 1774 Taylor and his cousin Willis Lee returned to the site and the following year Hancock Lee (brother of Willis) registered the 400-acre McAfee tract. The Lee brothers are therefore credited with making the first Anglo-American settlement in the Frankfort area in 1775, a settlement that quickly became known as Leestown (sometimes written Lee's Town and also sometimes called Taylortown).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

Section number 8 Page 23

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

During its early years, the settlement was periodically abandoned due to Indian attacks, but it appears to have achieved permanence by the mid-1780s, and in 1789 Hancock Lee offered town lots for sale in what at the time was described as a "flourishing" and "regularly laid out" community.<sup>1</sup>

Leestown did not develop beyond a small village and was soon eclipsed by the city of Frankfort, located a short distance upstream on the Kentucky River. An English traveler described Leestown in the early nineteenth century as "a hamlet of three or four houses." One of these early houses has survived to the present on the distillery grounds and is known variously as "Riverside" and the "Landmark House" (inv. no. 27). Historians Willard Jillson and Samuel Wilson, writing in the 1920s and 1930s, posited an eighteenth-century date of construction for the original one-story stone section of the dwelling; Wilson believed it was built by Capt. Richard Taylor in 1792 during his brief residence at Leestown. An alternative explanation is that Taylor had the house built about 1811 in conjunction with the construction of his Leestown warehouse (see following paragraph). According to a Lee family descendent who knew the house in the early nineteenth century: "Mr. Taylor . . . built a small stone house near the river, and called it Riverside. It is now owned by the distillery company . . . [Taylor] had many servants, all settled around him in little log cabins." Architectural and pictorial evidence suggests that the house originally had gable-end chimneys flanked by small garret windows, a gable roof with overhanging eaves on the front, and possibly a hall-parlor plan. A weatherboarded frame second story was added about 1900.<sup>2</sup>

Richard Taylor retained an interest in Leestown despite having moved away in the 1790s, and in 1811 he and a partner had a three-story stone warehouse built approximately on the site of the present boiler house (inv. no. 21). Tobacco inspection appears to have been one function of the warehouse, but it is known to have also stored whiskey, flour, beef, pork, and a variety of manufactured items such as paper and candles that were shipped down the Kentucky, Ohio and

---

<sup>1</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 8-18.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 18-19. The Lee family descendant quoted by Churchill was Mary Willis Woodson, whose reminiscences were published in the *Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society* in 1903. Architecturally, little fabric survives from Riverside's original construction other than the stone walls. Intensive investigative techniques such as archaeology may be necessary to corroborate an eighteenth-century date of construction.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 24

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

Statement of Significance (continued)

Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. An 1885 promotional booklet portrays the warehouse as it was in 1869: a plain, gabled building with multiple small windows. The Leestown warehouse was well situated to serve river traffic on the Kentucky. A stretch of rough water known as Lee's Ripple prevented vessels from easily passing further upstream, and Leestown served as Frankfort's port until river improvements in the 1830s made travel upstream more practical.<sup>3</sup>

In 1838 Frankfort businessmen and brothers Jacob and Philip Swigert acquired the warehouse and four acres. With another businessman, Thomas Theobold, they formed Theobold, Swigert & Company and used the warehouse as a "pork house" (presumably a pork processing plant) in the mid-1850s. In 1857 Jacob Swigert's son Daniel acquired the property and by the end of the following year he had converted it into a distillery. The enterprise is described in a sale advertisement published in a Paris, Kentucky newspaper in October 1858, which reads in part:

"The improvements consist of a large three story stone warehouse, a still house [probably an addition to the warehouse], wood house, and excellent pens. The machinery is of the best and most approved patterns for making copper distilled Whisky. The engine is a splendid one and entirely new, having cost a few months since, one thousand dollars."

Historian D. G. Churchill, who has studied Daniel Swigert's distillery and its relationship to antebellum Kentucky bourbon making, has described it as a "new type of whiskey making facility, designed for volume output, more efficient production, and ease of marketing" and a "prototype of the full-time, large-scale industrial distillery which would dominate the field in the post-Civil War era." The distillery was apparently the first in the state to use steam power, and its warehouse suited it for aging its product, one of the quintessential steps in making bourbon and an improvement only recently widely adopted.<sup>4</sup>

Swigert had barely equipped his distillery when he offered it for sale, explaining to prospective buyers that other business commitments prompted him to sell. Churchill has suggested another

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 21-24; *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*, Plate 1.

<sup>4</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 34-36, 200; Franklin County Deed Book 6, p. 220. Technically, distilling began on the present property somewhat earlier. Harrison Blanton, grandfather of later George T. Stagg Distillery president Albert B. Blanton, operated a still on land that was later acquired for the Stagg distillery (Churchill, p. 207; Brown, Buffalo Trace chronology).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 25

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

Statement of Significance (continued)

reason: bourbon making was not yet the profitable enterprise it would become after the war. The tame antebellum bourbon market may explain in part why Swigert could not find a purchaser until December 1859 when Clement and Ashton Craig bought the distillery, spring, "stone dwelling" (Riverside), and stables for \$3,500. By the late 1860s the distillery had passed to S.J.M. Major, Richard Tobin, and James Graham.<sup>5</sup>

*Taylor/Stagg Period, 1870-1920*

The George T. Stagg Distillery entered its heyday after the Civil War. In November 1870 Frankfort whiskey dealer and producer Edmund Haynes Taylor Jr. acquired the complex for \$6,000. Taylor, a relative of Hancock Taylor and a grand-nephew of President Zachary Taylor, mastered bourbon making through his acquaintance with innovators such as Oscar Pepper and Dr. James C. Crow and through his involvement with the Frankfort-area W. A. Gaines & Company distillery, which marketed the popular "Old Crow" brand. According to bourbon historian Gerald Carson, Taylor represented "a bridge between the old ways and the new." There is some indication that Taylor began distilling operations at the site in 1869, a year before purchasing the property. Taylor rechristened the distillery "O.F.C.", which stands for "old fire copper" in reference to the copper distillation equipment that Taylor favored. In 1873 he replaced the antebellum warehouse/stillhouse with a grand brick stillhouse designed in the fashionable Romanesque Revival style. In 1879-80 Taylor and his associates built a second facility at the location: the Carlisle Distillery, named for U.S. Congressman and bourbon industry backer John G. Carlisle.<sup>6</sup>

E. H. Taylor Jr. established his O.F.C. and Carlisle distilleries during a period of unprecedented expansion in the bourbon industry. One impetus for the expansion was societal: the prosperity of the post-bellum era and the development of population centers and markets in the West created demand. Improved transportation facilitated distribution; as D. G. Churchill has written, the

---

<sup>5</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 26, 35-37, 46; Franklin County Deed Book 7, p. 75, and Deed Book 11, p. 270.

<sup>6</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 14, 33, 45, 55, 59; Franklin County Deed Book 11, p. 270; *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*; Carson, *Social History of Bourbon*, 87-89; Connelley and Coulter, *History of Kentucky*, vol. 5, p. 592; and Brown, Buffalo Trace chronology.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 26

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

Statement of Significance (continued)

railroads helped "cover the land knee-deep in Kentucky whiskey." At the same time, in 1868, the federal government reduced the excise tax on whiskey from \$2.00 to \$.50, thereby making bourbon more affordable to the general public, and legislation in 1878 and 1880 further aided distillers. Federal industrial statistics illustrate the result. According to historians Lowell Harrison and James Klotter, bourbon production nearly tripled between 1871 and 1880 and doubled between 1880 and 1882. The value of bourbon produced in Kentucky virtually doubled every decade during the period, from \$4.5 million in 1870 to \$8.3 million in 1880 and \$15.2 million in 1890. The industry suffered setbacks in the early 1880s due to the consequent over-production and again in the mid-1890s during the nationwide depression that followed the Panic of 1893, but for the years around 1880--a period of considerable construction activity at the George T. Stagg Distillery--bourbon making could turn a considerable profit.<sup>7</sup>

In 1885 E. F. Taylor Jr. and his associates put out a lavishly illustrated promotional booklet entitled *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*. Coupled with an 1886 Sanborn insurance map the booklet provides a detailed portrait of the O.F.C. and Carlisle distilleries at the peak of their nineteenth-century development. The 1873 O.F.C. stillhouse was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1882; the stillhouse that replaced it the following year was larger but otherwise similar in its brick construction and Romanesque Revival styling (inv. no. 21). The 1883 stillhouse and an 1881 wing (from the earlier stillhouse) known as the Dickel Building (inv. no. 20) accommodated all steps in the production of the bourbon before barreling and aging. Grains entered a mill room on the second floor of the building's front wing where two sets of corrugated iron rollers--a recently introduced improvement over traditional stone millstones--produced meal and distiller's flour. The four-story stillhouse tower may have contributed to the milling operation (as towers did at other late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century distilleries), in addition to providing the building with its crowning architectural feature.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Regan and Regan, *Book of Bourbon*, 55-56; Harrison and Klotter, *New History of Kentucky*, 304; Churchill, "Ancient Age," 59-60, 118; U.S. census; and Carson, *Social History of Bourbon*, 232.

<sup>8</sup> *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*; 1886 Sanborn map; and Churchill, "Ancient Age," 102-03. Blind arcaded walls from the 1883 stillhouse and a corbeled facade from an adjacent boiler house were incorporated into the present 1930s boiler house (inv. no. 21) and are still readily visible.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 27

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

Statement of Significance (continued)

The meal and flour then dropped to the first floor of the stillhouse which connected to the second floor of the Dickel Building, a space known as the mash floor. The 10,000 square foot mash floor was occupied by numerous wooden mash tubs, and two large cooling tanks stood to the side. After mashing the beer was conveyed to eight copper-lined brick fermenting vats on the first floor, and after fermentation the beer was pumped to beer stills in the O.F.C. stillhouse. The stone walls, concrete floor and gutter, and iron columns of the fermentation floor aided sanitation. The fermented beer was then conveyed back to the north end of the stillhouse and to a room containing the stills. The stillroom illustration in the 1885 booklet appears to show both squat beer stills and a tall continuous still or "stripping column" such as was typical of the larger distilleries of the era. Vapor from the stills passed to a set of tall cylindrical condensers located in an alcove, and the condensed "singlings" were then conveyed back into the still room where they were purified in boiler-like stills known as "doubblers."<sup>9</sup>

From the still room elevated pipes carried the new whiskey to small brick buildings known as cistern rooms where the liquid was poured into barrels and rolled into adjacent warehouses. Another elevated pipe, the slop trough, carried the leftover stillage to cattle and hog pens at the north end of the complex. Of the seven warehouses constructed by the O.F.C. and Carlisle distilleries during the nineteenth century, four survive in full, two have been replaced by later distillery buildings, and one may survive in part incorporated into a later building. Warehouses provide more than dead storage; they play a critical role in the making of bourbon. To achieve the flavor and reddish color regarded as defining characteristics of bourbon, new whiskey matures in charred oak barrels over the course of several years while in storage, cycling through the wood of the barrel with seasonal or artificial temperature fluctuations. Masonry warehouse construction such as predominates at the George T. Stagg Distillery allowed for greater interior climate control and, in the opinion of most experts, thereby improved the quality and proof of the product. The two surviving Carlisle warehouses include the Free Warehouse (inv. no. 39) and the 20,000-barrel-capacity Warehouse B (inv. no.41), the most capacious in the O.F.C./Carlisle complex during the nineteenth century. Also surviving from the Carlisle complex in modified form is its cistern room (inv. no. 40).<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*; 1886 Sanborn map; and Churchill, "Ancient Age," 103-05.

<sup>10</sup> *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*; Brown, Buffalo Trace chronology; 1886 Sanborn map; and Pezzoni, "Evaluation of Kentucky's Historic Distilleries."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 28

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

Water for the operation was drawn from the river and from a spring-fed reservoir located on the river bank to the south of the Dickel Building, and power was supplied by a steam engine located in the aforementioned boiler room. (Steam power, a novelty before the Civil War, was commonplace at Kentucky distilleries by 1870.) Taylor and his associates proclaimed their enterprise "the model distillery plant of the world," and it was indeed acknowledged as a standard-bearer by contemporaries. A reporter for the New York *World* toured Kentucky distilleries in 1872 and ranked Taylor's enterprise among a handful that produced "the purest bourbon." D. G. Churchill lists other accolades in his history of the distillery.<sup>11</sup>

In an industry known for its colorful personalities, E. H. Taylor Jr. was a celebrity. His biographers stress his genius for promotion and public relations. While other distillery owners discouraged the public from visiting their facilities, Taylor saw an opportunity to win converts to his O.F.C. and Carlisle brands. As one New York visitor commented: "I was invited by every person and every appearance to walk in and look." Taylor was less successful with the financial aspects of the business, however. As early as 1871 he was in trouble, and in 1877 he declared bankruptcy. During the 1870s he had been unable to expand into marketing and instead became reliant on and indebted to the St. Louis commission firm of George T. Stagg. In 1878 Stagg and an associate acquired the O.F.C. and another Taylor distillery in neighboring Woodford County. The following year Stagg and Taylor formed the E. H. Taylor, Jr. Company and Taylor was assigned the daily operation of the distilleries. Taylor became dissatisfied with the arrangement, however, and in 1886-87 he and Stagg dissociated. Stagg retained the O.F.C. and Carlisle distilleries (the latter built after 1878) and Taylor received a Woodford County distillery that he renamed Old Taylor.<sup>12</sup>

George T. Stagg did not have the breadth of experience in making bourbon that E. H. Taylor Jr. possessed, which explains his continued association with Taylor despite personal friction between the two men. Also, Taylor had built a reputation for quality that Stagg capitalized on by keeping Taylor and his brands a part of the operation. Stagg quickly sold off Taylor's

---

<sup>11</sup> *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*; U.S. census; and Churchill, "Ancient Age," 74, 101, 105, 200. Remnants of the spring and reservoir may survive on the overgrown riverbank near the Dickel Building.

<sup>12</sup> Carson, *Social History of Bourbon*, 87-89; Churchill, "Ancient Age," 56-59, 65-69, 108, 127.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 29

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

Woodford County plant, originally the Oscar Pepper Distillery, to James Graham, who had been part owner of the Leestown distillery before Taylor. (Graham partnered with Leopold Labrot and renamed the plant Labrot & Graham, which was made a National Historic Landmark in 2000.) As an indication of Stagg's commitment to the success of the remaining Leestown distillery, he moved from St. Louis to a house adjoining the site. One development during the early years of Stagg's ownership was on-site bottling.<sup>13</sup>

In 1887, after Taylor's departure, Stagg formed the George T. Stagg Company to run the distilleries at Leestown and others he had acquired, but he continued to use the corporate name E. H. Taylor, Jr., Company and the brand names, much to Taylor's chagrin. In a play on his name, Stagg featured a stag elk amid mountain scenery in promotions of the period, a choice of imagery that helped emphasize the traditional roots of Taylor and Stagg's brands and that appears to have been reflected in the rustic character of buildings that would be constructed at the distillery in the 1930s. The George T. Stagg Company did well for a time--it made \$125,000 in profit in 1889--but the expense of building, equipping, and maintaining the Leestown distilleries and a downturn brought on by over-production conspired to place the company in jeopardy. Stagg's solution was to raise capital by associating with Walter Duffy of the Rochester, New York-based Duffy Malt Whiskey Company, which produced a medicinal liquor made of whiskey and plant extracts. Duffy's involvement dates to 1885 when he leased the Carlisle Distillery to produce 850 barrels of whiskey. In the 1890s Duffy and his associates bought up George T. Stagg Company stock and by the end of the decade the New York interests had gained virtually complete control. They renamed the Carlisle plant the Kentucky River Distillery in 1898 and used it to produce a cheaper "contract" grade of whiskey, while carefully maintaining the quality of the O.F.C. and Carlisle brands. In 1900 the New York and Kentucky Company brought the Leestown distilleries and several in New York under one corporate roof. The NY&K was one of three whiskey combines or trusts created during the period to regulate production and increase profits.<sup>14</sup>

Several important additions were made to the complex during the period from the 1890s to Prohibition. According to tradition, a warehouse steam heating system was installed in 1886, but Sanborn maps do not show construction of the requisite boiler house until the 1890s, with steam

---

<sup>13</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 57-58, 119, 122.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 66, 76-77, after 199, 201.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 30

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

Statement of Significance (continued)

pipes initially connected to Warehouse C and a Carlisle warehouse (now gone). The boiler house was apparently upgraded as an acetylene plant in 1907, and it survives today as a wing of the Albert B. Blanton Bottling Hall (inv. no. 36). The George T. Stagg Distillery is thought to be the first in the nation with steam-heated warehouses; other nineteenth-century warehouses relied on the change of the seasons to create the temperature fluctuations that matured the bourbon. In 1907 the 22,500-barrel-capacity Warehouse D (inv. no. 42) was built. Another addition of sorts was the hiring of Albert Bacon Blanton (1881-1959) as an office boy in 1897. Blanton had been raised on a farm adjoining the distillery--the same family that had distilled at Leestown in the early 1800s--and he wasted no time in learning every aspect of the distilling trade. In 1900 he was made superintendent of the distillery, warehouses, and bottling shop, and he continued to rise through the ranks until he was appointed president in 1921.<sup>15</sup>

The George T. Stagg Distillery--as the entire complex was renamed in 1904--made no major additions for almost three decades following the construction of Warehouse D, a period of reduced profits, war-time disruptions, and the greatest challenge to the industry's survival, Prohibition. In 1916, on the eve of America's involvement in World War I, the Carlisle plant was converted to the distilling of industrial alcohol used in making war materiel. The following year a nation-wide ban on whiskey production was enacted to conserve grain and a Wartime Prohibition Act became law in July 1919. Before war-time restrictions were lifted, nation-wide prohibition (popularly known as the Volstead Act) went into effect on January 17, 1920, and Prohibition became the constitutionally mandated law of the land. Bourbon distilling essentially ceased at the George T. Stagg Distillery in 1917, but withdrawals of aging whiskey from the warehouses continued and even increased as warehouse receipt holders (bourbon was usually sold before leaving the warehouse) rushed to beat Prohibition.<sup>16</sup>

*Prohibition, 1920-1933*

National Prohibition was an important event in twentieth-century American social history. The direct outgrowth of the temperance movements of the nineteenth century, Prohibition attempted to cure a host of social ills associated with alcohol abuse. Herbert Hoover lauded it as a "great

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 150-51; Sanborn maps.

<sup>16</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 134-36; Stagg, "Report of Distilled Spirits, 1914-1925," 126-27.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 31

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

Statement of Significance (continued)

social and economic experiment, noble in motive and far-reaching," and supporters claimed that enforced abstinence improved the nation's productivity, spending power, health, and morals. But Prohibition also had a dark side. Within hours of the Eighteenth Amendment taking effect at 12:01 a.m. January 17, 1920, criminal gangs raided bonded warehouses for liquor, the beginning of a thirteen-year crime wave unlike any the nation had experienced. Beverage alcohol production did not disappear--it went underground. The general populace habitually circumvented the law, unwholesome and even poisonous products flooded the black market, marijuana and opium consumption rose, and crime syndicates grew powerful enough to control sectors of American society and even entire municipalities. The drug problems of today--both the abuse itself and the societal response--are in large part an outgrowth of the Prohibition era.<sup>17</sup>

Prohibition had a devastating effect on Kentucky's bourbon industry. Even before the constitutional amendment took effect its apparent inevitability devalued distilling properties. After January 17, 1920 most distilleries sold their equipment to Canadian concerns (whose whiskey, ironically, was smuggled back into the states) or for scrap. A few concerns, such as the Glenmore Distillery in Owensboro, Kentucky, experimented with vinegar and industrial alcohol production, but most if not all of these efforts failed. Thousands of Kentucky distillery workers were laid off--an estimated six to eight thousand in Louisville alone--although as some pro-Prohibition economists of the period argued, many of the unemployed were able to find other jobs in the booming 1920s economy. An important source of state tax revenues vanished.<sup>18</sup>

The George T. Distillery was one of only six Kentucky bourbon distilleries to survive Prohibition intact. This was probably in large part due to the foresight of President Albert B. Blanton, who must have gambled that Prohibition would eventually be overturned. The distillery was helped by the Concentration Act of 1922, which facilitated government oversight of whiskey stocks by concentrating them in a select few warehouses. At the start of Prohibition whiskey was held in approximately 800 bonded warehouses throughout the country. By September 1922 the number had decreased to 300 and there were plans to further concentrate stocks into fewer than thirty

---

<sup>17</sup> Kobler, *Ardent Spirits*, 219, 222; Feldman, *Prohibition: Its Economic and Industrial Aspects*, 380; Warburton, "Prohibition," 504-08; and Thornton, *Economics of Prohibition*, 57, 67.

<sup>18</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 135; "Glenmore Distilleries Company," Purcell, "Bourbon to Bullets," 65; and Feldman, *Prohibition: Its Economic and Industrial Aspects*, 328-29.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

Section number 8 Page 32

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

warehouses. By 1932 most whiskey had been transferred to warehouses in Louisville and several other Kentucky locations. Whiskey from as far afield as New York and Maryland was concentrated at the George T. Stagg Distillery's Warehouse No. 20 under the watchful eyes of Internal Revenue agents.<sup>19</sup>

The other salvation of the George T. Stagg Distillery was a provision that permitted doctors and pharmacists to prescribe whiskey for medicinal purposes. Traditionally, whiskey was one of the few readily available pain-killers and antiseptics, and the common people as well as many medical practitioners ascribed to it a variety of restorative properties. At the time Prohibition went into effect, physicians frequently used whiskey as a stimulant during the "wasting stages" of influenza, a disease very much on the minds of Americans after the terrible mortality of 1918. The *New York Times* opined that "the death rate would be very much increased in the community during an epidemic of influenza if there were no whisky, or little of it."<sup>20</sup>

Twenty-six states sanctioned the prescribing of whiskey during Prohibition; Kentucky, for example, permitted doctors to prescribe one pint per patient every ten days. D. G. Churchill has pointed out that "Not even a moderate whiskey drinker could get much pleasure from three pints a month," but unscrupulous physicians, pharmacists, and patients found ways around the restrictions. "People were stricken with a variety of weird and wonderful maladies," bourbon historians Gary and Mardee Regan have written, "that needed regular treatment with frequent tots of decent, aged 'medicinal' whiskey." The Leestown distilleries had produced whiskey for medicinal use since 1885, and in 1925 the George T. Stagg Distillery bottled a million pints of medicinal whiskey. Packaging of the period advertised medicinal use, and the company's drummers canvassed the medical profession.<sup>21</sup>

American physicians were not in total agreement on the use of whiskey in treatment. Some practitioners claimed there was "little genuine prescription demand" for beverage-quality spirits and instead recommended preparations such as diluted deodorized alcohol as deliberately

---

<sup>19</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 133, 155; *New York Times*, January 31, 1920, September 6, 1922, October 2, 1932.

<sup>20</sup> Regan and Regan, *Book of Bourbon*, 45, 75; *New York Times*, January 23, 1920.

<sup>21</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 136-37; Brown, Buffalo Trace chronology.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 33

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

Statement of Significance (continued)

unpalatable alternatives less likely to "promote alcoholic habits." The medical profession's campaign to discredit and restrict patent medicines, which typically contained potent amounts of alcohol, contributed to a reluctance to prescribe spirits. Adding weight to the more purely scientific concerns was the social and moral cause of prohibition. In 1917, near the peak of momentum for national prohibition, the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association resolved that "alcohol has no therapeutic value, and its use as a therapeutic agent should be discouraged." However, the AMA leadership reversed itself in the 1920s, more for constitutional than medical reasons. President William S. Thayer complained of "intemperate" Federal laws intended "to legislate for the whole country as to what we may or may not eat or drink." An AMA poll of over 40,000 physicians found the profession equally divided on the question of whether whiskey was a "necessary therapeutic agent."<sup>22</sup>

As a social phenomenon Prohibition changed the dynamic of the medical debate. Individuals who sought to subvert the law exploited the medical provisions. One member of the AMA claimed that 90 percent of prescriptions for alcohol "were used for beverage and not for medicine in the scientific treatment of disease," and as early as June 1920 there were claims that Chicago doctors had issued 300,000 fake prescriptions since Prohibition went into effect at the beginning of the year. "Bootleg druggists" operated in many communities, and law-abiding pharmacists feared that they would be suspected of participating in the illicit trade. Permits for removing medicinal whiskey from bonded warehouses were forged, and there were cases involving gangsters legally withdrawing whiskey and then having it hijacked by their own organization so as to evade government control over the distribution. The *New York Times* ran numerous articles on medicinal whiskey abuse, and the problem preoccupied the AMA for the duration of Prohibition. The criminal diversion of medicinal whiskey was a significant and intractable problem that piqued the interest of a public eager for salacious stories that cast Prohibition and its unintended negative effects in a bad light. Some period observers noted, however, that the actual amount of liquor diverted was probably well below moonshine production from illegal stills.<sup>23</sup>

No new whiskey and bourbon had been produced in America since the 1910s and even the

---

<sup>22</sup> Rusby, "Alcohol," 169; Fishbein, *History of the American Medical Association*, 844; and Fisher, *Noble Experiment*, " 56-58.

<sup>23</sup> Fishbein, *History of the American Medical Association*, 844; *New York Times*, June 3 and 4, 1920; Warburton, "Prohibition," 506.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 34

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

Statement of Significance (continued)

moderate consumption of the 1920s had depleted stocks. Consequently, in January 1930 the government granted permission to three Pennsylvania distilleries to produce medicinal rye whiskey. Kentucky soon followed, and the George T. Stagg Distillery may have been the first to reopen. On June 29, 1930 the Louisville *Sunday Herald Post* ran a full-page feature identifying Stagg as the "only distillery in the Bluegrass manufacturing whisky and the only one in the state making the old fashioned small tub sour mash whisky." The article seems to imply that another distillery was in operation, but in February 1931 the *New York Times* suggested that other Kentucky distilleries including Stitzel in Louisville and the Frankfort Distillery in Frankfort had only just begun production. The same article reported that 65 percent of the two million gallons of medicinal whiskey and bourbon authorized in 1931 would be produced in Kentucky.<sup>24</sup>

*Post-repeal and War, 1933-1951*

By the end of the 1920s many respectable Americans had come to view Prohibition as a failure. Arguments about loss of income and jobs from distilling communities and tax revenues from distilling states and the federal government became more compelling during the Depression, and by the early 1930s repeal was in sight. Among the leaders of the distilling industry who anticipated a change was Cincinnati native Lewis S. Rosenstiel, who had risen to prominence in the medicinal whiskey trade and as a buyer of warehouse receipts in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Beginning in the mid-1920s Rosenstiel turned his attention to acquiring brands and distilleries, one of them being the Joseph S. Finch Distillery in Schenley, Pa. He acquired the George T. Stagg Distillery in 1929, and the following year he received permits to produce whiskey at both the Finch and Stagg distilleries. Schenley (as Rosenstiel's company is generally known) increased production at Stagg in 1931, and in 1932 the company may have distilled exclusively at its Kentucky plant.<sup>25</sup>

With repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment imminent in 1933, "whiskey fever" gripped Kentucky. Old distilleries that had survived Prohibition were refitted and enormous new facilities erected. Initially Schenley was poorly prepared to compete with industry heavyweight National Distillers,

---

<sup>24</sup> *Sunday Herald Post*, June 29, 1930; *New York Times*, January 8, 1930, February 8, 1931; and Churchill, "Ancient Age," 147.

<sup>25</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 134, 145, 151; *New York Times*, October 2, 1932; and Purcell, "Bourbon to Bullets," 65.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 35

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

but by 1936 it had "grown and multiplied with the furious self-projecting power of a yeast cell" in the words of a *Fortune* magazine writer. The company launched a major rebuilding, erecting the 50,000-barrel-capacity Warehouse I in 1935 (inv. no. 48), new stillhouse and fermenting buildings in 1936 (inv. nos. 29 & 31), a new mash house in 1937 (inv. no. 23), and remodeling the 1883 O.F.C. stillhouse to serve as a boiler house (inv. no. 21).<sup>26</sup>

A driving force during the post-repeal period was Albert B. Blanton, who went by Col. Blanton in reference to his membership in the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels. Like E. H. Taylor Jr., his predecessor at Leestown, Blanton cultivated a reputation as a consummately knowledgeable "bourbon aristocrat." The Schenley executives relied heavily on Blanton's expertise in all branches of the industry. On several occasions Blanton hosted large gatherings of business and political leaders on the distillery grounds, which were greatly enhanced in the mid-1930s by the addition of a log clubhouse and extensive rock gardens and water features. *Fortune* magazine helped promote Blanton's genteel persona, toasting him in its 1936 Schenley profile as "famed among Kentucky distillers not only for his slick sour-mash bourbon but also for his Kentucky burgoo and his fighting cocks." Blanton appears to have been as significant a factor in Schenley's promotional strategies as advertising and brand development.<sup>27</sup>

The George T. Stagg Distillery's post-repeal prosperity coincided with the New Deal and improved relations between management and labor nationwide. The clubhouse and landscaped grounds provided an amenity for the distillery workers, who acknowledged the gift by erecting a monument inscribed "This Tablet erected by the employees of the Geo. T. Stagg Co. to the Executives of Schenley, in appreciation of their interest and efforts in making this recreational center possible." Bourbon historians D. G. Churchill and Aaron D. Purcell have documented Schenley's progressive employee benefits programs, which included pension and medical plans and, in 1945, an initiative to encourage employee ownership of company stock. Lewis S. Rosenstiel saw stock ownership and other moves to improve the life of his employees as a way

---

<sup>26</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 154; "Name, Schenley; Age, Three," 99; Jancke, "Ancient Age Distillery." The pages of the *Manufacturers Record Daily Construction Bulletin* for the years 1934 and 1935 list the many extensive distilleries erected during the period.

<sup>27</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 148, 151, 177; "Name, Schenley; Age, Three," 104.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 36

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

to bolster capitalism, and in this regard his thinking was in accord with the New Dealers.<sup>28</sup>

The post-repeal boom in bourbon distilling led to over-production, and in 1938 Schenley shut down the George T. Stagg Distillery and others. But at the same time Schenley began to acquire additional distilleries, and in 1941 the company claimed to have the largest inventory of aged American whiskeys in the world and could boast thirty bourbon brands. The period also saw the early stages of America's preparations for war in Europe and the Pacific, and in the early 1940s Schenley refitted its plants to produce industrial alcohol, a non-potable 190 proof ethyl alcohol used to make synthetic rubber, smokeless powder, and other materiel. By October 1942 distilleries nationwide had converted to industrial alcohol production, and whiskey and bourbon production was officially banned. Schenley appears to have anticipated the ban by expanding its warehousing facilities at the George T. Stagg Distillery, erecting warehouses L, M, P and Q (inv. nos. 56 & 55) in 1941-42. Another important construction project of the war years was the dry house (inv. no. 24), completed with government funds in 1943 for the more efficient conversion of stillage (leftover cereal matter, slop) into animal feed. Also during the war, women filled many distillery positions vacated by conscripted men, paper recycling (begun in 1939) expanded, bottling lines were re-equipped to package K-rations and first-aid kits, and warehouses served for the storage of non-perishable food items. After the lifting of wartime restrictions in the late 1940s, operations at the George T. Stagg Distillery returned to normal.<sup>29</sup>

*Epilogue: Recent History, 1952-2001*

A measure of post-repeal prosperity occurred in June 1953 when the George T. Stagg Distillery filled its two-millionth barrel, the first distillery in the state to achieve that milestone following repeal. Schenley celebrated the occasion by inviting the governor and a host of dignitaries to attend the presentation of the barrel in its specially constructed one-barrel warehouse (inv. no. 62). Other production milestones followed: three million barrels in 1961, four million in 1971, and five million in 1981. In 1973 the distillery produced a record 200,000 barrels, but by the early 1980s straight bourbon had lost market share to vodka, tequila, and other distilled spirits and the distillery work force had dwindled to between three and four hundred employees. In

---

<sup>28</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 147, 171; Purcell, "Bourbon to Bullets," 83. By the late 1930s the George T. Stagg Distillery employed a thousand workers.

<sup>29</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 155, 172; Purcell, "Bourbon to Bullets," 66-87.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 37

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

1969 the distillery was renamed Ancient Age after a Schenley bourbon introduced in 1939 and heavily advertised in the 1950s.<sup>30</sup>

Schenley sold the distillery to a New York company in 1982 that introduced the successful brand Blanton's Single Barrel Bourbon in 1984, first commercially marketed single-barrel bourbon in the nation. The new owners cut employment until in 1991 the work force stood at fifty employees, and the distillery was near closing. The following year the distillery was acquired by the Goldring family, and by 1999 a renovation campaign had been completed and the facility was rechristened Buffalo Trace Distillery. Heritage plays an important role in shaping Buffalo Trace's corporate identity.<sup>31</sup>

**Architectural Analysis**

In the study "An Evaluation of Kentucky's Historic Distilleries," undertaken by the author for the Kentucky Heritage Council and the National Historic Landmark office, the George T. Stagg Distillery is described as an "outstanding complex both as an illustration of the development of bourbon distilling from the mid-nineteenth century on, and for its architectural qualities." As noted above in the section entitled "Summary and Statement of Applicable National Register Criteria," the architectural significance of the George T. Stagg Distillery is manifold. Most compelling is its architectural sophistication compared to most of the seventeen other distilleries evaluated in the aforementioned study.<sup>32</sup>

Historian Gerald Carson writes in *The Social History of Bourbon* that the majority of nineteenth-century Kentucky distilleries "looked something like a sawmill." Most distilleries of the era were indeed utilitarian building complexes devoid of architectural pretension. The 1857-58 Swigert distillery at Leestown, which occupied the 1811 Leestown warehouse, was a case in point. As illustrated in the 1885 booklet *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*, the distillery was a plain gabled stone building with gabled and shed-roofed attachments and a

---

<sup>30</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 177-78, 188, 202, 208; Brown, Buffalo Trace chronology.

<sup>31</sup> Churchill, "Ancient Age," 202-11; Brown, Buffalo Trace chronology; and Buffalotrace.com.

<sup>32</sup> Pezzoni, "Evaluation of Kentucky's Historic Distilleries," 7.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 38

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

Statement of Significance (continued)

masonry smokestack. Distilleries erected during the flush years that followed the Civil War were similarly utilitarian; most were built quickly in order to rush cheap whiskey to a booming market.<sup>33</sup>

Edmund H. Taylor Jr. had a different perspective on the industry and on the facilities required to make a well-regarded product. He considered the physical appearance of his distillery an important aspect of a broader promotional scheme designed to convince consumers of the quality and wholesomeness of his bourbon. Consequently, when he built his first O.F.C. stillhouse in 1873 he introduced architectural features such as blind arcaded walls, round-arched windows, quoins (decorative corner blocks), and a tower modeled on a Romanesque campanile. The second stillhouse, erected in 1883 and surviving in part (inv. no. 21), perpetuated the construction and style of the first but was apparently larger and more elaborately detailed. The several warehouses constructed in the early 1880s were simpler but still more stylish than their contemporaries at other distilleries. The quarter-round arch details at the tops of their facade piers reference the full arcading of the 1873 and 1883 stillhouses and imply the involvement of a single (unidentified) builder. The crowning element from Taylor's period of association with the distillery was Warehouse C (inv. no. 43), built in 1885. The multistory stone and brick building towered over the other warehouses, and its elevator tower with quoining, columned entry surround, and (originally) peaked pyramidal roof gave it an air of architectural sophistication that balanced the similarly well appointed stillhouse at the opposite end of the complex.

One feature of Warehouse C provides a particularly telling clue to E. H. Taylor Jr.'s architectural strategy. The warehouse was located on the Frankfort & Lewis Ferry Turnpike, and the corners of the building closest to the road were embellished with stone quoins, whereas the less visible corners have only brick quoining. Warehouse C, the stillhouse (located on the heavily traveled river), and to a lesser extent Taylor's other buildings were meant to be seen and appreciated by visitors and passersby. The illustrations in the 1885 promotional booklet make Taylor's intentions even clearer, for they portray aesthetic features and landscaping treatments that had no existence except in Taylor's imagination. For example, an aerial perspective shows a monumental fountain in the angle of Warehouse A (the location of an "under ground drain ditch" in the 1886 Sanborn map) and a park dotted with shade trees in the general location of the less than idyllic cattle and hog pens. To show Warehouse C and its decorative elevator tower

---

<sup>33</sup> Carson, *Social History of Bourbon*, 88; *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 39

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

to best effect the perspective artist rotated the entire building 180 degrees so that the tower faces the viewer. The mill room is portrayed as though it were a Victorian exhibition hall with paneled walls, portrait paintings, and a cuspidor--presumably to emphasize the significance of the novel roller milling machinery.<sup>34</sup>

The promotional architectural strategies that Taylor partially realized at the George T. Stagg Distillery, and that he projected in the 1885 booklet, he fully implemented at Old Taylor, erecting a stone stillhouse in the likeness of a medieval castle and laying out a sunken garden with pergolas and goldfish ponds. "Perhaps it was wildly romantic," Gerald Carson has written:

"Or was it?--this setting of a Rhenish castle in the Kentucky landscape, surrounded by grounds groomed like a gentleman's estate. Tourists and picnickers gladly came to look at the water, sniff appreciatively the aroma from the distillery and accept the complimentary 'tenth pint' bottles of Old Taylor. They were not likely to forget the experience. And that satisfied Edmund H. Taylor, Jr."

Taylor's concept of a bourbon distillery as tourist attraction anticipates developments in the late twentieth century when Maker's Mark, Labrot & Graham, Buffalo Trace, and other distilleries used the tourism appeal of their historic ambience to market their products.<sup>35</sup>

Following repeal in 1933 the George T. Stagg Distillery experienced a second architectural renaissance that also involved a tie-in to corporate identity and promotion. The Frankfort architectural firm Leo L. Oberwarth & Sons played an important role during this period. Principal Leo L. Oberwarth has been described by architectural historian William B. Scott Jr. as "an extremely talented architect whose designs so saturated Frankfort's built environment that

---

<sup>34</sup> *Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries.* The artist also employed graphic techniques to better portray aspects of the distillery but not necessarily to exaggerate or beautify them. For example, the illustration of the fermenting room replaces the sturdy cast iron columns of the Dickel Building's first floor with slender poles that interfere less with the view of the fermenting tanks.

<sup>35</sup> Carson, *Social History of Bourbon*, 88-89; Hudson, "Millville and the Old Taylor Distillery," 89; Porter and Hall, "T. W. Samuels Distillery," 39; and Pezzoni, "Evaluation of Kentucky's Historic Distilleries."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 40

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

you can hardly stand at any point in town and not see several of his works." The firm worked in collaboration with distillery president Col. Albert B. Blanton to design Blanton's 1934 residence Rock Hill (inv. no. 2), which combines Arts and Crafts and Colonial Revival elements.<sup>36</sup>

Leo L. Oberwarth & Sons next provided the design for the 1935 clubhouse (inv. no. 9) and also, presumably, for the associated landscape features and outbuildings. The two-story log clubhouse with wraparound double veranda is a clever rendition of the Rustic style. The veranda features log posts and balustrades after the fashion of the great Adirondack camps of the nineteenth century, and similar log and stick work is used to form a pair of screens between a first-floor dining area and cafeteria line. Fireplaces are appropriately stony, walls and ceilings are knotty, and sawmill slabs with uneven bark edges are used to frame door and window openings. One of the building's most delightful features is a bar back drop framed by columns and an arched span sheathed with slabs of varnished tree bark. In front of the clubhouse and on the hillside above it spreads a park with streams and cascading pools of rough stone construction; a log guest house and hose house that harmonize with the larger building (inv. nos. 15 & 17); a D.A.R. monument to the colonial settlement of Leestown (inv. no. 11) which antedates the other features by several years and may in part have inspired the pioneer architectural theme; and a stone kitchen where Col. Blanton supervised the preparation of corn bread and the traditional Kentucky stew known as burgoo during celebrations (inv. no. 12).

Concurrently with the nostalgia of Rock Hill and the clubhouse Schenley constructed a suite of modern distillery buildings that provided the efficiency and scale of production needed to compete in the expanding bourbon market of the 1930s. In their overall appearance these buildings are utilitarian in character, with blocky massing, flat or parapeted roofs, large metal-frame windows, and planar brick, concrete, and tile-block wall surfaces. Closer inspection reveals quarry-faced stone lintels over windows, stone "wainscots" at the bases of buildings, and even an elaborate stone archway on the 1936 fermenting building (inv. no. 31) that bears stylistic similarities to Rock Hill and suggests Leo L. Oberwarth & Sons also played a role in the design of these buildings. The stonework provides architectural continuity between the industrial buildings and the aforementioned non-industrial buildings and landscape features. The sum total architectural effect of Rock Hill, the clubhouse, and associated features (and to a lesser extent the 1930s industrial buildings) is one of pioneer rusticity and aristocratic bourbon tradition,

---

<sup>36</sup> Oberwarth and Scott, *History of the Profession of Architecture in Kentucky*, xv.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 41

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

---

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

themes rooted in the Old Fire Copper and George T. Stagg promotions of the nineteenth century and pervasive in Schenley advertising during the twentieth century. The sophisticated strategy pursued both during the years of initial expansion in the 1880s and again during the 1930s, whereby architecture was employed to further an industrial agenda, forms the basis of the George T. Stagg Distillery's architectural significance.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 42

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Acknowledgments**

A number of individuals and organizations assisted in the preparation of this report. Foremost among these was Buffalo Trace Distillery, Inc., the owner of the property and the nomination's sponsor; Mark Brown, distillery President and Chief Executive Officer; and project contacts Ken Weber, Bourbon Brands Manager, and Theresa ("Mack") McAninch, Hospitality & Events Coordinator. Others who provided assistance included Marty Perry, National Register Coordinator with the Kentucky Heritage Council; Dan G. Churchill, whose manuscript history "Ancient Age through the Ages: The Whiskey History of Leestown, Kentucky, 1769-1982" provided the framework for the historic context section of the report; former Master Distiller Elmer T. Lee, Frankfort; Michael Veach, Special Collections Assistant, Filson Club, Louisville, Ky.; and the staff of the King Library Special Collections, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

"Ancient Age Distillery Tour." Brochure, 1980s. On file at the Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort.

Black Sheep. Draft captions to historic images of Buffalo Trace and related topics. Buffalo Trace Distillery, Frankfort, Ky.

Blakey, George T. *Hard Times and New Deal in Kentucky, 1929-1939*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1986.

Brown, Mark. Buffalo Trace chronology. Report, 2000. Buffalo Trace Distillery, Frankfort, Ky.

Buffalotrace.com. Website.

"Burks' Distillery (Maker's Mark Distillery)." National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination Form, ca. 1975.

*Caron's Directory of the City of Frankfort*. Louisville, Ky.: Caron Directory Co. (various years, 1910-1930).

Carson, Gerald. *A Social History of Bourbon*. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1963.

Cecil, Sam K. *Evolution of the Bourbon Whiskey Industry in Kentucky*. Paducah, Ky.: Turner Publishing Company, 1999.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 43

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Major Bibliographical References (continued)**

Churchill, Dan G. "Ancient Age through the Ages: The Whiskey History of Leestown, Kentucky, 1769-1982." Manuscript, 1993.

Connelley, William Elsey, and E. M. Coulter. *History of Kentucky*. Chicago and New York: The American Historical Society, 1922.

*Description of the O.F.C., Carlisle, and J. S. Taylor Distilleries*. Frankfort, Ky.: E. H. Taylor, Jr., Co., 1885.

Ellis, William E. *The Kentucky River*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000.

Feldman, Herman. *Prohibition: Its Economic and Industrial Aspects*. New York and London: D. Appleton and Company, 1930.

Fishbein, Morris. *A History of the American Medical Association, 1847 to 1947*. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company, 1947.

Fisher, Irving. *The "Noble Experiment"*. New York: Alcohol Information Committee, 1930.

Franklin County deed records. Franklin County Clerk of Circuit Court, Frankfort, Ky.

Getz, Oscar. *Pictorial History of Whiskey*. Bardstown, Ky.: Barton Museum of Whiskey History, 1975.

"Glenmore Distilleries Co." Typescript, ca. 1965. Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Ky.

Harrison, Lowell H., and James C. Klotter. *A New History of Kentucky*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1997.

Hudson, Karen. "Millville and the Old Taylor Distillery: Industry and Community." In Riesenweber, Julie, and Karen Hudson, eds. "Kentucky's Bluegrass Region." Vernacular Architecture Forum 1990 Annual Meeting tour guide. Frankfort, Ky.: The Kentucky Heritage Council, 1990.

Jahncke Architects, Inc. "Ancient Age Distillery, Frankfort, Kentucky: Existing Building

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 45

George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.

---

**Major Bibliographical References (continued)**

- Sciences*. Vol. 1. New York: William Wood and Company, 1900.
- Sanborn Map Company. Maps of Frankfort, Ky., 1886, 1890, 1896, 1901, 1907, 1912 and 1925.
- Sinclair, Andrew W. *Prohibition: The Era of Excess*. Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1962.
- Stagg, A. C. "Report of Distilled Spirits, 1914-1925." Typescript, Lexington, Ky., 1950. Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Ky.
- Thornton, Mark. *The Economics of Prohibition*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1991.
- Traylor, Orba F. *The whiskey production tax in Kentucky, 1933-1947*. Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1949.
- Warburton, Clark. "Prohibition." In Edwin R. Seligman, ed. *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*. Vol. 1. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1937.
- "What's new at Schenley." Newsletter, September 1975. On file at the Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort.
- Wilson, James Boone. *The Spirit of Old Kentucky*. Louisville, Ky.: Glenmore Distilleries Company, Incorporated, 1945.
- Wolf, Jean K. "Labrot & Graham's Old Oscar Pepper Distillery." Draft National Historic Landmark Nomination, 1999.
- United States Census. Industrial statistics for the years 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, and 1900.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**George T. Stagg Distillery  
Franklin Co., Ky.**

Section number Photo Page 47

---

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. 1. Subject: George T. Stagg Distillery (same for all photos)  
2. Location: Franklin Co., Ky. (same for all photos)  
3. Photographer: J. Daniel Pezzoni (same for all photos)  
4. Photo date: October 2000 (same for all photos)  
5. Original negative archived at the Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort (same for all photos)  
6. Description of view: Buildings on bank of Kentucky River; Dickel Building far right, mash house far left. View looking northeast.  
7. Photograph number appears at beginning of entry (same for all photos)
2. 6. Maintenance shop far left, O.F.C. Warehouse 113B far right. View looking west.
3. 6. View looking north along course of former Frankfort & Lewis Ferry Turnpike through complex. Left to right: O.F.C. Warehouse 113B, Albert B. Blanton Bottling Hall, Warehouse D, Warehouse V (small building in center), and Warehouse I.
4. 6. Warehouses at east end of complex with water tower in center. View looking west.
5. 6. Warehouse C. View looking north.
6. 6. Riverside with grain elevators and mash house beyond. View looking northwest.
7. 6. Clubhouse, duck house, and D.A.R. monument with cascading pools in foreground. View looking north.
8. 6. Rock Hill. View looking east.
9. 6. Warehouse C interior.
10. 6. Clubhouse ballroom interior.

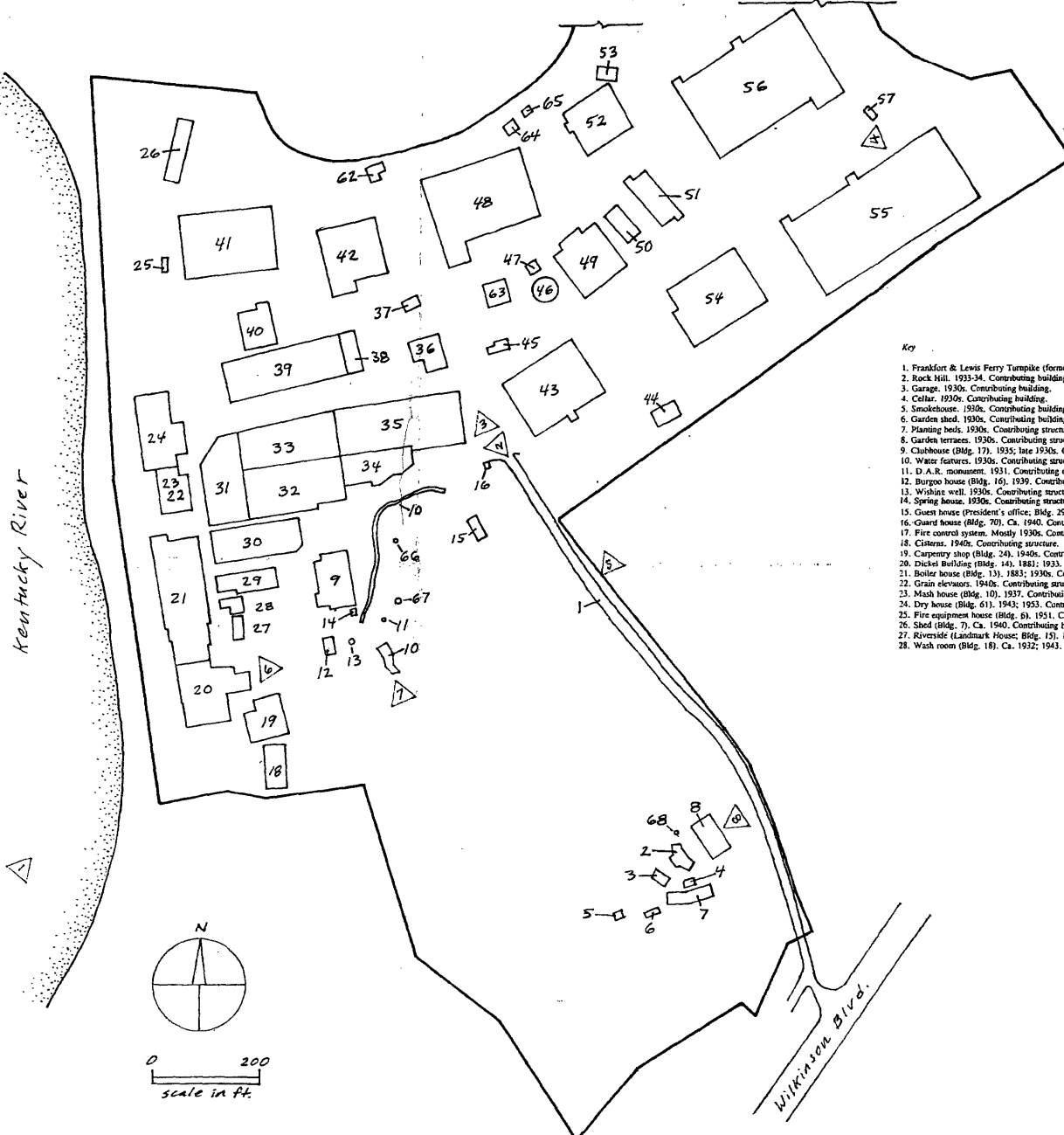


George T. Stag Distillery

Franklin County, Kentucky

Scale: 1 inch equals 200 feet

Heavy line indicates boundaries of nominated parcel.  
 Number and direction of photographs indicated by triangular markers.  
 North end of complex above match line depicted in lower right corner.



- Key
1. Frankfort & Lewis Ferry Turnpike (former; section), 19th c. Contributing structure.
  2. Rock Hill, 1933-34. Contributing building.
  3. Garage, 1930s. Contributing building.
  4. Cellar, 1930s. Contributing building.
  5. Smokehouse, 1930s. Contributing building.
  6. Garden shed, 1930s. Contributing building.
  7. Planting beds, 1930s. Contributing structure.
  8. Garden terraces, 1930s. Contributing structure.
  9. Clubhouse (Bldg. 17), 1935; late 1930s. Contributing building.
  10. Water features, 1930s. Contributing structure.
  11. D.A.R. monument, 1931. Contributing object.
  12. Burgoon house (Bldg. 16), 1939. Contributing building.
  13. Washing well, 1930s. Contributing structure.
  14. Spring house, 1930s. Contributing structure.
  15. Guest house (President's office; Bldg. 29), 1939. Contributing building.
  16. Guard house (Bldg. 70), Ca. 1940. Contributing building.
  17. Fire control system, Merely 1930s. Contributing structure.
  18. Cisterns, 1940s. Contributing structure.
  19. Carpentry shop (Bldg. 24), 1940s. Contributing building.
  20. Diced Building (Bldg. 14), 1881; 1933. Contributing building.
  21. Boiler house (Bldg. 13), 1883; 1930s. Contributing building.
  22. Grain elevators, 1940s. Contributing structure.
  23. Mash house (Bldg. 10), 1937. Contributing building.
  24. Dry house (Bldg. 61), 1943; 1953. Contributing building.
  25. Fire equipment house (Bldg. 6), 1951. Contributing building.
  26. Shed (Bldg. 7), Ca. 1940. Contributing building.
  27. Riverside (Landmark House; Bldg. 15), 1790s? ca. 1900. Contributing building.
  28. Wash room (Bldg. 18), Ca. 1932; 1943. Contributing building.
  29. Stillhouse (Bldg. 21), 1936. Contributing building.
  30. Maintenance shop (Bldg. 75), 1948. Contributing building.
  31. Fermenting building (Bldg. 25), 1936. Contributing building.
  32. Bottling house (Bldg. 26), Ca. 1950. Contributing building.
  33. Case shipping building (Bldg. 27), 1934. Contributing building.
  34. Blending and processing building (Bldg. 33), 1930s. Contributing building.
  35. O.F.C. Warehouse 113B (Glass storage building; Bldg. 28), 1881. Contributing building.
  36. Albert B. Blanton Bottling Hall (Bldg. 39), 1890s; 1907; 1936. Contributing building.
  37. Reconnoiter shop (Bldg. 106), Ca. 1935. Contributing building.
  38. P.I.V. No. 19, Ca. 1940. Contributing building.
  39. Free warehouse (Bldg. 3), Ca. 1880. Contributing building.
  40. Dock (Bldg. 2), Ca. 1880; ca. 1935; ca. 1950. Contributing building.
  41. Warehouse B (Bldg. 101), 1884. Contributing building.
  42. Warehouse D (Bldg. 103), 1907. Contributing building.
  43. Warehouse C (Bldg. 102), 1885; 1934. Contributing building.
  44. Cistern building (Bldg. 50), 1937. Contributing building.
  45. F&C Bourbon Line Depot (Bldg. 45), 1933. Contributing building.
  46. Water tower, Ca. 1935. Contributing structure.
  47. Firehouse (Bldg. 35), 1930. Contributing building.
  48. Warehouse 1 (Bldg. 105), 1925. Contributing building.
  49. Barrel storage and cooperage (Branding shed; Bldg. 47), 1936. Contributing building.
  50. Tax-paid dump room (Bldg. 52), 1940. Contributing building.
  51. Cistern room (Bldg. 49), 1936. Contributing building.
  52. Repairs room (Dump house; Bldg. 109), Ca. 1910; 1936. Contributing building.
  53. Warehouse office (Bldg. 79), 1930. Contributing building.
  54. Warehouse H (Bldg. 104), 1935. Contributing building.
  55. Warehouse P/Q (Bldgs. 112 & 113), 1941 (P); 1942 (Q). Contributing building.
  56. Warehouse L/M (Bldgs. 108 & 109), 1942. Contributing building.
  57. Field restroom (Bldg. 76), 1949. Contributing building.
  58. Warehouse K (Bldg. 107), Ca. 1935. Contributing building.
  59. Warehouse N/O (Bldgs. 110 & 111), 1937. Contributing building.
  60. Garage (Bldg. 73), 1948. Contributing building.
  61. Propane shed (Bldg. 59), Ca. 1950. Contributing building.
  62. Warehouse V, 1952. Noncontributing structure.
  63. Break room (Bldg. 72), Early 1950s. Noncontributing building.
  64. Shed (Bldg. 35A), Ca. 1990. Noncontributing building.
  65. Shed (Bldg. 35B), Ca. 1990. Noncontributing building.
  66. Col. Albert B. Blanton Monument, Ca. 1961. Noncontributing object.
  67. "Thunder" monument, 1999. Noncontributing object.
  68. Spirit pole, Ca. 2000. Noncontributing object.

