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Middle Tennessee was close behind. In 1787 the Red Heifer, a combined distillery and tavern, was established in Nashville by John "King" Boyd. In October of 1792, Indians burned Frederick Stump's distillery, but by 1795-96 he was producing 600 gallons with four stills, on which he paid taxes of $41.93. By 1799 there were sixty-one stills for less than 4,000 people in Davidson County, according to records kept by John Overton, who was then serving as Supervisor of Internal Revenue for the District of Tennessee.

Both East and Middle Tennessee were well suited for the production of whiskey, having good soil for growing corn, an abundance of firewood, white oak for the manufacture of barrels, and a good network of rivers upon which to ship the whiskey to marketing centers like Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, Memphis, and beyond. Many Tennesseans shipped their whiskey by flatboat to Natchez where it brought $2 a gallon, twice the going price in Nashville. On the farm the mash was fed to hogs and cattle which, in the form of salted meat and hides, were also suitable for export.

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As the frontier gave way to settlement, whiskey consumption increased, not only in Tennessee, but also throughout the nation. By 1810, 14,191 registered distilleries were producing 25.5 million gallons of whiskey, a five-fold increase over statistics for 1792.9 Registration fees for the distilleries were high enough to discourage small private producers; increasingly what had begun as a home industry became a more large-scale industry, with some farm producers in some counties making the transition.

As production increased, so did consumption and drunkenness. Congregationalists and Quakers in New England and Pennsylvania were the first to oppose the use of whiskey altogether. Fledgling temperance and prohibition movements spread south and west, to be carried over the mountains to the earliest settlements by Methodist circuit riders like Bishop Francis Asbury, who first visited Tennessee in 1788.10

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In the interim, Tennesseans were not only consuming more alcohol but they were becoming major producers as well. In 1820 the Fourth Census showed that New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Tennessee had more capital invested and employed more men in the production of spirits than any other states in the Union.11 The industry continued to grow right up until the Civil War, gradually becoming concentrated in certain areas. One of these was Robertson County, extending north of Davidson County to the Kentucky line.

During the war, occupying Union forces banned the distillation of whiskey because corn and other grains were needed to feed both humans and livestock. In Robertson County, distilling was one of the first businesses to start up after Federal troops pulled out in April of 1865. It was late spring, the favored season for distilling. Limestone water, corn, and firewood were readily available and a still could be set up easily and cheaply. It seemed as though nearly everyone in the county went into making whiskey for the simple reason that it was the fastest way to make money and required virtually no capital.

A major advantage was the fine reputation that Robertson County distillers such as Wiley Woodard already enjoyed. The 249 gallons of whiskey Woodard shipped to Lyon & Company in Nashville on September 21, 1865, commanded $3.75 a gallon, compared to forty cents a gallon before the war.12 Clearly his success would have been a stimulus to other producers.

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The Robertson County distillery that grew to be the largest was located at Greenbrier. When it was started about 1867 by Charles Palmer of Springfield, its capacity was a modest five gallons a day. In 1870, Charles Nelson, a native of Mecklenburg, Germany, who had come to Nashville from Cincinnati, bought it to supply his wholesale grocery business in Nashville (at that time grocers sold whiskey). The whiskey was manufactured in Robertson County, but it was both bottled under the Greenbrier label and distributed from his Nashville warehouse on Second Avenue North. At its peak, the distillery employed a work force of fifteen to twenty-five men, including government inspectors and gaugers as well as the operators. By 1885 the Greenbrier Distillery manufactured 8,000 barrels of whiskey or a little less than 380,000 gallons a year, and paid annual taxes of over $341,000.

In 1886 the Nashville Union reported that the distilling industry was the largest manufacturing industry in the state of Tennessee, annually consuming 750,000 bushels of corn and 500,000 bushels of apples and peaches. By the late 1880s, however, the industry had begun to decline. Smaller and less successful distillers had gone into other businesses, faced with intense competition from the larger distillers on the one hand, and mounting pressure from church and temperance groups on the other. The Women's Christian Temperance Union had organized in the state in 1874 and would be joined by the Anti-Saloon League in 1899.13

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Only two Tennessee distilleries would revive after prohibition—Cascade, later to be identified solely by the name of its distributor, George Dickel & Company—and Jack Daniel. The Cascade Distillery was located a few miles from Tullahoma in Coffee County, and only about a mile from the tiny community of Normandy, on Gage Creek, later called Cascade Springs.15 Around 1883 the distillery was acquired by Matthew Sims and McLin H. Davis. In 1888, Sims sold his share of the distillery to V. E. Shwab, a partner in George A. Dickel & Company; and in 1898 the heirs of McLin Davis sold his one-third interest to Shwab, who then became sole proprietor of the distillery.

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Today the most famous, largest, and, for various reasons, most authentic Tennessee distillery is Jack Daniel, which is located at Lynchburg in Moore County. This distillery is in full operation on its original site and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its founder, Jack Daniel, was born in 1848 about five miles away from the distillery. At age twelve he went to work for Dan Call, who operated a distillery a few miles away at Louse Creek, and at age fourteen became a full partner with Call, who clearly was an important mentor. In 1866 Jack Daniel leased the famous Hollow and Cave Spring which continue to be the focal point of the distillery's operation. At the same time Daniel apparently was the first to reapply for a distillery license after the war, which has been the basis of the company's claim that it is the oldest registered distillery in the United States. On June 17, 1884, Jack Daniel purchased the Hollow and cave, including in all 142 acres at a price of $2,180.40 from Wilburn Hiles and his partner Berry, owners since 1817.18

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Thus today we have two survivors of a frontier industry, one of Tennessee's first and for a time in the 1880s its leading industry, brought here by Scots, Scotch-Irish, Irish, and, we must add in deference to Frederick Stump, German immigrants moving west. The prohibition movement virtually eliminated not only the product, but also modern awareness of the industry's extent and scope before prohibition.

The re-emergence of Tennessee distilleries after prohibition is in both cases one of modern business involving politics, advertising, and acquisition by larger companies from outside the state. The quality of the product was upheld: both distilleries utilize the leaching process through maple charcoal which is the most distinctive characteristic of Tennessee sour mash whiskey. Advertising has been a key ingredient for both, with Jack Daniel achieving an almost legendary success.

Most important were the human ingredients: Jack Daniel got his start in the pre-Civil War era and made the transition to the new postwar economy; Lem Motlow took over the reins at the onset of prohibition and guided the company to the modern era, passing it on to his sons who negotiated its sale to an eminently compatible company, Brown-Forman. George Dickel had a less sure route to success, but fortunately George B. Shwab was able to achieve the transfer to Schenley at the end of prohibition; then, when the move back to Normandy was undertaken, Schenley had the right man, Ralph Dupps, for that challenging assignment. So it is that these two historic companies, representing a pioneer industry that started about 1771, still provide a hint of the tastes and smells of Tennessee's past whenever Tennesseans enjoy their Jack Daniel's or George Dickel over ice.

NOTES


3. Ibid., 598. Stump was a member of the German community that settled White's Creek; today his log home can
be easily viewed from the Briley Parkway.


5. This statement was attributed to Sam Krisle, Robertson County storekeeper, by George Henry Brown, author's grandfather.


7. Arnow, 280. She writes: "My own conclusion is that, though consumption of alcoholic beverages was heavy, there was among the Cumberland pioneers during the years 1780-1803 not only much less alcoholism than today, but even less than in most states during this same period."


9. Herbert Asbury, *The Great Illusion: An Informal History of Prohibition* (Garden City, 1950). See pp. 3-12 for a discussion for the period 1750-1840, which he describes as "the most intemperate era in American history."


11. Asbury, 89.


14. The Four Mile Law was the device through which anti-saloon leaders achieved prohibition; it outlawed the sale of liquor within four miles of any chartered institution of learning outside an incorporated town. In 1887 it was amended to include rural public schools, and in 1909 it was extended to all parts of the state. See Eric Russell Lacy, "Tennessee Teetotalism: Social Forces and the Politics of Progressivism," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* XXIV (Fall 1965): 224, 229.


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The re-emergence of Tennessee distilleries after prohibition is in both cases one of modern business involving
politics, advertising, and acquisition by larger companies from outside the state. The quality of the product was upheld: both distilleries utilize the leaching process through maple charcoal which is the most distinctive characteristic of Tennessee sour mash whiskey. Advertising has been a key ingredient for both, with Jack Daniel achieving an almost legendary success.

Most important were the human ingredients: Jack Daniel got his start in the pre-Civil War era and made the transition to the new postwar economy; Lem Motlow took over the reins at the onset of prohibition and guided the company to the modern era, passing it on to his sons who negotiated its sale to an eminently compatible company, Brown-Forman. George Dickel had a less sure route to success, but fortunately George B. Shwab was able to achieve the transfer to Schenley at the end of prohibition; then, when the move back to Normandy was undertaken, Schenley had the right man, Ralph Dupps, for that challenging assignment. So it is that these two historic companies, representing a pioneer industry that started about 1771, still provide a hint of the tastes and smells of Tennessee's past whenever Tennesseans enjoy their Jack Daniel's or George Dickel over ice.

NOTES


3. Ibid., 598. Stump was a member of the German community that settled White's Creek; today his log home can be easily viewed from the Briley Parkway.


5. This statement was attributed to Sam Krisle, Robertson County storekeeper, by George Henry Brown, author's grandfather.


7. Arnow, 280. She writes: "My own conclusion is that, though consumption of alcoholic beverages was heavy, there was among the Cumberland pioneers during the years 1780-1803 not only much less alcoholism than today, but even less than in most states during this same period."


9. Herbert Asbury, *The Great Illusion: An Informal History of Prohibition* (Garden City, 1950). See pp. 3-12 for a discussion for the period 1750-1840, which he describes as "the most intemperate era in American history."


11. Asbury, 89.


14. The Four Mile Law was the device through which anti-saloon leaders achieved prohibition; it outlawed the sale of liquor within four miles of any chartered institution of learning outside an incorporated town. In 1887 it was amended to include rural public schools, and in 1909 it was extended to all parts of the state. See Eric Russell Lacy, "Tennessee Teetotalism: Social Forces and the Politics of Progressivism," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* XXIV (Fall 1965): 224, 229.


19. Green, 197.


21. Ibid.

22. Green, 175.