

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Wentzville Tobacco Company Factory  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 406 Elm N/A not for publication  
city, town Wentzville N/A vicinity  
state Missouri code MO county St. Charles code 183 zip code 63385

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

#### Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

#### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>1</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official G. Tracy Mehan III, Director Date 5/26/96  
Department of Natural Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. 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

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

no style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls brick

roof asphalt

other wood

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Wentzville Tobacco Co. Factory is located at 406 Elm Street in Wentzville, Missouri, about 40 miles west of St. Louis. Constructed in 1885, the 3- X 6-bay factory is a 2 1/2 story brick building with gabled roof, featuring mill construction. The interior and exterior of the building survive in near-original condition; the only significant alteration is the addition of long, shed-roof dormers on the roof which do not disturb the integrity of form of the gabled roof.

The building is rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 40 feet (north-south) by 90 feet (east-west). Rising from a rubble stone full basement level, brick masonry walls (painted white) are 14 inches thick, laid in common bond; asphalt shingles cover the gabled roof. Openings (now boarded) are headed with double row-lock brick, segmental arches; windows are all wood double-hung sash with two lights each; sills are of wood. The primary facade, facing west, (Photo # 1) features two transomed doorways in the center bay. Comparison of Photo # 1 with historic Photo # 3 (circa 1900) reveals that only minor alterations have occurred. Shed-roof, wood-framed dormers have been added to both sides of the roof and extend the full length. A wood fire escape has been added to the north (side) elevation with window exits at second and attic stories. Chimney stacks (three on each side) have been removed, but portions of the chimney breasts still remain on the interior below the attic story. A later chimney exists on the north wall. The small cupola centered on the roof ridge has been removed. On the south (side) elevation (Photo # 2), a small storage shed has been added which is wood framed supported by concrete pillars.

The interior timber structure of the building remains intact; first, second and attic floors consists of two rows of nine columns extending the length of the building, developing three bays north-south. Except for a concrete basement floor, the building features a floor system of tongue and groove pine plank, 3/4 inches thick and 4 inches wide.

 See continuation sheet

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Industry  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  
1885-1892  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
1885  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
n/a  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
n/a  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder  
unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Wentzville Tobacco Company Factory is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A and is significant in the following area: INDUSTRY: Constructed in 1885, the building is one of a small number of Missouri tobacco factories which survive from a period when the state ranked first in the nation in the manufacture of tobacco. It is one of only four extant buildings in St. Charles County directly associated with the county's significant history of tobacco manufacturing. The building's period of significance is 1885-1892.

Background: Wentzville, Missouri, (population 6100) is located in the northwestern part of St. Charles County, twenty-one miles west of St. Charles, the county seat, and forty-two miles west of St. Louis. William M. Allen, a local farmer, merchant and extensive landholder in the area founded the town in 1855, the same year the North-Missouri Railroad connected Wentzville to markets in St. Charles and St. Louis. Allen's donation of land and money was instrumental in building the North-Missouri Railroad through Wentzville; he built the first depot and accepted the appointment of station agent. As a result of the railroad, the town began to prosper with the establishment of a hotel, restaurant, banks and stores, built principally to serve the railroad.

During the mid-19th century the cultivation of tobacco emerged as an important agricultural pursuit in Missouri, placing the state third in national production by 1873.(1) Nearly every county in the state produced some leaf, while certain counties developed as major growers. A strip of land on the western side of St. Charles County stretching from the Missouri River on the south to Eagle Fork (now Big Creek), a branch of the Cuivre River, on the north, was one of Missouri's banner tobacco-growing regions.(2) Included in this land was the Wentzville area where almost every farmer had a tobacco barn and many of the St. Louis tobacco manufacturing giants got their start, including,

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Wentzville Tobacco Company Factory

George S. Myers, co-founder of Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co.; Paul Brown, of Brown Tobacco Co.; James T. Drummond of Drummond Tobacco Co.; and Caleb Dula, President of Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co. after the court degree of 1911.(3)

In addition to growing tobacco, Wentzville area residents also began manufacturing at an early date; in 1865 it was reported that three tobacco factories (all demolished) were in operation there.(4) Moreover, the tobacco district of St.Charles County, along with Pike County, is credited with having been the cradle of invention of plug chewing tobacco, which was the most widely-used form of tobacco in America until the World War I era.

Industry 1885-1892: During the 1880s, the First Missouri Internal Revenue Collection District (which included St.Louis and Wentzville) made a dramatic climb to first place in national rank of tobacco manufacturing centers, based primarily on the volume of plug tobacco produced. In 1889, about 20 percent of the total national product was supplied by the First Missouri District.(5)

In this heady decade of expansion and growth for Missouri tobacco manufacturers, a consortium of seventeen Wentzville businessmen, merchants, and farmers incorporated the Wentzville Tobacco Company in 1884 for the purpose of manufacturing and selling plug and smoking tobacco, snuff and cigars. The same year the company purchased three lots in Wentzville for \$200 and erected a brick factory where the firm's registered plug tobacco brands, Ginger Cake and Pocket Piece, were manufactured. As far as is known, none of the company's incorporators previously had been involved in the production of tobacco. However, the Superintendent of the factory, Joel E. Carr, had been active in the industry most of his life, and for many years had owned and operated a tobacco factory with his son-in-law Robert Dula, whose brother Caleb Dula was later president of Liggett & Myers.(6)

The Wentzville Tobacco Company enjoyed a relatively brief period of existence. In 1892, the building was sold at public auction and the William Karrenbrock Milling Company began operations there, remaining in the building until 1936. The failure of the tobacco company most likely was related to local as well as to national market trends and conditions. By the late 1880s, tobacco planting in Missouri had declined significantly from a high of over 25 million pounds in 1860 to about 2 1/2 million pounds in 1890. The decrease in tobacco acreage was in large part a result of the loss of slave labor, along with the

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depletion of virgin soil. Farmers in St. Charles County found a larger return could be realized on other crops.(7) The Wentzville Tobacco Company also no doubt was adversely affected by the Great Plug War waged by North Carolina tobacco tycoon James Buchanan "Buck" Duke. In an effort to wipe out competitors and gain monopoly of the plug tobacco market, Duke engaged in drastic price slashing and costly advertising which forced many small companies out of business.(8)

In 1889, Connorton's Tobacco Brand Directory of the United States listed 34 tobacco manufacturers in Missouri which were located in 19 different towns or cities.(9) Although a statewide survey has not been completed, preliminary findings indicate that the once-rich resources of Missouri's tobacco manufacturing are greatly diminished. In St. Louis alone, where 13 of the 34 companies were located in 1889, buildings associated with only three companies survive. The Wentzville Tobacco Company building is the largest of only two factories surviving in St. Charles County which were constructed specifically for the manufacture of tobacco. The other example is a small two-story structure in the city of St. Charles where cigars were manufactured; two other buildings in the City of St. Charles were in use as tobacco manufactories for a short period.

FOOTNOTES

- 1) Missouri and Tobacco, (Washington D.C.: The Tobacco Institute, 1960) p.8.
- 2) First Annual Report of the Missouri State Board of Agriculture, (Jefferson City: n.p., 1866), pp. 107-109.
- 3) Barb Mittelbuscher and Gary Matlock, "The Great Tobacco Era of Western St.Charles County", in Past Times St.Charles, vol.2, no.2 (1985), pp.5-9.; Missouri Republic 25 December 1898.
- 4) First Annual Report 1866, p.109.
- 5) Connorton's Tobacco Brand Directory of the United States for 1889, (Chicago: J.W.Connorton, 1889),p.24; M.M Yeakle, The City of St. Louis of Today (St.Louis: J. Osmun Yeakle & Co.,1889), p.217.
- 6) Mittelbuscher, "Great Tobacco Era", pp. 5-9.

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- 7) Walter Williams and Floyd Shoemaker, Missouri, Mother of the West  
(Chicago: American Historical Society, 1930), p.347.
- 8) Maurice Corina, Trust in Tobacco: The Anglo-American Struggle for Power  
(London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1975), pp.53-58.
- 9) Connorton, Tobacco Directory, p.365.

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Jefferson City: Emory S. Foster, 1866.

Missouri Republic 25 December 1898. "Sketches of Men Who Developed the  
Manufacture of Plug Tobacco".

Missouri and Tobacco. Washington D.C.: The Tobacco Institute, 1960.

Mittelbuscher, Barb, and Matlock, Gary. "The Great Tobacco Era of  
Western St. Charles County". Past Times St. Charles. vol.2,no.2,  
(1985).

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Counties Missouri. Chicago: Chapman Publ. Co., 1895.

Williams, Walter and Shoemaker, Floyd. Missouri, Mother of the West.  
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& Co., 1889.

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2. Steven Mitchell  
National Register Historian and State Contact Person  
Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Historic Preservation Program  
P. O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102  
Date: May 5, 1989  
Telephone: 314/751-5368



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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The following information is the same for all photographs  
including the photocopy of historic Photo # 3:

Photographer: Melba McCarver

Date: March, 1990

Location of neg.: Wentzville Missouri Community Historical Society  
P.O. Box 202  
Wentzville, MO 63385

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Previous documentation on file (NPS): n/a

- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Wentzville MO Community Historical Society

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 

1	5
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6	8	6	5	6	0
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4	2	9	7	7	2	0
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Zone      Easting                  Northing

B 

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Zone      Easting                  Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The south half of lots 2 and 3 in Block 5 of R.L. Whitehead's Addition, City of Wentzville, St. Charles County, Missouri.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the remaining portions of the city lots that have historically been associated with property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Barb Eisenbath Mittelbuscher

organization Wentzville MO Community Hist.Soc., Inc. date March 26, 1990

street & number 1938 Olde Eisenbath Lane telephone 314-327-5597

city or town Foristell state MO zip code 63348





1

WENTZVILLE TOBACCO CO. FACTORY  
406 ELM  
WENTZVILLE, MO

CAMERA FACING SOUTHEAST



2

WENTZVILLE TOBACCO CO. FACTORY  
406 ELM  
WENTZVILLE, MO

CAMERA FACING NORTHWEST



3

WENTZVILLE TOBACCO CO. FACTORY  
406 ELM  
WENTZVILLE, MO

HISTORIC PHOTO, C. 1900  
CAMERA FACING SOUTHEAST

EXTRA  
PHOTOS







