

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: Durham
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Stagville

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
East side of S.R. 1004, 1 mi. north of S.R. 1632, at end of dirt lane

CITY OR TOWN:  
Durham vicinity

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Fourth  
The Hon. Ike F. Andrews

STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37      COUNTY: Durham      CODE: 063

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) None

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Liggett and Myers Tobacco Company

STREET AND NUMBER:  
P. O. Box 1886

CITY OR TOWN:  
Durham

STATE:  
North Carolina

CODE:  
37

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Durham County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Durham

STATE:  
North Carolina

CODE:  
37

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Durham

STATE:  
North Carolina

CODE:  
37

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Stagville is a late Georgian plantation house consisting of a two-story side-hall-plan main block and an original one-story wing with a rear shed room. Both sections are of frame covered with molded weatherboards; much of the brick foundation has been replaced, but the remaining original sections are in English bond. A molded cornice caps the facades, and the door and window frames are molded. The molded window sills are unusually well-executed as are the heavy sills beneath the doors. The entrance to the three-bay main block, in the south bay, consists of a double door beneath a transom; each leaf has three raised panels and, like doors throughout the house, is hung with hinges. Protecting the entrance is a simple pedimented porch. The wing is also three bays wide, with a central entrance sheltered by a shed porch with early tapered posts surviving against the facade. At the north end of the main block is a double-shoulder chimney of brick laid in common bond; a single-shoulder chimney rises at the end of the wing and another heats the shed room of the wing. The rear entrance of the main block is like the front but lacks a transom. The rear porch has a flat-paneled ceiling, and nearby lie the fallen molded handrail and a porch support octagonal in section; the outline where they were attached can be seen on the elements still in place. The rear porch of the wing is like the front one and has its early posts.

The interior of the house continues the restrained yet robust Georgian character of the exterior and retains almost totally its original fabric. Flat-paneled wainscots and raised-paneled doors are consistently employed, combined with heavy rounded Georgian moldings. The wainscot in the hall is particularly interesting: there is a lower range of vertical panels, beneath a very heavy symmetrically molded rail; above this is a range of long horizontal panels surmounted by a more shelf-like rail. To the north of the hall is a single large room dominated by an impressive, rather vernacular mantel that, with its overmantel, occupies the large area between the windows. Wide fluted pilasters flank the fire opening and reach to a molded dentil cornice that extends from window head to window head. A molded shelf appears over the fire opening, and the overmantel consists of six broad panels; three similar panels occur between the pilasters and the windows. The wainscot in this room has a single range of vertical panels, and the chair rail serves as window sills.

The stair rises at the rear of the hall. The first flight, rising along the southern wall, is open, with a high closed string and paneled spandrel; there apparently was never a balustrade. The second flight, which runs south to north, is enclosed with a flush-sheathed spandrel and paneled soffit. Beneath the stair is a small door with two large panels. At the second level the stair well is protected by a balustrade with a heavy molded rail carried on balusters and a post square in section. To the front of the stair hall at the second level is a small unheated room and to the north is a single large room. The wainscot has long panels each of which runs half the length of each wall. The mantel features a molded architrave surmounted by a frieze with two panels beneath a molded shelf.

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The finish of the wing is consistent with that of the main block. Of particular interest is the full-height built-in cupboard, apparently original, located in the hall of the wing backing up against the stair of the main block. Its side is flat-paneled and the rails and stiles feature robust moldings rather like the chair rail in the main hall. The doors are also flat-paneled and hung with H hinges. In the wing there are two small rooms and a hall, and to the rear two shed rooms. Only the two south rooms are heated. The mantel in the front room features a molded architrave and broad overmantel extending from window to window, reaching upward to several inches below the window heads. The mantel in the rear (shed) room has a molded architrave surmounted by a single large panel in the frieze.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian;       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1799

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Stagville, the home of the important Bennehan and Cameron families, is a restrained late Georgian plantation house, with exterior and interior finish combining a stylistically conservative retention of robust Georgian forms with excellent craftsmanship. The simplicity and dignity of the building, coupled with the remarkably complete survival of the original fabric, make it one of the most significant examples of its period in the state.

Stagville was the home of Richard Bennehan, merchant, planter, and early benefactor of the University of North Carolina. According to historian Kemp P. Battle,

Mr. Bennehan (Richard), of Petersburg, was selected by Mr. Wm. Johnston, a rich merchant of Hillsboro, to take charge of his country store on Flat River. By strict integrity, intelligence and good management, as well as by marriage, he accumulated a large estate, which descended to his son, Thomas D. and daughter Rebecca, who married Judge Duncan Cameron.

There is a letter from Johnston to Bennehan dated 1771, which suggests their business relationship existed at least as early as that date. Bennehan lived near the Flat River, "on the road between Hillsboro and Raleigh and dispensed a bounteous hospitality." He must have become a person of importance and responsibility by 1776 when the Provincial Congress appointed him a commissioner for holding elections for delegates from Orange County to that congress. In 1777 he was commissioned a justice of the peace by Governor Richard Caswell.

Among the young merchant's early visitors was James Iredell who lodged there in 1778. Iredell, North Carolina's attorney general during the Revolution and later a United States Supreme Court Justice, wrote his wife that Bennehan "attacked us with such hospitable earnestness . . . [that] we were doomed to spend the whole day there--and a very agreeable one it was." William R. Davie, Revolutionary general, member of the Federal Convention, governor, and "Father of the University of North Carolina," also visited Bennehan, as is evidenced by the dateline of a letter of 1795. According to the United States Census of 1790, Bennehan owned 2,355 acres and owned twenty-four slaves, the largest number in the county.

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The present Stagville plantation house was built by Richard Bennehan in 1799, according to the research of Professor Richard Saunders of Duke University. Saunders cites a tax list of "the early 1800's" which accurately describes the present house:

Dwelling house erected on the first mentioned land of the following demenions: 32 feet long, 22 wide, two stories. A wing annexed. One story 24 feet by 16 with a shed adjg the wing 10 feet wide and a passage 12 feet. The above described dwelling was erected in 1799.

In a county which from the beginning was composed mainly of small farms, Bennehan's holdings in 1800 amounted to 4,065 acres, making him the second largest land owner. With forty-four slaves he owned more than anyone else in the county. In 1801 his son Thomas D. Bennehan was one of nine graduates of the University of North Carolina. The father had been made a trustee of that institution in 1799, while his son became a trustee in 1812 and served as such for thirty-five years. Thomas D. acquired Stagville at his father's death in 1825, and continued the successful operation begun by his father. (Other of Richard's property had gone earlier to Duncan Cameron, who had married Richard's daughter Rebecca and established a major plantation nearby at Fairntosh.) When Thomas Bennehan died in 1847, about 5,000 acres including Stagville was devised to his nephew Paul G. Cameron (Duncan's son), one of the state's leaders in wealth and agricultural industry. Seven thousand acres more he devised to a niece, but the land was ultimately added to the Paul Cameron estate, swelling it to perhaps 30,000 acres. The will left more than 300 slaves to be divided.

Stagville remained in the Cameron family until it was sold to Liggett and Myers Tobacco Company, Inc., whose property it now is.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Charles Blume, Jr., survey specialist; architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor.  
 Battle, Kemp P., editor. "William Richardson Davie: A Memoir". James Sprunt Historical Monograph No. 7. Chapel Hill: The University Press, 1907.  
 Clark, Walter, editor. The State Records of North Carolina. Goldsboro, North Carolina: Nash Brothers, 1904.  
 Durham County Records, Durham County Courthouse, Durham, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		36° 07' 01"	78° 50' 16"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Office of Archives and History DATE: 8 May 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1956 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: H. G. Jones

Title: State Historian/Administrator

Date: 8 May 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Durham County Records, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina  
(Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).  
Hoyt, William H., editor. Papers of Archibald D. Murphy. Raleigh: E. M.  
Uzzell and Company, 1914.  
Leflor, Hugh Talmage and Wager, Paul, editors. Orange County 1752-1952.  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The Orange Printshop, 1953.  
McCree, Griffith, Jr. Life and Correspondence of James Iredell. New York:  
D. Appleton and Company, 1857.  
Orange County Records, Orange County Courthouse, Hillsborough, North Carolina,  
Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).  
Orange County Records, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina  
(Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

Stagville  
 S.R. 1004  
 Durham vicinity  
 North Carolina

USGS Map, Durham north quadrangle  
 Scale: 1: 62,500  
 Date: 1951

*Northeast Durham quad*

Latitude			Longitude		
degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
36	07	01	78	50	16

