



Edmund Haynes Taylor, Jr.

Taylor was born in Kentucky on February 12, 1830. Orphaned at an early age, he was raised in New Orleans where he attended Boyer's French School. The well-educated youth moved back to Kentucky, where E. H. Taylor, Sr., adopted him. In Frankfort, Taylor attended B. B. Sayer's Academy, which later moved to Louisville. Following in the footsteps of his adopted father, Taylor became involved in banking where he aided in the organization of several distilleries. Through his banking, Taylor became personally acquainted with many of the early whiskey makers.

In 1869, Taylor purchased a small distillery located in Leestown, on the banks of the Kentucky River where distilling and whiskey storage had been taking place on the site 1787. Taylor equipped the distillery with a modern boiler and immediately began to renovate, upgrade and modernize the plant. Some of his improvements were copper fermentation tanks, new grain grinding equipment, columnar stills and modern buildings to house them. He was responsible for the patented mash technique, which separated the solids from the slop, providing a thick creamy liquid rather than an inert mass for the sour mash. Because of his innovations, his systematic approach to whiskey making, his dedication to quality and his constant battle to protect bourbon and keep its name from being applied to inferior whiskies, Taylor is known as "The Father of the Modern Bourbon Industry."

During this period Taylor christened the distillery - O. F. C. for Old Fire Copper, its first official name. Taylor became involved in several other distilleries in Franklin and Woodford County. Because of money problems, Taylor left O. F. C., which became the property of George T. Stagg.

Taylor continued to innovate and be involved in Bourbon until his death in 1923. It is said that E. H. Taylor, Jr. was the last of a breed. A Bourbon Aristocrat who linked the "classic and modern eras of Bourbon making."