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The campaign for prohibition in Montana: Agrarian idealism and liquor reform 1883-1926

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THE CAMPAIGN FOR PROHIBITION IN MONTANA: AGRARIAN IDEALISM
AND LIQUOR REFORM, 1883-1926

by

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B.A., Hamilton College, 1980

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In 1916, Montanans approved a referendum calling for state-wide Prohibition. By 1926, seven years before national Prohibition ended, Montana's voters repealed the enforcement of state anti-liquor laws. This paper examines why the Prohibition campaign received such overwhelming support prior to 1920, only to lose much of its appeal six years later.

Manuscript collections of organizations such as the Montana Women's Christian Temperance Union and publications by groups such as the Anti-Saloon League and the W.C.T.U. provide the best source for information regarding Prohibition ideology. Montana's newspapers provide the most informative source of Prohibition issues concerning state residents.

Since many Progressive leaders included Prohibition in their reform agenda, a study of Montana's Progressive leaders, of the state's women's movement, and of the increased political activity of farmers all contribute to the study of Prohibition. The role of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company in the anti-liquor campaign provides an indication the social and economic problems associated with alcohol consumption in Montana's urban areas. The success of the anti-liquor campaign in 1916 proved that political interest groups other than the Company's could operate effectively in the state.

More important, this paper reveals how the popularity of the Prohibition issue reflected the overall fortunes of Montana's development. Prohibition symbolized the acceptance of an idealistic vision—held by many of the state's settlers during the first two decades of the twentieth century—of a traditional, moral way of life. The A.S.L. in particular capitalized on this idealistic fervor to achieve its objective.

By contrast, the acceptance of the practical regulation of the liquor industry—rather than its elimination—reflected the abatement of much of Montana's reforming zeal by 1926. Many reformers believed their objectives had been achieved and many Progressive leaders had turned their attention to the national political arena. A state-wide depression, particularly in farming areas, encouraged Montanans to seek revenue-raising legislation, and prompted efforts to reduce the cost of operating state and local government. This return to finding practical solutions to the state's problems provided the opportunity for the ultimate success of liquor reformers by achieving many of their initial objectives.
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INTRODUCTION

FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER AND MONTANA'S LATENT TEMPERANCE SENTIMENT

In 1915, Ernest H. Cherrington, editor of the Anti-Saloon League Yearbook, wrote, "[T]here is practically no efficient anti-liquor law on the statute books of Montana." He added, however, that "there is a strong, latent temperance sentiment in the state...." With these statements, Cherrington recognized the rising groundswell of public opinion in favor of Prohibition, a movement that had begun in 1883. The approval by Montana's voters of a referendum on House Bill 224—a law opposing the production, sale, and use of alcoholic beverages—fulfilled the efforts of the state's Prohibitionists. This decision occurred in 1916, only one year after Cherrington noted that Montana enforced no efficient liquor laws; this event preceded by more than three years the addition of the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

The sentiment in favor of anti-liquor laws to which Cherrington referred indicated that Prohibition became an explicitly defined moral issue by 1916. Montanans began experimenting with saloon regulation and local option as early as 1897, but for many reasons, including resistance by saloon keepers and changes in national Prohibitionist strategy, reformers argued that only state-wide Prohibition would control the adverse effects of liquor consumption. Ironically, one observer advised the liquor interests to support the anti-liquor referendum, since that bill allowed saloon-keepers a two year period of grace to sell their inventories. Their other alternative, county

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option, required saloons to close immediately. In either case, the editor noted, Montana would inevitably go Dry.6

The impulse compelling Montanans to support such drastic measures emerged from efforts by all Americans to adjust to the changing twentieth century. More important, however, the Prohibition campaign in Montana represented the attempt to fulfill the state's potential for prosperity and self-sufficiency. The ideology supporting this campaign allowed many Montanans to view Prohibition as a reform providing freedom, rather than a reactionary measure restricting individual liberty. Reformers envisioned greater purposes for anti-liquor views than simply eliminating drunkenness. Montanans adopted a progressive ideology to avoid mistakes made by settlers in other frontier areas earlier in the century. Residents of other territories believed that much of their political self-determination had been lost to eastern financiers allied with corrupt urban politicians.7 The increasing incidence of labor violence and the declining status of farmers in other parts of the country during the eighteen-eighties and eighteen-nineties prompted Montana's leaders to attempt to prevent their state from suffering the same fate. Prohibition, therefore, was not simply an illogical and oppressive manifestation of overzealous piety, but a compromise that reduced personal liberty in principle in exchange for greater economic and social freedom. The anti-liquor campaign began as an attempt to eliminate hindrances to Montana's development.

Montanans endorsed Prohibition in 1916 because, according to contemporary ideas, this law contributed to the common good. On the
national level, anti-liquor laws represented an attempt to impose traditional middle-class values upon a rapidly changing society. Originally, this response symbolized neither an agrarian rejection of industrialization nor a nativist reprisal against the onslaught of immigrant laboring classes. The reformers of the Progressive era perceived laws and regulatory institutions as the best means for the entire society to adjust to the twentieth century; they sided with neither rural nor urban interests, neither the upper classes nor the lower classes. Progressives encouraged the acceptance of industrial values such as scientific management and efficiency while also defending traditional symbols of social stability. Prohibition legislation offered one way in which both of these goals could be fulfilled.

Nationally, Prohibition represented part of the impulse to comprehend America's rapidly changing structure from a predominantly agrarian country to one largely depending upon industry. Progressives accepted the transition, but wished to implement newly emerging social values according to their standards. Reform leaders responded by supplementing "individual" ethics with laws. Legislated morality, they reasoned, could replace community regulations of behavior that had become outdated in large, impersonal factories and cities.

In the West, as part of a comprehensive Progressive ideology, Prohibition represented a renewal of the purifying influence upon society once fulfilled by the frontier. Thomas Jefferson envisioned the settling of the frontier by homesteaders as the source of strength for American republicanism. Americans found purification through their
contact with uncorrupted nature, while propagating democratic ideals and progress across the continent. The strength of character required to simply cultivate the land eliminated individuals unsuited to the frontier. Only the most capable settlers could create a society deriving the best characteristics of both the wilderness and modern industry.13 Frederick Jackson Turner's ideas complemented Jefferson's, by implying that from the frontier experience emerged Americans devoid of decadent European traditions. Another important element of Turner's hypothesis to Western ideology—the frontier as "safety valve"—suggested that the available land and the purifying environment of the West ensured the stability of American society against threats from turmoil created by increasing urbanization.14

The importance of these interpretations to Prohibition ideology arose when many Americans believed that the frontier no longer existed to fulfill the functions proposed by Jefferson and Turner. The increasing industrialization of the West by the railroads and other large corporations, and the "closing" of the frontier by the Census report of 1890 threatened to eliminate its cleansing effect upon American society.15 Since an uncorrupted environment no longer existed to purify the United States and to stabilize its democratic system, many Americans grasped an ideology that provided a similar function through laws and institutions. Through unity and rational management, for example, reformers proposed a way to save society from the adverse effects of its own progress.16

In the late nineteenth century and during the first two decades of the twentieth century many of the state's new residents attempted to
use Progressive ideology when they settled the relatively new area. Promotional efforts led by the Great Northern Railroad created a surge of homesteaders into the state that peaked during the moist climatic cycle of the twentieth century's second decade. Legislation enlarging the amounts of land available to settlers plus the promise of abundant harvests lured emigrants of many different backgrounds to the state. The Northern Pacific Railroad encouraged this boom in an attempt to sell its land grant holdings. The Great Northern offered inexpensive rates for settlers in order to create a market for railroad services in Montana. Bankers and land speculators flourished from the profits earned from the great number of new land owners. For many reasons Montana's population grew along with optimistic expectations for the state's future prosperity.

The growth of Montana's industries, particularly the mining ventures centered in Butte, Anaconda, and Helena, and the timber companies located in western portions of the state, balanced the influx of predominantly Scandinavian and midwestern immigrants with urban working classes of many national and regional origins. The eclectic nature of Montana's resources and economic base presented a problem to promoters and land owners who envisioned the state's settlement according to the agrarian principles articulated by Jefferson and Turner. Spokesmen like Robert N. Sutherlin, editor of the Rocky Mountain Husbandman, responded to this problem by proposing a pattern of agrarian settlement complementing Montana's industrial growth. Instead of disrupting the state's development because of their different resource, political, and social needs, industry and
agriculture, if their leaders cooperated, could together guarantee Montana's self-sufficiency. The rapid increase in the state's population after the turn of the century, and the expectation that this growth would continue, led Montana's developers to conclude that the historic trend of the state's exploitation could be ended. Fur trappers, range cattlemen, and miners profited from Montana's resources during the nineteenth century, but few reinvested their wealth into the state's development. With a larger population in the area, however, this process of colonial exploitation—causing cycles of extreme boom and bust—could be ended.\textsuperscript{20} Settlers, promoters argued, provided markets for manufactured goods and encouraged the investment of profits into capital improvements. The land boom of the early twentieth century prompted developers to envision a commonwealth of Montana, sustaining its own means of production and independent of eastern or foreign financial investors.\textsuperscript{21}

Specifically, Sutherlin's Inland Empire ideal called for the organization of agricultural communities in order to tap land and water resources effectively for individual farmers. According to this plan, farmers could implement irrigation systems more efficiently and profitably and transport their products to market more easily than if they had established isolated homesteads. Sutherlin's idea complemented the vision of men like Paris Gibson—the founder of Great Falls—who predicted the need for urban centers in Montana to serve as bases for industry as well as centers for agricultural services. Cities aided farming by providing supplies, manufactured goods, and transportation access to eastern markets.\textsuperscript{22} This ideal vision of the
state's development found considerable support from many of Montana's progressively minded citizens, especially among the prosperous farmers, ranchers, and the urban middle class.  

This social and economic development depended upon the existence of common values among Montana's citizens. Ironically, promoters such as Sutherlin and Gibson, and editors of publications like the Equity News who espoused the cooperation between agriculture and industry, expected that this alliance would reflect the acceptance of traditional American beliefs. Montana's prosperity depended upon physically and culturally shaping its communities into stable and productive environments. Cow towns, with their "scattered cabins, tents, saloons, and brothels" prompted reformers to attempt to transplant midwestern villages into a new area. Developers also sought to end the "boarding house culture" of the working class districts in urban areas in favor of communities with churches, schools, and parks. In 1907, one writer resurrected a dated image of the West by describing the importance to the nation of Montana's developing farm communities: "Like a monster steam engine, there must be a safety valve [the communities] or the machine will explode."  

Montana's reformers promoted traditional symbols of middle class culture as determinants of the state's development. The cohesiveness and tranquility of the various social classes depended upon the preservation of the traditional nuclear family. Successful production by both farmers and urban workers required the acceptance of a single strict work ethic. The use of modern technological devices in agriculture and industry could be adopted only if Montanans physically
and intellectually adjusted to this change. Much of the support for the Temperance movement, which later developed into the campaign for Prohibition, thus emerged from the ideal of transforming the state into a self-sufficient Empire. The ability to reconcile a technologically oriented civilization with the vision of Montana as an uncorrupted land of opportunity required the homogenization of many social values, including the acceptance of Temperance by a wide variety of citizens.

The convictions of many of Montana's social and economic elite, the literature used by promoters, and the optimistic tone of many newspaper editorials reflected the pervasiveness of the Inland Empire ideal among the state's leaders. The biographies included in *Progressive Men of the State of Montana* referred to their dedication in developing the commercial and agrarian resources of the state. Not an insignificant group, these "Progressive Men" numbered more than two thousand; the publishers conceded that many more self-designated elite had wished to be included. Although these paragons of society primarily represented the most prosperous residents of the state, they often became leaders of middle and upper class reform groups. Mary Alderson and Alice Barnes Hoag, for example, served as chairmen and spokesmen for the W.C.T.U., while Joseph Pope was head of the A.S.L. for many years. These individuals represented a large group of Montana's elite that actively promoted the values necessary to fulfill the Inland Empire ideal.

The promotional literature that lured many settlers to Montana also reinforced the progressive values of its leaders. Great Northern Railway pamphlets not only described the fertility of the land, but
included descriptions of the uncorrupted and productive communities being created in agricultural areas. Similarly, promoters de-emphasized the image of urban areas as wild mining camps; instead, they stressed the cities' mercantile and industrial growth and the cultural advantages of growing population centers. One account, describing Butte's "wonderful development" by 1900, began, "Where in 1885, rested a thriving mining camp of 14,000 souls...there now stands a metropolis. Like an engulfing wave, progress and growth have placed their mark upon every nook of the city...." This type of account glorified not only the industrial growth of Montana's urban areas, but also emphasized their increasing civilization, marked by the construction of churches, schools, and hospitals. The literature promoting investment and settlement in Montana also encouraged progressive values supporting the vision of men like R.N. Sutherlin.

Many of Montana's newspaper editors further exposed the state's populace to progressive ideology. Their editorials strengthened the view of Montana as an Inland Empire by defining acceptable behavior within the community, publicizing and congratulating industrial or agricultural achievements, and de-emphasizing the differences between rural and urban interests. Many editors repeated the theme of Montana as a unified Treasure State, where all of its residents were seeking the same goals of security and prosperity. The Inland Empire ideal, even if it failed to inspire Montana's working classes and less prosperous farmers, represented the attitude held by many of the state's leading citizens. Much of the advertising and editorial literature perpetuated this ideal, making Montanans receptive to
movements like Prohibition—believed by reformers as contributing to the fulfillment of their vision of the state's future.

In addition to being exposed to an optimistic ideal for the state's future, many Montanans exhibited an interest in political activism prior to or concurrent with the Prohibition campaign. The Populist and Progressive movements and the campaign for women's equal rights all contributed to anti-liquor sentiment an optimistic attitude for improving Montana society and an organized following committed to that task. Montana's sparse settlement and relative prosperity during the eighteen-nineties prevented the rise of a strong radical agricultural movement as in other areas. The urban areas of the state provided most of the members for the People's Party, since the most important issue of that movement to the Rocky Mountain mining region was the monetization of silver. Agrarian Populists, however, viewed Montana optimistically as the "best west". Based on lessons learned from earlier frontier experiences, these farmers believed that a system capitalizing upon the technology of the eighteen-nineties and the fertile environment of the state could eliminate the problems of political corruption and economic exploitation previously experienced by farmers in other areas. Montana's agricultural settlement represented an "age of optimism", but this attitude inspired a movement for grass-roots democracy to prevent the corruption of this ideal environment. For example, by appealing for direct democracy measures like the initiative and referendum, and the direct election of senators, the Populists attempted to prevent corrupt government officials or corporate leaders from gaining power. The effort also
represented a response to the corrupt bargains of the "War of the Copper Kings", such as the dispute over the capital's location, and the attempt by William A. Clark to buy a senate seat in 1889. Montana's Populists thus echoed the "conspiracy" rhetoric of the national agrarian movement, but declined to initiate a strong anti-urban rebellion. Much of the support for anti-corruption measures, however, originated as responses to events—like Clark's election—only indirectly related to agricultural issues.

Montana Populists primarily viewed the late nineteenth century as a period of opportunity. The state's transcontinental railroad service reached its completion in the 1880's and the growth of large-scale farming began to accelerate during the 1890's. Few opportunities arose for agrarian rebellion in Montana, unlike developments in the midwest and southeast. The legacy of the agrarian Populist movement in Montana symbolized the defense of rural values and an agrarian lifestyle against the perceived corruptness of urban life. More important, the optimistic political activism in pursuit of grass-roots democracy represented the central purpose of the movement. The organization of many farmers into powerful political groups like the Farmer's Equity provided the foundation for the popular support received by the anti-liquor movement during the early twentieth century. Agrarian political activism reflected the introduction of a "moralistic" political culture by Montana's homesteaders. This culture extended westward the "Puritan-Yankee" beliefs favoring an active government serving political and social reformers. The attempt to use government intervention to ensure the development of the state
according to traditional values represented the ideological link between Progressives and agrarian Populists.  

Montana Progressives also contributed to the organizational and ideological origin of the Prohibition movement. This reform group worked to retain the traditional values of the state's settlers, but advocated progress by replacing rugged individualism with community service. Like the Populists, Progressives supported a program of grass-roots democracy in response to political corruption. Montana's progressives also reconfirmed many of the values held by the agrarian reformers. When considering what brewery workers and saloon keepers would do after Prohibition, one newspaper editor suggested they try farming. Progressives used measures such as the initiative and referendum as both the means and the end of their political reform. In addition to supporting popular legislation for the sake of decreasing the influence of special interests, Progressives attempted to legislate their values by enacting laws and creating commissions to regulate these sanctions. Many political movements during the first two decades of the twentieth century represented middle class reforms designed to solve social or economic problems through the use of governmental power. Optimistically, Progressives believed that by using his intellect, man could shape society into a world organized to his advantage. In Montana, the Progressive movement not only continued the Populists' effort toward achieving a self-sufficient commonwealth, but also added efforts toward reducing political corruption and establishing middle class moral standards for the state. Prohibition therefore received considerable support from Montana Progressives,
since the anti-liquor campaign promised to make into law the traditional virtue of abstinence.

The campaign for women's suffrage, a third political movement preceding the campaign for Prohibition in Montana, also significantly contributed to the campaign against liquor. Begun in 1889, the Montana Women's Suffrage Association primarily based its appeal upon a demand for the fulfillment of women's natural rights. Many women shared the workload of settling the frontier environment, owned land outright, or had received an education equal or superior to that of their male counterparts. Based on their important role in Montana's society, women considered themselves entitled to vote to protect their interests. Demands for women's suffrage as a natural right, however, met considerable resistance from many of Montana's residents prior to 1900. Jeanette Rankin revived the suffrage movement in 1910 by renewing demands for voting rights based on women's moral contribution to politics. Women participating in this successful second drive for suffrage perceived the ballot as a tool to achieve "reformatory and progressive measures... as a meliorative force to complement men's qualities." By voting, the moral influence women contributed to society would henceforth extend to politics. Women campaigned for the right to vote not only to protect the home and family, but to complement the "rational" influence of men upon politics with their moral influence. The success of the women's suffrage movement in 1914, indicated by Montanan's approval of granting women of Montana the right to vote, also contributed to the success of the Prohibition campaign. The suffrage movement owed much of its popularity to the
rise of Progressive sentiment during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Both movements promised to enact reforms, to end corruption, and to protect traditional institutions like the home and family. Women thus gained equal suffrage as a reform measure with a purpose comparable to that of Prohibition and other Progressive campaigns.

Populism, Progressivism, and the campaign for women's suffrage all contributed to the Prohibition movement as bases of political and ideological support. All agreed with the objective of improving Montana; all used similar methods. A similar optimistic perception of the state's future—as a self-sufficient commonwealth—provided the initial impulse for each campaign. Each of the earlier movements created organizations and popular support that served Prohibitionists. For example, the Prohibition referendum in 1916 passed by the widest margins in rural areas where Populist ideas flourished. Montana Progressives provided a large proportion of the monetary and written support for Prohibition. As in the Wyoming campaign, women's suffrage did not lead directly to the passage of Prohibition, but many women turned out to vote in 1916. In response to liquor interests' opposition to equal suffrage as well as their moral role in politics, many women voted in favor of anti-liquor laws. The Prohibition movement in Montana did not originate solely as a crusade against liquor, but it offered a means of improving society according to traditional, middle-class, white Anglo-Saxon, Protestant values. This reform benefitted from the optimism, popular support, and ideological commitment of earlier reform movements. Prohibition particularly
reflected the efforts of Progressives, who attempted to improve society by creating laws and regulatory commissions to enforce their beliefs. \(^49\)
The impulse for the Prohibition campaign, however, began well before either the Progressive era or the Populist movement. Many of the arguments used by Prohibitionists in 1916 had been formed early in the nineteenth century. The campaign for Temperance, characterized in Montana by the efforts of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, provided much of the moral and intellectual foundation of the Prohibition movement.
NOTES FOR INTRODUCTION


2. In 1883, the first major anti-liquor organization in Montana, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, assembled in Butte.


4. Local Option gave citizens the opportunity to decide in local elections if their community would be Wet or Dry.


8. Several historians, including Andrew Sinclair and Joseph R. Gusfield, have defined Prohibition as having been inspired by agrarian suspicions of urban values. In particular, this apprehension grew from the influx of Catholic working class immigrants.


19. Ibid., p. 4.


33. The Inland Empire ideal included the concept that farmers, by forming cooperatives, could oppose their exploitation by railroads and eastern financiers. See Lawrence Goodwyn, Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) for a discussion of national Populism, which differed from the Montana agrarian movement in the eighteen-nineties.


37. Timberlake, Prohibition, p. 2.


39. The term Progressive movement is used to denote the optimistic spirit behind a variety of social, political and economic reforms.


41. Ibid., p. 34.

42. Women had previously been allowed to vote in elections determining membership of school boards and school policy.


44. Waldron and Wilson, Atlas, p. 57.

45. Suffrage did not carry simply because of the raised moral influence in politics promised by women's participation; Progressives, led by Jeannette Rankin, by this time accepted the notion that women deserved the ballot as a natural right.


47. Joseph Pope of the A.S.L., Mary Alderson of the W.C.T.U., and Joseph Dixon as editor of the Daily Missoulian typified the leadership of the campaign.

The origins of the Temperance movement in Montana are difficult to trace because several elements of that campaign bear little resemblance to a reform movement against the consumption of liquor. The strongest source of support for Temperance emerged from proponents of the idea of transforming the state into a self-sufficient Empire. The ability to reconcile a technologically oriented civilization with the vision of Montana as an uncorrupted land of opportunity required the homogenization of many social values, such as the acceptance of Temperance by a wide variety of citizens. In order to settle the state without spoiling it, Montana Progressives promoted a comprehensive reform program. Through a variety of improvements, Montana's leaders envisioned a state free from economic dependence upon eastern financiers, untainted by political corruption, and governed by a productive and prosperous middle class. Temperance represented one of the values necessary to ensure that Montanans lived a lifestyle that contributed to the state's prosperity.

Although many of the ideas forming the basis of the campaign for Prohibition in Montana stemmed from the ideology of the Temperance movement, each reform also exhibited significantly different goals and different perceptions of human nature. Proponents of Temperance represented part of a comprehensive reform program designed to improve the lot of the individual without disturbing existing social institutions. Until the founding of the Anti-Saloon League, for
example, Temperance leaders urged drinkers not to frequent saloons instead of challenging their existence. Prohibitionists, in contrast, supported the effort to eliminate the social institutions that adversely affected individuals. Temperance reformers believed that moral suasion—changing people's behavior through education or conversion to an idea—sufficed to create a tolerable environment within the existing social structure. Prohibitionists used methods of coercion, such as lawmaking, to compel people to change their habits if they failed to respond to education or to persuasion. This difference in approach reveals that Prohibitionists recognized social conditions as the main source of individual evil or degradation; altering these institutions thus represented the best method for improving individual behavior. Temperance reformers, however, viewed individual behavior as the source of many social problems. Both movements symbolized a struggle for unity in values and morals, but each effort reflected a different perception of the individual's role within society. Temperance reformers optimistically believed that the rational and virtuous elements of human nature would lead to the gradual acceptance of their values by all people. Unfortunately for the liquor industry, Prohibition leaders revealed less faith in human character.3

The Temperance movement complemented the Inland Empire ideal of promoting cooperation between rural and urban interests in order to create a self-sufficient commonwealth. Although the anti-liquor crusade originated as an attempt to preserve traditional Protestant middle class values, Temperance represented an "assimilative" reform, because its proponents tried to accommodate the various habits of urban
populations. Instead of simply trying to eliminate the diverse cultural values and habits introduced to the state by immigrants, these reformers attempted to reduce the adverse effects of these habits upon individuals and society. Ideally, Temperance leaders envisioned the end of all alcohol consumption, but a far more manageable task was to prevent the drunkard from starving his children by using all of his money for alcohol, or regulating saloon hours so that they did not compete with churches for patrons. The failure of assimilative reform, however, especially the regulation of saloons, eventually led to the use of coercive reform.

Protestant revivalism, providing much of the ideological basis of this anti-liquor movement, represented another reason Montana's new population readily accepted Temperance. This religious movement, which began early in the nineteenth century, reemerged in response to the increasing social turbulence of the late nineteenth century. Revivalism offered the solution of personal morality to counter corrupting influences of industrialization upon the United States. Religious piety also symbolized to Montanans a means of civilizing the frontier. The revivalists originally attempted to convert followers to prepare for Christ's second coming; religious leaders gradually tempered this zealous purpose to accommodate contemporary needs. This compromise allowed many Protestants to direct their efforts toward achieving temporal and attainable goals of prosperity and security.

Brother William Wesley Van Orsdel, a prominent revivalist who styled himself after Billy Sunday, viewed Montanans as "...those who ventured all on the success of the homestead, industrious people,
cultured people, men and women reared in the church of the east and middle west..." Brother Van perceived his mission as the revitalization of Christian zeal and goodness in frontier Montana in order to fully civilize the rough environment. To accomplish this goal, the revivalist began in 1872 to organize Sunday schools and Churches, since these institutions offered the best means for him to reach the people. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Brother Van's rhetoric included attacks upon liquor consumption and the liquor industry. Although he had friends in the liquor business, for the sake of that friendship, and for the good of humanity, Orsdel worked to end their involvement with that industry. Religious revivalists thus contributed to the Temperance movement not only their moralistic ideas, but also their desire to organize and motivate Montana's citizens to create a utopian society of industrious, cultured, church-going people.

Protestant revivalism also strengthened Temperance arguments by reaffirming the importance of a work ethic. Protestants always defined hard work as a method of serving God; material success and contributions to the church served as measurements of devoutness. Reformers combined contemporary scientific discoveries with the Protestant work ethic to form the basis of their arguments against excessive liquor consumption. During the eighteen-nineties scientists confirmed that alcohol acted as a depressant. This narcotic effect decreased the activity of the brain and the nervous system; consequently, large quantities of liquor reduced the consumer's ability to work.
Montanans valued the ability to work; men viewed as community leaders, like the "Progressive Men" of Montana, usually earned their status with economic accomplishments. Montana's elite included men who built their own ranches or industry—accomplishments creating an example for the rest of the community to emulate. Montana's upper classes were not the only group with a strong work ethic; homesteading required intensive labor from both men and women. Similarly, urban labor conditions created a taxing lifestyle for the working classes of this period.

Temperance reformers' combination of the work ethic ideal with the scientific findings describing alcohol as a depressant particularly appealed to urban employers, who profited from sober laborers. In Montana's mines and mills, men who worked more productively, safely, and efficiently earned greater returns for themselves and their employers. Temperance reformers thus addressed appreciative audiences when they described the adverse effects of alcohol upon an individual's ability to work. The consumption of alcohol threatened the means of attaining status, achieving prosperity, and adjusting to a rapidly changing society.

Two other related ideas completed the basis of the Temperance ideology during the nineteenth century. The first element—the study of eugenics—complemented the second concept, which described drinking as a threat to the existence of the family. Eugenics, the study of improving the human race, was one of the most important scientific topics of the day. Temperance leaders attempted to prove that the use of alcohol caused the degeneration of humans. Children inherited the
drinking habits of parents, or worse yet, drinking by married couples corresponded to the frequency of birth defects and infant deaths. One Temperance argument carried this idea to its logical extreme, stating that alcohol directly contributed to the decline of civilizations.  

The argument that alcohol consumption also threatened family unity complemented attacks upon liquor based upon eugenics data, since healthy, prosperous families and domesticated communities symbolized progress to Montana's reformers. Eugenicists began making their studies in the late nineteenth century in response to the influx of many immigrants to America who differed from the predominant white Anglo-Saxon race. These scientific studies, initiated to maintain the superiority of a race, became useful in Montana as settlers attempted to homestead in a hostile environment. The belief that the use of alcohol could undermine civilizations threatened progressives who envisioned the state developing into a self-sufficient empire. The presence of women and families on the frontier, along with churches and schools in communities, represented the advance of the state toward civilization and prosperity.

The combination of religious, scientific, and sociological ideas transformed the Temperance campaign into a movement relying upon rational as well as emotional appeals. Reformers associated alcohol with sin, and more important to many Montanan's, with failure. Alcohol threatened the symbols of the traditional values providing the basis for community prosperity and unity. Temperance spokesmen exploited both the terror of parents concerned with their children's health employers' logical desire to increase productivity of their workers.
In either case, reformers began the process of simplifying the issue of alcohol consumption to one of Good versus Evil; Prohibitionist propaganda fulfilled the process by which individuals accepted a reduction of their liberty by choosing between progress and failure, or tradition and uncertainty.\(^{19}\) For much of the period between the organization of a Temperance movement in 1883 and the campaign for Prohibition legislation in 1916, groups like the Montana Women's Christian Temperance Union contributed to anti-liquor efforts as a humanitarian reform. Many of their publications revealed that the creation of a utopian commonwealth represented their ideal objective, but the Union focused upon the defense of the family and maintaining traditional community values as their primary basis for action. Preceding the campaign for Prohibition, the Temperance movement provided later reformers with an ideological base, a popular cause, and an educated constituency.

I voted that women might vote, because I knew that they, the wives and mothers of the race, would vote John Barleycorn out of existence and back into the historical limbo of our vanished customs of savagery.\(^{20}\)

The Montana W.C.T.U. represented the best example of community support for organizations championing Temperance as a part of a comprehensive social reform program. The Anti-Saloon League and the Internal Order of the Good Templars also significantly contributed to the Temperance campaign. The W.C.T.U., however, represented the comprehensive movement for social reform based upon individual self-improvement. The A.S.L., in contrast, focused exclusively upon
eliminating the saloon as their method of improving society. The I.O.G.T.'s importance to the reform movement was reduced by its alliance with the Prohibition Party, a political group that gained little support in Montana. These two groups failed because of tactical disagreements with the more powerful A.S.L. The W.C.T.U., meanwhile, provided considerable support for the anti-liquor campaign by allying with the A.S.L.

Founded in 1883 with the assistance of Frances Willard, president of the national Union, the Montana W.C.T.U. grew quickly, establishing unions in thirteen communities by 1889. Mary L. Alderson, a leading member of the Union after 1896, defined the purpose of the organization as an effort to "elevate the moral tone of the community." To fulfill this purpose, W.C.T.U. leaders encouraged education of women, urged an increased role for women in society, and demanded the right to vote. Most important, however, during the early period of its existence, (1883 to 1910) the Montana W.C.T.U., by holding community meetings and by assisting communication between homesteads, ameliorated the rigorous conditions experienced by women on the homestead frontier or in rapidly developing urban centers. This function later led to the effective concerted effort in support of woman suffrage and Temperance.

One source of strength for women's organizations in Montana came from women seeking relief from the constant demands of raising a family. The existence of organizations like the W.C.T.U. encouraged women to act as "gentle tamers" of Montana. Through the activities of women's clubs or the local church, women applied eastern values and standards to western society.
Defending the family represented three primary means by which women could civilize their environment. The family symbolized a means of maintaining social stability, a reason for seeking prosperity, and the best way to perpetuate traditional values. First, the household served as a refuge for Montanans confronted with a new and demanding environment; the common beliefs of family members reinforced one another against any corrupting influences. Second, providing a good home prompted its members to seek material wealth, which in turn contributed to the prosperity of the community. Third, by providing education for children, the family perpetuated the values it had come to represent.

The Montana W.C.T.U. emphasized moral education as a means of fulfilling the family's role in civilizing the social environment. Elizabeth Fisk expressed the fears of many Montana women: "...[A] boy or young man is constantly exposed to many temptations in a town like this, and without Christian principles, one is never safe." The W.C.T.U. encouraged the education of children by creating affiliated youth groups whose members attended W.C.T.U. meetings and events. The Union also initiated a "textbook crusade" designed to require information on hygiene, temperance, and other similar topics to be included in McGuffey Readers—the standard grammar school text. These campaigners endeavored to produce restrained and dutiful children.

The demand for women's legal rights represented another function of the W.C.T.U. that provided the basis for the Temperance campaign. The Union attracted women who wanted civil equality with men while married, the right to sue for divorce, and the ability to legally to
defend themselves against rape or assault. Lobbying at legislative sessions provided the primary means women sought to establish these rights. The W.C.T.U. first tried to influence legislators to pass laws for their defense in a male dominated society. Woman suffrage originated as a measure to allow women to provide a positive moral influence upon politics by voting for school board issues. Only after 1910 was the suffrage campaign designed to provide women with political and social rights equal those held by men. The suffrage campaign diverted some of the W.C.T.U. ’s energy from the Temperance campaign, and created some confusion among members concerning the true function of the Union. By 1910, however, Mary Alderson asserted that "both movements served the same interest"; liquor interests opposed women's suffrage in 1913 "because the leaders have avowed that one of the principle reasons why women desire to vote is that it will afford them the best means of sweeping the saloon business out of Montana." The development of women's organizations—the W.C.T.U. in particular—thus encouraged popular support for the Temperance movement by mobilizing the political and moral influence of women.

Prior to 1913, the Montana W.C.T.U. used methods in their Temperance campaign that varied little from those used in other reform efforts. Women based many of their actions against liquor upon the scientific, religious, economic, and social arguments popularized by the national Temperance leaders. The Union, however, mounted its campaign within the context of its overall objective—the defense of the family. The W.C.T.U. 's efforts to improve public education persisted beyond the effort to include scientific data in McGuffey
readers. The Union demonstrated the assimilative nature of its campaign when one member suggested that "foreign children" should be taught about Temperance in addition to the information they learned in school. This type of moral suasion eventually would convince labor groups in urban areas and foreign born rural residents to join the anti-liquor campaign. Efforts to educate adults for the same purpose included publishing literature and holding meetings and conventions in which speakers proclaimed the advantages of a life of abstinence.

The most popularized moral suasion effort by the W.C.T.U. arose from women's effort to act as the conscience of men drinking in saloons. Historical accounts frequently portray White Ribboners (W.C.T.U. members) kneeling and praying in front of saloons while the men inside drank. For their efforts, these women attracted a great deal of publicity to their cause. More important, however, this act represented an attempt to convey the message that drinking was sinful and that many of the drinkers ignored their responsibility as family providers. The W.C.T.U. allowed saloon patrons the freedom to choose between drinking and abstinence, but offered many reasons for them to change their habits. Carrie Nation, a White Ribbomer who made a career of attacking saloons with hatchets, visited Butte in 1910. The W.C.T.U. always considered Nation's methods excessive, although many members admired the sincerity of her convictions. By 1910, Nation, then 63 years old, had mellowed; invectives rather than hatchets carried the force of her arguments. Her views also reflected W.C.T.U. ideology; during her visit to Butte, Nation visited saloons and houses of prostitution, preaching that liquor had the same effect as a "plague"
upon many families. She resolved to follow the Bible's teachings to forgive saloon keepers and brewers, but to encourage them to quit the business. Nation's visit reflected the overall Temperance effort of the W.C.T.U. by reminding individuals of their Christian duty to support their families instead of following a life of dissipation.

The methods used by Frances Willard, the national Union leader, indicated how women expected a number of reforms to mitigate the behavior of drunkards. As Norman H. Clark describes her,

> She [Willard] was always more inclined to organize the social agencies through which decent citizens might persuade a saloon regular to join the sober and respectable middle-class America than she was ever inclined to confront him personally and terrorize him into giving up his antibourgeois ways. Or, if the drunkard were beyond help, she wanted an impersonal but effective social agency to save his children.

Although individual members of the W.C.T.U.—such as Nation and Willard—employed methods of social reform suiting their own personalities, all contributed to realizing the same overall objective of the organization.

These efforts by the Montana W.C.T.U. demonstrated how the original function of the woman's club complemented contemporary Temperance ideology to create a large anti-liquor organization. The excessive consumption of alcohol directly threatened the existence of the family and therefore diminished the positive influence of that institution upon society. W.C.T.U. members perceived drinking as having a divisive influence upon families; drunken husbands often physically harmed their wives and children, or became unfit to provide for their dependents. Drinking exacerbated the conditions of isolation
experienced by many women on the homesteads, since men often spent more time in saloons than at home. Urban poverty increased as individuals spent on whiskey money needed for food and clothing. Drinking by parents caused the perception of immorality within the family. Children imitated the habits of parents or, driven by poverty, resorted to petty thievery for survival. As a means of assisting families in adjusting to a severe frontier environment, or to preserve the prosperity of rural communities, or to create a self-sufficient empire, the W.C.T.U. focused upon Temperance as part of a varied reform program. 36

The W.C.T.U.'s alternatives to saloons—described as poor men's clubs—strengthened their attack upon drinking. The Union offered social functions and permanent clubs as alternatives to drinking institutions. Various community services, such as mother's meetings and town beautification drives, offered an avenue of escape for women with drunken husbands. Women also found counseling available from other White Ribboners for their own drinking problems or for the alcoholism of their relatives. Even before women gained the right to vote in 1914, the W.C.T.U. proposed legislation for the zoning and regulation of saloons in order to keep them out of industrial and residential areas and to close them when church services were held. The Union also raised funds and wielded its influence upon voters to support candidates of any political party who supported anti-liquor measures. 37

For approximately the first thirty years of its existence in Montana, the W.C.T.U. functioned as an organization devoted to
assimilative, humanitarian reform. Ideally, Union members envisioned an end to all alcohol consumption, but refused to use coercive measures to achieve this goal. Instead, these reformers, relying upon a positive view of human nature, believed that through education, moral suasion, and alternatives to drinking, most people would gradually choose a life of abstinence. Their methods consisted of both rational and emotional appeals designed to use Temperance as a symbol of defending the family and as a contribution to the prosperity of the commonwealth. Gradually, however, the W.C.T.U. replaced these goals and methods with the coercive attitude assumed by the Prohibition campaign after 1913.

Beginning in 1907, when the W.C.T.U. joined the Anti-Saloon League in a Dry Federation, the Union gradually deemphasized many of its reform efforts in favor of its anti-liquor crusade. Its committees for other reform purposes remained intact, but W.C.T.U. rhetoric indicated that it would devote most of its energy to the complete elimination of the liquor industry. Anti-liquor literature assumed a less rational guise by 1913, when a W.C.T.U. speaker exhorted:

This day, O men, we, who hold high positions, can dedicate one vote to liberty, country, God and home, and re-dedicate the Constitution to the people and withdraw it forever as a bulwark for that conglomeration of cormorants who debauch manhood, slaughter womanhood, butcher childhood and crucify babyhood on the cross of alcohol.

During the same meeting, a speaker declared that the W.C.T.U. had joined the Dry Federation to eliminate "poor men's clubs" (saloons). No longer would Union members attempt to persuade men from drinking by offering alternatives to drinking.
This sentiment became prominent by 1914, when women gained the right to vote; Alice Barnes Hoag, a W.C.T.U. leader, urged voting for Prohibition to prevent Montana from becoming a haven for drunkards from nearby Dry states.  

(Washington and Oregon enacted Dry laws in 1914, while North Dakota had included anti-liquor legislation in the state constitution.) By 1916 the Union supported the passage of laws that forbid individuals from even moderate drinking. Similarly, the W.C.T.U. ignored their earlier attempts to reduce social problems through a broad reform program. Prohibition represented a panacea eliminating the need for education programs, poor houses, and counseling services,

Liquor is the cause of 75 percent of all crime, 50 percent of all pauperism, 35 percent of all insanity, and 40 percent of all divorces, and has not a single virtue to its credit. If Prohibition comes to us it will... not only fight the liquor traffic, but intemperance, impurity...

Thus, after 1913 the Montana W.C.T.U. ceased its attempts to improve society through Temperance reform. This transition reflected the course of the campaign for Prohibition legislation, symbolized by the coercive methods proposed by the state Anti-Saloon League. The behavior of saloon owners during the early years of the twentieth century prompted Drys to work for stronger measures against the sale of liquor. The saloon became a symbolic obstruction to the development of Montana's communities; Drys thus chose to impose anti-liquor laws in an attempt to preserve the utopian ideals of the state's settlers and promoters.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE


2. This distinction is made for the sake of clarity; the efforts of each movement often overlapped. Temperance leaders called for the prohibition of alcohol, and Prohibitionists promoted Temperance. They differed, however, since the former movement emphasized a strategy relying upon moral suasion, while the latter stressed coercive measures. Although the moral suasion efforts of Temperance leaders failed in the attempt to eliminate drinking, their educational program significantly contributed to the popular support for anti-liquor laws.


4. Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), p. 6; Gusfield distinguishes assimilative reform from coercive reform; the latter—which is important to this interpretation of Prohibition—was represented by Prohibitionists' attempts to eliminate alien cultural habits from American society.

5. Ibid., p. 7.


8. Myron J. Fogde, "Brother Van's Call to Frontier Montana" *Montana: Magazine of Western History*, vol. 22, no. 4, p. 9; quote is from *Montana Methodist Messenger*, vol. 15, August, 1920, p. 6. This view of Montana's population reflected van Orsdel's optimism, not an accurate assessment of the religious convictions of the state's residents. In 1906, for example, only 33 percent of all Montanans declared a church affiliation; 74 percent of that figure were Roman Catholics, most of whom lived in urban mining districts. See U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies: 1906* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910), pp. 42-43, 46-49.


11. Ibid., pp. 40-57.


15. Ibid., pp. 90, 91.


18. Ralph Mann, in After the Gold Rush (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982), argues the development of a frontier community could be measured by the presence and role of women. Churches, schools, and clubs for women who no longer had to work for their family's survival represented symbols of a town's maturity.


24. The W.C.T.U. Voice, January 1, 1907, also referred to the "boy problem", expressing concern regarding the development of vices such as drinking, cigarette smoking, and gambling.


34. *Butte Miner*, January 27, 1910, p. 3.


Although the Temperance movement preceded the Prohibition campaign, thereby providing it with ideological and popular support, the latter reform impulse did not simply begin when the earlier movement lost momentum. Major surges marked the progress of the Dry campaign, most notably when the Montana branches of the W.C.T.U. merged with the Anti-Saloon League and the Good Templars to form a Dry Federation in 1907, and again when Congress approved the Webb-Kenyon bill of 1913. (This bill prohibited the transport of alcohol from a Wet state to a Dry state.) For the most part, however, the Prohibition campaign proceeded gradually in its attempts to reduce the impact of saloons upon society, and finally to outlaw entirely the production and sale of alcoholic beverages. Reform leaders attempted to build their following while avoiding alienating any potential support by appearing overly zealous. Daily Missoulian editorials, which by 1916 strongly supported anti-liquor laws, reflected the gradual change evoked by Prohibition leaders. Remarking upon the Dry slogan, "Montana Dry in 1916", its editor wrote, in 1914, "Time was when such a crusade would have been greeted with hoots and yells of derision in Montana; but now—we are not certain." The transition experienced by the anti-liquor campaign transformed the movement begun as a idealistic reform movement; by 1916, with the Prohibition referendum before the state's voters, the public outcry for anti-liquor legislation changed the movement into a coercive, vindictive onslaught against all...
Several events during the first two decades of the twentieth century led to the use of coercive methods by reformers. Attempts to regulate the liquor industry, however, had begun much earlier. In 1867, the territorial government began passing laws to raise revenue from the sale of liquor, and to regulate the location of saloons and the hours they could remain open. In 1897 Montana voters approved a local option law, although no counties used this measure until 1903. Ravalli county laws prohibited the sale, manufacture, and consumption of alcoholic beverages in this year. These laws met with considerable resistance from county residents, who soon repealed county option in favor of general appeals for temperate consumption of alcohol. Montanans refused to pass another Prohibition law until 1916, when voters approved a referendum for a state-wide ban on liquor. From 1904 to 1916, however, reformers placed increasing limits upon liquor distribution. By 1907, Montanans had strengthened laws protecting the wives and children of drunkards, and supported new laws preventing the sale of liquor near places of work. Reformers designed these regulations to restrict saloons from operating in areas where they created the greatest adverse effect upon society. These laws prohibited saloons from opening near mills, railroad right-of-ways, and sheep shearing establishments, in an attempt to prevent workers from cashing their paychecks in saloons and spending their earnings on liquor. Also by 1907, many municipalities had begun limiting the hours that saloons could remain open; in Bozeman and Kalispell, for example, saloons closed at midnight on Saturdays, not reopening until Sunday.
afternoons. The Prohibition campaign that reached its pinnacle in 1916 occurred not from a sudden impulse of public opinion, but grew in strength through gradual attempts to regulate the liquor industry.

Two main reasons account for the popular acceptance of the transition to a campaign for a completely Dry Montana. First, Temperance ideology received positive reinforcement from recent scientific findings and results from saloon closures nationwide. Second, and most important, reformers realized that moral suasion and saloon regulation failed to accomplish their desired goals. By 1915, science, more than religion, prepared the public for Prohibition.

Throughout the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, Temperance leaders used scientific arguments against the use of alcohol. In 1914, however, an official statement given at a convention of psychiatrists labeled alcohol a poison, and linked its use with many cases of insanity. In 1915, several papers remarked on a recently published article stating that only two drinks a day proved harmful even to healthy individuals. These findings supported the attack made by reformers upon the idea that beer provided the same nutritional value as bread; because of its adverse effects on digestion, circulation, and the functioning of the brain, alcohol received no approval from scientists. These findings made Prohibition arguments acceptable to many people because total abstinence represented a practical choice rather than simply a moral obligation. These studies, substantiated by life insurance investigations and social scientists' findings, also brought many businessmen to the side of Prohibitionists.
In Montana, this change meant that the powerful Anaconda Copper Mining Company would not oppose the anti-liquor campaign. In 1915, in a statement made before the United States Commission on Industrial Relations, Cornelius Kelley, vice-president and managing director of A.C.M., revealed that drinking by miners before their work shifts significantly contributed to the unsafe and unsanitary conditions in Butte mines. In the same report, Dr. T.D. Tuttle stated that "almost without exception, the miners admitted to the [tuberculosis] sanitarium were heavy drinkers." Kelley's statement continued, describing the Company's informal response to miners' alcohol problems—requiring foremen to "send intoxicated men home." Kelley also justified the use of the controversial "rustling card"—implemented by A.C.M. primarily to exclude radicals from the workforce—as a means of denying jobs to alcoholics. A man who "had been guilty of drunkenness" could be refused a job before he "created a danger to himself and his fellows." By 1915, Montana's largest industry thus informally supported the Prohibition campaign.

Nationwide, business leaders began supporting Prohibition when evidence showed that abstinence from drinking improved workers' safety and efficiency and reduced absenteeism, or Blue Mondays. A corporate spokesman stated their interests succinctly: "Until booze is banished we can never have really efficient workmen. We are not much interested in the moral side of the matter as such. It is purely a question of dollars and cents."

Several events in Montana in addition to these economic arguments influenced the opinions of the A.C.M.'s leaders regarding the
Prohibition issue. Several recent studies linked alcohol with crime and worker unrest—two problems that caused particular discomfort to Montana industrialists in 1914. In June of that year Butte exploded with labor violence in response to the "rustling card" system and to unsafe working conditions. Instead of amending the root of the problem by addressing these grievances, however, Anaconda officials requested that Governor Stewart impose martial law, a procedure including the temporary closure of all saloons. Thus, Montana industrialists relied in part upon Prohibitionist ideas to reduce their labor problems; the National Guard added extra emphasis to the effectiveness of anti-liquor measures.

The 1914 episode of martial law in Butte's history also brought the Anaconda Company to support Prohibition for two other reasons. First, Company leaders concluded that they could support anti-liquor laws without personally sacrificing their drinking habits. While martial law required the closing of all miners' saloons, the Butte-Silver Bow Club—a bar serving the city's elite citizens—remained open as a result of the private intervention of Governor Stewart. The results of martial law also swayed Company opinion in favor of Prohibition because of worker behavior when the saloons closed. During this period, the efficiency of the miners increased twenty-five percent, while their safety record improved by approximately ninety percent. These results represented an "object lesson on the effects of Prohibition" which the Company could not ignore. Although anti-liquor leaders' rhetoric may have gained only the tacit support of Montana's leading industrialists, this "test" of
Prohibition laws prior to their state-wide enactment proved effective in convincing Company officials that Prohibition served their best interests.

The attempts by leaders of the Anaconda Company to control state politics also directed their efforts against anti-prohibitionists. In a plot to turn the Company against anti-liquor legislation, Wet leaders—brewery owners, saloon owners, labor leaders, and others opposed to Prohibition—promised their support against a 1914 mine tax in return for the industrialists' support against Prohibition. Unfortunately for the Wets, the Company successfully opposed the tax without their support, and supported Prohibition for economic reasons. This attempt at political blackmail only proved to the Company that the anti-prohibitionists represented a threat to mine owners' interests.

Further events also led many of Montana's corporate leaders to support Prohibition. Although the efforts of the Anaconda Company led to the defeat of a state workman's compensation bill in 1914, an amended version passed the following year. This act made employers liable for on-the-job injuries to employees. Montana's corporate leaders feared that injuries incurred by drunken workers would not only reduce productivity, but directly cost the employer in compensation fees. The scientific evidence that sobriety reduced the incidence of work-related injuries, and the example provided by Butte's saloon closures thus provided convincing evidence encouraging the support of Prohibition by Montana's industrial leaders.

The positive influence of Prohibition in nearby states confirming
the promises of anti-liquor rhetoric, also elicited support for this reform from Montana's business leaders. The citizens of Washington and Oregon approved state-wide Prohibition in 1914. After these laws took effect in January, 1916, business conditions improved considerably. These states both reflected a higher standard of living as manufacturing productivity increased, employment figures rose, and consumers spent more money on manufactured goods. These figures convinced many of Montana's business leaders that Prohibition acted as a panacea for economic problems. Although the Anaconda Company never publicly confirmed its support for anti-liquor legislation, its tacit approval of the campaign became apparent by 1916. Its public contribution to Prohibition occurred when two newspapers financed by the Company described the merits of Prohibition; the editors, however, designed their statements to promote abstinence without offending miners who opposed anti-liquor laws. Most evidence of A.C.M.'s opinion was revealed by anti-prohibitionists, who castigated the Company for supporting a measure opposed by most miners.

Ironically, many of the economic gains made in Washington and Oregon in 1916 occurred only coincidentally with Prohibition. The indicators that convinced many Montanans that Dry laws improved business conditions corresponded to events unrelated to Prohibition. The war in Europe created demands upon industries in the Pacific Northwest, increasing their rate of production and reducing the unemployment rate. The recent opening of the Panama Canal also contributed to the economic boom in that area. The rise in popularity of cinemas and the more prevalent use of automobiles for entertainment
purposes reduced the demand for several functions of the saloon. Although the appearance of economic prosperity in Washington and Oregon—and the promise of similar conditions in Montana—brought many of Montana's business leaders to the side of Prohibition, the causal relationship proposed by Drys between anti-liquor laws and prosperity never existed.

The second major reason for the transition of the anti-liquor campaign from an assimilative reform based on Temperance to a coercive reform demanding Prohibition resulted from the failure of moral suasion. The methods of education and evangelistic conversion used by Temperance leaders brought many supporters to their campaign. The failure of these methods to perceptibly improve society as Prohibition appeared to accomplish in other states, however, convinced many people that Prohibition offered the only means of attaining their idealistic, utopian goal. The positive reinforcement of Temperance rhetoric from other states thus created increased demands for Prohibition in Montana. Drys demanded legislation as a means to assert their standards of morality if educational methods failed. This movement created an alliance of the state's business leaders, urban Progressives and, most important, a large proportion of Montana's rural population.

One indication of moral suasion's failure to create a virtuous and prosperous society came from the primary object of Temperance reform—the individual. The behavior reflected by the arrest records for drunkenness and vagrancy of many citizens indicated that the traditional values promoted by R.N. Sutherlin, Montana's progressive-minded citizens, and the W.C.T.U. had not been sincerely
considered by many people. Drys responded to this problem by linking their campaign with broader issues of the day. Rural publications supporting Prohibition exploited anti-urban sentiment that had been encouraged by price fixing by railroads and financiers. Urban Drys attempted to establish a link between the liquor industry and urban politicians. The *Montana Progressive* of Helena, for example, considered the use of liquor for corrupt purposes as indicative of a larger conflict between the "interests" and the "people".

Saloons, however, represented the greatest obstacle to reformers trying to maintain traditional values in Montana. Not only did these institutions sell the liquor that corrupted individuals, but they demonstrated a "willful violation of the law" that posed a direct threat to many communities. Many examples of this behavior occurred when saloon-keepers resisted the moderate regulations established by local and state laws. Joseph Dixon, a Montana Progressive and owner and editor of the *Daily Missoulian*, used the editorial pages of that paper from 1914 to 1916 to campaign for liquor regulation. An attack upon saloons served as Dixon's primary weapon in his campaign. Citing a murder trial of a young boy, Dixon claimed that "booze was at the bottom of all the trouble in the world", and accused saloon-keepers with complicity in the crime, since they sold liquor to minors. Dixon frequently exploited the fears of many community residents in his attack upon saloons' disregard for the law. "Hell has no spirit more evil than that which inhabits an Indian," Dixon wrote, "when he is full of firewater." Drinking by Indians—a violation of federal law—created a "menace to women and children of the community" and made
"the Indian a burden on the state." Saloons also disregarded local ordinances regulating their hours of operation and state laws limiting the allowable number of saloons per capita. Many establishments simply remained open until their customers left, rather than submitting to an unprofitable one o'clock closing time. One Missoula saloon owner defied the city council by reopening his bar after it was shut down when the community exceeded its limit of saloons.

Ironically, attempts at saloon reform often backfired. In 1914, an ordinance in Hamilton, Montana reduced the legal maximum of saloons from twelve to five. As a consequence, the town's eleven saloons consolidated into five establishments. Dixon hailed this event as a step toward moral decency in that community, although five saloons still left five too many bars in Hamilton. By 1915, however, the town had fired its night watchman and reduced the salary of its police chief. These changes resulted not from a decrease in crime, but from the financial difficulty experienced by the town when it lost the revenues of its closed saloons. The *Ravalli Republican* led the outcry against cutting city services without entirely eliminating the source of many problems. Rather than viewing this situation as presenting a choice between continued city services or saloon operation, however, anti-liquor leaders interpreted the problems incurred by Hamilton's saloon consolidation as proof that Montana needed to become completely Dry. This situation proved to Prohibitionists that moderate regulatory measures failed because they created new problems without solving any of the old ones.

Leaders of the Dry campaign concluded that saloons invited their
own extinction because they threatened the community not only by selling liquor, but also by defying state and local laws. Temperance reformers had attempted to mitigate the impact of the saloon upon society through moderate regulations. The political and economic power of brewers and saloon keepers, however, allowed them to resist saloon closures. Temperance leaders also demonstrated reluctance to destroy a source of revenue if the habits of individuals could be improved while the saloon still existed. The increasing threats to Montana's communities by saloons and the undermining of reformers' attempts to morally uplift the state's citizens by saloon keepers reflected the failure of this strategy. The reluctance of individual citizens and the liquor industry to conform to the traditional values and order supported by reformers created a response of public indignation. The Montana Anti-Saloon League, by forming a diverse Dry coalition, led other anti-liquor organizations in capitalizing upon this response.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO


4. Acts, Resolutions, and Memorials of the Territory of Montana, Passed by the Fourth Legislative Assembly Convened at Virginia City, November 4, 1867 (Virginia City, MT, 1869), p. 237.


12. Ibid., p. 3842.

13. Ibid., pp. 3702, 3705.


16. Letter, Lowndes Mowry to Governor Samuel V. Stewart, October 10, 1914, Dixon Papers MSS Box 17, Envelope 11, University of Montana Archives, Missoula.


21. Editorial, Anaconda Standard, November 6, 1916, p. 6, this column also provided the opposing view of the issue; Paramount Issue (Billings), September 7, 1916, citing a statement from the Butte Mining and Oil Journal, this column declared the ACM Company pro-Dry; Montana Socialist (Butte), October 7, 1916, p. 1, this column accused Montana's industrial leaders of allying with the Drys against workers' interests (drinking).


23. Arrest reports, particularly for drunkenness, appeared daily in the newspapers of the state's cities. A Dry advertisement in the Great Falls Tribune, October 29, 1916, p. 6, summarized recent reports for that city.


27. Ibid., July 14, 1913, p. 4.

28. Ibid., April 8, 1914, p. 4.

29. Ibid., June 22, 1914, p. 4, and August 7, 1914, p. 4.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE: UNITY FOR DESTRUCTION

The Anti-Saloon League took the battered, rickety, decrepit old water wagon, and tinkered with it...until presently the Demon Rum found bearing down upon him an...overpowering engine of destruction.

The saloon problem led Montana's reformers to conclude that diminishing the adverse effects of alcohol consumption required measures more drastic than moral suasion. Clearly, Prohibitionists had to eliminate saloons from the state, since the methods of Temperance advocates failed to halt the production and sale of alcoholic beverages. The passage of Prohibition laws in nearby states contributed to Montana's problem by increasing demand for the trade carried on by its brewers and liquor dealers. Washington's anti-liquor laws of 1914, for example, allowed individuals to receive small quantities of alcoholic beverages through mail order or other delivery services. This situation, along with the reluctance of saloon keepers to comply with regulatory measures convinced state reformers to seek Prohibition. The success of a nationwide ban against liquor depended upon the success of each state's campaign. Since North Dakota, Washington, and Oregon all passed anti-liquor laws before Montanans approved their referendum, Montana's Prohibitionists worked to prevent the state from becoming a "dumping ground" for drunkards and liquor dealers from surrounding areas.

The Montana Anti-Saloon League's efforts best illustrated this
change in attitude and tactics by anti-liquor reformers. Although not the only Prohibition organization in Montana, its pressure politics and focus upon this single issue made the A.S.L. the most effective group in marshalling support for Dry legislation.\(^5\)

Other organizations, such as the W.C.T.U. and the Prohibition Party, also contributed to the success of anti-liquor arguments by linking them to broad reform programs or multi-issue political platforms.\(^6\) Prohibition Party candidates ran for office using a platform sanctioned by the national organization. These candidates failed to gain support from Montanans, however, because they proposed many varied issues; their platform included demands for equal suffrage, opposition to child labor, support for direct election of senators, and for a graduated income tax.\(^7\) Their support for the monetization of silver received considerable support from Montanans, but that issue split the party in 1896.\(^8\) After 1894, the Prohibition Party ran no candidates for state offices in Montana; in 1904, its representatives stated, "that owing to the present state of its development it was not advisable...for the Prohibition party to do anything further than select presidential electors."\(^9\) By 1912, the Party's presidential candidate received only thirty-one votes from Montanans.\(^10\) Although A.S.L. leaders agreed with the Prohibition Party's ideology for attacking the liquor traffic, the methods used by the two organizations conflicted.\(^11\) The A.S.L. criticized the practice of running candidates against Democrats or Republicans who supported anti-liquor laws, thus splitting the Dry vote and allowing Wet candidates into the legislature.\(^12\) By the turn of the century, however, the Montana
Anti-Saloon League won its battle against the Prohibition Party for political supremacy, as it would also eventually prevail over anti-prohibitionists.

The success of the A.S.L. resulted from its ability to focus upon a single issue: Prohibition. This policy allowed the League to organize many different interest groups that agreed Montana needed anti-liquor laws. Founded in 1897, as a "church federation for saloon suppression", the Montana A.S.L. originally achieved only moderate success supporting the passage of saloon regulations. In 1913, however, after Congress approved the Webb-Kenyon bill (prohibiting the transport of liquor from a Wet state to a Dry state), the A.S.L. began a campaign for national Prohibition. To achieve this goal, each state organization used the "Ohio Model" to generate popular support for its policies. This model, named for the state in which the League first formed, provided an outline for establishing and coordinating the efforts of church, local, county, and state affiliates. A.S.L. leaders called for the division of these organizations into three main branches—one for agitation, another for legislation, and the third for law enforcement. This system revealed the League's intent to gain a broad "grass-roots" source of popular support by personally contacting as many people as possible. For example, the majority of the League's considerable finances consisted of small contributions made by individuals. The League also courted the corporate community for support, but avoided appearing as an ally of business interests working against the general public. A.S.L. leaders considered themselves democratic reformers who represented the values and morality of an
overwhelming number of Americans. By using this sentiment to support anti-liquor laws and Dry political candidates, the League led a movement that the liquor interests failed to match.  

In Montana, each branch of the A.S.L. contributed significantly to the Prohibition campaign. The national organization funded professional "agitators" who raised money to pay for advertising and speaking campaigns. Using devices like "Field Days" Dry leaders raised funds to provide for the League's budget of nearly thirteen thousand dollars in 1916. Field Days were Sundays when churches allowed League representatives to read anti-saloon literature in order to convert followers and raise funds during the offertory. The Reverend Joseph Pope of Billings headed the state organization, and also distributed information through an A.S.L. publication the Paramount Issue. This paper published local and national news pertaining to the progress of the Prohibition campaign. The League also published the Real Issue, which reiterated much of the information included in the organization's national tabloid, the Anti-Saloon League Yearbook.

The legislative branch of the Montana A.S.L. focused upon two objectives: promoting anti-liquor laws and supporting the candidacy of Dry politicians. The League followed a strategy of initiating campaigns to zone saloons out of business districts and to reduce their hours of operation. When the local population realized the benefits of these changes, then Dry leaders could expand the movement to include entire counties, and finally the state. A.S.L. leaders believed that "sentiment did not so much need to be created, as to be directed." This strategy achieved only limited success for the League, however, as
saloons often ignored restrictive regulations.

The election of Dry candidates to office represented an essential element in the Anti-Saloon League's campaign for state and national Prohibition. In order for anti-liquor regulations to become law, the League needed a Dry majority in Montana's legislature. The A.S.L. thus spent considerable sums of money promoting its candidates, and making their views known to the public. In the 1916 gubernatorial election, the A.S.L. criticized the Women's Christian Temperance Union for supporting Samuel Stewart, who also received campaign support from the liquor industry. Frank Edwards earned the Prohibitionists' favor; they cared little for his political platform—his statements that he would enforce anti-liquor laws provided enough evidence that he would work for Montana's best interests. The strategy of providing political support for Dry candidates regardless of their party allowed the A.S.L. to avoid entanglement over other issues. Their focus on a single issue, not party politics, also enabled the League to avoid alienating social or economic groups that supported Prohibition for conflicting reasons.

The law-enforcement function of the A.S.L. emerged primarily after the enactment of Prohibition in Montana. Joseph Pope, a leader of the League prior to 1916, was appointed to a post with the state Prohibition Board in 1919. This strategy represented an attempt by the League to maintain the professionalism of their organization within the liquor regulatory commissions after they succeeded in gaining Prohibition. Anti-liquor laws only symbolized a means to an end; by attempting to prevent appointments to enforcement agencies from being

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used for political favors, the A.S.L. hoped to avert the corruption of their purpose.

Although the leaders of the A.S.L. faced a difficult task in their campaign for Prohibition, the arguments they used were relatively simple. They only had to present the "cold facts" about the impact of the "hell-soaked institution" upon society in order to persuade the public to support their effort. The League used the moral, economic, and scientific arguments of the Temperance movement to attack the saloon; the unwillingness of the liquor industry to abide with regulations beneficial to society merely confirmed the Dry's arguments that Prohibition, not regulation, was necessary to eliminate this evil from society.

The A.S.L. accused saloon keepers of devising ways of encouraging workers to spend their entire paychecks in their establishments. Saloons often operated as close as legally possible to places of work, thereby increasing the likelihood of workers' stopping in for a drink on their way home. Saloons enticed individuals to drink; saloon keepers solicited business by offering free rounds of drinks or a well-salted free lunch to potential customers. Saloons represented the focal point of red-light districts; gamblers, prostitutes, panhandlers, and thieves depended upon inebriated victims to ensure their success. Gamblers and prostitutes often paid a percentage of their earnings to saloon keepers who allowed them to operate in rooms adjoining the bar; some saloons maintained prostitution cribs in the same building. The Anti-Saloon League did not have to look very far for evidence proving that saloons adversely affected the morals of society and decreased the
economic and social well-being of their patrons.24

The A.S.L. also expended considerable effort compiling figures associating the saloon with problems of health and crime. In 1923, the Montana League published a report begun in 1915 associating the effects of excessive use of alcohol with diseases and major crimes. (Dry spokesmen argued that excessive drinking occurred primarily in saloons.) This bulletin indicated that most major crimes, such as assault, robbery, murder, and forgery decreased after Montanans banned liquor from the state. Similarly, the incidence of Bright's disease, tuberculosis, heart disease, and alcoholism also decreased. These statistics offered "convincing proof of the wholesome influence of Prohibition."

This conclusion also indicated the manner in which the A.S.L. considered drinking as the cause of many social maladies. The eradication of saloons offered a panacea for problems not always directly related to drinking.

The Anti-Saloon League used statistical evidence linking saloons with crimes and disease to support economic arguments in favor of Prohibition. Drys calculated the cost of saloons to society based on the number of crimes committed by saloon patrons. In Butte, the A.S.L., unsatisfied with simply reporting that 90 percent of all crimes and most instances of poverty could be traced to drinking, reported the cost incurred to the city by these problems. Although the city received fifty thousand dollars a year from saloon license fees, it paid eighty-thousand dollars a year in costs "relating to saloons." These costs included the salaries of policemen used to patrol the red-light district, the charges for incarcerating drunkards, and the
contributions made by the city to almshouses.  

The Montana A.S.L. thus provided a wide variety of evidence for its attack upon saloons. The presentation of these "cold facts"—problems that existed everyday that saloons remained open—provided a broad base of popular support for the Prohibition campaign. The League succeeded in making Prohibition a paramount issue during the second decade of the twentieth century. Frequently, political candidates indicated whether they supported anti-liquor laws, since the A.S.L. created a voting bloc that affected the outcome of many elections. The fulfillment of the campaign for Prohibition resulted from the League's ability to align diverse social and economic groups. Relying upon a complex organization and nonpartisan political campaigns to provide a broad base of popular support, the A.S.L. united businessmen, urban Progressives, and rural farmers behind a single issue. By 1916, Prohibition assumed greater proportion than simply "uplifting the moral tone" of communities or enabling individuals to become prosperous. The success of this measure symbolized the coercive predominance of traditional rural community values over the standards present in Montana's urban areas. Prohibition failed to support a cooperative vision of the state's development, because its supporters refused to assimilate the values and habits of several classes, particularly those of the urban working classes. The Anti-Saloon League, through its effective leadership, provided an acceptable vehicle for many people to join this campaign.

Urban Progressives, representing part of the A.S.L.'s constituency, used the campaign for Prohibition as part of their attack
Montana's Progressives contributed to the ideology of the state developing into a utopian commonwealth by attempting to eradicate vices associated with liquor interests in urban areas. Progressives objected to the existence of liquor interests because they were, in effect, unregulated, and exploited the inability of law enforcement agencies to control them. Saloons, for example, increased the cost of operating municipal governments. Reformers also campaigned against the saloon because it represented part of a corrupt industry. "The power of the brewers over the saloon was absolute; they controlled it under mortgage bonds and under their power to shut off its supply" Not only did liquor producers control saloons, but "brewery barons" acted as "taskmasters" attempting to reap a high profit from their investment. This relationship often led saloon keepers to use unscrupulous methods for raising money, including the encouragement of gambling and prostitution on the premises. Progressives often characterized their efforts as a campaign for the "people" versus the "interests". By attacking the liquor interests, reformers attempted to increase the democratic nature of the urban environment by allowing individuals—or those who supported Prohibition—to exercise greater control over the moral quality of their community.

Reformers argued that anti-liquor laws would contribute to civic improvement by reducing police graft and by making urban areas more attractive for business investment. The effort to increase the efficiency of urban police forces included making them public servants
rather than tools of special interests, like saloon owners. With the increasing regulation of saloons, many reformers realized that the primary drawback to enforcing these laws arose from police graft. Saloon keepers paid policemen in order to remain open after legal closing hours, for example. The solution to this problem, political candidates asserted, was to close down saloons altogether, rather than continually—and unsuccessfully—try to regulate them. This solution promised to improve downtown business areas by expelling many unsightly saloons from strategic street corner locations, and by reducing gambling and prostitution.

Encouraged by the desire to restore political power to "the people", reformers perceived alcohol as the source of much political corruption. "In every election, in every primary, in every political movement, the odor of whiskey can be detected." This statement in the Helena Montana Progressive went on to infer that the use of alcohol threatened to upset the democratic process. Corrupt politicians furthered their interests by exchanging drinks for votes, or by preying upon drunkards and "riff-raff" for support. The saloon in particular symbolized a source of political corruption: "In every precinct in which a saloon is located, in every community in which the liquor interests are to be found, there inevitably will be found the slimy trail of this political serpent." Montana's Progressives ascended new heights of eloquence in their opposition to this tyranny of the minority.

Alcohol was the source of power for corrupt politicians, and often the reason for them to use this ill-begotten influence. Candidates not
only emphasized alcohol for electioneering purposes, but brewers and liquor dealers "bought" politicians in order to reduce saloon regulations. A situation of this type came to the public's attention in a muckraking article, "Booze Boodle in Montana", reported in the New Republic. Reformers opposed this form of corruption by appealing to their "decent" constituents. In order to overcome the oppression of the liquor interests, Montana's morally upright citizens needed to ignore their differences of opinion on other issues, and unite against the "underworld".

Not only have the saloons always stood together while the decent element was usually divided, but in addition, the saloon has in a political way dominated the riff-raff. It has formed a community of interest between the loafer, the soak, the hanger-on, the petty criminal, and the white slaver, and has welded the denizens of the underworld into a political machine.  

This moralistic attack upon saloons and liquor interests reflected the decreasing willingness of Prohibition leaders to support the compromise solutions to the liquor problem. Regulations often only increased the problems of law enforcement, and the political strength of the liquor interests indicated that their source of influence—alcohol—had to be eliminated.

Urban reformers further appealed to middle and upper class citizens by claiming that the use of liquor threatened individuals with social ostracism and economic failure. Urban Prohibitionists usually repeated many attacks upon alcohol—it encouraged violence, and threatened the home—used from the outset of the Temperance movement. Later appeals, however, revealed an attempt by Drys to enlist the support of specific social groups. Contributing to the A.S.L. strategy

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of uniting individuals with different political and economic interests, urban reformers used economic arguments to elicit support from the upper class and businessmen, and used moral and social examples designed to turn the middle classes against alcohol. Drys continued to present standard images used by Temperance leaders, such as "...the picture of the wrecked and desolate home...", but also included, "...another picture of the ambitious young man on the threshold of a successful career, suddenly gone wrong, discredited, dishonored, and gazing from behind prison bars..." as the result of finding himself in the "deadly clutches of alcohol." 36

Reformers also cited instances when crime or the mere presence of saloons inhibited economic growth. One editorial asserted that "liquor traps" (saloons) created an environment in cities that made travel by honest citizens through these areas unsafe at any time. 37

Arguments appealing to the upper and middle class usually reflected an assured attitude anticipating success against the liquor traffic, since these groups shared the traditional Protestant values forming the basis of Prohibitionist ideology. When soliciting the support of urban working classes, however, Drys used a different strategy. Reformers needed the support of the lower classes for anti-liquor laws for humanitarian as well as political reasons. These groups constituted the majority of several Montana cities' population. Because of the poverty encountered in working class neighborhoods, and the laborers' propensity toward alcohol—exacerbating their urban squalor—humanitarians and Dry politicians alike encouraged workers to join the Prohibition crusade.
The arguments used to gain working class support for anti-liquor laws emphasized the manner in which Prohibition served the interests of laborers. Certainly the same appeals based upon the defense of home and family persisted, but most entreaties to the lower classes reflected the day-to-day interests of workers. Foremost among these arguments was the assertion that laborers needed Prohibition to assist them in adjusting to modern times and to changing conditions in the workplace.

Rather than simply reiterating the Temperance ideology, however, reformers employed labor union rhetoric in later articles. Quoting former United Mine Workers president Tom L. Lewis, one editor remarked:

Because the liquor traffic tends to enslave the people, to make them satisfied with improper conditions, and keeps them ignorant, the leaders of the trade union movement are called upon to fight the saloon.38

Many other advertisements cited labor leaders in an attempt to sway the support of workers for Prohibition. These statements countered the apprehension expressed by workers that Prohibition represented another method used by employers to impinge upon the rights of the lower classes. Drys pointed out that only the liquor interests truly enslaved laborers, because alcohol, not employers, made the worker unable to "earn enough to give his family all the comforts they deserve."39

Reformers continued to express optimism over enlisting the support of working classes in spite of the endorsement of Wets by the Montana Federation of Labor. Drys still expected labor support, since bartenders and brewery workers "were disproportionately represented" at
the Federation's convention.\textsuperscript{40} As election day neared and more groups, such as the Western Federation of Miners, revealed their opposition to Prohibition\textsuperscript{41}, anti-liquor leaders expressed less concern for labor interests than before. The attitude of Prohibitionists during 1916 became increasingly ambivalent toward their opposition; forsaking their efforts to reform and improve working class habits, Drys argued that their campaign would bring order to conditions created by immigrant groups in urban areas. Far from representing workers who "hoped the saloon would remain closed", the Prohibition movement became a coercive form of legislation representing the beliefs of few members of the urban working classes. Drys used their campaign first, as an attempt to assert the predominance of traditional, Protestant, middle-class values over those of Montana's urban, immigrant Catholic working classes, second, to counter the growing strength of corrupt urban political and economic groups, and third, to maintain the course of the state's ideal development.\textsuperscript{42}
NOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE


10. Ellis L. Waldron, Montana Politics Since 1864 (Missoula: Montana State University Press, 1958), pp. 66-156. This argument refutes Odegard's statement that the Prohibition Party failed because it promoted only one issue.

11. I.O.G.T. News (Stevensville, MT), September 1, 1896, passim. This newspaper presented the ideas of the Prohibition Party in Montana.

12. Odegard, Pressure Politics, p. 80; Blocker, Retreat From Reform, p. 179.


17. Copies of these publications may be found in the C.N. Kessler Papers, MSS.


19. **Montana Progressive** (Helena), November 2, 1916, p. 3.


21. Letter, Joseph M. Dixon to Joseph Pope, October, 1919, Dixon Papers MSS, Box 28, Envelope 2, University of Montana Archives, Missoula, MT.


25. Montana Anti-Saloon League statistical bulletin, C.N. Kessler Papers MSS.


30. Clark, "Hell-Soaked Institution", p. 3.


32. Letter, J.E. Patterson to A.B. Hoblitt, October 13, 1916, C.N. Kessler MSS.

34. Ibid., February 17, 1916, p. 2.


CHAPTER FOUR

FARMERS AND PROHIBITION: OPPOSING THE URBAN MENACE

It is crucial...to recognize that the political power of the rural population was essential in securing dry supremacy at state or national levels.

The strongest support for Prohibition in Montana emerged from rural areas of the state, where a renewed agricultural movement asserted the predominance of traditional values. Demands for anti-liquor laws arose from the Montana Society of Equity and the Nonpartisan League, which organized farmers to claim a larger share of Montana's leadership and wealth. This movement rose to prominence in 1915, benefitting from the rapid increase in the number of settlers arriving in the state following the enlarged Homestead Act of 1909. Lured to Montana by the rising price of wheat and above-average yearly rainfall after 1910 that produced bumper crops, these farmers were influenced by the "political prairie fire" of the North Dakota Nonpartisan League.2

This form of agrarianism differed from that of the Populists of the 1890's; the rural members of the Montana organization antedated Montana's Progressives, by proposing political reforms promoting a utopian vision of cooperation between industrial and agricultural interests. The later agrarian movement assumed a more radical pose in its attempt to fulfill the agrarian myth of rural superiority. Nonpartisan leaders designed their campaign to reclaim their lost

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status of cultivators of the Garden of the Earth as well as to protest against economic grievances. Montana farmers feared their exploitation and domination by "outside interests"; the agrarians acted by leveling attacks against the Anaconda Copper Mining Company and Montana's railroads. The Nonpartisan League demonstrated a willingness to use the government to achieve its goals— one of its most renowned disputes with the Company concerned the use of the direct primary. As part of their campaign to gain government support for agriculture—through rural credits, a good roads bill, and federal regulation of railroads and grain elevators—Montana farmers attacked urban-based financial and political interests that threatened rural prosperity.

These specific protests by the Nonpartisan League and other organizations revealed the increasing animosity of rural dwellers toward the interests and values symbolized by Montana's growing cities. The farmers "expressed a distaste for the growing trends toward urbanization, if not an actual fear of its consequences (to the national character), and fought to keep their youth at home." Many statements from agrarian leaders also revealed an anti-immigrant or xenophobic attitude, since many habits of immigrant urban residents—like drinking—threatened the values maintained by Montana's farmers. The rural campaign against alcohol represented a major part of the attempt to avert the corruption of agrarian morality by urban influences. Ideologically similar to the campaign against A.C.M. for economic and political power in the state, the rural campaign for Prohibition occurred as an attempt to gain cultural predominance in the state.
Rural Prohibition leaders usually focused their attention upon the adverse effects of the saloon (the Anti-Saloon League found supporters throughout the state) and directed their attacks upon rural and urban centers of vice. Farmers' criticisms of railroads were not limited to their usurious operation of grain elevators; railroads also contributed to the operation of saloons in rural areas. The construction crews of the Northern Pacific railroad were accompanied by an army of "gamblers, thugs, and thieves" who used crude tent saloons to ply their trades. Many communities through which railroads passed developed into "tough towns", creating opportunities for gamblers, murderers, and saloon keepers. The development of refrigerator cars also encouraged the presence of saloons in rural areas; urban-based brewers could supply more distant areas once the train replaced the wagon for transporting beer.

Saloons posed a threat to rural communities because their presence encouraged the growth of associated undesirable elements. Town leaders feared "the gambling dens and houses of prostitution [would] continue hand in hand with the saloon in the future as in the past." Combined, the "saloon element" formed an interest group supporting political candidates who opposed candidates nominated by the overwhelming vote of the people. Farmers objected to the Wet representatives who argued "the saloon is a blessing to the community and a protector of the home." The liquor interests, in their campaign to protect the saloon against Prohibition, only emphasized their disregard for the fundamental values of farmers.

To many farmers, the presence of saloons in rural communities not
only represented the encroachment of decadent urban morality, but also threatened the work ethic of agricultural laborers. One Cascade County newspaper advertisement complained, "the farmer in particular suffers from the liquor traffic. Do you recall the number of times your hired help, in haying and threshing time have become drunk and set back your work?"  

Alcohol thus detracted from rural residents' ability to work; the liquor industry also failed to contribute to the state's prosperity as did other industry. Agriculturalists based their protests against A.C.M. and the railroads on the premise that farmers deserved a greater percentage of the wealth they produced for the state. Saloon owners, in contrast to farmers, took much more than they gave in license fees or taxes. One farmer summarized the problem by writing, "If farms went out of business, the state would go under, but if saloons went under, there would be no loss in wealth." Moreover, this farmer objected to the "anarchist threats of the liquor interests to defy [Prohibition] if passed." Many reasons—ideological, economic, and political—thus existed in rural areas to provoke farmer's support for the Prohibition campaign.

Many rural residents during the Prohibition campaign believed anti-liquor laws would defend agricultural communities from the presence of immorality associated with urbanization and industrialization. Not all husbandmen, however, conformed to the standards of morality established by Dry leaders. Stockmen, for example, opposed the regulation of their lifestyle symbolized by Prohibition. Already "fenced in" by homesteaders' claims to the land,
many ranchers resisted having to accept farmers' values as well. To offset this opposition, Dry spokesmen tried to convince stockmen that Prohibition improved business conditions, which in turn benefitted all agricultural producers. Prohibitionists argued that stock shows—traditionally a time for liquor induced conviviality—were equally successful in states banning alcohol. In their opposition to the evils associated with urban areas, agrarian anti-liquor leaders attempted to create a united front of rural residents against the liquor interests. Although Drys failed to enlist all husbandmen into their campaign, they created enough support to provide a wide margin of victory in 1916 from rural counties. The chief tool employed by agrarian leaders was the ideological defense of traditional Protestant values held by many residents of farming communities.

Nativism represented only part of the opposition movement against urbanization. Farmers paid most attention to the "parasitical" corporate interests in Butte and their corrupt political minions in Helena, who, like the saloon, exploited the state's resources without significantly contributing to its wealth. In order to reestablish the public perception of agriculture as the foremost industry in Montana, farm organizations criticized not only corporate interests but a broad spectrum of problems related to cities. The "youth drain", immigrant groups and their red-light districts, and corrupt politics all received much attention from rural newspapers. The youth drain was created by the economic opportunities and the variety of lifestyles in cities; these alternatives to monotonous country life lured farm youths to urban areas. This phenomenon threatened to create labor shortages in
rural districts, and it questioned the superiority of the agrarian way of life. Conservative farmers viewed the youth drain as the result of unwitting adolescents being lured to cities by sinful temptations, like the saloon and houses of prostitution. To impede the progress of this migration, farm leaders warned their constituents of the immoral urban lifestyle, and also suggested that youths "stay down on the farm"—go to college for a degree in agricultural sciences, but return to improve the homestead. ¹³

Corrupt urban politics also represented a subject for the diatribes of rural spokesmen. Organizations like the Nonpartisan League competed directly with the Anaconda Copper Mining Company to gain support for their legislative programs. When the N.P.L. received considerable opposition to their platform, they accused the A.C.M. of using unscrupulous methods of winning the support of Montana's voters. Governor Samuel Stewart, known to be allied with the interests of the Company, was charged with operating a corrupt political machine in Helena. According to its critics, this machine received much of its strength from A.C.M. and saloon-keepers, and represented the "disreputable elements" of society while ignoring the needs of the majority of Montana's population. ¹⁴

Rural attacks upon urban liquor interests thus began as part of a reform movement against corrupt political practices and to counter the youth drain. This campaign symbolized the effort by farmers to regain control of the economic and political forces shaping their lives. As the N.P.L. and other groups met with resistance from urban interest groups, the premise of agrarian superiority assumed primacy among the
farmers' objectives. Although this idea had always existed as part of the rural reform ideology, its increased emphasis, along with diminishing concern for cooperation between rural and urban leaders, altered the strategy of the agrarian campaign. Prohibitionists promoted anti-liquor laws as a form of class legislation. This legislation was directed against corrupt urban areas, and against "dangerous classes" of the cities. As the election of 1916 neared, Dry leaders, confident of success in their own areas, suggested that no compromises be made with liquor interests. Rather than compensate saloon owners and brewers for their losses, one rural spokesman reasoned that these men deserved their fate, but some would benefit from the experience, if they "...May find homesteads where they can begin the simple way of life." The "simple life", of course, symbolized the uncorrupted rural alternative to a decadent urban lifestyle centered in boarding houses and saloons.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR


10. Rocky Mountain Husbandman (Great Falls), November 2, 1916, p. 2.


16. Editorial, Montana Progressive, January 20, 1916, p. 4, the quote was taken from the Yellowstone Journal.
CHAPTER FIVE

BUTTE: SYMBOL OF THE URBAN MENACE

"Approaching Butte", wrote a visitor in 1899, "I marveled at the desolation...verdure...had all been killed by the fumes and smoke of the piles of burning ore."¹ This description sharply contrasted with the image of the state created by Great Northern railroad promotional literature. To optimists (and land developers), Montana had emerged recently as a successful commonwealth, with social, political, and educational growth keeping pace with that of her agriculture.² Butte, however, represented an aberration from the course of the state's urban development.

Except for its chamber of commerce, most promoters tried to ignore Butte; the city, however, remained "so ugly that it is near the perfection of ugliness."³ Its slums "of crowded, drab, degraded-looking hovels and crazy, careening streets"⁴ symbolized an obstacle to the evolution of Montana as a flourishing, abundant utopia. Many critics blamed the mining companies for subjecting the city and its inhabitants to these conditions. Other contemporaries claimed, "Why the city looks so strange is the many different nationalities in the streets..."⁵ Those who censured Butte associated the presence of its large immigrant population with the debased urban environment;⁶ Prohibitionists believed their campaign would solve many problems encountered by reformers attempting to assimilate Butte into Montana's landscape.

Butte stood at the center of Montana's industrial activity since the large scale development of copper mining in the area during the
late nineteenth century. Promotional literature issued in the first decade of the twentieth century described Butte as a booming market and industrial city; to its chamber of commerce the community appeared to have few blemishes that might discourage business investments in the future. Another contemporary view of Butte described the town as "rotten old Butte", a haven for unscrupulous men motivated by a single axiom—"get the money." Somewhere between the view of the promoter and that of the muckraker lay the true countenance of the mining city; Butte at the turn of the century existed primarily as a male-dominated, working class society. The coming of World War One only accentuated these conditions; the increased demand for copper created a need for more miners—usually immigrant or first generation native-born, single, and transient.

Prohibitionists perceived alcohol as the main source of Butte's problems, since the saloon provided a center for many of society's "off-scourings". The anti-liquor crusade assumed a coercive, anti-immigrant, anti-working class stance when it tried to abolish saloons completely. Butte's saloons were not simply places to drink, like many rural "blind pigs" (illegal bars), but represented the social center of an urban "boarding house" culture for many single residents. By campaigning against saloons, Drys attempted to end the liquor traffic, but more important, anti-liquor leaders asserted the predominance of traditional rural community values over an immigrant, boarding house culture.

The main clientele of Butte's saloons—its single population—increased during the war years for several reasons. Census
reports from 1900 to 1910 indicate that the difference between the number of men and the number of women in Butte decreased during this period. Several events after 1914, however, offset this trend. Increased production from the mines required more laborers, many of whom were single. The passage of the Workman's Compensation bill in 1915 discouraged employers from hiring married miners, since the law required payment of accident benefits to dependent families. This act encouraged mining companies to hire single men or immigrants, since benefits did not have to be paid if the miner had no family, or if his dependents lived outside the United States.  

The rise of Industrial Workers of the World during this time period also contributed to the bachelor and transient composition of Butte's population. The radical—and often violent—actions of I.W.W. members willing to risk their jobs for better conditions and higher pay unsettled the city's working environment. Mining companies discriminated against purported radicals, by using the "rustling card" to identify workers affiliated with unions.  

The mining industry traditionally attracted single men to its workforce. Many workers never considered mining as a career, but planned on using the relatively high wages to buy a farm or to return home and start a business. Many Irish miners, for example, considered themselves exiles from their native land, only gradually accepting the permanency of their situation. For several reasons, by 1916, the population of Butte's boarding house culture had increased. As an indication of this growth, the number of furnished rooms and boarding houses listed in Butte's directory increased from 335 in 1907 to 377 in 1916.  

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1915. By comparison, Missoula and Great Falls combined offered only 109 of these accommodations in 1915.14

This male-oriented society operated to meet the needs of the working classes. Fraternal orders, sports, and saloons dominated the social lives of most working-class males, providing the means for relaxation and conviviality among peers. Miners without the money to buy houses lived in rooming or boarding houses, which provided a place to sleep, and, in the latter case, a place to eat. Miners often paid for one place to sleep, another to eat, and spent the rest of their time in the mines or the saloon. Since miners often could not afford to pay high rent, they accepted substandard housing in rundown areas of town. These areas, labeled Badlands or the Cabbage Patch, among others, encouraged single men to frequent saloons in an effort to escape their poor living and working conditions. Married men also frequented drinking establishments for the same reasons as bachelors, and also to elude the responsibilities found at home with their families.15 Saloons thus represented more than simply a place to drink; men gathered in these establishments rather than sit alone in a rooming house; bars also served as meeting places for social clubs or labor organizations. In any case, saloons brought color to the otherwise drab lifestyle of Butte's working classes.

The ethnic cultures of the workers contributed to the importance of the saloon in Butte. Although a variety of different groups comprised the city's population, for a generation after 1900, the Irish represented more than one quarter of Butte's inhabitants. Many other residents were Catholics of different nationalities.16 Catholics of any
national origin usually believed in a non-interventionist role for the government,

The ritualistic perspective of the Catholic emphasized doctrine and liturgy...It enabled its holder to delineate between supernatural values and secular activities. Catholics did not see sin in many of those activities [Protestants] condemned."

The cultural heritage of the Irish Catholics further supported the unregulated existence of saloons. Not only did their religion condone drinking, but their culture reinforced habits of heavy drinking as a means of social acceptance. In Ireland, drinking provided a method of gaining membership into bachelor groups. Men proved their maturity and distinctness from women through social drinking. These habits, adopted in response to the male-dominated society of Ireland, arrived intact in areas like Butte. As in Ireland, few women were available for marriage; men maintained a way of life that offered the comraderie of drinking as an alternative to courtship.

Saloon life also offered a means of adjusting to the urban industrial life of Butte. Little Ireland, the city's Irish section, provided a familiar environment for the newly arrived immigrant. The Hibernian Lodge, gymnasium, and saloons—on every block of the North End—maintained a sense of community among Butte's Irish, and organized this group socially and politically. The saloon, then, served many functions other than drinking, although alcohol consumption certainly played an important part in the social function of that institution. Many other residents of Butte also frequented saloons, but few groups maintained social and cultural habits that so conspicuously encouraged drinking.
Prohibitionists disagreed with the idea of saloons providing a positive, stabilizing contribution to the community. By proposing a ban on institutions vital to Butte's ethnic groups, Drys ignored the assimilative purpose of the earlier Temperance movement. Rather than seeking to reduce the destructive influence of the saloon upon individuals and society by strict regulation, anti-liquor campaigners attempted to coercively enforce their values upon different cultural groups. This transition marked the end of the Prohibition campaign as a reform for many Drys; anti-liquor laws failed to provide a compromise of values to improve society. Leaders of this movement increasingly accepted only one perception of the common good.20

Arguments revealing Prohibition as part of an anti-immigrant sentiment rely upon the expression of xenophobia by Montanans during the early years of the twentieth century. Several rural organizations exhibited this sentiment in their critiques of urban development. Urban reformers resorted to nativistic slurs in their editorials against political corruption. Prohibition leaders capitalized on this sentiment by associating alcohol and saloons with the most undesirable elements of immigrant populations. Drys argued that alcohol represented the source of the threat immigrants posed to Montana's Protestant middle class communities. Saloons, which catered to the "white slave trade" (prostitution), attracted "lusty Chinamen, Japs, Dagos, Athenian bo-hunks, half-breeds, negroes, un-Hungarians [sic], transient bums, and the offscourings of creations."21

Although Butte liquor interests maintained two classes of reputable saloons, Drys emphasized the unsightly characteristics of the
third class—the working class establishment. Prohibition literature largely ignored the upper and middle class bars since working class saloons provided more obvious targets for criticism. In these places, "fancy formalities were generally waived in the interest of getting the business before the other fellow; methods, ethics, and appearances mattering little or not at all." These bars, however, carried on business in areas where a miner's life was rarely comfortable. In 1912, Silver Bow county health officials reported on the conditions of Butte's working class neighborhoods: "Section is what is known as the 'Cabbage Patch' and is too filthy to describe...Houses small, poorly ventilated, alleys filthy...Understand many miners live [here] on account of the cheap rent...." Drys criticized saloon conditions according to their middle-class standard of living, ignoring the possibility that bar owners merely matched the quality of their establishments with the lifestyle of their clientele. Run-down saloons thus failed to prove conclusively that the institution itself contributed to the immorality and poverty of the working classes.

Prohibition leaders also attacked Montana's immigrant working classes by linking alcohol consumption with labor unrest. Drys attributed the increasing number of violent strikes and the rise of radical groups like the Socialist party and the I.W.W. as the consequence of saloons serving as meeting places. The combinations of union rhetoric and alcohol often produced explosive results; workers spending most of their paychecks in bars also encouraged them to demand higher wages. Prohibitionists argued that anti-liquor laws solved many problems associated with the working classes. Eliminating the
saloon mitigated urban poverty, political corruption, and crime. Most important, Prohibition reduced the threat of alien working classes to the traditional agrarian values of community residents. The xenophobia which became part of Montanans' efforts to create a homogenous commonwealth increased as threats to this ideal persisted. The impetus behind the attack upon "Rum, Romanism, and Ruin" failed to subside with the passage of Prohibition in 1916.25 Unfortunately for many Montana immigrants, the sentiment providing momentum for the anti-liquor campaign would reemerge during the war hysteria and Red scare a few years later.

Dry leaders capitalized upon a strong xenophobic sentiment in Montana by declaring that Prohibition would solve many problems associated with the immigrant population. Many anti-liquor leaders observed that conditions in Butte—an area not typical of Montana's development—would improve. Drys grasped the strategy of promising the rehabilitation of people not assimilated into the rural commonwealth ideal. Prohibitionists thus avoided having to criticize strongly the drinking habits of potential supporters among the urban middle classes or in rural areas while their attack upon the overall problem continued. Opposition to Prohibition, however, indicated that the use of the Inland Empire ideal by Drys failed to persuade many Montanans to renounce their drinking habits.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE


2. Montana for the Farmer (Great Northern Promotional Literature, 1924) Montana Historical Society, Helena, MT.


5. Stahlberg, "Butte", p. 244.


14. Polk's Butte City Directory (Helena, MT: R.L. Polk and Company,


21. Davenport, Butte and Montana Under the X-Ray, p. 64.


CHAPTER SIX

OPPOSITION AND H.B. 224: MONTANANS TRY TO CHOOSE THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS

Anti-Prohibition sentiment emerged from urban areas in response to the onslaught led by the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Anti-Saloon League. Wets enlisted the support of the liquor industry, many of the working classes, urban bankers, and real estate owners. Montanans who offered their money and votes to the Montana Commercial and Labor League often benefitted monetarily from the saloon business, or relied upon drinking as a significant portion of their social lives. Wets refused to apologize for the effects of alcohol upon society; instead, they promoted the health and psychological benefits of beer and saloons. Only in the final months before the referendum vote on Prohibition did the liquor industry acknowledge the saloon as a liability in their campaign. Ironically, the Commercial and Labor League used many of the same tactics employed by Drys; they quoted famous personages against Prohibition, and they described how the liquor industry revenues supported the state economically. Above all, Anti-Prohibitionists questioned the effectiveness of legislating the regulation of human behavior.

The opposition mounted by Wets to anti-liquor laws, however, merely publicized ideological differences already existing between the two factions. Wets offered no new information in defense of their interests; they relied upon a different interpretation of the role of government than that which Drys proposed. By 1916, those Montanans who
approved of using governmental sanctions for the state's improvement supported Prohibition. Progress, according to Drys, could only occur if all citizens conformed to traditional Protestant values. Wets, representing an individualistic political culture, believed reforms could be achieved without coercive intervention. Anti-prohibitionists thus supported the state's development, but they feared the tyranny of one social group over another. The Commercial and Labor League protested that Montanans should "leave well enough alone"; the state would continue to prosper without overindulging in excessive piety.¹

Advertisements describing the physical benefits of alcohol (particularly beer) consumption as a sales strategy indirectly voiced anti-Prohibition arguments. One advertisement, financed by the Miller Brewing Company, stated, "Beer possesses a four-fold property; it quenches thirst, stimulates, nourishes and strengthens."² Other companies described beer as "liquid bread" referring to nineteenth century scientific studies proving the value of beer as a "food alternative".³ Brewers used this logic in response to Prohibition arguments, describing a "natural demand" for "wholesome" beverages. "Evil" according to Wet rhetoric, "only is in the man who misuses them [barley brews]."⁴ Each faction in the liquor debate thus could substantiate its arguments with "conclusive" scientific evidence.

Wets also defended saloons for their public service and because they promoted a democratic spirit among their customers. Serving alcohol represented only one of the many functions of the saloon; it provided public toilets and washrooms, entertainment, rooms for weddings and union meetings, and charity for less well-to-do patrons.⁵
Anti-Prohibitionists argued that saloons fulfilled a vital social service outweighing the obnoxious impact of occasional drunkards upon the community. Viewing anti-liquor laws as discriminatory against the poor, Wets defended the saloon, where "all men with a nickel were equal." Workers experienced no feelings of inferiority in bars as they would in middle-class meetings in churches. The saloon atmosphere reduced labor unrest, as workers found respite from poor living conditions, and a dangerous fast-paced working environment. Wets allied with labor leaders in Montana to defend the cultural habits of urban working classes.

Some labor leaders perceived Prohibition as an effort by employers to subjugate workers by lowering their standard of living and disrupting their political alliances. The Western Federation of Miners opposed Prohibition because anti-liquor laws threatened the jobs of brewery workers. "Prohibition", asserted the Miners Union President, "by decreasing the standard of living of the workers and increasing the competition for jobs lays bare the road for the ultimate lowering of wages." Anti-liquor laws would also deprive workers of their favorite beverage, beer, since whiskey was easier to produce and transport illegally. Labor leaders concluded this argument by labeling the Dry campaign as a movement favorable to the rich, since they could afford to buy high-priced illicit liquor. Poorly paid laborers, meanwhile, would be deprived of liquor because of their economic status. Montana Socialists supported Temperance, but opposed Prohibition as an unnecessary "extension of the police powers of the capitalist state." This group described Prohibition as a "capitalistic ploy", designed to
divide workers politically so they could no longer effectively oppose the wage system. Dry laws represented not only a threat to workers' "boarding house" culture, but also provided employers the opportunity to lower wages and further oppress the laboring classes.

The Montana Commercial and Labor League also used economic arguments to defend the liquor industry. C.N. "Nick" Kessler, owner of the Kessler Brewing Company in Helena, derided Dry arguments, arguing that statistics could support any argument. Kessler cited evidence from Kansas and North Dakota refuting Anti-Saloon League statements using the prosperity of these states as proof that Prohibition worked. Commercial and Labor League figures illustrated that per capita wealth in Dry states was lower than in Montana. Montanans could afford lower tax rates than Kansas and North Dakota because liquor taxes provided high revenues. In 1916, Wets estimated saloon and liquor revenues exceeded one million dollars. Related industry also reportedly benefitted by over seven million dollars from saloon revenues. Brewers, distributors, and saloon owners employed over seven thousand Montanans who in turn supported dependents numbering over twenty-six thousand. These figures supported Kessler's remark that Prohibition represented "a step backward in progress," since the "irresponsible claims" of Wets threatened Montana with economic disaster. Anti-Prohibitionists designed their campaign to enlist the support of all businessmen, real estate agents, and other citizens with a stake in Montana's economic future. One typical advertisement compared the busy streets of Butte with the weed-grown, abandoned streets of Dry cities like Spokane. Wets, in addition to their defense of the
state's economic well-being, capitalized on Prohibitionist demands threatening the civil rights of Montana's citizens.

Liquor interests, representing Montana's third largest industry in 1916, objected to the uncompromising stance of Drys regarding the property rights of brewers and saloon owners. Although the state Prohibition referendum allowed a two year period of grace for liquor distributors to liquidate their inventories, the proposed law offered no compensation for manufacturers or salesmen who failed to sell their fixtures. Drys reasoned that breweries could be altered to produce soft drinks or canned goods, while ice cream and fountain drinks could substitute for alcohol in former saloons. Kessler refuted this argument by claiming that special manufacturing facilities (breweries) could not be used for general manufacturing purposes. Given the failure of Drys to provide an equitable alternative to Montana's alcohol industry, Wets labeled Prohibition an "arbitrary confiscation of property without compensation." This action threatened to create a dangerous precedent for the violation of citizens' rights to property and freedom by a tyrannical government. Anti-Prohibitionists thus used to their advantage the vision of Montana as the last state offering economic opportunity and prosperity to all newcomers.

Anti-liquor laws, Wets alleged, also threatened the morals of law-abiding citizens, and disturbed the tranquility of supposedly Dry communities. Prohibition made a crime of the commonly accepted practices—buying and drinking alcoholic beverages. From evidence provided by states going Dry before Montana, the Commercial and Labor League proved that Prohibition was ineffective as a means of changing
human behavior. In many states, for example, liquor production actually increased after voters approved anti-liquor legislation. Montana Wets concluded such laws would only increase crime levels in the state, since its citizens would most likely follow the pattern of behavior established in other states.\(^\text{20}\)

Rather than creating a tranquil law-abiding citizenry, Prohibition, Wets argued, inspired crime, graft, and a popular contempt for the law. Drys contended that anti-liquor laws defended the family, and expressed the will of the people. The Commercial and Labor League countered this use of symbolism by offering their own interpretation of Prohibition's effects. Wets warned, "You will be a criminal if you give your sick wife or husband any tonic containing ardent spirits,[or] give the baby any patent medicine containing alcohol when it has an attack of colic..." This advertisement continued, describing Montana's "reasonable" license regulations, concluding that a state Prohibition law would end the "home rule" offered by county local option law.\(^\text{21}\)

Using these arguments, Wets attempted to avert the groundswell of public opinion favoring Prohibition. Its opponents recognized that many people considered the law as a means of ensuring social morality and political self-determination.

Just as the Drys used prominent political and labor figures to create support for their campaign, the Commercial and Labor League quoted popular heroes favoring its cause. Anheuser-Busch's campaign in Montana used figures like Garibaldi of Italy, Daniel O'Conner of Ireland, and Bismarck of Germany, to enlist the support of ethnic groups.\(^\text{22}\) The Commercial and Labor League quoted Abraham Lincoln (out
of context), who doubted laws could significantly affect accepted traditions. Since this statement did not refer directly to the slavery issue, Wets used the principle behind the actual purpose of the statement to support their ideas.  

Clarence Darrow, who later received acclaim as a defender of civil liberties and scientific inquiry, visited Montana in 1916. Newspapers provided extensive coverage of his lectures against Prohibition, and the Commercial and Labor League advertised the times and locations of the meetings. The significance of the tabloids' reports was their reflection of the divisiveness of the liquor issue. Labor tabloids submitted favorable comments on Darrow's speeches by reiterating his stance against coercive class legislation and the reduction of legal rights. Publications favoring Prohibition, meanwhile, described Darrow's efforts as "sophistry", and "anarchistic support of liquor interests." The advocate's campaign in Montana, rather than altering public opinion, merely brought the distinctness of rural and urban ideologies to the front pages of the state's newspapers.

On two occasions each faction quoted the same people favoring their respective opinion. Paris Gibson supported Prohibition, but opposed the confiscation of property required by the law. Similarly, Montana's Bishop Lenihan, a prominent Catholic leader, opposed drinking, but also criticized the attempt to use the government to enforce an individual moral obligation. Arranging their quotes carefully, Drys attempted to convince their followers that they acted in the same spirit as the state's founders and moral leaders. Wets disputed the Prohibitionists' sources, and also criticized this
unscrupulous distortion of the evidence.  

By 1916, the liquor industry abandoned its attempts to defend saloons in favor of stricter regulation and licensing of these institutions. Wets defended their interests by citing the economic value of the industry to the state and the moral and political threat posed by coercive legislation. Each faction ironically emphasized issues other than the alcohol problem, logically the central topic of the Prohibition debate. The Commercial and Labor League implored voters to "let well enough alone"; they argued that Montana had achieved prosperity as a Wet state, and there was no reason to jeopardize the state's continued success. Furthermore, Wets argued, anti-liquor laws discriminated against a large portion of the state's population—those Montanans dependent upon the liquor industry workers who frequented saloons as an integral part of their social life. The central issues to Wets, then, were freedom and prosperity.

The ability of anti-prohibitionists to focus on abstract principles rather than the problems of alcohol and saloons matched the strategy of Drys. Prohibitionists abandoned the efforts of Temperance reformers to ameliorate individual drinking habits and reduce the adverse impact of the saloon upon society. By 1916, Drys attacked the saloon as a symbol of decadent alien culture, and perceived the liquor industry as a minion of corrupt politicians. In order to fulfill the vision of Montana as a prosperous commonwealth governed by traditional agrarian principles, the citizenry needed to eliminate the liquor industry. Alcohol and the saloon symbolized the threat to community values; Prohibition represented a panacea for crime, broken homes, and
poverty—all factors threatening the "best west" ideal.

The debate over Prohibition, which reached its apogee in 1916, reflected all of these ideals. Each faction incurred considerable expenses by using newspapers and speaking campaigns as forums for its opinions. In that year alone, the Montana Commercial and Labor League spent almost sixty-nine thousand dollars, mostly for its payroll and advertisements. Dry forces spent less money than their opponents, but these organizations used most of their funds for advertising and speakers, paying relatively little for payrolls. In spite of the moral value contributing to the Dry campaign, the Anti-Saloon League spent over twelve thousand dollars in 1916. The total for all members of the Dry Federation, however, exceeded twenty thousand dollars. Prohibitionists were also assisted by state and local candidates in favor of anti-liquor laws. Unfortunately for the liquor industry, Wet candidates usually waited for the "will of the people" to dictate their position regarding the issue. Sensing the popular appeal for Prohibition, most candidates who privately opposed Dry laws concentrated on other issues rather than jeopardize their political careers. The election of 1916 marked the popular acceptance of an idea that had required several years to be accepted by the majority of Montana's voters.

In 1915, during the fourteenth legislative assembly Montana's legislators passed House Bill 224,

An act prohibiting the introduction into, the manufacture of, and the giving, exchanging, bartering, selling, or disposing of ardent spirits, ale, beer, wine or intoxicating liquors within the state of Montana; providing penalties for the violation thereof, and providing a referendum of said Act and providing the time when said Act
The assembly submitted the act to Montana voters for the election held in November, 1916. The law carried a fine of up to three hundred dollars and imprisonment for up to two years for its violation. The measure was to become effective on December 31, 1918, if approved by popular vote.

Anti-Saloon League strategists originally intended to promote a more moderate bill than H.B. 224. In order to offer a law acceptable to the largest number of voters, the League lobbied for an act designed "not to regulate habits or appetites of the citizen", but to prohibit the "exploitation of vices for private profit" and oppose the "sinister interests" of the liquor industry. These "moderates" therefore supported a bill to ban only the sale and manufacture of intoxicating liquors. This proposal allowed the purchase of alcohol through the mail, and permitted its private consumption.

This attempt by the A.S.L. to gain votes for Prohibition proved unnecessary, since the assembly opted for H.B. 224, a bill with no apparent legal loopholes. A number of regulatory measures were considered by the legislature during this session. These submissions included the Junod Bill (Senate Bill 62), regulating the hours of saloons; H.B. 291, restricting the areas in which saloons could operate; and H.B. 71, calling for Prohibition as a constitutional amendment. The assembly thus selected H.B. 224 from a full agenda of anti-liquor legislation. Clearly, Prohibition represented a cause with considerable popular support. One rural newspaper editor predicted, "saloon owners loose both ways, if state Prohibition fails in the
cities, agricultural counties will have local option against saloons, with immediate effect." To this advocate, the referendum appeared as simply a choice between closing saloons immediately or in two years. With either alternative, saloon closure was inevitable.34

Montana's popular vote approving H.B. 224 reflected the same rural-urban rift that developed during the campaign. The referendum passed by an overwhelming margin, receiving a plurality of nearly twenty-nine thousand votes out of over one hundred seventy-six thousand votes cast. Over fifty-eight percent of Montana's voters supported the bill; only three counties—Deer Lodge at 48 percent, Lewis and Clark at 49 percent, and Silver Bow at 42 percent—failed to compile a favorable majority.35 These three counties represented the state's principal urban areas—Anaconda, Helena, and Butte—with large immigrant working class populations.36

A comparison of census reports and the voting statistics on this issue demonstrate the impact of Montana's increasing population upon political results. Several predominantly rural counties that experienced population increases of two hundred to five hundred percent from 1900 to 1920 provided margins of sixty to seventy percent in favor of Prohibition. Yellowstone, Dawson, and Valley counties, for example, all more than tripled in size during this period; all recorded percentages between sixty and seventy in favor of the referendum.37 Montana's urban population also grew considerably from 1900 to 1920; most of these immigrants, however, were laborers attracted to the opportunities offered by Montana's mining industry. The increase of the state's urban population also substantiated the apprehension of
rural dwellers regarding the rise of urbanization. The power of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company symbolized the menace of urban values; the increasing city populations represented the growing political and social influence of urban values.

Montana's rural counties united with moderate-sized urban areas such as Missoula, Great Falls, and Billings to offset the political power of the large urban areas of Butte, Helena, and Anaconda; Prohibition received its most enthusiastic support from the recently populated northern and eastern counties of the state. Montanans thus approved state-wide anti-liquor laws more than two years before the national ratification of the Eighteenth amendment.

Montana was the seventh state to ratify the national Prohibition amendment. Meeting in an extraordinary legislative session in February, 1918, the state assembly endorsed the joint resolution with nearly unanimous votes. Only two out of thirty-five senators casting votes opposed the amendment, while the House concurred with a margin of sixty-seven to seven. Of the dissenting legislators, all but two came from Montana's urban areas. This phenomenon further illustrated the urban-rural division of opinion over this issue.

The ratification of the Eighteenth amendment did not increase the stringency of Montana's anti-liquor laws. The federal act only prohibited "the manufacture, sale and transportation of intoxicating liquors." Montanans supported the amendment because it provided federal enforcement agencies for Dry laws. It also represented the most efficient means of opposing the liquor traffic, according to Anti-Saloon League strategists. National Prohibition meant that all
states would cooperate to combat bootleggers and rumrunners. The effort by Drys to support anti-liquor laws through the constitution fortified their attempt to protect social order. The amendment signified the law's strength and permanency against repeal attempts by liquor interests.

Montanans responded with optimism to the passage of the state-wide Prohibition laws. One editor asserted that the election results reflected a moral achievement for the entire state; the law did not pass simply because women voted. The Dry campaign also succeeded, he noted, in Michigan and Nebraska, where women had failed to gain suffrage. Other writers praised voters for their support of the referendum, but warned that the major task of enforcing the law still lay ahead. In 1919 one newspaper account stated, "the law means Montana is dry...Booze is a thing of the past." Many Montanans, however, anticipated the problems of fulfilling the objectives of anti-liquor leaders. The expectations created by the Dry campaign—that Prohibition ensured the state's prosperity and affirmed traditional agrarian values—placed a burden on Prohibitionists that they could not fulfill by simply enforcing the laws. By 1926, events testing anti-liquor laws—bootlegging, the operation of speakeasies, and continuation of private drinking habits—proved that as a coercive anti-urban measure promising the rise of the agrarian way of life—ideologically and economically—Prohibition had failed.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER SIX


3. G. Thomann, *The Effect of Alcohol On Those Who Make It and Drink It* (pamphlet) C.N. Kessler Papers MSS (unsorted), Montana Historical Society Archives, Helena, MT.


6. Ibid., p. 5.


12. C.N. Kessler remarks to the 1915 Montana Legislative Assembly, C.N. Kessler MSS.

13. Montana Commercial and Labor League pamphlet, C.N. Kessler MSS.


16. *Why Are They Doing This?* (Anti-Saloon League pamphlet), Montana Historical Society, Helena, MT.

17. C.N. Kessler remarks to the 1915 Montana Legislative Assembly, C.N. Kessler MSS.
18. Great Falls Tribune, November 5, 1916, p. 12; Rocky Mountain Husbandman, October 19, 1916, and others; C.N. Kessler remarks to the 1915 Montana Legislative Assembly, C.N. Kessler MSS.


20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. These advertisements began appearing in the Montana Socialist in May, 1914.


25. Miles City Daily Journal, October 26, 1916, p. 4; Montana Progressive (Helena), November 16, 1916, p. 4; reports of Darrow's speeches also appeared on the front pages of these and other journals.


27. Report from Montana Secretary of State, Great Falls Tribune, November 18, 1916, p. 3.


31. Ibid., p. 474.

32. Anti-Saloon League pamphlet, C.N. Kessler MSS.


37. Waldron and Wilson, Atlas, p. 67; Thirteenth Census of the...


39. Ibid., p. ix.


42. Meagher County Republican, January 3, 1919, p. 1.
CHAPTER SEVEN

REPEAL: FAILURE OF COERCION; SUCCESS OF REFORM

...the absence of John Barleycorn, even though it be more theoretical than real, seems to make the heart grow fonder.

The son-in-law who was run over by his dad-in-law's car when he stepped in front of it to stop it, either over-estimated the moral suasion he was exerting, or underestimated the momentum of the machine.

The repeal in 1926 of Montana's state Prohibition laws proved that the attempt by rural citizens to assert the predominance of their values over those of the urban population had failed. Several social changes, however, transformed the Dry campaign into a successful Progressive reform. For the first time, a state agency regulated the liquor industry. The saloon as it existed prior to 1916 was forever banished, and state laws regulated liquor dispensers and forbade the sale of alcohol to minors.

Prohibition had also become unnecessary as a means of achieving social order. During the nineteen-twenties, women assumed a more active role in society; their political rights and the availability of jobs precluded anti-liquor laws as a means of protecting women and the home. Labor violence continued, unaffected by the supposed calming effect of abstinence upon workers. Most importantly, however, events after 1919 proved that Prohibition failed to guarantee the state's
agrarian prosperity. The rise of urban corporate interests to the pinnacle of economic and political power in the state combined with the rural depression following the end of the war, crushed the idealistic spirit of Montanans. Not only had Drys failed to legislate morality, but their attempts to enforce the law became a burden that restricted individual liberty and taxed an already depleted economy. Prohibition became the scapegoat for the troubles that had befallen Montana. Ironically, this response guaranteed the eventual success of liquor reform.

"Prohibition was non-existent in our town [Anaconda]...you could still get a bottle of beer for two bits and two shots of moonshine for a quarter. In fact, there were more joints running openly than there had been before the national folly..."

So wrote Edmund Fahey about his experiences in 1923 prior to becoming a rum-runner. The illegal liquor traffic overwhelmed the Prohibition officials assigned the vast responsibility of controlling it. To many Montanans, Prohibition officials simply failed to control the illegal liquor traffic. In spite of this evidence Drys maintained an optimistic appearance of success. The Anti-Saloon League published reports of their "improving battle" against liquor interests; one story described the destruction of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars worth of liquor and two hundred and fifty arrests of liquor peddlers during the first year of enforcement in Silver Bow county. This type of evidence, however, failed to diminish opposition to Prohibition.

The main problem encountered by Drys after the enactment of anti-liquor laws was a conflicting perception of the effectiveness of
Prohibition. To Drys, the laws were succeeding in assisting society to achieve its objectives. People drank less frequently, less liquor was being manufactured, and crimes related to drunkenness had decreased. These positive gains made by the state proved Prohibition worthwhile. By restricting the individual freedom to drink alcohol, it increased social and economic opportunities for many citizens.

Wets, refuting their opponents' logic, argued that Prohibition failed as long as any number of people still drank and manufactured liquor. Prior to 1916, Drys promised the state would be rid of liquor if the referendum passed, and that this moral mandate would ensure prosperity. Anti-Prohibitionists asserted that the law failed to diminish the desire to drink, only making the fulfillment of that desire a crime. The movement for the modification of Montana's liquor laws thus originated from the perception that Prohibition failed to fulfill its promises of ending the liquor traffic and creating a utopian society.

The movement to repeal Prohibition in Montana succeeded because of the Drys' inability to enforce the law, and because many Montanans objected to the desperate measures used to enforce an ineffective law. The most prominent deficiency of the anti-liquor strategy was its reliance upon moral suasion to compel obedience of the law. Drys requested the "unreserved cooperation...from those moral agencies which are so vitally interested in the proper administration of this law." This optimism caused federal and state enforcement agencies to be understaffed in a state adjacent to Canada, which permitted the sale of alcohol. The many miles of unsettled territory represented a
formidable challenge to the few agents appointed to serve in Montana.

Popular support for Prohibition also diminished when the organizations orchestrating the Dry campaign suffered declines in power and influence. The A.S.L. and the W.C.T.U. experienced financial losses during the nineteen-twenties, limiting their ability to continue a campaign equal to that of 1916. Many anti-liquor leaders believed they had fulfilled their obligation to improve society once the referendum passed. Much of the energy infused into the campaign for Prohibition dissipated once the Drys achieved their initial objective. The inability of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Anti-Saloon League to raise funds to promote Dry-law enforcement reflected this deterioration of their popularity. Lack of funds prevented the A.S.L. from fulfilling the third element of the "Ohio plan"—law enforcement. The Montana W.C.T.U. in 1916 spent over seven thousand dollars on various campaigns. A large portion of this budget was spent on the Prohibition movement. By 1926, the W.C.T.U. raised only three thousand dollars for its yearly expenses. When money for enforcement campaigns and anti-liquor advertising failed to materialize from individual contributions, moral suasion proved an insufficient means of upholding the law.

This decrease in funds also reflected the declining popularity of anti-liquor organizations. The W.C.T.U.'s membership, which originally represented the most prominent women in many communities, primarily attracted middle-class women during the nineteen-twenties. Ironically, many wealthy women later joined organizations promoting repeal, arguing that Prohibition's ineffectiveness made children disrespectful of the
The A.S.L. suffered attacks upon its credibility that accused the Drys of supporting corrupt politicians simply because they supported Prohibition. Wets claimed that the A.S.L. abided by the slogan, "If he's a Dry, nothing else matters". Opponents of the A.S.L. argued that by defending anti-liquor laws alone, it failed to contend with more important economic and political issues.11

The rise of organizations like the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform and the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment further enfeebled Dry organizations. The Montana branch of the A.A.P.A., led by W.H. Maloney, used the same tactics of organizing grass-roots political support to achieve its objectives as the Anti-Saloon League had used to promote Prohibition. The A.A.P.A., however, received donations from large corporations in order to finance its assault upon the A.S.L. and Dry laws. Just when the League's earnings from church and individual contributions dwindled, the A.A.P.A.'s budget swelled. The anti-prohibitionists used these funds to criticize liquor legislation, but also successfully undermined the A.S.L.'s image as a morally unblemished organization. For example, the A.A.P.A. accused the Prohibitionists of spending fifty million dollars in a conspiracy to ratify the Eighteenth amendment.12 Montana's critics of the A.S.L. viewed the effort to maintain Dry laws as simply a ploy to guarantee a payroll for Prohibition administrators.13

The greatest encouragement to popular supporters of repeal originated from the Drys' increasingly desperate attempts to enforce the law. Underfinanced and understaffed, Dry agencies resorted to corrupt and harsh tactics against rumrunners and moonshiners. In
response to these measures, Montanans accused the Prohibitionists of causing increased criminal activity without solving the liquor problem. One newspaper editors labeled enforcement "persecution, not prosecution", because agents conducted illegal searches and seizures, and often physically abused suspects. Several accounts characterized federal officers as "professional thugs, ex-convicts, and gunmen", who "forced local sheriffs to enforce Dry laws at the expense of others..."14 Another writer labeled a youth shot by "Indians drafted to enforce liquor laws" as "another martyr to Prohibition." This account concluded with the statements, "travel [was] unsafe on the highways after dark, and homes [were] not safe from invasion."15 One editorial summarized repeal sentiment succinctly:

"The Wets do not depend upon [financial arguments] to carry out their views. Rather they depend on the doctrine of personal liberty and the practical effect of prohibition, which they claim has not promoted temperance, and has produced a flood of moral evil."16

Financial arguments, however, did not escape the attention of repeal proponents. In 1918, the prices of Montana's agricultural commodities began to drop. By 1921, the prices of several farm products had decreased fifty percent from their inflated war-time levels. Agricultural output also decreased as a consequence of a severe drought.17 As a result of these and other financial disasters, Montanans experienced an economic depression during the nineteen-twenties.

Prohibition, contrary to A.S.L. arguments, failed to decrease the cost of administering state and local governments. Taxes levied to support additional law enforcement agencies only aggravated the
economic crises experienced by many citizens. Furthermore, the state used this revenue to support a corrupt and ineffective organization, which failed to serve any "practical" need. The promised savings from jail closures never materialized; Drys, when they promised the decrease of law enforcement expenditures, failed to anticipate the cost of imposing anti-liquor laws upon a population that by 1926 had become reluctant in accepting these regulations. By that year, Montanans preferred to support initiatives like the Good Roads bill, which promised to bring twenty-seven million dollars of federal aid to the state.

Repeal of Prohibition also represented a financial gain to Montana. Modification of state liquor laws meant that state taxes levied for their enforcement would be discontinued. This measure marked the first step of lifting the economic burden of anti-liquor laws from the state. The second step of the modification strategy called for the resumption of liquor sales under government regulation. Wets as well as Drys opposed the resurrection of the saloon, but repeal proponents believed revenues generated by a closely regulated liquor industry would invigorate the state's economy. By 1926, Repeal spokesmen promoted a return of social order and prosperity, and opposed lawlessness and political corruption. Unlike the Prohibition campaign, however, modification of liquor laws emphasized practical results rather than a utopian ideal.

In November, 1926, Montana voters approved an initiative calling for the repeal of state liquor prohibition. The vote reflected the same urban-rural division of opinion; most eastern counties opposed
repeal, while urban counties in central and western Montana favored the bill. Most rural counties maintained slim voting margins in favor of Prohibition; urban county results, unlike those of 1916, produced considerably greater opposition to anti-liquor laws. Several newspaper editors expressed surprise over the results, stating that confusion created by repeal proponents accounted for the result. Drys attempted to vindicate this loss by campaigning for the enforcement of federal Prohibition laws with state agencies. In 1928, however, Montana voters rejected this initiative by an even greater margin than the plurality in favor of repeal in 1926.

The result of the 1926 and 1928 elections represented more than the loss of popular support for Prohibition caused by the exodus of many farmers from the state during the nineteen-twenties. The repudiation of anti-liquor laws symbolized the rejection of a facet of the idealism present in Montana during the Progressive Era prior to World War I. Agrarian utopianism lost much of its appeal when its symbolism was used for excessive campaigns like nativism, anti-Communism, and Prohibition. Since 1918, Montanans had witnessed the consequences of war hysteria and the Red Scare; they had followed the political ascendancy of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company; and they had experienced the destruction of agrarian utopianism by the depression of the nineteen-twenties.

By the middle years of the decade, Montanans viewed the loyalty tests, censorship, and violence occurring as a result of war hysteria and anti-Communist sentiment as a reduction of personal liberties. Governor Joseph M. Dixon anticipated this change of opinion in 1921 by
vetoing bills designed to give the government more power to enforce laws, particularly Prohibition. Indeed, Repeal was not the first effort by Montanans to regain individual liberty.

Dixon's defeat in his struggle with the A.C.M. for political control of the state contributed to the decline of Progressive idealism among Montanans. Dixon opposed the Company in order to ensure that the state's political and economic development would not be determined by outside corporate interests. The election of 1924 marked a turning point for liberal politicians in the state; most of Montana's prominent Progressives afterward turned their energies to the national political arena. Dixon briefly retired from political life after 1924; his impression of "Montana apathy", however, prompted his ensuing return.

Burton K. Wheeler and Thomas J. Walsh, liberal senators during the 1920's, turned their attention primarily to national issues after 1924. Jeannette Rankin, a suffrage leader and social reformer, had begun concentrating on a national peace campaign after the end of her first congressional tenure in 1919. An indication of this change in attitude among Montana's liberals arose from Wheeler's changing stance on Prohibition. Early in the 1920's, the senator idealistically advocated Dry laws. By 1926, however, Wheeler recognized the ambivalence of most Montanans toward Prohibition. This realization prompted his promotion of the modification of liquor laws.

Prohibition, however, represented only one element in a sequence of events that destroyed Montanans' idealism during the nineteen-twenties. By the end of the decade, the state's residents had twice rejected this utopian panacea in favor of practical and moderate
liquor policies.

Prohibition had failed to fulfill its promise of the ascendency of traditional rural values. Montanans found that urbanization, crime, and immorality still persisted in spite of the attempt to legislate against them. The repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, ironically, led to the ultimate fulfillment of liquor reform. In 1933, the year national Prohibition was repealed, the state's twenty-fourth legislative assembly passed the Montana Liquor Control Act, establishing a state monopoly of the liquor industry. The Montana Liquor Control Board served four purposes. First, the Board worked to prevent crime, political corruption, and immorality resulting from Prohibition. Second, this system provided a source of revenue for state and local examiners. Third, a board of examiners established controls over the liquor industry to regulate the quality of alcohol products, and particularly to monitor retail sales. Fourth, the Board promoted temperance in the use of alcoholic beverages. The assembly established the monopoly to solve problems with the liquor industry that had developed prior to and during the Prohibition era. The Board's primary tactic for exerting control was the licensing of retail liquor outlets. The assembly recommended "the establishment of no more than fifty-six state owned liquor stores," but this number proved insufficient to serve all of the counties effectively. By 1935, the number of liquor outlets had increased to one hundred and fifteen; by 1940 this total had nearly doubled. Most important, however, the Board by 1935 regulated the liquor industry to serve the best interests of the people while working to prevent crimes associated with the
alcohol consumption.

Although the Liquor Control Board failed to end immediately all crime associated with alcohol consumption, the state had established a commission that would eventually regulate the production and sale of liquor. During the nineteen-thirties the Board struggled to eliminate bootlegging, and to prevent taverns and bars from becoming like pre-Prohibition saloons. It attempted, for example, to eliminate gambling and sales to minors in bars. The Board received only limited support from tavern owners in promoting temperance, but other agencies assisted in fulfilling this task. The W.C.T.U. contributed its educational campaign against liquor consumption, and Alcoholics Anonymous was founded in 1935. Repeal thus encouraged the regulation of the liquor industry using Progressive guidelines, with the cooperation of private agencies to achieve its ends. The Liquor Control Board could not eliminate completely the evils associated with alcohol, but it represented a compromise between no regulation and coercive legislation.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER SEVEN


17. *General Economic Information Relating to Montana Agriculture* (Bozeman: Montana State College Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics, 1937), University of Montana Archives, Missoula, MT.


25. Ibid., pp. 208, 247.

26. Ibid., p. 213.


CONCLUSION

The Prohibition campaign began as part of an effort to fulfill Montana's potential as the "best west". The movement grew out of a combination of practical necessity and utopian idealism. Temperance leaders knew the state needed efficient, productive, and sober citizens to create an Inland Empire. This earlier movement provided many of the religious, scientific, and economic arguments against alcohol used by Prohibitionists. The objectives of the first reform campaign contrasted markedly from the eventual effort promoting a coercive and discriminatory law.

The Temperance campaign represented part of the process of adjusting to a frontier environment. Led by the W.C.T.U., this endeavor incorporated many interest groups from Montana's growing population during the late nineteenth century. The chief objectives of the reform were to improve individual behavior and to protect society, particularly the family, from drunkards. These reformers enlisted support from the homesteaders settling in the state who brought a moralistic political culture. As Montana's population swelled after 1909, several groups—Evangelists, Populists, Suffragists, and Progressives—influenced the Temperance movement through their political activities. Anti-liquor campaigners fashioned a persuasive ideology from contemporary religious, scientific, and economic arguments.

Urban leaders joined the effort to promote abstinence. The W.C.T.U. first established chapters in the state's largest urban
centers. Originally, Union rhetoric indicated no distinction between rural and urban reform, which reflected its accommodation of cultural differences. Reformers employed a variety of measures to mitigate the conditions of working class slums as well as the isolation of homesteads. Efforts by Temperance reformers represented the attempt to fulfill the vision of Montana as a cooperative commonwealth.

No strict division separated the Temperance and the Prohibition campaigns, because ideally, most early advocates against liquor wanted to ban drinking completely. Early efforts to invoke county option laws, however, lacked the considerable popular support accrued by the Prohibitionists. Anti-liquor leaders gradually generated enthusiasm for their reform by proposing saloon regulations without threatening to entirely eliminate the industry. The assimilative nature of the Temperance campaign, however, lasted only as long as Montana's rural residents retained their predominant political and economic status.

Two important developments provoked Montanans to seek state-wide Prohibition. First, the rise in political and economic power of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company threatened the cooperative ideal of the Inland Empire. Symbolized by the shutdown of 1903 and confirmed by corporate influence in state elections, the A.C.M.'s power threatened the ability of rural dwellers to promote their own interests. The Company attracted many immigrant workers to Montana's growing urban areas, which further betokened the declining political self-determination of the farmers. In response to these developments, organizations such as the Farmer's Equity and the Nonpartisan League initiated political attacks upon urban interests. The Montana Farm
Bureau in particular defended the value of traditional rural values against the threat of corruption from alien working class cultures.

The second development contributing to the movement toward coercive Prohibition legislation was the failure of saloons to comply with moderate regulations. Frequently, saloon owners sold liquor to minors and Indians, ignored local closing times, or refused to license their establishments. The Anti-Saloon League capitalized on this behavior, not only criticizing the obnoxious impact of saloons upon the community, but also warning that these practices posed an anarchic threat to the function of democratic government.

Urban leaders joined the Prohibition movement for reasons closely associated with the A.S.L.'s and farmer's displeasure with saloons and corporate power. Members of the upper classes linked the liquor industry with corrupt political behavior. The saloon symbolized a meeting place where political hacks could buy votes from the working classes for the price of a free round. No agency regulated the liquor industry; it became a target of Progressives who believed the government should oversee the methods used by all manufacturers and distributors. The saloon and liquor producers represented a corrupt and uncontrolled industry during a time when scientific management and close governmental regulation of society were perceived as necessary for progress.

By 1916, the A.S.L. was leading the campaign against the symbol of urban working class culture. The League financed advertisements and speaking campaigns directed against liquor, but more importantly, against the saloon as both cause and consequence of urban decadence and
corruption. Montanans, by voting for Prohibition, expressed a willingness to compromise individual liberty in an attempt to ensure community security. The A.S.L. succeeded in organizing support for H.B. 224 by ignoring all political issues except Prohibition. Using this strategy, the League overcame the obstacle of Montana's many different social groups.

Arguments by the liquor industry failed to sway the majority of the state's voters. Wet spokesmen denounced the tyrannical encroachment upon the rights guaranteed to all United States citizens. They also criticized the arbitrary confiscation of private property; Prohibition established dangerous precedent of outlawing a financially sound industry. Commercial and Labor League advertisements argued that eliminating the jobs and tax revenues created by the liquor industry threatened the state's security and prosperity. Labor groups resented legislation that affected only the poor, since the rich could continue to buy high-priced illegal liquor.

In the 1916 election, Montana's voters approved a strict and comprehensive anti-liquor law, although Drys gained the support of moderates by allowing a two year period of grace before saloons closed. Only ten years later, however, Montanans reversed their decision, voting to nullify state enforcement of liquor laws. This response indicated the desire of individuals to resume drinking legally, and to end the public financing of ineffective enforcement agencies. Nullification also reflected the failure of the corrupted idealism behind the Dry campaign. Legislation failed to act as a panacea for social and economic problems, as the struggle to maintain
agrarian dominance in the state experienced several setbacks. Laws failed to improve personal morality, because they denied individuals the option of temperate consumption of alcohol. As a consequence, Prohibition produced little effect upon most individuals' drinking habits. The corruption and heavy-handedness of enforcement officials provoked the active resentment of Montanans who had previously accepted anti-liquor legislation.

Several developments only indirectly related to Prohibition, however, encouraged demands for Repeal. The rise of the A.C.M. to a position of unchallenged power in state politics, in spite of efforts by Progressives such as Dixon and Wheeler, diminished the political idealism of many residents. Montanans also responded against the chaotic period of war hysteria and Red Scare by demanding the restoration of personal liberties. The depression caused by drought and decreased farm prices made farmers search for practical rather than idealistic solutions to their economic problems. The liquor industry's argument in 1916 that the state needed alcohol revenues eventually proved correct. By 1926, many Montanans perceived Repeal, not Prohibition, as the best means of regaining prosperity and security.

Repeal and the formation of the Liquor Control Board in 1933 symbolized the fulfillment of liquor reform in Montana. The Board established the legal mechanism for regulating the liquor industry and reducing the impact of alcohol consumption upon society. Above all, it ensured that the unmanageable saloon could never again operate in Montana. Thus, by 1933, the coercive measure of the Prohibition campaign had failed, although the reform goals of Temperance and early
Prohibition leaders had been fulfilled.

The campaign for Prohibition in Montana reflected the national tendency to support the campaign of one cultural group attempting to assert the predominance of its values in a heterogenous society. State Prohibition also represented part of the A.S.L.'s strategy for eventually attaining national anti-liquor legislation. Montana's history, however, included developments distinguishing its campaign from those of other states. The Temperance campaign began as an attempt to fulfill the Inland Empire ideal promoted by Montana's Progressives. The rise and decline of the fortunes of the state's rural population, however, marked the success and failure of Prohibition legislation. Agrarian leaders used the coercive law to maintain their traditional values in response to political and economic competition from urban interests. This movement emerged as Montana's farmers experienced prosperity, and wished to exert a control over the state's development that matched their contribution to its success.

Conversely, the decline of agrarian fortunes marked the failure of Prohibition laws in Montana. The ineffectiveness of Dry laws, and on a larger scale, the futility of opposing A.C.M. political influence disproved anti-liquor rhetoric and shattered the idealism of many farmers. Although many residents of rural areas continued to vote in favor of Prohibition laws, they sought practical solutions to economic problems rather than adhering to utopian social ideals. Prohibition failed as an attempt to create the "best west" in Montana; the lessons learned in the process, however, assured the success of alcohol reform.
This ain't no cow-town no more. Its one of the coming farmer-cities of this country, and the sellers of all this rich land don't want nothing that'll scare away farmers, and I'm here to please the folks. Most of these tillers of the soil come from prohibition states where men do their drinkin' alone in the cellar. When you drink that way, it don't cost so much. The old-timer that you knew was generally on the square. When he got drunk he wanted everybody to know it and they did, if they were in the same town. Folks to-day ain't been able to sweep all this old stuff out but, like some old bachelors I know, they've swept the dirt under the bed, and what you don't see don't look bad.

C. M. Russell (1931)
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Daily Missoulian
Engineering and Mining Journal
Fergus County Argus
Great Falls Leader
Great Falls Tribune
Helena Independent
IOGT News (Stevensville)
Kalispell Times
Meagher County Republican
Miles City Daily Journal
Missoula Sentinel
Montana Daily Record (Helena)
Montana Methodist Messenger
Montana Progressive (Helena)
Montana Socialist (Butte)
Paramount Issue (Billings)
Rocky Mountain Husbandman (Great Falls)
Shelby Promoter
Sheridan County News (Plentywood)
Spokane Press
WCTU Voice (Helena)
Woman's Journal
Woman's Voice (Helena)
Yellowstone Journal
Yellowstone Labor News (Billings)
APPENDIX A

1916 LIQUOR PROHIBITION
### APPENDIX A

#### 1916 LIQUOR PROHIBITION

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### 1916 LIQUOR PROHIBITION

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1928 Enact Federal Liquor Prohibition

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