



## PROHIBITION

### Temperance and Prohibition Time Line

by Jane Hedeem

1790–95—The Northwest Territory (including present-day Indiana) prohibits selling liquor to soldiers and furnishing liquor to Native Americans. Although the law is repealed in 1795, modified regulations continue to prohibit the distribution or sale of liquor to Native Americans throughout the territorial period.

1805—The Indiana territorial legislature enacts a law allowing taverns to be licensed to sell liquor by the drink. The sale of alcoholic beverages is regulated by local authorities.

1807—The Indiana territorial legislature enacts a law providing for the regulation of establishments where liquor is served by the drink. Offenses are punishable by revocation of licenses. The legislature also bars the sale of liquor to minors.

1816—Indiana becomes a state and prohibits liquor sales on Sunday.

1818—The sale of alcohol to drunks is prohibited. The state legislature also limits the amount of alcohol that may be purchased on credit.

Applicants for liquor licenses must gather signatures from “freeholders,” or landowners, in the area.

Mid-nineteenth century—Headed by Protestant evangelists who oppose alcohol on moral grounds, the temperance movement gains popular support.

1830—The Indiana Temperance Society is established.

1832—Indiana sets the age of minors at eighteen years.

1842–47—Indiana state legislature enacts local option laws, meaning that localities have the ability to prohibit the sale of liquor in taverns and groceries. By 1847 all Indiana counties except Rush and Harrison use local option laws.

1843—Indiana implements penalties for drunken stagecoach drivers and increases penalties for liquor law violations.

1847–53—Local authorities continue to exercise the local option to prohibit liquor licenses until the practice is declared unconstitutional by the Indiana Supreme Court.

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1853—Temperance supporters continue to push for statewide prohibition, while still supporting the local option. In general, Republicans support prohibition laws, as do the Know-Nothings on the grounds that establishments selling alcohol are often operated by “foreigners.” Democrats, for the most part, oppose prohibition laws.

1855—The first statewide prohibition bill goes into effect, allowing alcohol sales only for medicinal, chemical, mechanical, and religious purposes. Bootleggers are fined \$100 and sent to jail for thirty days. This law applies to beer as well as liquor.

1858—Indiana’s statewide prohibition law is repealed.

1859—Indiana imposes new regulations related to liquor licenses, fines for violations, etc. Beer and wine are considered “intoxicating liquor.”

1860—The Democratic Party opposes prohibition in its platform.

1861–65—Temperance concerns are set aside during the Civil War. Nearly 600,000 Union and Confederate troops die in battle or succumb to disease.

1874—Republicans support a city ward and township local option.

August, 1874—Organizers hold a meeting on the Chautauqua Grounds in Chautauqua, New York, and form the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, which opposes the use and sale of alcohol on moral grounds.

November 15–20, 1874—The first national convention of the WCTU takes place in Cleveland, Ohio.

1886—A peaceful union protest in Chicago turns deadly when police move to disperse the crowd. A bomb explodes and gunfire follows. Eleven are killed (including seven police officers) and more than a hundred are injured in the Haymarket Square bombing. As a result, the Knights of Labor, led by Terence Powderly, begins to decline, and the American Federation of Labor, led by

Samuel Gompers, is founded. Unlike the Knights of Labor, the AFL admits only skilled workers and believes in working with business leaders to reform labor conditions and wages.

1889—Jane Addams founds Hull House, a Chicago settlement house that serves as a social center for recent Italian immigrants in the surrounding neighborhoods.

1892—Ellis Island opens to screen immigrants as they arrive in the United States.

1893—The World’s Columbian Exhibition opens in Chicago to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Columbus’s discovery of the New World.

June 26, 1892—A strike begins at Andrew Carnegie’s steelworks in Homestead, Pennsylvania, following a cut in wages. The demonstration turns violent when Pinkerton guards are brought in to protect the plant. Ten strikers and three Pinkerton men are killed. Pennsylvania’s governor sends the state militia to protect the strike-breakers. The strike ends on November 20.

1893–97—Economic depression and panic grips the nation. Millions are unemployed and tramps wander the country searching for work and food.

1894—Five hundred unemployed workers march on Washington, D.C., in what is called “Coxey’s Army.” Armed police herd them into camps.

Workers at Chicago’s Pullman sleeping car plant protest a cut in wages that erupts into a company-wide strike. On June 26 the American Railway Union begins to boycott trains carrying Pullman cars. Eventually, President Grover Cleveland uses the military and the courts to crush the strike.

1895—The Anti-Saloon League of America organization forms. While the WCTU used moral suasion to combat the use of alcohol, the ASL works toward the legal abolition of alcoholic beverages. The ASL view prohibition as the cure for several problems related to health, family disorder, child and spousal abuse, political corruption, and workplace inefficiency.

1895—The Nicholson law passes. This Indiana law states that the majority of voters in townships and city wards can stall approval of a liquor license issued to a specific applicant for a two-year period.

1896—*Plessy v. Ferguson* decision is handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court. This ruling permits racial segregation among blacks and whites as long as both races receive equal facilities.

1898—The Indiana Anti-Saloon League forms.

The Spanish-American War begins when the battleship USS *Maine* sinks while anchored in Cuba's Havana Harbor. As a result, the United States acquires the territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines.

1899—Florence Kelley, leader of the National Consumers' League, lends her voice to the campaign against child labor.

1900—Carrie Chapman Catt succeeds Susan B. Anthony as the president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

1901—All states require the teaching of scientific temperance instruction in public schools.

President William McKinley is shot in Buffalo, New York, by anarchist Leon Czolgosz. McKinley dies on September 14 and is succeeded by Theodore Roosevelt.

New York passes a tenement house law, requiring fire escapes, a window in each room, and light in dark hallways.

1902—The United Mine Workers begin a strike against coal-mine operators to achieve recognition as a union, higher pay, and shorter hours. Mine owners will not talk with the UMW until President Roosevelt forces both sides to submit to arbitration. The UMW calls off the strike and miners receive a 10 percent wage increase and a reduction of the working day from ten to nine hours.

1903—The Indiana Anti-Saloon League establish a headquarters in South Bend.

1904—Roosevelt is elected president in his own right.

Progressive reformers found the National Child Labor Committee with the goal of abolishing child labor. The group hires "muckrakers" (journalists) who expose the awful conditions in which child laborers work.

1905—The Moore remonstrance law passes the Indiana legislature, allowing voters in city wards and townships to "remonstrate" (cast a vote) against all liquor licensing. Many saloons are closed.

The International Workers of the World is founded. Membership is open to any wage earner regardless of occupation, race, or gender.

1906—Upton Sinclair publishes *The Jungle* to expose working conditions in the meat-packing industry. Sinclair's book results in the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act, banning the sale of adulterated foods and drugs, and the Meat Inspection Act, which provides enforcement of sanitary regulations in the meat-packing industry.

1907—The Indiana legislature passes a "blind tiger" law allowing for search and seizure, with a mandatory jail sentence for a convicted operator of a blind tiger. (A "blind tiger" is another term for "speakeasy," a place where alcoholic beverages are sold illegally.)

1908—The Indiana legislature establishes a county local option for the state. Sixty-nine counties cast dry majorities.

Republican William H. Taft is elected president.

Henry Ford introduces the Model T, making the automobile affordable for the masses.

1909—An Indiana constitutional amendment on prohibition dies in the Indiana Senate.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is founded to demand equal civil, political, and educational rights for African Americans.

1911—A more liberal Indiana legislature passes the Proctor law, repealing the county local option in favor of a city/township local option. Twenty-seven Indiana counties remain dry.

A fire breaks out in the top stories of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City and panic ensues. Locked doors, inadequate fire escapes, and ladders that are too short to reach the victims result in the death of 146 young, immigrant women.

1912—Democrat Woodrow Wilson is elected president, beating Progressive Party candidate Theodore Roosevelt and GOP candidate Taft.

1912—The Progressive Party platform endorses women’s suffrage, child labor laws, the eight-hour workday, worker’s compensation, tariff reduction, tighter regulation of businesses, direct primary, and direct election of senators.

1913—The Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution passes, permitting an income tax.

1914—A Serbian nationalist assassinates Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, resulting in World War I.

1915—Release of D. W. Griffith’s film, *Birth of a Nation*, which glorifies the Ku Klux Klan.

1916—Congress passes the Keating-Owen Act that bars the transport of products manufactured by child labor through interstate commerce. The law is declared unconstitutional in 1918, but it paves the way for the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 that abolishes child labor.

1917—With support from the Anti-Saloon League led by Reverend E. S. Shumaker, the Indiana legislature approves a statewide prohibition bill. Governor James P. Goodrich signs it into law on February 9. Statewide prohibition goes into effect on April 2, 1918.

Suffragette Alice Paul and her followers picket the White House and accuse President Wilson of “deceiving the world when he appears as the prophet of democracy” and make him “responsible for the disfranchisement of millions of Americans.” Paul and several other demonstrators are arrested, jailed, go on a hunger strike while in jail, and are subsequently force-fed.

December 18, 1917—Congress votes overwhelmingly to pass the Eighteenth Amendment (Prohibition), but it still has to be ratified by state legislatures. More than half of the states are already dry.

1918—President Wilson issues his fourteen-point plan for a lasting peace to follow World War I.

The Spanish Influenza epidemic kills nearly half a million Americans.

April 2, 1918—The entire state of Indiana goes dry.

1919—The Versailles Peace Treaty ends World War I.

January 13, 1919—Indiana ratifies the national Prohibition amendment.

January 16, 1919—Nebraska becomes the thirty-sixth state to vote in favor of the amendment, achieving national Prohibition.

October 27, 1919—Congress passes the Volstead Act, which provides legislation to enforce the Eighteenth Amendment.

January 16, 1920—The Eighteenth Amendment goes into effect and national Prohibition begins. The amendment prohibits the manufacture, sale, transportation, importation, and exportation of alcohol.

August 26, 1920—The Nineteenth Amendment gives the vote to women. WCTU members support women’s suffrage, thinking it would help pass prohibition legislation, but Prohibition precedes women’s suffrage.

1921—The Indiana legislature passes additional laws to strengthen enforcement of national Prohibition. State regulations make it unlawful to possess or transport liquor. It also bans the sale of products such as hair tonics containing alcohol that could be used for “beverage purposes.”

1923—Indiana passes the first drunk driver law.

1925—The Wright “bone dry” law is enacted, making Indiana laws even stronger. Both liquor buyers and sellers are guilty under this law and prosecutors are awarded \$25 for each liquor conviction.

1927—In Indiana fines and sentences increase for liquor violations.

1929—Peace officers are awarded \$25 for seizing autos carrying illegal liquor.

1933—In Indiana the Wright law is repealed, effective March 1. The state legislature authorizes a referendum on repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment and modifies the Volstead Act to allow beer sales in Indiana. Indiana passes a law authorizing the sale of beer and “prescription liquor.” The state also begins to tax beer and liquor. On June 6, 1933, Indiana voters repeal the Eighteenth Amendment, while thirty-seven of Indiana’s ninety-two counties choose to remain dry.

December 6, 1933—The Twenty-first Amendment to the U.S. Constitution goes into effect, repealing the Eighteenth Amendment and ending Prohibition. Indiana’s state government assumes responsibility for issuing liquor licenses for retail, wholesale, and manufacturing of liquor. A new state excise tax on liquor is implemented.

1935—A new Indiana liquor regulatory law is enacted to provide for the sale of beer, wine, and liquor by the drink in cities and towns; “roadhouses” are banned; and a bipartisan system of control is established.