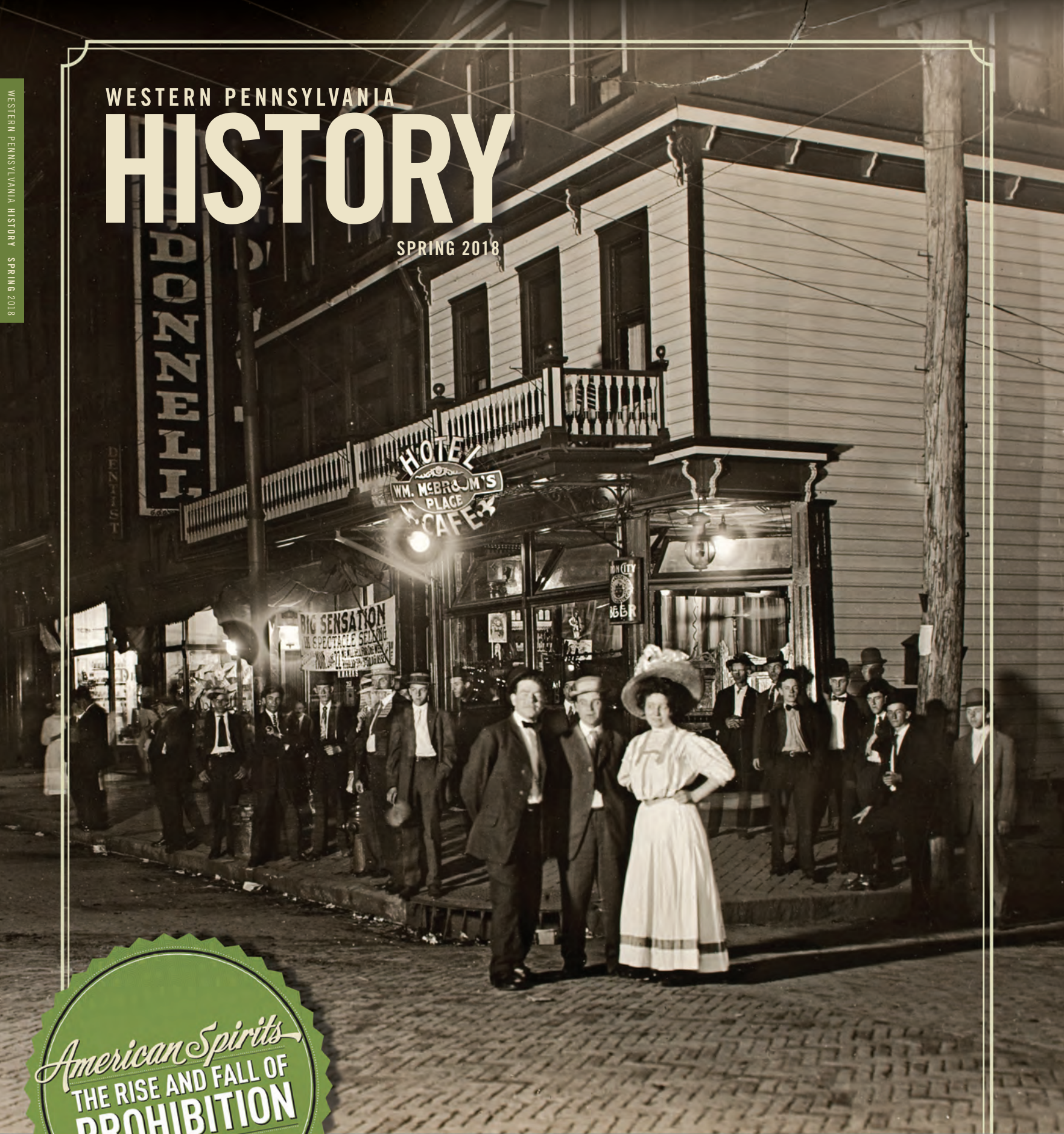


WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

# HISTORY

SPRING 2018



*American Spirits*  
THE RISE AND FALL OF  
PROHIBITION

Speak Easy, Boys!  
Speak Easy!

Pittsburgh's  
American Spirits

Pinchot &  
Prohibition



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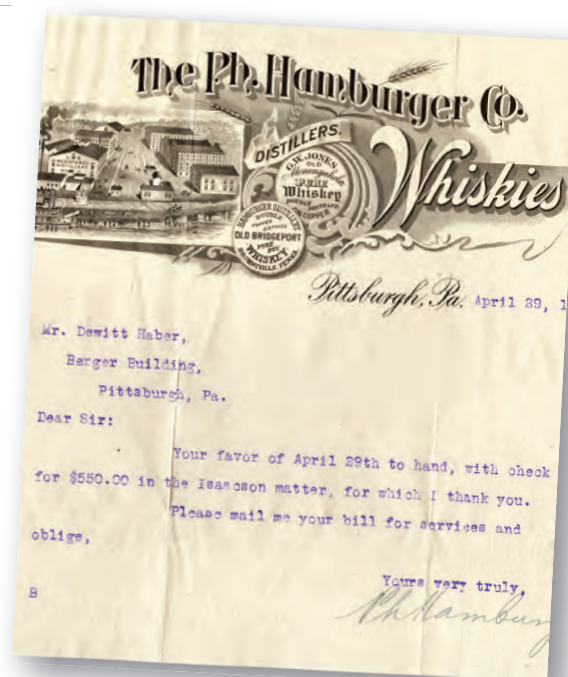
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*Night life in a small industrial town in Western Pennsylvania, c. 1908, by Lewis Wickes Hine. In Margaret Byington's volume on Homestead, part of the Pittsburgh Survey, this famous image was simply titled “Saloon Corner, Saturday Night.” Hotels often competed to offer their guests the finest saloons in the busiest parts of town. McBroom's Hotel and Café was built in 1900 by William MacBroom, a Scottish immigrant who worked as a miner, a boiler maker in the Homestead mill, served as chief of police, and opened this business on 8th Avenue at McClure Street. The site is now a bank parking lot.*

Courtesy of the George Eastman Museum.



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# EXHIBITS

## Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum, It's A Hockey Night in Pittsburgh!

Opens May 26, 2018

This spring, visit the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum to see new artifacts and interactives as part of an expanded hockey section that incorporates objects from the Pittsburgh Penguins' most recent Stanley Cup championship teams.

The life figure of Mario Lemieux hoisting the 1991 Stanley Cup will be on display in the hockey section.

Photo by Nicole Lauletta.



## Spring 2018 — Ongoing Exhibits

### *American Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*

Closes June 10, 2018

Step back in time to an exhilarating era of flappers & suffragists, bootleggers and temperance workers, and the infamous Al Capone and Carry Nation.



Prohibition agents pour liquor into the sewer while the New York City Deputy Police Commissioner looks on, 1921.

Library of Congress, 3c23257.

### *Eyes of Pittsburgh*

A photographic installation highlighting the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* most iconic images capturing more than 100 years of the city's unique history.

### *Art of Facts|Uncovering Pittsburgh Stories*

Barensfeld Gallery

Through April 29, 2018

### *Discovery Place*

*Discovery Place* infuses hands-on activities with historical content to inspire a new generation of innovators and allows visitors to leave the space with a better understanding of how ideas become real-world innovations.

### *Pittsburgh: A Tradition of Innovation*

### *Visible Storage*

Sigo Falk Collections Center

### *From Slavery to Freedom*

Explore 250 years of African American history in Pennsylvania

### *Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum*

### *Heinz*

### *Special Collections Gallery*

Treasures that celebrate our ethnicity, industry, innovation, and lifestyle.

### *Glass: Shattering Notions*

### *Rediscovering Lewis & Clark:*

A Journey with the Rooney Family

### *Prine Collection*

of Woodworking Planes

### *Wrought Metal Treasures*

from the Blum Collection

### *Clash of Empires:*

The British, French & Indian War, 1754-1763

At Fort Pitt Museum:

*From Maps to Mermaids:  
Carved Powder Horns in  
Early America*

At Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village:

Reopening for its 50th season  
on May 5, 2018



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Andrew E. Masich  
President & CEO



Happy Anniversary Mister Rogers – you’ve made history!

“It’s a beautiful day in the neighborhood, a beautiful day for a neighbor ... would you be mine?”

When Fred McFeely Rogers sang that now-famous tune to open the first national broadcast of *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* on Feb. 19, 1968, it marked the beginning of one of the most successful and influential runs in

television history. And it changed the world.

Rogers, a Latrobe native with a kind demeanor and gentle disposition, channeled his passion for music and teaching children to the show for nearly 900 episodes over a 33-year span.


While many of us who grew up watching *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* have fond memories of X the Owl, Mr. McFeely, King Friday XIII, and the “Neighborhood of Make Believe,” the show is also remembered for tackling subjects that were traditionally glossed over by children’s shows. Rogers openly discussed topics like competition, death, divorce, anger, and war in a comforting way that his young viewers could easily understand.

In recent years, as violence and tragedy continue to plague our society, Rogers’ teachings have resurfaced on social media, in the form of memes, videos, and a new generation of Daniel the Tiger programs that

reinforce his universal message of kindness and compassion.

This year, as the world celebrates the 50th anniversary of the first national broadcast of *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood*, it can be argued that Fred Rogers’ teachings have never been more relevant. His words still inspire us all to be kind to one another, to be neighborly, and to build a brighter future, together.

The History Center will commemorate the show’s 50th anniversary in 2018 with several new educational programs and exhibitions. This includes the addition of Fred Rogers’ iconic sweater and shoes to the display in the Sigo Falk Collections Center and new artifacts and video content added to the interactive kids’ exhibition, *Discovery Place*.

Be sure to check [www.heinzhistorycenter.org](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org) for the most up-to-date information on events and exhibits celebrating the 50th anniversary of *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood*. 

Visitors to the History Center can see the original set from *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* along with several puppets, X the Owl’s tree, and King Friday XIII’s castle, in the History Center’s fourth floor Sigo Falk Collections Center.

Photos by Rachellynn Schoen.







## FORT PITT

By Mike Burke, Exhibit Specialist,  
Fort Pitt Museum

### Beer Here? Beer and Brewing in Early Pittsburgh, 1758-1803

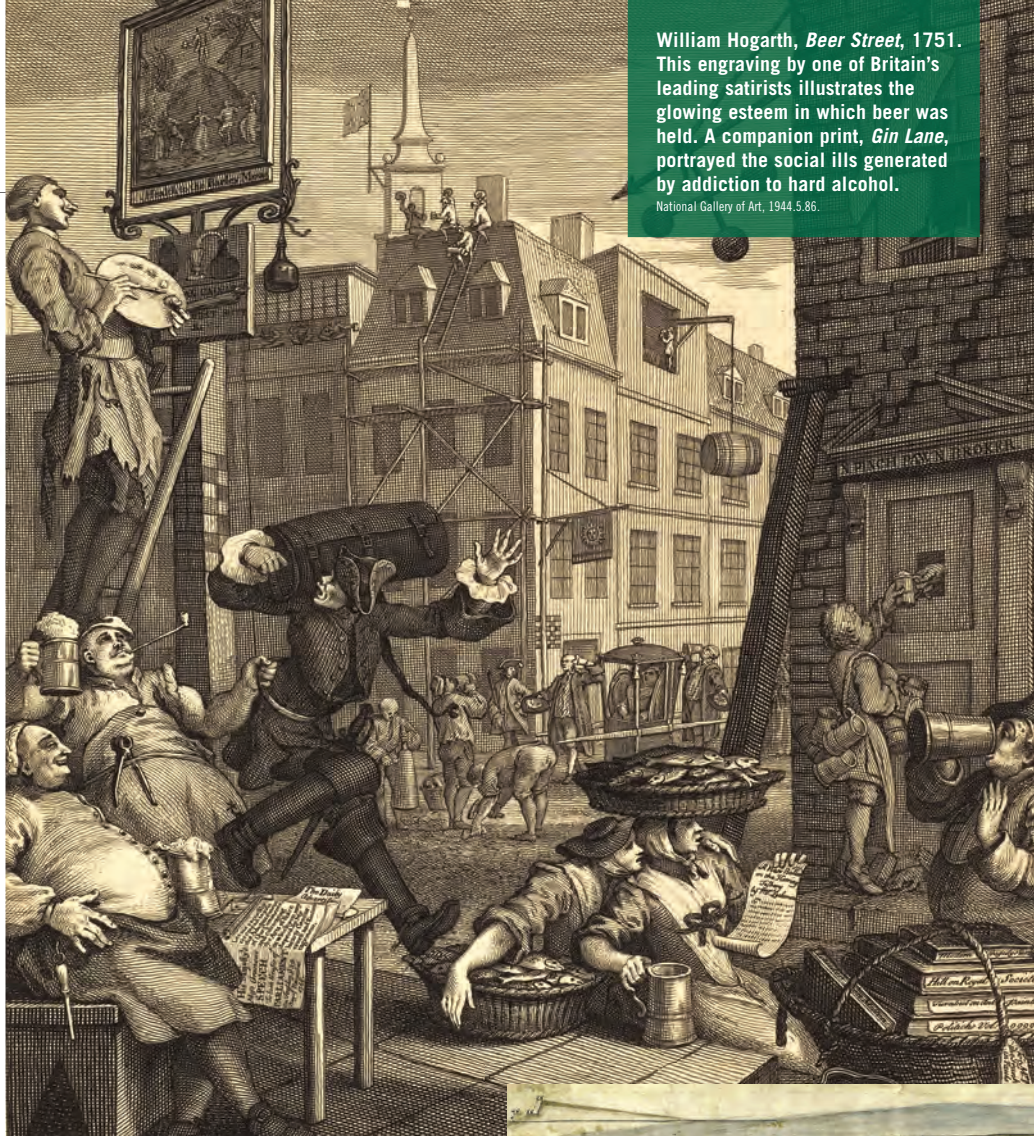
Pittsburgh has long enjoyed a reputation for beer and brewing, but how far back does this heady tradition extend? Given the mission of the British army in the Ohio Valley, life in the fledgling community of Pittsburgh, which grew in the shadow of Fort Pitt, was deeply entwined with the military presence. In the earliest years, the produce, commerce, and even the free time of its residents were intensely regulated, and the town's fortunes rose and fell with those of the army. Situated at the far western end of a narrow military road, Fort Pitt was connected to Philadelphia by a fragile lifeline on which personnel, supplies, and information traveled. It was on this road that the story of beer in Pittsburgh began.

When the British army under Brigadier General John Forbes arrived at the smoldering ruins of Fort Duquesne in November 1758, they brought with them a homegrown taste for beer. Made by fermenting the steeped liquor of malted barley and hops, Britons regarded beer in a patriotic, almost medicinal, light.<sup>1</sup> Just as today, several main types were common. Strong beer, high in alcohol as its name implies, was also rich in hops, which enhanced the flavor and allowed it to be stored for long periods. Comparably high in alcohol,

but lower in hops, ales were meant to be drunk fresh. Rounding out the top three, low-alcohol small, or table, beer was regarded as a wholesome choice for families.<sup>2</sup>

For soldiers, a fourth type was common: so-called spruce beer. Made from the green sprouts of spruce trees, water, molasses, and occasionally hops, the brew was high in Vitamin C, commonly used to prevent scurvy in 18th-century armies.<sup>3</sup> Due to its short fermentation period and relatively simple ingredients, it is believed that spruce beer was brewed and administered on the Forbes campaign as the army marched forward.<sup>4</sup>

No sooner had they displaced the French at the Point that the British grappled with the difficulty of supplying troops at Pittsburgh. While crops were soon planted, nearly all supplies for western outposts were carried via packhorse over the narrow military road.<sup>5</sup>



William Hogarth, *Beer Street*, 1751. This engraving by one of Britain's leading satirists illustrates the glowing esteem in which beer was held. A companion print, *Gin Lane*, portrayed the social ills generated by addiction to hard alcohol. National Gallery of Art, 1944.5.86.



This copy of Bernard Ratzer's 1761 *Plan of Fort Pitt and parts adjacent with both rivers*, made for William Darlington in 1882, shows the scale of the fort in comparison to previous fortifications at the Point. The outline of the French Fort Duquesne, destroyed in 1758, is shown near the confluence of the rivers, while an earlier British fortification, sometimes referred to as Mercer's Fort, is delineated just south-west of Fort Pitt on the Monongahela shore.

University of Pittsburgh, Darlington Digital Library, DARMAP0213.





Joseph Highmore (attributed), *Figures in a Tavern or Coffee House*, c. 1725 or after 1750. Taverns provided food, drink, and entertainment to road-weary travelers, military personnel, and locals alike. Samuel Semple's tavern was a popular gathering place in Pittsburgh by 1770, when George Washington visited the town.

Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

A journal kept at Fort Littleton—located between Carlisle and Bedford—gives insight as to which goods took priority.

23<sup>rd</sup> [February, 1759]

Arrived here with 12 horses loaded with Liquor W<sup>m</sup>: M Dowell Suttler. Also at 10 OClock AM Passed by here Tho<sup>r</sup>: Potts with a Brigade of Pack Horses to the N<sup>o</sup>: of 50 loaden with Flour...

...Three suttlers with nine Horses loaden with Liquor cam[e] here on their way to Pittsburgh.<sup>6</sup>

Given subsequent transactions at Pittsburgh, it seems likely that much of the *liquor* mentioned was rum, however, it is worth noting a shift in the definition of the term from the 18th century to today. Whereas modern-day *liquor* almost always denotes hard alcohol, two centuries ago it simply referred to “Any thing liquid,” or “Strong drink: in familiar language,” meaning that a portion of the shipments seen on the road may well have

been beer.<sup>7</sup> Several entries for the following month listed malt—one of the key ingredients in beer—among the westbound supplies, though the destination was not noted.<sup>8</sup>

That some beer was brought to Pittsburgh was confirmed by Colonel Henry Bouquet, who made several attempts to regulate its consumption, and even its price, in the early years. An order from September 1761 forbade the sutlers charged with provisioning the army from providing “any Rum, Wine, Beer, or other Strong Liquors to soldiers on Mondays,” and from giving them any alcohol during working hours.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to that purchased for recreational purposes, beer was also issued to troops at Fort Pitt, at least on one occasion. On June 5, 1763—near the beginning of Pontiac’s Uprising and the ensuing Siege of Pittsburgh—Captain Simeon Ecuyer ordered “one pint of beer issued” to each man, perhaps as an incentive to good conduct and bravery.<sup>10</sup>

After Pontiac’s Uprising, the population

of Pittsburgh contracted greatly as the town—consisting of a lower and upper section—had been destroyed to prevent besieging Indians from seeking shelter within. With their houses razed and trade curtailed indefinitely, many of the civilian residents of Pittsburgh (who numbered nearly 300 prior to Pontiac’s Uprising) retreated to the east.<sup>11</sup> In 1765, the long-awaited reopening of the Indian trade, and a plan for a new town, revived the fledgling community.<sup>12</sup>

As traders and tradesmen flocked to Fort Pitt, the rebuilt town of Pittsburgh once again buzzed with activity. It was then that perhaps the earliest known evidence of brewing at Fort Pitt appeared. In March 1765, Devereux Smith—later a prominent trader and founding citizen of Pittsburgh—was listed in the accounts of the trading firm Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan.<sup>13</sup> Like many of the carpenters, coopers, and other artisans at Fort Pitt, Smith’s occupation, *Brewer*, appeared next to his name on at least two occasions.<sup>14</sup>

While beer was brought to Fort Pitt early on, this listing from the daybook of Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan and Fort Pitt is perhaps the earliest reference to brewing in Pittsburgh.

HHC Dietre L&A, MFF 2000.

Month from	to	to	to
Devereux Smith	Brewer	D. to Sale of Merch <sup>ts</sup>	10. 11. 3
For Nicholas	2/6.. 1/2 p	Narras Libbon	3..



Despite the initial reference to his occupation, and the likely demand for his product, the firm's records show that Smith became deeply involved in the Indian trade. Perhaps to fill the void in the community, another brewer, James Milligan, arrived by 1767. Later listed in the records of the partnership of Devereux Smith and Ephraim Douglass, Milligan paid a portion of his balance in 1769 in "beer &c."<sup>15</sup>

In 1772, responding to a variety of economic and political factors, the British army formally abandoned Fort Pitt.<sup>16</sup> By that time, the town supported numerous traders, artisans, and at least one tavern.<sup>17</sup> While rum, and increasingly whiskey, were traded as commodities, the accounts of leather breeches maker Casper Reel for 1775 include payment of at least one debt in beer, ironically that of a Frenchman named Labatt.<sup>18</sup>

The American Revolution that followed largely curtailed the rhythms of daily life in Pittsburgh, and a return to cheap imported goods afterward threatened the economic independence of the new nation. Looking to jump-start local manufactures, a political commentator claimed in 1787 that he had seen "pretty good beer in the town of Pittsburgh, and lately excellent beer in the town of Washington."<sup>19</sup> In 1789, a tariff levied on foreign goods—including whiskey and beer—accomplished what pure patriotic zeal could not. It is no small coincidence that in 1792, a brewer and maltster, probably located near the remains of Fort Pitt, appeared among the town's 650 residents.<sup>20</sup> Three years later, the partnership of Robert Smith and Peter Shiras noted that they had "purchased the BREWERY at the Point, in Pittsburgh."<sup>21</sup> And, in 1803, James O'Hara, former assistant to Devereux Smith and Ephraim Douglass, bought them out, recognizing the potential of a brewery at the Forks.<sup>22</sup> Having survived its turbulent formative years, the local brewing

industry stood poised for a boom as the new nation pushed west with Pittsburgh as its gateway. 🌟

Thanks to Fort Pitt Museum intern Jennifer Motter for her help in combing through the Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan records, and to local historian Kelly Linn for information on the Point Brewery.

<sup>1</sup> George Watkins, *The Compleat Brewer; or, The Art and Mystery of Brewing Explained* (London: Printed for J. Coote, 1760) pp. iii-iv.

<sup>2</sup> Watkins p. 110-11, 121.

<sup>3</sup> "Dr. James Stevenson to Col. Henry Bouquet," c. April 1761 in Sylvester K. Stevens and Donald H. Kent, eds. *The Papers of Col. Henry Bouquet, Series 21646* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1941) p. 137. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015070207595> Accessed Dec. 1, 2017

<sup>4</sup> Douglas R. Cubbison, *The British Defeat of the French in Pennsylvania, 1758: A Military History of the Forbes Campaign Against Fort Duquesne* (Jefferson, N.C. McFarland & Company, Inc., 2010) p. 56.

<sup>5</sup> John Wilson Huston, *Fort Pitt, 1758-1772*, 1957 University of Pittsburgh, PhD Dissertation p. 79-86.

<sup>6</sup> Ensign Caleb Graydon "A Monthly Report of the Daily Transactions and Occurrences which happen'd at Fort Lyttleton since the 24<sup>th</sup> of January to the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1759," Entry dated Feb. 23, 1759 in Donald H. Kent, et al, eds. *The Papers of Henry Bouquet, Volume III* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1976) p. 159.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (Dublin: Printed by W.G. Jones, 1768).

<sup>8</sup> *Bouquet Papers*, Vol. III, p. 222-227.

<sup>9</sup> Louis Waddell, et al, eds., *The Papers of Henry Bouquet, Vol. V* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1984) p. 770.

<sup>10</sup> Mary Carson Darlington, "Orderly Book [Capt. Simeon Ecuyer]" printed in *Fort Pitt and Letters from the Frontier* (Pittsburgh: J.R. Weldin & Co., 1892) p. 151.

<sup>11</sup> Huston p. 152, 177-179.

<sup>12</sup> Huston, p. 258-259.

<sup>13</sup> M.P. Bothwell, "Devereux Smith: Fearless Pioneer" *The Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, Vol. 40, Number 4, 1957, p. 277 <https://journals.psu.edu/wph/article/viewFile/2584/2417> Accessed November 1, 2017

<sup>14</sup> Anonymous, *Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan Company Daybook [manuscript] 1765-1772*, Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, MSS 2000, p. 7,9



John Laguerre, *Hob Selling Beer at the Wake* (detail), 1725. In the earliest years, beer and other necessary goods at Fort Pitt were sold by sutlers, or military contractors charged with provisioning the army. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

<sup>15</sup> Ephraim Douglass, *Ledger 1769-1772*, University of Pittsburgh, ULS Digital Collections <http://digital2.library.pitt.edu/islandora/object/pitt:31735066223250> Accessed November 1, 2017

<sup>16</sup> Huston, p. 271-290.

<sup>17</sup> Samuel Semples's tavern, mentioned in George Washington *Remarks & Occurs in October [1770]* Founders Online <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/01-02-02-0005-0029> Accessed Dec. 1, 2017.

<sup>18</sup> *Casper Reel papers [manuscript] 1769-1835*, Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, MSS 0104, p. 22,23.

<sup>19</sup> Censor. "To the Printers of the Pittsburgh Gazette." *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, March 17, 1787, p. 1-2.

<sup>20</sup> *The American Museum, or, Universal Magazine for the Year 1792*, Philadelphia: From the Press of M. Carey, Volume 11, May 1792, p. 187-188 <https://books.google.com/books?id=mf1GAAAcAAJ&vq=pittsburgh&pg=RA2-PA188#v=onepage&q&f=false> Accessed Dec. 1, 2017

<sup>21</sup> "Brewery" advertisement, *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, October 17, 1795.

<sup>22</sup> "Pittsburgh Point Brewery" advertisement, *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, March 4, 1803.

# UP FRONT



## MEADOWCROFT

By David Scofield, Director, Meadowcroft  
Rockshelter and Historic Village

### Whiskey Sales in Washington County

The Meadowcroft archival collection contains several 19th- and early-20th-century ledger books which reveal period business practices, the value of available goods and services, and a listing of customer names with their account activity. One ledger caught my eye recently in light of the exhibition, *American Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*. Locally acquired by Meadowcroft founder Albert Miller in 1981, the ledger primarily documents the sale of whiskey between the years of 1819 and 1844.


Although it predates Prohibition by a century, it provides rich historical information about the value of the whiskey as well as goods and services that were sometimes bartered in the transactions it records. Unfortunately, there is no mention of the proprietor who kept this ledger but, since there are several locally recognized names listed, we can confidently attribute this to Washington County. The fragile spine is cracked and the decorative marbling on the cover is worn and faded. Page 22 of the ledger carries the account of George Miller (1767-1839), the great-great-grandfather of Meadowcroft founders Albert and Delvin Miller. George Miller emigrated from County Donegal in Northern Ireland in 1794, arriving just in

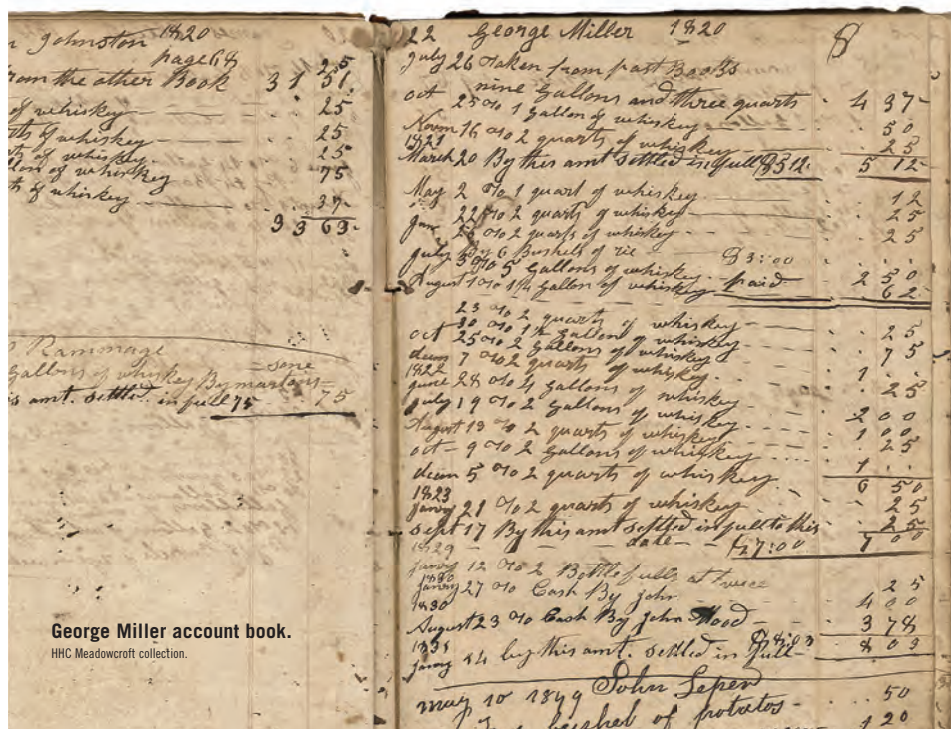
time for the infamous Whiskey Insurrection when Western Pennsylvanians rebelled against federal taxation on whiskey production. Miller purchased a 190-acre tract known as “Levin’s Folly” in western Washington County. The apparent folly of Mr. Levin thrived as Bancroft Farm for more than two centuries under the Miller family.

George Miller’s account begins on July 26, 1820, with an entry explaining that a balance of \$4.37 for previous purchases of whiskey was “taken from past books” and now carried over into this book. During 1821, he purchased 12 more gallons at a rate of 50 cents per gallon. This amount would have provided Mr. Miller (if he drank alone) with about one and a half shots for each day of the year. In 1822 he purchased nine gallons, followed by only two quarts in 1823. The account then skips to 1829 when he purchased “2 Bottle fulls.” His balance due was almost always paid in cash, with the exception of June 1821 when he paid off \$3.00 of his debt with six bushels of rye.

The Miller account ends as “settled in full” on January 14, 1831.

It’s interesting that various other customers also bartered with bushels of grain or with their own labor to pay their whiskey debt. In 1820, James Hunter settled his account “By 11 bushels of rye” noted as being located “in Fowlers mill.” James Cunningham paid his account down \$1.12 in 1823 “By 1 ½ days Credling Otes” (harvesting oats using a grain cradle which is similar to a scythe but has a series of long, wooden, finger-like extensions parallel to the blade for catching the cut grain stalk). He again traded labor in 1825 for 50 cents “By 1 day breaking flax” (shattering the dried flax plant stem to facilitate separation of the long flax fibers used to produce linen).

Historical documents such as this provide valuable information about Western Pennsylvania life and commerce as we continue the work of piecing together a picture of the past. 







THOMAS & KATHERINE DETRE

## LIBRARY & ARCHIVES TREASURES

By Eric Lidji, Director, Rauh Jewish History  
Program & Archives

### Jews in the Liquor Business

For the earliest Jewish settlers in Pittsburgh, liquor was not the easiest business opportunity, nor the most common one, nor the only source of great fortunes. But it best exemplified the economic life of the community at the time. Traits like self-employment, creativity, rapid advancement, social insularity, and communal generosity were found across the small Jewish population of the city before 1880 and were heightened among those few families engaged

in the business of making and selling alcoholic beverages.

The 50 or so Jewish families in Pittsburgh in the mid-1850s began to expand beyond dry goods into other mercantile fields, selling tobacco, jewelry, and notions. High start-up costs made liquor a tough business for new entrants. But by 1860, at least five Jewish men were employed in the retail end of the field running bars, inns, and stores.

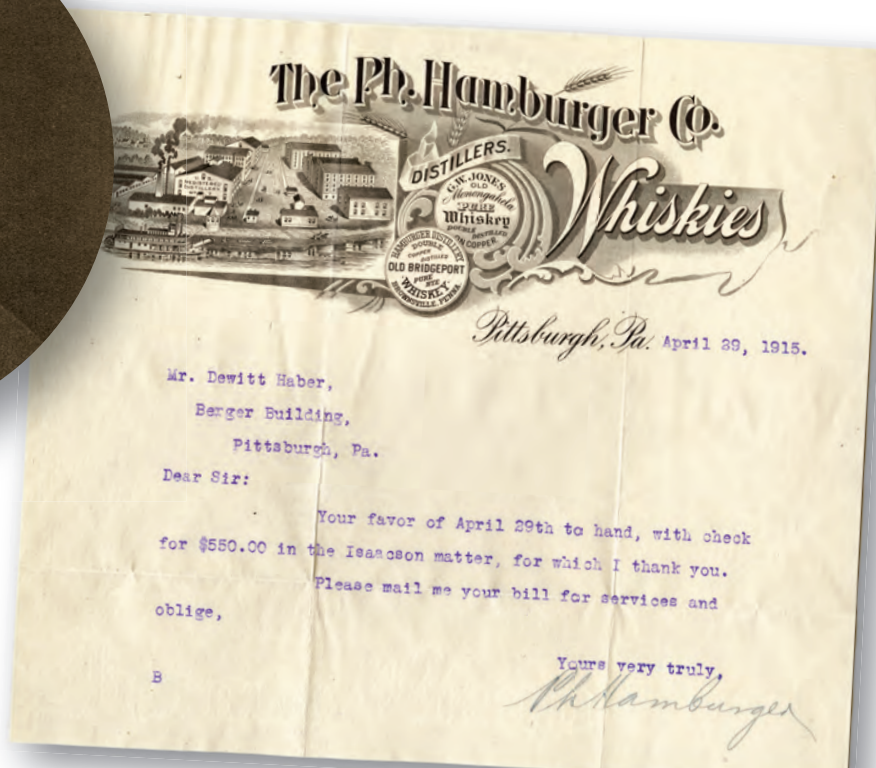
In partnership with his half-brothers Emanuel and Samuel Wertheimer, Asher Guckenheimer started a wholesale liquor

operation in downtown Pittsburgh as early as 1851, sometime after arriving in this country from the German state of Württemberg. Within six years, Guckenheimer Brothers had purchased the Thomas Bell Distillery in Freeport, Pa., upstream from Pittsburgh on the Allegheny River. By upgrading equipment and hiring expert Irish distillers, they turned “Good Old Guckenheimer Rye” into one of the most popular whiskey brands in the country and made a small fortune in the process. By 1880, Guckenheimer and Samuel Wertheimer were among five members of the Concordia



Philip Hamburger immigrated to Pittsburgh from Bavaria in 1867. The success of his distilling business made him an important figure in the local Jewish community.

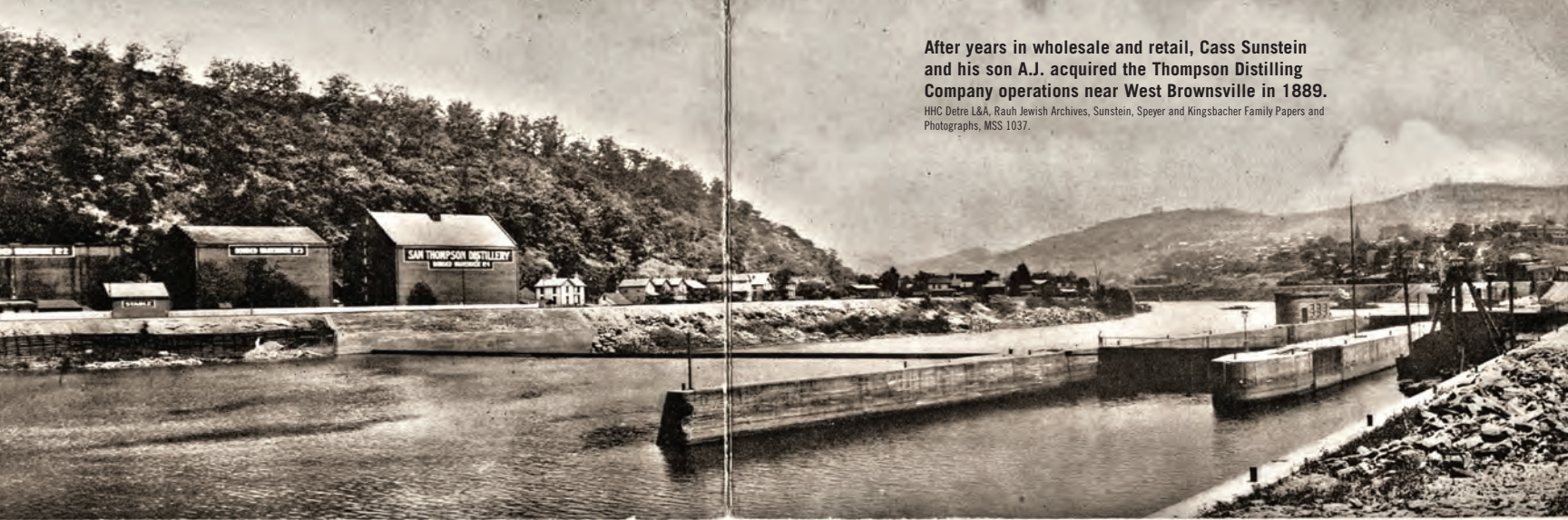
HHC Detre L&A, Rauh Jewish Archives, Philip Hamburger Photograph, 2001.0190.



Philip Hamburger acquired the George W. Jones distillery in Brownsville and produced the well-known “Monongahela Rye Whiskey” and “Old Bridgeport” brands.

HHC Detre L&A, Rauh Jewish Archives, Aaron Family Papers, MSS 248.





After years in wholesale and retail, Cass Sunstein and his son A.J. acquired the Thompson Distilling Company operations near West Brownsville in 1889.

HHC Detre L&A, Rauh Jewish Archives, Sunstein, Speyer and Kingsbacher Family Papers and Photographs, MSS 1037.

Club (an elite Jewish social club in Pittsburgh) who employed at least two servants.

A third member on that short list was Philip Hamburger, who started a retail liquor store soon after arriving in Pittsburgh from Bavaria in 1867. He eventually acquired the George W. Jones distillery in Brownsville, south of Pittsburgh on the Monongahela River. Innovative and aggressive marketing helped Hamburger grow his “Monongahela Rye Whiskey” and “Old Bridgeport” brands. He built one of the largest plants of its kind in the world and boasted a sizeable wholesale operation based out of a four-story building in Pittsburgh. He was a prominent figure in the industry, representing the U.S. Chamber of Commerce at three International Commercial Congresses.

Unlike the German-born Guckenheimer and Hamburger, Cass Sunstein came from Lithuania. According to family lore, he smuggled himself out of the country in a sack of hay to evade conscription in the Russian army. He arrived in Pittsburgh in 1866 and brought his wife and four children over in 1870. With his son A.J. Sunstein, he started the C. Sunstein & Sons jobbing business, and in 1889 they purchased the Thompson Distilling Company operations near West Brownsville. A.J. Sunstein served two terms as the president of the National Association of Distillers and Wholesale Dealers and three terms in the state legislature and was a leading

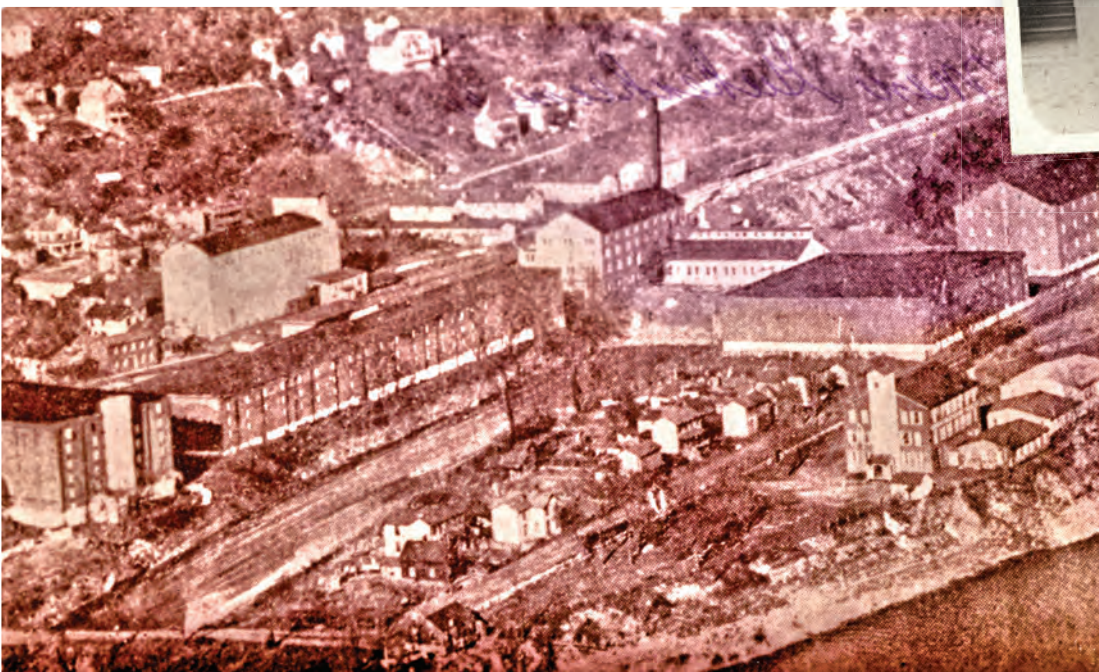
voice against Prohibition.

As the Jewish population of Pittsburgh grew—reaching 1,000 by 1870 and 2,000 by 1877—the segment engaged in liquor declined, but the stature of those businessmen increased. Liquor was the second most common profession among Concordia Club members after dry goods, accounting for 13.2 percent



Cass Sunstein immigrated to Pittsburgh from Lithuania in 1866 and became a jobber and retailer of liquor from various storefronts around downtown Pittsburgh, including this storefront at 133 Water Street.

HHC Detre L&A, General Photographic Collection, Box 17.



Guckenheimer Brothers acquired the Thomas Bell Distillery in Freeport by 1857 and greatly expanded the size and increased the quality of its distilling operations.


HHC Detre L&A, Rauh Jewish Archives, Lehman Family Papers, MSS 1018.



**Cass Sunstein started as a jobber and retailer of liquor from a storefront in downtown Pittsburgh."**

HHC Detre L&A, Rauh Jewish Archives, Sunstein, Speyer and Kingsbacher Family Papers and Photographs, MSS 1037.

in 1870 and increasing to 15 percent by 1880, according to an analysis by researcher Michelle Pailthorp. Economic bonds often cultivated social ones. For example, A.J. Sunstein's son Alexander married Aimee Rauh. Her great uncle was the malt dealer Louis I. Aaron. Her first cousin once removed was Marcus Feuchtwanger, who worked for a time in the Aaron family malting business. Feuchtwanger married Nellie Sunstein, who was Alexander Sunstein's aunt.

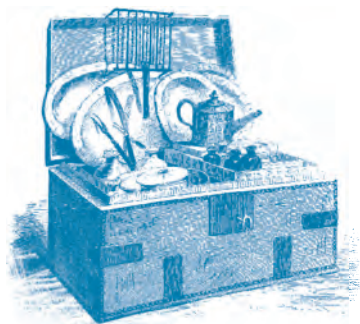
The communal benefits generated by these economic and social bonds lasted long after Prohibition brought an end to the industry in 1920. Emanuel Wertheimer was president of Rodef Shalom Congregation for 15 years. Hamburger and A.J. Sunstein were inaugural officers of the Federation of the Jewish Philanthropies of Pittsburgh. The wealth generated from their industrial efforts continues to address charitable needs today. 



**By investing in improved still design and Irish expertise, Guckenheimer Brothers turned its "Good Old Guckenheimer Rye" into one of the most popular whiskies in America.**

HHC Detre L&A, Rauh Jewish Archives, Lehman Family Papers, MSS 1018.





## CURATOR'S CORNER

By Emily Ruby, Curator

### Zoglmann's Saloon

When Benjamin Franklin wrote to a friend in 1763 about the frontier settlement surrounding Fort Pitt, he noted, "There is a Brewery, would you think it, near the Town."<sup>1</sup> Alcohol and its consumption played a long and critical role in the region, including the tumult that grew into the Whiskey Rebellion. As saloons and taverns continued to open, these establishments offered communal space where people could conduct trade and provided a place for recent immigrants to make connections. Many became legendary in their eras and even across the decades.

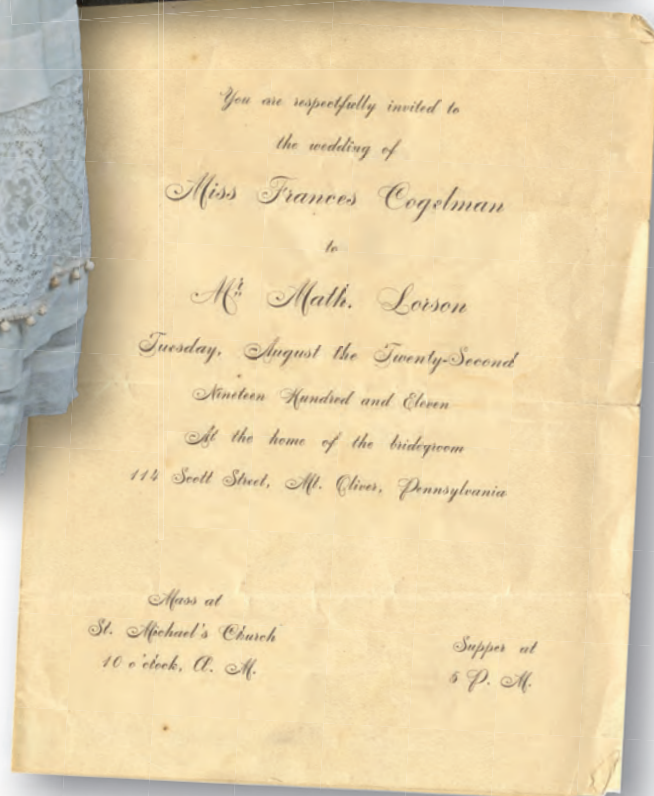
In a 1942 *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* article, Charles F. Danver captured the spirit of Zoglmann's "mellow tavern" along Carson Street and provided a hint as to why the place remained a staple in the community; it was "frescoed with hunting scenes and Danubian vistas, and here and there are huge pipes and old-fashioned beer steins. A friendly barkeep sets up a man's size scuttle of suds in an old-time glass holding 14 ounces. Not designed for a panty-waist columnist."<sup>2</sup>

The fact that Zoglmann's, opened and operated by Austrian immigrant Wolfgang Zoglmann, would be described in such



Frances (Zoglmann) Lorson's wedding gown, 1911. Frances and Mathias were married until 1931 when he died of a brain tumor at age 50 while still employed at A.M. Byers as a laborer.

HHC Collections, gift of Phyllis Tomko, 2017.41. Photo by Liz Simpson.



Frances (Zoglmann) Lorson's wedding invitation, 1911.

HHC Detre L&A, Zoglman-Linz Family papers and photographs 1891-1992, MSS 874.





**LEFT:** Wall fresco hung in Zoglmann's, c. 1900. One of those "Danubian vistas" described in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* now hangs in the Special Collections gallery in the German section. **ABOVE:** Hunting scenes and related sporting scenes were typical artwork in many German saloons, as well as being a popular pastime for Wolfgang. You can see additional frescos hanging in the bar in the interior image.

HHC Collections, gift of Ruth Kapinskis in honor of the Zoglmann and Linz families, 2003.15.5. Photo by Liz Simpson.

glowing terms during WWII is testament to the central role it played in the community and the popularity of its proprietor. Wolfgang came to Pittsburgh in 1893 from Vienna, where he had moved at the age of 16 from his Bohemian birthplace, and settled in the predominantly German area of the South Side. Around 1900, after working in his father-in-law's bar on Fifth Avenue, he opened his own establishment. Newspaper clippings donated to the History Center by the family include many stories of his jovial personality, love of hunting, and participation in Austrian/German societies.





Zoglmann's token, c. 1900. The back of the token shows it is worth 5 cents in trade, which at the time would have been enough for a typical saloon lunch of a "nickel" beer and a simple hearty offering of soup or stew.

HHC Collections, gift of Ruth Kapinskis in honor of the Zoglmann and Linz families, 2003.15.2.




Frances and unidentified women, c. 1910, playing cards in the courtyard of Zoglmann's.

Courtesy of Phyllis Tomko.

After their mother died, his sister Frances followed him to Pittsburgh in 1899. She is shown in the 1910 census as living at 601 Carson Street, the location of the bar and the family apartment above, and her occupation is listed as servant. It is likely that Frances worked in the bar and that is where she met her future husband Mathias Lorson, a German immigrant, who worked at the nearby A.M. Byers Company as a laborer. Mathias would cash his check at Zoglmann's and perhaps participate in a round of Sixty-Six, a popular card game in Austria and Germany and one

often played at the tavern. The two were married in 1911 and had four children. Frances continued to live in the area, but it is unclear if she continued working at Zoglmann's. When Wolfgang died in 1949, his daughters Frances and Loretta ran the bar until 1965. After several changes of ownership, it closed sometime around 1980.

In 2003 and in 2017 two separate donations of items documenting both the bar and the family came into the collection from different Zoglmann descendants. Together, the collections (consisting of wall frescoes,

St. Michael's memorabilia, Zoglmann's and A.M. Byers tokens, wedding gowns, German bibles, as well as photographs and other archival material) tell a rich story of chain migration, the South Side German community and the changing role of the tavern in American life. 

<sup>1</sup> *Letter from Benjamin Franklin to Richard Jackson, March 8, 1763*, The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, Courtesy of Yale University Library

<sup>2</sup> "Pittsburghesque" Charles F. Danver, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, May, 15, 1942, p. 10 \*Danubian refers to the river Danube.



# UP FRONT



## ARCHITECTURE AROUND US

By Angelique Bamberg

### Robert L. Barnhart: Architect of the Monongahela Valley

In 1890 or thereabouts, a young man stepped off the train at the brand-new Charleroi Station looking for opportunity. Robert L. Barnhart, 27 years old, had come from Missouri by way of New York. Possessed of restless energy, a creative mind, and skilled at engineering and design, Barnhart became Charleroi's first professional architect.

The word “professional” denotes a change in the way architects were viewed, educated, and prepared for their careers in the late 19th century. Professionalization entailed defining a specialized set of skills and devising a standardized program of education and licensing to qualify practitioners. In an era of rapid urbanization and advances in building technologies, the rise of the professional architect provided assurance of competence and expertise. Prior to this, architects, like other craftsmen (and they were mostly men), learned design and construction skills on the job. The elite studied in Europe, the rest via apprenticeships with practicing builders.

What training, exactly, Robert Barnhart

received in New York is not known, but its length—12 years—suggests an apprenticeship rather than university. Barnhart also brought other skills to Charleroi and pursued other kinds of work before, during, and after his architecture career. Shortly after his arrival, Barnhart worked to design Charleroi's electrical grid, and as early as 1891, he became the manager of an opera and vaudeville hall. His preoccupations with electrical technology and theater combined in the name of his own theater, the Electric Theater, which he built in 1905. Later, the Electric was incorporated into a larger movie house that Barnhart built next door, the Palace. The 1920 census lists his profession not as architect but as “manager—own theater.” Barnhart was also a tinkerer and inventor who held patents for

electrical appliances such as an animal trap and a smelting apparatus.

Barnhart's simultaneous career as an architect may say as much about his timing and entrepreneurialism as his vocational calling. He arrived in Charleroi, then a hamlet on the outskirts of Monongahela City, on the cusp of architecture's professionalization, when



The Palace Theater was reputedly the fourth moving picture theater in the United States. It closed in 1961, but still stands, in altered form, on McKean Avenue in downtown Charleroi.

**The Coyle Theater in Charleroi. Managing this theater was one of Barnhart's first jobs in Pennsylvania and led to a lifelong career as a theater owner and manager.**

All photos by Angelique Bamberg.





U.S. Post Office, Donora,  
R.L. Barnhart c. 1915.

the fields of building design and construction were busy and still open to any man who demonstrated skill. Along with Jeannette, Donora, Monessen, and other industrial towns developed during the 1890s, Charleroi was poised for a boom as the coal, oil, glass, iron, and steel industries thrived along the Monongahela River. For a creative young man with the mind of an engineer, this meant work, and plenty of it, designing and managing the construction of the many buildings that would house these towns' workers, managers, and their economic and social institutions.

Barnhart's first known commission was the original First National Bank of Charleroi in the center of the town's commercial district. Following this, Barnhart designed several other banks, schools, hotels, residences, and the occasional church, fraternal lodge, and post office throughout the Monongahela Valley. He worked in the Classical Revival Style, characterized by formal, symmetrical compositions with elaborate detailing based on the architecture of ancient Greece and Rome, and in the Colonial Revival Style, which tied ancient classical prototypes to the early building history of the American colonies. Both of these styles were popular around the turn of the 20th century and held associations with antiquity, tradition, and durability.

Some of Barnhart's buildings still stand, while others are known only through photographs, and still others, not at all. In addition to his major known commissions, Barnhart also designed dozens of small houses and other modest buildings in and around Charleroi which are unattributed today. Barnhart died in 1924 and is buried in Monongahela Cemetery. ☼

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**Angelique Bamberg** is an independent historic preservation consultant, instructor in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture at the University of Pittsburgh, and author of *Chatham Village: Pittsburgh's Garden City*.







## NEIGHBORHOOD STORIES

By Bette McDevitt

### Priming the Pump

The mention of Prohibition at the weekly gathering of the Pump House Gang in Homestead gave way to a lively discussion as if the event had occurred yesterday rather than 98 years ago. That's how conversations go with historians.

"The most violated law in the country," Joel Sabadasz, retired professor of United States history, declared, for openers. Others in the group offered up their opinions, laid out the background, and declared who benefited and who lost out during Prohibition. Charlie McCollester, retired labor historian, set the scene:

The movement toward Prohibition coincided with the mass migration of labor to this area and the Eastern Europeans, who came to work in the mills, brought their own alcohol traditions, plum brandy for one. My German grandparents made beer in the bathtub, during Prohibition, and in the house I bought, there was a wine press in the cellar. People made their own wine.

Talk of "drink" brought forth recollections by members of the group who lived in the Steel Valley neighborhoods surrounding the mills.

John Rudiak, who grew up on the South Side, said that, in some cases, women waited at the mill gates to collect their husbands' paychecks, so the money did not find its way to the local taverns. "While Catholics

generally greeted the end of Prohibition with enthusiasm," McCollester said, "there had also been a strong Catholic anti-drink movement. The church recognized alcoholism as a threat to the family." And so did others outside the working class. "Women's rights groups were supporters of prohibition because they saw drink as the catalyst to ruining families," Sabadasz said.

Beginning in 1907, more than a decade before Prohibition became law, Margaret Byington, a young social worker, compiled a survey of the living conditions of 90 families and single men whose lives were prescribed by working in the mill and living in the community of Homestead. She described, with a warm tone of empathy, their crowded living conditions, limited recreational opportunities, and unbearable working conditions with long hours:

I have already noted that in this community of 25,000 there are over 50 saloons and other drinking places, ranging from "speakeasies" to the

conventional bar-rooms with plate glass and bright lights. It was no part of my study to investigate the ownership or police surveillance of these establishments, the profits gathered in on pay nights, or the intoxication which, as we have seen, the courts prove so ineffectual in controlling. As places of relaxation, they fill a need not otherwise supplied. The Carnegie Library has a gymnasium and clubs, but, except for the saloons and the club rooms of one or two fraternal orders, there are no free and easy lounging places for refreshment and friendly intercourse. The Slavs bring much of the liquor they buy home and drink it sociably there, many of them being heavy drinkers.

The time she spent engaged in conversation with 90 families, most often in their kitchens, gave her extraordinary insight:

With hot work to whet thirst, and with the natural rebellion of human nature against the tension of long hours, the liquor interests have exploited the needs of the adults for recreation and refreshment. It is true that they have not



Homestead postcard.  
HHC Detre L&A, GPC020.F018.I01.



really met that need, and have exploited the opportunities they offer; but it is equally true that the need is met in no other way.

Our breakfast group, who resolve world problems every Wednesday morning, formed to keep the history of labor alive in the area. They view history through the lens of the working class, and Margaret Byington would have been at home with them.

“While the working class made home brew, the upper class could drink their Scotch and French wines at home and in selective private venues above the reach of the law,” said McColester, who then referred to the writing of Lincoln Steffens. “He wrote eloquently about the ‘Pittsburgh Plan of misgovernment’ whereby the political system was operated by real corporate power behind the scene. The

powers that be sat back and let the ward heelers control the government at the grassroots level. Those were the guys who ran the brothels, the gambling, and the speakeasies.”


We’ll never know the thoughts of Andrew Mellon and his friend Henry Clay Frick on this topic, but historians tell us how it played out: “Mellon was decidedly lukewarm about enforcing Prohibition,” said McColester.

Mellon had one third ownership in Overholt, Frick’s distillery that made rye whiskey. In 1907, they removed their names from the legal documents, realizing that being in the “rum business” was not wise when talk of prohibition was in the air. They still maintained ownership, and when Frick died in 1919, Mellon became the sole owner.

In 1921, the year after Prohibition became law, Mellon became Secretary of the Treasury.

Alcohol was, of course, under Mellon’s jurisdiction, a rather awkward situation for one who owned a distillery. Records show that Mellon turned over two million gallons of Overholt whiskey to the management of Union Trust Company, while he held office. Overholt had worked overtime before the law was passed, to stock up and send whiskey abroad. There is speculation that the whiskey found its way back to the United States.

Mellon had secured one of the few permits issued to sell the existing stock at the distillery as “medicinal” whiskey during Prohibition, legally with a prescription. When the William Penn Hotel uncovered the speakeasy on their lower level, they found three bottles of Overholt, dated before Prohibition. Frick built and owned the hotel, and no doubt supplied the whiskey.

It’s no wonder then that our historians speak so easily of the past. It’s all around us. 

**Bette McDevitt** is a freelance writer and a longtime contributor to *Western Pennsylvania History*.



**A crate for Overholt Whiskey.**  
HHC Collections, 2011.81.1.





## Model of a Rum Runner

Getting around the restrictions of the Volstead Act and the 18th Amendment inspired countless methods for transporting illegal liquor by land, air, and sea. With the adoption of Prohibition in 1920, water-based smuggling networks quickly sprang up between the Atlantic Coast of the United States and the rum rich islands of the Caribbean. The speedy boatmen and their varied craft came to be called “rum runners,” and the name soon became synonymous with all water-based smuggling during Prohibition regardless of the type of alcohol the boats were carrying.

This model of a rum runner launch built in 1930 is currently on display in the Heinz History Center’s exhibition *American Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*. A launch was a type of motorboat used to ferry liquor cargo from larger supply boats to the shore. Powered by a gasoline engine, the boat’s exhaust pipe could be lowered underwater to muffle its sound. The Smithsonian model depicts a boat built for the Atlantic Coast, in Essex, Connecticut. But it speaks to the larger tradition of rum running that impacted states throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, including Pennsylvania, which had two coasts that provided ports of entry for illicit hooch—the Atlantic Coast via the Port of Philadelphia and the rocky shores of Lake Erie, a border region



Composite photo showing the seizure of the *Venice* on Lake Erie at Cleveland, Ohio, August 13, 1927. The alcohol that was found during the raid is shown in the inset image.

Cleveland State University, Michael Schwartz Library, The Cleveland Press Collection.



for the bounty of Canadian whiskey flowing down from the north. Attention first focused on the East Coast but as time went on the Great Lakes became an increasing target for Prohibition enforcement efforts.

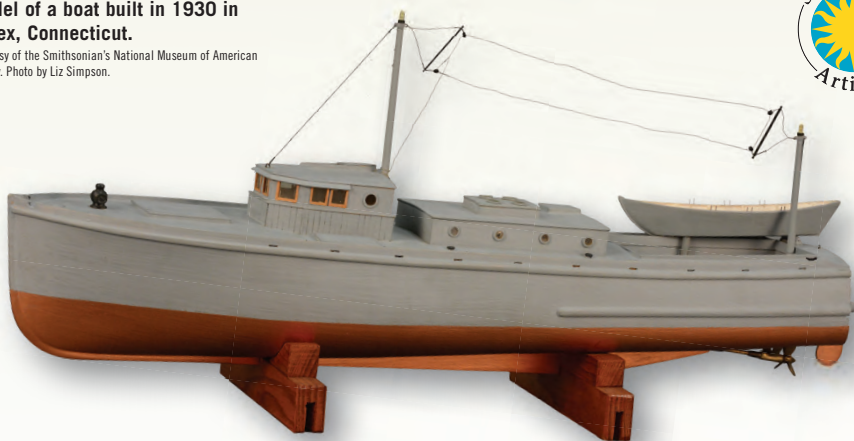
On Lake Erie, as with all the Great Lakes, the Coast Guard fought a nearly impossible battle intercepting small, fast craft along miles of isolated shoreline, some of it too shallow for the Coast Guard vessels to navigate. Many rum runners used small launches to carry their cargo to established drop points in the middle

of the night. Deposited in shallow water close to land, the cargo was later retrieved by bootleggers working from the American shore. Some stories hold that the most successful bootleggers out of Erie could make as many as three round trips a night, bringing nearly 1,000 cases of whiskey back to eager drinkers in the U.S.

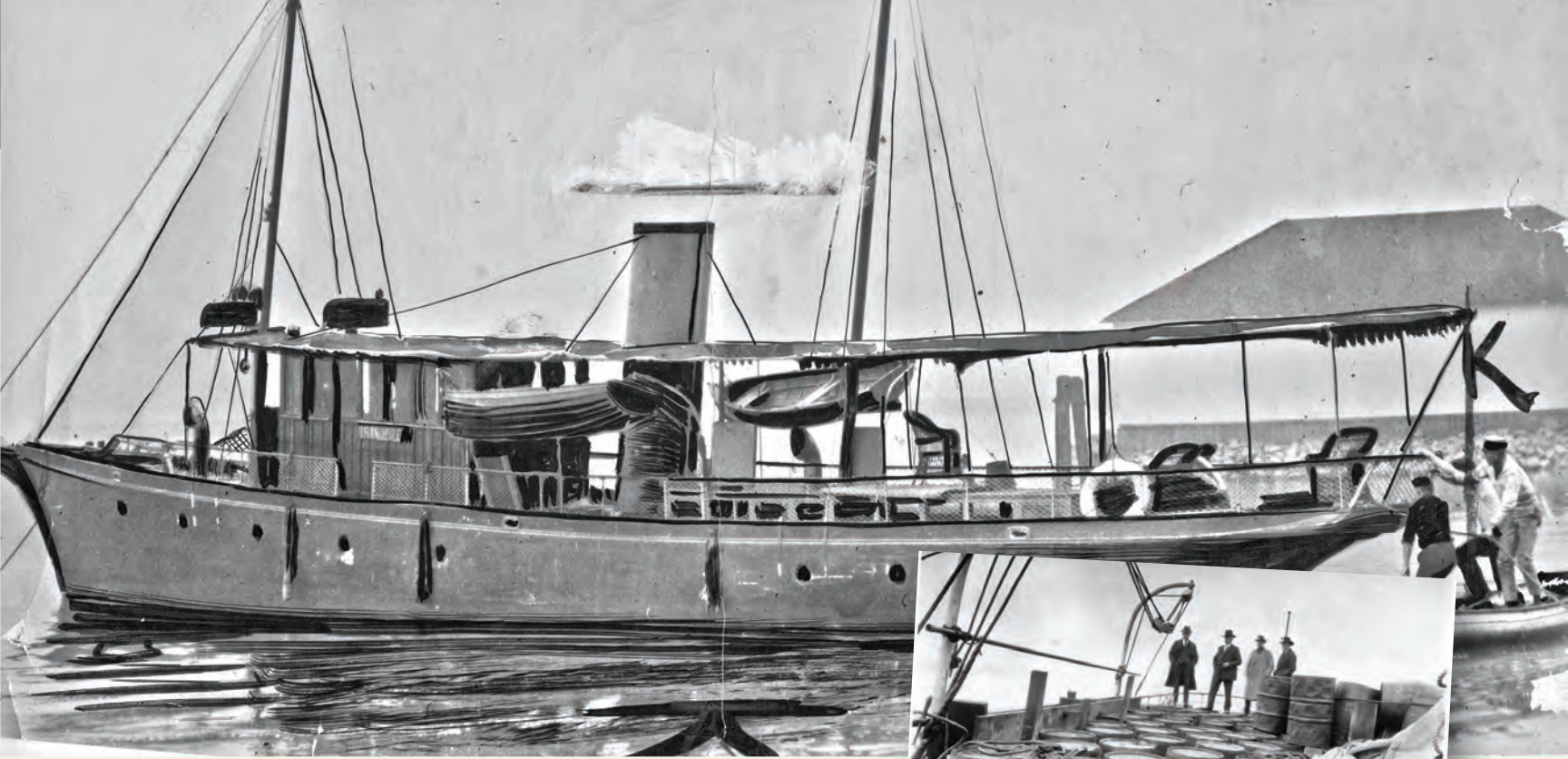
The Coast Guard sometimes resorted to dramatic action to try and stop the illegal shipments on the Great Lakes, including machine gun gauntlets and cannons installed on Coast Guard boats. Rum runners devised their own creative strategies to escape the law, even when they managed to get caught. One interdiction case made front page headlines in Pittsburgh in early 1930 when a prominent rum runner intercepted back in September 1929 in dramatic fashion near Erie sent a substitute to Federal Court in Pittsburgh to

**Rum runner motorboat launch, 1962 model of a boat built in 1930 in Essex, Connecticut.**

Courtesy of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History. Photo by Liz Simpson.







**Yacht seized for rum-running on Lake Erie during Prohibition, 1920s. The Great Lakes became a battleground between rum runners and enforcement agents during Prohibition due to the international boundary with Canada. On Lake Erie alone, the Coast Guard faced a daunting task covering the thousands of miles of shoreline from Detroit through Cleveland and Erie to Niagara Falls.**

Cleveland State University, Michael Schwartz Library, The Cleveland Press Collection.

be sentenced in his place, a ruse that initially went undetected.

Joseph Jarvis, or someone using that name, had been captured near Woodmere Beach in North East, Pa., after his motorboat, a Baby Gar built in Detroit, was cut to shreds and partially burned while trying to run a Coast Guard machine gun blockade. But when ordered to appear in Federal Court, Jarvis (whose name was really an alias for a prominent Canadian liquor smuggler) wrangled up a substitute. According to some reports, Jarvis was so confident that his trick would not be discovered that he even sat in the back of the federal courtroom in Pittsburgh to watch the sentence being passed on his stand-in. The ruse was uncovered when a special prohibition agent who knew Jarvis ran into him in Port Colborne, Ontario, a Canadian port city on Lake Erie near Niagara Falls.

After initially believing that Jarvis had escaped from jail, the agent realized that Jarvis had never made it there in the first place. With the swap uncovered, the right man ended up behind bars.

Although officials claimed that the case represented an aberration, it nonetheless illustrated the lengths to which smugglers would go to keep the profitable channels along the Canadian border open for business. Launches such as this model may not have been glamorous; some reports even suggest that rum runners painted their boats a drab gray to keep them from being noticed out on the water. But such craft helped turn some people into millionaires during that brief 13-year period when running alcohol illegally was big business on two Pennsylvania coasts.



**Prohibition agents examining barrels of alcohol on a rum runner captured by the Coast Guard Cutter USS *Seneca*, 1924.**

Library of Congress, USZ62-50081.

#### **FURTHER READING:**

David Frew, *Midnight Herring: Prohibition and Rum Running on Lake Erie* (Erie: Erie County Historical Society, 2006).

Philip P. Mason, *Rum Running and the Roaring Twenties: Prohibition on the Michigan-Ontario Waterway* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995).

Timothy Olewniczak, "Giggle Water on the Mighty Niagara: Rum-Runners, Homebrewers, Redistillers, and the Changing Social Fabric of Drinking Culture During Alcohol Prohibition in Buffalo, N.Y., 1920-1933." *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*. (78:1), 2001, pp. 33-61. Accessed November 4, 2017, at <https://journals.psu.edu/phj/article/viewFile/60278/60218>.

"Rum Runner Dupes Federal Court," *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 7, 1930.

"Rum Runner Proxy Facing Many Charges," *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 9, 1930.





## ITALIAN AMERICAN COLLECTION

By Melissa E. Marinaro, Director,  
Italian American Program

### The Price of an Education

There was a rumor in Italy in the late 19th century that the streets in the United States were paved with gold. This story was perpetuated by the appearance of newly wealthy return emigrants and the *padrone* who worked on behalf of American companies seeking inexpensive foreign labor. It was often the poor peasant of the agricultural south who fell under the spell of promises of the American dream. While the immigrant sacrificed much in exchange for their new home, there was one resource in the United States that proved to be priceless to generations of Italian Americans: the ability to earn an education.

When the first Italian immigrants came to the United States, many had only attended school until the third or fifth grade. Italians living in rural communities did not have access to secondary education in pre-World War I Italy and a large percentage had to forgo schooling to work. One third of WWI recruits were illiterate and the rate of illiteracy in women was even higher.<sup>1</sup> Despite these staggering statistics, Italians held the profession of teaching in high regards; teaching positions were well compensated and having an education was valued.<sup>2</sup>

Migrants brought this cultural attitude

towards education with them to the New World. While the first generation didn't always reap the benefits of the American educational system, graduating from high school and pursuing a college degree was encouraged for the second and third generation. Mary Ferro, a music teacher in the Carlynton School District, recalls her father, an immigrant from Calabria, encouraging her:

I remember education was so stressed in my family because neither one of [my parents] really had the chance to pursue what they wanted to do, and when I graduated high school I remember coming home and saying, "Gee Dad, I don't think I want go to school.... I think I want to be an airline stewardess or something." And he said, "You look at me. If you wanna be dirty like me, you don't go to school. If you don't wanna

be dirty like me, you go to school." That was it. That's all he had to say.<sup>3</sup>

Mary's father, Vincent Ferro, had been a teacher in Italy, but was forced to take work in a factory after his inability to speak fluent English prevented him from continuing his role as an educator in the United States.

Though access to education for the lower classes was better in America, teaching in the public school system was another issue altogether. In 1954, Joseph D'Andrea was looking for work after earning his degree from Duquesne University in Public Administration and Foreign Languages. In his oral history, he states, "When I went to be a teacher in Pennsylvania, I went into what you would call the difficulties: 'Well, you have an accent'; 'You are Catholic, and nobody will hire you'; 'You are an Italian immigrant.'"<sup>4</sup> He had an



An address book made by Jane Ferro for her mother Vittoria Iannotta, an Italian immigrant illiterate in Italian and English. Second down on the right page is her nephew, Dominic Iannotta, pictured in his cap and gown from his graduation from Duquesne University in 1942.

HMC Collections, Gift of Jane Ferro, 96.38.3.





Joseph D'Andrea appears at a U.S.A. Bicentennial event during his PSEA presidency at Forge Elementary School in Harrisburg with student Douglas E. Rauk, April 1976.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Joseph D'Andrea, MSS 1113.



A light-hearted moment captured between Principal Dominic Iannotta and students from the 1972 Oliver High School *Omicron* yearbook. After years of tension at Oliver, Iannotta's brand of discipline, which underscored mutual respect between students and authority figures, brought out the best in the student body.

HHC Detre L&A, Yearbook Collection.

interview with a public school in Somerset County and, despite a good meeting with the school's principal, his conversation with the superintendent wasn't as constructive. D'Andrea recalled, "He said, 'Yes, very good, but your church is a little bit away from here.' I didn't know what he meant.... So, I went home and asked my father and he told me [about] the potholes in America.... Three schools didn't accept me."<sup>5</sup> Eventually, D'Andrea found a position at an elementary school in Snowden and later transferred to Moon Area School District, where he taught Spanish for 28 years. In the mid-1970s, he served on the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA), first as President Elect, then as President, and was on the Board of Directors

for the National Education Association (NEA) from 1971-77.

Even well into the mid-20th century it was difficult for American-born Catholics to find work in certain industries. There were no laws officially barring Catholics from leadership positions but many institutions exercised their right to exclude religious minorities; this included the heavily Protestant-run school boards.<sup>6</sup> In the beginning of the 1969-70 school year, the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education transferred Dominic F. Iannotta to David B. Oliver High School in the North Side to serve as principal. Formerly Vice Principal and later Principal at Latimer Junior High School, he was one of the first Italian American Catholics to be promoted within the Pittsburgh Public

School system. Under normal circumstances, Iannotta's transfer would be considered a good promotion, but his placement at Oliver initially came with its share of difficulties.

Oliver High School made headlines in the late 1960s because tensions were high between the African American and Caucasian student body; violence had spread from the neighborhood into the school, students were boycotting class, and the Pittsburgh Police became a regular presence in the hallways. Iannotta, son of Italian immigrants Angelo and Giacinta Iannotta, was brought to Oliver to address these issues. In the December 1971 issue of the school newspaper, *The Bear Facts*, a student author writes, "It was Mr. Iannotta who was in the thick of the riots as soon as



# UP FRONT

it started.... He insisted that many privileges which had been denied us be reinstated. And then he told us to shape-up if we wanted to keep them.”<sup>7</sup> Privileges allotted during his tenure were student selected music in the cafeteria, more food options in the lunchroom, new student clubs, and an incentive program for field trips to destinations like Fallingwater. Chief among the changes instituted by Iannotta was equal representation of black and white pupils in all areas of student life. Iannotta served as principal at Oliver High School until 1976.

Even within my own family, which is now into the fourth generation, a respect for earning an education and for those professionals dedicating their lives to instruction was viewed as a by-product of our Italian heritage. My father said in his oral history, “[Grandpap] felt that the key to success in the United States was innovation and education; he wanted every one of his [five] kids to go to school.... Our family put a very high focus on education.”<sup>8</sup> Like Joseph D’Andrea’s mother Candida, who

told him that books were his best friends, and Mary Ferro’s father Vincent, who pushed his daughter to attend college, the first generation of Italian Americans recognized that, in the United States, diplomas and degrees subsidize the upward mobility of our ethnic group. 🌟

<sup>1</sup> R.J.B. Bosworth, *Mussolini’s Italy: Life Under the Fascist Dictatorship, 1915-1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 40.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Oral History Interview with Mary Ferro, HHC Detre L&A, 2016.0103.

<sup>4</sup> Oral History Interview with Joseph D’Andrea, HHC Detre L&A 2017.0054.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth J. Heineman, *A Catholic New Deal: Religion and Reform in Depression Pittsburgh* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 4.

<sup>7</sup> Dominic Iannotta Papers, HHC Detre L&A, 2017.0028.

<sup>8</sup> Oral History of David Marinaro, HHC Detre L&A, 2015.0013.



**In 1974, Dominic Iannotta received his doctorate from Carnegie Mellon University. He lectured in History at Duquesne University from 1946-1982 and received the Valley Forge Classroom Teachers Medal by the Freedoms Foundation for History in 1961.**

HHC Detre L&A, Gift of Catherine DeRiggi, 2017.0028.



**Dominic Iannotta’s mother proudly wears her son’s cap and gown in the backyard of their house in the Lower Hill District, 1942.**

HHC Detre L&A, Gift of Catherine DeRiggi, 2017.0028.





## Ohio County Public Library

**The Ohio County Public Library, Wheeling, W.V.**

All images from OCPL.

- The Ohio County Public Library (OCPL) in Wheeling is West Virginia's oldest tax-supported library. It opened as the Wheeling Public Library on October 12, 1882.
- OCPL has been housed at various locations around Wheeling including a grocery store, the Masonic Temple, and a dry goods store. In 1904, Andrew Carnegie offered funds to construct a library but his offer was rejected by Wheeling voters, largely due to Carnegie's role in the 1894 Homestead strike. The library was relocated in May 1973 to its present location.
- OCPL serves all residents in the panhandle of West Virginia and adjacent counties in Ohio and Pennsylvania by providing the resources necessary for the pursuit of education, information, and recreation, with the objective of promoting an enlightened and informed citizenry. It accomplishes this by providing all members of the community with a safe, pleasant, non-discriminatory, and technologically robust environment that is conducive to lifelong learning.
- OCPL maintains a substantial collection of materials related to the rich history that Wheeling and its surrounding area have accumulated since settlers first arrived in the 1790s. This includes an archive of photographs, ephemera, musical recordings, and a vast assortment of other materials and artifacts that preserve the region's unique and diverse heritage. Noteworthy collections include records from the 4th regiment, Virginia & West Virginia militia records, LaBelle Cut Nail Factory, and the W.C. Brown photograph collection, which includes early photographs of Wheeling.
- For adult patrons OCPL provides *The People's University* and *Lunch with Books*. *The People's University* offers free courses in the areas of history, literature, music appreciation, and philosophy. Recent courses include: The First World War, Appalachian Music & Folklore, Biology, and Regional Flora and Fauna. There are no prerequisites or tests with these courses. *Lunch with Books* is a series of free presentations on a variety of topics given by authors, poets, historians, and musicians. Free beverages are provided and most programs start at noon on Tuesdays in the auditorium.
- The library has a rich history of providing services to children of all ages since March 1912, when the library moved into its first permanent location and could dedicate space and services to children. The Children's Department has 35,000 items in its collection including books, magazines, and much more. Special programs are also scheduled during the year including Toddler Time for babies and toddlers, Step Into Stories for preschoolers, and a Summer Reading Program for older children.
- OCPL will host the Heinz History Center's traveling exhibit, *We Can Do It! WWII*, from May 26 to July 24, 2018, in conjunction with additional and associated exhibits, programs, and partnerships.
- OCPL's Outreach Services provide home delivery of library materials to temporarily or permanently homebound patrons throughout Ohio County. Schools and day care centers are also eligible for outreach services.
- The library has kept pace with rapid advances in technology by providing online services including: Select Reads, New Book Alerts, Author Check, InstantFlix, Freegal, and WVDeli, an acronym for West Virginia Digital Entertainment Library Initiative. WVDeli enables patrons to check out and download e-books, audiobooks, music, and more to a Kindle, Nook, iPad, Android tablet, laptop, or desktop.
- The Ohio County Public Library is located 52 16th Street, Wheeling, WV 26003. It is open Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, visit [www.ohiocountylibrary.org](http://www.ohiocountylibrary.org) or call (304) 232-0244.
- The History Center Affiliates Program, HCAP, is a membership-based network that allows local and regional historical societies and museums access to museum professionals and best practice standards through the Senator John Heinz History Center.

To find out more about HCAP or to apply for membership for your organization, please contact Robert O. Stakeley, History Center Affiliates Program (HCAP) Coordinator, at [rostakeley@heinzhistorycenter.org](mailto:rostakeley@heinzhistorycenter.org) or (412) 454-6359.



Regularly rotating exhibits on the first floor of the library highlight Wheeling history using materials and artifacts from the OCPL's Archives and Special Collections.



Carriages and pedestrians cross the Wheeling Suspension Bridge from Wheeling Island to the heart of the business district in this 1886 photo taken by W.C. Brown. An owner of one of the first photography studios in Wheeling, in 1950, W.C. Brown donated a significant number of photographs depicting scenes of early Wheeling to the library.



The Wheeling Room houses genealogy and local history research materials.



# Pinchot & PROHIBITION

By Carrie Hadley, Collections Associate



The Keystone State is known for having some of the strictest alcohol laws in the United States. If Pennsylvanians want to purchase wine or liquor, they must do so at a state-run store. Beer must be purchased at a distributor, a bar or brewery, or in specific sections of some grocery stores and gas stations. Liquor control has figured in recent political debates and some changes to the laws have been made—for example, in 2016, Governor Tom Wolf signed a bill that allows alcohol to be sold on Sundays for the first time since Prohibition.<sup>1</sup> Where did Pennsylvania's liquor laws come from, and why are they so strict compared to other states? An examination of the gubernatorial administrations of Gifford Pinchot provides some answers.



Buttons and a ribbon from Pinchot's campaign for the Governor's office in 1922.

All artifacts HHC Collections, The Elaine B. and Carl Krasik Collection of Pennsylvania and Presidential Political Memorabilia, 2015.22. Photos by Carrie Hadley.



The Prohibition Party was a major political force for many years before Prohibition was implemented.

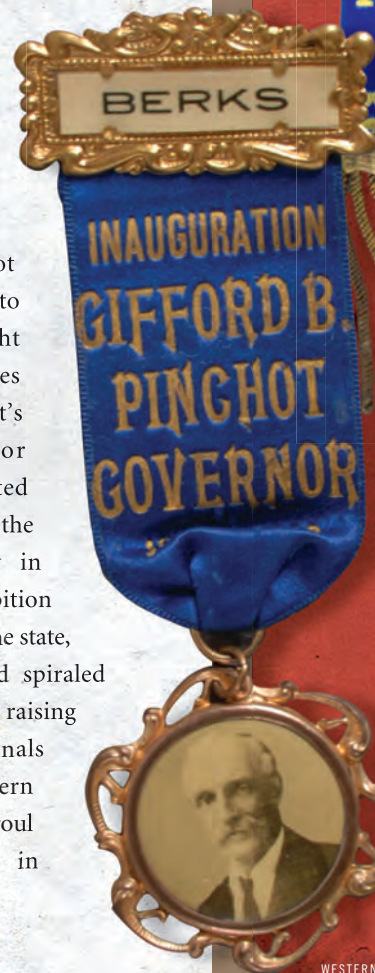
Pennsylvania Governor Gifford Pinchot (1865-1946) believed in the power of legislation to fix societal problems. By the time he ran for office in Pennsylvania, Pinchot had earned a reputation as a major figure in the late 19th and early 20th century conservation movement and as a political ally of President Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Party. As the first Chief Forester of the United States Forestry Service formed under President Roosevelt, Pinchot worked at the federal level to preserve forests from destructive lumbering practices in the late 19th century. His plan included responsible cultivation of natural materials in a way that also benefited the members of society. Pinchot's philosophy of placing endangered lands under the care of the federal government, while still enhancing the lives of the public, eventually transcended forestry and influenced his political career.<sup>2</sup>

Both of Governor Pinchot's successful gubernatorial elections (he served 1923-1927 and again 1931-1935) were reflections of shake-ups at the state and national level of politics. A supporter of Roosevelt's Progressive Party platform in the 1912 Presidential election, Pinchot ran his own unsuccessful Senate campaign against the powerful political boss of the state Republican Party, Boies Penrose, in 1914.<sup>3</sup> Down but not out, Pinchot continued to advocate for Pennsylvania conservation issues.<sup>4</sup> His focus on Progressive-era issues attracted union members, industrial workers, farmers, and newly-minted women voters. This support, combined with a split in the state Republican Party leadership after Penrose's death in 1921, paved the way for both of Pinchot's surprising victories. An ardent "dry," or supporter of Prohibition, his stance on this issue also contributed to his election.<sup>5</sup>

Prohibition became law through the ratification of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution in 1920, three years before Pinchot first took office. The law made the

"manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors" illegal.<sup>6</sup> Pinchot formed his personal views on alcohol after witnessing drunken behavior as a young man in college and while studying forestry in Europe.<sup>7</sup> This was not a novel concern—support for Prohibition had its roots in the 19th-century Temperance movement. The great amount of alcohol consumed caused public concern: by the 1830s, Americans drank on average seven gallons of pure alcohol yearly, the highest amount of alcohol Americans have ever consumed.<sup>8</sup> The formation of the political Prohibition Party and social and religious movements such as the Women's Christian Temperance Movement in the mid-19th century demonstrate how prevalent the concern became regarding alcohol consumption.

By the time Pinchot took office, the reaction to Prohibition had brought unintended consequences in Pennsylvania. Pinchot's predecessor, Governor William Sproul, admitted in his farewell speech to the state General Assembly in January 1923 that Prohibition laws were not working in the state, and that bootlegging had spiraled out of control. "We are raising a fine brood of criminals which it will require stern measures to suppress," Sproul lamented. The solution, in



Badge from Pinchot's first gubernatorial inauguration.





Dr. Silas Swallow was a frequent Prohibition candidate for Governor in Pennsylvania, and was the Prohibition Party's candidate for President in 1904.



Homer Castle ran for Governor of Pennsylvania in 1906.



Madison F. Larkin ran for Governor in 1910 as a Prohibition candidate.

his eyes, involved “careful and conscientious enforcement of the law by the authorities,” and greater public interest in seeing the law enforced.<sup>9</sup> Pinchot rose to the challenge, and his supporters stood ready—according to one newspaper account, the part of his inaugural speech discussing enforcement of Prohibition laws “drew more applause than any other portion.”<sup>10</sup>

Shortly after his inauguration, Pinchot began cracking down on lawbreakers. “Proper enforcement of Prohibition,” he argued in one speech, “will add uncountable millions to the wealth of the United States; will enormously increase the prosperity of our people and will

raise happiness and welfare, especially of our women and children, to a new and higher plane.”<sup>11</sup> A dramatic opener to a newspaper article in late January 1923 read:

The first stone from the reforming slingshot of Governor Gifford Pinchot fell like a ton of bricks among the wet Goliaths of Pennsylvania today. Dry agents descended upon liquor law violators seemingly by the thousands, and wires to the capital burned with minute by minute reports of new raids and seizures in all parts of the state.<sup>12</sup>

Ultimately, Prohibition fell far short of Pinchot’s lofty goals. As criminal activity increased and enforcement of the law

decreased nationally, Prohibition had clearly run its course by the end of the 1920s. With the federal government low on tax revenue due to the Great Depression, support grew for reversing the ban and reinstating taxes on alcohol. In 1933, the 21st Amendment passed, repealing Prohibition 13 years after its implementation.<sup>13</sup>

The 21st Amendment to the Constitution gave states the power to regulate alcohol. Not surprisingly, Governor Pinchot, two years into his second term, proved a strong advocate for maintaining strict policies on alcohol within Pennsylvania after repeal. He worked with a special legislative session to create state



Poster for Republican William S. Vare's 1926 candidacy for Senate. Vare ran against Pinchot and George Wharton Pepper in the Republican primary, a clear advocate for moderating Prohibition. Though he won the primary and general elections, scandalous charges lodged against his campaign ultimately resulted in Vare being unseated from the Senate.

regulations, which made purchasing alcohol difficult. His plan created a state monopoly on liquor sales, run by the State Liquor Control Board and facilitated through the state store system—a system Pennsylvanians still use to purchase liquor today. The Liquor Control Board licensed the institutions that served alcohol, set serving and state store hours, and defined the institutions allowed to serve. Employees of the stores had to pass a civil service exam and they were to be paid a salary, not a commission, to dissuade an “artificial stimulation of demand.”<sup>14</sup>

The new system targeted corruption. Pinchot noted that the plan would prevent liquor from becoming “the tool of unscrupulous politicians and the meal ticket for the innumerable promiscuous dispensers of booze,” and low prices would discourage bootlegging.<sup>15</sup> According to Pinchot, there were three strains of thought on Prohibition: “sincere dries” (supporters of Prohibition) and “sincere wets” (detractors of Prohibition) had enough in common to work against the corrupt interests of the “selfish wets,” who “have a selfish personal interest in the return of liquor.”<sup>16</sup>

Pinchot wanted to eliminate private profit from liquor sales, arguing that “if sales were in the hands of private retailers and wholesalers there would be sharp competition for business,” which he believed played into the hands of corrupt politicians and distillers.<sup>17</sup> Instead, tax revenue from the state system would partially fund social programs

ITALO-AMERICAN Campaign Committee of Phila.  
Supporter of President Coolidge For Tax Reduction and Economy

## VOTE FOR WILLIAM S. VARE



FOR  
**United States Senator**  
Republican Ticket

**Primary Election, Tuesday, May 18**

*Demands Modification of Volstead Act  
To Permit Sale of Light Wines and Beer*

Voted for Soldiers' Bonus

Stands for Protective Tariff

for the unemployed, care for the elderly, and schools—welcome relief during the Great Depression, when unemployment in Pennsylvania reached a staggering 40 percent by the time Pinchot left office in 1935.<sup>18</sup>

While Prohibition was repealed more than 80 years ago, actions that Gifford Pinchot and the state government took at its death knell ensure that Pennsylvanians still feel its effects. This is also felt on a local level; local municipalities choose their stance on alcohol, and as of August 2017, there were 686 municipalities throughout Pennsylvania that remain “dry.”<sup>19</sup> This legacy of Prohibition is not unique to our state—many states were influenced by Prohibition in their liquor laws, including Mississippi,

Ribbon for the “Republican Wet Ticket”, or supporters of Prohibition repeal, for the Republican primary election in 1930. Pinchot went on to win this election, his second term in office.

Republican  
**WET**  
Ticket

**BOHLEN**  
U. S. SENATOR

**PHILLIPS**  
GOVERNOR

**DORRANCE**  
Lieut. Governor

**Against  
Prohibition**

**PRIMARY  
MAY 20, 1930**



which remained a dry state until the 1960s.<sup>20</sup> While changes have recently been made to state liquor laws, liquor control continues to be an issue that Pennsylvanians grapple with at the polls.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Governor Wolf Signs Historic Liquor Reform Bill" Newsroom, Governor's Office, June 8, 2016, accessed December 4, 2017, <https://www.governor.pa.gov/governor-wolf-signs-historic-liquor-reform-bill/>; Mike Negra, "Overview of Pennsylvania's Liquor Laws & Regulations, Including Recent Changes" *Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board*, last modified January 4, 2017, <http://www.lcb.pa.gov/Licensing/ResourcesForLicensees/Documents/February%202017%20Presentation%20for%20PA%20Producers%20and%20Licensees.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Char Miller, "Introduction," in *Gifford Pinchot: Selected Writings*, ed. Char Miller (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017), 2, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Char Miller, *Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism* (Washington: Island Press, 2001), 237.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 249.

<sup>5</sup> James A. Kehl and Samuel J. Astorino, "A Bull Moose Responds to the New Deal: Pennsylvania's Gifford Pinchot," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 88, No. 1 (Jan., 1964), pp. 37-51; Miller, Char, *Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism*, pp 250-258.

<sup>6</sup> Amendment XVIII, *The Constitution: Amendments 11-27*, National Archives, accessed November 27, 2017, <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/amendments-11-27#toc-amendment-xviii>.

<sup>7</sup> Miller, *Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism*, 251.

<sup>8</sup> "Section 1: America Had A Drinking Problem" *American Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*, Exhibition, National Constitution Center, accessed November 27, 2017, <https://prohibition.constitutioncenter.org/exhibition.html>.

<sup>9</sup> United Press, "State Very Wet, Sproul Admits to Legislators" *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 2, 1923, 2.

<sup>10</sup> Dale Van Every, "Takes Oath as Chief Executive of State; Capital is Jammed" *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 16, 1923, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Gifford Pinchot, "Why I Believe in Enforcing the Prohibition Laws," in *Gifford Pinchot: Selected Writings*, 145.

<sup>12</sup> Dale Van Every, "Federal Agents May Aid Pinchot Dry Plan," *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 28, 1923, 1, 8.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel Okrent, "Wayne B. Wheeler: The Man Who Turned Off the Taps" *Smithsonian Magazine* (May 2010), accessed 11/27/2017, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/wayne-b-wheeler-the-man-who-turned-off-the-taps-14783512/>.

<sup>14</sup> Gifford Pinchot, "Liquor Control in the United States: The State Store Plan," in *Gifford Pinchot, Selected Writings*, 172-173.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

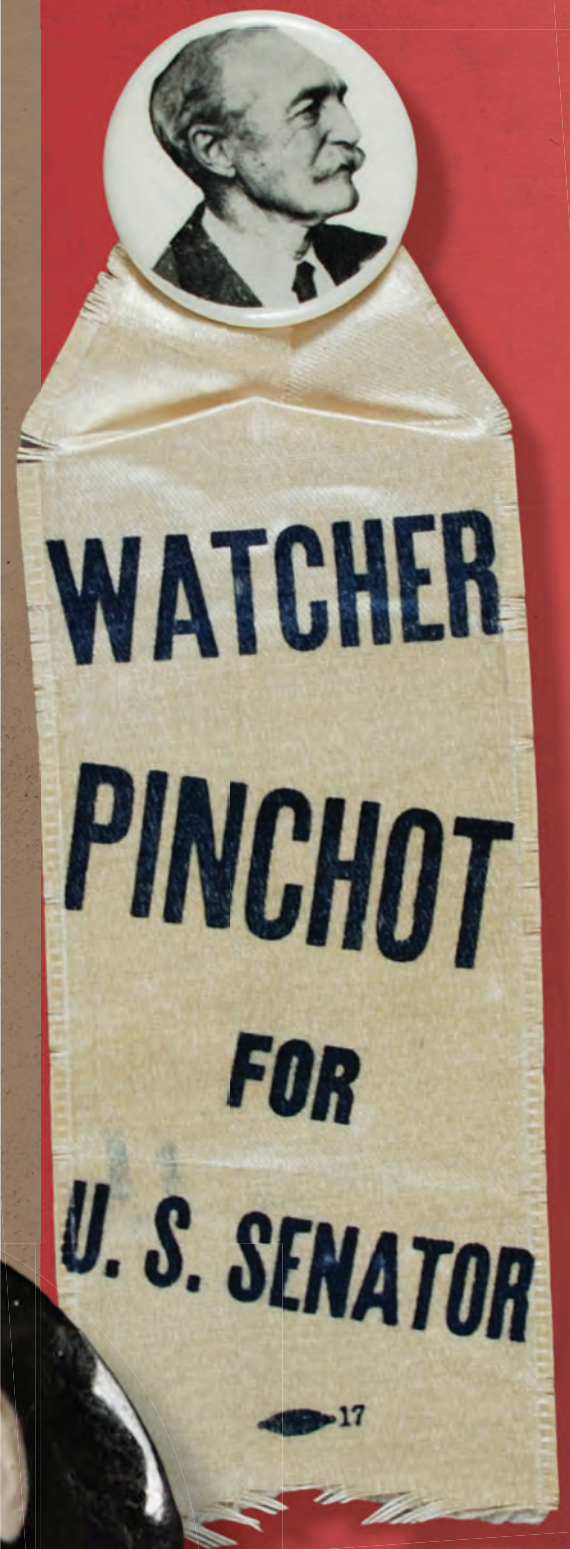
<sup>18</sup> "Governor Gifford Pinchot," *Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission*, accessed December 4, 2017, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/governors/1876-1951/gifford-pinchot.html>.

<sup>19</sup> "Wet Versus Dry Municipalities," *Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board*, accessed December 4, 2017, <http://www.lcb.pa.gov/Licensing/Topics-of-Interest/Pages/Wet-Versus-Dry.aspx>; "Local Option Referendum," *Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board*, accessed December 4, 2017, [http://www.lcb.pa.gov/Licensing/Topics-of-Interest/Documents/Dry\\_Municipalities\\_List.pdf](http://www.lcb.pa.gov/Licensing/Topics-of-Interest/Documents/Dry_Municipalities_List.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> NCC Staff, "Five interesting facts about Prohibition's end in 1933" *Constitution Daily Blog*, National Constitution Center, modified December 5, 2017, accessed December 7, 2017, <https://constitutioncenter.org/blog/five-interesting-facts-about-prohibition-28099s-end-in-1933>.

<sup>21</sup> Scott Bomboy, "Pennsylvania to fight one of Prohibition's last battles" *Constitution Daily Blog*, National Constitution Center, January 30, 2013, accessed December 1, 2017, <https://constitutioncenter.org/blog/pennsylvania-to-fight-one-of-prohibitions-last-battles>.

After both terms as Governor, Pinchot continued to pursue political office.



In 1938, Pinchot ran for a third term as Governor, but lost to Arthur H. James in the Republican primaries.



## All Set for the Big Flood—By Hungerford



Cartoon drawn by Cyrus Hungerford that depicts Pinchot's response to the end of Prohibition. This cartoon was originally published in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on December 1, 1933.

HHC Detre L&A, Cy Hungerford Papers, MSS 194.



# SPEAK EASY, BOYS! SPEAK EASY!

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN PITTSBURGH'S  
NINETEENTH-CENTURY ALCOHOL TRADE

By Leslie Przybylek, Senior Curator



Burg and Hager Saloon and Hotel, 1896. The woman and girl seen at the window are relatives of the saloon operators and workers. This was a common occurrence in the 19th century, when the upper floors of a saloon often functioned as living quarters for the family that owned or ran the place.

HHC Detre L&A, Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation Collection, MSP 33.



Mrs. Mollie Goltsman did not look like a typical bootlegger. But the white-haired, grandmotherly, 60-year-old was well-known to local law enforcement when she was paroled for the fifth time in April 1934 after another liquor conviction.<sup>1</sup> She had been arrested in January when she and her son Frank were caught with more than 50 cases of “cut whisky” and a five-gallon can of moonshine in their grocery store at 2216 Forbes Avenue. Their stock included popular brands such as Golden Wedding Whiskey and Overholt, the bottles filled with a typical Prohibition-era concoction of water, alcohol, food coloring, and “a little real whisky.” The arrest was heralded as the most important haul on a day that witnessed more than 40 people nabbed during a city-wide cleanup.<sup>2</sup>

In truth, it was another minor victory in a war that seemed like a never-ending flood. Mollie Goltsman was emblematic of that reality. Her name had appeared in the newspapers for illicit liquor sales going back to 1919.<sup>3</sup> During the early 1920s, she peddled moonshine out of her confectionary store at 2133 Forbes Avenue; she later moved up the block to 2216 Forbes. In 1928, a police inspector condemned Mrs. Goltsman as a woman who “refuses to reform” after a raid on her property resulted in a police officer being burned. (He opened a trap door, lit a match to see, and ignited alcohol hidden in a bottle below; he reportedly recovered.)<sup>4</sup>

Mrs. Goltsman was far from the only member of her sex who turned to bootlegging during Prohibition. Newspapers and magazines regaled readers with tales of women engaged in the illegal liquor trade. Some people argued that women made better bootleggers than men because enforcement agents were hesitant to search them.<sup>5</sup> The women claimed all sorts of reasons. In July 1924, Sarah Bennett, only 15, declared she was raising funds for her education when she was arrested in a small mining community in Scott’s Run, West Virginia.<sup>6</sup> In 1922 reports

surfaced of a well-dressed young woman going door to door in Pittsburgh office buildings selling exclusively to female workers, building her own feminine clientele.<sup>7</sup> In 1930, 21-year-old Edna Kern, when arrested in Pittsburgh, replied that she could make more money selling liquor than she earned as a nurse.<sup>8</sup> By the mid-1920s, the reality of women bootleggers was so well known that national newspapers ran full-page features on the topic. “What Marguerite Learned at the Bootleggers’ College” proclaimed a spread in *The Pittsburgh Press* in September 1926, generously illustrated with photographs and a snappy drawing showing how women hid their illegal inventory.<sup>9</sup>

Prohibition (1920-1933) spawned a wave of public tolerance for illegal activities that many scholars now interpret as part of a larger American response to cultural changes in the aftermath of World War I.<sup>10</sup> Women, especially young women, became visible signs



"Woman Bootlegger Says Beating Rap Cost \$500,000," *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 19, 1934. Mollie Goltsman was such a repeat violator of the state's liquor laws that she continued to face prosecution even after Prohibition had ended.





Young Women's Hebrew Association stag party, Duquesne, Pa., 1922. Although this photograph was clearly tongue-in-cheek, the young women's male dress, caps, pipes, and overt references to drinking vividly capture the topsy-turvy spirit of Prohibition and the 1920s.

HHC Detre L&A, Gellman Family Papers and Photographs, 2015.0142.

of that change. From their bobbed hair to the alcohol they drank openly, these “new” women exemplified a world turned upside down. It is not surprising that stories of female bootleggers filled the day’s mass media: the topic was sure to provoke a response and, it was hoped, sell more newspapers.

But was it really all so new? Women’s participation in the distribution of alcohol in Pittsburgh—illicit or otherwise—was hardly an invention of the topsy-turvy world ushered in by the 18th Amendment, although the social climate of Prohibition raised the profits and allure of such activity. Nineteenth-century Pittsburghers could have pointed to numerous examples of women’s interactions with the alcohol trade decades earlier that provided a harbinger of things to come. The ways that women participated in this trade were tied to the region’s ethnic, industrial, and urban heritage—factors that made Pittsburgh and a few other large eastern and Midwestern cities nominally more tolerant of women’s involvement in this sphere than other locales.

In fact, according to local legend the origin of one of the most celebrated settings for the Prohibition-era social revolution, the “speakeasy,” was linked to a woman running an illegal operation in McKeesport in the 1880s, although the reality of the matter was more complicated than the legend suggests.

## IN SOHO ON SATURDAY NIGHT

Pittsburghers of a certain age who followed Mollie Goltsman’s drama on Forbes Avenue, in a neighborhood known as Soho, may have recalled a popular minstrel ballad sung there in the 1880s and ’90s. The song, “In Soho on Saturday Night,” captured the nightlife:

They tell us in Soho on Saturday night,  
Most ev’ry person you meet they are tight;

The men with their bottles, their wives  
with a can. And young girls go prowlin’  
around like a man.

One woman I met, I’ll never forget. She  
fell in a sew’r and she got soakin’ wet.  
The crowd gather’d ’round her all  
thinkin’ her dead. But then she got up,

and quickly she said:

“Oh isn’t it queer how some women  
drink beer? They drink and they drink  
to get tight.

And the new license plan, it ain’t worth  
a damn in Soho on Saturday night!”<sup>11</sup>

The lyrics vividly illustrated the spread of alcohol across gender lines in Pittsburgh’s working-class neighborhoods. The “can” carried by wives was a reference to the “growler trade”—19th-century carryout beer. It was literally carried out in growlers or pails.<sup>12</sup> Given the timing of the song, the “new license plan” was almost certainly the statewide legislation known as the Brooks High-License Act. By raising state liquor license fees, this law, passed in 1887 and in effect as of June 1, 1888, made it prohibitively expensive to operate legal saloons. For large cities, the cost jumped from \$50 to \$500, dramatically reducing the number of sanctioned drinking holes, especially in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.<sup>13</sup> In a classic example of an enforcement action with unintended consequences, the High-License Act spurred an outburst of illegal drinking as



legions of former saloon operators and other entrepreneurs opted to forgo the high license fees and sell under the table instead.

From beer dispensed at kitchen counters to whiskey doled out in back alleys, illegal alcohol flowed across Pittsburgh, especially in working-class neighborhoods such as Soho, the Hill, Lawrenceville, and Oakland.<sup>14</sup> Women were routinely nabbed as operators of these joints.<sup>15</sup> Sometimes they tried to follow the respectable path, but the lure proved too great. In November 1889, a Mrs. Shirley, who had once run a saloon, was arrested near Fourth Avenue after a police captain and two detectives climbed through a back window off an alley and up a flight of stairs to find the proprietress with four customers. According to the newspaper, Mrs. Shirley “took the arrest, as well as the beer, philosophically, saying that it had served her right for wanting the earth, as she had closed up, once, but had reopened to get rid of some stock she had over.”<sup>16</sup> On one Sunday alone in May 1890, the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* identified more than 163 people arrested for Sabbath liquor sales, and more than half were women.<sup>17</sup> Most were charged a small fine and costs, but a few received harsher punishment: up to six months at the county workhouse, possibly an indication of repeat offenders.

## “SPEAK EASY, BOYS! SPEAK EASY!”

According to local legend, the most celebrated woman who defied the High-License Act was Kate Hester, an Irish widow who plied her trade in McKeesport. When she attempted to quiet her boisterous customers to avoid attracting unwanted attention, she supposedly whispered “Speak easy, boys! Speak easy!” coining an expression that soon signified an illegal drinking spot—the “speak-easy.”<sup>18</sup> A *New York Times* story written by a Pittsburgh correspondent attached Kate Hester’s name to the phrase in 1891. But the term appeared

in area newspapers as early as the fall of 1888. By then, its meaning as an unlicensed drinking establishment was commonly understood, although the roots of its origin were not so clear.<sup>19</sup> In December 1888, the *Canonsburg Notes*, repeating the word of the *Pittsburgh Times*, observed: “The phrase ‘speak-easy’ is familiar to every resident of Allegheny county, but its origin is little known. An old English dictionary of slang in the possession of Detective McTighe gives the phrase ‘hush-shop,’ a place where liquor is sold illegally. It is supposed from this term ‘speak-easy’ was derived.”<sup>20</sup>

Scholars such as Daniel Okrent, author of *Last Call, The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (2010), trace the phrase to 19th-century Ireland. Others have found it in British naval memoirs of the 1840s and early crime lexicons of London slang from the 1820s.<sup>21</sup> Their evidence makes a strong case for the phrase

## FROM BEER DISPENSED AT KITCHEN COUNTERS TO WHISKEY DOLED OUT IN BACK ALLEYS, ILLEGAL ALCOHOL FLOWED ACROSS PITTSBURGH



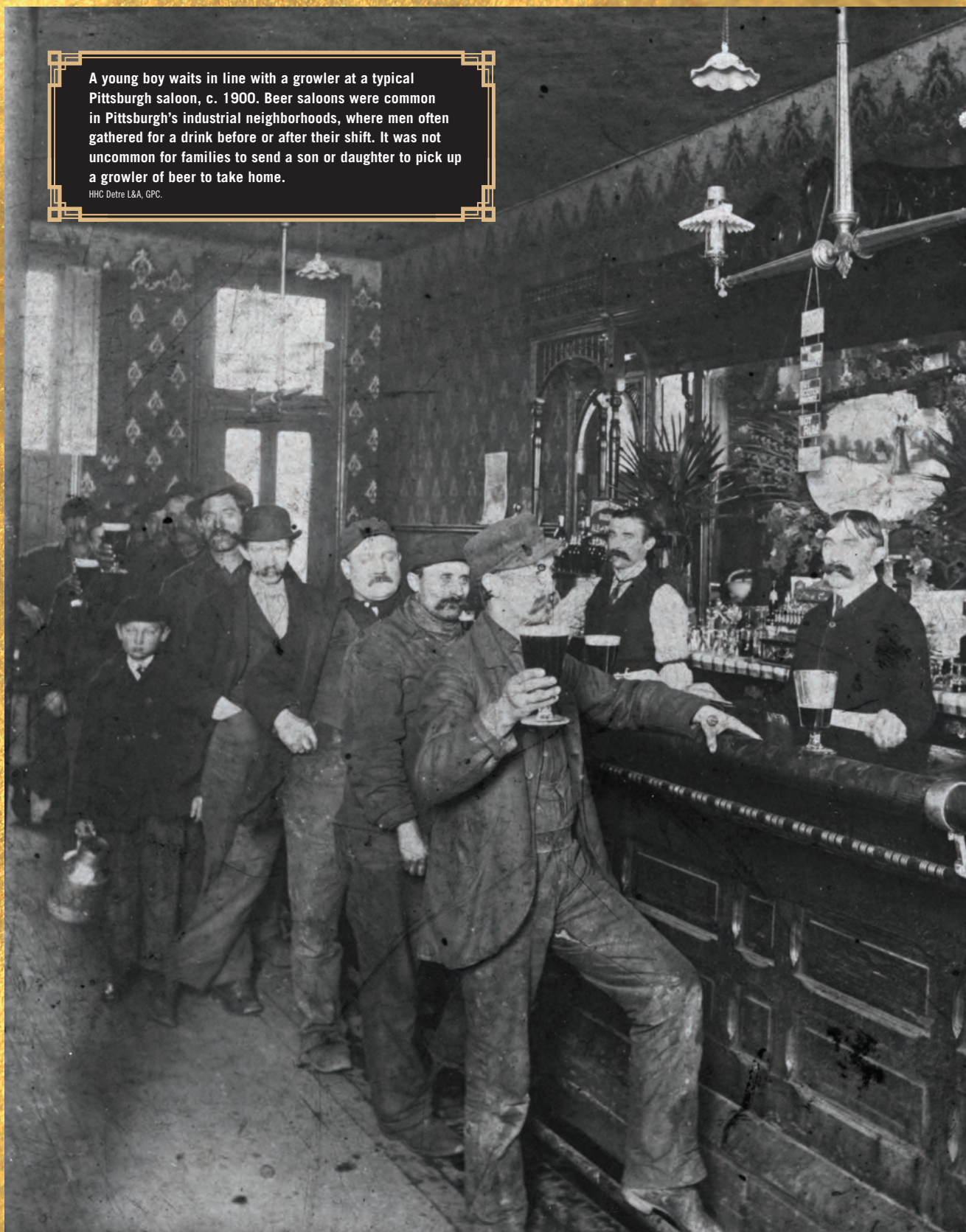
Interior of a South Side saloon, c. 1900. Though images of women working in saloons are rare, it was not unusual to see children. Sometimes they lived in the same building, or they came in seeking family members.

HHC Detre L&A, Bob Crammer collection, 1999.0080.

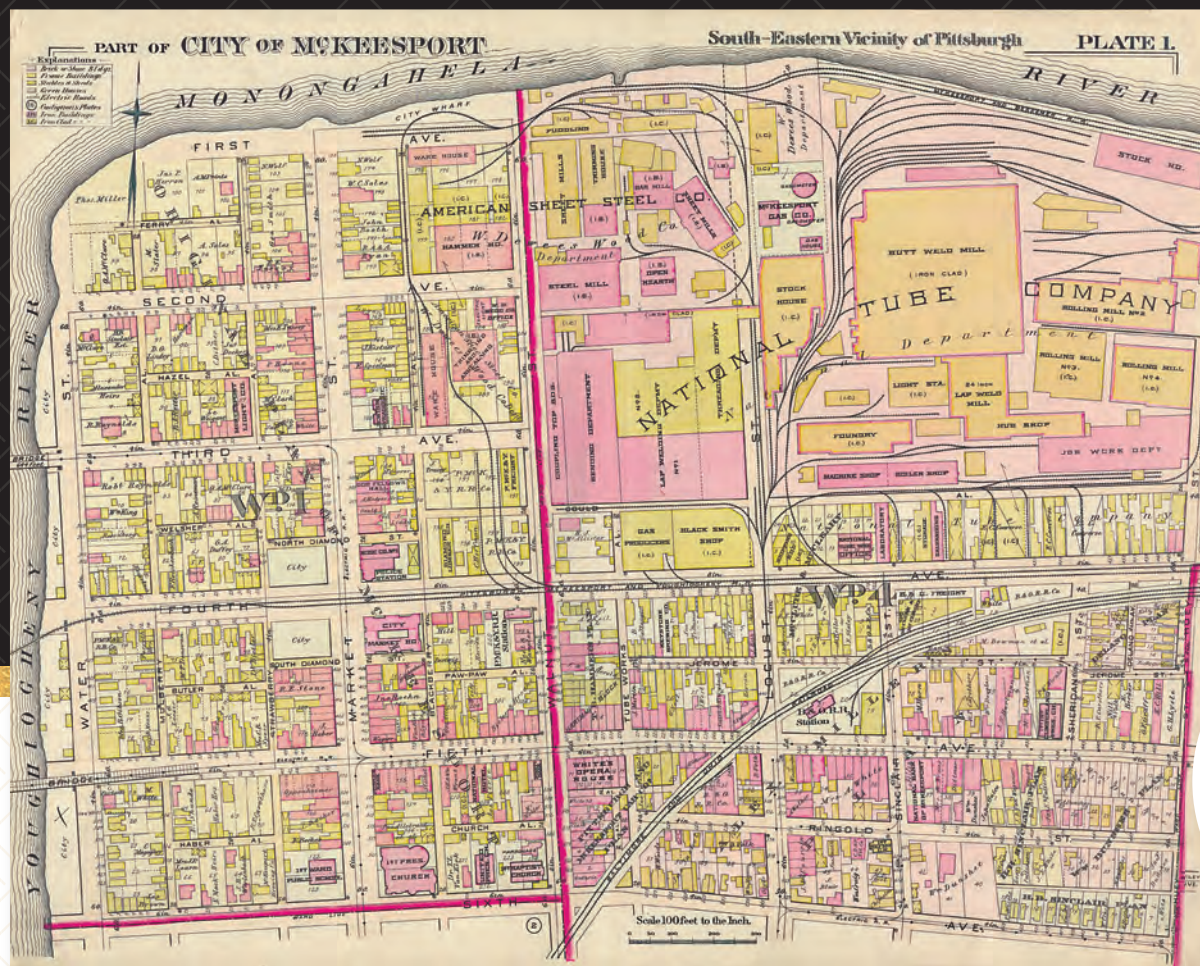


A young boy waits in line with a growler at a typical Pittsburgh saloon, c. 1900. Beer saloons were common in Pittsburgh's industrial neighborhoods, where men often gathered for a drink before or after their shift. It was not uncommon for families to send a son or daughter to pick up a growler of beer to take home.

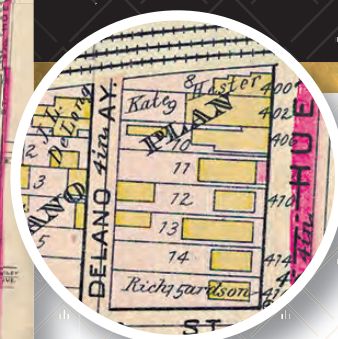
HHHC Dietre L&A, GPC.







Part of the City of McKeesport, Plate 1, 1900. Kate Hester's property is visibly marked on the far-right side of the map, on Huey Avenue just south of Fourth Avenue.  
University of Pittsburgh Archives & Special Collections, G.M. Hopkins Company Maps.



originating in the British Isles and finding its way to America in the 19th century, possibly through naval or maritime interactions. The expression could have ended up in Western Pennsylvania through overland trade and immigration or through the heritage of boat-building along the Monongahela River. We will probably never know conclusively why a correspondent linked it solely to one woman's operation in McKeesport. By the time her name was attached to the phrase, Kate Hester had been trying to run a legal establishment for at least two years.<sup>22</sup>

So, what is to be made of Kate Hester's tale? Even if the colorful figure of the defiant Irish barwoman was not the one true origin of the "speak-easy," the story's timing and the tragic details of the real Kate Hester's life underscore an experience shared by many women engaged with Pittsburgh's saloons and alcohol trade at the turn of the century. If the image of women and families destroyed

by alcohol was a powerful motif heralded by temperance organizations fighting against saloon and liquor interests, then Kate Hester and the legend of the "speak-easy" addressed a more complex reality, illustrating the dilemma of Western Pennsylvanians who made their living supplying a product culturally and socially entwined within their communities: an ethnic, industrial, and urban world often far different from the bucolic scenes offered by temperance advocates for a land under the beneficent sway of Prohibition.

According to material in the files of the McKeesport Regional History & Heritage Center, Catherine (Kate) Lynch Hester was born in England in 1854 and immigrated to the United States around 1860.<sup>23</sup> By the 1870s she had married John Hester. The family spent time in Ohio, welcoming five daughters before moving back to McKeesport around 1882, just as the community began to witness dramatic population growth, thanks to the

opening of the National Tube Works rolling mill in 1879.<sup>24</sup> John Hester apparently ran a saloon in the early 1880s along McKeesport's Fourth Avenue and Huey Street; tax books and maps between 1892 and 1900 show Kate Hester owning property at 400-402 Huey. The location had a history as a saloon.<sup>25</sup> It sat about one block away from part of the National Tube Company, separated from the industrial yards by a few sets of railroad tracks and Fourth Avenue. It must have seemed an ideal location, perfectly situated to catch mill workers at the beginning and end of each shift.

In December 1885, a story in the *McKeesport Daily News* informed readers that John Hester was giving up the saloon business.<sup>26</sup> By this point, Kate had given birth to three more daughters. With a household that included eight children as well as John's aged mother, perhaps the lure of a steady paycheck beckoned. John Hester went to work at the National Tube rolling mill; Kate managed a





OLD TIMES IN NEW ENGLAND.

**"Old Times in New England," illustration of a female tavern-keeper, 1884. This image from Daniel Dorchester's book, *The Liquor Problem in All Ages* (1884), reminded readers that women were once common as tavern and innkeepers. The rise of the saloon in the 1860s made their presence at the bar more fraught with controversy.**

HHC Detre L&A, Daniel Dorchester, *The Liquor Problem in All Ages*, 1884.

grocery store out of the home. Within three years, opportunity turned into a gruesome disaster. On the morning of Tuesday, March 27, 1888 (months before the Brooks High-License Act went into effect), John Hester, who worked as an oiler or greaser at the mill, leaned over a railing and tripped or lost his balance. He was pulled headfirst through the machinery into a pair of rollers, a space of "but six inches." Even in a place where industrial accidents were common, the catastrophic nature of his fate stood out. Local newspapers underlined the ghastly extent of the injuries: Hester was "Ground to Death," "Squeezed to Death." The mill shut down, and hardened men "walked away with horror depicted on their faces."<sup>27</sup>

John's battered remains were carried to

his home.<sup>28</sup> Kate Hester was now a 34-year-old widow with eight fatherless children and her deceased husband's mother to support. Perhaps she had been selling alcohol before the accident. Grocery stores often served as cover for illicit sales, but no record of such activity has yet been found. In any event, the impact of the High-License Act in June 1888 combined with the calamity of John's death would have raised the incentive to risk operating illegally. This convergence of factors may have been impossible for someone in Kate's position to ignore. If even the barest kernel of the legend is true, the boisterous men Kate tried to hush could have been the same men, many likewise immigrants, who left the mill in horror after witnessing her husband get crushed to death by

the machinery that provided their livelihoods. In that volatile mix of workers, industry, family, and alcohol, Kate and her "boys" were linked in a cycle of camaraderie, danger, and death that played out countless times across the region, from McKeesport and Homestead to Soho and Lawrenceville.<sup>29</sup>

## ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY

The figure of Kate Hester symbolized a deeper reality for women in Western Pennsylvania who chose to engage in the alcohol trade, whether in a licensed establishment or a walk-up behind an alley. Kate's identity as an immigrant, her family's connection to the saloon business, and her status as a widow all underlined factors that often compelled those of her gender to engage in activity that more "respectable" women never touched. Whether Kate Hester was Irish or English, her role as an immigrant of the British Isles situated her within one of the groups that controlled the region's alcohol trade. As was true in many eastern cities, by the mid-1800s much of Western Pennsylvania's liquor and beer business was dominated by people of certain ethnic and geographic origins: those of German, Austrian, Irish or English, Italian, and Jewish ancestry were more likely to be engaged in the alcohol trade than others.<sup>30</sup> This was certainly true of Pittsburgh. Prominent families in the beer and liquor industry carried names such as Sunstein, Overholt, Hespenheide, Ober, Lutz, Klinordlinger, and McCullough.<sup>31</sup> Some of these cultures were also far more forgiving of women venturing into this world. German beer halls routinely welcomed families. The Irish tradition of the "shebeen," or a home-based beer takeout shop, was often used by widows in the Old Country as a means of financial support. Within Irish neighborhoods in large American cities, the custom simply continued whether or not a piece of paper sanctioned it.<sup>32</sup>

Likewise, many women went into the alcohol trade through family enterprise.



It was not unusual for a family who ran a tavern or saloon—father, mother, in-laws, and children—to reside in the building that welcomed their customers, just as the Hesters did in McKeesport. Daughters who never walked through the front door of a saloon nonetheless worked behind the bar; wives assisted husbands; sisters and other relatives helped as well. Sometimes wives ran the place, supplementing other family members' incomes. Although numbers fluctuated between the 1870s and 1900, a few women always appeared in Pittsburgh city directories as saloon or retail liquor proprietors. Their numbers ranged from around 40 in the 1870s to a peak of more than 70 during the early 1880s and then declined again to around 30 in the 1890s.<sup>33</sup> Marital status was not always indicated, but when it was, married women made up the majority: in 1877-1878, of 39 women listed as "saloon proprietors," 26 were labeled "Mrs.," nearly 67 percent.<sup>34</sup> In 1884, the total was 66 out of 75. A few, such as the widow Mrs. Jane Dickroeger of Allegheny City, supported their family by operating a saloon for multiple decades.<sup>35</sup>

Although the number of women legally operating saloons in Pittsburgh was never high, it was more than in most American cities. That such women were rare nationwide is reflected by comments such as the lament found in the *Social Progress* yearbook of 1904. This publication, issued by Josiah Strong, President of the American Institute of Social Service, complained that the "unenviable procedure" of female saloonkeepers was most prevalent in just a few "populous" states that contained large cities. Pennsylvania ranked fifth on the list, behind New York, Ohio, New Jersey, and Illinois.<sup>36</sup> All of these states included heavily industrial areas with large immigrant populations.

## THE WIDOW'S PATH

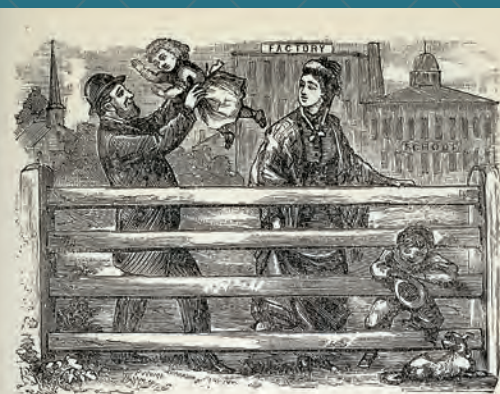
Kate Hester and women such as Jane Dickroeger also shared another similarity: they

were widows. Not all women who resorted to the alcohol trade did so because they lost a husband, but widowhood impelled many into the business. It was a common refrain during the Allegheny County Liquor Court proceedings in Pittsburgh, a forum where would-be saloon operators filed before a panel of judges, doing their best to convince the court that they deserved one of the precious legal saloon licenses.

Many women attempted to maintain businesses already in operation. At a license hearing in September 1887, Mrs. Anna Boehm's application was opposed because she had been running a saloon on her deceased husband's license; she had been a widow for nine weeks.<sup>37</sup> In March 1888, the *Pittsburgh Post* reported that of 29 license applicants from Pittsburgh's Twelfth Ward (around Penn Avenue) four were women, all widows. As was typical, the newspaper played up this fact. The first was Mary Corbett, "a sad-faced little woman heavily draped in mourning." She had run a small saloon with her husband and wanted "to take up the business where he laid it down." Mrs. Hannah Maher was also already operating a saloon at 3057 Penn Avenue. She was hoping for a renewal. Then it was Kate Ryan's turn. She again presented, "the somber picture of widow's weeds." Finally, Mrs. Josephine Schuman made her request. So short that only her black mourning bonnet was visible over the clerk's desk, Mrs. Schuman acknowledged with tears in her eyes that her dead husband had left her their saloon in his will along with his debts and eight children.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, in March 1890 Mrs. Barbara Buch, also "heavily robed in widow's weeds," pleaded her case. Her husband had been dead nine months and she ran a boarding house. She wanted to turn a small grocery store into a bar.<sup>39</sup>

Another grocery store operator also tried to get a liquor license in 1890: Kate Hester. In April 1891, *The Pittsburgh Press* reported that Mrs. Kate Hester was among those from McKeesport applying for a license at that

**ALTHOUGH THE NUMBER OF WOMEN LEGALLY OPERATING SALOONS IN PITTSBURGH WAS NEVER HIGH, IT WAS MORE THAN IN MOST AMERICAN CITIES.**



PROHIBITION—THE BARS CLOSED.



LICENSE—THE BARS OPEN.

Illustrations of "Prohibition" & "License," 1884. Temperance advocates published vivid images portraying the damage that alcohol wrought on families and the better world created by its absence. But such images sometimes underplayed the reality of the factory's impact on industrial workers and the neighborhoods in which they lived.

HHC Detre L&A, Daniel Dorchester, "The Liquor Problem in All Ages, 1884."





German-printed postcard showing a woman bartender, 1900s. Published by Owens Bros Co., Boston, Berlin, and Leipzig. Across the Atlantic, many European cultures were more accustomed to the idea of women operating and working in places that served alcohol. Private Collection.

year's court. Noting that she made "a strong play last year, but was knocked out just when everyone thought she was going to score," the paper then reported her lack of success again in 1891: mistakes had been made on her application by a McKeesport notary, and her hearing was denied.<sup>40</sup> Perhaps she had tried other years as well. The woman at the center of the local legend about the "speak-easy" may have never wanted to run one at all.

Kate Hester's unsuccessful attempts at a license and the desperation broadcast by black-clad women pleading before a judge illustrate why many may have succumbed to the temptation to operate illegally.<sup>41</sup> The *Pittsburgh Dispatch* confirmed this while reporting on liquor arrests in February 1891: "A large number of the violators were women, many of them widows with large families dependent on them."<sup>42</sup> Sometimes they resorted to extreme measures. In June 1890, the widow Mrs. Mary Diebold escaped a warden's custody by climbing up a stepladder and jumping out a window rather than waiting to stand trial on charges she was selling liquor without a license to support herself and nine children.<sup>43</sup> Not everyone was so adept at slipping through the law's grasp. In one sad day in 1890 in Pittsburgh's Nineteenth Ward (around East Liberty and Highland Park), Agent Dean of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children took charge of seven young wards—the five Slavin children and two Calhoun boys, ranging in age from 3 to 16—when both mothers were arrested for operating neighborhood speak-easies and sent to the county workhouse.<sup>44</sup>

For many Pittsburghers as well as Americans nationwide, such stories confirmed their worst visions of the alcohol trade. Although the rampant illegality spurred by the dearth of licenses granted under the Brooks High-License Act eventually led to a loosening of some guidelines, battle lines had been



German-printed postcard of a couple being served beer by a waitress in a beer garden, 1907. Printed in Saxony, Germany for the C.N. Caspar Co., Milwaukee. In German and Dutch tradition, men and women frequented beer gardens together, and waiters likewise could be men or women. Private Collection.









**A HILL SPEAK-EASY.**  
**A murder was committed out in Lawrenceville a few months ago in a speak-easy. It is not running now.**

"A Hill Speak-Easy," *The Pittsburgh Press*, May 10, 1891. The reference to an illicit drinking spot as a "speak-easy" was in common usages by the time a *Pittsburgh Press* reporter recorded this scene and the life of such establishments in the city's Hill neighborhood in 1891.

drawn. Nationally, cries against the saloon and against the large number of "foreigners" involved in the production and sale of alcohol grew in force and scale as the new century moved forward. More nuanced arguments were lost as groups such as the Anti-Saloon League gained legislative power, alcohol-fueled corruption reigned, and the leaders of the brewery and distillery communities failed to find ways to work together to counteract the bad press and legislative momentum.<sup>45</sup>

By 1891 the story of Kate Hester illustrated the complex reality that straddled

the clear-cut visions of the dries and the wets in the temperance debate. For many people in 19th-century Pittsburgh—women and men—the alcohol trade was a livelihood rooted in ethnicity, family history, location, and economic need. If Kate Hester really did run a speakeasy, it was a decision based on family tragedy and a resolve to survive. Today's popular vision of the 1920s Gatsbyesque speakeasy and the colorful stories of Prohibition's swashbuckling female bootleggers obscure the dire circumstances that drove 19th-century women such as Kate

Hester to engage in the illegal alcohol trade. Far from being drawn to a world of glamor and illicit thrills, these women made what some would have called a less-than-respectable choice to provide for their families as best they could, sometimes with great success and other times with disastrous consequences. Whether the real Kate Hester ever uttered the words "speak easy, boys! speak easy!," her story represented a dilemma confronted by women throughout the Steel Valley in the late 19th century. In a region where a common folk saying recognized "old age at 40" and many men left widows and children behind, women made due with the means they had at their disposal. Sometimes it worked, sometimes not; but what choice did they have except to try and endure?<sup>46</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Woman Bootlegger Says Beating Rap Cost \$500,000," *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 19, 1934; "Two Jurors Are Excused," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, April 19, 1934.

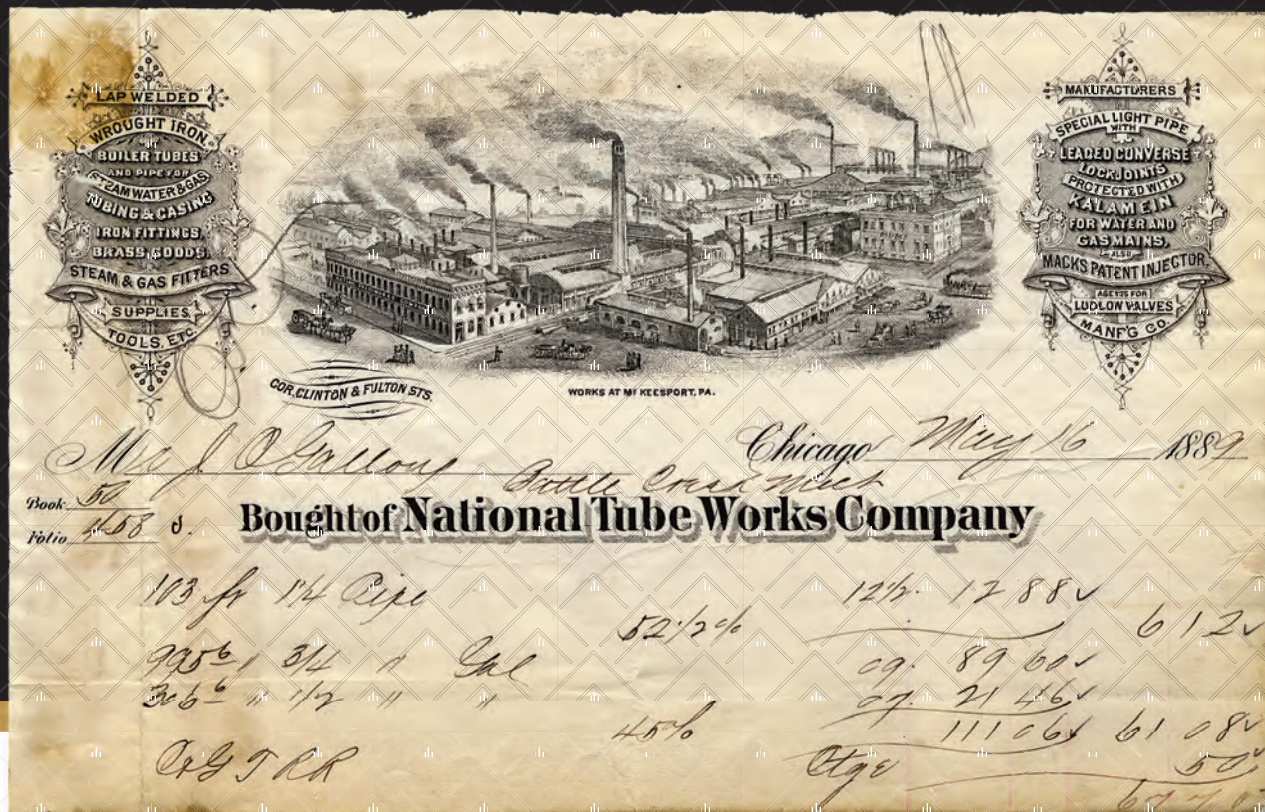
<sup>2</sup> "Racket Drive Traps 49 Here," *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 6, 1934.

<sup>3</sup> "Woman Fined for Whisky Sales," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, October 3, 1919. At the time, she was caught selling whisky illegally to customers at 35 cents a drink.

<sup>4</sup> For the account of the 1928 raid, see "Woman Held Again," *The Pittsburgh Press*, December 28, 1928; Pittsburgh city directories between 1920 and 1928 confirm the move up the street for the Goltsman household, although Mollie herself is not always listed. See also "Three Arrested in 'Dry' Raids," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, August 14, 1922; "Woman Held as Liquor Owner," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, June 2, 1923.

<sup>5</sup> Fred Minnick, *Whiskey Women* (Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books University of Nebraska Press, 2013): 75-78. National media widely acknowledged women's success; enforcement agencies were quick to counteract perceptions of leniency. See, for example, "Women Bootleggers Not to Get Leniency," *The Maysville Public Ledger* (Kentucky), February 21, 1921; "Women Bootleggers Defy U.S. Enforcement Agents," *Springfield Missouri Republican*, December 11, 1921; "Girl Bootleggers Thwart Detection," *Akron Beacon Journal*, November 16, 1923; Maxine Davis, "It's a Gay Life for Women Bootleggers in Washington," *Baltimore Sun*, Section Six, December 9, 1923; "Miami Women Bootleggers Find Business Profitable," *Tampa Tribune*, July 8, 1926; "Southern Chivalry Goes by the Board as Raiders Start Drive Against the Women Bootleggers," *The Evening Reporter-Star* [Orlando, Fla.], July 20, 1929. So many women were arrested for alcohol trafficking during Prohibition that it accelerated efforts for a new federal women's prison in Alderson, West Virginia; see Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol* (New York: W.





Letterhead of the National Tube Works Company showing the main mill at McKeesport, Pennsylvania, 1889.

HHC Detle L&A

W. Norton & Company), 2016: 96-98. Some also argued for female prohibition agents, on the theory that male bootleggers would not shoot them; see David Fernsler, "Women Prohibition Agents Would Not Be Killed," *The Ithaca Journal* (New York), February 27, 1923.

<sup>6</sup> "Needed Money for Education, Defense of Girl Bootlegger, Aged 15, After Her Arrest," *The Pittsburgh Press*, July 14, 1924.

<sup>7</sup> "Woman Bootlegger, Catering to Own Sex Downtown, Sought," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 18, 1922.

<sup>8</sup> It was her second arrest in six weeks; see "Youthful Girl Bootlegger Caught," *Warren Times-Mirror* [Pennsylvania], July 15, 1930.

<sup>9</sup> What Marguerite Learned at the Bootleggers' College," *The Pittsburgh Press*, September 26, 1926. There are few in-depth studies on female bootleggers. Two worth noting are Mary Murphy, "Bootlegging Mothers and Drinking Daughters: Gender and Prohibition in Butte, Montana," *American Quarterly*, 46 (1994): 174-194; and Tanya Marie Sanchez, "The Feminine Side of Bootlegging," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*, 41: 4 (Autumn 2000): 403-433.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Lawrence R. Broer and John D Walther, eds, *Dancing Fools and Weary Blues: The Great Escape of the Twenties* (Madison, Wisc. University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); Lynn Dumenil, *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995); and Nathan Miller, *New World Coming: The 1920s and the Making of Modern America* (New York: Scribner, 2003).

<sup>11</sup> As reported in 1947 by Mrs. Julia Means, who recalled hearing the song as a child, and published in Korson, George, ed. *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania

Press, 1949): 425-426; 432-433. See also Joe Brown, column in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 3, 1986. The song was reportedly written by street troubadour Philip Byerly. The tune can be heard on a Smithsonian Folkways Recording originally made in 1959: Vivien Richman, "Vivien Richman Sings Folk Songs of West Pennsylvania," Folkways Records / Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, FG 3568 / FW03568, 1959 / 2004.

<sup>12</sup> For example, "People Still Rush the Can," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, June 12, 1890. The subtitle notes, "The Poetry of Drinking Beer in a Coalshed Retains Its Enchantments in Spite of the Increased Number of Drinking Places."

<sup>13</sup> At one point, the fee was supposed to be as high as \$600 in the state's largest cities, see "The Brooks License Bill," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, March 22, 1887. In smaller cities such as McKeesport, it may have been as low as \$150, see "Saloon Sentiment," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, May 13, 1887. The fight over the law received extensive coverage in state newspapers; see, for example, "A High License Law," *The Times* (Philadelphia, PA), January 15, 1887; "Victims of the New Law," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, July 14, 1887; "The High License Law," *Lebanon Daily News* (Lebanon, Pa.), February 3, 1888.

<sup>14</sup> A good account of a visit to a speakeasy in Pittsburgh's Hill neighborhood, where men and women are found drinking together, can be seen in "Les Miserables," *The Pittsburgh Press*, May 10, 1891. Illicit drinking was not limited to the working-class. One 1891 report told of Mrs. McCrae of Penn Avenue, who ran a wine parlor for "fashionable young people" out of her fine brick home; see "Prim Wine Parlours," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, August 27, 1891. Throughout western Pennsylvania, speakeasies popped up wherever people could hide their activities. One in Johnstown was discovered in an old

mining cave: "A Mysterious Speak-Easy," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 25, 1889.

<sup>15</sup> For example, "Caught at Work," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, November 11, 1889; "Picked Up by the Police," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, May 7, 1891; "Young and Old Locked Up," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, May 18, 1891; "An Oakland Speak-Easy," *The Pittsburgh Press*, July 13, 1892; and "Speak-Easies Raided, Two Women Committed to Jail for Trial at Court," *The Pittsburgh Press*, September 3, 1894.

<sup>16</sup> "Caught at Work," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, November 11, 1889.

<sup>17</sup> "Crusaded to Death," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, May 26, 1890. Out of more than 163 people arrested, about 85 were women, or more than fifty percent.

<sup>18</sup> The Kate Hester story was originally reported by a Pittsburgh correspondent to the *New York Times* in 1891; see "The Illegal Speak-Easies," *New York Times*, July 6, 1891. The legend now gets wide play in local media and national publications, for example, Hal B. Klein, "Downtown's Omni William Penn hotel revisits its Prohibition Past," *Pittsburgh City Paper*, December 19, 2012; Sean Collier, "Bar Exam: Speakeasy," *Pittsburgh Magazine*, October 31, 2013, accessed November 15, 2017 <http://www.pittsburghmagazine.com/Best-of-the-Burgh-Blogs/After-Dark/October-2013/Bar-Exam-Speakeasy/>; and Andrew Small, "The Secret Lives of Speakeasies," *CityLab.com*, April 19, 2017, accessed November 15, 2017 <https://www.citylab.com/life/2017/04/the-secret-lives-of-speakeasies/521865/>. The last includes a nice overview of Kate Hester's coverage in Pittsburgh newspapers.

<sup>19</sup> By the time the term appears, writers are already



# Pittsburgh's Waiter Girl War

Some women found acceptance as saloon keepers in 19th-century Pittsburgh, especially if they had a family connection to the business. But certain kinds of jobs in the city's alcohol trade were never considered respectable for women. Starting in the Centennial year of 1876, a battle erupted in Pittsburgh over the phenomenon of the "Waiter Girl Saloon." These establishments, also known as "concert saloons," featured young women as waiters who went table-to-table serving drinks to men who gathered to watch free entertainment. Such operations had been garnering both crowds and condemnation in New York City since the 1860s.<sup>1</sup>

In 1876, local saloon proprietors Stevenson & Hancock introduced the concept to Pittsburgh, where it quickly caught on. Soon more than 20 waiter girl establishments had opened. As their numbers grew, so did local concern about them.<sup>2</sup> The presence of so many women employed in such a socially charged space naturally drew allegations of something more than beer sales. This was certainly the fear of cultural critics in Pittsburgh, although some waitresses viewed the matter from a different angle. They found that serving beer provided a better choice than other things they might do.

When a move to pass an ordinance banning waiter girls first emerged in 1876, a reporter for the *Daily Gazette* noted that "the girls were all fearful that the ordinance would pass." One woman even warned, "if we are stopped at this, we must do something worse."<sup>3</sup> The women found an unlikely ally in at least one local businessman. During a City Council debate, a Mr. Neeb objected to a section of a proposed ordinance banning all

employment of "girls as bar-tenders" because "it was contrary to the spirit of the Declaration of Independence, which allows any person, without regard to color or previous condition of servitude, to sell liquor, or do anything else for a living."<sup>4</sup>

Although it is likely that many Pittsburghers disagreed with Mr. Neeb, enough apparently concurred with him that early attempts at securing the ordinance failed. Waiter girl saloons continued to operate into 1878, some even operated by women. The most well-known (some might say infamous) personality connected with Pittsburgh's waiter girl war was Fannie Walters, who ran a saloon at 64 Diamond Street.<sup>5</sup> Fannie's business was so successful that when an act finally passed outlawing female waiters in 1878, she was not eager to give up her lucrative operation. She devised a strategy to work around the law. She fired her female staff and then offered them written agreements as business partners for a percentage of the profits.<sup>6</sup> The move landed Fannie in court and in local newspaper headlines, but the gambit didn't work and she was eventually forced to sell the property. The new owners turned it into a temperance saloon that sold buttermilk and soft drinks, a gesture ripe with symbolism.<sup>7</sup> Fannie however remained undeterred. By 1881, she was in court again for keeping another waiter girl saloon, part of the wave of city-wide activity in the 1880s that eventually helped fuel the passage of the state's High-License Act that prohibited the sale of liquor without a license.<sup>8</sup>

*Pittsburgh Gazette*, December 1, 1876, p. 4.

<sup>1</sup> A good general source on the New York context is Brooks McNamara, *The New York Concert Saloon: The Devil's Own Nights* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> The Waiter Girl saloon controversy garnered extensive coverage in city papers. For one of the most complete articles, see "Waiter Girl Saloons," *Pittsburgh Daily Gazette*, December 1, 1876. Many critics decried the presence of the young women, but did not support temperance society efforts to ban all saloons and liquor sales in connection with the controversy, see: "The Reason Why?" (Editorial), *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, September 11, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> "Waiter Girl Saloons," *Daily Gazette*, December 1, 1876; on at least one reported occasion (there were probably more), a mother and two sisters had to forcibly prevent a young woman from returning to one of these places after she had been retrieved, see: "A Young Girl Rescued," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, March 21, 1878.

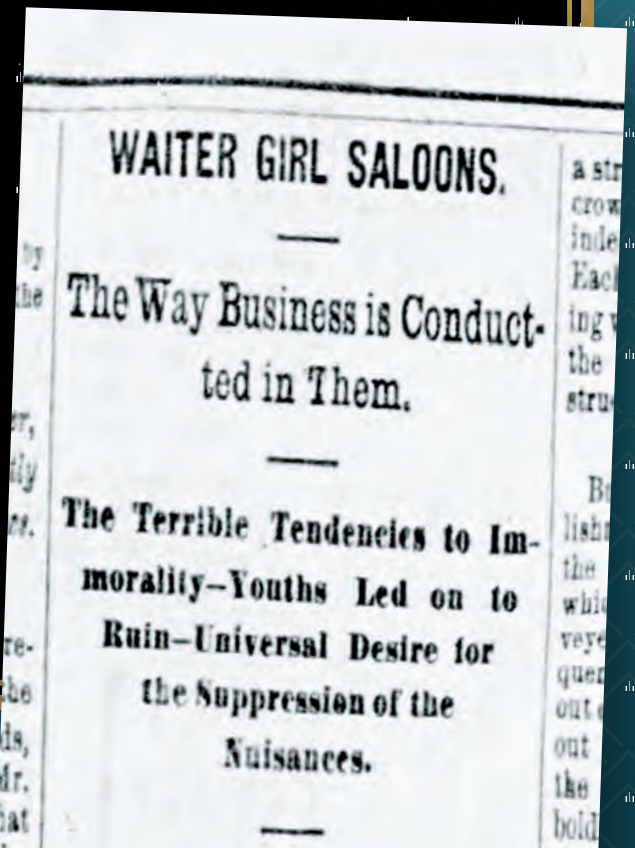
<sup>4</sup> "The City Councils," *Pittsburgh Daily Gazette*, November 28, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> "The Waiter Girl Saloons," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, July 15, 1878; "Waiter Girl Establishments," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, July 15, 1878.

<sup>7</sup> "Waiter Girl Establishments," *Post-Gazette*, July 15, 1878.

<sup>8</sup> The notice appears as part of a brief mention "Cleaning Out Policy Shops and Waiter Girl Saloons," in a larger article: "Police News," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, May 10, 1881.





- using it with clear familiarity rather than novelty; see, for example, "They Fared Badly," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, September 30, 1888; "Quite a Raid," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, September 30, 1888; "Concerning the Organ," (Letter to the Editor), *The Canonsburg Notes*, October 26, 1888; and "The Speak Easies," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 30, 1889. Phrasing nearly identical to what Kate Hester reportedly said can also be found in "The Speak Easies," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 30, 1889.
- <sup>20</sup> "Here, There, and Elsewhere," *The Canonsburg Notes*, December 21, 1888.
- <sup>21</sup> Daniel Okrent, *Last Call, The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (New York: Scribner, 2010): 207; Charles Vandersee, "Speakeasy," *American Speech*, Vol 59., No 3 (Autumn 1984): 268-269; Peter Jensen Brown, "Liquor Licenses, Steelworkers and the British Navy—an Unlicensed History and Etymology of 'Speakeasies'," Early Sports and Pop Culture History Blog, August 12, 2014, accessed October 28, 2017 <https://esnpc.blogspot.com/2014/08/liquor-licenses-steelworkers-and.html>. Brown's sources include John Badcock's *Slang, A Dictionary of the Turf, the Ring, The Chase, the Pit of Bon-Ton, and the Vagaries of Life* (London: T. Hughes, 1823): 163. Words related to "speakeasy" such as "hush-shop" appear routinely in dictionaries detailing London's urban slang through the 1800s.
- <sup>22</sup> "Our Newest City," *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 8, 1891.
- <sup>23</sup> City directories and files of the McKeesport Regional History & Heritage Center; Catherine Lynch Hester obituary, *McKeesport Daily News*, August 19, 1926. I am indebted to Ellen Show and the McKeesport Regional History & Heritage Center for this information.
- <sup>24</sup> McKeesport's population more than doubled between 1880 and 1890, from about 8,200 people to nearly 21,000; Walter S. Abbot and William E. Harrison, *The First One Hundred Years of McKeesport: an Historical and Statistical Description of the City From Its Inception Until Its Centennial in 1894*. (McKeesport, Press of the McKeesport Times, 1894): 46, 122.
- <sup>25</sup> Courtesy of Ellen Show and the McKeesport Heritage Center; "Map of the City of McKeesport," *Real Estate Plat-Book of the South-Eastern Vicinity of Pittsburgh, Penna.* (Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins & Co), 1900, Plate 1; the 1880 McKeesport City Directory listed a saloon at 4th and Huey run by W. Busch.
- <sup>26</sup> The story reports that he sold his saloon: *McKeesport Daily News*, December 2, 1885. Whether he sold it to another family member or Kate Hester reacquired it is not certain. It could also have been leased to someone else.
- <sup>27</sup> "Ground to Death," *McKeesport Daily News*, Tuesday evening edition, March 27, 1888; "Squeezed to Death," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, March 28, 1888; coverage of the accident went nationwide, although there seemed to be some confusion as to location. Multiple reports mention the National Rolling Mill at Duncannon (near Harrisburg), but the details, from the nature of the accident to the number of children in the family, are wholly consistent with the events in late March in McKeesport. See, for example, "A Man's Terrible Death," *New York Times*, April 24, 1888; and "His Body Mashed Between Rollers," *Plainfield Daily Press* [New Jersey], April 24, 1888.
- <sup>28</sup> The home's location was described as "Fourth street below Huey"; see "Ground to Death," *McKeesport Daily News*, Tuesday evening edition, March 27, 1888.
- <sup>29</sup> Indeed, thinking of industrial bloodshed of a later sort, some scholars have long argued that saloons were integral to the emergence of labor violence in places such as Haymarket Square (1886) and Homestead (1892); see Christine Sismondo, *American Walks Into a Bar* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011): 166-168.
- <sup>30</sup> Mack Holt, *Alcohol: A Social and Cultural History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006): 153-154. No single scholarly source fully explores Pittsburgh's saloon culture in the nineteenth century. The Germans and Irish dominate most of the early newspaper coverage. Good general sources include Richard Ober and Robert Musson, *200 Years of Brewing in Allegheny County, From the 1750s to the 1950s* (Medina, Oh. Zepp Publications, 2015); and Victor A. Walsh, "'Drowning the Shamrock': Drink, Teetotalism, and the Irish Catholics of Gilded-Age Pittsburgh," *Journal of American Ethnic History* (10: 1 Fall 1990-Winter 1991): 60-79. By the early 1900s, the sphere of "British Isles" in Western Pennsylvania also included a surprising number of Australians. See *First Annual Report – Anti-Saloon League of Allegheny County* (Pittsburgh, 1904): 8-9. Some American Jews working in the alcohol trade offered a connection to the past they left behind in Europe: Marni Davis, *Jews and Booze, Becoming American in the Age of Prohibition* (New York: New York University Press, 2012).
- <sup>31</sup> Some of these families are now documented in collections at the Heinz History Center's Detre Library & Archives. See Eberhardt and Ober Brewery receipts, 1886-1906, #2000.0021; Hespeneheide Family Papers, c. 1860-1930, #MSS 199; and Speyer-Sunstein Family Papers, #MSS 1037. See also Ober and Musson, *200 Years of Brewing in Allegheny County*, and Jack Sullivan, "Solomon Klinordlinger Hit a Home Run in Pittsburgh," Those Pre-Pro Whiskey Men! Blog, January 4, 2014, accessed November 16, 2017 <http://pre-prowhiskeymen.blogspot.com/2014/01/solomon-klinordlinger-hit-home-run-in.html>.
- <sup>32</sup> Madelon Powers, *Faces Along the Bar, Lore and Order in the Workingman's Saloon, 1870-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998): 122.
- <sup>33</sup> The 1877-1878 city directory listed 39 women; the 1884 directory included as many as 75; by 1890 the number was back down to thirty; see J. F. Diffenbacher, *Directory of Pittsburgh & Allegheny for 1877-1878* (Pittsburgh: Thurston & Diffenbacher, 1876): 707-712; J. F. Diffenbacher, *Directory of Pittsburgh and Allegheny Cities* (Pittsburgh: Stevenson & Foster, 1884): 1063-1074; J. F. Diffenbacher, *Directory of Pittsburgh and Allegheny Cities* (Pittsburgh: Stevenson & Foster, 1890): 961-966. By 1910, about fifty women were listed, but the directory combined restaurants and saloons, and many listings only include initials, so the numbers are difficult to verify. *Pittsburgh Directory, 1910* (Pittsburgh: R. L. Polk & Co and R. L. Dudley, 1910): 1946-1951.
- <sup>34</sup> Diffenbacher, *Directory of Pittsburgh & Allegheny for 1877-1878*, 707-712.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., Jane Dickroeger was listed as a widow of German origins in the 1880 U.S. Census. By that point she was supporting a household of five children, aged ten to twenty-two, and one elderly boarder:
- "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch, Allegheny City, Allegheny, Pa', enumeration district ED 16, sheet 414A, Nara Microfilm, accessed November 20, 2017, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MW6Z-S2G>.
- <sup>36</sup> Josiah Strong, ed., *Social Progress, A Yearbook and Encyclopedia of Economic, Industrial, Social and Religious Statistics* (New York: The Baker and Taylor Co. 1904): 108. The data included more than 2,000 female "saloonkeepers" but only 440 "bartenders," perhaps a reflection of fewer women operating as employees of someone else. In 1906-1907, one court session in New York included at least 28 women saloonkeepers arrested for liquor law violations along with 111 men; see Mara L. Keire, *For Business & Pleasure, Red-Light Districts and the Regulation of Vice in the United States* (Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010): 151 n78.
- <sup>37</sup> "The County's Worst Spot," *Pittsburgh Post*, September 10, 1887; The question of whether a deceased husband's license could be directly transferred to his widow with his assets and used for the duration of its portion came up in Philadelphia as well; see "The Transfer of Licenses," *The Times-Philadelphia*, October 20, 1888.
- <sup>38</sup> "Grinding Very Fine," *Pittsburgh Post*, March 24, 1888.
- <sup>39</sup> "License Court Open," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, March 18, 1890.
- <sup>40</sup> "Our Newest City," *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 8, 1891.
- <sup>41</sup> Whether these women were all really trying to run upstanding businesses is a fair question. Sometimes their witnesses and claims were belied by other evidence. In September 1887, for example, Mrs. Zelda Zimmerman applied for a license to continue operating a saloon she had run since her husband's death two years earlier. Although her paperwork claimed that she ran a respectable house, other evidence cited a riot that had taken place at her property as well as her own boast that "she didn't care for prosecution, because she could make enough on Sunday to pay any fine." See "Granted and Refused," *Pittsburgh Post*, September 8, 1887.
- <sup>42</sup> "Purified by Police," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, February 16, 1891.
- <sup>43</sup> "Cupid Breaks Jail," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 2, 1890.
- <sup>44</sup> "Mercy for None," *Pittsburgh Post*, May 20, 1890. This account made the paper's front page. One subtitle blared, "Babies Taken with Guilty Mothers."
- <sup>45</sup> There are many sources that cover the history of the Anti-Saloon League and the politics that led to Prohibition. See, for example, Okrent, *Last Call*, 7-114. Also worth reading: K. Austin Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1985); Thomas Pegasus, *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Publisher, 1998); and Ann-Marie E. Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition: Radicals, Moderates and Social Movement Outcomes* (Durham, N.C. Duke University Press, 2003).
- <sup>46</sup> Henry Neumann, "The Interchurch Report on the Steel Strike," *The Standard* (7:5 January 1921): 132. The date of the report was 1921, but the context of the term was much earlier.



# PITTSBURGH'S *american spirits*

By Leslie Przybylek and  
compiled by Liz Simpson

The passage of the 18th Amendment in 1919 establishing Prohibition was a watershed moment in American history. When it went into effect in 1920—one of the most far-reaching efforts at social engineering in the United States—Prohibition's supporters celebrated the coming of a new age of sobriety and prosperity. Thirteen years later, under a storm of public outcry, it became the only amendment ever to be repealed.

How did it happen? Prohibition was the culmination of decades of American debate over alcohol and temperance. In Western Pennsylvania, liquor had been a catalyst for civic dissent since the Whiskey Rebellion erupted out of a taxation dispute in 1791–1794. In Pittsburgh and nationwide, waves of temperance reform rose and fell starting in the early 1800s. These efforts picked up steam in the 1870s as the rise of industry and immigration accelerated changes in American society and opened greater divides between the nation's rural and urban areas.

One of those rifts focused on the saloon, which came to be regarded as the greatest evil in the anti-alcohol crusade. In industrial cities such as Pittsburgh, certain ethnic and religious communities, especially the Germans, Irish, Italians, and Jews, were heavily involved in the saloon and liquor business, leading more established generations to view ethnic usage of saloons as “un-American.” Meanwhile, many women viewed the saloon's consumption of men's paychecks and time as a threat to their homes and families. They found a voice in the temperance debate that would eventually support Prohibition and women's suffrage. Both viewpoints played into the coalition that secured passage of the 18th Amendment.

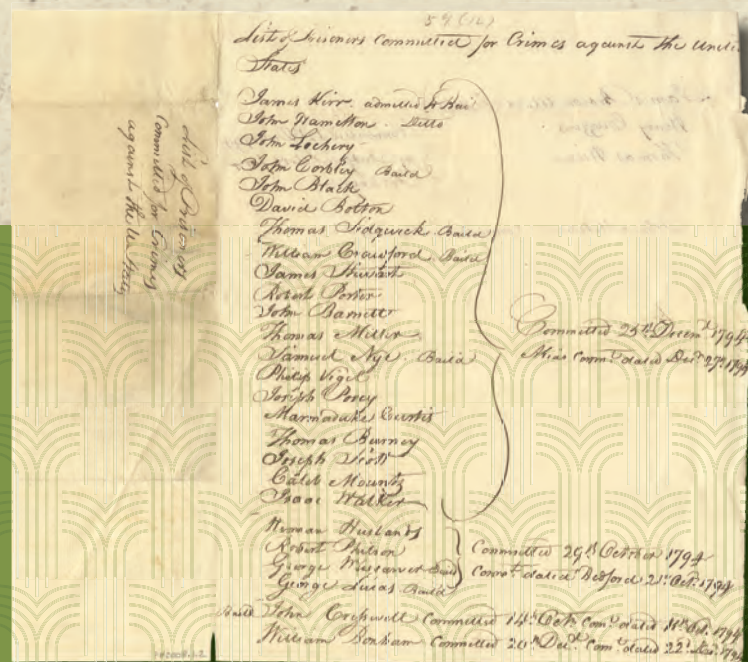
From the start, Prohibition was a mix of contradictions. While the production, sale,

importation, and transportation of alcohol were banned, drinking or possessing alcohol was never illegal. Legislation shaped what was considered “moral” behavior, but it actually fostered an increasing disrespect for the law. Enforcement was chronically underfunded. The effect was far-flung, from driving citizens to make bathtub gin to encouraging the expansion of organized crime and redefining the role of American government in people's lives. As ordinary citizens rebelled against the law, Pittsburgh earned a reputation as one the “wettest” places in the United States.

The following is a selection of artifacts that can be seen in the exhibition, *American Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*, that illustrate the alcohol debate and the era of Prohibition in Western Pennsylvania.

List of Prisoners from the Whiskey Rebellion. The list includes Philip ‘Vigle’ (Wigle), the namesake of today's Wigle Whiskey distillery in the Strip District. Wigle was one of ten men (of the 24 indicted) that were brought up on federal charges of treason after the Whiskey Rebellion ended. He and John Mitchell were convicted and sentenced to death by hanging but were later pardoned by George Washington.

PHMC, Fort Pitt Collection, L2010.20.283.





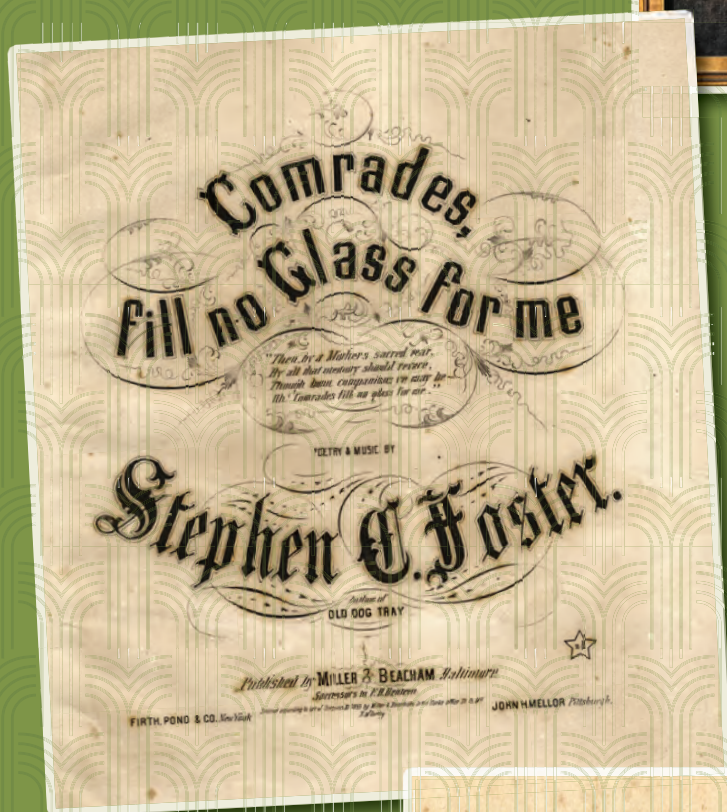
Artist David Gilmour Blythe created this painting of a boy sipping wine from a leaking barrel to critique Pittsburgh's growing immigrant population. Drinking alcohol helped shape the identities of ethnic groups in 19th-century Pittsburgh. Who sipped red wine here in the late 1850s? While fine wines such as champagne were associated with Pittsburgh's upper classes, inexpensive red table wine was linked to the city's working-class European immigrants. The boy's tattered clothing marked him as a street urchin, a subject Blythe painted frequently. To the artist, the boy symbolized the growing danger of Pittsburgh's "uncontrollable" immigrant communities.

*Sipping Wine*, David Gilmour Blythe, 1856-1860. Courtesy of the Duquesne Club. Photo by Liz Simpson.

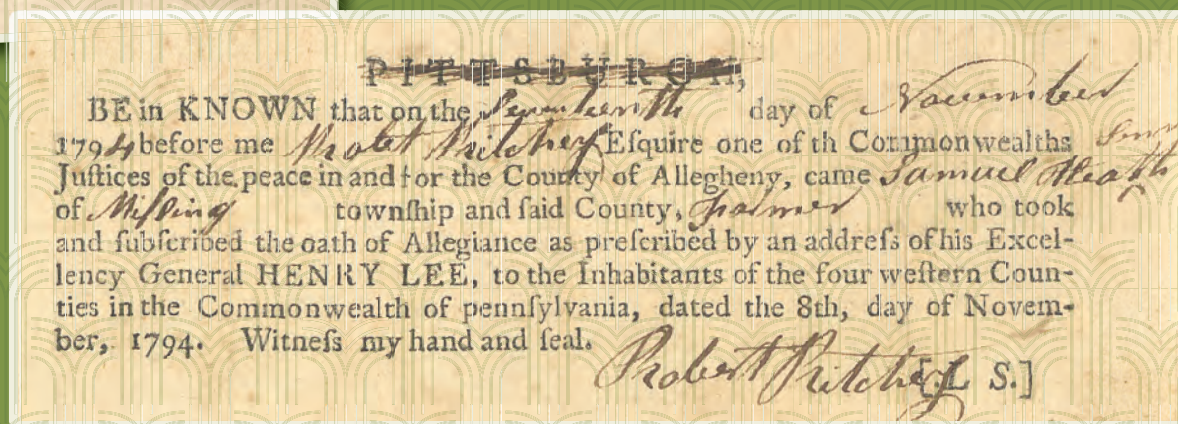


Even the region's most famous citizens could not escape the temperance debate. Stephen Collins Foster (1829–1864) wrote just one temperance song out of his more than 200 works but advocates of the cause often set their words to his most popular melodies. Stephen's father and brother were active participants in the temperance movement, but some people believe that alcohol may have contributed to Stephen's mysterious death in a New York City hotel in 1864.

Stephen Collins Foster "Comrades Fill No Glass for Me," 1855.  
University of Pittsburgh Library System, Center for American Music, Foster Hall Collection.



Whiskey Rebellion Loyalty Oath.  
PHMC, Fort Pitt Collection, L2010.20.320.





## A Rising Tide of Crime

Many American cities witnessed an increase in crime by the early 1920s, including Pittsburgh. Why was there so much crime in the 1920s and 1930s? Prohibition ushered in a perfect storm: many people outwardly defied the 18th Amendment and the Volstead Act, creating a tolerance for lawlessness that bled into other activities. Increased bootlegging across state lines encouraged the formation of national crime syndicates. Many local police departments refused to aggressively enforce the Volstead Act, although they did seek to combat other crime. For some people, bootlegging was the entry point to greater involvement with other criminal activities such as gambling, bookmaking, and robbery.



**Colt Police Positive Special  
Revolver and Colt .38 Official Police  
Revolver, c. 1930s.**

HHC Collections, gift of the Pittsburgh Police Historical Association,  
2011.127.85, 2011.27.101. Photo by Liz Simpson.

## Life in the Fast Lane

The automobile put much of the roar into the “Roaring Twenties.” Cars gave people the freedom and flexibility to come and go as they pleased, especially young men and women. Free from chaperones, they could travel one of America’s increasing number of paved highways and get far away from prying eyes. Between 1920 and 1930, the number of registered drivers in this country jumped from eight to 23 million. Many were women, whose preferences increasingly influenced the styles and colors of cars.

Founded to build wagons for miners and military uses, the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company shifted to making cars in the early 1900s. By 1920 they enjoyed a reputation for durable and powerful cars that could stand up to years of rough use. Folklore holds that Sheriff’s Departments in some states preferred buying Studebakers.

### Studebaker Special Six Touring Sedan, 1922.

Courtesy of a Friend of the Museum, L2018.4.7.  
Photo by Nicole Lauletta.







**Thompson submachine gun, 1929.** Originally purchased by the City of Pittsburgh to be used by the police force, this weapon symbolized the city's response to national fears about rising crime in the 1920s. By acquiring this gun, Pittsburgh gave its police force firepower that was already being used by criminals across the country. Although the true number of Thompson submachine guns toted by criminals was probably far less than the perception, they very quickly became associated with gangsters and bandits. HHC Collections, gift of the Pittsburgh Police Historical Association, 2011.127.63. Photo by Nicole Lauletta.

## Criminal's Best Friend?

The Ford V-8 symbolized the challenge faced by law enforcement agencies trying to catch the new kinds of criminals who emerged during Prohibition. Cars offered a fast getaway and access to a widening network of roads. Small time bootleggers, as well as organized criminal gangs, found cars to be perfect for

conducting their activities across state lines. In 1932, Ford Motor Company unveiled its Flathead V-8, a powerful yet affordable engine; the cars themselves came to be known as simply a Ford V-8. It was the first widely available "performance car" and accelerated from 0 to 50 mph in under 11 seconds,

making it the car of choice among criminals (and police too). The V-8 outlasted Prohibition and became famous as the vehicle favored by public enemies such as Clyde Barrow and John Dillinger.



**Ford Model 18 V-8 Sedan, 1932.**

Courtesy of a Member of The Early Ford V8 Club of America, Pittsburgh Group #48, L2018.10.1. Photo by Nicole Lauletta.





#### Silver powder compact, 1920s.

HHC Collections, transfer from Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 93.105.292 a.  
Photo by Nicole Lauletta.

#### Black dress with Art Deco inspired floral pattern c. 1925.

HHC Collections, gift of Twentieth Century Club, 96.2.9.  
Photo by Nicole Lauletta.

#### Brown georgette dress with brown, blue, and pink beading, c. 1925.

HHC Collections, transfer from Pittsburgh History and Landmarks, gift of Martha M. Semlak, 93.105.287. Photo by Nicole Lauletta.

## Fuss over the Flapper

She cut her hair, rolled her stockings, and drank and danced. Some called her independent. Others found her reckless. Social critics feared she symbolized the downfall of the nation. Who was the flapper? She was as young as 16 but most often between 18 and 25. In the aftermath of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote, she threw off the conventions of the previous era. Many scholars believe she was youth's response to the upheaval of World War I.

However, she was rarer than the headlines might suggest. Most young women, especially in rural America, picked up pieces of the flapper's style without fully engaging in the life that made the papers. Many women in Pittsburgh's industrial neighborhoods didn't have the money to live the flapper lifestyles, nor would most conservative ethnic families tolerate such behavior.



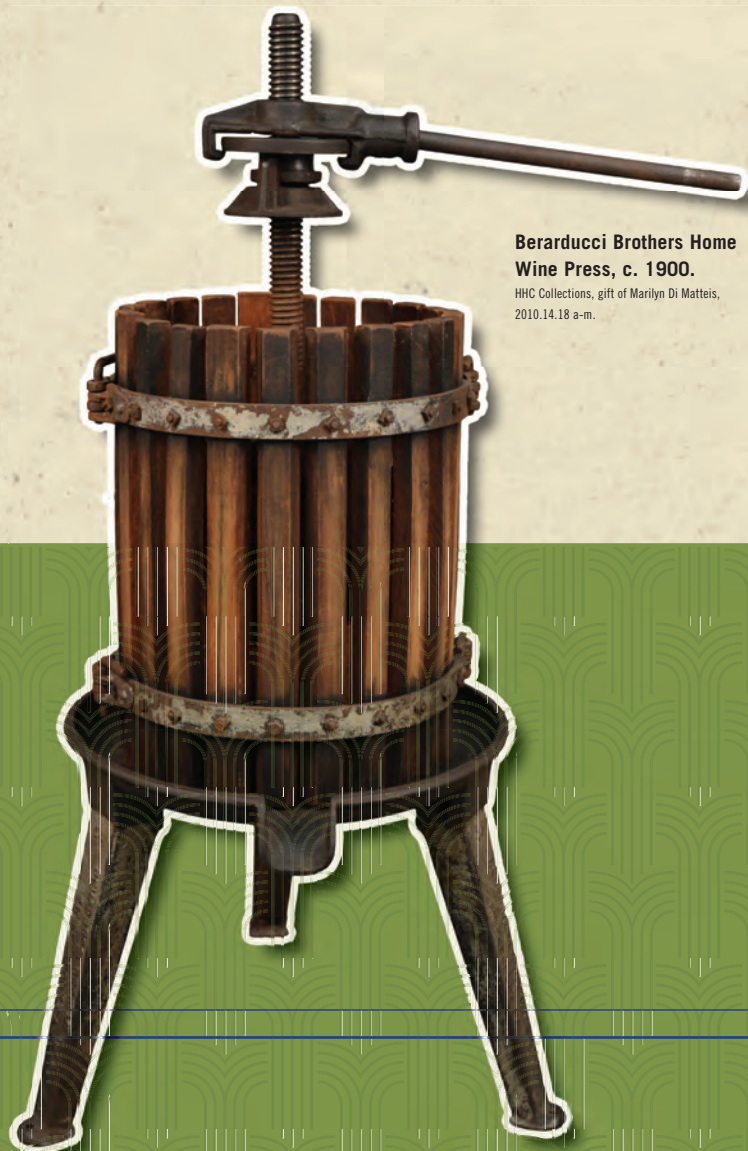
#### Berarducci Brothers Home Wine Press, c. 1900.

HHC Collections, gift of Marilyn Di Matteis, 2010.14.18 a-m.

## Do-It-Yourself in the 1920s

From Italians in Bloomfield to African Americans in the Hill District, many ethnic Pittsburgh families had long produced enough wine, beer, or moonshine for their own use. Sometimes they sold a bit of the extra supply to their neighbors. Prohibition motivated people to expand these kitchen industries into larger operations. Enforcement agents often confiscated 50-gallon, 100-gallon, or even 200-gallon stills hidden underneath homes or in garages in residential neighborhoods.

Wine was a special case. Prohibition laws allowed each home to make 200 gallons for personal use. Home winemaking exploded in popularity, with many Pittsburghers trying it for the first time, especially in the early 1930s after California wine bricks—blocks of condensed grape concentrate to make juice or (illegally) wine—hit the local markets.





### Fort Pitt Malt Tonic Bottle, 1920s.

HHC Collections, gift of John DeSantis, 2017.103.2.

Photo by Nicole Lauletta.

### Tambellini's "Elixir China Cheli" Bottle, c. 1920.

HHC Collections, gift of Joseph D'Andrea, 93.77.1.

Photo by Liz Simpson.



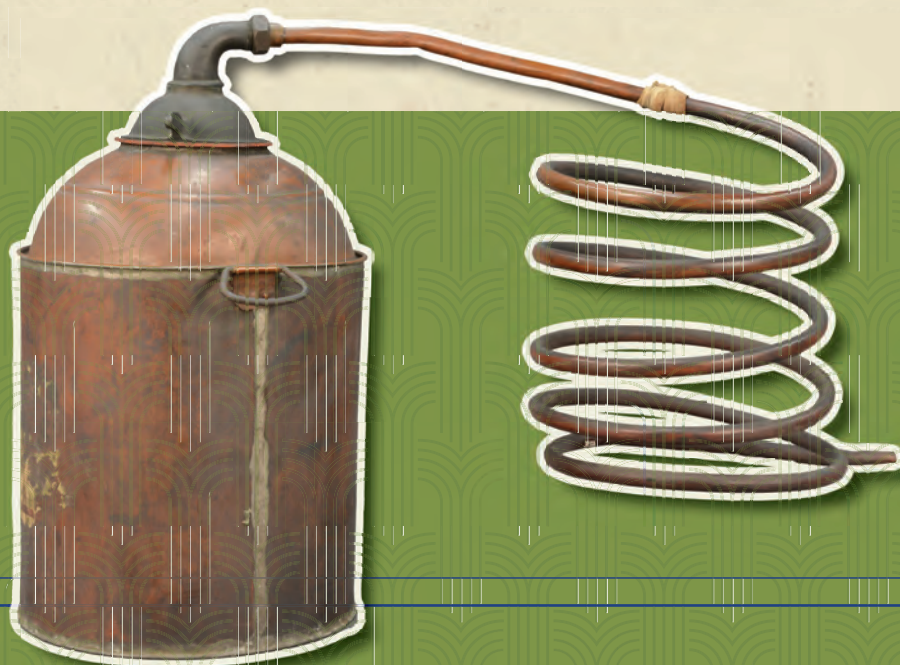
## Tonic and Ice Cream

Prohibition inspired creative product development and spurred new uses for existing products. Some Pittsburgh breweries survived Prohibition by switching to dairy products and ice cream novelties, items that could use existing brewery refrigeration. Others turned to "malt tonics," syrupy extracts of malt and hops that still contained a small amount of alcohol (up to 3.75 percent).

Some "health tonics" existed before Prohibition but their sales took on new meaning during the 1920s. This included Tambellini's China-Cheli Elixir, recommended as a "good stimulant, blood purifier, an aid to digestion, nervous condition, and malarial fever."

### Todd's Tonic Bottle and Box, c. 1920.

HHC Collections, gift of Joseph Miller, 90.29.13 a,b. Photo by Liz Simpson.



### Homemade still found near Homestead, Pennsylvania, 1920s.

HHC Collections, gift of Joseph S. Doczy, 91.5.1 a,b.

Photo by Nicole Lauletta.





# THE COLOSSUS OF LAWRENCEVILLE

THE COMPLETE STORY

By Tom Powers and James Wudarczyk

**For nearly a century, Lawrenceville's Doughboy statue has been the "Colossus of Rhodes" for one of Pittsburgh's largest neighborhoods. The details of the dedication of its replacement base containing the Sixth Ward Honor Roll have been lost to history—until now.**



The Doughboy statue as shown in this view from Penn Avenue was done in the “contrapposto” style (counterpoise in Italian), similar to Michelangelo’s “David” statue. Sculptor Allen Newman also used this relaxed pose technique in his “The Hiker” statue located next to the Frick Fine Arts Building in Oakland.

Photo by Tom Powers.

**Lawrenceville’s  
Doughboy colossus  
is the symbol of the  
neighborhood, worthy of  
representing the young  
men who marched off to  
two world wars.**







**"The Forks of the Road,"** photographed in 1902 to show the streetcar congestions at the intersection of Penn Avenue, Butler Street, and 34th Street.

*Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, December 8, 1902, p. 7.

If ever a city neighborhood was blessed with an iconic gateway monument, then Pittsburgh's Lawrenceville is it. The "Doughboy" statue has greeted travelers coming east to the intersection of Butler Street and Penn Avenue for nearly a century. Not nearly as large as the fabled 110-foot-high Colossus of Rhodes,<sup>1</sup> Lawrenceville's 28-foot-high (with base) Doughboy colossus is nonetheless the symbol of the neighborhood, worthy of representing the young men who marched off to two world wars. It also represents the neighborhood's resolve to persevere in times of prosperity and adversity. The most definitive account of Lawrenceville's icon was compiled in 2004 for the Lawrenceville Historical Society's second published volume, *A Doughboy's Tale ... and More Lawrenceville Stories*.<sup>2</sup> Since then, new information has come to light, and with the passing of more than a decade, it was time to revisit the subject.

Just how the Doughboy came to be is a story worthy of itself. It was never intended that a monument honoring veterans be

erected. Rather, the people of the Lawrenceville community got caught up in the patriotic fervor of World War I. Wanting to show their support for the men in service, they conceived the idea of holding a bazaar to raise money. In 1918, the Lawrenceville Board of Trade (later known as the Arsenal Board of Trade) organized a fundraiser in the form of a carnival to be held in Arsenal Park. Being involved with a variety of civic functions, the Board of Trade was also instrumental in organizing "community sings" that were held in Arsenal Park, Carnegie Library, and other places in the neighborhood. The musical gatherings were meant to boost morale while so many of the neighborhood's young men were facing suffering and death far from home.<sup>3</sup>

Since the war ended before the money could reach the troops, it was suggested that Lawrenceville emulate other communities and use the funds to erect a monument to honor its troops. To meet the goal of \$10,000, additional fundraising took place in 1919.<sup>4</sup>

The monument was to honor the troops of the Fifth Zone, which comprised the city's

Sixth Ward. The Art Commission of the City of Pittsburgh held a special meeting on February 25, 1920, and approved plans for the statue. The application to the Art Commission suggested the location be at the junction of Penn Avenue and Butler Street.<sup>5</sup>

The man responsible for the statue's realistic detailing was the New York sculptor Allen George Newman (1875–1940), who was the recommended artist for the project. Newman studied sculpting under John Quincy Adams Ward and later attended New York's Academy of Design. His many works included "The Hiker," a Spanish American soldier in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh called "the best bronze soldier in America";<sup>6</sup> "The Triumph of Peace" in Atlanta, Georgia; "The Pioneer" in Salem, Oregon; "Night and Day" in the Harriman Bank in New York; and "Sacrifice," which is also in Pittsburgh.<sup>7</sup>

As for "Doughboy," Newman designed the statue of bronze at a height of eight feet, six inches on a granite pedestal seven feet, three inches high.<sup>8</sup> Three Doughboys were cast. One was shipped to Pittsburgh, the second





The photo that started the search. Taken May 4, 1947, this shows the new statue base dedication. Photo by Robert Plonski (1890-1948) from the third floor of Plonski's Tavern at 3405 Butler Street.

Photo courtesy Phyllis Renda.





After a mere 25 years, the Doughboy's original concrete base was starting to crumble. Seen here are Frank "Babe" Foley with his friend John, c. 1946.

Photo courtesy Phyllis Renda.

one was sold to Cliffside, New Jersey, and the third statue was retained by Newman for his studio. That last one was eventually sold by his son, Thomas Allan Newman, to William Perry of Nyack, New York. Later it was resold to Dewitt Gurnell, president of the Rhinebeck Historical Society, and donated to the town of Rhinebeck, New York. A critic claimed that monument "to be the finest production Mr. Newman has designed and executed."<sup>9</sup>

Dedicatory events for the Lawrenceville monument were scheduled for May 30,

1921.<sup>10</sup> Dorothy Ziegler and Izola Wolfe—both students at the Lawrence Public School on 37th and Charlotte Streets—were selected to unveil the statue. In a personal interview in 1997, Dorothy Ziegler Wahl vividly remembered the event. She said that many people objected to the site of Butler Street and Penn Avenue because in those days that corner had a magnificent round streetcar shelter and a public comfort station. People were afraid that erecting the monument would lead to the destruction of both amenities, and the shelter

**Since the statue is so prominent in the community and is a great piece of artwork by a renowned sculptor, it was astonishing that the record of the dedication date was so difficult to find.**

was indeed removed. As tensions rose, some men threatened to bring their guns and stop the ceremony. Dorothy's mother was naturally concerned and was going to pull Dorothy from the unveiling. At the last minute, Mrs. Ziegler had a change of heart and decided to allow her daughter to participate.<sup>11</sup>

Aside from a few demonstrators, the unveiling went exceptionally well. Twenty thousand people showed up for the largest ceremony<sup>12</sup> in Lawrenceville's history. A parade through the neighborhood opened the ceremony. As the youngsters pulled aside the curtain to unveil the monument, the participating bands struck up the "Star Spangled Banner" and a wireless radio operator contacted a local battery of the 107th Field Artillery waiting at the old Allegheny Arsenal grounds. The battery immediately commenced firing a 21-gun salute. A wreath was laid by Mrs. William Gilbert, who had lost her son at the battle of Chateau-Thierry.<sup>13</sup>

By the early 1940s, the Doughboy statue was little more than 20 years old but was already showing signs of neglect. A piece in the *Pittsburgh Press* noted that the statue was "chipped and cracked in countless places and children romp up and down the memorial."<sup>14</sup> Another publication in April 13, 1944, stated that the statue was "grimy from City's soot."<sup>15</sup>

Shortly after World War II ended, the *Pittsburgh Press* wrote of the Doughboy, "He was supposed to look tired when he was



moulded, but not as tired as he looks since Christmas.... To his already weighty pack has been added a discarded Christmas tree, upside down. There are also the tattered remnants of an American flag tied to his bayonet, possibly a hangover from V-J Day.”<sup>16</sup>

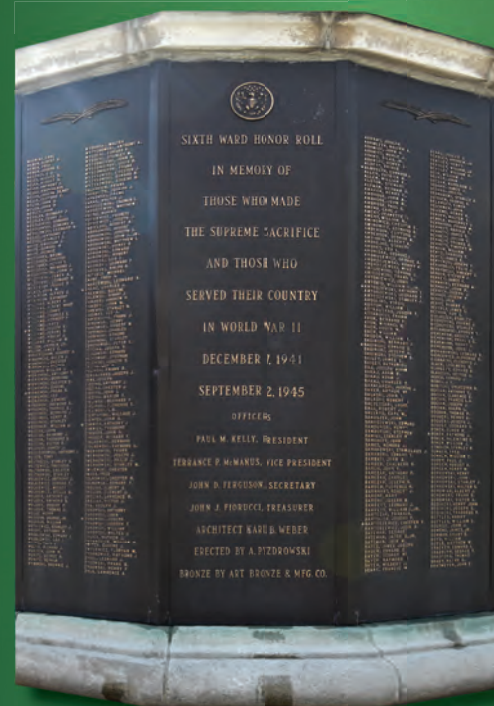
At the end of World War II, two citizens of Lawrenceville’s Sixth Ward became the driving force to add the names of the Sixth Ward’s World War II veterans to the pedestal, giving the statue even more significance as a military shrine. These two men were Joe Dobbs and John “Kiddo” Fiorucci, who was the magistrate for the Sixth Ward and the Democratic ward chairman. The architect on the project was Karl B. Weber (see sidebar), and the honor roll was erected by Anthony Pyzdrowski. Bronze plates were made by the Art Bronze and Manufacturing Company.<sup>17</sup>

Although there is ample documentation relating to the creation of the World War I monument, until recently all the Lawrenceville Historical Society knew about the addition of the bronze plaques with the names of the

World War II veterans from the Sixth Ward was that they were added “sometime after the Second World War.”

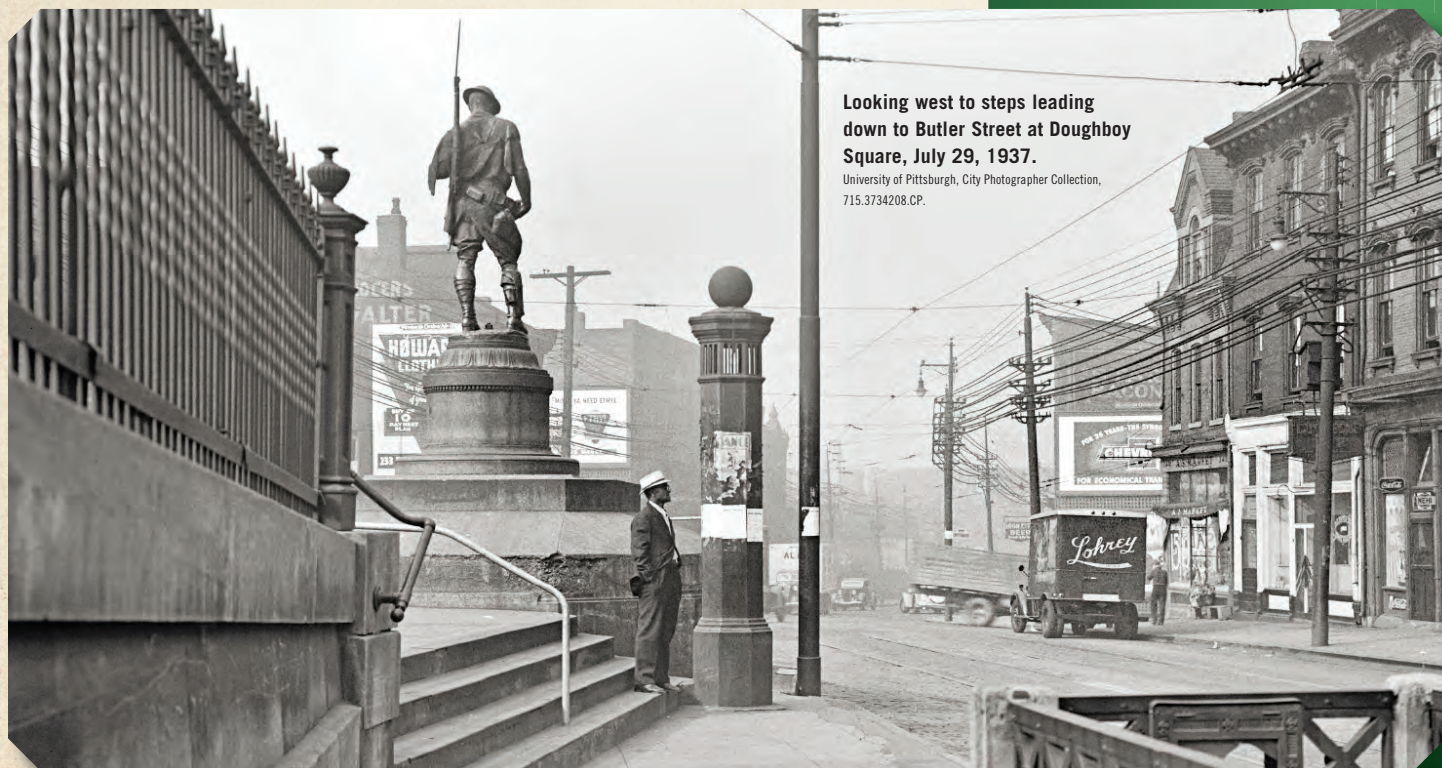
Between 2015 and 2017, Lawrenceville Historical Society’s chief researchers—Tom Powers, Jim Wudarczyk, and Jude Wudarczyk—made an exhaustive search of the archives of the University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, the Senator John Heinz History Center, Carnegie Library, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial, government agencies, newspapers, and other sources in an attempt to establish a date when the original statue was altered. Since the statue is so prominent in the community and is a great piece of artwork by a renowned sculptor, it was astonishing that the record of the dedication date was so difficult to find. Even the City of Pittsburgh’s Art Commission did not have any information in its files.

Powers suggested that the team look into the biographies of Weber and Pyzdrowski—the



The bronze plaques on the statue's base (aka plinth) list over 3,000 residents from Lawrenceville's Sixth Ward who served in World War II. Those who lost their lives are marked with a star.

Photo by Tom Powers.



Looking west to steps leading down to Butler Street at Doughboy Square, July 29, 1937.

University of Pittsburgh, City Photographer Collection, 715.3734208.CP.



# “Dutch” Weber

## From Sailing to Swimming Pools to Postage Stamps

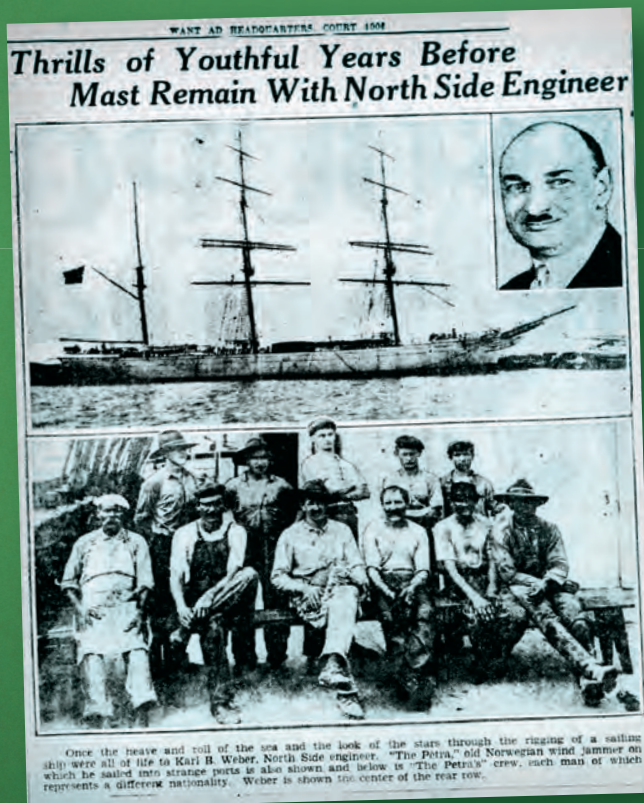
Karl Boromaeus Weber (June 9, 1892–May 11, 1955) was born in Munich, Germany. He graduated from Munich’s Royal Gizella College of Modern Arts and Science in 1908.<sup>36</sup> Weber’s earliest jobs were not in architecture but as a seaman aboard Swedish and Norwegian sailing vessels. He also served a brief stint with the United States Coast Guard, but he came back to the building arts and eventually became Carnegie Tech night school’s first architectural graduate.<sup>37</sup> For many years, he served as Supervising Engineer of Allegheny County’s Department of Parks and is credited with designing the North Park Swimming Pool, which at the time was the largest circulating pool in the United States. (It circulated 2.3 million gallons of water a day.) Under his direction in 1948, the South Park swimming pool was remodeled. The September 1950 issue of the architectural digest *Charette* noted, “Truly, he deserves the title of America’s foremost swimming pool designer.” The same article noted that Weber “reveals his true artistic ability as a zither player” (this at a time when Anton Karas’s “The Third Man Theme” made the zither a popular instrument).

His obituary, which appeared in the June 1955 issue of *Charette*, also credits Weber with designing many lakes, dams, and commercial structures, including the John Kappel Swiss Chalet. It noted that Weber designed the Thirtieth Street electric hearth for Crucible Steel Company and one for the company’s Norwalk, Ohio, plant. In addition to his many

engineering and architectural projects, Weber was the historian for the American Air Mail Society and author of the book *History of Governmental Operated Air Mail*. Although other accomplishments were mentioned, there was no reference in his obituary to Weber’s role in adding the World War II honor roll memorial to Allen George Newman’s great masterpiece “The Doughboy.”

Photo montage from page 6 of the February 12, 1930, issue of *The Pittsburgh Press*.

Photoscan from Newspapers.com.



architects responsible for the project. Powers found the following reference to Weber in the September 1950 issue of *Charette*, the journal of the Pittsburgh Architectural Club:

A war memorial at the corner of Penn and Butler in Lawrenceville is the design of County Architect-Engineer Karl “Dutch” Weber. The day of the recent dedication was not a memorable one for Dutch. Discovering that his name chiseled in stone on the monument was misspelled “Carl” instead of “Karl,” he sulked throughout the ceremonies. Still annoyed at the mistake several days later, Weber called the stone contractor and asked what could be done about it. He was told that the “C” could be changed to “K” for only \$50. But since the Memorial Committee isn’t interested in any alterations this soon and since “Dutch” doesn’t value his vanity at any more than \$37.50—at the most—he’s brushed the whole thing from his mind.<sup>18</sup>

Based on the above reference, it appeared that the dedication took place sometime in 1950. Looking at microfilmed copies of Pittsburgh newspapers in 1950 proved futile.

Researchers then turned their attention to Anthony Pyzdrowski, the other architect on the project. Prior to his death in 1964, Pyzdrowski was credited with working on many Catholic buildings. Among his many architectural accomplishments were the Auberle Memorial or Boys Town in McKeesport, Holy Family Institute buildings in Emsworth, Saint Valentine’s School and Church in Bethel Park, Holy Family Church in Lawrenceville, Saint Norbert Church and Convent in Overbrook, Holy Ghost High School in West View, and a number of convents, motherhouses, and academies.<sup>19</sup> Sadly, his obituary did not make any mention of his contribution to the erection of the bronze plaques on the Doughboy statue.

As for Art Bronze Company, this institution was housed in a building at 37th Street and Liberty Avenue. The building suffered damage from a fire and was razed



early in 2015. When Jim Wudarczyk found the name of the company's treasurer, he tried to contact him but found that the phone number had been disconnected.

The research team was joined by Lawrenceville Historical Society member Linda Kemmerling and began the arduous task of reviewing microfilm copies of Pittsburgh newspapers. Jim Wudarczyk continued reaching out to various government agencies and universities for leads. When Jim Wudarczyk and Joann Cantrell were working on the *Lawrenceville* book for Arcadia Publishing, former Lawrenceville resident Phyllis Renda graciously allowed the use of a photograph of the dedication of the World War II plaques that a family member had taken.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, the photo was not dated.

Powers was convinced that the picture was a key to solving the Doughboy mystery. First, he studied the various models of automobiles in the Renda photo. Jude Wudarczyk recruited Edward Pearsick's help. Pearsick dated one of the cars as a 1947 model, but this did not lead to any major discoveries. Next, Powers zeroed in on a billboard advertisement for Kaufmann's Department Store in the photo's background.<sup>21</sup> He noticed that the Kaufmann logo shown on the billboard had only been used in their newspaper advertising between March 3, 1947, and May 27, 1948. Although the potential date of the photo had been narrowed, the research team was losing hope of ever finding the missing piece of the puzzle.

Then on Wednesday, March 8, 2017, while doing an internet search, Kemmerling received a link to an advertisement for Newspapers.com services. The ad showed a thumbnail page from the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* that contained a photo with a headline reading "Sixth Ward Unveils its Honor Roll." This ad was generated based on key phrases Kemmerling typed into her search: "Sixth Ward" and "Honor Roll." Searches by the other

## Sixth Ward Unveils its Honor Roll



THE DOUGHBOY, a statue which has stood at Butler street and Penn avenue as a memorial to those who served in World War I, now stands on a new base of marble and limestone which supports bronze tablets listing names of the 3,100 Sixth Ward residents in service in

World War II, including 53 who died in action. Dedication ceremonies, attended by about 4,000, followed a parade which formed at Twenty-seventh street and Liberty avenues. Council President Thomas E. Kilgallen was among the speakers. The project cost \$11,000.

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* featured the new base dedication of May 4, 1947, in its next day's edition.

Photoscan from Newspapers.com.

team members didn't use this combination. The page's tiny photograph showed a large crowd of people by what appeared to be the Doughboy statue. Kemmerling made note of the date, May 5, 1947.

Not having a Newspapers.com account, Kemmerling immediately raced off to the microfilm department of the Carnegie Library in Oakland. There on page 17 of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* was the missing link. Under the photograph of the dedicatory service was a brief caption that noted the following:

THE DOUGHBOY, a statue which has stood at Butler street and Penn avenue as a memorial to those who served in World War I, now stands on a new base of marble and limestone which supports bronze tablets listing names of the 3,100 Sixth Ward residents in service in

World War II, including 53 who died in action. Dedication ceremonies, attended by about 4,000, followed a parade which formed at Twenty-seventh street and Liberty avenues. Council President Thomas K. Kilgallen was among the speakers. The project cost \$11,000.<sup>22</sup>

The *Pittsburgh Press*, on May 4, 1947, provided further evidence of the dedication date. Headlines read: "6th Ward Honors Veterans Today." While the article contained some of the information reported in the *Post-Gazette*, the *Press* noted that the parade was scheduled to start at 2:00 p.m. "Members of six military posts will be among 3,000 veterans, who will march. Mayor David L. Lawrence, County Commission Chairman John Kane and Dr. A.L. Lewin of the Board of Education will speak." The source also credited Paul M.



The monument was to honor the troops of the Fifth zone, which comprised the city's Sixth Ward.







The "Fork in the Road" was greatly enhanced with the Doughboy guarding the "Gateway to Lawrenceville." Penn Avenue and Butler Street at 33rd Street, October 31, 1932.

University of Pittsburgh, City Photographer Collection, 715.3217591.CP.

Kelly as the general chairman.<sup>23</sup>

It is ironic that within a few short years following the dedication of the World War II bronze plates that drew a crowd of 4,000 on May 4, 1947, the event was largely forgotten.

One misconception that this search corrected in the 2004 article is that "sometime during the late 1960s or 1970, metallic plates were added to cover the pedestal. These plates were said to include the names that had appeared on the pedestal. Some residents contended that three names—Russell Forsythe, Joseph Filipski, and Joseph Kruszcwski appeared on the pedestal, but are not listed on the plates."<sup>24</sup> The information in the articles that appeared in the three 1947 newspapers confirmed that the names were never carved in stone and later covered with bronze plates. The plates are very visible in the *Post-Gazette* photograph of May 5, 1947, and in the Renda photograph.

By the 1980s the Doughboy had taken on a sickly greenish hue due to pollution and age. The area around the Doughboy, like the statue, was showing signs of decay. By the middle of the decade, the Lawrenceville Citizens Council took it upon itself to encourage a revival of the area, which they called "Doughboy Square."<sup>25</sup> Mayor Richard Caliguiri supported the plans for the revitalization of Lawrenceville.<sup>26</sup>

The refurbishing was done by Donatelli Monuments in Ross Township. According to manager Fred Donatelli, the statue was stripped of its patina using the glass bead method. He said that this is the recommended method for stripping bronze statues; it is the safest, better for the metal, easier and less expensive than other methods such as sandblasting or chemical cleaning.

Once the patina, paint, and corrosion were removed, solder seams became visible. This always happens when bronze statues are stripped. Donatelli explained that many people think large sculptures such as the Doughboy

are molded as one piece, but, in fact, they are forged in sections. The sections are then soldered in place to make the statue whole.<sup>27</sup>

Donatelli went on to explain that the statue was then painted a dark brown, which was the color selected by the committee. Dark brown is usually recommended for the background of veteran honor rolls with the names being painted bronze. This provides a good contrast, making the names easy to read. The final step was to coat the statue and nameplates with a polyurethane lacquer.<sup>28</sup>

A restoration expert from a leading American museum, who wished not to be identified, disagreed with Donatelli's assessment and contended that glass bead peening is not the accepted method. It can be very aggressive and is possibly the reason that the welds were revealed. The expert further maintained that normally, high-pressure water washing and scrubbing with a stiff bristle brush are sufficient. The statue should have been chemically patinated and then waxed and buffed as a protective coating. The washing and rewaxing must be done on a yearly basis to preserve the finish.<sup>29</sup>

The original color of bronze is a dark brown or black, unless otherwise designed by the artist, who may choose to use chemicals that give different color variations. The Doughboy was probably originally dark but not painted.

The corner was extended to allow for a flower bed, which was maintained for many years by Grace Lafakis, Barbara Merlina, and Emelia Crowley. The extension was also necessary to provide proper lighting. Sargent Electric donated all the lighting.<sup>30</sup>

Not everyone agreed with the Lawrenceville Citizens Council's plans because the end product would detract from the statue's appearance. More criticism came from the Arsenal Board of Trade, which had been excluded from the project. That board



## A-18 Pittsburgh Press, Sun., June 19, 1983

### Jail's Legendary Lovers' Escape May Become Film

By AL DONALSON

The 100-year-old Allegheny County Jail, a landmark that has been the scene of legal and political storming because of overcrowding, may soon be immortalized by Hollywood.

Edgar Sherrock Productions, a small, independent, Los Angeles-based film company, had seven staff members touring the institution last weekend with representatives of the state's Bureau of Motion Picture and Television Development.

"They (Sherrock) had a writer, a producer, a location manager and others who spent the better part of Saturday afternoon touring the jail. They seemed to be impressed with the jail as a location and said they would get back to us," said Warden Charles Konakiewicz.

Sherrock might film the historic, but true, saga of the "Biddle Boys and Mrs. Soffel," which in 1982 was described as "the most romantic and sensational tragedy this country has ever known."

The incident, which began at the jail, involved Catherine Soffel, 35, a mother of four, who averaged quarters at the jail with her husband, Peter, who was warden.

Mrs. Soffel described as having "backseeth" fell to love with one of the inmates, Edward Biddle, 24, who was with his brother, John, 28, was waiting to be hanged for the death of a Mount Washington grocer and a county detective.

Arthur Pierson, in a book about the incident, wrote:

she's evidently grown tired of Mrs. Soffel started reading the Bible to the boys. Everyone told the warden something funny was going on, but he refused to believe it. He thought she was just being charitable.

"What she was really doing was reading loud enough to drown out the sound of them sawing at the bars of their cells. She wore a full skirt to cover up the work."

Mrs. Soffel's father, Conrad Dieckman, was the deputy warden at the jail. He did not like his daughter's associations with the Biddies and told her he thought she was doing more than reading the Bible. Dieckman told her to stop her activities, but Mrs. Soffel paid no heed to his warning.

On a bitter January night, the Biddies made their escape with a gun slipped to them by Mrs. Soffel. They wounded several guards and locked them into a cell.

Mrs. Soffel stole her husband's overcoat for Ed Biddle and the three headed for Canada.

They stole a sleigh in what is now the North Hills and staged a running gun battle with pursuing police, including Detective Charles "Buck" McCreary, who later was elected a county commissioner.

The escape was covered in the hills near Butler, where John was shot 18 times. Ed shot a down town and Mrs. Soffel once through the breast.

The Biddies died the next day in the Butler County Jail.

"We would not have been captured if we had not stuck to the woman," John Biddle told auditors.



Lawrenceville Doughboy Not Forgotten

The sometimes neglected World War I doughboy at Penn Avenue and Butler Street, was rededicated in a ceremony yesterday attended by Mayor Richard

A celebration of the completion was scheduled for Saturday, June 18, 1983. All this was followed by a great parade with someone dressed as a World War I doughboy and other marchers in Native American attire.

Doughboy rededication June 18, 1983, from the June 19, 1983 issue of *The Pittsburgh Press*. Photo by Jeff Schrier.

Photoscan from Newspapers.com.

believed that it should have been given some say in the project since it was the successor to the Lawrenceville Board of Trade, which had guided the community the Doughboy.<sup>31</sup>

In a letter to the editor of the *Pittsburgh Press*, Vernon Gay, coauthor of "Discovering Pittsburgh's Sculpture," also raised the question of whether the Doughboy memorial was damaged by the restoration. He wrote, "Unfortunately, the good intentions of this particular local committee will not compensate for any damage which may have been done to our sculpture."<sup>32,33</sup>

A celebration of the completion was scheduled for Saturday, June 18, 1983. All this was followed by a great parade with someone dressed as a World War I doughboy and other marchers in Native American attire.<sup>34</sup>

Regardless if one agrees with the supporters of the renovation or not, the event did get people thinking about the entire area around the statue.

In the years following this, several projects were started to help improve the locale. A partial list of restorations included the Pennsylvania National Bank Building, the old bathhouse at

3445 Butler Street, the former stables at 3441 Butler Street, and an old fire station. Also, a number of new homes were built along Penn Avenue. Other stores and houses were spruced up, and ramshackle buildings were torn down. Much of the credit for these improvements goes to the Lawrenceville Citizens Council and the Lawrenceville Development Corporation.

An individual who deserves a great deal of credit for the preservation and promoting of the names on the Doughboy is Norman J. Meinert. An avid genealogist, Meinert built a website that lists the names that appear on the plaques.<sup>35</sup>

Although one hopes that the next renovation to the Doughboy returns him to his original bronze color, it is obvious that this exquisite piece of architecture deserves preservation as a premiere Lawrenceville landmark.

**Tom Powers** is president of the Lawrenceville Historical Society and editor of its newsletter. He holds has an M.F.A. from Penn State University and is the principal author of the book, *Portrait of an American Community: O'Hara Township, PA* (2008). Tom is a regular contributor to this magazine.

**Jim Wudarczyk** is a board member and former president of the Lawrenceville Historical Society. His latest book, *American Exile and Other Lessons from the Civil War* (2017), is a collection of his articles on the subject. He writes widely on history and is the co-author of the Lawrenceville Historical Society's three books.

<sup>1</sup> Ancient estimates of the Colossus of Rhodes put the statue at approximately 110 feet. In comparison, the Statue of Liberty is 152 feet high, and the Lawrenceville Doughboy statue is 28 feet (with base). Higgins, Reynold, "The Colossus of Rhodes," in *The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World*, Peter A. Clayton and Martin Jessop Price, eds. (Hove, U.K.: Psychology Press, 1988), p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> Wudarczyk, Jude, "A Doughboy's Tale." A *Doughboy's Tale ... and More Lawrenceville Stories* (Pittsburgh: Lawrenceville Historical Society, 2004), pp. 87-99.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 87-88.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>5</sup> Application by Michael N. Shapiro to The Art Commission of the City of Pittsburgh, Designs For A Public Structure.

<sup>6</sup> Taft, Lorado, *The History of American Sculpture* (New York: Macmillan, 1925), p. 570.

<sup>7</sup> Vernon Gay and Marilyn Evert. *Discovering Pittsburgh's Sculpture* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1983), p. 423.

<sup>8</sup> "Lawrenceville Will Have Statue of 'The Doughboy,'" *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, February 26, 1920.

<sup>9</sup> Conklin, Jack. "The Story Behind Rhinebeck's Favorite Statue Doughboy." Rhinebeck Historical Society website. August 6, 2014.



- <sup>10</sup> "New Lawrenceville Memorial Unveiled," *Gazette Times*. May 31, 1921, p. 5.
- <sup>11</sup> Wudarczyk, pp. 88-89.
- <sup>12</sup> Gay and Evert. *Discovering Pittsburgh's Sculpture*, pp. 298-299.
- <sup>13</sup> Wudarczyk, p. 90.
- <sup>14</sup> Troan, John. "Costly Monuments to Heroes of Last War Now Blurred, Weather Beaten—and Ignored." *Pittsburgh Press*. June 25, 1942.
- <sup>15</sup> "Wanted: A Memorial," April 13, 1944. Miscellaneous clipping in the Archives of the Pennsylvania Department of the Carnegie Library, Oakland.
- <sup>16</sup> Cooper, William. "Reporter Makes a Tour of Parks and Finds Most of the Shrines Uncared for, Broken." *Pittsburgh Press*. January 20, 1946.
- <sup>17</sup> Inscription on bronze tablets on Doughboy statue.
- <sup>18</sup> Plans and Pan — "C/\$/K." *Charette*, September 1950, p. 11.
- <sup>19</sup> "Pyzdrowski, Architect and Builder, Dies." *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. July 21, 1964.
- <sup>20</sup> Joann Cantrell and James Wudarczyk. *Images of America: Lawrenceville* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Press, 2015), p. 24.
- <sup>21</sup> After further investigation, it was discovered that the Kaufmann's billboard was an adaption of an ad designed by Paul Rand (1914-1996) for the store's 1947 campaign, "If It's Out of This World, It's Here." Rand was responsible for the design of the Westinghouse, IBM, and UPS logos. A color copy of the original ad can be found at several sites online.
- <sup>22</sup> "Sixth Ward Unveils Its Honor Roll." *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. May 5, 1947. p. 17.
- <sup>23</sup> "6th Ward Honors Veterans Today." *Pittsburgh Press*. May 4, 1947. p. 2.
- <sup>24</sup> Wudarczyk, p. 91.
- <sup>25</sup> "Rededication of Doughboy." Lawrenceville Citizens Council, June 18, 1983. Ceremony program.
- <sup>26</sup> Wudarczyk, p. 92.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.
- <sup>30</sup> Rededication program.
- <sup>31</sup> Wudarczyk, Jude. p. 96.
- <sup>32</sup> Vernon Gay. "Restored 'Doughboy' Exposes City Officials." Letters to the Editor. *Pittsburgh Press*, June 12, 1983.
- <sup>33</sup> Personal interviews by Jude Wudarczyk with Emelia Crowley; Dorothy Hook; Grace Lefakis; and Cynthia Wudarczyk.
- <sup>34</sup> Life dates from Certificate of Death, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, file no. 39164, 1955; middle name confirmed from Petition of Naturalization, October 30, 1918. Ancestry.com.
- <sup>35</sup> "Obituaries—Karl B. Weber," *Charette*, June 1955. p. 24.
- <sup>36</sup> Dunbar, Lt. Robert F., "Personality of the Times," *Charette*, September 1950. p. 19.
- <sup>37</sup> Carnegie Tech Yearbok, "The Thistle," 1922, p. 148.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>39</sup> "Obituaries—Karl B. Weber," p. 24.

**Doughboy statue from the left side, 2017.**

Photo by Tom Powers.





# BOOK REVIEW



## ***The Schenley Experiment: A Social History of Pittsburgh's First Public High School***

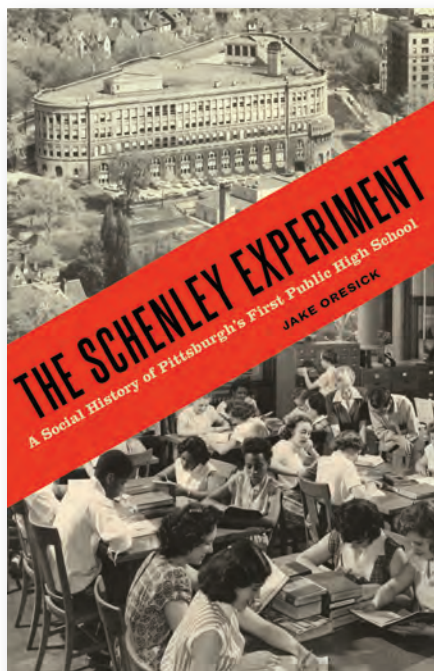
By Jake Oresick

Penn State University Press, 2017

240 pp., 42 b&w illus., 4 maps

Paperback, \$19.95

Reviewed by Lu Donnelly




While Jake Oresick is hardly an unbiased observer, as this 2001 graduate of Schenley High School illustrated in his 2008 article titled “Why We Fight for Schenley,” he nonetheless has managed to present a well-balanced and well-written study of the school in Pittsburgh’s Oakland neighborhood. The author analyses Schenley High School as a social incubator for class, race, and ethnicity.

Oresick, a Pittsburgh lawyer, points out the social benefit to students of blending both vocational and academic curricula as well as mixing races and economic classes. The author interviewed 150 alumnae, teachers, and administrators and skillfully weaves their personal testimonies into the narrative. He points to a special school spirit at Schenley illustrated during pep rallies, musicals, and even the lunch hour when he characterizes the school as “A place where people from different neighborhoods, religious backgrounds, economic strata, and, in many cases, different continents, live and learn and figure out life together.” From 1889 to 2011, Schenley’s red and black school colors and the school motto “Enter to Learn, Go Forth to Serve” represented the outward manifestation of this spirit.

The author shows that architect Edward Stotz’s design for the new 1916 Schenley High School building was at least the third million-dollar high school building in the United States; two previous schools, one in Philadelphia and another in Jersey City cost as much. Inside the school’s 468-foot limestone isosceles triangle,

Schenley boasted two gymnasias and wide, light-filled corridors lined with reproductions of famous art. The performances in the 1,600-seat auditorium not only attracted enthusiastic parents, but large city-wide audiences, and in some cases national celebrities like Marian Anderson and Eleanor Roosevelt. Oresick lists five pages of eminent graduates that includes judges and sports stars, artists like Andy Warhol and local celebrities like Bob Prince. Three nationally famous jazz greats—Earl “Fatha” Hines, Ray Brown, and Walt Harper—are also alumni.

One of the most interesting sections of the book is Oresick’s analysis of how Schenley came to be closed. While Pittsburghers read episodic newspaper reports as events unfolded, the book presents the issues clearly and chronologically in Chapter 10. Oresick doesn’t gloss over Pittsburgh’s integration and segregation history, interviewing African Americans who were taunted for “acting white” and other former students who actually enjoyed high school.

The book includes a brief general history of all of the city’s high schools from 1855 to today. With extensive footnotes and appendices chronicling everything from notable alumni to athletic accomplishments and school plays, *The Schenley Experiment* is an excellent addition to every local researcher’s bookshelf. 

<sup>1</sup> Jake Oresick, “Why We Fight For Schenley,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, June 25, 2008.



# LEGACIES

By Kaitlyn Loy,  
Senior Development Associate

**Jack Sheehan**  
Member since: 2007

There are more than 57 reasons to visit and volunteer at the History Center, and Jack Sheehan is one of them. With a passion for storytelling, this Vietnam War veteran is bringing to life the History Center's exhibitions and artifacts and sharing Pittsburgh's incredible history in a singular way.

After a meaningful visit to the *Soul Soldiers: African Americans and the Vietnam Era* exhibition at the History Center 12 years ago, Jack was inspired to enlist in the ranks as a volunteer. He enrolled in a docent training class, and it wasn't long before he was leading tours of his own.

Since then, Jack has worked with our affiliate museums, created lectures on Western Pennsylvania history through the Ambassador Program, and promoted the History Center at outreach events. As History Center Volunteer Coordinator Ellen DeNinno shares, "He is a dream volunteer."

Today, Jack's legacy is giving back to the city he loves. After achieving an incredible 4,600 hours of service to the History Center and the Fort Pitt Museum, Jack excitedly shares that the opportunity to work with visitors of all ages, from preschoolers, to college level students, to tour groups from all over the world, is what keeps him inspired. He adds, "I've learned from every one of them, probably more than they have learned from me."

When asked what the secret is to being a great volunteer, Jack is apt to quote Pittsburgh native and long-time History Center supporter, David McCullough: "In *The American Spirit*,



Jack Sheehan in front of the Heinz Hitch in the Great Hall.  
Photo by Sarah Reck.

McCullough writes that 'attitudes aren't taught, they're caught. If the teacher has enthusiasm for the subject at hand, the student catches that, be it in second grade or graduate school.... Show them what you love.'"

Jack adds, "What keeps me coming back is the atmosphere, the encouragement and helpfulness of the staff, the comradery of the fellow docents, the sheer fun of watching visitors discover what they have been a part of, and the discovery that this is so much more than memorizing dates and names as 'history' was taught in school."

When asked to share a memorable volunteer experience, Jack relates a powerful visitor moment: "I was working with a group of Alzheimer's patients, all in wheelchairs. Our last stop was the *Heinz* exhibit. As we entered the exhibit, one of the visitors started crying. I had never had this happen before, so I quickly knelt down and asked if anything was wrong.

Was there anything I could do? She looked at me and tearfully said, 'My husband worked for Heinz for 40 years.'"

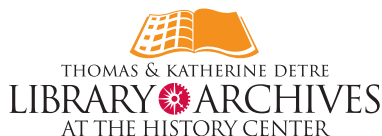
While it's true that the History Center preserves history through its artifacts, Jack impresses that docents are the "story tellers," who are helping to make history come alive for our visitors, so that when they leave, they feel inspired to contribute to the community in their own way. This is why Jack steadfastly supports the History Center with an annual gift of membership: a desire to make an impact in the lives of each one of our visitors. 🌟

**The History Center deeply appreciates the long-time support of Jack and all of our individual contributors, who make the History Center's work possible. To learn more about giving opportunities, please contact Tonia Rose, VP Museum & Development at [TMRose@heinzhistorycenter.org](mailto:TMRose@heinzhistorycenter.org).**



# INFORMATION

## 4 Museums. 2 Magazines. 2 Memberships:



An affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, the 275,000-square-foot Senator John Heinz History Center is the largest history museum in Pennsylvania. The six floors include the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum, covering a wide range of interests and events, and the Detre Library & Archives, containing 700,000 photographs, 40,000 books, and many more maps, records, and archival collections.

### 1212 SMALLMAN STREET in the Strip District

Parking lots and meters nearby.

[www.heinzhistorycenter.org](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org)

(412) 454-6000

### HOURS

Museum and Shop: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily.

Library & Archives: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.,  
Wednesday through Saturday.

Closed on New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving,  
and Christmas.

### ADMISSION

Members Free

Adults \$16.00; Students \$6.50 with a school ID;  
Seniors (62+) \$14.00; Ages 6-17 \$6.50; Retired  
and Active Duty Military \$2 discount; Age 5 and  
under Free.

Admission includes the History Center, the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum, the Library & Archives, and Fort Pitt on the same day. *Admission to only the Library & Archives is free for all visitors.*

### PARKING:

History Center members showing a valid membership card can park for a \$4 flat rate across the street from the museum at 12th and Smallman, subject to availability. Parking is also available at 13th and Smallman, 15th and Smallman, the Convention Center Garage, and the Grant Street Transportation Center Garages.

### FACILITY

Members enjoy a 15% discount at the Museum Shop.

Wheelchair accessible. Café on site.

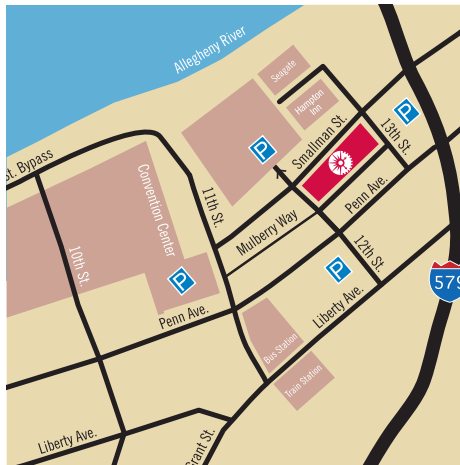
Discovery Place and Kidsburgh for children.

### GROUP SALES

Discounted rates for group admission, advance booking required. Call (412) 454-6304.

### FACILITY RENTAL

The History Center's distinctive setting, with superb dining provided by Common Plea Catering, is the perfect place to host your next banquet, party, reception, or seminar. Call (412) 454-6435 for information and reservations.



**401 Meadowcroft Road  
Avella, PA 15312**

[www.heinzhistorycenter.org/meadowcroft](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/meadowcroft)  
(724) 587-3412

Take a step back in time less than an hour west of Pittsburgh near West Virginia. Meadowcroft contains a 16th-century Indian Village, a 19th-century rural village, and the 16,000-year-old Rockshelter, the oldest site of human habitation in North America, and now a National Historic Landmark.



### HOURS

Memorial Day through Labor Day  
Wednesday through Saturday: 12 to 5 p.m.  
Sunday: 1 to 5 p.m.

May, Sept, Oct.

Saturday: 12 to 5 p.m.

Sunday: 1 to 5 p.m.

### ADMISSION

Admission includes Rockshelter, Village, and Museum  
History Center Members Free  
Adult \$15.00; Seniors (62+) \$14.00;  
Ages 6-17 \$7.00; Students \$7.00 with a school ID; Retired and Active Duty Military \$2 discount; Age 5 and under Free.



# GET BOTH A HISTORY CENTER AND A SMITHSONIAN MEMBERSHIP FOR 1 Price.



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<http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/fort-pitt>  
(412) 281-9285

Located in Point State Park, this two-floor, 12,000-square-foot museum in a reconstructed bastion tells the story of Western Pennsylvania's pivotal role during the French & Indian War and the American Revolution, and as the birthplace of Pittsburgh.



## HOURS

Hours 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily.  
Closed New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

## ADMISSION

History Center Members Free  
Adults \$8.00; Seniors (62+) \$7.00;  
Students \$4.50 with a school ID;  
Ages 6-17 \$3.50;  
Age 5 and under Free.

## PARKING

A variety of parking is available including:  
Boulos Parking Lot  
601 Commonwealth Place  
\$13 all day, \$5 after 2 p.m., \$7 on weekends.

## Give the gift of membership all year long!

The Heinz History Center is a proud affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. A one-year membership to the Senator John Heinz History Center includes free unlimited admission to the History Center, Sports Museum, Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, and Fort Pitt Museum as well as our quarterly Western Pennsylvania History magazine, invitations to members-only events, and more. You'll also receive a subscription to Smithsonian magazine, discounts in select Smithsonian shops and dining facilities, and other benefits.

**Contact Shirley Gaudette at:**  
(412) 454-6436

**Or visit us at:**  
[www.heinzhistorycenter.org](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org)

**Questions:**  
[membership@heinzhistorycenter.org](mailto:membership@heinzhistorycenter.org)



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