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Kara Lyn Parker
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**JUST “HELLING AROUND”: PROHIBITION IN
CACHE VALLEY, UTAH**

by

Kara Lyn Parker

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree**

of

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in

**History
in the Department of History**

Approved:

Thesis/Project Advisor
David Rich Lewis

Departmental Honors Advisor
Sue Shapiro

Director of Honors Program
Dr. Christie Fox

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Kara Parker
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Just “Helling Around”: Prohibition in Cache Valley, Utah

Busy dance halls, exploding bottles, back room exchanges, and car chases: the Prohibition Era was doused with excitement. In rural Cache County, Utah, in the thick of prohibition years, a thirsty customer cautiously entered the rural residence of a known illegal brewer. The seller firmly shook his client’s hand and calmly took his order. When the customer ordered some simple beer, the brewer sent his son to fetch some bottles. The son, after heading upstairs, poked his head back down, and asked his father, “Dad...do you want me to get the beer out of the crock that the cat got drowned in or the other?” With a nervous laugh, and a side glance at the customer, the father suggested the clean beer.¹ Like the rest of the nation, Cache County residents lived with and lived through this colorful era.

This paper explores the experiences of Cache Valley residents during the years of prohibition: what happened, citizens’ reactions, and the meaning prohibition held for these rural, nominally conservative individuals. With a large concentration of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), one might expect a fairly tranquil experience in the valley, but the reality was more complex than that. This paper compares Cache Valley citizens’ experiences moonshining, bootlegging, drinking, dancing, and outwitting law enforcement to the illicit activities throughout the State of Utah and the nation.²

¹Marion Olsen, “Bootlegging: An Oral History Interview,” Interview by Paul R. Willie, Paradise, UT., 8 March 1976, Special Collections and Archives, Merrill Cazier Library, Utah State University (hereafter Merrill Cazier Library), FILE MSS 255, p. 12.

² Though Cache Valley extends into southern Idaho, this paper primarily focuses on residents in Cache County, Utah.

Before prohibition swept the nation, citizens of Utah's Cache Valley involved themselves in alcohol legislation. A brief stint of city-wide prohibition began in 1879. With much public interest and participation, Logan City Council members passed a prohibition ordinance on 13 January 1879 to prohibit the sale of alcohol within city limits effective 1 April 1879.³ The law, however, created an enforcement nightmare because of frequent violations. Frustrated over prolific nonobservance of the law, Logan City officials hired detectives from out-of-town to uncover the liquor salesmen. On 25 June 1882, Salt Lake farmer Edward McCune, hired by the City for \$300, and his assistant Samuel Claridge sauntered into Edwards and Co, near the U&N railway station in Logan. There, Hyrum Edwards approached his visitors, quietly took their order, and disappeared into the back room. He emerged with three drinks and one bottle of whiskey, which he sold to the men for a total of one dollar. The following day, the detectives casually entered the summer drink business of W.C. Buck and C. H. Smith. Smith, unaware of the detectives' identities, proudly served his patrons four drinks of whiskey. The men enjoyed some hearty laughs before they made their exit. Arrests soon followed for the salesmen. Edwards' trial was held on 10 July 1882 in the Logan City municipal court. The jury returned a firm guilty verdict and fined him \$99 or a term of 99 days in jail. Justice of the Peace B. F. Cummings, Jr. of Logan City found Smith and Buck guilty as well.⁴

³"Prohibition in Logan," *The Logan Leader*, 11 Aug 1882, p. 2, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?utahj2.60733>, accessed 4 October 2010. "First District Court," *Ogden Standard*, 7 December 1882, p.3, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/u/?ogden1.25834>, accessed 22 October 2010. An article from Mendon City's website ("An Early History of Cache County – Early Logan City Government," www.mendonutah.net/history/cache_county/18.htm, accessed 3 June 2010) and an article printed in the *Journal* on 24 November 1923, page 7 stated that Logan City councilors passed their first prohibition ordinance in 1882. Newspapers and court cases show 1879 to be the actual date.

⁴"First District Court" *Ogden Herald*, 17 May 1883, p.3, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/u/?ogden1.37690>, accessed 19 October 2010. *Logan City v. Hyrum Edwards*, District Court (First District) Northern Division Civil and Criminal Case Files

Logan City did not stop there. Another detective, William R. Everill detected more illicit liquor sales within the city, revealing some repeat offenders. At the Blanchard Hotel on 21 July 1882 Thomas Connor served Detective Everill two glasses of brandy. At Connor's trial, the jury returned a guilty verdict and a \$99 fine or a 99 days sentence. He had better luck when he appealed his case to the First District Court. There his case resulted in a divided jury and dismissal. On 1 August Justice of the Peace B.F. Cummings, Jr. received a visit from Hyrum Edwards, this time for a 27 July liquor sale to Everill. At the First District Court, on appeal, Edwards was found guilty. Also on 21 July, Everill bought whiskey from W.C. Buck, who on 2 August again stood before Cummings and collected an additional guilty verdict. During the trials of both Buck and Connor, defending attorneys Crawford & Rich, and A.B. Taylor moved for dismissal on multiple grounds, one being that the defendants' acts "did not constitute a public offense." Another of the main arguments the attorneys used to defend their clients was that Logan City's charter did not authorize the city to enact a prohibition ordinance.⁵

On these bases, Edwards and Buck appealed to the Utah Territory Supreme Court. In June 1883, the court heard Buck's case. The discussion in court centered on the powers granted in Logan City's charter. Although Logan's charter empowered the city "to license, regulate, prohibit, or restrain the manufacturers, sellers, or vendors of spirituous or fermented liquors... or other houses or places for the selling or giving away of wines or other liquors..." the territorial court ruled that the charter "does not in terms empower the city to prohibit *the sale of* such

(hereafter First District Case Files), Series 1529, Box 5, Folder 43, Case 247, Utah State Archives and Records Service (hereafter Utah State Archives). *Logan City v. Buck and Smith*, First District Case Files, Series 1529, Box 5, Folder 42, Case 246, Utah State Archives.

⁵*Logan City v. Thomas Connor*, First District Case Files, Series 1529, Box 5, Folder 46, Case 250, Utah State Archives. "First District Court," *Ogden Herald*, 7 December 1882. p.3, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/u/?ogden1.25834>, accessed 22 October 2010. *Logan City v. W.C. Buck*, First District Case Files, Series 1529, Box 5, Folder 44, Case 248, Utah State Archives.

liquors, does not authorize an ordinance of the city which declares it unlawful to sell the same, and punishes by fine and imprisonment the sellers thereof.” The court likewise dismissed Edwards’ case based on the Buck ruling.⁶ After this ruling the Logan City Council once again issued liquor licenses.⁷

Logan’s first period of prohibition was a heated time. Violence by prohibition violators W.C. Buck and C.H. Smith reveals the tensions of the day. Between court days during one of their First District trials for liquor infractions, Buck and Smith took out their frustrations on B. F. Cummings, Jr., the justice of the peace who convicted them at the Logan City Municipal Court. As Cummings walked past Buck’s and Smith’s business late on 22 July, Buck and Smith “followed him to a secluded spot under some trees” before they called his name. “Smith spoke, and as Mr. Cummings replied the former struck the latter a severe blow, cutting the lower lip by means of an iron ring which he wore on one of his fingers.” The First District Court found them guilty of “committing an assault and battery.”⁸ Buck and Smith, as business owners, were invested in their liquor trade and willing to use violence to protect it.

As years passed, Cache Valley governments continued to explore issues surrounding prohibition. In 1884, territorial legislators amended Logan City’s charter, allowing the city to “license, tax, and regulate, or to absolutely prohibit, the manufacture, *sale* or giving away in any quantity spirituous, vinous, fermented, or other intoxicating liquors.”⁹ With city-wide prohibition legalized, citizens continued to discuss liquor legislation. Simultaneously, the

⁶ *Logan City v. Buck*, Utah Reports, Utah Supreme Court, Series 1481, Box 1, Volume 3, pp. 301-307, Utah State Archives, *emphasis added*.

⁷ “The Ruling,” *Utah Journal* (Logan, Utah), 14 July 1883, p.2

⁸ “First District Court,” *Ogden Herald*, 8 December 1882, p.3, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/u/?ogden1,25890>, accessed 22 October 2010.

⁹ *Laws of the Territory of Utah, Passed at the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Legislative Assembly*, (Salt Lake City: The Tribune Printing and Publishing Company, 1884), 137, *emphasis added*.

prohibition movement nationwide gained momentum.¹⁰ Though opinionated citizens in Cache County still spoke out against the dangers of liquor, city councilors did not pass another city-wide prohibition ordinance until 1909.¹¹ In 1911 the State of Utah passed a local-option law, allowing residents of each town to determine their stance on prohibition. Cache County held an election in June 1911, in which voters of all Cache County towns voted overwhelmingly in favor of maintaining their dry (or anti-alcohol) statuses.¹² Statewide prohibition followed, taking effect 1 August 1917, without much change for Cache County residents.¹³ When Nebraska became the 36th state to ratify the Eighteenth Amendment on 16 January 1919, the rest of the nation entered the era of prohibition that Cache County citizens had already embraced.¹⁴

Congress passed the Volstead Act on 27 October 1919, which outlined how national prohibition would function. The act regulated industrial alcohol and importantly set the criterion for illegal drink at 0.05 per cent alcohol. Also, it gave the Internal Revenue Service commissioner strong powers of enforcement. While prohibitionists had great hopes for the success of the Volstead Act, they were soon disappointed. After passage of the act, local leaders nominally supported prohibition, but refused to allocate sufficient funds for enforcement. Further, the Volstead Act brought a premature sense of victory, causing many Anti-Saloon League supporters who had fought for national prohibition to feel their work was done. The

¹⁰ Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 51, 93-117. Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, 107-135

¹¹ "Three Fights," *Utah Journal*, 27 June 1885, p. 3, http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?utahj2_38180, accessed 2 December 2010. "It is Dryer than Anticipated," *The Journal* (Logan, UT), 4 January 1910, p. 1; Justice Docket, Hyrum City, Cache County Records no. 67, Merrill Cazier Library.

¹² "Everything in Cache is Dry," *The Journal*, 29 June 1911, p.1. The county residents voted 2087 to 452 to stay dry, with Logan City precincts voting 1300 to 543 dry.

¹³ "Last Day on the Wet Calendar," *The Journal*, 31 July 1917, p. 1. Brent G. Thompson, "'Standing Between Two Fires': Mormons and Prohibition, 1908-1917," *Journal of Mormon History*, 10, (1983):51.

¹⁴ Thomas R. Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America, 1800-1933* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1998), 148.

energy of the movement faded. Additionally, supporters of prohibition expected a quick end to saloon society, something the Anti-Saloon League promised in their campaign. When a significant reduction of alcohol consumption did not immediately follow passage of the Volstead Act, disillusionment ensued.¹⁵

National prohibition faced challenges from the outset. Taking advantage of shoddy enforcement, “bootleggers” boldly risked up to five years jail time in defiance of the Volstead Act as they transported and sold illegal liquor to thirsty customers.¹⁶ Many prohibition violators were young. In 1931 the majority of bootleggers were under the age of forty. Young immigrants, seeking economic mobility organized themselves and profited from the liquor trade.¹⁷ Al Capone, a famous bootlegger from Chicago, related, “All I do is supply a public demand.”¹⁸ Without government regulation, however, the actual business of supplying alcohol often led to dangerous circumstances. In Chicago in 1929, Al Capone’s gang fought with a rival bootlegging gang, resulting in the death of seven bootleggers. This event, publicized as the St. Valentine’s Day Massacre, captured the attention of newspaper readers. This and other acts of violence affected these readers, helping them associate increased crime with the Volstead Act.¹⁹ Extending beyond organized crime, other youth engaged in prohibition violations. The Prohibition Era coincided with the Jazz Age, where young people enjoyed new music and drank

¹⁵Ibid, 150-153.

¹⁶ Ibid., 151, 173

¹⁷ David E. Kyvig, *Repealing National Prohibition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 26-27.

¹⁸ Capone, as quoted in Kyvig, *Repealing National Prohibition*, 26.

¹⁹ Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, 174. Norman H. Clark, *Deliver Us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition* (New York: Norton, 1976): 159.

in speakeasies, rebelling against the law. Polls on college campuses showed that two thirds of college students defied prohibition legislation through drinking.²⁰

The inadequacy of enforcement, along with the vast amounts of money to be made satisfying thirty customers, exacerbated the corruption and crime stemming from prohibition. On average, state budgets gave prohibition enforcement one eighth as much money as they allocated to fish and game law enforcement. In 1927 twenty eight states offered absolutely no funds for prohibition enforcement. This lack of funding created a climate where an insufficient number of agents existed, and made them easy targets for bribery. Between 1919 and 1925, over eight percent of federal agents were fired for corruption.²¹

By the mid 1920s, the middle-class Americans who had supported the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Anti-Saloon League in hopes of eradicating the saloon, grew disenchanted with the cause as a result of "the crime, corruption, and governmental incompetence that accompanied prohibition." Also, alcohol fit better into the 1920s culture of consumption, individualism and entertainment than it had in the conservative Victorian Era culture at prohibition's outset.²² With this shift in attitude, businessmen, professional workers, and women campaigned for repeal through organizations like the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA) and the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform (WONPR). The disastrous economic depression of the 1930s only helped those fighting for repeal. AAPA members explained that revenue from taxed liquor could help the failing national economy. Further, President Herbert Hoover, a long-time champion of prohibition, disappointed Americans with his inadequate policies for economic recovery. Upset Americans

²⁰ Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 140. Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, 175-176.

²¹Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, 158-160

²²Ibid, 168, 176.

linked prohibition with Hoover, which generated more support for repeal. With public opinion so against prohibition, Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt included repeal as part of his 1932 presidential platform. The 1932 election was a landslide victory for Roosevelt. One month after Roosevelt took office, U.S. Congressmen voted to change the Volstead Act to allow drinks with 3.2% alcohol. Then in December of 1933, Utah became the thirty sixth and last necessary state to ratify the Twenty-First Amendment, finally ending national prohibition.²³

While Utah helped bury national prohibition in December 1933, Cache County at large stood apart, casting a vote thoroughly in favor of retaining prohibition.²⁴ Though most Cache Valley residents supported early prohibition measures and opposed repeal in 1933, the prohibition years were anything but tranquil for members of this highly conservative area. Violations of prohibition law and inefficient enforcement in Cache Valley resonate with both statewide and national experiences. While Cache County may have stood apart in some ways, given its overwhelming Mormon population, its experience with prohibition was rather typical.

Cache Valley citizens were not isolated from the prominent questions surrounding prohibition legislation. Nationally, people argued whether prohibition was a positive measure to help reform society or whether it was an act of repression. As part of the complex Progressive reform era, prohibition was a response to the changes brought by industrialization and urbanization at the end of the nineteenth century. On whole, progressives sought to abate problems like unfair working conditions, political corruption, and poverty in society through intervention at individual, collective, or even governmental levels. This reform stemmed from both religious ideals and efforts for efficiency through scientific rationality. To its proponents,

²³Kyvig, *Repealing National Prohibition*, 26. Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 181, 200. Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, 167, 181.

²⁴“Cache County Champions Dry Cause,” *The Journal*, 8 November 1933, p.1.

prohibition was an attempt to diminish problems associated with drunkenness through government legislation and intervention.²⁵ Opponents of such legislation did not want government regulation at the expense of personal choice. Famous lawyer and activist Clarence Darrow viewed prohibition as “a fanaticism and intolerance that would hesitate at nothing to force its wishes and way of life upon the world.” On the other hand, many Americans, like fiction writer Timothy Shay Arthur, championed such legislation as a means to curb alcohol’s damage to family and social values.²⁶

These same issues circulated through Utah. Progressivism was alive in Utah, with the state constitution of 1895 including stipulations for labor improvements and women’s suffrage. In its early years state legislators enacted stricter labor laws, including an eight hour work day for miners, safety rules, and laws against child labor in the mining industry. They also moved to regulate health, food, and service industries.²⁷ Prohibition of alcohol was another sort of progressive reform in Utah, specifically the moral reform that informed progressives of the social gospel movement in America.

Mormons constituted the majority of Utah’s population.²⁸ An increasingly important aspect of the Mormon faith was the *Word of Wisdom*, an 1833 revelation by their founder Joseph Smith Jr., which introduced a warning against the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances. Coinciding with the application for Utah statehood, the Mormon Church experienced many changes around the turn of the century, including the abandonment of plural

²⁵Arthur S. Link and Richard L. McCormick, *Progressivism* (Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harland Davidson, Inc., 1983), 1-25.

²⁶Clarence Darrow, as quoted in Clark, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 100, and Arthur as quoted on 40.

²⁷ Dean May, *Utah: A People’s History* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 166.

²⁸In 1890, about 65 % of the people in Utah were Mormons. In 1920, Utah was 55% Mormon. Ethan R. Yorgason, *Transformation of the Mormon Culture Region* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 82.

marriage, removal from territorial political dominance, and a new beginning of social integration with others. These changes forced Latter-day Saints to redefine what made them particularly unique. Gradually, adherence to the *Word of Wisdom* became a defining characteristic of Mormonism. For the first fifty years following the revelation, adherence was inconsistent, with select church leaders emphasizing different aspects of the dietary code. When Joseph F. Smith became the sixth president of the church in 1902, Mormon Church leadership placed a more significant emphasis on the *Word of Wisdom*. In June 1902, for example, the highest church leadership “agreed not to fellowship anyone who operated or frequented saloons.”²⁹ With over 600 saloons in Utah in 1908, many devout Mormons must have seen this prevalent drinking as a threat to their solidifying religious values and desired reform.³⁰

Other Utahns, however, saw prohibition as unnecessary or even as an imposition of Mormon religious authority over their secular lives. While the *Word of Wisdom* was supported by church leadership after Joseph F. Smith’s presidency, some members persisted in alcohol and tobacco consumption. Heber J. Grant, one of the church’s Twelve Apostles and an ardent prohibitionist expressed that many members “sadly neglected” the revelation, “and that a revival of the observance of this law of God was very much needed.”³¹ Even Joseph F. Smith did not wholly support statewide prohibition. In an April 1915 general priesthood meeting, he explained that he felt temperance should originate at an individual level, from conversion to true principles.³² As a consistent conservative and leader of a new Mormon Republican party in Utah, he placed responsibility on the individual and rejected government’s duty to intervene in

²⁹ Thomas Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930*(Urbana: University of Illinois, 1996), 258-260.

³⁰ Thompson, “Standing Between Two Fires,” 36.

³¹ Grant, as quoted in Thompson, “Standing Between Two Fires,” 36.

³²Ibid, 48-49.

this area.³³ Other citizens opposed prohibition because they feared that such legislation would cause increased tensions between Mormons and non-Mormons, especially as those tensions had subsided and cooled since the fights over polygamy and statehood in 1896.³⁴ Utah, at this time, sought to fit into mainstream national society after years of standing firmly outside it.³⁵ Surely Utahns did not want to seem “fanatic” and “intolerant” to the nation at large, a nation still watching closely for signs of Mormon dominance and deviance.

Residents of Cache Valley shared similar perceptions of prohibition legislation. Many religious residents saw prohibition as a progressive measure. They desired greater protection of their religious values, and wished to free others from the problems associated with alcohol. Saloon society existed in Cache County, bringing regular disturbance of the peace. In 1904, thirteen saloons operated in the valley, seven of which were in Logan. By 1909 Logan City had nine operating saloons.³⁶ Surely some bystanders would have been annoyed by drinkers like Mr. George Peacock, who, in 1880, was carted to jail in a drunken state after “cursing, swearing, and ‘raising Ned’ generally on the streets of Logan.”³⁷ These citizens must have sought something more promising and permanent than the *Journal* advertisement for a concoction sure to

³³Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 262.

³⁴Ibid, 262-263. Larry E. Nelson, “Utah Goes Dry,” *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 41 no. 4 (Autumn 1973): 342. Utahns did face national ridicule when county officials in Salt Lake enforced a statewide cigarette prohibition law by arresting four distinguished businessmen for smoking outside in 1923. The mockery of national newspapers assisted businessmen and non-Mormons in their efforts to repeal the bill. Cigarette prohibition in Utah only lasted from 1921 to 1923. John S. H. Smith, “Cigarette Prohibition in Utah, 1921-23,” *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 41 no.4 (Autumn 1973): 358-72.

³⁵Ethan R. Yorgason, *Transformation of the Mormon Culture Region* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003): 169.

³⁶*R.L. Polk & Co's Logan City and Cache County Directory* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1904, 1909): 249.

³⁷“Cache County Cross Cuts,” *Logan Leader*, 1 Oct 1880, p.3.

“positively cure...drunkenness or the liquor habit.”³⁸ The notion of a “cure” for drinking reveals that these citizens understood drinking as a problem, either medical or social, but one in need of a cure.

In Cache Valley, concerned parents feared their children’s exposure to alcohol. Indeed, most of the discussions about temperance among valley residents centered on adults’ worries about youth coming in contact with alcohol and becoming addicted, thereby breaking their religious and social contracts.³⁹ While debate raged over Logan City’s first prohibition ordinance, the *Logan Leader* complimented its effect on youth, declaring, “many of our youth were thoughtless and heedless and easily led to indulge in that which sometimes necessitated their appearance in a public court, and had the temptation to drink been continually before them, some of them would undoubtedly have formed an unconquerable appetite for it.”⁴⁰

Also, a father in neighboring Box Elder County nearly lost his son because of drinking. The son had attended a dance with some friends. When he didn’t return the next morning, his father searched all over town, eventually checking in the granary of his son’s friend. He found his unconscious son, who had almost frozen to death after his friends had “stored him away in the wheat bin for the night.”⁴¹ Stories like this only tightened concerned parents’ opposition to alcohol. One month prior to Cache County’s local-option election, Mr. Oldham, a county resident, wrote a letter to the *Journal* which explained the promise of prohibition. He declared, “It is not to be supposed that in our Eden, there are no serpents to beguile, no temptations to be

³⁸*Logan Journal*, 1 January 1890-15 February 1890.

³⁹“Democratic Address,” *The Journal*, 28 Oct 1897, pp. 1-2, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?utahj,37927>, accessed 4 October 2010.

⁴⁰“The Logan Liquor Law,” *The Logan Leader*, 16 December 1881, p. 2, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?utahj2,30304>, accessed 4 October 2010.

⁴¹“Boys and Booze,” *Box Elder News*, 29 January 1914, p.6, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?Boxelder,37121>. accessed 16 July 2010

met, but as the years go by, there will be less and less of the temptations to indulge in strong drink.”⁴²

Following the passage of Logan’s 1909 prohibition ordinance, Heber City’s Mayor James W. Clyde congratulated the citizenry. His praise highlights the role of moral ideals in this early legislation. He commended, “the citizens of the beautiful Temple and college city of the North” for their stance against, “the saloons, with their glittering allurements for enticing the youth of the community into habits which would destroy their usefulness in life.”⁴³ His reference to the Logan LDS Temple suggests a religious responsibility of Cache Valley Mormons to stand against the saloon, that religious identity and idealism were key parts of the larger progressive reform.

At the end of 1909, the *Logan Journal* published an article that fondly praised the administration of Mayor William Edwards. The *Journal* dubbed Edwards’s administration, “the best and most progressive...that Logan City has ever had.” Listed among his progressive accomplishments of improvements in city sewage, power, water, and roads, was the city-wide prohibition ordinance passed in 1909.⁴⁴ This reflection of the local paper shows the perception of prohibition as a means of improvement through government intervention. A poem in the *Journal* also reflects the positive attitude of progressive prohibitionists. Published at the beginning of 1910 when Logan City’s prohibition ordinance took effect, it reads:

Oh! Happy new year here once more
 With snow so pure and white,
 Our city now looks clean again
 Which fills us with delight.
 We wink and blink, our face is red,

⁴²“Mr. Oldham’s Advice on the Liquor Law,” *The Journal*, 23 May 1911, p.1.

⁴³“Congratulations Heber City’s Mayor Advises Prohibitionists to Stand Firm,” *The Journal*, 18 December 1909, p.10.

⁴⁴ “A Fruitful Administration” *The Journal*, 8 January 1910, p.2

The snow drifts in our eye.
 This new year seems so different now
 Since Logan has gone dry.

The birds are flitting through the barn
 Tabby-cat has caught a mouse
 And Touser has come out to play
 From under the old store house.
 Now father's home, the house is clean
 And mother's baking a pie;
 The children all are happy now
 Since Logan has gone dry.

Young men and maids out on the ice
 Are having lots of fun;
 The girls have got their dollies
 And Johnny's got a gun
 The sleighbells jingle loud and clear,
 The lovers laugh and sigh;
 The drunken song is heard no more
 Since Logan has gone dry.

Brother goes to church once more
 And sister helps mama;
 And grandpa comes to visit me
 As also does grandma.
 And oh! we're having lots of cheer;
 Shall I tell the reason why?
 Because we don't get it out of beer
 Since Logan has gone dry.⁴⁵

The poem highlights the anticipated ability of prohibition to protect families and Logan City on whole from the dangers of alcohol. Also, following the local option election in 1911, the County Committee (apparently progressive prohibitionists) praised Cache County voters for their dry stance. They stated that arguments for “business” and “personal liberty” did not outweigh

⁴⁵ James S. Hancey, “A Dry New Year,” *The Journal*, 1 January 1910, p.7.

protecting “the best interests of the manhood and womanhood of our county.”⁴⁶ Many in Cache County saw the moral and public safety benefits of prohibition.

Yet like people throughout the state and nation, other Cache County residents saw prohibition as unnecessary and repressive. At the onset of Logan’s citywide prohibition in 1879, the *Logan Leader* reported that former alcohol salesmen petitioned the mayor and City Council numerous times, seeking repeal of the ordinance. The *Leader* was annoyed at the businessmen’s explanation that their services “satisf[ied]... a great public want.” Evidently a demand for alcohol existed, and these business owners felt government intervention in denying alcohol was wrong. Further, the businessmen highlighted the inefficiency of the ordinance, arguing that it did not really prevent liquor distribution, but instead prevented the city from securing tax revenue on the spirits. This lack of efficiency contrasted the progressive credo of efficiency and scientific logic. These unhappy businessmen--among them Buck, Smith, and Edwards--threatened to file suit against the city.⁴⁷ Eventually, their dissatisfaction was so great that they appealed to the Utah Territory Supreme Court, whose 1883 ruling terminated Logan City’s first stab at prohibition.⁴⁸

A telling example of the dialogue of differing perceptions on prohibition legislation is an article from the *Logan Leader* published while Logan City’s first prohibition ordinance was in effect. The *Salt Lake Herald* published an article against Logan’s ordinance, citing the personal rights of liquor sellers and the futility of enforcement. In response, the *Logan Leader* printed an article boldly defending the ordinance (while revealing a degree of intolerance), announcing that,

⁴⁶ “To the People of Cache County,” *The Journal*, 29 June 1911, pp.1, 4

⁴⁷ “Suppressing the Liquor Traffic in Logan,” *Logan Leader*, 23 January 1880, p.2, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?utahj2,31356>, accessed 4 October 2010.

⁴⁸ Utah Supreme Court, Utah Reports, Logan City v. Buck, Logan City v. Edwards, Series 1481, Box 1, Vol.3, Utah State Archives. “The Ruling,” *Utah Journal*, 14 July 1883, p. 2, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?utahj2,64647>, accessed 4 October 2010.

“...any man who might have the temerity to open a saloon in this city would certainly not be classed as one of our ‘worthy,’ ‘progressive’ and ‘moral’ citizens.”⁴⁹ Here the prohibition advocates writing in *The Leader* cast themselves as progressives, while others viewed prohibition as a threat to personal rights.

Also, in 1895 Joshua Hughes Paul, president of the Agricultural College of Utah, was concerned because many college students frequented J.R. Edwards’s saloon in Logan. He wrote a letter to Edwards, asking him to prevent ACU students from entering in the future. Edwards sent an angry reply, commanding Paul to mind his own business, and “keep out of my Pool and Billiard Hall.” If not, he warned, “it may not be for your health to continue to do as you have done.” Paul responded, calmly stating, “I shall...visit your hall in order to ascertain whether you propose to conduct a legitimate business, or to use your billiard hall as a snare for the young and unwary.” Undaunted, Paul visited the saloon. When Edwards saw Paul, he quickly delivered him a fist to the head.⁵⁰ While citizens like Paul feared drinking as a threat to morality, others like Edwards saw prohibiting alcohol as an unnecessary infringement of rights.

While Cache County shared national perceptions of prohibition, it also experienced illicit activities similar to those nationwide. During prohibition, the practice of drinking alcohol was alive and well in Cache Valley. Court records verify an abundance of drinking. Of the 320 misdemeanor criminal cases filed in Hyrum City between 1910 and 1925, 164 were alcohol related. A staggering forty per cent of the total misdemeanor cases were filed for either being drunk, appearing intoxicated, being under the influence of liquor, or drinking unlawfully. Forty

⁴⁹ “Temperance Laws,” *The Logan Leader*, 29 April 1881, p. 2, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?/utahj2,35977>, accessed 4 October 2010.

⁵⁰ Joshua Hughes Paul, J.H. Paul Correspondence, Merrill Cazier Library, Call Number 3.1/2-2, Box 1, Folder 1. A.J. Simmonds, “The Professor and the Publican,” *Valley Magazine*, 25 August 1980, p.3. A.J. Simmonds, “J.R. Edwards: Owner of the Valley’s Finest Saloon,” *Valley Magazine*, 13 August 1976, p.3.

one of those cases were filed after national prohibition took effect in 1920.⁵¹ Though not as overpowering as the Hyrum statistics, residents in Logan City also loved their liquor. Between May 1919 and September 1921, 7.3 per cent of all criminal cases in Logan City were alcohol related. Then from September 1921 to February 1925, the percentage rose to 13.3. February 1925 to August 1927 saw another leap to 16.7 per cent.⁵² Indeed alcohol maintained a significant presence during prohibition.

Repeat offenders constituted only a handful of defendants in the Logan City courts. Between 1919 and 1927, Oliver Carlson was charged seven separate times for prohibition violations in Logan City, including three cases for drunkenness, one for possession, another occasion for "possession, manufacture, and sale," and notably two charges of driving a vehicle while intoxicated. The majority of citizens charged for drunkenness in Logan City, however, appear only once between 1919 and 1927.⁵³ Although town drunks surely remained, brew dabblers were not limited to a select few.

Liquor legislation did not intimidate college students on the campus of the Agricultural College of Utah. During 1923, in the thick of national prohibition, the college's fraternities and sororities named their entire section of the student yearbook, "The Boozer," a spin of the yearbook's title, *The Buzzer*. "The Boozer" contains significant references to the prevalence of alcohol on campus. Introducing their section, the fraternities humorously rhymed, "We, the staff of this great boozer, dedicate this book/ To Military drill, burrheaded Lts. and -worst of all the rooks/ To the love lorn Phi Beta Rho's and Dashing Delta Nus./ To the Pi Zets bold, Omega Taus

⁵¹Cache County Court Records, Hyrum City Precinct, Cache County Records no. 67, 1910-1925, Merrill Cazier Library.

⁵²Register of Actions, Criminal, City Court Logan City, Utah, Series 0538, Vol. 1-3 (1919-1927), Utah State Archives.

⁵³Ibid.

and the Sigs with all their booze./ To the Epsilons and ro-wd-y Phi Kaps -whom Sororities never choose./ To the married men the sissies, and the Profs, whom we abuse.”⁵⁴ In another comical poem, the students compared two campus stereotypes, “the Grind” and “the Sport.” While describing “the Sport,” the students wrote, “’Tis true he can’t refuse,/ The great big pipe,/ Nor little snipe,/ He also takes his booze.”⁵⁵ Like “the Sport” and “the Sigs,” Ag students also drank their share. In lighthearted advice for dress standards for the Ag Club Ball, “the Boozer” writers counseled, “Have your trousers pressed...Be sure and have several patches on them so you will be deemed democratic. Carry some White Mule on your hip to keep the spirits up and an alarm clock on your wrist to tell you when to go home. Don’t worry about flowers. Present your lady with a bunch of alfalfa. They like it.”⁵⁶ Students’ jokes about drinking and about female co-eds reveal that Cache Valley young adults participated in the youthful rebellion emerging across the nation.

Drinking was not relegated to the college campus. High school students also experimented with the hard stuff. At a school dance, high school student Vern Schenck “got sickeningly drunk, dead drunk.” When Vern’s mother arrived in search of her son, his friend Milton Abrams and some other boys hustled him to the bathroom. Attempting to outsmart the mother, the boys, in a burst of High School genius, dangled Vern out of the restroom window, holding him only by his ankles. As would be their luck, Art, one of the friends, “dropped Vern on his head.”⁵⁷ Surely Vern’s morning-after headache was unpleasant.

⁵⁴ Utah Agricultural College, *The Buzzer* (Logan, Utah: Utah Agricultural College, 1923), p.197, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?buzzer,2275>, accessed 1 November 2010.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 225, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?buzzer,2303>, accessed 1 November 2010.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 227, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?buzzer,2305>, accessed 1 November 2010.

⁵⁷ Milton C. Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” Interview by Paul R. Willie, Smithfield, UT., 23 February 1976, Merrill Cazier Library, 253, p. 11.

While Logan City voters prided themselves on their prohibition legislation, Logan's youth apparently did not share their elders' disdain for alcohol. While Cache County was dry under local-option, some youngsters traveled to the Peach Days celebration in Brigham City, Box Elder County, and found the substance their parents had just outlawed. An editorial in the *Journal* complained, "People here were much disgusted to see boys fifteen and sixteen...come home with two or three bottles of whiskey in their pockets, and apparently very much the worse for liquor. Logan had saloons for many years but there never was a time when its saloon-keepers would permit infants to get drunk in their places..."⁵⁸ The *Box Elder News* responded to the editorial, blaming the Loganites themselves, stating that the young people's desire to obtain the booze must stem from their parents and examples back home in Logan.⁵⁹ Here one glimpses youth keen on acquiring alcohol, with parents casting blame where they can.

Remembering the valley's prohibition years, Milton Abrams explained that drinking was rather commonplace among Cache County youth. He recalled that "a typical weekend for a farm boy in Cache County would be, you know, a Saturday night dance. He'd come in and milk and maybe he'd get a bath, maybe he wouldn't. And he'd get off to town, go somewhere and have a few drinks, [then] show up at the dance..."⁶⁰ To others, however, drinking seemed less apparent. Marion Olsen was very young during prohibition years. He admitted that he was likely unaware of many illegal behaviors.⁶¹ Lloyd Simmonds also remembered a less abundant drinking culture. When asked about drinking during prohibition, he responded, "...if you're going to farm ya ain't a going to drink, because you haven't got time to. ...Course it wasn't bad, people a few of them

⁵⁸*The Journal*, 23 September 1911, p.8.

⁵⁹ "Local News," *Box Elder News*, 29 September 1911, p.4, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?/Boxelder,34791>, accessed 16 July 2010.

⁶⁰Abrams, "Prohibition in Cache Valley," p.9.

⁶¹ Marion Olsen, "Bootlegging: An Oral History Interview," Interview by Paul R. Willie, Paradise, UT., 8 March 1976, Merrill Cazier Library, FILE MSS 255, p.9.

had drinks and that was it.”⁶² Either way, their comments show that drinking was clearly present, but not at the forefront of every mind. Drinking was either something people simply did, or simply did not.

Though Mormon doctrine prohibited alcohol consumption, some church members’ *Word of Wisdom* adherence did not last much beyond church services. Marion Olsen recalled that at the regular Friday night dances held at the Mormon Church, one would not be surprised “to see boys come to the dance with a bottle of beer, malt beer.”⁶³ Abrams told that his friends in College Ward would gather at a service station Sunday evenings to share stories about the drinking and dancing of the previous night. Then “church time would come and half of them would go to church and half of them would go into town and see a movie.”⁶⁴ Later he shared that “So many of the fellows would go home and get up and administer the sacrament and they’d give short talks and all of these things, as pious as you please.”⁶⁵ This relaxed adherence among some Mormons was common across the state. Lloyd “Snooks” Roberts, a former moonshiner from Duchesne County, Utah, reported that Mormons would “go round behind the bush,” after which he “followed them behind the bush” to fill their orders. He said, “We called them Jack Mormons.”⁶⁶

Illegal drink took many forms during prohibition. Drinkers in Cache Valley enjoyed both home brewed brew and distilled alcohol. Milton Abrams related that many folks whetted their appetites with home brew before they sought out “the hard stuff.” Weekends were the busiest

⁶² Lloyd Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” Interview by Paul R. Willie, Trenton, UT., 5 Feb 1976, Merrill Cazier Library, FILE MSS 312, p.22.

⁶³ Olsen, “Bootlegging: An Oral History Interview,” 11.

⁶⁴ Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 9.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 10.

⁶⁶ Lloyd “Snooks” Roberts, interview by author, 28 May 2010, Tabiona, UT, tape recording.

time for drinking, with youth grabbing bottles before going dancing. Abrams explained that this ritual made dances at the Dansante building, “a good time.”⁶⁷

Enough people in the valley drank to support a bustling black market for booze. Opportunists realized that southern Cache Valley’s geography “[lent] itself a great deal to someone who wanted to have a still and bootleg whiskey.”⁶⁸ Just as the canyons and river washes were ideal for producing and hiding illegal alcohol in Southeastern Utah, Cache County’s remote mountainsides and canyons offered wonderful cover for liquor production and exchange.⁶⁹ Improvements in transportation, from automobiles to more paved roads, also beckoned to potential bootleggers.⁷⁰ Before Wyoming and Montana went dry, thirsty Utahns took advantage of their nearby liquor supplies. Bootleggers regularly traveled through Cache Valley’s Blacksmith Fork Canyon as they hauled their loot from Wyoming to Ogden.⁷¹ Driving home to Trenton from Bear Lake, Lloyd Simmonds spotted evidence of bootlegging. After Simmonds’s car broke down, he and his mechanic noticed another broken-down automobile on the side of the road. The mechanic recognized that the vehicle belonged to a well-known bootlegger. He commented to Simmonds, “He hauls coal from Kemmerer [Wyoming] and

⁶⁷ Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 1-2. For other recollections about youth’s drinking in dance halls, see Robert E. Parson, “From Dance Halls to Cabarets: Popular Music in Cache Valley, Utah, 1930-1962” (Master’s thesis, Utah State University, 1983), 15.

⁶⁸ Olsen, “Bootlegging: An Oral History Interview,” 1.

⁶⁹ Jody Bailey and Robert S. McPherson, “Practically Free From the Taint of the Bootlegger: A Closer Look at Prohibition in Southeastern Utah,” *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 57 no. 2 (Spring 1989): 152.

⁷⁰ Ibid, and F. Ross Peterson, *A History of Cache County* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society and the Cache County Council, 1997), 281.

⁷¹ Ibid, 282. Harry E. Lunn, “Biography of Harry Lunn,” Interview by Craig Fuller, Ogden, UT, 25 November 1974, Merrill Cazier Library, FILE MSS 292, p.214. Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” pp. 11-12. Helen Z. Papanikolas, “Bootlegging in Zion: Making and Selling the ‘Good Stuff’,” *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 53 no. 3 (Summer 1985): 277.

always has a jug or two of whiskey in there.” The men searched and discovered a five gallon jug of whiskey concealed in “a load of coal.”⁷²

When asked if he remembered bootleggers near Cove, Utah during prohibition, Ambrious T. Larsen responded, “Oh, yes, there were bootleggers around.”⁷³ Lloyd Simmonds also attested to the prevalence of bootlegging. He affirmed, “Why, anybody, any kid could buy booze. All you had to do was go to town and if you wanted a bottle of booze, why just let it be known and somebody would come with a bottle of booze for you.”⁷⁴ Marion Olsen actually assisted a pair of bootleggers when he and a friend logged up East Canyon in 1927. Olsen knew that a man in the area distilled whiskey in “his spare time.” He saw the man and his son-in-law pass in a Model T Ford. After they exchanged customary waves, Olsen noticed “a ten gallon keg...in the back end of the car.” In their hustle, the bootleggers traveled too quickly for the roughness of the road. The driver lost control, flipping his Model T completely over. Olsen and his partner kindly used their team to right the Ford. Wasting no time, the man and boy “drove...a little ways” before they noticed the keg had fallen out. They returned, hooked the keg back on the automobile, “and went on their way” presumably to bootleg the whiskey in town.⁷⁵

Canada was a popular source for whiskey to wet the whistles of Cache County drinkers. Ambrious Larsen shared an exciting story where bootlegger Heleb Conquist encountered trouble as he entered Canada to restock his liquor supply. As Conquist raced across the border, a gutsy sheriff fired, giving Conquist a nasty gunshot wound. Amidst his pain, Conquist spotted a nearby straw stack. Lucky for him, cattle had recently made a hole in the stack. Conquist boldly

⁷²Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 4.

⁷³Ambrious T. Larsen, “Life and History of Ambrious Larsen,” Interview by Craig Fuller, Cove, UT, 6 November 1974, Merrill Cazier Library, FILE MSS 338, p. 27

⁷⁴Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 2.

⁷⁵Olsen, “Bootlegging: An Oral History Interview,” 5.

drove into the stack and, according to Larsen, “tipped the straw over on his car, and...they never did find him.”⁷⁶ As a young child Lloyd Simmonds overheard men in town talking about an airplane that yearly landed on an ice pond near Trenton, UT to bring in booze. Curious, he went to investigate. Sure enough, when Simmonds and his friends visited the site, they saw the plane’s tracks in the ice.⁷⁷ Like people nationwide, citizens in Cache Valley enjoyed Canadian spirits.

Right before the State of Utah “turned off ... the taps” in 1917, opportunists made last ditch attempts to stock the state. Wellsville Canyon was a hot spot on their transportation route. Knowing this, Cache County officials carefully guarded the canyon. Two Cache County men, “Barker and Bradshaw, were [there]...gathered in and relieved of a big quantity of beer. These men gave bail in cash and were advised to return the next morning and testify before the justice as to their legal right to have such a quantity of booze in their possession.” They did not return.⁷⁸

Cache County court records demonstrate that bootleggers existed in the valley. From 1911 to 1916, the county’s First District judges heard sixteen cases on selling intoxicating liquor.⁷⁹ In the brief span between 1922 and 1924, Logan City court officials filed charges on twenty individuals for the sale of intoxicating liquors. Also in that time the court found two men guilty for transporting illegal liquor. The remaining years between 1919 and 1927 turned in fewer violations⁸⁰ Perhaps fewer people sold. More likely enforcement agents simply caught fewer violators. Hyrum City reported only six cases of bootleggers selling alcohol between 1910

⁷⁶Larsen, “Life and History of Ambrious Larsen,” 27.

⁷⁷Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 1-2.

⁷⁸ “Booze Traffic is on its Final Spurt.” *Box Elder News*, 6 July 1917, p 1, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?Boxelder.54437>, accessed 8 July 2010.

⁷⁹ Criminal Registers of Actions, First District Court (Cache County), Series 26014, Reel 1, Book 1, Utah State Archives.

⁸⁰Register of Actions, Criminal, City Court Logan City, Utah, Series 0538, Vol. 1-3(1919-1927), Utah State Archives.

and 1914.⁸¹ This is not surprising since people in rural areas across the state and nation tended to favor prohibition more than city dwellers.⁸² Still, whether rural or urban, residents of Cache Valley trafficked in bootleg liquor.

Local newspapers also reveal that Cache County had a lively liquor trade. Jack Lee, a trainman for the Utah Idaho Central Railroad, but more notably an active bootlegger from Ogden, ran into trouble with the law in August 1923. The *Journal* reported that he was “caught with the goods: wet goods at that, to the extent of several pints of spirits frumeenti or in other words ‘hooch’.” The *Standard Examiner* explained: “Lee, it is said, has been bringing liquor to Logan from Ogden for some time and has been under the surveillance of Thomas Burk, private detective for the railroad. Detective Burk decided that Lee had liquor in his possession when he boarded a . . . train at Ogden.” Burk phoned for backup and “Deputy Sheriffs Benson and King met the train at Wellsville and placed Lee under arrest. The officers say that about 12 pints of moonshine whisky were confiscated.”⁸³ Also in 1923, authorities found James Edsigna with “seven quarts of moonshine whiskey in his automobile” on his way to sell the goods to waiting Logan customers.⁸⁴

Cache County youth provided a significant market for bootleggers. In June 1924, three minors purchased moonshine in Smithfield. Their salesman faced ninety days in jail for the

⁸¹Cache County Court Records. Hyrum City Precinct, Cache County Records no. 67, 1910-1925, Merrill Cazier Library.

⁸² John Kearnes, “Utah, Sexton of Prohibition,” *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 47, no. 1 (Winter 1979): 19.

⁸³“Local News,” *The Journal*, 8 August 1923, p.3. “Ogden Trainman in Liquor Case,” *Ogden Standard Examiner*, 9 August 1923, p. 6, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/u/?ogden11,91896>, accessed 20 July 2010.

⁸⁴“Liquor Carrying Case is Delayed,” *Ogden Standard Examiner*, 25 July 1923, p. 6. <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/u/?ogden11,88846>, accessed 20 July 2010.

exchange.⁸⁵ Simmonds also recalled a well-known bootlegger in Lewiston regularly selling booze to youth on their way to dances in Preston, Idaho.⁸⁶

Bootleggers demonstrated ingenuity in their practice. One bootlegger in Cache County demanded money when his customers first requested their moonshine. Then he instructed them where they could find the product in a few hours' time. Olsen recalled the strategy: "Maybe it was in a culvert drainage under the road, maybe it was by a corner post of some field, or maybe it was behind a big rock.... [but] he didn't want to get caught."⁸⁷ Lloyd Simmonds recounted an exchange he witnessed in the bathroom at the Owl Pool Hall. The bootlegger "picked up the top off the water closet...and pulled out two pints out of there and sold it to him. They had it stashed everywhere."⁸⁸ When authorities neared the residence of one bootlegger, he cleverly hid his stash, "under the Trenton Church House." He rightly assumed that officials would not check there. While the community's non-Mormon population laughed at the irony of whiskey under the Mormon Church building, Simmonds remembered that the information was carefully concealed from the bishop and congregation members.⁸⁹

Another clever bootlegger (who was incidentally known for having a hook instead of a hand) ran a profitable operation on the outskirts of Avon. When not engaged in a transaction, he hid his stash in some brush right by his house. Though prohibition authorities "searched his home many times," recalled Marion Olsen, they never checked the bushes because, "it was too close for anyone to take the chance. It was right under their nose but they never did uncover it."⁹⁰

⁸⁵"Smithfield Man Get Sentence," *Ogden Standard Examiner*, 26 June 1924, p. 3, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/u/?ogden11.72824>, accessed 26 July 2010

⁸⁶Simmonds, "Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah," 5.

⁸⁷ Olsen, "Bootlegging: An Oral History Interview," 7.

⁸⁸ Simmonds, "Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah," 14.

⁸⁹Ibid, 6, 11.

⁹⁰Olsen, "Bootlegging: An Oral History Interview," 6.

In another case of creativity, Bry, a Lewiston bootlegger, outsmarted an agent disguised as his customer. When the agent approached he announced, “Bry, I got a cold. Would you sell me a pint of whiskey?” Bry responded, “You bet.” After Bry turned over the whiskey he demanded, “Now Johnny, you got to drink every drop of that.” He forced the agent to down the entire pint. Johnny was in no condition to make any arrest, and his belly made an excellent depository for the evidence.⁹¹ Though these resourceful bootleggers engaged in rampant disregard for prohibition laws, their operations did not constitute the dangerous crime prevalent in more urban areas across the state and nation.⁹²

Students at the Agricultural College of Utah viewed bootlegging as a clever practice. In their 1924 yearbook, the students heralded their football coach Dick Romney for his team’s successful season. They wrote, “The famous ‘bootlegger play’ which won the first Aggie touchdown on Turkey day was a product of Dick’s ingenuity.”⁹³ The students were aware of bootlegging, and associated the term with success and ingenuity.

Some bootleggers sold for profit, and others participated in the liquor trade rather informally. Sister Zilles, a German immigrant, ran a profitable operation near Smithfield. Milton Abrams estimated the average cost of her home brew at 25 to 35 cents per quart. He figured she made enough money to make a living.⁹⁴ Lloyd Simmonds remembered that harder substances cost closer to \$1.50 per pint, or the equivalent of about three dance tickets.⁹⁵ Abrams stated that for other liquor sellers, the trade was “not commercial at all. Very, very informal.”⁹⁶

⁹¹Ambrious T. Larsen, “Life and History of Ambrious Larsen,” 27.

⁹²Papanikolas, “Bootlegging in Zion,” 272.

⁹³ Utah Agricultural College, *The Buzzer*, 1924, p.101, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/u/?buzzer,1941>, accessed 2 December 2010.

⁹⁴Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 2.

⁹⁵Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 13.

⁹⁶Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 3.

To Simmonds, most prohibition violators “was doing it just for fun, rather than to make a profit.”⁹⁷ Both Logan and Hyrum City records show that some individuals simply gave away their moonshine.⁹⁸ Snooks Roberts remembered that in Duchesne County no one really had enough money to purchase booze. In 1927 he experienced one of his favorite trades. He related, “A kid come to me, he said ‘I need a quart of whiskey. I haven’t got no money. I’ve got these spurs I’ll give ya. When I get the money I’ll come back and get the spurs’.” Snooks accepted the trade, and reported, “I’ve still got the spurs.”⁹⁹ Much of prohibition exchange was conducted informally.

Though Canadian booze supplied liquor traders with some of their goods, daring citizens in Cache County also brewed and distilled their own. Historian Helen Papanikolas reported that when Utah went dry in 1917, across the state “The making...of liquor had suddenly passed from commercial distilleries to the underground. Immigrants who had used the grape residue from wine-making for their households’ liqueurs, Americans who had sporadically made a small amount of whiskey for their own consumption, and an eager number of novices...set up stills in towns, cities, and isolated areas of the state.”¹⁰⁰ Cache County was no exception.

Lloyd Simmonds confirmed the eagerness of beginner distillers. He attested, “All the guys my age had their turn at making home brew.”¹⁰¹ Milton Abrams shared a similar recollection: “I dare say that in those days almost everybody had their turn at making a batch of

⁹⁷Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 8.

⁹⁸Register of Actions, Criminal, City Court Logan City, Utah, Series 0538, Vol. 1-3 (1919-1927), Utah State Archives, Cache County Court Records, Hyrum City Precinct, Cache County Records no. 67, 1910-1925, Merrill Cazier Library.

⁹⁹Lloyd “Snooks” Roberts, interview.

¹⁰⁰Papanikolas, “Bootlegging in Zion,” 272.

¹⁰¹Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 7.

beer. My brother [made] home brew beer and [tried] to hide it from my dad.”¹⁰² Simmonds, an experimenter with home brew, also had the privilege to watch the experts. His friend took him to visit a hidden still, where he watched the still owner work his magic.¹⁰³ When manufacturing drinks, a moonshiner began with mash, which often consisted of water and either rye, wheat, or corn. After mixing the mash, a moonshiner fermented the substance with yeast for a few days, before straining the mixture and distilling the remnants.¹⁰⁴ On Simmonds’s trip, he was impressed that in a single day “they made seven gallons of booze out of that fifty gallon barrel of mash.” The still owner graciously offered a bottle to Simmonds, which he accepted. Back in town, Simmonds took the gift to a former saloon owner from Malad who curiously pronounced it very good and very old whiskey. Simmonds marveled that the manufacturer could produce such a quality beverage in such a short time.¹⁰⁵

Marion Olsen also remembered distillers at work in his neck of the woods. He mentioned a still two miles north of Avon, “in this draw they call Skunk Hollow.” The moonshiners “were up [from Ogden] and they’d implicated a couple of the local yohos in this with them and they were stilling quite a sizable still there.” After his experiences with prohibition violators, Olsen, “learned that many of these little springs in the mountains...had been used for this purpose.”¹⁰⁶ Milton Abrams reported that liquor manufacturers worked feverishly near Porcupine.¹⁰⁷ Simmonds commented on another still located west of Trenton. Neighbors easily spotted that particular still, since its owner often ran it at night with its blazing fire attracting attention.

¹⁰² Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 3.

¹⁰³ Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 7, 2.

¹⁰⁴ Papanikolas, “Bootlegging in Zion,” 276.

¹⁰⁵ Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 7, 2.

¹⁰⁶ Olsen, “Bootlegging: An Oral History Interview,” 5, 8.

¹⁰⁷ Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 5.

Noticing neighbors were largely unconcerned, however, and only commented, “Well, I see what’s his name’s making a living today.”¹⁰⁸

Not all neighbors were as understanding as those in Trenton. In November 1921, a disgruntled Clarkston citizen penned a letter to Cache County Sheriff Miles Peterson, complaining of a nearby liquor operation. The letter’s author sent directions to “a Bootleggers Inn” and attached a map. He or she explained, “The mens names are Gib Archibald, Tommy Butters and Golden Butters. These young men are drunk every night and selling their Boose at two dollars a pint [sic].” The accuser provided even more information, explaining, “There is also another young man in town Bootlegger who is only sixteen years old and makes his juice right in his Fathers house, selling it at three dollars a pint [sic]. His name is Sidney Godfrey, son of young Tommy Godfrey. The cork blew out of his hand and three mice got in which was not discovered for days, and when it was the stuff was hurried and sold at the same old price. It is time such as this is being stopped or someone is going to be poisoned. There is no town in Cache Co as full of boose as Clarkston.”¹⁰⁹ This concerned citizen’s letter shows not only the prevalence of alcohol manufacture, but also that undercover production was dangerous, both for the producer and the customer.

The dangers Cache County moonshiners and their clientele faced reflected the dangers common across Utah. With the secrecy of drink production, no sanitation or food preparation standards regulated the business. In Salt Lake City, prohibition agents uncovered gallons of unhealthily produced wine. They described the mash as “a conglomeration that respectable pigs would have scorned – being composed of decomposed grapes, apples and other refuse from the

¹⁰⁸ Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 2-3.

¹⁰⁹ Cache County Sheriff’s Office Correspondence (1920-1925), Incoming Correspondence (1920-1921), Merrill Cazier Library, COLL MSS 262, Box 1, Folder 7.

store.”¹¹⁰ Talking about home brew in Cache Valley, Marion Olsen explained, “Some of it can be tolerable and some of it can be terrible.”¹¹¹ Lloyd Simmonds explained that when he and a friend once made moonshine, they did not let the substance age long enough before bottling it. They soon experienced the excitement of exploding bottles. He also related that many moonshiners “bottled up a lot of flies.”¹¹²

In Cache Valley, still operators worked carefully and often changed locations in attempts to avoid law enforcement. Avon’s town marshal once responded to a tip about a still, only to find 55 gallon barrels abandoned at the site.¹¹³ Outside of the valley, in Carbon County, Utah, National Guardsmen, on duty because of coal strikes in Carbon, chased a young girl after they spotted her with copper tubing (a common component used in stills for condensation). In her attempts to avoid capture, she hid in a tree, then later cut and dyed her hair to prevent detection.¹¹⁴

While oral histories show home brewers and moonshiners making their mark, evidence from newspapers and Cache County Court records are sparser. The Logan City Municipal Court’s Register of Actions documents only six express cases of “manufacture of intoxicating liquor” between 1921 and 1927, an average of one case a year.¹¹⁵ While the First District Court reported numerous cases of “sale” “possession” and even “persistent violation of the prohibition ordinance” between 1910 and 1931, their Register of Actions contains no cases of specific

¹¹⁰ Quoted in Papanikolas, “Bootlegging in Zion,” 283.

¹¹¹ Olsen, “Bootlegging: An Oral History Interview,” 11.

¹¹² Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 7.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, 8.

¹¹⁴ Helen Z. Papanikolas, “Bootlegging in Zion,” 280.

¹¹⁵ Register of Actions, Criminal, City Court Logan City, Utah, Series 0538, Vol. 2-3 (1921-1927), Utah State Archives.

“manufacture” of alcohol.¹¹⁶ Obviously the courts did not charge every brewer and moonshiner, so the limited number of recorded violations does not represent the actual number of violations. Similarly, newspaper only covered cases that were actually reported. Federal records show that statewide, Utah moonshiners were active in their practice. Federal agents uncovered over 400 distilleries across the state between 1925 and 1932.¹¹⁷ Based on oral testimony, Cache County participated in the manufacture of illegal alcohol that occurred throughout the state.

Men were not the only prohibition violators. On a national level, the eradication of male-dominated saloons opened the doors for women to share their drinking space with men, creating the liberated woman drinker and dancer known as “the flapper.”¹¹⁸ John Farnsworth Lund of Salt Lake City penned his recollections of Utah’s turn to a dry state. He related that in pre-prohibition years, whenever he would enter saloons or coffeehouses, “I almost never saw a woman, because there were unwritten customs regarding them.”¹¹⁹ The prohibition years changed these customs in Utah. Throughout Utah, women became bootleggers for economic reasons. One woman in Carbon County operated a large scale brewery.¹²⁰

Cache County had its share of women fond of booze. Milton Abrams told how his brother manufactured beer and hid it from their father. But, Abrams said his brother was also “afraid my mother would find it because she’d drink it. She loved her home brew.”¹²¹ Lloyd

¹¹⁶Criminal Registers of Actions, First District Court (Cache County), Series 26014, Reel 1, Book 1, Utah State Archives.

¹¹⁷ W. Paul Reeve, “Prohibition Failed to Stop Liquor Flow in Utah,” *History Blazer*, (February 1995) http://historytogo.utah.gov/utah_chapters/from_war_to_war/prohibitionfailedtostoptheliquorflow_inutah.html, accessed 10 November 2010. Peterson, *A History of Cache County*, 281.

¹¹⁸Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, 176.

¹¹⁹John Farnsworth Lund, “The Night Before Doomsday,” *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 51 no. 2 (Spring 1983): 157.

¹²⁰Papanikolas, “Bootlegging in Zion,” 284.

¹²¹Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 4.

Simmonds remembered a liquor handler from Butte: “She was quite a business woman I guess, because she handled a lot of booze.”¹²² Though young women in Cache Valley participated in the Jazz Age culture of the 1920s, often they were left out of male drinking circles. Abrams shared that when he and his buddies went dancing with their dates, on the way they often stopped at Sister Zilles for drinks. Abrams, however, “never did know a single girl to go in there.” They always left their dates in the car.¹²³ Simmonds explained why he believed women did not join the main underground circles. He reasoned that a drunken man’s knack for urinating with or without facilities was quite a turn off for women.¹²⁴

As in other places across the nation, enforcement of prohibition in Cache Valley functioned haphazardly. On the local level, clearly some enforcement occurred. Court records document a high percentage of prohibition related cases. Indeed the number of arrests for drunkenness increased between 1919 and 1925 in the Logan City court. This suggests either an increase in violations, or an increase in enforcement during this period. Based on the fines associated with enforcement, the latter is likely untrue. Fines from these violations reflect a degree of apathy on the part of the courts toward prohibition enforcement. For example, between May 1919 and December 1925, the average fine for drunkenness in Logan City courts was fifty dollars. From February 1926 to August 1927 the average fine dropped significantly to an average of twenty five dollars.¹²⁵ The decrease in fines suggests that, as time went on, city officials viewed prohibition violations as less problematic. Interestingly, on 3 January 1925, the Hyrum City Court fined Sidney Napper only five dollars for “drinking intoxicated liquors within

¹²²Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 11.

¹²³Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 2-3.

¹²⁴Ibid, 6.

¹²⁵Register of Actions, Criminal, City Court Logan City, Utah, Series 0538, Vol. 1-3 (1919-1927), Utah State Archives.

a public Dance Hall.” The court fined a citizen charged for “driving with only one headlight” seven dollars, and a gentleman “driving a car without a light” five dollars.¹²⁶ To the Hyrum City court, dance hall drinking was about as significant as forgetting to turn on headlights.

Even in the first early years of prohibition, Logan City citizens noticed a distinct lack of enforcement. In 1911 Logan City was under a stringent prohibition ordinance, forbidding the sale of any substance containing more than one half of one per cent alcohol. Creative violators skirted the law by purchasing “bitters” from a city drug store. In June 1911, two men became very drunk off electric bitters containing twenty per cent alcohol. The *Journal* published an article calling for better enforcement. The author questioned, “Why not enforce this part of the law as well as the part that enables drunkards to be sent to jail or fined?”¹²⁷ At the exact time much of the state entered into prohibition through local option elections, Logan City already had enforcement trouble.

Enforcement problems persisted throughout prohibition’s duration. The concerned Clarkston resident who complained of bootlegging neighbors exclaimed: “It is time such as this is being stopped,” indicating a continued lack of enforcement. Ambrious Larsen surmised that many officials searched for prohibition offenders, but were simply unsuccessful.¹²⁸ The accounts of the Avon bootlegger hiding his stash in the bushes near his home, and the man storing his alcohol under the Mormon Church show that though enforcement officers were often unsuccessful, they were active enough to prompt men to conceal their booze.¹²⁹

¹²⁶Cache County Court Records. Hyrum City Precinct, Cache County Records no. 67, 1910-1925, Merrill Cazier Library.

¹²⁷ “Local News,” *The Journal*, 27 June 1911, p. 8.

¹²⁸Larsen, “Life and History of Ambrious Larsen,” 27.

¹²⁹Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 6, 11, 14.

Some local law enforcement officials simply did not care to enforce prohibition. Milton Abrams explained that though “Grandpa Eck’s” was a well-known spot for wine in Providence during prohibition years, “I don’t believe anyone ever thought of raiding him.” Abrams also reported, “Oh, I’m sure that the authorities all knew that the fellows went to Sister Zilles’ on Saturday night [for drinks]. It was one of the social centers of [College Ward].” Though authorities knew, no one was sufficiently concerned to arrest her. Abrams “never remember[ed] them bothering Sister Zilles.”¹³⁰

Valley resident Lloyd Simmonds remembered a particularly nonchalant sheriff in southern Idaho. He related that a bootlegger visited a boxing match in Grace, Idaho. Before entering the arena, he searched for a place to park his booze-laden car so he could protect his loot. He spotted a nearby garage and explained his situation to its owner. The garage owner patiently listened to the bootlegger’s explanation, then, smiling, “pulled his coat back” to show he was actually the local sheriff. A slight look of concern passed over the bootlegger’s face. The sheriff, however, was happy to oblige his petitioner, and let him use the garage, then go about his business following the match.¹³¹ This bootlegger’s main concern was not law enforcement. Few citizens, including law enforcement agents, took prohibition legislation seriously.

More dangerous prohibition violations, however, brought stricter enforcement. In September 1923, Oliver Carlson drove his vehicle while drunk. The courts did not turn a blind eye to this crime. He received a sixty day jail sentence. Judge Roberts of Logan explained the court’s reasoning: “A man who will drive a car while under the influence of liquor deserves a jail

¹³⁰ Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 3, 2.

¹³¹ Simmonds, “Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah,” 21.

sentence every time. The court cannot consider anything else.”¹³² When Carlson again drove under the influence in March 1924, the court was more severe in its reprimand, and slapped him a ninety day sentence coupled with a fifty dollar fine. The courts maintained their stance on the seriousness of intoxicated driving when Carlson appeared yet again before the Logan City Court in 1927. This time the court increased his fine to one hundred dollars, and also required him to spend sixty days in jail.¹³³ Though city and county officials often overlooked prohibition violations, in severe cases they strictly enforced the law.

Enforcement in Cache Valley reflected the situation in the State of Utah. Like the sheriff whom Simmonds remembered, across Utah some prohibition agents were known to actually help the bootleggers and moonshiners. About one hundred miles from Logan “In Summit County a deputy sheriff was indicted for allegedly furnishing a still to a bootlegger and conspiring with him to manufacture liquor.” Other agents accepted bribes from liquor violators.¹³⁴ With often irresponsible formal enforcement, extracurricular enforcement emerged in the state. Between 1924 and 1925, the Ku Klux Klan actively attempted anti-immigrant prohibition enforcement. This type of “enforcement” often involved the framing of immigrants actually innocent of any prohibition violations.¹³⁵ Whether due to attitude or economics, the dysfunctional enforcement of prohibition in Utah hampered the law’s vitality.

Problems from prohibition, such as dangerous production, makeshift enforcement, and an attitude of general disillusionment prompted most Utahns, like other Americans, to question the value of the Eighteenth Amendment. As national dissatisfaction with the law grew, Utahns

¹³²“Plumber Gets Term in Jail,” *Ogden Standard Examiner*, 19 September 1923, p.6, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/u/?ogden11,100897>, accessed 20 July 2010.

¹³³Register of Actions, Criminal, City Court Logan City, Utah, Series 0538, Vol. 2-3 (1921-1927), Utah State Archives.

¹³⁴Papanikolas, “Bootlegging in Zion,” 287.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

began to discuss repeal. National groups filtered down to the local level. By 1933, the WONPR had 12,000 members in Utah.¹³⁶

Repeal discussions centered on moral, religious, and economic issues. Both wets and dries used moral reasoning to champion their cause. The prohibitionists reminded voters of the evils of the saloon, and threatened that repeal would resurrect its power. Opponents of repeal highlighted the importance of law, and declared that repealing an unfavorable law would set a dangerous precedent of simply ending any law people broke.¹³⁷ Repealists attributed society's evils to the prohibition law itself. The *Salt Lake Tribune* ran a WONPR ad that pleaded, "For your children's sake, help close up the speak-easy; take the profit out of crime and restore respect for the law."¹³⁸

The Mormon Church participated in the repeal debates, using religious rationales. Church President Heber J. Grant openly encouraged Mormons to vote against repeal in his General Conference addresses to church members in the spring and fall of 1933.¹³⁹ In Cache County, just over a week before the repeal election, local church leader "President Rudger Clawson, representing the general authorities of the LDS church...discussed...revelation of The Word of Wisdom and the evils of strong drink and tobacco" at Hyrum's Stake Conference.¹⁴⁰ This likely influenced Hyrum Mormons in their votes. However, some church leaders actually favored repeal. Brigham H. Roberts, a member of the church's First Council of Seventy reasoned, "to my way of thinking there is no connection between state prohibition and our Word of Wisdom. State prohibition is based on compulsion...while the Word of Wisdom is just as the

¹³⁶Kearnes, "Utah, Sexton of Prohibition," 10-11.

¹³⁷Ibid, 14, 15.

¹³⁸*Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 November 1933, as quoted in Kearnes, "Utah, Sexton of Prohibition," 13.

¹³⁹Ibid, 16.

¹⁴⁰"Hyrum Stake Conference Successful," *The Journal*, 25 September 1933, p.1.

name implies, namely a Word of Counsel from the Lord...”¹⁴¹ Utah Mormons considered matters beyond religion in their vote on repeal.

Economic factors were important in the repeal discussion and vote in Utah and Cache County. Utah farmers, miners, and manufacturers suffered from the economic troubles of the 1930s.¹⁴² Struggling Utahns looked hopefully to presidential candidate Franklin D. Roosevelt for relief. Wets carefully emphasized that repeal was an important factor in Roosevelt’s platform, and declared that any loyal party member would vote for repeal. Repealists also argued that repeal would bring the opportunity to tax alcohol and its industries, thereby generating more revenue for state and local governments. Prohibitionists disagreed, declaring that the liquor industry was so small that its taxes would not make much of a difference.¹⁴³

With these issues in mind, Utah voters went to the polls. On 7 November 1933, 101,600 out of 169,000 Utahns voted for wet candidates to attend the state convention to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment.¹⁴⁴ Citizens statewide also voted for repeal of state prohibition.¹⁴⁵ In an example of mainstreaming, Utah sided with the national sentiment against prohibition.¹⁴⁶

In Cache County, with its highly conservative Mormon population, the *Journal* predicted a close vote, declaring, “The Cache County vote will probably be on the dry side by a narrow margin...”¹⁴⁷ With the city’s highest voter turnouts to date, 3,982 voters cast their decision on prohibition. The office of the *Journal* rarely had an open phone line on Election Day, because so

¹⁴¹Roberts, as quoted in Kearnes, “Utah, Sexton of Prohibition,” 18.

¹⁴² Richard D. Poll, *Utah’s History* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1989), 481.

¹⁴³Kearnes, “Utah, Sexton of Prohibition,” 110-113.

¹⁴⁴Ibid, 19.

¹⁴⁵ Reeve, “Prohibition Failed to Stop Liquor Flow in Utah.”

¹⁴⁶Kearnes, “Utah, Sexton of Prohibition,” 20.

¹⁴⁷ “Predictions Say Cache to Vote Dry,” *The Journal*, 7 November 1933, p.1.

many callers wanted regular updates about the repeal vote returns.¹⁴⁸ When the votes were tallied, “approximately 65 per cent of the people of Cache County voted in favor of leaving things as they are at present as regards the prohibition question.” Only four precincts returned wet majorities: Cornish, Petersboro Precinct 2, Trenton, and Logan Precinct 5. In College Ward, 147 voters favored prohibition, with only 8 dissenting, or 95 per cent against repeal.¹⁴⁹

While the rest of the state returned a high wet majority, Cache County’s overwhelming dry vote was not bizarre. San Juan and Garfield counties, both very rural, returned a three to one dry result, while Cache County’s was only two to one in favor of prohibition.¹⁵⁰ Seventeen total counties in Utah voted against repeal.¹⁵¹ In Logan City, more urban than the rest of Cache County, 43 percent of voters favored repeal, while, in the rest of the county, only 31 per cent voted against prohibition.¹⁵² Statewide, 86 per cent of the dry votes came from rural populations. Of the votes in favor of repeal, only thirty two per cent were cast by rural dwellers. Cache County’s rural population fits into the statewide pattern of dry voting.

Nationwide, people argued as to the effects of prohibition on the drinking culture.¹⁵³ The same debates shuffled through the valley. Abrams believed drinking increased after repeal, because, stopping by the local grocery store or even a state liquor store was much easier than “having to go and rouse out a bootlegger or go somewhere looking for some home brew or beer of any kind.”¹⁵⁴ Simmonds reasoned that while drinking may have increased initially, most people did what they wanted, regardless of the law: “Everybody after [repeal] seems like they

¹⁴⁸“Logan Polls Heaviest Vote in History,” *The Journal*, 8 November 1833, p.1. “Keen Interest Manifest in Election,” *The Journal*, 8 November 1933, p.1.

¹⁴⁹ “Cache County Champions Dry Cause,” *The Journal*, 8 November 1933, p.1.

¹⁵⁰ “Wet Majority in Utah Will Reach About 28,000 Votes,” *The Journal*, 8 November 1933, p.1.

¹⁵¹Kearnes, “Utah, Sexton of Prohibition,” 19.

¹⁵² “Cache County Champions Dry Cause,” *The Journal*, 8 November 1933, p.1.

¹⁵³ Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 209-212. Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, 163.

¹⁵⁴Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 12.

wanted to drink a bottle of beer...just because they'd been held off from it but, the few that was drinking kept on drinking, see. It didn't make a lot of difference, I don't think."¹⁵⁵ Simmonds's attitude reflects Cache County's overall experience with prohibition.

Indeed Cache County's prohibition experience was largely typical. County members saw the same drunkenness, bootlegging, moonshining, drunk dancing, laughable enforcement, and economic troubles that prompted Americans and Utahns in general to vote for repeal. On whole, Cache County citizens demonstrated a casual attitude toward prohibition problems. For Milton Abrams, prohibition signified "the time, you know, that I was helling around a little bit." His drinking and dancing buddies "were just rowdies, that's all."¹⁵⁶ As stated earlier, when some neighbors saw moonshining, they commented on the economic fortunes of the still operator rather than his threat to society.¹⁵⁷ In November 1933 the *Journal* did not report Cache County citizens championing the wonders of prohibition law, or even calling for stricter enforcement, but instead reported that voters wanted to "[leave] things as they are."¹⁵⁸ Granted, the Mormon Church's doctrine highlighted alcohol issues. This counsel probably caused people to discuss the issue over dinner. Their beliefs, though, did not really transfer to their everyday reactions to prohibition violations.

In general, most Cache County citizens held an amused attitude toward prohibition and its problems. As seen by an excited newspaper discussion, primarily around voting times like 1879, 1909, and 1933, Cache County citizens did have opinions on prohibition issues. These heated discussions, however, usually subsided after the elections. Most people were unconcerned. Remembering the times at Sister Zilles, and the lack of enforcement, Milton

¹⁵⁵Simmonds, "Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah," 9.

¹⁵⁶Abrams, "Prohibition in Cache Valley," 2, 7.

¹⁵⁷Simmonds, "Prohibition in Cache Valley and Utah," 2-3.

¹⁵⁸"Cache County Champions Dry Cause," *The Journal*, 8 November 1933, p.1.

Abrams reported, “It was so amusing.”¹⁵⁹ In May 1932, the *Journal* published some comical wisdom: “One gallon makes four quarts, one quart makes two pints, and one pint makes one ill.”¹⁶⁰ Then in October 1932 the paper’s “Poet’s Corner” declared, “Another doggone liar in

Sheriff Bill McFlower: He swears the hooch he confiscates is all poured down the sewer.”¹⁶¹

These bits show that Cache County citizens were aware of prohibition violations, but viewed them with amusement. This attitude contrasts the notion that Cache County Mormons and non-Mormons were too conservative and isolated to experience the color of the Prohibition Era.

They not only experienced the excitement, but because their experience was so very typical, they did not spend much time thinking about and agitating over prohibition issues.

Generally speaking, people usually worry about their present pressing needs. To a bootlegger, that may mean hiding his stash. To the everyday Cache County citizens in the early twentieth century, though, prohibition was not as big of a deal as running their farms, feeding their families, fulfilling their church assignments, or spending time with family or friends. For most Cache Valley folk, drinkers, bootleggers, and moonshiners were just “helling around.”

¹⁵⁹ Abrams, “Prohibition in Cache Valley,” 12.

¹⁶⁰ “Cache of Humor, Bootlegger’s Wet Measure,” *The Journal*, 7 May 1932, p.2.

¹⁶¹ “Cache of Humor” *The Journal*, 24 October 1932, p.4.

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