

NOT in ARCHIVES stacks

ALCOHOLIC CONTROL, BOARD OF

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS, 1936-1957, n.d.

Accession information:

Schedule reference:

Arrangement: Generally chronological.

Finding Aid prepared by: C. J. Benner, Jr., September 17, 1958.

Revised by: Ellen Z. McGrew, March 25, 1973.

North Carolina held its first state-wide referendum on the question of prohibition in 1881. The "wets" won by 166,325 to 48,370. After the defeat of 1881, the prohibitionists reorganized and regrouped. The W.C.T.U. became active and the churches worked in behalf of prohibition. After 1900, politics played a large role in a continuing fight, and the dominant Democratic Party allied itself with churches, temperance groups, and women's leagues to combat the evils of alcohol. As a result of the efforts of the newly-organized North Carolina Anti-Saloon League, the General Assembly enacted the Watts Bill in 1903. The purpose of the act was to drive liquor out of the unpoliced rural communities. The act provided that there was to be no liquor traffic outside incorporated towns and a plan of local option was established. This act was supplemented in 1905 to forbid liquor traffic in all communities except in incorporated places of at least 1,000 population.

The Anti-Saloon League, established in 1901, led the campaign for state-wide prohibition, and in 1908 prohibition was voted. This vote did away with the saloon system in the state, and there have been no legal saloons since 1908.

The drive and influence of temperance societies throughout the United States brought about the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, creating national prohibition, effective January 16, 1920. North Carolina's General Assembly passed the Turlington Act in 1923 to enforce prohibition in this state. The act made unlawful the manufacture, sale, barter, transportation, or handling for profit any beverage containing more than one-half of one per cent alcohol.

The Eighteenth Amendment created a wave of "moonshining," "boot-legging," and disrespect for law, and as the breakdown of prohibition became more common, it led to the repeal of the Federal Prohibition Amendment in 1933.

During the 1935 legislative session, it became apparent that many sections of the state were dissatisfied with the Turlington Act. Before the session adjourned, 17 of North Carolina's 100 counties had been

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permitted to break away from the prohibition system and to set up alcoholic beverage control stores for the legalized sale of whiskey within their counties.

In the closing days of the 1935 session, the legislature authorized the Governor to appoint a Commission to study the question of control of alcoholic beverages and to make a report to the 1937 General Assembly.

After the repeal of the Federal Prohibition Amendment, North Carolina's sister states, South Carolina and Virginia, had legalized the sale of liquor. South Carolina operated under a state licensing system while Virginia used a state monopoly system. It was obvious to many people that effective prohibition of alcoholic beverages in North Carolina was a thing of the past.

The Commission, after careful study of both the state licensing and the state monopoly systems, felt that the latter tended to eliminate liquor control from politics and to emphasize social welfare rather than revenues or profits. The counties wanted control of their own systems. The Commission believed that if the General Assembly of 1937 enacted the Alcoholic Beverages Control Act, a number of the counties would vote to legalize the sale of alcoholic beverages. In this way there should be state supervision within defined limits.

In its report to the General Assembly, the Commission emphasized that state supervision should not extend to such lengths as to destroy county autonomy nor to cause the counties to lose interest in the administration and enforcement of the county system. "Wherever possible it was deemed advisable to leave the bulk of the authority to the county boards and to make these boards responsible for the conduct of the county system"

The Commission felt that the control over the sale of beer and wine was a matter of enforcement and should not be included in the State Alcoholic Beverage System. It recommended, therefore, against placing the sale of beer and unfortified wines under the control of either the state or county boards.

With few changes, the General Assembly enacted the Commission's recommendations into law in 1937. Counties voting not to come under the act remained under the Turlington Prohibition Act. If approved, the Control System became effective, and a County Board consisting of chairman and two members was selected.

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The State Board of Alcoholic Control consists of a chairman and two associate members, appointed by the Governor. The general powers of the State Board are to control price, management, financing, approvals, testing for quality, selling, purchasing, number of stores, regulations, systems, permits, storage, transportation, and general handling.

By acts of 1945 and 1949 the powers of the State Board of Alcoholic Control were extended to cover wines, beers, and malt beverages.

Since the initial bill in 1937, the State has passed laws controlling and preventing the sale of alcoholic beverages to minors, regulating the days for the sale of such beverages, prohibiting sales to drunkards, outlawing drinking in public places, and regulating advertising.

Since February 1, 1958, there have been two major changes in the organization of the State Board. The Wine and Malt Beverages divisions were consolidated into the Enforcement unit of the State Board of Alcoholic Control. The second major change concerned the issuing of permits. The Board assumed the responsibility of investigating applications for permits. Other changes included the renewal of permits annually and the abandonment of the Analysis Laboratory. Analyses are being done by arrangement with the State Bureau of Investigation. [Source: Introduction to State Board of Alcoholic Control Inventory Schedules, prepared by State Records Center.]

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| 2 | Correspondence, Reports, etc., 1950-1957, n.d.  |
| 3 | Miscellaneous<br>Report of Commission to Study the Control of Alcoholic Beverages in North Carolina [1936].<br>Address of John Sprunt Hill on County Control of Liquor Stores, 1937.<br><br>Correspondence, Reports, etc., of Committee to Recommend Legislation for the Better Enforcement of Prohibition Laws, 1949-1951. |

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MINUTES OF THE BOARD, 1941-1970

Accession information: Transferred from the State Records Center  
April 7, 1977; accessioned April 22, 1977.  
Schedule reference: Page 4, item 1, as amended March 31, 1977.  
Arrangement: Chronological.  
Finding Aid prepared by: C. Edward Morris.  
Date: May 20, 1977.

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