

The Battle of the Bottle  
or  
License -- No-license  
or  
The Trials and Tribulations of Officer Connors  
Or  
"Is My Father In Your Barroom?" "Get Away From Them Swinging  
Doors."

The sound and fury and tragedy of yesterday's battles are concentrated in the Mack Sennott type of title and sub-titles of this paper. We can look back in amused toleration now, but 50 - 60 and 70 years ago, January, February and March of each year saw a titanic struggle take place for men's minds and votes in the small cosmopolitan town of Maynard. Ballies were held, voters were button-holed, dead men registered, money was passed, drinks were offered, group pledges were made; all the gambits of political warfare were utilized by one side or the other. But as the following record will show, virtuous Carrie Nation was no match for old demon rum - liquor in the form of beer being discovered around 3000 B.C., had given mankind a temporary Garden of Eden under its influence.

The one-half page unsigned advertisement in the Maynard News of March 9, 1900 epitomizes the liquor interests, to wit: (1) no license is farce (2) well conducted local saloon preferable to dive or kitchen barroom (3) ale, wine and liquor are national beverages necessary to the classes and masses (4) no license enforcement waste up money (5) source of revenue - thousands of dollars (6) means more business, money, less drunkenness, better standing in commercial world and life of progressive town (7) no-license means stagnation, dives, kitchen bars, vile liquors, more police, higher taxes.

The Maynard News of December 12, 1902 devotes an article to a



Womens' Christian Temperance Union rally at Methodist Episcopal Church at which Reverends Lawford and Washburn spoke. Thier points give a fair approximation of the temperance argument; (1) health, happiness and prosperity of Maynard impaired (2) open saloon moral and financial liability (3) no man of respectability and sobriety wishes saloon near his home (4) next to useless for Maynard to receive \$3000 in rum money, and then appropriate \$12,000 to introduce boys and girls to the high ideals of life - then requiring them to pass four times a day saloons when going to school (5) bad example of Maynard men and prayers of the women (6) Maynard boy who played drunk last week imitated his father (7) Cambridge City Hall and Concord Library more healthy stimulants to a town than Maynard saloon (8) give Maynard the library and close the saloons - then children will cease patronizing Concord library and Concord drunks can remain home (9) Maynard is on upgrade because of American Woolen Company - to be stigmatized as booze town of Commonwealth is unfair to hundreds of citizens.

The need for a temperance lodge rose early in Maynard history. The rigors and deadening influence caused by factory work on country boys from the surrounding area and old country immigrants no doubt created the condition for the organization of the oldest lodge in Maynard - The Iola Lodge, Good Templars, organized in 1866. This was of English and Scottish origin. Next was the organization of the Womens' Christian Temperance Union in 1884, followed by St. Bridget's Temperance Society in 1890 and the Finnish Alku Temperance Society in 1895. The rest of the twenty-one different national groups in Maynard apparently were not strong enough in numbers to have a temperance society, or were catered to by their church, or did not drink to that excess to need one.

But to get back to our title and sub-titles of this paper, let us



start with March 9, 1900. Good Templars and W.C.T.U. hold temperance rally in Music Hall with John Anderson, well-known Scottish temperance orator as speaker. Temperance concert also was held at the Congregational Church on Sunday eve. However, the Yes vote for liquor was 264 to 196 against. March 13, 1903 saw the No vote win by 379 to 301 - first time in nine years. St. Bridget's Temperance Society and the Good Templars joined in a celebration. May 1, 1903 finds the editor of the paper philosophizing that this being the first day of no-license a lot of dry people are around town. May 6, 1904 finds the selectmen voting out druggists licenses for the coming year. Apparently they must have abuse their privilege the preceding year as the only local purveyors of liquor for medicinal purposes. May 6th also finds Saturday as the last day of license in Hudson. The editor comments the riding on the electrics from Maynard to Hudson extremely heavy, with large bundles in the arms on the return trip. He goes on to remark that some cynic said "that people were laying in a supply, which of course is not so".

Jan 20, 1905, temperance forces first to start campaign with rally at Music Hall and M.E. Church. License men are rumored to be hustling also. Their argument being that the town has not been dry anyway for the past two years as several expressmen are in business. The selectmen also fight a case in court that was filed and won a \$50 fine against a peddler who was selling drinks out of a bottle carried on his person. March 17, 1905 finds the license forces winning by 451 to 361. Rumors now are flying as to who will get the three licenses and possibly two more after the census is taken. The editor comments that with Maynard following Hudson the No voters must have voted Yes this time as they were tired of going out of town and seeing expressmen for a \$2 license bring it into town for the affluent ones. May 5, 1905 finds Officer Cornors making his second trip this month already to Concord with drunks.



The selectmen also decide not to issue license to expressmen as liquor is back in town and the expressmen were not a necessity any more. (Their wording.) Liquor dealers all have paid their fees totaling \$3903. The editor has a field day remarking - "The sidewalks are too narrow for some people since Monday - Men in all stages of intoxication, jovial, looking for fights, weakened, hilarious - police lenient on first day be order - the three saloons busy from six in the morning until eleven at night - novelty were off by noon for those that traveled from one place to another on wobbly legs - two Finns had the extreme honor of being arrested and brought before Judge Keyes, fined \$10 and \$2, - that's all the second one had - Officer Connors established an acquaintanceship between one Maynard Irishman and Judge Keyes - fined \$10 - as it happened he had taken a little too much previous to the introduction." May 19, 1905 - the editor continues - 13 jaglets - largest number arrested in one day history of the town - the cells are small and when three or four occupy one cell in the town caboose in that condition puts one in mind of the old town "pound" when stray cattle were rounded up, - as a result the 7:35 Electric to Concord on Monday contained 13 gentlemen who desirous of making Judge Keyes acquaintance, devised the scheme of getting drunk and travelling to court at the expense of the town. As in such cases they were received courteously, and in fact the court was so taken with several present that it took \$5 a piece from these favored ones as a souvenir of their presence. July 21, 1905 - the two new licenses might go to the West end but the East enders are trying also. Oct. 20, 1905 - town receives \$202.65 for its share from Concord court from July 1 to September 30. Editor notes lots of drunks last Sunday - wondering where liquor is being sold on the Sabbath.



February 9, 1906 - Temperance societies united will once more wage war on rum with two rallies at Music Hall. March 16, 1906 - No-license win 479 to 366. License people were too confident. Question of druggist licenses and express being discussed. July 20, 1906 - new Maynard Temperance league composed of all temperance societies organized to combat illegal sale of liquor - it wants to stop this barefaced condition of things - will leave no stone unturned. November 2, 1906 - Temperance league warns town officers that if conditions are not changed, state police will be called in. Internal Revenue certificates held by 14 Maynard men, including drugstores - sell "Uno" beer - very popular since May 1. (With an assist from "Jim" Farrell, who still remembers the term "Uno" beer, we learn it was a beer-tasting liquid with very little alcoholic content and legal to sell.) Apparently the "Uno" beer selling was a front to allow the sale of more potent spirits for on February 8, 1907, state police raided "Uno" beer sellers - 5 drugstores and rooming houses where all sorts of liquor was discovered. The Temperance league went over the head of the selectmen, they not knowing beforehand any thing of the impending raid. March 1, 1907 finds three cases coming up in Concord Court as the aftermath of the raid. A long article in the paper gives all the particulars of these cases which Judge Keyes dismissed for lack of evidence! The Temperance league was furious but to no avail. March 15, 1907 finds the license people winning by 459 to 351. A deploring article in the paper wonders why last year (that is 1906) when the town was dry) the chairman of the board of selectmen did not want job as he is also chief of police and this year with the town wet a real fight has developed for the position. Officer Connors this year did yeoman work upholding the law and order by taking seven at one time to see the Minuteman statue but got only as far as the courthouse, says the editor.



April 30, 1900 - tough year starting now as town is dry and the nearest places are Boston, Lowell and Clinton. The expresses are not allowed to bring liquer into town either. The local W.C.T.U. celebrates its 25th anniversary. May 14, 1909 however finds a new fangled license called the interstate express license which came from the internal revenue service. Two or three corporations are being formed in town to take advantage of this. The license costs \$200 and orders filled outside of the state can legally be delivered. Selectmen then decide to discuss the pony express licenses which they can issue. Twenty applicants appear as if by magic. This holds up the parties interested in the \$200 interstate license so giving the selectmen some authority over the situation.

March 18, 1910 - license wins by 61 votes - 457 to 396. The editor mentions the fact that five license plums are available with nine applying and the heat is on the selectmen. This year the "bar and the bottle bill" was passed by the legislature separating the first and fourth class license so some establishments became bars and some package stores.

May 13, 1910 finds American Woolen Company again reverting to Saturday pay days as too many employees getting paid on Fridays forget to report in Saturday morning. November 18, 1910 - with the increase in population according to the census, the town finds itself in the enviable position of being able to have a sixth license - either a first or fourth class. According to the "Bar and Bottle Bill" giving the selectmen the authority to decide which it will be. March 17, 1911 - license forces win by 467 to 340 - quite a gain from the preceding year. April 14, 1911 - finds the sale of the Somerset Hotel and the immediate purchase of the Maple House raising some quizzical eyebrows as to the possibility of one man

running two establishments, one by proxy, which of course was denied as untrue.



March 15, 1912 - close vote - license wins 417 to 413. March 14, 1913 - license still by 23 votes - 465 to 442. March 13, 1914 - 18 votes decides town is still wet - 449 to 431. March 12, 1915 - finds a strong rebuke to the liquor interests in the town voting 521 to 419 against license. July 16, 1915 - being a dry year, the express is back in operation. However, the Boston & Maynard Express and the National Express Company prove to the satisfaction of the Selectmen that their business is non-liquor and the law states that 51% must be only other than liquor. February 16, 1917 - no-license wins 487 to 445. February 14, 1919 - license wins by twelve votes. February 13, 1920 - Maynard votes license 263 to 163 but as the editor says "the tongues are still dry in the mill - prohibition is here.

During the First World War on November 1, 1917 President Wilson issued a proclamation banning all liquor except beer and wine. On Nov. 11, 1917, he reduced the alcoholic content to 2-3/4% by weight. This must have compared to "Unc" Beer back in 1906. January 1919 saw the 18th amendment to the constitution ratified by the proper amount of states forbidding the manufacture and sale of intoxicants for beverage purposes. This to take place January 16, 1920. That was the reason for the editor's remark above about tongues in Maynard being dry. Prohibition lasted until Pres. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidency - it being repealed in 1933. This period was marked, it is generally conceded, by the greatest break-down of law and order in the history of the country - too many people ignored the law - it was unenforceable. And the little town of Maynard was no exception to this rule.

We have not delved deeply into the earlier history of license - no-license in the nineteenth century in Maynard. In 1881 local option was passed by the state legislature, meaning each community voted yearly on license - no-license. The town reports until 1888 lump all cash income together, so no picture is given to us from that source as to possible license fees.



Possibly selectmen's meeting minutes could clarify this prior to 1888. However, in that year the treasurer's report indicated receipts of \$1200 for six first class liquor licenses - one fourth class, \$125 and two sixth class at \$2.00. Expenses - 1/4 of liquor licenses to State, \$381.75 and cost of liquor license blanks \$2.24.

		1st Class	4th Class	6th Class	1/4 of lic. fee to state	Applications
1889	---	(2) \$2000	(1) \$300	(2) \$2.00	\$588.	\$50.00
1890	---	(2) \$2000	(1) \$300	(2) \$2.00	575.50	1.68
1891	---	(2) \$2000	(1) \$300	(2) \$2.00	575.50	1.63

1892 saw \$500 appropriated for suppression of illegal sale of liquor - received from District Court for fines \$60.07. Expended \$222.55 - leaving a balance of \$340.

1893 saw \$738.41 expended.

The scoreboard is interesting as to the Dry years and wet. From 1888 thru 1919, twenty-two years were license and ten were no-license. More interesting is the yearly tabulation showing abuse of both parties when "in", so would develop a revolt which would put the opposition back in power.

1888 - Wet	1896 - Wet	1904 - Dry	1912 - Wet
1889 - Wet	1897 - Wet	1905 - Wet	1913 - Wet
1890 - Wet	1898 - Wet	1906 - Dry	1914 - Wet
1891 - wet	1899 - Wet	1907 - Wet	1915 - Dry
1892 - Dry	1900 - Wet	1908 - Wet	1916 - Wet
1893 - Dry	1901 - Wet	1909 - Dry	1917 - Dry
1894 - Dry	1902 - Wet	1910 - Wet	1918 - Dry
1895 - Wet	1903 - Dry	1911 - Wet	1919 - Wet

In conclusion, May I read a poem. This represents the human tragedy of so many that did not escape the industrial revolution in a company town (which Assabet Village and later Maynard was).

I am indebted to Ralph Sheridan for information prior to 1893 (he really is not that old - he just happens to have available the information which I needed). The dates and editor's remarks after 1894 refer to the Maynard News.



Caliban in the Coal Mines

by  
Louis Untermeyer

God, we don't live to complain;  
We know that the mine is no lark.  
But, there's the pools from the rain;  
But, there's the cold and the dark.

God, you don't know what it is  
You, in your well lighted sky  
Watching the meterors whizz;  
Warm, with a sun always by.

God, if you had but the moon,  
Stuck in your cap for a lamp,  
Even you'd tire of it soon,  
Down in the dark and the damp.

Nothing but blackness above  
And nothing that moves but the cars ...  
God, if you wish for our love,  
Fling us a handful of stars!