

City University of New York (CUNY)

CUNY Academic Works

Theses and Dissertations

Hunter College

Spring 5-22-2020

Prohibition and Religion: William H. Anderson, the Anti-Saloon League, and The Rise and Fall of a Protestant Evangelical Crusade Against Alcohol in New York

Lionel Benavidez
CUNY Hunter College

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

More information about this work at: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/hc_sas_etds/566

Discover additional works at: <https://academicworks.cuny.edu>

This work is made publicly available by the City University of New York (CUNY).
Contact: AcademicWorks@cuny.edu

**Prohibition and Religion:
William H. Anderson, the Anti-Saloon League, and The Rise and Fall of a
Protestant Evangelical Crusade Against Alcohol in New York**

Lionel Benavidez

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master's in History, Hunter College
The City University of New York

2020

April 27, 2020
Date

Daniel Hurewitz
Thesis Sponsor

April 27, 2020
Date

Donna Haverly-Stacke
Second Reader

Table of Contents

Introduction

1. Religion and Politics
2. The Anti-Saloon League
3. William Anderson in New York
4. Prohibition Politics
5. Resistance to Prohibition
6. The Downfall of William Anderson

Conclusion

Introduction

The Prohibition Era of the 1920s was a social and political condition created and designed by a nineteenth-century rural Christian Protestant crusade against alcohol. Evangelical Protestant activists took a very personal and spiritual approach to the issue of alcohol consumption and turned it into a far-reaching and long-lasting nationwide campaign aimed at changing American culture. From the early 1830s until the first two decades of the twentieth century, this religiously-inspired movement radically evolved from simple, voluntary abstinence pledges and local temperance societies to absolute national prohibition under the law. Their ultimate goal was finally realized in 1920 when the movement's strongest advocate, the Anti-Saloon League (ASL), helped to oversee the addition of the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. That amendment banned the manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating beverages. The Prohibition Era which resulted was a brief noble experiment remembered more for its sensational news stories of organized crime, political corruption, and popular culture than for the religious crusade that produced this episode in American history.

The untold story of Prohibition involves a social and political methodology used by those religious crusaders as they spread their agenda throughout America. In their single-minded pursuit to eliminate alcohol from society, these social reformers challenged the separation of church and state, manipulated the rural and urban political (and cultural) divide, and utilized an aggressive single-issue political platform to achieve their goals. In 1914, the Anti-Saloon League sent Ohio minister and attorney William Hamilton Anderson, armed with these same methods, to New York City to confront the nation's largest cosmopolitan culture. The ASL and Anderson adopted social strategies and political techniques that created opponents, who then destroyed them and turned the fight about Prohibition into a fight about the League and Anderson himself.

The rise and fall of this religious crusade against alcohol, which created the world of Prohibition, can be seen through the story of the Anti-Saloon League and William Anderson's success and failure in New York City. The Protestant evangelical crusade for an alcohol-free society grew into an aggressive social and political campaign that did not stop until it achieved its ultimate goal, national Prohibition. Anderson, as an agent of the ASL faction, came to New York as a prominent representative of this religiously-driven crusade. Using a single-issue political platform, he manipulated New York's rural and urban divide and publicly challenged various church and political leaders. Although Anderson and the ASL were successful in getting New York (and the rest of the country) to ratify the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919, they failed to see the consequences of such a single-minded campaign. After the law passed, Anderson and the ASL struggled to maintain political power, enforce the new law effectively, and protect their organization from growing criticisms from opposition forces. Anderson was investigated in New York, put on trial, and sent to prison for a short time on allegations of financial mismanagement. The conviction ruined his career and marked the beginning of the end of the Prohibition Era that the evangelical crusade itself created.

Religion and Politics

At the very center of this movement for an alcohol-free society was religion. Christianity is a worldview in which sin and salvation are at the heart of the human experience that personally connects the believer to God. In the nineteenth-century United States, evangelical Protestants believed that a personal and heartfelt conversion to the faith could grant someone true salvation from sin. Passionately spreading the message of hope of salvation from sin was the driving force that inspired this particular Christian sect. The social movement against alcohol in

the early nineteenth century was itself a product of this spiritual challenge of sin and salvation. The resulting evangelical crusade expressed itself through both individual and organized social activism that spread from rural to urban America within a century. The first Temperance movements began at the turn of the nineteenth century among some prominent New England societies but became a national movement in the 1820s and 1830s when middle-class individuals began advocating for moderate drinking. When moderation did not work, some took an abstinence pledge to fight the temptation to drink. Religious reformers saw temperance as a Christian virtue that emphasized self-restraint and discipline. However, passionate conviction turned this personal worldview into a larger social crusade that took hold of the country by the end of the century. In her book, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State*, Lisa McGirr argues that “the character of the temperance movement of the early nineteenth century came from a strong current of evangelical Protestantism that had deep roots in the United States.”¹ The initial zeal that inspired this spiritual movement against alcohol evolved throughout the nineteenth century into a larger social phenomenon that significantly transformed American life in the 1920s.

The religious crusaders who started this movement considered alcohol a “social evil” that was an obstacle for faithful Christians trying to achieve salvation. This idea came out of the Second Great Awakening, a religious revival during the early nineteenth century that gained popularity among evangelical Protestant Christians. This movement was characterized by its extreme enthusiasm and a strong emotional appeal to the supernatural. This religious revival inspired several social reform movements including temperance, women's suffrage, and abolitionism. People advocated for issues on religious grounds and designed various reform

¹ Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2015), 7.

societies in an effort to cure the world's evils before the much-anticipated second coming of Jesus Christ. In his monograph, *Shaping the Eighteenth Amendment: Temperance Reform, Legal Culture, and the Polity, 1880-1920*, Richard Hamm argues that the Second Great Awakening “altered many middle-class Americans’ views of alcohol. These new evangelicals saw alcohol not as a benign part of life, but as an evil influence that threatened to weaken society by destroying individuals.”² Inspired to rid society of the negative and harmful effects alcohol consumption had on the individual, the family, and the community, many religious idealists began to work together to focus on this one issue in American life.

In their pursuit to create an alcohol-free nation, these evangelical activists projected their own Christian values on the public sphere in an attempt bring about their vision of a more perfect world, the Kingdom of God. This kingdom was supposed to be established through a covenant, or contract, with God that enabled the individual and the congregation to have a direct, binding agreement with His authority. Their devotion to this contract was combined with their civic sense of duty to save the American public from the evils of alcohol. These two ideals together created the social and political culture within the movement that eventually turned the Temperance movement into Prohibition. In his book, *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League*, Austin Kerr argues that “Protestants evangelized their commitment to a life of abstinence and promoted the notion that God’s kingdom could be brought closer to reality on earth through prohibition legislation.”³ As their ideology was incorporated into the larger world of American politics and governance, the divine mission of these evangelical Christians gained support and grew in strength.

² Richard F. Hamm, *Shaping the Eighteenth Amendment: Temperance Reform, Legal Culture, and the Polity, 1880-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 20.

³ Austin K. Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 91.

Although evangelical Protestants were leading the social movement against alcohol, not all mainstream Protestant denominations in the United States shared their vision. Most Christian churches agreed about the dangers of alcohol consumption for society but did not agree to the solution to the problem. In examining the differences on the alcohol issue between the various Christian churches, Hamm concluded that, “*evangelical* sects like Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, who believe in the idea of conversion and good behavior, saw prohibition as the answer while *liturgical* sects like Catholics, Episcopalians, German Lutherans, who believe in the idea of belief over action, did not support it.”⁴ From the beginning of the anti-alcohol movement, divisions between evangelical and liturgical denominations on the subject of alcohol contributed to a rift between the two groups, and those divisions eventually led to the evangelical crusade’s bigotry against other versions of the Christian faith. Throughout the nineteenth-century, evangelical social activism expanded from white, rural, and small-town areas like Ohio and Kansas to the large, urban ethnic centers of Chicago and New York City sparking conflict. Religious animosity followed these evangelicals as they energetically imposed their own solution to the alcohol problem upon the masses of America’s faithful, which consisted of various cultures and theologies, not all of which agreed with them. In particular, the many immigrants who migrated to the big cities in the United States during the late nineteenth-century were from cultures with liturgical traditions of Christianity that did not embrace the evangelicals’ condemnation of alcohol as sinful. The growing urban and rural divide in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth-century was a major contributing factor that exposed the inherent cultural bigotry and nativism of this particular evangelical religious crusade.

For many decades after the Second Great Awakening, evangelical reformers took it upon themselves to lead a quest to bring about God’s kingdom by engaging in a quasi-militant war

⁴ Hamm, *Shaping*, 22.

against alcohol. Armed with a spiritual ideology and a crusading mentality, many of them felt that they had inherited a divine mandate from God. However, it was their temporal methods of execution, more than their spiritual intentions, that led to the development of the Eighteenth Amendment and subsequent Prohibition Era. The social and political conditions upon which Prohibition were built were created by these religious reformers in their mission to bring their kingdom of God down to earth. The Anti-Saloon League's manifesto, *The Church in Action Against the Saloon*, published in 1906, explained and justified the Protestant evangelical zeal to take a personal crusade against alcohol. The document argued that "success would not be possible without the blessing of Almighty God upon the movement, and His guidance of the men who have seen the vision, consecrated themselves, abandoned their prospects, and became wanderers upon the face of the earth and strangers to their families. Through the sacrifice and devotion of Christian men and women, the League is answering the prayers of the weak and helpless."⁵ Believing they were thus ordained by God to do this work, these devout evangelicals wanted to cure society's ills with or without the consent of society itself.

The anti-alcohol evangelical movement evolved from Temperance to Prohibition during the nineteenth century as these religious reformers embraced a more rigid and strict view of alcohol's existence in American society. The Temperance movement emphasized moderate drinking habits and individual abstinence, but when these religious crusaders tried to convince others to give up alcohol altogether and met with resistance, they began to develop the idea of Prohibition. Although evangelicals banned drink in their homes and congregations during the temperance era, alcohol continued to be sanctioned by society at large. Distilled spirits, beer, and wine continued to flow freely both in private and public life. The apparent lack of public interest

⁵ William H. Anderson, *The Church in Action Against the Saloon* (Westerville: The American Issue Publishing Co., 1906), 46.

in their temperance cause created a sense of frustration among the evangelical crusaders that only served to exacerbate their crusading style. Each wave of reformers became less tolerant as the century progressed. Hamm argues that by the end of the nineteenth century, “prohibition radicals were extreme social crusaders who embraced an all-out position that regarded the total elimination of evil alcohol as the only acceptable solution.”⁶ Powerful public reformers like Frances Willard of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union who emerged in the 1870s gave way, by 1900, to more radicalized figures like the hatchet-bearing Carrie Nation of Kansas. In the eyes and hearts of these religious crusaders, there could be no compromise with the social problem of alcohol. McGirr argues that “the contest over drink, driven by powerful currents of evangelical Protestant perfectionism in the United States from the beginning, was more absolutist in its orientation than in most other Western countries.”⁷ An absolutist stance on the issue of alcohol became the fundamental element that defined the nineteenth-century evolution of the temperance movement into the Prohibition Era. By the end of the century, “For crusading evangelicals, any alcoholic imbibing at all constituted a social evil. Committed to redeeming souls and creating a more perfect world, preachers and their acolytes linked alcohol to temptation and sin; just one drop would lead down the path of dependency, slavery, and destruction.”⁸ A hardline view on alcohol consumption defined this next stage of the evangelical crusade.

A significant step in the evolution of the evangelical movement against alcohol occurred in the later part of the nineteenth century when these crusaders started to recruit the help of local, state, and eventually, the federal government to secure support for their cause. They saw the rule of law in the United States as originally established on Christian social and ethical guidelines.

Hamm writes that religious reformers “argued that law embodied the moral principles of

⁶ Hamm, *Shaping*, 26.

⁷ McGirr, *War on Alcohol*, 7.

⁸ McGirr, *War on Alcohol*, 7.

Christianity. It was as important as the church in meeting human needs. Human laws, with the principles which underlie and regulate them, were designed to be modeled after and built upon the principles of the Bible.”⁹ These evangelical crusaders claimed that both the church and the state were responsible for treating social problems, like alcohol consumption and abuse. They looked to government officials and politicians to initiate real anti-alcohol legislation that would serve as a continuation of a long Christian legal tradition. Although the separation between church and state should not allow religious institutions to get involved in politics, it could not stop individual, church-going citizens of different evangelical Protestant denominations from lobbying and petitioning together on this one single social issue.

As the first architects of the Eighteenth Amendment, these evangelical crusaders thus imposed their religious worldview onto the rest of the American public through their church-affiliated political activism. These reformers used their voting power as church goers to pressure local politicians and government officials to act on the alcohol issue. They began pressuring and manipulating politicians on the local, state, and then national levels. In rural counties throughout places like the Midwest, pressure politics was allowed to grow into a powerful tool. Evangelicals pushed for “local option” laws in which local residents decided whether to ban alcohol or not in their own districts. For example, these activists pressured local and state politicians to pass the Wilson Act of 1909, which allowed dry states to protect their own anti-alcohol laws.¹⁰ The law banned the entry of alcohol within the borders of states with Prohibition laws. A few years later, the Webb-Kenyon Act of 1913 regulated the interstate transport of alcohol by providing federal support for prohibition efforts in individual states.¹¹

⁹ Hamm, *Shaping*, 35.

¹⁰ Hamm, *Shaping*, 6.

¹¹ Hamm, *Shaping*, 141.

McGirr argues that as these religious enthusiasts extended their reach beyond the confines of their own communities, “their moral project to coerce, control, and reshape public and private behavior created a propitious marriage of state power and moral suasion.”¹² The evangelical crusade wanted the local, state and federal government to legitimize their worldview. These religious crusaders saw themselves as a collective effort that was working for the benefit of all American citizens. Hamm argues that these reformers were not interested in the individual needs of the drinker as much as with the communal good: “To them, the protection of society demanded action against sin if the sinners would not reform themselves. They sought to use the power of the state to achieve their goals, believing that the purpose of government was to advance a moral general welfare, even at the expense of individual liberties.”¹³ Their single-minded approach to pressure politics on religious grounds, regardless of its effect on the rest of society, became a method of operation from which the Anti-Saloon League was born.

The Anti-Saloon League

Throughout the nineteenth century, the evangelical crusade went through a series of developments that led to the formation of an organization solely dedicated to the elimination of alcohol. The movement evolved from abstinence societies, such as the Washingtonians, to the Women’s Christian Temperance Union and then, finally, to the Prohibition Party. Yet, ideological differences among the various temperance and prohibition organizations spread the evangelical crusade into several directions that left those groups with no clear path for the real eradication of alcohol. In the mist of this disorganization, a “church movement” calling itself the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) rose to power in the late nineteenth century. This organization sought

¹² McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 5.

¹³ Hamm, *Shaping*, 37.

to create a single, united front among religious crusaders and harness the efforts of previous reform movements into a single plan of action. Kerr argues that “the vacuum in the movement caused by organizational disunity and dissent over appropriate political techniques was what the new Anti-Saloon League wanted to end. Their goal was to provide both a clear political strategy and a new kind of political organization that could build and command the prohibition movement effectively.”¹⁴ It was this particular activist group that was responsible for the creation and design of the Eighteenth Amendment. The League propelled the long Protestant evangelical crusade to a unified and nation-wide movement at the turn of the twentieth century.

It is important to note that the Anti-Saloon League called itself a church movement and not an ecclesiastical institution. Its supporters did not represent or preach any specific church doctrine but, instead, they acted as a collective of church-going, concerned citizens who were fighting a social problem through political activism. Although they came from different evangelical churches, the League’s members participated together on the specific issue of alcohol. These religious reformers put aside theological differences in an effort to inject their particular ideology (on this issue of drink) into government policy. Although the separation between church and state did not allow any given church to interfere with the machine of government, the distinction between a church-driven movement and an ecclesiastical establishment allowed the ASL to advance their evangelical crusade into the political life of America.

The first chapter of the ASL opened in Oberlin, Ohio in May 1893. Its founder, Rev. Howard Hyde Russell, a Congregational Church pastor, referred to his movement as a “new American” temperance organization whose goal was to unify anti-alcohol public sentiment, enforce existing local option laws, and enact further anti-alcohol legislation. Its primary focus

¹⁴ Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition*, 66.

was to combat the social, political, and economic influence of the saloon in American culture.¹⁵ The League recognized how the saloon was much more than a drinking establishment; it was an institution where citizens, businessmen, politicians and civic leaders gathered to exchange social and political ideas (and favors). The saloon had a long tradition in American society in which men of various classes and ethnicities came to engage in the issues that concerned their lives. The saloon was a social club for the all different classes and cultures as much as it was a place for public drinking.¹⁶

In addition to condemning the saloon's deep-rooted influence on society, the League saw it as an establishment that was profiting from people's weakness for alcohol. To the ASL, the saloon was a "capitalized attempt to exploit human frailty. To be profitable it must create and pander to an appetite satisfiable only by the excessive use of intoxicating liquor. It causes distress, poverty, lawlessness, and crime while corrupting politics to perpetuate itself."¹⁷ With a profound moral agenda against alcohol as the driving force behind their aggression, the League sought to eliminate the most popular and well-established public space where legal drinking thrived.

Rev. Howard Russell, inspired by the might of the monopolizing corporations of the Gilded Age, wanted his anti-alcohol organization run like a business instead of just a church confederacy or community. The ASL was an institution with a bureaucratic framework in which its leaders were not elected but appointed. State board members appointed state superintendents who then appointed district superintendents. The internal structure of the League came complete with a hierarchical chain of command and specialized departments that employed religious leaders of various evangelical communities to execute specific functions. This business-oriented

¹⁵ Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition*, 82-83.

¹⁶ Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (New York: Simon & Schuster Inc., 2010), 28-29.

¹⁷ Anderson, *Church in Action*, 9.

design created a lack of democracy within the organizational structure and allowed this latest phase of the evangelical crusade to be controlled exclusively by church leaders.¹⁸

Russell ordered the League to be an operational center for religious heads to organize themselves beyond the confines of their own ecclesiastical institutions. The administrators were evangelical church leaders such as Purley Baker, a Methodist Minister, and Francis S. McBride, a Presbyterian Minister (both from Ohio). As ASL chapters sprang up in the Ohio area, each locale became part of a growing hierarchical system that reached the state level. Kerr argues that the state league's power extended down to the local church congregations and "taught citizens to spread the word of temperance, vote for anti-alcohol candidates, encourage local authorities to enforce existing local laws, and contribute the funds needed to keep the organization alive."¹⁹ The chain of command in the ASL served to organize the various levels of participation in order to effectively attain their ultimate goal of Prohibition.

The Anti-Saloon League used its powerful organizing structure against the saloon not only because of that institution's social and political role in the city, but also because of the central function it served in the "business" of alcohol. The saloon was at the center of all the stages of the liquor trade (buying, selling, consumption) that existed by legal sanction and popular consent. In their continuing struggle against evil alcohol, these religious reformers no longer thought that simply fighting against the "temptation" of alcohol was enough to provide any real results. As opposed to Temperance reformers, the ASL did not want to reform the habits of the individual drinker but, instead, went after the people who manufactured and distributed this perceived poison. The League claimed that its mission was "not to uplift the individual drunkard, but to remove the cause of his degradation. We are not an anti-vice association, a

¹⁸ Anderson, *The Church in Action*, 41-42.

¹⁹ Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition*, 93.

purity crusade, nor a mere law enforcement bureau, but something greater. It is the united church militant engaged in the overthrow of the liquor traffic.”²⁰ By getting rid of this so-called liquor traffic, the League felt that it was removing the problem at the source. Although this method of a forced salvation seemed far removed from the evangelical idea of a personal and voluntary journey from sin, the League believed that attacking the liquor traffic (through the saloon) was still fulfilling the divine mission of all the religious reformers who had come before them. *The Church in Action Against the Saloon* stated that: “In the providence of God the ASL movement was born as the means for the ultimate solution of the saloon problem. It represents the omnipotent power of Almighty God directed against the saloon through the medium of His Church. The league is the union of churches developing out of co-operation against a common enemy.”²¹ The ASL believed that its organization of united churches were ordained by God to eliminate the business of alcohol as conducted through the saloon.

What set this campaign apart from previous reform efforts was its implementation of intense social and political pressure upon American society. The Anti-Saloon League had three specific methods of operation to achieve its ultimate goal: agitation, legislation, and law enforcement. Agitation came in the form of the spoken and printed word. Its aim was to build up a righteous public sentiment to influence public opinion on the alcohol question. The League’s publishing company, The American Issue, distributed vast amounts of “dry” literature, like leaflets and posters, to sell the public on the merits of sobriety. The legislation department was concerned with trying to get government officials on the local, state, and national level to accept and adopt new anti-alcohol or anti-saloon laws that could lead to national prohibition. The ASL also wanted to enforce legislation already in place, such as the local options laws, as a foundation

²⁰ Anderson, *Church in Action*, 21.

²¹ Anderson, *Church in Action*, 64.

for further advance. The ASL moved the Protestant evangelical crusade to a higher level of achievement by organizing their social and political goals around the business of alcohol. This particular strategy was used to force the American public to accept its absolutist position on the alcohol problem in the country. In his book, *Dry Manhattan: Prohibition in NYC*, Michael Lerner argues that this new organization,

Made the eradication of the liquor trade a central issue in American public life, and convinced a broad cross-section of the American population of the need to rid the country of liquor dealers and saloons. They had taken up the war against alcohol as a struggle for the soul of the country. Prohibition was the result of well-funded, well-organized, and tireless efforts of moral reformers and lobbyists who attacked their foes, silenced their critics, and built alliances of opportunity that had allowed them to re-write the Constitution in their own vision.²²

The Anti-Saloon League harnessed strategies of previous reform movements and gave the evangelical movement a clear focus and plan of attack. The business structure of the League, coupled with its strength as a confederation of churches that believed they were blessed by God, allowed it to maintain control of all the different levels of the movement to most effectively fight the liquor traffic as exemplified by the existence of the saloon.

William Anderson in New York

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Anti-Saloon League was successful in advancing the evangelical crusade against alcohol throughout the less populated areas of the country. Rural America, in areas such as Ohio, Kansas, and Texas, had a predominantly white, Protestant population that was more likely to support the dry legislation the ASL was pushing on the local politicians of those states. District by district in small towns and rural areas, the League continued to capture hearts and minds for the evangelical cause. However, in order for the

²² Michael A. Lerner, *Dry Manhattan, Prohibition in New York City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 38.

religious crusade to achieve truly national prohibition, it had to get some level of success in urban America as well. The voting power of the urban areas was an important obstacle to overcome if the League hoped to continue winning the fight. In 1914, the Anti-Saloon League sent William H. Anderson, an attorney and Presbyterian Minister from Ohio, to New York State in an effort to engage the largest urban cultural hub in the country, New York City. Anderson's success or failure was critical to the national campaign for prohibition because the ASL expected New York City to put up the toughest fight it would encounter. In anticipation of this strong reaction, the League was careful in its selection of an equally strong representative. William Anderson was the ideal candidate for New York State Superintendent.²³

At the time of Anderson's arrival, New York City was America's largest and most influential city with a vibrant nightlife where alcohol was vastly consumed by much of the population. The city was filled with tens of thousands of bars, saloons, restaurants, dance halls, cabarets, and a myriad of other popular entertainment and drinking establishments. New Yorkers of all social classes and ethnicities participated in the leisure and entertainment industry of the city. New York City was also the most culturally diverse and densely populated area in the entire country. The ASL considered this city, with its ethnic Europeans, Jews, African-Americans, and various other minority groups, to be a threat to its movement. This city represented a country falling away from America's core principle values based on small-town Protestant morality and ethics. Lerner claims that "the ASL was concerned by the enormous problem New York City and its inhabitants posed to its efforts and feared they would never be able to promote the vision of a dry America unless they could claim some measure of success there."²⁴

²³ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 7-8.

²⁴ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 14.

William Anderson, one of the League's fiercest public advocates, was a highly effective and skillful lobbyist who was both feared by his opponents and admired by his supporters. According to Lerner, he was an "outspoken, opinionated, and energetic individual whose moral and legislative agenda was directed specifically to what he called 'the liquor center of America', New York City."²⁵ Although Anderson went to New York to spread the word on the evils of alcohol in the tradition of the Protestant evangelical crusade, he went there specifically to destroy the liquor traffic by any means necessary. As a self-professed "dry warrior," he pledged to eliminate alcohol's very existence and go after social and political leaders who stood in the way of the ASL's mission.

Anderson's almost rude boldness contrasted with previous reformers who were more reserved in their public agitation. Lerner argues that "Anderson's combative and methodical approach coupled with his bold predictions about the dry future of New York City defied the stereotypical image of the American temperance crusader."²⁶ While previous reformers had practiced patient and gradual reform, Anderson was quick to attack anyone who disagreed with, or in any way hindered, the prime directive of the evangelical crusade. During his ten years in New York, Anderson publicly called out, and at times chastised, religious and political leaders who were against the cause of Prohibition. Anderson and the ASL pressed their view on the alcohol issue upon the American public and did so in a way that was aggressive and undemocratic. This campaign by Anderson and the ASL resulted in resentment (and then anger) among various church goers, average citizens, and government officials who, as the Prohibition Era began, became key figures in the defeat of the evangelical crusade itself.

²⁵ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 9.

²⁶ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 10.

When William Anderson arrived in New York in 1914, he was pleasantly surprised to find that New Yorkers were mostly ignorant of the ASL's strength. While the League had been gaining momentum in the rural parts of the country, urban spaces like New York were unaware of the growing threat coming their way. Lerner argues that the people in New York City were "entirely unprepared for Anderson's challenge to their way of life. While the ASL had surged ahead as a force in national politics during the 1910s, many citizens of New York remained oblivious to the mounting dry crusade going on around them."²⁷ Using this mass ignorance to his advantage, Anderson's strategy to pass prohibition legislation in New York was based on the same single-issue ASL political platform used throughout the country that placed alcohol as its sole concern. It also accumulated a dry county-by-county rural vote to outnumber the larger urban wet vote. Anderson sought to win allies in districts outside New York City first by focusing on the state's rural areas where anti-alcohol legislation was already supported. By pushing for local options laws, Anderson and the ASL were trying to introduce Prohibition to the state on the local level. It was a form of gerrymandering in which dry counties, towns, and local districts could vote themselves dry and break away from so-called wet cities. Once this form of anti-alcohol gerrymandering advanced far enough, people in New York City would not have enough voting power to stop the League. As early as July 1899, the ASL organized anti-saloon forces in several areas in upstate New York. They mobilized one city at a time until the whole state was brought under the influence of the movement. The *New York Times* reported that, "the purpose was to divide the state into fifteen or eighteen districts. Binghamton would serve as the headquarters for the territory in the southern portion of the State."²⁸ The League's

²⁷ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 15.

²⁸ NYT Reporter. "A CRUSADE AGAINST LIQUOR.; The Anti-Saloon League Opens Its Campaign in Binghamton," *New York Times*, July 3, 1899. <https://www.nytimes.com/1899/07/03/archives/a-crusade-against-liquor-the-antisaloon-league-opens-its-campaign.html?searchResultPosition=1>

gerrymandering tactics were used to influence elections for the dry cause and use any support gained to further advance their moral agenda.

William Anderson's main objective was to build the League's influence in New York City to prepare its citizens for the inevitability of Prohibition. He utilized the same methods that brought the League such success in rural America: gathering local help and fighting the liquor interests head-on. He reached out to local Protestant communities for moral and financial support. By appealing to the morality of church goers, Anderson and the ASL were able to influence community religious leaders and, specifically, the politicians they helped put into office. He met regularly with Protestant church groups, campaigned for Sunday closing laws, and built alliances with other moral reformers of the day. For example, the Committee of Fourteen (an anti-vice organization) sought to reinforce the Raines Law of 1896, which raised licensing fees for saloons and prohibited the sale of alcohol on Sundays, except in restaurants and hotels with ten or more beds. Anderson pushed to eliminate the loophole that allowed hotels to sell alcohol on Sundays. Anderson argued that, "although the law was considered an advanced measure when passed, it is now an imperfect vehicle for the expression of the anti-saloon sentiment existing in many parts of the state."²⁹ As the League's most outspoken agitator, Anderson made sure to keep his name in the city's newspapers through his public speeches and press conferences. Anderson accused the liquor interests of being in the business and politics of trying to stop the inevitability of Prohibition. Lerner asserts that his "constant barrage of attacks on liquor lobbyists, hotel and saloon owners, and wet politicians kept his critics off balance."³⁰ Anderson's interests in working with religious groups and reform organizations coupled with his

²⁹ William H. Anderson, "Plans for a 'Dry' War Here," *New York Times*, December 29, 1913. <https://www.nytimes.com/1913/12/29/archives/plans-for-a-dry-war-here-wh-anderson-tells-the-times-what.html?searchResultPosition=1>

³⁰ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 27.

relentless public attacks on all associates of the liquor industry gained him a considerable reputation in New York City.

Another strategy utilized by Anderson in New York City was to pressure lawmakers and government officials, Republican or Democrat, to support anti-alcohol legislation in exchange for support from the local religious communities at the ballot box. Anderson and the ASL had laid claim to the church vote in many evangelical Protestant communities, but the political machinery of New York City included Catholics, Jews, and Liturgical Protestants. In addition, politics in New York City had been largely dominated since the 1850s by the Democratic Party and its machine known as Tammany Hall. Anderson focused his efforts on Republican support because this party was aiding the League's cause in rural areas upstate. Throughout the country, sections of the Republican Party had been sympathetic to the evangelical crusade. Although the ASL claimed to be non-partisan, it singled out New York Republicans for help. Lerner argues that "Republicans in New York were forced to reconcile themselves with the dry cause, even if they disagreed with it, on account of Anderson's growing power in state politics. His activism forced them to accept the liquor question as a central issue in state politics."³¹ It was to these Republicans that Anderson and the League went with their petitions and drafts of anti-alcohol legislation. A highly active organization, "they drafted pieces of dry legislation and pressured legislators to turn them into local, state, and federal laws. They responded to political opposition by mobilizing a dry voting bloc to oust any legislators who failed to support the Prohibition agenda."³² Anderson offered political support to Republicans as long as they supported the dry cause. All politicians in New York City, Republican and Democrat, were forced to deal with the

³¹ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 19.

³² Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 16.

growing influence of the ASL in the state and, because of Anderson's efforts, the impact of his influence on their own city.

By building support from religious groups, reform organizations, and many Republican politicians, Anderson's fight against the saloon appealed to Progressive era reformers who were concerned about the liquor interests' influence on city politics. Progressives considered the alcohol industry a seriously corrupt institution in need of real government intervention. They wanted to end the long-standing connection between the saloons and Tammany Hall that characterized New York City politics. Tammany Hall had gained power in New York with a lot of help (legal and illegal) from this large social institution. Progressives shared the League's concern with alcohol abuse and its effect on society, and fighting the power of Tammany Hall through the saloon was of political benefit to them in New York City. Lerner suggests that Anderson's "success was linked to his ability to latch onto two related causes dear to many New Yorkers - Progressivism and a desire to reign in the notoriously corrupt Tammany Hall machine. The dry movement appealed to middle-class urban reformers who shared the League's desire to bring order and sobriety to American cities."³³ The ASL's well-organized and hierarchical corporate structure legitimized it in the eyes of Progressive Era reformers, who viewed the organization as an effective institution for social reform. Anderson's work, "presented the League as part of a modern, scientific campaign that had much in common with the work that Progressive-minded New Yorkers had been attempting. The campaign against the saloon was long overdue and they eagerly joined forces with it."³⁴ Attacking the power of the saloon in New York City linked the ASL with the Progressive movement, but it was not until the start of the

³³ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 21.

³⁴ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 22.

First World War that real dry momentum began to be felt in New York and throughout the country.

World War I presented a great opportunity for the evangelical crusaders to impose their dry agenda onto the nation. There were two important factors that propelled anti-alcohol legislation in the country during the war: the creation of a need for wheat grains for food instead of alcohol production and the increase in cultural anxiety against German-Americans. The ASL was particularly skillful in leveraging the latter factor to advance its cause. A large number of brewers of beer and owners of saloons were German-Americans who had become the subjects of discrimination during WWI. Nativism and bigotry within the ASL's movement was used to spread the idea that to be pro-German was to be anti-American. Anti-German sentiment and war rationing offered Anderson and the League a way to change the tone in their pressure politics. Anderson and the ASL sought to connect their dry cause with the war effort in order to pass more anti-alcohol legislation. By linking war patriotism and anti-German propaganda, the ASL was able to secure a measure of "wartime prohibition" legislation that helped kill the liquor traffic. In August 1917, the Food and Fuel Control Act outlawed the use of any grains or foodstuffs for producing distilled spirits. Four months later, President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation forbidding brewers from brewing beverages with more than 2.75 percent alcohol by volume. In the armed forces dry zones were established around military camps and the Selective Service Act of May 1917 forbade the sale of liquor to men in uniform.³⁵ During the war Anderson and the ASL thus shifted their strategy in order to present the alcohol problem in a new light as an issue of patriotism and national security. The example made of German-Americans during the war was a public display of the ethnic and religious bigotry of the ASL. It

³⁵ Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition*, 199-201.

was also a signal to other ethnic opponents of Prohibition in New York City not to stand in the ASL's way. As a result of the League's tactics, "ethnic New Yorkers grew reluctant to speak out against the dry agenda as long as the war raged in Europe."³⁶ The League was gaining a victory that was not just about banning alcohol and changing politics, but also about defining the culture of the United States. Anderson's prejudice against Germans, Catholics, and other ethnic and religious minorities became more pronounced as the wartime dry campaign progressed.

The evangelical crusade against alcohol finally reached its goal in January 1920 when the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which specifically banned the manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating liquors, came into effect. It was the ASL that was responsible for getting the government to fashion this law to go after the business of alcohol instead of addressing the needs of the individual consumer. The ASL was directly responsible for raising popular support for the law and considered it an extraordinary achievement when it was passed. Anderson's work in New York was a significant display of the dry lobby's formidable power in the country.

The decline of the evangelical crusade against alcohol began *after* the ratification and implementation of the Eighteenth Amendment. The strategies employed by Anderson and the Anti-Saloon League to get this measure passed created deep resentment among American citizens at all levels of society. These evangelical reformers interjected a deeply spiritual belief concerning the consumption of alcohol into politics and forced the American public to accept Prohibition as law as a result. Anderson and the ASL crossed the line that separated church and state, manipulated the cultural urban and rural divide, and applied pressure politics to a single-issue platform. In doing so, they created various social, religious, and political opponents who went after them once Prohibition became law. Their methods were seen by average citizens,

³⁶ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 31.

devout church goers, and politicians as bigoted and contrary to the popular American ideology of equality and opportunity. Anderson's aggressive mission in New York City was a prime example of this grand failure to legislate morality. Anderson's tactics created opponents in New York that later became responsible for his own decline. Lerner states that "Anderson's attacks infuriated his opponents, who now desperately wanted to give Anderson a taste of his own medicine. His lack of restraint also had the effect of revealing prejudices that ran deep in the Prohibition movement."³⁷ His experience in New York provides a lens through which one can view the growth and collapse of the Protestant evangelical crusade against alcohol. Once Prohibition became the law of the land, circumstances for both Anderson and the League would change forever. Powerful New Yorkers with social and political influence delivered the first blow in the country to evangelical power over the question of alcohol by making a public example of its top agent, State Superintendent William Anderson.

Prohibition Politics

The Prohibition Era brought a new set of challenges for the evangelical crusaders against alcohol that led to the collapse of their social movement. There were four main problems the crusaders had to face once the law came into effect: maintaining dry political influence; solving the law-enforcement dilemma (corruption and incompetence); combating opposition from multi-cultural urbanites (such as those who lived in New York City); and, answering the calls for investigations into their own organization. Throughout the nineteenth century, evangelical crusaders were conditioned to be on the offensive when working to initiate anti-alcohol legislation, but they were forced into a more defensive position once Prohibition was passed. During the first few years of Prohibition, from 1920-1924, Anderson and the ASL found

³⁷ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 28.

themselves in a new kind of battle that they were not quite ready to handle. While Anderson and the ASL were focused on pressuring politicians and government officials to respect and uphold the new amendment to the Constitution, criticisms concerning the League's methods began to grow. Officials in New York City government, such as the District Attorney's office, conducted inquiries into the League that examined their organization's practices and personal finances. As a result, the ASL's prize agent in New York, Anderson, was accused of criminal wrongdoing.

When the Eighteenth Amendment came into effect on January 17, 1920, Anderson and the New York chapter of the ASL, moved quickly to maintain their position of influence and authority in city and state politics. Kerr argues that, "From their viewpoint the fight was unfinished. The ASL sought to maintain dry majorities in the legislatures and the Congress and hold politicians accountable for administering and enforcing the new amendment. The liquor traffic and its social effects were far from dead and continuing vigilance was necessary."³⁸ As the organization responsible for bringing about the Prohibition law, the League wanted to remain deeply involved in the initiation and implementation of any new anti-alcohol legislation. To achieve this end the League's members inserted themselves in ongoing discussions concerning the Prohibition issue in state and municipal legislatures and assemblies. Hamm argues that the ASL, "pressured the states into adopting new prohibition codes modeled on the federal law. The League targeted populous and notoriously wet New York and contended that a "successful administration" of Prohibition there would be an answer to those who say 'it can't be done.'"³⁹ As a result, New York politicians and government officials, looking for a way to implement this new amendment into law on the basis of state and federal concurrent-powers, had to also contend with the church-centered lobbying power of the ASL. When the Prohibition Era began, Anderson

³⁸ Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition*, 213.

³⁹ Hamm, *Shaping*, 254-255.

pressed politicians of both parties to accept, honor, and enforce the new amendment to the Constitution. Anderson publicly chastised politicians that he and the League regarded as weak on the alcohol question. Anderson's new mission was to continue his direct and aggressive approach in the political world of New York to ensure that the government properly implemented the new law.

These evangelical crusaders employed the same single-issue political platform as they had before the amendment was passed. The election of 1920 was the first contest of the Prohibition era and served as a referendum on the new anti-alcohol law. Both the Republicans and Democrats had candidates that Anderson judged solely on their ability to defend the new dry law. In June 1920, Anderson warned New York Republicans to be careful in their pick for the upcoming presidential election or risk losing support of the "dry majority" among the ranks of the party. Warning them about using Ohio Republican Senator Warren G. Harding's candidacy as way to dodge the alcohol issue, Anderson argued that, "ASL will not oppose the Republican nominee or Party, but the party is in danger if the Democrats nominate either a dry or wet. Senator Harding's dry record is not strong enough to hold dry Republicans against a dry Democrat. But, if the Democrats nominate a wet, Harding's record is too dry to hold any wets, but not dry enough to compel the entire dry strength to work with him."⁴⁰ Although this warning was aimed at the Republican Party, Anderson and the League pressured both political parties to give themselves wholeheartedly to the dry side of the alcohol issue.

In a personal letter dated June 26, 1920 to candidate Senator Harding himself, Anderson warned him of wet Republicans within the party who posed a danger to the party's hold on power. Anderson wrote his message with the expectation that the presidential hopeful would

⁴⁰ William H. Anderson, "ANDERSON SCOLDS G.O.P.; Sees No Hope for Harding Unless Democrats Dodge Prohibition," *New York Times*, June 17, 1920. <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/06/17/archives/anderson-scolds-gop-sees-no-hope-for-harding-unless-democrats-dodge.html?searchResultPosition=1>

show his full support for the dry cause. He urged the candidate to unite the Republican Party on this single-issue to enable it to successfully administer the new law and retain political power. But more importantly for the League, Anderson was reminding Senator Harding of who the ASL was, what it represented, and what kind of power it had. In his letter he wrote, “We represent the sentiment of a large majority of the rank and file Republican Party. We cleaned out the wet Republican legislative leaders in 1918 and compelled the Republican majority in the Senate and Assembly to make ratification a Republican Party issue.”⁴¹ Anderson expressed particular concern to Harding about New York State Republicans putting Senator James Wadsworth Jr. (instead of a dryer candidate within the party) up for re-election. Anderson offered to meet with Harding to reiterate the significance of the dry sentiment inside the party. Although he requested time with the presidential candidate, Anderson reminded Harding that they were still fine without his help. Anderson wrote, “If you want to talk, I shall be glad to. With all due respect, I wish to make very clear that I am not soliciting an interview. We have taken care of ourselves despite the reactionaries in New York. Their actions have made us stronger than ever before. We hate to see an innocent bystander like yourself suffer in this without giving him a chance to learn the facts and to act accordingly. With this offer, our responsibility ceases.”⁴² Senator Harding and Anderson never did meet. However, the message was clear: these reformers of the evangelical crusade were going to stay in the fight and were determined to make the new Prohibition law succeed.

Before the election, Anderson interjected himself in the battles for New York State Governor and Senator among Republican politicians. Anderson publicly offered an ultimatum to

⁴¹ William H. Anderson to Warren G. Harding, June 26, 1920, folder 4, box 1, page 31. William H. Anderson and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/ead/pdf/whanderson-0001-004.pdf>

⁴² Anderson, *Warren G. Harding*, 32.

the Republican Party. He threatened to support the drier candidates within the party instead of those chosen by the Republican State Committee. According to the *New York Times*, Anderson told the committee that, “if Judge Nathan Miller and Senator James Wadsworth, Jr., respectively the candidates for Governor and Senator, are nominated, the League will advise independent and Prohibition Republicans to vote for State Senator George Thompson and Mrs. Ella Boole, who are candidates for Governor and Senator respectively in the Republican primaries, but who will run as candidates of the Prohibition Party if beaten for the Republican nomination.”⁴³ For Anderson and the League, party loyalty was not as important as deference to the new dry law. The League’s allegiance could change when a politician or public official declared a dryer stance on the Prohibition issue. Pressured by Anderson and the League, Nathan Miller finally did adopt a slightly dryer position that resulted in Anderson changing his attitude about, and withdrawing his support for, Senator Thompson’s candidacy. When the election came, Thompson lost the Republican primary for governor to Miller.

When Anderson and the ASL were not busy going after New York politicians and public officials, they were sending their message of support for the law to their constituency: Protestant church-goers. The League asked the various evangelical churches in the state that supported the amendment to stay vigilant in their devotion to the law and to beware of ‘wet’ opposition forces in both the Republican and Democratic parties. Believing that any opposition to the Prohibition law was somehow a conspiracy aimed at their religious cause, Anderson and the ASL defended themselves with fierce determination. The League’s base of supporters (i.e. church leaders and followers who had supported them from the very beginning), needed to be reminded of their voting power against any wet challenges. In July 1920, superintendent field worker L.P. Tucker

⁴³ William H. Anderson, “ULTIMATUM BY ANDERSON; Says Anti-Saloon League Will Fight Miller and Wadsworth,” *New York Times*, September. 7, 1920. <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/09/07/archives/ultimatum-by-anderson-says-antisaloon-league-will-fight-miller-and.html?searchResultPosition=4>

gave the speaking staff of the ASL a bulletin that urged them to spread the League's message on Prohibition and get people to act at the voting booth. The bulletin's message included a dramatic proclamation by Tucker: "It is a time that appeals to the heroic in every person who has any red blood in him. The most critical time in the history of the Prohibition movement is between now and Election Day in November. The fight is so intense that it appeals to every man to throw himself into the battle as he never has before."⁴⁴ His message also served to remind these religious followers that the law was now on their side. Tucker proclaimed, "We have won. Prohibition has been adopted. Boasting that the law cannot be enforced should not be tolerated."⁴⁵ Church leaders and their congregations were expected to remain faithful to the dry cause in their beliefs and actions.

In addition to Anderson's and the ASL's working to maintain a dominant dry position in New York politics, they also had to come up with real solutions to the unintended problems the law created. Enforcement of the law became the most pressing issue of the era. Defiance of the Prohibition law was rapidly increasing in New York City and in many other cities across the country. Anderson and the ASL wrote a series of enforcement bills and presented them to the press, politicians, statesmen, and their own church congregations. To aid in the enforcement problem, Anderson and the ASL introduced legislation to members of Congress in which they outlined improved Prohibition enforcement through stricter fines and other heavier penalties. Although the Eighteenth Amendment prohibited the manufacture, distribution, and sale of alcoholic beverages and the Volstead Act provided for some enforcement, rapid-growing

⁴⁴ L.B. Tucker, Bulletin Number 16, July 22, 1920, folder 13, box 2, page 15. William H. Anderson and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/ead/pdf/whanderson-0002-013.pdf>

⁴⁵ Tucker, *Bulletin Number 16*, 15.

defiance to the law demanded a more comprehensive solution.⁴⁶ The enforcement problem of the Prohibition Era became a serious issue that required the attention of government agencies and the Anti-Saloon League as well.

Anderson sent a message to the Protestant pastors of New York State to make them aware of the social and political conflict surrounding the new enforcement issue. He specifically went after State Assembly Speaker Thaddeus Sweet, a Republican. Anderson accused Sweet of trying to play both sides of the enforcement issue as presented by the wets and dries in order to stay neutral on the subject and avoid the political risk of taking a stand that might endanger his political career. Anderson accused Sweet of playing politics because the Speaker wanted to run for Governor soon. Anderson told the pastors that “the time to save the Prohibition enforcement situation has arrived and prompt action is necessary. Speaker Sweet has not the remotest intention of having any enforcement bill become law, he is playing both ends against the middle. He hopes to get the dries committed to a weak bill so that when it fails the responsibility will be theirs, while the wets will get what they want, which is no action.”⁴⁷ Anderson accused not only Speaker Sweet, but also several other Republican politicians and officials of evading the dry issue.

When it came to the New York Democrats, Anderson and the League accused them of being shameless wets who were not at all interested in any kind of enforcement legislation. Alfred E. Smith, Democrat and Governor of New York, was a special target of Anderson and the League because of his well-known opposition to the new amendment. The ASL labeled the

⁴⁶ William H. Anderson, “PLANS BILLS TO AID DRY LAW IN TOWNS; Anti-Saloon League to Clear the Way for Enforcement Ordinances. HAS LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM If It Fails to Pass It Will Be Made an Issue in Fall Campaign. TO FIGHT IN EVERY VILLAGE Anderson Criticises Appointment of Prohibition Agents Through Influence of Politicians,” *New York Times*, December 27, 1921. <https://www.nytimes.com/1921/12/27/archives/plans-bills-to-aid-dry-law-in-towns-antisaloon-league-to-clear-the.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁴⁷ Tucker, *Bulletin Number 16*, 16.

governor an avowed wet who would not sign any dry legislation that came to his desk. Anderson told New York religious leaders that “the Governor has gone squarely against prohibition with his defiant personal liberty messages. It is doubtful whether he will even sign the ASL’s measure adapting the federal law to New York to give state courts jurisdiction and make state officials responsible.”⁴⁸ Anderson told New York Protestant pastors to spread this message about Governor Smith to their congregations in an effort to better inform dry voters. Anderson asks, “We urge that you immediately bring the matter to the attention of your congregation, to the attention of your adult bible classes and to the leaders among your membership. Have them authorize you to send telegrams in behalf of the congregation, reinforcing the same by personal letters from themselves urging speedy passage of the ASL Bill.”⁴⁹ Like Harding, Miller, Wadsworth and Sweet, Smith was simply another target of Anderson’s aggressive position in defense of the new dry law.

In September 1920, the Anti-Saloon League of America had its first national convention since the enactment of the Prohibition law. Various meetings were held throughout sixty-five churches in Washington D.C. for this event. The Legislative Superintendent for the National League, Wayne Wheeler, declared that more rigid enforcement was necessary to sustain both the Constitutional amendment and the state enforcement codes. Of particular concern to him was the rise in crime that seemed to accompany Prohibition. In a 1991 study on the rise of crime after the law was passed, Mark Thornton argued that, “although consumption of alcohol fell at the beginning, it subsequently increased. Alcohol became more dangerous to consume; crime increased and became ‘organized’; the court and prison systems were stretched to the breaking

⁴⁸ William H. Anderson to Pastors of New York State, February 18, 1920, folder 13, box 2, page 13. William H. Anderson and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/ead/pdf/whanderson-0002-013.pdf>

⁴⁹ Anderson, *Pastors of New York State*, 13.

point; and corruption of public officials was rampant.”⁵⁰ Wheeler blamed the alcohol industry for this rise in crime because he believed it had created contempt for the law among the nation’s citizens. Wheeler claimed that the “lawlessness of the brewers and liquor dealers encourages crime. Permitted lawlessness on Prohibition in any city, encourages all other law breakers. Most people are waking up to the fact that the breaking of the law at one point is like the leak in the dike which if not stopped quickly sweeps away the whole structure.”⁵¹ In short, Wheeler and the League accused the underground economy of making criminals out of citizen consumers, not Prohibition itself. The ASL also alleged that organized crime was, in fact, sanctioned by crooked politicians and government officials.

In this national convention, the ASL also spoke out against opposition forces in politics who were “conspiring” to destroy the dry law. For this reason, they presented a blacklist of candidates whom they wished to defeat in the upcoming election. Ohio native John F. Kramer, appointed National Prohibition Commissioner by President Woodrow Wilson, made a declaration before the convention in which he acknowledged a conspiracy against the law that had deliberately sabotaged the legal system. Commissioner Kramer said, “The nation is confronted by a gigantic and vicious conspiracy to discredit and ultimately overthrow Prohibition. In numerous communities prohibition cases were being dragged into federal courts at a rate of ten to twenty a week. The result is jammed court dockets and delay in the trial of dry law violators.”⁵² To combat those opposition forces who were hampering the legal system, the

⁵⁰ Mark Thorton, “No. 157: Alcohol Prohibition Was a Failure” *Cato Institute Policy Analysis* (July, 1991): 1 <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/32232611/alcohol-prohibition-was-a-failure-cato-institute>

⁵¹ Wayne B. Wheeler, “DRY” CONVENTION CLOSES; Anti-Saloon League Holds, Meetings in 65 Washington Churches,” *New York Times*, September. 20, 1920. <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/09/20/archives/dry-convention-closes-antisaloon-league-holds-meetings-in-65.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁵²John F. Kramer, “CHARGE CONSPIRACY TO WRECK DRY LAW; Anti-Saloon League Forces Declare This Movement Is “Gigantic and Vicious. “BLACKLIST ON CANDIDATES Will Fight Taggart and Representative Porter--Kramer Asks Moral Support,” *New York Times*, September. 17, 1920.

ASL made a resolution to remove public officials who were derelict in their duty to perform prohibition enforcement.⁵³

The task of prohibition enforcement was officially assigned to the newly created federal law enforcement agency called the Prohibition Bureau. It was a unit of the Bureau of Internal Revenue that became an independent entity within the Department of the Treasury in 1927 and then a part of the Department of Justice in 1930. But this new Prohibition Bureau was not equipped to deal with criminal activity on such a grand scale. In his address to the ASL national convention, Prohibition Commissioner Kramer claimed that his new agency “in addition to being confronted with a shortage of personnel had within it men who were corrupt. It would have been a ‘miracle’ if there had not been some men who had proved to be unfaithful to the oath inasmuch as the dry enforcement corps had been built up in about six months.”⁵⁴ Corruption and incompetence within the Prohibition Bureau became a greater and greater concern as lawlessness continued to increase. The ASL delegates listened to Kramer’s concerns and all agreed to be even more aggressive with Prohibition officials (of any rank) who broke the law. The ASL demanded that Congress act to adopt some standard for good behavior among employees of the Bureau and all other officers and appointees of the judicial system.

Resistance to Prohibition

When the Prohibition Era began in January 1920, Anderson and the ASL in New York found themselves in a brand-new type of fight. They continued with their previously successful policy of social and political agitation, but they were now forced to accept certain consequences

<https://www.nytimes.com/1920/09/17/archives/charge-conspiracy-to-wreck-dry-law-antisaloon-league-forces-declare.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁵³ Kramer, *"Dry" Convention Closes*

⁵⁴ Kramer, *"Dry" Convention Closes*

of their new law. For the religious crusade against alcohol, maintaining dry political power proved to be harder during the Prohibition Era. The ASL utilized the same old hardline offensive approach to the Prohibition world and quickly realized that those fighting against its agenda had intensified their opposition. The new resistance to their cause consisted of preachers, concerned citizens, local and federal officials, and even church members. The League was not necessarily prepared for the onslaught of public criticism that would lead to the unraveling of its movement and the subsequent accusations of criminality cast against Anderson.

Opposition to the Eighteenth Amendment was a widespread social phenomenon that developed within several levels of American society, from average citizens to government officials and politicians. Although opposition to Prohibition existed before the amendment was passed in 1919, it turned into an organized and active resistance once the law came into effect. This popular backlash was a reaction to the negative consequences the new law created, such as increased crime, corruption, and executive incompetence. Within a few years, public sentiment against Prohibition grew exponentially and manifested itself into a direct attack on the religious reformers who designed the law. McGirr argues that, “to many opponents of Prohibition, the Eighteenth Amendment signaled the government’s capture by a highly mobilized minority, the ‘tyrannical power of the Billy Sundays.’ In response, opponents of the law mobilized so that they might grasp the reins of power for themselves.”⁵⁵

To some opponents, the idea of Prohibition was both impractical and not morally justified. Some critics of the law argued that it was an infringement on personal liberty because it took away a right instead of guaranteeing one. Kerr argues that, “Prohibition eventually failed because the ASL attacked personal liberty and were obsessed with reaching down from their pulpits to control the lives of individuals according to a strictly defined, narrow code of moral

⁵⁵ McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 62.

behavior.”⁵⁶ For others, the moral cause against alcohol was not the issue as much as the questionable socio-political means upon which the law was ratified. But for all Americans, the removal of the legal business of alcohol did not simply eliminate the alcohol problem; it made everybody a criminal instead. This sudden and unexpected change in their society, initiated by these religious reformers, created massive resentment.

During the early years of Prohibition, opposition in New York City rapidly transformed from resentment and anger to social and political action against the law, the Anti-Saloon League, and William Anderson himself. McGirr argues that, “the fight against Prohibition was on the surface an effort to protect leisure habits, but in a world where class cleavages, closely aligned with cultural, religious, and racial divisions, it resonated with the deepest fractures of the economic and social postwar order.”⁵⁷ Resistance came from everyday citizens, church leaders, politicians, and public officials. At the forefront of this movement against the religious reformers were the so-called “wet” politicians who held positions in both the Republican and Democratic parties. Since the Eighteenth Amendment gave the individual states the freedom to dictate the parameters of Prohibition laws and enforcement measures within their own jurisdictions, New York legislators opposed to this new law put forward bills that relaxed the strict rules on alcohol preferred by the ASL. Anderson and the ASL saw these efforts as an attempt to modify, nullify, and eventually repeal the amendment. With an increasing support from local citizens and church leaders, lawmakers sought ways to both curb the power of the ASL and restore sensible alcohol laws. Concurrent state and federal power to legislate and execute this new law provided opponents of Prohibition a way to challenge the influence of the ASL and Anderson.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition*, 275.

⁵⁷ McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 45.

⁵⁸ Anderson, *Pastors of New York State*, 13.

In March 1920, just over two months after the law came into effect, New York legislators held a hearing in Albany before the Joint Senate Judiciary and Assembly Excise Committee to discuss a bill that legalized some low-alcohol beverages. Since the Eighteenth Amendment allowed the several states to each define “intoxicating” beverages, New York legislators were using this loophole to make legal beer and wine that contained only half of the normal alcohol content. It was a way to pacify the general public and appease the liquor interests. Anderson attended the Assembly to make a speech against the proposed measure but was silenced by the loud protests coming from the state representatives. After voting ten to six against his right to speak, the committee refused to let Anderson take the podium. After leaving without delivering his speech, Anderson said that, “the wets flatter me and overestimate my ability as a speaker. The short speech I was prevented from making will help the prohibition cause one hundred times over because of its suppression as it would have done if I had been permitted to deliver it.”⁵⁹ In the Senate chamber next door, Senators James J. Walker and George F. Thompson got into a heated debate over the Prohibition issue. Walker, a wet Democrat, and Thompson, a dry Republican, became emotional and ended up on the verge of a fistfight. The chaos in the Senate chamber even rivaled the loud protest against Anderson in the Assembly. The debate was ultimately shut down by Senator Loring M. Black of Brooklyn. Black was a strong critic of Anderson. He called him a “master of scurrility who heaps his dirty trade at the expense of our reputations. He is a bigoted, blustering buffoon running around here with a whip trying to force us to do something that we know our constituents are opposed to.”⁶⁰ New York legislators were

⁵⁹ William H. Anderson, “SILENCE ANDERSON AT ALBANY HEARING; Catcalls and Jeers Reinforce McCue's Objections to Letting "Dry" Leader Speak. CALLED ASSEMBLY INSULTER Clergymen and Women Oppose "Wet" Bills--Gompers Champions Liberal Dry Laws,” *New York Times*, March 31st, 1920.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1920/03/31/archives/silence-anderson-at-albany-hearing-catcalls-and-jeers-reinforce.html?searchResultPosition=3>

⁶⁰ Loring M. Black, “SENATORS ON VERGE OF FIGHT IN DEBATE; Thompson Retracts "Dare" as Walker Advances in Dispute Over Anderson. CHAMBER IN AN UPROAR Anti-Saloon League Superintendent Acridly

confronting Anderson and his dry political supporters with the same intensity the League showed them when they were trying to pass the law.

While wet and dry legislators were fiercely debating the Prohibition issue in New York State, other political leaders from surrounding areas were also voicing their opinions on the ASL and Prohibition. Governors Edward Edwards of New Jersey and Percival Clement of Vermont spoke out against the new law and the ASL to the *New York Times*. They both claimed that the federal government had been overtaken by the dry influence of the League. They accused Anderson and the League of infiltrating and pressuring members of Congress by threatening that churchgoing voters would reject them if they did not support full Prohibition. Governor Edwards argued that the U.S. Congress was weak and beholden to the ASL's interests. He said, "Politicians are cowardly, timid, and afraid of their own shadow. That shadow is the all-powerful influence, unscrupulously and dishonestly used, of the ASL."⁶¹ Governor Clement claimed that many politicians did not even have a choice but to support the law when it was presented to them in this way. He noted how, "The Eighteenth Amendment was lobbied through Congress with campaigns against them in their districts if they did not vote for the amendment. Many congressmen who voted for that amendment were not necessarily in favor of it and did not believe that it would go any further."⁶² Both Republicans and Democrats were faced with the decision to either support or not support Prohibition. Many voted against their conscience because they were afraid of losing the votes of their church-going constituents. Both governors warned the public of the bullying tactics that the League used on their elected politicians.

Assailed--Gillett to Call Up Beer Bill," *New York Times*, April 1, 1920. <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/04/01/archives/senators-on-verge-of-fight-in-debate-thompson-retracts-dare-as.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁶¹Edward Edwards, "DRY ISSUE TO THE FRONT; Governor Edwards Speaks for Those Who Would Force Prohibition Into Campaign Bluffing by Anti-Saloon League. Vote of the Soldiers. Both Sides Ready to Fight. Prohibition Prophets." *New York Times*, August 15, 1920. <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/08/15/archives/dry-issue-to-the-front-governor-edwards-speaks-for-those-who-would.html?searchResultPosition=5>

⁶² Edwards, *Dry Issue to the Front*

Although many politicians were leading the opposition, they were not alone in publicly speaking out against Prohibition and the League. Some religious leaders also spoke out against the new law and its damaging consequences. In New York City, a collection of clergymen of the Catholic diocese of Brooklyn questioned the motives and tactics of Anderson and the ASL. These Catholic leaders saw Anderson's outspoken and aggressive style as insulting to them and their congregations. Public accusations that the organization was bigoted and xenophobic were heard before, but it was not until passage and ratification of a law that the ASL's perceived prejudice was seriously reevaluated. Lerner states that Anderson, after the new amendment came into effect, "unleashed a torrent of anti-Catholic rhetoric by accusing the Catholic Church of working with Tammany Hall to nullify the Prohibition laws and trying to destroy [the Prohibition] victory to bring back the saloons."⁶³ New York's Catholic community responded to Anderson in their press releases. They argued that Anderson and the League were using Prohibition to launch a new wave of religious persecution in the United States. In a move that imitated the ASL's single-issue political platform, Brooklyn Catholics opposed any candidate for the 1920 election that was endorsed by Anderson and the ASL. They denounced Anderson as a man who was dangerous and unethical. The clergymen of the diocese of Brooklyn, along with some of their prominent Catholic laymen, released a statement to their *Tablet* newsletter which attacked Anderson's character: "This demagogue wields his influence as autocratically as a Prussian, as despotically as a Czar, as recklessly as an anarchist, and as indecently as a Chinaman throwing ill-smelling bombs."⁶⁴ Anderson's aggressive crusading style provoked a

⁶³ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 118.

⁶⁴ *Tablet* Editorial, "CLERGY TO FIGHT ANDERSON AT POLLS; Brooklyn Catholics to Oppose Any Candidate Endorsed by Anti-Saloon League. ALL PARTIES ARE WARNED Attacks on Church Likened to Sultan of Turkey's Demand for a Holy War. Not Concerned with Parties. Do Not Fear Disclosures," *New York Times*, March 12, 1920. <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/03/12/archives/clergy-to-fight-anderson-at-polls-brooklyn-catholics-to-oppose-any.html?searchResultPosition=1>

response from these Brooklyn Catholics that mirrored the same passion he and his evangelical crusaders had often displayed to them.

In their attempts to pass the Eighteenth Amendment during World War I, Anderson and the League had used prejudiced attacks on various ethnic groups in New York. These social and political tactics worked well to pass wartime anti-alcohol legislation but proved problematic when the Prohibition Era began. Lerner argues that, “The scapegoating of ethnic New Yorkers, Catholics, and Jews early in the Prohibition era ultimately had one overwhelming effect, which ran completely opposite of what dries had anticipated. Constant depiction of ethnic New Yorkers as delinquents who neither understood nor respected American culture and laws naturally prompted these people to reexamine their place in American society.”⁶⁵ Continued prejudice from Anderson and the ASL resulted in a social and political awakening among these working-class communities. Urban ethnic groups viewed Prohibition as some kind of trick put over by a small evangelical Protestant minority. The social problems resulting from a life under Prohibition provoked these communities to involve themselves in the political process. Prohibition helped unite working-class ethnic groups in New York, a unity that, in turn, changed political culture throughout the 1920s. Opposition to the new amendment began to coalesce as these urban ethnic workers experienced the harsh realities of a Prohibition law created by a small group of rural evangelical crusaders. McGirr adds that, “Ethnic working-class communities came to understand the law as an attack on their leisure and personal habits and protested its consequences to their communities. Prohibition spurred an Americanization process from the bottom up.”⁶⁶ Anderson and the League had thus provoked a mass resistance that brought various forces together in an effort to discredit the League and its leaders.

⁶⁵ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 123.

⁶⁶ McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 41.

A different type of opposition to the ASL emerged from within the Protestant community that directed itself at questioning the integrity of the organization. *The New York Times* released a story in March 1920 of a Presbyterian Church leader named Rev. William H. Freeman who spoke about the corrupt inner workings of the organization. Once Prohibition became a reality, there were many supporters who believed that the work of the ASL was done. Anderson and the League had to be much more active in order to keep funding their moral crusade during the Prohibition Era. Rev. Freeman came to the newspapers to expose the League's methods in training its public speakers. According to him, agents were trained to arouse emotions in their speeches in a focused effort to fund their organization, and specifically, themselves. Freeman, who claimed to have worked with the League for only ten days, left the organization because of the money-hungry scheming of its agents. To him, these so-called religious crusaders were far more concerned about their personal finances than about the success of the movement. Freeman was appalled at the way they exhibited this greed. Agents feared that since Prohibition was now the law, their services as dry social agitators would no longer be required. Anderson pacified them by saying that law enforcement would still necessitate more money and effort for years to come. The League continued to need public agitators to influence government officials and politicians to follow through and enforce the new law. Freeman, disgusted with both the trainers and the trainees, stated that the "agents spoke with the same contempt for congregations of church people from which they got money as a band of get-rich-quick specialists would use in alluding to their victims."⁶⁷ The agents were more concerned with financial compensation for their service than for the actual service itself.

⁶⁷ William H. Freeman, "PASTOR WHO QUIT ANTI-SALOON BODY ASSAILS ITS WORK; Rev. W.H. Freeman Says Agents of League Were Money-Mad and Disgusted Him. TELLS FINANCIAL METHODS Consecration Paraphrased Into "Coin-secration" by Reference to Church Meetings. W.H. ANDERSON'S TACTICS "Meat Axe" Activities of leader Described--Says Dictation of Country Is Sought. Feared Good Jobs Were Over.

According to Freeman, the speeches prepared by the ASL for these public speakers were designed to show them how to be effective money-getters. Freeman outlined the speech in four keys parts. First *conciliation*, to pretend that you are interested in the church folk and that the “work is in harmony with the spirit and purpose of Christ.”⁶⁸ Second was basic *information* about the organization, the campaign, and the primary cause. Third was *inflammation* in which Freeman explained that the goal was to, “set forth the genius and character of the liquor traffic in such a way as to arouse the congregation to action and make them want to fight the traffic themselves.”⁶⁹ Fourth was *consecration*, better known in jest by the money-mad agents as “consecration.” Business cards and magazine subscriptions were the preferred methods to arouse people to enroll in the war against alcohol. Freeman told the press that the “speeches outlined an intelligent and effective plan of action and called upon the people to take a hand. It is not so much eloquence but practical effectiveness and businesslike straightforwardness. Each sentence was to be shaped to aid inducing somebody in the audience to give money to the Anti-Saloon League.”⁷⁰ As a devout Christian, Rev. Freeman wanted to draw public attention to the inherent hypocrisy of the ASL and to separate it and its corruption from the churches that supported it.

In this media press release Freeman exposed not only the corrupt inner workings of the League, but also offered information on Anderson’s own methods. Freeman claimed that Anderson was notorious within the ASL because of an aggressive tactic he used called the “meat axe” method. This was a term that described the bullying tactics Anderson utilized against

Told How to Get Money. Seven Minutes of Inflammation. Refused to Degrade Office. Kept Methods Secret. Not Agency of Churches. Says Dictatorship Is Sought. ANDERSON ANSWER CHARGE. Says League Will Spend About \$300,000 This Year. EXPECTS MANY MINISTERS. Cuvillier Says at Least Dozen Will Appear Against League. ANDERSON SENDS CHALLENGE. Would Debate with Governor on Letter's Stand on Prohibition,” *New York Times*, March 5, 1920. <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/03/05/archives/pastor-who-quit-antisaloon-body-assails-its-work-revwh-freeman-says.html?searchResultPosition=2>

⁶⁸ Freeman, *Pastor who Quit Anti-Saloon Body*

⁶⁹ Freeman, *Pastor who Quit Anti-Saloon Body*

⁷⁰ Freeman, *Pastor who Quit Anti-Saloon Body*

politicians, church leaders, and public officials who opposed the new Prohibition law. He was known to say, “I use the meat-axe method. First, because it is effective: second, because no other method is effective.”⁷¹ As Superintendent of the New York State chapter of the ASL, Anderson wanted to make sure that his agents used a more subtle approach to convince the general public to support its evangelical crusade and encouraged them to leave the hard-hitting public denunciations of social and political leaders to him. Freeman denounced this approach and concluded his exposé by calling on New York religious leaders not to allow Anderson and the ASL to speak on behalf of Christian churches. To Freeman, the ASL was not a creation or an agency of the church, but an organization that was using the church. He claimed that “if the churches understood how they were being made the pawns of the ASL they would be revolted. Recalcitrant ministers are threatened with the alienation. The minister must do the will of the League agents or have them undertake a crusade against him among his followers. I saw the terrible power, the unscrupulous methods, and their brazen and contemptuous attitude toward the public and of the complete lack of sincerity.”⁷² Freeman’s leaked information to the press was a deliberate attempt to expose the so-called true nature of the League to the general public. Whether or not these claims were true did not matter as much as the impact that this public smear campaign had that was being launched against the ASL and Anderson.

In addition to political and religious opposition to Anderson and the League, public renunciations from concerned citizens filled the New York City press. Individual citizens, without any public or private affiliation, concerned with the growing consequences of life under Prohibition voiced their concerns to the newspapers, government officials, and anyone else whom they felt needed to hear it. In an op-ed to the *New York Times* in May 1922, A. Rene

⁷¹ Freeman, *Pastor who Quit Anti-Saloon Body*

⁷² Freeman, *Pastor who Quit Anti-Saloon Body*

Moen, a former dry sympathizer, wrote that he agreed with Anderson and the League on the alcohol problem, but the methods of obtaining the Prohibition law made Moen turn against them. He directed his statement in the newspaper specifically to Anderson. "I am opposed to your views on the liquor question and to a constitutional amendment which was secured by reprehensible methods. The law is not respected by our best citizens and you and your associates are entirely responsible by forcing an unnatural law that violates the sacred rights and personal liberties."⁷³ Moen was arguing that the League's preferred methods of political pressure, instead of democratic debate, created a law that most people would not follow. Moen declared that he would support those who were against Anderson and the League. "I stand today most emphatically for a repeal, or modification, of the law and I shall continue to work to this end and against the retention of the amendment. My influence and financial support will be given your opponents who are working to eliminate the liquor law, which makes law-breakers, and is a curse to my beloved country."⁷⁴ Moen's public denunciation of Anderson and the League was just one example of the widespread public resentment the Prohibition era created.

There were some citizens, however, who took a more extreme approach. In March 1922 Anderson received a death threat in a letter from an anonymous source that stated, "We mean to kill you without the slightest compunction. The ASL has spread its poisonous tentacles over the length and breadth of the land."⁷⁵ Anderson was not intimidated by this threat and responded, "I am not seeking a martyr's crown, but if it is necessary for me, or rather for my family, to make

⁷³ A. Rene Moen, "TWENTY YEARS' JOB TO DRY UP NEW YORK; Anti-Saloon League Head Says Fight Will Be Won After the First Two Years. CONVERTS FROM BENEFITS Magistrate Praises Fearless Policeman Who Risked Life Sampling Trade Liquors," *New York Times*, May 5, 1922.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1921/05/02/archives/twenty-years-job-to-dry-up-new-york-antisaloon-league-head-says.html?searchResultPosition=2>

⁷⁴ Moen, *Twenty Tears' Job*

⁷⁵ Anonymous, "DEATH THREAT LETTER SENT TO ANDERSON; Anti-Saloon League Head Blames Certain Newspapers for Inciting Self-styled Ex-Service Men," *New York Times*, March 29, 1922.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1922/03/29/archives/death-threat-letter-sent-to-anderson-antisaloon-league-head-blames.html?searchResultPosition=10>

this kind of sacrifice, in order to awaken the American people to a sense of their responsibility for the law, then I shall neither run away nor hesitate.”⁷⁶ Anderson, like those in the ranks of the entire ASL organization, was driven by a religious zeal to achieve moral justice and was not afraid of the consequences of his actions.

With opposition coming from so many different sections of society, organized political resistance against the law began to develop during the first couple of years of the Prohibition era. In 1922 the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA) became the first anti-Prohibition organization that was politically active in its opposition to the law, the ASL, and Anderson. Within a few years of life under the Prohibition law, the League began to see the damage the law was inflicting on society. Political and financial support for the League began to decline, while wet sympathy began its slow rise. Ransom Gillet, General Counsel of the New York Division of the AAPA, argued that “the ASL is a wreck and its employees are desperately striving to hold their jobs. The ASL has apparently accomplished its purpose and is gradually dying for lack of interest and funds. The AAPA proposes to abolish the Volstead Act and enact laws to give American citizens personal liberty.”⁷⁷ Anderson and the League acknowledged the threat posed by organizations such as the AAPA, one of a number of groups on the growing list of those who opposed them. As public sentiment against Prohibition increased, the ASL found it harder to garner support for the organization and to maintain the integrity of the Eighteenth Amendment.

⁷⁶ Anderson, *Death Threat Letter*

⁷⁷ Ransom Gillet, “ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE IS CALLED A WRECK; Gillett Says "Its Paid Employes Are Desperately Striving to Hold Their Jobs." HE REPLIES TO ANDERSON Calls Attack on Anti-Prohibition Movement a "Baseless, Unwarranted and Untrue Statement," *New York Times*, June 4, 1922. <https://www.nytimes.com/1922/06/04/archives/antisaloon-league-is-called-a-wreck-gillett-says-its-paid-employes.html?searchResultPosition=4>

Former attorney and naval officer Captain W. H. Stayton, who founded the AAPA, encouraged the formation of even more anti-Prohibition societies to fight Anderson and the ASL. Stayton, like many observers of the time, saw the ASL's declining influence on the liquor issue as a sign to strike. Stayton argued that it was time for all the various wet forces to come out and take hold of the Prohibition issue. As the social consequences of the Prohibition law (like crime and corruption) were taking its toll on the general public, organized opposition to the dries really began to take shape. Previous temperance organizations, like the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Prohibition Party, that were critical of the League's tactics in creating prohibition, also joined in to speak out against the ASL. Stayton saw hope in the rising tide of anti-ASL sympathies among the congressmen who had originally favored ratification of the amendment and were now experiencing the results of their vote. He argued, "Many who were advocates of prohibition in the past are deserting the cause. The political stranglehold of the ASL was broken with the ending of the 1918-1919 Congress. Its waning influence is one of the encouraging symptoms of a return to sanity on the part of Congress and the people."⁷⁸ Stayton's proclamation in 1923 to wet forces to unite in their fight against the dries was the call to arms that started the slow decline of the ASL and the quick downfall of Anderson himself.

Stayton criticized both the ASL's credibility as an organization and its overreaching influence in the lives of the American public. McGirr argues that Stayton and the AAPA wanted, "to sound the alarm that the Eighteenth Amendment's dramatic expansion of government authority set a dangerous precedent that could lead to further erosions of economic liberty."⁷⁹

Stayton, a New York elite, also urged other elite wet sympathizers to unite and fight against this

⁷⁸ W. H. Stayton, "SAYS DRY FORCES PLAN NEW MERGER; Leader of Anti-Prohibition Cause Says It Is Result of Anti-Saloon League's Waning Influence," *New York Times*, March 23, 1923.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1923/03/23/archives/says-dry-forces-plan-new-merger-leader-of-antiprohibition-cause.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁷⁹ McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 170.

intrusive law. Lerner argues that, “Stayton’s conservative, almost libertarian, opposition to Prohibition as a form of governmental intrusion attracted mainly conservatives and business world luminaries. He recruited a number of prominent industrialists and political figures to the AAPA.”⁸⁰ The AAPA was responsible for starting the effort to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment in the early 1920s. Although the AAPA’s successes were short-lived, they were responsible for starting a public debate on the merits of the Prohibition law. This fight against the Eighteenth Amendment exposed the weaknesses of the ASL and some of its leaders, particularly, William H. Anderson.

The Downfall of William Anderson

Opposition to the Prohibition amendment led to criticisms of the ASL, the group that helped create the law. Criticisms of Anderson and the League led to inquiries into their practices as an organization. In early 1920, Louis A. Cuvillier, a Democrat and New York State Assemblyman from the 20th District, was one of the first politicians in the Prohibition era to call for an investigation into the “church movement” fashioned as a “business” known as the Anti-Saloon League. He asked the assembly judiciary committee to conduct an inquiry into the political activities, methods, and financial operations of the New York ASL. Cuvillier wanted to ascertain if the League, a self-proclaimed non-partisan corporation, used the funds it collected from the public for direct political purposes. Cuvillier accused the ASL of spending its money to influence nominations and/or elections. He cited Section 44 of the General Corporation Law of New York (since expired) that restricted corporations from becoming directly involved in politics. Cuvillier argued that the League was using its money to spread propaganda, to promote or retard congressional legislation, and to influence political candidates. In an angry speech to

⁸⁰ Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 251.

the assembly, Cuvillier asked, “Are we going to humbly sit by and take this abuse? Are there not men in this Assembly with the backbone to stand up for what they believe are their rights? You will remember someday that you permitted these villainous and corrupt fanatics to dictate to you.”⁸¹ Cuvillier’s call for an investigation into the ASL was an opportunity for both New York politicians and the League to fight for full control of the Prohibition question.

Without offering any proof of their allegations, William Anderson and the ASL claimed that Cuvillier’s call for an investigation into their organization came directly from the Democrat-led Tammany Hall politicians of New York City who were trying to get revenge on the League for the passage of Prohibition. Anderson and the ASL claimed that Cuvillier’s attempt at an investigation was part of an anti-Prohibition conspiracy to embarrass and discredit them.

Whether or not there was any truth to their claims, Anderson and the League reacted fiercely to accusations against them and their movement. Anderson argued this investigation would actually expose their enemy’s efforts to block enforcement legislation of the new Prohibition law. He claimed that the investigation was a “wet scheme to block all honest enforcement legislation while pretending to favor it. It was the wets attempt to throw a monkey-wrench into the ASL’s cylinder.”⁸² Anderson then urged the assembly not to waste time or public funds for any inquiries or investigations. Anderson even suggested that the investigation be conducted by the ASL itself. He concluded that if the investigation was held by them it would reveal that the organization was “the agency of the churches and moral forces, that it has accomplished more with a given amount of money than any ordinary politician believed possible, and that the whole thing is as clean as a

⁸¹ Louis A. Cuvillier, “ORDER ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE INVESTIGATED; MANY REPUBLICANS SUPPORT MOTION FOR IT IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY, OPPOSING LEADER; VOTE STANDS 61 TO 52 Both Women Members Approve Motion for the Investigation. LIVELY DEBATE PRECEDES Adler Urges Reference to Ways and Means Committee, Which Cuvillier Strongly Opposes. SWEET TO SEEK ANNULMENT Speaker Holds Motion Was Irregularly Adopted by Less Than a Majority House,” *New York Times*, March 2, 1920. <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/03/02/archives/order-antisaloon-league-investigated-many-republicans-support.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁸² Anderson, *Order Anti-Saloon League Investigated*

hound's tooth."⁸³ Anderson defended the ASL with the same tenacity as when he fought for prohibition, but now he and the organization were faced with a more determined resistance.

Cuvillier's call for an investigation in 1920 provoked a very powerful public response from both Anderson and the League. Anderson also called for immediate action against this investigation by Cuvillier. Anderson and the ASL wanted to use this opportunity to expose the weaknesses the Republican Party on the Prohibition issue. These evangelical reformers wanted the Republican Party in New York to follow through on their initial success when they passed anti-alcohol legislation and to begin strict enforcement measures. Anderson said that "it is time for people to force the Republican legislature to do the honest intelligent thing on enforcement and enable us to defeat Tammany. It is a chance to clean out the whole Tammany bunch and vindicate righteousness and law and order."⁸⁴ Anderson and the ASL wanted to turn the criticisms against them into an issue of non-compliance to the Prohibition law by wet forces.

In a telegram to New York State Assembly Speaker Thaddeus Sweet in March 1920, Anderson claimed that the League was ready to fight any allegations. He told Speaker Sweet that the League would defend itself fiercely in public stating, "We are ready to take our chances with an organization which assists Tammany in an effort to outrage morality and nullify law and order."⁸⁵ But, after taking the high ground, Anderson then threatened Sweet's political career by promising to link it to any investigation of the evangelical crusaders. He reminded Sweet that any Republicans and Democrats who opened up an investigation of the ASL would expose how they had been influenced by wet forces friendly to Speaker Sweet. Anderson argued that the "motive behind an 'investigation' into the frank, wide-open work of the agency of the Protestant

⁸³ Anderson, *Order Anti-Saloon League Investigated*

⁸⁴ Anderson, *Pastors of New York State*, 46.

⁸⁵ William H. Anderson to Thaddeus Sweet, March 3, 1920, folder 13, box 2, page 47. William H. Anderson and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/ead/pdf/whanderson-0002-013.pdf>

churches without legislative consideration as to the secret activities of the wets whose leading organization supported you (Sweet) for election last fall will be obvious to the public.”⁸⁶

Anderson wanted to hold Sweet and the entire Assembly responsible for the political consequences of conducting an investigation and, thereby, hopefully dissuade them from opening it up.

As the social consequences of Prohibition began to be felt, the ASL not only found itself constantly fighting to maintain dry control in politics, to secure real enforcement legislation and to respond to the ever-growing opposition to the new law, but now it also had to struggle to maintain the integrity of its own organization by warding off accusations of corruption. In April 1922, representative George H. Tinkham, a Republican from Massachusetts, gave a speech on the floor of the U.S. Congress demanding an inquiry into the financial practices of the League. He pleaded to Congress for the U.S. Attorney General to investigate the organization to see if it violated any finance laws. Tinkham argued that, although the ASL admitted to having worked to influence congressional elections, the organization had not filed names, campaign expenses, and returns to the Clerk of the House from 1910 to 1918. Tinkham argued that an inquiry would show that the ASL was systematically financing some congressional campaigns. It was forcing representatives in both Houses to vote on the alcohol issue in accordance with the legal parameters set by the League itself. Tinkham declared that “it will be interesting to the country to learn that legislation is initiated in the national office of the ASL and not in the Congress of the United States. To what degradation and debasement has Congress fallen that its shame can be thus heralded to the world! Cowardice, destruction, and dishonor.”⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Anderson, *Thaddeus Sweet*, 47.

⁸⁷ George H. Tinkham, “ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE INQUIRY DEMANDED; Tinkham Declares It Should Be Prosecuted for Violation of Corrupt Practices Act BY DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE Says Plea to House to Investigate Would Be Futile Because. It Is Dominated by the League. Says No Returns Were Filed. Congressmen

The inquiries into the political and financial dealings of the League during the first few years of the Prohibition era led to an investigation that specifically targeted Anderson. In January 1923 the District Attorney's office of New York City looked into a financial arrangement Anderson had made with a former chief financial field agent named O. Bertsall Phillips. *The New York Times* reported that Phillips joined the ASL in 1917 under a salary agreement and then on a commission basis based on the money the organization raised through speeches and magazine subscriptions. Phillips had an agreement to divide his commission money with Anderson, but he claimed to have been coerced into that arrangement. Phillips also alleged that Anderson obtained the approval from the ASL for a blanket bill for \$24,700 paid out during 1913-1914 for so-called "publicity." There were no vouchers immediately available to explain the nature of the alleged payments made by Phillips or the amount paid to Anderson from the treasury. As this was an informal agreement between Anderson and Phillips, an official contract was not available to properly ascertain whether or not Phillips was lying.

Anderson dismissed Phillips as "a disgruntled employee fired for disloyalty, incompetence and the good of the service."⁸⁸ Anderson warned that Phillips was being coerced by wet forces who were looking "to get something" on Anderson. In his statement to the press Anderson stated that: "these charges are a desire for revenge from an ex-employee and an attempt to extort money. I have information that this proposition is being pushed by interests hostile to the prohibition movement and able to pay anybody they can use."⁸⁹ Without any

Under Obligation," *New York Times*, April 5, 1922. <https://www.nytimes.com/1922/04/05/archives/antisaloon-league-inquiry-demanded-tinkham-declares-it-should-be.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁸⁸ William H. Anderson, "ANDERSON DENIES GRAFT CHARGE MADE BY HIS COLLECTOR; Anti-Saloon League Superintendent Is Questioned by Acting District Attorney," *New York Times*, January 26, 1923. <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/01/26/archives/anderson-denies-graft-charge-made-by-his-collector-antisaloon.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁸⁹ Anderson, *Anderson Denies Graft Charge*

evidence to support his claims of conspiracy, Anderson linked Phillips to an anti-Prohibition scheme involving the liquor industry and New York City wet politicians.

The day after Phillip's accusations became public, Anderson was questioned for two hours by acting District Attorney Ferdinand Pecora. A few days after questioning, Pecora commented that "the truthfulness of the representations made by Anderson to the League's directors concerning the aforesaid indebtedness is seriously being questioned."⁹⁰ Pecora added that, "Although Mr. Anderson answered many of my questions, I am frank to say that his answers generally were such as to cause me to persist in seeking from him complete information as to the identity of the person or persons to whom he had received them. He has declined to give me this information. I am simply seeking to ascertain all the facts."⁹¹ Pecora continued his investigation of Anderson and the ASL throughout the first few months of 1923 but refrained from releasing information about his findings to the public.

Six months later, in July 1923, new District Attorney Joab H. Banton, a Democrat, went before a grand jury to get the ASL and Anderson indicted on charges of financial corruption. In a press release to the *New York Times*, Banton expressed that Anderson would be charged "with grand larceny for an alleged fictitious bill for \$24,700 to the league for "confidential publicity purposes"; with extortion in taking a split in the commissions paid to O. Bertsall Phillips, ... and with forgery in the third degree in connection with the alleged alteration of the books to conceal the difference between what Phillips was supposed to receive and what he actually received in commissions."⁹² Banton also submitted to the grand jury a list of witnesses to be subpoenaed.

⁹⁰ Ferdinand Pecora, "PECORA CHALLENGES ANDERSON IMMUNITY; Says \$24,700 Claim Against; Anti-Saloon League 'Is Seriously Questioned,'" *New York Times*, February 9, 1923. <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/02/09/archives/pecora-challenges-anderson-immunity-says-24700-claim-against.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁹¹ Pecora, *Pecora Challenges Anderson Immunity*

⁹² Joab H. Banton, "WILL RENEW EFFORT TO INDICT ANDERSON; Banton to Submit Anti-Saloon League Case to Grand Jury Again on Monday. NEW WITNESSES, HE SAYS Charges of Misuse of Funds, Which Failed

The list included Anderson's personal assistant Maude M. Odell, the president of the New York State ASL, Reverend Dr. David James Burrell, and former assistant treasurer of ASL, William Milton Potter.

Phillips' allegations against Anderson were known to the Anti-Saloon League before the press release. Phillips had already spoken to ASL National Superintendent Wayne Wheeler about going to the District Attorney in New York City to bring criminal charges. Anderson retaliated by delivering a "statement of facts" concerning the details of his contract with Phillips to Wheeler and the ASL Board of Directors. Anderson argued that it was Phillips who approached him and offered to split the commissions because he needed help to fulfill his monetary obligations to the League. However, Phillips argued that he entered into a contract with Anderson in which he was to get commissions on all money he collected for the dry propaganda of the League. Phillips insisted that this contract was for 20% on the first \$25,000 he obtained yearly and 10% on all money over that figure. He charged that Anderson, "had forced me to split 'fifty-fifty' on all collections commissions in excess of his own salary because he felt that no employee of the League should get more (money) than he."⁹³ Both Anderson and Phillips were accusing each other but neither had definitive proof of wrongdoing because no official records were kept concerning their alleged agreement. Anderson and Phillips continued to denounce each other to the press in what became a public display of conflicting reports.

Anderson resorted to attacking Phillips' character to the ASL Board of Directors in order to have the League side with him on the matter. He told the ASL that he initially trusted Phillips,

to Cause Indictment In January, Are Repeated," New York Times, July 3, 1923. <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/07/03/archives/will-renew-effort-to-indict-anderson-banton-to-submit-antisaloon.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁹³ O. Bertsall Phillips, "DECLARES ANDERSON FORCED HIM TO SPLIT PART OF HIS 'DRY' PAY; Chief Accuser of Anti-Saloon League Official Then Admits Trying to Sell Exposure. DENIES HE TRIED BLACKMAIL Defense Links Witness With Brewers and Wet Organization at Forgery Trial. SAYS ANDERSON HAD HIM 'SPLIT' HIS PAY," New York Times, January 23, 1924. <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/01/23/archives/declares-anderson-forced-him-to-split-part-of-his-dry-pay-chief.html?searchResultPosition=1>

even though he had reservations about the man's personal motivation. Anderson claimed that, "at the time I believed him honest, but he had shown such an utter lack of interest in the cause itself and such a cold-blooded, mercenary disposition to grab every cent that he could so far as the League was concerned."⁹⁴ Anderson accused Phillips of blackmail and linked the charge to a takedown of him as ASL leader of New York. He told the League that "the purpose is to shake me down into the payment either of this money or what he claims is due under his alleged contract under penalty of exposure."⁹⁵ Anderson's statement to the ASL Board of Directors was a defensive measure to discredit Phillips. He was not afraid to personally attack Phillips before the ASL because he felt that the ex-employee had been compromised by anti-Prohibition forces.

Anderson wrote a letter to the president of the New York State ASL, Reverend Dr. David James Burrell, to present his views concerning the issue of Phillips' accusations. Although ultimately unsuccessful, Anderson wanted President Burrell to put an end to Phillips's threat before it leaked to the press. Anderson urged him to meet with Phillips to convince him that he did not have a case. In addition, the Superintendent expressed to Burrell that the League should not give in to Phillips' attempt at blackmail. Anderson told the president, "my self-respect would not allow me to consent that the Board give him anything. As good citizens we cannot submit to blackmail. I'll see him all the way to his ultimate destination before yielding."⁹⁶ In another letter to Orville S. Poland, General Counsel to the ASL, Anderson questioned the mental stability of Phillips. Anderson wrote, "He is hopelessly crooked if he isn't becoming insane. It might be a happy ending if they would lock him up. Of course, if he goes insane he might conceivably do

⁹⁴ William H. Anderson to Wayne B. Wheeler, September 1922, folder 5, box 1, page 5. William H. Anderson and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/ead/pdf/whanderson-0001-005.pdf>

⁹⁵ Anderson, *Wayne B. Wheeler*, 5.

⁹⁶ William H. Anderson to David J. Burrell, December 27, 1922, folder 5, box 1, page 9. William H. Anderson and the Anti-Saloon League. Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/ead/pdf/whanderson-0001-005.pdf>

something desperate but that is a chance we have got to take.”⁹⁷ He assured both President Burrell and Counsel Poland that Phillips’ threat to take him to court would not stand up and was simply a fabrication from wet forces in New York to get him out of the way.

The ASL stood by Anderson as this controversy concerning Phillips began to grow. The ASL denied that money was stolen from their organization by Anderson or anybody else. The ASL renewed its vote of confidence in the New York State Superintendent and agreed with his assessment that anti-Prohibition forces were indeed responsible for the investigation. “We assure Anderson of our unqualified confidence and express our thanks to him for the wise, upright and courageous way in which he has conducted and managed the affairs on the ASL in New York. We utter our defiance against those against us in this contest.”⁹⁸ The League called the charges against Anderson a “monstrous perversion of justice” in which the allegations were part of a plot by the liquor interests to sideline Anderson in New York. District Attorney Pecora disagreed with their assessment of the investigation and released a statement to the press. He denied wet influence and any anti-prohibition bias. Pecora stated that “in this investigation the prohibition issue is in no way involved. Our purpose is to see if there has been any criminal wrongdoing connected with the league’s affairs or work. This investigation is not in any way to be regarded a manifestation of activity in opposition to the League or its cause.”⁹⁹ Despite the ASL’s claims of a widespread conspiracy, there was no proof that the liquor interests, Tammany Hall Democrats, or even wet Republicans worked together to influence the District Attorney to investigate Anderson’s work in New York. Pecora was asked to perform an investigation by concerned

⁹⁷ Anderson, *David J. Burrell*, 13.

⁹⁸ Edgar T. Brackett, “ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE UPHOLDS ANDERSON; Ratifies Acts, Despite the Known Views of Rockefellers on Commissions. PECORA HEARS SECRETARY Former Bookkeeper Appears on Her Own Account -- Denies Knowing of \$24,700 Fund. ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE UPHOLDS ANDERSON,” *New York Times*, January 31, 1923. <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/01/31/archives/antisaloon-league-upholds-anderson-ratifies-acts-despite-the-known.html?searchResultPosition=1>

⁹⁹ Pecora, *Anti-Saloon League Upholds Anderson*

political leaders like Rep. Tinkham and Assemblyman Cuvillier who were worried about the ASL's methods. The investigation eventually led to questions concerning the financial practices of its New York representative. In their zeal to protect the integrity of the evangelical Protestant crusade, the ASL and Anderson, were quick to allege a wide-spread conspiracy (without any proof) of anti-Prohibition forces working to bring down the crusade that secured the Eighteenth Amendment, but the evidence for such an allegation just was not there.

Nevertheless, the ASL's Board of Directors released a statement to the press concerning their own assessment of the Anderson situation that echoed the allegation of the wet conspiracy. According to them, there were three specific actions that intentionally paralyzed Anderson's leadership and nullified the work of the ASL in New York State: first, Assemblyman Cuvillier's call for an investigation into the League; second, the Association Opposed to the National Prohibition Amendment's representative Ransom H. Gillette's efforts to get the League to publish its list of financial contributors; and third, the New York City District Attorney's launch of an investigation into Anderson himself. By attacking Anderson, the wet forces were attacking what the League represented, the on-going evangelical Protestant crusade against alcohol. The Board concluded that

if Anderson were a spineless speechifier or painless protestor, he would never have been noticed. The ASL's grip upon the homes and churches and its commanding influence among law observing citizens make it the subject of a bitter and relentless attack. We denounce the indictments against Anderson perpetrated to destroy him and designed to crush the influence of these churches in the direction of enforcement of the supreme law of the land."¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Benjamin L. Rand and Dr. George Caleb Moor, "LEAGUE REAFFIRMS FAITH IN ANDERSON; Directors Call Indictment of Anti-Saloon Leader 'Monstrous Perversion of Justice.' DENY MONEY WAS STOLEN Troubles of State Superintendent Laid to Plot by the Liquor Interests," *New York Times*, July 25, 1923. <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/07/25/archives/league-reaffirms-faith-in-anderson-directors-call-indictment-of.html?searchResultPosition=1>

The ASL stood by Anderson with the same defiance that the New York Superintendent had showed these New York officials. In the minds of the ASL, New York anti-Prohibition forces, backed by the liquor interests, wanted to discredit the movement by destroying Anderson's reputation and career.

Rev. Burrell described the District Attorney's criminal accusations against Anderson as a "grim farce" and declared that even if the League Superintendent for New York was indicted, convicted, and sent to Sing-Sing prison, Anderson's "commanding voice would rally the law-abiding people to the support of a righteous cause as never before. He would be canonized and the influence of the ASL would be multiplied tenfold."¹⁰¹ Burrell defended Anderson while also acknowledging the crusader's aggressive methods. He stated that "such a man makes many bitter enemies and no crusader has ever succeeded by the polite methods of the velvet glove. He has struck hard but never the innocent and never below the belt. He has aroused against himself and his cause powerful influences, political, social and financial. He has many adversaries who would love to see him pilloried or hung."¹⁰² Burrell also argued that Anderson was the League's biggest champion in NYC. "Anderson was instrumental in putting the Empire State on the prohibition map. He succeeded where others had failed. For this the wets hate him and are moving the earth to get rid of him."¹⁰³ The Protestant evangelical crusade that the ASL represented strongly supported Anderson regardless of the circumstances surrounding the accusations against him.

¹⁰¹ David James Burrell, "ANDERSON ACCUSER BEFORE GRAND JURY; Former Dry League Aid Reported to Have Repeated Charges of Irregularities. DR. BURRELL TO DEFENSE Calls Second Presentation of Accusations Against Anti-Saloon Leader 'Grim Farce,'" *New York Times*, July 12, 1923. <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/07/12/archives/anderson-accuser-before-grand-jury-former-dry-league-aid-reported.html?searchResultPosition=1>

¹⁰² Burrell, *Anderson Accuser Before Grand Jury*

¹⁰³ Burrell, *Anderson Accuser Before Grand Jury*

Under indictment on charges of grand larceny, extortion, and forgery by the New York District Attorney Banton, Anderson spent the last few months of the 1923 defending his own public image from a falsely perceived notion of conspiracy from a collective of anti-Prohibition forces. He spoke at several Protestant denomination churches to shed light on the conspiracy allegedly launched against him and the ASL by wets on all levels of New York society. He blamed New York City politicians, newspapers, the liquor interests, and anti-Prohibition (or “anti-Protestant”) organizations for the investigation of him and for his indictment. Anderson also claimed that the Democrat-led Tammany Hall feared the ASL’s political opposition to presidential hopeful, New York Governor Alfred Smith. In an address to the Township Methodist Episcopal Church in Delaware County, Anderson stated that the “indictment was brought about through perjured testimony, accepted by a ‘Tammany Grand Jury’ and was the result of a conspiracy between Tammany Hall, Governor Smith and a ‘pliant’ public prosecutor.”¹⁰⁴ Although no evidence exists to show that there was any real conspiracy to rid New York of Anderson, the Ohio minister took to accusing others of trying to reverse Prohibition by destroying his career. Anderson felt that he needed to defend his public image as a prominent representative of the evangelical Protestant crusade against alcohol in America.

Anderson also charged that New York City newspapers were somehow involved in a conspiracy with Tammany Hall and anti-Protestant organizations. He argued that this conspiracy was an attempt to keep the public ignorant of the evils of alcohol in the city. He insisted that Tammany was using its influence in New York City as a way to control ethnic and religious minorities’ social and political habits. Speaking at the Newburgh District Annual Conference of

¹⁰⁴ William H. Anderson, “ANDERSON TALKS ON KU KLUX KLAN; Anti-Saloon League Superintendent Says Tammany Fears Its Influence,” *New York Times*, September 9, 1923. <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/09/09/archives/anderson-talks-on-ku-klux-klan-antisaloon-league-superintendent.html?searchResultPosition=1>

the Methodist Episcopal Church, Anderson charged that, “Tammany, an alien influence in American life, is exploiting racial and so-called religious prejudice in its conspiracy to wreck prohibition and is being helped by the newspapers. They want the electorate ignorant and drunken. If the people are intelligent, they will not stay drunk, and if they are sober they will not stay ignorant.”¹⁰⁵ Anderson continued his assault on the press until the end of 1923 in the hopes of gaining public support before going to court.

After months of waiting, on January 21, 1924, Anderson faced Judge Arthur S. Tompkins and a grand jury for indictments alleging him of grand larceny, extortion, and forgery. He was silent that morning before he presented himself to the court and simply stated that he had “nothing to say.” The *New York Times* reported that the indictment for grand larceny included two counts. The first count charged that in 1921 Anderson stole money from the League in the form of interest on an indebtedness of which he in 1918 had demanded from the League. The money was supposed to be a repayment of funds he alleged he had spent on “confidential publicity promotion” for the League from 1913 to 1914. Although Anderson was accused of stealing from the ASL, the League repudiated this claim and defended him wholeheartedly. The *Times* also reported a second grand larceny indictment that charged Anderson with illegally obtaining money from the League in 1921 as an installment on his demand to the League for sum he was owed. This count alleged intent on the part of Anderson on the allegation that he never spent the money for the League and that his statement that he did so was false.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ William H. Anderson, “ANDERSON ATTACKS PRESS.; Hits New York Papers and Sees a Conspiracy Afoot,” *New York Times*, September 21, 1923. <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/09/21/archives/anderson-attacks-press-hits-new-york-papers-and-sees-a-conspiracy-a.html?searchResultPosition=1>

¹⁰⁶ NYT Reporter, “ANDERSON SILENT ON EVE OF TRIAL; Anti-Saloon League Superintendent Charged With Larceny, Extortion and Forgery. PANEL OF 100 TALESMEN Examination as to Their Fitness to Serve Expected to Be Unusually Searching,” *New York Times*, January 21, 1924. <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/01/21/archives/anderson-silent-on-eve-of-trial-antisaloon-league-superintendent.html?searchResultPosition=1>

However, it was the indictment for forgery that led to a conviction of the New York State Superintendent. The *New York Times* reported that,

The forgery indictment was the direct result of Phillip's charges, with alleged corroboration by William M. Potter, former assistant Treasurer of the League, that Anderson ordered Potter to alter the books of the organization to have it appear that \$4,400 which Phillips alleged Anderson had received from him as share of commissions on contributions to the League, and which had been credited to Phillips as salary, had been received by Anderson on the "fifty-fifty" basis.¹⁰⁷

Anderson was found guilty of forgery in the third degree by directing alterations in the books of the ASL. According to the article, "Testimony brought out during the trial showed that Anderson had entered into a deal with Phillips to split evenly all commission Phillips earned in excess of \$10,000 a year. Phillip's complaint that he would have to pay income tax on \$4,400 one year's split to Anderson, brought about the change in the books."¹⁰⁸ In the end, Phillips did admit to trying to sell exposure by going to the press but denied that he tried to blackmail Anderson. Although the defense team for Anderson tried to link the claims against Anderson to wet forces, the jury found him guilty of forgery. He was sentenced to two years in prison.¹⁰⁹

Anderson's trial and conviction were seen by religious reformers who supported him as an attack on Prohibition and the League's work. His downfall sent a clear warning to the evangelical crusade about their precarious place in the Prohibition Era of the 1920s. Anderson and the League claimed that anti-Prohibition sentiment was at the center of the movement to bring Anderson down. But this claim of conspiracy was something government officials continued to deny throughout the entire Anderson scandal. Judge Arthur S. Tompkins told the members of the jury right before their deliberations that,

¹⁰⁷ NYT Reporter, *Anderson Silent on Eve of Trial*

¹⁰⁸ Judge Arthur S. Tompkins, "ANDERSON CONVICTED OF FORGERY; VERDICT ON SECOND BALLOT; Jury Finds Anti-Saloon League Leader Guilty of False Entry in His Books," *New York Times*, January 30, 1924. <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/01/30/archives/anderson-convicted-of-forgery-verdict-on-second-ballot-jury-finds.html?searchResultPosition=1>

¹⁰⁹ Tompkins, *Anderson Convicted of Forgery*

I want to emphasize the fact the ASL is not on trial, nor is the Prohibition law on trial, and no prejudice against prohibition, no sentiment in its favor, no feeling for or against the ASL or its activities and no prejudice against or sympathy for the defendant because of his position as the superintendent of the League, or because of his activities in the cause of temperance - none of these things are to influence you in the slightest degree on the consideration and determination of this case.¹¹⁰

Whether or not the jury was biased against Anderson, the League, or the Prohibition law cannot be known for certain. However, the guilty verdict assured the end of Anderson's role in the long-standing crusade against alcohol.

Anderson's career ended abruptly and anti-Prohibition forces began to slowly take back power from the dries. There was no clear evidence that Anderson's downfall was part of a wet plot looking to eliminate the head of the ASL in New York and smear the movement's image. However, the removal of Anderson as the front man of the Prohibition movement was of great advantage to the wet forces in the early years of the Prohibition Era. His failure in New York served as a warning to the ASL and the Protestant evangelical crusade against alcohol that blindly believed they could forcibly legislate morality. A few weeks after Anderson's trial (and before his incarceration) the ASL accepted Anderson's "resignation" as New York State Superintendent. Vice president of the ASL Board of Directors, Rev. William C. Spicer, a First Presbyterian Church pastor, refused to say whether the resignation was voluntary or not. He is quoted as saying that "it was an executive session. Anderson was not present, but he was in the building."¹¹¹ The religious reformers felt that they had to let Anderson go in order to save the long-term integrity of their religious cause.

¹¹⁰ Tompkins, *Anderson Convicted of Forgery*

¹¹¹ William C. Spicer, "ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE LETS ANDERSON GO; Accepts Resignation of State Superintendent Now Under Prison Sentence for Forgery. ACTED ON LAST TUESDAY Information Was to Have Been Given Out at End of Trial on Friday. DIRECTORS KEPT IT SECRET Vice President Spicer Refuses to Say Whether Resignation Was Voluntary or Not," *New York Times*, February 10, 1924. <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/02/10/archives/antisaloon-league-lets-anderson-go-accepts-resignation-of-state.html?searchResultPosition=1>

In February 1924, right before going to prison, Anderson wrote a few letters to members of the ASL, religious leaders, and other followers of the cause to thank them for their support despite the outcome of the trial. Anderson displayed mixed feelings about what he went through in New York for the cause. Anderson had accepted the challenge of New York City as the ultimate obstacle for Prohibition. He had great success, but also great failure in New York. He wrote, "It has been ten years of cruel punishment. No man ever ought to have to carry the load that I have had to carry. On the other hand, it has been ten years of glorious matchless opportunity. I am grateful to God that I have been spared this long and permitted to bring about so much of accomplishment."¹¹² Anderson showed no signs of regret and even relished his martyr-like position. He did feel betrayed by some in the ASL who may have doubted his innocence but proclaimed to be the better man as a result of the ordeal. "I have no bitterness in my heart. I regret some things. I have a little pity and some little contempt for some who have been so easily stampeded and fooled. I refuse to soil my soul by indulging in any hatred of the real traitors."¹¹³ Anderson told these men that his faith would get him through and keep him strong. He felt that he was right, and that time will expose the true nature of his conviction and imprisonment. "There is nothing for me to do except to hold on to my faith. I cannot be snuffed out by any such injustice as this. Someday people will comprehend the judicial and journalistic lynching of which I have been the victim and understand what was behind it."¹¹⁴ Unfortunately for Anderson, he would never see such redemption as he lost all his influence within the evangelical crusade.

¹¹² William H. Anderson to David J. Burrell, February 26, 1924, folder 7, box 1, page 18. William H. Anderson and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/ead/pdf/whanderson-0001-007.pdf>

¹¹³ Anderson, *David J. Burrell*, 18.

¹¹⁴ Anderson, *David J. Burrell*, 18.

On March 26, 1924 William H. Anderson was taken to Sing-Sing Prison in upstate New York. After he was fingerprinted and registered as prisoner No.75,745, Anderson began to serve out his sentence. The press described Anderson as grim, emotionally distraught and tense as he was processed for incarceration. As he stepped into the sheriff's office, "his chin was dropping, the normal flush of his cheeks was replaced by a pallor, his eyes wide and sad, his step was slow, and there was an air of martyrdom both in his garb and his manner. His dress was ministerial, a low-hanging frock coat replacing the plain business suit he had worn during this trial."¹¹⁵ He prepared a statement to the press in which he described himself as a soldier who is being persecuted because of his performance of a duty in behalf of all humanity. Anderson handed reporters typewritten copies of a statement in which he stated:

A soldier who volunteers to blow up the enemy's fortifications runs supreme risks. I blew up the liquor fortifications. To do this I took risks. I am a prisoner of a moral war in the hands of the enemy. Although God being my judge, I am innocent of this alleged crime. The spirit that has enabled me to fight the liquor traffic for twenty-four years, ten of them in New York, cannot be broken by any such incident in this uncompromising warfare against an unholy traffic.¹¹⁶

Within a few weeks, Anderson wrote a letter to pastor Reverend Dr. Charles R. Ross of the Central Methodist Church at Yonkers. This was the first time the public heard from Anderson since his imprisonment. Anderson told Ross to tell his congregation that he found solace in religion. He endured because of the similar sufferings Christ endured when he was being persecuted by the angry mobs against him. "As I was taken through many peering mobs the day I was brought here, there came in a flash that illuminated my soul. It was a comprehension of what Christ went through before he died to establish the basis for the faith that sustains me now. If that

¹¹⁵ Unknown Reporter, "ANDERSON IN PRISON, PROTESTS INNOCENCE; Submits Grimly to Fingerprinting, Then Is Taken to Sing Sing to Be No. 75,745," *New York Times*, March 26, 1924. <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/03/26/archives/anderson-in-prison-protests-innocence-submits-grimly-to.html?searchResultPosition=1>

¹¹⁶ Anderson, *Anderson in Prison, Protests Innocence*

understanding could come only through suffering, the punishment is not too great.”¹¹⁷ Anderson served nine months of his two-year term. He was never allowed to return to the Anti-Saloon League. The League continued to fight the growing wet forces throughout the rest of the 1920s but without him. Anderson was the first major casualty of the evangelical Protestant crusade against alcohol in the Prohibition Era. But he was not the last as Prohibition itself came to an end in 1933.

The people of New York also had mixed feelings about the trial and conviction of William H. Anderson. To some, he was a prohibition martyr; to others, he was a pompous public agitator who got what he deserved. Regardless of Anderson’s real intentions, the ASL suffered a humiliating defeat that signaled the beginning of their slow decline throughout the 1920s. The *New York Times* reported how, “Among the Broadway crowds dismissed from theaters and those that gathered in cabarets and restaurants there were few expressions of sympathy when the news spread that Anderson had been found guilty of forgery. Among the men there were smiles and expressions of satisfaction. One traffic patrolman said, ‘Bless the boys on that jury.’”¹¹⁸ Continuing to deny any involvement in Anderson’s downfall, Secretary Daniel L. Ryan of Tammany Hall was quoted as saying, “Of course there is nothing I should care to or would say about the matter at all. It is a matter in which the Democratic organization had no hand whatsoever. You may say that here is no statement, no comment, the Democratic organization has to make.”¹¹⁹ However, there were evangelical church leaders in New York who remained loyal to Anderson and the prohibition cause. Dr. Charles R. Ross reiterated his belief in

¹¹⁷ William H. Anderson, “ANDERSON GREETES CHURCH BY LETTER; His First Public Utterance Since Imprisonment Is Read at Yonkers. FINDS SOLACE IN RELIGION Says He Was Supported Amid Jeering Mob by Knowledge of What Christ Endured,” *New York Times*, April 14, 1924.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1924/04/14/archives/anderson-greets-church-by-letter-his-first-public-utterance-since.html?searchResultPosition=1>

¹¹⁸ Traffic Patrolman, *Anderson Convicted of Forgery*

¹¹⁹ Ryan, *Anderson Convicted of Forgery*

Anderson's integrity by claiming that, "I heard practically all the testimony. My faith in Mr. Anderson is absolutely unshaken. I am satisfied in my own mind that the verdict and the ruling of the court in the case will be reversed. This is just the beginning of a great prohibition fight in New York State."¹²⁰ Dr. Christian F. Reisner, pastor of the Chelsea Methodist Church, was quoted as saying, "I was in the courtroom during most of the trial and heard the evidence as I was subpoenaed. I am still convinced that while he might have been foolish he is not crooked or a grafter. He has given his life as a hard fighter against the saloon, and naturally he has made bitter enemies."¹²¹ Still, there were some prohibition sympathizers who felt that Anderson exceeded his mandate and allowed himself to be corrupted. Novelist Fannie Hurst said "Anderson has been a traitor to his cause. It seems unfortunate that at the crucial period following prohibition, when the whole movement seems to be hanging in the balance and found wanting, that this serious blow should have fallen on the ASL."¹²²

Conclusion

The Protestant evangelical crusade against alcohol that began in the early 1820s shortly after the Second Great Awakening evolved from a loose community of local temperance and abstinence societies into a nationwide campaign aimed at changing American culture. Throughout the nineteenth century, the movement's long transition from moderate views on alcohol to strict prohibition under the law led to the creation of a church movement, the Anti-Saloon League, which was directly responsible for the creation of the Eighteenth Amendment. The Prohibition Era of the 1920s was a moment in time created by this small group of radical reformers who wanted to re-shape American society in accordance with their own religious

¹²⁰ Ross, *Anderson Convicted of Forgery*

¹²¹ Reisner, *Anderson Convicted of Forgery*

¹²² Hurst, *Anderson Convicted of Forgery*

worldview. The Eighteenth Amendment was the result of the methodology used by these activists in their quest to destroy the “social evil” of alcohol. The ASL and their prized agent in New York, William Anderson, challenged the separation between church and state, exploited the cultural divisions of rural and urban America, and utilized single-issue pressure politics to force their spiritual values upon the rest of the country. However, these social crusaders failed to see the consequences of such a rigid and single-minded approach to the problem of alcohol. The social and political methods adopted by the League not only created an unenforceable law, it also helped to generate a vehement opposition that ultimately brought their movement to an end.

During the initial years of the Prohibition Era, opposition to the new law that arose from politicians, government officials, churches, social elites, and regular citizens, turned the fight over the alcohol issue into a fight about the religious crusaders themselves. The hostility toward William Anderson in New York was a reaction to both the problems created by the Prohibition law and the questionable methods that he used to advance his goals. The evangelical reformers fiercely reacted to growing criticisms against them by alleging that a vast conspiracy of “wet forces” in politics, media, and certain church congregations were trying to get rid of Anderson and nullify the Eighteenth Amendment. Whether or not such a widespread conspiracy actually existed during these first few years of Prohibition, the removal of Anderson as a front man of the movement paved the way for further advances against anti-alcohol laws as the years progressed. Anderson’s experience in New York was but the first sign of what would be the eventual collapse of the ASL and the decline of the evangelical crusade against alcohol.

As a result of their strict and unyielding approach to the alcohol problem, Anderson and the ASL were unable to expand their own agenda to address the consequences of life under Prohibition. The strategies employed by the League to pass the Eighteenth Amendment were not

sufficient to resolve the myriad of problems their law created, which included failure to maintain dry political power, mass resentment against the law, and harsh criticisms against their organization. The prevalent narratives on the Prohibition subject usually begin with the religious reformers who started the anti-alcohol movement but then tend to shift focus to the more sensational stories about crime, such as corruption, gangsters, and speakeasies. The failure of the Prohibition experiment is also a story of the rise and fall of an evangelical Protestant crusade. The interrogation of the experience of this particular movement is significant because it illustrates how a well-intentioned citizenry, concerned about a social and moral problem, could use their religion to drastically change American politics and culture, with or without the consent of those they intended to help.

Bibliography

Archival Material

Anderson, William H. and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, *Bulletin Number 16*, July 22, 1920, [Box 2, Folder 13], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/view.php?eadid=ICU.SPCL.WHANDERSON>

Anderson, William H. and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, *Letter to David J. Burrell*, December 27, 1922, [Box 1, Folder 5], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/view.php?eadid=ICU.SPCL.WHANDERSON>

Anderson, William H. and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, *Letter to David J. Burrell*, February 26, 1924, [Box 1, Folder 7], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/view.php?eadid=ICU.SPCL.WHANDERSON>

Anderson, William H. Anderson and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, *Letter to Pastors of New York State*, February 18, 1920, [Box 2, Folder 13], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/view.php?eadid=ICU.SPCL.WHANDERSON>

Anderson, William H. and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, *Letter to Thaddeus Sweet*, March 3, 1920, [Box 2, Folder 13], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/view.php?eadid=ICU.SPCL.WHANDERSON>

Anderson, William H. and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, *Letter to Warren G. Harding*, June 26, 1920, [Box 1, Folder 4], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/view.php?eadid=ICU.SPCL.WHANDERSON>

Anderson, William H. and the Anti-Saloon League Papers, *Letter to Wayne B. Wheeler*, September 1922, [Box 1, Folder 5], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/view.php?eadid=ICU.SPCL.WHANDERSON>

Newspapers

“A CRUSADE AGAINST LIQUOR; The Anti-Saloon League Opens Its Campaign in Binghamton,” *New York Times*, July 3, 1899, <https://www.nytimes.com/1899/07/03/archives/a-crusade-against-liquor-the-antisaloon-league-opens-its-campaign.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANDERSON ACCUSER BEFORE GRAND JURY; Former Dry League Aid Reported to Have Repeated Charges of Irregularities. DR. BURRELL TO DEFENSE Calls Second Presentation of Accusations Against Anti-Saloon Leader ‘Grim Farce,’” *New York Times*, July 12, 1923, <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/07/12/archives/anderson-accuser-before-grand-jury-former-dry-league-aid-reported.html?searchResultPosition=1>

Bibliography

“ANDERSON ATTACKS PRESS.; Hits New York Papers and Sees a Conspiracy Afoot,” *New York Times*, September 21, 1923, <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/09/21/archives/anderson-attacks-press-hits-new-york-papers-and-sees-a-conspiracy-a.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANDERSON CONVICTED OF FORGERY; VERDICT ON SECOND BALLOT; Jury Finds Anti-Saloon League Leader Guilty of False Entry in His Books,” *New York Times*, January 30, 1924, <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/01/30/archives/anderson-convicted-of-forgery-verdict-on-second-ballot-jury-finds.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANDERSON DENIES GRAFT CHARGE MADE BY HIS COLLECTOR; Anti-Saloon League Superintendent Is Questioned by Acting District Attorney,” *New York Times*, January 26, 1923, <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/01/26/archives/anderson-denies-graft-charge-made-by-his-collector-antisaloon.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANDERSON GREETES CHURCH BY LETTER; His First Public Utterance Since Imprisonment Is Read at Yonkers. FINDS SOLACE IN RELIGION Says He Was Supported Amid Jeering Mob by Knowledge of What Christ Endured,” *New York Times*, April 14, 1924, <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/04/14/archives/anderson-greets-church-by-letter-his-first-public-utterance-since.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANDERSON IN PRISON, PROTESTS INNOCENCE; Submits Grimly to Fingerprinting, Then Is Taken to Sing Sing to Be No. 75,745,” *New York Times*, March 26, 1924, <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/03/26/archives/anderson-in-prison-protests-innocence-submits-grimly-to.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANDERSON SCOLDS G.O.P.; Sees No Hope for Harding Unless Democrats Dodge Prohibition,” *New York Times*, June 17, 1920, <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/06/17/archives/anderson-scolds-gop-sees-no-hope-for-harding-unless-democrats-dodge.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANDERSON SILENT ON EVE OF TRIAL; Anti-Saloon League Superintendent Charged With Larceny, Extortion and Forgery. PANEL OF 100 TALESMEN Examination as to Their Fitness to Serve Expected to Be Unusually Searching,” *New York Times*, January 21, 1924, <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/01/21/archives/anderson-silent-on-eve-of-trial-antisaloon-league-superintendent.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANDERSON TALKS ON KU KLUX KLAN; Anti-Saloon League Superintendent Says Tammany Fears Its Influence,” *New York Times*, September 9, 1923, <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/09/09/archives/anderson-talks-on-ku-klux-klan-antisaloon-league-superintendent.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE INQUIRY DEMANDED; Tinkham Declares It Should Be Prosecuted for Violation of Corrupt Practices Act BY DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE Says Plea to House to Investigate Would Be Futile Because. It Is Dominated by the League. Says No Returns Were Filed. Congressmen Under Obligation,” *New York Times*, April 5, 1922,

Bibliography

<https://www.nytimes.com/1922/04/05/archives/antisaloon-league-inquiry-demanded-tinkham-declares-it-should-be.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE IS CALLED A WRECK; Gillett Says "Its Paid Employees Are Desperately Striving to Hold Their Jobs." HE REPLIES TO ANDERSON Calls Attack on Anti-Prohibition Movement a "Baseless, Unwarranted and Untrue Statement," *New York Times*, June 4, 1922, <https://www.nytimes.com/1922/06/04/archives/antisaloon-league-is-called-a-wreck-gillett-says-its-paid-employes.html?searchResultPosition=4>

“ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE LETS ANDERSON GO; Accepts Resignation of State Superintendent Now Under Prison Sentence for Forgery. ACTED ON LAST TUESDAY Information Was to Have Been Given Out at End of Trial on Friday. DIRECTORS KEPT IT SECRET Vice President Spicer Refuses to Say Whether Resignation Was Voluntary or Not,” *New York Times*, February 10, 1924, <https://www.nytimes.com/1924/02/10/archives/antisaloon-league-lets-anderson-go-accepts-resignation-of-state.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE UPHOLDS ANDERSON; Ratifies Acts, Despite the Known Views of Rockefellers on Commissions. PECORA HEARS SECRETARY Former Bookkeeper Appears on Her Own Account -- Denies Knowing of \$24,700 Fund. ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE UPHOLDS ANDERSON,” *New York Times*, January 31, 1923, <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/01/31/archives/antisaloon-league-upholds-anderson-ratifies-acts-despite-the-known.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“CHARGE CONSPIRACY TO WRECK DRY LAW; Anti-Saloon League Forces Declare This Movement Is "Gigantic and Vicious. “BLACKLIST ON CANDIDATES Will Fight Taggart and Representative Porter--Kramer Asks Moral Support,” *New York Times*, September 17, 1920, <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/09/17/archives/charge-conspiracy-to-wreck-dry-law-antisaloon-league-forces-declare.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“CLERGY TO FIGHT ANDERSON AT POLLS; Brooklyn Catholics to Oppose Any Candidate Endorsed by Anti-Saloon League. ALL PARTIES ARE WARNED Attacks on Church Likened to Sultan of Turkey's Demand for a Holy War. Not Concerned with Parties. Do Not Fear Disclosures,” *New York Times*, March 12, 1920, <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/03/12/archives/clergy-to-fight-anderson-at-polls-brooklyn-catholics-to-oppose-any.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“DEATH THREAT LETTER SENT TO ANDERSON; Anti-Saloon League Head Blames Certain Newspapers for Inciting Self-styled Ex-Service Men,” *New York Times*, March 29, 1922, <https://www.nytimes.com/1922/03/29/archives/death-threat-letter-sent-to-anderson-antisaloon-league-head-blames.html?searchResultPosition=10>

“DECLARES ANDERSON FORCED HIM TO SPLIT PART OF HIS 'DRY' PAY; Chief Accuser of Anti-Saloon League Official Then Admits Trying to Sell Exposure. DENIES HE TRIED BLACKMAIL Defense Links Witness With Brewers and Wet Organization at Forgery Trial. SAYS ANDERSON HAD HIM 'SPLIT' HIS PAY,” *New York Times*, January 23, 1924,

Bibliography

<https://www.nytimes.com/1924/01/23/archives/declares-anderson-forced-him-to-split-part-of-his-dry-pay-chief.html?searchResultPosition=1>

"DRY" CONVENTION CLOSES; Anti-Saloon League Holds, Meetings in 65 Washington Churches," *New York Times*, September 20, 1920,
<https://www.nytimes.com/1920/09/20/archives/dry-convention-closes-antisaloon-league-holds-meetings-in-65.html?searchResultPosition=1>

"DRY ISSUE TO THE FRONT; Governor Edwards Speaks for Those Who Would Force Prohibition Into Campaign Bluffing by Anti-Saloon League. Vote of the Soldiers. Both Sides Ready to Fight. Prohibition Prophets," *New York Times*, August 15, 1920,
<https://www.nytimes.com/1920/08/15/archives/dry-issue-to-the-front-governor-edwards-speaks-for-those-who-would.html?searchResultPosition=5>

"LEAGUE REAFFIRMS FAITH IN ANDERSON; Directors Call Indictment of Anti-Saloon Leader 'Monstrous Perversion of Justice.' DENY MONEY WAS STOLEN Troubles of State Superintendent Laid to Plot by the Liquor Interests," *New York Times*, July 25, 1923,
<https://www.nytimes.com/1923/07/25/archives/league-reaffirms-faith-in-anderson-directors-call-indictment-of.html?searchResultPosition=1>

"ORDER ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE INVESTIGATED; MANY REPUBLICANS SUPPORT MOTION FOR IT IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY, OPPOSING LEADER; VOTE STANDS 61 TO 52 Both Women Members Approve Motion for the Investigation. LIVELY DEBATE PRECEDES Adler Urges Reference to Ways and Means Committee, Which Cuvillier Strongly Opposes. SWEET TO SEEK ANNULMENT Speaker Holds Motion Was Irregularly Adopted by Less Than a Majority House," *New York Times*, March 2, 1920,
<https://www.nytimes.com/1920/03/02/archives/order-antisaloon-league-investigated-many-republicans-support.html?searchResultPosition=1>

"PASTOR WHO QUIT ANTI-SALOON BODY ASSAILS ITS WORK; Rev. W.H. Freeman Says Agents of League Were Money-Mad and Disgusted Him. TELLS FINANCIAL METHODS Consecration Paraphrased Into "Coin-secration" by Reference to Church Meetings. W.H. ANDERSON'S TACTICS "Meat Axe" Activities of leader Described--Says Dictation of Country Is Sought. Feared Good Jobs Were Over. Told How to Get Money. Seven Minutes of Inflammation. Refused to Degrade Office. Kept Methods Secret. Not Agency of Churches. Says Dictatorship Is Sought. ANDERSON ANSWER CHARGE. Says League Will Spend About \$300,000 This Year. EXPECTS MANY MINISTERS. Cuvillier Says at Least Dozen Will Appear Against League. ANDERSON SENDS CHALLENGE. Would Debate with Governor on Letter's Stand on Prohibition," *New York Times*, March 5, 1920,
<https://www.nytimes.com/1920/03/05/archives/pastor-who-quit-antisaloon-body-assails-its-work-revwh-freeman-says.html?searchResultPosition=2>

"PECORA CHALLENGES ANDERSON IMMUNITY; Says \$24,700 Claim Against; Anti-Saloon League 'Is Seriously Questioned,'" *New York Times*, February 9, 1923,
<https://www.nytimes.com/1923/02/09/archives/pecora-challenges-anderson-immunity-says-24700-claim-against.html?searchResultPosition=1>

Bibliography

“PLANS BILLS TO AID DRY LAW IN TOWNS; Anti-Saloon League to Clear the Way for Enforcement Ordinances. HAS LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM If It Fails to Pass It Will Be Made an Issue in Fall Campaign. TO FIGHT IN EVERY VILLAGE Anderson Criticizes Appointment of Prohibition Agents Through Influence of Politicians,” *New York Times*, December 27, 1921, <https://www.nytimes.com/1921/12/27/archives/plans-bills-to-aid-dry-law-in-towns-antisaloon-league-to-clear-the.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“Plans for a ‘Dry’ War Here,” *New York Times*, December 29, 1913, <https://www.nytimes.com/1913/12/29/archives/plans-for-a-dry-war-here-wh-anderson-tells-the-times-what.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“SAYS DRY FORCES PLAN NEW MERGER; Leader of Anti-Prohibition Cause Says It Is Result of Anti-Saloon League's Waning Influence,” *New York Times*, March 23, 1923, <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/03/23/archives/says-dry-forces-plan-new-merger-leader-of-antiprohibition-cause.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“SENATORS ON VERGE OF FIGHT IN DEBATE; Thompson Retracts "Dare" as Walker Advances in Dispute Over Anderson. CHAMBER IN AN UPROAR Anti-Saloon League Superintendent Acridly Assailed--Gillett to Call Up Beer Bill,” *New York Times*, April 1, 1920, <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/04/01/archives/senators-on-verge-of-fight-in-debate-thompson-retracts-dare-as.html?searchResultPosition=1>

“SILENCE ANDERSON AT ALBANY HEARING; Catcalls and Jeers Reinforce McCue's Objections to Letting "Dry" Leader Speak. CALLED ASSEMBLY INSULTER Clergymen and Women Oppose "Wet" Bills--Gompers Champions Liberal Dry Laws,” *New York Times*, March 31, 1920, <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/03/31/archives/silence-anderson-at-albany-hearing-catcalls-and-jeers-reinforce.html?searchResultPosition=3>

“TWENTY YEARS' JOB TO DRY UP NEW YORK; Anti-Saloon League Head Says Fight Will Be Won After the First Two Years. CONVERTS FROM BENEFITS Magistrate Praises Fearless Policeman Who Risked Life Sampling Trade Liquors,” *New York Times*, May 5, 1922, <https://www.nytimes.com/1921/05/02/archives/twenty-years-job-to-dry-up-new-york-antisaloon-league-head-says.html?searchResultPosition=2>

“ULTIMATUM BY ANDERSON; Says Anti-Saloon League Will Fight Miller and Wadsworth,” *New York Times*, September. 7, 1920, <https://www.nytimes.com/1920/09/07/archives/ultimatum-by-anderson-says-antisaloon-league-will-fight-miller-and.html?searchResultPosition=4>

“WILL RENEW EFFORT TO INDICT ANDERSON; Banton to Submit Anti-Saloon League Case to Grand Jury Again on Monday. NEW WITNESSES, HE SAYS Charges of Misuse of Funds, Which Failed to Cause Indictment In January, Are Repeated,” *New York Times*, July 3, 1923, <https://www.nytimes.com/1923/07/03/archives/will-renew-effort-to-indict-anderson-banton-to-submit-antisaloon.html?searchResultPosition=1>

Primary Sources

Bibliography

Anderson, William H. *The Church in Action Against the Saloon*. Westerville: The American Issue Publishing Co., 1906.

Secondary Sources

Hamm, Richard F. *Shaping the Eighteenth Amendment: Temperance Reform, Legal Culture, and the Polity, 1880-1920*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995.

Kerr, Austin K. *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.

Lerner, Michael A. *Dry Manhattan, Prohibition in New York City*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.

McGirr, Lisa. *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2015.

Okrent, Daniel. *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*. New York: Simon & Schuster Inc., 2010.

Thorton, Mark. "No. 157: Alcohol Prohibition Was a Failure." *Cato Institute Policy Analysis* (July 1991): 1. <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/32232611/alcohol-prohibition-was-a-failure-cato-institute>