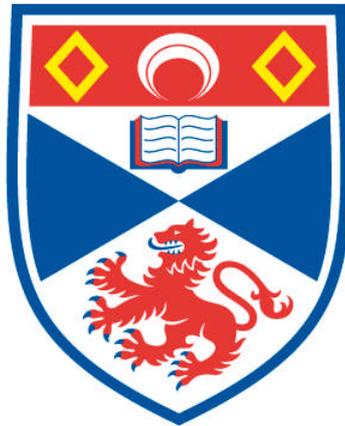


**PANIC OVER THE PUB :  
DRINK AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR**

**Robert R. G. Duncan**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
University of St Andrews**



**2008**

**Full metadata for this item is available in  
Research@StAndrews:FullText  
at:**

**<http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/>**

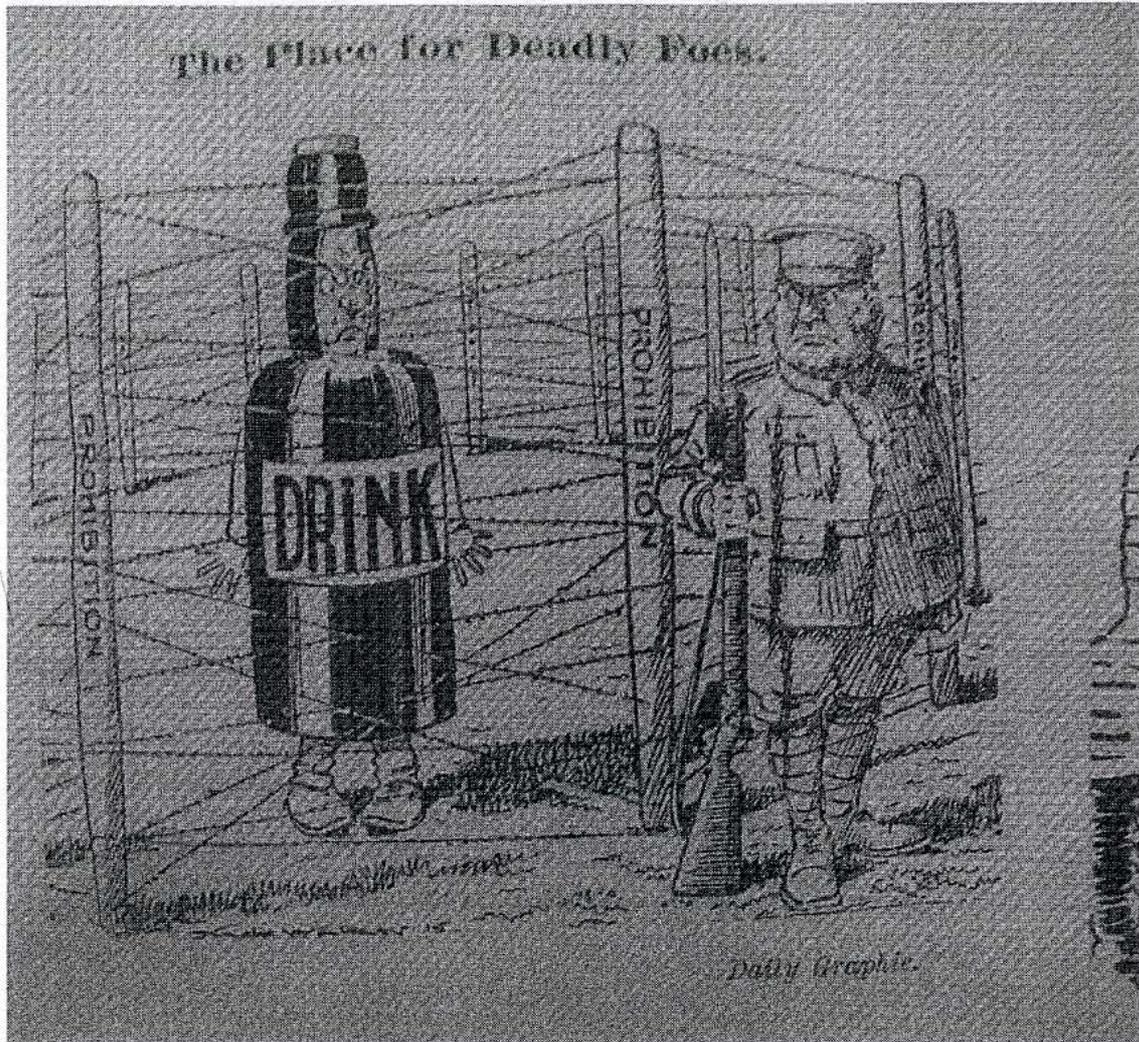
**Please use this identifier to cite or link to this item:**

**<http://hdl.handle.net/10023/558>**

**This item is protected by original copyright**

**This item is licensed under a  
Creative Commons License**

# Panic Over The Pub: Drink and the First World War



This thesis is submitted in requirement for the degree of Ph. D. at the University  
of St Andrews

27 February 2008

Robert R.G. Duncan

## Declarations

I, Robert Duncan, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 80,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

Date 27 February 2008

Signature of Candidate

I was admitted as a research student in September 2004 and as a candidate for the degree of Ph.D. in September 2004; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2004 and 2008.

Date 27 February 2008

Signature of Candidate

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Date 27 February 2008

Signature of Supervisor

In submitting this thesis to the University of St Andrews I understand that I am giving permission for it to be made available for use in accordance with the regulations of the University Library for the time being in force, subject to any copyright vested in the work not being affected thereby. I also understand that the title and abstract will be published and that a copy of the work may be made and supplied to any bona fide library or research worker, that my thesis will be electronically accessible for personal or research use, and that the library has the right to migrate my thesis into new electronic forms as required to ensure continued access to the thesis. I have obtained any third party copyright permissions that may be required in order to allow such access and migration.

Date 27 February 2008

Signature of Candidate

## Contents

<b>List of Illustrations</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter One: A Tale of Temperance and Drink 1870-1914</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Chapter Two: Vodka, Absinthe and Drunkenness on Britain's Streets in 1914: A Tale of Fear and Exaggeration?</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Chapter Three: Best Laid Plans? Lloyd George and the Drink Question</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Chapter Four: Restrictive or Constructive? The Early Stages of the Central Control Board</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>Chapter Five: The Carlisle Experiment: Lord D'Abernon's 'Model Farm'</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Chapter Six: 'Helping our weaker sisters to go straight' – Women and Drink during the War</b>	<b>201</b>
<b>Chapter Seven: Reforming the Working Man</b>	<b>218</b>
<b>Chapter Eight: State Purchase and the Waning of the Central Control Board</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>Conclusion: The End of the Central Control Board</b>	<b>270</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>295</b>

## Illustrations

Title page illustration: 'The Place for Deadly Foes', File of Temperance Cartoons, Alliance House Archive.

Figure 1, p. 3: Photograph of Reverend Henry Carter, Alliance House Archive.

Figure 2, p. 38: Punch Cartoon, 27 June 1900.

Figure 3, p. 67: United Kingdom Alliance advertisement, Alliance House Archive.

Figure 4, p. 72: Prohibition of Vodka cartoon, File of Temperance Cartoons, Alliance House Archive.

Figure 5, p. 77: 'Vodka and Absinthe Interned', The Brewers' Gazette 29 April 1915.

Figure 6, p. 77: 'On Account of the War', File of Temperance Cartoons, Alliance House Archive.

Figure 7, p. 79: Peter Walker Advert 'Patriotism Begins at Home', The Daily Mail 2 October 1915.

Figure 8, p. 80: 'Drunken Germans', The Daily Mirror and The Daily Express 28 September 1914.

Figure 9, p. 83: Champagne Bottles at the Chateau, The Sphere 10 October 1914.

Figure 10, p. 88: 'Britain Expects', St Andrews Citizen 13 March 1915.

Figure 11, p. 92: 'Every Shot Tells', The Brewers' Gazette 18 March 1915.

Figure 12, p. 93: 'The Bogue Patriot', File of Temperance Cartoons, Alliance House Archive.

Figure 13, p. 111: 'Total Prohibition and Mr Lloyd George's Letter Bag', Manchester Guardian 12 April 1915.

Figure 14, p. 112: 'Drink: The Subject that Interests Everybody', The Daily Mirror 12 April 1915.

Figure 15, p. 116: 'When water is our only drink', The Daily Mirror 8 April 1915.

Figure 16, p. 134: Photograph of Lord D'Abernon, HO 190/876, Dinner to Lord D'Abernon HM Ambassador to Germany: Report of the Speeches, 4 October 1920.

Figure 17, p. 157: Photograph of British and French soldier sharing a drink, Imperial War Museum Photograph Archive, A2742.

Figure 18, p. 158: 'The Cup that Cheers', Imperial War Museum Documents Library, Miscellaneous 213, Item 3099.

Figure 19, p. 159: 'One Thing Our Soldiers Will Learn In France', The Daily Mirror 1 October 1914.

Figure 20, p. 164: Gretna Munitions Factory, Imperial War Museum Photograph Archive, A30558.

Figure 21, p. 173: Offices of the Central Control Board in Carlisle, Tullie House - Carlisle, State Management Pictures.

Figure 22, p. 179: The Gretna Tavern in 1917, The Carlisle Journal 14 July 1916.

Figure 23, p. 180: The Gretna Tavern in 2006, Personal Photograph.

Figure 24, p. 181: The restaurant in the Gretna Tavern, Tullie House – Carlisle, State Management Pictures.

Figure 25, p. 182: Royal Visit to the Gretna Tavern, The Carlisle Journal 14 July 1916.

Figure 26, p. 185: Photograph of Harry Redfern, Tullie House – Carlisle, State Management Pictures.

Figure 27, p. 187: Carlisle Pub Interior, Tullie House – Carlisle, State Management Pictures.

Figure 28, p. 193: Cartoons from Wilson Stuart's Pamphlet, Wilson Stuart, The Carlisle and Annan Experiment in State Purchase and Liquor Nationalisation by the CCB.

Figure 29, p. 214: Young female workers bottling beer, Imperial War Museum Photograph Archive, A28330.

Figure 30, p. 227: New Kitchens, Feeding the Munition Worker.

Figure 31, p. 228: Lunchtime Service, Feeding the Munition Worker.

Figure 32, p. 237: Strength of Britain Newspaper Advert, Alliance House Archive.

Figure 33, p. 242: 'Temperance via Alternative means', Imperial War Museum Photograph Archive, HO108.

Figure 34, p. 245: 'Drink Leading Famine In', Alliance News September 1917.

Figure 35, p. 246: 'We risk our lives to bring you food', Imperial War Museum Photograph Archive, A80143.

Figure 36, p. 250: 'All Hands to the Plough', The Daily Express 19 January 1917.

Figure 37, p. 282: 'Club Rules', The Sunday Express 5 December 1920.

## **Acknowledgements**

First of all, I must thank my supervisor, Professor Jerry DeGroot, who has been an invaluable source of inspiration and advice from the start of my postgraduate career. He has helped me throughout these last four years whenever needed. He has read and commented on several drafts and I have enjoyed working with him immensely. I must also acknowledge several members of the University of St Andrews History Department, notably Dr Frank Muller, Dr James Nott and Dr Stephen Tyre. My fellow postgraduates Dr Peter Kushner, Claire Eldridge and David Meeres have become valued friends and I thank them for some light-hearted relief at difficult times. Thanks also to Professor David Gutzke and Dr John Greenaway for some early encouragement.

The Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, The Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys and the University of St Andrews kindly provided valuable financial assistance and accommodation without which this thesis would not have been possible.

Many thanks to the archivists of the National Archives, the House of Commons Archives, the British Library, Alliance House, Carlisle Record Office, Tullie House, Collindale Newspaper Library, Reading University, Modern Records Centre, Imperial War Museum and St Andrews University Library, particularly the Inter Library Loan staff.

Outside of University life I must thank all my friends and colleagues, especially at Luvians, who have accompanied me on this long road and helped me greatly without probably realising. I am also grateful to Lisa, Emily, Peter, and Bex for putting up with the occasional Ph.D. related rant and being great friends and flatmates. Special thanks must go to Caroline.

My partner Sarah has been especially understanding and I thank her for her patience and love.

My greatest thanks must be reserved for my parents, Geoff and Kathleen. I have always been able to count on their love, encouragement and guidance. It is of great regret that my mum never got to see the finished product but I know that she has watched over me all the way. I dedicate this thesis to them both.

## **Introduction**

A pint of beer in the First World War was a controversial thirst quencher. One contemporary noted ‘when the history of the present great and terrible war comes to be written, it will be found that alcohol has had a not inconspicuous part, both actively and passively, in its progress and final issue.’<sup>1</sup> Attacked by temperance critics, whilst being the livelihood of those involved in the trade, drink was the subject of much acrimonious debate throughout the tumultuous years of 1914-1918. Lloyd George wrote in his war memoirs that ‘during the first five months of the war drink became a serious element in the struggle to avert defeat . . . on the home front alcoholic indulgence shared with professional rigidity the dishonour of being our most dangerous foe’.<sup>2</sup> The war politicised the issue of drink and drinking, polarising society. For some a liking for beer became symbolic of the nation’s drift to defeat whilst to others it remained one of life’s pleasures, a quiet respite from the strains of war at home.

The drink controversy resulted in the formation of the Central Control Board (CCB): a government organisation whose remit was to oversee a radical overhaul of drink provision throughout Britain and ensure that national efficiency was not threatened by the continued popularity of the pint or whisky chaser. This was the first time a government organisation had been founded with this explicit reform agenda. Every aspect of drinking culture came under scrutiny, from pub layout, to the strength of drinks sold within hostelry nationwide.

The ‘crisis’ over drink reveals much about British society during the war, whilst simultaneously shedding light on the political and social repercussions of drinking alcohol. During the Second World War the drink issue was similarly

---

<sup>1</sup> Sir James Crichton Browne in Rev. Mathias Lansdown, Our Allies, Ourselves and the Drink Problem (London, 1915), p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> David Lloyd George, War Memoirs: Volume One (London, 1933), p. 323.

controversial. In 1939 John Atkins urged people to ‘recall the remarkable experiments and discoveries which were made in the war of 1914-1918 by the Central Control Board’ whose principles ‘became the basis of our present licensing reform in the Licensing Act of 1921’.<sup>3</sup> Atkins speculated that ‘a general knowledge paper would probably reveal hardly anyone, apart from politicians and social workers, who could say accurately what the Board did’.<sup>4</sup> This dissertation intends to broaden the general understanding of the actions of the Board and examine the plethora of varied concerns and events that constituted the drink problem during the First World War.

The control of drink during the First World War has already been subject to some scholarly inquiry. Three books were written on the management of drink during the war and in its immediate aftermath.<sup>5</sup> Each share fundamental similarities in argument and the type of evidence used to substantiate claims. They are united by a ‘top down’ approach which emphasised the role of government agencies, notably the CCB, in reducing drinking to the detriment of other societal factors. The books are guileless in their analysis of the nature and extent of the ‘drink problem’ and are all written without the benefit of private records and correspondence from the period. Furthermore, these books are each idiosyncratic in their origins.

Reverend Henry Carter in The Control of the Drink Trade: A Contribution to National Efficiency 1915-1917, published in mid-1918, argued that action was essential as drink impaired industrial efficiency leading to a loss of life abroad.<sup>6</sup> He suggested that:

---

<sup>3</sup> John Atkins, Drink in the Last War: A Study in Licensing Reform (London, 1939), p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade: A Contribution to National Efficiency 1915-1917 (London, 1918), Thomas Nixon Carver, Government Control of the Liquor Business in Great Britain and the United States (New York, 1919), Arthur Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control (London, 1923).

<sup>6</sup> Henry Carter was Temperance Secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion. He was also Chair of the Executive Committee of the Temperance Council of the Christian Churches. He was a teetotaler and not a convinced total prohibitionist.

Indulgence in liquor directly caused broken time and wastage of the national resources for work and war . . . it acted with and accentuated, other causes of lessened industrial output, such as physical exhaustion; a man, for instance, could not give his best in work if his free hours were spent in close and crowded liquor bars, or if his home were wrecked by the drinking habits of an intemperate wife . . . because of the interdependence of the processes of modern industry the intemperate habits of a minority might, and not infrequently did, delay a much larger body of workers.<sup>7</sup>

Carter felt that the government's actions concerning drink were of benefit and represented 'a great experiment which has been efficacious, in a notable degree, in repressing intemperance, advancing efficiency and bettering the social lot'.<sup>8</sup>



**Figure 1: Reverend Henry Carter**

According to Carter, the actions of the state, and in particular the Central Control Board, brought about ameliorated social conditions, principally the reduction of intemperance. It is unsurprising that he held such a viewpoint, given he was a member of the CCB and an active temperance campaigner. His positive and self

---

<sup>7</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 272.

laudatory appraisal of the CCB's performance was justified by his view that the state 'in its modern role of physician can – if it will – restore and keep in health the body politic'.<sup>9</sup> Carter's temperance convictions call into question the fairness and rationality of his assessment, especially since members of the Board actually co-wrote and edited the book. Despite these deficiencies, his account offers much valuable factual information, much of which will be discussed later.

Carter's acclamations concerning the success of the CCB were moderate in comparison to the ecstatic proclamations of Lord D'Abernon, who wrote the Preface to Carter's book. He had been Chairman of the Central Control Board and hoped to continue his programme of reform after the war. To a degree Carter's book can be interpreted as a promotional publication aimed towards this end. D'Abernon believed that action was justified to improve national efficiency:

Drink control is admittedly a problem of vital importance to our industrial future and to our national efficiency. But it is more than that. Throughout the world Drink Control is recognised as one of the most arduous questions which have hitherto baffled statesmanship. This has been notoriously so in Great Britain, where up to 1914, despite great enthusiasm and sincerity of purpose on the part of reformers, aided by the support of able statesmen, progress was precarious and disappointing . . . a return to pre-war conditions of Licensing and Drink Control cannot be contemplated with equanimity. It would certainly mean an increase of drunkenness, involving the sacrifice of many lives, the ruin of many homes, and a reversion of conditions conducive to crime and ill health.<sup>10</sup>

D'Abernon believed that from the 'irredeemable' pre-war conditions, the actions of the CCB had facilitated a fundamental reversal of fortune in the battle against drink. He proposed that 'the measures taken have been followed by a progressive decline of alcoholic excess so rapid that it appears difficult to account for it on any other hypotheses than that it is in large part the result of the regulations applied'.<sup>11</sup> As with Carter, it is difficult to distinguish the true value of D'Abernon's brief introduction as

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> Lord D'Abernon, Preface to The Control of the Drink Trade by H. Carter, p. vii.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. vi.

he too was, in effect, attempting to validate the continuation of the Board's legacy and establish his own particular place in history. Autobiographical writing aimed at keeping oneself in a job cannot be considered an objective historical source. However, this does not wholly denigrate the undoubted historical value of his work, in particular his review of the legislative changes introduced by the Board and their consequent effect. D'Abernon's introduction indicates his perception of the drink problem and the actions he believed were necessary to resolve the issue.

Less tainted by association, and by participation in government agencies, is the work of Thomas Nixon Carver, who produced a comparative piece concerning Government Control of the Liquor Business in Great Britain and the United States during the First World War.<sup>12</sup> It was a preliminary economic study of the war, produced in 1919. Carver's contention that efficiency and prevention of waste were the prime motivations behind the implementation of legislation concurs with both Carter and D'Abernon. He argues, with perverse simplicity, that:

In the midst of all the controversies over the question, and of all the uncertainties with which it is surrounded, two facts are at least certain and beyond controversy. One is that starch and sugar are used in the production of alcohol. The other is that large numbers of people get drunk on alcohol.<sup>13</sup>

After establishing these eternal truths, he identifies the 'three conspicuous forms of waste' that drinking caused:

First, the food materials used up in the production of alcoholic liquor; second, the prosperity and the man power used in dispensing the liquor to the drinking public after it is produced, and third, the impaired efficiency of those guilty of over indulgence.<sup>14</sup>

The drive for efficiency was necessary given the circumstances of war, as Carver recounted:

---

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Nixon Carver, Government Control of the Liquor Business in Great Britain and the United States.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. p. 22.

If, in facing what might have been their last fight, they had not taken active measures to conserve every resource which might aid in the winning of the war, and to prevent every form of waste which might decrease their fighting power, they would not have shown that capacity for self discipline upon which, alone, the salvation of democracy depends.<sup>15</sup>

Carver also discussed public opinion, in all its guises, far more than Carter or D'Abernon, contending that 'Public opinion (concerning alcoholic liquor), as expressed through its constituent organs, the newspapers, seems to have been very much divided . . . the only thing which seemed clear was that the government must do something about it'.<sup>16</sup> His discussion of 'public opinion' is somewhat limited, though, as he used only The Times newspaper in his analysis.

Carver's book is very useful. It differs from Carter's in that it informs the historian of an outsider's viewpoint of the government's actions. The bibliography of his book is a veritable goldmine of pamphlets and articles produced on the issue during the war. Many of them are highly propagandistic and unscientific in their approach to the issue, but nevertheless highlight the controversies and misperceptions relevant to the problem. His utilisation of statistics and hard evidence benefits the modern investigator immeasurably, as does his focussed review of the issue throughout the war.

Overall, a consensus emerges from contemporary commentators that a desire for improved national efficiency precipitated new drink legislation. This viewpoint was supported by the final contemporary review of the drink issue, Arthur Shadwell's Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control, published in 1923. Shadwell was an author, lecturer and avid social reformer. He argued that:

The war searched out every weak spot in national character and conduct as nothing had ever done before . . . this habit of excess was so plainly revealed

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. 17.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 63.

as a weak spot that extraordinary measures for dealing with it were adopted with general approval and acquiesced in by the community at large.<sup>17</sup>

He believed that ‘the need and effectiveness of control were convincingly shown and one of the catchwords of the day was “trust the people” but the truth was that there were too many people who could not be trusted.’<sup>18</sup> Like Lord D’Abernon, he believed that the applied regulations were responsible for the reduction in consumption since elements of society, particularly the lower orders, were incapable of exerting control over their desire for drink. The assumed impact of duty and Licensing Laws play a prominent part in this interpretation.

The voluminous records of the Central Control Board provide the greatest scope for new historical investigation. These records, held at the national archives in Kew, consist of some 250 boxes of material dealing with the drink issue in all its manifestations. The documents touch upon every aspect of the drink debate and their historical value is prodigious as they provide a window on attitudes and sources distinctly different from the more partisan viewpoints of both the various temperance bodies and the trade, even though these sources remain of significant historical interest. In particular, the trade archives provide insight into the relative patriotism of the industry during wartime and the manner in which cooperation, rather than hostility, greeted many of the Board’s actions. This divergence in opinion between the CCB, the trade and temperance movements provides an interesting insight into the practicalities and difficulties of solving the drink problem.

The Board’s archives have been examined previously, though not comprehensively, on three occasions. Michael Rose uses them in an article arguing that the Board provides a demonstration of ‘how control of an important and sensitive

---

<sup>17</sup> A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922, p. 148.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3.

area of social life in wartime was carried out in a positive, purposeful, and generally acceptable fashion.<sup>19</sup> He highlights the positive social reforms implemented by the Board and assesses their relative success. While he provides a valuable exposition of this aspect of the Board's success, the article is necessarily limited in scope.<sup>20</sup> This too could be said of Dr John Greenaway's scholarly examination of Drink and British Politics. His book, which will be considered in detail later, is a broad review of the issue since 1830, culminating in an assessment of the impact of more modern discourses on drink. Due to the nature of his work he only discussed certain aspects of the Board's policy, and in his introduction lamented the lack of historical research done on drink in the First World War.<sup>21</sup> Much more recently David Gutzke in his book Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England 1896-1960, an ambitious review of the 'progressive' nature of pub reformers, has highlighted the reforms undertaken by the Board in Carlisle during the war.<sup>22</sup> His book chronicles the development of a transatlantic progressive movement which he contends affected pub reform in Britain. His account illustrates how many reform schemes had a longer-term history than has previously been appreciated.

More generally, Brian Harrison, in his much-lauded book Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872, considered the general impact of temperance on British society and the general role of alcohol in Victorian life.<sup>23</sup> The book brought attention to the multi-faceted approach to sources that could be utilised for this purpose. His account ends in the early 1900s but has shaped the

---

<sup>19</sup> Michael E. Rose, 'The Success of Social Reform? The Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) 1915-1921' in Foot, M.R.D, (ed.), War and Society (London, 1973), p. 84.

<sup>20</sup> Rose himself admitted that the review was based on a 'fairly cursory survey' of the CCB's records which 'deserve more detailed investigation and analysis.' Ibid. p. 300.

<sup>21</sup> John Greenaway, Drink and British Politics since 1830: A Study in Policy Making (Basingstoke, 2003), p.3.

<sup>22</sup> D. Gutzke, Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England 1896-1960 (Dekalb, 2006).

<sup>23</sup> Brian Harrison, Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872 (London, 1971).

nature of drink investigation and the inherent techniques required of historians of alcohol since its publication. Apart from the obvious government records, Harrison utilised trade records, temperance publications and association accounts, newspapers, criminal and judicial records, personal recollections and cultural productions to show the intimate relationship of drink to society. Harrison's approach informs the analysis this thesis undertakes.

A discussion of social reform undertaken by the CCB will feature prominently in this thesis and it is my intention to maximise the potential of the Board's records and root the bulk of this dissertation in new sources. Material such as 'working class' newspapers, temperance and trade journals, trade records, trade defence association meetings, journals, personal recollections, brewery records, poetry and music hall lyrics, which have so far proved elusive to historical investigation with regard to this subject, will be utilised for the first time. This thesis will consider the reaction of British society towards the Board and its work and assess how the CCB managed its relations with both trade and temperance groups. Notable problems, such as the relationship of women to alcohol and the perceived impact on the familial structure, together with arguments over the use of foodstuffs in the production of alcohol, will be investigated in detail. Other records, such as the voluminous holdings of the Brewers' Society, held at the Modern Records Centre at Warwick University, and the local records of state run areas, such as Carlisle, have also divulged much of interest. Paradoxically the mere absence of sources at certain times can tell the historian a great deal about the nature of the drink debate. For example, the lack of interest in the question in 1918 in comparison to the earlier years of the war suggests that the problem had been deemed to have been dealt with both by political commentators and

by the population at large, or that the issue had at least become less newsworthy and elicited less hysteria.

This thesis is unique as it is the first academic dissertation to consider the drink question and the First World War as its primary focus. To be sure, much work has been undertaken on various subsections of the overall debate and these have informed this study. John Greenaway has covered the high politics aspect of the drink question briefly, but admirably, in his chapter on drink and the First World War.<sup>24</sup> He deals with some of the reasons why drink became an issue of political controversy during the war, the work of the Central Control Board and the issue of state purchase of the liquor industry. But in his work there is, necessarily due to the scope of his book, a lack of interaction with broader cultural attitudes and practices of the period.

In a review of his work, Matthew Hilton comments:

Politicians do not operate in a vacuum, as Greenaway would agree, but just how wide should we understand the social, political, cultural, economic and intellectual space within which they operate to be? Greenaway admits the influence of war, Europe, science and social and cultural changes such as the decline of nonconformity and the greater participation of women in the leisure industry, but these are treated as externalities rather than intrinsic means to understanding changing high political beliefs and reform agendas.<sup>25</sup>

This dissertation attempts to place the debates and decisions that occurred during the war into the context of the social world in which they were taken. Most importantly, how did class presuppositions affect the formation of drink policy? As G.B. Wilson, a contemporary member of the United Kingdom Alliance (UKA)<sup>26</sup>, a prohibitionist temperance group, and later historian on the subject, commented, ‘the drink problem is one of great complexity in which the investigator who relies solely on statistical

---

<sup>24</sup> See J. Greenaway, *Drink and British Politics*, pp. 91-113.

<sup>25</sup> Matthew Hilton, review of *Drink and British Politics since 1830: A Study in Policy Making*, by John Greenaway, *Institute of Historical Research*, January 2004. [www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/hiltonM2.html](http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/hiltonM2.html).

<sup>26</sup> The United Kingdom Alliance was a prohibitionist organisation. Its original ‘Declaration of Principles’ stated that ‘the traffic in intoxicating liquor is inimical to the true interests of individuals and destructive of the order and welfare of society and ought therefore to be prohibited.’

evidence and ignores the human factor may find himself committed to conclusions which are contrary to common experience.<sup>27</sup> It is of critical importance to know how drink was perceived, or as Hilton suggests, to recognise ‘the ideologies of drinking practices’, so that a greater understanding of the social world in which political decisions were taken is garnered.<sup>28</sup> This study will explore in detail the relationship between the two explanatory models of the social linkage between elites and drinkers.

Central to a discussion of this relationship is the aforementioned notion of ‘moral panic’. This is a sociological notion which concerns societal fear of a threat which far outweighs the true extent of that danger. It is best summarised by the leading theorist of this concept, Stanley Cohen, who, in his book concerning Teddy Boys and Mods entitled Folk Devils and Moral Panics,<sup>29</sup> argued:

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylised and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right thinking people, socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible. Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight. Sometimes the panic passes over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory, at other times it has more serious and long lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way society conceives itself.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> G.B. Wilson, Alcohol and the Nation: A Contribution to the Study of the Liquor Problem in the United Kingdom from 1800 to 1935 (London, 1940), p. xi.

<sup>28</sup> M. Hilton, review of Drink and British Politics by John Greenaway, p. 9. Greenaway refutes Hilton’s criticism: ‘implicit in his review is the assumption that they (moral frameworks and cultural attitudes to the policy process) impact clearly upon political reforms and policy making and influence the beliefs of decision makers. In my study I aim to show how such factors are indeed significant but also that they were continually mediated, in complicated ways, by political elites, both bureaucratic and party political. Institute of Historical Research, January 2004  
[www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/greenawayJ.html](http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/greenawayJ.html).

<sup>29</sup> Stanley Cohen, Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers (St Albans, 1973).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* p. 9.

This dissertation argues that the drink issue during the First World War exhibited clear traits of a societal moral panic, in which the perception and extent of the problem was vastly over exaggerated. Drink was politicised to previously unimagined levels of controversy. It cannot be denied that there were issues of concern to the government that required its intervention, for example, the issue of industrial drinking in relation to the quest for national efficiency, but major misconceptions, or conscious exaggerations, of the true extent and nature of the problem severely coloured the issue from the outset. Opinion makers and arbiters viewed the problem through preconceived filters of interpretation as opposed to undertaking a rational appraisal of the true situation.

The old historiographical discourse on the drink issue, as illustrated by Carter, Carver and Shadwell, proposes that policies originated from persistent governmental anxiety concerning the debilitating effects of alcohol on the population. This shared interpretation is a classic ‘top down’ or ‘social control’ appraisal of the potentiality of governmental policy. This explanatory model, as Jack Blocker, a leading historian of drink, has suggested:

Tends to portray mass drinking behaviour as a product of more or less deliberate action by an elite or elites. Within this framework, political elites (government officials, for example), economic elites (liquor manufacturers or other businessmen with an interest in social control), or social elites (aristocratic trend setters, for example) define the conditions under which everyday drinking takes place. Ordinary drinkers exercise the choices left to them only within the constraints – on type of beverage or container, timing or site of drinking, or amount consumed – thus imposed. Alternatively, their choices are channelled or moulded by advertising or by advice from above.<sup>31</sup>

This model neglects to mention those upon whom the regulations were enforced and their complicit role in the success of such policies. The proactive concerns of the people are lost in an interpretation which overlooks the social world in which these

---

<sup>31</sup> Jack S. Blocker Jr, ‘Introduction’, Histoire Sociale/Social History Volume 27, Number 54, November 1994, p. 229.

policies operated. This alternative can be called the cultural, bottom up or demand model whereby the power of group norms in determining individual drinking behaviour is emphasised, whether the group is defined by gender, nationality, social class, ethnicity or race.<sup>32</sup>

A more fluid interpretation is also possible: it allows for the coexistence, or at least a malleable flux, of both models. The social control paradigm ignores the manner in which legislation was viewed and implemented at the everyday level whereas the bottom up model denigrates the importance of policy in establishing the legal frameworks which establish systems of liquor control, or the effect of law in moulding, implicitly or explicitly, group norms. For example, it is doubtful whether a policy that had absolutely no support could be introduced in peacetime, but in wartime the process was less controversial due to the assumed necessities of total war. In this respect the extraneous circumstances of conflict are of equal importance as the desires of the governing elite, as they shape the reactions and responses of the nation toward policy. This is an issue that will be discussed throughout this study as it emphasises the ‘communicative’ process concerning the drink issue that occurred throughout the war. This process was of the utmost importance, yet has been somewhat neglected in the more recent historiography of the period. The story of drink control involves many of the leading figures of the time. It was an important concern of many leading political actors, central to many relationships and an important political and social issue over which relationships were formed and broken. The debate provides a fascinating insight into the machinations of a society at war, its morals and its attitudes to leisure whilst being the culmination of eighty years of previous drink agitation.

---

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p. 230.

Opinions toward drink form part of the overall history of moral attitudes. As Virginia Berridge has argued, contemporary thoughts regarding drunkenness are not simply an ‘arbitrary figment of man’s unreason for which history provides some insight, they are the product of a social structure and the social tensions of that time.’<sup>33</sup> The debate about drink control provides insight into broader historiographical contingencies, particularly as to whether the war brought about massive social change or merely reinforced continuities that had been evident in the Victorian period. During this period the consumption of ‘a pint’ became a contentious leisure pursuit as the intermixing of political and social debate produced explosive results.

The study of drinking opens a window of opportunity to the social historian. A worthwhile investigation of drink has to consider the question from a variety of angles. Primarily the historian of alcohol has to explain historical patterns of beverage use and the social response to drinking that occurred. Drink was a ubiquitous aspect of everyday life during this period and it was difficult for someone to escape either the product itself or not to hold an opinion concerning its societal worth. Drink was a political issue in 1914 because primarily it was a social problem.

In this respect drink affected both the personal and the political life of many people, operating at an individual and communal level. For some, drinking was no more than social habit, a leisure pursuit essential to the enjoyment of life and nothing more. To others, it was a cancerous tumour sapping the health of the local community and the nation. As Susanna Burrows and Robin Room highlight in their excellent introductory comments to Drinking Behaviour and Belief in Modern History:

The task for a social historian of responses to problematic drinking is to look beyond the political struggles over prohibition or alcohol control and medical ideologies of the treatment of inebriety and to comprehend the undercurrents

---

<sup>33</sup> V. Berridge and G. Edwards, Opium and the People – Opiate Use in Nineteenth Century England (London, 1981), p. 231.

of problem definition and response as they shaped family, work, and community life.<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, an examination of how cultural values, gender roles, economic patterns, and the actions of government can be explored by a consideration of drinking patterns and attitudes is worthwhile.<sup>35</sup> In effect, a study of the drink question involves the discussion of causes, consequences and control of popular drinking behaviour. Looking beyond the individual and moving towards an investigation of the perception of drink can broaden our understanding of the drink crisis during the First World War. The war provoked an unparalleled interest in the consumption of alcohol and the social issues attached to this perceived problem inspiring a unique governmental appraisal of how this leisurely, yet intoxicating, pursuit should be handled in the exigencies of conflict.

Chapter One of this dissertation deals with the drink issue prior to the First World War. It provides general context on the issue from the mid-nineteenth century up to 1914 and considers the history of the drink question, how it was formed, which parties developed an interest in its resolution and what impact the temperance movement had on the perception of the problem. It serves to establish a clear foundation for my own research and intends to provide an historical context for the temperance movement which will aid the development of ideas present in later chapters. This chapter establishes that subsequent problems and tendencies concerning drink that emerged during the war were developed in these earlier years.

Chapter Two highlights the growing development of the drink problem from August 1914 to March 1915. The chapter details press, public and political reactions to drinking in wartime and how drink became synonymous with waste. How the

---

<sup>34</sup> Susanna Burrows and Robin Room, (eds.), Drinking Behaviour and Belief in Modern History (Berkeley, 1991), p. 17.

<sup>35</sup> Jack S. Blocker Jr, 'Introduction', p. 233.

problem was comprehended by government was of the utmost significance, but the formation of opinion ‘from below’ and its relationship with the ‘high politics’ of the decision-making procedure also demands investigation. By considering how broader currents of social debate affected the governmental consciousness with regard to drink, new light can be cast upon the familiar tale of governmental control over the issue during the war.

A consideration of the circumstances leading up to the creation of the Board is undertaken in Chapter Three, which details the heightening panic over the drink problem. This includes an examination of the criticisms made towards drinkers by leading figures of the time, including Lloyd George, considering whether the accusations stemmed from political concerns about the anti-patriotic effect of drinking during the war or resulted from religious, temperate and class anxieties about the workingman being an ungodly, drink sodden, beast of burden.

Chapter Four details the formation of the Central Control Board, and considers the initial actions taken to nullify the impact of drink upon the efficiency of the war effort to the end of 1915. Chapter Five discusses one of the most notorious experiments undertaken by the CCB, the state purchase of the drink trade in Carlisle. This highlights the measures that the Board would have taken if they had been able to bring about nationwide state purchase. Chapter Six details the debate surrounding female intemperance during the war whilst Chapter Seven considers the Board’s ideas concerning the reform of the workingman and the relationship between food and beer, dealing specifically with the introduction of canteens and food taverns. Continuous tax increases on alcohol and a propagandistic campaign concerning the continued validity of utilising barley, wheat and sugars in the making of alcohol during wartime, served to make drink less readily available and less appealing to an increasing number

of consumers. This in turn nearly led to the attempt to nationalise the drink trade, an issue considered in Chapter Eight which details the final actions of the Board until the end of the war. In the conclusion an assessment of the Central Control Board's brief life after the war is undertaken together with an overview of the Board's work and historical significance.

The effect of this study is to rehabilitate the reputation of the 'drinking community', who were condescendingly believed to be unable to control their consumption habits.<sup>36</sup> It will be proposed that an innate patriotic determination not to endanger the successful prosecution of the war was present not only amongst those who drank, but also amongst those who stood to lose economically – the trade. It will be argued that a fundamental misreading of normal working class social habits shaped the government's attitude. This misperception was caused by a moral panic which engulfed the issue and by the extraneous circumstance of war, factors that caused latent anti-drink hostility to erupt once more.

The vast majority of drinkers were adept at policing themselves. Attitudes to drink were determined by an overriding sense that naturally principled and appropriate action was required in a time of war to guarantee victory. It will be contended that the creation of drink legislation was an organic operation during which the impetus for change was created from below, by an efficacious section of the community concerned with curbing unacceptable social excess, as well as from above. This 'pressure from above' was created by a government and state body confronted with a situation that seemingly threatened the successful prosecution of the war effort. Furthermore, a discussion of the motives behind some of this legislation reveals that the rationale for action was not as clear-cut as contemporaries led people

---

<sup>36</sup> This 'drinking community' is a somewhat open definition given that the vast majority did imbibe alcohol. The term relates predominantly to the working classes who were believed to be the principal 'drinkers' of the period.

to believe. This process involved the construction of a political, social and cultural debate about the role of drink in Britain during the First World War, elements of which have been previously unappreciated in relevant historiography.

This contention emphasises the continuity of the drinks issue between the years prior to and during the war. Temperance debates had increased the belief that alcohol was detrimental to the nation and its people. Far from being a period of impressive innovation in drink legislation, the governmental response to the problem was in accordance with much pre-war temperance conjecture. Its success was also purely dependent upon the consent of the people. Without an enduring commitment towards and acceptance of these policies within the local sphere no progress could have been made. It will be argued that the political and social controversy surrounding the drinks issue was merely a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the socially malevolent predictions of temperance ideology crystallized around perceived failures in the execution of total war. Preconceptions of those who drank reflected prevalent class biases and the undisputed class divisions prevalent throughout society at the time, obscured by the camouflaged cloak of national efficiency. Lastly, it will be suggested that it is inconsequential as to whether a drink problem actually did exist; statistically it is difficult to prove. The importance of this issue stems from the perception of over exuberant social activity acting as a possible hindrance to the war effort. Fanciful folklores morphed into false realities. This conviction was widely held and valid enough to reinvigorate a far-reaching debate about the role of alcohol in society during wartime. This dispute, though, had commenced long before 1914.

## **Chapter One: A Tale of Temperance and Drink 1870-1914**

This chapter will first outline how drink, via the temperance movement, was conceptualised as a social problem. The development of Liberal social theory and the evolution of a new form of social investigation will be examined as contributing factors to the renewed interest in the potentiality of an abstemious society. The influence of governmental intervention and legislation in this period will also be considered. Finally, an analysis as to whether these societal warnings were justifiable, given the magnitude of their malevolent predictions in relation to the actual situation, will be undertaken. By juxtaposing the two, contemporary misconceptions will be evident. This section will examine alcohol consumption figures and the problems facing the drink trade prior to the outbreak of conflict. It will be argued that the trade, in terms of overall consumption of its product, was actually undergoing a period of relative decline in the early 1900s. The extent of this decline is contentious, but the impression that the industry faced an uncertain future is overwhelming. It will be argued that drink was perhaps not the omnipresent social cancer that popular opinion believed it to be.<sup>1</sup> Contemporary debates, perceptions and opinions on the drink issue, though, are the primary concern of this dissertation. Arguments during this period coloured the judgement of those in power for the foreseeable future and, more importantly, those in charge of leading Britain through the most demanding conflict the world had seen.

The domestic situation of a century ago is perplexing and reveals a British society preoccupied with the same social problems that linger today. ‘Binge drinking’ has become a ‘national disease’, and has come to encapsulate an entire framework of attitudes, behaviours, lifestyle and philosophy common to those who engage in this

---

<sup>1</sup> One historian disagrees with this contention. Asa Briggs, in a lecture delivered to the English Brewers Congress, described the drink problem between 1900 and 1914 as ‘particularly serious’. ‘Beer and Society: A Major Theme in English History’, The Brewer August 1983, p. 317.

act of 'wasteful leisure'. Far from being a golden age of order and sobriety, Edwardian Britain, like contemporary Britain, was seemingly under the duress of a supposed drinking epidemic. In 1936, the eminent historian, R.C.K. Ensor, recalling the Edwardian period, detailed 'the monstrous evil of intemperance – how monstrous, it is perhaps difficult for the present generation to realise'.<sup>2</sup> Recent debates surrounding drinking culture echo those of the Victorian and Edwardian eras in that society as a whole, or at least certain sections of that society, are believed to drink far more than is appropriate for personal health and social well-being. In both cases, appropriate notions of conduct are allegedly ripped asunder by the consumption of alcohol.

A debate about the type of society that Edwardian Britain was, and what could be done to halt the waste associated with drink, precipitated an unprecedented increase in the amount of societal introspection in the early 1900s. It was believed that a route to a more abstinent and sober future could be found. Millennial optimism gripped the chattering classes. As one journalist prophesied, 'we stand upon the threshold not so much of a new century . . . as of a new era in political and social life'.<sup>3</sup> The time was ripe for solving social questions that had endured throughout the past century. The experience of the Boer War caused much anxiety; it was widely believed that Britain must either reform or decline. The drink problem was a perennial focus of social reformers and perceived as a constant hindrance to the development of a 'civilised' community.

The temperance movement was a focal point for those who believed in the seditious qualities of alcohol. Their actions provide an accessible route to the crux of the alcohol problem, though the drink controversy should not be solely viewed

---

<sup>2</sup> B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> G.R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency: A Study in British Politics and Political Thought 1899-1914* (London, 1990), p. 51.

through the prism of temperance thought and agitation. One must appreciate the subtler impact of temperance propositions upon the wider political and social debate to assess its overall long-term effect on the continuing liquor controversy. It is not, however, the purpose of this discussion to retread the entire history of the temperance campaign. Other historians have explored this path and produced much laudable work.<sup>4</sup> This chapter will summarise the historical importance of the temperance movement and extrapolate from this why it is important when considering the emergence of a drink problem during the Great War.

It is not intended, as is sometimes popular, to argue that the unprecedented drink reform of the First World War was a radical departure from early Edwardian society.<sup>5</sup> On the contrary, the long term continuity of attitudes to drink will be apparent given the nature of ‘traditional’ social debate in the years 1870-1914. Only by understanding this pre-war debate can the context in which extensive action was taken over the drink question during the First World War be truly understood. This chapter will identify how the warnings made by various political and social actors established a coherent programme of anti-drink assertions which established rigid parameters within which the drink debate was conducted.

As British society remained influenced by Victorian beliefs it is unsurprising that excess drinking was a social problem in the 1900s. Since the 1830s, a battle over drink had perpetuated throughout Victorian society with the temperance cause gaining increasing support. The working man allegedly had a tendency to overindulge.

---

<sup>4</sup> See, for example: A.E.Dingle, Campaign for Prohibition in Victorian England: The United Kingdom Alliance 1872-1895 (London, 1980), B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, E.King, Scotland, Sober and Free: The Temperance Movement 1829-1979 (Glasgow, 1979), W.R. Lambert, Drink and Society in Victorian Wales c1820-1895 (Cardiff, 1983), James S. Roberts, Drink, Temperance and the Working Class in Nineteenth Century Germany (Boston and London, 1984), L.L. Shiman, Crusade against Drink in Victorian England (London, 1988), J. Walvin, Leisure and Society 1830-1950 (London, 1978), G.P. Williams and G.T. Broke, Drink in Great Britain 1900-1979 (London, 1980), N. Longmate, The Waterdrinkers: A History of Temperance (London, 1968).

<sup>5</sup> Gareth Stedman-Jones, ‘Class Expression versus Social Control? A critique of recent trends in the social history of ‘leisure’’, History Workshop Journal, Issue 4, 1977, p. 167.

Frederick Engels claimed in 1844 that for the working men of Manchester ‘liquor is almost their only source of pleasure, and all things conspire to make it accessible to them.’<sup>6</sup> In 1896, the Reverend Thomas Page alleged that the working class due to drink had gone ‘from being a mainly independent, industrious and thrifty portion of the community attentive to the interests of their employers’ and had become ‘disaffected, dissolute, impatient of superiority or control and reckless of family duties’.<sup>7</sup> Beer during the period 1870-1914 accounted for 60 per cent of all alcoholic drinks consumed with another 30 per cent accounted for by spirits.<sup>8</sup> There were over 100,000 pubs and beer shops selling alcohol in Britain.<sup>9</sup> Alcohol, in one form or another, was the dominant drink of choice in the nineteenth century.

Temperance ideology established the ‘dominant’ school of thought concerning the drink question contextualising the parameters of the drink problem for the future. The temperance movement was influenced by evangelicalism. Drunkenness was denounced in line with religious principles. God and drink did not mix well. It was argued that the consumption of drink was inconsistent with the scriptures or with leading a righteous Christian life.<sup>10</sup> In a society in which religion played a far greater role than today the support given to the temperance cause by the major denominations – Nonconformist, Quakers and the Church of England – greatly aided its popularity. To be temperate was seen as analogous to living a godly life. The movement consistently promoted anti-drink propaganda arguing that alcohol was too readily available and fostered irreparable social disintegration.

---

<sup>6</sup> J. Walvin, *Leisure and Society*, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> N. Longmate, *The Waterdrinkers*, p. 31.

<sup>8</sup> A.E. Dingle, ‘Drink and Working Class Living Standards in Britain, 1870-1914’, *Economic History Review*, 25, (1972), p. 608.

<sup>9</sup> T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson, *The British Brewing Industry* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 31.

<sup>10</sup> The point at which seven men of Preston took the pledge on 1 September 1832 at a temperance meeting is sometimes accredited with the official ‘birth’ of the temperance movement. Longmate suggests that the first British total abstainers were probably the Cowherdites, an obscure religious sect founded at Salford, Lancashire by a former Anglican clergyman, the Reverend Cowherd. N. Longmate, *The Waterdrinkers*, p. 33.

Whilst being commonly in favour of temperance per se the movement was split into different groups each advocating a particular method of abstinence. The ‘Teetotal Movement’, which was not interested exclusively in merely temperance but persuaded by the virtues of complete abstinence from all kinds of intoxicating liquors, formed one branch of the temperance lobby.<sup>11</sup> Initially this mode of thought dominated the movement but eventually wilted under the pressure of seemingly more attainable abstinence ideologies exemplified by the ‘Moderationists’: Protestants who allowed the moderate use of alcohol consumption. These divisive interpretations limited the possibility of any longstanding coherent legislative programme being created.<sup>12</sup> Whilst united in condemning drink, the temperance movement floundered due to dogmatic internal squabbling concerning the implementation of practical measures.

Temperance propaganda and agitation was nevertheless effective in casting aspersions on the act of drinking. The temperance movement made the drink debate increasingly vituperative and established divisive views within society on how an appropriate life should be led. The temperance movement had several concerns. Numerous reports, such as G. Blaicklock’s The Alcohol Factor in Social Conditions: The Report of an Inquiry presented to the National Temperance League, highlighted drink as an agent of doom. These reports argued that drink harmed the individual and tore at the moral fabric of the family as a social unit. Drink was portrayed as being responsible for innumerable social problems – crime, vice, disease, pauperism, insanity and mental illness were all seen as the consequence of drinking. Temperance protagonists argued that drink was responsible for, amongst other things, syphilis,

---

<sup>11</sup> B. Harrison argues that the teetotal movement prospered due to the desire for respect and self reliance within the working class itself. See B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, p. 350.

<sup>12</sup> David Fahey, ‘Drink and the Meaning of Reform in Late Victorian and Edwardian England’, Cithara, Volume 13, 1974, p.51.

pneumonia and cancer.<sup>13</sup> More extreme temperance advocates even suggested that spontaneous combustion resulted as a consequence of heavy drinking. Drunkenness was seen to be an individual failure of social discipline and as a surrender to base animal instinct. The temperance movement served to make the drink issue one of the most prominent concerns of the nineteenth century.

Negative perceptions of alcohol consumption meant that the trade, by association, was stigmatised as an uncaring, profit driven industry, callously prospering upon men's 'degraded appetites' whilst happily bringing moral and physical degradation to the nation in exchange for profits. The term 'the trade' was used to synthesise the wider coalition of groups involved in the drink business such as retailers, wine and hop merchants, maltsters, company directors and bond holders. As one contemporary commented, 'the stream of horrible profits which drunkards pour into the drink trade . . . everywhere leaves the slime of its overflow over devastated areas of society'.<sup>14</sup> One temperance activist argued that publicans and brewers were nothing more than 'wholesale and retail manufacturers of drunkards'.<sup>15</sup> In 1901 the Reverend Ian Fry described the trade as 'wealthier and stronger than any continental mafia'.<sup>16</sup> Reformers concurred that the requirements of being a publican were detrimental to the duties of a provider of public services.

Brewers formed pressure groups in response to escalating temperance attacks on the trade as the debate became increasingly acrimonious.<sup>17</sup> Two contending viewpoints of the role of drink within society were therefore established. The trade

---

<sup>13</sup> See G. Blaiklock, The Alcohol Factor in Social Conditions: The Report of an Inquiry presented to the National Temperance League (London, 1914), p. 35.

<sup>14</sup> F.W. Farrar, Contemporary Review, 1894, quoted in D. Gutzke, Protecting the Pub: Brewers and Publicans Against Temperance (London, 1989), p. 37.

<sup>15</sup> W.R. Lambert, Drink and Sobriety in Victorian Wales, p.101.

<sup>16</sup> D. Gutzke, Protecting the Pub, p. 52.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* p. 30. Some brewers even hired hecklers to disrupt temperance meetings, see N. Longmate, The Waterdrinkers, p. 87.

recognised that temperance activity threatened its existence and had to respond. The ensuing debate garnered an obsessive following with the proper place of drink in society discussed with an intensity and exhaustiveness which has interesting parallels with today.

The public agitation solicited by the temperance movement was successful in recruiting subscribers to the cause. The more people began to worry about the problem the greater the support the temperance movement received from both middle and upper class members. Founded upon a mixture of middle class benevolence and working class self respect and self-realisation, the temperance movement looked forward to the creation of a society of self disciplined individuals. It was a movement ideally suited to the Victorian world. That is not to say however that it was universally popular, far from it. It proved on occasion to be a divisive force; as one resident of Hanover Square in London put it, 'this fanatical crusade against the drinking of fermented liquor . . . has passed beyond the legitimate limits of a fad and is beginning to assume the proportions of a public nuisance'.<sup>18</sup>

Assessments of the social profile of those within the temperance movement are somewhat speculative, as substantive records do not remain. Harrison contends that the United Kingdom Alliance was probably correct in believing that its 'numerical strength lay with what The Economist called upper class workmen, the humblest of the middle classes and generally speaking, persons below the class of gentlemen'.<sup>19</sup> There were those amongst the middle class who were genuinely concerned about the welfare of the emerging working classes but others acted for reasons of self-interest as the incompatibility of drinking with the necessity of industrial punctuality and regularity provided an indisputable financial spur to the

---

<sup>18</sup> N. Longmate, The Waterdrinkers, p. 137.

<sup>19</sup> B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, p. 221.

dissemination of temperance sentiment.<sup>20</sup> Discipline thus emerged as a key concept of temperance thought. The importance of ‘social discipline’ as a whole was widely stressed throughout Victorian society. Victorian arguments concerning leisure revolved around whether the action undertaken was rational and produced some social benefit. The pleasure of drinking was not believed to be a suitable rationale for alcohol consumption; consequently all drinking was assigned a negative moral value. One of the principal criticisms made of the temperance movement was its failure to articulate the benefits of abstinence to the occasional drinker who lay between the teetotaler and the chronic alcoholic, and who could drink seemingly without physical or physiological complications. This ‘silent majority’ were the quiet men of the drink debate. Prohibiting drink would not, after all, immediately end the demand for alcohol.

As Shiman has noted, new conceptions of ‘rational recreation’ dictated that leisure time had to be spent appropriately to ensure the continued economic development of the nation; this transformed drunkenness from ‘a personal state of excess sociability to an anti-social vice’.<sup>21</sup> From the outset, temperance was imbued with a distinct emphasis upon class and its relationship to character. Class was vital to the drinks debate. To be intemperate was a characteristic of the wayward working class individual, wasting his life away by spending his money in the depraved haunts of the public house, whereas temperance seemingly offered the possibility of an advance up the social scale and a gateway to assured economic prosperity. Sobriety was posited by the temperance message as an essential pre-requisite to self-advancement, interlinked with a distinct concern regarding established morals.

---

<sup>20</sup> As Harrison notes ‘can it be considered a coincidence that most of the major donors to the United Kingdom Alliance were drawn from industrial manufacturers mostly from the North of England?’ Ibid. p. 220.

<sup>21</sup> L.L. Shiman, Crusade against Drink in Victorian England, p. 2.

Originally the temperance movement emphasised its moral argument. Moral suasion, though, proved to be a slow and genuinely unproductive process.

Persuasion eventually gave way to prohibitive inclinations, best exemplified by the UKA at the end of the nineteenth century. Prohibition increasingly became the preferred choice of temperance activists, but the aforementioned divisions amongst them remained.<sup>22</sup> They argued that drink reform was necessary because the working class were believed to be incapable of resisting temptation; the only way of doing this was to ban all drinking. Harry Quelch, an early historian of the temperance movement, argued that 'the temperance movement was based on the assumption that the working man is a vile incorrigible drunken beast incapable of self control'.<sup>23</sup> When the workingman was in possession of disposable income, it was assumed that irresponsibility and drunkenness inevitably followed. This low estimation of the working class was not just a belief common to the temperance movement however. In a class-ridden society the workingman bore the brunt of a great deal of criticism.

Ancillary social activities, lifestyles and communities developed around the temperance movement. Organisations such as the Gospel Temperance Movement and the Band of Hope, a group aimed at inculcating children into a temperate way of life, represented, as Harrison contends, the 'increasing self consciousness of temperance reformers as a community'.<sup>24</sup> In 1908, there were 22,000 Band of Hope societies with 3,000,000 children enrolled.<sup>25</sup> To the ardent temperance proponent, abstinence was more than just a political conviction but formed the core of an entire system of beliefs. Living an idealised life, safe from the dangers of a drink infested world, these communities had their own social networks, meeting places and leisure activities

---

<sup>22</sup> D. Gutzke, Protecting the Pub, p. 85.

<sup>23</sup> B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, p. 404.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* p. 194.

<sup>25</sup> Philip Snowden, Socialism and the Drink Question (London, 1908), p. 23.

founded upon a common desire to live a good temperate life. Temperance hotels, friendly societies, halls, periodicals and building societies emerged to aid the social exclusivity of abstinence, providing welcome to the elite and most devout temperance devotee. While these communities were not completely isolated from the outside world, the chances of the presumed negative consequences of drink affecting their existence became severely diminished by their self-imposed isolationism. Film footage of temperance demonstrations reveals how much joining the temperance movement was a clear lifestyle choice.<sup>26</sup> Vast numbers of onlookers gathered to watch the procession of those that had 'saved themselves' from the degrading drink. The difference between the crowd and the marchers illustrated the divide between those who had chosen a 'virtuous' life and those who had not.

The temperance movement was large and with so many different social and cultural groups it was possible to live a well-rounded temperate life. As W.R. Lambert, utilising the example of the Temperance movement in Victorian Wales, has observed:

There is little doubt that the temperance society provided colour, interest and amusement in what was to many of its members a fairly drab life. The influence of 'temperance' . . . was ubiquitous. There existed a temperance way of life, with temperance drinks, temperance funerals, temperance weddings and temperance benefit societies.<sup>27</sup>

By attempting to isolate themselves from the outside world temperance advocates again failed actively to engage in converting non-abstainers. Only those who abandoned liquor could gain access to the benefits of this temperance utopia.

This physical separation compounded the ideological separation of the temperance movement from the mostly intemperate population. The contempt temperance reformers held towards the popular culture of the normal working class

---

<sup>26</sup> Exhibition 'The History of Drink' at the National Archives, Kew, London, Summer 2006.

<sup>27</sup> W.R. Lambert, Drink and Sobriety in Victorian Wales, p. 109.

male meant that drinking habits were not studied objectively. Temperance activists pontificated on the evils of drink without engaging with drinkers.<sup>28</sup> To escape the perils of drinking, the individual was urged to choose a temperance lifestyle. The benefits of temperance, however, were not recognised by everyone.

By the end of the nineteenth century, and after seventy years of temperance activity, no real progress had been made: drinking remained a popular social pursuit. Consumption statistics indicate that there had been no shift in overall consumption; in fact, drinking was as prevalent as ever. Per capita consumption of drink steadily rose till 1900 but was followed by a decline thereafter, with the exception of 1910-1913.<sup>29</sup> Yet temperance activity had been advantageous in some respects. The UKA believed that 'riotous drinking was gone, but that quiet soaking drinking was on the increase'.<sup>30</sup> The temperance movement cannot take sole credit for this given other advances in leisure provision. Nevertheless, the virtue of a quiet drink and mild intoxication remained, forever unknown to those within the temperance movement, but indisputably enjoyed by a significant proportion of the British people. As T.P. Whittaker, author of The Economic Aspects of the Drink Problem, and a temperance activist, testified:

In my opinion the true explanation of what is considered to the greater sobriety of the people is to be found in another direction. There is more drinking now than there was sixty or eighty years ago. But it is of a different kind. It is more frequent and regular. There is less obvious intoxication, but there is more soaking. There is less reeling drunkenness, less evident excess, and consequently there are fewer cases in the police courts, and fewer guests under the dinner table. But, taking the year round, more liquor is swallowed . . . Habitual drinking, continual and frequent, has taken the place of occasional bouts of brutal drunkenness.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Shiman argues that during the First World War the ferocity of Temperance advocates beliefs were lessened in the trenches when conduct between the drinker and non drinker exposed the falsehood of many temperance propositions. See L.L. Shiman, Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England, p. 243.

<sup>29</sup> A. Dingle, 'Drink and Working Class Living Standards in Britain 1870-1914', pp. 619-620.

<sup>30</sup> James Whyte, Secretary of the UKA testifying before the Royal Commission on Licensing in 1899. L.L. Shiman, Crusade against Drink in Victorian England, p. 240.

<sup>31</sup> Quoted by P. Snowden, Socialism and the Drink Question, p. 36.

The liquor traffic, according to one disappointed temperance proponent, ‘remained the stone that had to be rolled away before the dead Lazarus could emerge from the grave’.<sup>32</sup> Historical verdicts are no more complimentary, with Harrison believing that ‘the movement had insulated an elite from temptation; it had produced no nationwide temperance reformation’.<sup>33</sup> Whilst lacking a ‘reformation’ the temperance movement did succeed in maintaining focus on the drink issue, as it remained perennially high on the political agenda.

Party political positions on the drink debate were contentious. Generally the Tories allied with the trade, partly because a good number of Tory M.P.s had brewing interests. The Liberal Party was generally aligned with temperance activism. Later, in the early twentieth century, the clear links between Labour and Methodism meant that many Labour M.P.s were often of a temperate inclination; as was the case with Keir Hardie and the aforementioned Philip Snowden. But these boundaries were blurred by the changing position of the drink debate in society. The emphasis upon Britain’s imperial position in the world in the late nineteenth century meant that temperance ideals found favour amongst Unionist Tariff Reformers, Liberal Unionists and Fabian Socialists alike. The boundaries were thus muddled, but in general terms the links between the Tories and the Trade, and the Liberals with Temperance, were the most definite.

The temperance movement still had its advocates in the early twentieth century. The largest temperance organisation in the UK, the Church of England Temperance Society, had in 1899 7000 branches with 150-200,000 members, while estimates suggested that there were three million abstainers in Britain by 1908.<sup>34</sup> It is

---

<sup>32</sup> L.L. Shiman, Crusade against Drink in Victorian England, p. 109.

<sup>33</sup> B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, p. 318.

<sup>34</sup> L.L. Shiman, Crusade against Drink in Victorian England, p. 107.

unwise to equate the impact of temperance sentiment with the number of assumed subscribers. Nevertheless the ideological residue left by the temperance movement was to have a permanent effect upon the drink debate. As a social habit drunkenness now carried a horrid stigma. The temperance movement succeeded in equating a respectable status to abstinence or moderation in alcohol consumption.<sup>35</sup> Its agitation was often effective in its subtle effects upon social conventions. The boundaries of 'acceptable' sociability owe a debt to temperance agitation, perhaps even to this day. Thanks predominantly to the association of public drinking with the working classes, private drinking for the upper and middle classes became a mark of respectability and evidence of their supposed higher differential status. An increasing number of Britons accepted that the consumption of alcoholic beverages was no longer an essential prerequisite to good health.<sup>36</sup> Philip Snowden believed the prevailing public sentiment to be 'one of condemnation of drunkenness and respect for the total abstainer'.<sup>37</sup> Drunkenness was no longer celebrated; more often than not it was condemned. Prohibition may never have been likely but its subtle social message filtered down into the public sphere. The movement highlighted the genuine desire for respectability and self-reliance which permeated amongst sections of the working class. This message encapsulated the Victorian desire for betterment and in a developing industrial society there evidently were many willing listeners.

The temperance society also offered a rational alternative to the public house by showing the potentiality of an abstemious way of life. Some saw it as sanctimonious preaching on behalf of the upper and middle class, as mere meddling in a lifestyle they could not or did not comprehend. Indeed the majority were not willing

---

<sup>35</sup> This link is also evident when one considers the language used in the war to describe those who favoured the reduction of drinking. Although not necessarily 'temperance activists' they were often described as such.

<sup>36</sup> L.L. Shiman, *Crusade against Drink in Victorian England*, p. 244.

<sup>37</sup> P. Snowden, *Socialism and the Drink Question*, p. 23.

revolutionaries and remained attached to the routine of the odd drink and occasional insobriety.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, the idea that drinking inhibited social advancement had permeated wider society. Yet the temperance movement in Britain, by the early twentieth century, was just a single component of the broader drive towards progressive, humanitarian social reform evident at this time. The initial temperance battle had been fought valiantly, but was lost. Subsequent encounters were fought on new ideological ground whereby improvement rather than prohibition proved a more successful and convincing platform.

Drink and drunkards had long been an easy target for moralisers, but in the late Victorian and Edwardian era the need for a solution to the problem became all the more acute as degenerate behaviour became contextualised within the framework of national progress and the common good. As the Spectator opined in 1902, ‘there is a universal outcry for efficiency in all the depth of society in all the aspects of life’.<sup>39</sup> The belief that alcohol was congruent with a healthy lifestyle was diminishing, and led to the widespread conviction that drink corrupted and endangered social evolution.

A progressive conglomeration of middle class professionals, doctors, civil servants, journalists, health workers and politicians argued that a developing and competitive nation state could no longer tolerate invidious habits detrimental to its overall advance. These groups embodied the ‘new school’ of thought regarding the drink problem. This contextualisation of the drink debate built upon and modified many older temperance mantras. Improper consumption of alcohol was now an acknowledged hindrance to the required public health of the nation with its effect upon the individual and the family regularly highlighted by temperance propaganda. In a society that viewed the wasting of time as sinful, and in which recreational

---

<sup>38</sup> P. Bailey, Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control 1830-1885 (London, 1978), p. 48.

<sup>39</sup> G.R. Searle, The Quest for National Efficiency, p.1.

activities had to have moral justification, it is unsurprising that the link between the fit individual and the strength of the nation became firmly entrenched.

In a world in which a perversion of social darwinism predominated, concerns regarding national efficiency and racial degeneration were all the more pertinent leading to a reinterpretation of the necessity of social reform in the face of mass insecurity. These social anxieties, shared by both the political left and right, were increased by new international trade and political competition from America and Germany, intensified by a slow population growth in comparison with these nations, and by the debacle of the Boer War, which seemed to prove the inadequacy of the British working class lifestyle, particularly of those living in urban environments, which was later confirmed by official government inquiries.<sup>40</sup> These inquiries drew attention to the fact that society's failures could no longer remain hidden within the public house if British superiority was to be guaranteed. Drastic social reform based upon good housing, public health measures, education, clean air and water, and an adequate wage, were believed to be the necessary foundations for the creation of a renewed populace of sufficient manpower to maintain the industry and armies of Empire. As the universal appreciation of self-disciplined individuals grew, it is unsurprising that anti-drink thought assumed a newfound credibility. In this context, as R.B. Weir argues, the drunkard 'was the worst enemy which the trade has to fight and the best weapon possessed by the temperance orator'.<sup>41</sup>

The Edwardian era thus witnessed an important shift away from simply blaming the individual for woes concerned with alcohol to a new interpretation, which viewed the individual as being collaterally damaged by the failure of society to uphold social standards. The impact of socialist thought on the drink question was of

---

<sup>40</sup> For example, see the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, 1904.

<sup>41</sup> R.B. Weir, 'Obsessed with Moderation: The Drink Trades and the Drink Question (1870-1930)', British Journal of Addiction, Volume 79, (1984), p. 99.

paramount importance. 'There is no shortcut to universal abstinence', Philip Snowden, later a member of the Central Control Board, contended:

The relation of the drink question to the whole social problem is now being recognised by reformers of all schools. In so far as we elevate the ideals of the people, lessen the strenuousness of commercial and industrial life, improve the surroundings of the poor, increase their leisure and provide rational entertainment, so far shall we be working most effectively for temperance reform.<sup>42</sup>

The concept of a universal social duty to protect the 'unreformed' individual was gradually emerging.

The notion of the state as being intrinsically linked with the characteristics of its individual citizens was popular with many promoters of the 'new democracy', such as Sydney Webb and Ramsay MacDonald. The social basis of political power assumed a new prominence within political debate of the time, shown by the transition from individualism to collectivism during the period.<sup>43</sup> The increasingly influential biological interpretation of man and his world meant a new impulse from the state was gradually emerging towards moralism and social reform for the benefit of the nation. The state was flexing its muscle, becoming, as one commentator put it, 'the physician of society . . . it should prevent rather than cure the evils which are in its midst'.<sup>44</sup>

This belief was substantiated by new methods of social investigation. Charles Booth was one of the first investigators to consider the totality of the working class experience in his book Life and Labour of the People in London, published in 1899.<sup>45</sup> He revealed how each aspect of working class life, work, leisure, physical environment and religious conviction, was intertwined and dependent upon the other.

---

<sup>42</sup> P. Snowden, Socialism and the Drink Question, p. 191.

<sup>43</sup> For a stimulating analysis of this transition see Jose Harris, Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914 (Oxford, 1993).

<sup>44</sup> Dr Kate Mitchell, The Drink Question: Its Social and Medical Aspects (London, 1891), pp. 17-18.

<sup>45</sup> Charles Booth, Life and Labour of the People in London (London, 1899).

Primarily he demonstrated that men did not become poor simply because of individual failings, for example, idleness, improvidence, or drunkenness. In particular he postulated that drink was not the chief reason for poverty, his evidence showing that only 13 per cent of the poor and 14 per cent of the very poor in his sample owed their misfortune to drink.<sup>46</sup> Accordingly, as J.A. Hobson had argued in 1896, no separate 'drink problem' existed per se, it was just one of many unresolved social problems.<sup>47</sup> Excess drinking was much more the consequence of the larger question of working class poverty, deflating temperance claims to the contrary.

Booth's work laid the building blocks for other social investigators, such as the Webbs and Seebohm Rowntree, who concurred that poverty was a social condition, rather than an individual problem, and made a powerful case for the extension of state assistance.<sup>48</sup> The resolution of the drink issue was thus part of an overall programme of required reform as opposed to being the sum total of the problem. A consensus was emerging amongst opinion makers that the drink question was, as Snowden wrote, 'inextricably intertwined with all the questions which aim at the elimination of the social waste of human health, of human life, of labour and of wealth'.<sup>49</sup>

These beliefs were blended together into a new critique of alcohol consumption. As David Gutzke has argued, temperance assumptions were now critical of 'workers' expenditure on drink' which:

meant deficient nourishment, uncompetitive productivity, numerous pauperised families with retarded economic development, reduced potential incomes and squandered purchasing power, which caused under consumption,

---

<sup>46</sup> Quoted in B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, p. 404.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* p. 405.

<sup>48</sup> See B. Seebohm Rowntree, Poverty: A Study of Town Life (London, 1901).

<sup>49</sup> P. Snowden, Socialism and the Drink Question, p. 65.

and immense costs to the state – in adjudicating legal offences, incarcerating criminals, hospitalising the diseased and supporting widows and children.<sup>50</sup>

If temperance thought provided the foundations of the alcohol critique then writers such as Sherwell and Rowntree in their book The Temperance Problem and Social Reform, published in 1899, articulated and developed these ideas, adding extensively to their scope and rationale.<sup>51</sup>

The belief that the pernicious effects of alcohol were still widespread was given credence by political and social commentators. As Philip Snowden observed: ‘The evil effects of drink cannot be hidden. They obtrude themselves upon our attention at every turn. The public house is everywhere. The reeling and brutalised victims of drink meet us in the streets; the slum areas of our town reek with its filthy odours.’<sup>52</sup> Social environment was believed to be crucial in determining the psychological and physiological health of the individual. As Lady Bell, a social investigator, admitted in her most famous book At the Works:<sup>53</sup>

Social evils bring in their train not physical deterioration only, but spiritual deterioration as well, are not the monopoly of one particular class, and the tendency to them may be latent in us all. Each of us is born into the world as a mass of possibilities, and it is the lot in life and the surroundings of the average mortal that determine which of these possibilities, whether for good or for evil, shall be developed, and which are to remain for ever dormant.<sup>54</sup>

A greater concern for the welfare of the working class permeated each of these commentaries. The previously neglected cloistered precincts of working class sociability assumed a new relevance as these commentaries argued for a specific

---

<sup>50</sup> D. Gutzke, ‘The Cry of the Children’: The Edwardian Medical Campaign Against Maternal Drinking’, British Journal of Addiction, 79, (1984), pp. 73.

<sup>51</sup> See A. Sherwell and J. Rowntree, The Temperance Problem and Social Reform (London, 1899).

<sup>52</sup> P. Snowden, Socialism and the Drink Question, p. 1.

<sup>53</sup> Florence Eveleen Elanore Bell (1851-1930) was an author, social investigator and playwright. At the Works was published in 1907. It was a detailed investigation of Middlesbrough where her husband’s workforce lived. Utilising limited statistical analysis the book instead dwells upon not just the workplace but also on the homes of more than one thousand families. The evidence for the book was gathered over a period of thirty years. Angela V. John, ‘Florence Bell’ Oxford Dictionary National Biography, Oxford University Press, September 2004.

<sup>54</sup> Lady Bell, At the Works: A Study of a Manufacturing Town, p. 270.

political and social agenda. Cabinet memoranda proliferated upon the effect of drink; it was, the 'buzz' topic of the day, with Cabinet time spent on the question increasing fourfold.<sup>55</sup>

Ideas that gained currency in the political domain soon filtered down into wider society and were discussed with renewed intensity. The emphasis placed upon national efficiency dictated that the condition of the working classes was now paramount in ensuring Britain's continued superiority. The leisure habits of the working class, and particularly the role of drink, were the subject of many propagandistic polemics. How leisure time was spent was an increasingly contentious issue over which many groups speculated and theorised. The aforementioned Arthur Shadwell, a British economist and social commentator, remarked in 1906 that Britain was 'a nation at play' where Englishmen were 'still interested in breaking records, but only sporting records; their competitive drives and ambitions now centred not on the workplace and its product but on cricket and their product, betting.'<sup>56</sup> He argued that the emerging degenerate by-products of sport, increasingly popular amongst the working class, had superseded the intrinsic benefits of leisure. National decline was seemingly confirmed by this emerging 'degeneracy'.

The existence of this and other similar commentaries illustrates that the vast majority of working class leisure was conducted in the public sphere, and thus could be observed, as opposed to much middle and upper class leisure which occurred in private, as this Punch cartoon from 1900 hints toward.

---

<sup>55</sup> Jose Harris, 'The Transition to High Politics in English Social Policy 1880-1914' in M. Bentley and J. Stevenson, High and Low Politics in Modern Britain (Oxford, 1983), p. 61.

<sup>56</sup> Ross McKibbin, The Ideologies of Class: Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950 (Oxford, 1990), p. 140.



**Figure 2: Punch, 27 June 1900.**

The cartoon illustrates the manner in which 'gentlemen' could drink at home from their cellar and highlights their subsequent moral concern as somewhat duplicitous and hypocritical. Many groups and individuals were defined solely by what they drank, where they drank and how much they consumed. As Roberts has argued, 'styles of alcohol consumption, drinking and not drinking were an integral part of individual and group identity and thus one of the focal points around which social and cultural conflict revolved'.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> James S. Roberts, Drink, Temperance and the Working Class in Nineteenth Century Germany (George Allen and Unwin, 1984), pp. 1-2.

If one is to understand why the working class was indelibly associated with drink it is necessary to investigate working class social habits to see if historical evidence supports the widespread perceptions of the period. If a pervasive discrepancy is apparent between the two, this can inform us about the manner in which the drink debate was based more upon presupposition than actual fact. This is a difficult task but one aided by the excellent work of other historians, such as Andrew Davies, who have written at length on working class culture and leisure during this period. In the introduction to his book Leisure, Gender and Poverty: Working Class Cultures in Salford and Manchester, 1900-1939, Davies notes that the British working class is ‘encumbered with a historical mythology’ that has created a ‘vivid set of images of a traditional working class peopled by cloth capped, fish and chip eating, pub going, football watching working men, taking holidays in Blackpool’.<sup>58</sup> For stereotypes and mythologies to prosper there must be a certain element of truth in them, but Davies argues that working class leisure was much more varied than contemporary investigation and perceptions suggested. It is essential to look beyond these longstanding historical mythologies in order to make a judgement as to the validity of criticisms of the workingman. Once this has been analysed we can explore how these debates influenced the discussions that occurred during the war and how they impacted upon the world of the public house.

Class is an integral facet of British society, yet it is difficult to comprehend and has its own idiosyncrasies. It surrounds us yet remains elusive to sound definition. It can take many forms, as Stein Ringen recently commented:

What is peculiar to Britain is not the reality of the class system and its continuing existence but class psychology: the preoccupation with class, the belief in class and the symbols of class in manners, dress and language. This

---

<sup>58</sup> Andrew Davies, Leisure, Gender and Poverty: Working Class Cultures in Salford and Manchester, 1900-1939 (Buckingham, 1992), p. viii.

thing they have with class is a sign of closed minds and it is this which is difficult for a stranger to grasp in the British mentality.<sup>59</sup>

An awareness of class was central to Edwardian society. Class was a constant and real concern dictating, consciously and unconsciously, to a great extent how people behaved and thought. As J.B. Priestley, in his book The Edwardians, reflected:

Unless they happened to turn themselves into good gardeners, footmen or maids, the common working people must be kept in their place and out of mischief! Give them more leisure and more money and God knows what they might get up to! This prejudice was as strong among all but the best of the middle class as it was among the nobility and gentry. There was a vicious circle here. Many workers were brutalised by long hours, unhealthy conditions, low wages, bad housing. Their social superiors had only to assume they were all like that, not the victims but somehow the creation of their environment, to declare then with a clear conscience that anything better would be wasted on such people. Though it survived as a joke, it was said quite seriously at first that if baths were installed in their houses these people would only keep coal in them. Edwardian England, and indeed the England that survived him, had many severe economic problems, but there is no doubt in my mind that they were complicated and bedevilled by a class system and a class feeling.<sup>60</sup>

Clear class boundaries existed not only between the upper and middle class but also between the working and middle class, as Stephen Reynolds, who had lived in the house of a Devonshire fisherman, argued: 'The poor and the middle class are different in kind as well as degree. More different than the poor and the aristocrat. Their civilisations are not two stages of the same civilisation, but two civilisations, two traditions.'<sup>61</sup> British society was mesmerised by class and class structure, as Robert Roberts, whose autobiography is an excellent source for the student of working class culture, recalled:

Whatever new urges might have roved abroad in early Edwardian England, millions among the poor still retained the outlook and thought patterns imposed by their Victorian mentors. For them the Twentieth Century had not begun. Docilely they accepted a steady decline in living standards and went on wishing for nothing more than to be respectful and respected in the eyes of

---

<sup>59</sup> Quoted by David Cannadine, Class in Britain (New Haven and London, 1998), p. ix.

<sup>60</sup> J.B. Priestley, The Edwardians (London, 1970), p. 78.

<sup>61</sup> Harold Wright, Population (Cambridge, 1923), p. 159.

man. For them the working class caste structure stood natural, complete and inviolate.<sup>62</sup>

Class differences manifested themselves in many ways. For instance, the manner in which people spent their leisure time was an important indicator in determining social status.

Increasingly standardised and regularised work patterns brought new opportunities for relaxation to many people who had previously been unable to afford, or even have, leisure time. More free time was made available by the provision of bank holidays and the opportunity of cheap excursions due to developing transport networks, which precipitated an unprecedented increase in the number of individuals seeking pleasure.<sup>63</sup> This fostered the development of new businesses and leisure destinations, such as pleasure resorts like Blackpool, aimed at tapping working class expendable income. Leisure itself had become an industry requiring heavy capital investment and astute management with a clear consumer market. Aside from the more 'traditional' uniform working class leisure pursuits believed to be orientated solely around the public house, evidence suggests that a variety of local leisure pursuits existed within various communities. Davies stresses the continued utilisation of more 'nineteenth century' entertainments such as street markets, parades, bands, street cultures and 'doorstep leisure' into the twentieth century, which accompanied the more obvious leisure pursuits.<sup>64</sup> The upper and middle class' contention that drink and sex were the only leisure pursuits pursued with vigour by the working class was clearly wrong.

Gender and age variables also played a key role in forming leisure choices. Every family and individual was subject to different limiting factors but evidence

---

<sup>62</sup> Robert Roberts, *The Classic Slum* (Manchester, 1971), p. 16.

<sup>63</sup> J. Walvin, *Leisure and Society*, p. 76.

<sup>64</sup> See A. Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, pp. 116-141.

suggests that more leisure activities were enjoyed by the lower ranks of society than had ever been taken before, or at least more discernible and conspicuous leisure. Changing leisure patterns and the development of more ‘rational recreations’ did not bring an end to the popularity of drink within the working class. ‘The friendly mug of beer,’ as Charles Booth remarked, remained ‘the primordial cell of British social life’.<sup>65</sup> Yet Peter Bailey has argued that ‘with certain gross exceptions drink was becoming more of an incidental social lubricant and less of a total experience’.<sup>66</sup> This may have been the case but drinking remained a tempting and alluring pastime. Drink was built into the fabric of social life playing a part in nearly every public and private ceremony, commercial bargain and craft ritual.<sup>67</sup> It was crucial in creating the construction of identity as well as a means of bonding, and consolidating, social networks.<sup>68</sup> At most public and family occasions it was customary to indulge in alcohol and remains so to this day. Roberts recalled the role that the pub played in his local community:

To the great mass of manual workers the local public house spelled paradise. Many small employers of labour still paid out their weekly wages there. In the main fetid dens, they held an attraction with which nothing in present day society can quite compare. After the squalor from which so many men came there dwelt within a tavern all one could crave for – warmth, bright lights, music, song, comradeship, the smiling condescension of a landlady, large and bosomy, forever sexually unattainable, true, but one could dream.<sup>69</sup>

The pub was thus the focal point of much community life during this period, a place for contemplation, escape, fellowship, entertainment and social discourse unavailable in other premises. Like today, it existed as a place to spend those individual and communal moments of respite from the daily grind of life. In 1904, Arthur Sherwell, a temperance advocate and author, reluctantly conceded that for a long time ‘the

---

<sup>65</sup> P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian Britain*, p. 10.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* p. 174.

<sup>67</sup> Virginia Berridge, ‘Why Alcohol is legal and other drugs are not’, *History Today*, May 2004, p. 18.

<sup>68</sup> J. Burnett, *Liquid Pleasures: A Social History of Drinks in Modern Britain* (Routledge, 1999), p. 45.

<sup>69</sup> R. Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, pp. 93-94.

opportunity for enjoyment of social and friendly intercourse open to a very large portion of the community has centred in the public houses.’<sup>70</sup>

The public house was also the principal everyday setting for other leisure experiences aside from drinking. It played host to a variety of games and local clubs and was an institution central to neighbourhood life, the heart of a multitude of daily and weekly routines and social rituals. Rowntree, in his own investigation, made reference to the ‘social attractiveness’ of many pubs he viewed.<sup>71</sup> Historical investigation therefore suggests that social drinking was often more of an accompaniment to other leisure activities as opposed to the sum total of the working class leisure experience.

Although the social experiences available within the confines of the public house varied greatly, the power of association meant that time spent within a pub was automatically assumed to have been spent imbibing alcohol. As Lady Florence Bell somewhat pessimistically warned after conducting an investigation of Middlesbrough: ‘as long as the public houses are practically the centres of social life of the workmen, as long as they are the most accessible places in which he can spend his leisure, it is difficult to see how drinking is likely to be lessened to any great extent’.<sup>72</sup> The pub was thus portrayed as the breeding ground of the slothful workingman.

Other working class leisure pursuits were irrevocably linked with alcohol consumption. For example, the music hall had evolved from within the public house, with most early proprietors being in the wines and spirit trade, and drinking remained a central facet of a night’s entertainment at many a musical venue. At the height of its popularity in the years before the First World War, the music hall industry in Britain

---

<sup>70</sup> Arthur Sherwell, *The Drink Peril in Scotland*, (London, 1904), p. 44.

<sup>71</sup> B. Seebohm Rowntree, *Poverty: A Study of Town Life*, p. 312.

<sup>72</sup> Lady Florence Bell, *At the Works: A Study of a Manufacturing Town* (London, 1907), p. 246.

entertained 25 million people a year and employed 80,000.<sup>73</sup> The music hall by this point had succeeded in cutting across class boundaries. Temperance activists still sought to eliminate drinking from these venues. Time spent in distinct leisurely spaces was consequently subject to certain pejorative connotations often related to the social class into which the individual fitted.<sup>74</sup>

Within Britain there was a clear demarcation between places of leisure that were suitable for each respective class. Social exclusivity prevailed. Mixed audiences occurred at certain venues of entertainment. In music halls, and later cinemas, differing ticket prices for certain seating areas enforced class distinctions. Roberts's account of the classic slum makes reference to the social reputation and exclusivity of certain pubs within his locale: 'as if by natural order each establishment had its status rating over and above the social gradations to be found within a house itself'.<sup>75</sup> Even within pubs social divisions clearly existed. As Roberts related, 'workers other than craftsmen would be frozen or flatly ordered out of the rooms where the journeymen gathered. Each part of the tavern had its status rating, indeed "he's only a tap room man"' stood as a common slur'.<sup>76</sup> Class, space and presumed behaviour were all interlinked in the Edwardian leisure experience.

The working class leisure experience was never celebrated by the middle class but remained the constant subject of reformers' suspicions. However, limits to this type of social investigation existed. The vast majority of investigators were from a non-working class background. The likelihood of being able to construct a full appreciation of the typical working class experience, if one had never truly

---

<sup>73</sup> Paul Maloney, *Scotland and the Music Hall 1850-1914* (Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 1.

<sup>74</sup> This can particularly be seen with the material produced concerning women who drank in pubs.

<sup>75</sup> R. Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, p. 94.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* p. 6.

experienced it, was slim.<sup>77</sup> Judgement was thus skewed. As Noel Buxton and Walter Hoare, despite pontificating upon the social ills brought upon society by the pub, confessed: ‘to most of us the public house is as little known as China.’<sup>78</sup> To many, working class culture remained hidden, somewhat alien, potentially dangerous and subversive. The social background of many politicians from the period mirrored this disassociation from the working class life. Lines of status were clearly demarcated and hard to breach, as Lady Florence Bell readily admitted:

It is probable that any human being attempting to describe the life of another will only approximate to representing that life as it appears to the person described. A good deal of guessing will always remain to be done, and at the end we may not know whether we have guessed right – whether we have understood or misunderstood.<sup>79</sup>

Despite their inadequacies, however, these texts were seized upon by reformers as being representative of the necessity of social reform.

The prevalence of the music hall and the popularity of seaside holidays indicates the existence of new working class social experiences but these indicators were not immediately recognised by all social observers. Gareth Stedman Jones, for example, has argued that it was only at the beginning of the twentieth century, in London at least, that middle class observers began to realise that the working class was not without culture or morality, but in fact possessed a culture of its own.<sup>80</sup> Concurrently this was also an admission of defeat. By acknowledging the continued prevalence of working class drinking, the middle class accepted the failure of their attempts to regulate working class behaviour. For the observer it proved much easier

---

<sup>77</sup> This is a problem for the historian who often has to deal with sources ideologically antipathetic to working class life.

<sup>78</sup> Noel Buxton and Walter Hoare ‘Temperance Reform’ in C.F.G. Masterman, *The Heart of the Empire: Discussions of Problems of Modern City Life in England, With an Essay on Imperialism* (First Published London, 1901) Reprinted, Editor and Introduction by Bentley Gilbert (Brighton, 1973) p. 171.

<sup>79</sup> Lady Florence Bell, *At the Works*, p. 272.

<sup>80</sup> See G. Stedman-Jones, ‘Working Class Culture and Working Class Politics in London 1870-1900: Notes on the Remaking of a Working Class’, *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 7, Summer 1973-1974.

to believe the stereotype and predetermined judgement than investigate the reality of the situation.

The belief that the public house was now the sole preserve of the working classes gained impetus due to subtle changes in consumer behaviour. The development of bottled beer and off licenses meant that the middle and upper classes were less inclined to drink in the pub as they could drink and entertain in the home. Harrison maintains that as early as 1850 ‘no respectable urban Englishmen entered an ordinary public house’.<sup>81</sup> Clubs for a more discerning customer emerged. As Algy Burke, Secretary of White’s club in London, proudly declared in 1896: ‘The West Enders (I am speaking of my own class) are not attracted to the public house . . . the class I deal with and the class I associate with and the class I know do not go into public houses’.<sup>82</sup> By 1910 many brewers, retailers and commentators had noticed ‘a change of fashion towards off consumption’, matched by the increased sales of bottled beer.<sup>83</sup> For example, at the London brewery of Whitbread and Co bottled beer accounted for 58 per cent of gross sales in 1914.<sup>84</sup> Medical, religious, social and class based attacks on drunkenness formed a conglomeration of criticisms which diminished the allure of being drunk.

Working class leisure habits seemed to reconfirm class preconceptions already present amongst social observers. The pub was the principal leisure centre of the working classes and attracted their business more so than any other class. This does not mean that other classes did not frequent the pub but that they were less likely to do so. This perception made it easy to draw conclusions about the type of social problems which afflicted the class as a whole. As Davies argues, ‘most observers

---

<sup>81</sup> B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*, p. 46.

<sup>82</sup> M. Girouard, *Victorian Pubs*, p. 12.

<sup>83</sup> D. Gutzke, *Protecting the Pub*, p. 45.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* p. 45.

simply took the question of participation in leisure for granted, assuming that the presence of working people in beerhouses and music hall . . . was evidence of the behaviour of an entire class'.<sup>85</sup> The working class drunk served to reconfirm cultural and class presuppositions about the character of the working class as a whole. This was a stereotype easily created and accepted with relative ease, and, on occasion, with peculiar glee.

The definition of deviant behaviour relies upon someone providing that definition. As Stanley Cohen observed, 'a social problem consists not only of a fixed and given condition but the perception and definition by certain people that this condition poses a threat which is against their interests and that something should be done about it.'<sup>86</sup> Those interested in tackling drink had defined the problem, or at least the debate surrounding the issue, for many years. In order for the perception of threat to gain currency the message has to be promulgated or held sufficiently for it to gain credence. As working class public leisure supposedly centred on the pub it was easy to blame inefficiency upon the activities taking place within the premises. As Noel Buxton and Walter Hoare said of the public house, 'probably no single institution was ever so much spoken against, or so little spoken about'.<sup>87</sup>

As part of this increased interest in the pub a new consensus emerged from medical men, Royal Commissions, social workers, housing reformers, educationalists and labour leaders that all British people shared a common social citizenship. The Edwardian period witnessed an attempt to bring the notion of an 'organic' society closer to reality, which lent itself to the increasing 'medicalisation' of the drink problem. In 1898 the state codified its conception of alcoholics as patients with the Second Habitual Drunkards Act which gave magistrates the power to commit

---

<sup>85</sup> A. Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 168.

<sup>86</sup> S. Cohen, *Images of Deviance* (Harmondsworth, 1971), p. 14.

<sup>87</sup> Buxton and Hoare, 'Temperance Reform' in C.F.G. Masterman, *The Heart of the Empire*, p. 171.

‘criminal’ inebriates to special reformatories.<sup>88</sup> Health professionals postulated that drinking was not just a pernicious social habit but also a disease that required specific scientific research. Previously medical opinion had erred in favour of drink with moderate doses of alcohol being seen as beneficial to overall health. Medical opinion, though, gradually changed, facilitated by a group of professionals who viewed alcohol with disdain on medical grounds. By 1904 the Society for the Study of Inebriety had over 270 doctors as members.<sup>89</sup> Indeed, several leading medical doctors, who shared many assumptions regarding the use of alcohol, contributed to the Physical Deterioration Report of 1904 which linked female insobriety with high rates of infant mortality.<sup>90</sup> The report stated: ‘the committee are convinced that the abuse of alcoholic stimulants is a most potent and deadly agent of physical deterioration.’<sup>91</sup>

If Britain was to breed enough fit children to ensure the survival of Empire, this situation could no longer continue. Founded amongst fears concerning the future of the nation’s youth, this progressive coalition argued that drink was a contagion affecting the health of the nation and, in social darwinist terms, an identifiable representation of weakness. As Lord Roseberry summarised, ‘a drink sodden population . . . is not the true basis of a prosperous Empire’.<sup>92</sup> It was believed that if the British nation was to fulfil her civilising mission, such an illness would have to be eradicated, as would the inefficiencies of the ‘drinking class’. Even the treatment received by criminals incarcerated for drink offences showed a shift away from a

---

<sup>88</sup> The Reformatories proved to be generally unsuccessful. Only 12 were ever built and during their existence they dealt with 4590 inmates compared with 250,000 prison committals annually in the UK for drunkenness. Nevertheless in 1909 a Departmental Committee still advocated some means of removing chronic drunkards who were a ‘source of social disorder and social contamination.’ See David Smith, ‘Drinking and Imprisonment in Late Victorian and Edwardian Scotland’, Histoire Sociale/Social History Volume 17, 1986, pp. 161-176.

<sup>89</sup> D. Gutzke, ‘The Cry of the Children’, p. 74.

<sup>90</sup> See D. Gutzke, ‘The Cry of the Children’, pp. 71-84.

<sup>91</sup> P. Snowden, Socialism and the Drink Question, p. 8.

<sup>92</sup> David Wright and Cathy Chorniauwry, ‘Women and Drink in Edwardian England’, Historical Papers/Communication Historiques, (Canada) 1985, p. 124.

purely punitive to a medical approach, fostered by an increased appreciation of the wider societal forces operating on drunkards before they came before the police magistrates.<sup>93</sup> By the Edwardian era the influence of the state was recognised as a means to help the individual overcome his or her own debilitating habit to ensure continued national prosperity.

These changes were echoed politically by the transition from old Gladstonian Liberalism to New Liberalism. Aimed at alleviating the physical deficiencies of the lower orders of society, the welfare legislation of 1906-1911 was an unprecedented development in national social policy. In providing old age pensions, unemployment insurance, and national health insurance, the British government undertook for the first time to make payments to the poor as a right of citizenship. At the heart of this Liberalism lay a hatred of the very idea of drunkenness. The ‘mechanical potentiality’ of the state had finally been demonstrated; the question seemed to be where would it stop?

Increasingly interventionist policy ran counter to the traditional nonconformist attitude to the drink question. Although nonconformity still exerted some influence over Edwardian society it had declined in importance since the 1890s and this acceptance of societal responsibility merely hastened its demise. Nonconformist thought articulated the personal morality required to abstain from alcohol; temperance thus remained a moral issue absolved from any notion of requisite social amelioration. Drunkenness was seen as an all-explaining evil which led to a multitude of other sins rather than as the possible outcome or manifestation of social conditions.<sup>94</sup> Notions of the medicalisation of the problem were anathema to traditional nonconformists who continued to believe that drinking was indisputably sinful. The drink debate had

---

<sup>93</sup> See D. Smith, ‘Drinking and Imprisonment in Late Victorian and Edwardian Scotland’, pp. 161-176.

<sup>94</sup> W.R. Lambert, Drink and Sobriety in Victorian Wales, p. 154.

progressed, however, and nonconformist beliefs were subsequently left behind, only relevant to a few, who, nevertheless, retained a certain degree of influence within British politics.

The question must be asked what was the point of the temperance movement when so much of its ideology was now incorporated into the agenda of social reformers? When Sir Wilfred Lawson, President of the UKA, lost his seat in the election of October 1900 he declared 'there is nothing whatever in the result of the election which needs to cause the Temperance Party any discouragement'.<sup>95</sup> He was, like most defeated politicians, wrong. The temperance movement as a political organisation was subsumed under other political parties developing social reform agenda. Attempts to end the ideological paralysis which handicapped the movement failed.<sup>96</sup> Arguments concerning drink were now transmitted to a population willing to engage with different views about social reform. In newspapers much greater attention was given to wider social questions precipitated by a vast increase in the number of readers and contributors to the national press. The period 1881-1911 saw a quadrupling of the newspaper reading public, together with an increase in the number of journalists, authors and editors.<sup>97</sup> All the leading newspapers gave extended coverage to community issues and engaged in constructive debate as to how problems could be resolved. Nevertheless, social investigations ensured that drink remained at the forefront of contemporary discussion. Various governments and politicians of every persuasion believed they could resolve the issue. Attention must now focus on these attempts.

---

<sup>95</sup> G.P. Williams and G.T. Broke, Drinking in Great Britain, p. 13.

<sup>96</sup> See D. Fahey, 'Drink and the Meaning of Reform', p. 51.

<sup>97</sup> J. Harris, 'The Transition to High Politics in English Social Policy 1880-1914', in M. Bentley and J. Stevenson, (eds.), High and Low Politics in Modern Britain (Oxford, 1983), p. 61.

The 1896 Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing marks a watershed in the history of the drink problem. It was established to consider the operation and administration of licensing laws and to suggest modifications if required. This was a narrow remit yet one which offered an opportunity for the trade to present their views and demonstrate their willingness for reform. It also allowed the temperance movement, despite an evident split between prohibitionists and restrictionists, to again elucidate upon the evils of drink. The Royal Commission was a public demonstration that progress towards the resolution of the 'drink problem' was in the interests of all parties and of society in general. However, behind this public demonstration of progressive intent lay the harsh realities of political stagnation and calculation. The government committed to nothing by establishing the commission but could point towards possible improvement whilst the commission was sitting. The composition of the commission, with eight temperance reformers, eight representatives of the trade and eight neutrals to give each body a fair hearing, seems predisposed to eventual disagreement since neither side was going to abandon their principles completely and subjugate themselves to the whim of the opposition. The commission provides a neat illustration of the complexities involved in the drink question. After three years, 259 witnesses, 74,451 oral questions at a cost of £7,880 17s. 10d., the commission produced nine volumes of evidence, but was split into two opposed factions, who met in separate rooms and produced two divergent and partially contradictory reports.<sup>98</sup> These reports escalated disagreement as opposed to creating a settlement. One of the most extensive official inquiries undertaken in Britain had ended in a fudge with no clear resolution evident.

---

<sup>98</sup> See J. Greenaway, Drink and British Politics since 1830: A Study in Policy Making, pp. 59-68 for an assessment of the political significance of the reports.

The Royal Commission is representative of the trend toward increasing governmental and societal investigation and inquiry into the drink problem. In the Majority Report, signed by seventeen participants, eight directly concerned with the trade, they concluded that 'it is undeniable that a gigantic evil remains to be remedied and hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation'.<sup>99</sup> The stage had been reached when even the trade, whose livelihoods depended on the sale of liquor, was at least willing to admit that some reform was required, another example of the general shift in the debate towards greater regulation and a greater public acceptance of social responsibility. As The Times reported in 1901 'other social questions occasionally slumber and die, but the Temperance question never rests . . . the general current of public opinion – so far as it can be gauged – seems rather in favour of doing something'.<sup>100</sup>

Licensing legislation, however, was patchy and modest in its scope. The Licensing Act of 1902 changed the laws on drunkenness, improved the machinery of licensing, brought all 'off' licenses under the magistrates' control and registered clubs. In the debate considering the Bill, Charles Tritton, a Conservative, told the House of Commons:

I am an advocate for a sober nation. I know what a sober nation means. It means less sin and sorrow, less crime and cruelty, less pain and poverty, less ruin and wreckage. It means happier hearts and homes, and it means a people more fitted to cope successfully with those imperial responsibilities which whether we like them or not, are slowly but surely falling on this Empire.<sup>101</sup>

The bill indicates the growing trend towards the control of the drink trade in line with improving national efficiency.

In 1904 another Licensing Act established a compensation fund to pay off publicans whose licenses were not renewed by local magistrates financed by a levy on

---

<sup>99</sup> G.P. Williams and G.T. Broke, Drink in Great Britain, p. 6.

<sup>100</sup> The Times 31 August 1901.

<sup>101</sup> D. Wright and C. Chorniawry, 'Women and Drink in Edwardian England', p. 124.

every licensed house. This stemmed from magistrates' tendency to deny pubs a licence on the basis that they were seen as a corrupting social influence. However, the compensation fund was limited; thereby the number of licenses which the justices could reject was, by default, also limited. The Kennedy judgement established a precedent for generous compensation two or three times greater than the Inland Revenue had anticipated, thus further limiting the potential of the licensing act, and aiding publicans as they often received more than the actual pub was worth. This pseudo protection of the trade, as temperance activists saw it, under the guise of temperance legislation, resulted in the temperance movement opposing the measure.<sup>102</sup>

Licensing reductions were now official government policy but in the years 1905-1909 only one thousand licenses, two thirds of them beerhouses, were revoked annually.<sup>103</sup> The dearer the pub the higher the compensation and so the figure fell to nine hundred annually between 1910-1914.<sup>104</sup> Paradoxically the Act, rather than punish drink sellers, aided publicans in getting rid of unprofitable pubs. It is unsurprising then that the trade confirmed its support for the Unionist cause. In December 1905 the Licensed Trade News commented 'the trade cannot . . . cast off its allegiance to a party which has been just, fair and equitable in its attitude'.<sup>105</sup>

The 1906 'Liberal landslide' general election, which saw the pro-trade Tories receive a bloody nose, benefited the temperance cause. At this point Henry Carter, later a prominent member of the CCB, began to immerse himself in the study of Licensing Law.<sup>106</sup> In 1908 a controversial Licensing Act was proposed, which sought

---

<sup>102</sup> See D. Fahey, 'Temperance and the Liberal Party – Lord Peel's Report 1899', The Journal of British Studies, Vol. 10, No. 2, May 1971, pp. 132-159.

<sup>103</sup> D. Gutzke, Protecting the Pub, p. 156.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* p. 156.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* p. 108.

<sup>106</sup> E.C. Unwin, Henry Carter CBE: A Memoir (London, 1955), pp. 22-26.

to reform the 1904 bill. This measure restricted compensation, accelerated and expanded licensing reduction in order to reduce the number of licensed premises by a third, raised licence fees and permitted local referenda on licensing options. The House of Lords eventually rejected the legislation. The trade was thus able to present itself as an industry hounded by an unrelenting movement intent on running it down. In response, it organised protests in London against the Bill. This proposed legislation was justified by the great increase in the number of licenses in the late nineteenth century, which encouraged the viewpoint amongst temperance and religious leaders, magistrates, police constables and doctors that more licenses had merely encouraged rampant insobriety.<sup>107</sup> The bill was so controversial that The Times reported that ‘clearly the heart of the people is stirred as it can be stirred neither by religion nor patriotism nor tariff reform, nor even by Chinese slavery nor by anything but beer.’<sup>108</sup> The trade’s feeling of persecution was compounded by the 1909 budget which greatly increased licence duties.<sup>109</sup> But were these concerns over drinking valid in light of a consideration of falling alcohol consumption during the period 1900-1910?

Both a long and short-term decline are evident, despite drink prices remaining relatively constant between 1870-1914 with beer at 2 1/2d a pint, spirits averaging 3s 4d a pint (proof) and wine averaging 3d a pint.<sup>110</sup> Per capita consumption from 1875 to 1913 declined with regard to beer by 17 per cent, spirits by 46 per cent and wines by 53 per cent. In the short term, The Statist calculated that between 1900 and 1908 per capita consumption of beer fell by 18.2 per cent.<sup>111</sup> Hardened drinkers, who exhibited the battle scars of excessive over exuberance and were often laid low by alcoholism or cirrhosis of the liver, were 13 per cent less prevalent in 1914 than in the

<sup>107</sup> D. Gutzke, Protecting the Pub, p. 45.

<sup>108</sup> The Times 4 April 1908.

<sup>109</sup> D. Gutzke, Protecting the Pub, pp. 173-174.

<sup>110</sup> A.E. Dingle, ‘Drink and Working Class Living Standards in Britain 1870-1914’, p. 611.

<sup>111</sup> T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson, The British Brewing Industry (Cambridge, 1994), p. 295.

early 1880s.<sup>112</sup> This suggests a decline in sustained drinking in the late nineteenth century but an overall trend of declining consumption is especially evident in the years leading up to the war. From 1900-1904 per capita consumption of beer in gallons was 30.2, from 1905-1909 27.3, declining even further from 1910-1913 to 26.9.<sup>113</sup> A Parliamentary Paper issued prior to the budget in 1909 stated that ‘The diminishing consumption of alcoholic liquors, though to some extent attributable to the recent depression in trade is principally the result of a continuing change in the habits of the people which has been in progress for some time and seems likely to be permanent.’<sup>114</sup> The people themselves were evidently rendering the necessity of government intervention redundant.

The pub also faced increased competition from new centres of leisure encouraged by the influence of ‘non institutionalised’ temperance. Counter attractions, a concept, or at least a terminology, that originated in the temperance movement, proved to be increasingly popular in a world in which service capitalism was prospering. As Austen Chamberlain commented in his budget speech of 1905:

I think the mass of our people are beginning to find other ways of expending some proportion of the time and money which used previously to be spent in the public house. No change has been more remarkable in the habits of the people than the growing attendance in the last fifteen years at outdoor games and sports and large places of public entertainment like theatres, music halls and so forth, which, though not conducted on strictly temperance lines, do not lend themselves to the consumption of drink or offer it as their chief attraction. Again the extension of cheap railway fares and the enormous growth in cheap excursions absorb a further portion of the money which used to be formerly spent on drink.<sup>115</sup>

In 1912 one Brewery Chairman, David Faber of Strong of Ramsey, concluded that ‘the times are different – your old toper who would sit in the public house until

---

<sup>112</sup> D. Gutzke, ‘Rhetoric and reality: The Political Influence of British Brewers 1832-1914’, *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 9, part 1, 1990, p. 98.

<sup>113</sup> T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson, *The British Brewing Industry*, p. 30.

<sup>114</sup> G.P. Williams and G.T. Broke, *Drink in Great Britain*, p. 39.

<sup>115</sup> T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson, *The British Brewing Industry*, p. 39.

closing time is gradually dying out and is not being replaced. Popular amusements, such as picture shows, have multiplied.’<sup>116</sup> It is clear that the pub was no longer the sole social pursuit of the working class male, albeit the pub and drinking remained an adjunct to other social pleasures.

The increased reduction of licenses was also a longer-term trend. From 1886 to 1914 the number of on-licenses fell from 104,792 to 88,445 whilst the population had increased by 44 per cent from 1881 to 1911.<sup>117</sup> Liberal attitudes, as Leonard Hobhouse expressed in 1911, saw an ‘obvious and elementary duty (on the part of the state) to remove the sources of temptation and to treat as antisocial in the highest degree every attempt to make profit out of human weakness, misery and wrong doing.’<sup>118</sup> ‘This argument’, he added, ‘went beyond the problem of drink, it applies to all cases where overwhelming impulse is apt to master the will’.<sup>119</sup> It was argued by Liberal progressives that the state, by allowing the opening of multiple hostelries, had vastly increased working class temptation. Gutzke has argued that this attitude ‘derived from convictions of inferior working class morality and of drinkers’ impaired powers of resistance’.<sup>120</sup> This opinion was popular with temperance activists who often recounted the tale of the poor woman who complained ‘I can get my husband, sir, past two public houses, but I cannot get him past twenty.’<sup>121</sup> These restrictive measures were not always successful, however, as shown by the failure of the 1908 act.

In the 1900s, due to the restrictive tendencies of successive governments, a ‘scramble for licensed property’ resulted. As the number of licenses was reduced their

---

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. p. 307.

<sup>117</sup> J. Vaizey, *The Brewing Industry 1886-1951* (London, 1960), p. 10.

<sup>118</sup> Martin J. Wiener, *Reconstructing the Criminal: Culture, Law and Policy in England 1830-1914* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 189.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid. p. 189.

<sup>120</sup> J. Vaizey, *The Brewing Industry*, p. 45.

<sup>121</sup> B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*, p. 349.

commercial value increased and larger breweries began to buy up smaller houses to ensure their retention of commercial dominance. Many breweries, following the example set by Guinness in 1886, floated their companies. After all, a brewer could not make much money if there were no pubs willing to sell his produce. This became known as the 'tied house system' which began due to Justices of the Peace demanding improvements in premises before they would grant a licence. So great was the desire to secure pubs that one shareholder conceded in 1888 'there had been a tremendous run upon free houses and in the course of a short time there would scarcely be a house worth buying in the market'.<sup>122</sup> Time proved him correct. By 1900, 75 per cent pubs were 'tied houses'. By 1914 this figure had increased to 90 per cent.<sup>123</sup> The trade was becoming increasingly centralised, with larger brewers exhibiting monopolistic tendencies that gave little credence to their proclamations of acting in the public interest. A reputation for greed, above all due to the trade's actions during this licensed property boom, was hard to deny.<sup>124</sup> In tough times brewers and the new influx of businessmen in the trade had responded to protect their business by acting in an efficient and rational manner in response to the unpredictable consumer market of the time. This in turn placed obligations on brewers to make pubs more hospitable in order to attract a more diverse clientele. This centralisation of the trade went further with unprecedented amalgamation and merger amongst brewers. The number of brewers from 1880-1914 fell by 44 per cent whilst average output increased by 130 per cent.<sup>125</sup>

As a result of the decline in consumption this period also witnessed a prominent decline in sales and decreased spending on alcohol. From over 15 per cent

---

<sup>122</sup> A. Crawford and R. Thorne, *Birmingham Pubs 1890-1930* (Birmingham, 1975), p. 4.

<sup>123</sup> L. Richmond and A. Turton, (eds.), *The Brewing Industry: A Guide to Historical Records* (Manchester and New York, 1990), p. 8.

<sup>124</sup> D. Gutzke, *Protecting the Pub*, p. 243.

<sup>125</sup> L. Richmond and A. Turton, (eds.), *The Brewing Industry: A Guide to Historical Records*, p. 11.

of total working class family expenditure at the crest in 1876, spending on drink declined to under 9 per cent in 1910. Popular beers such as Burton pale ale also suffered. The early 1900s witnessed a yearly decline in sales, by 4 per cent in 1900-1901, 3 per cent in 1901-1902, and 7 per cent in 1904-1905. By 1910 sales had fallen by 40 per cent across the decade, to well under half their early 1880s peak.<sup>126</sup> Bass saw its sales fall by over 26 per cent during 1902-1910. As the Brewers' Journal commented in 1910 'the year just closed will undoubtedly go down in history as the blackest without exception in the annals of the brewing and licensed trade'.<sup>127</sup>

This decline suggests that brewery profits were hit hard, but the work of T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson has uncovered an interesting paradox of sluggish output and sales yet rising profits for the larger breweries. The decline of private brewing meant that consequent output figures of the industry understated the growth potential for common or commercial brewers since their total market increased from rather less than eight million barrels in 1830 to almost thirty million by 1900. Secondly, by 1914, although there were still around 1100 breweries, the industry was dominated by only 54, which were turning out more than a hundred times the minimum threshold qualification for a commercial brewery, 1000 barrels. Financially then, the trade was not in absolutely dire straits as the industry offered continued financial rewards. Management strategy was the decisive factor in determining a brewery's overall success and profitability.<sup>128</sup>

Falling consumption and sales precipitated a growing sense amongst some progressive brewers that customer's tastes were changing and that they expected a pub to provide more than just drink. As Sydney Neville, a brewer with reformist inclinations, commented:

---

<sup>126</sup> T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson, The British Brewing Industry, p. 304.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.* p. 293.

<sup>128</sup> T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson, 'Profitability in the Brewing Industry 1885-1914', p. 156.

I became more and more concerned at the evidence of drunkenness and disorder which was too often obvious at ‘turning out time’ and I began to understand the depth of prejudice against the Trade which had led the social workers to propound their policy of prohibition as the only solution. I also appreciated the force of the criticism, becoming more and more general, of the low average standard of public houses in working class districts and of their failure to supply a more varied range of refreshments. My conviction grew that unless the trade could improve the general standard of these houses, prejudice was justifiable; and that higher standards and better surroundings would themselves encourage sobriety.<sup>129</sup>

To gain custom publicans relied upon generous measures, exhibited by the emergence of the ‘long pull’.<sup>130</sup> This encouraged new notions of progressive intent. As Neville continued:

There was a growing opinion that the public houses ought to cater for the supply of other refreshments beside beer and spirits, and should be suitable for women and perhaps children. However the extreme temperance party vigorously and usually successfully opposed any attempt to improve the standards of service; they were still alleging that “the best public house is the worst public house.” . . . By improving our houses and our services we stood to attract new customers and broaden the basis of our trade. I was convinced that the brewers needed a constructive instead of a defensive policy, that it was foolish and indeed wrong to wait for attack and never put forward alternative proposals.<sup>131</sup>

Neville may have been writing through hazy hindsight, but his work indicates the reformist inclination in the drink trade. When interaction between classes occurred, the middle class reforming instinct proliferated. Associations aimed at reforming the public house had formed in the early 1900s. For example, in May 1901, Albert Henry Grey, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl Grey, founded the Public House Trust Company in Northumberland, which eventually became the Central Public House Trust Association covering the whole country. The trust maintained that ‘a public house as a social institution is a public necessity, and that consequently it is desirable to convert it as far as possible from a mere drinking bar into a well conducted club.’<sup>132</sup> Another successful reforming

<sup>129</sup> Sydney Neville, *Seventy Rolling Years* (London, 1958), p. 64.

<sup>130</sup> Whereby landlords were extra generous in their categorisation of what constituted a pint.

<sup>131</sup> S. Neville, *Seventy Rolling Years*, p. 67.

<sup>132</sup> M. Girouard, *Victorian Pubs*, p. 186.

association was the 'People's Refreshment Houses Association' (PRHA) which acquired existing licensees and reformed them by providing temperance drinks and food as well as beer under the management of a public trust. By 1907 the PRHA had reformed 233 premises. In 1909 the True Temperance Association (TTA) was formed with the same intent on reforming the public house. Each of these organisations shared a common belief that reform would premeditate an improvement in the respectability of those using the pub.

Changing consumer tastes were reflected by the ready availability of non-alcoholic drinks in pubs. By the 1890s most pubs offered food as well as Bovril, tea, coffee and ginger beer alongside alcoholic drinks. Prior to the First World War tea consumption rose from 6.07lb per person per year in 1900 to 6.89lb in 1914 with tea imports increasing by 160 per cent over the period 1870-1913.<sup>133</sup> It was sufficiently realistic to understand that the function of the pub was not just to sell alcohol. As Hepple Hall noted in 1878:

Persons in the humbler walks and occupations of life, who were not habitual drunkards were often compelled to frequent the public house because in this class of establishment alone were supplied the ordinary and natural cravings for society, the news of the day, and a place where they could pass a sociable hour.<sup>134</sup>

The competition for working class expenditure was increasingly fierce. For example, the amount of money spent on tobacco increased from £13.5 million in 1870 to £42 million by 1914.<sup>135</sup> Alternatives to drink were increasing and counter attractions were having a clear affect on social habit.

All did not bode well for the licensed trade. Declining consumption, slightly tempered by a small recovery from 1910-1913, according to some statistics, brought about, according to Dingle, by an increase in wages, a falling number of licenses and

---

<sup>133</sup> J. Burnett, *Liquid Pleasures*, p. 64.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.* p. 171.

<sup>135</sup> A. Dingle, 'Drink and Working Class Living Standards', p. 620.

a hostile taxation policy, suggest that the brewing industry was struggling and faced a fight for its future.<sup>136</sup> Falling beer consumption, together with excessive investment in licensed properties, served to create a depression in the industry further serving to accentuate the tax burdens of 1904 and 1909. Drink consumption was still at significantly lower levels than those experienced from 1870 onwards and absorbed a much smaller proportion of total purchasing power than previously.<sup>137</sup> The monetary situation, as noted above, is more complex. These dark realities facing the trade did not match the longstanding and moralistic perception perpetuated by the temperance movement of the invidious brewer and publican facilitating the moral and physical decline of the nation. As Gutzke contends, the trade had a ‘much vaunted but largely illusory power’ brought about by a ‘certain amount of delusion on behalf of its critics’.<sup>138</sup> Nevertheless the trade, in fact, was a large contributor to the Treasury, with almost one third of state revenue coming from alcohol taxation.<sup>139</sup> As long as the industry retained this economic power its future, however unstable, was almost guaranteed.

Drinking as a social activity was undoubtedly becoming less popular. Although history shows this decline, the perception of the time as propagated by temperance and social reformers was that the trade was expanding its negative social effect on society and exerting an unhealthy influence over certain political organisations. This was represented by the prominent position of several leading brewing magnates within the political parties. For example Asquith was married to Margot Tennant of the Tennant’s brewing family. Society was apparently fixated by insobriety and drunkenness. The two interpretations do not match up. The drink

---

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. p. 620.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. p. 621.

<sup>138</sup> D. Gutzke, ‘Rhetoric and Reality’, p. 98.

<sup>139</sup> B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians, p. 60.

problem was overblown and the foundations of moral panic established in the years prior to the First World War. Within discussion of the issue assertion was much more common than appreciation of hard fact.

Moralistic Victorians had viewed drinkers with great suspicion and this showed little sign of abating in the Edwardian era. Moreover, the predominance of teetotal sentiment, just as it had prejudiced collaborative temperance attempts previously, still limited the potential of any temperance collaboration with the trade. Leif Jones, a liberal M.P. and temperance activist, urged M.P.s not to forget the lessons of the temperance movement when discussing the DORA (Amendment No. 3 Bill):

These societies have concentrated their attention upon the very problem which is now engaging the house and whether you agree with their conclusions or not at any rate, without prejudicing this question when it is necessary instantly to deal with the problem, the house would do well not to disregard wholly the experience of the temperance workers throughout the land during the last seventy or eighty years.<sup>140</sup>

With war approaching, two prominent criticisms of alcohol use retained their societal currency. The twin concerns of individual responsibility and the responsibility of the state had become enmeshed into a universal hostility towards the act of drinking, each with its own advocates, its own false prophets and its own believers. Within this environment stereotypes favoured by the middle and upper classes, together with the ideas of the temperance movement, prospered and ensured that working class consumption was misunderstood, and tainted by misconceptions which had little grounding in objective fact. It was easy to believe stories of excessive drinking because they were commonly believed to be traits of the working class - 'the other' which was unknown but whose social pursuits evidently legitimised the criticisms made of them. The working class entered the war with their reputation

---

<sup>140</sup> Hansard 10 May 1915.

tainted by misperceptions. These misperceptions pervaded public opinion ensuring the creation of an atmosphere conducive towards the introduction of reformist policy. The drink problem was thus as much about class and perception of behaviour as about drink itself. It was, to an extent, a middle class creation based around middle class social mores. The true impact of the pre-war debate on drink can only truly be appreciated when one considers the type of arguments that emerged concerning alcohol when the war began. Only then can the impact of temperance ideology be fully appreciated and assessed.

## **Chapter Two: Vodka, Absinthe and Drunkenness on Britain's Streets in 1914: A Tale of Fear and Exaggeration?**

The war began calmly. Readers of The Times were assured that stocks of champagne in France were safe and that 1914 would be a very good year similar to the year of the Franco Prussian war.<sup>1</sup> The Wine Trade Review concurred, describing the year as one of 'exceptional quality', adding that the vintage would have the additional prestige of 'the war year'.<sup>2</sup> This relaxed attitude did not last. The onset of conflict heralded the beginnings of a new epoch in the drink debate. Beer drinkers in particular were in for a hard time. The early months of the war witnessed a renewal of anti-drink campaigning and an escalating press interest in the issue. Letter pages were filled by anxious correspondents distressed by continued drinking supposedly indicative of a decline in moral standards on the home front. When war came the language of moral virtue rang truer than ever.

Concentrating on the period of August 1914 to March 1915 this chapter will consider the earliest political and social responses to the drink problem during the war. The communal response to drinking will be evaluated in the context of the comparisons made between the abstinence efforts made by both France and Russia and how this affected societal anxiety over the problem. It will be argued that the portrayal of the drink problem relied upon emerging totems of moral panic, such as 'the drunken soldier', and led to widespread fear mongering and the perception of a national crisis during these months. It will be contended that simmering undercurrents of hostility to drink emerged into the public sphere once more via these easily communicated stereotypes, which aided the swift transfusion of anti-drink thought to society at large. How groups, which had long been involved in the drink question,

---

<sup>1</sup> G. DeGroot, Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War (London, 1996), p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> The Wine Trade Review 15 August 1914.

responded to this changing climate of intolerance will also be considered.

What had altered was the environment in which these opinions now circulated. To the unforgiving eyes of national efficiency proponents, drinking was a paramount cause of inefficiency and a threat to a nation at war. This view dictated that in a titanic struggle each inhibiting factor had to be eliminated. Previously the drink issue had been lying in wait, hiding in the shadows, emerging periodically to stalk society. Within days of the outbreak of hostilities there was no hideaway where the problem could continue to linger, as the beacon of national efficiency shone brighter, exposing presumed social deficiencies for all to see.

The war shattered Britain's sense of security. Renewed attention was focussed from the outset upon the drink problem. The war was meant to be a renewal and an exposition of the nation's noble values but, instead, drunkenness brought uncertainty. As drink was now a national issue, important to the national interest, debates concerning alcohol garnered a much wider audience. To be sure, temperance advocates still guided the debate but now most people held an opinion over the issue. As the Dundee Advertiser observed, after less than two weeks of war:

The movement in favour of early closing is not a puritanical movement. It has the support of multitudes of men and women who have the scantiest sympathy with Puritanical sentiment and who are simply conscious of the moral and economic incongruity of maintaining the fullest facilities for the waste of money on intoxicating drink at a time when the fate of the nation is in the balance.<sup>3</sup>

It is undeniable, as Arthur Marwick observes, that the war acted as a fillip for renewed endeavour on the part of temperance advocates.<sup>4</sup> The minutes of the UKA from the period are peppered with references to new publicity campaigns. Religious groups, often linked closely to temperance organisations, were also swift to join in

---

<sup>3</sup> Dundee Advertiser 17 August 1914.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Marwick, The Deluge: British Society and the First World War (London, 1965), p. 50.

condemnation of alcohol. The war offered them the opportunity to propose temperance solutions to assist in the prosecution of the conflict. For the moral establishment drink was not heroic, neither was it Christian or manly and thus should not be tolerated by a society at war. This new link between abstinence and patriotism benefited the temperance movement allowing it to cloak itself in patriotic garb even if the introduction of temperance measures remained its primary motive. This duplicity lies at the heart of much that will be considered henceforth.

The power of the trade had often been overestimated and this demonisation showed no sign of abating. The Spectator magazine, which campaigned for prohibition during the war, printed a letter which is characteristic of the hyperbole concerning the influence of the drink industry:

Something must be done to free our country from the power of the trade, which, with its immense financial resources and powerful organisation, has so far resisted every attack . . . I am possessed with a fear that the war will drag on until we as a nation have attacked and overcome this foe within our gates.<sup>5</sup>

This form of criticism was not uncommon during the war. Two days into the war a Master Douglas Gray, despite his modest rhyming skills, won a poetry contest in the Alliance News with an entry entitled The Curse of the Drink:

With voices noisy and loud,  
With toasts degraded and rude,  
The public house customer drinks away  
The money that should purchase food.  
Drink, drink, drink,  
Comes the call from the throat that is dry,  
Unmindful of being on misery's brink  
In squalor and dirt they lie.<sup>6</sup>

The UKA liked the poem because it succinctly summarised the major arguments against drink. Douglas Gray could not have known, however, how frequently these

---

<sup>5</sup> The Spectator 6 November 1914.

<sup>6</sup> Alliance News 6 August 1914.

arguments would be discussed during the next few years and how mainstream most of his ideas were to become. War magnified the temperance ideal, its moralistic inclinations feeding into a national consensus regarding national efficiency.

**WAR ON DRINK!**

**New Series of Leaflets & Posters**  
ISSUED BY THE  
**UNITED KINGDOM ALLIANCE.**

An entirely new series of **ALLIANCE WAR LEAFLETS** and **POSTERS** has been issued as under—

Leaflet No.

1. WASTE.
2. THE GREAT DRINK WAR.
3. THE NATIONAL RELIEF FUND.
4. THE "PUB" IN WAR TIME.
5. (Out of Print.)
6. EARLIER CLOSING.
7. EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL.
8. RUSSIA: A SHINING EXAMPLE.
9. LORD KITCHENER APPEALS TO THE NATION.
10. TO A FALSE PATRIOT.

**LEAFLETS:** The price of the Leaflets is 2/- per 1,000 (carriage paid); 7/6 for 5,000, and as a special inducement to Societies to assist in circulating the Leaflets a gift of an additional 1,000 will be made with each order for 5,000 or multiple of 5,000. For example, on an order for 20,000 a gift of 4,000 additional will be included. All parcels carriage paid.

**POSTERS:** Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10 of the Leaflets are reproduced in Poster form (size 40in. by 30in.). The price of the Posters is 3d. each (post free); 2/- per dozen; 7/6 for 50. All parcels carriage paid.

**POSTERS:** Nos. 8 and 9 are also printed in Double Crown size (30in. by 20in.) price 1d., post free 1/4d., or 1/- per dozen.

ORDERS AND REMITTANCES TO  
**George B. Wilson, Secretary,**  
United Kingdom Alliance, 16, Deansgate,  
MANCHESTER.

**Figure 3: This advertisement by the UKA is demonstrative of the new momentum the war gave to the Temperance movement.**

The First World War witnessed the growth of the state. In order to prosecute the war successfully, state intervention was used to influence areas of public and private life which had previously escaped intrusion and became an accepted aspect of

life in wartime Britain. The early months of the conflict witnessed a deep-rooted hostility developing within public debate towards continued drinking during the conflict. Previously, as Reverend Joseph Keating noted, ‘total abstinence, like every other good cause, had suffered from the advocacy of the fanatical and ill instructed’, but now public fears about waste and defeat were enmeshed with this social issue, even though the situation was no worse than it had been previously.<sup>7</sup> The drink problem had changed shape even though its essential characteristics, and the debates which constituted it, remained the same. Notions of a communal responsibility had emerged in the 1890s and its impact upon the individual and his or her relationship to the nation meant that people understood that the individual had duties toward the state but that the state also had a reciprocal duty towards the individual. As Keating argued:

The drink question concerns in varying degrees both the individual and the community and so it has many aspects – moral, sociological, economic, historical, political. It may sometimes be the duty of the individual to determine very definitely, in his own interest, to what extent he should make use of alcoholic beverages. It is always the task of the community, in view of the general welfare, to settle how far it should permit the drink traffic.<sup>8</sup>

This determinate relationship was at the heart of the alcohol problem in 1914. It is no wonder, then, that so many were interested in offering their opinion as to the best way to restrict drunkenness.

Most assessments were decidedly negative and uncomplimentary. The Archbishop of Canterbury in October 1914 stated that ‘we are, in many places face to face with a worse condition of intemperance than we have been accustomed to for many years’.<sup>9</sup> Within the press much was made of reports from journalists that exposed the moral anarchy that drink facilitated within urban centres. Publications exposing this drunkenness struck at the rationale of the modern urban planner, whose

---

<sup>7</sup> Reverend Joseph Keating, The Drink Question (London, 1914), p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> M. Murray, Drink and the War: From the Patriotic Point of View (London, 1915), p. 37.

streets and cities were configured to preserve order in regulated public space. As Arthur Mee and Reverend J. Stuart Holden observed:

There is to be seen within our towns and cities, as these words are being written, the most appalling spectacle of woe that ever eyes can look upon. The pavements in our streets are made impassable by long queues of people, regulated by police, waiting their turn outside the whisky shops. ‘I wish I could not get it’ cried one poor woman bitterly, and another, fresh from prison, was heard to proclaim ‘they say we shouldn’t be able to get it after Christmas,’ and hidden from the streets, behind these brick walls that hid the tragedy of the drink ruined homes of England, every daily paper tells us what is happening.<sup>10</sup>

Mee was an anti-drink writer, and later the founding member of the Strength of Britain movement, so it is unsurprising that he draws attention to a woman bemoaning the fact that she can still buy alcohol. He simultaneously points toward a future in which this no longer need be the case by highlighting this ‘lost’ woman whilst reinforcing conceptions of inferior working class morality. He alerts the reader to the problem of ‘drink ruined homes’ which society continues to ignore even though ‘every daily paper tells us what is happening’. This in itself suggests that only a part of the problem is ‘public’ and thus visible. His work is a classic case of fear-mongering propaganda that emerged during the war. The exposition of this scandal allowed the media to shape public opinion. The Daily Mirror pointed out that:

In Paris the cafes are being closed at 8 o’clock, and I think it would be much better for us if our public houses were closed at that time – or even altogether – for the present. Walking from the Strand to Victoria station last evening between 6 and 7 o’clock I saw more half tipsy men than one usually sees in a month. If this type of man is too selfish and lazy to trouble about his wife and family, I think it is time the government stepped in and made him do something else with his money than spend it on beer.<sup>11</sup>

By printing such provocative news stories the press made the issue current and worthy of public debate.

---

<sup>10</sup> Arthur Mee and J. Stuart Holden, Defeat or Victory?: The Strength of Britain book (London, 1917), p. 23.

<sup>11</sup> The Daily Mirror 15 August 1914.

In newspapers and journals, other contributors also sought to alert the general populace to the social costs of drinking. An editorial in the Dundee Advertiser related:

A very large amount of correspondence has reached us showing that during a national emergency like the present there should be early closing every night of the week . . . Drunkenness in the streets has been deplorably common and has not been confined to the civilian population. The country is urged to avoid every form of waste and the reduction of every kind of luxurious living is preached as a national duty. Liquor consumption is an unmitigated waste and it is perfectly certain that if the public houses are open on Saturday an enormous quantity of wages will be wasted which should be reversed for possibly hard emergencies before us.<sup>12</sup>

Each communal shortcoming was seen in relation to necessary national sacrifice. Evidently the nation, and particularly the government, was not doing enough.

Social Darwinism determined that the superior nation would emerge victorious in war. A reliance on alcohol was thus deemed to be a casual admission that the nation did not deserve, or want, to be victorious. As A.W. Richardson stated, ‘a growing slackness and torpor seemed everywhere apparent, and the resourceful energy and initiative which had once characterised us, seemed to have passed to other peoples’.<sup>13</sup> Indeed this problem was exacerbated by the widespread belief that the war would be over quickly. Britain’s seemingly lackadaisical attitude to drink control contrasted unfavourably to the apparently rapid and efficient measures implemented both in France and in Russia that quickly gained widespread publicity and admiration.

In Russia swift action was taken to abolish the government vodka monopoly by the Tsar, who had been described by The New Statesman as the ‘biggest dram shop keeper in the world’, which resulted in the closing of over 26,000 vodka shops.<sup>14</sup> He was in a position to do so as in Russia the state was the sole seller of Vodka, and had a free hand to deal with its own business. One of the Russian

---

<sup>12</sup> Dundee Advertiser 12 August 1915.

<sup>13</sup> A.W. Richardson, The Nation and Alcohol (London, May 1916), p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> E.S. Turner, Dear Old Blighty (London, 1980), p. 86.

government's main motivations was the rabid drunken degeneracy which had afflicted the country during the ill-fated Russo-Japanese War of 1905. The decision was thus legitimised in terms of improvements in industrial and military efficiency, social welfare and by the potential for economic savings. Several pamphlets extolling the virtues of Russian abstinence emerged in Britain after the decision had been taken. In a pamphlet entitled Alcohol and the War: The Example of Russia, John Newton, an author with no great temperance standing, highlighted reports from Russia on the immediate benefits of abstinence. One report read:

There was never a drunken peasant or soldier to be seen, and in consequence the mobilisation was effected several days sooner than the official schedule time, and three weeks sooner than the German military staff anticipated. Hence the marvellous progress of the Russian armies, which upset the German calculations and relieved the pressure on the Allies in the Western fields of battle. <sup>15</sup>

The explicit implication was that military success was due to alcoholic abstinence. So too were untold social improvements that supposedly sprouted up throughout Russia. As one report taken from the *Novoye Vremya* suggests, 'The old women in the villages can hardly believe their eyes and ears, so changed are their menfolk. Not a hard word, not a row, but everywhere peace, kindness, and industry. War is said to be hell but this is like a foretaste of heaven.'<sup>16</sup> So great were the alleged benefits that emerged from prohibition that Henry Carter described the act as one of the 'greatest moral decisions of modern history'.<sup>17</sup> One must take these accounts with a pinch of salt, given the propagandistic nature of the writing, but at the time they seemed to accentuate the contrastingly slothful response of Britain to alcohol control.

---

<sup>15</sup> John Newton, Alcohol and the War: The Example of Russia (London, 1915).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> H. Carter, Europe's Revolt against Alcohol (London, 1916), p. 221.



**Figure 4: This cartoon aimed to maximise the propaganda potential of The Times' support for the prohibition of Vodka in Russia.**

Politicians and the press were keen to comment upon the positive benefits of Russian action. Lloyd George described it as 'a great act of national heroism and sacrifice'.<sup>18</sup>

In October 1914 The Scotsman reported:

In renouncing the sale of vodka and the profits arising from it, the Russian government have taken a step which shows both courage and confidence . . . the enforced sobriety of the people is itself proving a great economic gain. The money previously spent on a particularly demoralising beverage is now being saved and more constant application to work is producing larger gross earnings.<sup>19</sup>

In March 1915 The Times reported that 'Ministers have been greatly impressed by the moral gain achieved by the Russian suppression of Vodka'.<sup>20</sup> The argument that Russia had benefited from enforced abstinence was clear. Within Britain there was universal acclamation for Russia's actions, which forced the nation to look at each

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. 221.

<sup>19</sup> The Scotsman 22 October 1914.

<sup>20</sup> The Times 2 March 1915.

individual and community's respective contribution to the war effort. The Bishop of Manchester, in November 1914, noted: 'I have been most profoundly impressed by the action taken in Russia. It seems to me that a public act of that kind calls upon other nations to think and thinking to take right action.'<sup>21</sup> Similarly, John Newton asked, 'Is it too much to hope that an enlightened democracy may under the inspiration of so splendid an example, do an equally great and beneficial work for itself?'.<sup>22</sup> It was a bold move which implicitly challenged Britain to follow in her footsteps. Nevertheless the true extent of the sobriety of the Russian people was debateable when considering reports that emerged concerning the alleged 'widespread nature of Russian illicit distilling being carried out on a widespread scale'.<sup>23</sup> This aspect of the Russian experience did not corroborate with the temperate interpretation placed upon the banning of vodka and so was subjugated beneath the more important benefits that abstinence had supposedly brought.

This implicit challenge to Britain was made all the more explicit upon consideration of the action taken by France to tame its alcoholic excesses. Within France there had been a long-term concern over the use of strong liquors, particularly the consumption of absinthe. For fifty years absinthe had gained a 'fatal popularity' amongst sections of the French population with unfortunate consequences. With an alcoholic strength of between 47 and 72 per cent, absinthe was an extremely potent drink which temperance advocates pointed out had the potential for creating extreme harm, a trait which endeared it to some, but generally caused much consternation within French society.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, the presence of wormwood within the substance allegedly caused hallucinogenic trips if drunk in extreme quantities.

---

<sup>21</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 39.

<sup>22</sup> J. Newton, Alcohol and the War: The Example of Russia, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Dundee Advertiser 10 April 1915.

<sup>24</sup> H. Carter, Europe's Revolt Against Alcohol, p. 219.

The war, the favourable publicity towards the Russian example, and the awakening of temperance sentiment within Britain about the effects of drink upon the productiveness of the labouring classes, drew yet more public attention to the problem of French drink.<sup>25</sup> Carter elucidated upon the societal wreckage that absinthe left in its wake. He wrote ‘insanity has rapidly increased in France, and 20 per cent of the present inmates of French lunatic asylums became insane from drinking absinthe’.<sup>26</sup> The apparent effect upon children was even more alarming. As Carter observed: ‘In some districts even children drank it. In one communal school in Paris attended by the children of workmen, out of class of forty-nine averaging ten years of age thirty said they were in the habit of drinking absinthe.’<sup>27</sup> One can only speculate as to the effect of this pamphlet upon popular sentiment during wartime. Further attention was paid to absinthe’s effect upon crime, disease, productivity and military efficiency. Scare stories concerning murders undertaken by ‘absinthe fiends’ underlay moral concerns about the continued use of such fiery intoxicants.

A ‘Prohibition of Absinthe Bill’ swiftly emerged which described absinthe as the ‘internal enemy’ of France. By February 1915 the Chamber of Deputies quickly passed the measure and the Senate ratified it successfully. Further restrictions upon home distillation, increased tax on alcohol and a state monopoly of commercial alcohol quickly followed. These decisions found understandable favour among temperance advocates in Britain. Carter commented that ‘France now realises that to fight alcoholism is her urgent duty’.<sup>28</sup> Marr Murray, in a pamphlet Drink and the War: From the Patriotic Point of View, commented that:

It is not immediately that France will feel the benefit of her action in banning

---

<sup>25</sup> John Koren, ‘Drink Reform in Europe’, Atlantic Monthly, December 1917, p. 743.

<sup>26</sup> H. Carter, Europe’s Revolt Against Alcohol, p. 219.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* p. 219.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* p. 220.

these poisonous drinks. In ten years time, according to expert medical opinion, the birth rate will begin to show a steady rise, better and healthier babies will be born, the prisons and lunatic asylums will be less crowded and the nation will be happier and more prosperous.<sup>29</sup>

Temperance advocates argued that by prohibiting absinthe, France was guaranteeing her future. This sentiment is unsurprising given the hereditarian debate surrounding drink that had occurred in pre-war Britain. What was somewhat lost in the contemporary reaction to the act was that steps to deal with absinthe predated the war, but conflict acted as the catalyst for these measures to be implemented. Moreover, at the same time as absinthe was being barred, large supplies of wine were being ferried to the front to maintain morale.

That Russia and France had ‘dealt’ with the drink issue, yet Britain had not, irked the sentimentalities of those in favour of action at home. Marr Murray proclaimed that other nations had chosen ‘the path of victory’ whilst:

We have thrown away the winning power of the war. Into that ditch where our great allies have flung their powers of weakness we have flung our strength. In a ditch in France lies Absinthe, in a ditch in Russia lies Vodka, but beer and whisky swagger through the streets of Britain, and in the ditch we fling the power of victory.<sup>30</sup>

A sense of social anxiety and panic is evident throughout such accounts. Paranoid about Britain’s place in the world, campaigners presented the drink issue as being much more than a workingman enjoying a pint in a pub but as a symbolic totem of the decline of the British race. A moment of national reckoning had been reached yet nothing was being done. This created a sense of frustration, whose conduit to mainstream opinion was the media. Arthur Mee summarised the reaction to these measures when he wrote:

To this nation has now come the moment to decide. Whatever our fate, at least it will stand on the national record that there were not a few men and women

---

<sup>29</sup> M. Murray, *Drink and the War*, p. 27.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* p. 70.

in Britain who saw the truth when it was as clear as the sun at high noon, and who knew and proclaimed that the truth alone could keep us free.<sup>31</sup>

He asked ‘what good is an expanding Empire to a declining race?’.<sup>32</sup> These scaremongering views, although understandable given the context, were challenged by other commentators. Referring to these comparisons with France and Russia in an article entitled Drink Reform in Europe, John Koren argued:

Fertile imaginations have played with it, publicists have glorified the new found zeal for abstinence in co-belligerent countries, and often the writings reveal the clumsy hand of the propagandist who does not hesitate to make capital even out of desperate conditions.<sup>33</sup>

Brewers responded by drawing attention to the ‘mildness’ of beer in comparison to both absinthe and vodka and by pointing out that the French drank a gallon of spirits more per head than the British.<sup>34</sup>

The worldwide movement in favour of temperance was nevertheless enlivened by French and Russian action. An American cartoon of 1915 showed the anti-saloon campaigner Carrie Nation in the guise of Mars having destroyed a house labelled ‘French Absinthe’ and another called ‘Russian Vodka’ now bearing down on ‘Ye Olde English Inn.’<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> A. Mee and J. Stuart Holden, Defeat or Victory?, p. 9.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p. 80.

<sup>33</sup> J. Koren, ‘Drink Reform in Europe’, p. 739.

<sup>34</sup> The Brewers’ Gazette 16 March 1916.

<sup>35</sup> Jad Adams, Hideous Absinthe: A History of the Devil in a Bottle (London and New York, 2004), p. 214.

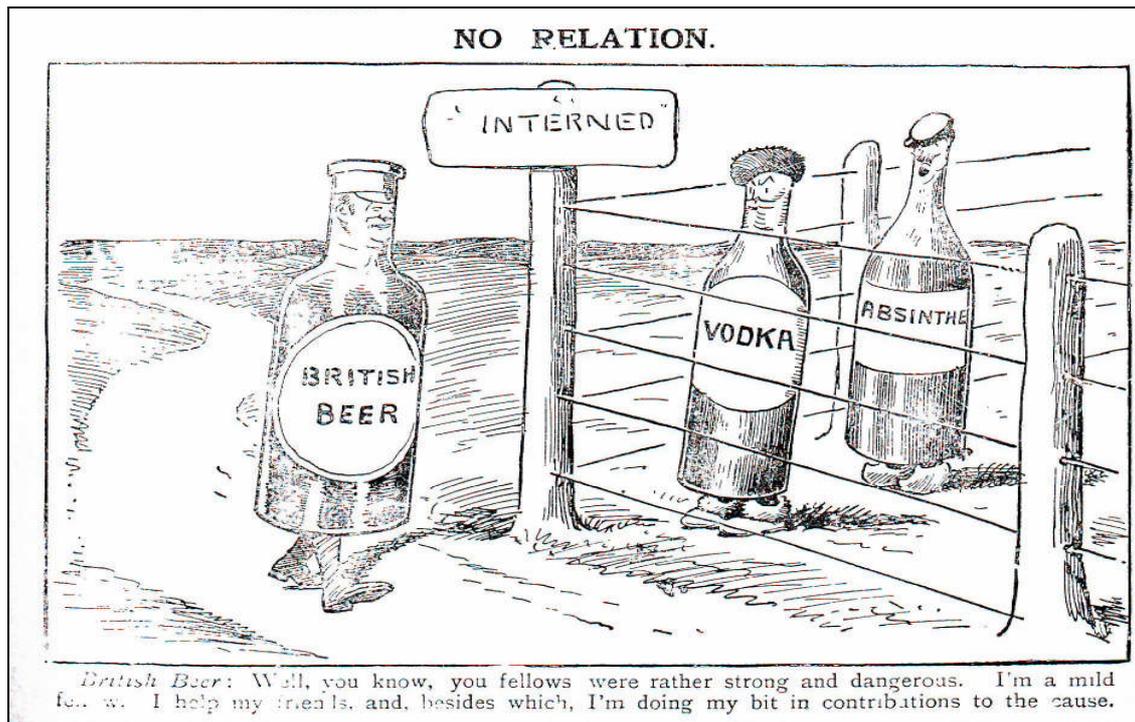


Figure 5: This cartoon was printed in The Brewers' Gazette and aimed to differentiate beer from Absinthe and Vodka due to its supposed 'mildness'.

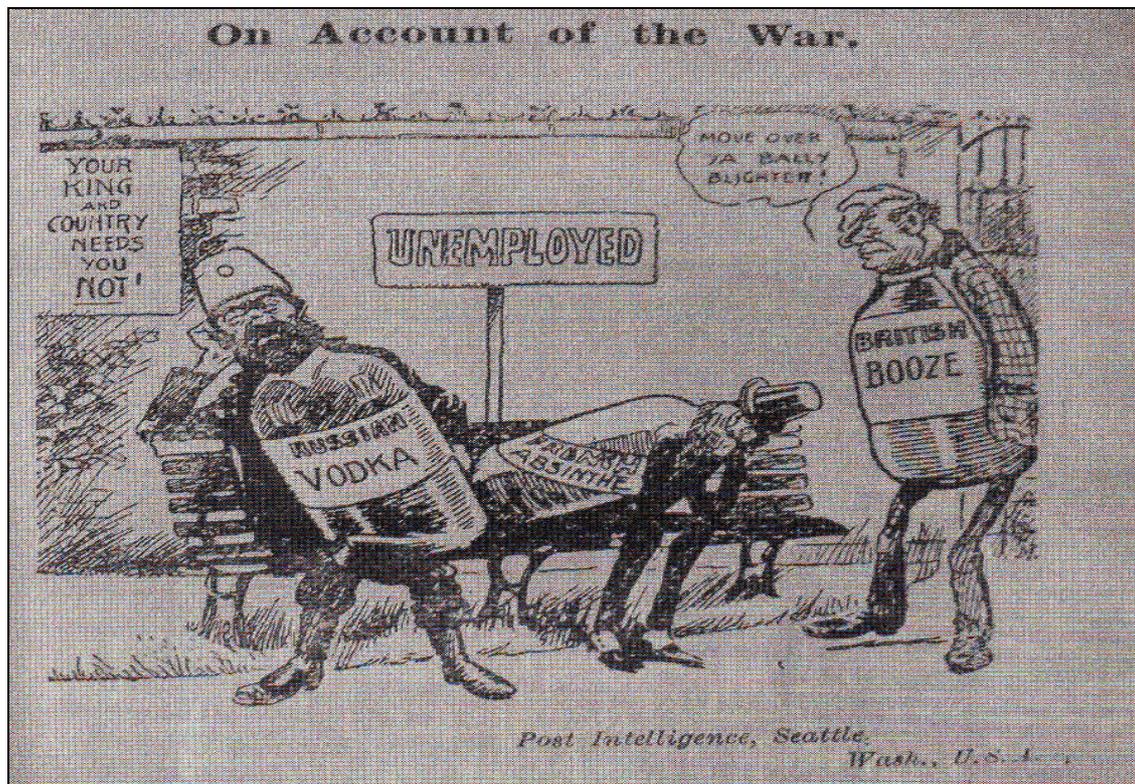


Figure 6: This cartoon, taken from an American Newspaper, illustrates the conviction that British booze was to join Russian Vodka and French Absinthe in being unemployed due to the new sobriety encouraged by the war.

The proposed link between racial decline and an alcohol habit meant that drink was often utilised in propaganda to highlight the lack of moral character within German combatants. Some drinks companies, fearing association with the enemy, sought to reassure customers of their origins. One advertisement read 'Carlsberg Lager is not German as someone with malicious intent is circulating. Carlsberg is brewed by the world renowned Carlsberg Breweries at Copenhagen Denmark where only Danish labour is employed.'<sup>36</sup> Schweppes also vehemently denied that they were a German firm whilst Perrier was described as the 'table water of the allies' while a whisky and Perrier cocktail was presented as the 'perfect entente'.<sup>37</sup> Wine drinkers were urged to 'drink imperially' and 'support the colonies' by drinking Australian claret.<sup>38</sup> Another brewer placed the following advertisement reminding readers that 'patriotism begins at home'.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> The Scotsman 19 August 1914.

<sup>37</sup> The Scotsman 11 January 1915.

<sup>38</sup> The Scotsman 17 September 1914.

<sup>39</sup> The Daily Mail 2 October 1915.



**Figure 7: An advertisement for Peter Walker Lager urges readers to drink British and not German Lager.**

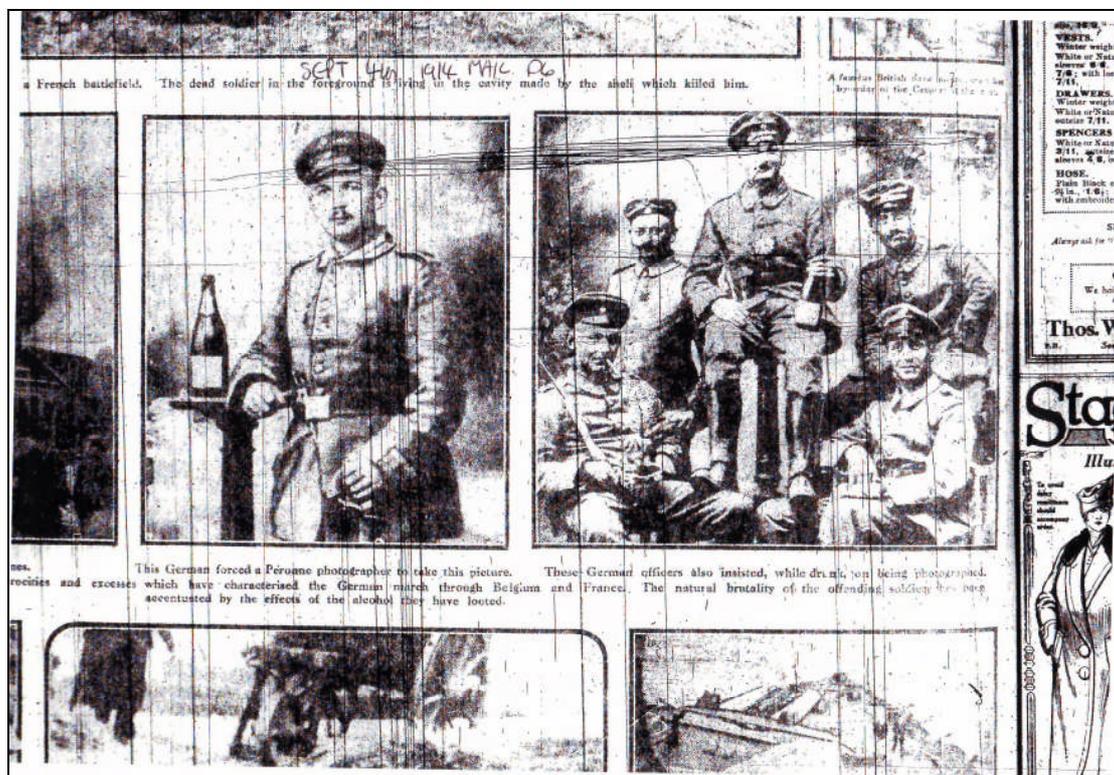
One unfortunate wine merchant, who specialised in German wines from the Moselle, had a hard time as the Pall Mall Gazette urged readers not to drink German wine. The concerned merchant replied that his wines:

Were bought and paid for long before the war broke out, or if it was not paid for, so much the better. No more German wines are likely to come into this country yet awhile, so let us drink what we have if we can afford it with a good conscience. I believe Nelson drank sherry the night before Trafalgar. He might have signed himself Patriot.<sup>40</sup>

Many stories emerged concerning the excesses of Germans fighting at the front. These stories varied from the serious, with drunkenness acting as a precondition for German atrocities carried out in Belgium, to the comic, with German moral character

<sup>40</sup> The Wine Trade Review 15 August 1914.

being questioned in amusing ways. Within Germany alcohol production was limited to 40 per cent of the average output, alcohol was banned in certain towns and the sale of spirits to the general public and the military was restricted. These measures were not widely reported in newspapers as they contrasted relatively favourably to the actions of the British government. Reports concentrated more on the excesses that many Germans supposedly indulged. This indulgence merely confirmed the lack of moral character within Germany and illustrated succinctly the sickness and sloth of the enemy.



**Figure 8: These pictures appeared in the press to substantiate the alleged atrocities committed by drunken Germans in Belgium. These pictures appeared in both The Daily Mirror and The Daily Express 28 September 1914.**

Most prominent amongst these criticisms were the alleged actions of the German troops who had invaded France and Belgium. Attention was drawn to the fact that when the Germans entered Belgium their 'first visit was to the cellar' where the 'Teuton has been drinking his bottle of Burgundy as he swallows his gallon of beer'

before committing ‘the crimes of brutes under the influence of bestial intemperance’.<sup>41</sup> Atrocities were committed, according to Edward Hicks, the Bishop of Lincoln, because they ‘had unlimited opportunities for getting themselves drunk’.<sup>42</sup> Instances of over exuberance permeated the Bryce Report of 1915. Although a propagandistic report, it shows the method in which drink was used as a symbolic totem of declining German standards of humanity in war, as this report relating to an incident that allegedly occurred at Campenhout in France shows:

In this village there was a certain well to-do merchant (name given), who had a good cellar of champagne. On the afternoon of the 14 or 15 August three German cavalry officers entered the house and demanded champagne. Having drunk ten bottles, and invited five or six officers and three or four private soldiers to join them, they continued their carouse, and then called for the master and mistress of the house: ‘Immediately my mistress came in,’ says the valet de chambre, ‘one of the officers who was sitting on the floor got up, and putting a revolver to my mistress’ temple shot her dead. The officer was obviously drunk. The other officers continued to drink and sing, and they did not pay great attention to the killing of my mistress. The officer who shot my mistress then told my master to dig a grave and bury my mistress. My master and the officer went into the garden, the officer threatening my master with a pistol. My master was then forced to dig the grave, and to bury the body of my mistress in it. I cannot say for what reason they killed my mistress. The officer who did it was singing all the time.’<sup>43</sup>

By illustrating the drunkenness of the German officers this incident suggests that the entire German moral framework, and that of the Prussian Junkers, was corrupt. The officer’s loss of control contrasts unfavourably with their supposed status as leaders of men. To be sure this entire story could have been fabricated. If this was the case, what remains of interest is the way in which German soldiers were portrayed as slothful and degenerate, behaviour intertwined with a fondness for alcoholic liquor. To drink to excess was not seen as a positive attribute but indisputably part of the character of the disreputable element of society.

---

<sup>41</sup> M. Murray, Drink and the War, pp. 30-31.

<sup>42</sup> Alliance News March 1915.

<sup>43</sup> Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages (Cd. 7894) pp. 30-31. Quoted in H. Carter, Europe’s Revolt Against Alcohol, p. 229.

This apparent lack of moral character within the German ranks was confirmed by other stories relating to their conduct. The Scotsman reprinted a letter found on a captured German soldier and printed in Le Figaro newspaper, adding that the story simply 'spoke for itself'.<sup>44</sup> The letter read:

We have plenty of wine to drink here, and we drink it like water. The first thing we do is to empty the cellars and fill our water bottles surreptitiously with wine. The beer is horrible, but a good brand can often be found. Looting is general. Picture to yourself rooms turned into piggeries, and sugar, rice, flour, broken window panes, wine glasses etc lying about everywhere . . . we have looted everything on which we could lay our hands, including women's stockings and underclothing. I myself am at present wearing a low cut chemise.<sup>45</sup>

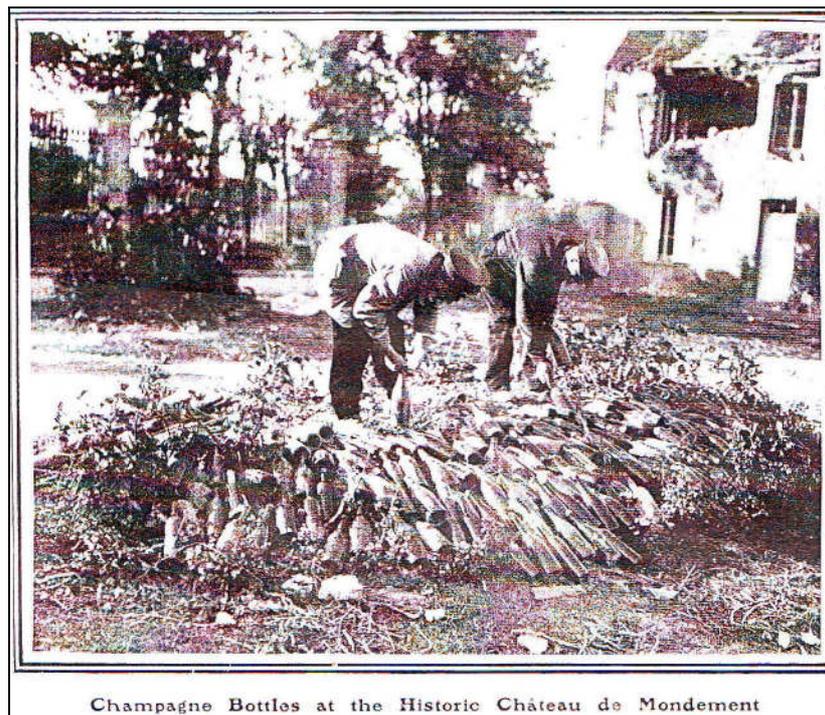
By portraying the German troops as drunkards let loose within France, as hooligans abroad with transvestite tendencies, the reputation of the Prussian archetypal soldier lay in tatters. This was contrasted with reports of the 'spectacle presented by the Allies . . . the British soldier marching through the best vineyards in existence and temperately demanding, as many letters tell us, the cup of tea'.<sup>46</sup> Sobriety, it seems, came to embody the cultural values of the nation. With abstinence accepted as a key factor to victory, news stories such as these were used to show the higher moral value of the British soldier in comparison with the moral deprivation of the Germans.

---

<sup>44</sup> The Scotsman 25 September 1915.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> The Scotsman 21 September 1914.



**Figure 9: This picture shows the decadence of the German troops in consuming vast amounts of the Chateau's champagne supply, 'now a mass of ruins instead of the historic mansion of a fortnight ago'.**

Propagandistic incidents were disputed by more clear-headed, or at least not distinctly biased, accounts which denied the existence of a drink problem in Germany comparable to Britain. One such article, written from an American perspective, stated that 'there is no evidence that either the economic or military powers of Germany have been greatly impaired by drink'.<sup>47</sup> To the contrary 'Germany is perhaps the largest contributor to the study of alcohol'.<sup>48</sup> Assumed moral failings made better news, however, and show how alcohol was a weapon of insult in the war of mobilising minds given drink's place in political debate prior to and during the war. Incidents of over exuberance served to crystallise the moral fears of Edwardian society. Since efficiency was paramount, the drink issue necessarily had to be solved. As Sir Alfred Pearce argued:

---

<sup>47</sup> J. Koren, *Drink Reform in Europe*, p. 747.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* p. 748.

To a nation at war alcohol is a traitor, it is made by a wasteful expenditure and of much needed food and labour, it lessens the physical fitness and power of . . . the civil community, it blurs their judgement, lets loose their emotions, exposes them to greater risk than epidemic diseases, and it undermines their power to make good the most serious ravages of war.<sup>49</sup>

In wartime, incidents such as that may have previously been ignored now became obvious examples of societal breakdown. A large proportion of 'news' was devoted to reports about what was classed as deviant behaviour of the time and its consequences. Like today, bad news, particularly scandalous headlines, sold newspapers. One of the most prominent headline grabbing concerns of the time was insobriety amongst soldiers.

During the early months of the war Britain's streets were littered with soldiers about to be sent to war in France. On occasion some of these troops were boisterous in attitude and lacking in sobriety. Looking back, it seems perfectly natural that these men would have wanted to savour their last hours of freedom before being sent off to war and possible death. To some the best way to go about this was to get drunk. However, moral frameworks dictated that a soldier, if he was going to be of any use, should be sober. Insobriety equated to a breakdown in the discipline of the army, which was an essential prerequisite of victory. The propagandistic portrayal of the sober British soldier in contrast to the enemy was compromised by drinking on the home front. The government was aware that drunken soldiers were proving problematic. In November 1914, Lord Roberts appealed to the civil population to stop treating soldiers to drinks: 'thousands of young recruits are now collected together in various places and are having their work interfered with and their constitution undermined by being tempted to drink by a friendly but thoughtless public.'<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> Sir Alfred Pearce, 'Alcohol and the War' in T.N. Kelynack, (ed.), The Drink Problem of Today (London, 1916), p. 218.

<sup>50</sup> P. Snowden, An Autobiography: Volume One 1864-1919 (London, 1934), p. 377.

Criticism often came from established moral authorities, be they religious institutions or investigative journalists, who were not averse to adopting the moral high ground. For example, the Bishop of Liverpool was critical of the city's relationship with alcohol at this time:

A few nights ago I went off to see my two sons by the mail train. I saw there a sight which I will never forget. The departure platform of Lime Street station was crowded from end to end. Here were three drunken soldiers with linked arms, rolling up the platform to the train; here were soldiers, leaning against each other and supporting each other, trying to find their carriage, here were friends, themselves half intoxicated, seeing off half drunken men whom they had been treating. The whole place was a pandemonium. There were drunken shouts, drunken songs, and a babel of conflicting sounds. An officer returning to the front, a complete stranger to me, turned to me and said, 'What a disgusting sight! If these men were at the front they would be shot at once.' It was the saddest send off I ever saw, and it was a scandal and a disgrace to a great city.<sup>51</sup>

The Bishop saw the drunkenness as evocative of Liverpool's disregard of the sacrifices required in wartime Britain, exemplifying the link between religion and abstinence. Allied to this was anger at the way the army had been besmirched by a break down in discipline at home. The comment by the officer that 'if these men were at the front they would be shot at once' illustrates the inequality of sacrifice between the home and military front lines that the Bishop hoped to illustrate. Moral criticism of this sort was very common when military drinking was being discussed. In London the situation was seemingly no better, as one frustrated observer wrote to the Secretary of the Admiralty:

I wish you could have seen the scene round a public house just outside King's Cross Station today. There were scores of men – sailors and soldiers drinking . . . It was heart breaking to see them fine fellows reeling about on the pavement with glasses in their hands. One man was violently sick on the kerbstone. It was disgusting. Lots of girls and women were about also, the house was crowded to the doors. Can nothing be done to lessen the temptation to the men? Since the war began this particular house has done a roaring trade and the scenes there are appalling.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> M. Murray, *Drink and the War*, p. 48.

<sup>52</sup> HO 185/247, CCB's orders in London, William Best to Secretary of the Admiralty, 22 June 1915.

A similar tone of criticism is apparent in a report entitled ‘the drink evil as seen on the streets of the city’ by the ‘man about town’ in the Dundee Advertiser of 29 November 1914:

Intoxication more or less pronounced was everywhere observed and it was saddening in the extreme to observe the many youths of both sexes carrying on in a way that was positively unseemly and calculated to make the man or woman that wishes well to our dear old country utter despair of its future. Indeed with such hooliganism abounding the pessimist who concludes that the inhabitants of these islands are degenerate, and not worth saving, may be excused. Young men wearing the King’s uniform were the principal transgressors against decorum.<sup>53</sup>

This piece articulates three themes of anti-drink polemical writing. Firstly the corruption of youth by sexual immorality in acting ‘positively unseemly’; secondly social decline (‘our dear old country utter despair of its future’); and, finally, the corruption of the King’s uniform. This type of journalism utilises these key themes and invites the reader to agree with the author in reaching a similar conclusion. In creating stereotypes (e.g. the drunk soldier) the report makes the problem ‘real’ to those reading the article as these stereotypes were visible on Britain’s streets. This was a necessary dramatisation of the problem. As Kenneth Thompson, writing on moral panics, has argued:

If the world is not to be represented as a jumble of random and chaotic events, then they must be identified (i.e. named, defined, related to other events known to the audience) and assigned to a social context (i.e. placed within a frame of meanings familiar to the audience.) This process – identification and contextualisation – is one of the most important through which events are ‘made to mean’ by the media. An ‘event’ only makes sense if it can be located within a range of known social and cultural identifications.<sup>54</sup>

This can be called the ‘labelling process’, by which commentators attempt to ‘restructure and make sense of an ambiguous situation’.<sup>55</sup> It can be no coincidence

---

<sup>53</sup> Dundee Advertiser 29 November 1915.

<sup>54</sup> Kenneth Thompson, Moral Panics (London and New York, 1998), p. 58.

<sup>55</sup> S. Cohen, Images of Deviance (Harmondsworth, 1971), p. 56.

that such stereotypical characters as the ‘drunk soldier’ emerge as totems of the decline of Britain’s morality. When creating an effective story easily identifiable characters are always required to deepen and progress the narrative. They do not necessarily have to be accurate. For many soldiers drink was forced on them. One soldier on leave from Flanders told a correspondent of the Manchester Guardian ‘I cannot put my head outside my own mother’s door without having people total strangers to me pressing me to take drink. I’m sick of it for one, and glad my leave is short.’<sup>56</sup> His opinion did not matter, however, since the symbolic damage had already been done.

Such scandalisation was sometimes subject to a more critical eye. The two articles above were both subjective personal opinions. Another commentator, Murray, was critical of this type of reporting:

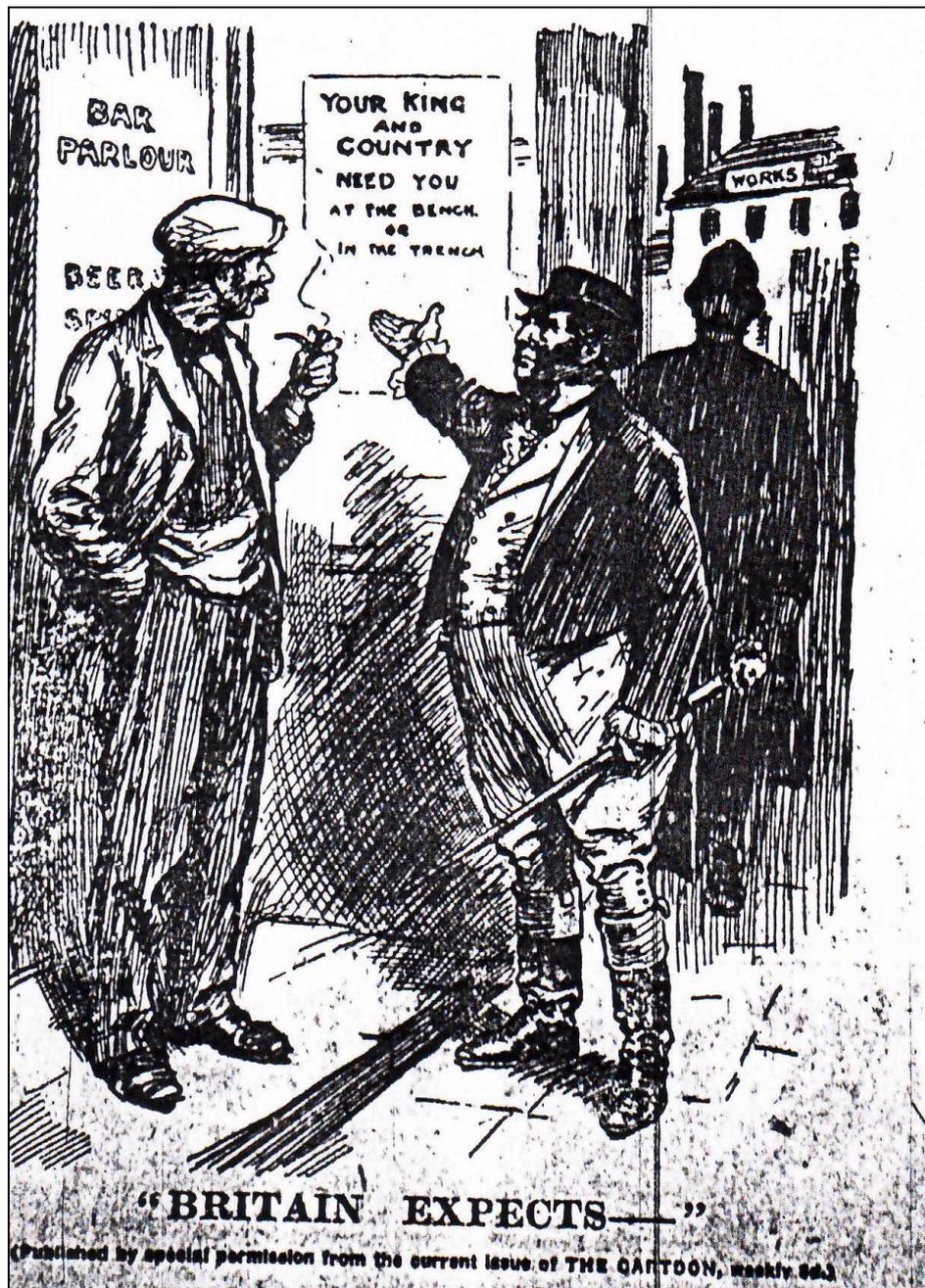
A visit to Woolwich, Chatham, or any other garrison town gives the impression that the British soldier’s sole concern is for strong drink and loose women. The sensational observations of those who describe what they have seen in such places must, no matter how honest the intentions of the writer, be watered down very considerably. The average British soldier is not to be found in the public houses or lurking along the streets, there exists a drunken minority.<sup>57</sup>

However, the drunken minority grabbed the headlines.

---

<sup>56</sup> H. Carter, Europe’s Revolt against Alcohol, p. 237.

<sup>57</sup> M. Murray, Drink and the War, p. 47.



**Figure 10:** This cartoon illustrates the discrepancy between accepted notions of service to the national cause and the continued use of the pub by men from ‘the works’.

If drunken soldiers were neglecting their patriotic duty, drunken civilians were an ‘enemy within’. Writing to The Scotsman, a J.D. Robertson argued, ‘our country is engaged in a life and death struggle with a powerful foe. We believe we will triumph, but what if we allow an enemy within our gates to devastate the homes of the very

men who will win for us this country.’<sup>58</sup> This was a familiar strand of criticism which placed drinking in the context of national decline. By concentrating on the eradication of the drink problem ‘within our gates’ the nation could help those fighting at the front. Any proposed solutions often fell back to temperance ideas for inspiration. As we shall discover, these proposed solutions, despite the view of those implementing them, were not that innovatory.

Though the belief in the existence of an alcohol problem was widespread it is hard to discern the true extent of the problem. While one section of the population saw drinking as having increased since the start of the war, others saw little or no difference. The judgement on what needed to be done depended upon the individual’s own viewpoint. Apparent flouting of efficiency doctrine and incidents of copious indiscretion led to much public outcry. The government had to respond to this public disquiet. During this period the method by which politicians could make calculations about ‘public opinion’ was very limited, and, as Michael Bentley has argued, ‘was often the product of a personal (perhaps chance) encounter with individuals or organisations, or of hearing reports of such encounters from others’.<sup>59</sup> In this context it is unsurprising that the drink issue, as it was related in the media, caused such a controversy. The government may have argued that business was as usual, but ‘drinking as usual’, a phrase used ironically by advocates of abstinence, could not be allowed to continue.

The first step taken by government in response to this public outcry was the introduction on 12 August 1914 of powers to naval and military authorities to close licensed premises in or near a fortified place. On 31 August 1914 the Intoxicating Liquor (Temporary Restriction) Act was introduced which gave licensing authorities

---

<sup>58</sup> The Scotsman 20 October 1914.

<sup>59</sup> M. Bentley, The Liberal Mind 1914-1929 (Cambridge, 1977), p. 216.

the power to restrict pub-opening hours. This generally meant earlier closing at (9 or 11 p.m.) instead of 12.30 a.m. Initially these regulations were imposed on munitions areas but gradually became more widespread. In the first two months after the enactment of the act the hours of sale were curtailed in 259 out of 1000 licensing districts in England and Wales and by the end of 1914 the order covered 427 licensing districts.<sup>60</sup> In Scotland little action was taken, as hours were already stricter.<sup>61</sup> Introduced to curb late night drunkenness and inhibit the opportunity of the over consumption of alcohol, this act was intended as a representation of the government's desire to crack down upon 'industrial drinking'. Furthermore, civilians were not allowed in the restricted areas to buy drinks for members of the armed forces. The Act's effect was immediate, as The Brewers' Gazette testified:

A transformation of the night scenes of London has followed from the closing of the public houses at 11 p.m. Great traffic centres, like the Elephant and Castle, at which immense crowds usually lounge until one o'clock in the morning, have suddenly become peaceful and respectable. The police, instead of having to 'move on' numbers of people who have been dislodged from the bars at 12.30 at night, found very little intoxication to deal with . . . Many of the public houses were half empty, some before closing time. Journalists, who are necessarily out late, have quickly noticed the effects of the change upon public conduct and have been spared the sounds of ribald songs, dancing and quarrelling which hitherto have marked 'closing time' since the war began.<sup>62</sup>

This, in effect, was a governmental quick fix to the problem. Indeed the Act built upon earlier reports written by the Imperial Defence Committee.<sup>63</sup> Shortening opening hours was a minor reform of the public house. This was the equivalent of placing a plaster on an alleged gaping wound. By curtailing the hours available for

---

<sup>60</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 32.

<sup>61</sup> A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control, p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 36.

<sup>63</sup> 'The Imperial Defence Committee had at a much earlier date recognised that in the event of any outbreak of war it would be immediately necessary to take powers to deal with the perils arising from the presence of the public house and consequently had already drafted a series of orders which were immediately put into force under the Defence of the Realm Act.' G.B. Wilson, Alcohol and the Nation A Contribution to the Study of the Liquor Problem in the United Kingdom from 1800 to 1935, p. 157. This hints toward the level of anticipation that surrounded a 'drink problem' emerging and the extent to which central planning was deemed an appropriate response to such an issue.

drinking it was assumed that less damage could be done. It was a populist measure to deal with the furore that had emerged over drinking since the war began, but it is one that is easily explainable. From the vantage point of a politician wanting to be seen to be making a difference and listening to the concerns of the people, this legislation made perfect sense. Moreover it could be passed uncontroversially. Whilst quelling popular discontent this act left the drink trade relatively unregulated, and for many this was a situation that rankled.

The government also sought to limit consumption of drink by making it more expensive. On 18 November 1914 a war tax on beer was introduced which raised the duty per standard barrel from 7 shillings 9 pence to 23 shillings, with further advances of 1 shilling to follow in April 1916 and April 1917. The immediate intention was to raise the retail price by half a penny per half pint, so as to encourage a drop in consumption, as it was assumed that people had a fixed amount to spend on beer. The absence of any political opposition to these measures indicates the level of consensus that had emerged over the issue and the extent to which moral panic had overturned the divisive splits of the pre-war drink debate. One slightly eccentric wine merchant in Soho welcomed this tax rise, as he announced in a price list from the period:

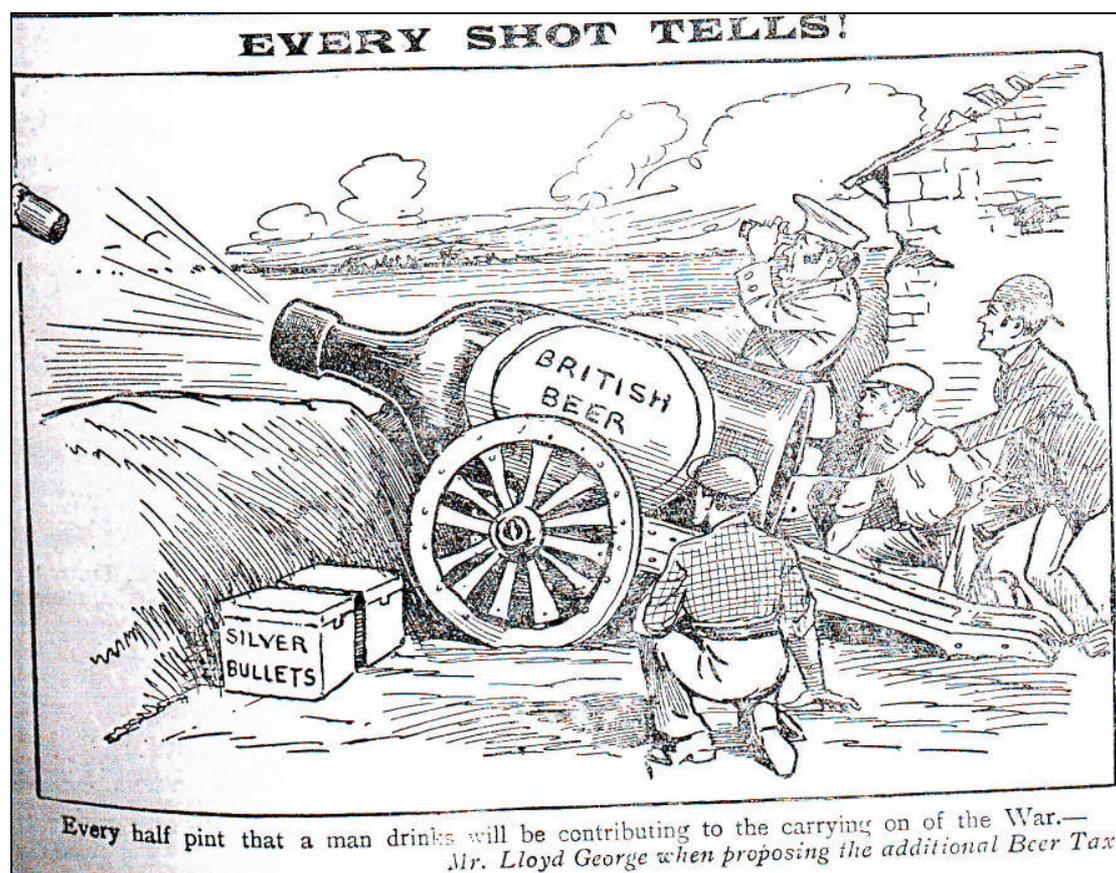
I am proud to think that the dusty thousands of bottle necks which peer at me from the dimness of my old crypts, like guns from between the timbers of an oaken frigate, represent hundreds of gold pieces, or scores of tons of coal, or thousands of cartridges now at Britain's call in our hour of danger.<sup>64</sup>

The Brewers' Gazette believed this patriotic view to be 'an admirable sentiment admirably expressed' whilst one brewery advertised the following 'Brewery Tax – order a pint of beer and drive a nail into the Kaiser's coffin. If you can't manage a pint, order half a pint, and drive a tintack. Drink the national beverage and help your

---

<sup>64</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 10 September 1915.

country by paying your share of the war tax.’<sup>65</sup>



**Figure 11: The brewing trade seized upon Lloyd George’s comment that drinking supported the war effort and milked its propaganda potential.**

However, these attempts to curb alcohol use did not stem moral criticism of drinking during wartime, which remained vitriolic. One pamphleteer wrote:

It sometimes seems as if the powers of hell have broken loose, and one of the agencies which is giving powerful support to Germany in this awful war is the selfishness of men in England who will break their engagements and strike without notice for a slight rise in wages, or will sit boozing in a public house instead of doing their utmost to help to supply the munitions of war, for want of which their fellow countrymen have been dying in thousands at the front.<sup>66</sup>

Drinkers were viewed not only as morally culpable, but also as stupid in failing to realise the national cost of their actions. So obsessed were certain writers with the drink question that one wrote: ‘if out of this terrible war could come a real settlement

<sup>65</sup> M. Murray, *Drink and the War*, p. 111.

<sup>66</sup> Lauder Brunton, ‘Alcohol: What it does to us and what we ought to do with it’, *The Nineteenth Century*, July 1915, p. 74.

of the drink question the tragedy might seem almost worthwhile'.<sup>67</sup> In the face of such fanaticism it is unsurprising that the government was regularly castigated for its alleged failure to deal with the problem. In each case of social controversy drink was posited as a possible, and in most cases, undoubted cause. Accusations were made by temperance advocates that drink sellers were morally complicit in continually promoting alcohol to a drinking public that anti-drink commentators believed were unable to control themselves.



**Figure 12:** This portrayal of the drink seller in The Pioneer, a Temperance Journal, was common. It attempted to expose the hypocrisy of those profiting from drink whilst ‘supporting’ the war effort.

The accusation that wartime brewers were making large profits and capitalising upon

<sup>67</sup> A.W. Richardson, The Nation and Alcohol, p. 63.

the misery of others was widespread and drew upon the pre-war hostility directed towards the trade. They were seen as carriers of wanton ‘drunkenness, poverty, ignorance and vice to all classes’.<sup>68</sup> Criticism of the trade was common: Alexander Part wrote that ‘the influence of the trade is all pervading, and affects a larger number of individuals than any other. Its power and wealth are enormous . . . it has become almost unconsciously the most powerful and dangerous factor in the life of the nation’.<sup>69</sup>

In reality the situation was much more difficult for the brewer than was commonly appreciated. George Younger wrote that ‘the start of the Great War in 1914 generally upset all continuity of trade. Sales abroad dropped off, more particularly in bulk, due to the difficulty of securing transport and also to the home demand.’<sup>70</sup> Beer output fell by 35 per cent from August to December 1914 and prices rose due to heavily increased liquor duties and because of increased raw material costs. But as Neville recounted, ‘war is a thirsty business and as there was soon full employment and rising wages throughout the country these fears were not wholly realised’.<sup>71</sup> General inflation meant higher profit margins, though, and consequently ‘the first crop of annual statements by brewing concerns rather surprisingly reported no fall in profits.’<sup>72</sup> On the contrary, brewers were believed to be making huge profits. This was yet another case of assertion outweighing factual reality as evidence shows that breweries were merely treading water.

Experienced after years of conflict with the temperance cause, brewers were adept at defending their interests. Pointing to falling sales after one month of war, one

---

<sup>68</sup> K. Mitchell, The Drink Question: Its Social and Medical Aspects, p. 29.

<sup>69</sup> Alexander Part, ‘Licensing Reform: A New Policy’, The Nineteenth Century, January-June 1915, p. 61.

<sup>70</sup> A Short History of George Younger and Son Ltd 1762-1925 (Alloa, 1925), p. 23.

<sup>71</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, p. 82.

<sup>72</sup> J. Vaizey, The Brewing Industry 1886-1951, p. 20.

anxious brewer in The Scotsman proclaimed that ‘the fact is that there has been already a very serious drop in sales, and that will be all the more pronounced as time goes on’.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, brewers had support from politicians sympathetic to the trade’s denials of facilitating nationwide insobriety. In Parliament in March 1915, J.D. Rees suggested that ‘the extent of drunkenness in this country is exaggerated for political reasons . . . there is a danger that again this honest loyal trade will not have fair justice’.<sup>74</sup>

Furthermore, the drink trade suffered through military recruitment. Staff volunteering for the armed forces caused labour problems in some breweries. Sydney Neville wrote ‘as these were the days before conscription, we thought it right to encourage our men to enlist’.<sup>75</sup> By 1916, only three men of military age were working at McEwans Brewery where more than two hundred men had joined the armed forces and their places had been taken over by ‘over one hundred women, old men, Italians, niggers and what not’.<sup>76</sup> Within pubs barmaids as opposed to barmen became more prevalent. This was, according to the Brewers’ Journal, ‘not because the trade is putting pressure on its male employees, nor is it entirely from the latter’s pure and undiluted patriotism, but the men have been such a target for sarcastic remarks that many have enlisted’.<sup>77</sup>

The trade was also not averse to going on the offensive to defend its interests. In December 1914 the brewers issued their own manifesto which questioned the true necessity of further control. It read: ‘the extent of drunkenness in this country at the present time is grossly exaggerated and investigation of such drunkenness as there is

---

<sup>73</sup> The Scotsman 14 September 1914.

<sup>74</sup> Hansard 28 August 1914.

<sup>75</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, p. 79.

<sup>76</sup> B. Ritchie, Good Company: The Story of Scottish and Newcastle (London, 1999), p. 85.

<sup>77</sup> Brewers’ Journal 10 June 1915.

would show that only a negligible part of it was due to the drinking of beer'.<sup>78</sup> However, responding to allegations in this way gave some validity to them. In trying to deflect criticism the manifesto was not universally effective, and merely succeeded in exacerbating divisions between the trade and the temperance movement, as the reaction of the UKA exemplifies:

We have filed this manifesto as perhaps the most glaring illustration which 'the trade' has ever given of its shameless selfishness and utter disregard of its responsibility to the nation and to humanity. The shamelessness of the appeal is only equalled by the unscrupulousness of its arguments.<sup>79</sup>

Murray, a drink pamphleteer, commented that:

[The manifesto] did the trade a great deal of harm by prejudicing moderate opinion. The whole thing was shallow and anybody with ordinary intelligence could see through it. The brewers were obviously more concerned at the prospect of a reduction in their profits and at the fact that drunkenness was hampering the conduct of the war.<sup>80</sup>

Indeed, long held criticisms of the trade's implicit greed were going to be difficult to refute given the vituperative hostility that critics held of the industry.

The first months of the war were given to debating the extent of the drink problem and what it actually entailed. This chapter has attempted to see through the thicket of entangled prejudice. By looking at this material it has been possible to see the development of a panic created by moral entrepreneurs keen on confirming the seditious nature of drink on the individual and on society. The key message seems to have been that the public could not be trusted. The panic did not begin and stop at a definite moment but developed organically over time, as can be seen from the news coverage given to the drink problem. Concern became consternation; frustration developed into fear. Increased attention on drinking focussed attention on those believed to be the biggest drinkers – the working class and the manner in which they

---

<sup>78</sup> G.P. Williams and G.T. Broke, Drink in Great Britain 1900-1979, p. 45.

<sup>79</sup> Alliance News January 1915.

<sup>80</sup> M. Murray, Drink and the War, pp. 117-119.

lived their day-to-day lives. In the spring of 1915 the panic became even more widespread thanks to the actions of a prominent politician and the King. It was only then that the true 'severity' of the problem was finally realised, or merely confirmed to those already obsessed by the seditious effects of intoxicants and insobriety.

### **Chapter Three: Best Laid Plans? Lloyd George and the Drink Question.**

As the war progressed, its pressures had increasing repercussions on the home front. The expenditure of shells and arms on an unprecedented scale increased pressure on Britain's industrial infrastructure. Armament firms were expected to produce 176 million rounds by the end of 1914 when their capacity was just 3 million, and from 25 August 1914 to 1 October 1914 as many artillery pieces were ordered as during the previous ten years.<sup>1</sup> Adjusting to this demand for military hardware was a difficult task and the type of war being fought accentuated the problem. Trench warfare dictated that high calibre, high explosive shells were needed in large numbers. Britain's factories, whilst simultaneously having to deal with a large amount of its experienced workforce joining the army, could not cope with demand. The shell shortage at Neuve Chapelle, and later problems at the second battle of Ypres, was a manifestation of these difficulties and increased worries about the British army's efficiency being let down by disorganisation on the home front. Blame had to be placed somewhere, so it is unsurprising that the industrial working class bore the brunt of accusations regarding degenerate behaviour

By the spring of 1915 concern over the consumption of drink had reached fever pitch. Moral conclusions regarding drink had been reached. With this discontent public opinion became ever more vociferous in criticising the continued moral laxity of those who drank in wartime. This chapter aims to detail the gathering crescendo of this coalition for change and will assess whether these fears were real or imagined. This was the period during which the 'severity' of the drink problem was finally realised by society. It was argued that all of the previous symptoms of abject degeneracy caused by drinking were subjugated to, yet implicitly part of, the loss of

---

<sup>1</sup> G. DeGroot, Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War, p. 74.

industrial productivity allegedly caused by the continued over indulgence of workmen involved in heavy industry. Drink provided a convenient excuse to discipline the labour force of the country.

In Bangor on 28 February 1915 Lloyd George delivered his famous speech on the drink problem, during which he ascribed continued industrial inefficiency to the drink habits of an intemperate minority of the British workforce:

I hear of workmen in armament works who refuse to work a full week's work for the nation's need. What is the reason? They are a minority. The vast majority belong to a class we can depend upon. The others are a minority. But, you must remember, a small minority of workmen can throw a whole works out of gear. What is the reason? Sometimes it is one thing, sometimes it is another, but let us be perfectly candid. It is mostly the lure of the drink. They refuse to work full time, and when they return their strength and efficiency are impaired by the way in which they have spent their leisure. Drink is doing more damage in the war than all the German submarines put together.<sup>2</sup>

This statement had a significant impact on the drink problem. Lloyd George employed no statistical support for his rhetorical description, but the lack of factual material was inconsequential as his words confirmed latent fears concerning the social habits of this section of the population.<sup>3</sup> The speech fed into many familiar stereotypes. As Arthur Shadwell confirmed, 'the whole controversy had been coloured by class feeling. Drink, being a real weakness and too familiar, was the simplest reason to give and became the stereotypical charge.'<sup>4</sup> Lloyd George denied that he had attacked the social habits of the working class directly but upon consideration of the evidence this denial is questionable. The speech coalesced all of the social costs of drinking and re-emphasised their effect upon the productivity of the nation in wartime. Reaching out to those less concerned by social welfare, but more

---

<sup>2</sup> Lloyd George, War Memoirs: Volume One, p. 325.

<sup>3</sup> In fact, a report Lloyd George commissioned later stated that no significant increase in drinking had occurred on the Clyde since the war began. See Stuart Mews, 'Urban Problems and Rural Solutions: Drink and Disestablishment in the First World War', in Derek Baker, (ed.), The Church in Town and Countryside: Studies in Church History (Oxford, 1979), p. 455.

<sup>4</sup> A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control, p. 22.

concerned about victory in war, Lloyd George raised the stakes of the drink problem, magnifying its inextricable links with national efficiency. By creating a climate of opinion in which restrictive measures could be pursued he set in motion the development of several policy initiatives aimed at curtailing drinking in Britain. From February to May 1915, state purchase, heavily increased taxes and abstinence campaigns were considered as appropriate solutions. Many facets of the drink problem were examined in this period, resulting in the compromise creation of the Central Control Board.

According to Carter, the Bangor speech ‘changed the perspective of the question. Concern was no longer limited to administrators and to enthusiasts, the nation awoke’.<sup>5</sup> The speech expressed the ‘idea’ of drunkenness in association with a clear class critique of behaviour. Unsurprisingly it aroused significant comment in the press and amongst the usual interested parties. In fact it was an easy speech to make. The pub was much easier to criticise than the factory or farm. The UKA saw it as a turning point in the battle to prohibit drink:

The closer this nation is getting to the realities of war the more clearly it is seeing that the liquor traffic is menacing our very existence. We do not suggest that this traffic is consciously working in the interests of our enemies but we do say that it could scarcely serve our enemies more effectively than it is at present doing.<sup>6</sup>

The Daily Mail was scathing in its condemnation of the speech:

We must confess our profound amazement at the wholesale charges of drunkenness brought by Mr Lloyd George against the skilled workers of this country . . . we frankly do not believe that the British trade union workers are habitual drunkards . . . the fact is that the government is sheltering itself behind these random charges. It failed to realise the need for munitions at the outset and did not organise the productive power of this country at once . . . We recognise Lloyd George’s honest intentions but the truth seems to be that this drink question has become such an obsession with him that he is unable to see facts in their proper proportions.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade: A Contribution to National Efficiency 1915-1917, p.48.

<sup>6</sup> Alliance News April 1915.

<sup>7</sup> The Daily Mail 30 April 1915.

The Brewers' Gazette alleged that the temperance movement was to blame for the content of the speech whilst portraying those who believed in Lloyd George's argument as intrinsically un-British:

In the matter of publicity, the advocates of intolerant teetotalism enjoy a marked advantage over the trade. Scarcely an utterance is made, even by the veriest nonentity, without it finding a prominent position in the columns of the antiquarian press . . . Let us give Lloyd George credit for one thing. He knows how to trap the fools . . . We have been bred up on beer. We have built our Empire on beer. We have got drunk and still prospered. Our forefathers thrashed Napoleon, beat him to a frazzle, but they never went to bed sober.<sup>8</sup>

The Daily Express concurred that Lloyd George was being unreasonable blaming his 'tendency to picturesque exaggeration as well as his confirmed tendency to excessive Puritanism' as responsible for the attack.<sup>9</sup> Yet the true accuracy of Lloyd George's statement remained open to conjecture. Marr Murray proclaimed that if 'the Chancellor's words were based on the truth then the nation will be prepared to sacrifice its habits and pleasures in order to annihilate the third enemy'.<sup>10</sup> The Times, on the other hand, lamented that Lloyd George had laid stress on 'crude statistics supplied by anonymous firms . . . the inevitable inference is utterly misleading'.<sup>11</sup> During the war, however, time was in short supply, action, not debate, was the watchword of the day. Momentum for change was gathering.

Historians disagree over why Lloyd George chose to denounce a 'small minority' of workmen drinking. Cameron Hazlehurst stresses the dynamism of Lloyd George's personality and innate desire to ratchet the war effort. Frustrated by Kitchener and Asquith's wavering leadership, Lloyd George, according to Hazlehurst, delivered the speech to whip up public opinion in favour of greater state control of the industrial life of Britain and, as he saw it, of one of the social factors which was

---

<sup>8</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 18 March 1915.

<sup>9</sup> The Daily Express 1 March 1915.

<sup>10</sup> M. Murray, Drink and the War: From the Patriotic Point of View, p. vii.

<sup>11</sup> The Times 30 April 1915.

inhibiting production.<sup>12</sup> Other historians, such as John Turner and Stuart Mews, have pointed to Lloyd George's political and social roots in nonconformity as being influential in shaping his overall attitude to alcohol consumption.<sup>13</sup> These interpretations are not mutually exclusive. Undoubtedly Lloyd George's background influenced his thoughts on the subject, but the effect of this will forever remain difficult to measure. Hazlehurst's interpretation is convincing given Lloyd George's subsequent actions. Having been convinced of the need for improved organisation within factories as early as September 1914 it is unsurprising that he scrutinised the condition of factory workers and their particular social habits. In the context of answering critics of the Munitions of War Bill, who contended that the bill threatened the working classes, his intentions in this respect are clearer:

If we cannot, by voluntary means, get the labour which is essential to the success of this country in a war upon which its life depends, we must use, as the ultimate resort, use the means which every state has its command to save its life. You have got to save the life of Britain. We talk about the State as if it were something apart from the workman. The workman is that state. He is a living ingredient in it.<sup>14</sup>

In common with the New Liberal view concerning the organic interdependence of society, reforming the individual was thus, at least to Lloyd George, intrinsic to ensuring victory. Lloyd George's background hampered attempts at prosecuting this agenda, however, as regardless of the manner in which his viewpoint was presented, it could always be said that the accusation sprung from his innate prohibitionist tendencies.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> See Cameron Hazlehurst, Politicians at War July 1914 – May 1915: A Prologue to the Triumph of Lloyd George (London, 1971), pp. 210-215.

<sup>13</sup> J. Turner, 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade', The Historical Journal, 23, 3, p. 597 and Stuart Mews, 'Urban Problems and Rural Solutions: Drink and Disestablishment in the First World War', Studies in Church History, Volume 20 (1983), pp. 337-350.

<sup>14</sup> John Grigg, Lloyd George: From Peace to War 1912-1916 (London, 1985), p. 216.

<sup>15</sup> Lloyd George had a long history of anti drink agitating. His very first appearance on a public platform was at a temperance meeting at Machynlleth in 1883, and his maiden speech in the Commons on 13 June 1890 was made on the issue of proposed compensation to publicans who might be dispossessed of their licenses. A young Lloyd George had taken money from the UKA to subsidise his

The speech was also undeniably an articulation and product of class politics. In The Making of the English Working Class E.P. Thompson argued that ‘class happens when some men, as the result of common experience (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs.’<sup>16</sup> If one defines ‘interests’ as including social culture then the argument that Lloyd George used the speech as a method of evoking class identities is made all the clearer. He used class, willingly or unwillingly, as a means of expressing ‘common traditions, experiences and values’<sup>17</sup> to articulate the differences between an ideal state of behaviour and the form of behaviour that manifested itself, as he saw it, in industrial centres throughout Britain.

This point was not lost on contemporaries and criticism of the speech gathered pace. Speaking to an Independent Labour meeting at Norwich, a couple of months later in April, Keir Hardie attempted to escalate the issue further on class lines by proclaiming that ‘workers who were putting in eighty-four hours a week had been maligned and insulted and the lying word – on the authority of Mr Lloyd George – had gone round the world that the British working class were a set of drunken wasters’.<sup>18</sup> Hardie, a temperance man himself, utilised the simmering discontent that Lloyd George’s comments had created to make a broader political point. He argued that it was not productivity that was the genuine motive for reform but an innate hostility to the working class which determined the government’s actions. By seeking

---

local veto speeches. In 1907 he spoke of drink as ‘the great recruiting sergeant of the unemployed army . . . the greatest evil and the greatest wrong of all the old evils that have festered for generations.’ John Turner suggests that the anti drink aspect of the Bangor speech may have been tailored specifically for the Welsh nonconformist audience to which it was given as they were listening to a political speech on a Sunday and so needed some reward. Lloyd George was surely aware of the significance of what he was saying, however, and aware of the controversy that would result from his delivery of a line so beautifully crafted as ‘Drink is doing more damage . . .’ suggests.

<sup>16</sup> E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (New York, 1966), pp. 9-10.

<sup>17</sup> Joanna Bourke, Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1960 (London, 1994), p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> The Times 9 April 1915.

to move the blame for the shell scandal onto the working class, the government was trying to avoid its own responsibilities, to ascribe blame where Hardie believed there was none.

Hardie was not alone in criticising Lloyd George for blaming the workers. The Daily Express saw the speech as a precursor to a governmental attempt to introduce prohibition:

This is humbug and nauseous humbug, a cowardly excuse of incompetent politicians for their own blunders. It is notorious that the British working class has become more and more sober each year . . . It is strictly true that the British Empire has been largely built on beer and the Bible. We are fighting for an English England, the England of Shakespeare and Dickens, an England of large hearted, kindly cheerfulness and we are trying hard to believe that after the war we shall see again a prosperous, happy and merrie England . . . Prohibition is impossible and would be sheer tyranny if it was possible.<sup>19</sup>

Criticism also came from fellow Liberal M.P.s. E.S. Montagu wrote to Lloyd George expressing his unease at the situation:

I cannot find myself in agreement with you that there is any evidence that drink has hampered us in this War on any substantial scale which calls for heroic remedies . . . It is true that receipts from the sale of drink are large but this is due mainly to your own taxation, which has increased the price of beer and to the increase in the price of raw material and of labour, which has increased the price of whisky . . . It is a habit of mind which treats the working man as a machine with no vested interest in his habits and with no right to humane consideration, Just as if an engine can do 500 revolutions a minute it can do 30,000 in an hour and 300,000 in ten hours, so they think a man who can drill 6 holes in an hour ought to drill 60 in 10 hours and 600 in 100 hours. Anything wrong with their system they are accustomed to put down to their unpatriotism, to the want of a sense of duty, the gross habits of these animals whom they regard as their inferiors . . . Every one of the deputation which waited on you the other day drinks moderately – they told you so – but they would be insulted if you told them that they were unfitted for work because of this habit and I really believe that you run grave danger by insulting or being understood to insult the people of this country of all classes by interfering with their liberty. The agricultural labourer, the honest, self-controlled artisans, the small tradesman, inspired by patriotic motives and doing his duty, may feel that those who are running the war do not trust them and you may impair the fighting enthusiasm of your country.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The Daily Express 9 April 1915.

<sup>20</sup> Lloyd George Papers, LG/C/23/2/9.

Lloyd George denied these accusations, responding to Hardie and other critics by stating:

I went out of my way to make it clear that in my judgement drink only affected a small minority of the workmen and that the vast majority were doing their duty loyally so that as far as the first speech I delivered on the subject is concerned there is not a syllable to justify Keir Hardie's reckless assertions but quite the reverse.<sup>21</sup>

The Bangor speech is symptomatic of Lloyd George's impulsiveness during this period. Its content was vague and lacked evidence. It may not have been his intention to link 'working class' drinking as a whole with work inefficiency but that was the result, as in an environment in which every aspect of society was constantly assessed to ensure that it was contributing to victory, accusations, no matter how true or valid, were more difficult to deny. Moreover, his words built upon a negative view of the workers' ability to handle money. Money spent on drink was believed to hinder spending upon the essentials of life. As one commentator suggested, 'the money spent by the working class in this way is not, recollect, taken from their reserve funds for they have none, it is taken from what is needed often for bare existence and always for existence under decent human conditions'.<sup>22</sup> By raising the spectre of wasted funds Lloyd George further interlinked the behaviour of the working class with the general efficiency of the nation.

The Bangor speech was given added support by Lord Kitchener, who in a speech to the House of Lords a few days later announced that 'there have, I regret to say, been instances where absence, irregular timekeeping and slack work have led to a marked diminution in the output of our factories. In some cases the temptations of drink account for this failure to work up to the high standard expected'.<sup>23</sup> At a meeting on 17 March with the Trade Unions Lloyd George drew further attention to

---

<sup>21</sup> The Times 9 April 1915.

<sup>22</sup> The Daily Telegraph 3 May 1915.

<sup>23</sup> A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922, p. 14.

reports emanating from the Admiralty and the War Office that supposedly ascribed unproductive output to drink. The Trade Union representatives at this point indicated their willingness to support whatever measures were required so long as there was evidence to support such accusations and that legislation was to be applied equally and to all classes. Indeed the Transport Workers' Federation went further. In a letter to Lloyd George they urged the government 'to take immediate and decisive action to reduce the results of intemperance to a minimum'.<sup>24</sup> At a conference held with the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation on 30 March Lloyd George was given added support when the industry pushed for total prohibition during the war. Employers were keen to lay blame on the workers to avoid possible action being taken against them on grounds of non-production of war materials.

On the 30 March 1915 Lloyd George provided another quotable sound-bite to the press, stating with typical exuberance that 'we are fighting Germany, Austria and Drink, and as far as I can see, the greatest of these three deadly foes is Drink'.<sup>25</sup> This statement is hyperbolic, exemplifying how the problem had lost all sense of perspective. Fired up by stories relating to the impact of drink, such as the battleship that was sent for urgent repairs but was 'ignored for twenty-four hours as the riveters refused to leave the public house'<sup>26</sup>, he set about attempting to remedy the problem.

Beaverbrook wrote in his diary that:

Mr Lloyd George had become obsessed with a totally different aspect of the same problem – the slow rate in the production of munitions which he ascribed to drink. His energies became directed rather to seeing that the workingman got less beer than to making certain that the soldiers got more shells. The abolition of vodka in Russia went to the Chancellor's head, and he became determined to carry state purchase and control in England in order to promote war efficiency.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>25</sup> The Times 30 March 1915.

<sup>26</sup> E.S. Turner, Dear Old Blighty, p. 88.

<sup>27</sup> Lord Beaverbrook, Politicians and the War (London, 1960), p. 65.

It was this fervency that led Lloyd George to begin to cultivate support for restrictive measures.

Further support came from the Commander-in-Chief in France. After the battle of Neuve Chappelle, Douglas Haig blamed the workers' fondness for drink for the shortcomings in industrial productivity. 'The best thing, in my opinion' he argued, 'is to punish some of the chief offenders . . . Take and shoot two or three of them, and the "Drink Habit" would cease I feel sure. These sub-people don't care what the King or anyone else does – they mean to have their drink.'<sup>28</sup> Officer Caven of the 4<sup>th</sup> Guards Brigade of the British Expeditionary Force wrote to Lloyd George pleading for action:

You must do something to hit everybody rich and poor. Prohibit drink, stop racing and professional football – till the War is over so every man and woman in England at once feels the bite and grip of the war . . . for God's sake turn every soul on to making shells and so shorten the war by months and save tens of thousands of us. Call back from the Army all skilled shell makers you want. Their services as such would be treble their value in the field –for in the latter case they can be replaced – in the former not.<sup>29</sup>

Lloyd George had much political capital to spend, with many supporting his expose of the ills of drinking and the 'virtue' of his cause. C.P. Scott wrote:

I was delighted, as I should fancy most other people were, with your Bangor speech – particularly with what you said about restrictions on the sale of intoxicants. The present partial and haphazard restrictions imposed by the police or the military can have a little general effect, but I believe the nation is perfectly prepared for a little compulsory temperance and that the Government might go a long way in that direction during the war without the slightest risk.<sup>30</sup>

Lloyd George was ready to act.

Yet the working class fought back. On 23 March, The Times published a letter signed 'Working Class', protesting against the implication that the working classes were greater sinners than others in the matter of drink:

---

<sup>28</sup> G. DeGroot, Blighty, p. 75.

<sup>29</sup> Lloyd George Papers, LG/5/7/21.

<sup>30</sup> T. Wilson, (ed.), The Political Diaries of C.P. Scott 1911-1928 (London, 1970), p. 122.

Lloyd George's magnificent good sense has for once forsaken him. The working classes feel that the aristocracy of England is thoroughly playing the game in this war, but they feel that the merchants, shippers, and manufacturers are out mostly for self. This may be a harsh judgement. But we have to take the facts as they are. No class will be more loyal than the working classes to any common restrictions affecting all alike. They will resent being pilloried for special treatment . . . Will the aristocracy not give us another lead? If the principal social and political clubs in London voluntarily agreed, and that quickly, to accept the same limitations with regard to the hours at which drinks may be served as the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes for workingmen, it would do much to make the movement a national one.<sup>31</sup>

Another 'worker' equated Lloyd George's actions to those of the total prohibitionists, and was scathing regarding the lack of understanding of the working environment of many industrial sites:

I think the total prohibitionists are making a very grave mistake in attempting to force their views on the county. There are thousands like myself who, though not teetotallers have never lost an hour through the abuse of drink – but, on the contrary – working side by side with total abstainers – have found they could simply 'leave them' when it has come to an emergency . . . To deprive such of their accustomed modest allowance is the most certain way to defeat the ends the prohibitionists claim to have in view . . . you cannot persuade me that the man who has been used to a 'tonic' or two a day will prove a better workman, a better timekeeper or a more loyal citizen through having his accustomed allowance forcibly 'kicked off'.<sup>32</sup>

Clearly some felt they were being singled out for unnecessary special treatment indicating that behind a supposedly 'national movement' old class hostilities had continued long into the war. Mr Appleton, General Secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions, argued that 'complete prohibition is a much more sensible proposal . . . all classes should, in my opinion, receive the same treatment'.<sup>33</sup>

Lloyd George's speech also set workers against employers. On 3 March 1915 more than one newspaper carried a letter from the chairman and the general secretary of the Boilermakers' Society, in which the employers' statements about drunkenness among its ship workers were challenged:

---

<sup>31</sup> The Times 23 March 1915.

<sup>32</sup> The Daily Mirror 12 April 1915.

<sup>33</sup> The Scotsman 31 March 1915.

The tales told by the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation are the same old misrepresentations, exaggerations and contradictions that we have heard from them many times. They are the tales they usually give us instead of money . . . We are therefore grieved that the Chancellor . . . should have come to conclusions and permitted himself the grave statements which he made . . . The wholly unjustifiable attack of the shipbuilding Employers Federation will do more that all the drink in the country to diminish output.<sup>34</sup>

Disagreement as to the true extent of drinking and its effect upon productivity permeated contemporary debate. To some, Lloyd George merely spoke the truth. An article in The Spectator commented, 'in a word he [Lloyd George] drew attention to what we all know, but what a good many people will not say because they prefer the rule of humbug to the rule of truth – that we waste a great deal too much energy as a people on strong drink.'<sup>35</sup> Yet the evidence presented was contradictory, underlining the manner in which anecdotal evidence and broad generalisations were used to justify legislation supposedly based upon empirical truths. Assumed conclusions were reached without an objective and scientific examination of their cause.

The evidence is certainly inconclusive. One police report from Colchester noted:

During the evening I visited a number of public houses and hotels in the centre of the town. I found them well filled, though not overcrowded, with privates and non commissioned officers, but, without exception, the bars and bar parlours were occupied by an exceedingly orderly and sober lot of men and in no house did I see a man the worse for drink . . . I only saw three privates who could be termed the worse for drink, but they were by no means incapable.<sup>36</sup>

This report was not exceptional. Turner has argued, after reviewing the material sent to Lloyd George relating to absenteeism, that 'there is little to convince a disinterested observer that drinking had a serious effect on munitions production and shipping'.<sup>37</sup>

Distillers of the time not surprisingly felt that the evidence to support the accusation

---

<sup>34</sup> J. Grigg, Lloyd George from Peace to War 1912-1916, p. 234.

<sup>35</sup> The Spectator 24 April 1915.

<sup>36</sup> Lloyd George Papers, C/5/12/11.

<sup>37</sup> J. Turner, 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade in the First World War', p. 597.

was 'thin to the point of non existent'.<sup>38</sup> Brewers were particularly disturbed by the turn of events. The Brewers' Society reminded Lloyd George of the 'absolute impossibility of prohibition'.<sup>39</sup> Yet Lloyd George, in a private letter to Lord Northcliffe said that it was possible to produce 'overwhelming evidence' of the negative effect of drinking in industrial areas.<sup>40</sup> This begs the question, why did he not make this public in order to present a stronger case?

Lloyd George's action suggests he wanted a 'national conversation' on the issue. Thanks to his machinations, The Times reported that 'on all sides it was admitted that the Drink Question was one of the most pressing problems of the day'.<sup>41</sup> It may not have been the direct intention of Lloyd George's speech, but the implication created, perhaps by the reaction towards it, was that the workingman hampered the war effort due to his uncontrolled drinking. As an editorial in The Times suggested 'sober workmen will feel that a stigma has been cast on the general class of workers which is certainly not justified by the facts'.<sup>42</sup> In a question riddled with prejudice Lloyd George did nothing to alleviate the arguments of rival factions. He succeeded in creating a public debate over the issue which would hopefully aid in curbing alcohol consumption. By 12 April 1915 he had received a quarter of a million letters on the subject with newspaper coverage continuing to proliferate and the desire for a solution all the stronger.

---

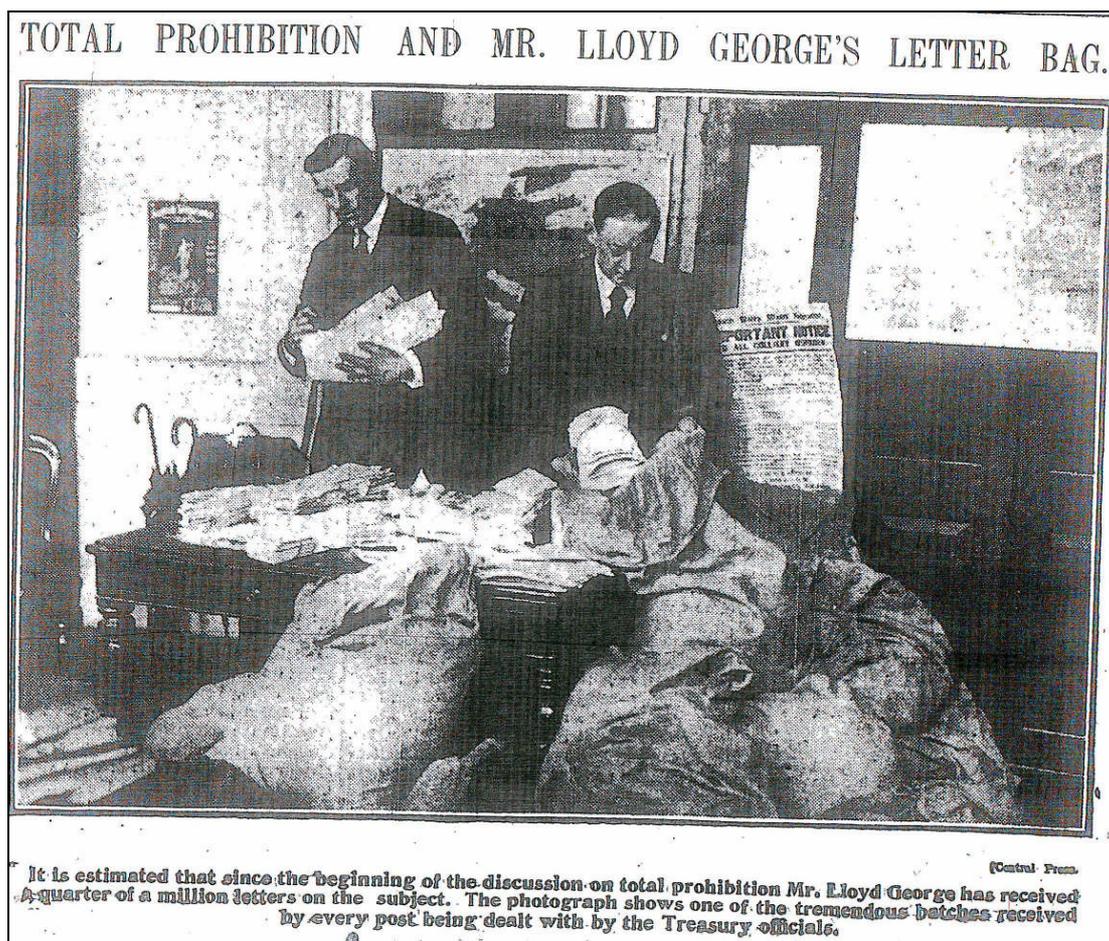
<sup>38</sup> R.B. Weir, 'Obsessed with Moderation: The Drink Trades and the Drink Question 1870-1930', Institute of Social and Economic Research Department of Economic and Related Studies University of York, Reprinted from the British Journal of Addiction, Vol. 79 1984, p. 101.

<sup>39</sup> Brewers and Licensed Trade Retail Association, MSS.420, Box Number 1, Minute Book 4, 7 April 1915.

<sup>40</sup> C. Hazlehurst, Politicians at War, p. 211.

<sup>41</sup> M. Murray, Drink and the War, p. 96.

<sup>42</sup> The Times 3 May 1915.



**Figure 13: A picture published in the Manchester Guardian showing the numerous letters written to Lloyd George on this subject.**

In an attempt to lessen the apparent class hypocrisy on 30 March 1915 Lloyd George succeeded in persuading the King to abstain from alcohol during the war. The King proclaimed that he had given up drink 'so that no difference shall be made . . . between the treatment of rich and poor in this question'. Buttressed by assurances from Lloyd George of further declarations of personal enforced sobriety from 'judges, Cabinet Ministers, Clergy, the Medical profession, Great Manufacturers and if possible the Trade Union Leaders' the King's letter was published, the first step on a campaign aimed at encouraging declarations of personal abstinence.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Lloyd George Papers, C/5/6/12.



**Figure 14: A cartoon that appeared in The Daily Mirror showing how drink had become a popular topic of conversation.**

Unfortunately for the King no such further declarations, aside from Lord Kitchener and Lord Haldane in government, emerged. The shining lights of British society were not keen on practising what they preached. This dereliction of duty did not escape censure. The National Review commented that the failure of Asquith to follow the King and take the pledge had ‘naturally aroused comment’.<sup>44</sup> Given Asquith’s fondness for the odd tippie this is unsurprising. Some were quite vitriolic in

<sup>44</sup> E.S. Turner, Dear Old Blighty, p. 87.

their refusal to join the King. F.E. Smith, the Conservative M.P., and renowned hedonist, told Lloyd George ‘My dear George, next time you see His Majesty I hope you will tell him, with all respect, that he isn’t going to put a key on my wine cellar.’<sup>45</sup>

In his memoirs Lloyd George attacked the failure of others to join the King in abstaining: ‘this attitude on the part of the nation’s legislators helped to prevent the King’s pledge from becoming the starting point which King George and his advisers had hoped it might prove for a big voluntary movement of national sobriety’.<sup>46</sup> He neglected to mention that he, in this case, had been the King’s principal advisor. Also, given that Lloyd George was turning his mind to state-based solutions to the drink problem, it seems strange that he would implicate the King in a movement based around self-denial.

In his war memoirs he went on to state that ‘unfortunately the King’s example was not adopted widely enough to make any deep impression on the problem itself . . . it remained, therefore, to reinforce this initial impulse by statutory powers.’<sup>47</sup> The evidence suggests that Lloyd George was hitting out in all directions at the drink problem. This resulted in huge inconsistencies. Lloyd George himself was a very moderate drinker but, like most of the cabinet, never renounced a tippie, leaving a moral vacuum at the heart of the proposals. This discrepancy caused much outrage and vitriolic sentiment from commentators. Arthur Mee wrote:

Will it be believed, we may wonder, when the historian comes to write the story of these times, that in the spring of 1915 the destinies of Britain were in the hands of men who saw these things, who knew them well, who were warned – not once nor twice, but many times – that our Armies and Fleets were in peril through drink, but who listened to the warnings and did nothing?

---

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. p. 87.

<sup>46</sup> Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, p. 330.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p. 330.

. . . The House of Commons kept open its bars defiantly . . . to patronise, at the bars of parliament, this trade that the King had banished from his house.<sup>48</sup>

Lord Roseberry also lambasted Lloyd George: ‘this agitation is saturated with humbug and hypocrisy. The working man is to be reformed and regulated, but most of the reformers are laying in good stocks of liquor to provide against the evil day of prohibition.’<sup>49</sup> This lack of moral leadership is more surprising when one considers Lloyd George’s further discussion of the issue in his memoirs:

There was sound wisdom in the scheme for the workers habitually complained, and with all too good reason, that while their employers and the members of the so called upper classes were eternally lecturing and rebuking them for drinking, they were themselves freely and often excessively enjoying the alcohol which they sought to deny to their employees.<sup>50</sup>

The fact that in his memoirs he condones upper class drinking yet only attacked working class drinking in his speech at Bangor at the time suggests that it was the working class specifically that he sought to blame. The moral duplicity he displayed in not rejecting alcohol indicates Lloyd George’s hypocrisy over this issue.

Nevertheless, in the public sphere the King’s pledge apparently did have an effect, albeit a temporary one. The Daily Express drew attention to the new sobriety at the palace:

At dinner their majesties usual beverages are burgundy and champagne in very small quantities but varieties are provided for guests. In regard to the household nothing alcoholic whatever can be obtained inside for all the cellars are firmly fastened and any one bringing intoxicants within the precincts will subject himself to instant dismissal. Throughout the palace lemonade, ginger beer, soda water, barley water, fruit drinks and plain water hot and cold are served at the tables in place of the former supply of hock, claret, chablis, port, burgundy, champagne and liquor brandy while there is a large increase in the consumption of tea, coffee and chocolate.<sup>51</sup>

His pledge interlinked abstention and patriotism with the unmistakable implication being that if the sovereign had chosen to abstain then surely everyone should follow

<sup>48</sup> A. Mee and J. Stuart Holden, Defeat or Victory?: The Strength of Britain book, pp. 14-15.

<sup>49</sup> J. McEwan, (ed.), The Riddell Diaries 1908-1923 (London, 1986), p. 105.

<sup>50</sup> Lloyd George, War Memoirs, p. 329.

<sup>51</sup> The Daily Express 17 April 1915.

suit. Nevertheless it had a detrimental personal effect as it led the King to eat more resulting in unnecessary weight gain.<sup>52</sup>

The pledge provoked a clear reaction from many. One patriotic columnist wrote 'the nation must realise that the situation is even graver than is commonly supposed. It is a situation which demands the self-sacrifice of every individual and of every interest. In that self sacrifice the King has furnished a lead which none of his loyal subjects will decline to follow.'<sup>53</sup> A ubiquitous commitment to follow the King's example emerged: one man confirmed that, due to the actions of the King, 'We are all becoming tee total nowadays.'<sup>54</sup> In a letter to The Times a Mr R. Burbridge wrote:

As illustrating the great influence of the King's example in deciding to forego alcohol during the war, I am sure it will be of public interest to know that today all our employees who have meals on the premises have unanimously offered to give up alcoholic drinks for the future. I have no doubt that large masses of workers all through the country will act similarly, and also that employers will encourage this national movement toward temperance wherever the desire for abstinence is manifested.<sup>55</sup>

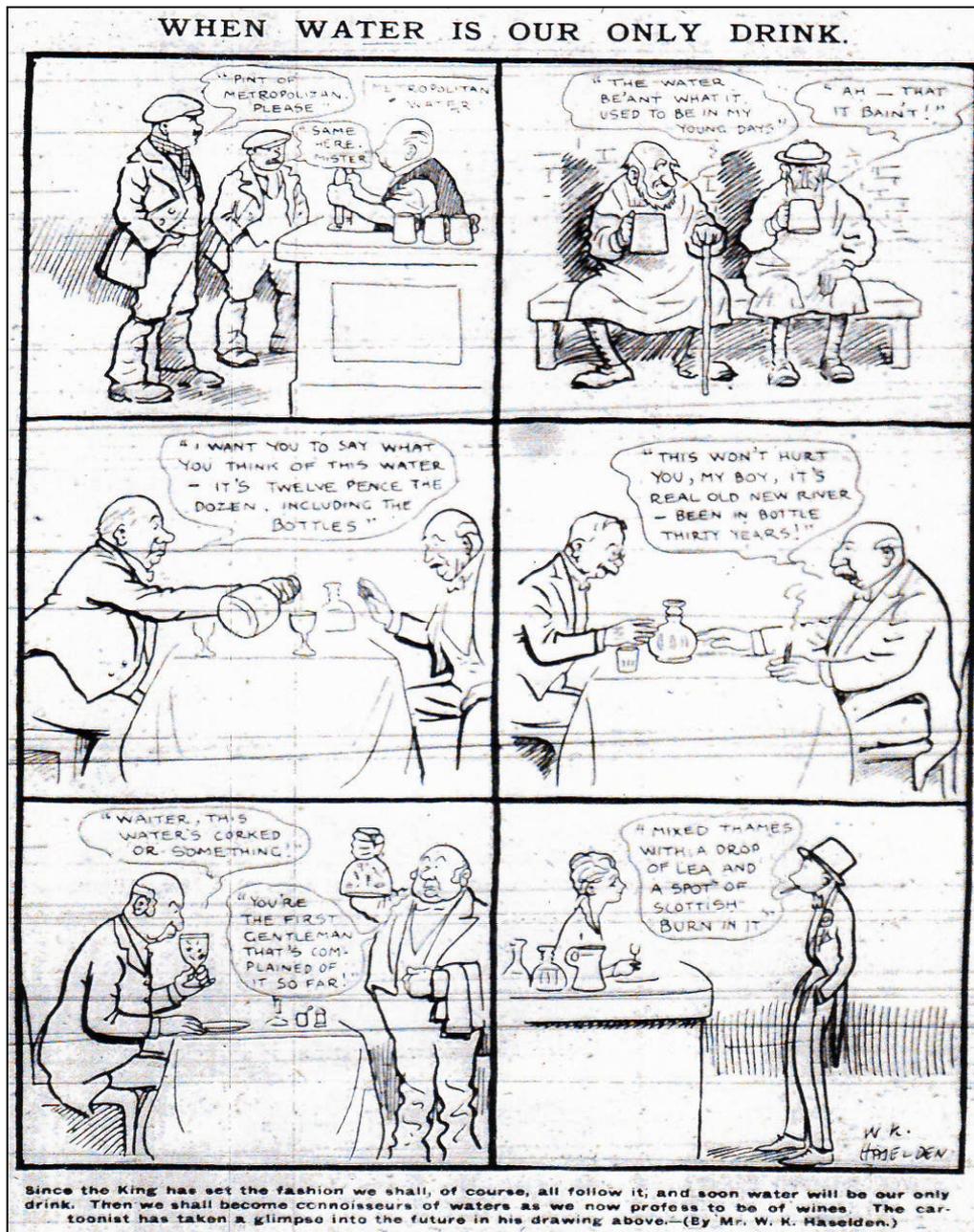
---

<sup>52</sup> G. Cassar, 'Kitchener at the War Office' in Hugh Cecil and Peter Liddle, (eds.), Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced (London, 1996), p. 39.

<sup>53</sup> Dundee Courier 1 April 1915.

<sup>54</sup> Dundee Courier 7 April 1915.

<sup>55</sup> The Times 7 April 1915.



**Figure 15:** This cartoonist predicted that everyone would follow the King's lead. His sarcastic handling of events draws attention to the paucity of taste to be had from water and its place in the social habits of society.

The proliferation of declarations of sobriety, which followed the King's example, should come as no surprise, as the British working man was, in general, proud of the monarchy and very deferential. As one contributor to The Spectator wrote:

In the days of chivalry it would have been treachery for those who stood nearest the King not to have responded to his summons when the country's

safety was threatened. I do not claim that such a situation has exactly been reproduced today, but a resemblance exists that is uncomfortably striking.<sup>56</sup>

Indeed, the position of the King was unquestioned by all classes; innate patriotism predominated. As one publican commented ‘the average man will be half ashamed to be seen patronising drinking places’.<sup>57</sup> Some companies sought to profit from the King’s abstinence. Wrigley’s urged customers to ‘follow the King’s lead’ and ‘avoid alcohol’ by chewing gum. Recipes for ‘good’ drinks made out of fruit, ‘oranges, apples and the rest’, together with lemonade and barley water appeared in the press.<sup>58</sup> Thus, whilst the movement did not perhaps evolve as Lloyd George had expected, it was still useful in persuading toppers to think about their drinking habits in a way which previously they had not. It is a shame the campaign did not gain added impetus from others whose example would have deepened the implicit moral shame that accompanied drinking. Despite his failure to sign up to the pledge, Lloyd George, in a letter to his nephew, outlined his anger at those who failed to take up the matter:

Great pity that the bulk of them are not deprived of pub services by prohibition. Altogether should the House of Commons, who failed to give an example, and those of status had followed their king in this matter and done their duty it would be far greater service to their country at these times than most of them can possibly do otherwise. [In Welsh] Shame on them!<sup>59</sup>

Whatever the intricacies of the drink debate the evidence shows that the drink issue was a divisive affair. The power of the social panic which drink facilitated is measured when one assesses those who contributed to the debate. The King, the media, parliament, the cabinet, high society, and the church all had a say. The issue was contentious, and one that needed a solution, yet it was difficult to do so since precise information on the nature of the problem had yet to be presented to the most

---

<sup>56</sup> The Spectator 18 December 1915.

<sup>57</sup> The People’s Journal 10 April 1915.

<sup>58</sup> The Daily Mirror 13 and 14 April 1915.

<sup>59</sup> Lloyd George Papers, C/23/2, 23 April 1915.

important participants of all – the public. Seeking to dampen the popular hysteria, The Times declared:

The question of drink in connection with the production of war material is getting a little out of perspective . . . To magnify a single point until it assumes monstrous proportions and blocks out everything else is the certain road to failure. The problem is to increase the production of war material, but it is in danger of disappearing from view in a cloud of controversial dust about the age long subject of drink. Mr Lloyd George's striking remark about fighting three enemies of whom the worst is drink may have led to certain confusion. It puts drink, which can only be fought in a metaphorical sense, on the same plane with the enemy whom we are really fighting.<sup>60</sup>

The editorial reveals the panic now entrenched in the public mind. The problem was out of perspective as essentially the shortage of shells was a manpower and management problem rather than a drink problem.

Stung by criticism that his views concerning drinking were based on little more than speculation, Lloyd George attempted to dissipate dissident voices by ascertaining the true extent of the drink problem through a review of drinking habits. Under the auspices of Reginald McKenna, Lloyd George took counsel from plainclothes investigators who had been sent to northern munitions and shipbuilding areas to discover the veracity of claims regarding the impact of drink on productivity. Lloyd George was told that these men found a 'deplorable state of things' on the ground.<sup>61</sup> Evidently, behind the chimera of a united industrial sector, drink was sapping productive energies.

The Board of Trade simultaneously set about inquiring into the same phenomenon with their evidence used by Lloyd George when he presented the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) to parliament on 29 April 1915, and on 1 May, presented a white paper entitled 'Report and statistics of bad time keeping in

---

<sup>60</sup> The Times 3 April 1915.

<sup>61</sup> National Archives, Cabinet Papers, CAB 37/127/23, McKenna's report 'drinking in the shipbuilding trades', 1 May 1915.

shipbuilding, munitions and transport areas.’ Shadwell, who found the evidence much more convincing than the accounts relied upon previously, wrote:

It was more comprehensive, detailed and precise than previous utterances on the subject, and it made a great impression. It proved beyond all possibility of denial the prevalence of drinking habits in certain districts, chiefly in the Northern shipyards and in naval transport areas . . . which brought the standard of efficiency not only below a possible maximum, but below the normal level.<sup>62</sup>

There was, however, no real consensus of opinion. Various interested parties criticised the method of investigation undertaken. Labour members of Parliament, upon presentation of the DORA bill, stated that:

Evidence has been sought only from employers and officials, that is one sided and unfair, we know the workers, why was not our help and knowledge called for? We should have pointed out that ‘broken time’ was due to more than one cause, to bad weather, to sickness, overstrain, insufficient rest and food, delays of material, inefficient labour replacing the efficient men who have enlisted, as well as to drink.<sup>63</sup>

They had a point. No matter how the social investigations were undertaken the level of impartiality, due to the middle class environments from which the investigators originated, was always likely to be circumspect. To see the effect of drinking on work as it was, or as the section of those who disagreed with the report would have liked to believe, was always going to be difficult. Given what has been said about class presupposition, how was someone who had never worked on an industrial site expected to understand conditions and the dreadful monotony of industrial work? In The Scotsman Mr Will Thorne, Labour M.P. and General Secretary of the National Union of Gas Workers and General Labourers, made clear that he ‘was not prepared to admit all that Mr Lloyd George had said’ as he had ‘spoken with men who were teetotallers and who had worked eighty or ninety hours a week on the production of war munitions’ who had told him that it was ‘a physical impossibility to work on

---

<sup>62</sup> A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922, p. 21.

<sup>63</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 72.

through these hours without special sustenance'.<sup>64</sup> Despite Lloyd George's assertion that 'there was no charge against the working classes of the country', there was undoubtedly a necessity to establish the existence of a drink problem amongst the working class to justify legislation aimed at curtailing such activities.

Turner contends that the McKenna inquiry, to an extent, was prejudiced from the start since, briefed to find out about drinking habits, it would 'require a superhuman objectivity on their part not to conclude that drink was the root of all evil'.<sup>65</sup> The situation was farcical in some ways. First, there was no real agreement on whether a drink problem really existed. Furthermore, the evidence gathered to illustrate the real existence of such a problem was criticised not just in terms of its inaccuracy, but also due to the method by which it had been gathered. An admiralty minute submitted to Churchill concurred with this criticism stating 'the very worst form of evidence on which to ground a general indictment against the ordinary labour of the country is ex parte statements made by its employers'.<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless the government's information oiled the cogs of political reform of the drink problem, increasing the political capital that Lloyd George utilised to implement change. Perhaps the most damning verdict of this whole procedure though came from the mouth of Lloyd George himself who, according to Christopher Addison, said that 'the idea that slackness and drink, which people talk so much about, are the causes of delay, is mostly fudge.'<sup>67</sup>

Lloyd George was willing to cash in this political capital but faced a battle spending it as he wished. Clearly the question occupied a great deal of his attention. Asquith, somewhat contemptuously, wrote to Venetia Stanley that 'Lloyd George is

---

<sup>64</sup> The Scotsman 22 March 1915.

<sup>65</sup> E.S. Turner, Dear Old Blighty, p. 599.

<sup>66</sup> Lloyd George Papers, C/3/16/25, Churchill to Lloyd George 7 April 1915.

<sup>67</sup> J. McEwan, (ed.), The Riddell Diaries 1908-1923, p. 74. Entry of 10 April 1915.

now off thinking of anything but drink'.<sup>68</sup> Foremost in his thoughts was state purchase of the entire liquor trade, a monumental legislative feat if it could be implemented. The government chief whip somewhat jealously wrote that 'Lloyd George has got a very big scheme on hand and, as usual, he will probably get his own way.'<sup>69</sup> This confidence in the Chancellor's ability was on this occasion awry. A less flattering assessment came from Asquith who thought that Lloyd George had 'completely lost his head' on the issue, with his mind oscillating 'from hour to hour' between 'the two poles of absurdity, cutting off all drink from the working man – which would lead to something like a universal strike – or buying out the whole liquor trade of the country and replacing it by a huge state monopoly'.<sup>70</sup>

Lloyd George set about negotiating with various interested parties in order to establish the cost and realistically appraise the likelihood of state purchase. An initial report from Sir William Pender estimated the cost of state purchase initially to be £320 million but this was reduced to £225 million. A cabinet committee chaired by Herbert Samuel was also established to consider the monetary costs of such a project.<sup>71</sup> After negotiations with the Conservatives and members of the trade, and with support from a section of the temperance movement, the state purchase scheme evidently seemed a viable possibility.

The Tories favoured the idea of disinterested management and some form of action being taken on the drink issue with many within the trade favouring a buy out

---

<sup>68</sup> J.A. Spender and Cyril Asquith, *Life of Lord Oxford and Asquith* (London, 1932), p. 139.

<sup>69</sup> John Gullard to Elsie Osborne 11 April 1915, Cameron Hazlehurst, *Politicians at War*, p. 211.

<sup>70</sup> Asquith, *Memories and Reflections* (London, 1928), p. 71. The historian Marvin Rintala claims that Asquith cannot be considered 'disinterested' as he was 'an alcoholic . . . part of the drinking problem faced by Britain in the First World War and no part of the solution to that problem.' Rintala contends that Asquith's 'alcoholism' was an important factor in his political demise. See M. Rintala, 'Taking the Pledge: H.H. Asquith and Drink', *Biography*, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 10.

<sup>71</sup> The committee was comprised of Herbert Samuel M.P. (Chairman), Lord Conliffe, Governor of the Bank of England, Sir John Simon M.P., Sir John Bradbury, of the Treasury, Sir William Plender, Sir John Harwood Banner M.P., Sir Edward Coates M.P., Sir Thomas Whittaker M.P., and Philip Snowden M.P.

that guaranteed sufficient financial compensation as opposed to facing a continued battle to make ends meet during the war. Further impetus was given to the cause by the ‘surprisingly generous’ terms that were suggested as payment to Brewers by Samuel’s committee.<sup>72</sup> Asquith was less convinced believing that the purchase scheme ‘will ruin our finances.’<sup>73</sup> In the days before the advent of coalition government, Conservative support was advantageous and on this occasion it was forthcoming. As serious action was now required, the trade would, according to Bonar Law:

Come to us as a Party telling us that they are ruined and expect us to oppose it . . . If we do not oppose what the government suggest we shall be bitterly attacked by the Trade which will have a great deal of support in our own party. On the other hand, if we do not oppose the proposals of the government we shall certainly offend a large section of conservative opinion which has become a little hysterical on this subject.<sup>74</sup>

The hysteria surrounding the drink problem was a factor driving reform. Bonar Law opted to support state purchase and disinterested management buttressed by a belief that the reform would cause the Liberals difficulties in dealing with the ‘opposition of the teetotal fanatics’.<sup>75</sup> The trade was not universally in favour of the measures, despite the financial security that state purchase could potentially guarantee. As The Times argued:

There is a general feeling in the licensed trade that all sense of proportion is being lost and that for the remedies which are being suggested there is not the slightest justification . . . The acting secretary of the Brewery Society states yesterday that it seemed incredible, especially when all parties were agreed that there should be a political truce, that any proposal involving hundreds of millions of pounds could be carried through when the nation was engaged upon the greatest war in history . . . the people interested in the licensed trade are inclined to resent ‘the manner in which temperance advocates are exploiting the necessity of the moment in the interests of the cause they have at heart.’ They declare that it is a breach of the political truce at a time when

---

<sup>72</sup> J. Greenaway, Drink and British since 1830: A Study in Policy Making, p. 96.

<sup>73</sup> G.B. Wilson, Alcohol and the Nation, p. 121.

<sup>74</sup> J. Greenaway, Drink and British Politics, p. 97.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* p. 96.

the friends of the trade are fighting the country's battle abroad and cannot therefore defend them at home.<sup>76</sup>

The two extremes of the drink debate were united in their hostility to the measures. Ironically some temperance workers let it be known that state purchase would be akin to a 'partnership with the devil'.<sup>77</sup> Their particular preference for prohibition excluded the prospect of any progressive temperance reforms being seen to be in the interests of the nation. The National Union of Brewery Workers were unlikely allies, albeit for different reasons, calling the measures the product of 'a colossal outburst of misguided fanaticism'.<sup>78</sup> Reports circulated that people were 'stocking up on beer, wine and whisky in case prohibition being enacted'.<sup>79</sup>

Progress towards state purchase floundered when it was discussed in cabinet on 15 April. At this meeting Asquith spoke against state purchase and was apparently pleased that Lloyd George accepted his comments with relative calmness. Four days later the issue was again discussed in cabinet, after which Asquith declared the 'Great Purchase folly' to be as 'dead as Queen Anne'.<sup>80</sup> 'Lloyd George's idea of nationalising the drink trade came to nothing to the distress of one section of the public, who thought that a great opportunity was missed, and to the joy of another section'; recalled the contemporary chronicler C.S. Peel.<sup>81</sup> The costs of purchase had proven too prohibitive for the cabinet to accept, alternatives necessarily had to be sought.

The Daily Mail doubted Lloyd George's ability to find an alternative and also questioned the rationale for his action: 'We recognise Mr Lloyd George's honest

---

<sup>76</sup> The Times 15 April 1915.

<sup>77</sup> The Daily Graphic 14 April 1915.

<sup>78</sup> Dundee Advertiser 2 April 1915.

<sup>79</sup> St Andrews Citizen 17 April 1915.

<sup>80</sup> H.H. Asquith, Memories and Reflections 1852-1927: Volume Two (London, 1928), p. 74.

<sup>81</sup> C.S. Peel, How we Lived then 1914-1918: A sketch of social and domestic life in England during the War (London, 1929), p. 63.

intentions throughout but the truth seems to be that this drink question has become such an obsession with him that he is unable to see facts in their true proportion.’<sup>82</sup> Others were harsher. The Brewers’ Gazette wrote that ‘it is difficult to equal the muddleheadedness of this type of idiot: to suggest that you can cure an “appetite” for drink by buying up the licenses of publicans is like insisting that you will destroy a taste for beef by killing all the butchers.’<sup>83</sup>

The relative ease with which Lloyd George set about drawing up alternative plans either indicates his ideological non-commitment to the idea of state purchase or a pragmatic acceptance that the plans were unworkable and he would be better off attempting to create some form of compromise. As Beaverbrook commented ‘one may marvel at, if one can hardly admire, the light hearted way in which Lloyd George picked up this vast new plan as one might pick up a sovereign and then dropped it again as quickly as if the sovereign had turned out to be a hot potato.’<sup>84</sup> The Wine Trade Review noted that it had been ‘the sharpest crisis that has ever arisen in the history of the trades and manufacturers concerned, it arose so suddenly, loomed dark and heavy for a week or so, and then collapsed’.<sup>85</sup>

Turner argues that the scheme was never an end in itself but merely a means to ‘creating a public impression of great emergency to justify such radical schemes as the Treasury Agreements.’<sup>86</sup> Whilst agreeing with this interpretation it is necessary to stress that the commotion caused by the drink problem was not solely created by Lloyd George but, as can be seen from the previous chapter, was evident from the very first days of the war and had been a social problem for the past century. The debate about state purchase had made the issue even more newsworthy but this played

---

<sup>82</sup> The Daily Mail 30 April 1915.

<sup>83</sup> The Brewers’ Gazette 10 June 1915.

<sup>84</sup> Lord Beaverbrook, Politicians and the War, p. 69.

<sup>85</sup> The Wine Trade Review May 1915.

<sup>86</sup> J. Turner, ‘State Purchase of the Liquor Trade’, pp. 603-604.

upon already existing fears rather than conjuring up new totems of social discontent. If the controversial issue was cost then from the earliest discussions concerning state purchase it would have been apparent that this was likely to prove prohibitive. Therefore it is confusing as to why Lloyd George would pursue the matter. One could argue that he truly believed in the legislation, seeing it as evidence of his ability to be seen to achieve tangible results in government, or that he desired some form of resolution to the drink problem and was not particularly bothered by what form this took. Regardless of which interpretation is closer to the truth it did not take long for Lloyd George to come up with his 'ingenious substitute' plans.<sup>87</sup>

On 19 April the cabinet concluded that the best option was to pursue a dual policy of higher taxation on spirits, wines and heavy beers together with the implementation of government control of pubs and breweries in certain areas considered to be of importance to the war effort. These plans were seemingly less popular than those for state purchase. Fearing the financial burdens of a trade lull during the war and the threat of temporary restriction and control on offer, brewers, such as George Younger, sought to harness their natural base of support within the Conservative party to obstruct the full implementation of these new proposals. Meanwhile on 29 April Lloyd George announced the plans to the Commons, articulating his new plans for control and promising a rise in liquor taxation at the next budget. So high were these proposed levels of taxation that one commentator described them as 'stillborn',<sup>88</sup> whilst Shadwell, in hindsight, described them as 'amounting to partial prohibition'.<sup>89</sup> Duty on spirits was to be doubled, wine duty to be quadrupled and surtaxes placed on higher strength beers. Alcohol taxation was recognised as an important facet of government finance and as such its revenue

---

<sup>87</sup> H.H. Asquith, Memories and Reflections, p. 73.

<sup>88</sup> St Andrews Citizen 8 May 1915.

<sup>89</sup> A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922, p. 20.

potential was regularly tapped. These measures, though, in the climate of spring 1915, were seemingly proposed as a means by which the state could try to influence the consumption of alcohol by making drink prohibitively expensive; added revenue would be a bonus. With state purchase at the time a non-starter, increased taxes offered a partially tenable form of indirect control to the state.

However, both the trade and the Conservative party opposed these measures. Bonar Law faced calls within his party to oppose the legislation. Lansdowne wrote to Bonar Law: 'I wish we had more information as to the facts – I rather resent action which is in effect a plea of guilty to a charge of national insobriety.'<sup>90</sup> A visiting deputation from the National Trade Defence Association told Law that 'we do not see that we are called upon to make sacrifices which to many of us will amount to absolute ruin for no good whatsoever'.<sup>91</sup> Bonar Law subsequently informed Lloyd George that support for the increased liquor taxation would not be forthcoming from the Conservatives, saying that 'the Tory party is so much in the hands of the trade that they must oppose these (tax increases) root and branch'.<sup>92</sup> In the debate on the legislation on 4 May the vehemence of this opposition was made clear when Conservative backbench M.P.s voiced their hostility to higher tax. Further antipathy to the measures came from Irish representatives who argued that economically important beer imports into Britain would suffer if these taxes were passed. John Redmond warned 'if this proposal is carried out, no one who is acquainted with the trade will deny that Dublin stout and porter will be entirely put out of the market in this country.'<sup>93</sup> Trade hostility was understandably fervent. The Brewers' Society

---

<sup>90</sup> Bonar Law Papers, BL 117/1/6, Lansdowne to Bonar Law 3 April 1915.

<sup>91</sup> J. Turner, 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade', p. 605.

<sup>92</sup> H.H. Asquith, *Memories and Reflections*, p. 75.

<sup>93</sup> *Hansard* 11 May 1915.

believed that ‘no case for the taxation proposals had been made’.<sup>94</sup> One distiller regarded the tax increases ‘as those of a temperance fanatic. The working classes were to be most severely hit whereas the man who could buy champagne and wine was practically not touched at all.’<sup>95</sup> B.T. Hall, secretary of the Working Men’s Club and Institute Union, believed that Lloyd George had missed the point entirely:

Recent restrictions . . . are not dictated by public necessity, but by an energetic minority of fanatics . . . What is wanted is a little more confidence in the character and self respect of the people, and a little less of the Prussian method of compelling men to do or refrain from doing certain things at the dictation of a few persons who arrogate themselves to the position of supermen.<sup>96</sup>

Some workers suggested that excess wages would more than cover the proposed price hike. One worker commented that:

They might have some effect if there had been unemployment and a consequent shortage of cash but the fact that all kinds of workers are earning more money and adding it more steadily than they have ever done before seems to have been overlooked. The addition of the price of spirits can easily be met by the surplus wages.<sup>97</sup>

Indeed, these increased wages had been a source of the original discontent, as more money was believed to be going toward drink. One ‘observer’ in Lloyd George’s white paper suggested that ‘they [the workers] have not been educated to spend their wages wisely and the money is largely wasted, for they have few interests and little to spend their wage on apart from alcohol.’<sup>98</sup>

Negotiations took place but there was not much room for compromise. Only the proposed prohibition of the sale of spirits less than three years old survived.<sup>99</sup> The trade approved of this measure describing it as ‘an infinitely better measure, more

---

<sup>94</sup> Brewers and Licensed Trade Retail Association records, MSS. 420, Box Number 1, Minute Book 4, 30 April 1915.

<sup>95</sup> Dundee Advertiser 1 April 1915.

<sup>96</sup> The Daily Telegraph 1 May 1915.

<sup>97</sup> Dundee Advertiser 10 May 1915.

<sup>98</sup> The Daily Telegraph 3 May 1915.

<sup>99</sup> The Immature Spirits Act which Lloyd George described as an ‘insignificant but quite useful little restriction.’ The act created a shortage of whisky during the war.

knowledgeable and restrained, than might have been expected from a government which so recently was responsible for drink proposals that were insincere, based upon ignorance and prejudice, and inherently unsound.’<sup>100</sup> As The Scotsman opined, ‘any idea of forcing abstinence upon the people by prohibitive taxation has had to be abandoned’.<sup>101</sup>

Despite the furore over the issue, the special areas scheme was passed without the open hostility which had met the taxation proposals and went into legislation via changes to the DORA regulations on 18 May, paving the way for the formation of the Central Control Board. In proposing this legislation Lloyd George sought to draw a line under events by stating that ‘of all the perplexing and disagreeable tasks that has fallen to the lot of my ministry, I think the attempt to provide a solution to the drink difficulty is about the worst . . . To agree upon facts is bad enough, but to agree about a remedy is impossible.’<sup>102</sup> An alternate solution had thus been found to deal with the ‘crisis’ of the preponderance of drink in the manufacturing industries. Lloyd George played a prominent role throughout eventually arriving at the compromise of control in certain areas. Turner has argued that state purchase was ‘not a temperance measure’, that the idea was ‘based around false premises about a social problem’ and he questions whether it ‘was all symbolic activity, designed and presented by a master showman to convince the British people that the war could be won.’<sup>103</sup> Nevertheless, in essence, the possibility of state purchase in 1915 paved the way for the compromise of the scheme of control. It made the formation of the CCB, as Henry Carer observed, seem ‘mild by comparison’.<sup>104</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> The Wine Trade Review May 1915.

<sup>101</sup> The Scotsman 7 May 1915.

<sup>102</sup> Hansard 29 April 1915.

<sup>103</sup> J. Turner, ‘State Purchase of the Liquor Trade’, p. 615.

<sup>104</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 135.

#### **Chapter Four: Restrictive or Constructive? The Early Stages of the Central Control Board**

The Central Control Board came into being on 19 May 1915 with the passing of the Defence of the Realm (Amendment) (No.3) Act, 1915. The Order in Council establishing the Defence of the Realm (Liquor Control Regulations), giving the CCB actual powers and defining the functions, constitution and power of the Board, was applied on 10 June 1915. The Board was established for the purpose of ‘controlling the sale and supply of intoxicating liquor in naval, military, munitions or transport areas, where such control should be found expedient for the successful prosecution of the war.’<sup>1</sup> This was a historic moment for drink control in Britain. For the first time a government body with real power had been established to deal explicitly with the question of alcohol consumption, focussed upon national efficiency. The parameters in which the Board could act were apparently firm but the perception of them, as we shall see, was open to interpretation. These criteria meant that the CCB could not enact change simply for reform’s sake. As Lord D’Abernon, Chairman of the Central Control Board, later recalled ‘[the actions of the Board] constitute the first attempt to deal with the drink traffic solely on lines of national efficiency, any other aspect of the problem having been barred by the terms of reference’.<sup>2</sup> Thus, much of the action taken by the Central Control Board, under the auspices of ‘national efficiency’, was reformist in nature for the simple reason that social reform was in the best interests of increasing national efficiency.

As we have seen, the Edwardian concept of ‘national efficiency’ was founded upon primarily middle class concerns. Drinking contributed towards inefficiency and the working class supposedly drank more than any other class. The social habits of the

---

<sup>1</sup> The Defence of the Realm (Liquor Control) Regulations 1915.

<sup>2</sup> A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control, p. ix.

working class were centred on the pub, were visible and permeated much of the urban fabric of British society. Criticisms of the middle and upper classes unproductive pleasures were less common. Their social habits were not subject to such intense scrutiny and thus caused less concern. Puritanical introspection was not considered a character trait of the middle and upper classes. For years, various 'concerned' groups had agitated for reform to no avail. The war gave the arguments of these progressives a new impetus to deal specifically with the institution of the public house. An assault on the traditions of the public house may have been justified in terms of national efficiency, but the consequences were perceived in such a way that it was apparent that this was an attack upon the working class as a whole. The boundaries between efficiency and persecution were blurred, yet drew attention to the fact that British society was intensely divided by class attitudes which the war had temporarily obscured.

This chapter details the first steps taken by the Board to reduce drinking. It argues that the Board did seek to act solely in the interests of national efficiency but that broader societal preconceptions of working class behaviour and a distrust of their moral commitment to the war influenced its action. The reaction to many of the Board's decisions show that these issues divided classes and indicates how sociability was conceived as an intrinsic aspect of class identity. Members of the CCB frequently denied that class was a factor taken into consideration, but actions speak louder than sanctimonious rhetoric. By investigating the actions of the Board the eventual culmination of many pre-war temperance schemes is evident.

On 9 June 1915 the Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association (SLTDA) met in Edinburgh. These meetings had been common in the pre-war years, but on this particular occasion the air was rife with discontent and disappointment. The meeting

sheds light on the concerns of the trade and exemplifies the perpetual distrust that existed between the trade and temperance factions. As The Scotsman, reporting on the speech by the President of the Association, noted:

Their position as a trade was that whenever it could be shown that any disability that was imposed upon them was going to further the prospect of victory, or was going to shorten the war by a single day, they were perfectly prepared to bear that disability and suffer loss. But they thought there had been too much made of drunkenness by the extreme section of the state – (applause) – and that it was not really drunkenness that was causing delay in the production of munitions of war so much as the want of patriotism on the part of a large section of the people. He thought it was also, to some extent, a want of patriotism on the part of the extreme temperance party – (hear, hear and applause) – in that on no account whatever would they allow the liquor traffic to assist by the own efforts, in helping the government. (Applause).<sup>3</sup>

Feeling that their patriotism had been slighted, the trade was not afraid to sulk over its treatment. The President's comments illustrate that old hostility between the divergent factions of the drink discourse perpetuated into the war. The speech indicates the desire and willingness of the trade to cloak itself in patriotic clothing and comply with the wishes of the government, but also exemplifies an issue which was to rankle throughout the conflict – the issue of fairness and equality of sacrifice. The trade had difficulty in altering longstanding perceptions of conduct and overcoming the natural enmity that existed between those who wanted drink banned and those who normally prospered from it. The Central Control Board, if it was to be successful and enact substantial change, would have to work through this thicket of prejudice, working with both extremes who, at various points, had hindered any resolution to the drink issue.

To be sure, the SLTDA was only a pressure group, and one amongst many, but its opinions still had to be considered. Others, such as Thomas Whittaker, believed that armed conflict gave the temperance movement a great opportunity to strike

---

<sup>3</sup> The Scotsman 10 June 1915.

‘whilst the overshadowing issues of the war are accustoming the people to restricted liberties’.<sup>4</sup> Some saw through this opportunism. The Daily Express noted that ‘it is the vehement denunciation by the cranks of the ordinary enjoyments of human life that have made the public houses of this country mere drinking dens’.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the CCB would have to frame its actions in terms which were suitable for all parties concerned. It was to prove a difficult task but one willingly undertaken in the interests of a much greater cause, that of winning the war.

Lloyd George, upon assent being given to the bill creating the CCB, declared that the Board was to ‘comprise representatives of the admiralty, the war office, the home office, employees of labour, labour organisations and men of rather wider interests’.<sup>6</sup> Whilst being subject to the jurisdiction of the government in terms of member selection, the Board was otherwise an autonomous body with complete power to implement reform. It was also independent of Parliament, an issue that was later raised to question both the legitimacy and accountability of the CCB. Critics pointed out that the Board ‘is not itself representative, and its attributes, and certainly its methods, are rather those of a secret conclave than of a responsible authority’.<sup>7</sup> Before considering the Board’s policies it is pertinent to consider its most prominent members.

The Board was composed of an array of individuals from a variety of backgrounds. Lord D’Abernon, otherwise known as Edgar Vincent, was asked to preside over the CCB and readily accepted. He had had an eventful career. Throughout his life he had been a financier, diplomat, former Conservative M.P. and unsuccessful Liberal candidate and had a good administrative background, as

---

<sup>4</sup> B. Glover, Brewing for Victory: Brewers, Beer and Pubs in World War Two (Cambridge, 1995), p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> The Daily Express 10 April 1915.

<sup>6</sup> Hansard 10 May 1915.

<sup>7</sup> H.J. Jennings, ‘New Drink Regulations’, Fortnightly Review January 1916, p. 178.

demonstrated by his role as financial advisor to the Egyptian Government and afterwards as Governor of the Imperial Ottoman bank at Constantinople. Sydney Neville, who was later a member of the Board, wrote of D'Abernon that 'with his long experience in difficult public problems [he] was an ideal chairman for an organisation such as the CCB. His indeed was a magnificent presence.'<sup>8</sup> Neville also wrote that D'Abernon 'held decided views on drink and especially on the public house, which in many ways matched my own'.<sup>9</sup> D'Abernon was an imposing, and, in private, charismatic figure. Margot Asquith described him as 'one of the four best looking men I ever saw'.<sup>10</sup> Sir Collin Scott-Moncrieffe agreed, describing Lord D'Abernon as 'beautiful . . . like a son of the Gods'.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, p. 98.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* p. 98.

<sup>10</sup> M. Asquith, The Autobiography of Margot Asquith: Volume Two (London, 1936), p. 129.

<sup>11</sup> M.A. Hollings, (ed.) The Life of Sir Colin-Scott Moncrieff (London, 1917), p. 157.



**Figure 16: Lord D'Abernon, aka Edgar Vincent, Chairman of the CCB.**

D'Abernon's 'beauty' was an attribute that he apparently made good use of, with his extra marital affairs earning him the laudatory nickname 'the Piccadilly

Stallion'.<sup>12</sup> Sir Robert Vansittart described him as having 'something more than an eye for a pretty girl, excellent company, one of those Britons who contrive to be cosmopolitan in culture and insular in outlook'.<sup>13</sup> It seems that it was perfectly acceptable for him to concern himself with the supposed immoral activities of others whilst not exactly being a beacon of virtue himself. Indeed D'Abernon had a reputation for being very self-confident. He was granted a peerage in July 1914 making him Baron D'Abernon of Esher upon the recommendation of Asquith<sup>14</sup>, who wrote of him two months later: 'Edgar is a curious study – fine intelligence, undeniable charm, and the simulation of bigness without quite the reality.'<sup>15</sup>

Lloyd George's selection of D'Abernon as Chairman of the Board is unsurprising given that D'Abernon had links with the drink question from before the war, having served on the Home Counties' Trust from 1909.<sup>16</sup> This was an organisation that believed in reforming the physical layout of the pub, and the goods offered for sale, in order to engineer reform within the individual customer. His expertise thus lay in the constructive and reformist aspect of public house reform. The necessity of required improvements in national efficiency gave D'Abernon the ideal opportunity to practice what he had preached. He was sure that the 'phenomenon of intemperance could be controlled by skilful legislation'.<sup>17</sup> This chance, as we shall see, was pursued with some vigour.

Philip Snowden was another prominent member of the Board. He was a fervent socialist, a devout teetotaler and a prolific journalist who espoused his views

---

<sup>12</sup> Richard Davenport-Hines, 'Vincent, Edgar, Viscount D'Abernon (1857–1941)', Oxford Dictionary National Biography (September 2004) [www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com).

<sup>13</sup> G. Johnson, The Berlin Embassy of Lord D'Abernon 1920-1926 (Basingstoke, 2002), p. 21.

<sup>14</sup> D'Abernon had close links with the Asquith's. He was godfather to Violet Asquith's daughter, Cressida Bonham Carter. Lady D'Abernon was godmother to Raymond Asquith's daughter, Helen.

<sup>15</sup> M. Brock and E. Brock, H.H. Asquith: Letters to Venetia Stanley (London, 1982), p. 240.

<sup>16</sup> An organisation which favoured the expansion of food sales in public houses. See D. Gutzke, 'Gentrifying the British Public House'.

<sup>17</sup> Lord D'Abernon, 'Preface' to H.M. Vernon, The Alcohol Problem (London, 1928), p. vi.

at meetings throughout the northwest and through his writing. He originated from a working class background, was largely self-educated and had a distinguished career in the civil service. Elected in 1906 as the Labour M.P. for Blackburn he became a socialist figure of nationwide renown. In 1908 he published an important work on the drink issue, Socialism and the Drink Trade.<sup>18</sup> In July 1914, disillusioned by disagreements with Labour contemporaries, Snowden embarked upon a worldwide lecture tour during which he focussed primarily upon temperance. He was a member of the Committee which had reported upon state purchase in March 1915 and was a prominent advocate of this cause. As one historian has argued '[he] accepted a seat on the Board motivated more by his dislike of drink than by the desire that this body might prevent the consumption of alcohol impairing the war effort'.<sup>19</sup> As a devout teetotaler any opportunity to tackle the demon drink was readily acceptable to him and it is unsurprising that Snowden stepped into the breach. Yet rather than follow the extreme policy of many teetotalers, he thought it better to apply existing liquor laws to the letter, and seek to provide working men with counter attractions to the public house.<sup>20</sup> He thus complemented the 'progressive' body of opinion within the Board.

John Hodge was a further prominent Labour activist on the Board. A distinguished Trade Unionist, he was elected a Labour M.P. in 1910. With the outbreak of war he became an exponent of the extreme patriotic tendency within the Labour Party, arguing for the suspension of traditional union practices and vehemently opposing strikes. In 1916 he was made Minister of Labour by Lloyd George. He was on the Board predominantly as a representative of the Trade Union interests. His role was to preserve the relationship with the working man, whose social habits were to be reviewed by the CCB.

---

<sup>18</sup> P. Snowden, Socialism and the Drink Question.

<sup>19</sup> K. Laybourn, Philip Snowden: A Biography 1864-1937 (Aldershot, 1988), p. 69.

<sup>20</sup> C.E. Bechhofer, Philip Snowden: An Impartial Portrait (London, 1929).

Employers were also represented. William Lever was a prominent industrialist and soap manufacturer with a keen interest in philanthropy and a fervent belief that commercial efficiency was a service to humanity. Drawing upon his own experience of the management of canteens in his industrial career, he was primarily concerned with the provision of canteen facilities for workmen, which often entailed long visits to principal centres of production to discover what changes needed to be made.<sup>21</sup> His presence is again indicative of the importance ascribed to the constructive aspect of the Board's work.

The membership of the CCB was drawn from across the political spectrum. Waldorf Astor had been the Conservative M.P. for Plymouth since 1911 and was also a newspaper proprietor: he owned The Observer and had a keen interest in social reform, supporting the Lloyd George budget of 1909 and the National Insurance Act of 1911. During the war he was primarily concerned with waste in army management and in armament factories. Thus he was ideally suited to advising the Board on the effect of alcohol upon the efficiency of factories within the country. In December 1916 he became Lloyd George's parliamentary private secretary and was a member of the prime minister's 'garden suburb' of advisors.<sup>22</sup> Others who joined the Board at its outset included Neville Chamberlain, at the time a leading figure in Birmingham local government, and whose father, Joseph, had been a prominent advocate of public house reform; Richard Cross, an expert on licensing law and keen supporter of the nationalisation of the drink traffic; Colonel John Denny, who represented industrial interests; Sir George Newman M.D., in charge of the medical aspect of the problem; and Sir John Pedder, at the time Assistant Secretary to the Home Office who acted as

---

<sup>21</sup> W.P. Jolly, Lord Leverhulme – A Biography (London, 1976), p. 159.

<sup>22</sup> See J. Turner, Lloyd George's Secretariat (Cambridge, 1980).

Chairman in D'Abernon's rare absence.<sup>23</sup> He was also responsible for the text of the various orders being 'a typical civil servant of the highest class.'<sup>24</sup> Other members included R.R. Scott, principal clerk to the Board, and W. Towle, who had great experience of providing social services as hotel manager of the Midland Railway. The Secretary, J.C.G Sykes was, according to Neville, 'a charming and lovable personality with a whimsical humour and a great capacity for analytical detail, together with a placid temperament when faced by emergencies.'<sup>25</sup>

The Board at its conception numbered thirteen people. Expectations were high. The Scotsman described it as 'the largest social experiment of our time'.<sup>26</sup> The reaction to its formation was generally supportive. Brewers greeted 'the Central Control Board with satisfaction' though were wary that the temperance faction would use 'every endeavour' to hijack the organisation 'to its own ends'.<sup>27</sup> The Brewers' Gazette commented that despite:

The very drastic and comprehensive powers of the Board . . . it will require from the people of many classes, large sacrifices of habit and custom, if not of money. But this sacrifice is asked in the name of patriotism by a government representative of the whole nation.<sup>28</sup>

Within the first few weeks of the Board's existence D'Abernon was already convinced of its value to the nation. Amidst a debate beset by muddle, he proposed himself and the CCB as the best chance of redemption. In a statement to the press indicative of his undoubted self-confidence he wrote:

This is pioneer work worthy of great expansion . . . The drink problem has baffled politicians of every party. That some reasonable solution of its more pressing difficulties may be found by a non-political, non-prohibitionist and non-teetotal board in this critical junction in the country's history must be the

---

<sup>23</sup> Cross died in June 1916 due to a swimming accident.

<sup>24</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, p. 98.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* p. 100.

<sup>26</sup> The Scotsman 14 August 1915.

<sup>27</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 13 May 1915.

<sup>28</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 24 June 1915.

hope of all whether politicians, social reformers or the humble man in the street.<sup>29</sup>

The statement testifies to D'Abernon's desire to uplift the Board's actions from the intransigence of the drink discourse to a new level of impartiality concerned simply with efficiency.

John Greenaway argues that a 'feature of the CCB evident from the outset was its independence from the "vested interests" of the Drink Question: the Temperance organisations and the Trade.'<sup>30</sup> Whilst true to an extent, certain members of the CCB had long been involved in the resolution of the drink problem. For example, Lord D'Abernon's participation in pub reform organisations, and Snowden's devout temperance beliefs, indicates that there were clear opinions already held on certain aspects of the drink question amongst members of the Board. Many of the individuals described above had been chosen for this specific reason. Indeed, so attached were some of the members to certain drink policy that the Licensed Victuallers' National Defence League protested that 'two thirds of the members of the Control Board are men whose personal views on the drink question in relation to the public house as a national institution are known to be of such a nature as to influence their judgement adversely to the public house system on the issues submitted to them.'<sup>31</sup> The Licensing World and Licensed Trade Review, whilst being pleased that the government had appointed a Liquor Control Board, were not:

Very much struck with the particular appropriateness of the several appointments, or the special fitness for the position of those who are to constitute the new body. At all events, when we look down the list of names we cannot feel, as we ought to have been able to do, that the work is in the hands of men who have a practical and impartial knowledge of the public house.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> HO 185/253, D'Abernon statement to the Press, 24 August 1915.

<sup>30</sup> J. Greenaway, Drink and British Politics since 1830: A Study in Policy Making, p.98.

<sup>31</sup> H.J. Jennings, 'The New Drink Regulations', p. 179.

<sup>32</sup> The Licensing World and Licensed Trade Review 29 May 1915.

Nevertheless, D'Abernon made clear that this organisation was going to deal with the drink issue as no other organisation had done so before, free from bias and preconception. In reality, the likelihood of complete impartiality was slim, especially when the Board had been constituted to reduce drunkenness. Thus, whilst it is true that there was no direct influence from temperance organisations and the trade at the outset, those involved with the CCB were, despite the rhetoric, predisposed to certain solutions.

The CCB met weekly and from its offices on The Strand in London sought to regulate liquor sales in regions important to the war effort. D'Abernon admitted to a temperance deputation that he hoped to reduce drunkenness in the UK by 50 per cent in two years.<sup>33</sup> Upon application by either the Ministry of Munitions, the War Office or the Admiralty, areas deemed to be in need of liquor regulation were immediately surveyed by a team of investigators. These teams were composed of naval, military and civil authorities, and representatives of the employers and workmen in the locality, who all gave their opinion as to the necessity of CCB intervention. Temperance and religious organisations could give evidence separately if they wished, though their opinions were unlikely to be surprising or innovative. These local investigations then reported back to the CCB which, after approval by the Minister of Munitions, acted upon their recommendations. The Board decided what precise regulations were required, though these very rarely differed in terms of content, and fixed the geographical boundaries of the control order. This consultative procedure aimed to prove the necessity of the Board's actions to doubters. No order was made without consideration of the rights of license holders or the convenience of the public. Some, however, were critical of this process, noting that 'the inquiries

---

<sup>33</sup> HO 185/313, For Chairman, 26 October 1915.

were largely conducted by chief constables committed simply to doing whatever the Board considered fit to suggest'.<sup>34</sup>

The first order, passed in July 1915, covered Newhaven where stories of soldiers' insobriety before setting off for France had caused outcry. By September 1915, fourteen areas had been placed under the jurisdiction of the CCB including ten areas in England and Wales, three in Scotland and the London area. Most of these areas were ports, such as Southampton and the North East coast area, indicating that shipbuilding areas and those naval bases involved in war and mercantile activities were the greatest concern for the authorities.

The selection of areas chosen for control was not without controversy, especially given that there was no recourse to appeal with regard to the Board's decision. Those with business interests related to the trade, unsurprisingly, readily expressed their discontent that their area had been chosen for control whilst a neighbouring area had not. As Edgar Sanders reported to Lord D'Abernon on 18 October 1915:

At Bristol I find that there is a feeling that there was no reason why it should be selected as against Bath or Gloucester, or indeed that the country district surrounding Bristol should have been chosen as against the remainder of Gloucestershire or Somersetshire . . . it is necessary to encourage the feeling that areas have not been selected haphazardly.<sup>35</sup>

Moreover, brewers seemed perplexed as to why some areas had been chosen in the first place. The Home and Southern Counties District noted that a deputation had visited Portsmouth on 8 November 1915 but, despite D'Abernon's view that Portsmouth had a 'clean sheet' with regard to drunken behaviour, the area came under restriction on 22 November.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> The Scotsman 16 August 1915.

<sup>35</sup> HO 185/253, For Chairman: Sanders to D'Abernon, 18 October 1915.

<sup>36</sup> Brewers and Licensed Trade Retail Association, MSS. 420, Box Number 249, Home and Southern Counties District Report 1916.

To allay criticism, and with an appreciation regarding the value of control, a constant stream of control orders was issued. By the end of 1915 a further ten areas had been placed under the jurisdiction of the CCB resulting in about half the population of Great Britain living under the new conditions.<sup>37</sup> Each of these orders was very similar in character with discrepancies only occurring where particular local circumstances dictated. The Board's policy was to take repressive measures in order to ensure that the act of drinking was made more difficult and the product itself, in some forms, less intoxicating. The sale or supply of intoxicating liquor, for consumption on or off premises, was restricted to two and a half hours in the middle of the day, and to three, and in some cases two, hours in the evening. These restrictions applied not only to pubs, but to clubs, restaurants, grocer's shops, refreshment rooms, hotels and theatres also. This was a massive reduction in opening hours as pubs previously had been open normally from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. in most British towns, and from 5 a.m. till 12.30 a.m. in London. Off sales were forbidden after 8 p.m. or 8.30 p.m. to limit the opportunity for continual drinking after the pub had closed. These changes meant that if an individual was to engage upon a long drinking session he or she would, at the very least, have to be well organised. Public houses, however, were allowed to remain open in the curtailed hours for the purpose of serving non-alcoholic drink and food. This was to encourage the growth of the idea of the pub as a place of socialisation where alcoholic drink did not necessarily have to be consumed. On a Sunday, hours were reduced even further by enforced closing at 9 p.m. Minor differences applied to certain areas, for example, in Scotland on a Saturday the pub was to open only from 4-9 p.m. to prevent men from visiting the public house straight after being paid.

---

<sup>37</sup> The full list of areas placed under the jurisdiction of the board and the date on which this occurred can be seen in The Fourth Report of the Central Control Board.

This major curtailment of pub opening hours was designed to limit the opportunities of the working class to indulge in liquor and to ensure that the worker remained efficient as ‘early morning and late evening drinking made for broken time and inefficiency in industry.’<sup>38</sup> By offering alternatives to the pub, the Board wanted workers to socialise elsewhere without drink. By closing pubs in the afternoon, and coordinating opening hours with meal times, the Board sought an end to the habit of ‘soaking’, the contemporary description for what has become in modern parlance ‘binge drinking’, although some critics argued that the shortening of hours would merely result in the ‘concentration of drinking in a shorter period.’<sup>39</sup> To some, however, the implications of these measures were clear. The Daily Express argued that:

It would be absurd not to admit that the curtailment of public house hours is in effect, a limitation of the personal liberty of the poor. The well to do are not dependent for their drink either on licensed houses or clubs. The man with a wine cellar and the man whose friend has a wine cellar may still have a drink whenever they will . . . Nothing would be worse than to prevent the poor wasting their pence while you leave the rich free to waste their pounds. There is a suspicion that the new order is a mere puritanical dodge to use the war to restrict freedom.<sup>40</sup>

Others, such as ‘one parched citizen of St Andrews’, noted that ‘the horrors a war’s brought home to everybody now’.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore ‘treating’, the custom of buying drinks in rounds was prohibited by the CCB, together with credit sales. The Board also regulated the transport of alcohol within designated areas. Despite rhetoric disavowing the implications of the CCB’s acts this legislation sought to reform the customer of the public house which was predominantly the working class male. To be sure, pubs in more upmarket areas attracted customers from a similar social background but it was in the industrial

---

<sup>38</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 138.

<sup>39</sup> The Scotsman 16 August 1915.

<sup>40</sup> The Daily Express 30 November 1915.

<sup>41</sup> St Andrews Citizen 22 August 1915.

centres of Britain that most attention was initially paid. The message was clear from those interested in the resolution of the drink problem: if Britain was going to win the war then the working man had to be changed, he had to be made sober.

The abolition of treating was a major assault on working class custom as it was the most popular method by which drinks were purchased. Balfour had originally raised the idea in March in Cabinet with the caveat that ‘these suggestions may perhaps seem at first sight somewhat fantastic, but they are in my judgement worth consideration’.<sup>42</sup> That he describes them as ‘fantastic’ indicates the swift change in attitude that had occurred. What had once seemed like fantasy was now reality. One newspaper believed that the ‘abolition of treating is perhaps the greatest revolution in our social customs produced by the war’.<sup>43</sup> The custom had long been criticised by the temperance movement and the CCB agreed, believing it to be an invidious practice. Treating was known as the ‘have another habit’, due to its tendency to encourage long bouts of drinking, as people would not normally leave the public house until the round had been completed. For many, though, treating was looked upon with fondness and was an intrinsic aspect of the social experience that the pub offered. ‘Why’, commented one old man, ‘more than half the pleasure of a dram lies in having a friend to share it with.’<sup>44</sup> Others saw the ban as a security measure, ‘[the no treating order] tried to stop the social life of the pub as much as possible, because of the possibility of people saying unguarded things, having a drink or two over the odds’ noted William Benham.<sup>45</sup>

It was hoped that by prohibiting the custom bouts of group overindulgence would be curtailed. This was an authoritarian, yet symbolic, step, the implications of

---

<sup>42</sup> CAB 37/126, Balfour Intoxicating Liquor Special Restrictions, 22 March 1915.

<sup>43</sup> Dundee Courier 15 September 1915.

<sup>44</sup> The People’s Journal 27 September 1915.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with William George Benham, British officer with Hawke Battalion Naval Division on Western Front 1915-1917, Imperial War Museum Sound Archive, Number 95 Reel 3.

which were appreciated at the time. The Metropolitan Police speculated that the ‘prohibition [of treating] will be welcomed by the persons mainly concerned, namely, the work people; and, further that licensed victuallers will not be indisposed to do their best in the same direction.’<sup>46</sup> This was an optimistic assessment, but one that proved not entirely unfounded. The Spectator surmised that:

A remarkable fact in the working of the recent restrictive and ‘No Treating’ orders is that there have been no complaints . . . We suspect that hundreds of thousands of men are secretly delighted to be delivered from an expensive and senseless social tyranny . . . There can only be one explanation. People want the order to work.<sup>47</sup>

The Daily Express was also supportive of the measure, noting that ‘exceptional measures are necessary at exceptional times. The law against treating will doubtless cause irritation and it is sure to entail some anomalies, but the people must put up with them.’<sup>48</sup>

For some, however, the change brought uncertainty. Golfers at St Andrews were unsure as to the legality of a game being played for a round of drinks.<sup>49</sup> For others, it provided a curious distraction to the war, as one journalist reported:

Lunch-time in the city was as convivial a function as ever. The new order gave every one something to talk about. None bothered about Belgrade or Ferdinand or the Censor, but every one was keenly concerned in counting the extra number of times the cash register bell had to ring in order that each glass of liquor supplied might be recorded as a separate transaction.<sup>50</sup>

Initial reviews were nevertheless promising. One report noted that the ban on treating ‘is generally popular and is looked on by most of the decent working men as an excellent excuse for evading the sponging of the ordinary public house loafer’.<sup>51</sup> By later 1917 the apparent consequences were more definite. One report noted that the

---

<sup>46</sup> The Spectator 6 November 1915.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> The Daily Express 25 September 1915.

<sup>49</sup> The Daily Mail 21 September 1915.

<sup>50</sup> The Daily Graphic 12 October 1915.

<sup>51</sup> HO 185/228, Report by Dr. Sullivan on Alcoholism on Liverpool with special reference to the effect of the restrictive orders of the CCB, 25 July 1916.

‘application of the order’ has ‘removed to a very great extent the pastime of “pub crawling” which created groups of drinkers’.<sup>52</sup>

The Board not only meddled with behaviour within the confines of the public house but also modified the alcoholic strength of the publican’s wares. Spirits, such as whisky, brandy and rum, had to be diluted to 35 under proof instead of 25 under proof only if they were to be sold. This policy was introduced to deal with the high alcoholic strength of these spirits which were popular, and thus deemed to be more injurious to industrial efficiency, particularly in Scotland and the North of England. These actions stemmed from a belief that if the working man could not be trusted to inhibit his drinking habits then the drink itself had to be altered.

The actions of the CCB thus illustrate the initial inclination towards repressive action. The previous months, and the ensuing moral panic, had shown the necessity of these measures and the nature of the Board’s actions are unsurprising. In order to assess the success of these measures, a Restrictions Committee was established which dealt with questions arising out of the successive restrictive orders and, from time to time, suggested modifications or additions to them which appeared in later CCB reports. Occasionally when breaches of the order appeared so serious as to defeat the policy of control, this committee investigated and advised the Board as to whether it was necessary to stop the sale of liquor on the premises concerned.

The Board had variable success in trying to distinguish itself from the temperance movement. Some argued that it merely pandered to temperance advocates by passing ‘temperance legislation’ under the guise of action in the name of national efficiency. Discontent mounted amongst the trade. One official of the Edinburgh Trades Council, discussing the first action of the Board, opined ‘that order is simply

---

<sup>52</sup> HO 185/243 Report by Madden, 15 November 1917.

fanatical, and is the work of temperance fanatics to further their own ends'.<sup>53</sup> One contributor to The Times was particularly angered by the CCB:

How long are we to endure the tyranny of so called temperance fanatics? . . . They maintained that all crime was due to drink. The increase in the drink bill has been marked by a startling decrease in crime. We are fighting this war in order to call our souls our own. Those who most conspicuously challenge the right of the state to compel military service are the first to impose a degrading tyranny in order to advertise their own fads and nostrums. They will only succeed in promoting the furtive use of the brandy flask and sham medicines instead of the moderate consumption of wine or beer.<sup>54</sup>

These accusations contained a kernel of truth as the legislation implemented mirrored temperance proposals to deal with the drink problem. The fact remained that any attempt at controlling the consumption of drink was by its very nature temperate action. Only by repeatedly stating that their actions were in the interests of efficiency could the Board attempt to disassociate themselves from the broad and emotional appeals of the temperance movement.

This task was made all the more difficult by various reports concerning the favourable reaction of social reformers in extolling the benefits of control. Thomas Whittaker wrote that 'to the social reformer the actions of the Central Control Board . . . may prove to be the starting point of a new departure in the effort to grapple with a most difficult and fundamental social problem'.<sup>55</sup> The Times reported that 'social reformers had welcomed the new Central Control Board order'.<sup>56</sup> Lord Leverhulme wrote about 'another wide and equally well founded public sentiment; a suspicion that some members of the Board, in particular Lord D'Abernon, were choosing to overlook the nature of the original directive to the CCB that national efficiency for war purposes and not social reform was the object of their mission.'<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> The Scotsman 16 August 1915.

<sup>54</sup> The Times 5 October 1915.

<sup>55</sup> T. Whittaker, 'The Work of the Central Control Board', Contemporary Review, March 1916, p. 19.

<sup>56</sup> The Times 22 November 1915.

<sup>57</sup> W.P. Jolly, Lord Leverhulme – A Biography, pp. 160-161.

This distinction is important. The implementation of social reform had clear political connotations. Radical liberals, and the progressive element within British society, had supported radical reform prior to the outbreak of war and, thus, they were interlinked with, and an intrinsic part of, this particular course of action. The Board, however, had been ordered to act solely in the interest of national efficiency. The delicate divide between the two was blurred given that most social reform was conducive to benefiting the efficiency of the nation. Those who believed that the CCB was acting in the interests of social reform could point towards its intervention in the social fabric of the public house, whereas those who appreciated the benefits to national efficiency could point towards improving productivity and reducing crime.

The Board contended that:

There is no ground for the assertion that general social reform has been aimed at. At practically every conference Lord D'Abernon, or the member of the Board presiding in his absence, has commenced the proceedings with the statement that national efficiency for war purposes, and not social reform was the object of their mission.<sup>58</sup>

As the CCB took on more constructive work these accusations became more ferocious and harder to deny, but deny them they did.

Whilst the CCB tried to distance itself from the pre-war drink debate, the sniping which continued was all too familiar. When the Bishop of Croydon alleged that 'measures of reform and restriction called for in the interests of the nation' were being 'systematically opposed', a spokesman for the trade responded by drawing attention to Lord D'Abernon's comments that 'wherever the Board have made orders the trade in the localities affected have carried out these orders loyally, and done their best to conform to the new regulations in force'.<sup>59</sup> Rumours and exaggerations were common. The trade believed that 'in the matter of publicity, the advocates of

---

<sup>58</sup> HO 185/253, For Chairman, 18 January 1916.

<sup>59</sup> The Times 16 November 1915.

intolerant teetotalism enjoy a marked advantage . . . scarcely an utterance is made even by the veriest non-entity, without its finding a prominent position in the columns of the antiquarian press'.<sup>60</sup> Prohibitionists, in contrast, believed that the press was engaged in some sort of conspiratorial silence over this issue, as they were supposedly under the control of the trade due to the finance accrued from liquor advertisements.<sup>61</sup>

Some trade unions also had to be reassured by Hodge that the regulations 'had not been framed with any idea of interfering with working class liberties' but that 'they were agreed on in the interests of the workers engaged on munitions work'.<sup>62</sup> For some, though, this was not enough. At a Trade Union conference in Hackney on 18 November 1915, attended by over three hundred delegates, a measure was passed demanding the withdrawal of 'the insulting restrictions imposed by the Central Control Board', describing the order as 'a direct indictment to the workers to down tools.'<sup>63</sup> The meeting also resented 'the insinuation that working men are addicted to excessive drinking.'<sup>64</sup> This indicates that despite the Board maintaining that its actions were not based upon ideas concerning working class indiscipline the perception of some within the working class movement was that they had done precisely that. One trade representative highlighted the somewhat hypocritical situation whereby 'it is people who do not require to use the public house for refreshment who bring in rules of this kind'.<sup>65</sup>

This accusation was difficult to deny. Hodge frequently had to refute hurtful accusations that he had slandered the workingman as a drunkard and a shirker. Together with Lloyd George, who had suffered similar accusations, he issued a joint

---

<sup>60</sup> The Daily Mail 18 March 1915.

<sup>61</sup> The Spectator 4 September 1915.

<sup>62</sup> The Times 22 November 1915.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> The Scotsman 16 August 1915.

letter to the editor of the New Statesman that whilst there was a 'section of the workers who by their habits retard munitions making' he resented the magazine trying 'to twist this into a slander upon the whole of my fellow workmen.'<sup>66</sup> The reality was that the majority of workers were willing to abide by the rules, and various accounts testify to the general acceptance of the measures. The Times noted that despite the 'strong language that continues to come from the London Trade Unions Protest Committee the workers as a whole are now inclined to accept the curtailed facilities with a good grace.'<sup>67</sup> Once again, established fears concerning the priorities of the working class within Britain had proven to be unfounded.

Meanwhile, the portrayal of the CCB as an autocratic body was gathering pace. There was criticism from the trade about Neville Chamberlain's supposed comment that during his tenure on the Board 'I do not remember previously having heard that the Control Board was prevented from doing anything it desired'.<sup>68</sup> The Brewers' Journal commented:

As to the limitation of powers of the Board by the regulations there is really no limitation at all. For example the Board recently desired to extend its orders to unlicensed hotels, boarding houses and other similar places but it possessed no power to do this. The remedy however proved to be simple. An order in council was made conferring such powers . . . it is grotesque and absurd to find D'Abernon complaining to the temperance council of the 'limited powers under which we act'.<sup>69</sup>

Hostility within the trade was clearly growing. Much anger was directed at the alleged 'temperance under a new name' activities of the Board and, in particular, the influence of men traditionally antipathetic to the drink trade. As the Brewers' Journal asserted:

The triumvirate pulling the wires behind the CCB are Lloyd George, Addison and Snowden. All these gentlemen are uncompromising teetotallers, and,

---

<sup>66</sup> Manchester Guardian 15 December 1915.

<sup>67</sup> The Times 30 November 1915.

<sup>68</sup> Brewers' Journal 15 October 1915.

<sup>69</sup> Brewers' Journal 15 November 1915.

whilst the very existence of many licensed houses is threatened, the cry of the United Kingdom Alliance goes up in unblushing confession through the mouth of the secretary Mr Alexander Thompson ‘the new restrictions foreshadowed are the outcome of our insistence for the past fifteen months’.<sup>70</sup>

Criticism from this trade organisation thus centred on the temperance faction within government exerting undue influence over the Board. Despite frequent denials it was an accusation that was eventually to prove damaging to the CCB and its programme of reform, particularly as one of the supposed strengths of the Board was its cold impartiality in its consideration of national requirements.

The First Report of the CCB was produced on 12 October 1915, five months after its inception. The report was a slim document, being only five pages in length, but reviewed and testified to the impact of the Board’s measures upon liquor control. The Board drew upon the collective experiences of notable figures, including chief constables, medical officers of health, employers of labour, men’s representatives, philanthropic associations, and the working class regarding the effects of the order within restricted areas. Moreover, chief constables provided statistics for the number of prosecutions and convictions for drunkenness in the four weeks prior to, and after, the introduction of the order in an attempt to ascertain the initial success of the Board’s measures. The Report stated:

There has been a considerable diminution in the number of both the prosecutions and the convictions for drunkenness. The prosecutions for drunkenness in the first eight areas scheduled in England and Wales, on an average of the four weeks prior to the commencement of the Order in each area, amounted to 734 per week. This figure, calculated for a period of four weeks for each area subsequent to the commencement of the Orders for the respective areas, has fallen to 417, a decrease of over 40 per cent. The corresponding figures for the first two areas scheduled in Scotland are 695 and 585.<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup> Brewers’ Journal 15 November 1915.

<sup>71</sup> The First Report of the Central Control Board.

Of those who had been convicted, ‘a considerable proportion’, according to the Board, were persistent offenders with ‘at least twenty or more previous convictions’.<sup>72</sup> In effect the Board was saying that these men were beyond redemption, adding that ‘inquiry and research might usefully be made with a view to discovering some method of treatment giving better hope of effective cure’.<sup>73</sup> With regard to the effect of the no treating order, the results were even more pleasing. Police reports testified to the benefits:

When public houses have been visited, police almost invariably find fewer people, and the tendency for these to make much shorter stays has been observed. This is accounted for by their having to pay for their own drinks . . . Police have experienced little difficulty, on the whole, in enforcing the Order, and breaches of the law have been few.<sup>74</sup>

The initial prognosis was encouraging. Behaviour had been significantly improved by the CCB’s regulations.

Anecdotal evidence from eyewitness accounts suggested a significant decline in the analogous consequences of intoxication throughout the controlled areas. The Report continued:

Many witnesses, speaking of their own areas, mention improved public order, a better condition in the streets, and an improved condition of the children; and the Board have received evidence that money which was formerly spent in excessive drinking is now either deposited in savings banks, or used to improve the home.<sup>75</sup>

The public health department in Edinburgh, for example, reported an ‘enormous improvement noticeable in the city . . . almost a transformation has been noticeable in the poorer working classes and slum districts. They are now quiet and peaceful early in the night, whereas formerly disorder and drunkenness frequently characterised

---

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> MEPO 2/1645 Precis of Superintendents Reports on the effect of the Non Treating Order.

<sup>75</sup> The Times 22 November 1915.

them.’<sup>76</sup> Industrial efficiency also improved. The Report stated that ‘time keeping appears better in certain areas, and from all areas reports have been received indicating an improved condition of the men coming to work in the morning’.<sup>77</sup> The orders seem to have been accepted with little of the predicted antagonism and without any of the anticipated breaches of public order.

At a conference held in September 1915 with the Chief Constables of the restricted areas, Lord D’Abernon confessed that ‘the results exceed my most sanguine expectations’.<sup>78</sup> He was, however, unable to isolate precisely the specific reasons as to why the changes had been successful. Drawing attention to the cooperation of the public in accepting the Board’s actions, he concluded:

All the measures appear to have done something, but above all I attribute the ready response of the public to the action of the Board to the fact that it has been realised that we have limited our remedy to serious evils impairing national efficiency; that we have allowed no prejudice against any particular class to influence our action and to the fact that the orders have been carefully framed to interfere with no legitimate interests except in so far as it is appeared absolutely necessary to the object in view . . . Not only have the public acquiesced in the restrictions made, but many of them admit that they are better both in health and in pocket for the restrictions.<sup>79</sup>

The belief that the working classes would be reluctant to sacrifice themselves for the good of the country thus proved false. The early evidence, to the contrary, suggested that the working class was willing to subjugate any individual desire for over exuberance, if such a thing existed, to the public good. In St Andrews, for example, the response had been largely positive:

In theory many of the clauses of the order are almost impossible to adequately enforce, but in practice, the restrictions are operating very effectively. There has been a general readiness on the part of the public to adhere stringently to the letter as well as the spirit of the age . . . that the order has largely decreased the consumption of liquor must be attributed to the very prevalent desire

---

<sup>76</sup> HO 185/260, Working of Board’s orders: Reports of Medical Officers of Health and Employers of Labour, 31 August 1915.

<sup>77</sup> The First Report of the Central Control Board.

<sup>78</sup> The Times 25 September 1915.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

among all classes to assist the government in every way possible in anything affecting the conduct of the war. The reasons are not obvious, and no attempt is made to explain them, nevertheless the people are willing to accept their necessity on trust and to lend their best endeavours to complying with it. This attitude is certainly indicative of a healthy national spirit.<sup>80</sup>

Moreover, the public apparently yearned to be led. One memorandum to Lord D'Abernon from Edgar Sanders relating to the first restricted areas noted that 'the reception of the orders has been unexpectedly gratifying . . . the temper of the nation at present is such that the people are waiting to be told what to do, then they will do it cheerfully'.<sup>81</sup>

The report admitted that the Board had, up to 1915, concentrated upon the 'restrictive' nature of their work but that it attached very considerable importance to the constructive side of its work. The report concluded with a statement that previewed the Board's future direction:

The Board incline to the view that excessive drinking may often be traced to the want of adequate facilities for food, refreshment, and recreation particularly in conjunction with long hours and overtime. The improvement of public houses and the provision of canteens may therefore do much to render less necessary the imposition of purely restrictive measures.<sup>82</sup>

The 'progressive' agenda had therefore not been abandoned or forgotten, merely relegated behind the more pressing desire to quell the moral panic towards drink that had engulfed the nation. Indeed, so successful were the measures that calls emerged for the immediate extension of the system throughout the entire country. The Spectator, a magazine that favoured prohibition, proposed that 'the results have been so good . . . that it is madness not to do so'.<sup>83</sup> Accordingly, the next few months witnessed a further expansion of the areas deemed ripe for control in order to ensure this drive towards efficiency was both successful and enduring.

---

<sup>80</sup> St Andrews Citizen 11 September 1915.

<sup>81</sup> HO 185/353, For Chairman, Sanders to D'Abernon, 6 September 1915.

<sup>82</sup> The First Report of the Central Control Board.

<sup>83</sup> The Spectator 6 November 1915.

However, opinions, as ever, varied concerning the success of the Board's first few months. The UKA were relatively pleased with its performance, yet still yearned for prohibition to be enacted:

The first report of the CCB . . . is a brief account of an immense amount of hard work of a most difficult kind, carried out, in our opinion, with tact and discretion. We are confident that the people will never allow a reversion to the pre-war conditions of drink selling . . . And yet – how far short of the nation's real needs do these regulations fall! At the best they are only a palliative – not a cure. We wish them the fullest success, but they still leave the drink shop as a standing menace to our national life.<sup>84</sup>

In contrast the trade remained convinced that the Board's actions were the result of the temperance movement's exploitation of the conditions of war. The Brewers' Gazette commented:

It is not simply the prerogatives delegated to this junta we have to remark, it is the application of the despotism thus created, which induces apprehension and rightly alarms the multitude. It certainly appears as though the industrial classes of all grades were being experimented upon. There are, as our contemporary The Evening Standard very appropriately says 'unmistakeable indications that behind these reforms is the insidious influence of the teetotal and religious fanatic. By persistently drawing lurid and alarming pictures of the evil effects of excessive drinking – pictures which have their only reality in the perverted brains of blue ribbonites – they have managed to exploit the war in furtherance of their mysterious fads, and, at the same time, they have cast a slur upon the working classes which in times of peace would not under any pretext be tolerated.'<sup>85</sup>

The issue was thus still perceived by some in explicit class terms, with the working class unnecessarily subject to governmental intervention based upon the predilections of the temperance movement. Certainly some remained suspicious about the true motives of the Board. In a supposedly 'neutral' opinion piece speaking for the 'majority' on the drink question, H.J. Jennings highlighted a reluctant acceptance of the Board's measures when he wrote:

If the excesses of a few foolish toppers do really prevent us from getting on quickly enough with war work, and these excesses can only be checked by

---

<sup>84</sup> Alliance News December 1915.

<sup>85</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 30 November 1915.

inconveniencing some millions of ordinary temperate citizens, then, in spite of the unreasonableness of the new conditions, patriotism compels us to submit to them, although it cannot be expected that we shall kiss the rod.<sup>86</sup>

The Board evidently still had to persuade some sceptics of the seriousness of the drink problem and the true necessity of its measures.

Meanwhile, the issue of soldiers' drinking habits remained a matter of concern. Tirades from temperance activists against the continued rum and beer ration at the front, and its impact upon fighting efficiency, clearly mirrored arguments concerning industrial efficiency on the home front. The provision of drink was subject to approval by divisional commanders on medical grounds when the conditions of war were suitably 'arduous'. Soldiers received a quarter gill (one sixteenth of a pint) of rum a day, hardly enough to get drunk. Rum was issued in earthenware jars marked SRD, which officially stood for 'Special Rations Department', but was commonly twisted to 'seldom reaches destination' or 'service rum diluted'.<sup>87</sup> Supplies were often hard to come by. Major J Pullan recounted how 'in the trenches it was customary to accept a drink from those behind you as it was easier to get supplies, but not from those at the front as getting drink was difficult.'<sup>88</sup> However, the temperance accusation of widespread degeneracy in the trenches due to drink were misplaced. Richard Holmes, in reviewing the British soldiers' experience on the Western Front, did 'not encounter a single reliable contemporary source that mentions large scale alcohol abuse in the trenches'.<sup>89</sup> It seems that mythology once more was utilised instead of the truth to propagate temperance mores.

---

<sup>86</sup> H.J. Jennings, The New Drink Regulations, p. 186.

<sup>87</sup> Richard Holmes, Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918 (London, 2004), p. 328.

<sup>88</sup> Imperial War Museum Documents Library, Major J Pullan, pp/mer/151.

<sup>89</sup> R. Holmes, Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918, p. 328.



**Figure 17: A British and French Soldier enjoying a drink.**

On the frontline alcohol was to many a necessity. Others used alcohol to ease nerves prior to an attack. A former Black Watch medical officer perhaps overestimated the beneficial aspects of the occasional drink when he said ‘had it not been for the rum ration I do not think we should have won the war’.<sup>90</sup> Others needed to help fight the elements. Frederick Powell, a pilot with the Royal Flying Corps on the Western Front, recalled ‘I remember one occasion that I had a small cask filled with rum and when ones moustache got frozen this kept me going, the effect was immediate.’<sup>91</sup> Temperance calls for a ban on the rum ration thus seemed to make soldiers angry, highlighting the gap in wartime experience between the home and military front, and exemplifying how out of touch the temperance movement had become. Gerald Burgoyne argued that ‘all the drink cranks can say what they like about the issue of rum to troops, and drink generally, but if instead of writing from the

<sup>90</sup> R. Holmes, *Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918*, p. 330.

<sup>91</sup> Imperial War Museum Sound Archive. Testimony of Frederick Powell, pilot with 5 and 40 squadrons Royal Flying Corps on Western Front 1915-1917, recorded 25 January 1973.

comforts of a nice cosy room they'd put in a few days in the trenches I'm sure they'd change their minds.'<sup>92</sup> Ernest Shepherd, when his rum ration failed to arrive, blamed 'newspaper agitation by cranks' and hoped that 'critics of the ration would come up to the line to supply hot coffee to the troops'.<sup>93</sup>



**Figure 18: This was a drawing done by a British soldier entitled 'The Cup that Cheers' and it shows the happiness brought by Rum in the trenches.**

The drink habits of troops were a topic of some debate. Some optimists hoped that British soldiers would learn from his experiences on the continent and upon his return home precipitate the birth of café culture in Britain. One correspondent wrote that 'when Tommy comes back he will prefer the tavern that offers him his drink in the clean comfort of the continental café to the stuffy little ginshop bar to which he was previously used.'<sup>94</sup>

<sup>92</sup> R. Holmes, *Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918*, p. 331.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* p. 331.

<sup>94</sup> *The Daily Mirror* 2 October 1914.



Figure 19: Cartoon published in The Daily Mirror showing the ‘civilising influence’ of Europe’s café’s.

The year 1915 had witnessed a phenomenal alteration in the amount of control exerted upon both the drinker and drink itself. Although the actions of the CCB were not solely responsible for changes in drinking habits, a definite trend of declining drunkenness is evident. Almost immediately after the Board’s measures had been

introduced drunkenness fell. In Liverpool, for example, the number of prosecutions for drunkenness at work fell from 240 per week before the establishment of the Board, to 164 after it. In the North Coast Region there was a reduction from 201 arrests in the four weeks before the Board's order to 107 in the four weeks after. In the Midlands these figures stood at 74 to 22 respectively. Overall, drunkenness proceedings throughout the country had dropped from 263,515 in 1914 to 205,345 in 1915, a reduction of approximately 58,000.<sup>95</sup> These results accrued in controlled areas suggested that the work of the CCB was beneficial in reducing the effects of drink on society. Up to this point nothing implemented had been 'revolutionary' in content or 'progressive' in nature but had merely built upon the supposed 'truths' of the preceding eighteen months. As the UKA argued the war had proven to be 'a rude but efficient teacher of temperance truth'.<sup>96</sup>

For the first few months of its existence the Board had merely found its feet, implementing fairly conservative measures to limit drinking, while establishing a foothold from which to launch a major assault. As one reviewer stated 'it will be a matter of surprise to many of our readers that those abuses of what is at all times a dangerous traffic should not long since have been checked.'<sup>97</sup> However, The Brewers' Gazette anticipated more radical steps: 'we are interested spectators, and anticipate lively happenings before the Board is much older'.<sup>98</sup> They were correct. Thoughts were turning to fundamentally changing the role of the public house. As The Daily Express speculated:

When the war is over, hundreds of thousands of our men will return to this country with a knowledge never previously possessed of the possibilities of social life and intercourse possessed by a reasonable café system such as

---

<sup>95</sup> The Second Report of the Central Control Board.

<sup>96</sup> The Alliance Report, Report of the Executive Committee of the UKA, October 1915.

<sup>97</sup> James Samuelson, Drink: Past, Present and Probable Future with some of its Bearings on the War (Liverpool, 1916), p. 23-24.

<sup>98</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 2 September 1915.

prevails on the continent. The sawdust and reeking atmosphere of the English public house will disgust them. They will resent the drink up and go attitude with which they will be met. They will be ready for the ideal public house.<sup>99</sup>

This was an optimistic appraisal but the CCB did have significant power to implement such a radical change if it chose to do so. Snowden, despite his temperance inclinations, still described the Board as having ‘very drastic’ powers whose members ‘were not hampered in their operations by the existing Licensing Acts, which they were entitled to set aside where they considered this to be necessary.’<sup>100</sup> The CCB had been given the opportunity to enact real changes to the drinking habits of a nation. The initial reaction to the Board’s measures had shown that the ‘patriotic spirit evoked by the war could be used to the lasting material and moral benefit of the whole nation’.<sup>101</sup> The following year would see the CCB’s work broaden in context and continue to manifest itself throughout Britain, particularly in some northern towns where descriptions of degenerate behaviour were causing much anxiety within government and it was here that the ‘very drastic’ powers of the Board would reach their apotheosis.

---

<sup>99</sup> The Daily Express 24 June 1915.

<sup>100</sup> P. Snowden, Philip Snowden: An Autobiography Volume One 1864-1919, p. 379.

<sup>101</sup> H.G. Chancellor, The War and National Temperance, p. 353.

### **Chapter Five: The Carlisle Experiment: Lord D'Abernon's 'Model Farm'**

Carlisle remains a curious episode in the social history of the war and in the history of drink control. The experiment was, as Lord D'Abernon called it, the CCB's 'model farm',<sup>1</sup> a place where ideas and plans, which had previously been nothing more than idealistic musings, could be brought into reality. In Carlisle the Board was able to implement its most radical agenda and the scheme reveals measures the Board may have taken if state purchase had been instituted nationally.

Both Carter and Shadwell dedicated a chapter to the events in Carlisle, each relying predominantly on the official reports produced by Edgar Sanders, manager of the scheme. Thus their work, to a certain extent, corroborates the 'official' view of the Carlisle project given that it was influenced by men involved with the scheme.<sup>2</sup> David Gutzke, in his book Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England 1896-1960 provides an astute analysis of the Carlisle Experiment.<sup>3</sup> He argues that it was an important moment in the progressive reform of the pub, with the scheme being an 'experimental laboratory and microcosm of the entire industry' which provided 'a tested blueprint for post-war reconstruction'.<sup>4</sup> Gutzke's work, however, does not signal the end of historical curiosity with regard to the history of direct control.

This chapter intends to broaden our understanding of the experiment, taking into consideration how the scheme was run, by whom and their relation to the CCB. Also, the veracity of some of Carter's claims as to the reasons behind the introduction

---

<sup>1</sup> J. Atkins, Drink in the Last War: A Study in Licensing Reform, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, many Board members contributed to the books. J.S. Eagles to Sanders 'I understand that Carter has sent you a type written draft of the chapter on Carlisle. I am not very satisfied with it myself, thinking it pretty dull, and I must try to liven it up.' Sanders himself was asked by Carter to write the Chapter on Carlisle but refused. See HO 190/490, J.S. Eagles to Sanders, 1 August 1917.

<sup>3</sup> See D. Gutzke, Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England 1896-1960, pp. 49-67.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 67.

of the scheme will be tested. How both the temperance and trade bodies viewed the experiment will be considered too, together with an assessment of its success.

The naming of the state purchase scheme as the ‘Carlisle Experiment’ is something of a misnomer as the first nationalised pubs were at Enfield Lock, home to an armaments factory, where four pubs fell under the jurisdiction of the state in January 1916, and at Invergordon, home to a naval base and more arms factories. The seeds of the Carlisle experiment were planted as the Gretna munitions factory was being built. From August 1915 construction began on a huge chemical factory to aid in the production of munitions, together with the communal facilities required to sustain such an enterprise. The countryside of this isolated and quiet border farmland was irrevocably changed. The towns of Gretna and Eastriggs were developed to cater for the needs of the workforce who numbered in the region of 16,500, a substantial proportion of whom, around 11,500, were women.<sup>5</sup>

The making of munitions took place at four separate sites – from Dornock, to the east of Annan, through to Gretna, and eastwards, across the border, to Longtown, north of Carlisle. In total the activities of the factory covered an area of around twenty-five miles, spanning the border area. It was a huge undertaking to develop what was in effect an entire community from scratch in a wartime environment. By October 1915, 5,000 construction workers were on site and by the end of 1917 the number of construction and factory workers had steadily increased to roughly 24,000, which subsequently placed pressure on housing facilities in the city as Carlisle had

---

<sup>5</sup> Chris Brader, ‘Policing the Gretna girls: The Women’s Police Service in World War One’, (Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Warwick, 1997), p. 4.

only a population of around 52,000.<sup>6</sup> Ernest Selley reported ‘houses with ten bedrooms accommodating thirty-seven male lodgers’.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 20: The Gretna Munitions Factory – Township under construction.**

The munitions workers were paid high wages and in their spare time unsurprisingly sought to relax and enjoy the fruits of their labours, even though the leisure opportunities in the border area were somewhat limited. As one of the workers remarked to Ernest Selley, ‘when you’ve had dinner there is nothing to do but go out. You can’t all sit round one fire’.<sup>8</sup> Another ‘intelligent mechanic’ told him ‘you’re simply obliged to go out, and Carlisle is such a dull place. There is nothing at all on

---

<sup>6</sup> A. Shadwell, *Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control*, p. 60.

<sup>7</sup> HO 190/459, Administration: General Management Correspondence with Eagles, 20 February 1917.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

better than the pictures.’<sup>9</sup> Many turned to drink. One report noted that workers ‘have multiplied the drinking population many times over’.<sup>10</sup> This desire for leisure led the workers to Carlisle, only nine miles from Gretna and the only major urban conurbation within sixty miles.<sup>11</sup> The publicans in Carlisle were to enjoy an unprecedented custom but little did they know that it was to have a fundamental impact on their trade and town.

The Gretna workers had significant amounts of surplus income. Whereas before the war they had earned only a few shillings a week some were now earning eight shillings a day.<sup>12</sup> The Annandale Observer noted: ‘never have the wages paid to labourers been so high’.<sup>13</sup> Exiled from their families and away from home, many sought solace and company in the local public houses. One report noted: ‘the construction of the munitions factory has brought into the neighbourhood thousands of navvies – the majority of whom are hard drinkers and are recruited from the worst classes’. Furthermore, ‘they are most improvident and the majority of them are immersed in liquor’.<sup>14</sup> Evidently they took most of their money to Carlisle and often left the greater part of it behind the counter of the city’s pubs, which, according to Neville, were ‘mostly run by pensioners and widows quite incapable of handling the tough customers who invaded the city every night’.<sup>15</sup>

After the evening shift the only train from Gretna to Carlisle arrived merely five minutes before closing time. This did not deter a certain section of the workforce, however, who often sought to bribe the train driver to arrive in Carlisle a few minutes

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> HO 185/227, Colonel David Davies to D’Abernon, 28 August 1916.

<sup>11</sup> Carlisle is sixty miles from Newcastle, seventy miles from Lancaster, ninety from Glasgow and ninety-nine from Edinburgh.

<sup>12</sup> HO 185/227, Colonel David Davies to D’Abernon, 28 August 1916.

<sup>13</sup> The Annandale Observer 1 October 1915.

<sup>14</sup> HO 185/227, Colonel David Davies to D’Abernon, 28 August 1916.

<sup>15</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, p. 101.

early. Invariably they would rush to the nearby Boustead's bar where the owner, Sammy Boustead, would have between four and five hundred whiskies already poured for them. The desire to get drunk in five minutes flat, whilst not only bringing new meaning to the phrase 'binge drinking', enraged local opinion. At the weekend the situation was exacerbated by the increased number of workers who made the trip into town and the extended time they had available to socialise in their own inimical style. One individual described the state of the return trains leaving Carlisle for Gretna on Saturday nights as 'a horrible and nauseating sight. The trains were full of men in all stages of intoxication – some were helpless, some vomiting, and others urinating, and the whole train reeked with the smell of whisky.'<sup>16</sup> A reporter for The Carlisle Evening News declared: 'far be it from me to suggest that the navy is not a noble fellow. But like the clayey subsoil he often works in he can hold a great deal of moisture.'<sup>17</sup> The liquor trade boomed, bringing what one correspondent described as 'profit as well as notoriety'.<sup>18</sup>

The CCB was made aware of the drinking problems of the Gretna workers. In a confidential report sent to the Board regarding the Gretna factory in September 1915, Sir Thomas Munro argued that 'the regulation of the liquor traffic in the area in which the factory is situated . . . would seem to be most desirable at the earliest date, so as to secure that efficiency will be the rule from the start.'<sup>19</sup> The idea of state purchase of the Carlisle trade was floated by Munro. He believed there were 'exceptionally favourable conditions' to try such an experiment.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore:

The financial aspect of the question should, instead of being a deterrent, be an argument in favour of the larger proposal. The present value of the houses on which it may be assumed that compensation would be based must be small

---

<sup>16</sup> HO 190/459, Administration: General Correspondence with Eagles, 20 February 1917.

<sup>17</sup> Carlisle Evening News 18 May 1916.

<sup>18</sup> The Carlisle Journal 22 August 1916.

<sup>19</sup> HO 185/213, Confidential report to the CCB on Gretna Explosives Factory. 11 September 1915.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

compared to the value that will accrue to them owing to the influx of population. If they are acquired now, the increase in value will be secured to the Board.<sup>21</sup>

Evidently financial gain was a distinct consideration in the event of state purchase and the CCB believed that money was to be made from nationalising pubs.

Munro's proposal was persuasive enough for the Public House Committee<sup>22</sup> (PHC) to recommend 'immediate action' on 20 September 1915.<sup>23</sup> The Board immediately hired Harry Redfern, a notable architect, to value pubs within the area and develop plans to alter the physical layout. All of this was done in December 1915, a full six months before the scheme was announced. The idea of state management was nothing new and had been discussed from the outset by the CCB,<sup>24</sup> but Carlisle provided an ideal opportunity for the Board to implement its ideas.

Meanwhile, reports emanating from Carlisle continued to provide evidence that the city was in the clutches of a drinking epidemic. At a conference of Chief Constables, held in London, the head of the Cumberland police, Mr Parry, noted that 'these works [Gretna] are in course of construction and we are getting the very worst class of navvy out there, the scum of Scotland and England are meeting there and we

---

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> The Public House Committee was a sub committee of the Control Board whose responsibilities lay in controlling state owned districts. The committee consisted of Waters Butler (Chairman), Towle, P. Snowden and Waldorf Astor with J.S. Eagles as Secretary. Sykes also attended as Secretary to the Board. S. Neville, *Seventy Rolling Years*, p. 102.

<sup>23</sup> HO 185/213, Public House Committee Minutes, 20 September 1915.

<sup>24</sup> HO 190/501, Circulated for the Information of the Board, Alexander Part RE: State Management, 15 July 1915. See for example the following suggestion by Mr Alexander Part of the Public House Trust made to the CCB on 15 July 1915. The Proposal read 1. Take one or more of the prescribed areas. 2. Acquire, compulsorily, all the licensed premises in the selected area or areas under powers given to the Board of control. 3. Close all redundant houses and all off licensed houses so far as the off licensed part of the premises is concerned. 4. Select suitable licensed and other houses within the chosen area for the purposes of canteens and (if necessary) let the Board of control supply the money to build such houses according to a definite ration to persons employed in the area. 5. Form local advisory committees in each selected area, consisting of employers and employed, whose duties will consist in regulating hours and directing, under the direction of the Board of control, the general policy in regard to the management of canteens.

have already experienced considerable trouble with one or two public houses.<sup>25</sup> On 27 September 1915 a secret conference of delegates of local authorities was convened by the CCB to consider what restrictions should be placed on the sale and supply of intoxicating liquor in the area. The local Chief Constable of Carlisle, E. DeSchmid,<sup>26</sup> reported the increase in convictions which had taken place during the final months of 1915. This figure increased from fifteen arrests in September to thirty-five in October, fifty-nine in November, and seventy-six in December.<sup>27</sup> At the same time he notified the Board of the shortage of the manpower at his disposal: ‘my force has been reduced by 50 per cent, forty of my men have enlisted. Several temporary men have been taken on, but these are over military age and not fit to cope with the navvies.’<sup>28</sup> Overall, though, the number of convictions for the year 1915 was 301, 9 less than the 1914 figure of 310.<sup>29</sup> This total masks a change in the number of non-Carlisle residents convicted. In 1914 this stood at 90 whilst in 1915 this figure had increased to 154.<sup>30</sup> Taking into consideration the number of men who must have left Carlisle to fight in the war it is unsurprising that a large amount of drunken disorder was blamed on the Gretna workers. This is apparent upon consideration of the 1916 conviction figures, which show 964 arrests for drunkenness, 788 of whom worked in Gretna.<sup>31</sup>

The Board sought to alleviate these problems by scheduling the area to come under its regular jurisdiction. On 22 November 1915 a drink restriction order for the Western Border Area was passed which included the counties of Cumberland, Westmorland and adjoining parts of Northumberland and Lancashire. Sunday closing

---

<sup>25</sup> HO 185/259, Working of Board’s Orders, Conference of Chief Constables, Working of Orders in the North East, 27 September 1915.

<sup>26</sup> E. DeSchmid later changed his name to E. Spence on account of the abuse he received regarding his ‘German sounding’ name.

<sup>27</sup> Chief Constable of Carlisle’s Report, 31 December 1915, Volume xxvii.

<sup>28</sup> HO 185/253, Western Borders Area: Secret Conference of Delegates of Local Authorities convened by the CCB, 27 September 1915.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Chief Constable of Carlisle’s Report, 31 December 1916, Volume xxviii.

was introduced to prevent any legislative difference between areas, as Sunday closing was enforced in Scotland but not in England. Carlisle drinkers thus suffered on the grounds that they lived far from anywhere else in England but resided relatively close to Scotland.

This action was welcomed: 'the mayor of Carlisle said that no one except the publicans complained either of the curtailed hours or the Sunday closing'.<sup>32</sup> But this situation did not last. Sanders reported that the scheme by the spring of 1916 was 'resented' and Sunday closing 'the feature of the order disliked the most'.<sup>33</sup> 'What chiefly irritates the Carlisle working man is the fact that they are singled out for special treatment as against their fellows in the rest of England', he noted.<sup>34</sup> One local paper pointed out that 'Carlisle is the first and only English town subjected to the inconvenience of praying with a parched throat.'<sup>35</sup>

The Board's normal restrictions were however insufficient to meet the demands posed by the transient drinkers of Carlisle. Conviction rates continued to increase. In March and April 1916 this figure increased to eighty-nine and ninety-eight respectively, not to mention those who were not arrested but perhaps should have been.<sup>36</sup> To add fuel to the fire, continued accounts of the alleged horrors taking place within and outside the confines of the Carlisle public house permeated government reports and the local and national press.

In March 1916 Edgar Sanders was sent by the CCB to review the conditions prevailing in Carlisle. He was a member of the PHC, and his report favoured

---

<sup>32</sup> HO 185/253, Sanders for the circulation of the Board, 15 December 1915.

<sup>33</sup> HO 185/213, Sunday Closing Memorandum by General Manager for consideration of the Board, 24 October 1917.

<sup>34</sup> HO 190/841, Sunday Closing Area.

<sup>35</sup> The Carlisle Evening News 18 May 1916.

<sup>36</sup> Chief Constable's Report 31 December 1916 Volume xxviii.

‘acquiring the licensed houses in the City of Carlisle’.<sup>37</sup> He wrote that ‘I visited a large number of licensed premises in Carlisle, and generally speaking, I have never seen public houses more unsuited for that purpose. On Friday and Saturday nights most of the houses were full to the doors, especially in the last hour before closing time.’<sup>38</sup> By March the Mayor of Carlisle had also become disenchanted with the drink problem suggesting that ‘unless something is done the place will soon become completely demoralised’.<sup>39</sup>

A report written by Sykes in April 1916 confirmed the viability of buying out the Carlisle Licensed Trade and the suitability of the locale for such a scheme:

Newcastle, the nearest large town to Carlisle, is sixty miles away, so that the competition of private traders can be practically eliminated by the acquisition of the trade interest in Carlisle itself, and its immediate neighbourhood . . . The number of licensed premises in Carlisle is understood to be considerably in excess of the requirements, and the scheme is therefore one in which it would be essential, alike on financial and general grounds, to close a proportion, probably nearly half, of the existing licensed houses.<sup>40</sup>

Evidence shows that a number of locations, such as Bristol and Middlesbrough, were considered for a trial state purchase experiment but Carlisle offered the most compelling option.<sup>41</sup> In fact, at the time, members of the Board viewed it merely as a

---

<sup>37</sup> HO 190/405, Carlisle and District State Management scheme: Report by Sanders, 29 March 1916.

<sup>38</sup> HO 185/253, Sanders for the Board, 21 March 1916.

<sup>39</sup> H. Carter, *The Control of the Drink Trade: A Contribution to National Efficiency 1915-1917*, p. 199.

<sup>40</sup> HO 190/437, Sykes for PHC, 7 April 1916. To this day Carlisle remains a place of experiment. Consumer products are often tested in the city prior to any national introduction as the area is so appropriate for experimentation.

<sup>41</sup> HO 190/501, State Purchase and Control 1915-1918, A letter headed to the Chief Constables of Carlisle and Middlesbrough dated 18 February 1916 read ‘As you are aware, the CCB have power to take over and manage any licensed premises in any area . . . the Board are now considering whether an experiment should be made with one or two larger areas and at first sight your city borough would appear to afford a good example.’ The letter was sent to Carlisle but was never sent to Middlesbrough. Other areas considered included Bristol in February 1917 and Rosyth HO 185/213, Cheapstow HO 185/234. Also see HO 185/263, D’Abernon’s Semi-Official Correspondence 1915-1919, Neville Chamberlain to D’Abernon 26 June 1916 – ‘In further reference to your letter of the 19 June, I have now made some enquiries from which it seems to me that Birmingham would be an exceptionally good place to make the experiment of control. Out of some 2300 licensed premises, about 1800 are controlled, and for the most part by one of four large breweries. Moreover the trade association here is particularly strong, so that altogether the problem is very much simplified. Butler can, of course, speak as to the attitude of the trade towards such a proposal, if I were a member I should jump at it, but I should expect that there would be a tremendous outcry, with a great show of indignation, that Birmingham should have been picked out for ‘penalisation’. Figures will be produced to show that

precursor to state management on a national scale. As Lever wrote to Addison: ‘The principle might be tried in Carlisle first before applying the same to the whole country.’<sup>42</sup> This was a brave prediction. Carlisle was a risk as the CCB would have to implement successful reforms to have any hope of introducing state purchase nationally.

This evidence broadens our understanding of the reasoning behind the introduction of state management in Carlisle. Carter suggested that it was solely ‘the inadequacy of the Board’s ordinary plan of control to meet the extraordinary local situation which impelled the Board to employ another method of grappling with a problem of unique acuteness and complexity.’<sup>43</sup> This is true, but he neglects to mention, or perhaps was not aware of (given that he was not a member of the Board until January 1916) the machinations that had occurred concerning the introduction of the scheme. Carlisle was best suited to this reform as there was an evident drink problem and its isolated location meant that an experiment could be conducted with fewer variables than elsewhere.

The desire for some reform was acute, not only within governing circles but also amongst local opinion makers, by the spring of 1916. As The Carlisle Journal, on the release of the Second Report of the CCB, noted:

[The report] ‘unanimously testifies to the beneficial effects of the restriction orders’ and that the police reports from the scheduled areas ‘without exception record greater sobriety and a general improvement in conditions.’ That is a statement which will be read with amazement in Carlisle which is certainly a conspicuous exemption to this rosy condition . . . the people of Carlisle will welcome the adoption of any means which will provide a remedy for the

---

Birmingham is exceptionally sober, and the Board will be asked what right they have to treat her as though she were the reverse.’

<sup>42</sup> HO 190/501, Letter sent 1 May 1916. Also at a CCB meeting Lever reported that ‘the scheme was being worked on right lines which could without difficulty be applied to the whole country.’ HO 185/229, 19 September 1916.

<sup>43</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 199.

present state of things and are awaiting with keen interest the Board's decision on the question of taking over the licensed houses in the city.<sup>44</sup>

After a committee composed of CCB members had visited the city in June 1916, noting that the 'main evils were congestion, structural defects, concentrated drinking, excessive spirit drinking',<sup>45</sup> state management of the pubs in the city was announced later that month. A prototype experiment was underway; the Board finally had its opportunity to create a model licensing district.

The 'Carlisle Experiment' was not restricted to the immediate confines of the city but stretched far beyond into much of the surrounding area. The entire direct control area was divided into two administrative sections to allow for the differences between the licensing laws of England and Scotland. Each section was under the control of a general manager and each had a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) which provided information for the PHC, which made decisions from London. Edgar Sanders, a licensing judge from Liverpool who had conducted some work for the Board previously, was appointed manager of the Carlisle scheme. His office was on Castle Street and from there he oversaw the rapid purchase of the city's pubs and breweries. Sanders did not have baronial control over the scheme, however, as he was in constant touch with the CCB, and in particular Lord D'Abernon. D'Abernon wanted to present an austere version of state purchase that was successful, but also economical, as he knew critics were ready to expose mistakes and wasteful expenditure by the Board. D'Abernon was so intent on presenting an image of efficiency that he even expressed concern to Sanders about his 'palatial offices'.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> The Carlisle Journal 9 May 1916.

<sup>45</sup> HO 190/488, Papers Relating to Carlisle before the start of the Carlisle Office, Committee of the Board visit 14-16 June 1916.

<sup>46</sup> HO 190/779, D'Abernon to Sanders, 11 August 1916.



**Figure 21: The 'Palatial Offices' of the Central Control Board, 19 Castle Street, Carlisle.**

The Carlisle Local Advisory Committee was drawn from a varied number of groups within the local community. The President was the Earl of Lonsdale, with Scott, Butler and Towle representing the CCB. Mayor W. Gibbings represented the Carlisle Watch Committee, Benjamin Scott, J. Dove and J. Burn represented the Carlisle Licensing Committee, and F.W. Chance was Chairman. The Committee met monthly and dealt with issues arising from the scheme in a supervisory and developmental capacity, providing guidance, advice and assistance to the CCB. The workload was heavy due to the need to keep London informed whilst also running the scheme locally.<sup>47</sup>

The reaction to the announcement of the scheme was mostly supportive but some remained cynical. An article originally appearing in The Globe, and reprinted in the Brewers' Journal, described the prospective future of the public house under government management in a somewhat sarcastic manner:

Since our pastors and masters are going into the licensed trade, it behoves members of the public to begin thinking of adapting themselves to the altered conditions of things. The private bar will now be a government department, administered, not by civil, smiling barmaids, but by civil service clerks who have got their positions by competitive examination. No longer can the thirsty customer slam his coin upon the counter and cheerfully demand a pint of bitter. He will have to wait until young gentlemen behind the bar have finished their conversation; and then, after being coldly inspected, will be required to fill up a form. Retiring to a corner with a pen, ink and Form OK 71832 (Public Refreshments Supply), he will spend an exciting hour and a half in filling in the various particulars required, with, of course, his reason for wanting 'Beer, Bitter, Pint, One, of.' Having sworn to his signature, the customer now sits down and waits while his application is scrutinised by higher officials, endorsed and filed. The required beverage is then issued, by which time the customer has either died of thirst or the closing hour has come.<sup>48</sup>

The trade was clearly suspicious of government intervention. State purchase would bring unnecessary regulation and bureaucracy to the normally relatively unregulated

---

<sup>47</sup> See HO 190/503, Complete List of the CCB, 18 June 1918.

<sup>48</sup> Brewers' Journal 22 June 1916.

public house, where social custom, rather than state regulation, usually dictated behaviour. The Carlisle Licensed Victuallers' Association recounted their 'everlasting regret' that the Board 'backed up local brewers who were anxious to sell, local landed gentry, prominent business men and the teetotal party, like an avenging army, entered the English gate of your old and honoured city'.<sup>49</sup> Clearly the association saw the Board as some sort of conspiratorial conglomeration of interests antipathetic to working class life, intent on attacking the working man's pub. It claimed the Board had merely 'advertised Carlisle as the most drunken city in Great Britain'.<sup>50</sup>

Yet, despite some negative comment, the experiment, as The Carlisle Journal concluded:

Offered an opportunity for progress to be made in the resolution of the problems caused by drink. The Carlisle scheme is a bold experiment and the slight opposition which has been offered to it may be taken as a tacit acknowledgement that no more feasible and practical alternative can be devised for alleviating a condition of things that is admittedly both deplorable and intolerable.<sup>51</sup>

Moreover, the CCB could not afford to waste this opportunity. The stakes were high. As another local paper noted: 'if the Carlisle experiment ends in disappointment and failure, the case for drastic legislative action will be vastly strengthened'.<sup>52</sup> The author was presumably thinking about prohibition.

The Board wasted little time in acquiring the various strands of the licensed trade of Carlisle. Included in this were hotels, breweries, maltings, blending and bottling stores, wine and spirit merchants, shops and offices. The purpose was thus not solely confined to reducing the number of public houses but allowed for a much more extensive management of properties relating to the alcohol industry. In total

---

<sup>49</sup> HO 190/482, Licensed Victuallers Association General Correspondance.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> The Carlisle Journal 23 June 1916.

<sup>52</sup> The Carlisle Journal 20 October 1916.

there were 120 pubs in Carlisle and 4 breweries.<sup>53</sup> The buy out was not undertaken in one fell swoop. The process began in July and was not completed until October of that year. Some in the trade were hostile to the takeover though a general acquiescence to the Board's scheme existed.<sup>54</sup> Meanwhile, further reports in the summer of 1916 underlined the extent of the drink-related problems facing the CCB. A concerned Colonel David Davies commented in August 1916:

The conditions under which liquor is sold and consumed on these premises are deplorable; crowded bars, parlours, staircases, and passages render proper supervision impossible, with the result that there has been a certain amount of drunkenness . . . it is necessary to push on rapidly with the reconstruction of existing premises, and to improve sufficient accommodation to tide over the period of congestion during the next four or five months. The navvies have a custom of drinking beer and whisky or rum together, and as they usually have their drinks before their meals, this habit seriously affects their efficiency as workmen.<sup>55</sup>

Pubs in the areas surrounding Carlisle had to be taken over in order to prevent navvies from taking a short trip to nearby Maryport, in order to enjoy drink in an uncontrolled premise. This area was the last purchased after the acquisition of the Maryport brewery in late 1916. In total this meant the state purchase region extended to an area of around 500 square miles containing a wartime population of approximately 140,000.<sup>56</sup>

The process of buying pubs continued over the summer. By September Sanders was able to report 'good progress is being made here and we have now taken over all the houses.'<sup>57</sup> The Board in total bought out 4 breweries, 195 'on' licenses

---

<sup>53</sup> For a review of Carlisle pubs prior to state purchase see Steven Davidson, Carlisle Breweries and Public Houses 1894-1916 (Carlisle, 2004).

<sup>54</sup> HO 185/222, The Jennings Brothers of Cockermouth and the Maryport Brewery were unconvinced of the legal justification of the Board purchasing their pub. In a climbdown on 7 September 1916 they claimed that they 'wished to help the Board in their work for what is considered to be the national interest. For that reason they would be prepared to come to a reasonable agreement for the acquisition of the Board of the premises and interests which they desire to take over.' This indicates how the process of the CCB buying pubs could be slowed down.

<sup>55</sup> HO 185/227, Colonel David Davies to D'Abernon, 28 August 1916.

<sup>56</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 203.

<sup>57</sup> HO 190/779, Correspondence between Sanders and London Office, 4 September 1916.

and 20 'off' licenses. By August 1917, sixty-six 'on' and eighteen 'off' licenses had also been suppressed as redundant or undesirable.<sup>58</sup> The pubs closed were those deemed to have been incapable of meeting the criteria of a reformed public house and those in dubious geographical positions, such as in back streets, which made police supervision all the more difficult. In total the Board paid £900,000 in compensation.

The CCB also sought to reduce the consumption of spirits: the vice of choice to the hardcore drinker. The sale of spirits was prohibited near the Gretna factory and in the surrounding village public houses. The weekend was made a spiritless zone with the complete prohibition of 'on' spirits and the arrival of 'spiritless Saturdays'. It was not a well-liked policy however. Carlisle was the only English city where it was applied and the workers were unhappy at being denied the liberty common to fellow workingmen throughout the land.

Other actions taken by the Board against spirits included a reduction in the number of off licenses selling spirits from 101 to 18 and the attempted eradication of the custom, noted above, of buying beer and spirits together. This was an arbitrary measure as customers could still buy spirits but it meant going to the bar again, and presumably after a few beers the idea was that this became a less enticing prospect in a crowded pub. Furthermore, as an alternative to higher strength alcoholic drinks, 'munition beer', which had a strength of 2 per cent, was widely available by April 1916. 'It smells like beer, it looks like beer, and tastes like beer, the only difference is in the headache', noted one member of the Board.<sup>59</sup>

The creation of 'reformed' public houses came to symbolise the progressive nature of the Carlisle experiment. This involved the alteration of existing premises to new specifications aimed at alleviating the drink problem and the establishment of

---

<sup>58</sup> H. Carter, *The Control of the Drink Trade*, p. 206.

<sup>59</sup> *The Annandale Observer* 14 April 1916.

purpose-built pubs which provided food and leisure facilities to the expanding workforce who lived in the area. Gutzke has written that state managed pubs were a 'laboratory for evolving an entirely new public house with food as the centrepiece' which 'embodied progressives' belief in pragmatism and experimentation'.<sup>60</sup>

The Board's records show that every detail of their construction was carefully considered to ensure that these 'model' public houses fulfilled these idealistic beliefs. These model public houses were to be 'a place of refreshment for the body and mind alike' and a physical institution of the reformist musings of the previous years. By creating a simple and straightforward environment organisers hoped that the behaviour of the customers would reflect the austerity of the new pub. Interestingly, The Carlisle Journal saw the scheme as:

A practical test of the theory of those temperance reformers who have urged that by opening houses where no inducements were offered to customers to drink for the sake of drinking, and where other refreshments including food were supplied at modest prices amid comfortable and pleasant surroundings, a marked reduction in the consumption of intoxicating drink and consequently of drunkenness would ensue.<sup>61</sup>

The paper noted, however, that this scheme was not universally popular amongst the temperance party as this reform 'may make the public house more attractive and would have the effect of increasing instead of diminishing the sale of drink'.<sup>62</sup> It was a distinct moment at which either one or the other of the temperance wings, prohibition or reform, would be proven correct.

A vast amount of building work was immediately undertaken. Ironically one wonders if increasing the number of working navvies in Carlisle contributed to the problem. The goal of this construction work was the creation of better public houses and the extension of food provision. The CCB placed much emphasis on the link

---

<sup>60</sup> D. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives*, p. 67

<sup>61</sup> The Carlisle Journal 14 July 1916.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

between a good diet and sobriety. In Carlisle the pubs served only drink and the restaurants and cafés could not cope with the extra custom from the influx of workers. Therefore, the Board sought to create new restaurant/bars and encourage the sale of food in pubs where liquid refreshment dominated.



**Figure 22: The Gretna Tavern as it stood in 1917.**

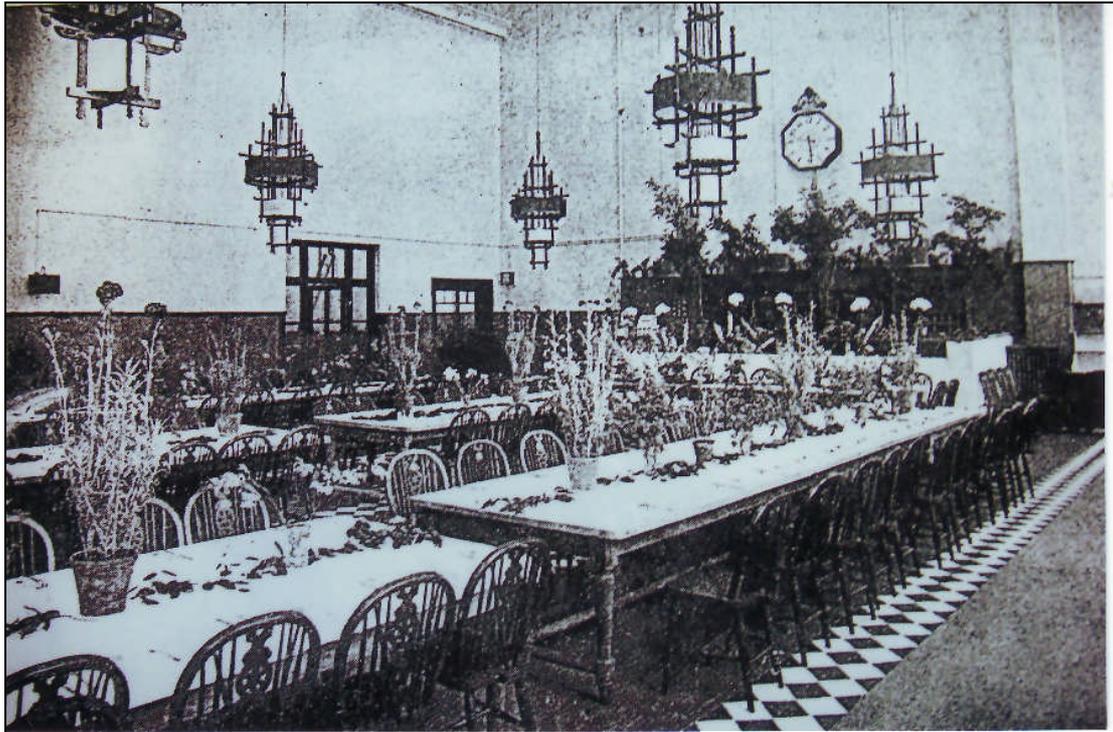


**Figure 23: The Gretna Tavern in 2006, now a TSB bank.**

The Gretna Tavern, the first ‘food tavern’ opened by the Board, was a showpiece model pub designed to highlight the work undertaken in Carlisle. It was opened on 12 July 1916, within a month of the CCB taking over at Carlisle. It was a symbolic moment as on the same day six existing public houses were closed. As the first ‘reformed pub’ in Carlisle its opening received a great deal of press attention. The Carlisle Evening News reported that:

Considerable structural alterations have been carried out in the interior to fit the building for its future use as a model Government Refreshment house. In the long room which was formerly used as the Post Office Public Counter there is a stand up bar at which local beer and stout can be obtained but no spirits. The large department at the rear used for letter sorting has been transferred into a handsome café with tables at which refreshments will be served including tea, coffee, cocoa, soup, a good meal, Welsh rarebit, a plate of ham and egg etc will be served and there will be facilities for writing, reading and smoking, also to hear some music and to have a rest.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Carlisle Evening News 12 July 1916.



**Figure 24: The restaurant in the Gretna Tavern 1917.**

The restaurant had a capacity of 180 and food could be purchased from 7.30 a.m. until 9 p.m. Alcoholic drinks could only be purchased between 12 noon and 2.30 p.m. and from 6 p.m. till 9 p.m. Hopes were high that this model tavern heralded a new dawn in the social life of Carlisle and perhaps of the pub in general. Indeed, it was a momentous moment in the control of the drink problem, as Lord D'Abernon, at the opening of the Gretna Tavern, underlined:

The licensed houses I think have been found by common experience to be inadequate to the necessities of the case, and not only inadequate in accommodation but also in a large measure to be unsuitable . . . I am told by those who have been able to compare the facilities afforded here and there that we need not fear any unfavourable contrast. It is obvious that in any experience of this kind it is necessary to replace the small hole and corner premises where a very large trade is now done, necessarily without adequate supervision, by more commodious, more healthy surroundings, where reasonable refreshments, including particularly non alcoholic refreshments and solid food may be obtained under agreeable circumstances. Every endeavour will be made to improve the character of the business done.<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>64</sup> The Times 13 July 1916.

He was aware, however, that customs could, and would, not change overnight. The Gretna Tavern was utilised as a showpiece for the Board's endeavours and its success was paramount to the cause of the reform of drinking behaviour. In July 1917 King George V and Queen Mary visited the tavern. The Carlisle Journal reported that 'the King appeared to be very favourably impressed with the working of the tavern. 'It was', he remarked, a 'modern club house for the working man, and a decided improvement on the public house'.<sup>65</sup> One wonders if D'Abernon had provided the script.



**Figure 25: The King and Queen visit the Gretna Tavern July 1917.**

The provision of food at the Gretna Tavern was successful. By April 1917 food constituted 77 per cent of the total sales.<sup>66</sup> Selley noted:

I had the place under observation for a week. On Saturday afternoon the dining hall was crowded almost to excess. Also the bar was well filled. Among those taking meals were a large number of navvies. I had my meal in the company of such men. Many were having coffee or tea with their dinner,

<sup>65</sup> *The Carlisle Journal* 22 May 1916.

<sup>66</sup> HO 185/9, Carlisle details and accounts.

others were drinking ale. Most of them had a very substantial meal, as large numbers of them look upon this meal as the meal of the week.<sup>67</sup>

As the showpiece pub of the reformist movement, the Gretna Tavern was often the subject of acrimonious debate. It was, however, just one of the main projects undertaken by the Board and its opening precipitated a gust of social reconstruction.

From the spring of 1917 attention turned to food provision within existing public houses. In total, nine 'reconstruction schemes' were completed in the first year, in pubs primarily best suited to supplying food. As an incentive to managers, the pubs could stay open during the day just to sell food and non-intoxicating drinks with a commission equal to 75 per cent of the gross profits being paid to the manager. This was a popular move as new refreshment rooms emerged. In Carlisle, the Pheasant Inn reported a 'good business' in food. At Annan, the Globe public house was reopened as the Globe Restaurant and proved immediately popular with the navvies.<sup>68</sup> All the pubs aimed to provide hot meals at cheap prices. New cooking facilities were introduced and proved popular. Selley reported that:

The canteen at Gracie's Banking successfully meets a very great need. The building contains a large café where excellent meals can be obtained, a spacious beer hall, with ample provision of games. A cinema is attached to the premises, and in the summer a fine bowling green will be available for the men.<sup>69</sup>

This alteration in emphasis within the pub encouraged a broader clientele. As 'one moderate drinking man' said of the London Tavern, 'you can take the missus there and have supper, and have a glass of beer with it. Jolly fine.'<sup>70</sup> The Brewers' Gazette noted that the model public house now 'replaced mere drinking shops by sanely managed houses of refreshment to which even an Archdeacon might take his wife and

---

<sup>67</sup> HO 190/459, Ernest Selley, Administration General Management correspondence with J.S. Eagles, 20 February 1917.

<sup>68</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 211.

<sup>69</sup> HO 190/459, Ernest Selley, Administration: General Management correspondence with J.S. Eagles, 20 February 1917.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

daughters – a procedure hitherto denied to the common publican by the cast iron methods of the Licensing benches.’<sup>71</sup>

New social facilities, such as billiard tables, newspapers and writing materials, were an important adjunct to the food provided. They were introduced to make the pub more of a general social space and to offer a distraction from alcohol consumption. Space for such facilities was made within pubs by the removal of unnecessary barriers to create a more enlightened and visible public area. It was further hoped that a spacious interior would limit nefarious behaviour. Together with the introduction of comfortable furnishings, the idea was to improve the salubrity of the public house. As the chairman of the local trades council, who was in favour of the Board’s work, suggested:

When men cannot get a drink in comfort they invariably consume more. If there are tables and chairs where men can sit down and drink at ease and read their paper, or have a “crack” with their pals, and take time over it, there is less danger of excessive drinking.’<sup>72</sup>

The external appearance of public houses also changed dramatically. Drink advertisements were banned, bottles removed from windows, and many pubs were painted. The changes were so great that ‘many strangers remarked upon the difficulty in distinguishing the public houses in the main streets’ which, after all, was the intention.<sup>73</sup> For some temperance advocates, however, new items of interior design, purchased to educate the working class, were simply too much too soon:

The external appearance of the houses is all that can be desired, and I have nothing to do but praise the general scheme. The internal decorations, on the other hand, while good from the point of view of the advocates of the impressionist school, are, in my judgement, quite beyond the comprehension of the average public house customers. The black ceiling at the London Tavern, the impressionist prints after the style of those on the Metropolitan Railway, the plaster bas reliefs in the Room at the Working Girls Club, are

---

<sup>71</sup> The Brewers’ Gazette 1 March 1917.

<sup>72</sup> HO 190/459, Ernest Selley, Administration General Management correspondence with J.S. Eagles, 20 February 1917.

<sup>73</sup> Report of the General Manager 31 December 1917.

examples of what I mean. To me they may convey the sense of much that is beautiful, to them they do not appeal greatly. Some good coloured and black and white prints, such as are supplied for elementary schools, would be far more suitable . . . You cannot suddenly lift men and women from squalor to an appreciation of impressionist art. It can only be a very gradual process.<sup>74</sup>



**Figure 26: Harry Redfern.**

The architect chosen to design and implement this scheme of reform in Carlisle was the aforementioned Harry Redfern. His job was to manifest physically the ideas of the CCB within the remaining public houses of Carlisle. His commission was what many architects would consider to have been a dream - a project with a

---

<sup>74</sup> HO 185/227, Temperance Legislation League visit to Carlisle (Mr Harvey), Report 3 to 7 July to 1917, The Carlisle Public Houses, Structural Alterations.

large amount of finance available, supported and funded by a government department together with an opportunity to create an architectural legacy, not only for a city, but for a way of life. Redfern had previously undertaken work for both Oxford and Cambridge Universities and had experience of restoring ancient buildings. By creating a simple and homely environment it was hoped that the behaviour of the customers would reflect the atmosphere of the new pub. An architectural review of Redfern's work noted, 'Redfern swept away all snugs, those bastions of covert Victorian sexuality, confronted the perpendicular drinker with more and more seats, and hung tasteful prints and engravings to provide a suitable ambience.'<sup>75</sup> One barman reported that 'there's no privacy now. If a woman wants a drink she has to go where she's seen, and she doesn't like it.'<sup>76</sup> In Gracie's Banking pub, Redfern removed the stand up bar entirely, relying instead on waitresses serving drinks. D'Abernon believed the 'appearance of the houses wonderful and the order inside excellent'.<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> C.H.B. Quennell, *The Good New Days* (London, 1935), p 81.

<sup>76</sup> HO 190/459, Ernest Selley, Administration General Management correspondence with J.S. Eagles, 20 February 1917.

<sup>77</sup> HO 190/455 R. Burrill, who acted as the Chief Clerk of the Carlisle Experiment, to Sanders, 25 June 1917.



**Figure 27: A ‘unique’ feature within one of the reformed Carlisle Pubs.**

Redfern was also not averse to more radical experimentation, particularly when one considers the Crescent Inn on Warwick Road. Today it stands as it did ninety years ago, though it is now known as the ‘White Horse’. Redfern sought to bring a small piece of the Mediterranean to Carlisle by building this pub in a Spanish Moorish style.

One author described how:

There is a balcony over the main door and someone has remarked that all the Crescent needs to finish off its visual appearance is a dark haired senorita claspng castanets, and a gay young toreador standing in Warwick Road serenading her with his guitar while she tosses blood red roses at his feet.<sup>78</sup>

The pub was designed to enlighten the cultural atmosphere of the city. What the workers made of it is a matter of conjecture.

Redfern was successful in creating several model pubs, both during and after the war. It was testament to his ability that Lord Amulree remarked at the Institute of British Architects in 1932 that ‘Mr Redfern will leave behind him a monument more

---

<sup>78</sup> J. Hunt, *A City Under the Influence: The Story of Half a Century of State Pubs* (Penrith, 1971), p. 35.

enduring than bricks and mortar. He has captured the spirit of the Border City, and designed different types of houses which are a tribute to his artistic and professional skill.<sup>79</sup> His designs also left a positive impression upon visiting temperance enthusiasts:

Viewed as models and experiments for the guidance of the state in dealing with the Liquor Problem on national lines they are of great and permanent value, and the architects, and others who have been responsible, under the board, for carrying out the work, deserve the greatest credit. The work will be an enduring monument to their enterprise and right conception of what is needed in the interests of great social reform.<sup>80</sup>

In 1920 visiting Labour party members wrote that the houses ‘possessed a certain dignity and beauty’.<sup>81</sup>

Having bought out the breweries of Carlisle, the CCB was also in charge of beer production in the area. In order to ensure beer quality the Board hired an expert from the University of Birmingham’s school of Malting and Brewing to monitor the beer on sale. His report was encouraging:

During the course of my inspection I visited a large number of public houses in both Carlisle and Longtown for the purpose of examining the character of the draught ales being served to the public . . . I am able to report that the beers as a whole were satisfactory.<sup>82</sup>

Others had a more candid viewpoint:

In the days of my indiscretion it was an article of faith with me that while some beers were better than others, there was no bad beer. I have drunk of the State Brew of Carlisle, and I now know that there is bad beer. I paid four pence for a glass of something wet. My first thought was that the Germans had poisoned the wells. My second that it would be a social service to poison the brewer . . . it was muddy, flat and almost tasteless.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. p. 37.

<sup>80</sup> HO 185/227, Report by Temperance Legislation League after a visit to Carlisle.

<sup>81</sup> P. Talbot, ‘The Case for the State Control of the UK Brewing Industry and its extension in 1920 and Beyond’, *Brewery History: The Journal of the Brewery History Society*, Number 116, Autumn 2004.

<sup>82</sup> HO 190/449, Adrian J. Brown, British School of Malting and Brewing, University of Birmingham, to Chairman Public House Committee, 8 February 1917.

<sup>83</sup> *The Carlisle Evening News* 4 December 1916 reporting on an article in *The Sunday Chronicle* entitled ‘The truth about Carlisle Pubs.’

One suspects this criticism came from a bitter member of the trade. His view was, according to one Board member, the exception: 'I am pleased to report that the complaints we have as to the qualities of our ales and beers are very few.'<sup>84</sup> The Board continued, however, to monitor the beer on sale. After all, a pub with bad beer was unlikely to make money or attract custom.

The vast majority of pre-direct control pub management staff were kept on by the Board but were given new directives by which to manage their pubs. Most notable was the introduction of 'disinterested management', a concept borrowed from 'the Gothenburg scheme', a cause celebre of the progressive movement.<sup>85</sup> As Sanders described:

In nearly all cases, those persons who were licensees before the Board took possession have become the salaried managers under the Board. They have no interest whatsoever in the sale of intoxicants, the amount of their wages for the future depending in no way upon this part of the trade. On the other hand, licensees have been encouraged to provide food and to push its sale together with that of non-intoxicants.<sup>86</sup>

The scheme paid the managers a set salary. The manager was thus under no pressure to sell his wares to customers in order to boost his earnings. His livelihood was guaranteed so the pressure to sell that last drink to someone already intoxicated was thus lessened. As The Carlisle Evening News observed: 'unmercenary managers now rejoice more over the sale of one small lemonade than of several pints of beer'.<sup>87</sup> Those publicans who did not act in line with the Board's directives were swiftly moved on, though not without some acrimony. For example, records show that on 22 November 1917 the manager of the Jovial Sailor Inn, who apparently was 'most

---

<sup>84</sup> HO 190/1, Martin Beaty to Edgar Sanders, 26 February 1917.

<sup>85</sup> For a discussion surrounding the origins and implications of this scheme, see D. Gutzke, 'Gentrifying the British Public House', International Labour and Working Class History, No. 45, Spring 1994, pp. 29-43.

<sup>86</sup> HO 190/434, General Manager Report to the local committee as to the position of Carlisle upto 31 October 1916.

<sup>87</sup> The Carlisle Evening News 18 May 1916.

unsatisfactory', was given notice to quit by 1 December due to 'unreasonable behaviour'. He refused to do so, and the house was 'closed for business on the latter date'.<sup>88</sup>

The CCB monitored and managed the performance of its managers to ensure the successful implementation of its directives. Monitoring fell to members of the Board, who would go into pubs and anonymously watch proceedings, subsequently reporting back their findings. The local police forces, as before, were responsible for the enforcement of the CCB's directives, adding further to their already heavy burden of work.<sup>89</sup> Regular progress reports and transgressions were reported to the Local Advisory Committee and upwards to the CCB itself.

Newspaper reporters, temperance workers, trade representatives and social reformers would regularly travel to the north to witness the work being undertaken in Carlisle. The scheme was very newsworthy and, from the outset, a popular point of conjecture in the press. Some commentators were keen on drawing swift conclusions. In November 1916 a deputation was sent by the Liverpool Licensed Victuallers' Association to study the conditions prevailing at Carlisle under the CCB's scheme. The Association was uncomplimentary about the project:

More men were to be seen drunk during this one evening that would be seen in Liverpool in a month . . . The scene at the station about 9 p.m. when the workmen's trains were leaving was indescribable. It was like a free fight to get into the station, and the crowds of drunken and half drunken men were herded and packed together like wild beasts . . . Conditions existed that would not be tolerated by any self respecting licensing bench in the country.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup> HO 190/472, Reports sent to General Manager, 22 November 1917.

<sup>89</sup> Chief Constable of Carlisle's Report, 31 December 1917. As De Schmid reported 'the year has been one of exceptional difficulty, as apart from the shortage of the regular members of the Force, the great increase of drunkenness, and the influx of thousands of workmen, an enormous amount of extra work has been thrown on the police, particularly on the HQ staff, in carrying out the numerous DORA regulations, special work in connection with the CCB, dealing with the registration of Aliens, the issuing of ID books, regular visiting of Enemy aliens, inspection of Registers kept by hotel and lodging house keepers, reports re local suspects and a very large number of enquiries for other police forces.'

<sup>90</sup> Cumberland News 22 November 1916.

Indeed, the trade viewed some of the action taken in Carlisle as arbitrary and representative not of a scheme of control but a crooked manifestation of temperance ideology introduced without proper consultation.

Some temperance societies, of the prohibitionist persuasion, were also quick to record their disenchantment. In October 1916, in the annual report of the UKA, the committee 'placed on record its strong protest against a measure which, for the first time, in our history, has put the state into the position of a maker and vendor of intoxicating liquors.'<sup>91</sup> So powerful was the prohibitionist view that any dilution of this position, even if temperance proposals were being introduced, resulted in discontent.

One of the most prominent episodes in this hostile dialogue over the Carlisle scheme was a pamphlet produced by the Reverend Wilson Stuart entitled The Carlisle and Annan Experiment in State Purchase and Liquor Nationalisation published in mid-1917. Stuart was a convinced prohibitionist and his pamphlet ardently criticised the undertakings at Carlisle but was presented as if it were the work of an impartial investigative journalist. The pamphlet called into question whether anything within Carlisle had actually been changed by the Board, thus setting in motion a pamphlet war. In a section entitled 'Carlisle Public Houses Still Unreformed', Stuart presented a familiar picture:

In the many Control Board public houses in Carlisle and District I saw the same old liquor advertisements – many of which could be removed without the extraction of a tin-tack. There is the old total absence of anything but liquid refreshment of the ordinary public house kind, there is in many of them the same poorly dressed, ill-kempt, foul mouthed blaspheming crowd of drinking men and women – with barmen and barwomen presiding, who were there before the Board came; in others there are the same flashy questionable women drinking and smoking<sup>92</sup> cigarettes. The language and low life in some of these places is indescribable.

<sup>91</sup> Annual Report of the United Kingdom Alliance 1916.

<sup>92</sup> Wilson Stuart, The Carlisle and Annan Experiment in State Purchase and Liquor Nationalisation (London, 1917), pp. 7-8.

Stuart clearly wrote with an agenda. He sought to undermine the argument that direct control was a suitable substitute to overall prohibition by attacking the Board's claim to have 'civilised' the public house. He argued that nothing had changed in Carlisle, and that the government was profiting from the evils of drink. He also questioned whether a public house could ever be truly reformed:

The Gretna Tavern with its relative respectability, has just got a few clients and has not touched the general drinking of Carlisle. As to combining drinking of alcohol with eating, whether in 'Gretna Tavern' or at 'Gracie's Banking', Annan, it is for all practical purposes non-existent . . . The drinking of Carlisle is still swilling, and the eating is teetotal eating.<sup>93</sup>

That his evidence was anecdotal did nothing to blunt his ever-sharpening sword. Not content with commenting on the unchanged situation in Carlisle, Stuart showed the reader the supposed Armageddon-like scenes within the Cathedral city. The pamphlet incorporated 'twelve sketches of striking scenes in Carlisle'. These pictures are contrasted with quotations, such as that from Percy Alden M.P. that 'the CCB has put an end to the drunkenness which for a time so disgraced the munition work in Carlisle', and sought to highlight the differences between the supposed reality of the situation and the 'official' picture of Carlisle.<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. pp. 9-10.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid. No Page Number.



judge of the benefits which have flowed from the purchase operations of the Board, which began in August.<sup>95</sup>

This is a curious argument to make as Stuart had earlier discussed how the navvies still drank to their hearts' content in Carlisle. Nevertheless, he recounted a few more scenes of drunkenness, the theme being one of moral outrage, then concluded with a summary of his arguments:

- 1: The Board's constructive methods . . . employ much labour, are very costly, and have added to the congestion of the other houses.
- 2: There has been enormous expenditure of public funds on a most contentious experiment, and after six or seven months operations, men and women engaged on work of national importance are still grievously incapacitated by drink.
- 3: All the new model houses have failed to attract the drinker from the old purely drinking houses.
- 4: The scores of ordinary public houses are mostly full of people, and are such as they were before. There is no eating and no attempt, by advertisement of food or provision of it, to encourage or build up a trade in victuals. The publican, barmen, and bar women are the same. The habits and morals of the habitués are the same.
- 5: The attempt to rehabilitate the public house in the public estimate will, I fear, promote drinking habits in those who have not before visited public houses.
- 6: Drink, in the six or seven months of the Board's operations, as much pushed as it ever was.
- 7: The Board's ideal, and the new houses have utterly failed to attract old drinkers.<sup>96</sup>

This list usefully summarised concerns and accusations levelled at the scheme.

Stuart's work should be considered as prohibitionist propaganda. To be sure there was, as with all propaganda, some basis of fact in his attacks. The CCB could not be expected to curtail drinking completely and undoubtedly drunkenness was still in evidence on the streets of Carlisle but his pamphlet confirmed to those who believed in prohibition their self-righteousness and sought to change the mind of those who were more neutral.

---

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. p. 14. Quoting the Cumberland News 4 November 1916.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. pp. 19-21.

Stuart's pamphlet riled the Board and those sympathetic to its work.<sup>97</sup> The Earl of Lonsdale wrote: 'I most certainly think that some steps should be taken as regards Mr Wilson Stuart's pamphlet. I am afraid that I do not quite grasp from the booklet what really is at the bottom and is the foundation for the statements made in it.'<sup>98</sup> Speculation soon arose as to the origins of the pamphlet given its damaging criticism. Sanders wrote: 'I understand that the money for this campaign is being found by the extreme prohibitionist party, who desire to utilise this in their opposition to state purchase and control.'<sup>99</sup> Waters Butler was even more condemnatory in a letter to Sanders: 'the treatment you are receiving from these fanatics is an illustration of what the licensed trade has had to suffer for many years, and I trust no effort will be spared to expose their unjust tactics.'<sup>100</sup> Sanders replied: 'My own opinion is that we should now ignore him . . . In reality I think he has done us a considerable service as a good many people in Carlisle realise the work that has been done by the Board during the last year.'<sup>101</sup>

Others came to the aid of the CCB. Bramwell Evens, a Wesleyan Minister, wrote a pamphlet that disagreed with most of Stuart's conclusions. He made clear that the 'writing of this pamphlet is purely voluntary' and 'I am neither under obligation to the Control Board (I was not even aware who most of them were), nor am I controlled by the Prohibitionists.'<sup>102</sup> Entitled The Truth about Direct Control in Carlisle, it dealt immediately with Stuart's work in the opening paragraph:

So strong is the feeling among our citizens who have read the [Stuart's] pamphlet as to its misleading, insinuating and unfair statements, that I feel the general public should be acquainted with the real state of affairs by one who

---

<sup>97</sup> Stuart later joined the UKA in August 1919.

<sup>98</sup> HO 185/352, Earl of Lonsdale to Cartmell, 3 June 1917.

<sup>99</sup> HO 185/352, Sanders to Butler, 30 May 1917.

<sup>100</sup> HO 190/463, Butler to Sanders, 12 June 1917.

<sup>101</sup> HO 190/463, General Administration: Correspondence with Waters Butler 1916-1917, Sanders to Butler, 13 July 1917.

<sup>102</sup> G. Bramwell Evens, The Truth about Direct Control in Carlisle (Westminster, 1917), p. 13.

has not merely visited the city, but lived here in pre-control Board days and through the whole period of control.<sup>103</sup>

He argued that Stuart was unrealistic in his expectations of the scheme:

No Control Board by its mere assumption of power miraculously sobers a town in a day. Its legislation and policy leave the tastes of the people untouched. Had the Control Board policy been the desires of the populace, a miraculous sobriety would have been possible. But the Board commenced its work and extended it for seven months amidst the very class by whom drink – and plenty of it – was deemed a necessity. It is no wonder, then, that the statistics for drunkenness after six months show only a decline in convictions (as compared with the former half year) and not a total abolition of drunkenness. It is to the credit of the Board that any substantial diminution of drunkenness occurred at all.<sup>104</sup>

Evens went on to recount the successes of the Board's work, notably the disinterested management scheme, the reduction of licenses, the reconstruction of public houses, the prohibition of spirits and the end of mixing drinks. He then assaulted the underlying theme of Stuart's work:

The whole tone is that of one who is delighted to find supposed weaknesses in the Government scheme and to exaggerate them until its reforms seem of little importance. His anxiety is not so much to help the country to a solution of the liquor problem as to show that this government experiment is contrary to his own pet theories.<sup>105</sup>

He concluded with a rebuttal of many of Stuart's claims. One example should suffice to illustrate the nature of his riposte. Replying to the accusation that the 'beginning of Direct Control synchronised with the exodus of the heaviest drinking class (the navvies)' Evens noted that this statement was 'completely at variance with the real facts':

This is the most serious blunder Mr Stuart has made . . . he was content to take press and hearsay evidence instead of sifting out the truth for himself from the only authority who had a right to give it. This authority I now quote. Sir Edward Pearson (Ministry of Munitions) states 'The number of workmen employed on construction work was practically the same at the end of 1916 as at the end of June . . . I should say that the number of labourers coming from

---

<sup>103</sup> Ibid. p. 1.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid. p. 12.

Carlisle all through remained fairly constant.’ This is the final word on the subject.<sup>106</sup>

Overall, Evens, himself a minister, who was not particularly fond of drinking, could clearly see the benefits of a system of control:

No longer will the drink traffic be in the hands of ‘profiteers’ but earnest temperance and social reformers will have a voice in the conducting of this trade . . . I am far from urging that this experiment in the Carlisle area is the ideal. But I do claim that considering we are dealing with a ‘Trade’ into which, by its very nature so many abuses can creep, we have found the best method.<sup>107</sup>

Employing one of Stuart’s sources, Evens points to an article in the Cumberland Evening News, which was less than flattering about Stuart’s pamphlet. The article read:

Criticism of the Carlisle ‘experiment’ . . . was to be expected, but if it is to be helpful it must be applied in a different spirit to that which animates the Reverend Wilson Stuart, of Birmingham . . . we take the strongest exception to his conclusion that conditions in the city are worse since the Board became the sole victualler than they were before.<sup>108</sup>

Meanwhile, the Carlisle experiment was paying. The reforms were profitable with yearly profits exceeding expectations.<sup>109</sup> From 1916-1918 the scheme made £107,392 profit. Sanders let it be known, however, that it was ‘unwise to announce profits’ and, despite questioning from Colonel Gretton as to the financial status of the CCB, little monetary information crept into the public domain.<sup>110</sup> This profit was a fillip to those seeking the introduction of nationwide state purchase as this monetary gain contrasted to the economic loss that was generally predicted by critics. Sanders admitted to Astor: ‘we have put into operation all the reasonable and generally accepted temperance proposals made in the last half century, and can show that this is possible

---

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. p. 16.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. p. 28.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. p. 29. Quoting the Cumberland News 29 May 1917.

<sup>109</sup> HO 190/472, Sanders to Scott - The financial results are coming out splendidly, and I think the 15 per cent mentioned by Lord D’Abernon will, in practice be nearer 17 per cent on a capital which I estimate at between £750,000 and £800,000.

<sup>110</sup> HO 185/213, Public House Committee Minutes, 13 March 1917.

not only without financial loss but with a considerable margin of profit to the state.’<sup>111</sup> D’Abernon, however, castigated Sanders for using such temperance terminology. An open admission that the Board had merely implemented temperance proposals would have caused great controversy if it had been publicised, as it would have confirmed what trade activists had been claiming throughout the war.

Certainly it seems that the people of Carlisle generally accepted the scheme, be they long-term residents or visiting workers. One report noted: ‘on the whole men acquiesced in the new regulations without open complaint. As one navy said to me, “we’ve got to put up with many things nowadays as there is a war on” . . . In Carlisle itself the Board has attained a measure of success under very difficult circumstances’.<sup>112</sup> Indeed the ready acceptance of the measures is testament to the working class’ desire, not only for victory, but to make sacrifices to ensure this victory. As one man reluctantly accepted: ‘I suppose they have taken over the pubs in order to make us teetotallers.’<sup>113</sup> No significant backlash against these new premises was apparent. This acceptance belied accusations that the working class could not be trusted. So long as beer flowed there seems to have been a general ambivalence as to whether it flowed in a state run or private pub.

In terms of arrests for drunkenness the CCB can be considered successful in reducing this criterion of measuring insobriety. From 953 convictions for drunkenness in 1916 the figure was reduced to 320 in 1917 and to 80 in 1918.<sup>114</sup> The decline in drunkenness was accompanied by reports of order being restored to the streets of the city. Sanders, in his annual report of 1918, wrote:

---

<sup>111</sup> HO 190/493, Sanders to Astor, 16 September 1918.

<sup>112</sup> HO 190/459, Ernest Selley Report, 20 February 1917.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> P. Talbot, ‘Accounting for the Nationalised Brewery (1916-1974) and the Public Good’, Journal of Finance and Management in Public Services, Volume 4, Number 2, p. 6.

The improved condition of the streets, especially at night, is a fact which impresses itself upon residents and visitors alike. Although the streets are unduly crowded, especially on Saturday nights, the sight of a drunken person is very exceptional. Any person who lived in Carlisle through the years 1916 and 1917 will testify to the greatly increased order and quietness in the streets of the city since the work of the Board began to take effect and especially during the last three quarters of 1917.<sup>115</sup>

Historical reviews have commonly agreed that the scheme was a success, lessening conviction rates whilst also showing the potentiality of reform. The area covered by the scheme totalled some 369 licensed premises, 321 of which were taken over by the Board. This was a considerable administrative achievement made even greater when one considers that Sanders and his colleagues were acting under wartime duress. To create an administrative body from scratch and run the scheme successfully in the space of twelve months must be considered an impressive achievement.<sup>116</sup>

Interestingly, the scheme proved some temperance theories. As Sanders, seeking to place the Carlisle scheme in historical perspective, wrote:

It is the first piece of constructive licensing reform undertaken with the prestige and authority of a government department. It has shown that the liquor trade can be carried on, subject to reasonable regulations without detriment to the well being of the community, and without undue interference with the liberty, tastes and preferences of the large mass of the adult population . . . Above all it has offered a new solution of the problem of intemperance.<sup>117</sup>

This lesson was taken onboard by the international community. In 1918 press representatives from across the world visited Carlisle to view the work of the CCB

---

<sup>115</sup> HO 190/473, Copies of Reports, General Manager from Carlisle 1918-1919.

<sup>116</sup> The accounting techniques used at Carlisle were so innovative that academic research has been carried out on them. See P. Talbot, 'Costing the State Pint 1916-1974,' Journal of Finance and Management in Public Services, Volume 5, Number 2, December 2005.

<sup>117</sup> HO 190/497, Sanders' address to the Durham Citizens League on State Management of the Liquor Trade in Carlisle, 14 November 1919.

and were impressed enough to write of the scheme as a distinct alternative to prohibition, both in the United States and Canada.<sup>118</sup>

Carlisle had been an interesting experiment but had it made a significant difference? Whilst the decline in arrests for drunkenness was commendable there were similar declines in other areas not under the direct control of the Board. Indeed, the fact that the Carlisle area did not witness a significantly greater reduction in drunkenness than other privately run areas suggests that the reform undertaken had had limited effect.<sup>119</sup> It will, alas, be impossible to come to a full-proof conclusion as to the value of the work of the Carlisle scheme. Perhaps the most fair-minded review of the experiment was made in 1919 by Theodore Carr, a parliamentary candidate for the Carlisle constituency:

I have come to the conclusion, and I think it is the conclusion that a great many people are coming to very quickly, and that is that the Control Board have done some real good in this great temperance cause, and if we want to encourage real true temperance, we must in this matter as in politics, in social questions, and in general industrial matters, try and combine and do all we can to avoid taking an extreme course. A gradual and satisfactory improvement in the conditions of the country can only be brought about by every possible force joining hands.<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>118</sup> HO 190/863, The Carlisle Journal 17 September 1918, 'The opinion expressed by one of the speakers and shared by many of the others was that if prohibition in the States were to fail Carlisle had provided an alternative which they were prepared to recommend to the American people.' Canadian Press Representatives stated that 'although prohibition had been adopted in Canada, they regarded it as a wartime measure only, and the methods adopted in Carlisle offered a most interesting possibility for a future scheme in the dominion.'

<sup>119</sup> See W.J. Irving, State Purchase of the Drink Trade and the Sale of Drink under Government Management in Carlisle, Comparing the years 1913 and 1922 Carlisle shows a reduction of sixty per cent in the number of convictions for drunkenness. Forty-three of the eighty-one county boroughs show reductions as great or greater than Carlisle, thirty-seven are worse than Carlisle's percentage reduction but this does not take into consideration the hardcore navy drinker.

<sup>120</sup> HO 190/437, Theodore Carr speech, July 1919.

## **Chapter Six: 'Helping our weaker sisters to go straight' - Women and Drink during the War**

This chapter will show that perceptions of female drinking were a key component of the moral panic surrounding the drink issue. During the war it was believed that an increased number of women were drinking larger amounts of alcohol than ever before. Contemporary evidence differs with regard to the scale of the problem, making it difficult for the historian to come to definite conclusions. Indeed, much evidence is simply contradictory. What is known for certain, though, is that female drinking became emblematic of the broader desire to regulate certain sections of society for the supposed benefit of the war effort. The intricacies of this debate illustrate the shaky ground on which so much drink policy was founded.

During the Edwardian period women were still defined in terms of their relationship towards men. Women's prime role in life was still regarded as motherhood. The woman was the domestic hub of Edwardian family life, central to the existence of the family unit and thus of Edwardian society. Any movement outside of this domestic sphere encountered suspicion. Thus it was with despair that many moral commentators became conscious of women drinking in Britain during the war.

As early as 1900 concern was increasing over female intemperance due to the protestations of disparate groups of temperance workers, eugenicists, social reformers, imperialists and the medical profession.<sup>1</sup> Women had always drunk in the pubs of Britain forming between 25-30 per cent of pub customers prior to the war, but in the context of war this drinking was interpreted as definite evidence of the disintegration

---

<sup>1</sup> See D. Wright and C. Chorniawry, 'Women and Drink in Edwardian England', Historical Papers/Communication Historiques 1985, pp. 117-131, D. Gutzke, 'The Cry of the Children: The Edwardian Medical Campaign against Maternal Drinking', pp. 71-84, Joanne Woiak, 'A Medical Cromwell to depose King Alcohol: Medical Scientists, Temperance Reformers and the Alcohol Problem in Britain', Histoire Sociale Social History, Volume XXVII, November 1994, pp. 337-365.

of the family, which would lead to defeat in war and the moral collapse of the nation.<sup>2</sup> This attitude ensured that when women drank moral condemnation and uproar inevitably followed. In August 1915 The Times reported the concerns of clergy and police in areas of the East End about female drinking, stating that the ‘problem of open drunkenness among women was serious and was increasing’.<sup>3</sup> Murray argued that ‘everything tended to urge the women into the public houses. They had plenty of time and plenty of money and they [the women] were all very worried.’<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, women were deemed to be incapable of handling drink to the same extent as men. The 1896 Commission’s Minority Report had concluded that ‘it is a lamentable fact that when a woman becomes intemperate she seems to have less power of self-control than a man.’<sup>5</sup> The removal of men into the army and the resultant perceived reduction in the standard of parenting led to, as one commentator argued, ‘an increase in the proportion of children born of parents less fit and possibly less temperate . . . a lowering of the national standard, both physical and moral, is inevitable.’<sup>6</sup> Alarmed social workers wrote to The Times that women who insisted their children were starving were ‘all the time puffing into our faces fumes of whisky, gin and the like.’<sup>7</sup> Worries increased due to the number of women filling industrial vacancies.<sup>8</sup> Darwinist anxieties were rife.

This disquiet over women’s drinking angered Sylvia Pankhurst, who saw it as condescending towards her gender. In her autobiography she reflected:

---

<sup>2</sup> D. Gutzke, ‘Gender, Class and Public Drinking in Britain during the First World War’, Histoire Sociale/Social History Volume 27, Number 54, (1994), p. 368.

<sup>3</sup> G.P. Williams and G.T. Broke, Drink in Great Britain 1900-1979 (London, 1980), p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> M. Murray, Drink and the War: From the Patriotic Point of View, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> David Wright and Cathy Chorniawry, ‘Women and drink in Edwardian England’, p. 129.

<sup>6</sup> H.G. Chancellor, War and National Temperance (Living Age, 1916), p. 350.

<sup>7</sup> G. DeGroot, Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War, p. 237.

<sup>8</sup> By mid 1914 more than 2 million women were employed in British factories, and by July 1918, that figure rose to nearly 3 million according to the 1919 Report of the War Cabinet Committee on Women in Industry. C.A. Culleton, Working Class Culture, Women and Britain 1914-1921 (Basingstoke, 2000), p. 1.

Wartime hysterics gave currency to fabulous rumours. From press and pulpit stories ran rampant of drunkenness and depravity amongst the women of the masses. Alarmist rumour mongers conceived most monstrous visions of girls and women, freed from the control of fathers and husbands who had hitherto compelled them to industry, chastity and sobriety, now neglecting their homes, plunging into excess, and burdening the country with swarms of illegitimate infants. Living amongst the poorest, and constantly journeying to the working class areas of provincial towns, I witnessed nothing of this alleged phenomenon.<sup>9</sup>

Pankhurst questioned the moral panic that had emerged over women drinking at this time. Relating the criticism to overall hostility towards women, she suggested that rumour mongering was another falsehood aimed at inhibiting women from living a fulfilling life. Whether a woman was drunk or not was largely a question of perception. Those who wished to see female drinking as testament to the collapse of moral virtue would do so regardless of the reality, whereas those less obsessed by the idea would see no great divergence from pre-war female drinking customs and patterns. As one chief constable, quoted as part of an inquiry into 'excessive drinking among women in Birmingham', noted: 'people who investigate this subject have in many cases no previous experience of such investigations, they are naturally shocked at scenes at which they are unaccustomed and therefore tend to exaggerate and to confuse rowdyism with intoxication.'<sup>10</sup>

The trade refuted the idea that more women were drinking to excess. This was illustrated by a reported speech by Mr F.G. Gardiner, Chairman of Directors for the Public House Trust:

Since the question of drinking among women has been prominently before the public for some time he had thought it desirable to make some inquiry into the matter in what he regarded as authoritative quarters. The best opinion he had been able to obtain was that there was no excessive drinking among women since the war broke out (applause). He would like to point out that women of a certain class were being visited by other women, and it was quite possible that

---

<sup>9</sup> Sylvia Pankhurst, *The Home Front: A Mirror to Life in England during the First World War* (London, 1987), p. 98.

<sup>10</sup> HO 185/238, Drunkenness among Women and Young People.

the fact of drinking that took place among that class at any rate was being brought more to the public notice that it would otherwise be.<sup>11</sup>

Panic though, once begun, was hard to contain. Swept along by a tide of popular anxiety the very concept of women drinking to excess threatened established gender roles. In a war fought to preserve Victorian certainties this was a substantial shock to the system. Gender and class prejudices fused easily.

The early months of the war witnessed sustained moral criticism of female drinking, with purveyors of moral panic highlighting the drunken female as the archetypal representation of the decline in moral virtue. Given the undoubted 'masculinity' of the public house, the presence of women in the bars of Britain (in seemingly unprecedented numbers) caused much consternation about the state of the nation, intensifying anxieties about gender identity in the process. The notion that women could enjoy drink supplanted established conceptions of the female's place in society. An appreciation of pleasures outwith the context of the home was perceived as a distinct threat to the orderliness of society as a whole. The Edwardian fixation with masculinity ensured that the absence of a male influence was identified as a suitable explanation for the spate of female insobriety. As temperance campaigner Mrs Alan Bright noted, 'women who drank before, now drink more and what is infinitely sadder, young wives, many of them mere girls, to whom alcohol must have meant nothing at all, now take it because they are dispirited or lonely, or without resource.'<sup>12</sup> The Countess of Warwick shared this view:

A certain number of women of all classes have been drinking more than is good for them, and since the war broke out the working women's temptations and the opportunity to indulge them have grown side by side. The majority of working women are as sober as the majority of every class, but though there are thousands of temperate women, they are matched by thousands of

---

<sup>11</sup> The Scotsman 19 December 1914.

<sup>12</sup> Steve Humphries and Richard von Emden, All Quiet on the Home Front: Life in Britain during the First World War (Headline Book Publishing: London, 2003), p. 235.

intemperate ones, the number has grown apace, and I feel that they should be saved from themselves.<sup>13</sup>

Others, who saw in the descriptions of female drunkenness the familiar over exaggeration of anti-drink polemicists, disputed these accusations. Anna Martin, in the Nineteenth Century Journal, argued:

There was doubtless a considerable increase in the number of women frequenting public bars after the outbreak of war, but the phenomenon was not understood and was therefore mishandled. No tattle of evidence has ever been adduced to show that women, previously temperate, were taking to dissolute ways, and the indignation felt by the wives of the reservists was natural and great . . . The piteous picture, which forms such a prominent part of the stock in trade of temperance propagandists, of the good, king husband coming home from his day's toil and finding his wife dead drunk on the floor, is largely an affair of their own imaginations . . . Among the mass of printed matter lamenting and denouncing the intemperance of married women, one searches in vain for any intelligent and detailed study of its causes.<sup>14</sup>

Some critics, unconvinced about the scandalisation of female drinking, argued that with men absent due to military service it was bound to appear as though there were more women drinking.<sup>15</sup>

Despite some cynicism, the CCB had to take this problem seriously because it was so newsworthy. Middle and upper class reformers feared that working class women were incapable of controlling their temptation to drink. This anxiety was increased by concerns regarding the appropriate policing of women drinkers due to the number of police serving in the armed forces overseas. Some moralistic working class women also lamented the failure of their social superiors to behave properly. Females from the middle and upper class often drank but did so in the confines of

---

<sup>13</sup> Countess of Warwick, A Woman and the War (Chapman and Hall Ltd: London, 1916), p. 23.

<sup>14</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 9 December 1915, quoting an article that appeared in The Nineteenth Century Journal, December 1915.

<sup>15</sup> An argument which Gutzke correctly contends has its limits, given that the level of drunkenness declined amongst women as well as men and that deaths due to cirrhosis of the liver declined for the entire population. See Gutzke, 'Gender, Class and Public Drinking in Britain During the First World War', p. 372.

their own home, drinking wine or spirits.<sup>16</sup> This compared unfavourably with working class women who often drank beer or stout at pubs.<sup>17</sup> Examples of female over-exuberance are found in numerous correspondence pages of the period. One contributor to The Spectator wrote:

Competent observers tell us that there can be no question but that drinking is spreading among women. They have got the money, they have got the leisure and they have got the kind of worries and anxieties which drive people to seek relief in drugs and intoxicants.<sup>18</sup>

Rifleman H.V. Sawyer, upon returning from the front, noted the newfound phenomenon of the high spending and heavy drinking munitions girl. He wrote:

I was sent to the convalescent depot at Sutton Coldfield where they rehabilitated wounded soldiers to get them fit again for the Front. Birmingham city I liked, but I regret I was not at all impressed with the men folk. The munitions lassies – the girls in overalls and clogs – were always good company, or so I found them. The moment they found out a soldier was from the convalescent depot, then that soldier was point blank refused to be allowed to buy a round of drinks. I felt damned embarrassed when I walked into a pub with ‘Tich’ one night and called for two drinks. Some factory girls were also present and when I put my hand into my pocket for cash to pay for my order one girl forestalled me saying, ‘you keep your money, Corporal. This is on us’ and with no more ado she pulled up her frock, turned back her stocking from under the flashy garter, and produced a roll of notes big enough to choke a cow. Many of the girls earned ten times my pay as a full Corporal, and they said so, and they were generously big hearted where we were concerned.<sup>19</sup>

Women buying beer was something that men had to quickly come to terms with, even more so when women were buying men beer.

Female drinking challenged traditional gender identities. Female workers enjoyed monetary independence due to a combination of greater disposable income and new separation allowances, whose use in such a ‘wasteful’ manner brought much criticism. Critics argued that more money meant more drinking. As one munitions girl wrote ‘in self defence’, she believed this cultural anger stemmed from ‘a tyrannical

---

<sup>16</sup> D. Gutzke, ‘The Cry of the Children: The Edwardian Medical Campaign against Maternal Drinking’, The British Journal of Addiction 79 1984, pp. 71-72.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* p. 72.

<sup>18</sup> The Spectator 4 September 1915.

<sup>19</sup> Lyn Macdonald, 1914-1918: Voices and Images of the Great War (London, 1988), p. 145.

attitude about the place of the working classes.’<sup>20</sup> The Woman’s Dreadnought commented ‘some people cannot endure the thought of a working woman having a few shillings to spend.’<sup>21</sup> Some women spent their money on drink but away from the limelight of the pubs. A report on drinking conditions among women and girls in Woolwich and District concluded that ‘very few [munitions girls] of these call at any of the public houses, and then only get a glass of stout.’<sup>22</sup> Prior to the war concern had been raised about the impact of Grocers’ Licences, which allowed women to buy alcohol away from the judgemental confines of the pub. Some used their newfound freedom to try to escape the prying eyes of the state. This did not always succeed, as a report from one policewoman in Grantham, notes:

A Defence of the Realm regulation gave us power to go in the women’s houses and to see if the girls were in bed, and to see who was in the house. We found that women were getting large quantities of drink and entertaining the men in their houses instead of being out on the streets . . . that was doing more harm than if the women had actually been in the public houses and in the streets where people could see them. We turned hundreds of soldiers and girls out of these houses, and reported it to the military authority and to the Chief Constable, with a result that the order restricting women was taken off.<sup>23</sup>

C.S. Peel believed that the whole ‘trouble was not very tactfully handled’ and that the idea of police supervision of women ‘roused the indignation of the public and was quickly abandoned.’<sup>24</sup> Public house drinking was the real concern.

The CCB began an inquiry into women’s drinking habits as a consequence of the publicity given to female drunkenness. In October 1915 the Board appointed a committee of women under the chairmanship of Mrs Louise Creighton<sup>25</sup> to inquire

---

<sup>20</sup> C. Culleton, Working Class Culture, Women, and Britain 1914-1921, p. 58.

<sup>21</sup> G. Brayton, Women Workers in the First World War: The British Experience (London, 1981), p. 147.

<sup>22</sup> HO 185/241, Report on Drinking conditions among women and girls in Woolwich and District, May 1916.

<sup>23</sup> C. Culleton, Working Class Culture, Women, and Britain 1914-1921, p. 143.

<sup>24</sup> C.S. Peel, How we lived then 1914-1918: A sketch of social and domestic life in England during the War, p. 61.

<sup>25</sup> Louise Creighton (1850-1936) was a social activist and writer of popular history. She argued against female suffrage. She was heavily involved with the National Union of Women Workers (NUWW), a

into the alleged excessive drinking amongst women and to suggest what action, if any, was required in the interest of national efficiency.<sup>26</sup> The members of the Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) were chosen largely from among the representatives of the working class or those in close in touch with them.<sup>27</sup> The Committee's conclusions were surprising, and did not accord with widespread preconceptions concerning female insobriety.

The WAC passed its report to the Central Control Board for consideration after holding fourteen meetings and receiving evidence from thirty-two witnesses. Enquiries had been undertaken in twenty-eight special districts, on sixteen occasions through special committees appointed by branches of the National Union of Women Workers, a predominantly working class organisation.<sup>28</sup> Their conclusions placed the blame for the perception of rising female insobriety firmly at the feet of those who had enjoyed a drink prior to the war, not on a new breed of degenerate wartime female drunkards, contrary to widespread expectations. The report stated:

It seems certain that drinking amongst women has increased since the beginning of the war, and that this increase was worse during the excitement of the earlier months of the war, but that the increase has been mainly amongst those who drank before . . . Many of them are the wives and dependents of casual workers who have now enlisted. They live in slum districts. Many of them have no decent standard of life and no domestic habits. Now suddenly they have more money to spend than they ever had before, and at the same time the restraint, such as it was, exercised by their husbands is removed. There is no need for them to be at home to prepare their husband's dinner. They are excited and eager for company and talk. It is for the most part these women who are now drinking to excess and by their conduct bringing unmerited reproach on the great majority of soldiers' and sailors' wives.<sup>29</sup>

---

non-political organisation of middle class women dedicated to improving the lives of working women. She believed in the sanctity of the role of women in family life, seeing church work as an extension of this. She also served on the venereal disease commission of 1913. James Thayne Covert, Oxford Dictionary National Biography, [www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com).

<sup>26</sup> HO 185/258, Women's Advisory Committee Reports and Correspondence.

<sup>27</sup> HO 185/258, D'Abernon's letter to the Duchess of Marlborough, 11 October 1915.

<sup>28</sup> HO 185/258, WAC Reports and Correspondence, 26 February 1916.

<sup>29</sup> HO 185/258, WAC Reports and Correspondence, WAC Report, 20 February 1916.

The report, however, confirmed many suspicions. The women of the slum were seen as incapable of controlling themselves when faced with the temptation of alcohol. The evidence offered in support of these accusations was anecdotal with no vigorous statistical proof offered. Yet the absence of domestic habit, and the consequent corruption of all that was female, seemingly loosened the inhibition to drink to excess amongst those who had already enjoyed a tipples. According to the report, those who had always been a hindrance to the community were now merely drinking more, a view corroborated by a separate inquiry conducted in Lambeth.<sup>30</sup>

The report also implicated women in higher social classes. ‘The increase of drinking during the last ten years, has not, however, been only amongst the women of the poorer classes’, the report continued, ‘there has also been an increase among women in all social classes. But as the women of better position for the most part drink in secret, it is not possible to get direct evidence of their numbers.’<sup>31</sup> Indeed, later in the report the admission was made that ‘neither have we felt it our province in this report to consider in detail the case of women of the middle and upper classes who are given to intemperate habits, but we do not forget their existence.’<sup>32</sup> As a result, the behaviour of the working class woman was placed under a scrutiny which the middle and upper class female was not. The report thus acknowledges its own failings.

Despite the report’s class bias it indicated that reports of female insobriety had been overstated. One superintendent of district nurses in Leeds argued:

The charge of drinking amongst women has been much exaggerated and is a great injustice to the great mass of women of the working class, who are sober,

---

<sup>30</sup> See HO 185/353, For Chairman, ‘Enquiry into alleged increase of Excessive drinking in certain districts in the Borough of Lambeth,’ 18 December 1915. The enquiry concluded ‘we are of opinion that the increase of excessive drinking referred to above has been mainly confined to women living under degraded conditions and inclined to excessive drinking in normal times.’

<sup>31</sup> HO 185/258, WAC Report, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p. 15.

steady, and are leading good lives during a time of great anxiety, stress and, in many cases, grief.<sup>33</sup>

The report also testified to the success of the no treating order and to the reduction in hours of public house opening: 'streets are now quiet and orderly at night, where terrible noise and disorder used to prevail at closing time. People are able to get to sleep and the children get to bed earlier.'<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the report argued that the increasing number of women with expendable income due to war work, who were blamed for the increase in female insobriety, had exercised self-restraint. The report stated:

Though their opportunities for over indulgence have been largely increased by the uncontrolled possession of more money than they had before . . . the committee have received no evidence that women and girls who did not drink before have taken in any considerable numbers to drinking to excess in consequence of the war or the receipt of allowances. There is much evidence of improvement in the homes and in the condition of the children, and of wise spending on the part of the great majority of those in receipt of war allowances.<sup>35</sup>

Despite this upbeat conclusion, the report nevertheless ended with a tirade against drink that could have come from the most ardent temperance activist:

Drink interferes with the efficiency of our workers, and with the quantity of their output in all industries. Drink threatens the health and well being of the children in whom the future of the country depends . . . Surely this is the time to make an appeal to the true patriotism of the nation to consider how, without regard to the interests either of trade or personal wealth and comfort or of party politics, this tyranny of drink can be destroyed by wise and far reaching measures, which shall make for the true efficiency and well being of the nation.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, even when the Committee had concluded that there was no discernible increase in drinking amongst women in general the symptoms of moral panic remained apparent. The CCB was desperate to avoid this overreaction and outburst of temperance rhetoric, in complete contradiction to the evidence gathered. It is

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. p. 16.

unsurprising that neither the report nor its conclusions found favour with D'Abernon and his colleagues.

After submitting the report to the CCB, Mrs Creighton was disturbed to find that it would not be published. She made it clear that she

Had never understood that the report would be confidential and that some of the members would not have worked as they did if they had thought the report would not be published . . . Mrs Creighton's main point in pressing for publication of the Report is to clear the character of women from the charge of drinking commonly brought against them.<sup>37</sup>

It is a mystery why publication was such an issue to her. One can only speculate that it was a matter of personal pride or reputation. But this was not the end of Mrs Creighton's troubles. The Restrictions Committee of the CCB added to her woes by lambasting her report:

The restrictions committee . . . are by no means convinced that the conclusion at which Mrs Creighton and her committee have arrived is well founded . . . The Restrictions Committee feel sure that the Report as it stands contains, and fear that any modified Report would also contain, many statements which would give occasion for hostile criticisms likely to be detrimental to the policy and future activities of the Board.<sup>38</sup>

The Board was clearly concerned about its credibility if the report was made public. To a certain extent the results of the WAC questioned the *raison d'être* of the CCB as a whole. If there was no discernible increase in drinking then some of the CCB's future plans could be affected. Moreover, it alerts the historian to the fact that preconceptions were more important to the Board in guiding policy than an ardent examination of evidence.

Mrs Creighton was clearly angered by the Board's criticisms of her report. In a letter to Lord D'Abernon in April 1916 she made clear her displeasure:

It was useless under the circumstances to go through the criticisms, particularly as Mr Sykes at last told us plainly that to accept them would not

---

<sup>37</sup> HO 185/258, Report of Restrictions Committee on WAC.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

be sufficient to make the Board agree to the publication of the report, that they would not do that unless the fundamental basis of the report was changed, as they would not accept our conclusion that there was no considerable increase of drinking amongst women who did not drink before . . . the Board does not put any confidence in our work, and that because our conclusions are not such as expected it refuses to publish them . . . You yourself have followed the course of our work and as far as I could gather from my interviews with you, have approved of its method and intentions . . . No other member of the Board has even come near our committee or gave us any indication of what the Board wanted from us.<sup>39</sup>

Her protestations came to nought. The report remained unpublished, although its conclusions were discussed by the Board within the Second Report of the CCB, which sought to dispute the ‘prominence’ attack of some critics by pointing out that drinking women were more numerous ‘not only actually but relatively to the population.’<sup>40</sup>

Creighton’s report highlights the difficulty for historians in attempting to disentangle contending evidence about women’s drinking. For example, the aforementioned investigation of female drinking conditions at Woolwich concluded that:

A great many smartly dressed Woolwich girls throng the Beresford Square House after 8 o’clock drifting from house to house, and consuming ports and spirits. In the present diluted state they seem little the worse for this kind of amusement, but it is a habit they have acquired, the danger of which will be all the more evident should liquor after the war return to its old strength.<sup>41</sup>

Another inquiry conducted by the CCB at Birmingham found that ‘evidence . . . did not point to any recent increase of drunkenness or indeed of excessive drinking amongst women.’<sup>42</sup> The Board was receiving contradictory evidence. The WAC report was based largely upon anecdotal evidence and lacked any substantive material to prove its veracity to the Board. Furthermore, the rejection of the report’s conclusions indicates that the CCB saw female drinking as a ‘problem’ and wanted to

---

<sup>39</sup> HO 185/258, Mrs Creighton to D’Abernon.

<sup>40</sup> D. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England 1896-1960*, p. 53.

<sup>41</sup> HO 185/241, Report on Drinking conditions among women and girls in Woolwich and District, May 1916.

<sup>42</sup> *The Third Report of the Central Control Board: Appendix Report of Special Investigation in the Birmingham District*. See also HO 185/238, *Drinking among Women and Young People*.

act upon it irrespective of any opinions to the contrary. Taking some form of action to modify female drinking behaviour was part of their overall strategy to control drinking throughout Britain. This rationale for action would have been undermined if the report had been made public.

The problem of women drinking thus remained high on the agenda of the CCB. Some temperance activists, such as F.B. Meyer, proposed closing public houses to women so that money would be saved for home and children in order 'to make it easier for our weaker sisters to go straight'.<sup>43</sup> The Board, however, rejected the option of imposing more serious restrictions on women than men as Labour representatives, together with women's social and industrial organisations, argued that this would be iniquitous and merely create further discontent.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore they also discounted the requests of the Chief Constables in Newcastle, Durham, and surrounding towns, to ban female drinking in the evening to deal with the 'growing evil' of female intemperance.<sup>45</sup> As Neville recalled, 'in the old days few decent women would go into a public house at all . . . now they were walking in bold as brass, putting down their money and calling for beer.'<sup>46</sup> But gender differences, despite justifying the CCB's actions, were not to be a determining factor in its policymaking.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> The Times 30 July 1915.

<sup>44</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade: A Contribution to National Efficiency 1915-1917, p. 168.

<sup>45</sup> D. Gutzke, Pubs and Progressives, p. 66.

<sup>46</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, p. 108.

<sup>47</sup> For example, in February 1917 the Carlisle Local Committee rejected a proposal to increase the drinking age for women to 21. See HO 190/458, Correspondence with Mr Sykes.



**Figure 29: Young female workers bottling beer in an unknown brewery.**

The issue of female insobriety remained contentious for the remainder of the war. Changes in attitudes to female ‘emancipation’, in terms of their leisure activities, could not be artificially altered by legislative means. Change in cultural perceptions offered the only real chance for this shift to occur. Later in the war The Daily Express, under the headline ‘sober women’, noted that the:

War has brought us compensations for all its woes and ills . . . the restriction of public houses has doubtless been a contributory cause but the real reason for the decline is the increase in self-respect that has come with wider employment and greater independence. The war has added to women’s interest and made their lives fuller. It is the idle and bored who are most likely to drink too much.<sup>48</sup>

Much attention was paid to drinking habits of working class women but what about the better off women? Gutzke has argued that the war saw the increasing use of pubs by middle and upper class women for whom drinking ‘had been hitherto

<sup>48</sup> The Daily Express 20 December 1917.

unacceptable'.<sup>49</sup> He argues that the CCB endorsed gender equality in drinking and that customers of the pub broadened to include:

Single women without men, and wives with husbands fighting in Europe who had joined the workforce because of wartime labour shortages. In London and more broadly southern England, necessity forced them to break with the pre-war tradition of accompanying husbands or boyfriends to pubs for a drink only on weekends. Deprived of male companionship, affection, and a sexual relationship, lonely women, commonly in their twenties, found solace with other similar females in the pub. Large numbers of female patrons, far fewer male drinkers, and publicans' wives, standing in for husbands in uniform abroad all made the pub temporarily respectable.<sup>50</sup>

At the same time many working class women were ostracised by the CCB's pub reform programme in state managed areas.<sup>51</sup> The pub, as they had known it, was altered by the reforming impulse of the CCB. This highlights the manner in which the CCB targeted working class drinkers to facilitate social change.

Gutzke's argument seems all too romantic. The pub may now have had a broader, more genteel, customer base but it remained to many deeply unrespectable. The 'respectability' of an establishment is in essence an arbitrary judgement, difficult for historians to evaluate as numerous factors contributed to status. For example, Neville highlighted the role of geographical differences as being influential in shaping perceptions of female drinking. He wrote that 'it seemed to me strange that leading police officials [in the north] should be so troubled at what in the south was a quite normal custom.'<sup>52</sup> Women did drink in unreformed pubs but this made the social habit more acceptable to some, and the problem more apparent to others. Coming to a definite conclusion as to female drinking habits, as exhibited by the differing viewpoints and evidence above, is problematic as attitudes to female drinking and notions of 'respectability' varied.

---

<sup>49</sup> D. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives*, p. 53.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.* p. 53.

<sup>51</sup> See Gutzke, 'Gender, Class and Public Drinking', p. 379.

<sup>52</sup> S. Neville, *Seventy Rolling Years*, p. 108.

But whatever ‘respectability’ might have meant, conviction figures for women belied accusations of rampant female drunkenness during the war. A study released in 1917 showed that arrests for drunkenness amongst women decreased from 40,815 in 1914 to 24,206 in 1916. D’Abernon admitted in 1918 that although there had been an increase of 1.5 million women working and an increase of between £150 and £200 million in the wage earnings of women, there had been a decline in female drunkenness amounting to no less than 73 per cent compared with pre-war figures.<sup>53</sup> The Times, a propagator of much speculative criticism concerning female drinking, was forced to admit in 1917 that ‘there has never been so great a reduction spread over so large a population in the same space of time.’<sup>54</sup>

Female drinking during the war was thus an issue of much contention. Opinions differed as to its significance but it is apparent that the issue was used as a justification to support the CCB’s policies. Views differed for political and social reasons. Suffragettes saw the concern as condescending whereas social reformers and temperance activists saw it as evidence of a nation drinking its way to defeat. The ‘drink problem’ was a political football and different groups had conflicting views about how the game should be played. Concerns about class, rather than gender, determined the Board’s policies. The CCB, in pursuing a policy of gender equality in its pubs, particularly in state run areas, was altering the working class pub irrevocably by bringing more women into what had previously been a male dominated social space. A good pub for the Board, as exhibited in Carlisle, was one unlike that which had existed prior to the war. Concern surrounding female drinking merely provided further justification to alter the pub. Whether the panic over women drinking was real or imagined, its consequences were felt not only during the war but after it as well,

---

<sup>53</sup> Waldorf Astor Papers, WC1057, Lord D’Abernon speech ‘Public Health and Alcoholism among Women.’

<sup>54</sup> The Times 13 March 1917.

when attempts were made by brewers to safeguard the developing female custom in pubs throughout Britain.

## **Chapter Seven: Reforming the Working Man**

This chapter demonstrates the CCB's broader mandate to improve industrial performance and highlights how the 'drink problem' was more than just a problem of pubs but involved an assessment of the working man's daily routine. It will, for example, consider action taken by the Board to modify munitions workers' diets. The chapter will also discuss the increasing discontent caused by the actions of the CCB and important alterations to its membership. At the beginning of 1916 the Board was optimistic that its policies were producing significant results in the battle against drink. The trade had tolerated interference in its work but the extension of the Board's policies over the forthcoming months was to place a severe strain on this grudging acquiescence. The extension of the CCB's powers was seen as vindictive temperance policy implemented under the national interest.

The personnel of the Board altered in 1916. Neville Chamberlain resigned in February due to the pressures of his work as Lord Mayor of Birmingham. Prior to this, Waters Butler, a prominent and much respected brewer from Birmingham, and the aforementioned Henry Carter, had joined the Board in January.<sup>1</sup> Carter was known at the time as 'the most prominent personality in the temperance party'.<sup>2</sup> The CCB, which up until this point had been free of direct influence from either trade or temperance advocates, now had what was perceived as representatives of both these interest groups. The symbolic importance of this change was perhaps more substantive than the results suggested, but it symbolised an attempt at a new

---

<sup>1</sup> Waters Butler (1866-1939) was Chairman and managing director of Mitchells and Butlers from 1914 until his death. His company distinguished itself due to the emphasis placed upon 'fewer and better' public houses, the mantra which saw expression predominantly in the 1920s. Butler was elected President of the Institute of Brewing in 1906 and as Chairman of the Brewers Society in 1907-1908. He was made a baron in recognition of philanthropic, national and political services in 1926. Terry Gourvish, 'Butler, Sir William Waters, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, September 2004.

<sup>2</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, p. 99.

consensus, a possible meeting of minds between two contradictory and entrenched positions.

Butler was conscious of the likelihood that he would be identified as the trade's spokesman, and wrote to D'Abernon expressing his concerns:

I should be willing to accept a seat, but on the distinct understanding that I am not to be looked upon as in any sense a delegate of the trade, and consequently, in any action of the Board to which I might be Party it could not be said that the Trade's Representative approved of the same. A few trade friends I have consulted, while expressing the hope that if offered the seat I should accept, warn me of the rather unenviable position in which I should be placing myself . . . I am prepared to face such a position as I feel sure the meeting of the moderate temperance reformer with the broad minded brewer – which I claim to be – should tend to bring about conditions not detrimental to the future welfare of the Trade with which I am connected.<sup>3</sup>

He clearly hoped that a coalition of the willing, between the moderate brewer and the forces of moderate temperance, offered the best avenue of progress to the Board in solving the drink problem. Distrust of their intentions, though, was evident from the outset. According to Carter's biographer:

They [Carter and Butler] attended the first committee held after their appointment to the Board, and found that they were welcomed very coldly. The Board, from the first, had sought to do their work without bias or contention, and suspected the advent of these representatives of opposing interests. At the end of the meeting Carter went up to Butler. 'It doesn't seem that you and I can do much good,' he said. 'They think we're here to represent conflicting interests. But I don't consider I was put on the Board to run temperance but to assist the Board in the national work it is doing, with whatever knowledge or experience I have, and I am sure it is the same with you.' 'Exactly,' said Butler. 'Well then,' went on Carter, 'let us take the first opportunity to show this to the Board, and show them that we are not here as enemies or rivals.' 'Agreed,' said Butler.<sup>4</sup>

Their appointment marks the strengthening of the reformist influence within the Board and a growing mutual respect between the two wings of the debate.

---

<sup>3</sup> HO 185/231, Correspondence: RE Appointed Members, 26 January 1916. Butler offered his resignation to the Brewers' Society but they backed his appointment to the CCB. See Brewers and Licensed Trade Retail Association, MSS. 420, Box Number 1, Minute Book 5, 20 June 1916.

<sup>4</sup> E.C. Unwin, *Henry Carter CBE: A Memoir*, p. 36.

Meanwhile, the Board pressed on with its programme. The Second Report of the CCB, published on 1 May 1916, is indicative of the swift and substantive progress made in little under a year. The document itself is much longer than its predecessor, which was referred to as a 'provisional report', and deals with a number of concerns merely hinted at previously. Most prominent was the interest taken in the relationship between food and the effect of alcohol, again a familiar grievance of both the temperance and social reform movement, and another front in the battle against drink. While today it is unusual to find a pub that does not sell food, in the Edwardian period this was the exception. The report states:

The evil results arising from excessive indulgence in intoxicating liquor are frequently due, not so much to the unrestricted facilities for obtaining it, or even to the detrimental practice of consuming it at irregular times, and unaccompanied by a meal, as to the absence of wholesome and satisfying substitutes, whether food or drink. A reform of the national habits in this matter, or a reconstruction of the machinery for the provision of refreshments throughout the country, being out of the question in an emergency period like the present, as well as being outside the province of the Board, the Board have taken such opportunities as have presented themselves to urge the improvement of public houses in scheduled areas and to assist in the provision of canteens.<sup>5</sup>

By seeking to improve the eating facilities offered at public houses the Board was attempting to change unfavourable preconceptions of the pub from that of a mere drinking shop to a place for general socialisation, where food could be purchased together with drink. By providing a greater accessibility to food, both at the pub and the workplace, it also hoped to provide the worker with the energy and physical fitness required by the munitions work of the day and thus increase national efficiency.

From the outset, the CCB praised those who provided such facilities but lamented that 'a very large proportion of public houses were not fulfilling their

---

<sup>5</sup> The Second Report of the Central Control Board.

traditional function of victualling houses'.<sup>6</sup> Two main reasons for this lack of food provision were described: firstly, the neighbourhood of a pub might not be able to sustain such provision thus making it unworkable; and secondly a lack of enterprise on the part of the landlord and a desire to push the sale of drink. The Board sought to tackle the second problem by making it clear that all extensions of licensed premises for catering purposes would be given 'sympathetic consideration'.<sup>7</sup> Moreover it tried to revise long-held preconceptions of the public house. Sanders, on his tour of the restricted areas, had found 'a near universal view among publicans that, except in special houses, the customer would not regard the public house as a place for the provision of food.'<sup>8</sup>

Henry Carter wrote that the Board's efforts met with only 'a modest measure of success'.<sup>9</sup> He placed culpability firmly on the licensee, writing:

The hope of an expansion of a food trade lay chiefly with licensees in suitable districts who had not heretofore given much attention to this branch of business; and it cannot be said that the Board were able to induce any considerable number of them to cater in a promising way . . . there was a lack of enterprise on the part of licensees. The attitude of many seemed to argue, 'Liquor pays best'.<sup>10</sup>

Coming from a temperance man, these accusations are unsurprising.<sup>11</sup> Yet later he admitted reluctantly that 'it is fair to say that not every publican who made a bid for a "food trade" found a public response; there were those who tried, and abandoned the experiment simply because supply did not create demand.'<sup>12</sup> The pub offered a particular type of socialisation distinct from that offered by restaurants and cafes,

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> HO 185/242, Circular to Licensing Authorities in Scheduled Areas.

<sup>8</sup> HO 185/353, For Chairman, Edgar Sanders to the Justices to Lord D'Abernon on Public Houses, 12 October 1915.

<sup>9</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade: A Contribution to National Efficiency 1915-1917, p. 177.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p. 178.

<sup>11</sup> He only excludes the licensees of Cardiff who 'made a united and determined attempt to develop the victualling branch of their business, not altogether without success.' H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 178.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 178.

which had seen an increase in their custom in the previous years. Shadwell wrote that ‘the great bulk of the people who frequent the public house go there for a drink and not for food and they know perfectly well what they want.’<sup>13</sup> To change social habits, and broaden the conception of the pub as an eating-place, was an unrealistic goal over such a short time span.

A more successful initiative pursued by the CCB was the creation of industrial canteens. Michael Rose highlights the role of P.W. Wilson, secretary of the People’s Palace Association, in first raising the issue of canteens and industrial efficiency with the Board in July 1915. Wilson wrote to D’Abernon complaining that 150 of the 200 firms his association had approached with regard to establishing canteens had either ignored or refused his suggestions, adding disappointingly that some of these rejections came from ‘those who have been most conscious of the drink evil’.<sup>14</sup> But Wilson believed that their position was flexible, as ‘a little tactful pressure by the Board would greatly hasten the extension of this work.’<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, official concern grew over the lack of catering facilities within the industrial heartlands of Britain. A police report reproduced in a Home Office white paper, on shipbuilding, munitions and transport areas in April 1915, is symptomatic of the new concern regarding the welfare of workers:

Many of the workmen take insufficient food, which not only increases the temptation to drink, but makes the effect of the liquor taken more injurious, so that the result is to incapacitate the workmen for the strain of heavy work . . . reports emphasise the need for mess rooms and canteens in the yards where the men could get good meals in comfort without having to resort to the public house. Such accommodation is very rarely provided.<sup>16</sup>

In the climate of war these reports deeply disturbed the government. Canteens were required due to the number of large factories being built in isolated areas, the number

---

<sup>13</sup> A. Shadwell, *Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control*, p. 50.

<sup>14</sup> HO 185/242, National People’s Palace Association, Wilson to Lord D’Abernon, 22 July 1915.

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

<sup>16</sup> H. Carter, *The Control of the Drink Trade*, pp. 183-184.

of women being employed and the fact that night shifts were becoming more of a regular occurrence.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, buttressed by an improvement in the science of nutrition, ideas concerning the diet required by a worker became less a subject of speculation and more an obvious point of neglect, rooted in scientific fact. While the average intake of calories in the working class family was 2,398 per head per day during 1902-1913, the national intake per head was 3,171 calories over the same period. This meant that the working class consumed only 76 per cent of the national average.<sup>18</sup> An obvious way to improve productivity was to thus to boost the 'engine' which powered the industrial juggernaut of the nation. If workers could be fed properly, latent productivity, laid low by the curse of an unfulfilled stomach, would be increased. The industrial canteen thus became an object of reform around which welfare protagonists gathered gleefully, and none more so than the members of the CCB.

The CCB established a committee of six members, originally entitled 'the Canteens Committee', to oversee the introduction of industrial canteens in factories.<sup>19</sup> The Committee was to approve and encourage the construction of canteens in Munitions Factories and also advise as to their management after necessarily inspecting the premises.<sup>20</sup> The regulation of physical fitness by providing nourishing food was another aspect of the CCB's effort to reform the social habits of the working class as a whole. The Board's canteen policy indicates the fluid boundaries of the remit given to the Board by the concept of efficiency. A diverse portfolio of concerns conglomerated to form an efficiency agenda of which drinking was a ubiquitous

---

<sup>17</sup> See MUN 5/95 346.1/1-13, 'Report of the Munitions Food Committee', 24 April 1917.

<sup>18</sup> P.E. Dewey, 'Nutrition and Living Standards in Wartime Britain' in Richard Wall and Jay Winter, (eds.), *The Upheaval of War: Family, Work and Welfare in Europe 1914-1918* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 199.

<sup>19</sup> HO 185/229, CCB Minutes of Meetings, 29 June 1915. The committee consisted of Sir William Lever, Waldorf Astor, Towle, Scott, Snowden and Newman.

<sup>20</sup> MUN 5/95, The Functions of the Proposed Food Section.

polarising influence. By considering the daily physiological patterns of the working class consumer, officials adjusted pub-opening hours in order to limit the potentiality of drinking detrimentally affecting eating habits. Pubs were now opened only when a consumer was most likely to be eating or after he had been eating so as to limit the effect of the alcohol within the bloodstream. The working class individual was regarded as nothing more than essential manpower and, like a beast of burden, had to be managed and looked after in order to ensure productivity. The state was akin to a devoted parent paternalistically considering the diet and health of its child. The Board declared that it had ‘To secure the supply of proper and sufficient nourishment for the worker in order to maintain his health, to increase his energy and output, and to diminish or prevent fatigue and exhaustion.’<sup>21</sup> This initiative was welcomed by the press. The Times argued that:

The provision of canteens is a most desirable thing . . . I have no doubt that this would soon be appreciated by the men, especially by those who live at a distance, and would have a beneficial effect on their health and efficiency . . . Men who live sufficiently near their work generally go home to dinner, and those at a distance bring their own food, but if they could get it from a canteen at cost price they would probably do so.<sup>22</sup>

Originally the canteen system was sustained by voluntary subscriptions and help from various charitable organisations, together with a 50 per cent contribution from the Treasury. But this initial enthusiasm eventually gave way to a realisation that continued funding would have to be supported by more diverse sources. Thus employers were encouraged to support the construction of canteens by being allowed to write off some of the expenses of construction, as agreed by the CCB, from funds which otherwise the firms would have had to pay to the state as wartime ‘excess profits’.<sup>23</sup> In other words, the expenditure could be treated as a trade expense

---

<sup>21</sup> The Second Report of the Central Control Board.

<sup>22</sup> The Times 29 May 1915.

<sup>23</sup> H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 187.

subsidised by government. In government-run factories the state paid the full cost of the canteens, with the CCB given the direct responsibility for running them. Industrial canteens thus emerged from a public/private partnership.

This lesson was not lost on Lloyd George, who as Secretary of State for War, wrote an introduction to a pamphlet entitled Feeding the Munition Worker prepared by the Canteen Committee of the CCB in 1916. 'It is a strange irony', he remarked,

but no small compensation, that the making of weapons of destruction should afford the occasion to humanise industry . . . Old prejudices have vanished, new ideas are abroad; employers and workers, the public and the State, are all favourable to new methods . . . the effort now being made to soften asperities, to secure the welfare of the workers, and to build a bridge of sympathy and understanding between employer and employed, will [leave] behind results of permanent and enduring value to the workers, to the nation, and to mankind at large.<sup>24</sup>

Lloyd George evidently was not thinking simply about the production benefits of industrial canteens but of the longer term social benefit to the community.

This pamphlet was sent to the heads of works and factories in order to persuade them of the virtue of the cause. The booklet argued that the necessary diet for a worker should consist of 'a sufficient quantity of nutritive material: in proper proportions, suitably mixed, easily digestible, appetising and attractive, obtainable at a low cost'.<sup>25</sup> Whilst the canteen itself 'must be accessible and attractive, it should be suitably constructed and equipped, the food should be varied, fresh and good, there must be prompt service and, lastly, arrangements for payment must be simple and convenient'.<sup>26</sup> The canteen was to be a focal point of the factory community, somewhere workers could come and get a good meal and enjoy the positive benefits of socialisation away from the temptations of the pub.<sup>27</sup> It was to be a civilising

---

<sup>24</sup> MUN 5/95 346.1/100, Feeding the Munition Worker, p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>27</sup> Over 95 per cent of canteens were dry. Those canteens that had an alcohol licence could serve only beer and there was a one pint limit to be served with a meal. Light beer of less than 2 per cent alcohol

influence and a substantial contribution to the humanisation of industry marking a development in better relations between employers and employed. This represented a great advance in worker welfare.

The Canteen Committee produced further literature in support of its case, visited munitions works and even built a model canteen for the National Economy and Welfare Exhibition of 1917 in order to propagate and nurture support for their plans. By August 1917, 710 canteens for munitions and transport workers had been established serving over 900,000 industrial workers regularly with fulfilling cuisine.<sup>28</sup> By 1918 a further 70 canteens had been established serving a further 90,000 workers. By the end of the war the number of canteens had increased to 900.<sup>29</sup> In total, canteen establishments accommodated 990,000 workers out of a total of 2,299,000 employed on munitions work.<sup>30</sup> The cost of this to the government was £3.5 million but the social benefits, at least to Sir George Newman, Chairman of the Canteens Committee, outweighed this cost.<sup>31</sup>

---

was served in 25 canteens but restrictions on quantities of alcohol produced by the Food Controllers 'limitation of output' made the widespread application of the idea redundant. H. Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade, p. 190.

<sup>28</sup> 150 canteens were established in the new national factories, over 500 in 'controlled establishments' and 60 in shipyards and dock areas until 1917. The Times 25 January 1918.

<sup>29</sup> M. Rose, 'The Success of Social Reform?', p. 76.

<sup>30</sup> H.M. Vernon, The Alcohol Problem, p. 86.

<sup>31</sup> M. Rose, 'The Success of Social Reform?', p. 76.



**Figure 30: A picture taken from Feeding the Munition Worker which shows one of the new kitchens constructed to feed workers.**

Responses to the scheme suggest that the money was well spent. Predictably, the Canteen Committee extolled the virtues of canteens. In its pamphlet Feeding the Munition Worker, the ‘substantial benefits both to employers and workers’ of an ‘adequate and well managed canteen’ were listed.<sup>32</sup> The direct benefits were ‘marked improvements in the health of the workers, less sickness, less absence and broken time, less tendency to alcoholism, increased efficiency and output’ whereas the indirect benefits were ‘saving time of the worker, salutary change from the workshop, greater contentment of worker, the better ventilation of the workshop and an increase of recreation and games in spare time’.<sup>33</sup> However, factory owners generally agreed. The owner of ‘Brunner, Mond and Co’ wrote that ‘we are quite convinced that the provision of a hot, well cooked and sufficient midday meal has been of great benefit to our workpeople, both male and female, many of whom come from a distance, and

<sup>32</sup> MUN 5/95 346.1/100, Feeding the Munition Worker, p. 27.

<sup>33</sup> MUN 5/95 346.1/100, Feeding the Munition Worker, p. 27.

will therefore have contributed very largely to their efficiency for work.’<sup>34</sup> Industrial management also benefited. Sir William Lever wrote that ‘not only is the health of the employees better as a result . . . the filling of vacancies when vacancies occur, or at times when the staff is being increased, presents no difficulties’.<sup>35</sup> The reaction of workers was also positive. One report in The Times about the Woolwich Arsenal Munitions factory drew attention to the happiness that canteens engendered among the workers:

The keen whirring sound of machinery in motion ceases. From every corner girls, gay as crocuses in their many coloured caps and overalls, run fleetly to the staircase leading to the canteen, laughing and chattering cheerfully as they go . . . Some bring their own food, which is heated up at the counter. Others partake of the excellent meal provided at an astonishingly low sum. They can do as they please in the matter. It is good to know that this is a government canteen . . . At the Woolwich Arsenal welfare work is conducted not only with the head, but also with the heart and the imagination, and therein lies the secret of its success.<sup>36</sup>



**Figure 31: This picture shows lunchtime service underway. It is interesting to note that every person pictured is female.**

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 27.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. p. 27.

<sup>36</sup> The Times 1 September 1916.

This upbeat view of the impact of canteens was common. Feedback from another munitions works in Kent highlighted the multifaceted role they played in factory life:

We should like to point out that we feel the canteen has become more to the workers than a mere place for obtaining food. We have, during the winter season, run in the canteen on Thursday evenings a cinematograph show for the employees, and on Tuesday evening the Works Entertainments Committee have run a concert, both with great success. Further, various meetings in connection with the Sports Club, etc have been held there, and we feel sure that it has been looked upon as a great asset for their benefit by the people here.<sup>37</sup>

This report highlights the reform of leisure habit as an analogous benefit to the introduction of canteens throughout Britain. Others found the new drinks on offer less enticing. One ‘working class male’, after being served cocoa with his dinner, observed ruefully: ‘it’s a terrible thing for a man who has drunk beer for fifty years to have to turn his mind to cocoa’.<sup>38</sup>

To some, the factory was now almost akin to the public house in its social value. Lloyd George was convinced of the benefits:

I am delighted to see these canteens springing up throughout our workshops. They make an enormous difference. The men should get their meals, not in the old squalid, uncomfortable conditions, but in conditions which are in themselves attractive and healthful . . . We are making a better country because we have the recognition that the interests of one section of our society are the interests of all.<sup>39</sup>

These canteens stood as a testament to progress within industry and as an indication of the importance of workforce efficiency to employers. ‘The absence of civilising influences from factory industry has been its condemnation in the past. The industrial canteen aids in the destruction of this traditional approach . . . and may be claimed as a substantial contribution to the humanisation of industry’, argued the

---

<sup>37</sup> H. Carter, *The Control of the Drink Trade*, p. 194.

<sup>38</sup> C.S. Peel, *How We Lived Then 1914-1918: A Sketch of Social and Domestic Life in England During the War*, p. 66.

<sup>39</sup> MUN 5/95 346.1/100, *Feeding the Munition Worker*, p. 28.

CCB.<sup>40</sup> Despite this, whilst acknowledging that workers ‘desired and used’ canteens, Lord D’Abernon was still ‘not sure’ that employers had yet ‘fully grasped’ how important they were ‘to national health.’<sup>41</sup>

Nevertheless, the canteen scheme progressed, despite administrative backbiting within Government. The Finance Department of the Ministry of Munitions was critical of the cost of canteens and established a separate Canteens’ Finance Committee to scrutinise the budgets of national factories.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, the Treasury was critical of the Board when it sanctioned five canteens between 1915 and 1917 without its permission; an accusation denied by Lord D’Abernon.<sup>43</sup> In February 1918 the Ministry of Munitions took over the responsibility for the canteen system from the CCB, primarily due to the general shortage of food which made cooperation with the Food Controller essential, creating a bureaucratic rivalry between the two organisations. As Shadwell points out, this testifies to the political distinction between the provision of food and the drink question, even though they were interlinked by welfare reform. The Canteen Committee was maintained in an advisory capacity.<sup>44</sup>

Beyond canteen provision, the CCB’s second report detailed further restrictive measures that it had introduced. The Board banned the ‘Long Pull’, whereby licensees were prevented by law from being over generous in their measures of beer to attract custom. The canvassing of beer was forbidden, as too was credit drinking.<sup>45</sup> Drinking on the slate was no longer a legal option.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, the Board was given the

---

<sup>40</sup> Samuel J. Hurwitz, State Intervention in Great Britain: A Study of Economic Control and Social Response, 1914-1919 (New York, 1968), p. 113.

<sup>41</sup> The Scotsman 25 January 1918.

<sup>42</sup> M. Rose, ‘The Success of Social Reform?’, p. 77.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* p. 77.

<sup>44</sup> MUN 5/95 346.1/7, See Memorandum on the relations of the Ministry of Munitions with the CCB, January 1916-August 1917 by Mr G.H.Duckworth.

<sup>45</sup> The ban on canvassing prevented members of the trade from soliciting business by ‘canvassing’ for orders at people’s homes. Furthermore, it was forbidden to take money at customers’ houses for alcoholic drink.

<sup>46</sup> ‘Drinking on the slate’ is another term for credit drinking.

power to close pubs that did not abide by the Board's regulations. By the end of the war 92 pubs in England and Wales and 86 pubs in Scotland were closed by the Board.<sup>47</sup> These restrictive measures, however, were beginning to raise the ire of critics who were angered by recent events and sceptical as to the motivation behind the Board's ideas. Accusations that vindictive temperance activists were affecting the Board's work were becoming increasingly vociferous. Criticism came from all sides, particularly as these measures had a sense of permanence which did not befit a supposedly temporary emergency body. The Globe assessed the work of the CCB and was distinctly unimpressed:

We warn Lloyd George and the unconcerned and uncontrolled Lord D'Abernon that the people are becoming restless and dissatisfied. The silly restrictions are a burden and an insult to the best community in the world, who have done nothing to deserve such a moral strait waistcoat.<sup>48</sup>

Discontent was also increasing within the trade, Alfred Collier, a family brewer, complained that 'the CCB was appointed to regulate the consumption of alcohol solely for the benefit of troops, production of munitions etc. In taking up the question of beer hawking and making regulations to deal with it they are attempting legislation which is quite outside the scope of their appointment.'<sup>49</sup>

Matters were not aided by the work of the CCB sub-committee known as the 'Star Chamber' formed by Henry Carter and John Pedder, whose job, according to Neville was:

To ensure observation of the Board's orders but whose methods were the least justifiable of the Board's activities. While breaches of the Board's orders by licensees were legal offences and could be dealt with by the ordinary processes of law, the 'Star Chamber' method was more direct; but in my view, indefensible. The Board had wide powers, and when information was received to the effect that one licensee or another was not conforming, they ordered the house to be closed on the thin pretext that it was hampering due prosecution of the war. This arbitrary action naturally caused intense resentment among the

---

<sup>47</sup> Brewers and Licensed Trade Retail Association, MSS. 420, Box Number 247, NTDA report 1918.

<sup>48</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 13 April 1916.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

licensed trade organisations and I have always thought had much to do with the disapprobation in which the Board was held.<sup>50</sup>

A discussion of the Star Chamber's work was conspicuously absent from Carter's review of the Board's activities. The Brewers' Gazette referred to the action of the CCB as arising from 'bigotry and tyranny'.<sup>51</sup> Discontent within the pages of newspapers and trade journals did not, however, transfer itself into open revolt against the Board. The measures prompted anger but were accepted. This is testament to the compliance of the trade. Moreover, some amongst the brewing fraternity saw unforeseen benefits of the CCB's restrictions. The Brewers' Gazette noted some of the positives in expanding the clientele of the pub:

Despite the many restrictions, which have hampered the publican in improving his house, a good many changes are quietly going on which deserve to be recognised. For instance, it is now possible in good houses to get other sorts of liquid refreshment than alcoholic, served without any criticism or complaint . . . a very large proportion of patrons of public houses and profits of public houses in these days of motoring and cycling and open life generally is made up of teetotallers who use these places of call and are unconsciously perhaps fashioning them to meet the needs of the times.<sup>52</sup>

There was also some discontent within parliament. The Conservative M.P., James Mason, complained that the Board was attempting to 'set up during the war a complete system of temperance reform . . . in a somewhat promiscuous and haphazard way'.<sup>53</sup> He further objected to this being done 'under the cloak of military necessity'.<sup>54</sup> Another Tory, W. Bull, called the Board 'utterly un-English'.<sup>55</sup> The Scotsman believed that the time had come for 'an impartial inquiry into the whole workings of the body'.<sup>56</sup> Another M.P. John Gretton, himself a brewer criticised the Board's lack of accountability which gave credence to the tyrannical protests of those

---

<sup>50</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, pp. 99-100.

<sup>51</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 13 April 1916.

<sup>52</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 22 June 1916.

<sup>53</sup> The Scotsman 20 April 1916.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

opposed to the work undertaken. The Manchester Guardian, however, sought to defuse this criticism:

The critics dwelt on the fact that the Board . . . had in reality embarked upon vast temperance measures of a nature which the nation would not in normal times have sanctioned without full debate and had done this without any adequate check by parliament upon the policy or personnel of the Board or upon the moneys expended by it. With this criticism the firmest admirers of the Board's work will have some sympathy . . . if the operations of the Board were directly answered for in parliament by a responsible minister the best of these experiments would have a surer chance of permanence and of popular appreciation.<sup>57</sup>

One explanation for the political tolerance of the CCB was the apparent success of its measures. The Second Report gave extensive coverage to the benefits accrued by control. Arrests for drunkenness declined across every controlled area. In Liverpool, where average weekly arrests had fallen from 207 in early 1915 to 118 by March 1916:

There are fewer arrests for drunkenness, people generally are more sober and go home much earlier, more are also going to places of amusement instead of public houses. There are fewer people under the influence of drink about the streets, fewer street disturbances to quell, and fewer drink quarrels in the home calling for police interference. The late hour of opening has been most beneficial to workmen and employers, many men turn up to work in the morning, who, if the public houses had been open, would not have done so, the employers get better labour and the men are better for it. Dock labourers have openly expressed their appreciation of the absence of the temptation to drink.<sup>58</sup>

The report ended with an admission that the Board's success owed a lot to the communal response to the orders. Praising Trade Union leaders and the community as a whole, the report concluded:

This increased efficiency contributes to the vigorous prosecution of the war, and the Board's task has been materially lightened by the patriotic manner in which the leaders and the majority of the rank and file have cooperated with the nation generally, in accepting the inconveniences which the Board's restrictive measures have necessarily occasioned.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup> Manchester Guardian 27 October 1916.

<sup>58</sup> The Second Report of the Central Control Board

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

Accusations that the 'people could not be trusted' were thus refuted by the CCB's report. The Board recognised that the control orders would not, and could not, work without the compliance of the general public. Self-regulation, as much as regulation from above, evidently played a prominent part in the story of drink control during this period. This compliance also applied to the trade. Despite the occasional tirade, the trade acquiesced to the Board's orders. As D'Abernon admitted in June 1916, that 'in the main the Brewers of England have acted loyally in carrying out the regulations and restrictions of the Board'.<sup>60</sup> The successful implementation of the Board's ideas was thus a two way process: an innate patriotism determined that interested parties put the pursuit of war and the nation before their own personal interests and the public generally accepted the restrictions.

---

<sup>60</sup> HO 185/353, For Chairman, 26 June 1916.

### **Chapter Eight: State Purchase and the Waning of the Central Control Board**

In April 1916 the government passed the Output of Beer Restriction Act which limited the aggregate quantity of beer brewed in the United Kingdom to twenty-six million barrels for the year ending March 1917. This was a reduction of four million gallons on the previous year's output, by ten million gallons, or 28 per cent less, than that of 1914.<sup>1</sup> It is testament to the patriotism of the trade that such a cut was accepted, especially given that further reductions were likely. This was the first act in an extensive period of reform concerning the use of foodstuffs in the production of drink.

For some these reforms did not go far enough. As The Spectator opined:

The brewery is wasting in the production of an unnecessary luxury the very life of the people . . . We are no teetotal cranks . . . All we say is that when it is certainly a question of food shortage, and may be a question of actual starvation, it is madness, it is a crime, for the government to allow our daily dwindling supplies of wheat and sugar and coal to go in the manufacture and transport of drink and at the same time to allow the depletion of our manpower caused by the employment of hundreds of thousands of men in making, selling, and moving beer who might be doing war work.<sup>2</sup>

These accusations, however, angered the trade. The Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association answered accusations of waste by pointing out that the government benefited monetarily from drinking due to taxation. Keith Hamilton, the Chairman, noted:

One of the favourite arguments in favour of prohibition was the plea of economy. The expenditure of £183,000,000, was described as pure waste. It was deliberately ignored by most speakers that of the £183,000,000, £68,000,000 at least goes to the State directly in taxation and rates, £20,000,000 in wages, and the remainder in rent, material, interest, and profits, of which materials constitute the largest sum. If the whole trade were suspended today it was arguable that the real wealth of the state would lose rather than gain by the operation. The theory of waste, carried to its logical conclusion, would upset all the principles of political economy and the wealth of nations. Everybody could clothe themselves in sackcloth, everybody could

<sup>1</sup> A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> The Spectator 23 December 1916.

live in a five pound house, everybody under such circumstances could live on one shilling per day; but we would then have reverted to a nation of primitive savages from which waste (in the sense of the teetotallers) had elevated mankind during the past ages of civilisation.<sup>3</sup>

The connection between food and drink thus became further politicised. This chapter will consider the debate concerning the use of foodstuffs in the production of alcohol and it will discuss a further attempt by the CCB to introduce national state purchase of the liquor trade. It will also consider other aspects of the Board's work from the beginnings of 1917 until the end of the war. During this period the Board faced virulent criticism.

Despite the restrictions introduced by the CCB, temperance organisations remained keen to persuade the British people that drink was the cause of society's ills. Most prominent amongst these was the Strength of Britain Movement, formed by the aforementioned Arthur Mee in June 1916, who has been described as 'a one man Temperance factory'.<sup>4</sup> Mee was a writer notable for his Children's Encyclopaedia and the weekly Children's Newspaper which aimed to educate the next generation 'which is going to save the world from the sins and follies and blunders of this'.<sup>5</sup> During the war his focus switched to the resolution of the drink problem and he used his journalistic experience to produce reams of anti-drink agitation. The Strength of Britain movement gained the support of businessmen, social reformers, temperance activists and a broad coalition of anti-drink polemicists whose intention was to implement prohibition throughout the UK. The group attempted to mobilise public

---

<sup>3</sup> The Scotsman 15 June 1916.

<sup>4</sup> Maisie Robson, Arthur Mee and the Strength of Britain Selections from First World War pamphlets (Wombwell, 2006), p. 40.

<sup>5</sup> Oxford Dictionary National Biography, entry on Arthur Mee by Kimberley Reynolds, (Oxford University Press, 2004), [www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com).

opinion by utilising a widespread advertising campaign through the national press.

The group also released 20 pamphlets, selling 1.5 million copies in total.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 32: A typical example of an advertisement published by the Strength of Britain Movement.**

Many of these advertisements pointed to the economic waste caused by the consumption of drink. Aimed at eliminating waste from every aspect of British life, the movement became a prominent fixture on the political landscape for the remainder

<sup>6</sup> J. Blocker Jr, David Fahey and Ian Tyrell, (eds.), Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History: An International Encyclopaedia (London, 2003).

of the war. In essence the Strength of Britain movement was temperance repackaged as patriotism and wartime expediency.<sup>7</sup>

The movement's active campaign angered the trade who saw the group as merely the new face of temperance fanaticism. The Brewers' Gazette, after Mee had published his propagandistic Defeat or Victory?, lambasted: 'we have long come to the conclusion that it is a waste of time to combat the mendacious vapourings by scribbling fanatics. Their denunciations have so frequently been shown to be baseless and preposterous, that it is quite superogatory to again demolish them.'<sup>8</sup> In response to a specific recommendation from Mee that the rum ration at the front be replaced by hot tea served in thermos flasks, the journal accused Mee of proposing 'insane theories', adding sarcastically that 'such being the stimulative effect of this beverage [tea] that apparently the crushing of the enemy would take place within the next hour'.<sup>9</sup> Mee's friend, Kennedy Jones, who was Alfred Harmsworth's colleague in the founding of The Daily Mail, also made a wisecrack about him, and the potential 'success' of the movement, in a London weekly. Asked 'who is going to rob the working man of his beer?' he replied 'not Mee'.<sup>10</sup> Mee was undoubtedly a divisive figure, a champion to some, whilst to others nothing more than a temperance rabble-rouser. One critic saw him as an 'exponent of journalistic frightfulness'.<sup>11</sup>

The Strength of Britain's significance is most acute when one considers the ensuing debate concerning the 'wasteful' use of foodstuffs in the production of alcohol which took place in 1917. In his book, Defeat or Victory?, Mee summarised the case for the prosecution:

---

<sup>7</sup> The UKA passed a resolution stating 'that an effort be made to bring about a working arrangement between the 'Strength of Britain Movement' and the London Campaign Committee for the promotion of a campaign for prohibition during the war on 23 May 1917.

<sup>8</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 20 July 1916.

<sup>9</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 1 February 1917.

<sup>10</sup> Sir J. Hammerton, Child of Wonder: An Intimate Biography of Arthur Mee (London, 1946), p. 162.

<sup>11</sup> Brewers' Journal March 1918.

The brewer and distiller are destroyers of food, nothing more and nothing less. Except by the destruction of carbohydrate foods, starch and sugar, they cannot make alcohol . . . it is waste and worse, the turning of treasure into trash, of food into poison.<sup>12</sup>

The renewed focus on the use of foodstuffs in the production of beer may not have been solely due to the agitation of the group, but it is churlish to suggest that it had no effect in contextualising the ensuing debate.

At this time, the government faced increasing problems concerning the provision of food to Britain. Already stretched by the demands of war, the British were further rocked by the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare by Germany on 1 February 1917, which exacerbated Britain's food problem. From February to June 1917, 85,000 tons of sugar were lost, reducing the nation at one stage to merely four days supply with meat imports also badly affected.<sup>13</sup> Attention was naturally focussed on possible foodstuff savings that could be made on the home front. The continued use of wheat, barley and sugar in the production of alcoholic drinks was criticised. Sir Alfred Booth, Chairman of the Cunard Company, remarked: 'if we are to maintain our armies in the field we shall before very long have to choose between bread and beer.'<sup>14</sup> Essentially, the submarine action turned the drink problem into a drink and food problem. Another factor in precipitating this course of action was increasing criticism from the US and Canada, two countries in which anti-drink agitation was rising, concerning the justification of supplying Britain with foodstuffs when the domestic supply was being used in the production of alcohol. Their support came with conditions attached. It was in this context that renewed calls for state purchase of the drink trade surfaced.

---

<sup>12</sup> A. Mee, *Defeat or Victory?*, p. 8.

<sup>13</sup> G. DeGroot, *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War*, p. 87.

<sup>14</sup> *Manchester Guardian* 27 November 1916.

In 1917 H. Baynes and H.G. Chancellor began a paper urging the adoption of state purchase by describing one of many temperance meetings they had attended:

Few things are more stimulating and enkindling than a good red-hot teetotal meeting. I had the honour of presiding at one the other day when the Birmingham Town Hall, which holds 3,000 people, was packed, and some 500 were turned away . . . The enthusiasm was intense, the speaking fervid, and the vote unanimous, and one comes away from such a meeting buoyant, confident, and optimistic, 'carried along on the tide of a joyful and bounding emotion,' and saying, 'now at last we are really going to get something done.' And yet, after thousands of such meetings, as far as concerns a real remedy for the great central evil, we cool down again, and the glow is succeeded by a chill, and nothing happens.<sup>15</sup>

Lord D'Abernon hoped that he would be more successful. The CCB recommended state purchase to Lloyd George and the cabinet in December 1916. The Board recommended purchase partly due to its confidence in the smaller state purchase experiment undertaken at Carlisle and its desire to extend the scheme nationwide. Moreover if state purchase was to be enacted the Board would be given much greater power to influence drinking habits. The Board's state purchase memorandum read as follows:

The successful prosecution of the war is still being hampered by excessive consumption of intoxicating liquor. This excessive consumption is of serious consequences to the efficiency of our fighting forces, especially in regard to material. Looked at from another point of view it involves wastage of the nation's food supplies and prevents economy in the use of the nation's resources in the matter of sea and land transport. In the light of the experiences which they have gained during the last eighteen months, the Board are of opinion that the time has now come when comprehensive measures, beyond their present powers, are necessary in order to carry to completion the work of restriction and control which the Board were established to discharge . . . State control has come to be regarded with more and more favour as being the policy which offers the most rapidly effective and the best permanent solution of the problem.<sup>16</sup>

The state purchase memorandum supported the reorganisation of the trade on 'scientific and economical lines', a euphemism for closing certain pubs and breweries

---

<sup>15</sup> H. Baynes and H.G. Chancellor, 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade', *Contemporary Review*, July 1917, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> HO 185/266, Lord D'Abernon's Cabinet Papers 1917-1918, State Purchase Memorandum, 16 December 1916.

as D'Abernon believed there to be 'thirty thousand public houses in excess of the requirements either of the trade or the community'.<sup>17</sup> The proposal was thus also justified upon the basis that drinking was still endemic, that the Board did not have enough power to curb this, and that purchase offered the best 'solution' to the problem.

The temperance movement agreed with this diagnosis, but differed in their attitude to prospective cures. Whittaker wrote to Lloyd George, noting that 'if you can solve the Drink Problem and the Irish question we shall not pass through the terrible ordeal of this war in vain.'<sup>18</sup> The idea of state purchase was, however, naturally unpopular with the prohibitionist lobby who saw the government as engaging in an ungodly union with drink sellers. Others argued against the buy out from a different perspective: business interests were sceptical of the likely commercial gains. Some astutely asked why state purchase was necessary when 'at the present moment the government have full control over the liquor interest already unless it be for the purpose of making a huge profit for the benefit of the war?'.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> HO 185/262, D'Abernon to Lloyd George, 16 December 1916.

<sup>18</sup> Astor Papers, MS1066/1/1055, Whittaker to Lloyd George, 29 December 1916.

<sup>19</sup> The Daily Graphic 1 January 1917.



**Figure 33: ‘Temperance via alternative means’ - This photograph shows the aftermath of a Zeppelin raid on London where an unknown pub met an untimely demise at the hands of the Germans.**

Initial plans involved a swift reduction in the number of breweries and pubs throughout the land, supposedly without any consequent effect on profits.<sup>20</sup> Idealistic planning was still dependent upon financial realities. The government had to be persuaded that national efficiency would improve by buying out the trade and that it would be money well spent.

Despite these concerns preparations were being made for the introduction of state purchase by early January. As the Daily Dispatch reported:

---

<sup>20</sup> HO 190/874, See for example Astor to Sanders 13 January 1917: I think you told me the other day that under nationalisation the requirements of Liverpool could be met by three out of the existing thirteen breweries. Is this correct? How many employees do you reckon the thirteen breweries now have on their staffs, and how many would be required under the reduction? I think you also said that half the public houses in Liverpool could be wiped out without any inconvenience. Have you any idea of the total number of men and women at present employed in these pubs. Could you safely reckon that you could wipe out fifty per cent under nationalisation?

Word has gone forth from the highest quarter to the effect that an 'atmosphere' must be prepared which will facilitate the accomplishment of a state scheme for taking over the entire liquor trade of the country by purchase . . . The PM is strongly supported in his intention to nationalise the liquor trade. Mr Bonar Law, Mr Balfour, Mr Long and the rest of the leading Unionists are with him on this question. The CCB is unanimously in favour of the proposal. The representatives of the monetary interests identified with the trade are willing to be bought out provided satisfactory terms and plans of purchase can be arranged . . . But the need for the creation of a favourable atmosphere arises from the opposition which is certain promoted by the prohibitionists who demand a 'dry' nation by Act of Parliament for the duration of the war and six months after.<sup>21</sup>

The Times also placed itself firmly behind such a course of action:

The CCB who represent the government, have pursued a middle course with uncommon success and we trust that they will continue to do so. They have drastically diminished the facilities for drinking and checked some of the practices which encourage it . . . Prohibition is not the only way of settling the eternal liquor question both for the war and for the future as well. There is state purchase and control, which is being strongly advocated on the strength of the Carlisle experiment. It would settle many questions in the easiest way, and has much to commend it.<sup>22</sup>

State purchase was an ambitious project but D'Abernon could never be accused of lacking the requisite self-confidence.

Meanwhile, rumour and counter rumour filled the daily press. The Daily Express reported that the purchase of the trade was 'imminent'.<sup>23</sup> But the situation was so changeable that a few days later, on 2 January 1917, the same paper reported that the scheme 'will probably be postponed owing to almost insuperable difficulties until after the war'.<sup>24</sup> The UKA, sensing that the new coalition government could perhaps be convinced to implement prohibition once more pushed for this:

There are no terms of guarantees that would make such a scheme easier to control . . . the only conceivable reason for raising it now is in order to provide compensation for the Liquor Trade . . . we say purchase would side-track the whole movement when we are nearing victory, when in its hour of agony the world is turning towards prohibition as a help.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> The Daily Dispatch 6 January 1917.

<sup>22</sup> The Times 29 December 1916.

<sup>23</sup> The Daily Express 29 December 1916.

<sup>24</sup> The Daily Express 2 January 1917.

<sup>25</sup> Lloyd George Papers, LG/F/228/1, Deputation from the UKA and the Strength of Britain Movement.

Those involved in the drink debate donned their armour once more for the fight ahead. The Daily Telegraph believed that, whatever happened:

The public have set their teeth quietly, but firmly, and are resolved to support whatever action the government may deem necessary for the successful prosecution of the war no matter what personal inconvenience or sacrifice may be involved.<sup>26</sup>

State purchase was now high on the political agenda.

Both trade and temperance factions had a keen interest in the resolution of the issue. On 4 January 1917 The Brewers' Gazette warned:

If the government is not going to fundamentally interfere with the trade, the prospect of further restrictions will be borne philosophically by it, as a necessary evil wherewith to accomplish the one end aimed at, namely, the speedy ending of the war . . . our trade as a whole had ever met the Control Board in the right spirit, and so long as any regulations are improvised by it, for the good of the country and the winning of the war, they will be welcomed and loyally obeyed without demur or protest.<sup>27</sup>

The debate was, however, further confused by the increasing limitations placed upon the production of beer and spirits by the food controller. In January 1917, Lord Davenport, controller of the newly created Ministry of Food, limited beer production to 50 per cent of the 1915 level. The Board regarded this policy as likely to cause 'hardly less unrest than a policy of total prohibition'.<sup>28</sup> This restriction was adopted by the war cabinet in February 1917 and, in effect, was a further 30 per cent cutback on the figure permitted under the Output of Beer Restriction Act of 1916, amounting to a reduction from twenty-six million to ten million barrels. In order to eke out this supply of beer it was brewed at a lower gravity, and after a time it was arranged that the average gravity of all beer brewed in Britain should not exceed 1030<sup>0</sup>.<sup>29</sup> Spirits were similarly curtailed, from twenty-eight million gallons to fourteen million. This

<sup>26</sup> The Daily Telegraph 3 January 1917.

<sup>27</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 4 January 1917.

<sup>28</sup> HO 185/264, Confidential Papers on Limiting the Consumption of Spirits, 22 January 1917.

<sup>29</sup> H.M. Vernon, The Alcohol Problem, p. 89.

was the beginning of a somewhat fraught relationship between the CCB and the Ministry of Food, which began to encroach upon much of the Board's territory.<sup>30</sup>



**Figure 34: Cartoon taken from the Alliance News highlighting how the ‘drinker’ was a drain on food resources.**

<sup>30</sup> Indeed it made the Board merely reassert their favouritism of the state purchase route. The Board admitted in a memorandum of 16 January 1917 that they had ‘no information on which to form a definite judgement as to the necessity, from the point of view of the nation’s food supplies, for so great a reduction as appears to be contemplated. If, however, they must assume that some reduction is necessary and is to be attempted notwithstanding the difficulties attending its execution, the Board desire to represent that a policy of state purchase provides at once the most effective and the most equitable modus operandi.’ See MAF 60/100.



**Figure 35: This postcard draws attention to the risks that British Seamen took to bring food to Britain due to Germany's submarine campaign. Greater pressure was placed on society to avoid food wastage.**

Relations were tense. The minutes of the CCB's meetings suggest that these new restrictions meant certain areas would be faced 'with an acute beer scarcity, which in some cases will amount to famine'.<sup>31</sup> The Board warned that 'measures must certainly be taken to spread the reduced volume of beer over the whole country, and

<sup>31</sup> HO 185/265, D'Abernon's confidential papers, Restriction of Brewing Materials, Memorandum circulated to Board for meeting 8 February 1917.

to do this as evenly as possible'.<sup>32</sup> Events proved the Board to be correct as beer shortages became a regular occurrence in the spring and summer of 1917. The restrictions were so severe that some pubs only had enough beer to sell at weekends.<sup>33</sup>

The Board's 'scientific management' of the trade was now under threat from the harsh realities of a government department intent on savage cutbacks on the use of raw food materials required for the making of alcohol. It is interesting to note that the Board was worried about beer shortages. It indicates a strategy for controlling drink rather than simply prohibiting the consumption of alcohol. The pledge to ensure the supply of beer should have been seen by the trade as an indication that the Board was not, as some still perceived, a purely temperance body intent on closing the nation's public houses.

Naturally the CCB wondered why, if the government was willing to introduce such a prohibitive and restrictive policy through the Ministry of Food, it would not immediately implement its favoured option of state purchase. The lack of action seemed stupefying. To limit speculation, the Home Secretary, Sir George Cave, was appointed chairman of a committee to investigate the financial effects of the recent restrictions, and was authorised to announce in the Commons that the government was 'keeping the question of nationalisation before them'.<sup>34</sup>

The membership of the committee was confined to representatives of the trade and a few government officials. It had no representation from the CCB as D'Abernon thought it best not to associate with restrictions that had 'nothing to do with temperance only with submarines'.<sup>35</sup> This was an interesting aside. That D'Abernon

---

<sup>32</sup> HO 185/265, D'Abernon's confidential papers, Restriction of Brewing Materials, Memorandum circulated to Board for meeting 8 February 1917.

<sup>33</sup> Brewers' Journal 15 April 1917.

<sup>34</sup> J. Turner, 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade in the First World War', The Historical Journal, 23, 3, p. 608.

<sup>35</sup> J. Greenaway, Drink and British Politics, p. 108

now associated himself with ‘temperance’, given the number of times that he sought to disassociate himself from that perception, was an unusual admission. Nevertheless, in hindsight it would have been more conducive for D’Abernon to involve himself with the inner workings of this committee rather than to remain marginalised given the subsequent detrimental effect on the Board’s reputation.

The drink trade thus found itself under attack on two fronts. The threat of state purchase, on one hand, and the enforced reduction of beer production, on the other, meant that 1917 had begun badly for drink sellers. The trade bore these measures with stoicism, declaring that the issue was not one of temperance but of food production. In fact The Brewers’ Gazette, after accepting Lord Davenport’s restrictions, declared that the net effect on food supplies was unlikely to be that great:

It is neither a measure of temperance nor an experiment in social reform, but a necessary corollary to the exigencies of the time. No doubt the restriction will be hailed as a great achievement for the teetotal cause, but it is actually a food restriction. Lord Davenport has estimated that his proposals will result in a saving for the year of 286,000 tons of barley and 36,000 of sugar, but even if this represented a direct economy in food, which it certainly does not, it is obvious that, distributed over a population of over forty million the daily saving cannot reflect itself in any appreciable effect on the price of food and very little open tonnage.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, the measures caused some discontent, Colonel Gretton, Chairman of Messrs Bass, Ratcliff and Gretton, stated in an interview that he regarded the beer restrictions as ‘very drastic’:<sup>37</sup>

They will place many breweries in great difficulties but brewers will undoubtedly accept them as necessary to the prosecution of the war. No consideration has been given to the general public and the beer drinker is expected to make sacrifices which no one else is called upon to make. As there is already a general shortage of beer, the restrictions will be greatly felt by the public.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> The Brewers’ Gazette 1 February 1917.

<sup>37</sup> The Brewers’ Gazette 27 January 1917.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

But the threat of state purchase still hung over the trade. In an attempt to force a decision over this matter, Waters Butler, a committee member of the Brewers Society as well as of the CCB, proposed that ‘the time had arrived to consider and come to a decision upon the principle of state purchase’.<sup>39</sup> He called for a general meeting of the society so that ‘an authoritative answer could be given if the government enquired the views of the trade’.<sup>40</sup> Butler was in favour of state purchase but his subsequent attempt to create a consensus among the trade was inhibited by the anti-state purchase section of the brewing community.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Brewers and Licensed Trade Retail Association, MSS. 420, Box Number 1, Minute Book 5, 31 January 1917.

<sup>40</sup> J. Turner, ‘State Purchase of the Liquor Trade in the First World War’, p. 608.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* p. 609.

**“Little Peterisms.”**



**LITTLE PETER: “All hands to the plough.”**

Peter Walker Lager is so light, so refreshing, so delicious, and, withal, so invigorating, that it will be found to relieve nerve tension, and impart a feeling of entire satisfaction. Try this delicious drink to-day. Order a dozen from your grocer or wine merchant, or ask for a “SMALL PETER” at any high-class bar.

**PETER WALKER & SON (WARRINGTON AND BURTON), LTD.**

Head Office: 106, Duke Street, Liverpool; London Office and Stores: 41-45, Pancras Road, N.W.; Manchester: 64, Bridge Street, Deansgate; Birkenhead: 59, Albion Street; Chester: 1A, Nicholas Street; Breweries: Sheball Road, Burton-on-Trent; and Dalby Lane, Warrington.

**Figure 36: Some breweries responded with advertisements showing that beer was an adjunct to food production rather than a wasteful resource.**

Indeed, the Brewers' Society was unprepared to accept state control without purchase and other brewers were simply unwilling to accept state purchase at all.<sup>42</sup> As a memorandum to the War Cabinet made clear:

Opinion among brewers is divided upon this question, the large brewers being generally opposed to purchase while some of the small brewers would

<sup>42</sup> National Archives, Cabinet Papers, CAB 24/6, GT219, Memorandum by Sir George Cave as to progress of Liquor Restrictions.

welcome it. The Irish licensees are willing to entertain a proposal for purchase while those in Great Britain vigorously object to it.<sup>43</sup>

The trade was not monolithic. It had different interests with different financial requirements. Coming to a conclusion suitable for all was difficult. The Brewers' Gazette believed that:

The attitude of the trade is by no means clear . . . the present government is wholly a war creation. It has no mandate whatever, from the proletariat, save to concentrate all its energies on achieving a speedy victory over our enemies . . . a national business cannot be swallowed up, or devoured, without a national appeal to the people, and that, at this juncture, is an impossibility.<sup>44</sup>

Meanwhile, the terms of any buy out needed to be considered. D'Abernon was acutely aware that the government would have to buy out the trade as though it was producing twenty-six million barrels of beer when, in fact, it was only going to be allowed to produce ten million that year, a discrepancy which would make purchase negotiations all the more complex.<sup>45</sup> For this reason, he urged the war cabinet not to make public any decision to purchase under these conditions adding that it 'would be desirable to defer decision as to purchase until the committees proposed to be set up had shown purchase to be possible on satisfactory terms'.<sup>46</sup> How D'Abernon expected such a decision to remain under wraps is unknown. But his intervention shows how

---

<sup>43</sup> CAB 24/6, GT219, Memorandum by Sir George Cave as to progress of Liquor Restrictions.

<sup>44</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 29 March 1917.

<sup>45</sup> HO 185/266, Lord D'Abernon's Cabinet Papers 1917-1918, 7 May 1917. D'Abernon wrote that 'I understand Lord Milner's intention to be that a bargain should be struck now with the trade, the execution of the contract being deferred until after the war. But if this is done the government run the risk that they will have agreed to pay 300 or 400 millions three or four years hence for the acquisition of a business which will then be either non-existent, under prohibition, or largely reduced under A) the operation of the Restriction of Output Order, B) absence of materials, C) local option. In each of these cases the state will be bound under a contract for payment of the full price, whereas the asset acquired will be badly damaged. It is inconceivable that Parliament would agree to such a bargain. Alternatively, if it is pleaded that the financial obligation to pay 300 or 400 millions is justified because the trade in alcohol after the war will return to pre-war conditions, it is extremely doubtful whether temperance opinion will allow any such pledge to be given. There appears to be no escape from the dilemma that the state will either be paying an excessive price for an injured property, or that it is compromising its freedom of action in the direction of temperance by the obligation of recouping itself for an enormous outlay.

<sup>46</sup> J. Turner, 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade', p. 609.

important perceptions were to the implementation of purchase. Davenport's restrictions had made an already thorny proposal more complex.

Nevertheless, after hearing that purchase could possibly produce profit for the state, the war cabinet authorised Lloyd George 'to make investigations' in Liberal and Labour circles and for Lord Milner to begin work on a draft bill.<sup>47</sup> The war cabinet believed that a 'defining statement should be made by the PM, announcing that the government had decided in favour of state purchase'.<sup>48</sup> The cabinet had thus taken its first tentative steps towards purchase but Lloyd George remained silent. Turner argues that these 'investigations' were necessary in order for him to ensure support for purchase as he had done during 'the previous drink excitement'.<sup>49</sup> As the trade was complicit in purchase, and the financial deal was good, the Prime Minister had only to deal with the malcontents of the temperance cause. He did so by receiving each prohibitionist lobby, together with a purchase deputation, in order to 'spike the prohibitionists' guns'.<sup>50</sup>

The continuing 'drift' of the legislation was censured regularly within the press, who were unsure as to why such a controversial measure was either taking too long or being attempted in the first place:

The Daily Express does not understand the reason for plunging into this controversial question in the very crisis of the war. Faced with the need of economy and of putting its best effort into its daily work the nation is already drinking much less alcoholic liquor than it did before the war and it will continue to drink less.<sup>51</sup>

In May 1917, Milner submitted his draft bill to the war cabinet, with the caveat that 'the trouble over this question cannot possibly be avoided and delay in

---

<sup>47</sup> Lord Alfred Milner (1854-1925), Minister without portfolio in Lloyd George's war council.

<sup>48</sup> HO 185/226, Lord D'Abernon's Cabinet Papers 1917-1918, 7 May 1917.

<sup>49</sup> J. Turner, 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade', p. 609.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.* p. 610.

<sup>51</sup> The Daily Express 13 April 1917.

taking it seems certain to render the trouble worse'.<sup>52</sup> He advocated immediate state control, even if the actual purchase had to take place after the war as 'if this preliminary control is not set up now, it is very doubtful whether the summer beer famine and discontent can be dealt with.'<sup>53</sup> Meanwhile, meetings between Lloyd George and representative brewers made it seem that the government did not intend to purchase. This caused consternation amongst interested parties but it appears that wires had been crossed. Milner was forced to emphasise that a permanent transfer of assets to the state was still being contemplated. The confusion surrounding the issue led to accusations that Lloyd George should concentrate on running the war effort rather than attempting to create a new 'beerocracy'.<sup>54</sup> The war cabinet warned that 'such a policy of drift would satisfy no-one but those who advocated Prohibition without compensation'.<sup>55</sup>

On 31 May various committees were set up by the war cabinet to work out the financial details, a two clause bill to provide funds was approved, and the decision made to assume control immediately after the bill was passed. A three-pronged 'please-all policy' had been agreed, with control, purchase and local option all featuring in an attempt to dilute potential opposition to the plan. Milner pointed out that the trade was to be controlled by a new cabal of brewers, licensed victuallers and civil servants. He believed the CCB was regarded by the trade with 'suspicion and dislike and was not suited to do the actual control'.<sup>56</sup> This was a strange judgement given the Board had successfully run the only state control experiment up to this point. Milner believed that the Board retained a symbolic role for social reformers and

---

<sup>52</sup> J. Turner, 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade', p. 610.

<sup>53</sup> J. Greenaway, *Drink and British Politics*, p. 109.

<sup>54</sup> *The Daily Express* 16 May 1917.

<sup>55</sup> MAF 60/100, War Cabinet Papers, Liquor Restriction and Control.

<sup>56</sup> J. Greenaway, *Drink and British Politics*, p. 110.

this meant it could not be completely ‘ignored and should be fitted in’.<sup>57</sup> But this was hardly a ringing endorsement of the capability of D’Abernon and his colleagues.

D’Abernon was indeed anxious about the CCB being sidelined. In response to the news that control was to be assumed by a body combining civil servants, brewers and licensed victuallers whose powers were not to be used to close public houses or breweries, he likened the new body to a ‘revivalist meeting with reclaimed offenders officiating on the platform’. He warned that ‘the proposal will be attacked as little more than a trade frame up designed to secure maximum profits at no risk, or alternatively to escape from efficient control, and to relapse to the old path of license and excess.’<sup>58</sup> Seeing that his Board’s work was endangered, D’Abernon was not afraid to fight his corner, but events were overtaking him. Evidently, how the Board was perceived was now more important than the tangible results of its work. The future relevance of the CCB was unclear. Meanwhile, as Turner has argued, ‘there seemed nothing to stop the liquor trade passing into the hands of the state forever’.<sup>59</sup>

Then, at a meeting on 21 June an amazing u-turn was undertaken by the Prime Minister. Usurping Milner’s scheme, Lloyd George presented an alternative plan to increase beer output without taking control and argued that the parliamentary situation was wrong for state purchase. After six months of debate and speculation, Lloyd George suddenly decided that the government had other priorities. Perhaps the difficulty in implementing purchase influenced his sudden abandonment of the scheme but it is a mystery why he suddenly ruled out the idea. Waldorf Astor remembered that ‘Milner was taken completely by surprise and put up no fight’.<sup>60</sup> Milner himself concluded that ‘the fatal swerve . . . has, I fear, made it impossible to

---

<sup>57</sup> HO 185/266, Lord D’Abernon’s Cabinet Papers 1917-1918, Milner Memorandum, 16 June 1917.

<sup>58</sup> J. Turner, ‘State Purchase of the Liquor Trade in the First World War’, p. 611.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* p. 611.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* p. 612.

take the one straight road which would have got us out of these difficulties, besides opening up a prospect of an almost immeasurable social reform'.<sup>61</sup> Turner suggests that Lloyd George's confused pronouncements in May had scared the brewers, who were concerned about not being protected against heavy financial losses in the event of purchase.<sup>62</sup> The concerns of brewers, though, were unlikely to have been the determining factor in such events. Whatever the reason, the state purchase plan lay in tatters.

The prospect of state purchase during the war was thus dead. On 28 June 1917 The Daily Express reported that the 'state purchase of the liquor trade as a war policy has been finally and definitely abandoned by the government.'<sup>63</sup> On this occasion there was no reversal of policy. Committees did consider the financial implications of state purchase in England, Wales and Scotland but the length of their investigations, which concluded in May 1918, meant that the irons had long cooled on prospective action. By this time the food crisis had faded. The committees themselves eventually recommended the purchase of both the manufacture and the supply of alcoholic liquor. Since most retail outlets were tied to brewers, the total cost based upon average annual profits from 1910 to 1913 was estimated to be some £400 million. However, Lloyd George did not see this as a priority any longer and the cabinet postponed discussions on the matter indefinitely.<sup>64</sup>

Later that year, Lloyd George explained his thinking to a deputation he received from the Methodist Churches campaigning for prohibition:

I think I was one of the first to be convinced that a restriction upon the sale of intoxicating liquors was necessary not as a great social reform but for the purpose of winning the war. This year the convictions up to August are 929 per week. That is something between one third and one fourth of the

---

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. p. 612.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. p. 612.

<sup>63</sup> The Daily Express 28 June 1917.

<sup>64</sup> J. Greenaway, Drink and British Politics, p.111.

convictions for drunkenness in the first year of the war and that indicates a very considerable improvement . . . The people have made sacrifices . . . so do not let us judge too harshly and try and impose too many restrictions upon people who have not yet been trained to regard alcoholic drink in the same way as you who are before me regard it . . . everybody must share in the sacrifices, and I have seen nothing up to the present moment which induces me to believe that when the people are convinced – whether they are men who drink alcohol or men who do not drink alcohol – that it is necessary to give up anything, whatever it is, I have seen nothing which lends me to believe that they will not readily do it.<sup>65</sup>

Essentially he argued that existing restrictions, together with the work of the CCB, had proven successful in the battle against drink. Lloyd George had eventually come to the conclusion that state purchase was an unnecessary burden to a nation at war. The Board was seemingly doing fine as it was. The Manchester Guardian noted that ‘the CCB have done very well on the whole and it would not be surprising that the government should continue to leave it to them.’<sup>66</sup>

Despite this vote of confidence, the inability of the CCB to bring about state purchase marks the nadir of the Board’s power. Its political capital, which had been plentiful early in the war, had been spent. From now on the work of the Board was tainted by association with a highly controversial scheme, representative in some eyes of the worst traits of tyrannical state interference. The CCB was thus damaged and henceforth had to face increased criticism. Moreover, while moderate licensing proposals were henceforth seen as acceptable larger, more ambitious CCB schemes, were deemed unworkable.

But the CCB still remained active. The Third Report of the CCB, produced in 1917, highlighted the progress of the Board. The Manchester Guardian described it as:

A hopeful document. The experience of the CCB reinforces the belief of those who hold that a sane and practicable step towards robbing the drink traffic of its horrors lies in the provision of houses of refreshment in which beer, wine and spirits shall be put in their proper perspective beside tea, coffee, minerals

---

<sup>65</sup> Lloyd George Papers, LG/F/228/6, Deputation to the Prime Minister from the Methodist Churches asking for Prohibition, 14 November 1917.

<sup>66</sup> Manchester Guardian 27 June 1917.

and food, where there shall be room to breathe, space to sit, and a chance for talk and fellowship without shame or excess.<sup>67</sup>

The report drew particular attention to the potentiality of transforming the pub into a modern café. The Daily Express opined that:

People should be developed. People should be able to enter such houses with their womenfolk and families. The provision of music of an elevating kind would emphasise the social side and it should be possible for men to transact business or for women to meet their friends over a light meal. In such surroundings there would be a practical discouragement of the use and abuse of heavy intoxicating liquors.<sup>68</sup>

Meanwhile, further restrictions were introduced by the Ministry of Food. Instead of purchase, a scheme ensuring the increased production of beer was introduced to allay the threat of shortages and possible industrial unrest. The permitted barrelage was to be increased by 20 per cent in return for brewers brewing a weaker beer at 1036<sup>0</sup>.<sup>69</sup>

Fears grew about the sanctity of the working man's pint. The Daily Express reported that 'it is probable that the pint measure will shortly disappear from the public house . . . a growing minority of brewers favour closing down at the end of October for ten days or a fortnight but others think such a policy would exasperate the working man and affect the output of munitions.'<sup>70</sup> So infrequent was the arrival of beer at some pubs that Butler reported that:

When [beer] is on sale in any particular houses, consumers crowd out such houses immediately when beer is delivered to them and demand that the licensee put it on sale forthwith although not in a fit condition for retailing. Consumers often decline to part with glasses when empty, but thrust them forward to be filled again . . . supervision of the premises is impossible under such conditions.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Manchester Guardian 4 January 1917.

<sup>68</sup> The Daily Express 2 January 1917.

<sup>69</sup> National Archives, Cabinet Papers, CAB 23/3.

<sup>70</sup> The Daily Express 10 October 1917.

<sup>71</sup> National Archives, Cabinet Papers, CAB 24/22, Copy of Memorandum by Waters Butler.

Matters were not helped by the ‘hot weather’ accentuating the beer shortages.<sup>72</sup> By August 1917 warnings were being made that frustrated drinkers were turning to spirits in order to alleviate their ‘intense irritation’ at being unable to buy beer.

The CCB’s best-laid plans came under threat due to a situation outwith their jurisdiction. The working class once more felt their lifestyle to be under attack. The government was fully aware of this discontent. In his memorandum in favour of state control, Milner had pointed out that ‘much of the labour dissatisfaction is due to the beer shortage and that something ought to be done at once . . . immediate control would ease the situation as, under Government control, the bulk of beer can be materially increased by dilution.’<sup>73</sup> In May various deputations made D’Abernon aware of the increasing importance of the issue. The Medical Officer of Bermondsey, in a frank letter, wrote that the working classes had just about had enough:

The working classes, which constitute the large majority of the population, have been irritated in various ways since the war. They have lost relatives and friends, food has become dear and scarce, labour restrictions of various sorts have been introduced, and finally they are threatened with total deprivation of their favourite beverage after the prices have gone up exorbitantly and the hours have been much restricted. Now signs are not altogether wanting to close observers that we are nearing the ‘flashing point’ and it becomes a serious question whether the important ‘factor’ you control should be permitted to hasten the conflagration. I have been struck by the philosophical way the working classes have accepted all these disabilities, and it has been done since they thought it important for winning the war.<sup>74</sup>

It is interesting to note that supply issues were deemed to be under the jurisdiction of D’Abernon. In fact he had limited influence over this aspect of the drink problem yet all affairs concerned with drink were believed to be under his Board’s jurisdiction. It was with ‘surprise that some Welsh colliers in a rather dangerous mood discovered

---

<sup>72</sup> The Licensing World and Licensed Trade Review 16 June 1917.

<sup>73</sup> CAB 24/16, GT1070, State Control of the Liquor Trade, Memorandum by Lord Milner.

<sup>74</sup> HO 185/263, D’Abernon Semi-Official Correspondence 1915-1919, Bermondsey Medical Officer to D’Abernon, 21 May 1917.

that the regulations were issued by the food controller'.<sup>75</sup> This misperception was appreciated by D'Abernon, who wrote: 'it was very foolish to impose an impossible reduction. We warned the government but they would not listen. Although I lose no opportunity of saying it, the Board have nothing to do with it – we get some criticism and it reflects on the good restrictions which are muddled up with the bad.'<sup>76</sup>

In April 1917 the Brewers' Journal was reporting that 'even in large urban areas, there are many public houses whose share is now only one barrel per week, and in the rural districts this position must be more pronounced'.<sup>77</sup> One month later the same journal was reporting beer houses in many urban areas being closed for certain days of the week due to a lack of beer. D'Abernon warned that 'the present allowance of beer was insufficient especially in the great munitions areas. Public houses were allowed to be open for 5 ½ hours but in fact were only open from 2 ½ to 3 ½ hours due to a shortage of supplies.'<sup>78</sup> Astor suggested rationing drink as 'it might go far to meet the resentment among the working classes which is based on the feeling that the brewers and whisky distillers are profiteering.'<sup>79</sup> Resentment increased when it became apparent that while grain for brewing was scarce, the consumption of port, champagne and particularly wine, traditionally the drink of the upper classes, was on the increase.<sup>80</sup> The Board argued for a managed distribution network, adding that if 'certain irritation and unrest in the munitions areas is to be avoided, measures must certainly be taken to spread the reduced volume of beer over the whole country, and to do this as evenly as possible.'<sup>81</sup> Some breweries, in areas where the demand

---

<sup>75</sup> HO 185/263, Mr Thornborough on 'Effect of New Restrictions on Output to D'Abernon, 7 May 1917.

<sup>76</sup> British Library, Lord D'Abernon's Personal Papers, 17 June 1917.

<sup>77</sup> Brewers' Journal 15 April 1917.

<sup>78</sup> MAF 60/100, Cabinet Papers Liquor Restriction and Control, 25 September 1918.

<sup>79</sup> CAB 24/36, Liquor Restriction and Control: Memorandum by Major Waldorf Astor.

<sup>80</sup> Jose Harris, 'Businessmen in British Food Control 1916-1919' in Burk, Kathleen, (ed.), War and the State.

<sup>81</sup> HO 185/265, D'Abernon's confidential papers, 9 February 1917.

exceeded local supply, sold their beer to other breweries to alleviate the burden of restriction.<sup>82</sup> In an attempt to avoid increased discontent, Milner recommended the exclusion of light beers of no more than 2 per cent alcoholic volume from the restrictions on barrelage, a suggestion with which the CCB concurred.<sup>83</sup>

D'Abernon was acutely aware of the situation and opposed to the restrictions. Motivated partly by a hostility regarding the legitimacy of the orders, and partly by bureaucratic rivalry, he made clear his belief that these restrictions led to 'alternations of drink famine and rush drinking which are prejudicial to public order', and that considerable advantage would result from an increase of the present allowance of beer by a further amount of two or three million barrels of a fixed gravity between 1023<sup>0</sup> and 1025<sup>0</sup>.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, the Board received first hand evidence of the seriousness of the restrictions placed on beer output in Carlisle as worker discontent manifested itself in calls for further barrelage to be released.

In July the government agreed, due to the threat of industrial strikes, to permit the brewing of one third more beer or 970,000 barrels during the quarter ending September.<sup>85</sup> The Home Secretary stated that the increase was granted for 'reasons connected with the conduct of the war and for no other reason'.<sup>86</sup> In November, after consultation with the Food Controller, D'Abernon let the War Cabinet know that he was also in favour of the release of 'light wines' onto the market, as opposed to the issue from bond of heavier wines or higher strength spirits.<sup>87</sup> In early 1918 the Board announced: 'It is desirable in the national interest that beer and spirits should be

---

<sup>82</sup> HO 185/265, D'Abernon's confidential papers, Brewing and the Resumption of Malting, 9 August 1917.

<sup>83</sup> National Archives, Cabinet Papers, CAB 24/16, Memorandum by D'Abernon, 19 June 1917.

<sup>84</sup> HO 185/265, Memorandum by D'Abernon, 9 August 1917.

<sup>85</sup> Twenty per cent of this increase was to be directly allocated to brewers who agreed to brew half their output below a gravity of 1036<sup>0</sup>. This beer was then given directly to workers in munitions areas. See F. Collier, *A State Trading Adventure* (London, 1925), p. 134.

<sup>86</sup> The Fourth Report of the Central Control Board

<sup>87</sup> MAF 60/61, War Cabinet meeting, RE – release of Wine and Spirits from Board, 7 November 1917.

available in such quantity as is consistent with reasonable contentment.<sup>88</sup> Until the end of the war D'Abernon and the Board continued to argue for an adequate supply of low gravity beer to ensure that workers did not stray to drinking higher alcohol spirits and wines.

Although some brewing was permitted, so short were supplies of wheat that watered down beer became more common. Brewers diluted beer to 2-3 per cent, approximately half the pre-war strength. The average gravity of beer dropped from 1053<sup>0</sup> in 1913 to 1030<sup>0</sup> in April 1918.<sup>89</sup> Sarcastically known as 'government ale', this weak beer became synonymous with unwanted government intervention in the public house. The weakness of the beer became a standing joke. Newspapers regularly drew attention to the poor quality. The Manchester Guardian reported one 'discontented ale drinker' saying that 'he could make a better glass of beer out of a glass of water with a touch of quinine and a small quantity of burnt sugar'.<sup>90</sup> Music Hall comedians satirised the weakness of the beer with aplomb. In a song entitled 'Lloyd George's Beer', Ernie May, rather tunelessly, sang:

We shall win the war,  
As I have said before,  
The Kaiser is in dreadful fury,  
Now he knows we're making it in every brewery,  
Have you read of it,  
Seen what's said of it,  
In the Mirror and the Mail,  
It's a substitute,  
And a pubstitute,  
And it's known as government ale,  
Or otherwise,  
Lloyd George's beer.

At the brewery there is nothing doing,  
All the water works are brewing,  
Lloyd George's beer,

<sup>88</sup> HO 185/266, D'Abernon's Cabinet Papers 1917-1918, Memorandum by CCB on output of beer, 8 March 1918.

<sup>89</sup> D. Gutzke, Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England 1896-1960, p. 52.

<sup>90</sup> Manchester Guardian 29 December 1917.

It isn't beer,  
 Oh they say it's a terrible war, oh lord,  
 And there never was a war like this before,  
 But the worst thing that ever happened in this war,  
 Is Lloyd George's beer.

...Shove you head in it,  
 From January to October and I will bet a penny that you'll still be sober.<sup>91</sup>

Snowden recounted the story of a man 'who went into a public house and the barman refused to serve him on the ground that he was drunk. The man protested, and said 'I am not drunk, but I may be waterlogged.'<sup>92</sup> Accompanying this shortage of beer was an increase in the consumption of wine. The Brewers' Gazette reported that 'among the many changes in the habits of the nation is a revival of the popular taste for good wine'.<sup>93</sup>

These stories further damaged the reputation of the CCB which was seen, erroneously, as responsible for all official policy regarding the drink problem. Ridicule soon followed. The Alliance News reported that 'the casual reader must always bear in mind that there are now two 'Control Boards' in operation. One is the CCB which must not be confused with the other 'Board of control' (Lunacy and Mental Deficiency). The first deals with the operations of the liquor traffic, the second has to deal with some of its finished products.'<sup>94</sup> For some the Board had done an admirable job but the resolution of the problem as it stood seemed beyond the capability of the CCB. Here parts of both the trade and temperance movement agreed. Arthur Mee argued that the 'Control Board has done wonders . . . but it was like controlling the German Army to control this trade and the central lesson of this Board

---

<sup>91</sup> Ernie May, Lloyd George's Beer from a compilation of songs entitled Laughter on the Home Front: Popular songs from the First World War Imperial War Museum Sound Archive 28943/2.

<sup>92</sup> P. Snowden, An Autobiography: Volume One 1864-1919, p. 382.

<sup>93</sup> The Brewers' Gazette 8 November 1917.

<sup>94</sup> Alliance News, August 1917.

is that drink cannot be effectively controlled'.<sup>95</sup> The Brewers' Journal added that 'after two and a half years of the Board's regime, it is generally admitted that good has resulted to the people and the state'.<sup>96</sup> Elements of both sides remained blinkered. In a book entitled Drink: The Greatest Foe the temperance activist Lieutenant Colonel A.H. Williams lamented that 'the nation still fails to grasp the facts or to believe that drink is the worst of the enemies with which we have to deal'.<sup>97</sup> Despite some evident progress the two sides to the debate could not resist ridiculing the other, as a story from the Alliance News indicates:

The following chestnut appears in the current Licensing World 'old stories are appearing in new war paint! This is the latest from the trenches: - Temperance advocate to soldier: 'You really don't mean to contend that the rum ration does any good? Soldier: - Well, it's like this. We ad' a little pet mouse in our trench. One day we gave the little beggar a crumb soaked in rum. Before you could say 'knife' he was up on his hind legs, shouting out 'where's that f ing cat?''<sup>98</sup>

This ridicule of the opposition was constant throughout the war in the drink debate. The CCB was powerless to change this.

Although the CCB was increasingly sidelined and satirised, in November 1916 it sanctioned a scientific investigation to divulge the real effect of alcohol on the individual.<sup>99</sup> This aimed to 'prove' that an alcohol problem existed, and to demonstrate in physiological terms why alcohol was a danger to society. D'Abernon, in a speech on 'The Need for a Scientific Basis for Temperance Reform' given to the

---

<sup>95</sup> Alliance News November 1917.

<sup>96</sup> Brewers' Journal March 1918.

<sup>97</sup> Lt. Col. A.H. Williams, Drink: The Greatest Foe (Protestant Truth Society 1918), p. 1.

<sup>98</sup> Alliance News, June 1918.

<sup>99</sup> The Committee, under the Chairmanship of Lord D'Abernon, consisted of the following members – Professor A.R. Cushny – Professor of Pharmacology at University College, London, Dr. H.H. Dale – Head of the Dept of Biochemistry and Pharmacology under the Medical Research Committee, National Health Insurance, Dr. M. Greenwood – statistician to the Lister Institute of Preventative Medicine, Dr. W. McDougall – Reader in Mental Philosophy in the University of Oxford, Dr. F.W. Mott – Pathologist to the London County Asylums and Consulting Physician to Charing Cross Hospital, Sir George Newman (member of the CCB), Professor C.S. Sheringham – Waynflete Professor of Physiology in the University of Oxford and Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, Dr. W.C. Sullivan – Medical Superintendent of the Rampton State Asylum for Criminal Lunatics.

Church of England Temperance society at Lambeth Palace in mid-1917, articulated the reasons why the Board was taking such a step:

Practical information regarding the subject of alcohol (has) never been made the subject of research, because there has been no proper recognition of the need of a scientific basis for temperance reform. This deficiency, I am glad to say, is now on process of being made good . . . without a solid basis of scientific fact, temperance reform will be empirical and uncertain . . . The line of moderate regulation and reform has been advanced.<sup>100</sup>

In the preface to this report, D'Abernon was honest in his appraisal that 'there is an almost entire absence of reliable data regarding the psychology of the drunkard, though adequate information on this point is obviously essential to devising rational methods for the treatment of the inebriate.'<sup>101</sup> The work separated 'what is knowledge from what is surmise, conjecture, or popular belief, and by this preliminary clarifying of the question, to prepare the way for further research'.<sup>102</sup>

During the course of investigations into the effect of alcohol, experiments were conducted on prisoners in Holloway prison. In mid-1916, prisoners were made to consume various doses of alcohol and then attempt to use a typewriter to judge how much drink could be taken.<sup>103</sup> Other experiments comparing the effect of alcohol and opium were also undertaken together with tests upon cats and dogs to understand the effect of alcohol.

The report was published in book form in March 1918 to laudatory praise from the temperance movement. The book seemed to prove that drinking was bad for health and thus bad for society as a whole. All of the temperance movement's warnings were apparently proven and justified by science. The Alliance News noted that it:

---

<sup>100</sup> HO 185/242, D'Abernon on the Need for Scientific Basis for Temperance Reform, 15 May 1917.

<sup>101</sup> Alcohol: Its Action on the Human Organism (London, 1918), p. vii.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* p. x.

<sup>103</sup> For details on the types and results of experiments conducted, see HO 185/228, Alcohol Committee Correspondence Memoranda.

It is an honest attempt to state the truth as to the physiological action of alcohol without conscious bias in any direction . . . The report is not a temperance report, it is a report prepared by men of science, none of whom are total abstainers, so far as we know, after long and careful investigation, with a full sense of their responsibility to lay a plain statement before the nation . . . The report, in our opinion, makes out an overwhelming case for prohibition during the war and during demobilisation.<sup>104</sup>

D'Abernon, though, was consistent in his opposition to prohibition.<sup>105</sup>

The report exerted a profound influence over the drink debate. Much conjecture was now elevated to the status of accepted fact. For example, the temperance movement had perpetually discussed the link between the proper provision of food and the avoidance of drunkenness and now the scientific inquiry proved that alcohol taken without food endangered the stomach membrane.

The Board was predictably pleased with this contribution to the study of drink:

The authoritative character of this book, representing as it does the unanimous conclusions of the distinguished authorities serving on the Committee, has been widely recognised, particularly by those who have a scientific or practical interest in alcohol and its effects, and the Board believe that the book will exercise a marked influence upon future research as well as upon conduct and public opinion.<sup>106</sup>

Fisher was pleased, believing it to be 'a work of great importance and I hope it will receive the very wide circulation it deserves. As far as I know it is the first time that there has been a temperate, non partisan and scientific statement on this subject.'<sup>107</sup>

Despite its worthy efforts, the CCB, as we have seen, was losing public confidence. The views of The Brewers' Gazette were symptomatic of the newfound antipathy towards the work of the Board: 'this war has much to answer for, not the least being the opportunities it has presented to a lot of incompetent bureaucrats to restrict the working of centuries old industries in the guise of communal

---

<sup>104</sup> Alliance News, March 1918.

<sup>105</sup> Throughout the war he rejected such calls. D'Abernon to Lord Derby 8 January 1918 'I feel myself that prohibition would be definite retrogression and entail a reversion to the old conflict between extreme policies, which has caused the failure of reform during the hundred years before 1915.'

<sup>106</sup> The Fourth Report of the Central Control Board.

<sup>107</sup> HO 185/263, Fisher to D'Abernon, 5 March 1918.

benevolence.’<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, the threats of strikes brought about by the lack of beer brought further condemnation:

The excursions of the Liquor Control Board in the introduction of laws (hitherto the prerogative of Parliament) are continually usurping all reasonable limits, and call for strong public action. Introduced insidiously, the full effect of their regulations are not grasped by the people, until their baleful influence asserts itself and threatens to overwhelm age old privileges to the prejudice generally of the community. Now, in these precarious times, the obduracy of the board is a national peril, and parliament should promptly take the matter up. It is not a time to invite discontent among the workers, but to do everything possible to allay irritation and unrest.<sup>109</sup>

The constitutional position of the Board was seen as a strength despite criticism within parliament that it remained unaccountable. A minister in parliament did not represent the CCB and this was a source of some anger, especially when the Board was undertaking particularly controversial measures. Nevertheless, by 1918, this idiosyncrasy was seen as one of the main advantages that the Board possessed. D’Abernon wrote to Hugh Godley that ‘its [the Board’s] quasi independence of parliament renders its action less liable to be influenced by gusts of outside opinion, and is therefore necessary to success.’<sup>110</sup> After three years of dealing with the difficult and intransigent positions of those involved with the drink problem, Godley candidly replied to D’Abernon that:

We have in effect completely autocratic powers . . . we are free to carry out our own policy in our own way. In my view that is vital to our success. No subject is so violently canvassed by stupid, ignorant and interested persons as liquor control, and the closer we get to ‘public opinion’ the more liable we are to be influenced if not coerced by irresponsible clamour.<sup>111</sup>

---

<sup>108</sup> The Brewers’ Gazette 16 August 1917.

<sup>109</sup> The Brewers’ Gazette 22 November 1917.

<sup>110</sup> HO 185/232, Correspondence RE: Appointed Members, D’Abernon to Godley, 2 February 1918. Sydney Neville and G.J. Wardle M.P. joined the board 26 July 1917. J.H. Thomas and Godley joined the board 1 November 1917.

<sup>111</sup> HO 185/232, Godley to D’Abernon, February 1918.

This letter highlights the significant powers of the Board. At a clear moment in history, defined by the limits of the war, real change could be enacted with a clear rationale for action.

Over the course of 1917 and into 1918 the CCB became strongly identified with the state purchase cause, a perception aided by the publication of Henry Carter's book. One reviewer noted that 'the book is of course, written from the point of view of an advocate of state purchase, but although the bias in favour of that method is clearly manifested the writer's views are put forward in moderate terms'.<sup>112</sup> It was produced at a time when a valuable exposition of the Board's work was necessary to deflect increasing criticism of its allegedly despotic ways. The drink debate was less newsworthy in the final months of the war. The problem had seemingly been 'dealt' with by the CCB. Britain's armament production had come to terms with the demands of war. During an attack on the Hindenburg Line, British soldiers fired 943,947 shells in a twenty-four hour period.<sup>113</sup> Shell shortages were a thing of the past. In consequence, a less disparaging attitude toward working class behaviour was apparent. The rationale for the continued impingement of the CCB on working class culture was fading.

The CCB was also increasingly resented by working class drinkers. D'Abernon was heckled vociferously whilst giving a speech to the Lord Mayor of Manchester. 'We don't want an academic speech we want more beer' noted one thirsty critic.<sup>114</sup> Another accused D'Abernon of being a 'dirty dog who sends my class to jail'.<sup>115</sup> D'Abernon was asked if he would use his influence to have Philip Snowden removed from the Board. The question was 'greeted with loud cheering and cries of

---

<sup>112</sup> Manchester Guardian January 1918.

<sup>113</sup> G. Sheffield, Forgotten Victory - The First World War: Myths and Realities (London, 2001), p. 247.

<sup>114</sup> Manchester Guardian 16 February 1918.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

‘he’s a traitor,’ to which D’Abernon replied that he was a man of ‘high intellectual ability’.<sup>116</sup> In November 1918 a damning open letter was written by the ‘executive of the dock and riverside workers union’ concerning the work of the Board:

Summing up the value of your committee, I very much regret to say that you have made profiteers of both distillers and brewers together with public house owners and the consumer of the ordinary health beverages has been mulcted into exorbitant costs. If you think that a reward for your services you are welcome to do so, but so far as the nation is concerned they have suffered materially by your mischievous administration and while there may be some results of usefulness in your committee, on the whole, I think it has been an egregious failure and a very unwarrantable cost to the community. We regard it as the most Hun-like Department that ever the war has produced.<sup>117</sup>

On the morning of 11 November 1918 the war ended. Lloyd George made a statement outside Downing Street that ‘at 11 o’clock this war will be over. We have won a great victory and we are entitled to a bit of shouting.’<sup>118</sup> Rather than shout, many preferred a drink. The King ended his controversial abstention from alcohol by cracking open a bottle of brandy which he described as tasting ‘very musty’.<sup>119</sup> Throughout Britain celebrations erupted. Government beer may have been weaker but people made up for this by drinking generous amounts of it. In France the situation was no different. Troops made the best of the circumstances, canvassing for ale, wine or spirits wherever possible. As Private Frank J.H. Dunk of the Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment recollected:

The next morning we got up to see our officer coming down the street in his shirt and braces with a barrel of beer on a big French wheelbarrow. He came into the billet and said ‘come on lads, the war will be over at 11 o’clock.’ When the French folks heard, out came the flags and wine, beer, all sorts, and everybody got totally pickled.<sup>120</sup>

In Carlisle similar exuberance was evident:

---

<sup>116</sup> *The Brewers’ Gazette* 28 February 1918.

<sup>117</sup> *Manchester Guardian* 4 November 1918.

<sup>118</sup> G. DeGroot, *Blighty*, p. 249.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* p. 250.

<sup>120</sup> L. Macdonald, *Voices and Images of the Great War 1914-1918*, p. 309.

A very large trade was done at the various houses, as was natural . . . In the middle of the day a raid was made on one of the Board's lorries, which was thought to be conveying bottles of spirits to the houses. Fortunately however, it was conveying empties, and the crowd, quickly realising their mistake, did no damage.<sup>121</sup>

It would have tested even the most ardent of temperance enthusiasts to suggest that the occasion did not warrant such celebration. But most of those who came out on the streets showed restraint. On 14 November Sir Eric Geddes viewed some of the scenes in London. He reported that 'the temper and conduct of the crowds were everywhere good. There was very little drunkenness and few excesses were committed at that hour. Of these few Australians were prominent participants.'<sup>122</sup> With the war won there was no longer a need to pillory the working class for their enjoyment of alcohol. Attention, however, soon turned to what was going to happen to the CCB now that peace had come.

---

<sup>121</sup> HO 190/822, General Manager's Report, 19 November 1918.

<sup>122</sup> See WC 502, 14 November 1918. Sir Walter Long believed that it was urgent to get the Australians out of London as they had been accused of taking a leading part in increasing the rowdiness of some of the crowds in the capital.

### **Conclusion: The End of the Central Control Board**

On 12 November the CCB held its 103<sup>rd</sup> meeting but its future was now uncertain. The Board at this point was composed of thirteen members with a staff of around 1250 people.<sup>1</sup> As a body established to ensure efficiency in wartime, the Board's continued existence was dependent upon the benefits of its work being appreciated in peacetime. Given the hostile reaction to some of the Board's measures in the previous two years, the task of demonstrating the Board's continued worth was onerous, yet was undertaken by its members keen on preserving the beneficial social reform which they believed the Board had implemented. This struggle, though, swiftly frustrated those who undertook it.

With the end of the war, the trade believed that an end should come to the 'arbitrary' regulation of their livelihood. As the Brewers' Journal noted:

The history of the trade in these unprecedented times can be penned with pride and satisfaction . . . for the first two years our trade was caught up in the vortex of every sort of political and other controversy. The 'take advantage of the war opportunists', defying the political truce, have used every form of assault. They have failed. Their one aim, prohibition, has ignominiously collapsed – killed by the strongly aimed blows of the mighty workers.<sup>2</sup>

The trade believed it had weathered the temperance storm. Accordingly, with the coming of peace, the rationale for the continued existence of the Board was undermined. The electorate seemingly agreed as many Temperance M.P.s lost their seat in the election of 1918, something which the Alliance News argued was 'a real peril to the nation'.<sup>3</sup> The burden of accusations against the CCB's work now carried greater credibility. If the Board was not now working for wartime efficiency what else could it be operating for other than the introduction of temperance principles?

---

<sup>1</sup> The thirteen members of the CCB at this time were Lord D'Abernon, Butler, John Denny, Leverhulme, Neville, Newman, Pedder, Snowden, J.H. Thomas, Hugh Godley (a barrister), Towle, Sykes and Meicklejohn.

<sup>2</sup> Brewers' Journal November 1918.

<sup>3</sup> Alliance News January 1919.

Unpopular, and with its continued existence questioned, the Board soldiered on. This chapter will consider its post war demise and assess the extent of the Board's success.

The extension of the Board's powers for twelve months after the cessation of conflict, guaranteed by the legislation that created the Board, allowed for the introduction of either a permanent body, or some form of permanent legislation. D'Abernon believed that continued temperance reform was imperative. He was proud of the achievements of the CCB and believed that it was 'in the national interest that restrictions should be kept'.<sup>4</sup> By the end of the war, 95 per cent of the population of Great Britain lived under the Board's restrictions.<sup>5</sup>

The Board used convictions for drunkenness as the primary criteria for legitimising its success. Although they were subject to a number of variables, notably the strictness of police officers, conviction rates suggest a clear reduction in drunken behaviour. In 1915 the figure stood at 135,811. In 1916 this figure had been reduced to 84,191, a reduction of 38 per cent. This is the best indication of the effect of the Board's work prior to the reduction imposed on output. A further decline occurred in 1917 to 46,410 and in 1918 to 29,075 - 70 per cent lower than in 1914. To be sure, the Board's restrictions must have affected these figures but there is no way of quantifying the effect of these, together with the effect of the aforementioned restrictions imposed by the Food Controller. As the Alliance News noted, 'we think Lord D'Abernon, perhaps naturally, gives the Board of Control more credit than it really deserves, as other factors have been at work, not least the actual reductions in the quantity of available alcohol.'<sup>6</sup> The CCB admitted other variables might have contributed:

---

<sup>4</sup> HO 185/242, Press Release, 14 June 1919.

<sup>5</sup> The Times 15 May 1918.

<sup>6</sup> Alliance News January 1919.

The heavy reduction in convictions for drunkenness, may, in some areas be partly accounted for by the withdrawal of men into the army. There has, too, in many quarters, been evident a gradually increasing sense of the seriousness of the national emergency, with a consequent tendency to self-restraint and sobriety. On the other hand, the break up of home life on an unprecedented scale, owing not only to enlistments into the Army but to the migration of men and women into munition-making areas, the strain and the excitements incidental to a long period of war, and, above all, the increasing spending power of large sections of the population, are factors which, judging by past experience, might naturally have been expected to make, not for improvement, but for deterioration.<sup>7</sup>

Shadwell argued that the principal measures contributing to the reduction of convictions were ‘curtailment of hours, limitation of supply and diminution of strength and raised prices’ whilst adding that ‘the volume of intemperance can be kept far below the former level by means of shorter hours and higher taxation.’<sup>8</sup> Wilson ascribed a certain proportion of the success to reduced hours, patriotism, the removal of men, migration of war workers and reduced output of alcohol.<sup>9</sup> While a historical consensus exists concerning the variety of reasons behind the decline in drunkenness, to try to isolate the relative importance of one factor over another would be a futile and arbitrary exercise. It has been necessary, however, throughout this thesis, to draw attention to the patriotism of those denigrated in Shadwell’s work.

As well as a reduction in drunkenness, the CCB could also claim that there was less overall drinking. Together with a significant reduction in the number of people locked up for being drunk went an accompanying reduction in the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Average beer consumption in 1909-1913 was 35.1 million bulk barrels per annum. This had fallen to 21.4 million by 1918.<sup>10</sup> For spirits this figure stood at 31,660 gallons in 1914 but was reduced by 1918 to

---

<sup>7</sup> The Third Report of the Central Control Board.

<sup>8</sup> A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control, pp.272-273.

<sup>9</sup> See G.B. Wilson, Alcohol and the Nation: A Contribution to the Study of the Liquor Problem in the United Kingdom from 1800 to 1935, pp. 272-276.

<sup>10</sup> A.R. Prest and A.A. Adams, Consumers Expenditure in the UK 1900-1919 (London, 1954), p. 76.

15,108.<sup>11</sup> Much less wine was also consumed. In 1914 10,630 gallons had been imbibed by the British public. In 1917 only 7,099 gallons were drunk.<sup>12</sup> In the longer term a real shift in alcohol consumption patterns was precipitated by the war, as by the early 1920s per capita consumption of spirits was half that of before the war whilst beer consumption had fallen from twenty-five gallons to just ten.<sup>13</sup> Taking into consideration that post-war beer was weaker in strength, this is indicative of a major change in social habits. This habit precipitated beneficial health results with liver cirrhosis deaths reduced from 152 per million in 1914 to 56 per million in 1918, a reduction of 64 per cent.<sup>14</sup> The Board could thus point to a reduction in arrests, a reduction in the consumption of liquor and to positive health benefits emerging as a result of their work. The situation was so favourable that the Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir Edward Henry, argued that ‘I believe that we have now reached a low water mark and that no measure, not even of total prohibition, would be likely to bring about any further appreciable reduction in the number of charges of drunkenness.’<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, getting drunk was now frowned upon rather than celebrated. The New Survey of London Life and Labour noted ‘the social status of drunkenness has steadily fallen in the eyes of the working class population, where once frequent drunkenness was admired as a sign of virility, it is now regarded as, on the whole, rather squalid and ridiculous.’<sup>16</sup> The Scotsman remarked that the CCB ‘have not only reduced drunkenness in the present, they have shown how it may be combated in the

---

<sup>11</sup> Reginald Smart, ‘The effect of Licensing Restrictions during 1914-1918 on Drunkenness and Liver Cirrhosis Deaths in Britain’, British Journal of Addiction, 1974, Vol. 69, p. 109.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p. 109.

<sup>13</sup> J. Greenaway, Drink and British Politics since 1830: A Study in Policy Making, pp. 111-112.

<sup>14</sup> Reginald Smart, ‘The effect of Licensing Restrictions during 1914-1918 on Drunkenness and Liver Cirrhosis Deaths in Britain’, p. 109. Smart also concludes that ‘areas within jurisdiction of the Board’s orders showed a significant reduction in drunkenness and liver cirrhosis deaths whereas in areas not covered by the CCB death rates continued to rise.’ See Smart, pp. 115-119.

<sup>15</sup> The Times 4 December 1918.

<sup>16</sup> G. DeGroot, Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War, p. 238.

future'.<sup>17</sup> All this combined to create a good platform on which to launch a campaign to render some of the Board's work more permanent, especially given consideration of the fact that drunkenness in the early months of 1919 showed an appreciable rise which continued into 1920.<sup>18</sup>

D'Abernon hoped that any permanent body would be under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, as opposed to the Home Office, which again indicates his desire that the problem would progress along the road of scientific temperance as opposed to following a restrictive direction. To many, though, the CCB was discredited and the onset of peace merely exacerbated this discontent. The trade led these criticisms. The National Trade Defence Association was vehement in its desire to see the CCB quashed. Issued in 1919, under the headline How Long are Wartime Restrictions to Continue?, one pamphlet stated:

For love of our country, and to win the war, we put up with all manner of inconveniences and went without things we should never have dreamt of giving up a few years ago . . . Many of these restrictions were no doubt necessary. Some we certainly thought were not. But all these became as nothing when we thought of the hardships endured, the dangers faced, the sufferings borne, and the sacrifices made by our brave boys across the water . . . victory was won last November. So isn't it about time for us to manage for ourselves most of the things which concern our everyday life, instead of having this done for us by a crowd of unnecessary officials.<sup>19</sup>

The delay in clarifying the Board's position endangered its continued existence. With no great support or urgency from the government in establishing a permanent body the CCB languished in a state of flux, unable to enact any further significant reform

---

<sup>17</sup> The Scotsman 7 May 1918.

<sup>18</sup> HO 185/263, D'Abernon's Semi-Official Correspondence 1915-1919, D'Abernon to Churchill, 9 July 1919 – Since the end of 1918 there has been a considerable increase of drunkenness, probably due in part to the relaxation of restrictions - in part also to the return of Army men – and to the large numbers of persons in receipt of unemployed pay and gratuities. According to the Alliance News, February 1920, convictions for drunkenness in scheduled areas increased from 27,849 in 1918 to 56,103 in 1919. Shadwell discusses the rise in drinking in 1919 placing the blame primarily upon the lifting of restrictions on output and extended opening hours whilst downplaying the effect of returning demobilised troops on levels of insobriety. See A Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922, pp. 131-135.

<sup>19</sup> HO 190/482, Carlisle Licensed Victuallers Association 1916-1919 Miscellaneous Correspondence, Pamphlet by National Trade Defence Association.

whilst having to justify its continued existence. Without the challenges of war, and the subsequent emphasis upon the drink question, the future looked bleak for the CCB. The Board was seen as an unaccountable body which made decisions arbitrarily and its bureaucratic meddling now transgressed upon peacetime conceptions of laissez faire governance. As one correspondent for The Times noted, ‘there is a strong feeling in the country that the drink traffic must revert to Parliament and that orders made by a group of men sitting round a table must be replaced by considered legislation.’<sup>20</sup>

This situation deteriorated as the Treasury, which had been compliant with most of the CCB’s schemes during the war, made clear that funds were now required elsewhere. Facing questions regarding the continued funding of industrial canteens, a Treasury official replied in ominous terms:

The position as I understand it is that now the war is at an end, expenditure on such a purpose is no longer a proper charge to Munitions funds. If the government however wish to go in for a policy of temperance reform in the shape of providing improved accommodation and provision for meals for the working classes, it is for the proper authority to approach the war cabinet and the treasury . . . it is doubtful, if budgets are ever again to balance, that there will be much margin for other schemes.<sup>21</sup>

The debate concerning what aspects of the CCB’s work were to be enshrined in permanent legislation, together with post war governmental drift, was to blame for this indecision. On the one hand, public opinion was against the permanent retention of the wholesale restrictions that remained in force. On the other, the war experience provided a template from which possible moderate temperance reform in peacetime could emerge. The Times believed that:

A great opportunity for promoting sobriety is before the country. The public and the trade itself are ready for drastic modifications of the conditions which governed the drink traffic before the war, and a reasoned programme

---

<sup>20</sup> The Times 23 January 1919.

<sup>21</sup> HO185/263, D’Abernon’s Semi-Official Correspondence 1915-1919, Meicklejohn to D’Abernon, 23 December 1918.

embodying most of the regulations which have proved so valuable during the past three years would meet with a remarkable measure of support.<sup>22</sup>

The same paper speculated on the reforms which would probably satisfy public opinion, noting that the opening hours of pubs was generally agreeable as people saw the clear benefit of an afternoon break. Less popular were the laws concerning treating which, ‘despite the best of intentions’, and which in theory seemed to be ‘an excellent reform’, ‘cut across a deeply ingrained British habit and in spite of fines, and even the serious attempts of many publicans to enforce the principal, it has not been accepted, and is in fact now openly disregarded alike in London and the country’.<sup>23</sup> A secret report on labour unrest from the North Western District, which included Liverpool, confirmed this view of events and emphasised how the CCB had come to be seen as an agent in the class war:

The big man can take his pals to a hotel and stand them a bottle of wine, and it is nearly time they are allowed to stand a pal a glass of beer. They had put up with it because they had been told it was necessary but this tale wouldn’t wash now. They say that the British tradesman is not a Bolshevik or a boozer and he wants to be treated as a man, and governed by men, not fanatics . . . They are moderate men and they want their glass of beer under the conditions they had it before the war, otherwise there will be trouble for Lord D’Abernon, whom they describe as a bigot, and the sort of man who would incite the workers to revolt.<sup>24</sup>

The more moderate of the Board’s measures were thus the more likely to be maintained. Radical reforms, those the workers associated with ‘fanatics’, had only been acceptable in wartime and their continued implementation was resented.

D’Abernon appreciated the dilemma facing Lloyd George. Speaking to a Temperance Council of the Christian Churches, D’Abernon synthesised the current predicament facing those interested in the control of drink: ‘The question before you is how to maintain the ground gained without imposing such restrictions upon

---

<sup>22</sup> The Times 24 January 1919.

<sup>23</sup> The Times 3 March 1919.

<sup>24</sup> W.P. Jolly, Lord Leverhulme – A Biography, p. 161.

recreation and refreshment as might be considered intolerable in time of peace.<sup>25</sup> On that very same day, The Times reported a meeting held at Nottingham attended by ‘thousands of people’ which adopted a resolution demanding ‘the immediate removal of the Liquor Control Board and all restrictions imposed by it as the Board was purely a war measure, and the necessity for its continuance no longer existed’.<sup>26</sup> Wartime consensus had given way to divisions over the Board’s worth.

Extensive speculation and impassioned argument continued to fill the pages of the daily press. The Bishop of London warned in The Times that it was ‘up to us to ensure that the England our men had died for was worth saving and that there must be no return to the disgraceful 19 ½ hours of drink selling every day’.<sup>27</sup> The temperance lobby, the extreme members of which wanted the government to enshrine the Board’s work in permanent legislation regardless of what the public desired, still questioned every government pronouncement on the subject of drink. The drink trade wanted rid of some of the more pernicious legislation of the Board but were at least open to some proposals being ascribed a permanence given the beneficial economic effect that had resulted. Both fronts, though, were united in their dislike of the CCB as an administrative body.

The future of the Carlisle scheme was also controversial and clouded in mystery. The Board was unanimous in declaring the experiment an undoubted success. Equally happy with the effect of state purchase was the local committee of Carlisle which passed the following memorandum to the CCB in August 1919: ‘That whatever course is taken on the licensing question generally, the system of state management, which has proved such a success in this area, be maintained, with

---

<sup>25</sup> The Times 16 June 1919.

<sup>26</sup> The Times 16 June 1919.

<sup>27</sup> The Times 16 April 1919.

adequate powers to complete and continue the work.<sup>28</sup> This is unsurprising: any other pronouncement would be akin to turkeys voting for Christmas. The end of the war certainly brought with it worries that the experiment would be ended but the practicalities of re-privatisation ensured that this was unlikely. The government would have to sell its holdings and in the post-war climate there were unlikely to be any buyers. Moreover the trade had been bought out on beneficial terms. The government was thus wedded to an involvement in the management of Carlisle's licensed trade. In any case, the scheme continued to be profitable. Trading profits for the year ending 31 March 1921 amounted to £149, 700.<sup>29</sup>

Meanwhile, there was to be no return to the pre-war hours of drinking. The experience of the war had demonstrated to the government the benefits of breaking up the hours of opening. Nevertheless, by mid-1919 opening hours were liberalised. Weekday opening in England and Wales was extended till 10.00 p.m. whilst in Scotland evening hours were 6.00-9.00 p.m. and on a weekend 4.00-9.00 p.m. With regard to restrictions placed on the production of alcohol, the CCB, as it had during wartime, had limited influence. The restrictions on output had been a cause of concern during the war and afterwards were deeply unpopular as they continued to impinge upon drinkers throughout the land. Moreover, D'Abernon was acutely aware of the damage the restrictions had done to his preferred cause of moderate reform. In a letter to Northcliffe his anger is clear:

I have always been against any severe restrictions of the quantity of liquor available for public consumption as I believe such restrictions to be neither theoretically defensible nor practically wise. It would be deplorable if all the ground gained for reasonable regulation was lost through irritation caused by insufficient supplies.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> HO 185/8, Carlisle Local Committee to CCB, 20 August 1919.

<sup>29</sup> The Times 19 October 1921.

<sup>30</sup> HO 185/353, For Chairman, 26 May 1919.

Restrictions on beer were also eliminated by mid-1919. In February output was increased from 10.7 million barrels to 13.4 million and in May to 26 million, with all restrictions ceasing in June 1919 with the gravity of beer allowed to increase to 1044<sup>0</sup>. Taxation levels on alcohol were, however, never to return to pre-war levels. Indeed, taxation was increased further from the already high levels imposed during the war. In April 1920 duty was raised to 100 shillings a barrel and on spirits to 72 shillings 6 pence a gallon. In August 1914 beer duty per barrel had been 7 shillings 9 pence. These heavy increases, although not the policy of the CCB but of the Treasury, served to cast further public suspicion on the Board.

Alongside these measures various alternate strategies for controlling drink were once more proposed. Advocates of state purchase, such as H.A.L. Fisher<sup>31</sup>, Astor and Lord Milner, once more rallied in an attempt to introduce this policy but they failed due to a lack of belief at the highest level that the policy could be implemented. Lloyd George, acutely aware that he needed the continued support of the Tories in his coalition government, stated that he 'knew nothing of renewed attempts at state purchase'.<sup>32</sup> In any event moderate opinion, if newspapers are anything to go by, would not have countenanced state purchase at this point. Less regulation, not more, was the dominant preference regarding control in the post-war world. This dislike of intervention also affected advocates of prohibition as, inspired by events in the United States, there were calls for prohibition to be introduced in Britain and even rumours of a campaign 'led by American money'. However this was never considered a practical policy in Britain during wartime, and was derided throughout the war. Dreamers, though, like to dream; campaigning for prohibition had become not just a cause but a way of life divorced from reality.

---

<sup>31</sup> President of the Board of Education and Chair of the Cabinet Committee on Liquor Restriction.

<sup>32</sup> For an extended discussion of the political campaign for state purchase in the immediate post war world see J. Greenaway, *Drink and British Politics*, pp. 117-120.

Meanwhile, interpreting the government's lack of action over the CCB as indicating that the Board's days were numbered, D'Abernon resigned from the CCB officially in March 1920, though he had made clear his intention to do so a month or two earlier.<sup>33</sup> Prior to his resignation he explained to Lloyd George his belief that 'peace having been declared, the appointment of a new authority with a new mandate appears to me indispensable'.<sup>34</sup> His resignation letter exemplifies his belief in the innate worthiness of the Board's work:

After nearly five years of strenuous work together it is delightful to look back on cooperation and support so close that hardly any divergences of aims or methods can be recorded . . . I will not conceal my conviction that the Board may anticipate without undue vanity or optimism that the results attained will permanently affect public opinion throughout the world . . . Under present conditions the Board is compelled, if I may say so, merely to tread water – an unsatisfactory task which offers no scope for initiative and which is essentially different from the war emergency control which I undertook.<sup>35</sup>

Upon hearing the news, journalists penned several praiseworthy reviews extolling the virtues and strength of D'Abernon's chairmanship. The remaining members of the CCB also praised him:

[They] Heard with much regret of the retirement of their chairman, Lord D'Abernon. [He] did valuable work in initiating and encouraging the scientific investigation of the physiological effects of alcohol and indicating the lines upon which results of practical value might be made manifest. We assure him of their regard, and trust that he will feel that his onerous labours have laid the foundation of a permanent benefit to the nation.<sup>36</sup>

Lloyd George complimented D'Abernon, placing on record his determination that 'when normal times returned, the nation must reap permanent benefit from the object lessons which your operations have afforded, and from the broad and scientific spirit

---

<sup>33</sup> This followed the resignation of Sir George Newman and Philip Snowden in March 1919. Their places were taken by Mr Will Thorne and Dr H.H. Dale, a member of the SAC. The Times 25 March 1919.

<sup>34</sup> HO 185/231, Correspondence RE: Appointed Members.

<sup>35</sup> HO 185/231, Correspondence RE: Appointed Members, D'Abernon's resignation letter, 16 March 1920.

<sup>36</sup> HO 185/231, CCB to D'Abernon, 11 March 1920.

in which you have dealt with the problems which you had to face.’<sup>37</sup> This respect for the work of the Board did not, however, transpose itself to the population in general. Upon a further extension being granted to the CCB, the Daily Mail, under the headline ‘Liquor Control – Longer Hours Plan Deferred – Dictators in Power another year’, reported that:

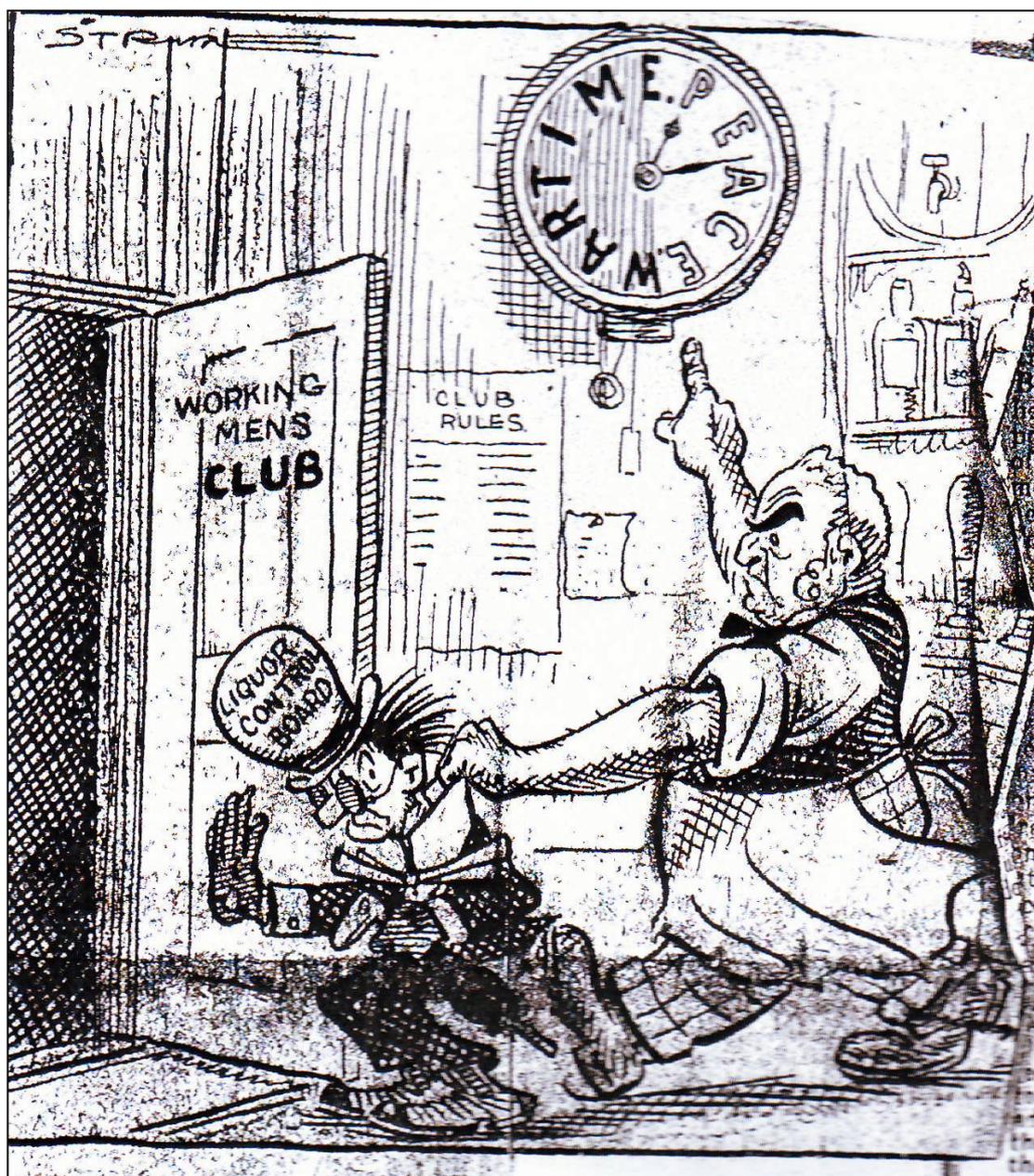
The government propose to re-establish the Control Board with full powers for at least another year. This means that less than a dozen people, not elected, but nominated by the government, meeting in secret and with no appeal from their rulings, will have the power to decide how and when 45,000,000 people in Great Britain shall drink.<sup>38</sup>

The Board was clearly, for some, overstaying its welcome.

---

<sup>37</sup> HO 185/231, Correspondence RE: Appointed members, Lloyd George to D’Abernon, 20 February 1920.

<sup>38</sup> HO 185/231, Daily Mail Press Clipping.



**Figure 37:** This cartoon, taken from The Sunday Express, illustrates the unpopularity of the CCB by 1921 and also the view that its rules should have applied only in wartime and not in peace. The ‘Club Rules’ illustrate that pubs could self regulate if necessary.

With D’Abernon gone the Board was rudderless. The remaining members became frustrated by the lack of progress. John Denny made clear his irritation in a letter to Lloyd George:

The carrying, sooner or later, of a permanent licensing act is, of course, imperative . . . something must be done if all the good resulting from the Board’s work is not to be lost. If I might suggest, the main thing for the Board is to be represented by a Minister in Parliament, who can act as Chairman in

the ordinary sense of the term . . . The Board, thus regularised, can take up questions of further relaxation of restrictions and general administration in a way it cannot do just now.<sup>39</sup>

Agitation, Board members complained, was ‘undermining the future of liquor control generally’.<sup>40</sup> Sydney Neville suggested an alternate strategy that would effectively call parliament’s bluff:

I feel confident that an announcement of the intention of the Board to abrogate its orders on a definite date in the absence of any expression on the part of parliament to the contrary, will not only quench the fire of criticism now being directed against the Board which threatens to destroy its work, but will also stimulate an overwhelming expression of that opinion, both in parliament and outside, which we know to be in favour of retaining some of the Board’s work but which at present is silent or incoherent.<sup>41</sup>

Carter saw this strategy as ‘entertaining’, and he was willing to try anything so long as it ‘saved the restrictions’, but Neville’s risky plan was never implemented as resolution was in sight.<sup>42</sup>

In January 1921 a government committee was established to modify the Board’s orders ‘so as to make them more suitable to present conditions’.<sup>43</sup> Events, though, transpired to make this committee somewhat redundant. In March 1921, 166 M.P.s signed a resolution calling for the abolition of the CCB. The motion read:

In the opinion of this house the continued existence of the wartime CCB is contrary to the undertaking given by the government at the institution of the said Board, is considered by the people to be a breach of faith, and is a fruitful cause of unrest, that the Board should be dissolved forthwith and its regulations annulled.<sup>44</sup>

The following month Lloyd George met with the Board and discounted the possibility of any licensing bill being passed that year, while stating that the CCB ‘still had the

<sup>39</sup> HO 185/231, John Denny to Lloyd George, 15 December 1920.

<sup>40</sup> HO 185/231, Letter from Central Control Board to Lloyd George, 3 December 1920.

<sup>41</sup> HO 185/231, Sydney Neville to Sykes, 17 December 1920.

<sup>42</sup> HO 185/231, Carter to Sykes, 20 December 1920.

<sup>43</sup> HO 185/232, CCB Parliamentary Control – Modification of Orders.

<sup>44</sup> Lloyd George Papers, LG/F/96/1/9, Motion by Frederick Alexander Macquisten to Lloyd George.

support of the public and the complete confidence of the government'.<sup>45</sup> He spoke in glowing terms about the CCB:

It has been a most conspicuous piece of work, I think, of social work, which has been done by any body of men for a very long while . . . It has been a remarkable success. I am especially interested in the experiment you tried at Carlisle. I wish it had been possible to have extended that and to have applied it to one of the great cities of this kingdom. I should have liked to have had it tried in Birmingham . . . The restrictions and limitations which you have imposed have, on the whole, commended themselves to the commonsense of the nation.<sup>46</sup>

These words do not sound like those of a man convinced of the longevity of the Board. But once again Lloyd George's true intentions are difficult to read. As Waters Butler pointed out:

You referred to us continuing our task. That is a difficulty I feel. I feel we are a set of idlers. We have nothing to do. People come and say to us: 'Are you still a member of the Board? What are you doing? How often do you meet? And so on. I am really in trouble about that point. I feel we have not a task. The work of the Board is dormant.'<sup>47</sup>

The reality was that the Board was effectively defunct; it existed in name only.

Lloyd George's hand was forced by a private members' bill submitted by Colonel John Gretton M.P. that same month which proposed moderate restrictions on the powers of licensing authorities and magistrates.<sup>48</sup> This new licensing bill drove the Prime Minister to propose a compromise. It was not politically expedient for him to make drink a major issue of contention. He proposed that in compensation for the brewers dropping Gretton's bill, the government would definitely bring the issue to a head by agreeing on a suitable compromise measure. A round table conference resulted, the members consisting of the Attorney General, and eighteen M.P.s, four

---

<sup>45</sup> Lloyd George Papers, LG/F/228/7, Liquor Control Board Conference, 22 April 1921.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Formulated from a brewers group created in 1917 with a 'constructive' attitude and later supported by the Brewers' Society and the NTDA. This bill was proposed originally in March 1920 but was hindered by a conglomeration of temperance and licensing magistrates' hostility. For further details, and a more extensive investigation of the passage of this bill, see J. Greenaway, Drink and British Politics, pp. 121-124.

each from the temperance and trade sides, two representing clubs, four neutrals and two from the government and Labour opposition. From this, in July a draft bill was proposed and later the new licensing bill was created which abolished the CCB.

In the meantime, on 26 May 1921 Sir John Baird was elected the new chairman of the Board but his reign was short. By July 1921 the aforementioned new licensing bill was in place. The Bill fixed hours of opening to nine in London, between 11.00 a.m. and 11.00 p.m., and eight in the rest of the country, between 11.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. A compulsory afternoon break of two hours was introduced in accordance with the successful policy utilised by the Board during the war. Furthermore, credit remained restricted and the long pull prohibited. The Carlisle scheme was preserved, passing under the jurisdiction of the Home Office, and taxation remained far higher than it had been in real terms prior to the outbreak of war. The temperance lobby saw the act as a stopgap, merely preparing the way for more radical legislation in the future. But in hindsight the CCB was as close to radical as the temperance movement was to get. At the final meeting of the CCB on 21 September 1921 Baird congratulated the Board on the fact that it was their work that had ‘led to, and had alone rendered possible, the very substantial advance on all previous licensing legislation which had been achieved by the passing of the Licensing Act’.<sup>49</sup>

Diverse opinions marked the Board’s demise. The NTDA in its 1920 report noted:

[The CCB] suited the purpose of a section of the government that the public should become habituated to the restrictions . . . the unwarranted continuance of the Board provoked such general dislike that, when at last its abolition was decided upon, its replacement had become impossible . . . no voice was heard in either House of Parliament to protest against its suppression.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> HO 185/229, CCB Minutes of Meetings, 21 September 1921.

<sup>50</sup> The Brewers and Licensed Trade Retail Association, MSS. 420, Box Number 247, NTDA report 1921.

The Brewers' Journal pointed to a general disgruntlement with the CCB whilst appreciating the reforming work of some of its members:

Save among that small section of the people who love restriction as the rest love liberty, the Board will pass unhonoured and unsung. At the same time the members of that Board never expected to shine as public idols . . . much of the unpopularity which the Board earned was caused by its own actions. The treatment it accorded to the licensees dispossessed at Carlisle was foreign to all ideas of British justice. Both Waters Butler and Sydney Neville have served on the Board as members of the public first and as members of the trade afterwards. Of one other member Lord D'Abernon a good word must be said. Lord D'Abernon is an exceptionally minded man with a genius for ruling and leadership. With these qualities he combines a sagacity which prompted him to resign his chairmanship of the Board at a time when, in his judgement, that body should have been disbanded. As to some of its other members, we prefer to maintain a discreet silence.<sup>51</sup>

The Wine Trade Review, however, was less complimentary:

As to the Control Board, it had no right to continue its life or irritating and unequally applied regulations, and we should have preferred its internment and a simple return to pre-war licensing conditions . . . Once more the nation has discovered that Government departments are not to be trusted to manage such a concern as the drink traffic, and state purchase schemes may be regarded as dead as a door nail . . . the universal expressions of joyful relief must have convinced all disposed to favour prohibition that they have held sway too long, and everybody rejoices at the dismissal of the Liquor Control Board.<sup>52</sup>

Even members of the Board realised it had run its course. Neville recalled that 'the CCB was wound up and laid to rest to popular satisfaction. Like all bodies engaged in restricting and controlling public activities, it was unpopular, it certainly made mistakes; but in general, I believe, that its labours were essential.'<sup>53</sup> To reformers the CCB was regarded as a 'golden age' of liquor reform. Vernon described the CCB's restrictions as a 'landmark, which it will be the object of reformers to reach again by

---

<sup>51</sup> Brewers' Journal August 1921.

<sup>52</sup> The Wine Trade Review August 1921.

<sup>53</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, p. 136.

methods . . . based to a considerable extent on the principles established by wartime control'.<sup>54</sup>

A further testament to the success of the Board came eighteen years after its demise. Upon the outbreak of the Second World War immediate calls were made for the full restoration of First World War restrictions from the National Temperance Federation. In reply, the Brewers' Journal pointed out that:

The last war accustomed the people to all kinds of restraint and restrictions. Some of them were provided by time to be good and they have been embodied in our national life. Others when hostilities ended were seen for what they were – opportunist attempts to thrust on the masses the inclinations of the few. In the present conflict the nation comes first and service and devotion to its cause are paramount. But guard must be set on our gates lest the licensed trade becomes as in the last war, the target of teetotal attacks guised under the cloak of patriotism.<sup>55</sup>

History, it seemed, was repeating itself. The Board's experiences created a template on how to manage the alcohol problem in the exigencies of war. Both divergent groups were ready to defend their respective interests but the context of how the alcohol problem was viewed had changed. The drink problem was not as controversial as it had been during the Great War. Society had moved on. In 1931 the British Women's Total Abstinence Union was now campaigning against the corrupting effect of cinema as the 'the drink question alone' was no longer a 'sufficient draw'.<sup>56</sup> How different this situation was from the early days of the war and the spring of 1915 when drink was at the forefront of political and social concern.

This dissertation has considered the drink problem in the First World War. The early days of the war witnessed a moral panic over the drink issue, when its presumed consequences threatened to harm the war effort. The drink problem was

---

<sup>54</sup> H.M. Vernon, The Alcohol Problem, p. 72.

<sup>55</sup> B. Glover, Brewing for Victory: Brewers, Beer and Pubs in World War Two, p. 4.

<sup>56</sup> N. Longmate, The Waterdrinkers: A History of Temperance, p. 279.

also used as a pretext for reforming one aspect of the social habit of the entire working class. This was never an expressly declared motivation but when the evidence is considered the implication is clear. In the field of symbolic politics in war, drink was a powerful totem. Central to these issues was the CCB and in particular the prominent role that Lord D'Abernon took in resolving the drink problem.

Initial assessments of Lord D'Abernon were fairly uncomplimentary as the self-confidence he displayed in his work as chairman was mistaken for the work of an arrogant self-congratulating politician. With hindsight this view seems erroneous. Lord D'Abernon was a most capable man and a central figure in the resolution of the drink problem. He was relatively popular with both the trade and temperance movements, and his resignation in March 1920 destroyed the possibility of any radical reform being maintained in the post-war world. His dynamic activism was representative of the reforming thrust of the Board and without it the organisation would have been severely weakened. He was a man who had clear ideas and, more often than not, was able to implement them. John Pedder recalled the very first meeting of the Board:

The success was due, I think, to two main agencies. In the first place, the motive of the successful prosecution of the war, potent enough, surely, but alarmingly vague, and in the second place, the hands of the Chairman . . . He directed the machinery at his disposal, and adapted it to the work and the material before him so skilfully, that every one dropped into his place almost as though by the mere force of nature rather than by directions imposed upon them.<sup>57</sup>

For his own part, D'Abernon hoped for a permanent legacy to be left behind:

We took up the task with the earnest desire to contribute something to the successful prosecution of the war and to arrest the dire injury which alcoholic excess was working in more directions than one. Once the task was grappled with, once success was achieved in our war effort, we remained united in the

---

<sup>57</sup> HO 190/876, Dinner to Lord D'Abernon, HM Ambassador to Germany – Report of the Speeches, 4 October 1920.

earnest desire to effect something during peace, towards permanent social improvement and towards a higher level of health and efficiency.<sup>58</sup>

The emphasis upon the scientific dispensation of temperance reform was D'Abernon's legacy to the drink problem and marks one of the most innovatory aspects of the Board's work. He hoped that rationalisation, rather than scurrilous rumour mongering, could change the management of the drink problem forever.

There was much truth in the accusations made that D'Abernon had merely implemented temperance reform, under the guise of social reform, in the interests of national efficiency. After the war the distinction was not so important but in the midst of conflict it was necessary to deny such pro temperance policies. His policies of reducing hours, banning treating, reducing the gravity of beers and spirits and the Carlisle scheme could have come straight from one of the many temperance journals prior to and during the war. They were certainly not innovative. But it was the context of war which allowed for their proliferation into 'mainstream' politics. The emphasis placed upon industrial productivity and appropriate conceptions of 'leisure', meant that these ideas were regarded as sensible in terms of national efficiency. Under the jurisdiction of the Board, they proved their value in reducing insobriety. The unfortunate by product was that they became irrevocably associated with the CCB, which, by the end of the war, was a universally derided organisation. This, in turn, was due to it being tainted by association with the cuts in drink production and shortages implemented by the Ministry of Food in mid-1917. The CCB had gone out of its way to declare itself to be a non-temperance organisation yet on the ground people saw their supply of beer limited and drew the conclusion that the Board, as it was in charge of 'drink control', was to blame. The CCB had come to be seen as being an agent of repression in the class war. The trade had borne the CCB's

---

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

legislation loyally but reluctantly, but from this point onwards was unconvinced as to the impartiality of the organisation. The trade was also convinced that the Board should not continue after the war.

The failure within government to create a post war body to manage the drink problem represented a withdrawal by the state from this field. But the CCB heavily influenced the work undertaken by brewers in the 1920s and the popular emergence of the reformed public house and policy of cultural uplift that it embodied, owes much to the Board's work. Even if D'Abernon was not overseeing future reform his legacy lived on. Neville testified to his progressivism: 'it is an undeniable fact that the adoption of Lord D'Abernon's policy of improvement inspired much constructive effort in the trade in the post-First War years.'<sup>59</sup>

Public opinion was also important in the demise of the Board. In the immediate post-war world the justification of continued infringements on the liberty of the individual to drink did not equate with what the First World War had idealistically been fought for: the idea of liberty and freedom at home and abroad. People could not see why restrictions had to continue as the war had been fought to preserve the British way of life, not to create a land of restriction and sobriety propagated by temperance faddists. A return to 'normality' was desired and the CCB, as an archetypal example of government intervention in daily life, was a casualty of this understandable urge.

Likewise the temperance movement, after the First World War, was largely consigned to irrelevance. The logic of the temperance argument had been proven in the light of the clear reduction in insobriety but had been seen to be unpopular. The failure of the movement was compounded by the failure of activists on the

---

<sup>59</sup> S. Neville, Seventy Rolling Years, p. 118

prohibitionist wing to compromise. The UKA remained convinced that prohibition was the answer. A rational appreciation of how moderate reform offered the most substantive opportunity for the progression of ideas, which underlay the moral and social justification for temperance, was lacking. As so often, the moderate voice was not the loudest. Consequently, this allowed the trade to draw attention to this radical version of temperance ideology and label the entire movement as harbouring these extreme ideas.

The war provided the movement with a real opportunity. Moderate temperance legislation was implemented under the guise of being essential to national efficiency. This could have been used to build momentum but a constant desire for ever more radical legislation meant that the good done by these measures was obscured by the radicalism of those proposing increasingly intrusive policies. Moreover, much of the fuel firing the temperance question was taken away by the measures of the CCB. Carlisle was the most radical of the Board's measures. It was effectively a temperance utopia where ideas could be tested. The failure to extend this scheme nationally, when the opportunity was there and the CCB supported it, revealed the limits of the temperance crusade. Even then, prohibitionists remained disgusted at the government's involvement in the selling of drink. With the introduction of moderate temperance measures, some of which was permanently enshrined in the 1921 Licensing Act, the continued purpose of the moderate temperance lobby was also called into question. There was nowhere left for it to go aside from the realms of radical prohibitionism. It would have been appropriate if temperance advocates, so proud of wearing the white ribbon, had at this point instead raised the white flag. The gridlocked antagonism between the temperance movement and the trade remained.

In contrast, the trade came out of the war rather well. Having consented to government intervention, it could portray itself as patriotic, willing to sacrifice elements of its business for the greater national good. This ran contrary to those depictions of the trade from temperance foes as interested merely in money and in corrupting society through the sale of alcohol. With reputations intact, the trade found that war did not prove as bad economically as had been expected. Brewers were now receiving more money for a lighter product. During the war brewers produced roughly two thirds of the bulk output with one third of the raw materials.<sup>60</sup> Figures published in The Economist showed that profits for a representative sample of firms had in total risen from £2,902,157 in 1914 to £4,973,199 in 1918.<sup>61</sup> Trade duties remained high, and as one journal noted, ‘Englishmen are condemned to consume an insipid travesty of beer and pay for it as though it was champagne.’<sup>62</sup> The war had also shown that money could be made from varying the type of trade within the pub. The increase in the number of soft drinks for sale, together with an increasingly diverse clientele, was encouraging for the future of the trade in the post-war world. It was up to this new progressive faction within the industry to take up the mantle offered by the war, to build on the lessons of the CCB as the foundation for opening up the pub as a place of sociability for all in the community. The progressive faction of brewers had done well in pacifying the extreme wings of the various brewers’ organisations but they could not create a surge in support for the CCB. By the end of the war the Board had become unpopular across the brewing fraternity because legislation accepted during the conflict was unwelcome in peacetime.

---

<sup>60</sup> Lesley Richmond and Alison Turton, (eds.), The Brewing Industry: A Guide to Historical Records (Manchester, 1990), p. 14.

<sup>61</sup> Waldorf Astor Papers, MS 1066/1/1071, Article ‘Breweries and Beer Duty’. Figures refer to the following companies Guinness, Barclay, Perkins, Bass, Ratcliff, Bent’s, Boddington’s, Cannon, Chester’s, Huggins and Co, Mitchell and Butler, Newcastle, Watney, Combe, W.B. Reid, Whitbread, William Hancock. In 1919 profits increased further to £6,498,263 but fell in 1920 to £5,882,311.

<sup>62</sup> The Licensing World and Licensed Trade Review 13 August 1921.

The popularity of the CCB's legislation with the general public is difficult to measure. In an age prior to regular polling data one has to rely on anecdotal evidence. The CCB was never going to be the most popular of institutions given that it was created to limit and control the enjoyable experience of going to the pub. Stories claiming that, according to Frank Coller, Secretary to the Minister of Food, even the German Chancellor regarded the actions of the CCB 'as violating the liberty of the subject', did not aid matters.<sup>63</sup> Consent to the Board's measures is also difficult to judge. The only criteria by which an insight into this can be gauged is by considering the decline in convictions in drunkenness, which, as has been said above, indicates either an innate patriotism, a belief that drinking in wartime was damaging to the nation or, after 1917, a shortage of beer and spirits. However, the general public seemed to abide by the new rules. The ban on treating, for example, however unpopular, was applied throughout the land; there was no widespread revolt. This compliance with the Board's legislation, if anything, should lay low the ghost of accusations that there were 'too many people who could not be trusted.'

However, some issues proved too difficult for the Board to solve. The creation of a 'café society' eluded D'Abernon and his colleagues. At one of his final meetings with the Board, Lloyd George noted ruefully:

One often sees on the Continent, where the man gets his mug of lager in front of him and he takes his time over it and goes on talking, but here when a man stands in front of a bar what does he do? He tosses his drink off and he has another at the same place or goes to another place and then has another...the working man is conservative. If you have got him accustomed to drinking at the bar he does not like to have it at any other place.<sup>64</sup>

Such problems still afflict society today. Politicians yearn for a change in the drinking habits of the nation to ape our fellow Europeans. With the advent of 'twenty-four hour

---

<sup>63</sup> Frank Coller, *A State Trading Adventure*, p. 133.

<sup>64</sup> Lloyd George Papers, LG/F/228/7, Liquor Control Board Conference, 22 April 1921.

drinking' a more leisurely pace of drinking was predicted. It will be interesting to see how this prediction turns out. Perhaps politicians today could learn some lessons from the experiences of the Central Control Board.

The repercussions of war are many and varied. The drink debate during the First World War exemplifies how British society focussed on unpatriotic social habits when the war was not going well. Someone had to be blamed and the drinkers of the nation provided a suitable scapegoat. Drink had been a longstanding concern. The war merely presented an ideal opportunity for familiar arguments to be cast in a new light. The moral panic that resulted stemmed from a desire to be seen to be doing everything to win the war but the truth was, in fact, far simpler and more difficult for temperance activists to swallow. It did not really matter whether the domestic Tommy drank, because the war was not won in the pubs of Britain. Victory was gained on the battlefield. Victory celebrations took place in that most popular of British institutions, the public house, which will always have a certain allure. In the cold light of the post-war world anxious war worries were swiftly forgotten. Time had been called on the protagonists of panic.

## Select Bibliography

### Archives

**Held at the National Archives, Kew.**

#### **Home Office Files (HO classification)**

##### **HO 185/**

- 5 Carlisle
- 8 Carlisle Constitution
- 9 Carlisle Local Committee Minutes
- 17 Carlisle District/Periodical Reports by Mr Sanders for consideration of the Public House Committee
- 33 Carlisle Financial Arrangements Banking
- 37 Accounts
- 140 New Brewery Caldergate Miscellaneous Correspondence
- 190 Compulsory Requisition of Licensed Premises
- 191 Cases and Opinions of the Law Officers of the Crown
- 197 Increment Value Duty
- 210 Carlisle Pubs
- 211 Carlisle Pubs
- 213 Public House Committee Minutes July 1915 to March 1917
- 214 Public House Committee Minutes 1918
- 222 Carlisle Legal Matters
- 223 Law Officers
- 224 Compensation
- 225 Questions arising from Compensation
- 227 Reports on Working of Board's schemes (including correspondence with Dr Addison).
- 228 Alcohol Committee Correspondence Memoranda
- 229 Central Control Board Minutes of Meetings
- 230 Central Control Board Reports
- 231 Correspondence RE Appointed Members
- 232 Central Control Board Parliamentary Control, Modification of Orders
- 233 Original Signed and Sealed Orders
- 234 Cheapstow National Shipyards Correspondence RE Direct Control of Canteens
- 235 Contravention of Board's Orders/Case of William vs Pearce, Charing Cross Hotel
- 236 Contravention of Board's Orders Claims for Compensation from Closing Licensed Premises
- 237 Dilution of Spirits Correspondence and Memoranda
- 238 Drinking among Women and Young People
- 239 Miscellaneous/Medicated Wines/ Post-war changes to Board's Orders.
- 240 General Orders
- 241 Light Beer Correspondence
- 242 Miscellaneous Canteen Committee, Press Communiqués
- 243 No Treating Order/ Correspondence, Reports, etc.
- 244 Official Correspondence, Government Laboratory, War Cabinet
- 245 Official Correspondence/Ministry of Reconstruction
- 246 Correspondence Regarding Issue of Board's Orders

- 247 Correspondence Regarding Issue of Board's Orders London Area
- 248 Correspondence Regarding Issue of Board's Orders Dartford Area, Gloucestershire and Hereford/Liverpool
- 249 Correspondence Regarding Issue of Board's Orders Eastern Area, Shorncliffe, South Eastern Area
- 250 Orders Regarding Norfolk, Portsmouth, Southampton etc
- 251 Welsh Area
- 252 Welsh Area 1917-1919
- 253 Western Border Area
- 254 Orders in Council
- 255 Output of Beer Restriction Act Correspondence 1916
- 256 Restrictions Committee Minutes
- 257 Summer Months proposed relaxation of restrictions at Watering places
- 258 Women's Advisory Committee Reports and Correspondence
- 259 Working of Board's Orders, Conference of Chief Constables, Working of Orders in the North East
- 260 Working of Board's Orders/Reports of Medical Officers of Health and Employers of Labour
- 261 Working of Board's Orders by Inspectors 1916-1921
- 262 Lord D'Abernon's Personal Papers
- 263 Lord D'Abernon's Semi-Official Correspondence
- 264 Confidential Papers on Limiting the Consumption of Spirits
- 265 Lord D'Abernon's Confidential Papers
- 266 Lord D'Abernon's Cabinet Papers 1917-1918
- 267 No Treating Order, Medical Certificates, Output
- 268 Compensation
- 269 Specimen Files from Carlisle
- 270 Central Control Board Minutes
- 273 Copies of Reports
- 280 Gretna Tavern
- 283 Carlisle
- 348 Personal Letters
- 349 Control of Licensed Premises/Suggestions for taking over other properties – Cardiff, Gateshead, Liverpool, South Shields.
- 352 Carlisle Local Committee
- 353 For Chairman
- 510 Board's Orders 1919-1921
- 522 Carlisle General Manager
- 523 Local Committee 1919-1920 Carlisle Miscellaneous Correspondence

#### **HO 190/**

- 1 Carlisle Breweries Purchase of Raw Materials
- 2 Carlisle Breweries Purchase of Hops and Miscellaneous Correspondence
- 3 Carlisle Breweries Purchase of Raw Materials 1917
- 4 Carlisle Breweries Acquisition of Plant and Material, Brewing Programme and Output
- 5 Miscellaneous Correspondence
- 139 Carlisle Correspondence
- 146 Gretna Tavern 1917
- 147 Gretna Tavern 1917-1919

- 405 Carlisle and District State Management Scheme
- 424 Coffee Carts
- 425 Miscellaneous Correspondence concerned with Coffee carts
- 426 Dry Canteen and Hostel High Brewery
- 427 Licensed Houses where food is attainable
- 434 Memoranda by Sanders 1916-1917
- 435 Memoranda by Sanders February 1917-December 1917
- 436 Memoranda by Sanders 1917-1918
- 437 Memoranda by Sanders 1918-1919
- 449 Reports from Latymer House London 1916-1917
- 450 Reports from Latymer House London 1914-1919
- 454 Correspondence between Mr Sanders and Mr Burrill 1916-1917
- 455 Correspondence between Mr Sanders and Mr Burrill 1917-1919
- 456 Correspondence between Mr Sanders and Mr Burrill 1919-1929
- 457 Office of Works Miscellaneous Correspondence
- 458 Correspondence with Mr Sanders Admin General
- 459 Administration General Management Correspondence with Eagles 1917
- 460 General Management Correspondence with Eagles 1917
- 461 General Management Correspondence with Eagles 1918
- 463 General Administration correspondence with Waters Butler 1916-1917
- 464 General correspondence with Waters Butler 1917-1918
- 465 General correspondence with Waters Butler 1918-1919
- 468 Sanders Private correspondence 1916-1917
- 469 Sanders Private correspondence 1918-1919
- 472 Copies of Reports General Manager Carlisle
- 473 Copies of Reports General Manager Carlisle 1918-1919
- 482 Carlisle Licensed Victuallers Association 1916-1919 – Miscellaneous Correspondence
- 483 Ministry of Food Miscellaneous Correspondence Carlisle 1916-1917
- 484 Ministry of Food Miscellaneous Correspondence Carlisle 1917-1920
- 485 Editors, Publishers and Newspaper Agents Correspondence 1916-1919
- 488 Papers relating to Carlisle before the starting of the Carlisle Office 1916
- 489 Defence of the Realm Reports and Orders 1915
- 490 Correspondence with Reverend Henry Carter 1916-1936
- 491 Legal Notes and Memoranda 1916-1927
- 492 Correspondence with Theodore Carr 1919-1922
- 493 Correspondence with Major Astor 1916-1927
- 497 Correspondence with Cranfield – Stimulation of Public Interest in State Control 1919-1920
- 499 First Report of Sanders upto December 1916
- 500 Appendices to First Report
- 501 State Purchase and Control 1915-1918
- 502 Central Control Board Reports
- 503 Complete list of the Central Control Board 18 June 1918
- 509 Orders of the Board
- 510 Orders of the Board
- 515 Carlisle and Maryport Charities 1917-1918
- 520 Local Committee 1916-1917
- 521 Local Committee 1917
- 528 Correspondence with Mr F.W. Chance 1918-1932

- 529 Correspondence with Mr Towle Local Advisory Committee 1918-1929
- 530 Circulated information of Public House Committee 1918-1920
- 544 Public House Committee Minutes April 1916-end of 1916
- 545 Public House Committee Minutes 1917
- 546 Public House Committee Minutes 1918
- 547 Public House Committee Minutes 1919
- 548 Public House Committee Minutes 1920
- 550 Central Control Board book of the Carlisle Local Committee
- 522 Local Committee Minutes
- 561 J.D. Wallis Carlisle
- 601 Correspondence with London office Accounts 1916-1917
- 621 Estimates etc
- 675 Carlisle Statistics Book
- 776 Constabulary Correspondence with Chief Constables of Carlisle 1917-1918
- 777 Constabulary Correspondence with Chief Constables of Carlisle 1918-1919
- 779 Correspondence between Mr Sanders and London Office 1916
- 780 Correspondence between Mr Sanders and London Office 1916-1918
- 781 Correspondence between Mr Sanders and London Office 1917
- 784 Sanders and London Office 1917-1918
- 785 Sanders and London Office 1918
- 786 Sanders to London 1918
- 787 Sanders to London 1918-1919
- 788 Sanders to London 1919-1921
- 807 Restriction Act Output of Beer and Spirits 1916-1917
- 808 Restriction Act Output of Beer and Spirits 1917
- 809 Restriction Act Output of Beer and Spirits 1917
- 822 Drunkenness Statistics 1917-1936
- 823 Dilution and Analysis of Spirits 1916-1924
- 826 Notes on Interviews and Inspections and Reports Conversations on telephone 1917
- 827 Notes on Interviews and Inspections and Reports Conversations on telephone 1917
- 828 Notes on Interviews 1917-1918
- 829 Notes on Interviews, Inspections and Reports 1918
- 830 Notes on Interviews, Inspections and Reports 1917-1918
- 841 Sunday Closing Area 1917
- 842 Sunday Closing Opening 1917-1919
- 843 The Temperance Legislation League 1917-1922
- 854 Their Majesties visit to Carlisle
- 861 Letters written and reports made by Sanders from Canada House 1916
- 862 Correspondence with Catering Superintendent
- 863 Press representatives visit to Carlisle 1918-1919
- 866 Reports on Operations of Orders and other reports 1915-1916
- 867 Mr Wallis' Report on Longtown
- 868 Mr Wallis' Report on Longtown
- 874 State Purchase
- 875 General Managers Reports
- 876 Miscellaneous Material
- 1388 Old Bottle Labels

**Cabinet Papers (CAB classification)**

CAB 23/1  
CAB 23/2  
CAB 23/3  
CAB 23/4  
CAB 23/5  
CAB 23/6  
CAB 23/7  
CAB 23/8  
CAB 24/6 – GT 219  
CAB 24/11 – GT 526  
CAB 24/13 – GT 727  
CAB 24/12 – GT 630  
CAB 24/14 – GT 885  
CAB 24/16  
CAB 24/17  
CAB 24/22  
CAB 24/25  
CAB 24/27  
CAB 24/30  
CAB 24/31  
CAB 24/32  
CAB 24/36  
CAB 24/40  
CAB 24/43  
CAB 24/44  
CAB 26/1  
CAB 26/2  
CAB 26/3  
CAB 27/62  
CAB 27/150  
CAB 37/126  
CAB 37/127  
CAB 37/128  
CAB 41/36  
CAB 41/40

**Ministry of Munitions Papers relating to Central Control Board (MUN classification)**

MUN 5/95 346.1/1-13

**Metropolitan Police Records relating to Central Control Board (MEPO classification)**

MEPO 2/1620 Restriction of Sale and Consumption of Intoxicating Liquor: Effect on Theatres  
MEPO 2/1645 Effect of No Treating Order  
MEPO 2/1646

MEPO 2/1694 Liquor Licenses entertaining friends during prohibited hours  
 MEPO 2/1702 Liquor Traffic Treating  
 MEPO 2/2047 Warnings Administered to Licensees of Public Houses by Police  
 MEPO 2/4450  
 MEPO 2/8116  
 MEPO 2/9174 Pleasure Steamboats on the Thames  
 MEPO 3/25  
 MEPO 3/238  
 MEPO 3/2432  
 MEPO 3/2435

**Ministry of Food Papers relating to Central Control Board (MAF classification)**

MAF 60/61  
 MAF 60/100 Cabinet Papers Liquor Restriction and Control

**Treasury Papers relating to the Central Control Board (T classification)**

T272/16  
 T112/1 Letters from the Treasury to the Central Control Board

**Brewers and Licensed Retail Trade Records held at the Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick**

MSS. 240  
 Box Number:  
 1 October 1912-September 1915 Minute Book 4.  
     October 1915-July 1917 Minute Book 5.  
 2 October 1917-April 1919 Minute Book 6.  
 22 1912-1918 Members Subscriptions No. 2.  
 30 1912-1923 NTDA Minute Book 2 Trade Defence Fund.  
 32 Bedfordshire Brewers Association Minutes May 1908 – November 1931.  
 42 Circulars.  
 43 Circulars.  
 247 National Trade Defence Association Reports (1914-1921).  
 249 National Trade Defence Association Annual Report for the Eastern District:  
 Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.  
     National Trade Defence Association Home and Southern Counties District  
 Reports 1915-1922.  
     National Trade Defence Association Nottingham Report 1917.  
 278 1909-1929 Various Papers on Beer, Duty and the Budget.  
 304 Memorandum on State Purchase.  
 393 Restrictions on Output 1914-1918.

**Carlisle Record Office**

City of Carlisle Proceedings of the Council and Committees  
 General Manager's Report to the Board 1916-1921

**Carlisle Tullie House Museum**

State Management Files

**Alliance House Archive, London**

United Kingdom Alliance Minute Books

United Kingdom Alliance Yearly Reports 1914-1921

United Kingdom Alliance Hand Book 1921

National Commercial Temperance League Minutes 1914-1921

The International Good Templar

Alliance News

**British Library**

Lord D'Abernon Papers

Lady D'Abernon Papers

**Reading University**

Waldorf Astor Papers

**House of Commons Archives**

Lloyd George's Personal Papers

Bonar Law Papers

John St Loe Strachey Papers

**Imperial War Museum Sound Archive**

Recorded Interviews with the following individuals:

William George Benham

Frederick Powell

Elsie Scott

Ernie May

**Imperial War Museum Documents Archive**

Miscellaneous Printed Material from the following individuals

D.L. Rowlands

Major J. Pullan

'The Cup that Cheers' Miscellaneous 213 Item 3099

**Imperial War Museum Photograph Archive**

## Contemporary Newspapers and Journals

*Alliance News*  
*The Annandale Observer*  
*The Brewers' Gazette*  
*Brewers' Journal*  
*The Carlisle Evening News*  
*The Carlisle Journal*  
*Cumberland News*  
*The Daily Dispatch*  
*The Daily Express*  
*The Daily Graphic*  
*The Daily Mail*  
*The Daily Mirror*  
*The Daily Telegraph*  
*Dundee Advertiser*  
*Dundee Courier*  
*The International Good Templar*  
*The Licensing World and Licensed Trade Review*  
*Manchester Guardian*  
*Punch Magazine*  
*The Scotsman*  
*The Spectator*  
*The Sphere*  
*St Andrews Citizen*  
*The Sunday Express*  
*The Times*  
*The White Ribbon*  
*The Wine Trade Review*

## Primary Sources

### Books

Astor, Lord Waldorf, 'Temperance and Politics', *The New Way Series*, No. 12 (Daily News, London, 1925).

Asquith, Herbert Henry, *Memories and Reflections 1852-1927*, Vol. 1, (Cassell and Company Ltd, London, 1928).

Asquith, Lady Cynthia, *Diaries 1915-1918* (Hutchinson, London, 1968).

Asquith, Margot, *Margot Asquith: The Autobiography*, Vol. 2 (Penguin Books, London, 1936).

Beaverbrook, Lord Max Aitken *Politicians and the War 1914-16* (Osbourne Book Company, London, 1960).

Bell, Lady Florence *At the Works: A Study of a Manufacturing Town [i.e. Middlesbrough]* (Edward Arnold, London, 1907).

Black, William, *Temperance Stories: contributed to the "Fraserburgh and Elgin temperance quarterlies"* (Elgin, Publisher unknown, 1915).

Blaiklock, George, *The Alcohol Factor in Social Conditions: The Report of an Inquiry presented to the National Temperance League*, Edited by Rae, John Turner (P.S. King & Son, Westminster, 1914).

Blake, Robert (ed.), *The Private Papers of Douglas Haig 1914-1919: being selections from the private diary and correspondence of Field-Marshal the Earl Haig of Bemersyde, K.T., G.C.B., O.M., etc.* (Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1952).

Brock, Michael and Eleanor (eds.), *H.H. Asquith: Letters to Venetia Stanley* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1982).

Carter, Henry, *Control of the Drink Trade: A contribution to national efficiency, 1915-1917, etc.* (Longmans & Co., London, 1918).

Carver, Thomas Nixon, *Government Control of the Liquor Business in Great Britain and the United States* Preliminary Economic Studies of the War, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of Economics and History (Oxford University Press, New York, 1919).

Churchill, Lady Randolph (ed.), *Women's War Work* (C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., London 1916).

Churchill, Sir Winston, *Thoughts and Adventures* (T. Butterworth, London, 1932).

Coller, Frank Herbert, *A State Trading Adventure: [The Ministry of Food, 1917-21]* (Oxford University Press, London, 1925).

Creighton, Louise, *Memoir of a Victorian Woman: Reflections of Louise Creighton, 1850- 1936*, Editor, Introduction and Annotation by Covert, James Thayne (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1994).

George, David Lloyd, *War Memoirs Volume One* (Nicholson & Watson, London, 1933).

Greenwood, Arthur, *Public Ownership of the Liquor Trade* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1920).

Horsley, Sir Victor and Sturge, Mary D. *Alcohol and the Human Body: An Introduction of the Subject* (MacMillan and Co Ltd., London and New York, 1907).

Kelynack, T.N. (ed.), *The drink problem of today in its medico-sociological aspects* (Methuen, London, 1916).

MacDonagh, Michael, *In London During the Great War: The Diary of a Journalist* (Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1935).

Maskell, Henry Parr and Gregory, Edward W., *Old Country Inns* (Pitman and Sons Ltd., London, 1910).

Mass-Observation, Harrison, Thomas H. (ed.), *The Pub and the People: A Worktown Study*, The Cresset Library Series (First Published 1943) (Reprinted edition: Hutchinson, London, 1987).

Masterman, C.F.G. (ed.), *The Heart of the Empire: Discussions of Problems of Modern City Life in England, With an Essay on Imperialism*, Society and the Victorians Series, (First Published: T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1901) 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Reprinted, Editor and Introduction by Gilbert, Bentley B. (The Harvester Press, Brighton, 1973).

McEwan, J.M. (ed.), *The Riddell Diaries 1908-1923* (The Athlone Press, London, 1986).

Mee, Arthur and Holden, J. Stuart, *Defeat or Victory?: The strength of Britain book* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Morgan and Scott Ltd. for the Strength of Britain Movement, London, 1917).

Mitchell, Kate, *The Drink Question: Its Social and Medical Aspects*, Social Science Series 7 (S. Sonnenschein: British Women's Temperance Association, London, 1891).

Murray, Marr, *Drink and the War: From the Patriotic Point of View* (Chapman and Hall Ltd., London, 1915).

Neville, Sydney O., *Seventy Rolling Years* (Faber and Faber, London, 1958).

Pankhurst, Estelle Sylvia, *The Home Front: A Mirror to Life in England during the First World War* (First Published: Hutchinson, London, 1932) (This Edition: Cresset Library, London, 1987).

Peel, C.S., *How we lived then 1914-1918: A sketch of social and domestic life in England during the War* (John Lane, The Bodley Head, London, 1929).  
- *Life's Enchanted Cup: An Autobiography (1872-1933)* (John Lane, The Bodley Head, London, 1933).

Rae, John Turner, '*Drink and Degeneration*', The N.T.L. Tracts for the Times, No. 3 (1904).

Richardson A.E. and Eberlein, H. Donaldson, *The English Inn Past and Present: A Review of its History and Social Life* (B.T. Batsford Ltd., London, 1925).

Roberts, Robert, *The Classic Slum: Salford life in the first quarter of the century* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1971).

Rowntree, B. Seebholm, *Poverty: A Study of Town Life* (MacMillan and Co., London, 1901).

Selley, Ernest, *The English Public House As It Is* (Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., London, 1927).

Sherwell, Arthur, *The Drink Peril in Scotland* (Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, Edinburgh and London, 1903).

Sherwell, Arthur and Rowntree, Joseph, *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1899).

Snowden, Philip, *Socialism and the Drink Question*, The Socialist Library 6 Series (Independent Labour Party, London, 1908).  
- *An Autobiography; Volume One 1864-1919* (Ivor Nicholson and Watson Ltd., London, 1934).

Soutter, Robinson, *Alcohol: Its Place and Power in Legislation* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1904).

Spender, J.A. and Asquith, Cyril, *Life of Herbert Henry Asquith, Lord Oxford and Asquith* Volume II (Hutchinson & Co., London, 1932).

Starke, J., *Alcohol: The Sanction for its Use* (G.P. Putmans Sons, New York and London, 1907).

Tillerton, W.R., *Drinking Songs, and other songs, etc.* (Cecil Palmer, London, 1928).

Tozier, Josephine, *Among English Inns: The Story of a Pilgrimage to Characteristic Spots of Rural England* (L.C. Page & Co., Boston, 1904).

Warwick, Frances Evelyn Maynard Greville, Countess of, *A Woman and the War* (Chapman and Hall Ltd., London, 1916).

Wilson, Trevor (ed.), *The Political Diaries of C.P. Scott 1911-1918* (Collins, London, 1970).

Wright, Harold, *Population*, Cambridge Economic Handbooks 5 Series (The University Press, Cambridge, 1923).

### **Primary Pamphlets and Articles**

Atkins, John Black, 'Drink in the Last War: A Study in Licensing Reform', *A Monthly Bulletin* (1939).

Babington, C.H., 'The "New" Policy of Licensing Reform: A Reply from a Brewer', *The Nineteenth Century* 77 (1915) pp. 372-381.

Barclay, Edwyn, 'The Future of the Public House', *The Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 65 (1909) pp. 994-1004.

Baynes, H. and Chancellor, H.G., 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade', *Contemporary Review* (1917).

Beesly, Gerald, *The Drink Problem* (Temperance Legislation League Pamphlets, London, January 1916).

Brunton, Sir Lauder, 'Alcohol: What it does to us and what we ought to do to it', *The Nineteenth Century* (July 1915) pp. 58-74.

Carter, Henry, *Europe's Revolt Against Alcohol*, (Charles H. Kelly, London, 1916).

Chancellor, H.G., 'War and National Temperance', *Living Age* (November 1916) pp. 349-354.

Cross, Richard, 'Public House Reform at Carlisle', *The Nation* (April 1915).

Evens, Reverend G. Bramwell, *The Truth about Direct Control in Carlisle: As Administered by the Central Control Board Liquor Traffic* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. P.S. King, Westminster, 1917).

Henderson, J.M., *Proposed State Purchase of the Liquor Traffic* (Hodder and Staughton, London, 1917).

Irving, W.J., *State Purchase of the Drink Trade and the State of Drink under Government Management in Carlisle* (West Riding ABC Publishing Co., Leeds, 1924).

Jennings, H.J., 'New Drink Regulations', *Fortnightly Review*, (January 1916) pp. 176-186.

Jones, Harry, 'What Lloyd George accomplished against Liquor', *Worlds Work* (August 1915) pp. 223-225.

Keating, Reverend Joseph, *The Drink Question* (Catholic Studies in Social Reform, London, 1914).

Koren, John, 'Drink Reform in Europe', *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1915) pp. 739-750.

Lansdown, Reverend Mathias, *Our Allies, Ourselves and the Drink Problem* (Congregational Union of England and Wales, London, 1915).

Lathbury, D.C., 'Drink and the War', *The Nineteenth Century* (May 1915) pp. 1004-1014.

Murray, Marr, *Drink and the War: From the Patriotic Point of View* (Chapman and Hall Ltd., London, 1915).

Newton, John, *Alcohol and the War: The Example of Russia* (Richard James, London, 1916).

Part, Alexander, *The Public House Trust: Some Answers to Critics* (St. Albans, London, 1903).

Part, Alexander and the Right Hon. Earl Grey, 'Licensing Reform: A New Policy', *The Nineteenth Century* (January 1915) pp.60-71.

De Peyer, E.C., *A Scheme for State Purchase of Breweries and Licensed Houses* (Pitman, London, 1916).

Reason, Will, *The Liquor Traffic as a National Problem* (Congregational Union of England and Wales, London, 1917).

Richardson, A.W., *The Nation and Alcohol* (London Student Christian Movement, London, May 1916).

Samuelson, James, *Drink Past Present and Probable Future, With Some of its Bearings on the War* (Philip Son and Nephew Ltd., Liverpool, 1916).

Shadwell, Arthur, 'Liquor Traffic in War', *The Nineteenth Century* (February 1917) pp. 332-347.

Sherwell, Arthur, *Carlisle (the Carlisle scheme of Direct Control of the Liquor Trade) and its Critics: Allegations tested by facts* (Temperance Legislation League, London, 1923).

Stuart, Reverend Wilson, *The Carlisle and Annan Experiment in State Purchase and Liquor Nationalisation*, (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. R.J. James, London, 1917).

Weaver, Laurence, 'The Public House of the Future' *Country Life*, Vol. 40 (1916) pp. 329-330.

Whittaker, Sir Thomas, 'Work of the Central Control Board', *The Contemporary Review*, Vol. CIX (March 1916) pp. 273-287.

Williams, Lt Col A.H., *Drink: The Greatest Foe* (Protestant Truth Society, London, 1918).

Wilson, G.B., *Nationalisation of the Liquor Traffic: Ought the Churches to advocate it?* (R. J. James, London, 1916).

Wood, Edward, *The Nationalisation of the Liquor Traffic: A menace to the Nation* (P.S. King and Son, London, 1916).

### **Parliamentary Papers and Official Publications**

*Alcohol: Its Action on the Human Organism* (H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1918).  
*Carlisle and District Direct Control Area: The General Manager's Report to the Board 1916-1921.*

*Hansard Parliamentary Debates.*

Home Office, *The First Report of the Central Control Board* (1915)

Home Office, *The Second Report of the Central Control Board* (1916)

Home Office, *The Third Report of the Central Control Board* (1917)  
 Home Office, *The Fourth Report of the Central Control Board* (1918)  
 Home Office, *Memorandum in favour of State Purchase* (December 1916)

### **Secondary Literature**

Adams, Ian H., *The Making of Urban Scotland*, Croom Helm Historical Geographical Series (Croom Helm, London, 1978).

Aldcroft, Derek, 'Control of the Liquor Trade in Great Britain 1914-1921' in W.H. Chaloner and B.M. Ratcliffe, *Trade and Transport: Essays in Economic History in Honour of T.S. Willan* (The University Press, Manchester, 1977).

George Younger and Son Limited, *A Short History of George Younger and Son Ltd., Alloa (1762-1925)* (Publisher and Location unknown, 1925) (reprinted ed., Clackmannan District Libraries, Alloa, 1982).

Bailey, Peter, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: rational recreation and the contest for control, 1830-1885* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1978).

Barnett, L. Margaret, *British Food Policy During the First World War* (George Allen and Unwin, Boston, 1985).

Beckett, Jane and Cherry, Deborah (eds.), *The Edwardian Era* (Phaidon Press and Barbican Art Gallery, Oxford, 1987).

Bédarida, François, *A Social History of England, 1851-1975*, trans. A.S. Forster (Methuen and Co. Ltd., London, 1979).

Benson, John, *The Working Class in Britain, 1850-1939* (IB. Tauris, London and New York, 2003).

- *The Rise of Consumer Society in Britain, 1880-1980* (Longman, London, 1994).

- (ed.), *The Working Class in England, 1875-1914* (Croom Helm, London, 1985).

Bentley, M. and Stevenson, J. (eds.), *High and Low Politics in Modern Britain* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1983).

Bentley, M., *The Climax of Liberal Politics: British Liberalism in Theory and Practice 1868-1914* (Edward Arnold, London, 1987).

- *The Liberal Mind, 1914-1929*, Cambridge Studies in the History and Theory of Politics, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1977).

Berridge, Virginia and Edwards, Griffith, *Opium and the People – Opiate Use in Nineteenth Century England* (Allen Lane, London, 1981).

Berridge, Virginia, *Temperance: Its History and Impact on Current and Future Alcohol Policy*, JRF Drug and Alcohol Research Programme (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York, 2005).

Booth, M., *Opium: A History* (Simon and Schuster, London and New York, 1996).

- Bourke, Joanna, *Fear: A Cultural History* (Virago Press, London, 1995).  
 - *Working Class Cultures in Britain, 1890-1960: gender, class and ethnicity* (Routledge, London and New York, 1994).
- Blake, Robert, *The Private Papers of Douglas Haig, 1914-1919; being selections from the private diary and correspondence of Field-Marshal the Earl Haig of Bemersyde* (Eyre and Spothswoode, London, 1952).
- Blocker, Jack S., Jr. (ed.), *Alcohol, Reform and Society: The Liquor Issue in Social Context*, Contributions in American History, No. 83 (Greenward Press, Westport and London, 1979).
- Braybon, Gail, *Women Workers in the First World War: The British Experience* (Croom Helm, London, 1981).
- Briggs, Asa, *A Social History of England* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1983).  
 - *Mass Entertainment: The Origins of a Modern History*, Joseph Fisher Lectures in Commerce (The Griffin Press, Adelaide, 1960).
- Burk, Kathleen (ed.), *War and the State: The Transformation of British Government 1914-1919* (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1982).
- Burke, Peter (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Polity Press, Cambridge, 2001).
- Burnett, John, *Liquid Pleasures: A Social History of Drinks in Modern Britain* (Routledge, London and New York, 1999).
- Burrows, Susanna and Room, Robin (eds.), *Drinking: Behaviour and Belief in Modern History*, Revised Conference Papers (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1991).
- Cannadine, David, *Class in Britain* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1998).
- Cassar, George H., *Asquith as War Leader* (Hambleton Press, London, 1994).
- Cecil, Hugh and Liddle, Peter H. (eds.), *Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced* (Leo Cooper, London, 1996).
- Checkland, Olive, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland: Social Welfare and the Voluntary Principle* (John Donald Publishers Ltd., Edinburgh, 1980).
- Chinn, Carl, *They worked all their lives: Women of the urban poor in England, 1880-1939* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1988).
- Coetzee, Frans and Coetzee, Marilyn (eds.), *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War* (Berghahn Books, Providence and Oxford, 1995).

Cohen, Stanley, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The creation of the Mods and Rockers* (Paladin, St. Albans, 1973).

- (ed.), *Images of Deviance* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1971).

Condell, Diana and Liddiard, Jean, *Working for Victory?: Images of Women in the First World War, 1914-18* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1987).

Constantine, Stephen, Kirby, Maurice W. and Rose, Mary B. (eds.), *The First World War in British History* (Edward Arnold, London, 1995).

Crawford, Alan and Thorne, Robert, *Birmingham Pubs, 1890-1939* (University of Birmingham Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, with the Victorian Society, Birmingham Group, Birmingham, 1975).

Crook, David Paul, *Darwinism, war and history: the debate over the biology of war from the 'Origin of species' to the First World War* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994).

Cross, Colin, *Philip Snowden*, (Barrie & Rockliff, London, 1966).

Crossick, Geoffrey (ed.), *The Lower Middle Class in Britain, 1870-1914* (Croom Helm, London, 1977).

Crow, Duncan, *The Edwardian Woman* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1978).

Culleton, Claire A., *Working Class Culture, Women and Britain, 1914-1921* (MacMillan, Basingstoke, 2000).

Davidson, Steven, *Carlisle Breweries and Public Houses 1894-1916* (Amadeus Press, Carlisle, 2004).

Davies, Andrew, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty: Working Class Cultures in Salford and Manchester, 1900-1939*, Themes in the Twenty Century (Open University Press, Buckingham, 1992).

- *Workers' Worlds: cultures and communities in Manchester and Salford, 1880-1939* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1992).

DeGroot, Gerard J., *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War* (Longman, London, 1996).

Devine, T.M., *The Scottish Nation, 1700-2000* (Penguin Press, London, 1999).

Dewey, Peter, *War and Progress: Britain, 1914-1945* (Longman, London and New York, 1997).

Dingle, A.E., *Campaign for Prohibition in Victorian England: the United Kingdom Alliance, 1872-1895* (Croom Helm, London, 1980).

Dombrowski, Nicole Ann, *Women and War in the Twentieth Century: Enlisted with or without consent*, Woman's History and Culture Series, Vol. 13 (Garland, London and New York, 1999).

Donachie, Ian L., *A History of the Brewing Industry in Scotland* (Donald, Edinburgh, 1979).

Dorn, Nicholas, *Alcohol, Youth and the State*, Social Analysis Series (Croom Helm, London, 1983).

Duis, Perry R., *The Saloon: Public Drinking in Chicago and Boston, 1880-1920* (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1983).

Dyas, H.J. and Wolff, Michael (eds.), *The Victorian City: Images and Realities* Volume 1 (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1976).

Finlay, Richard, *Modern Scotland, 1914-2000* (Profile Books Ltd., London, 2004).

Fraser, Hamish W. and Morris, R.J. (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland: Volume II, 1830-1914*, A social history of modern Scotland series (John Donald Publishers Ltd. in association with the Economic and Social History of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1990).

Fraser, Derek and Sutcliffe, Anthony (eds.), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (Edward Arnold 1983).

Gardner, Juliet (ed.), *What is History Today...?* (MacMillan Press, Basingstoke, 1988).

Garine, Igor de and Valerie de (eds.), *Drinking: Anthropological Approaches*, The Anthropology of Food and Nutrition; Vol. 4, (Berghahn Books, New York, 2001).

Garrard, John (ed.), *The Middle Class in Politics* (Saxon House, Farnborough, 1978).

Gilbert, Bentley B., *British Social Policy 1914-1939* (B.T. Batsford, London, 1970).

Girouard, Mark, *Victorian Pubs* (Studio Vista, London, 1975).

Glover, Brian, *Brewing for Victory: Brewers, Beer and Pubs in World War Two* (The Lutterworth Press, Cambridge, 1995).

Goldby, J.M. and Purdue, A., *The Civilisation of the Crowd: Popular Culture in England 1750-1900* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Sutton Publishing Company, Stroud, 1999).

Gordon, Eleanorm and Nair, Gwyneth, *Public Lives: Women, Family and Society in Victorian Britain* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 2003).

Gourvish, T.R. and Wilson, R.G., *The British Brewing Industry* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994).

Gray, A. and McGuigan, J., *Studying Culture: An Introductory Reader* (Edward Arnold, London and New York, 1993).

Grayzell, Susan, *Women's Identities at War: Gender, Motherhood and Politics in Britain and France during the First World War* (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and London, 1999).

Greenaway, John, *Drink and British Politics since 1830: A Study in Policy Making* (MacMillan Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2003).

Grigg, John, *Lloyd George: From Peace to War, 1912-1916* (Methuen, London, 1985).

Gutzke, David, *Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England, 1896-1960* (Northern Illinois University Press, DeKalb, 2006).  
- *Protecting the Pub: Brewers and Publicans Against Temperance*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History, 58, (Boydell Press, London, 1989).

Hammerton, Sir John Alexander, *Child of Wonder: An Intimate Biography of Arthur Mee* (Hodder & Stoughton Ltd., London, 1946).

Harris, José, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: A Social History of Britain, 1870-1914* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1993).

Harrison, Brian, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England, 1815-1872* (Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1971).

Hartwich, Veronica C., *Ale an' A' thing: Aspects of the Grocery and Licensed Trades in Dundee 1800-1950* (Dundee Museums and Art Galleries, Dundee, 1981).

Hawkins, K.H. and Pass, C.L., *The Brewing Industry: A Study in Industrial Organisation and Public Policy* (Heinemann Educational, London, 1979).

Hayler, Mark, *The Vision of a Century, 1853-1953: The United Kingdom Alliance in Historical Retrospect* (United Kingdom Alliance, London, 1953).

Hazlehurst, Cameron, *Politicians at War, July 1914 to May 1915: A Prologue to the Triumph of Lloyd George* (Jonathan Cape Ltd., London, 1971).

Heron, Craig, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Between the Lines Press, Toronto, 2003).

Hey, Valerie, *Patriarchy and Pub Culture* (Tavistock Publications, London, 1986).

Holmes, Richard, *Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front, 1914-1918* (Harper Collins Publishers, London, 2004).

Horne, John, *State, Society and Mobilisation in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997).

Hurwitz, Samuel J., *State Intervention in Great Britain: A Study of Economic Control and Social Response, 1914-1919*, Columbia Studies in the Social Sciences (1<sup>st</sup> AMS ed. AMS Press, New York, 1968).

Hutchison, I.C.G., *Scottish Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2001).

Humfries, Stephen, *Hooligans or Rebels?: An Oral History of Working Class Childhood and Youth, 1889-1939* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1981).

Hunt, John, *A City Under the Influence: The Story of Half a Century of State Pubs* (Lakescene Publications, Carlisle, 1971).

Hynes, Samuel, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1968).

Jackson, Alan Arthur, *The Middle Classes 1900-1950* (David St John Thomas, Narin, 1991).

Jackson, Michael, *The English Pub* (Collins, London, 1976).

Johnson, Gaynor, *Berlin Embassy of Lord D'Abernon, 1920-1926* (Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstroke, 2002).

Jolly, W.P., *Lord Leverhulme: A Biography* (Constable, London 1976).

Jones, Greta, *Social Hygiene in Twentieth Century Britain*, The Wellcome Institute Series in the History of Medicine (Croom Helm, London and Wolfeboro, 1986).

Jones, Stephen G., *Workers at Play: A Social and Economic History of Leisure 1918-1939* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1986).

Kenna, Rudolph and Mooney, Anthony, *People's Palaces: Victorian and Edwardian Pubs of Scotland* (Paul Harris Publishing, Edinburgh, 1983).

King, Elspeth, *Scotland, Sober and Free: The Temperance Movement 1829-1979* (Glasgow Museum and Art Galleries, Glasgow, 1979).

Lambert, W.R., *Drink and Sobriety in Victorian Wales c1820-1895* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1983).

Langan, Mary and Schwarz, Bill (eds.), *Crises in the British State 1880-1930* (Hutchinson in association with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, London, 1985).

Laybourn, Keith, *Philip Snowden: A Biography 1864-1937* (Temple Smith, Aldershot, 1988).

Liddle, Peter H. (ed.), *Home Fires and Foreign Fields: British Social and Military Experience in the First World War* (Brassey's Defence Publishers, London and Washington, D.C., 1985).

Littlejohn, J.H., *The Scottish Music Hall 1880-1990* (G.C. Book Publishers, Wigtown, 1990).

Longmate, Nigel, *The Waterdrinkers: A History of Temperance* (Hamish Hamilton, London, 1968).

Macdonald, Lyn, *1914-1918 Voices and Images of the Great War* (Michael Joseph, London, 1988).

Mallins, Joseph Jr., *Wilson Stuart: A Memoir* (James Clarke & Co., London, 1935).

Maloney, Paul, *Scotland and the Music Hall 1850-1914*, Studies in Popular Culture, (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2003).

Martin, George M., *Dundee Worthies: Reminiscences, Games, Amusements* (David Winter & Son, Dundee, 1934).

Marwick, A., *Women at War, 1914-1918* (Croom Helm for the Imperial War Museum, London, 1977).

- *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (Bodley Head, London, 1965).

Mason, Tony, *Association Football and English Society 1863-1915* (The Harvester Press, Brighton, 1980).

McDonald, Maryon (ed.), *Gender, Drink and Drugs*, Cross-cultural Perspectives on Women, Vol. 10 (Berg Publishers, Oxford, 1994).

McDougall, Ian, *Voices from War and Some Labour Struggles* (The Mercat Press, Edinburgh, 1995).

McKibbin, Ross, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998)

- *The Ideologies of Class: Social Relations in Britain, 1880-1950* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990).

Meacham, Standish, *A Life Apart: The English Working Class, 1890-1914* (Thames and Hudson, London, 1977).

Meller, H.E., *Leisure and the Changing City 1870-1914* (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., Boston and London, 1976).

Mills, James M., *Cannabis Britannica: Empire, Trade and Prohibition 1860-1928* (Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford, 2003).

Monckton, H.A., *A History of the English Public House* (Bodley Head, London, 1969).

Mungham, Geoff and Pearson, Geoff (eds.), *Working Class Youth Culture* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1976).

Pearson, Geoffrey, *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears* (MacMillan Press Ltd., London, 1983).

Pittman, David J. and Snyder, Charles R. (eds.), *Society Culture and Drinking Patterns* (John Wiley and Sons, London and New York, 1962).

Priestley, J.B., *The Edwardians* (Heinemann, London, 1970).

Richmond, Lesley and Turton, Alison (eds.), *The Brewing Industry: A Guide to Historical Records*, Studies in British Business Archives (Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1990).

Ritchie, Berry, *Good Company: The Story of Scottish and Newcastle* (James and James, London, 1999).

Roberts, C.E.B., *Philip Snowden: An Impartial Portrait* (Cassell and Company Ltd., London, 1929).

Roberts, Elizabeth, *A Woman's Place: An Oral History of Working Class Women 1890-1940* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1984).

Roberts, James S., *Drink, Temperance and the Working Class in Nineteenth Century Germany* (George Allen and Unwin, Boston and London, 1984).

Robinson, David, Maynard, Alan and Chester, Robert (eds.), *Controlling Legal Addictions: Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Symposium of The Eugenics Society, London, 1989* (St. Martin's Press, London, 1989).

Robson, Maisie (ed.), *Arthur Mee and the Strength of Britain: Selections from First World War pamphlets* Defeat or Victory?, The fiddlers, The parasite (Eynsford Hill Press, Wombwell, 2006).

- (ed.), *1906: Every Man for Himself!* (Eynsford Hill Press, Barnsley, 2002)

- *Arthur Mee's Dream of England* (Eynsford Hill Press, Barnsley, 2002).

Rose, Jonathan, *The Edwardian Temperament, 1895-1919* (Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio and London, 1986).

Rose, M.E., 'The Success of Social Reform? The Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) 1915-1921' in Foot, M.R.D. (ed.), *War and Society: historical essays in honour and memory of J.R. Western, 1928-1971* (Elek, London, 1973), pp. 71-84.

Royal College of Psychiatrists, *Alcohol: Our Favourite Drug; new report on alcohol and alcohol-related problems from a special committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists* (Tavistock Publications, London, 1986).

Searle, G.R., *The Quest for National Efficiency: A Study in British Politics and Political Thought 1899-1914* (The Ashfield Press, London, 1990).

Shadwell, Arthur, *Drink in 1914-1922: A Lesson in Control* (Longmans, Green and Co., London and New York, 1923).

Sheffield, Gary, *Forgotten Victory: Myths and Realities in the First World War* (Headline Book Publishing, London, 2001).

Shiman, Lilian Lewis, *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England* (MacMillan Press, London, 1988).

Smith, Simon Newell (ed.), *Edwardian England, 1901-1914* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1964).

Smout, T.C., *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Fontana Press, London, 1997).

Springhall, John, *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics* (MacMillan Press, London, 1998).

Stevenson, John, *British Society 1914-1945* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1984).

Storch, Robert D. (ed.), *Popular Culture and Custom in Nineteenth Century England* (Croom Helm, London, 1982).

Thompson, Kenneth, *Moral Panics* (Routledge, London and New York, 1998).

Tilly, Louise and Scott, Joan W., *Women, Work and Family* (Routledge, London and New York, 1978).

Thompson, F.M.L. (ed.), *Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950: Volume One Regions and Communities* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990).

Thompson, Thea, *Edwardian Childhoods* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1981).

Thorne, Robert, 'The Movement for Public House Reform 1892-1914' in Derek J. Oddy and Derek S. Miller (eds.) *Diet and Health in Modern Britain* (Croom Helm, London, 1985).

Thrift, Nigel and Williams, Peter (eds.), *Class and Space: The Making of Urban Society* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1987).

Turner, John, *British Politics and the Great War; Coalition and Conflict, 1915-1918* (Yale University Press, London and New Haven, 1992).

- (ed.), *Britain and the First World War* (Unwin Hyman, London, 1988).

- *Lloyd George's Secretariat* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1980).

Turner, E.S., *Dear Old Blighty* (Joseph, London, 1980).

- Unwin, E.C., *Henry Carter CBE: A Memoir* (Epworth Press, London, 1955).
- Vaizey, John, *The Brewing Industry 1886-1951* (Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd., London, 1960).
- Vansittart, Peter, *Voices from the Great War* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1981).
- Vernon, H.M., *The Alcohol Problem* (Bailliere, Tindall and Cox, London 1928).
- Waites, Bernard, Bennett, Tony and Martin, Graham (eds.), *Popular Culture: Past and Present* (Croom Helm in association with The Open University Press, London, 1982).
- Walker, William, *Juteopolis: Dundee and its Textile Workers 1885-1923* (Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1979).
- Wall, Richard and Winter, Jay, *The Upheaval of War: Family, Work and Welfare in Europe 1914-1918* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988).
- Walton, John K., *The British Seaside Holidays and Resorts in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000).  
- *Fish and Chips and the British Working Class 1870-1940* (Leicester University Press, Leicester, 1992).
- Walton, Stuart, *Out of it: A Cultural History of Intoxication* (Hamish Hamilton, London, 2001).
- Walvin, J., *Leisure and Society, 1830-1950*, Themes in British Social History (Longman, London, 1978).
- Weiner, Martin J., *Reconstructing the Criminal: Culture, Law and Policy in England, 1850-1914* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990).
- White, Stephen, *Russia Goes Dry: Alcohol, State and Society* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996).
- Wild, Paul, 'Recreation in Rochdale 1900-1940' in Clarke, John, Critcher, Chas and Johnson, Richard (eds.), *Working Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory*, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Classic texts, Vol. 6 (Hutchinson, London, 1979).
- Williams, Gwylmor P. and Broke, George T., *Drink in Great Britain, 1900-1979* (Edsall and Co. Ltd., London, 1980).
- Winter, J.M., *Socialism and the Challenge of War: Ideas and Politics in Britain 1912-1918* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1974).
- Winter, J. and Robert, Jean Louis, *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1919* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997).

Wilson, G.B., *Alcohol and the Nation* (Nicholson and Watson Ltd., London, 1940).

Wilson, T., *Myriad Faces of War: Britain and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1988).

Wilson, Thomas M., *Drinking Cultures* (Berghahn Books, New York and Oxford, 2005).

Wrigley, Chris (ed.), *A Companion to Early Twentieth-Century Britain* (Blackwell Publishing, Malden, 2003).

Yeo, Eileen and Stephen, *Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590-1914: Explorations in the History of Labour and Leisure* (Harvester Press, Brighton, 1981).

### **Articles**

Berridge, Virginia, 'Why Alcohol is Legal and Other Drugs are Not', *History Today* (May 2004) pp. 18-20.

Bennison, Brian, 'Drunkenness in turn of the century Newcastle Upon Tyne', *Local Population Studies*, Vol. 52 (1994) pp.14-22.

Bennison, Brian, 'The Scramble for Licensed Houses: Some Evidence from Newcastle Upon Tyne', *Journal of Regional and Local Studies*, Vol. 15 (1995) pp. 5-13.

Boyd, Kelly, 'Historical Perspectives on Class and Culture', *Social History* (1995) pp. 93-100.

Brader, Chris, 'A World on Wings: Young Female Workers and Cinema in World War One', *Womens History Review*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2005) pp. 99-118.

Briggs, Asa, 'Beer and Society: A Major Theme in English', *The Brewer* (August 1983) pp. 314-318.

Davin, Anna, 'Imperialism and Motherhood', *History Workshop Journal*, Vol. 5 (1978) pp. 9-66.

Denny, Norna, 'Self Help, Abstinence and the Voluntary Principle: The Independent order of Rechabites 1835-1912', *Scottish Labour History Society Journal*, No. 24 (1989) pp. 24-42.

Dingle, A.E., 'Drink and Working Class Living Standards in Britain 1870-1914', *Economic History Review* 25 (1972) pp. 608-622.

Donnachie, Ian, 'World War One and the Drink Question', *Scottish Labour History Society*, Vol. 17 (1982) pp. 19-26.

Dyhouse, C., 'Working Class Mothers and Infant Mortality in England 1895-1914', *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 12 (1978) pp. 248-267.

Fahey, David, 'The Politics of Drink', *Social Science*, Vol. 54 (1979) pp. 76-85.  
 - 'Drink and the Meaning of Reform in Late Victorian and Edwardian England', *Cithara*, Vol. 13 (1974) pp. 48-56.  
 - 'Temperance and the Liberal Party – Lord Peel's Report', *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (May 1971) pp. 132-159.

Glatt, M.M., 'The English Drink Problem: Its Rise and Decline Through the Ages', *British Journal of Addiction*, Vol. 55 (1958) pp. 57-67.

Gourvish, T.R. and Wilson, R.G., 'Profitability in the Brewing Industry 1885-1914', *Business History*, 27 (1985) pp. 146-165.

Greenaway, John, 'Policy Learning and the Drink Question in Britain 1850-1950', *Political Studies*, Vol. XLVI (1998) pp. 903-918.

Gutzke, David, 'Gender, Class and Public Drinking in Britain during the First World War', *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, Vol. 27, No. 54 (1994) pp. 367-391.  
 - 'Gentrifying the British Public House 1896-1914', *International Labour and Working Class History*, No. 45 (Spring 1994) pp. 29-43.  
 - 'Rhetoric and Reality: The Political Influence of British Brewers, 1832-1914', *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 9, Part 1 (1990) pp. 78-115.  
 - 'The Cry of the Children: The Edwardian Medical Campaign against Maternal Drinking', *British Journal of Addiction*, 79 (1984) pp. 71-84.

Hart, Nicky, 'Gender and the Rise and Fall of Class Politics', *New Left Review*, Vol. I, No.175 (May-June 1989).

Higgs, E.J., 'Research into the History of Alcohol Use and Control in England and Wales: The Available Sources in the PRO', *British Journal of Addiction*, 79 (1984) pp. 41-47.

Johnson, Paul, 'Conspicuous Consumption and Working Class Culture in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ser., Vol. 38 (1988) pp. 27-42.

Jones, Stephen G., 'Labour and Society and the Drink Question in Britain 1918-1939', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (1987) pp. 105-122.

Lowerson, John, 'Review Article: Starting from your own past? The Serious Business of Leisure History', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 36, Issue 3 (July 2001) p. 517.

Melling, Alethea, 'Wicked Women from Wigan and other tales: Licentious Leisure and the social control of working class women in Wigan and St Helens, 1914-1930', *North West Labour History Journal*, Issue 24 (No Year) pp. 30-44.

Mews, Stuart, 'Urban Problems and Rural Solutions: Drink and Disestablishment in the First World War', *Studies in Church History*, Vol. 20 (1983) pp. 337-350.

Parry, J.P., 'Review Article: High and Low Politics in Modern Britain', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (1986) pp. 753-770.

Rintala, Marvin, 'Taking the pledge: H.H. Asquith and Drink', *Biography*, 16 (1993) pp. 103-113.

Smith, David, 'Drinking and Improvement in Late Victorian and Edwardian Scotland', *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, Vol. 17 (1986) pp. 161-176.

Smout, Reginald, 'The Effect of Licensing Restrictions during 1914-1918 on Drunkenness and Liver Cirrhosis Deaths in Britain', *British Journal of Addiction*, Vol. 69 (1974) pp. 109-121.

Stedman-Jones, Gareth, 'Class Expression versus Social Control?' A Critique of Recent Trends in the Social History of 'Leisure'', *History Workshop Journal*, No. 4 (1977) pp. 162-170.

- 'Working Class Culture and Working Class Politics in London 1870-1900: Notes on the Remaking of a Working Class', *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 7 (1973-1974) pp. 460-501.

Summerfield, Penny, 'Mass Observation: Social Research or Social Movement?', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 20 (1985) pp. 439-452.

Talbot, Philip, 'Costing the State Pint 1916-1974', *Journal of Finance and Management in Public Services*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (December 2005) pp. 9-30.

Turner, John, 'State Purchase of the Liquor Trade in the First World War', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (1980) pp. 589-615.

Waites, Bernard, 'The Effect of the First World War on Class and Status in England 1910-1920', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 11 (1976) pp. 27-48.

Weir, R.B., 'Obsessed with Moderation: The Drink Trades and the Drink Question 1870-1930', *Institute of Social and Economic Research Department of Economic and Related Studies University of York*, reprinted from the *British Journal of Addiction* Vol. 79 (1984) pp. 93-107.

Woiak, Joanne, 'A Medical Cromwell to depose King Alcohol: Medical Scientists, Temperance Reformers, and the Alcohol Problem in Britain', *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, Vol. 27, No. 54 (1994) pp. 337-365.

Woollacott, Angela, "'Khaki Fever" and its control: Gender, Class, Age and Sexual Morality on the British Homefront in the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 29 (1994) pp. 325-347.

Wright, David and Chorniawry, Cathy, 'Women and Drink in Edwardian England', *Historical Papers/Communication Historiques* (1985) pp. 117-131.

**Unpublished Theses**

Brader, Chris, 'Policing the Gretna Girls: The Women's Police Service in World War One' (MA Thesis, University of Warwick, 1997).

Kemp, J.D., 'Drink and the Labour Movement' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Dundee, 2000).

Paton, D.C., 'Drink and the Temperance Movement in Nineteenth Century Scotland' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1977).

**Book Reviews**

Cain, Louis P., Review of *The Saloon: Public Drinking in Chicago and Boston 1880-1920*, by Perry Duis. *Business History Review*, Summer 1985 Vol. 59, p. 302.

Hilton, Mathew, Review of *Drink and British Politics since 1830: A Study in Policy Making*, by John Greenaway. *Institute of Historical Research*, January 2004, [www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/hiltonM2.html](http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/hiltonM2.html).