ONE TRADE, TWO WORLDS: POLITICS, CONFLICT, AND THE ILLICIT LIQUOR TRADE IN WHITE COUNTY, GEORGIA AND PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1894-1895

by

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(Under the Direction of John Inscoe)

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the moonshine experience in White County, Georgia and Pickens County, South Carolina. This thesis is a comparative study of the illicit liquor trade in both counties during the last decade of the 19th century. Considerations of economic and political context are included for each county and for the time period. Once a context is provided, considerations of prohibitionist movements in each county are presented and important contrasts are drawn between state and federal efforts to regulate and eliminate the illicit liquor trade. Finally, a discussion is undertaken of the Appalachian moonshiner's identity and their experiences in state and federal courts. This thesis concludes that the moonshine experience in South Carolina was different from Georgia because of the Dispensary System, moonshiners' identities closely followed the stereotype of the white farmer, and local-federal conflict developed as state and local authorities were more interested in eliminating the trade than their revenue-hungry federal counterparts.

INDEX WORDS: Georgia, South Carolina, White County, Pickens County, Moonshine, Illicit Liquor, South Carolina Dispensary System, Ben Tillman, The Panic of 1893
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my stepfather Harry Young. More than anyone else, he taught me the value of hard work and sheer determination. Rest in peace, Harry.
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There are so many people I need to thank for making this thesis happen. I would like to start by thanking my mother for always pushing me and expecting nothing but the best out of her son. Thanks also to my entire family—you are an inspiration. Thanks to my thesis advisor Dr. Inscoe for always finding time to advise and revise despite his busy schedule. Thanks also go out to Dr. Clark and Dr. Cobb for serving on my committee and for coming up to Athens and accommodating my schedule. I also want to thank my University of Miami history professors and advisors Dr. Johnson, Baptist, and Bachin—you sparked my interest in history and taught me how to write like a historian. Special thanks go out to all of my friends who lent me a helping hand, let me stay with them on research trips, listened to my panicked phone calls, and helped keep my head up; thanks John Paul, James, Drew, Bob, and Eric. Finally, I want to thank the librarians and research assistants at all of the libraries, collections, and archives I visited. Without all of you, none of this would be possible.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

For the last three decades, Appalachian historians have been fighting an ongoing battle against the social and historical misrepresentation of Appalachia. In his 1990 consideration of Appalachian identity entitled *The Invention of Appalachia*, Allen Batteau argues that scholars and fictional writers in the late nineteenth century focused on the "otherness" of the region by pointing to the backwardness and violence of activities like moonshining.1 Unfortunately, later scholars did little to rectify the prevailing vision of Appalachia as isolated, backward, and monolithic. By looking at the region in oversimplified and condescending terms, mainstream America felt better about the profound and often negative economic and environmental changes it was making in Appalachia. According to Batteau, prevailing American movements and beliefs shaped the way in which scholars presented the mountain South.2

It was not until the 1970s that historians began to approach Appalachia with a more discerning eye. For example, Henry Shapiro outlined and critiqued historical attempts at defining Appalachia in his 1978 work *Appalachia on Our Mind*. As Appalachian historians came to terms with Appalachia's historical legacy, some scholars applied the growing field of microhistory to specific areas of the mountain South. In his 1988 work, *Cade's Cove: the Life and Death of a Southern Appalachian Community, 1818-1933*, Durwood Dunn investigated the unique historical legacy of one such town in western North Carolina. In addition, Altina Waller investigates the social impact of the
famous Hatfield-McCoy feud on several counties in Kentucky and West Virginia in her 1988 study entitled *Feud: Hatfields, McCoys and Social Change in Appalachia: 1860-1900*. Coupled with this burgeoning knowledge of the complexity and richness of Appalachian history was a more thorough understanding of specific aspects of its culture, including moonshining. Over the last three decades of the twentieth century, historians confronted traditional conceptions of the Appalachian moonshiner. Instead of presenting illicit liquor traders as isolated, violent, and ignorant characters, scholars began to see a complex moonshining subculture operating not in isolation from and oblivious to the rest of the world, but in concert with the political and social sentiments of the time.

The scholarship of Jess Carr and Joseph Dabney in the 1970s bridged the gap between national movements and processes and the illicit liquor trade in the mountain South. Both Carr's *Second Oldest Profession* and Dabney's *Mountain Spirits* investigated the increase in moonshine activity during the late nineteenth century and argued that outside movements and conditions rather than deeply ingrained cultural defects encouraged the Appalachian moonshine trade. *Revenuers and Moonshiners: Enforcing Federal Liquor Law in the Mountain South, 1865-1900*, a 1991 study by Wilbur Miller, provides the most thorough investigation both of mountain moonshine and governmental efforts at curbing the trade. Miller's book encompasses every part of the mountain South and tackles a variety of social, economic, and political processes at work in the manufacture of and fight over illicit liquor. He outlines the temperance movement and its effects on moonshine in specific parts of Appalachia. In addition, Miller considers the effects of political conflict and economic upheaval on the illicit liquor trade.
These fairly recent investigations of the moonshine trade add to our appreciation of this important southern economic endeavor. Through the work of scholars like Carr, Dabney, and Miller, we have answers to some of the basic questions concerning the illicit liquor trade. We know where the trade flourished, how moonshine was made, and even what economic forces encouraged the manufacture of illicit liquor. However, the study of moonshine lags behind other recent investigations of Appalachian culture in its microhistorical focus. Works like *Revenuers and Moonshiners*, while thorough in their investigations of national and even state movements and events affecting moonshine, fail to consider adequately how these movements affected individual communities. They consider their subjects from the outside looking in rather than from the inside looking out. By looking at the trade from relatively broad and detached perspectives, Appalachian scholars miss an important level of local complexity.

I see my work fitting somewhere between *Revenuers and Moonshiners* and *Cade's Cove*. The main focus of my thesis involves the complex interaction between national and even state interests and ordinary people on the local county level. Like Miller's work, I will focus on three main dimensions of the interaction between federal and state powers and local people. The social dimension encompasses the interplay between national religious and temperance movements and their interactions with both local moonshiners and non-moonshiners. Citizens on the local level did not always agree with the manner in which popular national movements attacked the illicit liquor trade. My economic investigation will consider whether national and state economic processes were as important in encouraging or discouraging the moonshine trade as local economic changes. The last, and perhaps most important, dimension of my thesis involves the
effects that political and legal processes had on the trade. Did citizens on the local level handle the illicit liquor trade in the same manner as national or even state interests?

Within my social, economic, and political framework, I will present a comparative study of two Appalachian counties in separate states. My consideration of White County, Georgia and Pickens County, South Carolina will provide local depth while at the same time allowing for a consideration of state-level differences in regards to the trade. While my investigations of moonshining activity in these two counties will be linked for comparison's sake, important state-level differences between Georgia and South Carolina will provide a unique opportunity to view interactions between national, state, and local interests in more than one way. Interactions and conflicts in Georgia over the regulation and prosecution of moonshine tended to be between an alliance of state and local operatives who joined forces to challenge the federal government. On the other hand, local South Carolinians often found themselves in conflict with both their state and federal governments. This was the result of a unique Dispensary system that put the state in control of the legal liquor trade towards the end of the nineteenth century.

In addition to the comparative benefits of state-level differences between the sample counties, there are several other reasons for my selection of White County and Pickens County. Both are situated along the southern periphery of the Blue Ridge Mountains. This limits the impact of geographic variability between the two locales. In addition, neither county is conspicuously large or small and neither had a particularly large urban center in the late nineteenth century. Most importantly, both counties published weekly newspapers. White County's *The Cleveland Progress* and Pickens
County's *The Pickens Sentinel* provide valuable insight into local movements, beliefs, and sensibilities.

I chose a focused study of 1894 and 1895 for one particular reason. It was a series of legislative developments and the response to them that made 1894 and 1895 significant. This period comes in the midst of great economic and social upheaval. Faced with a budget deficit, the federal government chose an increased excise tax on alcohol. The government passed the Whiskey Tax of 1894, leading to an explosion in the illicit liquor trade and its subsequent prosecution (moonshine cases numbered well into the thousands by 1895). Because of this increased moonshine activity, the regulation of licit and illicit liquor became an important national, regional, and local issue. On the state level, South Carolina's Dispensary system came under intense criticism by 1894 and is in danger of being eliminated. In addition, prohibitionists ("drys") and liquor interests ("wets") were engaged in a heated debate by 1894 over liquor regulation in Georgia and South Carolina.

Although I will touch on a variety of themes in this thesis, two general issues will drive the study. Local citizens did not always agree with the ways in which state and federal authorities regulated and prosecuted illicit liquor. State and federal courts adjudicated and sentenced moonshiners in similar ways and with similar degrees of success. However, local movements in Georgia were more interested in eliminating the moonshine trade than were state and federal authorities, while in South Carolina (similarly) local movements were more interested in eliminating liquor than federal and even state authorities.
In order to prove these conclusions and keep my state and county comparisons under control, a well-structured approach is vital. The first chapter will include a brief profile of White and Pickens County and a discussion of their respective demographic information. Once I introduce my sample counties, I will present a historiographical consideration of 1894 and 1895. In addition, I will consider political, economic, and social movements on the national level as they pertain to the moonshine trade. Coupled with this larger discussion of national trends will be a consideration of movements and changes present in Pickens and White County. This will allow for a better understanding of where Pickens and White converge with and diverge from popular national trends. These trends include attitudes towards progress, political power, and approaches to temperance and prohibition.

Once a basic understanding of context is provided, the paper's focus will shift to a discussion of how divergent opinions between local, state, and federal led to heated and even violent disagreements between local people and governmental forces. A discussion of differences in moonshine regulation between local, state, and federal authorities is necessary here as federal (and sometimes state) authorities operated differently than their local counterparts. A comparison between conflict in White County and Georgia and Pickens County and South Carolina will come next. The second chapter will encompass a discussion of the Dispensary experiment and discussions of differences between Georgia's relatively calm conflict over the regulation of liquor and South Carolina's violent reactions to Governor Ben Tillman and his Dispensary system. In this section, comparisons between the counties will be closely linked to comparisons between Georgia and South Carolina.
To close out the thesis, chapter three will discuss differences between the moonshine trade in White County and Pickens County. I will examine state and federal court cases from both counties to investigate differences in the trade between a state with no summary Dispensary system and one with state-supported distillation and regulation of alcohol. I will consider whether the existence of a Dispensary system in the late nineteenth century had a negative or positive impact on the illicit liquor trade in Pickens County as compared to the trade in White County. Finally, I will compare the typical moonshiner in White County to the average illicit distiller in Pickens County.

Certainly secondary sources like historical monographs and articles help place my thesis in a workable context. Basic population schedules and agricultural surveys provide good background on my sample counties. Legislative minutes and various other state government records shed light on prevailing legislative sentiments in both Georgia and South Carolina. Local county newspapers and their larger state counterparts provide good insight into how local and state residents felt about moonshine and the manner in which their state and federal governments handled the trade. State newspapers and papers published in bigger cities also tell us something about the way in which urban residents saw their fellow citizens in mountainous counties like White and Pickens. Newspapers also provide interesting narratives of particularly important local and state events and indicate the prevailing biases that some residents brought to these events.

Manuscript collections at the University of Georgia and Clemson University offer substantial insight into the minds of important political leaders like South Carolina Governor Ben Tillman and also include valuable local histories and family papers. The State Archives in Georgia hold valuable records and writings of Georgia political leaders
like Governor William Northen as well as state superior court records. The South Carolina Archives provide even more information on Ben Tillman and his Dispensary system as well as various state-level legal and legislative records. The federal archives in East Point, Georgia hold federal court records pertaining to moonshine offenses as well as soundex records for individuals from South Carolina and Georgia. These soundex records help to identify the people involved in the moonshine trade.

I hope that this study creates a substantial contribution to our understanding of Appalachian communities, their relationships to their states or nation, and one of the region's most fascinating practices. Because of my decision to study only two years and two counties, this will not be a complete study of the moonshine trade even in these two counties. I am sure that this thesis will raise as many questions as it answers. This thesis will support the conclusion that coupling microhistory with the larger historiography is a valuable yet underutilized framework for discussions of important social, economic, and political issues in Appalachian studies. Initially, I can draw two general conclusions. County residents did not always agree with the ways in which state and federal authorities regulated and prosecuted moonshine. In addition, local and state authorities were slightly more interested than their federal counterparts in eliminating the moonshine trade.

5 Pickens Sentinel, April 26th, 1894.
CHAPTER 2

SETTING THE STAGE

Situated in the North Georgia mountains, White County is a good site for careful consideration of Georgia moonshine on the local level. In studying White County, the historian benefits from a weekly newspaper, *The Cleveland Progress*, which provides invaluable insights into local movements, beliefs, and sensibilities. Pickens County, located in the foothills of the Appalachians in northwestern South Carolina, provides a sample of local concerns over illicit liquor in the Palmetto State. Relatively close to White County, Pickens County also published a newspaper, *The Pickens Sentinel*.

Before investigating the nature of illicit liquor in White and Pickens Counties, more must be known more about these locales. Considerations of population figures, economic practices, views towards progressivism, and effects of nineteenth century southern industrialization are important components of building a workable historical and geographic context. In building this context, one realizes that White and Pickens Counties are similar despite their geographic and physical differences. Most importantly, these counties challenge assumptions regarding Appalachian society.

White County

In terms of population and demographics, White County was not unique. The mountain county's population grew from 5,341 in 1880 to 6,151 in 1890.¹ The population of White County was comparable to surrounding counties; Rabun County to the east and White County's neighbor to the west, Lumpkin, had populations of 5,606 and
6,867 respectively in 1890. Importantly, White County grew between 1880 and 1890. A 13 percent increase in population over a ten-year period is only partially attributable to natural population growth. The rest of the increase was due to in-migration, but the new arrivals probably did not come from very far away. On the state level, no fewer than 132,995 (91%) people out of 146,486 were born in the South. White County was no different. In fact, the county was even more regionally specific in its composition. Out of 6,151 residents, only 22 people came from outside the United States. In addition, these 22 people did not represent the ethnic diversity of late nineteenth century American immigration. Out of these 22 residents, 20 were of Scots-Irish descent. However, the lack of a significant immigrant population does not mean that White County was the stereotypical bastion of Appalachian whiteness. In fact, the county had a relatively large African-American population. Of 6,151 residents in 1890, 662 (11%) were black. In relative terms, this was a large population. Comparably sized Lumpkin County was home to only 414 blacks.

Like most mountain counties of the time, White County based much of its economy on farming. In 1900, the United States Department of Agriculture classified 77.1 percent of available land in White County as farmland. Corn was the major staple crop of the area. By 1900, corn production was at its peak as 189,050 bushels were produced annually on 13,966 acres of agricultural land. White County farmers also produced grains like wheat at a moderate rate (100 to 1000 bushels). Although not dependent upon cotton, White County also dabbled in the cash crop toward the end of the nineteenth century. However, it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that cotton acreage grew significantly.
Gold mining also had an important impact on the economy of the area. Gold was first discovered and mined in the county in 1829. While mineral exploitation was common in much of Appalachia, the presence of gold was not common in much of the rest of the region. As one historian of the White County gold trade asserts, the county was home to widespread gold mining towards the end of the nineteenth and early part of the 20th century. The presence of corporate gold mining (albeit declining) in the county around the turn of the century certainly attracted both White County natives and people from other parts of the state and country. This was the way influential White County residents liked it. Frequent stories appeared in the Cleveland Progress touting the abundance of gold in the north Georgia county.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the middle class townspeople of White County followed much of the rest of the nation in their adherence to the ideals of progress and industrialization. In some cases, progress and industrialization were already present in White County. The Blue Ridge and Atlantic Railroad entered the area in 1882; and daily mail delivery came to the valley by 1895. In addition, the first signs of mountain tourism appeared in areas of the county. By the turn of the century, summer tourists began to stay in private homes as they sought to escape the oppressive heat of the lowland South. It was mining, however, to which most of the mountain elite hitched their economic wagons. Although gold mining was in decline by the end of the nineteenth century and becoming the exclusive domain of locals rather than corporations, citizens in White County could not abandon the practice as a viable way to attract money and progress to the region. Even as the state geologist asserted that gold stores in
Georgia and White County were limited, local miners insisted that "the surface prospects...are as good, if not better, than many noted gold mining countries".\textsuperscript{18}

As gold fever fizzled in White County during the last decade of the nineteenth century, the county's population declined somewhat between 1890 to 1900, from 6,151 to 5,912.\textsuperscript{19} Despite this setback, accounts, advertisements, and editorials in the \textit{Cleveland Progress} still demonstrated the local attraction to gold extraction. Editors of the local paper argued that "the mineral interest of North-East Georgia will receive greater impetus than did California in her palmiest days" once word of the area's stores was spread.\textsuperscript{20} In an editorial entitled "We Must Be There," the publishers of the \textit{Progress} urged the county to take part in the Atlanta Exposition to demonstrate that White County "is as rich in the precious minerals as any county".\textsuperscript{21} In addition, the publishers regularly ran advertisements that proclaimed "a big [gold] boom" in various parts of the county.\textsuperscript{22} The combination of editorial sentiment and advertised boasts regarding the wonders of mining demonstrate that some people in White County looked to the future, and that future was tied to mining.

\textbf{Pickens County}

Pickens County is a marginally Appalachian locale in a number of ways. Unlike White County, Pickens is not situated entirely in the Appalachian Mountains. Also, both in size and population, it is considerably larger (like other South Carolina counties) than the average Georgia county. On the southern border of North Carolina and the Blue Ridge Mountains, Pickens is a mixture of rolling hills, valleys, and jagged mountains. Because of its lack of significant gold reserves, the county elite did not show the type of dependency on mineral exploitation that more mountainous locales like White County
exhibited. Despite these differences, Pickens County is a valuable comparative counterpart to White County and is the closest approximation to a genuinely Appalachian locale in South Carolina.

The population of Pickens County increased from 14,389 in 1880 to 16,389 ten years later. While this population was much larger than that of White County, it was the smallest in the South Carolina upstate. Like White County, Pickens County was mostly rural. By contrast, Anderson, Greenville, and Spartanburg Counties, Pickens' neighbors to the south and east, all had sizeable urban areas and were home to 43,696, 44,310, and 55,385 people in 1890. Oconee County, Pickens' immediate neighbor to the west, was similar in its relative lack of a larger urban area towards the end of the nineteenth century. In 1890, this smaller foothills county had a population of only 18,687 and was the only locale remotely comparable to Pickens County in the Upstate.

Like White County, Pickens was not home to a large immigrant population. In fact, of 16,389 people in 1890, the county was home to only seven non-native born residents. In the case of Pickens County as well, the myth of Appalachian whiteness did not apply. Relative to White County, Pickens had a considerable African-American population. Of 16,389 residents in 1890, roughly one quarter (4,136) were black. While far more than the norm for Appalachia, the number of blacks was small relative to the rest of South Carolina. Despite being home to a relatively diverse Appalachian population, Pickens County was actually one of the least diverse in the state as it was one of only eight with white majorities. In spite of some geographic and basic demographic variability, both of these counties were surprisingly similar at the end of the nineteenth century.
As of 1890, similarities between White and Pickens Counties were not limited solely to demographics. While their economies were not exact, they were remarkably similar. Agriculture was the key economic endeavor in Pickens County around the turn of the 20th century. Farming comprised the livelihood of most Pickens County citizens. While some Pickens residents were tradesmen and a handful were factory workers, the vast majority made their living either as farmers or farm laborers.28 The importance of agriculture in this county is also evident in the Statistical Atlas of the United States, 1900. As in White County, Pickens County farmers grew a great deal of corn around the turn of the century. According to government numbers, both counties were in the same statistical quartile for corn yields per acre (10 to 20 bales per acre).29

Both counties were in the third quartile in farm production value per acre ($6-$10) in 1900.30 This suggests that farmers in Pickens County grew some of the same crops as their Georgia counterparts. Overall production of all grains in both counties was classified in the second (average) quartile.31 Unlike their Georgia counterparts, nineteenth-century Pickens farmers engaged in considerable cotton farming. Farmers in Pickens County grew ten to twenty bales per acre of cotton while significant cotton cultivation in White County was still a few years away.32 This cotton cultivation led to a difference in average value of products per farm between the two counties. The average Pickens farmer in 1889 grew $350 worth of crops while the average farmer in White County grew products valued at $194.33 Both counties had limited yields of manufactured goods like refined cotton and other agricultural products at the turn of the century (less than $1000).34
The relative lack of a manufacturing infrastructure did not mean that Pickens County citizens lacked interest in industrial and transportation development. In some ways, Pickens County was ahead of its Georgia counterpart. Its elite understood the economic benefits of railroad development and tied at least part of their county's future to the existence of a railroad. William K. Easley, an attorney for the Atlanta and Charlotte Air Line Railway Company, encouraged Pickens residents to offer $100,000 worth of bonds to railroad executives so they would lay part of their track from Atlanta to Charlotte in their county.35 Easley's ploy was successful as the chief company engineer defied white conservative pressure to run the railroad through larger urban counties like Anderson and built the railroad "through the unpopulated hills in Pickens County".36

The railroad came to Pickens County almost a decade earlier than its White County counterpart. Established in 1873, it created towns like Calhoun (Clemson), Central, Liberty, and Easley.37 While railroad terminals along the line created hotel and shopping centers in towns like Central, the population of these towns and of Pickens County as a whole never approached the size of bigger cities and counties like Spartanburg and Greenville.38 Despite its measured population growth, some forays into manufacturing began in the county by the 1890s. While manufacturing output was negligible, the town of Norris was home to a small sawmill and cotton mill by 1895.39 In fact, by the turn of the century, the county was home to "three cotton mills, two railroads, three banks, three roller mills, 37 sawmills, ten shingle mills, and four brickyards".40

While the statistical data suggest that most of these facilities were small operations, Pickens County undoubtedly had an industrial infrastructure by the 1900s. Like their neighbors in White County, the Pickens County elite saw the benefits of
embracing progressive development. By the 1890s, there was considerable discussion about making Pickens County into a summer resort area. However, this talk was ineffectual as tourism would not take hold in Pickens County until the second half of the twentieth century. These progressive sentiments would affect how both counties viewed the question of liquor regulation.

National Sentiments

Because of the political and economic complexity of the time, it is necessary to limit this study to one or two years. Due to the passage of the Whiskey Tax of 1894, the trade flourished and moonshine prosecutions numbered well into the thousands nationwide by 1895. Also, if The Pickens Sentinel is any indication, South Carolina's unique Dispensary system was under considerable social and legal attack. The end of the nineteenth century represents an interesting crossroads in the study of illicit distilling. When supporters and opponents of moonshining fought during the late 1800s, it was rarely an exclusive conflict over economics, legality, or morals. It was in fact the convergence of these three issues that steered the fate of moonshining and its subsequent regulation and prosecution. The regulation of liquor production was not a new idea in 1895. In fact, the government first regulated distilled spirits in 1791 as part of the first internal revenue act. By the 1860s, liquor taxes were an important part of the federal internal revenue effort. Taxes on liquor supplied 30 percent of all federal internal revenue by 1868. However, by the early 1880s, America's economic prosperity led to discussions regarding the abolition of all internal revenue levies. But through the insistence of President Chester A. Arthur in 1882 and its later acceptance by Democrats during the first Cleveland administration, the liquor tax continued. In fact, the
economic crisis of the 1890s would make the liquor tax indispensable and would lead to a significant increase in the levy.

By the early 1890s, the United States was in serious economic trouble. Panics in economic sectors created a depression that started in 1893 and lasted into the last decade of the nineteenth century. The federal government needed a way to boost the sagging economy. The answer was the whiskey tax of 1894. In order to compensate for the fact that the purchase of taxable items was declining due to the bad economy, Congress decided to raise money by increasing the tax on liquor to $1.10 per gallon. This decision nearly doubled the existing tax on whiskey. Superficially, this plan made sense. However, problems arose because of the severity of the measure. Many distillers, including companies that manufactured liquor legally, found themselves in violation of the law because it became prohibitively expensive to pay the tax and run a legal distillery. While moonshining was always a common practice in the southern mountains, the increased tax led to an explosion in activity. By 1896, illicit distillers nationally were producing between five and ten million gallons of moonshine annually.

White County/Georgia Sentiments

The passage of the liquor bill was not the only thing on the minds of many White County residents in 1894. Some residents of the county believed that their economic future lay in the continued progress of industrialization and gold mining. These processes were making headway into White County by 1895. By the time the liquor tax of 1894 had passed, definite divisions between town and country had been drawn because of the railroads and other progressive and industrial enterprises. The panic itself had a particularly negative impact on the economic viability of White County's corn farmers.
While corn was the most important and established crop grown in the county, depression-era farmers could not obtain a reasonable market price for the crop; consequently, they turned to moonshining as a more lucrative means of profiting from their agricultural wares.\(^{54}\)

As the production of illicit whiskey exploded in the 1890s, disagreements over how to handle the trade developed in White County. Arguments over the federal revenue system boiled over into its actual legal administration. One would think that federal and state officials would have worked together to prosecute illicit moonshining since it should have served the interests of both. Newspapers in Atlanta and White County published articles that presented the revenuer effort as a unified governmental push to rid the mountains of illicit liquor. They periodically printed articles reporting "A Seizure and Capture" of moonshine stills or other facilities.\(^{55}\) However, this was not the case. Because state authorities were interested in severely limiting the illicit liquor trade, they saw federal agents interested only in the collection of liquor taxes as an obstruction to the anti-moonshine effort.\(^{56}\) Traditional conceptions of the interaction between revenuer and moonshiner argue that poor mountain moonshiners were persecuted by outside federal interests. Surprisingly, the evidence suggests that it was in fact the moonshiner's elite neighbors and state authorities who made the strongest case against illicit distilling.

Between 1895 and 1900, many North Georgia counties (White County included) were already dry or on their way to being dry because of local option elections.\(^{57}\) The journal of state senate proceedings indicates that Georgia lawmakers, like those in other states, were on the forefront of efforts not only against illicit liquor, but also against liquor altogether. During 1894 and 1895, the Georgia legislature considered
several measures calling for the regulation or outright elimination of any liquor on the state and local level. The most far-reaching and important call for liquor control came during the 1894 session of the state senate. It was described in the minutes as "a bill to abolish the barroom, to prohibit the manufacture, sale, and keeping of intoxicating liquor". However, the 1894 proposal floundered and it was not until 1907 that a state prohibition law passed. The bill's proposal signifies the developing importance of prohibitionist sentiment in moral and political debates. While the federal government was interested in regulating the liquor trade in order to derive revenue, some in the state of Georgia wanted to abolish all liquor distilling.

No White County representative presented an anti-liquor bill between 1894 and 1895. However, as was the case in other Appalachian locales, White County's middle class townspeople and religious leaders were no less dedicated to the eradication of moonshine and legal liquor. Mountain townspeople saw prohibition as a positive step towards reforming supposedly backward rural inhabitants. The Cleveland Progress reveals that White County townspeople, led by religious figures, were interested in controlling the liquor trade. Opinions expressed in letters to the editor and ongoing temperance columns in the Progress demonstrate the moral and economic basis of anti-liquor sentiment. In 1893 and again in 1895, temperance was a hot topic in the Cleveland Progress. While mass meetings eventually would be held in 1895, a number of individuals supported temperance in their 1893 columns. In fact, from March into April 1893, the "Temperance Column" appeared in almost every issue of the weekly newspaper. Each written by a different individual, these columns provided moral, religious, physical, familial, and economic arguments against both legal and illicit liquor.
The March 10th "Temperance Column" argued that liquor interests "are busily engaged in buying up our legislators, congress members, judges, and jurors". Column author J.W. Smith was not interested solely in exposing the corruption of liquor interests, he wanted the saloon and liquor itself eliminated. Smith called upon Christians to "work incessantly until the dram shops shall darken no more the dear homes of our beautiful land".

F.B.S. wrote the following week's column and his approach was similar. The author argued that "the distiller and vendor of whiskey belongs to the third class…a destroyer of values". On March 24th, the "Temperance Column" was written anonymously and examined losses attributable to alcohol and the economic peril of alcohol. The most important aspect of this column was the announcement made at the end. According to the announcement, "The Temperance Society is meeting regularly to practice songs for their next entertainment", which confirmed the existence of an established temperance presence in White County. This same organization held a mass meeting in 1895 and argued the direction in which the movement needed to proceed. The content of this meeting and the basic conflict between local temperance interests and the state and federal anti-liquor forces that this gathering underscored will be discussed in the next chapter.

Pickens County/South Carolina Sentiments

The temperance movement in Pickens County had a different history from the movements in White County. This was not the result of a distinct belief structure regarding liquor. In fact, the Pickens County temperance movement agitated for many of the same changes as its White County counterpart. The difference lay in the existence of a liquor regulation system in South Carolina that did not exist in White County, although
a municipal system had existed in Athens, Georgia since 1891. The name of this system was the South Carolina Liquor Dispensary, or Dispensary for short. The existence of the Dispensary from 1893 well into the twentieth century shaped the ways in which South Carolina activists protested and how the state itself confronted these prohibitionists. Therefore, a discussion of anti-liquor sentiments in Pickens County and South Carolina is impossible without a consideration of the South Carolina Dispensary as well.

The Dispensary was not a distinctly American idea. In fact, the system traced its lineage back to Sweden. Vexing debates over liquor control extended beyond the borders of America by the middle of the nineteenth century. A temperance organization in the Swedish town of Gothenburg petitioned the government for a licensed monopoly over the sale of liquor in 1865. This request and its subsequent approval lay the groundwork for a Dispensary system in the state of South Carolina. The administrative rules for the South Carolina Dispensary followed almost verbatim the initial laws governing the Gothenburg Plan. According to the Gothenburg rules, profits from the sale of alcohol were to be limited, saloons had to be managed by approved employees, the product was to be pure, hours of sale were limited to daylight, and no minors could be served.

It is not surprising that an idea like the Gothenburg Plan was quite appealing to a large number of citizens and politicians if one considers American attitudes towards temperance in the late nineteenth century. Due to the rise of national agricultural and monetary crises early in the 1890s, national prohibition organizations and their concerns were placed on the back burner. However, prohibition remained a major issue in the South during the late nineteenth century. The state of South Carolina was certainly active
in the prohibition debate by this time. In fact, the liquor issue was a legislative concern in some municipalities long before the 1890s. There was an upsurge of prohibition sentiment in the state from the 1870s into the 1890s. Where upstate parts of South Carolina and Georgia had very few municipalities where liquor was outlawed in 1877, these same areas had numerous dry areas by 1887. This was a result of state and local legislation in both states.

According to historian Pearl Smith McCall, "the question of prohibition was the main issue in every election campaign in South Carolina in the late 1880s". Key in South Carolina's local effort against alcohol was the 1882 state passage of the local option law. In essence, this law allowed municipalities and counties to decide for themselves through referenda whether or not they wanted outright prohibition. Prohibition sentiment was so well established on the local level that sixty or more municipalities and a number of counties considered prohibition by 1891. As the 1890s approached, calls for prohibition in South Carolina continued unabated. In fact, prohibition and temperance sentiment in the state was so firmly ensconced that state prohibition seemed to be inevitable. By 1891, South Carolina lawmakers had tried twice to initiate statewide prohibition. Both attempts, one in 1889 and one in 1891, were narrowly defeated. The 1889 effort failed to pass the state house by eight votes, while the 1891 bill died in the Senate after passing the House.

It would not take long for South Carolina prohibitionists to regroup and try statewide prohibition again. In 1892, two years into Ben Tillman's first term as governor, dry interests tried again. This time, they expressed their sentiments in a more immediate manner. In a decision that Tillman himself declared non-binding, the people of South
Carolina voted 38,890 for prohibition and 29,464 against in a referendum that was connected to the August Democratic primaries. Unfortunately for prohibitionists, the referendum had little official power. Due to political concerns, some Democrats decided that the results of the prohibition vote could not be viewed as a legislative order in the eyes of state representatives. However, regardless of political machinations, the prohibition dye had been cast. It seemed to many politicians that the people had spoken, requiring decisions on the liquor question. However, the liquor question did not move in a natural progression towards absolute state abolition of alcohol. Rather, the will of Ben Tillman would steer prohibition in a totally new direction and would lead to the birth of the South Carolina Dispensary.

Tillman's first term in office was but a prelude to his push for the Dispensary in his second go-around. Politically, the governor kept his promises to farming whites by reapportioning house seats so that urban areas in the Low Country lost seats to rural, Upcountry areas and by trying to hold a constitutional convention to disfranchise blacks. However, it was a statement made in his 1891 message to the General Assembly that foreshadowed his support for a state Dispensary. Pointing out that little of the liquor tax went to the state fund, Tillman argued against statewide prohibition as both impractical and undesirable. His demand for larger state liquor revenues and opposition to prohibition would help create the South Carolina Dispensary system.

With his reelection in 1892, Tillman had the kind of power that he did not have in his first two years. His prestige increased as he won a large majority of delegates to the convention and now enjoyed an overwhelming pro-Tillman majority in the state legislature. All of the components seemed to be in place to give birth to the South
Carolina Dispensary. However, as we already know, the issue of prohibition had been voted on and supported during the August primary. He had already declared in 1891 that prohibition was not desirable, but the people had spoken. Yet, as Howard Dorgan points out in *The Oratory of Southern Demagogues*, "Tillman seemed to act on the supposition that Providence had granted him license to attack anything and anyone".

In essence, the governor simply ignored the popular call for statewide prohibition. In his 1892 address to the assembly, Tillman pointed out the failure of local prohibition, reiterated his belief that liquor revenues must "go into the county and state treasuries," and argued that conflicts over prohibition led to "an appeal to the negro as the balance of power". Using his power in the legislature, the governor proposed his own solution. Mentioning the Dispensary system already at work in Athens, Georgia, Tillman pushed the highly contested Dispensary bill through "on the last night of the [1892] session" with little or no time for the house to even "examine or alter the bill".

The governor had his Dispensary. Similar to the Swedish plan, the South Carolina State Dispensary placed a variety of regulations and limitations on the manufacture and consumption of alcohol. Among the most important were that the sale of alcohol would be run by the state through a State Board of Control, dispensaries could be established only in majority pro-alcohol counties or by local petition made by "a majority of the freeholders", and profits would go to the state. Like many other counties in South Carolina, Pickens County had a Dispensary outlet, located at Pickens, the county seat. The people of Pickens County had mixed reactions to the Dispensary. This was the case for much of the state as the conflict we will see in White County
between county residents and their federal government paled in comparison to the
conflict between Pickens County residents and their state government.

1 The 11th Census of the United States, p. 15.
3 Ibid, p. cxvi.
5 Ibid, p. 607.
8 USDA, White County Farm Statistics (Athens, Georgia: 1955), p. 2.
9 Ibid, p. 5.
11 White County Farm Statistics, p. 2.
14 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 172.
18 Cleveland Progress, March 10th, 1893.
20 Cleveland Progress, April 21st, 1893.
21 Ibid, February 22nd, 1895.
22 Ibid, March 5th, 1895.
24 Ibid
25 Ibid


28 1900 Population Schedules (South Carolina), Pickens County.


30 Ibid, plate 134.

31 Ibid, plate 153.


33 The 11th Census of the United States, Agricultural Schedule, p. 204 and 226.


35 Anderson Online, Pickens County Community Factbook, www.andersonsc.com/community/pickens_county/Pickens_city.easley.asp (Website).


37 Anderson Online, Pickens County Community Factbook, www.andersonsc.com/community/pickens_county/Pickens_city.central.asp (Website).


42 Aheron, Images of America, p. 53.

43 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 166-167.

44 Pickens Sentinel, April 26th, 1894.

45 Schembecker, The Bureau of Internal Revenue (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins Press, 1923), p. 3.

46 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 148.


49 Ibid, p. 166.

50 McGonan, Government Regulation of the Alcohol Industry, p. 45.

52 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 166.


54 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 168.

55 Cleveland Progress, June 28th, 1895.

56 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 170-171.

57 Ibid, p. 171.


60 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 172.

61 Cleveland Progress, March 10th, 1893.

62 Ibid, March 10th, 1893.

63 Ibid, March 17th, 1893.

64 Ibid, March 24th, 1893.

65 Ibid, March 24th, 1893.


70 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 171.

71 McFall, It Happened, p. 136.


73 Ibid, p. 119.

74 Eubanks, Ben Tillman's Baby, p. 47.


78 Eubanks, Ben Tillman's Baby, p. 47.


80 1891 Message to the General Assembly, The Benjamin Ryan Tillman Papers, Clemson University, Box 1, Folder 10, P.U. Series, Clemson, S.C.

81 Simkins. Pitchfork Ben Tillman, p. 216.


84 Pickens Sentinel, December 1st, 1892.


86 Eubanks, Ben Tillman's Baby, p. 66-67.

87 McFall, It Happened, p. 137.
CHAPTER 3

CONFLICT

Conflict over local, state, and federal attempts at liquor regulation varied in degree and focus depending on the type of regulation attempted and location considered. As we know, the South Carolina State Dispensary made the liquor question an issue of statewide political importance. Therefore, prohibitionist residents of Pickens County and of South Carolina as a whole eventually directed their displeasure more toward authorities in Columbia than toward politicians in Washington. Unlike their South Carolina counterparts, anti-liquor residents of White County, Georgia did not live under a statewide regulatory system like the Dispensary. The only statewide regulation enacted in Georgia required liquor manufacturers to pay a special license fee of $25.\(^1\) If Georgia citizens wanted prohibition, they had to enact it on the local level through petition or local-option elections.\(^2\) Therefore, they directed their criticisms more towards Washington than Atlanta. A conflict in Pickens County and all over South Carolina developed between local people and state authorities as the Dispensary grew less and less popular while disagreements between local residents and the federal government grew as White County prohibitionists became frustrated with federal liquor law. Anti-liquor residents in both counties were frustrated because, like other prohibitionists, they believed it was the role of the government to limit the manufacture and consumption of alcohol and they saw governmental authorities as failing in this endeavor.\(^3\)
Local-Federal Conflict in White County

Opponents of moonshine in White County, like other American prohibitionists, were interested in ridding their county of all liquor regardless of its legal status. This is important to remember because most of the anti-moonshine opinions voiced in White County newspapers and meetings were based on established prohibitionist approaches like economy, progressivism, and morality. Like other nineteenth-century prohibitionists, anti-moonshine interests in White County believed that individual states were key in the limitation or elimination of liquor. This opinion makes sense if one considers the relative success of prohibition in various Georgia counties towards the end of the nineteenth century. There were no dry areas in northeast Georgia in 1877; ten years later most of the mountain counties surrounding White County were dry due to local-option elections. White County residents realized that state authorities tended to be more successful and rigorous in their regulation and punishment of moonshiners than were federal agents. The nature of federal liquor revenue laws gave White County prohibitionists the best reason to pin their hopes on local and state prohibition and also the most logical reason to resent the revenue efforts of federal liquor authorities.

In the opinion of White County prohibitionists, the basic problem with federal revenue laws was that they did not work in tandem with state efforts at liquor regulation and moonshine prohibition. A statement made by a federal tax collector best summarizes the goals of federal revenue officials. Georgia Collector T.C. Crenshaw stated that "I am a tax collector…I am not here to suppress liquor making or liquor selling". While state authorities were interested in eliminating the moonshine traffic, federal revenue agents were interested in tax revenue, not prohibition. If the government did away with
moonshine altogether, it would be difficult to derive revenue from the liquor trade. Prohibitionists understood this inherent conflict between state and federal authorities and became vocal critics of federal revenuers. As one Georgia prohibitionist stated, the federal liquor tax "was the strongest barrier ever erected across the pathway of temperance in the United States". He lamented both the fact that a federal tax on liquor actually encouraged the production of cheap, illicit liquor and the federal government's lack of dedication to its eradication.

While discord with governmental authorities in White County was not as pronounced or even violent as the conflict over the Dispensary in South Carolina and Pickens County, a number of White County citizens still expressed their displeasure with the federal revenue system. On June 28th, 1895, citizens published a petition in the Cleveland Progress calling for "A Mass Meeting to Consider the Whiskey Question". At this meeting, middle-class townspeople and religious leaders of White County were to consider "the making of whiskey in said county, and whether good law abiding citizens ought to keep quiet when they know the law is being violated". What happened at this meeting provides valuable insight into the effort against liquor in White County and how local prohibitionists built their cases against federal revenue law.

At the meeting, held several weeks later in mid-August, 150 residents came together and drafted six resolutions concerning the manufacture of whiskey in White County. Not surprisingly, much of what was agreed upon at this meeting was based on progressive and especially prohibitionist principles of religious uplift. Both the chairman and secretary of the committee were ministers and a Reverend W.A. Simmons was particularly vocal in his support of using "moral influence in the suppression of the
manufacture and sale of whiskey". In addition to including this moral call to arms as the sixth resolution, citizens at the meeting also drafted five other resolutions. These resolutions included a pronouncement that whiskey use was on the downturn, a call to all prohibitionists to keep working, a statement supporting the laws of Georgia and denouncing the federal revenue laws as oppressive, a criticism of the destructive tendencies of federal revenue officers, and a call for changes in federal laws. Clearly, White County prohibitionists wanted to support Georgia's anti-moonshine laws while pushing for widespread changes in the federal liquor laws. They saw federal laws as "obnoxious to the best interests of the people and that the manner in which they are administered is vicious and oppressive on a free and independent people" because federal agents often seized and destroyed what residents considered private property. White County prohibitionists believed in their own state laws and authorities and resented the outside influences and interests of federal revenue officials. Because of their focus on revenue, "prohibitionists saw in federal regulation an even more flagrant example of law serving the greedy interests of the liquor traffic rather than curbing them".

Local-State Conflict in Pickens County

Like citizens all over South Carolina, residents of Pickens County endured a much wider, and sometimes more violent, form of conflict over the issue of illicit liquor and prohibition. While White County prohibitionists were concerned with what they saw as ineffectual and tyrannical regulatory efforts originating in Washington, many Pickens County "drys" (the same types of people as in White County) believed that they should be frightened by ineffectual and tyrannical forces closer to home. Sharing some of the same concerns over issues like property destruction as their Georgia counterparts,
residents of Pickens County often directed their anger towards Governor Ben Tillman's state liquor constables rather than federal revenue officials. But South Carolina residents took the kind of philosophical attacks staged by White County "drys" in newspapers and at meetings to another level, violently attacking state Dispensary agents in several areas by the middle of the 1890s.

Surprisingly, some initial support for the Dispensary preceded this sort of violent opposition to the system. While there is no doubt that Tillman negotiated around a rising prohibition sentiment by adopting the Dispensary system, "some prohibitionists found the Dispensary an acceptable means to a prohibition end". However, widespread support for the system was hard to sustain for any substantial period of time because South Carolina prohibitionists began to realize that the Dispensary provided a half-hearted and insufficient check to liquor. Ironically, supporters and opponents of prohibition attacked the system in tandem for political reasons. South Carolina newspapers, notoriously "wet" and anti-Tillman conservative, often joined forces with the state's "drys" to wage war on the Dispensary. While "wet" conservatives wanted a return to the days of open liquor sales in areas where alcohol was not prohibited by local option, prohibitionists sought a more stringent form of the Dispensary enacted and had no problem joining the newspapers because it was politically expedient.

While we must consider the South Carolina conflict over liquor regulation on a statewide rather than countywide level because of the state Dispensary, it is necessary to retain at least some of our county-level focus. Pickens County played an interesting role in the debate and violence over the South Carolina Dispensary. As home to a large number of farmers and other laborers, Pickens County was the center of pro-Tillman
country in South Carolina. In fact, Governor Tillman carried over 95 percent of the county's popular vote in the 1890 gubernatorial election. The popularity of Tillman in the upstate did not guarantee unmitigated support for his Dispensary. While other regions of the state were more adamant and even violent in their criticism of the system, prohibition agitation was strong before and after the implementation of Tillman's Dispensary. Like their Georgia neighbors, Pickens County prohibitionists criticized the federal government for their lack of effectiveness in the fight against illicit liquor before the Dispensary's establishment in 1893. According to an 1890 editorial contained in the *Pickens Sentinel*, the weekly newspaper published in Pickens County, "the federal officers are faithful in the discharge of their duty, but if the object of the District [federal] court is to suppress the traffic, it is certainly a magnificent failure." Pickens County prohibitionists saw federal officers as basically honest but impotent in their regulation of liquor. The editorial goes on to argue for similar support for state efforts against liquor as decided upon at the White County temperance meeting. According to the *Sentinel*, "the evil of the traffic cries aloud for the additional check of the State's authority." Ironically, agitation against this additional check in the form of the Dispensary would run rampant only three years later in the same newspaper. Before focusing on Pickens County reactions to the Dispensary, it is necessary to examine the violent opposition that the system faced in another part of the state.

An article entitled "A Row in Darlington," published in the *Pickens Sentinel*, described a disturbing agitation on Wednesday, March 28th, 1894, fifty miles east of Pickens County in Darlington:

*Columbia, S.C., March 29-There came near being a big riot in Darlington yesterday over the raiding of blind tigers [illegal saloons] by State*
constables. The matter fortunately passed without bloodshed, but the indications for some time were for serious trouble. The first known of the trouble here was about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, when Governor Tillman received a telegram from Dispenser Floyd saying that raids were being made and that a mob was on the streets armed with Winchesters.22

Unfortunately, the trouble did not end as quickly as the article foresaw. What followed over the next few days in Darlington is open to considerable conjecture and debate. Residents of the small town, whipped into a frenzy by rumors of "whiskey spies" entering homes and illegally searching for bootleg alcohol, were angered by the presence of state liquor constables and local authorities.23 By Friday, the situation in Darlington was nearly chaotic. Despite Governor Tillman's later insistence that the state liquor constables could not and did not search private homes, many of the people in Darlington were undeterred in their rumor-inflicted rage.24 A confrontation was imminent and would end up being much bloodier and more violent than the Sentinel article initially believed. As the liquor constables prepared to leave the town by train after their peaceful investigation was completed, a fight broke out between the townspeople and constables leading to a shootout that took the lives of two citizens and a deputy.25 Unfortunately for the Governor and his supporters, the violence did not end in South Carolina's sand hills. "Our Whiskey Rebellion," as Tillman remembered it, lasted through the better part of the weekend and into the next week. In fact, Tillman was afraid of state civil war as demonstrations reached all the way to the state capitol of Columbia from inside the city limits and more remote parts of the state like Darlington. A mob threatened to overtake the Governor's mansion, but N.G. Gonzales, editor of the Columbia State, begged the group not to proceed and quelled the riotous citizens.26 Eventually, order was restored throughout South Carolina despite the possibility of statewide rebellion.
While the system fit Tillman's political and social sentiment and seemed to him to be a good compromise on the prohibition issue, the South Carolina Dispensary would lead a difficult life. Its difficulty resulted mainly from the fact that people on every side of the prohibition equation had some problem with the Dispensary. The governor attacked urban interests when he classified three groups of people who defied the Dispensary law. They were townspeople whose taxes were increased because of the system, "liquor dealers and their friends," and the former Bourbon (old-money urbanite) regime leaders whose "opposition is purely political". Prohibitionists had a particular problem with the administration of the Dispensary. While some prohibitionists supported the law as a social positive, others did not think the law went far enough to stop drinking and did not believe that profits should have been turned over to the state.

Criticism of the Dispensary came from ordinary citizens as well. The governor's incoming correspondence is filled with letters from citizens who were negatively impacted by the law. One of the main issues of concern for the private South Carolinian involved the transportation of alcohol. Although South Carolina residents could transport Dispensary liquor within the state or even into dry counties, state authorities passed specific prohibitions against the illegal transportation of liquor and placed a cap of one gallon on liquor being carried into the state. Private citizens took issue with the state government telling them what they could and could not carry. In a letter to Tillman in early 1894, L.W. Reese complained about the one-gallon limitation and was sure that "many of our friends saying they would not support the administration if such was the case." While opposition to the system seemed to come from all directions by the beginning of 1894, the Dispensary had yet to face its two biggest tests.
The Darlington liquor riot of 1894 was the best-known example of collective violence against the Dispensary system. The uprising in Darlington was the first potentially fatal challenge to the system. After quelling it and subsequent uprisings in other cities, the governor made sure that the people knew on whom the blame fell for the Darlington violence. When Tillman called up militia units from cities and towns like Columbia, Charleston, and Sumter to protect the capital city from a possible insurrection, they refused to obey on account of incendiary reports from anti-Tillman papers. The governor was quick to pounce on this defiance of his authority in his May, 1894 journal article account of the riots entitled "our Whiskey Rebellion". In this article, he painted the city militia units as defiant ideologues driven by whiskey interests while the "yeomanry of the state" saved the proverbial day by coming to his aid in Columbia. This stance was indicative of the divisions he created between city Bourbons and rural yeomen. Friends and enemies praised Tillman for the stand he took in defense of the system and his maintenance of relative order in the state capital. The Dispensary had survived a potentially fatal insurrection.

The Dispensary would soon face a stronger challenge that would succeed in killing the system for a short time. On April 21st, 1894, three weeks after the Darlington Riot, the state Supreme Court ruled that the Dispensary system was unconstitutional based on its violation of property and trade rights. However, Tillman was without his system for only a short time. Only two of the three justices voted the system unconstitutional and one anti-Dispensary justice's term expired August 1st. Three months after the Dispensary was shut down, Tillman waited for the new, pro-Tillman justice to be sworn in and simply declared that the dispensaries would re-open on August 1st.
October 8th, the new Supreme Court officially declared the Dispensary constitutional and the system was politically strong even after Tillman departed for Washington, D.C. as a senator.36

Joining their neighbors in agitation against the Dispensary, Pickens County residents made their feelings known in the editorial pages of the *Pickens Sentinel*. Their main objection involved the possibility of reestablishing legal liquor in the dry areas of the county. According to an editorial entitled "Will it Make Dry Places Wet?" alcohol had been banned in the town of Pickens by state legislative order.37 Seemingly confident in their prohibitionist victory, at least in the town of Pickens, the county's dry interests were concerned by letter of the Dispensary law. Many prohibitionists assumed that dry towns would not have dispensaries. But Attorney General D.A. Townsend stated otherwise. He ruled that any area in the state could become home to a local Dispensary pending a majority petition by its freeholders (white property owners).38 This ruling concerned Pickens County "drys" as "the Dispensary will establish barrooms were none now exist."39 As a result, they saw the Dispensary as anything but a beneficial compromise on the liquor question. To them, it was "a measure to extend the sale of liquor, to abolish dry towns and to make every citizen of the State a partner in the liquor business."40

"Dry" citizens of Pickens County had good reason to be concerned over the establishment of a Dispensary in their county. As previously discussed, freeholders established a local Dispensary in the town of Pickens through petition. However, if the Pickens Dispensary's performance is any indication, the county's one Dispensary facility had few customers. According to the county dispenser's reports from 1895 to 1901, it
posted operational losses and never made more than $130 per month due to the fees and taxes imposed by the Dispensary Board of Control.41

The purchase orders for the Pickens Dispensary provide more evidence of its weak performance. According to these records, the Pickens County Dispensary consistently ordered some of the smallest amounts of liquor from the central Dispensary in Columbia compared to other local dispensaries. While other counties had multiple dispensaries and routinely ordered thousands of dollars worth of liquor, Pickens' orders sent to Head Dispenser F.M. Mixson never surpassed the hundreds of dollars; there were even months when no liquor was ordered.42 This condition was due, most importantly, to the availability of cheaper moonshine liquor. M. W. Hester summarizes the situation in South Carolina most effectively. In an 1894 letter to Governor Tillman, he argues that "if the distilleries are aloud to run I cant see how our dispensers can be a success…they generly do a bigger retail business than the dispensers do [sic]."43 Mr. Hester's assertions made a great deal of sense. If faced with the choice of purchasing taxed Dispensary liquor for a higher price or moonshine liquor for a much lower fee, most "wets" would choose the illicit brand of whiskey. If the court records in Pickens County are any indication, many drinkers in Pickens chose the latter rather than the former.

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2 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 169.
3 McGonan, Government Regulation of the Alcohol Industry, p. 45.
5 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 169 and 171.
6 Ibid, p. 171.
7 Ibid, p. 170.
8 Ibid.
9 Cleveland Progress, June 28th, 1895.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid, August 16th, 1895.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.


17 Aaron and Musto, "Temperance and Prohibition in America," in Alcohol and Public Policy, p. 149.

18 Eubanks, Ben Tillman's Baby, p. 84.


20 Pickens Sentinel, October 23rd, 1890.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid, April 5th, 1894.

23 Eubanks, Ben Tillman's Baby, p. 88-89.


26 Eubanks, Ben Tillman's Baby, p. 96-99.


29 Eubanks, Ben Tillman's Baby, p. 81.

30 L.W. Reese to Ben Tillman, January 27, 1894, The Benjamin Ryan Tillman Papers, Clemson University, Box 1, Folder 13, Clemson, S.C.


33 Eubanks, Ben Tillman's Baby, p. 105.
34 Ibid, p. 105.


36 Ibid, p. 113-114.

37 *Pickens Sentinel*, January 26th, 1893.

38 Ibid and Ibid, June 22nd, 1893.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 B.C. Baker, "Reports of County Dispensers, Pickens County April 30, 1895-December 30th 1901," The South Carolina Department of Archives of History, Columbia, S.C.

42 "Record of Wines, Liquors, and Malted Goods, Purchased from F.M. Mixson," The South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.

43 M.W. Hester to Ben Tillman, circa 1894, The Benjamin Tillman Papers, Clemson University, Box 1, Folder 3, Clemson, S.C.
CHAPTER 4
PROSECUTING THE TRADE

On the surface, the battle over Appalachian moonshine was a simple conflict for most residents in north Georgia and northwestern South Carolina. Opponents of illicit liquor saw the debate as a moral one. In their eyes, moonshine was a great evil and worthy only of elimination through a combination of religious and political agitation. Those who consumed illicit liquor understood only one thing about moonshine; it was cheaper and more available than legal liquor. Whether purchasing bootleg whiskey in South Carolina or moonshine in North Georgia, residents knew that they saved considerable money by avoiding heavily-taxed Dispensary liquor or heavily-taxed dealer liquor. Even moonshiners themselves often saw the trade in simple terms. By converting their corn crop into liquor rather than selling their harvest as food, mountain farmers in the 1890s made a great deal more money for their families as agricultural prices were extremely low during and after the Panic of 1893. Governmental officials of the time realized this and commented that mountain residents could barely provide for their families without the additional income provided by illicit liquor.¹

Surprisingly, this surface-level view of moonshine endures even today. This simplified view of the trade results mainly from romantic notions both of Appalachian life and of the rugged moonshiner himself. In the eyes of most, the conflict over illicit liquor still has two distinct sides: the meddling government and the oppressed moonshiner. As historian Wilbur Miller argues, "moonshiners have been traditional
heroes, representatives of a stubborn individualism that appeals to Americans' resentment of government interference in their lives.\textsuperscript{2} However, if one considers the trade from all sides and perspectives, it is clear that the manufacture, regulation, and prosecution of illicit liquor was considerably more complex than originally assumed. Opponents of liquor were not always on the same side as those who, at least on paper, were charged with the task of regulating and limiting moonshine. In addition, the government forces that supposedly oppressed the moonshiner did not view illicit liquor in the same way and did not always work in tandem to stamp out the trade. The complexities summarized here and detailed in the first two chapters must be understood and considered when investigating moonshine and its subsequent prosecution in detail.

One aspect of the trade that remained simple, despite the complex political and social dynamics steering moonshine, was the identity of the mountain distiller. It would make sense that those who had easy access to crops, especially corn, would be moonshiners. This assumption makes more sense if the depressed state of the mountain farmer in the 1890s is taken into consideration. Farmers had the raw materials in the form of corn and the impetus in the form of their poverty to engage in the trade most consistently.

Indeed, census data suggest that these assumptions are valid. The vast majority of accused and convicted moonshiners in both states were farmers or farm laborers. Out of a sample of twenty White and Pickens County residents tried for illicit distilling, eighteen were either farmers or farm laborers.\textsuperscript{3} Farmers in both counties tended to have smaller than average farms. The average farm size in both counties was between 80 and 160 acres.\textsuperscript{4} The other defining aspect of the moonshiner's identity was the familial status of

these men. Out of the twenty residents investigated, all were male (not one female moonshiner was found), and the vast majority were family men. Nineteen of the men were married and eighteen had children. In fact, the census data indicate that most of these fathers had large numbers of children. The presence of large families undoubtedly complicated an already difficult situation for many poor farmers and probably forced a number of them into the moonshine trade. Despite their similar identities, the experiences of accused or convicted moonshiners would vary greatly depending on whether state or federal authorities adjudicated their cases.

Federal Regulation and Prosecution

By the middle of the 1890s, moonshining had increased dramatically in many areas of Georgia and South Carolina. From a federal perspective, this was the result of a Democratic effort to increase revenue by doubling the existing tax on whiskey. By making liquor prohibitively expensive to produce legally, large and small-scale liquor operations evaded the new tax and became moonshiners. This tax increase, coupled with the dire financial situation of many mountain farmers that forced many to become illicit distillers themselves, encouraged the illicit production of corn whiskey. The number of federal moonshine cases in the north Georgia mountains grew from 211 in 1893 to over 700 by 1894. By the beginning of 1896, many in cities like Atlanta believed an epidemic of illicit distilling was developing in the mountains. Urban journalists were quick to point out that half of the cases adjudicated in federal courts were connected to violations of federal revenue statutes and that indicting moonshiners was becoming a full-time job for many federal grand jurors.
Because the same federal liquor laws were applicable to both South Carolina and Georgia, it is possible to discuss both together in terms of the federal search for liquor revenue and effort against distilling. The federal court records from both counties reveal that revenue was the top priority for most federal tax officials. "Revenuers," as federal agents were called in most mountain regions, were in areas like White County and Pickens County to remove the threat that moonshiners posed to licensed liquor producers. An editorialist in the *Pickens Sentinel* labeled these efforts a failure; while a colleague at the *Cleveland Progress* voiced similar sentiments. In an April 26th, 1895 *Cleveland Progress* article entitled "The Revenue Raids," a writer detailed the difficulty that federal officials were having in their efforts to stop illicit competition with federally-licensed distillers. Part of the difficulty may have been the result of sheer volume of moonshine produced and legal inefficiency. While the volume of distillery seizures and arrests exploded, the ratio of seizures to arrests was never lower.

In the midst of this illicit liquor explosion, bureaucratic inefficiency plagued the federal effort against moonshine. Fifteen out of 75 available federal revenuers in Georgia, most from outside the area, were fired in 1894 in order to save money. The federal efforts in South Carolina and Georgia were severely handicapped and it showed in the continuously high numbers of moonshine cases in the federal courts in both states. Had federal efforts at eliminating illicit competition against licensed manufacturers been successful and if federal prosecution of moonshine had been a real deterrent, federal liquor cases would have decreased as time went on from 1894 through 1895. This certainly was not the case, as the number of federal liquor cases in both counties stayed relatively constant towards the end of 1895.
A consideration of federal court case files suggests an additional rationale for the failure of federal efforts against illicit liquor. In examining the policies and sentencing patterns of the federal courts, it becomes clear that federal officials may not have been particularly interested in eliminating the liquor trade at all. While eliminating the illicit competitor was good for business to a certain extent, it cut down on the amount of money that could be collected through continued seizures of moonshine distilleries. Federal revenue officials saw their primary role as that of a tax collector. The suppression of liquor was not a top priority for most federal revenuers, since its elimination would limit their ability to gain valuable revenue from legal and illegal distillers. Federal sentences tended to place more weight on fines than on jail time, suggesting an emphasis on revenue rather than correction. However, the ease by which many convicted moonshiners negotiated their sentences and avoided extended jail time and large fines indicates that ultimate emphasis was placed on getting moonshiners through the system and back home making more moonshine. Often, a federal jail sentence was much better than one would expect. The judge in the Atlanta federal court, which handled White County cases, allowed prisoners to be housed at the Hall County jail in Gainesville. Not only was this jail much closer to their homes in North Georgia, moonshiners from White County could go out in public during the day and were permitted even to visit relatives in White County.\textsuperscript{13} Federal authorities held Pickens County moonshiners in the Greenville jail, only a few miles from the Pickens County border.

There were a number of charges for which suspected moonshiners could be held and prosecuted, some more serious than others. One of the most frequent charges in South Carolina was "for violation of section 3242…carrying on the business of a retail
liquor dealer without having paid the special tax." This charge usually resulted in a sentence of several months in federal prison and approximately $100 in fines. For example, John Earle was convicted for a 3242 Code violation on February 15th, 1895, pled guilty, was sentenced to five months in federal prison (in Greenville) and was fined $100. It is important to note that Pickens County moonshiners were prosecuted for being illegal distillers more frequently than for tax evasion before the whiskey tax increase in 1894. This was probably the result of prohibition being in effect for parts of Pickens County where legislative acts were in place at the time and the perceived limited need for liquor revenue creation before the whiskey tax was doubled. For example, John Stewart was convicted of being an illegal distiller on February 6th, 1892 and sentenced to one month in prison and subject to a $100 fine. One thing federal officials were fairly successful in doing was convicting moonshiners and obtaining sentences for these illegal distillers. While we know that the ratio of distillery seizures to actual arrest was low due to legal inefficiencies, the ratio of prosecution to conviction was fairly high. In the South Carolina federal court cases examined, officials convicted nine out of sixteen suspects.14

The average White County moonshiner's experience with federal liquor prosecution was similar to that of the Pickens County distiller's in 1894 and 1895. Both the United States circuit court and district court adjudicated federal liquor law violation cases for White County. For the purposes of moonshine adjudication, the circuit and district courts served the same purpose. Similar to Pickens County federal court cases in 1894 and 1895, cases in White County were concerned mainly with tax revenue violations. Often, moonshiners in White County were charged with a wide variety of violations at once. Among these violations were illegal distilling, working at a distillery,
wholesaling liquor without a license, retailing liquor without paying the whiskey tax, possessing raw materials, removing liquor from an illegal distillery, concealing a distillery, and possessing an unregistered still. While moonshiners could have been charged with any combination of the above violations, most illicit distillers were charged with at least illegal distilling, working at a distillery, and retailing liquor without paying the tax. Like sentences handed down by federal juries in South Carolina, most convicted moonshiners faced several months in federal jail and most often a $100 fine. However, a wide variety of plea-bargains and sentence negotiations occurred in the Georgia federal courts which could alter the severity of sentences considerably.

Just because the judge sentenced a moonshiner, this did not always mean that the convicted moonshiner would be forced to serve his entire sentence or even pay his fine. For example, in the case of United States vs. Henry Hefner, the Georgia suspect was successful in reducing his sentence by pleading guilty only to working at an illegal distillery. While Hefner was presented with a variety of charges at first, his guilty plea on the count of working at a distillery allowed him to get his case dismissed by the United States circuit court judge. All moonshiners were not as lucky as Mr. Hefner, but most others were able to at least mitigate their sentences or fines by reducing several charges to only one. Often, this meant an abbreviated jail sentence and no fines. This was mainly the result of lenient judges who sentenced guilty moonshiners.

Even if convicted of more than a single charge, moonshiners had ways to circumvent their full sentences. Faced with a wide variety of charges like working at a distillery and carrying on a fraudulent liquor business in 1895, John O' Kelly was successful in limiting his sentence by taking the poor convict oath. Swearing that he had
less than $20 to his name, the Georgia moonshiner petitioned the court to set him free because his imprisonment was the result of his inability to pay the $100 fine. This was a common way for poor moonshiners to avoid a fine. In addition, the judge decided to reduce Mr. O' Kelly's jail sentence from four months to one month. This was a fairly common practice and applied to moonshiners convicted of many different violations. While all ten of the Georgia cases analyzed for this thesis were chosen because they returned guilty verdicts, the federal courts in Georgia were about as successful as those courts in South Carolina with around fifty percent of the cases returning guilty verdicts. The conviction rates were fairly high in both states but could have been higher if not for the sentiments of mountain jurors. Mountain prohibitionists may have despised alcohol, but they also hated the interference of federal liquor tax interlopers. According to Miller, "the boast [was] being publicly made that the jurors are on the side of the prisoners and against the government."16

There is a good explanation for the manner in which the federal courts negotiated jail times and fines. Federal courts around the southern mountains were overburdened by moonshine cases by 1894 and 1895. According to an article in the Atlanta Constitution on March 25th, 1896, "the federal grand jury is occupied nearly five days in each week returning true bills against moonshiners."17 The courts and jails simply did not have enough space and time to deal with the influx of illicit distilling cases. Therefore, the federal courts had to rush moonshiners and their cases through the justice and correctional systems. While revenue would have been a nice result of federal prosecution of liquor violators, the courts sometimes had to make sacrifices in order to keep the wheels of justice in motion.
State Regulation and Prosecution

If state revenue officers or Dispensary agents caught a moonshiner, his legal experience was likely to be substantially different from that of his contemporary's in the federal system. In both Georgia and South Carolina, the goal of state officials was to eliminate the illicit liquor trade altogether. This goal was evidenced by the relative severity of sentencing in the state superior courts. The elimination of illicit liquor made particular sense in Dispensary-era South Carolina. In order for the Dispensary to work as a regulatory and revenue agent, competing illicit distillers had to be put out of business. In a letter to Governor Tillman, M.W. Hester understood the need for a state liquor monopoly when he stated that "if the distillerys are aloud to run I cant see how our despenserys can be a sucksess [sic]."18 It was clear from the beginning that regulation and elimination of saloons and moonshine was more important than the gain of significant revenue from Dispensary sales.19

In Georgia, the goal of eliminating the illicit liquor trade resulted from the explosive growth of prohibitionist sentiment in the area. Life was no easier for the Georgia moonshiner simply because the state lacked a Dispensary system. While early prohibitionists mainly attacked the saloons, a growing movement to kill the illicit trade developed soon after. Wilbur Miller claims that this attack on moonshine did not occur until the early twentieth century, temperance editorials in the *Cleveland Progress* indicate that this movement grew in White County a full decade earlier.20 Prohibition sentiment both in South Carolina and Georgia undoubtedly helped to bolster the effort against illicit liquor. While they had different goals, federal and state liquor authorities comprised a two-pronged attack on moonshine in the mid-1890s that put increased pressure on the
mountain moonshiner. As indicated by the comparative fates of distillers prosecuted by
the federal government and the states of South Carolina and Georgia, a moonshiner was
lucky if the federal government caught him.

In general, the Dispensary provided a strong framework from which state
authorities attacked illegal liquor. As the Dispensary developed under Tillman, the
governor utilized a special police force under his jurisdiction called the Dispensary
constables. Tillman created this force with the exclusive task of eliminating moonshine
in South Carolina. Bolstered by a stronger and better-defined Dispensary law by the end
of 1894, these authorities had extensive rights of search and seizure and could demand
the full cooperation of the local police. The constables did have a significant check on
their power. Instead of unilaterally arraigning suspected moonshiners, constables had to
obtain a warrant from the trial judge in the county of offense. This placed the
responsibility of adjudication in the hands of county superior courts, similar to the
process in Georgia.

Life was especially difficult for illicit distillers in areas where alcohol was
prohibited. South Carolina was included in these dry areas as the Dispensary was
technically a prohibition act because it was drafted "to prohibit the manufacture and sale
of intoxicating liquors as a beverage within this state…except as herein permitted." Because South Carolina was a prohibition state, moonshiners could do no right in the
eyes of either the federal or state governments. This was the result of a bizarre twist of
legal fate. If one was not an official dispenser, one was guilty of breaking Dispensary
law even if one paid the federal liquor tax. If one did not pay the federal tax because
liquor was illegal anyway in South Carolina, one was guilty of tax evasion in the eyes of
Unless one was an official dispenser, there was no way to make legal liquor in the state of South Carolina after 1893.

Sessions journals and dockets of the Pickens County Superior Court provide the best insight into how the Dispensary impacted the adjudication of local moonshine cases. Unfortunately, many of the sentences that the court handed down were sealed and thus not revealed in the docket records. However, there were enough open sentences in order to draw important conclusions about the nature of moonshine prosecution in Dispensary-era South Carolina. Apparently, liquor violations were not of paramount importance to the Pickens County court from 1891 to 1894. The one liquor law violation that appeared before 1895 was similar to the taxation cases in the federal courts. W.O. Singleton was convicted of selling without a license in 1892; his sentence was sealed. While seizures of moonshine stills exploded in 1894 and into 1895, increased cases did not appear until the end of 1895 and into 1896 because the court only gathered for several sessions a year. While these cases often were not resolved until 1896 or even 1897, it is safe to assume that many were carried over from 1895. When the cases did appear, they occupied a significant amount of the court's time. Of the forty-five cases in the docket books for the March and July 1896 term, twenty were Dispensary cases.

The most common charges levied against defendants were called "violations of the Dispensary law" and involved manufacturing, selling, possession of, or transporting illicit liquor. On the surface, sentences seemed lighter than their federal counterparts because they were structured as either a fine or jail time rather than a fine and jail time. However, this arrangement was misleading. According to the Dispensary law, keeping and selling illicit liquor (the most common charge) was subject to a fine of $100 to $1000.
or three months to one-year imprisonment. Repeat offenders of the liquor law were
guaranteed at least a one-year sentence. Most of the sentences that were recorded in the
docket books were on the lighter side of the guidelines. However, this did not mean that
sentencing on the state level was any more lenient than punishment on the federal level.
Quite the contrary, sentencing was stricter. The average moonshiner convicted of selling
or keeping illicit liquor in the state could expect a sentence of approximately $100 or
three months. Of course, the choice between sentences was not the defendant's. If the
moonshiner could not pay the $100 fine, he was subject to the three-month sentence.
This three month sentence was nothing like the sentences handed down by the federal
courts. Prisoners in the Pickens County jail for three months were to engage in labor for
the entire time period. If the sentences are any indication, the goal in South Carolina was
to ensure that illicit distillers did not repeat their offenses. Ensuring revenue from
moonshine was not on the mind of Pickens County judges.

To a lesser extent, the same can be said for the White County Superior Court.
The similarities between the local Georgia and South Carolina courts are striking.
Similar to the Pickens County court, White County experienced a surge in moonshine-
related cases after 1894. Before 1894 and 1895, liquor cases occurred periodically, but
never to the levels seen in 1894 and especially 1895. In addition to this parallel upsurge
in liquor-related cases, both courts were interested more in ending the moonshine trade
than in deriving revenue from illicit liquor. The typical sentences handed down by White
County justices reflect this concern.

Like the Pickens County court, White County sentences were structured as a fine
or jail time. The major difference between the nature of these sentences was the amount
of the fines levied by White County. Instead of considerable fines like $100 in Pickens County, White County usually levied fines of only $20 or $25. This small fine suggests at least some concern for revenue on the part of White County officials. After all, a liquor license in the state of Georgia at the time was $25 and anyone who was caught without a license would be fined $25. Like their Pickens County counterparts, many moonshiners in White County were poor. If illicit distillers in federal cases told the truth in their poverty oaths, the majority of moonshiners had less than $20 dollars to their name; not enough to afford the fine. If the convicted moonshiner was in default of the $20-$25 fine, he was subject to twelve month's work on a chain gang. This was a clear deterrent to continued illegal liquor activity.

While there is no evidence to suggest that moonshiners were imprisoned for the twelve months, the sheer threat of chain gang labor anywhere in the South at this time would deter even the most stubborn moonshiner from ever making mountain dew again. The lower fines levied by state courts and harsh terms of imprisonment suggested a focus not on revenue, but on ending moonshining. However, the federal courts did not share the same goals as their state counterparts. Their sentencing patterns indicated a greater interest in deriving revenue from the convicted moonshiner than correcting his behavior. These different goals created divisions and tensions between Georgia residents and the federal government. In South Carolina, the state courts wanted to end moonshining in order to eliminate cheaper, illicit competition and sustain the Dispensary. Despite the purported prohibitionist role of the Dispensary, many South Carolinians detested the system and, like their Georgia neighbors, disagreed with the federal government's handling of the moonshine trade.
1 Miller, Revenuers and Moon shiners, p. 168.

2 Ibid, p. x.

3 1900 Census Schedule, Pickens and White County.


5 1900 Census Schedule, Pickens and White County.

6 McGonan, Government Regulation of the Alcohol Industry, p 46.

7 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 166.

8 Atlanta Constitution, June 28th, 1894, p. 10.


10 Cleveland Progress, April 26th, 1895.

11 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 167.


14 The information presented on federal liquor law regulation and prosecution in South Carolina is based on federal court records for the western district federal court of South Carolina.

15 The information presented on federal liquor law regulation and prosecution in Georgia is based on federal district and circuit court records for the Atlanta division and Northern District of Georgia.

16 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 51.

17 Atlanta Constitution, March 25th, 1896.

18 M.W. Hester to Ben Tillman, circa 1894, The Benjamin Tillman Papers, Clemson University, Box 1, Folder 3, Clemson, S.C.


20 Miller, Revenuers and Moonshiners, p. 169.

21 Ibid, p. 173.

22 Wallace, South Carolina State Dispensary, p. 26 and 41-42.

23 "Dispensary Instructions to Constables," in the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

24 Pickens Sentinel, January 5th, 1893.

26 "South Carolina State Dispensary, Law Pamphlets 1892-1907," The South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Columbia, S.C.

27 The information presented on South Carolina liquor law regulation in Pickens County is based on Pickens County court docket and sessions books.


29 The information presented on Georgia liquor law regulation in White County is based on minutes from the Georgia Superior Court in White County.
CHAPTER 5

EPILOGUE

While there were striking similarities between Pickens County and White County prosecution of moonshine, there is no denying the important impact that a statewide Dispensary had on the nature of the moonshine trade and its subsequent prosecution. Technical statewide prohibition in South Carolina forced the issue of moonshine to the forefront as the Dispensary could not profit or even exist for very long without the elimination of the trade because South Carolinians chose cheaper, illicit liquor over the heavily taxed Dispensary whiskey. However, despite the efforts of county superior courts like in Pickens, authorities could not eliminate the illegal liquor trade and thus the Dispensary never really had a chance because it lacked the monopoly necessary to succeed.¹ Prohibition sentiment was so strong in Pickens County that, as soon as the 1904 Brice Act reestablished local option on the county level, Pickens citizens voted for countywide prohibition.² While White County and the rest of Georgia lacked the Dispensary system necessary to launch a concerted attack on illicit liquor, they were not far behind Pickens County in joining the prohibition fold. In 1907, a statewide prohibition measure was passed and went into effect on the first day of 1908.³ Once citizens established state prohibition in Georgia and reestablished local option in South Carolina, problems with the moonshine trade and its prosecution worsened to an extent unimagined in 1894 and 1895.
Revenuers realized that state prohibition only worsened the moonshine epidemic. Unfortunately for many prohibitionists, anti-moonshine agents were in many cases the only ones who realized that drying up an entire state did little to limit the consumption of liquor. Dry states like Georgia were faced with a bevy of problems. In areas where local and federal revenue officials could not keep up with moonshining due to insufficient funding and manpower, the trade spiraled out of control. Even if authorities did an effective job keeping an area dry, the production of illicit liquor grew more rapidly than before state prohibition because demand increased from all areas of the state. In addition, new moonshiners were encouraged to start businesses as they could charge more for their wares in a high-demand environment.

South Carolinians faced many of the same problems as their Georgia neighbors when they reestablished local option in 1904. Wet counties that chose to retain their dispensaries flooded dry counties like Pickens with Dispensary liquor. The 1907 passage of the Carey-Cothran Act eliminating the state Dispensary in favor of local Dispensary option only worsened the problem as fewer Dispensary counties chose to keep their Dispensaries after the law, thus increasing the demand for liquor in the six counties who retained their Dispensaries by 1909. The remaining Dispensaries were so popular and corrupt that they eventually sold their wares to private, illicit liquor dealers in dry parts of the state. This corruption only complicated the illicit liquor problem in dry areas like Pickens County where the state was never able to control moonshine production anyway due to bootleggers (moonshine producers and smugglers) and "blind tigers" (illegal saloons).
Undoubtedly, the growth of state prohibition in the early twentieth century encouraged illicit liquor production. South Carolina scrapped any form of the Dispensary system and joined Georgia in statewide prohibition on January 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1916.\textsuperscript{8} Nine southern states had statewide prohibition by 1916 and the demand for illicit liquor was never higher as authorities seized more moonshine stills than ever before (3,382) in 1915.\textsuperscript{9} The more prohibitionists, local, and state governments attempted to eliminate liquor, the more they encouraged the production of moonshine. Prohibition sentiment spread throughout the country and agitation for national prohibition grew in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Soon, citizens in every region of the United States would face the conflicts between prohibition and moonshine that had existed for decades in the mountain South.

\textsuperscript{1} Wallace, \textit{South Carolina State Dispensary}, p. 118.

\textsuperscript{2} Ibid, p. 77.

\textsuperscript{3} \url{http://3.1911encyclopedia.org/G/GE/GEORGIA.htm} (website).

\textsuperscript{4} Miller, \textit{Revenuers and Moonshiners}, p. 188.

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid, p. 187.

\textsuperscript{6} Eubanks, \textit{Ben Tillman's Baby}, p. 172-175.

\textsuperscript{7} Wallace, "South Carolina State Dispensary," p. 118.

\textsuperscript{8} Eubanks, \textit{Ben Tillman's Baby}, p. 178.

\textsuperscript{9} Miller, \textit{Revenuers and Moonshiners}, p. 187.
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