Alcoholic Dogs and Glory for All: The Anti-Saloon League and Public Relations, 1913

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Abstract. In 1913, the Anti-Saloon League of America declared its intention to pursue national prohibition. While it continued to adhere to its core principles of agitation, it expanded its communication efforts and entered a partnership with the Scientific Temperance Federation, a spin-off of the education arm of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. The League’s tactics were not necessarily new to the temperance movement — or even to other reform movements of the time. What did set it apart was its single-minded focus on stopping the liquor traffic. Tracing through archival artifacts the League’s communication strategies and tactics during 1913, then, this study contributes to a larger body of work that seeks to expand on the traditional model of public relations history.

The Westerville, Ohio, group of manipulators have added to medieval intolerance the craftiness of the most astute politician, the persistence of the frenzied zealot and an efficiency in organization unequalled by the most avaricious of trusts.\(^1\)

The Anti-Saloon League was a church-based organization founded in 1893 in Ohio to combat the liquor traffic in that state. Two years later it became a national organization and, later, from its headquarters in Westerville, Ohio, the driving force behind the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment. Scholars have explored the work of the League in the context of political, social, religious, and cultural changes, other reform movements, and against the larger backdrop of the Progressive Era.\(^2\) What these scholars did not explore in depth were the League’s communication efforts in terms of what Robert Weibe described as the Progressive Era’s use of “moral suasion to excellent effect.”\(^3\) As such, this study contributes to a larger body of work that seeks to expand on the traditional model of public relations history by exploring the communication strategies of the League, which were not designed by publicity men but by lawyers and ministers who considered their efforts to be in the service of God.\(^4\)

In 1951, British social historian J.A.R. Pimlott wrote, “‘Public relations’ is not a peculiarly American phenomenon, but it has nowhere flourished as in the United States. Nowhere else is it so widely practiced, so lucrative, so

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pretentious, so respectable and disreputable, so widely suspected and so extravagantly extolled.\footnote{5} Nothing could have been more true of the work of the Anti-Saloon League of America. Indeed, through its speeches, pamphlets, newspapers, and fundraising campaigns, the League made a conscious effort to influence public sentiment by targeting its audiences with the strategies, messages, and tactics most appropriate to each one – an approach still considered to be a cornerstone of public relations today.\footnote{6}

The traditional model of public relations history depicts the start of the modern-day field in 1900 with a relative boom in the wake of the Committee on Public Information (the World War I Creel Committee), a largely east coast, business-based orientation.\footnote{7} However, the League’s communications system was conceived and implemented well before then, supporting suggestions that public relations has a more expansive lineage that could be more strongly rooted in early social reform than in twentieth-century corporate America. This study, then, traces through archival artifacts the communication strategies and tactics the League employed during 1913, a pivotal year in its own history when it declared its intention to pursue national prohibition and redoubled its communication efforts.\footnote{8}

As the League positioned itself to lead the national charge for a dry America, it swept aside the efforts of older and similarly committed groups such as the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the Gideons, and the Prohibition Party, and its religious fervor gave way to secular determination while emotional appeals gave way to rational ones. It continued to adhere to its core principles of agitation – the building and mobilizing of public sentiment at the local and state levels – but its expansion to the national level meant a shift in its political activism: increased levels of controlled communications, such as newspapers and magazines, and the harnessing of other tools that are now commonly recognized as modern public relations practice, such as third-party endorsements and special events, culminating in the introduction of the Hobson Amendment to Congress at year end. Most importantly, it entered a partnership that year with the Scientific Temperance Federation, a spin-off of the education arm of the WCTU.

The League’s tactics were not necessarily new to the temperance movement – or even to other reform movements of the time. Similarities can be found, for example, with the “religious persuasion” of the Great Awakening, the non-denominational approach to some revivals in the Burned-Over District, and the strategies, methods, and rhetoric of the British Corn Laws protests, woman’s suffrage and the WCTU.\footnote{9} Additionally, temperance pledge movements, such as the League’s Lincoln-Lee Legion, were not new. Americans already had experienced Dr. Billy J. Clark’s 1808 pledge-signing temperance society, the 1826 American Temperance Society, and the 1840 Washingtonians, to name a few.\footnote{10}

What did set the League apart from many reform movements of its time, however, was its single-issue orientation.\footnote{11} In his first national conference re-
port, lawyer-turned-minister and League leader Howard Hyde Russell quoted the League’s Constitution, “The object of this League is the suppression of the saloon. To this end we invite the alliance of all who are in harmony with this object, and the League pledges itself to avoid affiliation with any political party as such, and to maintain an attitude of neutrality upon questions of public policy not directly and immediately concerned with the traffic in strong drink.” For example, although the League worked closely with the WCTU and supported woman’s suffrage, this was simply in the service of meeting its own objectives.

In 1874, the same year as the founding of the WCTU, a temperance meeting was held at Oberlin, which sparked the Oberlin Temperance Alliance, an organization that sought to lawfully “suppress the traffic in and use of intoxicating liquors.” Fourteen years later, the Alliance asked Howard Hyde Russell, by then an Oberlin student and a minister of the Congregational Church in Berea, Ohio, to lead the call for a statewide local option law.

Local option laws provided for a call for a special election in a town, city, or county in which voters would decide whether or not their locality would remain wet or dry through the continuation or suspension of liquor licenses and/or sales in the area. While appealing to the idea of local control – and promoted as such by prohibitionists – local option also meant that there was no guarantee of a dry outcome or that the resulting law would hold for more than two to three years, when another special election could, possibly, overturn the results of the previous vote. Although local option was seen among prohibitionists as one step toward suppressing the liquor traffic, the uncertain outcome of the process confounded what Richard Hamm called the prohibitionists’ “critical criterion – absoluteness” and eventually drove them to seek more permanent legislative solutions.

Russell’s success in driving the passage of the Ohio local option law soon led to his proposal for a statewide prohibition organization. By 1893, the Oberlin Alliance agreed to support him and the newly formed Anti-Saloon League of Ohio. Two years later, Russell’s efforts resulted in a national initiative. An 1897 speech he delivered to the International Convention of Christian Endeavor demonstrated how he could combine hellfire and suasion with lawyerly pragmatism, both of which would characterize the League’s messages in its early years. First, he established the righteousness of the League’s work against the liquor traffic, then summarized how the power of agitation through saturation of information, education, and credible sources in the form of church organizations not only could tap existing public sentiment to effect change, but could create public sentiment to that end, as well:

There can be, therefore, no better Kings-business for the Church of Jesus Christ than to destroy this most desolating work of the devil, the drunkard-making, heart-breaking, home-blasting, soul-damning, hell-crowding saloon. The churches have all declared war upon paper. No great power in history has ever uttered more unequivocal ultimatums against another great power than the Church versus the saloon... The Anti-Saloon League is a public opinion building society. By
the public union anti-saloon meeting regularly held, by the circulation of literature, by the organization of educational work in the public schools, in the pulpits, the young peoples societies and the Sunday Schools, we persistently press the agitation and keep the awful facts upon the hearts and consciences of the people, until a stern and determined public demand has been created and fostered to the pitch where the people of the community will not tolerate in their midst, a crime breeding, disease-engendering, poverty-producing saloon.\(^\text{18}\)

In this speech, Russell acknowledged being influenced by abolitionist Wendell Phillips in his use of agitation to sway public opinion, and he reinforced these ideas as editor of the League’s *American Issue*, the successor to the Ohio League’s *The Anti-Saloon*, which he had started in 1893.\(^\text{19}\) When he turned the editorship over to John Collins Jackson in July 1890, the stories continued to combine the emotive and cognitive elements that Russell had mastered, reinforcing the suasive power now recognized as effective in public relations even as Jackson modernized the layout and eliminated the biblical passages from the nameplate.\(^\text{20}\)

In 1903, Russell turned over the League’s leadership to his successor, Purley A. Baker, a Jackson County, Ohio teacher and ordained Methodist minister who served as general superintendent until his death in 1924. Under Baker’s leadership, the League established its headquarters and publishing concern, the American Issue Publishing Company (AIPC), in Westerville, Ohio, in 1909. In his report to the convention that year, Baker, mindful of changes in tactics among political parties, called for a better quality and quantity of literature that would “move the indifferent and convince the prejudiced.”\(^\text{21}\) It was important, he said, not to overestimate the public’s understanding of the liquor question and to carefully match messages with the interests of different groups, a possible precedent for today’s concept of targeting:

> The great mass of our people are yet in the primary grade as to the real knowledge they have of this evil; they need a literature that will quicken the conscience and enlighten the mind… Others need to be inspired by the noise of victory – a literature that recounts successes. Still others, with little conscience, want to know if it pays. The people must be graded and classified and their needs met as we have not dreamed of hitherto.\(^\text{22}\)

The next year, in 1910, the League published the Blue Book, a national declaration of the League’s mission.\(^\text{23}\) Endorsed by Russell and Baker, the book was written by William H. Anderson, a lawyer who joined the League in 1900 after working for temperance through the Methodist Church.\(^\text{24}\)

Although Anderson reinforced Russell’s ideas concerning both the mobilizing and creation of public sentiment, among other things, he also injected a kind of ruthlessness that contrasted with Russell’s rhetoric. For example, he wrote that churches who created problems for the League would find themselves compelled by the League to “take a stand or cease to be respectable – as churches.”\(^\text{25}\) And, he declared harshly, the League was not interested in “the ministerial misfits and clerical flotsam and jetsam that are kindly recommend ed by their friendly, but despairing, denominational associates for every new
interdenominational job that is open.” Unlike Russell, who had once called for others to join him in the fight against the “arch-demon” as did the “brave clans of old,” Anderson took a more threatening tone in his close, warning that church ministers lacking “faith, courage or wisdom” would allow the “gates of hell” to prevail.

The Blue Book served to codify Russell’s and Baker’s ideas, framing them in a “take no prisoners” tone. Armed now with a publishing house and a well-tuned national newspaper, the League was positioning itself to move beyond the churches with better targeted literature and beyond local option with a drive for national prohibition.

**National Prohibition**

By 1913, nine out of forty-eight states were dry, or nineteen percent, with at least twenty more pushing for statewide prohibition. Local option laws were on the rise, although, according to K. Austin Kerr, their popularity could also have been a result of the wets capitalizing on the League’s promotion of local option as the democratic ideal of self-rule – as a way to exercise the right to vote for liquor traffic, thereby diluting, if not defeating, the League’s own efforts at the local level. Legislatively, prohibitionists had scored a success with the passage of the Webb-Kenyon Act, “an epoch in the history of this reform,” which outlawed the shipment and subsequent receipt, possession, or sale of intoxicating liquors from any place in or outside of the United States to any area within this country in which liquor had been banned. And, as an added victory, President William Howard Taft, who had vetoed the Act and then been overridden, lost the 1912 election to Woodrow Wilson. The League also perceived the advent of the income tax through the Sixteenth Amendment as advantageous because it would create an alternative to the revenue stream generated by the liquor tax since the Civil War.

In terms of funding, the League was entering what would be its most prosperous period, securing support from the likes of retailer S. S. Kresge and Standard Oil’s John D. Rockefeller and reaping eighty to ninety percent of its earnings from its increasingly successful Field Days, in which League supporters spoke to congregations and then solicited subscriptions and contributions. As to communication, circulation of the American Issue was rising, plans were under way to launch four new publications, and, most important, the League had secured a partnership in June 1913 with the Scientific Temperance Federation, an alliance that the League perceived as greatly enhancing its own credibility. The convergence of all these developments in 1913 paved the way for the League’s “Next and Final Step,” national prohibition.

**The Declaration**

It was at the League’s Fifteenth National Convention, held in 1913 in Columbus, Ohio, to mark its twentieth anniversary, that League general superinten-
Reverend Purley A. Baker declared its intention to pursue a national prohibition amendment. He began by reviewing the challenges that the League and others had overcome in building the anti-saloon movement, including the liquor interests, some religious leaders and politicians, and “that part of the press in which liquor advertisements outweigh editorial decency and duty to the homes of their patrons.”

Additionally, Baker reminded the convention delegates that the founding purpose of the League had been to “amalgamate scattered forces; to mobilize the already created sentiment and focus it at a given point for immediate results.” Its success, he said, was evident in the abundance of references that the League garnered in opposition publications and the lay press – not because it sought such attention, but because the prevalence of its work was bound to get noticed. He recognized the WCTU for its “early enlistment, constancy of effort, loftiness of purpose, wise planning, and successful execution”; the Prohibition Party for having “sounded the gong in the ears of sleeping saints until under other auspices they are enlisted in a relentless war for the overthrow of the liquor traffic”; and the Gideons for “making the hotel bars unpopular and unprofitable.”

But then he seemed to push these groups aside to position the League as leading the charge toward national prohibition, explaining,

There comes a time in every movement when distinctively advanced policies and programs must be announced and strictly adhered to until the entire line moves up... It means thoughtful days and sometimes restless nights... because of how your following and associates may view it... To know when to move to hold the radicals and not lose the conservatives requires the most careful discernment of the draft of public thought.

The implication was that it would be the League, with its “distinctively advanced policies and programs” and “careful discernment of the draft of public thought,” that would be raising the bar and causing friends and associates to fall by the wayside in its drive toward national prohibition.

Following this introduction, Baker presented the “Next and Final Step,” a resolution formally voted upon and passed by the League’s Headquarters Committee and National Board of Trustees that spring. Here, the League drew its battle lines, calling the liquor traffic “an enemy of everything that is good in private and public life... a friend of everything that is bad... [and] a despoiler of the race.” The cities, Baker said, were a danger to democracy because their saloons bred their politicians; to save the urban citizenship, then, and preserve the rural people and the Republic, “the liquor traffic must be destroyed.” The time was ripe for national prohibition, he said, because the movement was so large and so well organized, and because “the moral, scientific and commercial aspects of the problem are being more intelligently put before the public than hitherto. The narrow, acrimonious and emotional appeal is giving way to a rational, determined conviction that the traffic being the source of so much evil and economic waste and the enemy of so much
good, has no rightful place in our modern civilization."

To elect a Congress favorable to such an amendment, Baker continued in his speech, would require that each House and Senate candidate from then on be “interrogated in a courteous, clear, dignified, written communication” by an anti-liquor committee from within his constituency concerning his stance on a prohibition amendment. His replies would then need to be publicized; if he refused, that need would need to be publicized; if his response was convoluted, then the League would interpret it and publicize its findings to his voters. Baker then neatly summarized the League’s political strategy, revealing a ruthlessness at which the 1910 Blue Book had only hinted. “One of the heartbreaking experiences of such a campaign,” Baker said, “is that we will be compelled to oppose and even defeat and probably thereby politically ruin some who have fought with us in the past.”

Surprisingly, neither Baker, who had devoted much of the previous decade to establishing the infrastructure for the League’s communication efforts, including the publishing facility in Westerville, nor Ernest Cherrington, who was the League’s publisher, addressed the ways in which communication would be used in the national prohibition campaign. Instead, that direction could be gleaned from the speaker following Baker, Lillian Burt of the Ohio WCTU, who praised the League’s legislative efforts, but called for more emphasis on “definite, systematic educational work against the real enemy, alcohol.” If people understood the effects of alcohol on themselves and on their unborn children, she said, they would not consider supporting the liquor interests. According to Burt, the Ohio WCTU had developed a series of readings that addressed the effects of alcohol on the brain, the nerves, heredity, child life, and government, among others, and that had been incorporated into youth meetings and weekly Sunday school lessons to convey “the truth concerning alcohol to the homes.” The WCTU had then developed these readings into a series of pamphlets and posters to be distributed so thoroughly “that no man can go anywhere without seeing the truth concerning alcohol.” Leaders of the movement, such as the Prohibition Party and the League, she said, all did their parts in their own ways, but an “education campaign,” she concluded, would establish more common ground among them because everyone recognized the truth about alcohol.

Although it is not evident from reviewing the 1913 convention proceedings, the League had come to the same conclusion as Burt had concerning the importance of alcohol education. In fact, securing a controlling partnership with the Scientific Temperance Federation (STF), a spin-off of the WCTU’s education efforts, was one of the League’s final steps in its preparation for launching its national prohibition amendment campaign.

**The Scientific Temperance Federation**

In 1911, two years before Baker announced the League’s decision to pursue national prohibition, he reported to the national conference that the AIPC
would need to increase its daily production of literature from one and one-half tons to ten tons if the League were to print its “way into the knowledge and power of the people.” He said it would be five years before the AIPC could meet this production goal and explained:

This is not spectacular work. It is siege work, but it brings lasting victory… The masses are utterly without knowledge. They will not seek knowledge. It must literally be forced upon them when they are not looking, “line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little,” yesterday, today, and every day… In an age of a literature propaganda for everything, we are trying to convince the public with poor speeches that not one in fifty ever hear and those who do were mostly converted before they came. We must put modern advertising business sense into our propaganda. Well-prepared circulars for the different classes mailed into the homes, attractive posters hung everywhere… bristling with facts that stick like tacks in the mind, the church press and the League papers – strong, dignified, intense and fertile, widely circulated to give texture and vision to our leadership, is our present and future need…

… You can not successfully combat page color advertisements, flashy posters and great electric beer signs with a few tracts printed on paper so cheap that when printed on one side you can read them on both. Such literature is a misappropriation of trust funds that ought to be prohibited by law.

If Baker had been writing an introduction to the work of the STF, he could not have been more on point. Cora Frances Stoddard, STF corresponding secretary and treasurer, wrote in 1910, “it is the simple statement of the proven fact that is winning attention and conviction from those who hitherto have regarded the matter [of temperance] with indifference or polite incredulity.”

Further, she said, the purpose of the STF’s work was not to find ways to eliminate pain and disease, but to “get the evidence that will convince man to exert his moral nature in resisting temptation, which indulged in, impairs his physical efficiency, but still worse weakens his moral nature, impairs his moral development and destroys character.” This was the kind of focus Baker had called for, and Stoddard, who had graduated from Wellesley in 1896 and had been the secretary to Mary Hannah Hanchett Hunt of the WCTU’s Department of Scientific Temperance Instruction, would soon find herself and the STF beholden to the League.

The Boston-based STF was rooted in Hunt’s work with the WCTU, although the ownership of that work upon her death in 1906 remained in contention. According to Stoddard, the WCTU’s Scientific Temperance Association shared Hunt’s material with the STF, which, in turn, used that research while continuing to gather more to enrich the body of knowledge concerning the effects of alcohol on individuals and society.

Hunt’s entry in the League’s *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem* credited her with leading a national campaign between 1882 and 1902 that resulted in legal temperance education requirements in “every State and in the Territories, requiring instruction in the nature and effects of alcohol and other narcotics, as a part of physiology and hygiene.” Indeed, Philip Pauly found that it was Hunt who brought “the physiological rationale” to the WCTU in 1879, channeling it through a growing number of statewide textbook adop-
tions targeted to students. The idea of educating the public about the physical effects of alcohol was nothing new, but Hunt’s physiological approach, while popular, reflected “a tradition of expertise in which authoritative ignorance formed an integral part of scientific practice.” Nevertheless, by 1901, one-half of the country’s school districts had adopted a scientific temperance textbook that had been endorsed by Hunt, making one out of every two children at the time probable recipients of her temperance lessons. At Hunt’s death, more than forty textbooks featured her research and/or her editorial input concerning the role of alcohol and its impact on the body and on society.

According to the League, the STF took Hunt’s work one step further because it disseminated scientific information on alcohol in “popular form, in books, pamphlets, special articles, and addresses.” Important, too, was that the League perceived the STF to be highly credible among temperance workers at home and abroad. The STF not only had a library of international medical research concerning alcohol and alcohol-related studies, but it also published a quarterly periodical, *Scientific Temperance Journal*. And, it had found new ways to communicate these findings by publishing charts and colored diagrams, pictures, and slides, and incorporating these, as well as three-dimensional models, into a traveling exhibit. Thus, it was a mutually beneficial partnership: the STF had the data and the design and the League had the production facilities and distribution channels.

From the STF’s perspective, however, there were two additional reasons to pursue this partnership. The first concerned financial survival. The STF was established as an independent clearinghouse for data and research concerning alcohol and alcohol abuse. However, many organizations found it more economical to gather their own data than to subscribe to the STF, and even its own supporters were reluctant to increase their donations because the STF lacked a well-organized or sizeable constituency. The second reason for Stoddard’s alliance with the League is that scientific temperance education in schools – the movement’s primary forum heretofore – was rapidly becoming eclipsed by a larger movement in social hygiene. This shift represented a move from a focus on physiology and alcohol’s effects on human organs to a broader perspective on society’s welfare that emphasized “social relationships and responsibilities.” Whereas Hunt’s supporters would have considered hygiene to be a lifestyle issue (clean, moral living leads to good health), the social hygiene movement recognized that sound morals would not be enough to combat bacteria or disease.

Although the STF sought to follow in Hunt’s footsteps by demonstrating through scientific evidence the damage of alcohol to the human body, its “millions of posters, charts, billboards, and pamphlets” produced between 1908 and 1912 tended toward the emotional rather than informational, emphasizing the more visible social problems of alcohol abuse. The STF’s “Exhibit in Alcohol and Public Health” at the 1912 International Congress in Hygiene and Demography may have been just such a display of social consequences that
prompted the League, through Cherrington, to seek out the STF and propose combining forces.64

By this time, though, the STF had affiliated itself with the National Temperance Society. Thus, in response to Cherrington’s overture, Stoddard wrote that the STF would be unwilling to submerge itself in another organization and that it would want to know the permanency of the arrangement concerning ownership of the materials produced jointly, “should the League at some future time decide that it did not wish to continue it any longer.”65

While awaiting a formal proposal from Cherrington, Stoddard wrote Charles Scanlon, an STF supporter and League critic, to update him on association news and to reassure him of STF’s intentions in working with the League.66 It was quite clear that while she and others regarded the League with skepticism, there were some pragmatic benefits that she believed the STF and the temperance movement as a whole could reap from such an arrangement:

While I know how you and many others of our good friends feel in regard to the Anti-Saloon League, I do not think we ought to turn down, without a hearing, at least, any proposition that they have to offer which carries any assurance of a larger work. There is the imminent danger that in the near future the liquor people are going to begin to work the scientific end, and when they once begin to cover the country with their false and misleading statements, they will gain the public ear, and it will multiply the difficulties of our work one hundred fold. If there is any agency by which we can reach the public in a large way immediately with the scientific facts, I think we ought to use it…

… There is this question to be considered, let them go on and develop their own work in their own way, making mistakes as they have already done and are bound to do, or put ourselves in position to help control the matter…

… I want you to be open-minded and to consider what is the best thing in the largest way… the work must be done by a scientific and not by a political organization, that its permanency and scientific standing must be ensured.67

When the National Temperance Society considered dropping out of the negotiations six months later, Stoddard wrote to Scanlon that Cherrington wanted to delay the deal to avoid looking like “the League is trying to ‘grab’ everything in sight,” although, she reported, the League seemed to be “finally waking to the importance of the scientific and educational work.”68

Weeks later, the National Temperance Society did drop out, although the League was still prepared to make an investment of a “good many thousand dollars.”69 Not surprisingly, on June 9, 1913, the STF agreed to work with the League. Among the stipulations were that the STF would retain its name and location in Boston; its name would appear as the source for all publications it provided, “so far as practicable”; it would be paid for articles Furnished to the AIPC, but not for reprints; and the League would have a fifty-one percent presence on the STF Board of Directors, while the STF would retain a twenty-five percent presence on its own board.70 Thus, through its formal agreement with the STF, the League gained access to the literature that Baker had dreamed would “quicken the conscience and enlighten the mind,” whereas Stoddard had found a way for the STF to stay afloat while still serving the
movement.\textsuperscript{71}

**Scientific Temperance Federation Fliers**

Once the deal was signed, it was not long before the eight commercial presses at the AIPC began to churn out STF fliers, which would also double as posters and which usually featured the STF copyright, the AIPC publishing credit, and a source citation for the statistics featured in the copy. These three elements contributed largely to the idea of source credibility, considered today to be a primary element of effective public relations.\textsuperscript{72} By listing itself separately from the AIPC as the copyright holder, the STF not only avoided being subsumed by the League, one of Stoddard’s conditions for the partnership, but also conveyed to those drys who opposed the League that the work continued to be the STF’s, not the League’s. Also, by citing its sources, the STF conveyed to readers that its information was based on scientific evidence, not “the narrow, acrimonious and emotional appeals” that Baker derided in his 1913 general superintendent’s report.\textsuperscript{73}

Two other features common to most of the STF fliers and posters were the bold use of black and red against a white background and simple but powerful graphics used to reinforce the copy. Both sets of elements made the publications distinctive and remarkably timeless – and created impact even, presumably, for people unable to read. This approach was just what Baker envisioned when he called for better communication pieces at the 1911 national convention. Here were the “attractive posters… bristling with facts that stick like tacks… strong, dignified, intense and fertile,… widely circulated to give texture and vision to our leadership.”\textsuperscript{74}

Examples of League work without STF credit portray Dickensian despair, such as “The Full Father and The Empty Stocking: Thirty-Six States can Change This by Constitutional Amendment,” a split image of four men at a bar with a drawing underneath of a child in rags weeping, alone, in a bleak, battered, empty room, while a snowstorm howls outside on Christmas.\textsuperscript{75} Another depicts a girl lying on a tombstone labeled “Profit,” and attacks the liquor industry for employing children. But it also includes a message about children who die in “drinking homes.” The number given is 2,407, but there is no context or source. Atop the image is the phrase “The State is Going Dry,” which also is used on a second poster in which a photo of a young boy is shown standing on a drawing of a town in which there are rows of saloons. It asks, “Must these go down to a drunkard’s grave in order that we the streets may pave?”\textsuperscript{76} Thus, while the messages about children’s welfare in relation to alcohol was relevant to concerns of the times, these kind of melodramatic and/or undocumented appeals underlined Stoddard’s concern that the League should turn its focus from politics to more educational and scientific efforts.

Indeed, the first STF/AIPC flier/poster titles were in sharp relief to those emotive approaches. They had a copyright date of 1913 and closely adhered to Cora Stoddard’s vision of science-based appeals: “Parents’ Drinking Weakens
Children’s Vitality”; “Alcoholic Dogs had more Feeble and Defective Puppies”; or “Deaths, Defects, Dwarfings in the Young of Alcoholized Guinea Pigs.” While all three reflected a contemporary scientific interest in alcohol’s effect on reproduction, the latter cited a study by Charles R. Stockard, whose 1912 guinea pig research published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* was, according to Pauly, “immediately picked up by the medical and social reform press.” Other fliers concerned the dangers of drinking in relation to sunstroke, “feeblemindedness,” and “worker’s efficiency.” One striking flier featured a centered photograph of the ill-fated luxury liner Titanic over which was a headline that declared, “The Titanic Carried Down 1503 People” and under which was a subhead that added, “DRINK CARRIES OFF 1503 Men and Women EVERY EIGHT DAYS in the Year.” This was followed by a statement in smaller type that said, “At Least One Man in Every Seven and One-Half Men who Die in the United States Loses His Life as the Direct or Indirect Result of DRINK.” The last line of copy, printed in the third largest typeface, read, “No Man Need Die of Alcohol-Caused Disease.”

This piece demonstrated a few things about the sophistication of the STF’s communication tactics. First, it established common ground with readers by using an international tragedy with which many people at that time could identify, and then it related the incident back to the alcohol issue by showing how alcohol abuse was an ongoing tragedy of similar proportion. Second, the STF kept the copy simple and direct and complemented it with a photograph of what by then would have been a widely recognized image. Third, the STF combined this emotive appeal with a cognitive one, statistics, in constructing its message, demonstrating, again, its sound persuasive writing. Finally, the STF adhered to its own legacy of physiological messages by closing the piece with a medical-sounding note, “alcohol-caused disease,” rather than a moral one.

Even a pamphlet that focused on morality was presented as scientifically grounded. “DRINK A GREAT CAUSE OF IMMORALITY,” was developed from what was cited as a “Report (1909) of Inspector Under Inebriates Acts, on 865 Immoral Inebriate Women in British Reformatories.” The pamphlet showed a red triangle of which roughly forty percent was black. In the black area was a white box that read, “40 percent of the Immorality was due solely to Drink.” The bold use of black and red against a white background not only was eye-catching, but the graphic served to reinforce the remaining copy, “There was no apparent reason why any of the persons (represented by the black section) should have become immoral but for preceding alcoholism. – R. W. Brandthwaite, M. D.”

**American Issue Publishing Company Literature**

Meanwhile, the AIPC had continued to produce League publications alongside those of the STF. In a January 1, 1925 report reviewing the output of the AIPC since its inception in 1909, Cherrington recorded the total revenue
gained in that period from print orders for “books, booklets, pamphlets, leaflets, tracts, letterheads, envelopes, subscription cards, blank forms” placed by state Leagues and related concerns such as the STF, the League’s temperance youth organization, the Lincoln-Lee Legion, the Subscription Department (to print the subscription forms used for Field Days, for example), and the League. A summary of those orders by category showed that leaflets, such as the STF fliers described above, far outnumbered the others, with more than 127 million pieces bringing in more than $226,000 in revenue, compared to just over 2 million book orders at $134,000 and 6.2 million pamphlets at $67,600. Total revenue from the League’s flagship newspaper American Issue was not listed, although circulation figures revealed a steady rise between 1909 and 1914, from almost 700,000 to 8.9 million copies, and between 1917 and 1920, from 11.8 million to 18.4 million copies. After the enactment of Prohibition, circulation dropped by approximately 4 million between 1921 and 1924. A drop between 1914 and 1916, however, might best be explained by the brief appearance of four additional League publications: the American Patriot, a general interest magazine (1912); the New Republic, a fundraising piece (1913); the National Daily, targeted to editors of the popular press and magazines (1915); and the Worker, an appeal to labor (1915).

Cherrington had developed these with the intent of appealing to different parties and classes. By doing so, he might have been attempting to meet a need identified by Baker as early as 1909: “The people must be graded and classified and their needs met as we have not dreamed of hitherto.” All four, though, were eliminated after 1916, because capital was spread too thinly. Indeed, the AIPC’s total operating profits (excluding outside contributions) peaked in 1914 at just over $46,000 but plummeted to just under $1,500 in 1916, the last year these four publications were produced. Such a staggering drop suggests that some or all of these pieces were not offered by subscription, as was the American Issue, but distributed for free to promote the League to those specific groups whose support it sought: potential donors, editors, and labor.

A final point to consider is that although the circulation figures for New Republic and National Daily were substantial, neither publication was designed with home and family in mind. In contrast, although the American Patriot was a family magazine, it had quite a modest circulation even in its best year. Thus, in addition to financial concerns, it was also possible that the League ceased publication of these four pieces because they detracted from Baker’s desire to reach men in the home.

American Issue

By 1913, Cherrington had been editor of the American Issue for four years, since John Collins Jackson’s death in 1909, and, judging by the masthead and the infrequency of bylines in the June 1913 issue, in which Baker first declared the League’s intentions to pursue national prohibition, Cherrington
might also have been the principal writer of the now-monthly magazine. The cover design was reminiscent of early *National Geographic* issues, with bold letters across the top and an inner frame within which the cover image or copy appeared. This format used an outer cover and an inner one. In the June 1913 issue, the two covers juxtaposed a higher ideal with a baser attitude. The outer cover featured a quote from lawyer, former Prohibition Party candidate, and League supporter John G. Woolley, who urged cooperation among the WCTU, the Prohibition Party, and the League. He wrote that the WCTU was unrivaled in “inspiration and education,” the Party was unequalled in “its assault upon the national attention,” and the League was unmatched in “utilizing public sentiment as it forms.” Thus, he concluded, in words that were more inclusive than Baker’s would be at the November national convention, “there has been work enough and will be glory enough for us all.”

In contrast to this ideal, the issue’s inner cover was a cartoon that depicted a garbage barrel overflowing with trash labeled “rum,” “bar-room,” “cash,” “whisky,” and a half-buried man in a pinstripe suit, whose leg is labeled “the traffic.” Strewn around the base of the barrel were broken liquor bottles, dice, playing cards, racing forms, betting forms, and piece of paper with “prize fights” on it. These covers not only contrasted the good drys with the bad wets, but they also revealed something about the continuum along which the League operated. It was just as comfortable spouting lofty ideals as it was spewing crass attacks.

Articles in this issue included a recap of the Webb-Kenyon victory and announced that the principal authors of that bill, Texas Senator Morris Sheppard, North Carolina congressman Yates Webb, and Iowa senator William S. Kenyon, would be at the national ALSA convention in November. Another described two temperance addresses delivered in May by Navy Secretary Josephus Daniels and then explained their significance. Because Daniels “is a man of large affairs and wide experience,” it read, and hailed from North Carolina, a prohibition state, then prohibition could not be a failure; otherwise “he would not have made these addresses.” Such commitment to the cause, the story concluded, put Daniels alongside then Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan and President Woodrow Wilson “in public proclaiming against the drink evil.” Bryan was, indeed, a dry supporter, earning $11,000 as a speaker for the League in 1919. Wilson, however, supported local option as a New Jersey gubernatorial candidate because he believed in local self-government, not because he was a prohibitionist.

The League’s quick adoption of Daniels, Bryan, and Wilson as its own, despite Wilson’s objection to prohibition, indicated its eagerness to amass powerful supporters who could then provide third-party endorsements, just as, years earlier, the drys and wets, for example, both claimed Abraham Lincoln as an ally in their causes. This method is often employed today in public relations to garner “legitimacy” for a message, idea, or action, and gain credibility with target audiences. With the Daniels story, it was clear that the League
already had learned to do this.

The editorial page of the June 1913 *American Issue* featured an article re-confirming the League’s commitment to national prohibition and assuring readers that the fight for local option would continue in areas where it did not already exist. “As a matter of fact,” it read, “in many states, local option was and is urged temporarily but always put forth as a stepping stone to state Prohibition just as state Prohibition is designed as a stepping stone to national Prohibition.” This was a far cry from League founder Howard Hyde Russell’s call at the turn of the century for good citizenship through local political involvement. However, the transition from a local to national emphasis might best be explained by what the League had certainly said all along, that it would proceed at the pace of public sentiment, whether, apparently, it arose by itself or through the League’s agitation efforts. Either way, the League perceived that public sentiment now justified a constitutional amendment.

**THE HOBSON AMENDMENT**

On December 10, 1913, in an attempt to influence congressional votes, the League marched to the Capitol to present to the United States Congress petitions for a national prohibition amendment resolution. On the following day, the *New York Times* reported that the march had consisted of one thousand men joined by a similar number of women from the WCTU and hundreds of supporters. Although, according to the *Times*, the two groups had marched separately and silently, they all sang “Onward Christian Soldiers” and “America” upon arriving at the Capitol.

Receiving the League and the WCTU on the Capitol steps were Representative Richmond Pearson Hobson of Alabama and one of the champions of the Webb-Kenyon Act, Senator Morris Sheppard of Texas. Sheppard introduced a resolution that afternoon, but it died in committee, whereas Hobson presented it the next day to the House to better reception. The resolution would not come up for a House vote until a year later, however, when, armed with a petition that he claimed bore six million names, Hobson won majority approval (197 to 189, out of a total of 428) but not the two-thirds necessary to pass.

Although the resolution failed, the League considered the vote to be a great victory, because it did receive a majority and because it was the first time national prohibition had been debated in the U.S. House of Representatives. The League would try submitting a resolution again in 1915, but to no avail. In 1916, a presidential election year, Cherrington urged League leaders to place national prohibition on both party platforms, but they refused. It would not be until December 1917 that the resolution would finally pass both the House and the Senate, opening the way first to ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment, followed soon after by national prohibition as law – a process that took just two years.

In the meantime, despite his defeat in the 1914 congressional elections, Richmond P. Hobson would become the highest paid “special speaker” for the
League between 1914 and 1925, earning $171,250, or an annual average of about $19,000, almost twice as much as the next highest earner. In contrast, Louis Albert Banks, another League speaker and self-appointed chronicler of the Lincoln-Lee Legion, made $54,739 in that period, averaging just over $6,000 a year, and, as mentioned earlier, the League paid William Jennings Bryan $11,000 in 1919.

Conclusion
The League ended 1913 on a high note and would continue this momentum in its drive for national prohibition through the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment in December 1917. But 1913 is significant in that it ushered in a more aggressive League. Shedding the vestiges of religious fervor that had been so characteristic of Howard Hyde Russell’s leadership, the League served notice to its supporters and its foes through its own pages and at its national convention that it intended to lead the national charge. The League sought out and secured a controlling partnership with the STF, the comparatively scientific works of which would enhance the League’s credibility and coffers through the American Issue Publishing Company. It harnessed the American Issue as its primary channel of persuasion at the national level, combining affective and cognitive appeals increasingly effectively. And, the League identified well-known public figures who could provide third-party endorsements for its work. By combining these elements with the introduction of the Hobson Amendment to Congress at year-end, the League had succeeded in shifting the issue of national prohibition from the drys’ agenda to the agenda of the greater American public.

The League’s strategic approaches to honing its communications in 1913 not only predated those commonly considered to be milestones in modern public relations, but also highlighted a number of possible influences predating the League, such as Wendell Phillips, the WCTU, the Prohibition Party, and the Gideons, most of whom Baker acknowledged and then effectively dismissed from the dry platform in his call for the “Next and Final Step.”

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Endnotes


6. In addition to many of the sources cited here, here, specific work on the League’s communications in relation to public relations history can found in: Margot Opdycke Lamme, “Tapping into War: Leveraging World War I in the Drive for a Dry Nation,” *American Journalism, Special Issue: Persuasive Communication* 21, no. 4 (2004): 63-91; Lamme, “Snatching Defeat from the Jaws of Victory: Communications of the Anti-Saloon League of America, 1920-1933,” *Atlanta Review of Journalism History* 4 (Fall 2003): 1-49; and Lamme, “The ‘Public Sentiment Building Society’: The Anti-Saloon League of America, 1895-1910,” *Journalism History* 29 (Fall 2003): 123-32. It should be noted that the term “public relations” did not become commonly used until the 1930s; however, terms such as “publicity” or “propaganda” were used interchangeably in the mid-1800s/early 1900s to define and refer to some of the kinds of things encompassed by the term “public relations” today.


8. Primary sources used in this study consisted of hard copy originals available at the Westerville Public Library, Westerville, Ohio, which received ownership of the Anti-Saloon League of America’s papers in 1973, and original League documents catalogued within an extensive microfilm collection compiled in a joint cooperative effort between the Ohio State Historical Society, Michigan Historical Collections, and the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, also available through the Westerville Library (hereafter OSHS/MHC/WCTU collection).


24. *Standard Encyclopedia*, 1: 164. The Blue Book was still listed in the League’s literature catalog in 1918, indicating that its messages were still considered to be relevant.


26. Ibid., 63.


cecdings, Fifteenth National Convention of the Anti-Saloon League of America Twenty Year Jubilee Convention, Columbus, Ohio, 10-13 November 1913, 63. A copy of the declaration also can be found in the “Minutes of the Headquarters Committee of the Anti-Saloon League of America,” Westerville, Ohio, 22 April 1913, roll 82 (box 27, folder 1), Ernest Hurst Cherrington Series, Westerville Public Library (OSHS/MHC/WCTU collection).


34. Ibid., 57.

35. Ibid., 58, 59-61.

36. Ibid., 62.

37. “The Next and Final Step” in “General Superintendent’s Report,” Proceedings, 10-13 November 1913, 63. See also Purley A. Baker, “The Next and Final Step,” American Issue, June 1913, roll 5, American Issue Series, 4. Although this story consisted of the formal declaration only, without the context Baker would provide in his convention speech later that year, it served to give five months’ notice to American Issue subscribers and so, presumably, anyone else, of the League’s intentions.


39. Ibid.


42. “The Need of Temperance Education, Mrs. Lillian Burt,” Proceedings, Fifteenth National Convention of the Anti-Saloon League of America Twenty Year Jubilee Convention, Columbus, Ohio, 10-13 November 1913, 70-71. Cherrington’s speech, which he was not present to deliver although it was included in the Proceedings, introduced “The World League Against Alcoholism.”

43. Ibid., 71.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid., 71-72.


49. Cora Frances Stoddard to Mrs. Mary F. Lovell, February 24, 1910, 7.


52. Standard Encyclopedia, 3: 1269.


54. Ibid., 368.


56. Standard Encyclopedia, 3: 1269. For a detailed examination of Hunt’s work and its impact on American education and democracy, see Zimmerman, Distilling Democracy. See also Sinclair, Era of Excess, 43-45. A. S. Barnes’s Pathfinder Series and McGuffey’s Readers have been identified by Zimmerman and Sinclair, respectively, as two of the many textbooks Hunt endorsed during her tenure at the Department of Scientific Temperance Instruction. According to Zimmerman,
many within and outside the WCTU— including WCTU President Frances Willard—thought Hunt exaggerated and was even dangerous. Additionally, a number of Union members at the state and local levels resented her for taking credit for legislative reforms in their areas. After Hunt’s death in 1906, the WCTU designated its Department of Scientific Temperance Instruction as “a clearinghouse for alcohol information,” the same role that the Scientific Temperance Federation sought to fill under Stoddard’s leadership. See Zimmerman, *Distilling Democracy*, 9, 10, 29-30.


58. Ibid.


61. Ibid., 130; 115.

62. Ibid., 120-21. A contemporary article, for example, examined records of venereal disease, marriage, prostitution, criminal records, and divorce, to develop a measure for rural morality.


65. Cora Frances Stoddard, Boston, Massachusetts, to Ernest H. Cherrington, Westerville, Ohio, TLS, 4 November 1912, roll 24 (box 8, folder 3), Scientific Temperance Federation Series.

66. According to K. Austin Kerr, a number of prohibitionists objected to the work of the Anti-Saloon League because they felt it undermined the work of other groups, such as the Prohibition Party, and because it seemed more interested in raising money than “building a grass-roots movement for prohibition.” See Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition*, 134.

67. Cora Frances Stoddard, Boston, Massachusetts, to Professor Charles Scanlon, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, TL, December 18, 1912, roll 24 (box 8, folder 5), Scientific Temperance Federation Series, 2.

68. Cora Frances Stoddard, Boston, Massachusetts, to Professor Charles Scanlon, Atlanta, Georgia, L, May 12, 1913, roll 24 (box 8, folder 3), Scientific Temperance Federation Series, 1; 2.

69. Cora Frances Stoddard, Boston, Massachusetts, to Professor Charles Scanlon, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, L, May 29, 1913, roll 24 (box 8, folder 5), Scientific Temperance Federation Series, 3.

70. “Meeting Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Scientific Temperance Federation,” Boston, Massachusetts, June 9, 1913, roll 7 (box 3, folder 6), Ernest Hurst Cherrington Series, Westerville Public Library (OSHS/MHC/WCTU collection), 4.


76. Museum display of two samples from the Anti-Saloon League poster sales catalog, Westerville Public Library.

77. Pocket version of League’s “1924 Catalogue: Temperance Posters,” Anti-Saloon League Flier File, Westerville Public Library. Examples here are listed as “E Series No. 1, 10, 11, respectively. Each of the STF pamphlets is numbered, but there is no record in this file of when each was produced, only when each was copyrighted; however, many continued to be part of the League’s “1924 Catalogue: Temperance Posters” (pocket version found in the Flier File).

78. Philip J. Pauly, “How Did the Effects of Alcohol on Reproduction Become Scientifically

79. “No. 35: Keep Cool”; “No. 6: Feeblemindedness”; and “No. 23: Moderate Drinking Reduces the Worker’s Efficiency,” in Anti-Saloon League Flier File, Westerville Public Library.


81. “No. 19: Drink a Great Cause of Immorality,” in Anti-Saloon League Flier File, Westerville Public Library. The name of the law was “Inebriate Act” or “Inebriate Acts.” Branthwaite (note spelling) was the inspector of reformatories under that law. See, for example, G. Hunt, J. Mellor, and J. Turner, “Wretched, hatless and miserably clad: women and the inebriate reformatories from 1900-1913,” British Journal of Sociology 40, no. 2 (1989): 244-70.

82. Ibid. [Italics in original.] It is hard not to wince at the unfortunate confusion between “drink” as a verb and noun; one wonders if it was caught at the time.


85. According to Cherrington, because League publicity began to spread to other departments, pinning down revenue calculations for the American Issue was next to impossible. See “Report of Ernest H. Cherrington,” November 5, 1925, 4, and, for example, Odegard, Pressure Politics, 204. For circulation figures, see “Report of Ernest H. Cherrington,” November 5, 1925, 12-15.


89. “Report of Ernest H. Cherrington,” November 5, 1925, 18. In fact, according to this report, the 1914 figure was the greatest profit from operations the AIPC gained in the period between October 1909 and January 1, 1925.


92. Woolley, American Issue, June 1913, outer cover.


95. “Mr. Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, Delivers Two Strong Temperance Addresses,” American Issue, June 1913, roll 5, American Issue Series, 7.

96. “Mr. Daniels,” American Issue, June 1913, 7.

97. Odegard, Pressure Politics, 274.


103. Congress, House, Representative Hobson of Alabama speaking for the Joint Resolution
on National Prohibition, H. J. Res. 168, 63rd Cong., 3rd sess., Congressional Record 52 (December 22, 1914), 603, 616.

104. Odegard, Pressure Politics, 156.
105. Cherrington, Evolution of Prohibition, 326.
106. Kerr, Organized for Prohibition, 192.
107. Odegard, Pressure Politics, 274-75.
108. Ibid., 274.