

1853—Temperance supporters continue to push for statewide prohibition, while still supporting the local option. In general, Republicans support prohibition laws, as do the Know-Nothings on the grounds that establishments selling alcohol are often operated by “foreigners.” Democrats, for the most part, oppose prohibition laws.

1855—The first statewide prohibition bill goes into effect, allowing alcohol sales only for medicinal, chemical, mechanical, and religious purposes. Bootleggers are fined \$100 and sent to jail for thirty days. This law applies to beer as well as liquor.

1858—Indiana’s statewide prohibition law is repealed.

1859—Indiana imposes new regulations related to liquor licenses, fines for violations, etc. Beer and wine are considered “intoxicating liquor.”

1860—The Democratic Party opposes prohibition in its platform.

1861–65—Temperance concerns are set aside during the Civil War. Nearly 600,000 Union and Confederate troops die in battle or succumb to disease.

1874—Republicans support a city ward and township local option.

August, 1874—Organizers hold a meeting on the Chautauqua Grounds in Chautauqua, New York, and form the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, which opposes the use and sale of alcohol on moral grounds.

November 15–20, 1874—The first national convention of the WCTU takes place in Cleveland, Ohio.

1886—A peaceful union protest in Chicago turns deadly when police move to disperse the crowd. A bomb explodes and gunfire follows. Eleven are killed (including seven police officers) and more than a hundred are injured in the Haymarket Square bombing. As a result, the Knights of Labor, led by Terence Powderly, begins to decline, and the American Federation of Labor, led by

Samuel Gompers, is founded. Unlike the Knights of Labor, the AFL admits only skilled workers and believes in working with business leaders to reform labor conditions and wages.

1889—Jane Addams founds Hull House, a Chicago settlement house that serves as a social center for recent Italian immigrants in the surrounding neighborhoods.

1892—Ellis Island opens to screen immigrants as they arrive in the United States.

1893—The World’s Columbian Exhibition opens in Chicago to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Columbus’s discovery of the New World.

June 26, 1892—A strike begins at Andrew Carnegie’s steelworks in Homestead, Pennsylvania, following a cut in wages. The demonstration turns violent when Pinkerton guards are brought in to protect the plant. Ten strikers and three Pinkerton men are killed. Pennsylvania’s governor sends the state militia to protect the strike-breakers. The strike ends on November 20.

1893–97—Economic depression and panic grips the nation. Millions are unemployed and tramps wander the country searching for work and food.

1894—Five hundred unemployed workers march on Washington, D.C., in what is called “Coxey’s Army.” Armed police herd them into camps.

Workers at Chicago’s Pullman sleeping car plant protest a cut in wages that erupts into a company-wide strike. On June 26 the American Railway Union begins to boycott trains carrying Pullman cars. Eventually, President Grover Cleveland uses the military and the courts to crush the strike.

1895—The Anti-Saloon League of America organization forms. While the WCTU used moral suasion to combat the use of alcohol, the ASL works toward the legal abolition of alcoholic beverages. The ASL view prohibition as the cure for several problems related to health, family disorder, child and spousal abuse, political corruption, and workplace inefficiency.