



William Jennings Bryan, Billy Sunday, and the Prohibition Party Ticket of 1920

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Article Summary: Although Prohibition was the law of the land by 1920, many prohibitionists feared that the next presidential administration might not enforce the law vigorously, and they tried to persuade three-time Democratic nominee William Jennings Bryan and revivalist Billy Sunday to accept nominations at the party's national convention in Lincoln.

Cataloging Information:

Names: William Jennings Bryan, Billy Sunday, Virgil G Hinshaw, H W Hardy, John B Finch, Charles E Bentley, W G Calderwood, Charles Bryan, Lucy Page Gaston, James Cox, Marie Brehm, Aaron S Watkins, D Leigh Colvin, Eugene V Debs, Charles Hiram Randall

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Photographs / Images: Billy Sunday and William Jennings Bryan; Nebraska Wesleyan University; postcard announcing that Lincolmites had voted the city dry, May 4, 1909; Bryan postcard, undated; *Lincoln Daily Star* headline "'Drys' May Draft Bryan and Sunday" (July 19, 1920); Bryan family photograph; Lindell Hotel, Lincoln; Lincoln City Auditorium; Aaron S Watkins; *Nebraska State Journal* headline "Bryan Named to Lead Drys" (July 22, 1920); Herman P Faris; Chafin and Watkins button; "Warren F Harding for President" button

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William Jennings Bryan, Billy Sunday, and the Prohibition Party Ticket of 1920

BY PATRICIA C. GASTER

“We have come together to select a burial lot for John Barleycorn,” said Virgil G. Hinshaw in his opening address to Prohibition Party delegates on July 21, 1920. The party’s thirteenth national convention had just been called to order at 10 a.m. in Lincoln’s city auditorium by Hinshaw, chairman of the Prohibition National Committee.¹ More than 250 delegates from around the country heard him congratulate the nation’s oldest third party (founded in 1869) on the recent achievement of its longtime goal of national prohibition, now the law of the land, thanks to the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.² Before the day was over, convention delegates would try to draft two high-profile temperance advocates from outside party ranks, William Jennings Bryan and Billy Sunday, to head their party’s national ticket.

The enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment, which banned the manufacture, sale, and distribution of intoxicating liquors nationwide, was the culmination of a series of steps toward national prohibition begun by the states and by federal restrictions on alcohol during the World War I era. Before the U.S. entered the war in April 1917, twenty-six of the then forty-eight states had already gone dry. In Nebraska a prohibitory amendment

Left: This 1918 postcard shows evangelist Billy Sunday (left) shaking hands with William Jennings Bryan in Chicago, where Bryan was helping Sunday support local temperance forces in their efforts to prohibit the sale of alcohol in the city.
NSHS RG0802-112-4



was adopted to the state constitution in 1916, which took effect on May 1, 1917. By the time the Eighteenth Amendment took effect on January 17, 1920 (Nebraska was the requisite thirty-sixth state to ratify on January 16, 1919), thirty-three states had adopted state prohibition.³

World War I provided an opportunity for prohibitionists to advance their goal of banning liquor across the country. While the U.S. was at war, many considered it unpatriotic to use much-needed grain to produce alcohol, and in August 1917 Congress adopted the Food and Fuel Control Act, which prohibited the manufacture of distilled spirits from foodstuffs. It also closed distilleries, many of which were thought to be operated by Germans. The War-time Prohibition Act, passed in November 1918 after the Armistice had already been signed, prohibited the manufacture of beer and wine after May 1, 1919, and banned the sale of all liquors after July 1. It was to continue in force until the conclusion of the war and demobilization. The National Prohibition (Volstead) Act, passed on October 28, 1919, was designed to enforce the provisions of both the Wartime Prohibition Act and the Eighteenth Amendment.⁴

The convening of the Prohibition Party in Lincoln in July of 1920 attracted much interest around the state and nation. The two major parties had already held their national conventions. The Republicans, meeting June 8-12 in Chicago, selected Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge as their

presidential and vice presidential nominees. (An early boomlet in support of Nebraska's Gen. John J. Pershing for president on the Republican ticket collapsed.) The Democrats met June 28-July 6 in San Francisco, nominating James M. Cox and Franklin D. Roosevelt as their standard bearers. It might have been supposed that the Prohibition Party, which had celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in September 1919 at a national meeting in Chicago, would disband and rest on its laurels now that the Eighteenth Amendment had become a part of the Constitution. However, prohibitionists believed that the administration of the new law would be as great a challenge for them as its adoption into the Constitution had been.⁵

Prohibition Party members distrusted the lukewarm attitude of the two major parties toward both the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act. Although the U.S. Supreme Court had upheld the constitutionality of both measures, the wets at the time of the 1920 convention in Lincoln were keeping up a "continuous agitation" for some modification of the law that would permit the manufacture of light wines and beer. Convention delegates felt that in such a political climate, it was necessary to hold the party together and put a national ticket into the field in 1920.⁶

Lincoln, Nebraska, was unanimously chosen in January 1920 by members of the Prohibition Party's executive committee as the party's national

convention site. The city had a number of advantages. It was centrally located between the two coasts, with good railroad connections, and had a reputation of being friendly to temperance. The large number of churches had in some circles earned it the nickname "The Holy City." It was the home not only of the University of Nebraska, but of several religious colleges in its suburbs: Nebraska Christian University (Cotner College), sponsored by the Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church, in Bethany; Union College, sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventists, in College View; and Nebraska Wesleyan University, Methodist, in University Place. All three of these denominational schools, especially Nebraska Wesleyan, favored temperance. At Wesleyan few national issues, other than presidential campaigns and the coming of World War I, surpassed on campus the fervor in support of prohibition as dry campaigns to amend the state and national constitutions unfolded in the late 1910s.⁷

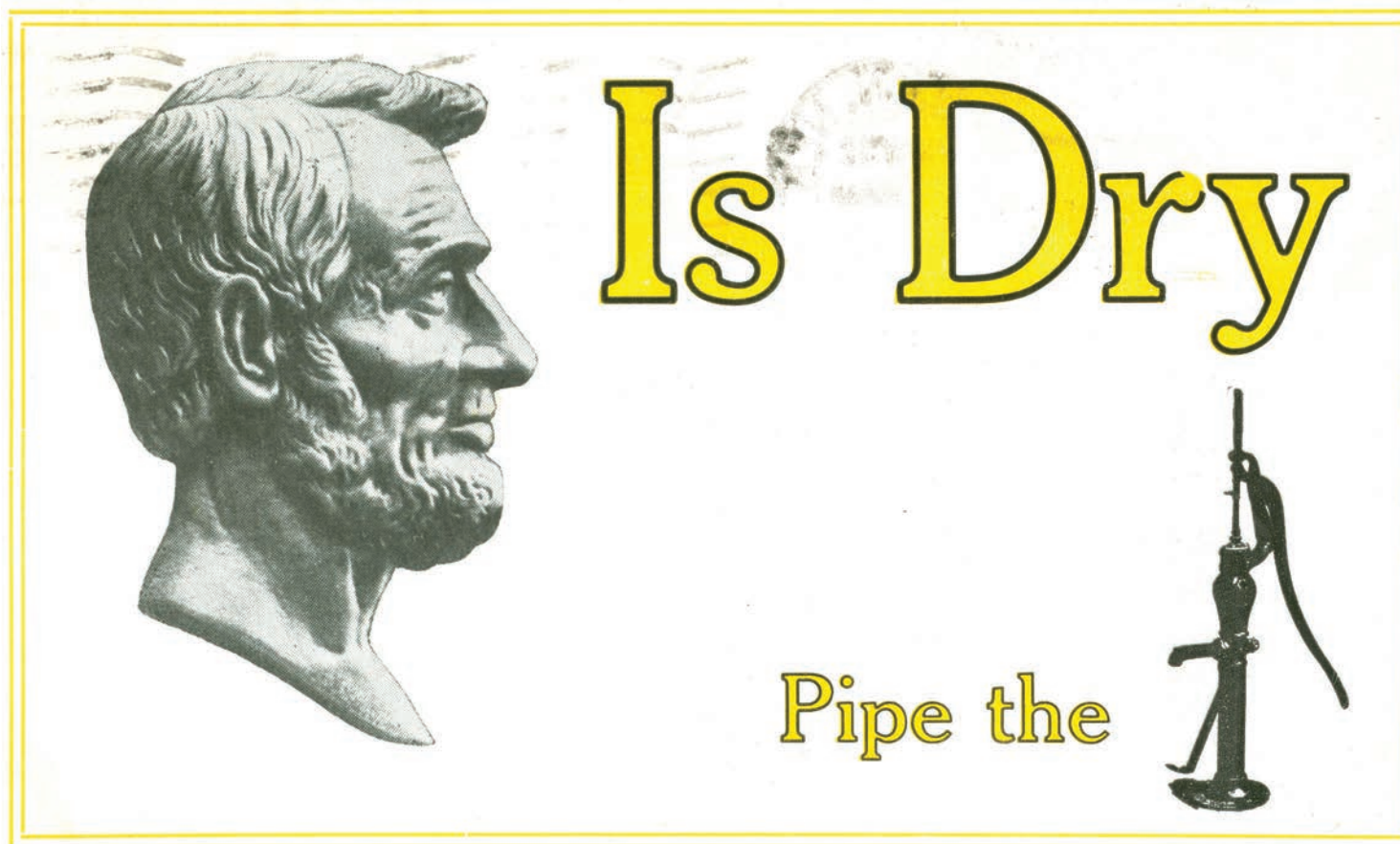
Lincoln was also the home of the high-license city ordinance of 1877, sponsored by mayor H. W. Hardy, which inspired the statewide Slocumb high-license liquor law, enacted in 1881. The 1881 measure,

which reduced the overall number of saloons due to the high license fee, resulted from the efforts of Hardy and John B. Finch, a nationally known temperance worker and lecturer who spent many of his productive years in Lincoln and introduced the Red Ribbon reform club movement there in the late 1870s. Beginning in 1880, Finch was also active in Prohibition Party politics, serving as chairman of its national committee from 1884 to 1887.⁸

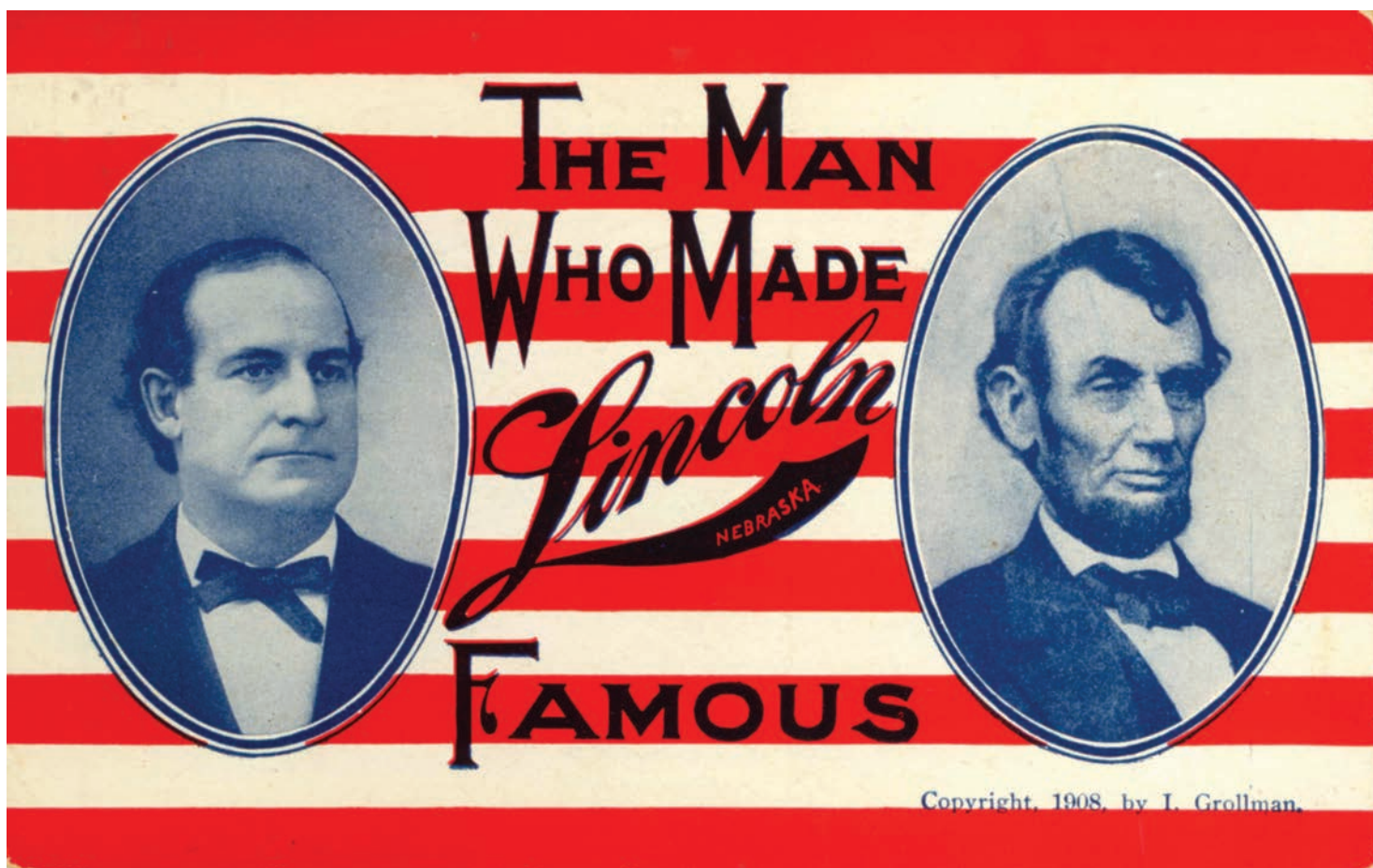
The city's preoccupation with the prohibition issue quickened in the first decade of the twentieth century. The spring election of 1902 in Lincoln resulted in the establishment of a progressive excise tax on the city's saloons, a gradual reduction in their numbers, and limited hours of operation, serving as a model for a statewide saloon restriction bill in 1909. Lincoln residents voted their city dry on May 4, 1909. They voted by a narrow margin to keep prohibition in 1910, but the result in 1911 was a narrow defeat for prohibition, and the city returned to the strict licensing system.⁹

Perhaps more important to the Prohibition Party than Lincoln's reputation as a temperance city, was its reputation as the hometown of William Jennings

This postcard is postmarked May 12, 1909, after Lincolmites voted the city dry on May 4.
NSHS 8757-263



L-1 MFG'D BY THE NEW CENTURY PRINTERS, LINCOLN, NEB.



Postcard, undated.
NSHS 7956-6129

Bryan, whom many party members were hoping would head their ticket in 1920. Bryan had moved to Lincoln from Illinois in 1887 and immediately became active in the Democratic Party. He was elected to Congress, serving from 1891 to 1895, having failed in his bid for a Senate seat in 1894. He was three times a candidate for President and three times defeated (1896, 1900, and 1908), serving from 1913 to 1915 as U.S. secretary of state under Woodrow Wilson. In his later years he spent more and more time in Florida, but returned to Nebraska to vote in the November 1920 election.¹⁰

Bryan, if he could be persuaded to run in 1920, would not have been the first Nebraskan to head a national Prohibition Party ticket. In 1896, when Bryan first ran on the Democratic ticket for the presidency, the Rev. Charles E. Bentley of Surprise, Nebraska, was the presidential nominee of the free silver wing of the Prohibition Party, which had split into gold and silver wings. Evidently it was Bentley who led the pro-silver members out of the national Prohibition Party convention in Pittsburgh in the summer of 1896. His initiative may have led to his nomination by the so-called "National Party," while

the "gold" members of the Prohibition Party nominated Joshua Levering of Maryland for president.¹¹

Bryan, however, easily outclassed Bentley as a potential presidential candidate for the Prohibition Party. With his wealth of political experience, Bryan was elected a delegate to the June 1920 Democratic national convention at San Francisco, where he tried and failed to have a dry plank adopted into its platform. Prohibitionists, who were still trying to decide whether to put a national ticket into the field, may have considered this an indication that the Democrats, if elected, would not enforce the Eighteenth Amendment and that Bryan might be persuaded to run again on their party's ticket.¹²

When W. G. Calderwood of Minneapolis, vice chairman of the Prohibition National Committee, arrived in Lincoln in mid-July to prepare for the convention, scheduled for July 21-23, he freely told the press that he favored nominating a national ticket with two surefire vote getters: William Jennings Bryan and famed evangelist and temperance advocate William A. "Billy" Sunday. Perhaps reminded that Bryan was a Democrat, and the Reverend Sunday had in June announced his support for Harding, the

Republican presidential candidate, Calderwood declared himself in favor “of running this team [Bryan and Sunday] regardless of their personal views as to making the race.”¹³

It was hardly surprising that such a high-profile temperance advocate as Bryan, with his political experience, had attracted the attention of the Prohibition Party. During Bryan’s early career, prohibition was not at the top of his agenda. However, in his private life, he did not drink alcohol, had taken a temperance pledge as a child, and felt prohibition would contribute to the moral improvement of the individual and society. Then in 1910 Bryan abandoned his neutral stand on prohibition and began to encourage members of the Democratic Party to follow the dry track. In 1918 he accepted the presidency of the Dry Federation of America, which represented a number of temperance organizations, including the Prohibition Party.¹⁴ A Prohibition Party leader assured Bryan in 1915 that the party’s 1916 presidential nomination was his if he wanted it, but Bryan declined. J. Frank Hanly of Indiana headed the ticket that year.¹⁵

Rumors of the party’s related interest in Sunday also surfaced in the press in early 1920. However, the evangelist’s announcement during his January and February crusade in Norfolk, Virginia, that a Bryan-Sunday ticket “will be named by the ‘drys’ if the Republicans and Democrats name ‘wet’ candidates,” was taken less than seriously. In March Sunday announced, perhaps facetiously, that he would accept the Republican nomination for president if offered and listed some of the individuals he would place in various Cabinet positions if he became president.¹⁶

It wasn’t entirely clear early in 1920 which man—Bryan or Sunday—would get top billing on a prospective Prohibition Party ticket. The *Kearney Hub* thought the honor might go to Sunday and remarked on March 15: “Nothing further is needed to aid and abet the gaiety of nations than to have Billy Sunday run for president on the dry ticket.” Others thought Bryan would never accept second place. “Sunday was a sprinter when he played professional baseball,” said another newspaper in recalling the preacher’s early days on the baseball diamond as a player in the major leagues, “but we doubt if he could get far in the presidential game with Bryan playing second fiddle.”¹⁷

Although Sunday wasn’t present in Lincoln for the Prohibition Party convention in the summer of 1920, he was certainly no stranger to Nebraska. Shortly after the start of his evangelistic career, launched at Garner, Iowa, in 1896, Sunday gave a

**'DRYS' MAY DRAFT
BRYAN AND SUNDAY,
CALDERWOOD SAYS**

**Prohibition Vice Chairman As-
serts Convention May Name
Them Regardless of Wishes.**

**Advance Guard of Delegates
Slow In Arriving—Labor
Wants Plank.**

Bryan for president and W. A. "Billy" Sunday for vice president on the prohibition ticket may be "drafted" by the national prohibition party convention here Wednesday to Friday of this week, according to W. G. Calderwood of Minneapolis, vice chairman of the national executive committee.

Lincoln Daily Star,
July 19, 1920

five-week series of meetings in Pawnee City. He later said that an “infidel” who had cursed and harassed him there had suddenly dropped dead.¹⁸ He was in Tecumseh in early 1897, where one of his sermons, delivered to a crowded audience of men only, “was a logical argument in the way of needed reform in morals.”¹⁹

By the time Sunday preached in Lincoln in 1915 as a part of his fifty-day campaign to rid neighboring Omaha of “civic vice, greed, corruption, and liquor,” he was a celebrity and had long since left what he called the “kerosene circuit” of small Midwestern towns lacking electricity where he began his preaching career.²⁰ Stepping off a train from Omaha on September 14, he was welcomed to Lincoln by William Jennings Bryan himself and younger brother Charles. The older Bryan introduced Sunday at St. Paul’s Methodist Episcopal Church, telling the rapt audience “that he was glad

This Bryan family photograph includes siblings Mary Elizabeth Bryan (left), William Jennings Bryan, Nancy Lillard Bryan, Charles Wayland Bryan, and Frances Bryan, about 1900. Charles Bryan served as his older brother's political secretary and business manager.
NSHS RG3198-10-2



to be on the platform with a man who was doing so much to make his fellows better men and women." Sunday's September 14 morning and afternoon sermons at St. Paul's attracted standing-room-only crowds: 4,100 during a morning service for women, and 3,000 during an afternoon service for men. He was back in Lincoln on October 15 for another presentation at St. Paul's, this one aimed at University of Nebraska students and faculty, that included "college yells and a college song or two" before the service began.²¹

In the summer of 1916 Sunday returned to Nebraska to speak during the successful campaign to adopt a prohibitory amendment to the state constitution. He came at the urging of Charles Bryan, then mayor of Lincoln and leader of the Nebraska Dry Federation, organized the year before.²² Sunday spoke at North Platte and Grand Island as well as Lincoln, where on August 19, 1916, he was introduced by Charles Bryan and promised his 2,000 listeners gathered in the city auditorium that he was determined to live long enough to preach the funeral sermon of the "booze makers." He told the crowd that "the booze interests had voted \$150,000 to put 'Bill' Sunday out of business but he defied the whole gang."²³

Several factors in 1920 may have influenced the Prohibition Party to consider potential candidates

from outside party ranks, especially Bryan and Sunday, who had previously worked together. (Bryan had participated in Sunday's 1915 anti-alcohol campaign in Philadelphia and in his 1918 Chicago crusade supporting a local effort to vote the city dry.)²⁴ After the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment, the party seemed less relevant to many former supporters and its ranks began to dwindle. Many party leaders hoped that a national campaign, headed by such well-known public figures, would help hold the party together, arousing more enthusiasm and garnering more votes than had the staid candidates (able but dull) that had been fielded in the past. It was also hoped that Bryan would attract female voters who might otherwise vote for Harding, the handsome Republican candidate. Although the Nineteenth Amendment enfranchising women was not ratified until August 18, 1920, when Tennessee provided the final vote needed to add the amendment to the Constitution, it was widely expected by Prohibition Party convention delegates and others that women would be voting in the national elections of 1920. Few of the newly enfranchised women, it was thought, would vote for Cox, considering his past divorce and his reputation as a "wet."²⁵

Members of the party's national committee met at Lincoln's Lindell Hotel on Tuesday, July 20, as

delegates continued to arrive for the convention, lending the city the “airs of a real national convention tepee,” with Lincoln businesses decorated for the occasion. Many delegates were veterans of the decades-long struggle to enact national prohibition, but others, such as anti-tobacco crusader Lucy Page Gaston, a former Republican, were relative newcomers to the Prohibition Party.²⁶

Gaston had earlier in 1920 sought the Republican nomination for president, entering the South Dakota primaries on a platform that included an anti-cigarette plank, with demands for unadulterated food and “clean morals.” However, on June 7 she announced that her name would not be presented to the Republican convention. “I have withdrawn in favor of anybody who will indorse the moral reforms for which I stand,” she told the press,” and turned up at the Prohibition Party convention in Lincoln in July.²⁷

Preconvention activities at the city auditorium included Tuesday afternoon addresses by members

of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, with an evening meeting for children and young people. Bryan was increasingly mentioned as the head of a possible national ticket, with Sunday as his running mate. Chairman Hinshaw indicated that the party would not demand that its top candidate be exclusively aligned with the party but only that he be “an active worker for the prohibition cause.” The *Lincoln Star* said on July 20, “This answers in the description of William Jennings Bryan, who party leaders hope to draft for the presidency.”²⁸

The all-important question, of course, was whether either of the hoped-for candidates was willing to run. In a July 17 Chautauqua address in Corvallis, Oregon, Sunday said that he had received a telegram asking if he would be willing to run for vice president on a national prohibition ticket if Bryan accepted the presidential nomination. His reply: “If I felt that this was necessary to insure the defeat of Cox I would make the race.”²⁹ Several days later he seemed to be wavering.

Lincoln’s Lindell Hotel was the scene of numerous meetings held in conjunction with the Prohibition Party convention in 1920.
NSHS RG2133-12-444





The Lincoln City Auditorium in which the Prohibition Party held its national convention in July 1920.
NSHS RG2133-121

Speaking from his summer home in Hood River, Oregon, Sunday told the press on July 19:

I have not heard from Mr. Bryan, . . . but have been in communication with the prohibition party committee. If Mr. Bryan thinks it necessary that the prohibitionists put a ticket in the field or that existing circumstances point to a possible undermining of the purposes of the 18th amendment, then you may count on us getting into effective action.³⁰

Sunday's indication that his course of action would depend on Bryan's and on "existing circumstances" may have been a way to extricate himself from a potentially sticky new commitment, especially since he had already endorsed the Republican presidential candidate in June. Besides, Sunday admitted to the press, he was "much disinclined" to get into politics. "I certainly do not wish to give up my work as an evangelist," he said.³¹

Meanwhile, Charles Bryan, who served as his older brother's political secretary and business

manager, and associate editor and publisher of Bryan's newspaper, *The Commoner*, was trying to squelch the "Bryan for President" boomlet. He met informally with members of the Prohibition Party's national committee on Tuesday and informed them that Bryan had no desire to run on their ticket. Charles, a former Lincoln city councilman and mayor, told committee members the older Bryan recommended that the party forgo a national ticket in order to work for the election of a dry Congress.³²

W. J. Bryan was quoted as saying that Democratic presidential nominee James Cox's position "has been that congress can permit an increase in the alcoholic content of beverage liquors and weaken the enforcement provision and his supporters say it should be done. The thing to do is to elect a Senate and House that will not pass such a bill." He added that a wet president who failed to enforce national prohibition could be impeached by a dry Congress. The Anti-Saloon League planned to follow Bryan's recommended course and devote their efforts to defeating all candidates for Congress who displayed "wet tendencies." J. Frank Hanly, the Prohibition

Party's presidential candidate in 1916, did not favor putting a national ticket into the field in 1920 and did not attend the convention in Lincoln."³³

Also under discussion at Tuesday's national committee meeting at the Lindell was the Prohibition Party platform and the failure of the two major parties to include unequivocal support in their platforms for the Eighteenth Amendment and its strict enforcement. Bryan had already failed in his attempt to have a dry plank included in the Democratic Party document; a dry plank adopted by the Republicans' resolutions committee never appeared in their final platform. Telegrams had been dispatched from the Prohibition Party to representatives of both major parties seeking explanations and "satisfactory statements," without which the prohibitionists planned to put a national ticket into the field.³⁴

Bryan and Sunday weren't the only prospective candidates being discussed by arriving delegates on the eve of the convention. After Bryan, the most popular potential presidential nominee seemed to be the Rev. Daniel A. Poling of New York, a YMCA worker and longtime head of the World's Christian Endeavor Union. The Nebraska delegation was pledged to nationally known orator Clinton N. Howard, also of New York, who arrived early and delivered three preconvention addresses in Lincoln. Women were liberally represented as delegates and reportedly planned "to run one of their own sex for the vice-presidency." Front runner among the women was Marie C. Brehm, then of Long Beach, a longtime WCTU and woman's suffrage worker, "who comes with a solid Southern California delegation behind her." The *Nebraska State Journal's* characterization of the convention's opening sessions as "Chautauqua with now and then a reminiscence of prayer meeting and ladies' aid society" probably referred to the prominence of Brehm and other women at the convention.³⁵

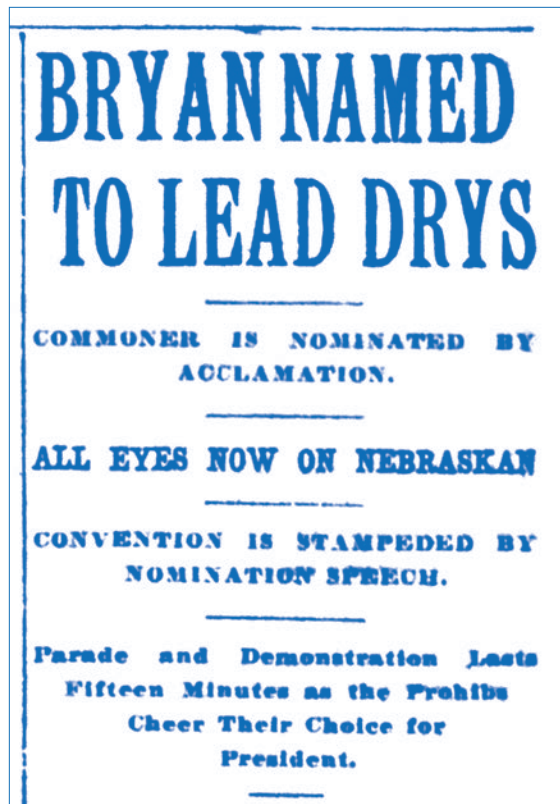
In Nebraska state and local Prohibition Party officials helped prepare for the convention and welcomed the delegates to Lincoln. Calderwood estimated that about 200 delegates would attend (almost 250 actually showed up), some of whom planned to stay in private homes in the city. State party chairman J. A. Murray of University Place found himself "very busy completing arrangements for this great meeting." Wesleyan instructor Douglas Powell, who planned to lead the singing at the convention, asked for all the local volunteers he could get. The *University Place News*, in the interests of its Methodist readers, many of whom were expected to attend as spectators, printed the entire convention program on July 16.³⁶



Aaron S. Watkins. In Ernest Hurst Cherrington (ed.), *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem*, Vol. V (Westerville, OH: American Issue Publishing Co., 1929), 2218.

The convention was opened by national chairman Hinshaw on Wednesday morning, July 21, in the city auditorium, decorated with the traditional flags and bunting, with delegates present from two-thirds of the states, and an additional three hundred local spectators. Governor Samuel R. McKelvie welcomed the delegates to the state. A gavel carrying symbolic meaning to the host city of Lincoln was used to call the convention to order. Its head was fashioned from timber from a Lincoln house (still extant in 1920) once inhabited by John B. Finch. The handle was made from wood taken from property owned by W. J. Bryan, and the whole fashioned under the direction of E. C. Hardy, son of H. W. Hardy of Lincoln, the father of the city's 1877 high-license ordinance.³⁷

"Haven't we been some party," Hinshaw remarked in his opening address, congratulating the party on the achievement of its longstanding goal of national prohibition with the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment. He listed the major reforms—including woman suffrage, civil service, and direct election of U.S. senators—advocated by the party in the past that had now become realities, and delivered a "rapid-fire history of the battle to secure a dry plank into the republican and democratic platforms and the dodging that was done to prevent such action."³⁸



Hinshaw's further talk of selecting a burial lot for John Barleycorn may have entertained the delegates, but it was hardly the first such event held. The Reverend Sunday had staged a flamboyant mock funeral service for him in Norfolk, Virginia, on January 16, 1920, just before the Eighteenth Amendment took effect on January 17, which included twenty pallbearers with a man dressed as the devil "wearing a mask and simulating a state of deep dejection" among the mourners. Dry organizations across the country staged similar, if less elaborate, mock funerals, wakes, and watch parties in honor of the death of legal alcohol in American life.³⁹

Marie Brehm was elected permanent convention chairman, the first time in the twentieth century that a woman had been so honored by an American national political convention.⁴⁰ Keynote speaker Aaron S. Watkins of Germantown, Ohio, told delegates, "We are still on the map and our mission is not ended." He favored placing a national ticket in the field, "a ticket of real presidential size," and a national campaign "that will win the respect of all thinking men and women." He criticized the two major parties for failure to include a dry plank in their platforms, saying, "The silence of those platforms is a wet silence and will be so interpreted." The *Nebraska State Journal*, which covered convention proceedings in detail, noted

that if speechmaking was the prime requisite for a presidential candidate, the Prohibition Party nominee should be Watkins.⁴¹

Rumors continued to circulate among the delegates about the possibility of Bryan heading a national ticket. The move to offer him the nomination was made on Wednesday, the first official day of the convention, although nominations had not been scheduled until Friday. Bryan supporters had already telegraphed him on Tuesday announcing their intention of "placing him before the people on the driest platform that can be framed" unless he flatly refused the nomination. Preliminary convention debate centered around a resolution offered by Calderwood "tendering" the presidential nomination to Bryan and directing officers of the convention to contact him personally for his decision. The convention cheered its approval, and an attempt failed to have the motion tabled. There were calls for a formal nomination, which it was thought might carry more weight with Bryan.⁴²

After a late Wednesday afternoon recess, delegates returned to the hot, unventilated city auditorium, where Bryan supporters attempted to stampede the convention for their favorite. Even if Bryan didn't wish to run, they hoped that he might be drafted in such a manner that he would feel obligated to accept the nomination as a public duty.⁴³

The most memorable demonstration of the convention was led on Wednesday evening by Herman P. Faris of the Missouri delegation, who

with a shout grabbed the Missouri standard and jumped into the aisle[;] the delegates grabbed their state insignias and started the march of jubilation. . . . Every state took part in the parade and very few individual delegates held back. The delegates pounded on the floor with the end of the standards and howled 'We Want Bryan,' 'We'll win with Bryan,' and 'Watch the prohibitionists sweep the country.' . . . A steam roller locomotive yell 'Bryan-Bryan-Bryan' was introduced and a number of the group took up the shout.⁴⁴

When order was finally restored after about fifteen minutes, convention chairman Brehm temporarily relinquished the chair while she made the formal nomination of William Jennings Bryan for the U.S. presidency. J. A. Murray, on behalf of the Nebraska delegation, and others seconded the nomination. Officially announced at 7:03 p.m., it was made by acclamation. It was not unanimous. Six or seven delegates held out, stubbornly refusing

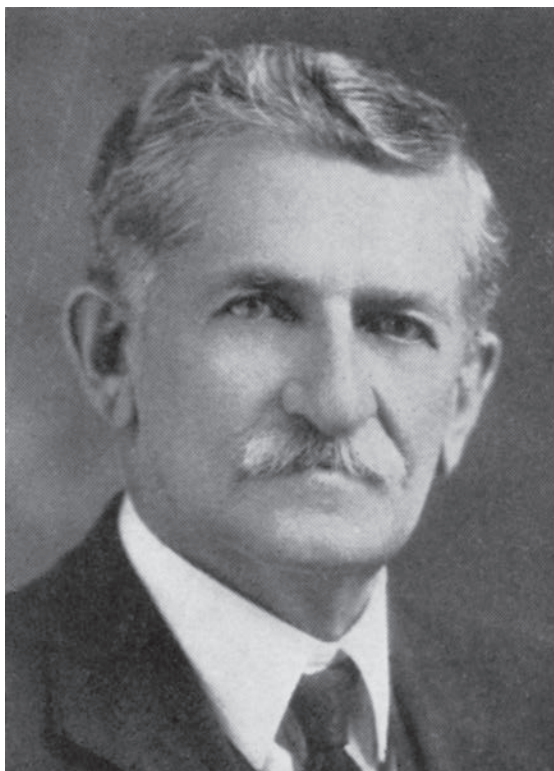
to vote in the affirmative. All attempts to persuade them to make it unanimous failed. Another round of noisy demonstrations followed.⁴⁵

The *Nebraska State Journal* noted, "The Bryan drive was unorganized but had the backing of the entire delegation, few individuals holding back. . . . Should Bryan fail to accept the nomination it is difficult to forecast who the candidate will be for there are practically as many candidates as there are delegates." A partial list from the *Journal* included Poling; Hinshaw; Brehm; Watkins; lawyer Robert H. Patton of Illinois; Columbia University-educated D. Leigh Colvin of New York; milk bottle manufacturer Francis E. Baldwin of New York; and auto maker Elwood Haynes of Indiana. Even industrialist Henry Ford, "whose statements on the temperance question have been forceful and uncompromising," had a few supporters.⁴⁶

Suspense mounted as the convention waited to hear from Bryan—but he was hard to find. He was said to be performing on a Chautauqua circuit (and enjoying some much-needed relaxation) in Montana. Under the headline "Bryan Is Elusive" the *Lincoln Star* reported on Thursday that Bryan for the last twenty-four hours had successfully eluded all efforts by the Prohibition Party, telegraph companies, press associations, individual newspapers, and hundreds of private individuals to reach him. Meanwhile the platform committee was going out of its way to try to incorporate Bryan's views into a document that he would find acceptable if he decided to run on the Prohibition Party ticket.⁴⁷

But Bryan refused to run. Earlier in 1920 he had written to brother Charles that despite the urging of some friends, he would not accept any presidential nomination in 1920 unless the Republicans split, the "labor people and prohibitionists" got behind him, and Democratic delegates expressed a "need for me" at their San Francisco convention.⁴⁸ He reportedly learned of his nomination for the presidency by the Prohibition Party at Lincoln from the *Bozeman Chronicle* before a telegram from the convention reached him. From Norris, Montana, Bryan sent a telegram to Charles at Lincoln on Thursday, July 22, instructing him to deliver his refusal to Chairman Brehm at the convention.⁴⁹ Bryan said that he could not

in justice to the prohibition party or to myself accept the nomination. My connection with other reforms would make it impossible for me to focus attention upon the prohibition question alone, and besides, I am not willing



Herman P. Faris, shown in 1924 when he was the Prohibition Party's presidential nominee. In Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem*, 2218.

to sever my connection with the Democratic party, which has had a glorious part in securing the prohibition amendment and the enforcement law and which has signally honored me in years past.⁵⁰

The party's dream of a Bryan-Sunday ticket was dead, for Sunday would not run without Bryan. The decision was not a great surprise to party leaders, who had been told in advance by Charles Bryan and other Bryan friends in Lincoln exactly how the sought-after candidate felt about the matter. The rank and file, however, had believed that it might be possible to stampede him into accepting it "or to put it up to him so strongly that he might be convinced that the path of duty lay that way."⁵¹

The reading of Bryan's telegram was followed by silence on the convention floor. The *State Journal* the next day said: "No signs of resentment were shown, but on the contrary, a little wave of handclapping ran over the audience." Other press reports indicated that some grumbling occurred. Rumors circulated during the convention that "innumerable secret conferences" between certain delegates (including Clinton Howard, himself a presidential hopeful) and Charles Bryan had been held to prevent W. J. Bryan's nomination. H. P. Faris, leader of the Bryan "stampede," declared that Howard had "come here purposely to prevent

Eugene W. Chafin (left) and Aaron S. Watkins ran for president and vice president respectively on the Prohibition Party ticket in 1908 and 1912. Watkins was the party's presidential nominee in 1920. NSHS 8661-65



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a nomination and held many conferences with Charles Bryan to that end." Some delegates even questioned whether Charles had a right to speak for his brother."⁵²

Local press reaction to the political events in Lincoln varied. The *Lincoln Star* noted on the opening day of the convention, July 21, that the two major parties "suffice the needs of the day and offer a political affiliation for every voter who earnestly strives to do his part as an American citizen." Will C. Israel of the *Havelock Post* was more direct: He was certain that Bryan would "only be digging his

political grave a little deeper and sooner" by accepting a nomination from a party that is "almost extinct."⁵³ *Nebraska State Journal* columnist A. L. Bixby summarized Bryan's failed nomination in his characteristic comic verse:

They nominated William J.—
The weather was oppressive—
Then waited for a weary day,
Encouraged and aggressive,
Hoping that he would be content
To run again for president.

It was a rather weary wait—
I'll say that much emphatic—
But Bryan wouldn't take the bait,
He being democratic;
And so the votes were thrown away,
That nominated William J.

It was a most peculiar case,
I'll stake my reputation;
Charles said he wasn't in the race
Before the nomination,
But notwithstanding his intention,
He stood high man in the convention. . . .

But Bryan will not run—ah, well,
That's all there is about it
But he is quite as dry as anybody,
And don't you ever doubt it!
I'm glad he's for us, anyway
And that is all I have to say.⁵⁴

Swallowing their disappointment, convention delegates turned on the evening of Thursday, July 22, to tried-and-true party regulars: Watkins, nominated for president on the second ballot, and Colvin, nominated for vice president. (Brehm was tendered the nomination for vice president, which she declined.)⁵⁵

Watkins, a Methodist Episcopal minister, educator, and former lawyer, had previously run for a number of offices on the Prohibition Party ticket, including attorney general, secretary of state, and governor of his home state of Ohio, and U.S. vice president in 1908 and 1912. His presidential running mate in both years was Eugene W. Chafin, who attended the Lincoln convention in 1920 and addressed the delegates on Thursday evening. It was widely noted after Watkins's nomination in 1920 that he, Cox, and Harding were all from Ohio.⁵⁶

Colvin, long associated with the Intercollegiate Prohibition Association, had been the Prohibition

Party's candidate for U.S. senator from New York in 1916 and for mayor of New York City in 1917. He was also the party's historian, author of *Prohibition in the United States, A History of the Prohibition Party and of the Prohibition Movement*, published in 1926. The book includes his account of the 1920 campaign, in which he participated. Despite its wealth of detail on other topics, the book omits any mention of either Bryan or Sunday in connection with that year's national convention in Lincoln.⁵⁷ Watkins had said publicly at the close of the convention that "[n]o shadow has been cast on the campaign" by the refusal of Bryan to accept the nomination but perhaps Colvin and others felt that it might be best not to mention it in an official party history.⁵⁸

The party platform, also adopted Thursday evening, included a declaration that the "Prohibition party remains the sole political champion of National Prohibition," and declared itself opposed to all attempts "to nullify the Amendment by such modification of the Enforcement Act as will increase the alcoholic content in beer and wine and thus thwart the will of the people as constitutionally expressed." Additional planks expressed approval of American entrance into the League of Nations ("not objecting to reasonable reservations"); of a constitutional amendment providing that peace treaties be ratified by a majority of both houses of Congress; of compulsory education (with instruction in English); and of economy in governmental administration, with additional planks on labor and industry, profiteering, agriculture, law and order, and presidential qualifications. In addition, the program of the recently established League of Women Voters, promoting the welfare of women and children, was adopted into the platform.⁵⁹

Not to be found in the platform was an anti-tobacco plank or specific condemnation of lynching, although the law and order plank pledged impartial enforcement of all law. Reference "not only to Almighty God, but to 'His Son, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords'" was not added to the preamble, despite the efforts of Pennsylvania clergyman Byron E. P. Prugh, after a New York delegate protested that it might discourage Jewish support of the dry ticket. The convention concluded its business shortly after midnight.⁶⁰

Watkins and Colvin knew they faced impossible odds. The Prohibition National Committee met at the Lindell Hotel again on Friday, July 23, to make preliminary plans for a national campaign. Harding's Thursday speech at Marion, Ohio, hinting at the possible amendment of the Volstead Act, was denounced as giving moral encouragement to the

wets. Hinshaw delivered the grim news that the party was on the ballot in only six states (including Nebraska) and could only get onto the ballot in thirty-nine others by holding a state convention or by petition. In Kansas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana it was too late to get on the ballot at all.⁶¹ Watkins in September 1920 publicly offered to withdraw from the race "if either of the candidates of the two major parties declares without equivocation for prohibition and announces he will veto any bill to repeal national prohibition."⁶²

The demanded assurances were not forthcoming. Both major parties made general statements supporting the enforcement of federal law, including national prohibition, but refused to go any further. Prohibition Party members noted these "danger signals" and continued their national campaign, despite persistent rumors during its final days that Watkins had indeed withdrawn, as he had earlier offered to do. National chairman Hinshaw told the press in October:

Early in the campaign we told both Mr. Cox and Mr. Harding that Mr. Watkins would withdraw if either would make an open and specific pledge to oppose legislation which would weaken the Volstead Act, but neither responded with such a pledge. An eleventh hour declaration by either candidate would not now result in the withdrawal of the prohibition candidates, who are in the fight to the finish.⁶³

In November W. J. Bryan returned from Florida to Lincoln to cast his vote for James Cox, the last time he voted in this state, lecturing at the University of Nebraska on November 2 while in town. Harding won the presidency in a landslide, defeating Cox in Nebraska by a margin of more than 125,000 votes.⁶⁴ Watkins and Colvin had waged a vigorous campaign, but found it difficult to make themselves heard in an election in which they faced so many obstacles, including a number of other third-party candidates.

The most prominent of the third-party "also rans" was Socialist Eugene V. Debs. Convicted under the Espionage Act of 1917 for denouncing American participation in World War I, he conducted a campaign from behind bars that managed to capture 919,801 votes, 3.4 percent of the total cast. Farmer-Labor candidate Parley P. Christiansen of Utah captured 265,421 votes, approximately 1 percent of the total cast. Watkins was accorded 189,467, just 0.71 percent of the total number of ballots cast, the worst showing for the

Prohibition Party since 1884.⁶⁵ Even the largely dry Methodist enclave of University Place near Lincoln gave him only 114 votes, with 1,163 cast for winner Harding. J. D. Graves of Peru, the Prohibition Party's gubernatorial candidate in Nebraska, received just 95 votes in University Place, with the winning Republican candidate, Samuel McKelvie, receiving 904. "The victory is overwhelming for the Republicans almost everywhere," said the *University Place News*.⁶⁶

Vice presidential candidate Colvin, in his 1926 history of the Prohibition Party, noted that during the 1920 national campaign, he and Watkins made extensive speaking tours from coast to coast, but "owing to the disintegration of the party organization," the ticket managed to get onto the ballot in just twenty-five states. "Many people thought they had to vote for the less wet of the two major party candidates," he wrote, "in order to keep the wetter one out of the Presidency." Watkins acknowledged just before election day that he would not be elected president but stayed in the race to the end.⁶⁷

The Harding landslide in 1920 swept out of office the only member of Congress with ties to the Prohibition Party, Nebraska-born Charles Hiram Randall, representing California's Ninth District. Randall, born in Auburn in 1865, was the son of a Methodist clergyman. He published newspapers at Kimball, where he founded the *Nebraska Observer* (now the *Western Nebraska Observer*) in 1885 when just nineteen years of age, and at Harrisburg, which is platted on land he once owned. He also worked as a railway mail clerk before relocating to California in 1904. He served in Congress from 1915 to 1921, making the advancement of prohibition his primary objective. He was a key force behind the passage of the Wartime Prohibition Act in 1918. Randall was mentioned as a possible presidential candidate at the Prohibition Party's convention in Lincoln in 1920 but facing a difficult re-election campaign, he did not actively seek the nomination.⁶⁸

Several of those prominent in the 1920 convention in Lincoln went on to play major roles in the Prohibition Party. Convention chairman Brehm was in 1924 the first woman in American history to appear on official ballots for the vice presidency of the United States, with H. P. Faris of Missouri, leader of the Bryan stampede in 1920, as her presidential running mate. Watkins did not run again for national office, but Colvin tried for several such offices on the dry ticket, culminating in a run for the U.S. presidency in 1936. He also served as chairman of the Prohibition National Committee from 1926 to 1932.⁶⁹

The year 1928 saw another national office seeker with a Nebraska background nominated by the Prohibition Party. James A. Edgerton, a newspaperman, poet, and philosopher, ran for vice president on the dry ticket, although he was better known in Nebraska as a Populist. Edgerton had a long record of government service, including stints with the Nebraska State Labor Bureau and the U.S. Post Office as a purchasing agent. He was also a prolific writer, the author of eleven books, including a volume on poetry and a Populist handbook, published in 1895 while he lived in Nebraska.⁷⁰

W. J. Bryan, a temperance advocate who refused to head a Prohibition Party ticket, lived only five years beyond 1920, dying on July 26, 1925, after participating in the famous Scopes monkey trial in Dayton, Tennessee, in which high school teacher John Scopes was convicted of violating Tennessee's law against the teaching of evolution in state-funded schools. Bryan and the prosecution won the case (later overturned on a technicality) but lost in the court of public opinion.⁷¹ Billy Sunday telegraphed his support to his old friend during the trial but did not attend. However, Sunday's support of prohibition remained firm. During one of his last visits to this state in 1930, he conducted several religious services at the Nebraska State Fair and declared "in no unmistakable terms that he was an uncompromising foe of the liquor traffic."⁷²


Charles Bryan, who outlived his more famous older brother by twenty years, served as governor of Nebraska from 1923 to 1925 and again from 1931 to 1935. He was mayor of Lincoln from 1915 to 1917 and from 1935 to 1937. Bryan was also notable as the Democratic vice presidential candidate in 1924, when he was picked largely because of his well-known name to serve as running mate to conservative easterner John W. Davis. The ticket was overwhelmingly defeated.⁷³

Although the Eighteenth Amendment was a part of the Constitution by 1920, prohibitionists rightly suspected that the victory over alcohol might not be lasting, and believed they had followed the right course in conducting a national campaign and keeping what they considered the most important issue in American politics before the public. Watkins clearly didn't expect to win; "I will not be elected president," he told the press as he wrapped up his national campaign.⁷⁴ The purpose of the nation's oldest third party was to strengthen support for the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act and to press the two major parties on the issue. Its new symbol, a two-humped Bactrian camel, adopted at the 1920 convention in Lincoln, was

judged the animal best suited to lead America into a dry future.⁷⁵

The next thirteen years saw a steady erosion of American support for prohibition. Ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment in December 1933 repealed the Eighteenth Amendment and with it, both national prohibition and the Volstead Act. In 1934 Nebraskans voted to repeal the state's constitutional prohibition by a sixty-to-forty-percent margin.⁷⁶

Ten years later, in 1944, the dry movement, organized as the Allied Dry Forces of Nebraska, was able to put a state constitutional referendum up for vote that would have effectively reinstated prohibition in Nebraska. Led by former state prohibition enforcement officer Harold "Three-Gun" Wilson, the dries drew most of their support from church groups, the WCTU, and rural anti-liquor sentiment. Heading the opposition were most state newspapers, ex-governor Keith Neville, and many Nebraska servicemen still in Europe.⁷⁷

Nebraska voted against the referendum in what the dries called a victory for the "stupendous newspaper and pamphlet advertising of the liquor interest." The *Evening State Journal* of Lincoln noted on November 8: "The only county which definitely voted dry was Phelps. . . . Virtually all of the other 92 counties showed top-heavy 'wet' majorities."⁷⁸ What the prohibitionists of 1920 feared had come to pass, both in Nebraska and the rest of the country. 

NOTES

¹ "Dry Convention Comes to Order 'To Bury Booze,'" *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 21, 1920, 13.

² "Hinshaw Hits 'Dry' Keynote in His Talks," *Kearney Daily Hub*, July 21, 1920, 1.

³ D. Leigh Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States, A History of the Prohibition Party and of the Prohibition Movement* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), 472-73; Ernest Hurst Cherrington et al., eds., *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem* (Westerville, Ohio: American Issue Publishing Company, 1925-30), 4 (1928):1875.

⁴ Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 446, 472-73; Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 5 (1929): 2211.

⁵ Frank E. Vandiver, *Black Jack, The Life and Times of John J. Pershing* (College Station and London: Texas A&M University Press, 1977), 2:1050-54; Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, v, 453-57; Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 4 (1928):1875.

⁶ Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 6 (1930):2783; "Platforms Are Being Erected," *Kearney Daily Hub*, June 1, 1920, 6.

⁷ "Nebraska in Brief," *Dakota County Herald*, Jan. 22, 1920, 2; Burton W. Folsom Jr., *No More Free Markets or Free Beer, The Progressive Era in Nebraska, 1920-1924* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999), 50; David H. Mickey, *Of Sunflowers, Coyotes, and Plainsmen* (Lincoln: Augstums Printing Co., 1992), 163, 284-85.

⁸ Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 185; Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 3 (1926):989, 1181-82, and 5 (1929):2208-9; Patricia C. Gaster, "Signing the Pledge: George B. Skinner and the Red Ribbon Club of Lincoln," *Nebraska History* 91 (Lincoln: 2010): 66-79.

⁹ John A. Anderson, "Lincoln, Nebraska, and Prohibition: The Election of May 4, 1909," *Nebraska History* 70 (Lincoln, 1989): 186-87, 199.

¹⁰ Robert W. Cherny, *A Righteous Cause, The Life of William Jennings Bryan* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1985), ed. Oscar Handlin, 164-65.

¹¹ "Bentley for President, 1896," Nebraska State Historical Society, http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/timeline/bentley_for_president_1896.htm (accessed Aug. 19, 2013); Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 257.

¹² "W. J. Bryan Lost Test," *Lincoln Daily Star*, June 29, 1920, 1; "Bryan Defeated in Prohibition Fight," *Kearney Daily Hub*, July 3, 1920, 1.

¹³ "'Drys' May Draft Bryan and Sunday, Calderwood Says," *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 19, 1920, 2; "For Bryan and Sunday," *New York Times*, July 17, 1920; "Billy Sunday Falls in Line for Harding," *Washington (D.C.) Times*, June 23, 1920, 1.

¹⁴ Darcy G. Richardson, *Others: "Fighting Bob" La Follette and the Progressive Movement: Third Party Politics in the 1920s* (New York, Lincoln, Shanghai: iUniverse, 2008), 68.

¹⁵ Lawrence W. Levine, *Defender of the Faith, William Jennings Bryan: The Last Decade, 1915-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 112; Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 3 (1926):1174.

¹⁶ "'Great God!' Said the Woodcock, and Flew!" *Bourbon News* (Paris, Ky.), Feb. 27, 1920, 7; Roger A. Bruns, *Preacher: Billy Sunday and Big-Time American Evangelism* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 269.

¹⁷ "Nothing further is needed . . .," *Kearney Daily Hub*, Mar. 15, 1920, 2; "Don't Do It Bill," *Bemidji (Minn.) Daily Pioneer*, Mar. 31, 1920, 4.

¹⁸ "A Great Success," *Pawnee Republican*, Mar. 12, 1896, 4. There has never been any confirmation of this incident, but it was widely reported in small-town newspapers all over the Midwest. See Wendy Knickerbocker, *Sunday at the Ballpark: Billy Sunday's Professional Baseball Career, 1883-1890* (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2000), 145.

¹⁹ "Revival Services at Tecumseh," *Omaha Daily Bee*, Feb. 9, 1897, 2.

²⁰ Leslie R. Valentine, "Evangelist Billy Sunday's Clean-up Campaign in Omaha: Local Reaction to His 50-Day Revival, 1915," *Nebraska History* 64 (Summer 1983):209-27; Robert F. Martin, *Hero of the Heartland, Billy Sunday and the Transformation of American Society* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), 47.

²¹ "Billy Sunday Storms Lincoln," *Kearney Daily Hub*, Sept. 14, 1915, 1; "Sunday Talks to Lincoln Students," *Omaha Daily Bee*, Oct. 16, 1915, 6.

²² Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 4 (1928):1875; "Sunday to Speak in Dry Campaign," *Kearney Daily Hub*, Oct. 23, 1915, 1; "Sunday Attacks Saloons," *Red Cloud Chief*, Aug. 24, 1916, 3.

²³ "Billy Sunday Goes Through," *Kearney Daily Hub*, Aug. 18, 1916, 5; "Sunday After a Dry State," *Kearney Daily Hub*, Aug. 19, 1916, 8.

²⁴ "Mr. Bryan in Philadelphia," *The Commoner* (Lincoln), Apr. 1915, 20; Paolo E. Coletta, *Political Puritan, 1915-1925*, Vol. 3 of *William Jennings Bryan* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964-69), 66; "February 2008: Presidential Campaigns Over a Century Ago," Billy Graham Center Archives, <http://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/bulletin/bu0802.htm> (accessed Aug. 19, 2013).

²⁵ "Mr. Bryan Declines Prohibition Nomination," *The Commoner*, Aug. 1, 1920, 4; "Bryan Will Not Run if Nominated," *Nebraska State Journal*, July 20, 1920, 1; "Bryan Named to Lead Drys," *Nebraska State Journal*, July 22, 1920, 1-2.

²⁶ "Drys Flay Old Order," *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 21, 1920, 1.

²⁷ *Ibid.*; "Lucy Page Gaston Quits Race for Presidency," *New York Tribune*, June 8, 1920, 2.

²⁸ "Dry Convention Comes to Order 'To Bury Booze'"; "Still Talk of Drafting Bryan," *Nebraska State Journal*, July 21, 1920, 1; "Prohibs Drafting Their Platform," *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 20, 1920, 5.

²⁹ "Billy Sunday May Become Candidate," *Odgen* (Utah) *Standard-Examiner*, July 18, 1920, 8.

³⁰ "Billy Sunday May Go on Dry Ticket," *Morning Oregonian* (Portland), July 20, 1920, 3; "Still Talk of Drafting Bryan."

³¹ "Billy Sunday Falls in Line for Harding"; "Billy Sunday May Go on Dry Ticket."

³² "Still Talk of Drafting Bryan"; "Dry Convention Comes to Order 'To Bury Booze'"; "Bryan Will Not Run if Nominated."

³³ "Declines to Talk Ticket," *Nebraska State Journal*, July 17, 1920, 8; "Anti-Saloon League Neutral," *Nebraska State Journal*, July 23, 1920, 1; Richardson, *Others*, 68-69: "Put Only Drys on Guard," *The Commoner*, July 1, 1920, 1.

³⁴ "W. J. Bryan Lost Test"; "Want a Statement," *Kearney Daily Hub*, July 6, 1920, 1; "Prohibs Drafting their Platform"; "Hinshaw Hits 'Dry' Keynote in His Talks"; "Drys Holding Forth in the Capital City," *Kearney Daily Hub*, July 20, 1920, 1.

³⁵ "'Drys' May Draft Bryan," *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 19, 1920, 2; "Bryan Named to Lead Drys"; Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 458.

³⁶ "'Drys' May Draft Bryan and Sunday, Calderwood Says"; "Prohibs Have Set Stage to Big Sessions," *Kearney Daily Hub*, July 19, 1920, 1; Richardson, *Others*, 68; "Dry Convention," *University Place News*, July 16, 1920, 1.

³⁷ "Drys Flay Old Order"; "Drys Will Honor Finch, Former Lincoln Temperance Leader," *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 20, 1920, 5; Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 3 (1926):1181-82.

³⁸ "Hinshaw Hits 'Dry' Keynote in His Talks"; "Still Talk of Drafting Bryan."

³⁹ Paul W. Glad, *William Jennings Bryan, A Profile* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1968), 222; Levine, *Defender of the Faith*, 127-28; "'Billy' Sunday Greets 'Old J.B.' With a Grin; Preaches His Funeral," *New York Tribune*, Jan. 17, 1920, 3.

⁴⁰ "Drys Flay Old Order"; Richardson, *Others*, 4:68. Another first for women at the Lincoln convention was the election of Ida B. Wise Smith of Iowa as vice chairman of the Prohibition National Committee. Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 458.

⁴¹ "Still on Map, Keynoter Says," *Ogden* (Utah) *Standard-Examiner*, July 21, 1920, 1; "Dry Convention Comes to Order 'To Bury Booze'"; "Bryan Named to Lead Drys."

⁴² "Mr. Bryan Declines Prohibition Nomination"; "Still Talk of Drafting Bryan"; "Bryan Named to Lead Drys"; "Bryan Boomed as Prohibition Party Choice," *New York Tribune*, July 21, 1920, 5; "Drys in Stampede Nominate Bryan," *New York Times*, July 22, 1920.

⁴³ "Drys in Stampede Nominate Bryan"; "Bryan Named to Lead Drys"; "Still Talk of Drafting Bryan."

⁴⁴ "Bryan Named to Lead Drys."

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*; "Mr. Bryan Declines Prohibition Nomination."

⁴⁶ "Bryan Named to Lead Drys"; Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 3 (1926):1012. Poling had pressed Ford to run for president on the Prohibition Party ticket in 1916, but Ford declined. See Reynold M. Wik, *Henry Ford and Grass Roots America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972), 168.

⁴⁷ "Bryan is Elusive," *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 22, 1920, 1-2.

⁴⁸ Michael Lienesch, *In the Beginning, Fundamentalism, the Scopes Trial, and the Making of the Anti-Evolution Movement* (University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 269-70.

⁴⁹ "Mr. Bryan Declines Prohibition Nomination"; "Bryan Prompt to Refuse It," *Nebraska State Journal*, June 23, 1920, 2.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ "Mr. Bryan Declines Prohibition Nomination."

⁵² "Bryan Named to Lead Drys"; "Drys in Stampede Nominate Bryan"; "Bryan Prompt to Refuse It."

⁵³ "The Two Parties," *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 21, 1920, 6; "Israelights," *Havelock Post*, July 22, 1920, 4.

⁵⁴ "Daily Drift," *Nebraska State Journal*, July 23, 1920, 8.

⁵⁵ Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 1 (1925): 399.

⁵⁶ "Bryan Named to Lead Drys"; Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 6 (1930):2808-9; Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 340-41, 351.

⁵⁷ "Bryan Will Not Run if Nominated"; Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 2 (1924):661; Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 325.

⁵⁸ "Aaron S. Watkins is Choice of Drys," *Nebraska State Journal*, June 23, 1920, 2. Roger C. Storms's, *Partisan Prophets: A History of the Prohibition Party, 1854-1972* (Denver: National Prohibition Foundation, Inc., 1972), 37-38, likewise includes no mention of Bryan or Sunday in connection with the 1920 convention.

⁵⁹ "Platform Adopted by National Prohibition Convention," *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 23, 1926, 11; Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 458-62.

⁶⁰ "Bryan Prompt to Refuse it." The Rev. Thomas M. C. Birmingham of Milford had proposed to the platform committee a plank on lynching, "a 'Volstead act' to enforce the franchise of the negro."

⁶¹ "Drys Rap Harding," *Lincoln Daily Star*, July 23, 1920, 1, 15.

⁶² "Dry Candidate Offers to Quit," *Washington* (D.C.) *Herald*, Sept. 23, 1920, 1; "Harding Asked to Back 'Drys,'" *Ogden* (Utah) *Standard-Examiner*, Sept. 25, 1920, 8.

⁶³ *New York Times*, Oct. 23, 1920, quoted in Darcy G. Richardson, *Others*, 4:75, 85; "Prohibition Not Campaign Issue," *Kearney Daily Hub*, Sept. 6, 1920, 4.

⁶⁴ Cherny, *A Righteous Cause*, 164; "William Jennings Bryan to Talk at Convocation," *Daily Nebraskan* (Lincoln), Nov. 1, 1920, 2; "Harding Majority in Nebraska is About 125,000," *Lincoln Daily Star*, Nov. 4, 1920, 12.

⁶⁵ Richardson, *Others*, 100-102. Several other third-party candidates made even worse showings: James E. Ferguson of Texas, running on the American Party ticket; William Wesley Cox of Missouri on the Socialist Labor ticket; and Robert C. Macauley of Pennsylvania on the Single Tax ticket.

⁶⁶ "Republicans Win," *University Place News*, Nov. 5, 1920, 1; Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 651. J. D. Graves also ran for Nebraska governor on the dry ticket in 1916.

⁶⁷ Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 463; Richardson, *Others*, 4:85. One of the few bright spots in national election returns for the Prohibition Party in 1920 was the strong showing made by Ella A. Boole, prohibition candidate for the U.S. Senate from New York, who garnered 159, 623 votes, more than any other female candidate for public office up to that time. Richardson, *Others*, 4:118, 121.

⁶⁸ Cherrington, *Standard Encyclopedia*, 5 (1929):2251; "Old Records Blotted Out," *Nebraska State Journal*, Nov. 4, 1920, 1; Colvin, *Prohibition in the United States*, 409-10, 446-47; Plains Genealogical Society of Kimball County, comp., *Kimball County, Nebraska, 100 Years, 1888-1988* (Dallas: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 169; *Banner County and Its People* (Harrisburg: Banner County Historical Society, 1982) 1:15, 48; Richardson, *Others*, 4:68.

⁶⁹ Richardson, *Others*, 4:68, 220-21; "David Leigh Colvin," The Prohibition Party, <http://www.prohibitionists.org/History/votes/votes.html> (accessed Aug. 19, 2013).

⁷⁰ Richardson, *Others*, 4:326-27; Benton Maret, "James Arthur Edgerton," *The Magazine of Poetry and Literary Review* 7 (September 1895): 395.

⁷¹ "Commoner Passes Away Suddenly at Dayton, Tennessee," *Lincoln Star*, July 27, 1925, 1, from William Jennings Bryan Papers, RG3198, Series 8, Reel 2, Nebraska State Historical Society; "William Jennings Bryan is Dead," *Nebraska State Journal*, July 27, 1925, 1, Bryan Papers, Series 8, Reel 4; L. Sprague de Camp, *The Great Monkey Trial* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1968), 154-55.

⁷² Lienesch, *In the Beginning*, 288n87; V. W. Binderup, "Among the Bees," *Kearney Daily Hub*, Sept. 22, 1930, 6.

⁷³ Bryan was also an unsuccessful candidate for governor in 1926, 1928, 1938, and 1942; for the U.S. Senate in 1934; and for Congress in 1940. "Ex-Governor C. W. Bryan Dies; Rites to Be Tuesday," *Lincoln Star*, Mar. 5, 1945, 1, 4, 6; "Charles W. Bryan, Former Nebraska Governor, Dies," *Nebraska State Journal*, Mar. 5, 1945, 1, 2.

⁷⁴ Richardson, *Others*, 4:85.

⁷⁵ It replaced the older symbols of a white rose and single-humped dromedary camel. Storms, *Partisan Prophets*, 37.

⁷⁶ "Three Changes in Constitution Appear 'Over,'" *Nebraska State Journal*, Nov. 7, 1934, 1.

⁷⁷ "Vote Yes Nov. 7," *The Nebraska Issue* (Lincoln), November 1944, 1; "Victory and Defeat," *The Nebraska Issue*, December 1944, 1; Lorne Kennedy, "John Barleycorn Becomes Candidate in Hotly-Contested Nebraska Election," *Pittsburgh Press*, Oct. 24, 1944, 21. "Three-Gun" Wilson told the University of Nebraska's *Daily Nebraskan* on April 19, 1932, that his unusual nickname "was given to him because a friend in Massachusetts gave him a brace of pistols and he added his own to the collection." The paper added, "Aside from this, he has the reputation of attacking his problems with a 'bang,' and is noted for his aggressiveness in prohibition enforcement work."

⁷⁸ "Victory and Defeat"; "Republicans victors in Nebraska; prohibition, gas amendments lose," *Evening State Journal* (Lincoln), Nov. 8, 1944, 1, 6.