



## **German Village Old Brewery District Prohibition and World War I**

### **Historical Context and Overview**

With the passage of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1919, disaster struck many businesses in Columbus. Many saloon, restaurant, and tavern keepers, and the entire brewing industry of the German Village shut down. Thousands on the South side were employed in the making of beer—stable hands, barrel makers, distributors, salesmen, laborers, drivers, and the beer makers. Breweries supported Columbus’s charities, recreation for children, funded the first zoo, kept railroads, construction, and other industries humming.

Front Street was home to the Schlee Brewery and the family home (Germania). Other Breweries included: Franklin Brewery, City Brewery, Gambrinus Brewery, Washington Brewery, and Born Brewery. In addition, partnerships among the brewers also created Born and Schlee, Bavarian Brewery, Schlegel and Blenker Bavarian Brewery, City Park Brewery, and the Born, Schlee, and Hoster Brewery.

Alcohol fueled Columbus’s economy and was part of the cultural and social life of the city. Excessive drinking was clearly a problem in America and in Columbus vice and prostitution were linked with alcohol consumption. Rev. Washington Gladden of First Congregational Church and leader of the Social Gospel Movement, enlisted hundreds of children to form a crusade downtown to stop the Sunday sales of liquor. However, the solution to the issues was destined for a national forum.

There was some anti-German sentiment in Columbus during World War I. Schiller Park was renamed Washington Park; Schiller Street was renamed Whittier. Some street names were reestablished after World War I. The German school books were burned and German language classes stopped, but these were many activities that Germans (especially third and fourth generation German Americans) participated in. Except for personal grudges or political quarreling among associates, there was no directed violence at individuals during World War I in German Village.

### **Standards Alignment**

#### **Ohio’s New Learning Standards: K-12 Social Studies**

Grade 3, Content Statement 3: Local communities change over time.

Grade 8, Content Statement 22: Choices made by individuals, business, and governments have both present and future consequences.

HS American History, Content Statement 14: The Progressive Era was an effort to address the ills of American society stemming from industrial capitalism, urbanization, and political corruption.

## Learning Objectives

- Explain how federal solutions to issues impact local communities.
- Discuss the reasons behind the temperance movement and Prohibition.
- Explain how Progressivism was a reaction to politics, urbanization, and capitalism.
- Discuss the impact of the Breweries' closures on the economy of Columbus.
- Analyze the extent of anti-German sentiment during World War I.

## Discussion Questions

1. How did the Breweries impact Columbus?
2. How did Prohibition impact Columbus?
3. What motivated the Temperance Movement and Prohibition?
4. How did World War I establish the groundwork for the end of the brewing industry?
5. What anti-German actions were taken in Columbus during World War I?

## Extension Activity

Have students create their own propaganda campaign for prohibition. Students can use political cartoons, posters, speeches, music, etc. to persuade the country to go dry. Presentations can be created through a variety of Multimedia tools such as PowerPoint, Prezi, MovieMaker, Animoto, etc.

Have students debate the merits of prohibition. One side should argue that prohibition was necessary to curb excessive drinking and associated vices. The other side should argue that prohibition was an ineffective restriction on personal liberty.

## Additional Resources

Temperance and Prohibition - <http://prohibition.osu.edu/>

Anti-Saloon League - <http://www.wpl.lib.oh.us/AntiSaloon/>

Ohio History Central: Anti-German Sentiment in World War I - <http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/entry.php?rec=1578>

"We Had to Be So Careful" A German Farmer's Recollections of Anti-German Sentiment in World War I - <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/3/>

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