Moonshiners and Prohibitionists: The Battle over Alcohol in Southern Appalachia

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The writing style is animated and easy to read. Appendix 1 Client List shows more than six hundred clients at thirty-six places. Appendix 2 Gardens to Visit makes known nineteen gardens to go to see along with their street addresses and websites. Archives and Resources encompasses eight Main Repositories, twelve Other Repositories, and three Other Resources. The excellent two hundred and one notes are divided by the twelve chapter titles and the epilogue. Two hundred and forty-one references comprise the bibliography.

The fabulous work has a connection to the south due to Ellen Shipman’s creation of Long Vue House & Gardens in New Orleans for Edgar Stern, head and leading owner of Sears, Roebuck Company and his wife Edith Stern in 1936. Other gardens developed by Ellen Shipman connected to the south are Chatham Manor Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park in Fredericksburg, Virginia and Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens Italian Garden in Jacksonville, Florida. Others are the Sarah P. Duke Gardens and Terrace Gardens at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina and Edison and Ford Winter Estates Mina Edison’s Moonlight Garden in Fort Myers, Florida. Another garden established by Ellen Shipman connected to the south is Southeast Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The magnificent monograph has connection to the south because of patrons of Ellen Shipman: three from Florida, two from West Virginia, six from South Carolina, three from Tennessee, twelve from Virginia, twenty-three from North Carolina, six from Georgia, four from Kentucky, and nine from Louisiana.

Famous customers include Clara and Henry Ford, Ford Motor Company originator and their estate Fair Lane in Dearborn, Michigan, Mina and Thomas Edison and Moonlight Garden in Fort Myers, Florida, and Eugene DuPont Junior, son of Eugene DuPont creator of contemporary DuPont Chemical Company presently DowDuPont Chemical Company and his estate’s Owl’s Nest in Greenville, Delaware. Anna Thompson Dodge the spouse of Horace Elgin Dodge Senior inventor of Dodge Automobiles and her estate Rose Terrace in Grosse Pointe, Michigan is another one of Ellen Shipman’s patrons.

Some of the flowers used by Ellen Shipman in her patrons’ settings are roses, peonies, irises, foxgloves, chrysanthemums, primroses, asters, anemones, tulips, gladiolus, larkspur, astilbes, violets, hydrangeas, wisteria, monkshood, Cora bells, poppies, gardenias, Queen’s wreath, and narcissuses. Ellen Shipman brought into play reflecting pools, stone bridges, terraces, dovecotes, teahouses, boxwood, waterfalls, Chippendale Gate, Statue of Mercury, Statue of Dianna, Piping Pan Fountain, pergolas, walking and horse riding routes, and Corinthian columns. Further decorations seen in Shipman’s venues are sundials, pavilions, nymphs, borders, stone benches, a roof garden, bronze figures, fish gardens, loggia, lotus fountains, parterres, and arches. Thirty-two color photographs give readers an idea about the impressiveness and beauty of Ellen Shipman’s sites. Approximately one hundred forty-nine black and white pictures disclose the opulence of Shipman’s work of landscaping brilliance. The monograph divulges around thirty-nine pictures of a few of Shipman’s outlines. Ellen Shipman developed sceneries for railroad headquarters, organization headquarters, government buildings, libraries, graveyards, houses of worship, and places of learning. Judith B. Tankard composed additional wonderful books including The Gardens of Ellen Biddle Shipman, Beatrix Farrand: Private Gardens, Public Landscapes, A Legacy in Bloom: Celebrating a Century of Gardens, Gertrude Jekyll and the Country House Garden: From the Archives of Country Life, and The Artists and Gardens of the Cornish Colony.

The recommended audience is anyone interested in gardens of the United States, Ellen Shipman, and/or landscaping. The masterpiece is an invaluable vital addition to public and academic libraries. It is a stunning success and a fantastic treasure bringing to light lovely United States gardens developed by Ellen Shipman.

Melinda F. Matthews
University of Louisiana at Monroe

Bruce Stewart’s social and political themes run through his research of the battle over alcohol manufacture and sale in early Appalachia. He takes the reader on a winding journey from early saloons and mountain stills to state owned distilleries. He gives us fascinating passages relating the impressions and beliefs held by local citizens on
temperance and prohibition of the manufacture and use of alcohol.

Stewart helps the reader to understand how Appalachia was viewed by Americans outside its region with a quote from Dan Rather: “a place that seems like something out of another country. Appalachia often evokes images of drunken hillbillies, rednecks, feudists, and moonshiners…supposedly eccentric, illiterate, lazy and hard-drinking…a different breed of people” (p.3).

Stewart shows two points of view on manufacture and sale of alcohol. Those who lived in Appalachia, citizens involved in manufacture and sale of alcohol, and those across the nation who attached a righteous sense of the damage of the public good that comes from alcohol sale and use.

The controversy between the moonshiners and the prohibitionists rose to such heights that voters saw the passage of the 18th Amendment forbidding the manufacture and sale of alcohol in 1917. Yet, by 1933, the 21st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution struck down the 18th Amendment and returned power to regulate the manufacture and sell of alcohol to the States.

“The Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution Constitutional Amendment

The Eighteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution established the prohibition of “intoxicating liquors” in the United States. The amendment was proposed by Congress on December 18, 1917, and was ratified by the requisite number of states on January 16, 1919. The Eighteenth Amendment was repealed by the Twenty-first Amendment on December 5, 1933.”

Through a series of black and white photographs throughout the research, opportunities are given to see the manufacture and production of “moonshine”. The focus on the historical rise and development of “the battle in Southern Appalachia” between the moonshiners and the prohibitionists is well documented by Stewart’s research.

Recommended for public and academic libraries, and for historical societies.

Carol Walker Jordan
Librarian and Consultant


This serious examination of the integration of southern public libraries “in the Jim Crow South” was based on extensive research by the Weigands. Serious examination revealed how local activists in the 1950s and 60s opened the doors to black patrons.

Unique to this activism was the participation of young black community members joining protests and peacefully demanding services due to them as community members. Showing us in some communities that library services were paid for with tax dollars, the young protesters claimed their right of access along with whites.

The Weigands focused their research on southern public libraries in Tennessee, Virginia, South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Searching newspapers, manuscript collections, public library annual reports, a collection of university masters theses, and federal legislation provided an exceptional historical account of the challenges for blacks to have free access to those southern public libraries. Some tragic incidents and some heartwarming ones are revealed through their extensive research.

Some mentions are made of the slow and minimal support from the American Library Association given to those who advocated providing equal public library services to black community citizens. (p. 185)

An interesting example of bias held toward black community members in 1952 by a Maryland Magistrate who helped found a public library in his community. Regarding the option of providing a bookmobile for black community members, he was quoted as saying: “a Negro will never set foot in that library so long as I have anything to do with it.” (p. 51)