

**Office of the Vermont Secretary of State
Vermont State Archives**

**Statewide Referendum
1916: Prohibiting the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor**

Background/Issue: See referenda of 1847-53 and 1903. Though Vermont voted for local option in 1903, thus ending statewide prohibition, temperance supporters remained active. In 1915 they passed an act restoring statewide prohibition.

Referendum: Act 171 of 1915, enacted March 12th, called for the prohibition of the sale or furnishing of intoxicating liquors in Vermont. The act provided two effective dates to be decided by referendum held at town meeting, 1916 (the same day as the direct primary referendum). A yes vote would mean the act would take effect on May 1, 1916; a no vote would delay effect until May 1, 1927.

On March 7, 1916 the no vote prevailed by 13,489 votes, 18,653 to 32,142. Only Orleans County voted for the early enactment date.

Result: The temperance law was repealed on January 23, 1917 by Act 234. On January 19, 1919 national prohibition was ratified through the 18th amendment without Vermont's vote.