

THE ROARING 1920's

BY CHAD JONES

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PROHIBITION AND ORGANIZED CRIME

SPEAKEASIES

- A speakeasy, also called a blind pig or a blind tiger, is a hidden saloon or nightclub that illegally sells alcoholic beverages.
- They were created for people to get around the 18th Amendment, which prohibited the “manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors.” In order to be served liquor in these clubs, you would have to prove that you were not an officer, usually by identifying yourself as a friend of a trusted patron of the speakeasy.
- By the middle of the 1920’s it was thought that there were approximately 100,000 speakeasies in New York alone.



TEXAS GUINAN

- Mary Louise Cecilia "Texas" Guinan (January 12, 1884 – November 5, 1933) was an American speakeasy keeper, actress, and entrepreneur.
- She was one of the first female MCs. Upon the introduction of Prohibition, she opened a speakeasy called the “300 Club” at 151 W. 54th Street in New York City. She would greet her customers by cheerily shouting “Hello, suckers,” when they walked inside, and they loved it.
- The club became famous for its troupe of forty scantily-clad fan dancers and for Guinan's distinctive self-confidence, which made her a celebrity.



BOOTLEGGING

- Bootlegging, also called rum-running, is the business of illegally smuggling alcohol over land or over water.
- The term originated during the Civil War when soldiers would sneak pint bottles of liquor into enemy camps by putting it in their boots.
- It was said that some ships carried \$200,000 in contraband in a single run, during a time when \$50 a week was considered a good wage for an honest worker.



AL CAPONE

- Alphonse “Al” Capone was an infamous gangster who led a Prohibition crime syndicate.
- Capone came to Chicago from New York in the early 1920’s, at the command of Johnny Torrio, the head of Chicago’s crime world.
- His group was dedicated to smuggling and bootlegging liquor, and was active from the early 1920’s until 1931.
- In 1929, Bureau of Prohibition agent Eliot Ness began an investigation of Capone and his business, attempting to get a conviction for Prohibition violations.
- In May 1932, Capone was sent to Atlanta U.S. Penitentiary, he was then transferred to Alcatraz, where he was given absolutely no contact to the outside world.
- He died in prison on January 25, 1947 after having a stroke.



ELLIOT NESS

- Elliot Ness was a Prohibition agent, famous for his efforts to enforce Prohibition in Chicago during the 1920's.
- Ness was the leader of the legendary team of law enforcement agents nicknamed The Untouchables.



ST. VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE

- The Saint Valentine's Day massacre is the name given to the murder of seven people as part of a prohibition era conflict between two powerful criminal gangs in Illinois, on St. Valentine's Day 1929. The gangs were the South Side Italian gang led by Al Capone and the North Side Irish gang led by Bugs Moran.
- Former members of the Egan's Rats gang were also suspected to have played a large role in the St. Valentine's Day massacre, assisting Capone. Capone might have ordered it after Bugs' gang machine-gunned Al Capone's headquarters.
- Two of the shooters were dressed as Chicago police officers, and the others were dressed in long trenchcoats, according to witnesses who saw the "police" leading the other men at gunpoint out of the garage.
- In 1931, Capone was convicted of income tax evasion and was imprisoned. The massacre did severely cripple the North Side gang, a blow from which they never fully recovered.



IZZY & MOE

- Isadore “Izzy” Einstein and Moe Smith were police officers, specifically agents of the US Prohibition Unit, during the first years of the alcohol prohibition era from 1920 to 1925.
- They were well known for successfully shutting down illegal speakeasies and similar drinking establishments.
- What set them apart from other police officers was that they spoke in several different languages, wore disguises, and arrested more than 4,000 suspected bootleggers.

