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Lawrence County (Ark.) tavern permits, 1840-1900

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Lawrence County (Ark.) tavern permits MSNE.0082

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives
11 Seventh Street
Powhatan, Arkansas, 72458

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Summary Information

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Repository | Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives |
| Title | Lawrence County (Ark.) tavern permits |
| Date [inclusive] | 1840-1900 |
| Extent | 0.25 Cubic feet 1 box |
| Language | English |
| Language of Materials | Materials entirely in English. |

Preferred Citation

Lawrence County (Ark.) tavern permits, Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives, Arkansas State Archives, Powhatan, Arkansas.

Biographical/Historical Note

The manufacture and sale of alcohol has long been a contentious issue in Arkansas. Initially, the primary focus of prohibitive legislature was to limit sales to Native Americans. Eventually though, dry advocates promoted temperance for all of Arkansas. In the early 1850s, the Arkansas General Assembly passed an initiative to ban the manufacture and sale of alcohol entirely, although it had little effect.

By 1855, another law was passed stating that taverns and dram shops must be approved by the local majority. During the Civil War, however, the Confederacy completely banned all manufacture and sale of alcohol. This was essentially reversed in 1864 when merchants were allowed to purchase alcohol from the government to resell.

After the Civil War, farmers found that growing corn for whiskey was much more profitable. This renewed tensions over the legality and morality for manufacturing and selling alcohol. Another large push for prohibition began in the early 20th century and culminated in the Newberry Act of 1915 which made all of Arkansas dry.

After the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1933, Arkansas was once again wet. Opponents of alcohol pushed for new state level legislation. In 1935, a new law was passed which placed control of the sale of alcohol on the county level and placed a threshold of 38% of voters signing a petition in order to hold a referendum.

As of 2015, Lawrence County is one of 41 dry counties in Arkansas with the remaining 34 being wet.

Scope and Contents

Included in this collection are applications for liquor licenses, tavern permits, tavern bonds, and a petition to allow a tavern. The licenses are generally vague with the names of the owner/operators, town or general vicinity of the establishment, and the names of any business partners. Records span from 1840 to 1900.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives 02/04/2015

Revision Description

06/21/2016

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research use.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Lawrence County Historical Society, Powhatan, Arkansas, 2010.

Collection Inventory

| | Box |
|-----------|------------|
| 1840-1849 | 1 |
| 1850-1859 | |
| 1870-1879 | |
| 1880-1889 | |
| 1890-1899 | |
| 1900 | |