



A replica of the original Labatt Brewery, built in 1828 in London, Ontario.

1786: John Molson, an Englishman, founded Canada's oldest continuing brewery in Montreal.

1828: John Labatt, an Irishman, founded a brewery in London, Ont.

1850: Revenues from beer and liquor excise taxes brought in \$90,388. The duty on beer was one cent a gallon. It went up to three cents in 1862.

1867-68: The consumption of beer, which had been rising steadily for two decades, plunged when Great Britain withdrew its troops from Canada.

1878: Canada passed its first prohibition law, the Scott Local Option Act. Within eight years prohibition was in effect in parts of Quebec, half of Ontario, nearly all of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia and all of Prince Edward Island.

1898: A national plebiscite on prohibition disappointed its sponsors; less than twenty-three per cent of the voters wanted it. In Quebec it was favoured by only eight per cent.

1902: The voters of Ontario voted down prohibition by an overwhelming margin but, as the *Western Brewer* noted, "the constant agitation of this question by the extremists of the Dominion has operated seriously against the general prosperity of the brewing industry."

1903: Ontario produced nearly 12 million gallons of beer in a year, double the amount produced in Quebec. The O'Keefe Brewery unveiled a 50-ton ice machine.

1916-1919: The War Measures Act prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages. After the war prohibition continued in all provinces except Quebec. It was provincial and/or local and it came and went at different times to different provinces and towns. In Ontario the provincial law was passed in 1916 and repealed in 1927, but some Ontario counties remained legally dry until the late 1940s.



An arrest under prohibition.

Cooling It in 1794

A Swedish traveller named Peter Kalm visited Canada in 1794 and published his observations in *Travels in America*.

"Some of the people of quality make use of ice-cellars to keep beer cool in during summer and to keep fresh flesh which would not keep long in the great heat. These ice-cellars are commonly built of stone, under the house. The walls of it are covered with boards because the ice is more easily consumed by stones. In winter they fill it with snow, which is beat down with the feet and covered with water. They then open the cellar holes and the door to admit the cold. It is customary in summer to put a piece of ice into the beer to be drunk."

