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Try to Control Yourself
The Regulation of Public Drinking in
Post-Prohibition Ontario, 1927-44



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Preface:

The Word on the Street

Of the dozen streets in the south-western Ontario village of Thorndale (pop. 400), where I spent the second decade of my life, one of the shortest is Temperance Street. It is literally a road to nowhere: roughly 150 metres long, it boasts a whopping three houses, and terminates in a farmer's field. When, in 1984, the township of West Nissouri – of which Thorndale was the municipal capital – voted to end local option, making it legal to have a licensed premises, or even, God help us, a liquor store in the town, I, a cynical, slouching teenager, was baffled at the idea that there had been any kind of prohibition up to this point. I was raised in a family of moderate social drinkers, and still pride myself on what I call my healthy relationship with alcohol. Although one grandfather might be considered to have had a drinking problem (stories abound of my parents fetching him from the Hespeler Hotel's beer parlour), my parents were social drinkers who enjoyed cracking a cold one when friends and family dropped by. Needless to say, we had many friends and family dropping by.

Soon after local option was overturned in West Nissouri, a licensed restaurant opened up. It was located on the corner of Temperance Street. When, decades later, the Liquor Control Board of Ontario began to open "Agency Stores," contracting private convenience-store owners in remote parts of the province to sell booze under licence, the store in Thorndale that got the licence was, you guessed it, on the other corner of Temperance Street. Fearing that the street would soon be renamed, since this positioning seemed to me too brilliant an irony to last, I asked my mother to keep an eye out for a name change. If they changed the name, I told her, I wanted that sign. My mother is clever, and our town is small; she went to the municipal office (a short stumble from Temperance Street) and paid to have a new "Temperance St." sign hung. I have the original in my kitchen. The street's name remains the same.

I tell you this not because I find my experience particularly fascinating but because the story of the moistening of Thorndale's Temperance Street

offers a useful metaphor for the story in this book. The end of prohibition did not see the end of temperance in Ontario. That movement was strong, vocal, and persistent. Just as Temperance Street's name became increasingly irrelevant as liquor gradually moved in at the end of West Nissouri's own prohibition era, the creation of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario necessitated a gradualist approach to changing the system, requiring regulations that struck a balance between temperance sentiments and "wetter" inclinations. It was a bureaucratic solution to what was considered a widespread social problem. More important, it was a bureaucratic solution to a deeply divisive *political* problem. As a result, we still have many seemingly archaic and remarkably frustrating liquor regulations and laws in the province. We are not alone. Most Canadian provinces, and I would suspect American states, are riddled with bizarre and seemingly regressive regulations that limit the free flow of booze or impose certain expectations on the proprietors of public drinking spaces and on the people who want to consume alcohol. Visitors from abroad may be baffled by our laws. A friend from Edinburgh, Scotland, once told me of the odd looks he got when he and his wife, fresh off a long bike ride in Banff, Alberta, strolled the path around Lake Louise while sipping from cans of beer. They were unwittingly breaking the law, and some people were aghast.

It is this sort of reaction that inspired the research that has led to this book. The end of prohibition was a tense and difficult time for government regulators. On the one hand, they had the evidence of what appeared to be the utter failure of prohibition, at least when viewed from the perspective of social order. On the other hand, they had many constituents who still believed that liquor was the devil's drink and that the legalization of booze would lead to the downfall of society. I am not belittling these people. Many of them were progressive, socially minded individuals who believed that their ideas would elevate society, help to end poverty and social decline, and pave the way to a better world. Politicians also took them seriously. They were not mindless reactionaries, antiquated old biddies, or crazed radicals. They were voting citizens who were organized, passionate, and respectable.

As a result of this tension, the liquor control regime that emerged was full of contradictions. From a contemporary perspective, it can appear to have been a frightening, hypercontrolling surveillance regime. But such an interpretation would be based both on a limited understanding of the goals of the regulatory system and on the tensions between the ideal and the actual. The functioning of the law and regulations, the system that emerged, was shaped by people – politicians, bureaucrats, and everyday citizens – who had to negotiate the implementation of the regulations. This book is a story of the social, political, economic, and cultural forces that moulded the system with which they all interacted.

Try to Control Yourself



Figure 1 The LCBO required hotel beverage room operators to send photos of their public spaces. This one, including a rare glimpse of a patron, is additionally remarkable for the signs of a recent, cursory mopping. The neat and clean beverage room was an indication, however superficial, that the management was trying to keep things in order. *Source:* Undated photo, Rex Hotel, Port Arthur, AO, RG 36-1-0-1149.

Introduction:

The Emergence of Liquor Control Bureaucracy in Ontario

With its own attempt at the “noble experiment” of prohibition a dismal failure, the Province of Ontario took the moderate route. In 1927 the Liquor Control Act (LCA 1927) overturned provincial prohibition, legislated by the Ontario Temperance Act, in favour of government-run liquor distribution, replacing the prohibition-era Board of License Commissioners with the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) and ushering in the provincially managed distribution of alcoholic beverages.

Liquor control was supposed to solve the problems of prohibition, the “noble experiment” gone awry. In spite of much fear mongering from the temperance forces, rhetorical hyperbole from the media, celebration from the drinkers, and – undoubtedly – hand rubbing from the brewers and distillers, the end of provincial prohibition did not usher in utter social chaos.¹ Although the “Drys” (often pluralized like that) feared that the Liquor Control Act would renew society’s slide toward iniquity, the advocates of liquor control chose a temperate modification to the status quo. The Liquor Control Act legalized alcoholic beverages in a manner that aimed to encourage a moderate approach to drinking. The LCBO began to reconstruct residents’ relationship with drink, how and where they could consume it, and in effect their perception of a mind-, body-, and (for some) soul-altering substance.

Since the LCBO’s early work involved both controlling the sale of liquor to the public and the regulation of the places in which people could drink their booze, a study of the entire scope of the board’s work would be far too complex for one book, at least if there is any hope of giving it a fair analysis. This book, therefore, considers public drinking, leaving to others the issue of government sale for private consumption. What I am interested in here is the way that the *public* consumption of alcoholic beverages was regulated in post-prohibition Ontario, how government control placed constraints and expectations on the population, and how the regulatory process created

a dynamic interaction between the government agency and the general public. Residents who wanted to drink and those who wanted to sell it to them blatantly or surreptitiously challenged and in some cases modified the system that was envisioned by the regulators.

It is tempting to create a sharp dichotomy between the two sides of the equation – the government and the people – but it would be a distortion. Neither side was homogeneous. “The government” was, and is, a complex system comprising politicians, self-interested career civil servants, idealistic administrators, and partisan appointees. They had diverse agendas and were often working at cross-purposes. The same can be said of “the people.” Owing to the distinct communities in which people lived, to the background, gender, ethnicity, or social class of the individuals, and to the values that drove them, the members of the general public were equally diverse. So studying the regulation of public drinking involves dissecting a complex relationship between the regulator and the regulated. To understand state regulation of the individual, we need to look at a variety of interests from a variety of perspectives, all under the disarmingly simple term of “liquor control.”

Among Canadian provinces, Ontario was no leader; by the time the LCBO opened its offices, ordered its stock, hired its staff, renovated its first liquor stores, and deputized its inspectors, provincial liquor boards were becoming somewhat commonplace in Canada.² For most provinces, prohibition had been a wartime innovation (ostensibly to address wartime resource scarcity), which the Dominion government enacted through a series of prohibitionist orders-in-council. Consequently, immediately after the war, several provinces dismantled their prohibitory regimes. Quebec rescinded prohibition as soon as possible, allowing sales in stores in 1919 and reintroducing public drinking in 1921. British Columbia and Yukon Territory followed soon after, introducing their own liquor control regime in 1921; by 1925 both had opted to permit the public consumption of beer (passing “beer by the glass” legislation).³ Other provinces soon followed suit, with Manitoba (1923), Alberta (1924), and Saskatchewan (1925) beating Ontario onto the liquor control bandwagon, although not necessarily permitting beer by the glass so quickly. Whereas Albertans could drink in bars the same year that they could buy alcohol at stores, Manitobans had to wait until 1928, and Saskatchewan’s residents had to wait until 1935, fully a year after Ontarians had reopened the beverage rooms.⁴

From a twenty-first-century perspective, the metaphor of “jumping on the bandwagon” seems apt; given the limited nature of its early liquor control system, the province might appear to have remained almost completely “on the wagon.” Indeed, regulation was deliberate and slow, and in its operations the LCBO presented a sober face in a process that encouraged moderation.

The LCA (1927) erected a complex system of oversight, what some have hyperbolically described as Nazi-like surveillance.⁵ People could buy liquor at government-run stores, but public drinking remained illegal. The consumption of beverage alcohol had to take place in an individual's private residence. Notwithstanding that the act defined "private dwelling place" remarkably loosely as "any building or part of a building or tent where a person resides," which included private guest rooms in hotels, it would be another seven years before people could drink regular-strength beer in public with their friends and neighbours.⁶

Yet a closer look calls into question the often-stated opinion that Canada's seemingly restrictive, abstemious provincial liquor control regimes were an extension of temperance ideology. Liquor control was, in my view, almost a revolutionary innovation for two reasons. First, looking forward from 1916, the creation of the LCBO was a reversal of the direction in which the province had been heading. Temperance rhetoric and the temperance movement had been strong in Ontario. In the 1898 plebiscite, Ontarians had voted overwhelmingly in favour of prohibition. Similarly, a 1902 provincial plebiscite geared to eliminating public drinking in favour of centralized liquor licensing – the License Act (1902) – was supported by a majority of electors, although it failed to receive adequate support to become law.⁷ Nonetheless, many Ontario municipalities had passed "local option" plebiscites, which banned the sale of liquor, beer, and wine within their boundaries. Wartime prohibition was continued after a resounding majority of voters agreed in a 1919 plebiscite on the issue. In 1921 another prohibition plebiscite reiterated this decision. Thus, far from embracing temperance ideology, liquor control was pushing against a process of drying out the province that had peaked in 1916 with prohibition.

The second reason that the LCA (1927) might be considered revolutionary is the nature of the regime that it enacted. A centrally organized Liquor Control Board, based on modern principles of governance, was what Gerald Halliwell called a "socialist system" of government oversight.⁸ The social problem of alcohol consumption was to be managed by tight control over the distribution of the troubling beverage. The board would be Janus-faced, charged with discouraging indulgence while profiting from sales.⁹

It was, however, a moderate revolution. There were many consistencies with the past. The LCBO replaced the provincial Board of License Commissioners (BLC), which had been in existence for the decade of prohibition. The BLC was itself a centralized board, but its mandate was to oversee the distribution of liquor for medical and industrial purposes and to make sure that the Ontario Temperance Act was enforced.¹⁰ It was also responsible for inspecting and licensing "Standard Hotels," a component of its work that was a holdover from the decade before prohibition when the public

consumption of liquor in Ontario was normally confined to hotels. Finally, the administrative apparatus was already in place: the LCBO hired back most of the staff of the BLC.

For the first seven years of its existence, the LCBO was occupied mainly with controlling the distribution of alcohol for personal consumption. It closely monitored activities within the liquor stores, posted inspectors at each distribution point for alcohol (i.e., breweries, distilleries, and wineries), and simultaneously investigated the conduct of premises licensed to sell light beer. This beer, approximately 2.2 percent alcohol by volume, was known colloquially as “4.4 beer” in reference to its proof level.¹¹ The board also collected data on the drinking habits of Ontarians, collaborated with social service agencies to keep an eye on the trouble drinkers, worked in close contact with various police authorities to root out illegal sellers (i.e., bootleggers) or illegal drinking places (often called “blind pigs”), and made sure that all beverage alcohol was distributed under its watchful administrative eyes.

In 1934 the board’s work expanded considerably. As a result of pressure from consumers, combined with the end of prohibition in the United States, the Conservatives under Howard Ferguson’s successor as provincial premier, George Henry, introduced to the Ontario Legislature “An Act to Amend the Liquor Control Act, 1927,” more commonly known as the Liquor Control Act (1934). Its major, and most controversial, change was to permit the sale and consumption of regular-strength beer and wine in public places, commonly called “beer by the glass” legislation. The law was passed by the Conservatives in an attempt to curry voter favour in the 1934 election. This political strategy did not work. The Conservatives’ main opponents, the Liberals, were led by the young and charismatic Mitchell Hepburn, who vowed to uphold the LCA in his stated attempt to depoliticize prohibition as an election issue. The Liberals won, and Hepburn was left to figure out how his party, which drew considerable support from the quite vocal and active temperance movement, would make this new legislation work.¹²

Hepburn’s task was made easier by the ambiguity of the 1934 legislation. The LCA (1934) did not clearly state where public drinking could take place. The Conservatives had apparently planned to extend the permission to several types of public establishments, including restaurants and hotels. Doubtless, many who voted for the Liberals thought that they would be able to buy a beer at their local restaurant or “snack bars,” both of which had been permitted to sell light beer, and certainly many restaurant owners presumed this would be the case. They were mistaken. Hepburn and his newly selected chief commissioner, former federal Liberal member of Parliament Edmond Odette, decided that the best way to operate the LCA (1934) was to limit the sites of public drinking. The LCBO, therefore, focused

its efforts on hotel beverage rooms and dining rooms, private clubs, steamships, and trains.

By far, the most prominent drinking space quickly became the hotel beverage room, a place rooted in several decades of public-drinking tradition. Within the span of a few weeks in the summer of 1934, the LCBO received well over one thousand applications from hotel proprietors seeking the privilege of selling beer in their beverage rooms or beer and wine with meals in their dining rooms. Hotels that received such permission were issued a beer authority or a beer and wine authority (and although it was the proprietors who applied, the authority was attached to the premises). In late July, Ontarians returned to the revived hotel beverage rooms.

What they found would have surprised and disappointed many of them. The beverage room of 1934 was considerably different from the archetypes of the past. The LCA (1934) was heavily restrictive, and the LCBO expanded on the legislated rules with its own set of regulations. According to the LCA (1934), no gambling, drunkenness, or “riotous, quarrelsome, violent or disorderly conduct” could take place in the beverage rooms. No slot machines or gambling devices were allowed. The stand-up bar, a mainstay of the pre-prohibition saloon, was prohibited, replaced by a screened-in “taproom.” Beer could not be served for off-premises consumption. Hotels were not allowed to have any financial association with breweries, and breweries could neither own nor provide free services or products to hotels. The LCBO’s regulations were more specific. Only beer could be sold in beverage rooms. Beer and wine were allowed in hotel dining rooms as long as a reasonably sized meal was also purchased. In the beverage room, customers had to sit at a table and be served their beer by waiters – whose tidy appearance was also mandated by the regulations. To the clause on disorderly conduct in the LCA (1934), the board added “music, singing, dancing, disorder, quarrelling, profane or obscene language or misbehaviour.” Radios and music boxes being played in other parts of the hotel should not be loud enough to be heard in the beverage room. Food was not allowed in beverage rooms, although in the early rules “the Board will make no objection to the placing of a small bowl of either pretzels or potato chips on each table ... providing no charge is made for the same.”¹³ As we will see, the board created many more regulations, governing all aspects of a hotel’s operations.

Disinterested Management

In placing the control over drinking in the hands of a central board, the Ontario government was following the lead of governments around the world. The centralization of both distribution and control over liquor consumption was based on the principle of “disinterested management” pioneered in Scandinavia in the last part of the nineteenth century. Under this

arrangement, also called the Gothenburg system, government controlled both the manufacture and the sale of alcoholic beverages. Such management was “disinterested” because managers did not have a financial stake in selling more alcohol; their focus was supposed to be control. Ontario’s approach was a modified Gothenburg system: the manufacture of alcohol remained the purview of private industry, but the LCBO ran the stores. Breweries and wineries were allowed to sell their own products from their own stores, but an LCBO inspector was on site. The 1934 act continued this mix of private and public management: the drinking establishments were privately owned but were authorized by the board and closely watched by the local inspector. Management of all aspects of liquor consumption remained, ultimately, the purview of the state.

The centralization of liquor control in Ontario created a system in which individual behaviour intersected with state regulation. This of course is nothing new, but the process of liquor control was a major expansion of the state oversight into individual lives. It is an example of “governmentality,” an idea Michel Foucault introduced to characterize governance in the modern era, or as he explained it, “the conduct of conduct” (“*conduire des conduits*”).¹⁴ As Mitchell Dean notes, “government entails any attempt to shape with some degree of deliberation aspects of our behaviour according to particular sets of norms and for a variety of ends.”¹⁵ As an agent of governmentality that attempted to “conduct the conduct” of citizens, the LCBO attempted to construct a social vision based on a specific set of values and ideas about social order. It created a system of control that defined moral and immoral activities, compelling individuals to conform to idealized behaviours in order to get direct benefits – a drink in public with their friends.

To further Foucaultize the discussion, I would argue that the LCBO’s activity was the expression of *biopower*. Biopower is the active principle of biopolitics, the process by which government’s role expands from the simple management of trade and other *external* facets of life to the subtle but pervasive management of the *internal* life of the individual, the way we conduct our physical selves.¹⁶ Biopolitics is not just social control with a newer name. Whereas social control is the imposition or implementation of a specific value system on others, the “power” in biopower is a neutral force that both oppresses and empowers: certain activities and beliefs are permitted and even encouraged, whereas others are suppressed and discouraged. Biopolitics is therefore a process of negotiation and modification. The LCBO’s biopower was subtle but extensive. It sought to reshape the individual’s relationship with his or her body by internalizing self-control over the consumption of liquor and to restructure an individual’s ideas about the physical and neurochemical effects of that substance. Whereas prohibition simply prohibited the consumption of alcohol, liquor control *permitted* consumption,

although under certain conditions that were controlled by the state but negotiated with the citizen.

The mechanisms of the LCBO's biopower were complex and pervasive. The very consumption of something that brought pleasure and psychic transformation was framed by various notions of propriety and validity, discourses like those found in temperance, medical, and social-reform rhetoric, each of which contained specific ideas of what was dangerous to the physical body and the body politic. These mechanisms forced people who wanted a drink to run a series of bureaucratic gauntlets before they could indulge and relax. In the liquor stores, the customer had to buy a permit book, fill in a form listing a substance he or she wanted to buy, and be evaluated by the liquor store employee.¹⁷ (The employee's actions, of course, were also controlled.) As I noted above, after 1934 the customer who wanted to have a legal drink with friends was also subjected to a series of state-prescribed constraints on behaviour. There was slightly more leeway in the licensed hotel dining rooms, but here again the individual's desire for the physical pleasure of drinking was severely constrained. Moreover, the system contained several layers of control: the hotel management was overseen by the state; staff was overseen by management; the customer was both served and regulated by the staff; and members of the public could report back to the state about activities in the hotels. (As we will see, the apparatus of the state was also scrutinized by the public.) The authority of the central administration was diffused throughout the system by various paid and unpaid agents.

Those familiar with the work of Max Weber will recognize this structure since the LCBO's biopolitical project was facilitated by the bureaucratization of government. Weber's dissection of bureaucratization helps us to see the structural implementation of central values. He and his intellectual descendants provide an appreciation of how government works in a structural way and of how bureaucrats who are invested in the system place considerable value in the bureaucracy as a way of injecting rationale into chaos.¹⁸ Weber's "ideal-typical" bureaucracy, which strives toward an objectivity that is devoid of subjective value judgments and personal interest, is a valuable tool for understanding the LCBO's regulatory project. A bureaucracy derives its power from "well-defined spheres of competence, continuous performance of official duties, an orderly hierarchy of control ... decision-making based on written records ... and a style of decision-making which consists of applying general rules to particular cases."¹⁹ These structures permit a form of governance that would otherwise be impossible. Hence the structure was functional: "The whole point about bureaucratic administration as a means of domination is that it carries out tasks which cannot technically be performed by the employing agent itself."²⁰ A well-structured bureaucracy allows management of people from a distance.

What makes Weber's ideas of bureaucratization useful to a study of the LCBO is that this idealization of an objective, rule-based bureaucracy stands in stark contrast to emotionally charged temperance discourse of moral regulation and social disaster. By the 1930s the manufacture, sale, and consumption of beverage alcohol had been the focus of reform organizations in North America for at least a century. Even though many considered prohibition – the outcome of the anti-alcohol movement – to be a failure by the 1930s,²¹ the temperance movement remained a strong and very active force in local and provincial politics. So the activity of the LCBO was viewed from both sides, the Drys and the Wets, in emotional and passionate ways. The Wets saw the board as restrictive; the Drys saw it as facilitating a social danger. Indeed, that the LCBO's first few years brought enough money into the coffers of the provincial government to virtually erase its debt further added to the Drys' concerns about the dubious connection between liquor and the management of the state. To them, these connections created the danger of the pre-prohibition regime, in which alcohol licensing was an intensely political activity. In contrast, the Wets were not really a cohesive movement. Yet, although not as organized or vocal as the Drys, they certainly expressed their interests through their actions. The many arrests, licence suspensions, and investigations into illegal activities in both hotel beverage rooms and the pervasive unlicensed "blind pigs" made it very clear that the people wanted to drink in public and could not easily shake off the forms of sociability that had been normative in the past. Such behaviour is fundamental to understanding the operation of and the limits to the bureaucracy of the LCBO. No matter how well-organized this bureaucracy was (and the LCBO was by no means a perfect system), it was run by, and organized to control, the actions of humans, all of whom had their own values, ideals, expectations, and demands.

The Governmentality of the Bureaucracy

Although it may seem odd, the ideas of bureaucratization and governmentality intertwine quite nicely. Bureaucratization is the development of a complex organization in which rules and ultimate power are centralized but decision-making authority is diffused throughout the system. Governmentality is the discursive construction of this regulatory system. Mitchell Dean has described a variety of components of governmentality that are useful for this current analysis. Most notable are the means by which government functions and the point at which it ceases to function: the "regimes of control" of government. These regimes sit within the bureaucracy's "field of visibility" and are shaped by a variety of technologies, what Dean calls the "*techne*" of the system. "Fields of visibility" are the areas in which a government functions and on which a governing activity focuses. I like to think

of a spotlight in the dark: it brightly illuminates certain things while obscuring everything outside of the spot. So the government's vision is limited to that which it chooses to see; governmental discourses ignore certain behaviours, ideas, and values. Similarly, the *techne* restricts the form of governance: the technologies, documentation, mechanisms, and apparatuses of the governing body enable a certain delimited form of observation and data collection, but they also limit the mode of governance to the parameters of the physical functionality of these technologies.²²

The complex bureaucracy of the LCBO relied on diverse technologies of communication and surveillance – including paperwork, statistics, observations, and photographs – that facilitated a certain degree of standardized data collection presented in a form that was understandable to the central administration. Moreover, communications tools, such as the telephone, the telegraph, letters, and personal meetings, further shaped the nature of the LCBO's governance, that is, the way conduct was conducted. Here, we see the limits of the *techne*. Certain aspects of public behaviour were hidden from the eyes of the bureaucracy, whereas others faced increased scrutiny. Still others may have been ignored, to extend the analogy, through a sort of selective blindness. Moreover, the bureaucracy's view was additionally obscured because it relied on a degree of subjective evaluation by inspectors who were from the regions under scrutiny and who thus had their own biases about the communities. For example, local hotel inspectors could (and some did) exploit their official positions to advance their own interests, but this activity was often invisible to the central administration (and sadly, to historians), owing to the nature of the techniques of regulation. We learn of this behaviour only when a proprietor or community member chose to complain, and even then the veracity of the complaint is questionable. As well, the structure of the bureaucracy, which required a degree of trust in the system's distant agent, made it difficult both for the central administration to accept such criticisms and for the complainants to make their case.

Here, we get back to my assertion that liquor control was revolutionary: its expansion drove the centralized control of behaviour deeper into the lives of individuals, as a solution to a "problem" that had plagued the state for decades, and in the process constructed a new discourse of governance. Government became an agent of moderation; the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century temperance movement's insistence on absolute prohibition was replaced by an earlier form of moderation (or "true temperance"), regulated by the state but made real by the self-governing individual – you had to control yourself if you wanted to drink. This revolution was possible because the alternative was social chaos. On the one hand was prohibition, which had been reframed as a state of lawlessness under an extremely restrictive legal regime, not to mention an egregious violation of

individual liberties. On the other hand was the unregulated drink traffic, which had been framed by the prohibition and temperance movements as a steep and slippery slope to social disaster. Liquor control was the compromise between the two extremes. Just as, with public health inspection of factories, schools, and other public or semi-public institutions, the government infiltrated the bodies of individual citizens, so with liquor control the government entered another aspect of the lives of citizens: their bodies at rest. It deployed the ideal of what I call the “citizen-drinker”: one who indulges, but responsibly, within the constraints imposed by the state and in a way that does not upset the existing social order.

Possibly the key to understanding the specific biopolitical perspective of the LCBO’s bureaucracy is the notion of a politics of moderation. Just as excessive drinking wreaked havoc on an individual’s body, excess was the enemy of the body politic. Overly permissive liquor distribution in the pre-prohibition period resulted in prohibition, which was excessive restriction. Neither worked. In his 1929 report to the provincial Legislature, the board’s second chief commissioner asserted that the board was interested in moderation in all aspect of its work: “After the test of prohibitory laws, it may be affirmed that moral advance and their personal acceptance of voluntary limitation, if not voluntary abstinence, is the real solution to evils arising from the abuse of intoxicating liquors.”²³ In other words, prohibition failed because it was legislative excess rather than moderation. To be too restrictive would be to drive erstwhile legal drinkers into the arms of the still-prevalent bootleggers or operators of “blind pigs.” As a result, the board had to be responsive to the demands at the local level. It recognized that the only way to create a successful regime of control was to create a system that was both sufficiently lenient to discourage people from seeking illegal means of satisfying their craving and sufficiently restrictive to prevent social disorder.

To understand this process of regulation, the interplay of often contradictory interests, and the negotiation of respectability, this book examines the LCBO’s operations at the community level, excavating its relationship to the individual drinker and vendor while considering how its system of control was a mechanism enforcing a biopolitical agenda. It looks at the operation of the Liquor Control Board in six Ontario communities: (1) Essex County; (2) Waterloo County; (3) the “Niagara region” of Lincoln, Niagara, and Welland Counties; (4) the Thunder Bay district; (5) the city of Ottawa; and (6) the city of Toronto. These communities were chosen in an attempt to embrace geographic and demographic diversity, and the specific social and demographic characteristics of these communities are provided in the Appendix. The study ends in 1944 because in that year new legislation was passed that bifurcated the work of the LCBO, creating the Liquor Authority

Control Board to oversee the regulation of booze consumption in public places.²⁴ Most of the current study concentrates on the period 1934-44, the first decade of “beer by the glass” legislation.

By reading all of the available LCBO Establishment Files for these communities, I was able to construct an impression of the type of forces at work in each area: the local politics, the community opposition to or support of public drinking, and the various social and cultural factors that affected the board’s ability to enforce its rules. This multcentred approach is far preferable to any other form of sampling, such as a random sample of all of the establishments across the province, because it permits us to see the communities as places with their own character and cultures. The context of these activities was established by an examination of at least one newspaper from each region. Municipal and other government records, such as letters to the premier of Ontario, round out main sources for the work. Since much of the material and many of the investigations into the drinking spaces were filtered through official eyes, it is important to remember that what we have here is a biased view of public drinking. Some things are missing. For example, there is no indication, even in reports on the beverage rooms of a city as diverse as Toronto, that some of these spaces were used for homosexual socialization, even though it is likely that they were.²⁵ This is not a cultural history of drinking in post-prohibition Ontario; it is a social, cultural, and administrative history of the development of the control of public drinking in the province.

Drinking and Regulation in History

As a study of liquor regulation, and of government bureaucracy, this work fits into several historical traditions. Since the LCBO was mandated to restrict access to alcohol, its creation and most especially its early history inform aspects of the broad history of the prohibition and temperance movements. Conversely, in attempting to shape the way people viewed alcoholic beverages, the LCBO is part of an emerging history of drinking culture. Moreover, as a government agency that emerged in the interwar period, the LCBO also adds to the literature on the functioning of government bureaucracy. It is valuable to look at these historical traditions in turn.

For several decades, the social history of alcohol was for the most part a social history of anti-alcohol movements. Research on “temperance” is broad and deep. The temperance movement was a remarkably important and influential social force in North America, and by the end of the nineteenth century, it was international in scope.²⁶ The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which began in the United States and quickly spread to Canada and around the world, established what Ian Tyrrell has called a “Woman’s Empire.”²⁷ The WCTU was not alone in its efforts, and

male-dominated organizations like the Anti-Saloon League in the United States and the Dominion Alliance for the Total Suppression of the Liquor Traffic in Canada joined the WCTU to push the prohibition agenda in the political realm.²⁸ By the beginning of the First World War, many states and several provinces had already passed some form of prohibitory legislation. These histories are important because they help us to understand that, far from some group of sour, boring old crackpots who wanted to stop decent people from having a nice drink with friends, members of the temperance and prohibition movements viewed themselves as progressives, hoping to elevate society from the potential downward spiral of an industrial age. They just wanted to do it without what they saw to be the fundamentally demoralizing and socially disruptive influence of beverage alcohol. This is why, in Canada, they allied themselves politically with the Liberals.

Although the history of the temperance and prohibition movements is extensive, an increasing number of historians are looking at those on the other side of the barroom door: the drinkers. Several historians of early modern drinking have demonstrated that the tavern was an important social space in a variety of urban and rural settings.²⁹ For Upper Canada, historian Julia Roberts has shown that the rural tavern was an essential community centre.³⁰ As industrialization expanded, the urban tavern in North America appears to have become more firmly a place of working-class socialization. Historians of working-class culture have found the tavern to be an important, if not the most important, cultural institution for the industrial working class.³¹ Craig Heron's recent research into the place of the working-class tavern in Canada and his tremendously important larger study of booze in Canada have gone a long way toward rectifying this gap, but more examples from more places across Canada will expand our understanding of this important social space.³²

Since most of the studies of historical North American drinking cultures and their opposition reasonably set the onset of prohibition as their end point, the history of alcohol (both temperance and consumption) exhibits an uneven appreciation of the prohibition and post-prohibition drinking environments. Prohibition itself has not been understudied, but there has been a decided lack of rigour in much of the popular prohibition-era histories. With gangsters, rumrunners, and speakeasies, the prohibition era has seen tremendous attention in popular history and popular culture. Much of this attention has been highly sensationalized, placing "myth above reality."³³ In contrast, academic historians have attempted to understand prohibition as government policy and social formation.³⁴ Some studies of prohibition-era policy creation have taken the examination of government regulation forward into the post-prohibition era. In the United States, where liquor policy is developed at the state level, several historians have begun to dissect the field of post-prohibition liquor policy.³⁵ Some valuable studies

have considered the relationship between Canada and the United States during American prohibition, including Greg Marquis's examination of how Canadian post-prohibition policies affected US attitudes toward liquor control and other studies of the situation along the Canada-US border.³⁶ In Canada, given the provincial jurisdiction of liquor policies, the situation has also been studied mostly at the provincial level.³⁷

This book engages with these various historical traditions. For historians of the temperance and prohibition movements, the LCBO's work to limit access to and curtail the consumption of alcohol offers important insights into how the messages of these large social movements impacted public policy after their big success – complete prohibition – was seen to have failed. For historians of drinking cultures, the LCBO's mandate to facilitate but control drinking provides important insight into how uses of alcohol within a social setting were viewed by the predominantly white, middle-class bureaucrats who were interested in normalizing a specific type of drinking within a narrowly focused notion of respectability. Finally, for historians of government policy and government bureaucracy, the LCBO's work provides key insights into the functioning of an administration that, although constructed to deal with the significant political challenges presented by public drinking, did not seem to be able to please anyone, except maybe the politicians who hid behind its apparatus.

The book is divided into two sections. After a brief examination of the unique political and social situation regarding public drinking from 1927 to 1934, the book turns to the various aspects of regulation of space and behaviour. The first section examines the ways the LCBO attempted to re-structure, physically and discursively, the public drinking space. Here, we are concerned with the bureaucratic methods of the LCBO, Dean's *techné* of governmentality (Chapter 2), the geospatial arrangement of the drinking space (Chapter 3), the social and political forces that influenced the LCBO's work (Chapters 4 and 5), and the ways that the hotel proprietors resisted or attempted to modify the board's approach to entertainment and recreation (Chapter 6). The second section is concerned with the way the LCBO sought to regulate specific types of people within the drinking space. The board sought to address the sticky problems of women in bars (Chapter 7) and of ethnic groups whose relationship with beverage alcohol was different and therefore a challenge to the LCBO (Chapter 8). The last chapter is an examination of how the board's work, forged in the Depression of the 1930s, changed during the Second World War. The brief Conclusion considers the board's legacy in 1944, when new legislation divided its operations, transferring the oversight of public drinking to a new government agency.

Post-prohibition liquor control is a story of how the temperance movement, various drinking cultures, politicians, and the emerging bureaucracy interacted in the reformation of public alcohol consumption and in the

construction of a new subject, the citizen-drinker. He or she consumed legally purchased alcohol in legal spaces and tried to behave but acted in a way that accepted the need for social order. By looking at the activities in the communities, the book attempts to go beyond the “high-policy” approach to studying governance. It considers the implementation and modification of policy at the community level and how these local contexts affected the achievement of some homogenized version of the citizen-drinker. The attempted objective implementation of centralized rules intersected with the subjective interest of a diverse population. Temperance Street would never be the same.

1

Liquor Control Bureaucracy and the Mechanisms of Governance

As a complex regulatory bureaucracy, the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) developed or adapted a series of systems and technologies to do its work. Some of the board's approaches have been addressed by other writers, notably Scott Thompson and Gary Genosko in *Punched Drunk* and Mariana Valverde in *Diseases of the Will*.¹ Both of these studies conceptualize the board as an essentially oppressive agency that kept Ontarians under tight surveillance. Although it is true that, like most developing government bureaucracies, the board was increasingly technological and complex in its functioning, such extreme characterizations miss the limits of the bureaucratic apparatus. As discussed in the Introduction, both the presuppositions and the technology of control affect the view of the observer. What one looks for, and where and how one looks for it, restricts the range of possibilities of what one finds. It is useful, then, to examine both the context in which the LCBO was created and the procedures the board developed to undertake its work.

When it was formed in 1927, the LCBO adopted some of the apparatus of its predecessor, the Board of License Commissioners, but with a much larger and growing bureaucratic organization. Initially, the LCBO's central administration consisted of three men: chief commissioner D.B. Hanna and commissioners R.J. Manion and Stewart McClenaghan.² By 1934, before the new Liquor Control Act (LCA) of that year came into place, this body had been reduced to now chief commissioner McClenaghan, supported by deputy chief commissioner J.M. McNamara.³ Premier Mitchell Hepburn reduced the number of commissioners to one: chief commissioner Edmond Odette.⁴ Through its first seven years, the LCBO reported to the attorney general. Under Hepburn's Liberals, the board began to report to Hepburn himself, likely because he was not only the premier but also provincial treasurer.

Although the precise internal organizational structure of the LCBO remains unclear, extant records offer us a basic quantitative impression of the board's operations. In 1927 the head office included a commissioner's staff of five,

a general manager's staff of two, a comptroller's office of eight, and a general office of several hundred. Including the inspectors and store and warehouse staff, the LCBO in 1927 had 785 employees.⁵ By 1934, prior to the new LCA, although the total number of commissioners had declined, the office staff had increased to seven in the chief commissioner's office, four in the general manager's office, and eleven in the comptroller's office. Although the total number of office staff appears to have been reduced, likely as a result of Depression-era reductions, increased inspection, store, and warehouse employees meant that, before the new law came into place, the LCBO's staff numbered 1,066, a 36 percent increase in employees.⁶ After the beginning of the operation of the LCA (1934), and despite significantly adding to the hotel-inspectorate branch, the LCBO's staff declined to 904.⁷

The LCBO rapidly became an extensive, complex regulatory bureaucracy. Its activities reached to the edges of the province, into the homes of any resident who chose to purchase and consume alcohol, and into the public spaces in which they were permitted to do so. Through its operations, it sought to reshape not only the behaviour and very self-perception of drinkers but also the attitudes of the managers and owners of drinking establishments. The board employed inspectors and staff across the province and deployed various forms of regulatory technology and bureaucratic language to fulfill its mandate. To reconstruct the citizen-drinker, a concept based on intermingling discourses of social order and respectability, it deployed an authoritative language of control that radiated from the central administration to its operatives at the periphery, where it was modified to suit local conditions.

Hotels throughout the province were the main focus of the LCBO's public-drinking regulatory activities. In the early part of the twentieth century, most hotels remained small, independent businesses that were often run by a married couple or less frequently by a widowed woman or (less ideal to the board) a male bachelor. Far from the large, multistorey hotels owned by multinational corporations, with which readers may be more familiar, a typical Ontario hotel at this time was relatively small, with no more than a handful of rooms, several of which could be occupied by the proprietor and his or her family. The building might be either owned by the proprietor or leased, leading to a variety of individuals who were interested in the successful operation of the business. Building owners might repeatedly dismiss problematic proprietors until one who could properly do the job was found. Or owner-proprietors would struggle along, hoping to make enough money to improve their business, and either prosper or sell out and move on. So when an inspector reported back to the central administration about the activities within a hotel, he often framed his assessment in a personalized manner, making subjective assessments of the situation that added nuance to what could, at a distance, seem a clear case of rule violation or poor management.

Hotels were an important part of life in Ontario. Julia Roberts has shown how the colonial tavern functioned as a way station in the pre-mechanized travelling life of the province.⁸ This aspect persisted, transformed by the development of railways and automobiles.⁹ Business travellers needed hotels, and most older hotels had some kind of “sample room” where travelling salesmen could store or display their wares. Peter Delottinville’s description of Joe Beef’s Tavern in Montreal as a place that included facilities for workers to sleep further illustrates how hotels could cater to a variety of classes.¹⁰ Many hotels, especially in times of affluence or in areas of increased industrial or economic activity, housed workers either temporarily or on a semi-permanent basis. In north-western Ontario during various economic booms, the hotels could be full of “bushmen” or temporary labourers. Across the province during the Second World War, hotels were pressed into service to house transient or newly arrived labourers in wartime industries. Also, most hotels, especially those in smaller towns, usually had large rooms that could be made available to the public for banquets or other functions. Whereas large, corporate, and respectable hotels like Ottawa’s Chateau Laurier, Toronto’s Royal York, and Windsor’s Norton-Palmer were frequented by elite travellers, many more modest establishments, family-owned and -operated, squeaked by in a competitive market. These businesses received the most intense scrutiny from the LCBO.

With so many small hotels, the board could be selective in its licensing decisions. The “Standard Hotel” licence was considered by many to be a mark of quality, and not all hotels received it. In 1927 the LCBO licensed 1,258 standard hotels, and by the time the legislation changed in 1934 the number had risen to 1,463 (most, but not all, of these were licensed to sell light beer).¹¹ It also denied many applications, deeming the premises to be unsuitable for any number of reasons, ranging from physical layout to potential problems in the surrounding community.¹² The accommodation business was competitive. As Karen Dubinsky has shown in her work on Niagara Falls, there was considerable tension between owners of standard hotels and those individuals who operated “tourist homes,” which were licensed, if at all, by municipal authorities.¹³ To further complicate things, the board distinguished between rural and urban hotels. Initially, a rural hotel could have only four bedrooms, and an urban hotel needed a mere six. Likely as a result of applications from people who hoped to create a country drinking space by sparsely furnishing four “bedrooms” and calling their place a hotel, the LCBO quickly modified its regulations. Within the first year of the operations of the LCA (1934), a rural hotel needed six rooms, and an urban one needed twelve.

When an individual applied for a standard hotel licence and, after 1934, usually accompanied this application with one for a beer authority or a beer and wine authority, they subjected themselves, their family, and their

premises, as well as the area in which their property was located and its residents, to the regulatory gaze of the LCBO. This gaze was authoritative and appeared ubiquitous, but it was also limited and biased, shaped not only by the values of the members of the central administration but also by the very apparatus of the LCBO's bureaucratic structure. The technology used to enforce regulations both shapes and limits the activities of the governing agency.¹⁴ Having examined the surveillance techniques of the LCBO over a broad span of time, Gary Genosko and Scott Thompson argue that the various means of recording and tracking liquor purchases of individuals “could transform the most private interests into public matters, in the process re-categorizing individuals and redefining their material possessions and property.”¹⁵ In this view, the private individual fell under the oppressive gaze of the public agency.

Although this interpretation is useful, it tends to understate the functional limits of the surveillance techniques and the restrictions that extant communication methods placed on the ability of the central administration to enforce its authority. To use Dean's terminology, the *techne* restricted the field of visibility available to the board's scrutiny. What follows is a dissection of the various forms of communication between hotel proprietors and the board. It demonstrates the limits of the technology of control, suggesting that silences were created by documentation that asked for specific information, and it exposes the expanding impersonalization of the process. This all began with the application for a standard hotel licence and for a beer and wine authority.

The Application

The initial contact between the hotel proprietor and the LCBO was often through the application for a standard hotel licence. Prior to 1934 the licence application form was a single standard-sized page, which included a few lines indicating the proprietor's desire for a light-beer authority. On the rare occasion when a hotel did not wish to apply for a light-beer authority along with the standard hotel licence, the light-beer section might be crossed out or not completed. After 1934 the hotel proprietor had to complete an application for a standard hotel licence and a separate application for a beer authority or a beer and wine authority. These applications were much more comprehensive than the pre-1934 form, being four pages long and asking for a range of information from physical layout of the building to the management structure of the business. The applicant also had to forward three letters of reference from respectable community members – a politician, a police official, and another respectable community member, usually a business owner. All had to attest to the proprietor's good character and suitability for running a hotel. Finally, possibly further attesting to the proprietor's

financial stability and credibility, the application had to be accompanied by the appropriate fees: \$1 for a standard hotel licence and \$300 for an authority. The latter fee was not as high as it might appear since the board then credited back to the hotel \$300 off the “gallonage fees” the management paid on beer purchases.

Although ideally an application would be followed by a visit from a local inspector or less frequently a police officer, in the first few months of the operation of the LCA (1934), this process was often impractical. In the summer of 1934, the board received well over one thousand applications but had yet to add the staff required to enforce the new rules. Not surprisingly, the local inspectors could not undertake inspections of the premises prior to granting an authority, and many were granted “site unseen.” This situation caused some concern when, in November 1934, after the initial phase of the LCA (1934)’s operation, and at the end of the fiscal year, many of these authorities were revoked.¹⁶

Less frequently, prior to an application being filed, the board would receive a letter asking whether an application would have any chance of success. Many of these letters came after the initial flurry of applications and the granting of authorities in the summer of 1934 and permitted the board to undertake a much more comprehensive evaluation of the establishment than it had in the first few months. Having an inspection prior to submitting an application provided the proprietor the opportunity to make changes that the board required in order for the hotel to conform to a more idealized vision of a standard hotel. It also provided the inspector with an opportunity to comment on the character of the proprietor (and owner if they were not the same person) and to provide other subjective information, such as the suitability of the location for a hotel and the “desirability” of the hotel in the location. In the first few months of the 1934 act’s operation, the board promised to grant authorities to a few proprietors based on assessments of pending renovations.¹⁷ By the end of 1934, the board had changed its policy: no more promises would be made before renovations were completed.

Once the licence and authorities were granted, the normal procedure was for the inspectors to file an annual report and monthly “Authority Holder’s Conduct Reports” (AHCRs). The annual reports were standardized four-page forms, with roughly three pages of checkboxes and fields that the inspectors needed to complete and with space at the end for additional comments. The AHCR was a shorter document, one single-sided page, that had a series of fields with yes or no questions or brief items that needed to be filled in, such as listing the temperature of the glass-cleaning water or the state of the beer kegs. An open field at the bottom of this report, about ten centimetres of space, was left for comments, and the opposite side of the page had lines for additional information. Some inspectors routinely used

all of this space. Inspector D.W. Downey from Toronto's east side had large, scrawling handwriting and filled a page and a half with comments; other inspectors might have five lines of tightly typed information or nothing more than a word or two.

Depending on the location and the time of year, these monthly AHCRs were often filed irregularly. Probably owing to the number of hotels he had to inspect, and the problems he found in a number of them, inspector John Kidd from Toronto's west side (whose district included the city's rambunctious Jarvis Street) often filed AHCRs with several dates in the "date inspected" field, suggesting that, whereas he inspected frequently, he filed reports only occasionally. In contrast, inspector George Skuce of the Thunder Bay district found that some of the more remote locations were difficult to reach, especially in the winter, and therefore would apologize to the central administration when he could not visit every hotel on a regular basis. These forms, both the annual report and the AHCR, permitted a degree of subjective information to accompany the specific fields to be included. So the inspector's perspective was essential to the technology of control; he could choose which aspects of the establishment's operation to include or ignore.

By the 1940s the board had modified the format of both the long report and the AHCR to assert more specific control over the type and format of information being requested and over the activities of inspectors. Indeed, the AHCR was changed to the "Authority Holder's Monthly Conduct Report" (AHMCR), suggesting a standardization of the use of time. In both report forms, the requisite objective data expanded, and the space for additional subjective information declined. The long report now had a note at the bottom of the fourth page indicating that additional information should be submitted on a separate page, something that most inspectors rarely did. The AHMCR had about three centimetres of space; often inspectors entered brief, generic information, such as "A well run hotel," or more often simply left it blank. The subjective input from inspectors was reduced by these forms, although the priorities of each local inspector (e.g., whether he always checked the temperature of the dishwater or was preoccupied with the cleanliness of basements) could reappear in letters sent to the board or in additional pages. As a result, the inspector became more of a calculator for the central administration. Although it is impossible to determine the impact of such expanded objective formatting on the inspectors, it is telling that, after the AHMCR replaced the AHCR, the reports became increasingly bereft of additional comments. One can imagine an inspector becoming a form-filler; from Max Weber's perspective, this outcome is the fundamental dehumanizing aspect of bureaucratization, but it is also what makes the ideal-typical bureaucracy so valuable to the central authority since it affords increased control of the type and format of information gathered. At the same time, by removing the opportunity for the inspector to make quick

and insightful observations, the board reduced the effectiveness of its main source of information about the context in which the hotel operated.

Oversight of the Hotel Proprietor

Although reports were the main face-to-face contact between the LCBO and the establishment, the board's central administrators also communicated directly to hotel proprietors using a variety of methods. Most communication involved letters to deal with specific occasional problems and generic circulars to deal with broader, system-wide issues. Members of the central administration would, at times, travel to the area in question and visit a variety of establishments. Telegraphs also flowed both ways, as did telephone calls, although much less frequently. Finally, in extreme cases the board would invite an establishment's proprietor to visit the board's offices on University Avenue in Toronto. Sometimes these invitations were, quite clearly, commands.

Circulars were fundamental to the communication strategy of the board.¹⁸ Indeed, on the liquor store side of board operations, circulars were sent out with remarkable frequency. Between 1927 and 1934, over 1,600 circulars were sent to the store employees (nearly 230 circulars per year), and in the next ten years the number doubled. This tremendous amount of contact indicates how important tight control over the operation of the retail liquor stores was to the board. It may have been a result of the fact that spirits, traditionally considered more problematic than wine or beer, were being sold there. Circulars were also sent to licensed beverage rooms, the "establishment side" of the board's operations, although not nearly to the extent that they were sent to the liquor store employees. By 1944 hotel proprietors and club managers had received only 198 circulars, averaging fewer than two dozen annually.

Circulars were valuable components of the board's control efforts, most especially in the first few months after the LCA 1934 came into effect, when the board often changed or added new rules in the course of a few weeks. Many of these circulars simply reiterated for proprietors the laws or regulations in the LCA or in the annual *Digest of Rules, Orders, Regulations and Legislation* that the board sent to all hotels. Usually, hotel managers were expected to send back a brief acknowledgment of the circular. For example, the board required a reply confirming that the management had "read and understand[s] the contents" of the circular that was sent out in March 1938 reminding proprietors that the law forbade them from seeking "assistance [from brewers or distillers], either by way of donations of Beer, money or equipment, nor must an Authority Holder seek funds from the advertising of personal greetings on behalf of Brewers or their employees in proposed programmes or pamphlets."¹⁹ These were static forms of control, issued from the centre to the periphery, that enabled the board to speak *at* the managers

but did not facilitate any sort of dialogue or allow the local context to be taken into consideration.

A somewhat more dynamic form of interaction was possible through sometimes frequent back-and-forth correspondence between the central administration and either the proprietor or the local inspector. These letters could relate to routine aspects of the hotel operations, such as the number of fire escape ropes in rooms, or to more troubling issues, such as stories of drunkenness, prostitution, or violence in the hotel. The letters were quite often spurred by the content of an inspector's report or letter, which Arnold Smith, the deputy chief commissioner after 1934, or William Mair, the assistant director of hotels, read carefully, highlighting items of concern with a ubiquitous red pencil and occasionally making notes in the margins. A letter would then be issued to the proprietor informing him or her of the rule violation and often including a reminder that such behaviour was unbecoming of a hotel licensed by the board. Often the response would be a simple reply apologizing for the transgression, but at times the board and hotel proprietor could engage in protracted discussions about facets of the hotel's operation and about the unique characteristics of the location or the establishment that the hotel proprietor felt the board should consider.

At times, letters were not enough. In many cases, hotel proprietors would decide, or be ordered, to visit the board's offices in Toronto to discuss a specific situation. Often such visits were made when a hotel's authority was suspended or when the board repeatedly refused to grant an authority in the first place. At other times, members of the board's central administration might embark on a tour of different parts of the province. For example, Arnold Smith visited the Thunder Bay district at least once, in 1935, and Essex County that same year; he also spent some time in Ottawa (he was from Cornwall) and in the Niagara region. Edmond Odette, the chief commissioner, spent a good amount of time at his home in Tilbury and was a frequent visitor to nearby Essex County, although whether he was enforcing, inspecting, or glad-handing is never clear. In Toronto, staff members of the central office might take it on themselves to drop in on nearby establishments; proprietors in that city would also phone or visit the board's offices much more frequently than those who lived outside the provincial capital.

The demand for a proprietor to meet with the chief commissioner or deputy chief commissioner was among the most serious requests in the operations of the board.²⁰ When made of hotel proprietors in more distant areas, such a demand was often a measure of last resort, designed to reiterate the importance of the board's rules and to remind proprietors that they faced severe consequences if they continued to cause or allow trouble. Although no transcripts exist of the discussions in these meetings, a memo was occasionally included in the establishment's files giving some details. Usually, these memos ended with some generic statement of proprietor compliance,

such as in April 1941 when Mr. McMillan of Toronto's Variety Hotel "promised future cooperation."²¹ If the board's authority was not heeded in these situations, the proprietors were usually out of luck: a change of hotel ownership or management would usually follow.

Inspectors

To function with any hope of effectiveness, the LCBO's regulatory regime relied on the activity and integrity of its regional inspectors. As a bureaucracy, the LCBO required a degree of consistency in the enforcement of its rules, but within a system that recognized the unique characteristics of each community. The LCBO relied on its inspectors to provide insight into the specific contexts of individual cases. Given the importance of a beer authority or a beer and wine authority to the economics of a hotel, inspectors could wield considerable power among local hoteliers. The LCBO, therefore, had to keep an eye not only on the hotels but also on the inspectors.

Government inspectors were not a new sight in 1927. From at least the early part of the twentieth century, government inspection of a variety of private industries and public agencies had represented an increased infiltration of the government into the lives of everyday people. Most inspectors were focused on ensuring that revenues, generated by various forms of licences, were collected, whereas others, notably the factory inspectors, scrutinized the activities of industry (and faced more rigid opposition). Liquor inspectors in the early years of the province's post-Confederation life were locally appointed individuals who were normally focused on collecting fees and, since these were local patronage appointments, not usually concerned with regulating behaviour.²² With the centralization of liquor-licensing bureaucracy in 1915 – a change that was followed almost immediately by (and may have intentionally predated) provincial prohibition – liquor inspection began to shift into a more hands-on concern with the behaviour of licence holders and the operations of their premises. Also in the early part of the twentieth century, increasingly complex regulatory bureaucracies, such as those necessitated by Children's Aid and Mother's Allowance, required a specialized, nearly professional inspectorate that was preoccupied not with revenue collection but specifically with evaluating behaviour.²³ LCBO inspectors straddled these two traditions. They were expected to have some (however limited) expertise in the hotel business, they definitely paid attention to behaviour, and they were the conduit through which the board ensured that fees were collected. Judging by the reports that inspectors regularly submitted, the work of the LCBO's inspectors after 1934 was focused predominantly on evaluation of proprietors and their premises and on intervening when things went wrong.

Yet who were the inspectors? Unfortunately, personnel files for the inspectors, if they ever existed, have not survived. Thus much of the information

about them has been gathered from assorted records in various hotel files, asides on letters, and the premier's correspondence files. Normally, outside of Toronto, each region had one inspector. Toronto appears to have begun with one inspector, but with the advent of "beer by the glass" legislation, new inspectors were added to that city's roster. Among all of the communities studied, only one, Ottawa, had the same inspector from 1934 through 1944. The backgrounds and training of the inspectors are difficult to determine. Some appear to have worked in the hotel business. General inspector John Pitt, who had been an inspector at least since the operation of the Board of License Commissioners, was described in 1930 as "a thorough hotel man."²⁴ Inspector U.G. Reaume of Essex County may have worked in the real estate business: in one case, he mentioned that, prior to his appointment with the board, his office had handled the sale of a particular hotel property.²⁵ Others were clearly partisan appointments. Several letters in Premier Hepburn's correspondence files were from individuals thanking him for helping them to get their positions with the board, usually as clerks in stores but occasionally as hotel inspectors. At the same time, at least one inspector, Toronto's A.A. Montgomery, appears to have lost his position in 1934 owing to complaints that he was favouring Conservative hotel proprietors. Montgomery had been appointed under the previous administration, and although this was not an automatic reason for dismissal (Pitt had also been an inspector prior to 1934), his partisan activities were viewed poorly by influential Liberals.²⁶ As I discuss in Chapter 5, the partisan nature of some appointments does not necessarily suggest that the individuals were not suited for their jobs since there were far more requests for patronage than the government could honour.

Inspectors were busy. As noted earlier, inspector Kidd consolidated several months' worth of inspections on one form, suggesting he had limited time to fill in the form or maybe even to inspect. More explicit information about the inspector's workload can be seen in a March 1936 letter to Odette written by Windsor barrister A.J. Gordon. The writer, whose office was in the same building as inspector Reaume's, had agreed to take messages for the inspector one Saturday afternoon and was struck by the number of calls and by the diversity of the issues they covered. Claiming he had not informed inspector Reaume that he was sending the letter, Gordon observed that "he never complains; but I just want you to know how onerous his duties are and ask that your Board bear with him." To add weight to his argument, the correspondent reproduced the list of twelve calls, detailing the issues that Reaume's work encompassed. Odette replied that "it is quite apparent that poor Inspector Reaume is greatly over-worked" and explained that he was sending the letter to Hepburn so that "he may lay [the issue] before the house [provincial Legislature]."²⁷

Given the importance of the beer authority to the hotel industry, it is not surprising that inspectors often became the targets of complaints and allegations of misuse of power. Regularly, the central office received letters complaining of the activities of the inspectors. These letters might be from disgruntled hotel proprietors who felt that the inspector was being unjustly severe in enforcing the rules, or more often they might comprise anonymous complaints about a hotel that suggested the inspector was not doing his job properly. Although these sorts of complaints were generally either not heeded or found to be fictitious, the board did recognize that some of its inspectors needed to be watched closely for various reasons. Whereas some inspectors appear to have had tremendous integrity in the eyes of the central administration, a number of them made decisions and evaluations that quickly brought their ideas and actions under closer scrutiny by the board. The complaints about Waterloo's Norman Ratz were so persistent that the board appears to have done remedial work with him, sending the chief inspector (initially John Pitt and later Harry Simington) or inspectors from other regions to accompany him or to check up on his work. Eventually, Ratz was dismissed under allegations that he was participating in corrupt and illegal activities (something against which he protested vigorously to the premier).²⁸

The board also became concerned about the inspection and opinions of Ottawa's Alfred Larocque. Rather than suggesting that Larocque was conspiring with criminals, the board began to question his ability to provide objective evaluations of hotels identified with a range of social classes. Larocque was somewhat sycophantic, favouring clubs and hotels frequented or owned by people in power while being dismissive or overly critical of hotels of a lower status. Most glaring was the case of the Bridge Club of Ottawa, which inspector Larocque continued to insist was respectably run. Deputy chief commissioner Arnold Smith visited the club and found it was being operated without any regard for the specific regulations for private clubs. He informed Larocque that he had received information about the club's substandard operation but did not tell the inspector that he had visited it personally. When Larocque attempted to contradict this report, claiming that Smith's informant was mistaken, Smith reprimanded the inspector for being biased and sloppy.²⁹ The board rejected such overt favouritism, and throughout the 1930s Larocque's decisions became increasingly both questionable and questioned. However, that Larocque was never dismissed indicates that his behaviour was not so egregious as to undermine the operations of the LCBO.³⁰

Formal training of inspectors, if there was any, is also absent from the records. Apart from occasionally being accompanied on their rounds by senior inspectors John Pitt or Harry Simington, local inspectors appear to have been left on their own. The records indicate only one time when all inspectors were brought together for something akin to a conference. At

that time, in late 1936, they visited a variety of Toronto hotels in groups and wrote reports on all of them. Although this exercise may have been an attempt to enforce some sort of standardization among the inspectors, its effectiveness is difficult to gauge. It does make for interesting reading of the various ways that inspectors interpreted behaviour.

The relative autonomy of the inspectors forces us to consider the limits of their reports. Given that the inspectors were familiar with the local situation – often appearing to have been friendly with many hotel proprietors and certainly to have been sympathetic to the plight of many of these small business people – they were as much advocates for hotel proprietors as they were conduits between the central administration and the individual hotel management. So evaluations of the inspectors' communications with the board, as detailed and rich a source as they are, must be qualified with the understanding that it is likely the inspectors did not report everything. Although the administrators in Toronto were likely to demonstrate some leniency of their own, they tended to be intolerant of the inspectors' tendencies to arbitrarily enforce (or not) specific rules. These sentiments could be reiterated when the board might send an inspector from one region to do a surreptitious evaluation of the premises in a different region. Several times, the reports back to the central administration presented pictures very different from those painted by the inspectors. Such episodes, combined with the stories mentioned above about inspectors Ratz and Larocque, demonstrate that although the board's managers, especially Arnold Smith, were interested in the functioning of the hotels as viable businesses, they felt that control – and therefore power – should remain in the offices on University Avenue. In the language of governmentality, the subjectivity of the inspectors' view limited the central board's field of visibility.

The Language of Control

The LCBO's inspectors visited the hotels and reported on their operations, but apart from the inspectors' immediate observations, most of the rule enforcement was done through correspondence from the central authority. It is valuable, then, to examine the language of control in order to see the mechanisms through which the LCBO exerted its authority. This analysis also enables us to examine the language of bureaucracy, how the board, a relatively localized government administration that oversaw a geographically broad network of employees, attempted to create the perception of objectivity through its words. Communication was coded in an administrative jargon that reiterated certain discourses of power and authority.

As in any bureaucracy, the esoteric jargon of the LCBO held both blatant and subtle discursive associations. The LCA did not create a system of liquor licences; it created a network of beer and wine "Authorities." The term "Authority" was usually capitalized, which suggests increased weightiness

in the word. Hotels with standard hotel licences were “Authorized premises,” and the proprietor was an “Authority holder” (whether capitalized or not). The language of “authority” is powerful, but beyond the power of the term is its discursive meaning. Having the “Authority” of the LCBO was a greater burden than simply being licensed by the board; it imbued the beverage room and hotel with state sanction, and in the eyes of the board it also added important responsibility to the hotel proprietor. The hotel was, in effect, an extension of the state apparatus; indeed, it was legally defined as a public place. The board expressed the importance of keeping the hotel doors open at all hours for the “travelling public,” noting that the hotel lobby was a public space and also that the hotel proprietor, who often lived in the hotel, was significantly restrained in what he or she could do as a private citizen-drinker. Demonstrating the increased responsibility of the authority holder, hotel proprietors had to apply for a special permit to keep liquor and beer for personal consumption in their private rooms in the hotel. According to the LCA, liquor could be consumed in the privacy of your own home, but the nature of the hotel business meant that the authority holder had to be extra careful. Not only was it too easy for private liquor to end up in the public spaces of the hotel, but the proprietor was an ostensible agent of the government and needed to act appropriately.

This additional responsibility of the authority holder was not restricted just to alcohol possession. The place of the authority holder between private citizen and public agent meant the board could scrutinize any range of negative actions. So when a senior administrator at the board received letters from creditors complaining that a hotel proprietor had not paid a bill, he would explain to the creditors that the board would not act as a collection agency. At the same time, he would usually write the proprietor a stern letter saying that nonpayment of bills was not the sort of behaviour the board expected from an authority holder. This was the significance of the term “authority” – an extension of biopower that was permissive (i.e., granted permission to sell and profit from beer and wine) but simultaneously restrictive (i.e., imposed increased scrutiny on what would normally be private behaviour).

Other language was similarly encoded with weighty meaning beyond seemingly innocent terminology. Authorized premises were “Standard Hotels,” which might have an authorized “beverage room” but not a “tavern” or “saloon” or “pub.” Was this term used to enforce a knowing vagueness about what took place in these spaces or, conversely, to reinforce the discursive distance from the pre-prohibition saloon? It is difficult to determine, but newspaper evidence suggests that, official labelling notwithstanding, people employed a variety of terms, such as “beer parlour,” “tavern,” and “bar,” when describing the hotel beverage room. The elimination of the saloon – a stand-alone drinking place – from pre-prohibition legislation,

which began in 1897, suggests that the goals of legislating away the problem of the saloon predated the LCBO. Of course, “beverages” are any kind of consumable liquid, but the term also functioned commonly as a euphemism for alcoholic drinks, just as does the term “drink” itself. So a beverage room was a place where people went to consume alcoholic beverages. As I discuss further in the next chapter, outside of its beverage and dining rooms, the hotel could sell “soft” beverages. The standard hotel licence gave rights for hotels to sell a range of products, for which other businesses required separate municipal licences. With the term “beverage” attached to alcohol, the flexibility in advertising and signage was constrained. Newspaper or poster ads were not allowed to have any reference to alcohol. So to announce that a hotel’s dinner dance included “a meal and beverages” or even “a meal and refreshments” was to attract the ire of the board.

Moreover, the term “beverage room” seems to have been a compromise that enabled the space to be described for the purpose of the administration of the law, but the term was not always used within the hotel. The board was not consistent on this practice, but at times it required hotels to post “Men’s Entrance” and “Ladies and Escorts’ Entrance” over the doors to the respective beverage rooms. This practice stripped this public space of any indication of what actually took place within, although it is unlikely that anyone would be fooled. Here, we see the discursive restructuring of reality: hotels, which had beverage rooms – and which were the only public spaces where people could buy and consume alcoholic beverages – were simultaneously public but hidden. We will see this feature repeated when considering the physical reconfiguring of the beverage rooms.

In the daily operation of the LCBO too, its administrators deployed a series of terms that both reinforced the sense that its actions were objective and created an idea of broader surveillance. The LCBO was constructed as an impersonal, remote organization. Consider, for example, Arnold Smith’s reply to the request by Fort William’s Elks Club to hold a New Year’s Eve dance in 1939. “The Board have decide[d] that if any Club wishes to hold such a dance, the Board will not object, but wish to point out that they certainly feel that it is very poor policy for any club to hold such a dance, as they will certainly not meet with public favour.”³¹ Here, the “Board” is a regulatory construction, and the use of plural verbs suggests that the “Board,” or central administration, consisted of many members. After 1934 the central administration of the LCBO was essentially a one-man body, consisting of Edmond Odette, although at times in the Ontario Legislature Smith was stated to be a second member. This construction was bolstered by the passive voice, such as when William Mair noted to the managers of the city of Kitchener’s American Hotel (who wanted to open a hotel in the nearby town of Preston), “I am requested to advise you that the Board will consider no

further authorized premises in the Town of Preston.”³² Indeed, such linguistic obfuscation makes the actual membership of this “Board” impossible to determine. Smith suggested in the Elks Club quotation that he was responding to the directives of some group, but Odette alone was the only person superior to Smith in the LCBO’s reporting structure (apart from the elected politicians). At times, the facade of a remote, all-powerful “Board” was dropped. Smith often slipped between the generalized, impersonal use of the term “Board” and the personal pronoun. So when the Nipigon Hotel wanted to use one room as an all-purpose space, Smith wrote to inspector George Skuce, “the Board cannot give him permission to use this room as a sample room once a week, a beverage room during the daytime and a bedroom at night. I do not mind giving him permission to use it as an overflow beverage room when it is needed but certainly not as an all round purpose room.”³³ More telling was Smith’s reply to an inquiry about the status of Toronto’s Avonmore Hotel: “The hotel was one of the early ones to receive an Authority and was one of the first whose Authorities I cancelled.”³⁴

As a number of these quotations indicate, one common bureaucratic discursive form, employed often in corrective messages to the hotel proprietor, was the passive or indirect voice. In this context, the language of the bureaucracy connects with ideas of discipline as expressed by Michel Foucault, and here we can merge it with Max Weber’s notion of rationalization through bureaucratization.³⁵ The passive voice implies objectivity of processes by removing an actor from the process. It is used in scientific writing to suggest that the people doing the experiment do not matter and to thereby lend the language a sort of universality.³⁶ Just as the use of the plural term “Board” suggested a larger decision-making body, the use of a passive voice, or indirect language, strengthened the sense that the work of the LCBO was guided by bureaucratic objectivity. It most definitely permitted the source of information or decisions to be obscured. Often when an inspector or the police reported on a particularly unsavoury activity in a hotel’s beverage room, the letter to the proprietor would contain the words “As the result of reports received” or “Complaints have been received.”³⁷ These passive or indirect constructions do not indicate who made the reports, suggesting that the proprietor could not escape the ubiquitous gaze of the LCBO (nor could the inspector – it was this kind of language that tripped up inspector Larocque). Some proprietors attempted to talk their way out of a situation by implying that the reports were not true, even when they had come from a viable source, such as an inspector or other official. For example, when the board refused his request for permission to have dancing in the dining room of his British American Hotel in Windsor, citing problems in the management of the hotel, Elias Doumani replied, “not only [do] we consider your reports you received are untrue, but realy [sic] believe that

there are some great mix up in this affairs." Unfortunately for Doumani, the reports came from William Mair, director of hotels, who had personally, surreptitiously, visited the hotel.³⁸

Like the passive or indirect voice, another obfuscating term that reinforced the mystery of the bureaucratic process was often deployed on reinstatement of a suspended beer authority. When a beer authority or a standard hotel licence was suspended, the board gave specific reasons for doing so but rarely indicated the length of the suspension. Usually, an authority was suspended "indefinitely," a term that suggests the premises would be dry for a long time while the proprietor straightened up. When the authority was reinstated, the board usually explained the decision as resulting from "representations" made to the board. When the city of Windsor's St. Clair Hotel requested permission to have dancing in the dining room, the board gave permission "as a result of representations made and after careful consideration."³⁹ In 1942 the Embassy Hotel in St. Agatha (Waterloo County) had its authority suspended "indefinitely" on 25 June, and it was reinstated on 26 July "as a result of representations made."⁴⁰ For the historian, such obfuscation can be frustrating since it does not permit us to trace the reasoning behind these decisions. Did the "representations" come from influential politicians or simply from an inspector's or administrator's review of the situation? Or, conversely, was there no "representation" at all? Could the board have made a predetermined decision about how long the authority would be suspended but have told the proprietor that it was an "indefinite" suspension to frighten him into behaving? Of course, this was the very point of such language: its obscurity imbued the board with a seemingly impenetrable opacity. The bureaucracy moved in mysterious ways, and therein lay its power.

A final form of obfuscation that the board used when denying an authority application was the explanation that there were "sufficient authorities" in the area. At first glance, this term may seem entirely reasonable, as I discuss in Chapter 3, given the need to keep the number of beverage rooms in a specific area to an acceptable number. A closer look reveals that the suggestion of an objective calculation helped to obfuscate a more subjective evaluation. For example, in September 1934 inspector M.G. Dean reported that the proprietor of the City Hotel in Humberstone, near Fort Erie, had a "very chequered career and there is certainly a very strong feeling that this authority should not be granted." Another local resident explained to the board that "the people of Humberstone are not opposed to the City Hotel having a [beer] permit but are very much opposed" to this particular family's application. When a barrister wrote on behalf of the family in question to ask for an authority, Smith replied that "the Board could not see their way clear to the granting of such License and Authority, they being of the opinion

that there were sufficient Licenses and Authorities to meet the needs of the locality."⁴¹ In a similar case, where the board's reply was even more clearly intended to be obfuscatory, the proprietors of the Belmont Hotel in St. Catharines applied for an authority and included in their application the required recommendation from a city official – in this case, the mayor of St. Catharines, Frederick Avery. The board was prepared to issue the authority, but then Avery called to withdraw his recommendation, explaining that he had been "wrongly advised regarding the character of the applicants."⁴² Mair removed the authority from the mail and wrote to the applicants' barrister explaining that "the Board have decided that in view of the present commitments they are of the opinion that the City of St. Catharines will be adequately served in the matter of Hotel and Beverage Room accommodation."⁴³ The seemingly objective calculation obscured a subjective evaluation and a potentially embarrassing political situation. It is probably not insignificant that Avery was a Liberal who would run for provincial office two years later.

Limited by the Technology

As the above example suggests, the technology of the bureaucracy of governance had limits and flaws. The inspections, reports, memos, letters, and circulars permitted a persistent but restricted form of control over the actions of the beverage room management. Although the board's rules could be ignored or at least tempered by proprietors who had a good rapport with the inspectors or who could appear to be doing their best, the central administration also had to read between the lines of each report, letter, and memo. So some features of the hotel management that may have been legitimate or valid in a given community could appear, when translated through the static media of letters and inspectors' reports, to be problematic and in need of correction.

The board occasionally used form letters to apprise proprietors of broad, province-wide issues or, in specific regions, to deal with issues germane to an area. Although efficient for communicating general directives, the form letter could undermine the impression that the LCBO had a panoptic view of the hotel operations. For example, in Waterloo County in 1935 the board began to issue letters to several hotels about the sale of beer in the dining room after beverage rooms had closed at 11 p.m. The standard text of the letter included the following observation:

Owing to reports having been received that your Hotel, which does a very small dining room trade in the day time, is doing a tremendous eleven to twelve pm beer trade in your dining room which clearly proves that this is just a means of serving Beer from eleven to twelve, you are hereby notified

that all service of Beer must cease at eleven (11) P.M. or in other words, when the beverage room closes at 11 o'clock, no Beer may be served in your Dining Room.⁴⁴

This letter usually produced an apologetic response from proprietors. Sometimes, however, such generalizations could undermine the board's attempt to imply its omniscience. In the case of the Central Hotel in Preston, which received a copy of this form letter, the proprietor wrote back in surprise, "I have never opened my dining room for that trade, thus you have been misinformed of this hotel."⁴⁵ Given that generally good reports on the hotel were filed on other occasions, his protests seem valid.

Bureaucratic oversight could also be limited due to its reliance on the impressions of individuals familiar with the local situation. In this business, there appear to have been no innocents. Although most of the inspectors seem to have had the interest of the board's regulatory integrity at heart, the stories of inspectors Ratz and Larocque indicate the limits of any assumption that there was perfect integrity among the inspectors. Thunder Bay inspector George Skuce, moreover, was characterized by the local member of the provincial Legislative Assembly (MLA), Charles Cox, as "rather incompetent."⁴⁶ Yet Cox's evaluation drips with irony since Cox himself was exceedingly biased in his assessment of local hotel premises: not only was he the MLA, but he was also the mayor of Port Arthur. He could exercise undue influence over the fate of a hotel's authority application, as I discuss in Chapter 5. So, although the LCBO's procedures relied on well-established individuals to give a trustworthy opinion about the situation "on the ground," the reports to the central administrators were also shaped by any range of political or personal biases. The central administrators were not unaware of these flaws in the system and appear to have tried to work around them (rather than simply being an extension of the partisan political machine) but were not always successful. Thus, although the ideal-typical bureaucracy would have credible operatives at the periphery, the LCBO was limited by the character of the people and by the often obscure intricacies of local personal politics and partisan intrigue.

A final limit of the processes of the LCBO was its reliance on other agencies for evaluation. In undertaking its work, the board liaised constantly with local and provincial police departments. Often a decision to suspend an authority was made after the police informed the board of a raid on a hotel or of a proprietor's conviction for personal violations of the LCA. These reports were formal and employed their own dry, bureaucratic formats. Moreover, they tended to be valid. Yet in other ways, police officers could be less reliable. Numerous reports came to the board about police officers being given free drinks by hotel proprietors (which was against the law). Yet none of these reports came from police officers themselves. If the allegations

were true, and at least some of them appear to have been so, then the limits to the police's law enforcement practices would have constrained the board's ability to enforce its own rules. If police officers were favouring a particular hotel, it was unlikely that they would raid it.

In still other ways, the evaluations of the police could be suspect. In 1931 the LCBO sought input from the Fort William Police Department on the application for a standard hotel licence for the Queen's Hotel. The local police chief, W.J. Dodds, said the applicant "had been a resident ... for a number of years and bears a good reputation." When William Dingman, the director of permits, refused the application, he explained to Dodds that it was based on "an adverse report from the Provincial Police." He concluded his letter with the observation, "I regret to find that two much esteemed [police] authorities differ in their reports."⁴⁷ The fundamental flaw of any bureaucracy appears to be that it has to be operated by humans.

Understanding the processes of regulation is essential to understanding the operations of the LCBO. The regulatory project was shaped by the technologies, forms, reports, and individuals that were involved in developing and enforcing the board's rules. Each of these elements affected the regulatory authority of the central administration. The paperwork forced often subjective evaluations to follow a standardized format; the richness and diversity of the local context were squeezed into a uniform configuration. Doubtless, some elements remain invisible to contemporary historical investigation. Nevertheless, the very volume of material that the board generated, the personalities and preoccupations of the individual inspectors, and the competing interests of the community meant that the board's regulatory project was a diverse and complex, if flawed and limited, endeavour.

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