

# history of moonshine in appalachia

History of Moonshine in Appalachia: A Deep Dive into Tradition and Culture

**history of moonshine in appalachia** is a fascinating tale woven into the fabric of American folklore and rural life. It's a story of resilience, ingenuity, and a fiercely independent spirit that shaped not only the Appalachian region but also left an indelible mark on American culture. From its origins to its impact on the local economy and society, moonshine has been much more than just illicit alcohol; it's a symbol of survival and tradition in the rugged mountain landscapes.

## The Roots: How Moonshine Became an Appalachian Staple

The story of moonshine in Appalachia stretches back centuries, long before Prohibition made it a household term. Early settlers in the Appalachian Mountains brought with them the knowledge of distilling spirits from Europe, adapting their methods to the resources available in America. Corn, an abundant crop in the region, became the primary ingredient for the clear, potent liquor we now recognize as moonshine.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, distilling was a practical necessity. Families produced their own alcohol for medicinal purposes, celebrations, and barter. However, the remote and rugged terrain of Appalachia made it difficult for government agents to enforce tax laws on distilled spirits, which planted the seeds for moonshine's illicit reputation.

## Why Appalachia? Geography and Culture

Appalachia's mountainous landscape provided perfect cover for clandestine distilleries, often hidden deep in valleys or thick forests. This isolation fostered a culture of self-reliance and suspicion of outside interference, including government tax collectors known as "revenuers." The term "moonshine" itself refers to the practice of distilling at night, under the light of the moon, to avoid detection.

The culture surrounding moonshine production also became tightly knit, with families passing down recipes and techniques through generations. This tradition created a strong sense of community identity tied to the craft of making moonshine.

## The Impact of Prohibition and Government Crackdowns

The enactment of Prohibition in 1920 marked a pivotal moment in the history of moonshine in Appalachia. With the legal sale of alcohol banned nationwide, demand for illicit liquor skyrocketed. Moonshiners became folk heroes in many Appalachian communities, supplying a thirsty nation while evading federal

agents.

## **Bootlegging and the Rise of the “Revenuers”**

During Prohibition, moonshine production shifted from small-scale home distilleries to more organized bootlegging operations. The increased risk of arrest and violence led to the rise of “revenuers,” government agents tasked with hunting down illegal distillers. These confrontations sometimes turned deadly, further romanticizing the moonshiner as a symbol of rebellion.

Bootleggers also innovated to stay ahead, using fast cars and secret routes through the mountains. This cat-and-mouse game between moonshiners and law enforcement contributed to the early development of stock car racing, which later evolved into NASCAR.

## **The Economic Role of Moonshine**

For many Appalachian families, moonshine was more than just a drink; it was a vital source of income during hard economic times, especially during the Great Depression. Farmers who struggled to make ends meet often turned to distilling as a way to supplement their earnings. Bartering moonshine for goods and services became commonplace, highlighting its importance in the local economy.

## **Techniques and Traditions: The Making of Appalachian Moonshine**

The process of making moonshine in Appalachia is as much an art as a science, steeped in tradition. While the basic principle involves fermenting corn mash and distilling the alcohol, each family often had its own unique methods and secret recipes.

## **Ingredients and Equipment**

Corn remains the primary ingredient due to its availability and sugar content, which ferments well into alcohol. Some distillers also used rye or wheat to modify flavor. Traditional copper stills, sometimes handcrafted from repurposed materials, were essential for the distillation process. The copper helped remove impurities, producing a cleaner and more potent spirit.

## **Safety and Quality Control**

Despite the romantic image, making moonshine was dangerous. Improper distillation could lead to methanol contamination, causing blindness or death. Experienced distillers, known as “stillers,” were careful to discard the “foreshots” and “tails” – the initial and final parts of the distillate that contain harmful compounds.

# The Legacy of Moonshine in Modern Appalachia

Today, the history of moonshine in Appalachia is celebrated in festivals, museums, and even legal distilleries that honor traditional recipes while adhering to safety and tax regulations. The spirit of moonshine lives on, not just in the bottles but in the stories and culture of the region.

## Legal Distilleries and Craft Spirits

In recent decades, many former moonshiners have brought their craft into the legal market, creating artisanal whiskey brands that pay homage to their family histories. These legal moonshines often emphasize authenticity, using old recipes and traditional methods to appeal to consumers seeking a taste of Appalachian heritage.

## Moonshine in Popular Culture

Movies, music, and literature have frequently drawn inspiration from the moonshine legacy, portraying it as a symbol of rebellion and rugged independence. From country songs to Hollywood films, the image of the Appalachian moonshiner continues to captivate audiences, keeping the history alive beyond the mountains.

## Understanding Moonshine's Role Beyond the Liquor

Moonshine's significance in Appalachia extends far beyond its role as an alcoholic beverage. It represents a complex interplay of survival, resistance, and cultural identity. For many Appalachian people, moonshine was a way to assert independence in the face of economic hardship and external control.

## Tips for Appreciating Appalachian Moonshine History

- Visit Local Museums and Distilleries:** Many Appalachian towns have museums dedicated to the history of moonshine, where you can see authentic stills and learn about the distilling process.
- Attend Regional Festivals:** Events celebrating Appalachian heritage often feature moonshine tastings, storytelling, and music, offering a rich cultural experience.
- Explore Oral Histories:** Listening to firsthand accounts from Appalachian families provides unique insights into the personal and communal importance of moonshine.
- Understand the Legal Evolution:** Learning about how moonshine transitioned from illegal activity to a celebrated craft helps appreciate the resilience and adaptability of Appalachian culture.

The history of moonshine in Appalachia is a vivid reminder of how tradition and innovation can intertwine, creating a legacy that continues to influence

American culture and identity to this day.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the historical origin of moonshine production in Appalachia?**

Moonshine production in Appalachia dates back to the 18th century when early settlers, many of Scots-Irish descent, brought distilling traditions with them. Due to limited access to commercial alcohol and high taxes on whiskey, they began producing homemade distilled spirits, commonly known as moonshine.

### **Why was moonshine particularly popular in the Appalachian region?**

Moonshine was popular in Appalachia due to the region's isolation, difficult terrain, and economic hardship. The high excise taxes on liquor and limited law enforcement presence made illegal distilling profitable and accessible for many Appalachian families as a source of income.

### **How did Prohibition impact moonshine production in Appalachia?**

During Prohibition (1920-1933), moonshine production in Appalachia surged as legal alcohol was banned nationwide. This led to increased clandestine distilling and smuggling operations, with moonshiners often evading federal agents known as 'revenuers.' The era cemented moonshine's cultural significance in the region.

### **What role did moonshine play in Appalachian culture and community?**

Moonshine was not only a source of income but also a cultural symbol of self-reliance and resistance to outside authority. It featured in social gatherings and local traditions, and the knowledge of distillation was often passed down through generations, strengthening community bonds.

### **How has the history of moonshine influenced modern-day Appalachia?**

The history of moonshine has influenced Appalachia's economy, culture, and identity. Today, legal craft distilleries celebrate this heritage, producing spirits inspired by traditional recipes. Moonshine also attracts tourism, with festivals and museums dedicated to its history.

### **What were some of the risks and challenges faced by Appalachian moonshiners historically?**

Moonshiners faced risks such as raids by law enforcement, violent confrontations, and legal penalties including fines and imprisonment. Additionally, the distillation process was hazardous, with dangers from

explosions, fires, and poisoning from improperly made alcohol.

## **Additional Resources**

**\*\*The Enduring Legacy: History of Moonshine in Appalachia\*\***

**History of moonshine in Appalachia** is a complex and deeply rooted narrative that intertwines culture, economics, and law enforcement across centuries. This clandestine distillation of homemade spirits, often referred to as "white lightning" or "mountain dew," has shaped Appalachian identity while simultaneously reflecting broader themes of resistance and survival in a region marked by geographic isolation and economic hardship.

## **Origins and Cultural Context of Appalachian Moonshine**

Moonshine's history in Appalachia is inseparable from the region's early settlement patterns and socioeconomic conditions. The Appalachian Mountains, stretching from southern New York to northern Alabama and Georgia, provided a rugged landscape where subsistence farming was common but often insufficient for economic prosperity. Early European settlers, many of Scotch-Irish descent, brought distillation techniques from their homelands, adapting them to local ingredients such as corn, rye, and barley.

The practice of distilling homemade liquor emerged as both a practical and cultural response. Corn, the staple crop in Appalachia, was abundant and ideal for fermentation, making moonshine production a natural extension of farming life. Beyond the practicalities, distilling spirits became a cultural tradition, passed down through generations, symbolizing self-reliance and community cohesion. This homemade liquor was often consumed socially, reinforcing familial and neighborhood bonds in otherwise isolated mountain communities.

## **Economic Drivers and the Role of Moonshine**

By the 19th century, the economic importance of moonshine in Appalachia had grown significantly. For many families, it was not merely a beverage but a source of income in a region with limited opportunities and poor access to markets. Distilling was relatively low-cost and allowed producers to convert surplus grain into a valuable commodity that could be bartered or sold.

The imposition of federal excise taxes on distilled spirits in the late 18th century, including Alexander Hamilton's controversial Whiskey Tax of 1791, intensified tensions between Appalachian distillers and the government. This tax, perceived as unfair and burdensome, led to the Whiskey Rebellion, an early test of federal authority. Although the rebellion was eventually quelled, it set the tone for decades of defiance against what many Appalachian distillers viewed as unjust regulation.

# **Moonshine and Prohibition: A Catalyst for Expansion**

The nationwide Prohibition era from 1920 to 1933 marked a significant turning point in the history of moonshine in Appalachia. The 18th Amendment and the Volstead Act outlawed the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcoholic beverages, creating a lucrative black market for illicit liquor. Appalachia, with its rugged terrain and established distilling traditions, became a hotbed for moonshine production.

## **The Impact of Prohibition on Appalachian Moonshiners**

During Prohibition, moonshine production escalated dramatically. The clandestine nature of the trade intensified as distillers adapted to evade law enforcement. Remote mountain locations, dense forests, and winding roads provided natural cover for hidden stills and evasive transportation routes. Moonshiners developed sophisticated methods, including the use of modified vehicles—early “stock cars”—to outrun revenue agents.

However, this period also introduced significant risks. The quality of moonshine varied widely, sometimes resulting in dangerous, poorly distilled liquor containing harmful substances such as methanol. Additionally, the illicit trade fueled violent confrontations between moonshiners and law enforcement, as well as rival factions competing for control.

## **From Moonshine to NASCAR: A Cultural Offshoot**

An intriguing facet of Appalachian moonshine history is its connection to the origins of stock car racing and NASCAR. Moonshine runners needed fast, agile cars to transport their product swiftly and evade capture. Mechanics and drivers modified their vehicles for speed and handling, giving rise to a new form of grassroots racing. Many early NASCAR drivers had backgrounds as moonshine runners, highlighting a unique cultural crossover between illicit distillation and American motorsport.

## **Law Enforcement and Legal Challenges**

The persistent presence of moonshine in Appalachia posed ongoing challenges for federal and state authorities. From the 19th century through the 20th century, various government agencies, including the Bureau of Prohibition and later the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), undertook numerous campaigns to curb illegal distillation.

## **Strategies and Tactics**

Enforcement efforts ranged from routine raids to high-profile manhunts. Revenue agents often faced dangerous, armed resistance. The rugged topography of Appalachia complicated policing, as distillers exploited hidden coves and mountain hollows. Enforcement successes were sporadic, with moonshine

production often rebounding after crackdowns.

Over time, evolving laws and shifting public attitudes led to a gradual transformation in the legal landscape. The repeal of Prohibition and the establishment of regulated alcohol markets reduced some incentives for illegal distillation; however, moonshine persisted in many areas due to economic necessity and cultural attachment.

## Contemporary Perspectives and Revival

Today, the history of moonshine in Appalachia remains a vibrant part of the region's cultural heritage. While commercial distilleries produce legally regulated spirits inspired by traditional recipes, illegal distillation still exists but on a much smaller scale.

## Legal Distilleries and Cultural Preservation

The modern craft spirits movement has embraced Appalachian moonshine as a symbol of authenticity and tradition. Numerous distilleries market "moonshine" products that replicate the clear, unaged qualities of the original homemade liquor, often highlighting historical ties and local ingredients. This legal revival provides economic benefits, encourages tourism, and helps preserve Appalachian heritage without the risks associated with illicit production.

## Balancing Myth and Reality

Popular media often romanticizes Appalachian moonshine, emphasizing its outlaw mystique and rugged individualism. While these narratives hold cultural value, it is important to recognize the nuanced reality, which includes economic struggle, legal conflict, and sometimes dangerous practices. Understanding the history of moonshine in Appalachia requires acknowledging both its role as a symbol of resilience and the practical challenges faced by those involved.

## Key Features of Appalachian Moonshine Through History

- **Geographic Isolation:** The Appalachian Mountains' terrain provided natural concealment for illicit stills and influenced the self-reliant culture that fostered moonshine production.
- **Economic Necessity:** Limited industrial development and poverty made moonshining a vital supplementary income source for many families.
- **Cultural Transmission:** Distillation techniques and recipes passed through generations, embedding moonshine in Appalachian identity.
- **Legal Conflict:** Persistent clashes with authorities, from the Whiskey

Rebellion to Prohibition-era raids, shaped the socio-political dynamics of the region.

- **Technological Innovation:** Adaptations in production and transportation, including the development of fast cars, influenced broader American culture.

The history of moonshine in Appalachia is a multifaceted story that continues to inform the region's cultural landscape. From its origins as a home-distilled spirit born of necessity to its place in American folklore and legal commerce, moonshine embodies the complexities of Appalachian life—resilience, rebellion, and reinvention.

## **History Of Moonshine In Appalachia**

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**history of moonshine in appalachia: Moonshiners and Prohibitionists** Bruce E. Stewart, 2011-04-22 Homemade liquor has played a prominent role in the Appalachian economy for nearly two centuries. The region endured profound transformations during the extreme prohibition movements of the nineteenth century, when the manufacturing and sale of alcohol—an integral part of daily life for many Appalachians—was banned. In *Moonshiners and Prohibitionists: The Battle over Alcohol in Southern Appalachia*, Bruce E. Stewart chronicles the social tensions that accompanied the region's early transition from a rural to an urban-industrial economy. Stewart analyzes the dynamic relationship of the bootleggers and opponents of liquor sales in western North Carolina, as well as conflict driven by social and economic development that manifested in political discord. Stewart also explores the life of the moonshiner and the many myths that developed around hillbilly stereotypes. A welcome addition to the *New Directions in Southern History* series, *Moonshiners and Prohibitionists* addresses major economic, social, and cultural questions that are essential to the understanding of Appalachian history.

**history of moonshine in appalachia: Moonshine-made Appalachia** Emelie K. Peine, 2002

**history of moonshine in appalachia: Moonshiners and Prohibitionists** Bruce E. Stewart, 2011-04-22 A “masterly study” of how the business of homemade liquor shaped the history and culture of a region (*Journal of American History*). Homemade liquor has played a prominent role in the Appalachian economy for nearly two centuries. The region endured profound transformations during the extreme prohibition movements of the nineteenth century, when the manufacturing and sale of alcohol—an integral part of daily life for many Appalachians—was banned. *Moonshiners and Prohibitionists: The Battle over Alcohol in Southern Appalachia* chronicles the social tensions that accompanied the region's early transition from a rural to an urban-industrial economy. It analyzes the dynamic relationship of the bootleggers and opponents of liquor sales in western North Carolina, as well as conflict driven by social and economic development that manifested in political discord—and also explores the life of the moonshiner and the many myths that developed around hillbilly stereotypes. “A much-needed contribution to our understanding of the complex social, economic, religious, and cultural issues underlying the prohibition impulse that swept the South between 1880 and 1920.” —*Journal of Southern History*



**history of moonshine in appalachia: Hungry Roots** Ashli Quesinberry Stokes, Wendy Atkins-Sayre, 2024-04-25 2025 North Carolina Humanities North Carolina Reads pick A journey through Southern Appalachia to explore the complex messages food communicates about the region. Depictions of Appalachian food culture and practices often romanticize people in the region as good, simple, and, often, white. These stereotypes are harmful to the actual people they are meant to describe as well as to those they exclude. In *Hungry Roots: How Food Communicates Appalachia's Search for Resilience*, Ashli Quesinberry Stokes and Wendy Atkins-Sayre tell a more complicated story. The authors embark on a cultural tour through food and drinking establishments to investigate regional resilience in and through the plurality of traditions and communities that form the foodways of Southern Appalachia.

**history of moonshine in appalachia: Dictionary of Southern Appalachian English** Michael B. Montgomery, Jennifer K. N. Heinmiller, 2021-06-22 The Dictionary of Southern Appalachian English is a revised and expanded edition of the Weatherford Award-winning Dictionary of Smoky Mountain English, published in 2005 and known in Appalachian studies circles as the most comprehensive reference work dedicated to Appalachian vernacular and linguistic practice. Editors Michael B. Montgomery and Jennifer K. N. Heinmiller document the variety of English used in parts of eight states, ranging from West Virginia to Georgia—an expansion of the first edition's geography, which was limited primarily to North Carolina and Tennessee—and include over 10,000 entries drawn from over 2,200 sources. The entries include approximately 35,000 citations to provide the reader with historical context, meaning, and usage. Around 1,600 of those examples are from letters written by Civil War soldiers and their family members, and another 4,000 are taken from regional oral history recordings. Decades in the making, the Dictionary of Southern Appalachian English surpasses the original by thousands of entries. There is no work of this magnitude available that so completely illustrates the rich language of the Smoky Mountains and Southern Appalachia.

**history of moonshine in appalachia: Appalachian Home Cooking** Mark F. Sohn, 2005-10-28 "The 80 recipes are important, but really, this is a food-studies book written for those who feel some nostalgia for, or connection to, Appalachia." —Lexington Herald-Leader Mark F. Sohn's classic book, *Mountain Country Cooking*, was a James Beard Award nominee in 1997. In *Appalachian Home Cooking*, Sohn expands and improves upon his earlier work by using his extensive knowledge of cooking to uncover the romantic secrets of Appalachian food, both within and beyond the kitchen. Shedding new light on Appalachia's food, history, and culture, Sohn offers over eighty classic recipes, as well as photographs, poetry, mail-order sources, information on Appalachian food festivals, a glossary of Appalachian and cooking terms, menus for holidays and seasons, and lists of the top Appalachian foods. *Appalachian Home Cooking* celebrates mountain food at its best. "When you read these recipes for chicken and dumplings, country ham, fried trout, crackling bread, shuck beans, cheese grits casseroles, bean patties, and sweet potato pie your mouth will begin to water whether or not you have a connection to Appalachia." —Loyal Jones, author of *Appalachian Values* "Offers everything you ever wanted to know about culinary mysteries like shucky beans, pawpaws, cushaw squash, and how to season cast-iron cookware." —Our State "Tells how mountain people have taken what they had to work with, from livestock to produce, and provides more than recipes, but the stories behind the preparing of the food . . . The reading is almost as much fun as the eating, with fewer calories." —Modern Mountain Magazine

**history of moonshine in appalachia: Engaging Appalachia** Rebecca Adkins Fletcher, Rebecca-Eli Long, William Schumann, 2023-03-07 Inclusive campus-community collaborations provide critical opportunities to build community capacity—defined as a community's ability to jointly respond to challenges and opportunities—and sustainability. Through case studies from across all three subregions of Appalachia from Georgia to Pennsylvania, *Engaging Appalachia: A Guidebook for Building Capacity and Sustainability* offers diverse perspectives and guidance for promoting social change through campus-community relationships from faculty, community members, and student contributors. This volume explores strategies for creating more inclusive and sustainable partnerships through the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. In

representing diverse areas, environments, and issues, three relatable themes emerge within a practice viewpoint that is scalable to communities beyond Appalachia: fostering student leadership, asset-building, and needs fulfillment within community engagement. Engaging Appalachia presents collaborative approaches to regional community engagement and offers important lessons in place-based methods for achieving sustainable and just development. Written with practicality in mind, this guidebook embraces hard-earned experiences from decades of work in Appalachia and sets forth new models for building community resilience in a changing world.

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** Blacks in Appalachia William H. Turner, Edward J. Cabbell, 2021-03-17 Although southern Appalachia is popularly seen as a purely white enclave, blacks have lived in the region from early times. Some hollows and coal camps are in fact almost exclusively black settlements. The selected readings in this new book offer the first comprehensive presentation of the black experience in Appalachia. Organized topically, the selections deal with the early history of blacks in the region, with studies of the black communities, with relations between blacks and whites, with blacks in coal mining, and with political issues. Also included are a section on oral accounts of black experiences and an analysis of black Appalachian demography. The contributors range from Carter Woodson and W. E. B. Du Bois to more recent scholars such as Theda Perdue and David A. Corbin. An introduction by the editors provides an overall context for the selections. Blacks in Appalachia focuses needed attention on a neglected area of Appalachian studies. It will be a valuable resource for students of Appalachia and of black history.

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** Reconstructing Appalachia Andrew L. Slap, 2010-05-28 Families, communities, and the nation itself were irretrievably altered by the Civil War and the subsequent societal transformations of the nineteenth century. The repercussions of the war incited a broad range of unique problems in Appalachia, including political dynamics, racial prejudices, and the regional economy. Andrew L. Slap's anthology *Reconstructing Appalachia* reveals life in Appalachia after the ravages of the Civil War, an unexplored area that has left a void in historical literature. Addressing a gap in the chronicles of our nation, this vital collection explores little-known aspects of history with a particular focus on the Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction periods. Acclaimed scholars John C. Inscoe, Gordon B. McKinney, and Ken Fones-Wolf are joined by up-and-comers like Mary Ella Engel, Anne E. Marshall, and Kyle Osborn in a unique volume of essays investigating postwar Appalachia with clarity and precision. Featuring a broad geographic focus, these compelling essays cover postwar events in Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. This approach provides an intimate portrait of Appalachia as a diverse collection of communities where the values of place and family are of crucial importance. Highlighting a wide array of topics including racial reconciliation, tension between former Unionists and Confederates, the evolution of post-Civil War memory, and altered perceptions of race, gender, and economic status, *Reconstructing Appalachia* is a timely and essential study of a region rich in heritage and tradition.

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** *My Appalachia* Sidney Saylor Reynolds, 2014-04-23 My family lived as far back in the hollers as it was possible to go in Bell County, Kentucky. Dad worked in the timber woods and at a sawmill, when there was employment to be found. We ate what we grew on the place or could glean from the hillsides. Just about everything was made by hand. We had little contact with people outside the region. Sidney Saylor Farr grew up in the mountains of southeastern Kentucky, the eldest of ten children. Her devotion to her family led her to accept heavy responsibilities from a very young age: at three, she remembers being put in charge of her baby sister while her parents worked in the corn field. At the age of twelve, Farr was forced to leave school to care for her ailing mother and younger siblings. Although she did not often have time to pursue her own goals, life in the mountains nourished and shaped Farr and the writer she would become. Her great-grandmother was a master storyteller, and stories passed down from generation to generation helped define her family history and fueled her imagination. Her Aunt Dellie, a voracious reader, received discarded books from the Pineville library, and as she shared these volumes with young Sidney, she opened the world to her eager niece. Farr's intense determination

compelled her to find her own path and gave her the strength to become one of the most influential figures in Appalachian letters, nurturing other young writers who wanted to document the region's particular way of life. Although living in Appalachia was difficult—many people of Farr's generation left the mountains for good—she persisted through countless challenges, including poverty, discrimination, and personal loss. Farr managed to thrive despite these adversities, educating herself, raising two sons, and becoming a voice for her family, community, and culture. In *My Appalachia*, Farr shares the stories of her struggles and triumphs to create a vivid picture of a culture as enduring as the mountains. Composed of a rich mix of folklore, family history, and spiritual and intellectual exploration, Farr's deft and gentle storytelling reveals the beauty of life in Appalachia.

**history of moonshine in appalachia: Death and Dying in Central Appalachia** James K. Crissman, 1994 James Crissman explores cultural traits related to death and dying in Appalachian sections of Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and West Virginia, showing how they have changed since the 1600s. Relying on archival materials, almost forty photographs, and interviews with more than 400 mountain dwellers, Crissman focuses on the importance of family and neighborliness in mountain society. Written for both scholarly and general audiences, the book contains sections on the death watch, body preparation, selection or construction of a coffin or casket, digging the grave by hand, the wake, the funeral, and other topics. Crissman then demonstrates how technology and the encroachment of American society have turned these vital traditions into the disappearing practices of the past.

**history of moonshine in appalachia: Southern Communities** Steven E. Nash, Bruce E. Stewart, 2019-07-15 Community is an evolving and complex concept that historians have applied to localities, counties, and the South as a whole in order to ground larger issues in the day-to-day lives of all segments of society. These social networks sometimes unite and sometimes divide people, they can mirror or transcend political boundaries, and they may exist solely within the cultures of like-minded people. This volume explores the nature of southern communities during the long nineteenth century. The contributors build on the work of scholars who have allowed us to see community not simply as a place but instead as an idea in a constant state of definition and redefinition. They reaffirm that there never has been a singular southern community. As editors Steven E. Nash and Bruce E. Stewart reveal, southerners have constructed an array of communities across the region and beyond. Nor do the contributors idealize these communities. Far from being places of cooperation and harmony, southern communities were often rife with competition and discord. Indeed, conflict has constituted a vital part of southern communal development. Taken together, the essays in this volume remind us how community-focused studies can bring us closer to answering those questions posed to Quentin Compson in *Absalom, Absalom!*: Tell [us] about the South. What's it like there. What do they do there. Why do they live there. Why do they live at all.

**history of moonshine in appalachia: Rereading Appalachia** Sara Webb-Sunderhaus, Kim Donehower, 2015-12-18 Appalachia faces overwhelming challenges that plague many rural areas across the country, including poorly funded schools, stagnant economic development, corrupt political systems, poverty, and drug abuse. Its citizens, in turn, have often been the target of unkind characterizations depicting them as illiterate or backward. Despite entrenched social and economic disadvantages, the region is also known for its strong sense of culture, language, and community. In this innovative volume, a multidisciplinary team of both established and rising scholars challenge Appalachian stereotypes through an examination of language and rhetoric. Together, the contributors offer a new perspective on Appalachia and its literacy, hoping to counteract essentialist or class-based arguments about the region's people, and reexamine past research in the context of researcher bias. Featuring a mix of traditional scholarship and personal narratives, *Rereading Appalachia* assesses a number of pressing topics, including the struggles of first-generation college students and the pressure to leave the area in search of higher-quality jobs, prejudice toward the LGBT community, and the emergence of Appalachian and Affrilachian art in urban communities. The volume also offers rich historical perspectives on issues such as the intended and unintended

consequences of education activist Cora Wilson Stewart's campaign to promote literacy at the Kentucky Moonlight Schools. A call to arms for those studying the heritage and culture of Appalachia, this timely collection provides fresh perspectives on the region, its people, and their literacy beliefs and practices.

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** *A Handbook to Appalachia* Grace Toney Edwards, JoAnn Aust Asbury, Ricky L. Cox, 2024-07-31 Scholars who teach, write, or speak on the history and culture of the Appalachian region are frequently asked by students, administrators, or colleagues to recommend a relatively short, comprehensive book about Appalachia. Until now, there has been no interdisciplinary introductory text in Appalachian studies. *A Handbook to Appalachia* comprises a collection of concise, accessible overviews of the region written by top academics in a variety of fields, all directed at a general audience. Accompanied by dozens of inviting photographs, the essays offer information to those becoming acquainted with Appalachia for the first time as well as to more experienced observers of the region. The essays are arranged to show how various features of Appalachia are related. Each essay is followed by a list of suggested readings for further study. *A Handbook to Appalachia* provides a clear, concise first step toward understanding the expanding field of Appalachian studies, from the history of the area to its sometimes conflicted image, from its music and folklore to its outstanding literature. Chapters: History, The Peoples of Appalachia, Natural Resources and Environment, Economics, Politics of Change, Health Care, Education, Folklife, Literature, Religion, Visual Arts, and Appalachians Outside the Region.

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** *Mountain Spirits* Joseph Earl Dabney, 2014-08-12 Originally published in 1974, *Mountain Spirits* traces the history of whiskey making from its origins in Ulster, Ireland, through its arrival in the United States in the great waves of mostly Scotch-Irish settlers who traveled the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road into the Southern Appalachians, making illicit corn likker part of the southern way of life. Colorful interviews and stories relate the experiences and methods of the independent moonshiners who plied their craft in the hills, the revenue agents who tracked them down (often with respect and affection) and the wilder young men who hauled the product in the first hotrod cars. As legal distilling brings the tradition to a new generation, Joseph Dabney offers a glimpse of a time when crops were measured in gallons and families carried the secrets of their stills to their graves.

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** *Discovering the Appalachian Trail* Joshua Niven, Amber Adams Niven, 2022-06-01 From beginners to thru-hikers, *Discovering the Appalachian Trail* has something for anyone that wants a connection with the nation's longest marked footpath at approximately 2,181 miles. Starting at Springer Mountain in Georgia and finishing far to the north in Maine's Mount Katahdin, the A.T. crosses 14 states, 6 national parks, and 8 national forests. Taking on the A.T. is a pilgrimage because of both its beauty and accessibility. Let Joshua Niven and Amber Adams guide you across the best trails that the Appalachian Trail has to offer. Complete with full-color photography, you'll also have hikes suited to every ability, mile-by-mile directional cues, sidebars, and maps.

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Alcohol* Scott C. Martin, 2014-12-16 Alcohol consumption goes to the very roots of nearly all human societies. Different countries and regions have become associated with different sorts of alcohol, for instance, the "beer culture" of Germany, the "wine culture" of France, Japan and saki, Russia and vodka, the Caribbean and rum, or the "moonshine culture" of Appalachia. Wine is used in religious rituals, and toasts are used to seal business deals or to celebrate marriages and state dinners. However, our relation with alcohol is one of love/hate. We also regulate it and tax it, we pass laws about when and where it's appropriate, we crack down severely on drunk driving, and the United States and other countries tried the failed "Noble Experiment" of Prohibition. While there are many encyclopedias on alcohol, nearly all approach it as a substance of abuse, taking a clinical, medical perspective (alcohol, alcoholism, and treatment). The *SAGE Encyclopedia of Alcohol* examines the history of alcohol worldwide and goes beyond the historical lens to examine alcohol as a cultural and social phenomenon, as well—both for good and for ill—from the earliest days of humankind.

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** *A College For Appalachia* P. David Searles, 2014-10-17

Alice Spencer Geddes Lloyd was a New England woman with a mission in life. In 1916 she settled on Caney Creek in Eastern Kentucky, determined to bring higher education to this remote corner of Appalachia. The school she founded, now Alice Lloyd College, continues to serve the area and its people and to stand as a tribute to Lloyd's remarkable energy, determination, and vision. Lloyd's program combined a rigorous academic curriculum with an intense effort to instill a sense of service in the school's graduates. This education was provided free and required only that the students abide by Lloyd's strict rules of conduct and pledge to remain in the mountains after graduating. In the first full-scale study of Lloyd's life and work and the institution she founded, David Searles shows how this courageous and complex woman struggled throughout her long life against seemingly insurmountable odds to create an institution dedicated to improving life in Appalachia. But, as he acknowledges, Lloyd's fundraising activities relied on harmful stereotypes that caused resentment among her mountain neighbors, and she often angered others working in the mountains. Despite the negative aspects of Lloyd's activities, Searles casts serious doubt on the now fashionable conclusion that the women who came to the mountains to do good created more problems than they solved. Lloyd's story, he argues, demonstrates that much good was indeed accomplished and that the people of the mountains recognized and appreciated her achievement.

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** *Synergist* , 1975

**history of moonshine in appalachia:** *Appalachian Folkways* John B. Rehder, 2004-07-12

Winner of the Kniffen Award and an Honorable Mention from the Professional and Scholarly Publishing Awards in Sociology and Anthropology Appalachia may be the most mythologized and misunderstood place in America, its way of life and inhabitants both caricatured and celebrated in the mainstream media. Over generations, though, the families living in the mountainous region stretching from West Virginia to northeastern Alabama have forged one of the country's richest and most distinctive cultures, encompassing music, food, architecture, customs, and language. In *Appalachian Folkways*, geographer John Rehder offers an engaging and enlightening account of southern Appalachia and its cultural milieu that is at once sweeping and intimate. From architecture and traditional livelihoods to beliefs and art, Rehder, who has spent thirty years studying the region, offers a nuanced depiction of southern Appalachia's social and cultural identity. The book opens with an expert consideration of the southern Appalachian landscape, defined by mountains, rocky soil, thick forests, and plentiful streams. While these features have shaped the inhabitants of the region, Rehder notes, Appalachians have also shaped their environment, and he goes on to explore the human influence on the landscape. From physical geography, the book moves to settlement patterns, describing the Indian tribes that flourished before European settlement and the successive waves of migration that brought Melungeon, Scotch-Irish, English, and German settlers to the region, along with the cultural contributions each made to what became a distinct Appalachian culture. Next focusing on the folk culture of Appalachia, Rehder details such cultural expressions as architecture and landscape design; traditional and more recent ways of making a living, both legal and illegal; foodstuffs and cooking techniques; folk remedies and belief systems; music, art, and the folk festivals that today attract visitors from around the world; and the region's dialect. With its broad scope and deep research, *Appalachian Folkways* accurately and evocatively chronicles a way of life that is fast disappearing.

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