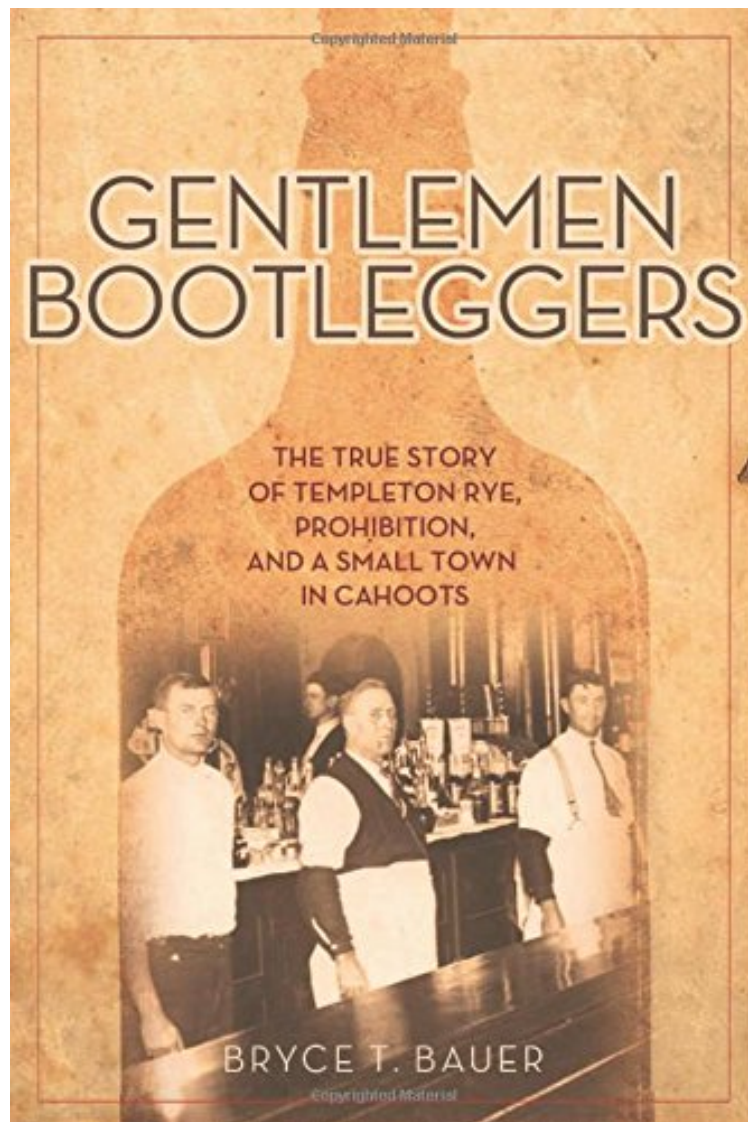


[Ebook pdf] Gentlemen Bootleggers: The True Story of Templeton Rye, Prohibition, and a Small Town in Cahoots

Gentlemen Bootleggers: The True Story of Templeton Rye, Prohibition, and a Small Town in Cahoots

Bryce T. Bauer

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Bryce T. Bauer : Gentlemen Bootleggers: The True Story of Templeton Rye, Prohibition, and a Small Town in Cahoots before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gentlemen Bootleggers: The True Story of Templeton Rye, Prohibition, and a Small Town in Cahoots:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Buy this book!
By Gregory It has been a while since I've read a more entertaining book. I figured that sooner or later, someone would get into the act and write a book about Templeton Rye, but I was pleasantly surprised to see one so well written. It is a stirring story of civic cooperation ("being in cahoots", if you will) against an oppressive law. I have two quibbles: (1) The book makes it sound as if the whole Templeton Rye phenomenon was rather completely the work of one man -- Joe Irlbeck. Certainly Irlbeck was a major actor in the drama, but according to what I've been able to determine, there was much activity that had nothing to do with Joe Irlbeck. (2) It looks as if the author was trying to draw a parallel between Joe Irlbeck and the gangsters who operated in Des Moines and Chicago. The parallel was inept. Irlbeck never engaged in territorial wars, and there is no record of him ever branching out into things like gambling and prostitution. These two quibbles aside, my hat is off to Mr. Bauer for a masterful book.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not as riveting as the rye
By Phelix Picked this up as we have sort of a cult about Templeton Rye. It is more of a historical text that never really rises to riveting. Read it, drank some rye, then passed it along to another member of the cult.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. At the end good guys shake hands with bad guys
By Customer A lot of research, true story makes less nuanced bravery or romance. But witnesses ancestral innovation under government stress/oppression. We have a history of illegal behavior done to maintain family ties and civic life when the law just doesn't make sense for the situation. Some motivation is for money, but they didn't lose respect for small people. It is middle America story. At the end good guys shake hands with bad guys. I wonder if similar life happens elsewhere in the world, from Somalia to the Mexican border.

During Prohibition, while Al Capone was rising to worldwide prominence as Public Enemy Number One, the townspeople of rural Templeton, Iowa (population just 428) were busy with a bootlegging empire of their own. Led by Joe Irlbeck, the whip-smart and gregarious son of a Bavarian immigrant, the outfit of farmers, small merchants, and even the church Monsignor worked together to create a whiskey so excellent it was ordered by name: "Templeton rye." Just as Al Capone had Eliot Ness, Templeton's bootleggers had as their own enemy a respected Prohibition agent from the adjacent county named Benjamin Franklin Wilson. Wilson was ardent in his fight against alcohol, and he chased Irlbeck for over a decade. But Irlbeck was not Capone, and Templeton would not be ruled by violence like Chicago. *Gentlemen Bootleggers* tells a never-before-told tale of ingenuity, bootstrapping, and perseverance in one small town, showcasing a group of immigrants and first-generation Americans who embraced the ideals of self-reliance, dynamism, and democratic justice. It relies on previously classified Prohibition Bureau investigation files, federal court case files, extensive newspaper archive research, and a recently disclosed interview with kingpin Joe Irlbeck. Unlike other Prohibition-era tales of big-city gangsters, it provides an important reminder that bootlegging wasn't only about glory and riches, but could be in the service of a higher goal: producing the best whiskey money could buy.

"Bauer serves up history just the way I like it—straight and with a strong punch."
Gentlemen Bootleggers is insightful, well-written, and highly entertaining.
—Jonathan Eig, author of *Get Capone: The Secret Plot That Captured America's Most Wanted Gangster*