Good afternoon. Welcome to the Filson. I'm Mark Wetherington. Director. And I want to thank you for joining us today for women bootleggers for family money and whiskey with Fred Minnick. And before I introduce Fred, and the program a little more detail, I want to thank you all for joining us. It's great to be able to get here to a program that hasn't been rescheduled because of the weather. It was a nice sunny day outside. And I thank you for for choosing to spend this time with us. Our mission is to collect, preserve and tell the significant stories of Kentucky and the Ohio Valley region's history and culture. And our collections can tell many stories. And one of those stories is this story of bourbon whiskey and the whiskey industry. We have a wonderful collection of research material here. We're always growing that collection. And we also have a bourbon Academy, which is an educational outreach of the Filson that Mike Veatch here in the back of the room is our bourbon historian. I know many of you have met Mike, or I've been to some of his programs over the years. You can always find out more about our programming on www.dot Filson historical.org and follow a lot of our activities. There. We have an award winning whiskey writer and best selling author with us today. Fred Minnick. Its first book, camera boy and army journalists war in Iraq, became a Wall Street Journal, best selling ebook. His magazine writing and photography credits include Wine Enthusiast, tasting panel, whiskey magazine and whiskey advocate. And Fred, where we're very, very happy that you could be with us today, and to talk about when bootleggers.
the state for this industry, and absolutely for the Filson Historical Society. So I would like to actually give a round of applause for Mike because he, he's in the bourbon Hall of Fame. And I can, I can tell you that I would not be here in terms of, you know, where I am at in my career without his guidance and several issues. Looks like we lost the the eyes that were looking upon you. That was a picture of the woman who was a treasurer, the very first female Treasury agent. So if you had bootleg something in here, she would have came and got you from the grave. So what is bootlegging? This is actually I actually found that people don't really necessarily always know what bootlegging means. So I pulled something from the dictionary for you, quote, alcoholic liquor unlawfully made, sold or transported without registration or payment of taxes. So we have two operative words here registration, and taxes. So that means it's a crime to take whiskey or gin or whatever from one place that you don't have official license for and sell it at another place. In other words, it's all about the tax. That's all they care about. You know, there in time there have been there have been situations where they're like, Oh, it's a health concern. moonshines killing the public. They don't care. They want their taxes. And when we think about bootleggers, we think about these big strong men, you know, carrying large barrels of whiskey and, and making gin in their bathtubs and Chicago, but really women were better bootleggers than men. And not just in prohibition and in recent times, but throughout history. And in full disclosure, researching women bootleggers is a chore. It is not an easy subject to research because the only The way you can find them is if they got caught. You know, you don't have women bootleggers writing memoirs. They're not doing interviews. So they do everything they can to kind of keep this anonymous profile. And the only way I could find them were was an arrest records, court trials and newspaper accounts. And as an old newspaper man, I would, I would tell you that a lot of these reports were very lavish and might have been a little yellow journalism practice with with with some of these women bootleggers. So the first woman bootlegger, arrested or is actually the first known bootlegger in time. In 1506, King James the fourth king of the Scots, only a trusted astute gentleman for Aqua vitae supply. And he actually sent a law out signed a law and monopoly law in Edinburgh and 1506. For the guild of surgeon, barbers and guild, the surgeon barbers were basically doctors, they were entrusted with the Aqua vitae or whiskey for the use of medicinal purposes. And so if they were outside of that, guild, it was considered illegal. So unless you sir, were a surgeon, barber, you are not allowed to prescribe Aqua vitae for the medicinal purposes. If you wanted to get drunk on it, that's fine. Just don't try to make anyone better on it. But here's the law, that a person's man nor woman with this Bursch shall make nor sell Aqua vitae except said masters, brethren and Freeman have said crafts in quote. What's interesting, that law was established in 1506. And the very first arrest record, per this law, based on the Treasury accounts of Scotland in the 1500s, was a woman by the name of Bessie Campbell in 1556. She violated this rule, and was basically fine. She didn't go to jail, she was fine and told that she could not sell the liquor anymore in this particular district, and on Sundays. So what that tells me is that this was probably going on all along. And this was a territorial thing. And as long as you didn't sell on a Sunday in certain districts, you were fine. And in my theory, Bessie got routed out by a monk, because that's who she was competing against. In this particular area. We're monks, so I don't know if this was a vow of silence bunk, but they chose to probably talk about Bessie at this point. So all sorts of things happen, and let's just get straight to America. In the 1800s. Early American women were bootlegging geniuses, they were the entrepreneur types. These were women who didn't need men. They didn't like men. Maybe they had their own gangs, but they were running multibuy $1,000 Even multimillion dollar operations in the grand scheme of things. The 1800 Whiskey is used to trade
for Native Americans. It's used as currency throughout the country. And it was also used to help fellows get drunk in the brothel. Madams running brothels in the 1800s were probably some of the wealthiest people in the United States, they would earn significant revenue. And they also were very frequent at avoiding their taxes, thus making them bootleggers. I know this woman is not in the Ohio Valley, but she's certainly worth pointing out. Nancy Boggs and Portland ran a brothel boat. Back then Portland was not all Portland, there was Portland and East Portland. And she would dock on one side of the Portland's and when the cops came to collect the taxes, she went on the other side. So she avoided tax penalties for many years. They didn't care about the prostitution back, some of the cops would go on there on their own time and do their own thing. But they were concerned about not paying the taxes. Well, she eventually gets busted. And that's, of course, how I found out about her. But it just goes to show that this was an incredible Empire for her and she was trying to avoid it at all costs. And the government didn't care because prostitution was not illegal. What was illegal was not paying your taxes. And to that point, in 1857, New York brothels earned $2.08 million and liquor sales. Now that was what was reported to the government now is actually ended up being a very sizable amount, about half of the city's budget is what the prostitutes in New York were making off of liquor sales. So imagine if you could hide a cent or two from the government, you'd be incredibly profitable. Along those lines of profitable Wynnum women were the gangster women. These were women who were riding, riding horses throughout the West, even here in Kentucky. And then they were stealing whiskey and selling it to the Native Americans or stealing whiskey to you know, do their build their own empires. One of those women was Belle Starr. She was known as the bandit queen. And she ran the popular star gang, and basically went across the Canadian River and stole whiskey from white people and sold it to the Native Americans. Now, that kind of sad piece to Belle Starr story was she was murdered in her whiskey was stolen. So she was actually a target of the same thing that she targeted others for. Women were also very brash, in the 1800s. We see a lot of women with moxie, and not afraid of the law. And when they got caught, they demonstrated that probably my favorite of this is a woman named Betty Smith in Tennessee in 1885. She's standing before the judge, and this is the actual transcription with the judge. The judge. What did you do with the whiskey you made? Smith? I sold it. Who bought it? Well judge it would be rather hard to tell who bought it. Some time ago, a party of gentlemen came into my neighborhood to hunt deer. The party got out of whiskey, but found it difficult to buy any. After a while. I told a man if he would put his jug down on $1 and go away he might when he came back, find a jug jug full of whiskey. He did so the judge would you know the man. And the woman looked up at him and said, Oh, yes, sir. I recognize him in a moment. You are the man judge. So you have you. I very seriously doubt it was actually the judge. But you have you have this sort of marks in the 1800s of women just not caring in terms of the authority. One of my other favorite stories is from another Tennessee woman. Those Tennessee women I'd tell you what now. Oh, maybe we should be watching out for you bootlegging any whiskey in here. If so when he got so this woman was reported to be the largest woman in Tennessee. I mean, who's really keeping track of this stuff going to the whole yellow journalism piece. This is something I picked up on a paper but Betsy Molins weighed 600 pounds. In the 1800s. That's pretty big. She was bedridden. And she had all these moonshiners around her area. And they would make make whiskey, she would store the whiskey in their house. In one report, she said to keep it under her bed. I could not confirm that. I don't know how that worked out. Or maybe she kept some in the closet. But bottom line is we know she was a pretty significant bootlegger. And when people came to her home, she hooked him up with whiskey would tell him where it was. Well, she sold some to an undercover agent or undercover cop at that point, a law man. And they're like, Well, we're gonna take you out. And keep in mind she weighs 600 pounds. She told the law man, carry me out if you can. So prohibition hits you know, the temperates women do their thing. And we see an incredible change in dynamic and women. During Prohibition, the women
bootleggers are much different than what we saw in the 1800s. In the 1800s, they were very entrepreneurial. They were leading gangs, but the illegal markets started drying up. And as the women were pursuing rights to vote, and trying to ban alcohol. At the same time, cities were getting rid of brothels, prostitution started becoming illegal. And they started really cracking down on illicit sales, we would see a pretty significant bans on the selling to Native Americans. Of course, the country as a whole really shifts its priorities with the Native American tribes. And so that kind of, you know, lost in that whole shuffle is the woman bootlegger who is no longer really relevant. Prohibition comes along, and there's a little bit of relevancy for the quote. Woman bootlegger again. But this time they're bootlegging for a much different reason you still have the entrepreneurial women. But right now, you have mostly women who are bootlegging, because their husbands are dead. They have no other means to provide for their family. And what that did was create kind of a sad atmosphere for the police officers. And so a police officer might show up and see come into arrest, unknown bootlegger in the area, sees a bunch of ratty haired kids, they barely have a potato in the closet, you know, they don't have any food, you might let them go. And in times, they did arrest them. One example is an Ohio woman named Columbus, Ohio rather married our Kino was arrested, they found four curly haired boys, their father had abandoned them. And moonshining was the only way she could make money. So she was arrested in 1924. Her steal was seized, and she received $1,000 Fine. According to my research, that was one of the largest finds for a woman at this point in prohibition. The children went to a neighbor, she started doing jail time, and somebody reached out to the Ohio governor, victim II. And he commuted her sentence to five days. So at this point, we see we kind of get a picture of politicians and judges having some sympathy. In addition to the law men having sympathy for the women bootleggers. President Warren G. Harding actually pardoned a woman with 11 children, and no father. So it went all the way up to the top in this country in terms of how we viewed women bootleggers. Now, what I do find interesting about this, is that this was the notion for women with a lot of children. But if the women were single, or if the women had an accent, meaning they were an immigrants, the judges treated them much differently. Maybe that was the prejudice of the time. Maybe they wanted to teach them a lesson. Maybe everything was unique and individual to the case. But I found a very interesting quotes from Chicago, Judge Henry M. Walker. He had a Polish woman before his court, she was a whiskey maker. This is what he said. You are a travesty on motherhood. You are the mother of four children, and yet you are selling moonshine, which may poison other women's sons. I'm going to notify the federal authorities and I hope they will deport you. Now, isn't that a quite a bit drastic feeling that we see with the Chicago judge, then President Harding, partying a woman, the Ohio governor commuting a sentence, police officers blatantly ignoring women getting arrested. It's completely different turn and the only thing that I can associate the only thing that I could find to be a connection with that is that these women were immigrants. And maybe there was some prejudice going forth with the with the women bootleggers. But there's one thing that should be recognized, and that is, women bootleggers had the opportunity, because the laws on the books allowed them to most states, especially Ohio, had very strict laws against male officers searching a woman it was illegal. And so if a raid came in here, right now, you every lady in here, if all the officers were cops, male, and every woman in here had a flask and you know on their persons, you would be protected. You know, they did not have the right to search you. i On the other hand, could be getting, you know, searched over here like there's no tomorrow. And I found it very interesting that the criminal syndicates took advantage of this. They started hiring women and using them at every corner. And this is from a an prohibition agent in Ohio. painted up doll was sitting in a corner. She had her arms folded, and at our command she stood up but then came the rub. She laughed at us. Then defiantly Claire to bring suit against anyone who touched her. Now, I don't know if there was actual civil cases that went against law men. I don't the country wasn't quite as frivolous and litigious as it is today. But I have a feeling that this painted up doll might very
well have sued the police officer. And Oklahoma agent actually confirmed this sort of notion, saying that we find the woman bootlegger the hardest to catch. And not only did this legal loophole allow the criminal syndicates to take advantage of the situation. It was also the time men were more chivalrous. They didn't suspect women really have anything. And this is a quote from the Boston daily globe. No self respecting federal agent likes to hold up an automobile containing women. So even if they did not bootleg the whiskey, the actual bootleggers hired women to sit in the car with them to drive along the road, because they would be less likely to get pulled over by a cop or a federal agent, it would be rude to pull over a car with the lady. That was the notion then. And of course, the prettiness of this woman apparently mattered. According to the West Virginia Charleston Daily Mail with a Holy Girl, a man may get arrested between a certain Kentucky town and this city for a pint of corn liquor. With an unusually pretty girl, he might get away with 10 gallons. But this kind of brings everything to a head. And you know, 1923 1924 when agents believed that female bootleggers outsold the men, five cells to one. Now, again, they were not reporting this. I mean, they were not reporting their sales numbers. So this was a fairly good judgment on the revenue agents at the time. And if you're a woman in 1925, and you don't shoot at an officer while you're in the middle of getting arrested, why wouldn't you bootleg, a Milwaukee woman admitted to earning $30,000 a year, she was caught and fined $200, with a month sentence to jail, netting a profit of $29,800. For the year, a Denver woman was sentenced to church. Now that may not go over well, for some, but I'll take church for a little bit of profit. And also the judges. By the late night, by the 30s, they were kind of getting annoyed with the whole bootlegging thing. So you see a shift in the mood. People are tired of the judges are tired of you know, dealing out these fines are tired of giving, you know. This was a government started encouraging Sheriff county counties to hire women agents. The Treasury agency hired its first woman in 1922 Her name was Miss Georgia Hopley. That was the woman who was up there on the on the frame. You saw her eyes she was not married. She was very intense. And apparently she did not like women bootleggers. This is what she said upon her hiring women resort to all sorts of tricks concealing metal containers and their clothing and false bottoms who's got false bottoms on in here? Anyone know? And traveling bags and even in baby buggies. On the Canadian, Mexican and Florida borders. Inspectors are constantly on the lookout for women booklet bootleggers who tried to smuggle liquor into the States. Their detection and arrest is far more difficult than that of male law breakers. Now, what's interesting about this, about four or five years after she says this women bootleggers are so strong that the Temperance unions, the Treasury agency, they start downplaying women. There were women, women in the court system backed up by like 200 to go to court. They were killing the books for the court system. And yet, they became such a big deal that they started doing a propaganda push probably around 1927 1928 saying, Oh, wait, no, yeah, I know we said this five years ago, but Oh, no, there's might be one bootleg in the entire country now. So they started shifting their plans that maybe maybe inside their huddles are saying, well, by talking about the woman bootlegger, we're encouraging future woman bootleggers. So but there's not really any indication as to why they started denying it. I can only assume that they're trying their own little propaganda spill. So you, you have these women all over the place, and how do they get caught? Well, a West Virginia woman was caught with cheese sold liquor to an undercover agent. This is how this is how women got caught a lot. They weren't searched by the men, the men would come in and be an undercover
was that the press loved and I mean, love women bootleggers, because they could give them personally think that was a smokescreen. But you know, it just the point of that particular story headlines all over the country. Looking for the blonde bootlegger, they never caught her. I

And this woman was a molly Richardson. Muhammad Ali, not Umali but she was paid $5 for a jug of whiskey. And when they went to arrest her, she swallowed it. And 1925 Thelma Elson claims he only sold one gallon of whiskey. She was caught and was a suspected bootlegger. She was 21. And this was her first offense. And when they started pressing her for where she got the whiskey, she's like, Oh, I don't know. In Georgia 1929 Nail Jetsun had been arrested and charged and sentenced three times. She sold liquor to earn money to keep her children in school. She was so she received a jail sentence of maybe a few days. She could have enjoyed those few days, and went back to her business wasn't that big of a deal. But she tried to escape. And this is one of the big pieces to the woman bootlegger puzzle, is that, you know, if you're if you are only in jail for five days, and you're making 15 $20,000 a year, can you stick it out for a little longer. But the reason why a lot of these women would actually end up being executed in Canada get longer sentences throughout the country was because they tried to initiate violence. And but not all of them did. Some of them didn't get caught. Anybody in here know Janet Steele Holloway. She's the founder of women leading Kentucky. Her grandmother was a pretty notorious bootlegger. She would transport moonshine from West Virginia, to Chicago during Prohibition. And when she would ask her when Janet would ask her grandmother nicknamed granny bill about this, she was like, a girl's got to make a living. But Bill it her name was Billy Brown, and she actually was sent to the first federal pin for women. And that was the Alderson, federal prison in Tennessee, and she would join countless women bootleggers in that time, there was a lot of female bank robbers, small time bank robbers and bootleggers. It was a very minimal security system. Anybody here from Newport, Kentucky, you're close you're close. So this was this was another one. This was kind of like a during Prohibition Newport was a kind of a hot spot for bootleggers George ream has frequented quite often there was a place there of ill repute called the Kentucky in. They ran a speakeasy there. And this is the only woman and my research that I have not been able to track down. Her name was the Miss Tiger woman. And she ran that speakeasy. And that's all we know about her. She worked with the the mobster Howard vise and purchased whiskey from the bootlegger George Remus who, coincidentally was from Cincinnati and murdered, his wife got got sent to an insane asylum and released a few months later, but this Miss Tiger woman is one of those people where it's like, she was doing something right because she didn't get caught. And there was a couple of murders in her place too. So that is one of the few few women who've been able to get away with it and we don't even know her name yet. In Defiance, Ohio, anyone from defiance? Anybody know where Defiance is? Right? We see a woman get another large fine of $600 for the sale of six gallons of white meal. Now I don't think anybody's wanting to drink this white meal. I'm feeling like that's why she got the fine of $600 Not because of the amount but because it was bad stuff. And you would actually see women bootleggers, all bootleggers really, but especially women when they would get caught. They would try to tell the judge to let everybody know that their whiskey was the good stuff. Because when they got out, they didn't want to have a bad reputation of selling something dirty, because people would cut it with bleach and well, you know, people end up dying at various points on bad moonshine still happens today in places like India. People make bad moonshine and correctly, or moonshine incorrectly and it gets them sick. Another woman who was not caught was someone who was simply known as the blonde bootlegger. This was a woman who met a pilot's in Zanesville Ohio. And the pilot offloaded his apparently Canadian whiskey rum and some bourbon on to her truck. And she took off, the pilot gets arrested. And I don't know if he tells the police that it was a blonde bootlegger, a blonde woman that took all of his product. But they were never never able to catch her either. And what's interesting about this woman is that the press fell in love with her who has this blonde bootlegger, who isn't. And the next week, you would see headlines all over the country. Looking for the blonde bootlegger, they never caught her. I personally think that was a smokescreen. But you know, it just the point of that particular story was that the press loved and I mean, love women bootleggers, because they could give them
all sorts of nicknames. You had henhouse Helen. You had moonshine Mary, you had Texas GYN and aka Queen of the nightclubs, and my favorite was queen of the bootleggers. Now, anytime a woman was arrested with any more than a pint of whiskey, they call them the Queen and the bootleggers or they said that this was the first woman arrested for bootlegging in this particular area or in the entire country. They were saying this well into the late 1920s. But rest assured, Cleveland, Ohio enjoys the right to claim the first woman bootlegger arrested after Prohibition. That town was a mess of women bootleggers running liquor well into the 1960s when they shouldn't have been what is up with Cleveland. But the strongest and most powerful woman bootlegger on the mall was a woman from Bowling Green, Ohio. Her name was Cleo Lythgoe. She after after Prohibition hit. She moved to the Bahamas and became a legitimate licensed wholesaler liquor wholesaler in the Bahamas. She was majestic looking very beautiful. People thought she was Russian, French or Spanish. Some thought she was actually an American spy. Some thought she was a Spanish spy she could. She had a lot of connections in Scotland, due to her pre prohibition dealings, and actually would work with the real Bill McCoy. And anyone heard that name. Ever heard the real real McCoy comes from this fella. She worked with this guy to get actual scotch and have it shipped to the Bahamas illegally, and bring it in the United States. She was also working with people in Kentucky, I could not find out who but she was working with people in Kentucky to get bourbon and people in Indiana for some rye whiskey. So I couldn't find out who again, these are not people who keep book records or good notes with their clients. So she used to work with Bill on this regard, but she saw that the real money was not in the supply side of things. It was in the bootlegging and she was she faced a lot of issues with competition in the Bahamas, undercutting her whiskey saying that she had a superior product she didn't have a superior product everyone else. Well, there was one fella doing this to her. And in one day this guy is in the barber shop shaven and he she goes in there takes the blade out of the barbers hand puts it up against his throat and very quickly corrects that issue. This woman also face grave danger many times was threatened with rape. You know, rape is a is a control thing. How would you like it if you're one of these big powers are full macho men and this woman comes in and starts getting all your business. Well, in the Bahamas that was even apparently a bigger deal than it was the United States at that time. So she kept the pistol with her at all times, and a one time a man try to actually a cost her in her own room. And she reached for her pillow as if she had a gun underneath there. Apparently, this fellow thought she did, she did not. And he fled the room. So she faced a lot of issues like that. So she knew what she was into. But she was also very prepared to take care of herself. And the media fell in love with this woman. Remember, I told you they loved women bootleggers? Well, they especially love Cleo. Cleo, was written about by every single paper in the world. And I don't mean that lightly. They had stringers just hiding out in her hotel, just to report what her actions were. And, of course, what does that do? That gets a love letter sent to the newspapers that covered her. She received actual marriage proposals long before match.com. And so this is from an Englishman who simply signed it one who loves you. I only wish you lived in England, I would marry you as a home life would be far more suitable for your for you then the President occupation. And she also had people asking for money. She had want people wanting recipes. I mean, it was it was amazing. The amount of admiration she had across the world. The the point to this was, though, that she didn't need a man. You know, she was like, I don't need a man and she never married. She told the paper. I don't need a man to tell me what to do. I mean, she was independent, very strong woman, and would protected her protected her assets at all costs. Well, if you hire people in this line of work, eventually you're going to get betrayed. And when in 1925, one of her boats were seized at in taken into New Orleans. Her employees stole the boats. And they didn't complain otherwise. I mean, did did she have enough power to get them taken care of in the in the pen or did they actually steal the boat? I mean, I don't know. I think that a woman who's commanding a multimillion dollar whiskey ring has the capability of killing you if you if you get caught and that was probably one of the deals. But you know Clea
Lythgoe was actually running a multi million dollar whiskey bootlegging operation, but we don't hear about it. We hear about George Remus, we hear about Al Capone, or about the real Bill McCoy. And chances are if you were drinking premium scotch, and the 1920s, you know, 1920 to 1925. It came from her because she never let her products get diluted, unlike a lot of suppliers. But there's really not a lot we know about her other than what's in, you know, arrest records and newspaper accounts, which can often be wrong. And she wrote a very cryptic memoir that to this day, you can't make heads or tails of what she did. So she never incriminated herself, but we do know that she was a very significant supplier up until 1925. And she's from Ohio. So this area can kind of claimer. So prohibition ends. Okay. It ends and bootleggers you know, people can buy liquor, legally, you know, through the lovely three tier system that we have today. Many of the books, many of the rules are still in the books. Yeah, like it's still kind of stinks to be honest with you. But you have ways to buy liquor legally. Well, if you're a woman bootlegger in the 1930s, do you want to get a special license and start doing it legally? Heck, no, I'm gonna keep that profit. So just because Prohibition ended, that does not mean the illegal whiskey running stopped. This is just an idea of the taxes that they were paying in 1952. According to the Miami Herald, a fifth of blended whiskey, that costs $4.27 $2.36 went to taxes. So you can run this perfectly legal operation over here and give more than half of your profits to the guy But Oh you can do it over here and take your chances because bootlegging is not really on a lot of people's radar it does in certain areas. But if you're sly you can get away with it. And a lot of women did. Just a couple of my favorites are Kentucky women. There was a woman actually. In 2007, Maxine Payton from Glasgow, Kentucky. She gets arrested and is charged with trafficking alcoholic beverages in a dry county. For she was see they seized 30 Can cases of beer, bourbon and gin and she was selling the beer for $1. A can. This isn't a dry county at 2007. Now she was doing this for a while. They're women doing this in Cleveland. There are women doing it all over the state. They're just running, running to Jefferson County, buying it legally and then selling it out of the refrigerator in Oldham County. That's all that's going on here. But the law says that they can't do it so they get arrested pay a fine serve six months in jail or something like that. Probably the most notorious is a woman named Maggie Bailey of Harlan County, Kentucky. Anyone ever heard of mags Bailey? Is anyone willing to admit that they purchased moonshine from mags Bailey, statute of limitations is gone. So it's okay to admit it. Maggie Bailey, was probably it was the largest bootlegger coming out of Harlan County after Prohibition, and she bootlegged basically, from the time she was 16 years old. And 1921. To the year she got saved in 1996. There are some reports though, after she found the Lord, she's still paddling a little bit of rye whiskey. Allegedly, this woman was five foot four, or print Tres, just as sweet as she could be. She never made moonshine, but she sold it out of her rented shack and clover town was you know, small areas, small town in that area. And why she never really got was really a target by the local police was she worked with a lot of them, their nephews would get sick and she would pay for the doctors. They would run out of coal in the winter. And she would give them a comb. And this woman was like the Robin Hood of bootleggers. And there's actually a woman who's like this in in the Irish Times name's Kate Carney. During the Great Famine, she was giving pot chain, which is the Irish moonshine to poor families. So you know, when the when you have one of these really large women in the bootlegging circles with the exception of the entrepreneurial minded or maybe the brothel minded women, you find that they're very philanthropic and they try to take care of their community. And they just really, you know, bootlegging is just a means of making money. That was the case for Maggie. But in 1941, she sold to an undercover federal agent and was sentenced to two months and Alderson, the, the facility I mentioned earlier. Later on in 1970, she underwent trial after state police discovered booze at her place and a half million dollars of cash and securities. Following the arrests, the Internal Revenue Service realized the thing about the arrest she got she got off on and her brother in law took the fall. Again, you kind of develop this love in the city in the county and people always end up taking the fall for
that was very common. But the arrest also illustrated to the IRS that this woman had never paid taxes. And so they started digging through her records and place a $1.37 million lien against a property. And the Kentucky Department of Treasury issued $3,708 and liens for back taxes. The IRS sued her and ended up suing her for $170,000 and some change for tax penalties from 1942 to 1963. Now, I don't think this is good advice. I don't think an accountant would tell you to do this. First of all, they would tell you not to bootleg, it's illegal. But second of all, she didn't keep records and that actually worked to be in her benefit. Because they didn't really know how much she made. They couldn't pin her to an exact amount. And so she only ended up paying $18,000 out of that whole deal. I mean, think about it. What in the world is the IRS let you know let's see. $1.37 million in liens Come $18,000 Now I've never had any dealings with the IRS, knock on wood. But I just I just can't see that happening today. So she died in 2005 at the age of 101, probably because all that good whiskey she had. But she was kind of an end to an era, you know, a woman who bootlegged in prohibition. And a woman who bootleg after she gave interviews, occasionally always denying everything. I had the opportunity to speak with her lawyers. And she was just like the, you know, when she got caught, you know, she, she avoided getting caught, because everybody loved her nobody on a jury in that area jury of her peers would ever convict her. And also, because if she didn't know your parents, and your parents, parents, she wouldn't sell to you. So she used some of those old fashion. Who's your Daddy kind of things to to make sure that the but when she died in 2005 There she did the family received cards from President Bush. Senator McConnell. Oh, all of these politicians were were very saddened to see her go because she represented more than just bootlegging. I mean, bootlegging was just a means to make money in a dry county. She was really a very philanthropic person. And throughout history, we see that with women. And really, in the legitimate whiskey side of things, too. We see that women are philanthropic, while the men are just trying to build dynasties. So maybe they're just women are just better people than men. I don't know. But so she was she was the end of a true legacy in the women bootlegging arena. And again, all of these all of this research I've done is after someone has been suspected, has been ratted out, has been arrested. None of this stuff came from their lips willingly. So with that said, I would love to interview any women bootleggers in here for my next work. Anybody willing to come forward? Well, that actually concludes my discussion. I've got some lovely photos here. I want to show you we could talk about these about these women. Oh yeah, I wrote that book over there to whiskey women, where there's a lot of a lot of women bootleggers moonshiners, distillers, murderers. And this here is Georgia. Hopefully, she was the first trip woman Treasury agent. Alright, go ahead. This gives you an idea of how bad the problem was. You in 1922 This is one of the stories from a wire service that was floating about. You can see how they were concerned about them. And everyone read that okay. All right. And here's, we see quite a bit more here. This is this is the article I quoted earlier. Pretty girl as useful as liquor camouflage. Mentioned that was in somebody's vows one day. All right. And this is one of the ways that they they bootlegged in the streets. Women would secure it and garter belts. There's actually reports of larger women having a decent size kids strapped on the backside. So just like they were larger, they would wear it as like they look like they were pregnant. You know, that's kind of like the hand a hand. bootlegging. You know when you got them loaded up in the trucks and everything gets a little different. Okay. This is the sad day for all of us. I know I heard Mike you know, hurt his heart skip a beat back there. This is the day prohibition pouring all that out. Looks like MASH or beer some is a clear lift go. You remember I told you she was very exotic looking. She was a head turner and she could she could. She could get a lot of contracts in her favor. And this is a good old fashioned flask in the booth cannot be searched by man. I do believe that's my final photo. Yes, get the term, the term bootlegger. I've always thought that I actually have not researched that Mike is putting slapping in the old boot. That's basically it. That's that's one way it's always been assumed for me to so I didn't have washed it on the floor. Ah, that was that was taken it
was remember the swastika wasn't always a bad thing. It was that used to be the Cherokee Indians symbol used to be it's a symbol of peace for some money. You know, the Nazis when screwed it all up? I don't actually know where that particular photo was taken. I do believe it was the East Coast though. It was also a symbol of the franc. That's right. It was different. There's there's a case of that in the Oscar gets whiskey Museum. Yes, ma'am. As a percentage of woman? Well, again, they you know, we don't know exactly because there was not a datasheet. Right. There. It is, like, from a sales perspective. It was five sales to one. I don't know if that means five bootleggers to one. But that's more research on my end to tally that up. Yes, sir. Maggie Bailey started when she was 16. How did she get started in and was she arrested at age 16. She that was told to me by her lawyer. She did get arrested but it wasn't. Nothing came of it during Prohibition. The big arrest when she served time, I believe was in the 40s I think it was on 42. Yeah, she Yeah. 41. She sold to an undercover agent. So that's when she really did her meantime. But that knowledge of when it was 16 was from her lawyer.

Fred Minnick  52:17
How did you get started? You know, it's

Question  52:19

how a lot of women got started. They just didn't have any money. You know, and they needed to, to make money. And her her, her husband was was in on two. So a lot of times it was a male. It was a husband wife scenario. There's this woman in Arkansas, who was considered to be the first woman bootlegger, first queen of the bootleggers. And she's like, 86 years old. And she would set out by the Steel's with a shotgun, and she fell asleep and that's how they how they got caught. So she's like, my husband didn't we wouldn't have got caught. So yes, sir. Prohibition in Canada, Canada did not have prohibition they had VariCam voting prohibition they pretty much repealed it because they knew they could make more money selling it what's interesting is Canada today has very strict advertising laws, whereas we have very loose advertising laws like it's illegal. And to advertise whiskey in sporting arenas and Canada. We're now Jim Beam has their own their own box at Yankee Stadium plastered everywhere. So yes, sir. Women from immigrants had treated more harshly right. What about African Americans? Oh, yeah, they were that, ya know, that was that was pretty significant. Actually, they were they were treated pretty poorly too. And, and actually, you know, I've got as a, you know, researching this stuff. That was probably one of the researching my book that was probably one of the hardest pills for me to swallow was, was the African American Eagle, because a lot of these distilleries here in Kentucky had slaves on their property. And even Thomas Jefferson, he did not like whiskey, but he gave it to his slaves. And he, you know, there I have accounts of how slaves were given whiskey just to fight off disease and, and when it came to the bootlegging side of deals, you know, they were not referred to in the very kindness light. And so they did receive pretty significant penalties. I do not know off the top of my head of you know, very, you know, the differences of them, but I do recall, feeling that it was very, very much not as fair, Sir, we're talking about we kind of talked about magazine 25 What happened at that point after 19 In 25, she kind of went off into hiding, and she died. I think in 6465 When she died, the Wall Street Journal said that she her estate was still worth about a million dollars. So she went into hiding, and we didn't. She wrote a memoir, it comes out. It's very badly written. I mean, it was it was a, it was difficult to get through that thing. And I'll tell you, it was very cryptic. And you didn't learn much from it. So I mean, there's a there's a place in Iowa
called Templeton. It's a little city. And they were considered to be one of Al Capone's favorite spots. And they made whiskey for Al Capone and other bootleggers. And there are several women, they're involved in that racket. And to this day, you go up there and people are very afraid to talk to outsiders. I just find that there is people who were in this illicit game were very much closed off to outsiders now. So I can only imagine what it was like for a major bootlegger coming out of prohibition. They were probably very afraid, because the IRS would love to take that money. Fine question. With all the information about Mary and calving and cornbread mafia, was there any indication or women involved with that? Not talking about cyber. You know, usually in every bootlegging ring, there's women. I most of the ones that I kind of talk about where are the leaders and the pioneers? You know, they're in various counties and states. Georgia had a lot of female bootleggers, Ohio had a ton, Kentucky, just a few key ones that I could find. Does that mean Kentucky women were smarter? I mean, I don't know. But it's I did not find much in that in that area.