THE CONSTITUTION WITH CARL

Volume 22 - The Twenty-first Amendment - Prohibition Ends

Prohibition Ends: The Amendment That Undid an Amendment

Central question: How does the Constitution undo its own change?





In Volume 19 you read how the Eighteenth Amendment banned the liquor trade across the whole United States in 1920. This volume is the sequel. Thirteen years later, the country had changed its mind, and it used the Constitution itself to say so. The Twenty-first Amendment did what no amendment before or since has done: it repealed another amendment outright, word for word, and ended its legal force.

It did a second unusual thing as well. Every other amendment in this series was ratified by state legislatures. This one was ratified by state conventions, special meetings of delegates the voters chose for this single question. And it did a third thing that still shapes American life today: instead of writing a new national rule about liquor, it handed the question back to the states, where it has stayed ever since.

Like Volume 19, this book keeps an adult subject at history level, in plain facts. Lawbreakers are presented plainly, and so are the crusaders on both sides. Nobody in these pages is made glamorous. The story is interesting enough told straight: a great national experiment, honestly attempted, honestly weighed, and honestly ended by the same road that began it.

For ages 7 to 11. Level Up boxes reach to age 13.

START HERE

Meet Carl and the Four Strands

Carl the Cardinal is Repeal Carl in this volume. He is rolling up a large scroll, and the scroll is blank. The scroll stands for the Eighteenth Amendment, a rule being put away. Carl is not carrying anything to drink, and he never does in this series. Behind him a shopfront stands open again, its door open and its awning out, because the street belongs to ordinary business once more. Carl's job is to show you the paperwork of a nation changing its mind, in order, with the receipts.

The four strands, kept separate

Strand	What it is
THE WORDS	The amendment itself, in ORIGINAL WORDS, plus a PLAIN LANGUAGE EXPLANATION set apart from it.
THE HISTORY	How the experiment wore out, how the repeal campaign was fought, and how the conventions decided, told from the records.
COURTS HAVE SAID	Named cases with years. This is interpretation by judges, labeled as interpretation.
STILL DEBATED	Real disputes that remain. Stated fairly, never as settled fact.

How to use this book

- Read the words aloud first. Then read the explanation.
- Write, draw, point, or dictate your answers. All of those count.
- This book pairs with Volume 19. Keep it nearby. Page 5 sets the two amendments side by side, and Activity 1, on page 16, is built on reading their words against each other.
- Keep one label straight all the way through: the Twenty-first Amendment is the Constitution. The Cullen-Harrison Act, on page 10, is a statute, an ordinary law. The two did different jobs in 1933, and mixing them up scrambles the whole story.
- Family Talk is where the family viewpoint lives. It is never presented as a court holding.

CARL'S TWO "ONLY" FACTS

This amendment holds two records no other amendment can take from it. It is the **only** amendment that repeals another amendment. And it is the **only** amendment ratified by state conventions instead of state legislatures. When a fact in this book sounds too neat to be true, check it against those two. They are both true, and the sources on page 20 carry them.

MEET CARL BOX

Carl rolls the scroll up carefully and ties it, because a repealed amendment is still part of the record. The Eighteenth Amendment still prints in copies of the Constitution today, with a note beside it saying it was repealed. Nothing is torn out. That is how a careful nation corrects itself: it keeps the old page, writes the new one, and lets any reader watch the correction happen.