

Secret Still

Gavin D. Smith

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This work covers Scottish illicit distilling. It examines the historical events and legislation that gave rise to, and sustained, its "boom" years. During those times, the Scottish countryside, and even city centres, teemed with "sma' stills" and were awash with whiskey which had been distilled without payment of excise duty. It follows the fortunes of the illicit distillers as successive governments tried to prevent them from plying their trade, and chronicles its decline after the first quarter of the 19th century. Not that illicit distilling ever disappeared in Scotland, contrary to popular belief, and the recent past - and present - is far from neglected. Using a blend of formal documentation, apocryphal tales and oral history, this work focuses on the manufacture, transportation and eventual consumption of the product of Scotland's illicit stills. The important role played by women in illicit distilling is given due credit.



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