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# The Saloon in Eau Claire, Wisconsin 1880-1920 : a Working Man's Institution



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## Abstract

In the decades prior to prohibition, the saloon was an economic and cultural institution in industrial communities that was created, operated, and frequented by the working class. In Eau Claire, Wisconsin, the number of saloons increased and decreased with the growth and decline of the lumber industry. This paper uses city directories, censuses, newspapers, and lumber statistics between 1880 and 1920 to analyze the relationship between the saloon, the lumber industry, and the working class in Eau Claire during this period. It also explores the different economic and cultural functions of the saloon and how these functions met the needs of Eau Claire's working class. Ultimately, the saloon in Eau Claire declined with the lumber industry, which led to increased diversification and greater upward mobility within the town's workforce. The examination of the saloon in Eau Claire contributes to the understanding of working class formation and culture in America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

## Subject

Working class--Wisconsin--Eau Claire--History  
Eau Claire (Wis.)--Social life and customs--19th century  
Eau Claire (Wis.)--Social life and customs--20th century  
Bars (Drinking establishments)--Wisconsin--Eau Claire--History  
Lumber trade--Wisconsin--Eau Claire--History  
Lumbering--Wisconsin--Eau Claire--History

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Eau Claire is located in Eau Claire County and situated in the west-central portion of Wisconsin. The name Eau Claire comes from the original French name "Eaux Claires" which translates to "Clear Waters" which was the description of the Eau Claire River by French pioneers. The city is about 90 miles away from Minneapolis and St. Paul. The terrain features steep slopes located in the eastern as well as the southern portion of Eau Claire. History. Eau Claire was established close to the convergence of the Eau Claire River and the Chippewa River as three settlements. In 1872 t Eau Claire (/oʊˈkleər/) is a city in Chippewa and Eau Claire counties in the west-central part of the U.S. state of Wisconsin. Located almost entirely in Eau Claire County, for which it is the county seat, the city had a population of 65,883 at the 2010 census, making it the state's ninth-largest city. Eau Claire is the principal city of the Eau Claire, Wisconsin Metropolitan Statistical Area, which is a part of the Eau Claire-Menomonie Combined Statistical Area. Eau Claire, Wisconsin. This bizarre labyrinth of buildings previously housed several factories, as well as an apartment block. It is said to be haunted by former residents and workers of Banbury Place. Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Kjer Theatre founder Earl Kjer is known to haunt his theater by tinkering with the lights and moving the props and the curtains. His apparition has been seen observing performances from his usual seat. A former blacksmith shop, the 1860s building was converted to a saloon and boarding house by John B. Paul. Its name comes from Irish immigrant James Sheeley who, with his wife Kate, bought the building and took over in 1905. In 2001 when the building was being cleaned and touched In Eau Claire, Wisconsin, the number of saloons increased and decreased with the growth and decline of the lumber industry. This paper uses city directories, censuses, newspapers, and lumber statistics between 1880 and 1920 to analyze the relationship between the saloon, the lumber industry, and the working class in Eau Claire during this period. It also explores the different economic and cultural functions of the saloon and how these functions met the needs of Eau Claire's working class. The examination of the saloon in Eau Claire contributes to the understanding of working class formation and culture in America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Subject. Working class-Wisconsin--Eau Claire--History. Institution. People. Exhibitions & Publications. During the 1880s, the two wings of the women's rights movement struggled to maintain momentum. The AWSA was better funded and the larger of the two groups, but it had only a regional reach. The NWSA, which was based in New York, relied on its statewide network, but also drew recruits from around the nation largely on the basis of the extensive speaking circuits of Stanton and Anthony. For the next two decades the NAWSA worked as a nonpartisan organization focused on gaining the vote in states, although managerial problems and a lack of coordination initially limited its success. The first state to grant women complete voting rights was Wyoming in 1869.