

# House Story

Researching the History of a House

## Links and Additional Information

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### Architectural Style Resources (online)

Guide to Residential Styles (from the National Association of Realtors):

<https://bit.ly/2NI13Bo>

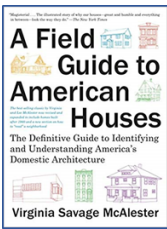
Architectural Styles of Historic Properties in Eau Claire, Wisconsin:

<https://bit.ly/2LYETiK>

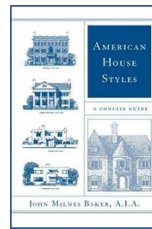
Eau Claire Landmarks: Designated Historic Properties in Eau Claire:

<https://bit.ly/2VQvM8k>

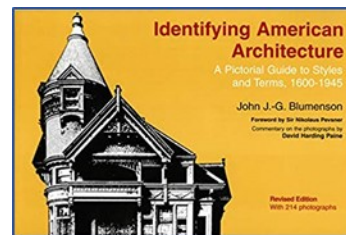
### Architectural Style Resources (print)



*A Field Guide to  
American Houses*  
Virginia McAlester



*American House  
Styles*  
John M. Baker



*Identifying Ameri-  
can Architecture*  
John Blumenson

### Step-by-Step Research: Maps

Sanborn fire insurance maps, plat maps, birds-eye view maps and topography maps can all provide valuable information about properties and buildings. The Wisconsin Historical Society's Maps and Atlases Collection online (<https://bit.ly/2HGoydj>) provides access to many pre-1923 maps. Additional print and microfilm versions of maps are available through the Chippewa Valley Museum and at the Eau Claire Area Research Center.

### Step-by-Step Research: City Assessors' Data

City Assessors' offices often maintain significant data regarding houses and properties. For the city of Eau Claire, much of this data is available through an online portal (<https://bit.ly/2Qiqf4G>).

### Step-by-Step Research: City Directories

City Directories provide detailed information about the occupants of buildings within a community. Many city directories are now available online, especially those that now fall outside copyright restrictions (pre-1923). Ancestry.com and archive.org provide some online access. Locally, the Eau Claire public library provides great pre-1923 online access that is fully searchable by name or address (<https://bit.ly/2Jvtxkj>).

### Step-by-Step Research: Register of Deeds Data

The Register of Deeds office for a community also contains valuable property information, especially helpful if you are trying to understand who owns a property and when transactions occur. For the City of Eau Claire, information about accessing this information is available from the office website (<https://bit.ly/2WfgJ7x>).

### Step-by-Step Research: Researching Owners and Occupants

Online genealogical resources, such as Ancestry.com or **FamilySearch.org** (free), can provide biographical data regarding individuals. Public libraries (including the UWEC ARC) may provide reading room access to these and other genealogical resources such as newspaper databases. The Eau Claire public library also provides some online access to local history and genealogical information (<https://bit.ly/2Jvtxkj>).

### Step-by-Step Research: Digging Deeper

Additional resources, such as photographs, subject and property files (WHS Architecture and History Inventory: [wisconsinhistory.org](http://wisconsinhistory.org)), tax records, blueprints, and more, along with research assistance, is also available:

UWEC Area Research Center: [library.uwec.edu/archives](http://library.uwec.edu/archives)

EC Library: [ecpubliclibrary.info](http://ecpubliclibrary.info)









Chippewa Valley Museum: [cvmuseum.com](http://cvmuseum.com)

WI Hist. Society: [wisconsinhistory.org](http://wisconsinhistory.org)

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Researching the History of a House

## Common Architectural Styles in Eau Claire, Wisconsin

 <p><b>Gothic Revival 1840-1880</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gothic shaped windows</li><li>• Steeply pitched roofs and steep cross gables</li><li>• Stone exterior and prominent window frames to emphasize scale</li><li>• Wall extends into gable without break</li></ul>	 <p><b>Queen Anne 1880-1910</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Steeply pitched roofs</li><li>• Patterned masonry chimney</li><li>• Wall texture variations</li><li>• Prominent front gables</li><li>• Towers</li><li>• Upper story balconies</li><li>• Prominent porches</li><li>• Large paned glass on windows</li></ul>
 <p><b>Tudor Revival 1890-1940</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Massive decorated chimney</li><li>• Façade dominated by cross gable</li><li>• Half-timbering appearance</li><li>• Tall, narrow multi-paned windows</li><li>• Steeply pitched roofs</li><li>• Ornate bargeboards</li></ul>	 <p><b>Colonial Revival 1880-1955</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Side gabled</li><li>• Symmetrically balanced</li><li>• Paired windows</li><li>• Multi-paned windows</li><li>• Accentuated front door</li><li>• One story wings featuring flat roofs</li></ul>
 <p><b>Bungalow 1910-1950</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exposed rafters</li><li>• Gently pitched roof</li><li>• Battered porch supports</li><li>• Top of windows often even with roof line</li><li>• Craftsman style is common in Eau Claire</li></ul>	 <p><b>American Foursquare 1850-1950</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 x 4 design (four rooms on each floor)</li><li>• Double-hung windows</li><li>• Porches, of various sizes, often present on front</li><li>• Simple columns</li><li>• Vernacular construction</li></ul>
 <p><b>Upright and Wing 1850-1950</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Front gabled façade</li><li>• Side gabled wing</li><li>• Porch often accompanies side gabled wing</li><li>• Multiple additions may be present</li><li>• Vernacular construction</li></ul>	 <p><b>Ranch 1950-1985</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One story design reflects larger lot sizes post WWII</li><li>• Asymmetrical façade</li><li>• Low pitched roof</li><li>• Prominent chimneys present on many early models</li><li>• Attached or detached garages</li></ul>

## Basic Architecture Terminology

**Gable** The part of the wall which encloses the end of pitched roof.

**Façade** The street side view of a building.

**Bargeboards** Boards which hang down from the roof line, often ornate and elaborately carved.

**Pane** A framed piece of glass; multi-paned glass has multiple framed pieces of glass in a single window.

**Double Hung** Windows with two vertically sliding sashes, each closing a different part of the window.