

Copy of letter sent to  
Hon. Andrew Carnegie  
#5 West 51<sup>st</sup> Street  
New York City

29 November 1901

by the Committee  
appointed by the  
Common Council  
of the  
City of Eau Claire

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Eau Claire, Wis., November 18, 1901.

Hon. Andrew Carnegie,  
New York City.

Dear Sir:-

In and by a resolution heretofore unanimously adopted by the Common Council of the City of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, the undersigned were appointed a committee to prepare and present to you, in behalf of the City of Eau Claire and its inhabitants, a request that you give to said City the sum of fifty thousand dollars, or such additional sum or portion thereof, as, in your bounty and good judgment, you deem would be commensurate with the needs and requirements of this City and its inhabitants, to build and construct a suitable building to be devoted to the purpose of maintaining a free library in this City for all future time, to be known as the "Carnegie Library."

To suitably advise you of the present conditions, and future prospects of the City of Eau Claire, and to put you in possession of such facts, we beg to submit the following:

LOCATION:

Eau Claire is beautifully located on both sides of the Chippewa and Eau Claire rivers in the central portion of western Wisconsin, 321 miles northwest of

Chicago and 80 miles east of St. Paul. It is the metropolis of the Chippewa Valley.

POPULATION:

The population of the City of Eau Claire, by the census of 1900, is 17,517.

ASSESSED VALUATION AND BONDED INDEBTEDNESS:

The assessed valuation of the property of the City of Eau Claire is \$6,569,076.

Its bonded indebtedness is \$250,000.

RAILROAD FACILITIES:

Eau Claire is situate[d] on the main line of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railway Company; on the river division of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway, and on the Wisconsin Central Railway. It has an excellent street railway and is connected with Chippewa Falls by the interurban line of the Chippewa Valley Electric Railroad.

EAU CLAIRE AS A BUSINESS CENTER:

Eau Claire is the central point of distribution for the Chippewa Valley and northwestern Wisconsin. It has numerous wholesale and department stores.

PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES:

While Eau Claire for many years has been and now is a lumbering center, still for a number of years there has been a gradual change to hardwood factories and the establishment of numerous diversified forms of manufacturing enterprises which employ a large number of hands at remunerative wages.

The principal manufactories of the City are an extensive pulp and paper plant, a refrigerator factory, two extensive furniture factories, three large saw mills, three foundries, several extensive machine shops, two box factories, carriage factories, wholesale shoe factory, trunk factory, planing mills, and a large number of other smaller factories. Two breweries and a pork packing establishment.

#### QUASI-PUBLIC INDUSTRIES:

The Eau Claire Light & Power Company maintains 4,000 incandescent and 200 arc lights; the Gas Company has 15 miles of mains, and now takes rank among the best gas works of the State. The Eau Claire Water Works operates 25 miles of pipes and has about 340 hydrants. The Chippewa Valley Electric Railroad Company has 7 miles of electric railway within the City upon which a first-class service is maintained.

#### PUBLIC BUSINESS AT EAU CLAIRE:

Eau Claire is the County Seat of Eau Claire County. It is the location of the United States Land Office and Revenue Office, and it is one of the places where the United States Court holds its session for the Western District of Wisconsin.

#### GOVERNMENT BUILDING:

At its last session, the Congress of the United States appropriated \$110,000 for the purposes of providing at Eau Claire a public building.

#### RECENT IMPROVEMENTS:

Within the last few years, the more important substantial improvements that have been made in the City of Eau Claire are a pulp and paper plant and sulphide plant by the Dells Pulp & Paper Company at a cost of \$500,000; a brown stone depot by the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railway Company at a cost of \$125,000; a new central plant by the Eau Claire Gas Company at a cost of \$50,000; several attractive and costly business blocks and many comfortable homes.

#### CITY, GENERALLY:

In the City there are three banks, a fine opera house, several first class hotels, three public parks, numerous beautiful churches and excellent schools; have a fine hospital under the care of the Sisters, and an exposition building.

#### FUTURE PROSPECTS:

No one not acquainted with the exact situation realizes the possibilities and certainties of the improvement and development of northwestern Wisconsin, of which Eau Claire is the center. The pine has been simply the first surface crop and already hardwood enterprises are being established and developed. Beds of clay and shale are now being developed within but a few miles of the City of Eau Claire.

That Eau Claire will continue to grow at a moderate rate, and will, in a few years, become a manufacturing town of treble its population, would seem assured.

#### LIBRARY:

In the year 1875, the City of Eau Claire established a free public library. It has now over thirteen thousand volumes, and the City for many years has contributed annually to its support the sum of thirty-five hundred dollars, but it is willing to, and will, if means are provided to erect a library building, contribute at least five thousand dollars a year hereafter.

The City of Eau Claire for many years was compelled to pay rent for its Library building, and it is now occupying rooms in different parts of the City for library purposes. The principal room at present is being furnished by one our citizens, but our tenure of occupancy is indefinite and limited, and the City has no available means to provide a building suitable for the accommodation of its present library, and to meet its increasing demands.

The Common Council of the City of Eau Claire, well knowing your laudable purpose and earnest desire to contribute means to worthy communities sufficient to build in each a library building for the accommodation and use of a free public library, and being desirous of providing a suitable building for such purpose in the City of Eau Claire, resolve to make a formal application to you in its behalf.

We, therefore, in behalf of the City of Eau Claire and its inhabitants, most respectfully request that you donate and give to the City of Eau Claire, on such reasonable terms and conditions as you may prescribe, the sum of fifty thousand dollars, or such additional sum or portion thereof as to you may seem meet, to erect and establish in this City a library building for the purpose of maintaining

therein a free public library, and to be known as the "Carnegie Library."

The City of Eau Claire will undertake to, and will in each year provide at least five thousand dollars, or such reasonable sum as you may exact for library purposes.

THE GIFT WILL BE APPRECIATED:

Without hesitancy or resort to flattery, we can assure you that the City of Eau Claire and its habitants will greatly appreciate and ever keep in kindly remembrance such gift as you may see fit to make.

This feeling of gratitude and appreciation will be deep and lasting, not alone because of the munificence and the intrinsic value of the gift, but also because of the higher thoughts and feelings that will be inspired in our people, in contemplating that, through and by the wise and generous impulses, so highly exemplified in yourself, it has been made possible for our people, for all time, to enjoy the advantages of a free library.

Awaiting your pleasure we have the honor, in behalf of the Common Council of the City of Eau Claire, and its inhabitants, to subscribe our names hereto.

Respectfully,

(Signed)

T.F. FRAWLEY  
WILLIAM J. STARR  
DAVID DRUMMOND  
GEO. L. BLUM  
M. SEVERSON  
J.H. FOREST