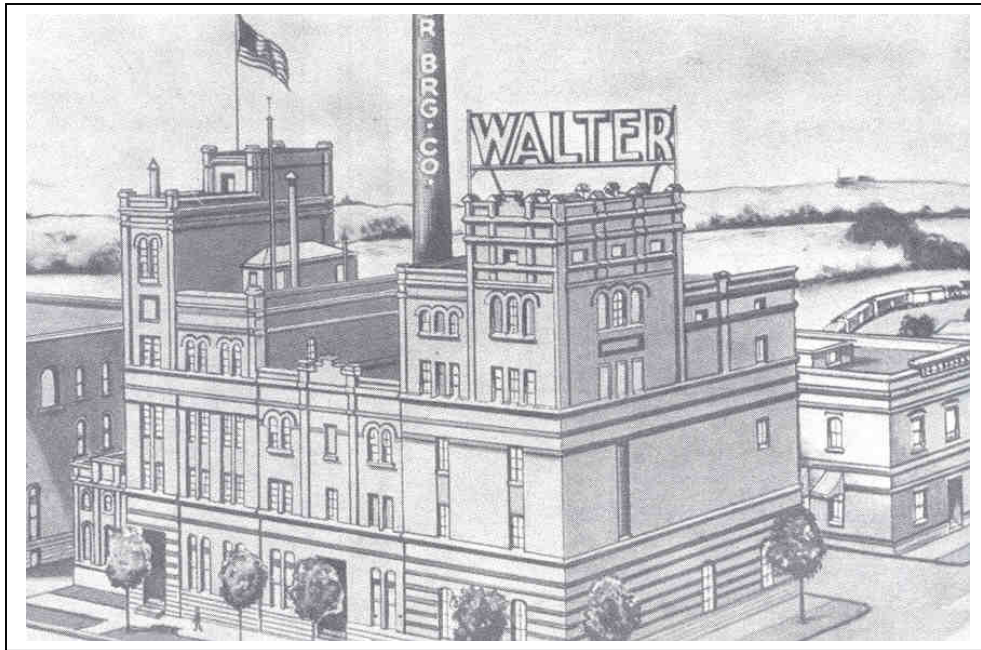




Walter Brewery/Olinger Gardens

318 Elm Street/Huysen and Hobart Streets

Romanesque Revival



John Walter purchased the troubled Empire (old Dells) Brewery in 1890 for a sum of \$8,500. Within a few short years and in spite of a major fire in 1892, the John Walter Brewing Company had become a successful operation.

At the corner of Elm and Hobart Streets is the 1890 stone foundation, which supported the original Malt House. The large two to four story Brew House at Elm and Barstow and the Bottling House behind it were remodeled with brick in 1906. Other buildings in the complex are much more modern.

This was one of the first breweries to use steel-lined tanks and an interior waste system with tile drainpipes. The brewery remained in the hands of the Walter family until 1985, when it was sold and renamed Hibernia Brewery, which operated for several years. The buildings are now utilized for various commercial and industrial uses.

At the corner of Huysen and Hobart Streets is the site of the old Olinger Gardens. As early as 1866, German residents enjoyed an afternoon's respite from their toil at Mr. Olinger's Beer Garden. John Olinger was a well-known grower of fruits and vegetables for the community. His garden became one of Eau Claire's favorite pleasure spots, with German Brass Bands, a dance pavilion and German-style lager beer.

Use of Olinger Gardens terminated in 1922 when John Walter bought the land intending to use it for construction of a railroad spur to his brewery. Hibernia Brewery reopened the garden in 1985 for a short time as Walter Park.