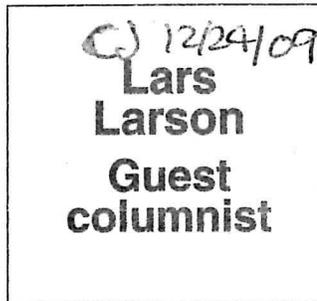


The four major components of Washburn's reconstructed economy, shipping lumbering, wood products and the Du Pont plant, were complemented by several small, if ephemeral, businesses. The Washburn Brewing Company was organized in 1889 by the Waegerle family, who constructed a brewery on the southwest corner of Third Avenue West and Fifth Street. At first the brewery was successful, but with the decline of the great boom and competition from the national brewers, it was soon in financial difficulty. Purchased by a national brewing company, the brewery went out of business when Washburn went dry in 1914.

In 1906 several local men organized the Washburn Brick Company to manufacture bricks from the large deposits of clay underlying the city. The plant, located south of Bayfield Street, between Eighth and Tenth Avenues West, had a capacity of 20 to 30 thousand bricks per day. It soon encountered financial difficulties, however, going out of business about 1910.

In late 1905, a "creamery man" from Ottawa, Minnesota invited to Washburn by the Commercial Club, constructed a creamery on the southeast corner of Bayfield Street and Second Avenue West. It quickly encountered financial problems, however, and went bankrupt in 1907. The creamery was taken over by another

party in 1908 but soon closed. In 1889 John A. Jacobs of Washburn opened a small mill for manufacturing cedar shingles, but closed it in 1901. He reopened the mill the following year but in late 1903 it burnt down. Undeterred, Jacobs built a new mill on the same site for producing railroad ties, fence posts, and laths, but how long this mill remained in business is not known.



In 1895, Frank J. Meehan, who had built the Union Block, on the southeast corner of Bayfield Street and Central Avenue, after the great fire of 1888, erected the Meehan Block, on the south side of Bayfield Street, between First and Second Avenues West. The smaller store on the west side of the building was occupied for years by the City Drug Store. A series of clothing businesses occupied the larger east side of the building, including the Segal brothers from Washburn, who took over in 1903. They arranged it as a department store, at that time a new merchandising concept, holding an elaborate grand open-

ing in the spring of 1903. By the following year the store was in financial difficulty. Taken over by creditors, it apparently continued in business but for how long is not known.

In the summer of 1910 A.I. Lien constructed a building for his clothing store on the south side of Bayfield Street, near Washington Avenue. Constructed of brick, its local brownstone façade was the last use of that stone for building construction in Washburn. In recent years the building served as a post office.

There were many other short-lived businesses during these years, including a cigar factory, a machine shop, and a bottling works for soft drinks. There were also numerous hoped-for enterprises that never materialized, including a cedar yard, a plant to produce turpentine and other products from tree stumps, a pea cannery, and a plant to make bins for grocery stores.

Community leaders even believed that the Navy could be persuaded to locate its large training center near Washburn and were acutely disappointed when the Great Lakes Naval training Center was established near Chicago.

The end of Washburn's post-boom recovery was marked by two significant events. In 1911 the city council agreed to return to the Town of Washburn the northern sections of its gerrymandered 1904 territory, based on

the realization that tax revenues from the area were insufficient to support the costs of roads and schools. The council's action was submitted to the voters but was defeated. In 1913 the legislature incorporated these sections into the Town of Bayview, finally reducing Washburn's inflated territory to its present boundaries. The advent of prohibition in the city, a year later, was perhaps a more significant development. The substantial revenues from saloon licenses were lost, a major argument of the opponents of prohibition. While the closing of the saloons meant that Washburn was no longer a wide open town, at the same time there was an increase in petty offenses, described by colorful words such as bootlegging, moonshine, and blind pig, as people tried to get around the restrictions imposed by prohibition.

While Washburn's reconstructed economy did not generate the prosperity of the great boom, it was sufficient to maintain what was now a slowly declining community. Then in June 1914 an event in a distant country, which few people knew even existed, dramatically changed Washburn's fortunes, and, for a few brief years, it appeared as if the good old days had returned and would last forever.

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