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Names and Traditions of Some Rochester Streets

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Old street names often supply suggestive reminders of community traditions. Some, like Clinton and Monroe Avenues, recall the deeds of historic leaders and also help to date the street openings; others, such as Chili and Dewey, provide documentation for events of international importance and prove that our forbears were by no means isolated provincials. Many more, of course, honored local residents, as in the case of Culver and Alexander, or marked the location of distinctive activities or institutions that have long since disappeared, as has happened on Mill and Spring Streets. Some streets have borne a succession of names (some still have two or more), which further helps to illuminate the city's history.

But before exploring the rich vein of historical lore to be found in any list of Rochester's street names, it seems desirable to look briefly at the street pattern, particularly that of the central city, for it, too, is historically revealing and will also help to structure our street survey.

Even a hasty glance at the city map is sufficient to remind us

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that Rochester was the product of several independent promotional efforts. Colonel Rochester's hundred-acre tract on the river's west bank clearly has a different street grain from Brown's tract, sometimes called Frankfort, which adjoined it on the north, and from the Greig tract on the south; each of these west-bank subdivisions contrasts even more sharply with the street layouts east of the river. Yet a close look reveals that every one had its rectangular grid clustering around a small public square, though Brown, Caledonia, Franklin, and Washington "squares" have suffered reductions in size and alterations in shape, while the old court house square has long been completely covered by the county's third Court House.

An observant driver or pedestrian can readily see where any one of Rochester's pioneer subdivisions ended and the next one began by noting the sudden turns or jogs in the older streets, as on Fitzhugh or Plymouth, for example, for it was there that the proprietors endeavored to fit their separate patterns together into one unified city. Naturally the wide curve in the river and the location of its falls also helped to determine the course of the adjoining streets. Indeed, the Genesee supplied an effective dividing line on a north-south axis, while Main Street, running east and west from the original bridge crossing, provided the principal link between Rochester's two halves.

Two other features of Rochester's street layout are historically revealing. First is the wagon-spoke arrangement of several major streets, particularly on the east side. For a city that lacked a master planner in its formative years, comparable to those who served Washington and Buffalo, for example, the east side of Rochester does present a striking unity as St. Paul, Clinton, North, Main, East Avenue, Monroe, South, and Mt. Hope spread out over a 220-degree arc. Most of these were, of course, the rural roads of the pioneer period designed to accommodate market wagons bringing produce in to the east-side

bridge-head. West of the river no single focal point developed, though two major highways converged at the Four Corners and again over a mile west at Bull's Head.

Topography had much to do with that major street pattern, and it had still more to do with the location of the Erie Canal and the New York Central tracks. Obviously, the canal had to follow contour lines that led to a river crossing between the main and the small upper falls. Thus the Erie, with its Genesee aqueduct located a few hundred yards south of the Main Street bridge, provided a secondary dividing line across the city winding from the southeast to the northwest. In like fashion, the early railroad builders had to find a river crossing between the same falls, but, by selecting one at the brink of the main falls, they were able to skirt around the northeastern edge of the city of 1840 and to push westward between the major concentrations of old Rochesterville and Frankfort.

Thus the city's first business center, located by Colonel Rochester at the Four Corners on the west side, expanded and prospered for half a century between the arcs of the canal on the south and the railroad on the north. By the mid-1870's, however, a measure of congestion had developed within that constricted area, and with the construction of a solid row of stores along the southern as well as the northern side of Main Street bridge, Rochester's unique Ponte Vecchio, the flow of business enterprise east along Main Street increased. Soon it began to spread over the much wider district bounded by the river, the canal, and the railroad on the east side, where the wagon-spoke arrangement of the principal highways gave it a new focus at the Main and Clinton four corners.

Main Street and Its Branches

Main Street, the principal east-west axis since the beginning, lacks a distinctive name but makes up for it by a rich history.

Parts of the street have borne several names and its eastern end has changed its course. Possibly it is more accurate to say that its eastern extension, which originally followed the route of the old road to Pittsford, was renamed East Avenue in the mid-1850's when a new Main Street extension was opened from the Liberty Pole eastward across the railroad to a junction with Goodman Street and Schanck Road, named after a contractor by that name. In the late eighties, East Main, by absorbing Schanck Road, extended eastward to Culver and twenty-five years later reached Winton Road.

West Main was originally named Buffalo Street by Colonel Rochester when he laid out the 100-acre tract in 1811. It commenced at the river where a wooden bridge was already under construction and stretched westward to present Bull's Head corners where it connected with the Genesee and Buffalo roads. Sometime after the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, the portion of Buffalo Street west of the canal was renamed West Avenue, and so it remained after 1870 when, in a peevish slap at our robust neighbor to the west, Buffalo Street was renamed Main Street West. That name was also applied to the section beyond the canal in 1913, when at last Main Street West reached the junction of Chili and present West Avenue.

Under its varied names, Main Street West has had many significant landmarks, most of which have now disappeared. First in importance have been the court houses, the third now completely occupying old Court Square, which once graciously accommodated the first (1822-1849) and the second (1850-1892) Court Houses. Even the third is now partially supplanted by the new Hall of Justice on the Civic Center to the south. Gone, too, is the elegant classical building of the Rochester Savings Bank erected across Fitzhugh Street in 1857. Though somewhat antiquated in its later years, that structure long provided in its spacious loft a nursery for many of Rochester's civic and cul-

tural institutions. A block farther west and on the north side, the red brick hulk of the old United States Hotel, later the birthplace in 1850 of the University of Rochester and the Rochester Theological Seminary, is still standing, but its future is bleak. The last of a succession of lift bridges over the old Erie Canal disappeared with the abandonment of that waterway in 1920, although Broad Street decking the subway, which followed its course, was not completed for another five years.

Farther west on Main Street, the General Hospital, which opened as the City Hospital in 1864, is now about to give way to a new complex of buildings to house the Board of Education and an experimental school. Still farther west at Bull's Head, the old tavern, which supplied that name, has long since been forgotten and St. Mary's Orphan Asylum for Boys, which replaced it, has also disappeared, giving way to the present Bull's Head Shopping Center. Across Genesee Street, St. Mary's Hospital has likewise replaced most of its original stone buildings of the 1860's and after, and the West Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, erected in 1899, is now the oldest institutional structure standing in that area.

Of course the Powers Block at the eastern end of West Main has for a full century been the street's most distinctive landmark. Built in large part of cast iron, when that was a novel form of construction, and capped by three mansard roofs, it for a time housed one of the largest private art galleries in the country and still serves as a favored office building for attorneys.

Main Street East, which now starts at the Four Corners instead of at the bridge, has had many landmarks of its own. The old Reynolds Arcade, built near the Four Corners in 1829, gave way a century later to its taller but much less interesting successor, and the brick structures that have lined Main Street bridge since the 1870's will soon do the same, though we can hope that their replacements will be more worthy and will at

the same time permit a view of the Genesee on both sides. Main Street hill east of the bridge has long since been graded down to a gentle rise, but somehow the two skyscrapers that straddle the street at the crest of the hill, the Commerce and Granite Buildings, no longer appear so lofty or so elegant as at their opening in the mid-1890's. The Granite Building recalls the great Sibley fire, which gutted the buildings east of it in 1904 and hastened the removal of the Sibley, Lindsay & Curr Co. eastward beyond Clinton Avenue, where its spacious department store, the largest in Western New York, gradually took shape between 1904 and 1926.

The Liberty Pole triangle, now again in the news, deserves special mention. The first Liberty Pole was erected there in July 1846, when the surrounding lots were only sparsely developed. By 1859, when that first pole was cut down after a severe gale had loosened its moorings, houses and shops had appeared on all sides. The second Liberty Pole, erected on the same site a year later, soon became the beacon for a lively farmers' market, which appropriated all sides of the triangle during the 1860's and 1870's. That second pole stood for almost three decades until a great storm in December 1889 brought it crashing to the ground on the day after Christmas. Both poles had their critics as well as their admirers, and that appears to be the lot of the third pole destined to arise this summer, but if it is as successful as its predecessors in symbolizing the spirit of liberty, Rochester will be the beneficiary.

It was in the mid-1850's that Josiah W. Bissell tacked up a string of signs renaming old Main Street beyond the Liberty Pole as East Avenue. An early painting shows a miscellaneous assortment of forest and ornamental trees along the avenue, but now its residents, led by Bissell who lived in the brownstone house, set out two rows of young elms, which gave it as the decades advanced an unmatched charm, though the elm-tree

beetle has in recent years somewhat marred its beauty.

Oldest among the distinguished mansions that still grace East Avenue are the Smith-Perkins house, known as Woodside, and the Pitkin-Powers house facing it across the street. Both built in 1840 and 1841, they are, respectively, occupied today by the Historical Society and the Boy Scouts. Most of the elegant homes that once lined the avenue from this point to the Liberty Pole gave way to business blocks after 1890, but the Hiram Sibley and Aaron Erickson mansions continue to face each other across the avenue, the latter as the nucleus of the Genesee Valley Club.

The larger and more sumptuous mansion at Number 900 East Avenue was erected for George Eastman in 1905. Built of brick with stone trim in the late Georgian revival style, it originally contained 49 rooms, including the spacious conservatory which housed a pipe organ and provided an ideal setting for the Sunday evening recitals that supplied the high point in the social life of Rochester for more than two decades.

Several of East Avenue's landmarks have unfortunately disappeared. The Warner Observatory, erected in 1881 near the entrance to Arnold Park, was the first observatory in the country open to the public. But after 12 years, Professor Swift dismounted his telescope and removed to California, leaving the observatory empty until its demolition four decades later. The library of the Theological Seminary, ancestor of Colgate-Rochester, occupied the southeast corner at Alexander Street from 1879 until its demolition in the late 1930's, and again its last years were desolate ones. Fortunately the brownstone house across the street from the Museum of Arts and Sciences, built by Bissell in the mid-forties with stone salvaged from Rochester's first aqueduct, is preserved today as a Methodist home.

Major North-South Arteries

Next in importance to Main Street and its branches were two north-south arteries both of which, like Main, have had several names. The oldest, even antedating Main, was the west river road, which was chopped out by the pioneers in the late 1790's from the upper falls to the lake. It was later improved by Colonel Rochester and his contemporaries as Mill Street (south of Main), Carroll Street (north of Main to Mumford), State Street (Mumford to the Deep Hollow at present Lorimer Street), and from that point north as the road to Charlotte. In similar fashion the east river road, opened along the eastern bank from Avon to the falls in the early 1800's, received new names from the interested townlot promoters who improved it. The designation, River Street, stuck for a time south of Main, but as it was extended north of the bridge it became Market Street to the main falls and then Clyde Street to its terminus at Carthage above the lower falls.

Each of these streets has had its landmarks and has experienced changing fortunes. State Street, including the portion originally called Carroll, early attracted some of the town's major establishments. The Mansion House, sometimes known as Christopher's Tavern, was for several years the leading hotel. General Lafayette was wined and dined there on his visit to Rochester in 1825. The Ensworth Tavern at the Four Corners was a lesser rival, but the Eagle Hotel which replaced it in 1820 quickly acquired undisputed priority and maintained leadership for more than 20 years. Both Jenny Lind and Daniel Webster stopped at the Eagle Hotel on their visits to Rochester in 1851. Daniel Powers, who erected his five-story cast-iron block on that site in the late sixties, added three mansard roofs in successive efforts in the seventies and eighties to retain supremacy over the new Elwood and Ellwanger buildings erected nearby.

Although State Street's commercial leadership was challenged in these years, when the rebuilding of Main Street bridge and the removal of the New York Central Station to the east side encouraged retailers to move eastward on Main, a young bank clerk, George Eastman, soon redressed the balance. When his first workshop, opened in 1880 at Number 71 State Street, proved inadequate, he found larger quarters, also on an upper story, at Number 149, but in 1882 he moved again, this time to Number 343 where the progressive development of his factories and office tower has assured the industrial pre-eminence of State Street.

State, of course, leads into present Lake Avenue, as the old road to Charlotte has been renamed. Maintained for four decades by the Charlotte Plank Road Co., it became the route in 1890 of the area's first electric trolley. That venture was backed by the promoters of the amusement parks at Charlotte who wished to attract excursionists from the city who might otherwise have been content with a visit to Maple Grove, a rival resort at Rochester's northern limits maintained by the proprietors of the city's horse-car line, or to Glen House in the gorge below. Lake bathing was still a novel experience at the turn of the century when women bathers were covered from head to toe and all men's swim suits had skirts. The city added old Maple Grove to its park system in 1895, renaming it Maplewood Park; in 1918, it also acquired the amusement resorts at Charlotte and converted them into a public beach. Long before that date the development of a new industrial park at the Ridge Road crossing had assured the economic future of Lake Avenue.

After its brief period of prosperity in the 1820's and 1830's, Exchange Street gave precedence for a full century to Main or State. Its short course, reaching at first only to Troup Street, restricted its use, and a later extension to Clarissa Street after its first bridge was completed in 1844 only partially removed

the handicap. The construction of a railroad south along the west bank of the river promised additional advantages, but although it was linked with the Erie Railroad, completed in 1851, that company did not feel the need to erect a depot in Rochester until 1887, a year before the county jail was built nearby.

Exchange Street's greatest activity came in the early 1900's when the huge interurban trolleys made the short stretch between the canal and Court Street their principal loading station, yet few of the property owners fronting there reaped much advantage. That era passed quickly, but a revival occurred between Main and Broad in the 1930's, and in the last few years, with the opening of the War Memorial, Exchange Street has again enjoyed a renewed activity south of Broad that foreshadows the pagentry that may develop there when the new Civic Center Plaza across the street is completed.

East of the Genesee the name of the first portion of the river road running north from Main was changed from Market to Clyde when the opening of the Public Market on the West side in 1831 made it inappropriate. Seven years later the whole of Clyde north to Carthage was renamed St. Paul in recognition of the Episcopal church by that name which provided at the time its most distinguished structure. The city's first horse-drawn railroad followed that course for a few brief years in the late thirties, and most visitors to the Flour City rode or strolled along this route at least as far as Falls Field to enjoy a full view of the main falls and of the busy mills that lined the west bank of the gorge. Traveling circuses pitched their tents on that sloping field for several decades, and a beer garden operated there for a time, drawing citizens back for repeated visits, until it was sold for industrial uses in the 1880's.

The industrial advance along North St. Paul commenced in the mid-seventies when Bausch & Lomb erected the first of its

cluster of factory buildings overlooking the gorge a few blocks north of the falls. Soon the Bartholomew brewery and other concerns were located nearby, and a new burst of activity developed along the entire street when the New York Central elevated its tracks in the mid-eighties and built its second station over the St. Paul Street underpass.

It was at this time that H. H. Warner, the patent medicine king, decided to locate his factory and office building next door to old St. Paul's Church. First, however, he asked the city to widen the street so that it could become the principal commercial thoroughfare. When the Common Council tabled that action as too costly, Warner left for New York vowing that he would pull out of Rochester. The city fathers, hastened after him, promised to widen the street as he proposed except at the Main Street corner, where the Granite Block was soon to be erected, and the resultant jog in the width of St. Paul at the northern corner of that block remains to this day a curious reminder of that squabble.

South Avenue, originally called River Street, was known as South St. Paul Street for half a century after it, too, received that name in 1838. Beyond the canal crossing a new street was cut through in the 1840's and named South Avenue as far as the city line, where it linked with the East Henrietta Road. The Rochester & Hemlock Lake Plank Road Co., organized in 1850, improved a swampy stretch of that road to expedite the transport of produce and people to the county almshouse, located in 1826 a mile south of the village on this road. Its site was later absorbed by the expanding city, and the entire street from Main Street to the city line was named South Avenue in 1899.

The first major structure to appear on South St. Paul was the Enos Stone building near Main Street, which housed Rochester's first permanent theater, 1848-1868. Destroyed by fire, it was replaced by Cook's Opera House, which, after frequent re-

modelings, is still standing though unoccupied today. Another old landmark, known at its opening in 1880 as the New Osborn House, later as the Milner and finally as the Mills Hotel, has recently been replaced by the Downtowner Motel, while the old Young Men's Christian Association Building, which stood at the Court Street corner for 25 years after 1890, has given way to a parking lot.

South Avenue's most notable addresses are public ones: 115 South Avenue is, of course, the address of the Rundel Building of the Rochester Public Library, opened in 1936. A mile and a half to the south is the entrance to Highland Park. Originally laid out on the east side in 1888, it now straddles South Avenue and supplies, with its horticultural attractions, its amphitheater, and other features, the city's favorite mecca on many occasions. And beyond the park on the east side of the street is a row of county and state institutions that extends for a full mile south to and beyond the city limits.

Mt. Hope Avenue, originally also a part of River Street, attracted little interest until 1838, when the removal of the public cemetery from the west side of town to the cluster of hills on the east bank, overlooking the river, prompted the Common Council to name both the street and the cemetery Mount Hope. The simultaneous decision of young George Ellwanger and Patrick Barry to lay out a nursery on the east side of that street brought it a new functional vitality. An omnibus ran two trips daily out this street in the fifties, and in 1863, the newly chartered horse-car company, headed by Patrick Barry, established its second line on this route.

Mt. Hope Avenue early attracted a number of distinguished buildings. The oldest is the Warner Castle, built on the model of an English castle by Horatio G. Warner in the early 1840's. Of equal interest are the small Gothic office building designed by Alexander Jackson Davis for the Ellwanger & Barry firm in

1854 and, a year later, the Patrick Barry home next door; built in the Italian Victorian style, the latter has recently been restored as the home for the provost of the University of Rochester. But, of course, the street's prize possessions are its towering trees, and in the Barry estate these really are prizes, brought there from many lands by the city's leading nurserymen.

Additional North-South Arteries

Rival north and south arteries soon appeared on both sides of Rochester. Clinton Avenue, named after Governor DeWitt Clinton, the chief promoter of the Erie Canal, started at the canal east of South Avenue and extended north across Main to the edge of town. The building of the railroad retarded its development beyond the tracks in the 1840's, but many newcomers from abroad found cheap home sites there, and, after the elevation of the tracks in 1883, a horse-car line and in 1890 a trolley advanced north along Clinton to and beyond Clifford serving an area which now became a populous immigrant district. The electrification of the line also prompted the city in 1893 to push Clinton Avenue south across the canal where it absorbed old Pinnacle Street and extended to the city line.

Clinton Avenue has had some noteworthy structures. The two churches at the Main Street crossing have long since been forgotten and the Lyceum Theater where drama flourished for half a century after 1888 is only a memory. The Seneca Hotel erected nearby in 1905 and the opening that year of the Sibley store on the northeast corner speeded the street's commercial development. More recently the building of Midtown Plaza with several of its stores opening on Clinton promises to sustain its inner-city values.

But Clinton Avenue south of Washington Square was from the start overshadowed by Monroe Avenue. Originally named Court Street by Elisha Johnson, who laid out the east-side tract in 1815, this section of the new road to Pittsford was renamed

Pittsford Street when in 1820 a new eastern extension of Court Street was opened parallel to Main. Fifteen years later, the Common Council changed its name to Monroe Street in honor of former President Monroe.

A stage followed this route in the thirties, but the road became so poor in boggy stretches that the Rochester & Pittsford Plank Road Co. was organized in 1850 to improve and maintain it beyond the city limits. The Rochester & Brighton Railway Co. laid a horse-car line out this street in 1865 to Goodman, which was then the eastern boundry, and extended its tracks to the canal crossing by 1889. The demand for service beyond the canal to the new city line at Culver was not granted until after the arrival of the trolleys. A cluster of stores and shops had appeared around the water trough at the Goodman Street crossing in the eighties, but they did not extend in solid phalanx to the canal crossing until the time of its abandonment in 1920.

Balancing Monroe on the north side of Main was North Street. Although extended as a farmer's road deep into Irondequoit before that town was set off from Brighton in 1840, the railroad that year slowed its development, and North Street did not receive horse-car service until the late 1870's. An eastern fork, originally called North Avenue in 1860, was renamed North Street when that longer street claimed designation as an avenue in 1874. The eastern branch regained the avenue appellation two decades later, only to drop it in 1897 for Portland Avenue, a probable bow to the city in Maine towards which it vaguely pointed. North Street had to content itself with that more prosaic name and faced the diversion of its trolleys to Portland on the east and to Hudson on the west (pointing in its turn toward Hudson Bay), but these rival tributaries assured a prosperous commercial development on North Street as it approached Main.

The open spaciousness of Rochester's east side made ample room for the layout of two additional radial streets of major importance. Park Avenue, which was laid out eastward from Alexander Street (probably named for Squire Alexander S. Alexander, an early resident of Rochester) in the 1850's, got its name from the short-lived driving park that provided a brief attraction to east-side sportsmen in pre-Civil War years. James Vick purchased the oval track in 1866 and operated it for a time as a seed farm, but he soon subdivided the property and sold off house lots along Vick Park A and B, while Park Avenue drivers continue to this day to swing around the southern end of the old race course.

The other major easterly street was of course University Avenue, also opened in the late 1850's and named for the University of Rochester which had just decided to accept part of the Azariah Boody farm as a campus, to which it moved in 1861. That avenue, whose promoters boasted in the mid-sixties of the fine view it afforded of trains puffing in and out of the city, later developed unexpected value as newly expanding industrial firms vied for locations along its northern side in the late 1890's in order to make use of the railroad in back. Meanwhile a spur off the avenue, which crossed the tracks and headed due east, took its name from its ultimate destination, the Atlantic.

West of the river and beyond the Four Corners, the proximity of the canal on the south and the railroad on the north hampered the development of major intersections east of Bull's Head. Yet Plymouth Avenue, under various names, did acquire considerable importance and so did Clarissa Street in a different respect, though neither became a major trade artery.

Plymouth, originally named Sophia south of Main, and Hart to the north, honored Colonel Rochester's wife and a former partner in Maryland, respectively, while John Greig named the southern extension of that street Caledonia after his Scottish

hometown, and Matthew Brown named its northern extension Jones Street for no apparent reason. After a considerable hassle in 1857, the city fathers renamed the entire street Plymouth Avenue in honor of the newly erected Congregational Church by that name, though one disgruntled councilman, with a sense of humor perhaps, proposed that it should more properly be named Immaculate Conception after the more numerous Catholic parish, which planned to build a still larger church on the street.

Despite disagreement over its name, Plymouth, or Sophia in its heyday, early became a favorite location for handsome residences. If none rivaled the few scattered classical mansions on nearby Fitzhugh (a Rochester partner) and Washington Streets, many were substantial and a few were very elegant, notably the Churchill and Bronson houses at the Atkinson Street corner and the Hess house at Caledonia Square. That square eventually became Plymouth Circle and a choice site for a flower bed which was maintained at the start by the residents of nearby Glasgow and Edinburgh Streets (the last reminders, with nearby Greig, of the tract's Scottish promotion) and was taken over by the new Park Department in the late 1880's.

Much could and has been said of Fitzhugh and Washington Streets, of Livingston Park and the intersecting streets, Spring and Troup, which, with Sophia and Atkinson, comprised the heart of the old Third Ward. Protected by the canal, which obstructed the passage of heavy wagons to and from the business center, but which made a stroll into town and back a pleasant stint, this area quickly became Rochester's choice residential district. Only a few of its elegant mansions have survived, notably the Campbell-Whittlesey house on Troup Street (named for Robert Troup, an early land agent), the Jonathan Child mansion on Washington Street, (probably named for Washington County, Md., where Colonel Rochester had resided

for three decades) and the Ely-Osgood mansion, now the Daughters of the American Revolution house, on Livingston Park, which was laid out by James K. Livingston, an early miller, whose still larger classical mansion at the other end of the park has since been removed.

Just over the crest of the hill on which most of the gracious homes of the old Third Ward clustered is a north-south street now known as Clarissa. Originally named High Street, though, in fact, it was low and marshy and troubled by poor drainage, it attracted modest residents, many of whom found employment in the mansions over the hill. Most of Rochesterville's pioneer Negro families located here and cooperated in building the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church on nearby Favor Street. High Street was renamed Caledonia Street in 1868 during a resurgence of Scottish newcomers along its southern course; it retained that name until 1927, when it was absorbed by Clarissa Street as the section between Plymouth and the bridge had been called since 1844. Fortunes have been as changeable as the names on this street, which enjoyed a modest heyday at the turn of the century, only to suffer a rapid decline in recent decades as neglect and overcrowding have reduced it to a wretched state, prompting the adoption of a joint city and federal plan for its rehabilitation under an urban-renewal project that promises to make it again the commercial heart of a restored neighborhood.

A mile further west, Bull's Head corners form another significant hub. Road builders of the Town of Northampton opened the Genesee road north to this point and beyond in the early 1800's and Buffalo road west to Batavia. A glance at the map reveals that the northern extension was later bent eastward towards the main falls and became present Brown Street, named for Matthew Brown, while Genesee Street runs directly south to the westerly bend of the river around the University

of Rochester campus. A hamlet known as Castletown appeared there in 1811 near the foot of present Brooks Avenue. Among several comfortable rural estates that developed along the Genesee road, perhaps the most interesting was the Elmwood cottage built in the Victorian Gothic style for Captain Robert Harding in 1848. Later occupied for a time by Harvey Humphrey, a friend of the Negro who is said to have sheltered fugitive slaves in a hidden room in the cellar, the cottage is still standing in a forlorn state of disrepair.

Brooks Avenue likewise follows the route of a pioneer road and boasts of its historic traditions. Stretching west from Castletown to Little Black Creek, where it turned southwest through Chili Center, it supplied a convenient link to the southwest. Lewis Brooks, a Rochester Quaker and business leader, gave his name to the road, which attracted a cluster of Hicksite Friends in the 1840's, when the DeGarmos and the Anthonys settled on neighboring farms at the intersection of Brooks and present Genesee Park Boulevard. In the 1850's, both fugitive slaves and budding suffragists found shelter and refreshment in this rural retreat where Miss Susan B. Anthony spent several successive summers and holidays.

West from Bull's Head, the old Buffalo road led through Gates Center to the upper reaches of Little Black Creek where it, too, turned southwest to present Churchville, Batavia, and Buffalo. Renamed West Avenue within the city limits, this street likewise attracted a number of distinguished residences, notably that of Judge Henry Danforth, which is preserved today as the headquarters for the city's Senior Citizen activities. A second road, opened southwest from Bull's Head and connecting with Brooks at the Little Black Creek crossing, was named Chili after the town, which was in turn named for the new country formed in South America, though, for some unknown reason, the spelling and the pronunciation did not

quite match.

A third westward road branched off from State Street to follow the route of the Erie Canal through Spencerport and Brockport. Opened in 1815, it was named within the city Lyell Street for the Gates commissioner of Highways who supervised its early improvement. Though it became a busy stage route after the decline of the packet trade on the canal, it was not until after the building of the Vincent Place bridge over the gorge in 1873, linking it with the city's eastern side, that Lyell Avenue presented a solid row of modest residences west to the Erie Canal crossing. A decade later, with the construction of a lift bridge over the canal, house lots to the west began to appear, only to be displaced in time by a string of factories that now dominate much of the south side of this street westward to the new Barge Canal crossing.

Of course no other Rochester street could rival the Ridge Road in novelty, for here was a natural highway stretching east and west on a dry and firm course that required only minimal improvements where north-flowing streams had broken through. Although early settlers speculated over the fate of the prehistoric tribe that had built the road, it was not a tribe of Indians but the waves of an ancient glacial lake that constructed this 200-mile-long sandbar a few rods offshore many centuries ago.

The one point on the Ridge Road that required a major improvement was at the Genesee crossing where the river gorge cut a broad gap in this potential highway. Carthage pioneers on the east bank made the first effort to bridge that chasm in 1819, and the Carthage bridge, built of logs, was the longest single-arch bridge in the world in its day, though unfortunately that "day" was a short one, only 14 months long. After the fall of the Carthage bridge in 1820, a quarter century elapsed before a second one was erected, an early suspension bridge which

also collapsed after a short period, this time under a heavy fall of snow. It was not until the erection of the present Driving Park Avenue Bridge in 1890 that the two ridge roads were indirectly linked and not until the building of the Veterans' Memorial Bridge in 1930 that they were securely tied together.

Although a dozen major streets of the early years, some with different names on varied parts, provided the basic pattern for Rochester's growth for more than a century, with the city's expansion and the multiplication of automobiles in the last few decades, several minor streets and formerly rural roads acquired new importance before the new superhighway system was recently imposed on the old street layout. Thus Goodman Street and Culver Road, named respectively for pioneers who owned farms along their routes, served successively as eastern boundaries and are now integral parts of the city street system. Even Winton, named apparently for the automobile most popular in the early 1900's, has been absorbed by the city on the east, as Elmwood has been on the south, while Genesee Park Boulevard, laid out in the early 1900's as the first part of an ambitious outer loop, is now being superseded by a non-access outer loop hopefully destined for completion in the early 1970's.

2000 Streets

Although the 20 or more streets we have named still constitute the basic highway pattern, they do not exhaust our interest in the city's street lore. With approximately 2000 names in the street index today, it would be impossible to cover them all, but numerous categories of street names quickly appear. The prominence of Washington and Monroe prompts a check that reveals that all but six American Presidents have streets dedicated to them or bearing their names in Rochester and nearby towns—the forgotten six are Van Buren, Polk, Buchanan, Hayes, Truman, and Eisenhower. As many as 25 Rochester mayors

have similarly been forgotten, though 32 have been remembered, which is a higher proportion than among the governors, or even the states only 20 of which have Rochester streets named for them. At least twelve colleges have given their names to Rochester streets, though Harvard Streets, which may have inspired this particular practice, actually got its name from the Reverend John Harvard Castle, a Canadian friend of the subdivider.

Oxford should possibly have been given a horticultural name since its Magnolia trees have won fame for its three-block-long mall. Rochester's many years as the leading nursery center in America were perhaps responsible for the fact that Birch, Cedar, Chestnut, and at least 15 other trees have supplied street names in the city, as have seven types of fruit and numerous flowers.

Most of the principal industries and firms have streets bearing their names, from old Mill Street (the second one, which runs from the mills overhanging the western edge of the Genesee gorge south to the back of Main Street's stores) to modern Mustard Street, which supplies an entrance to R. T. French's mustard factory. Rochester has avoided an excessive use of numbers for street names but because of their obscurity most residents will be surprised to learn that the city does have a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th, as well as Avenues A, B, C, D, and E. One short street, Emanon Street, when read in reverse claims to have "no name." It of course contrasts with the many streets that honor noted residents, ranging from Eastman Avenue to Bausch Street, Curtice Street, Greenleaf Street, Sibley Place, Danforth Street, Seth Green Drive, and including at least one for a woman famous in her own right—Anthony Street.

The new loops and expressways (which are already in their incomplete stage moving cars rapidly into and out of the city and greatly relieving the old surface arteries—except during occasional traffic jams that dump an excessive flow onto adjoin-

ing streets) have failed so far to attract imaginative names. The Eastern Expressway may be as accurately named as East Avenue or North Street, neither of which follows the compass very closely, but since the expressway occupies the bed of the old Erie Canal and since its builders have preserved the stone frame of one of the canal's early locks, the name Erie Expressway suggests itself as more historically meaningful. The projected Southern Expressway might quite fittingly be named Highland or Lilac Expressway. And in view of the fact that the proposed salutes to George Eastman and George Aldridge cancelled each other out when Broad Street was named some forty years ago, their names might now be given to the Inner and Outer Loops, or better still, they might be named the Flour City and Flower City Loops, respectively, to help keep the city's history fresh in mind.

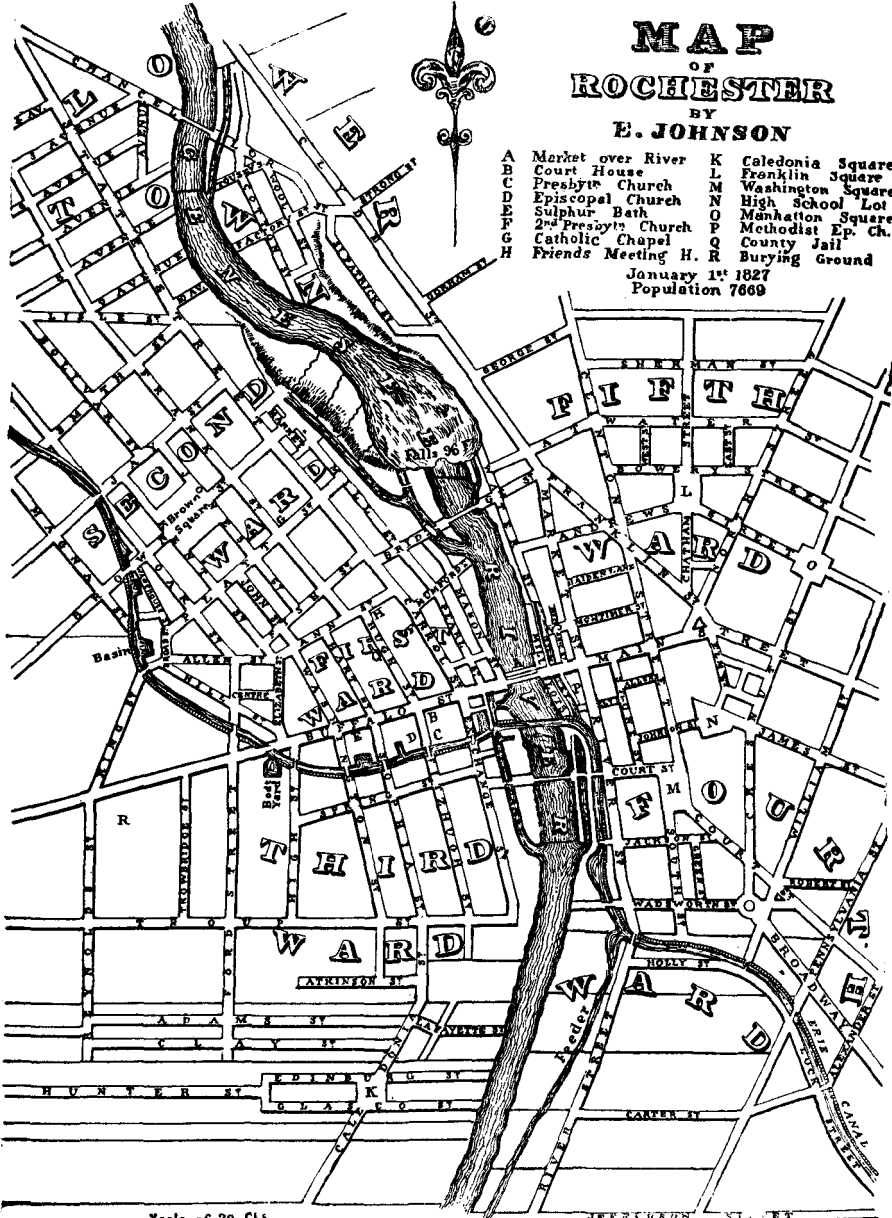
The general dissatisfaction with the popular designation of the "Can of Worms" might be removed by coining a new designation for such complex intersections. Since neither 'intersection' nor 'clover leaf' seems adequate, and since Rochester has long been the home of an active necktie factory, we might offer the symbol of a bow tie, and call the eastern one the Brighton Bow Tie. The western one, which promises to be much simpler, might be called the Gates Four-in-hand to provide the nation's expressway designers with a meaningful choice. At least we should prod our historic records more diligently when naming new streets in the suburbs if we wish to impress future generations with our sensibilities.

MAP OF ROCHESTER

BY
E. JOHNSON

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| A | Market over River | K | Caledonia Square |
| B | Court House | L | Franklin Square |
| C | Presby't. Church | M | Washington Square |
| D | Episcopal Church | N | High School Lot |
| E | Sulphur Bath | O | Manhattan Square |
| F | 2 nd Presby't. Church | P | Methodist Ep. Ch. |
| G | Catholic Chapel | Q | County Jail |
| H | Friends Meeting | R | Burying Ground |

January 1st 1827
Population 7669



Scale of 20 Ch

Eng. By Hudson Clark & Co. A.S.

1827

MAP
OF
THE CITY OF
Rochester

DRAWN FOR ORRILLY'S ANTHOLOGY
A. COLLECK
[1838]

- LEGEND**
- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Blue Ground of the City | 15. Yellow Ground |
| 2. Green Ground of the City | 16. Orange Ground |
| 3. Red Ground of the City | 17. Purple Ground |
| 4. Black Ground of the City | 18. Brown Ground |
| 5. Grey Ground of the City | 19. Light Green Ground |
| 6. White Ground of the City | 20. Light Orange Ground |
| 7. Blue Ground of the City | 21. Light Purple Ground |
| 8. Green Ground of the City | 22. Light Brown Ground |
| 9. Red Ground of the City | 23. Light Grey Ground |
| 10. Black Ground of the City | 24. Light White Ground |
| 11. Grey Ground of the City | 25. Light Blue Ground |
| 12. White Ground of the City | 26. Light Green Ground |
| 13. Blue Ground of the City | 27. Light Orange Ground |
| 14. Green Ground of the City | 28. Light Purple Ground |
| 15. Yellow Ground | 29. Light Brown Ground |
| 16. Orange Ground | 30. Light Grey Ground |
| 17. Purple Ground | 31. Light White Ground |
| 18. Brown Ground | 32. Light Blue Ground |
| 19. Light Green Ground | 33. Light Green Ground |
| 20. Light Orange Ground | 34. Light Orange Ground |
| 21. Light Purple Ground | 35. Light Purple Ground |
| 22. Light Brown Ground | 36. Light Brown Ground |
| 23. Light Grey Ground | 37. Light Grey Ground |
| 24. Light White Ground | 38. Light White Ground |
| 25. Light Blue Ground | 39. Light Blue Ground |
| 26. Light Green Ground | 40. Light Green Ground |
| 27. Light Orange Ground | 41. Light Orange Ground |
| 28. Light Purple Ground | 42. Light Purple Ground |
| 29. Light Brown Ground | 43. Light Brown Ground |
| 30. Light Grey Ground | 44. Light Grey Ground |
| 31. Light White Ground | 45. Light White Ground |
| 32. Light Blue Ground | 46. Light Blue Ground |
| 33. Light Green Ground | 47. Light Green Ground |
| 34. Light Orange Ground | 48. Light Orange Ground |
| 35. Light Purple Ground | 49. Light Purple Ground |
| 36. Light Brown Ground | 50. Light Brown Ground |
| 37. Light Grey Ground | 51. Light Grey Ground |
| 38. Light White Ground | 52. Light White Ground |
| 39. Light Blue Ground | 53. Light Blue Ground |
| 40. Light Green Ground | 54. Light Green Ground |
| 41. Light Orange Ground | 55. Light Orange Ground |
| 42. Light Purple Ground | 56. Light Purple Ground |
| 43. Light Brown Ground | 57. Light Brown Ground |
| 44. Light Grey Ground | 58. Light Grey Ground |
| 45. Light White Ground | 59. Light White Ground |
| 46. Light Blue Ground | 60. Light Blue Ground |
| 47. Light Green Ground | 61. Light Green Ground |
| 48. Light Orange Ground | 62. Light Orange Ground |
| 49. Light Purple Ground | 63. Light Purple Ground |
| 50. Light Brown Ground | 64. Light Brown Ground |
| 51. Light Grey Ground | 65. Light Grey Ground |
| 52. Light White Ground | 66. Light White Ground |
| 53. Light Blue Ground | 67. Light Blue Ground |
| 54. Light Green Ground | 68. Light Green Ground |
| 55. Light Orange Ground | 69. Light Orange Ground |
| 56. Light Purple Ground | 70. Light Purple Ground |
| 57. Light Brown Ground | 71. Light Brown Ground |
| 58. Light Grey Ground | 72. Light Grey Ground |
| 59. Light White Ground | 73. Light White Ground |
| 60. Light Blue Ground | 74. Light Blue Ground |
| 61. Light Green Ground | 75. Light Green Ground |
| 62. Light Orange Ground | 76. Light Orange Ground |
| 63. Light Purple Ground | 77. Light Purple Ground |
| 64. Light Brown Ground | 78. Light Brown Ground |
| 65. Light Grey Ground | 79. Light Grey Ground |
| 66. Light White Ground | 80. Light White Ground |
| 67. Light Blue Ground | 81. Light Blue Ground |
| 68. Light Green Ground | 82. Light Green Ground |
| 69. Light Orange Ground | 83. Light Orange Ground |
| 70. Light Purple Ground | 84. Light Purple Ground |
| 71. Light Brown Ground | 85. Light Brown Ground |
| 72. Light Grey Ground | 86. Light Grey Ground |
| 73. Light White Ground | 87. Light White Ground |
| 74. Light Blue Ground | 88. Light Blue Ground |
| 75. Light Green Ground | 89. Light Green Ground |
| 76. Light Orange Ground | 90. Light Orange Ground |
| 77. Light Purple Ground | 91. Light Purple Ground |
| 78. Light Brown Ground | 92. Light Brown Ground |
| 79. Light Grey Ground | 93. Light Grey Ground |
| 80. Light White Ground | 94. Light White Ground |
| 81. Light Blue Ground | 95. Light Blue Ground |
| 82. Light Green Ground | 96. Light Green Ground |
| 83. Light Orange Ground | 97. Light Orange Ground |
| 84. Light Purple Ground | 98. Light Purple Ground |
| 85. Light Brown Ground | 99. Light Brown Ground |
| 86. Light Grey Ground | 100. Light Grey Ground |

