

# ROCHESTER HISTORY

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## TOURING BACKWARDS

A VISIT TO ROCHESTER IN 1818, AND AGAIN IN 1838

BY BLAKE McKELVEY

There is perhaps no better method for recreating the history of a community than a stroll through the scenes of its early growth. In a city such as Rochester, most of the features of a hundred years ago have disappeared—not through decay, but because the business center of an industrial city has been erected over the site of the original village. Nevertheless, there are a sufficient number of early remains to suggest something of the past and possibly to throw light on some of the circumstances of the present. Where no traces of an old structure can be found, a mere visit to its site will frequently aid the imagination to reconstruct the former scene. Such a visit may become a real experience when made in the company of an aged citizen who, leaning on his cane, gives vent to a flood of reminiscences. So let us call upon one or two of the white-haired gentlemen of Rochester's past and enjoy a stroll around old Rochester—if we may use that adjective in relation to a city that has but recently celebrated the centennial of its incorporation.

### A STROLL ABOUT ROCHESTERVILLE WITH THE PROPRIETOR IN 1818

It will not be an imposition to ask Colonel Nathaniel Rochester himself to show us about, for we know that the old gentleman was inclined to be affable toward those interested in his village. By the fall of 1818—the time chosen for our first visit—Rochesterville had already spread out beyond the One-Hundred-Acre Tract bought by

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Rochester, Fitzhugh, and Carroll for \$1,750 in 1803. Several other promoters were actively developing neighboring tracts, and the population had recently topped the one thousand mark, so that the village could no longer be considered as the handiwork of a single proprietor. But the old gentleman had contributed the use of his name and had laid out a street plan along generous lines; he had himself invested extensively in improvements and, only a few months before our visit, had moved from his East Bloomfield estate and taken up a permanent residence here. Thus we can find no better guide for a tour of Rochesterville.

If we call late in the afternoon we will doubtless find the proprietor in the garden back of his house at the head of Mill Street [present Exchange Street, where it is joined by Spring Street]. The garden is a spacious one, extending down to the river's edge just at the point where the millrace commences above the cascades [today the City Hall Annex and some of the buildings on the eastern side of Exchange Street north of Court Street occupy the site of that garden]. As we open the gate a tall gentleman approaches to bid us welcome. It is Colonel Rochester himself, whose spry step contrasts with the aged appearance suggested by white hair and stooping shoulders—the undeniable effects of sixty-six years of ceaseless activity. When we have made known our desire to see the village, the Colonel, with a dignified chuckle, agrees that he will be only too pleased to accompany us, adding that the village is growing so rapidly that he will have to keep an eye on it himself.

As we set out to the north along the lane known as Mill Street, the Colonel stops and indicates with his cane the course which his new millrace will take when it is constructed in another year or so. The plan is to tap the river some distance above the Colonel's place, whence the race will cross his garden and flow north parallel to Mill Street towards the Red Mill ahead of us, where it will join the channel of the present but smaller race. Shortly we leave the lane and strike across the open field towards the Red Mill. After crossing a foot bridge over the millrace and climbing down a ledge of rock which extends out into the river where it forms the base of the cascades, we follow a path [approximately Graves Street] which leads over the meadow past the mill towards the western end of the river bridge. Before we have advanced many paces the Colonel stops and

points over to the right at a heap of refuse which, he says, is all that remains of the first mill erected here thirty years before by Ebenezer Allan.

A stone's throw beyond stands the sturdy Red Mill where four run of stones are busily grinding the grain brought down from farms up the river. Colonel Rochester tells us that, when this mill was erected, three years before, by Josiah Bissell and Hervey and Elisha Ely, he was himself planning to engage in a similar venture, but one such mill appeared to be sufficient for a village of three hundred inhabitants. Yet now we can see half a dozen similar mills scattered up and down both sides of the river. 'Yes,' admits the proprietor, 'we are growing more rapidly than I had expected. Some say we are growing too fast and that we will not be able to employ and support the more than two hundred families now settled here. But all of our mills are busy, as you will see when we make the rounds.'\*

As we continue past the mill we cross the stream through which the mill discharges its water into the river, and a few paces beyond we emerge onto the roadway called Bridge Street [today East Main Street extends across the bridge, starting at the Four Corners] which leads up to the bridge. Most of the houses in the village are scattered about to the north of this street, but Colonel Rochester suggests that we may wish to look first at the developments of neighboring proprietors on the other side of the river. We stroll across the sturdy wooden bridge from which we get a clear view up the river to our right of the succession of low cascades that produce the waterfall used by the mills above us. To our left some distance down the river we can see a few large mills at what the Colonel tells us is the main falls. After crossing the bridge we climb a slight hill on the east bank and stop in front of a rambling and somewhat dilapidated frame structure [near the corner of East Main and South Avenue] bearing the sign "Stone's Tavern." Here in the warm afternoon sun in front of what we learn was the first tavern opened in this neighborhood, we can enjoy a good view of the forest-bound settlement of Rochesterville.

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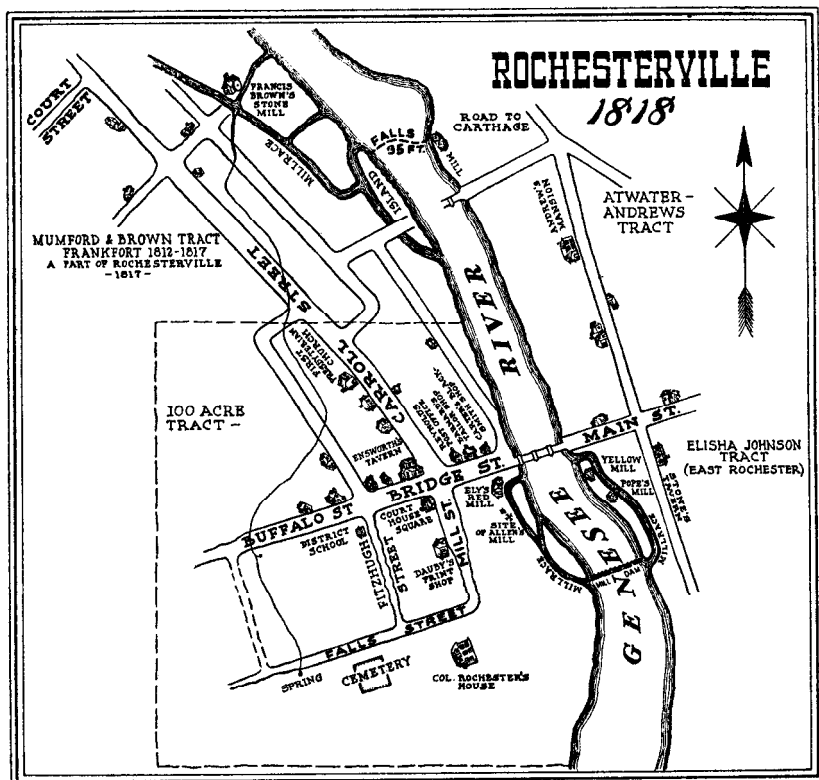
*\*Editors' Note:* We hasten to admit that this and succeeding "remarks" by Colonel Rochester have been placed in his mouth for the benefit of this tour. We are, however, confident that the facts he reveals are historically accurate. We have used the single quotation marks to indicate the limited character of these quotations.

Below to our left, as we face the river, stands a new Yellow Mill over a second millrace. The Colonel tells us that the mill was erected the year before by young William Atkinson, and was the first to make use of the power supplied by the newly opened Johnson millrace. 'There was quite a celebration here on the Fourth, last year,' the Colonel adds. 'All the settlers on both sides gathered for a bounteous feast and witnessed the blasting of the stones from the bottom of the raceway.'

We learn that Elisha Johnson, two years before, paid \$10,000 for eighty acres of Enos Stone's farm which bordered the river on this side. The millrace was the first of his developments and a dam was constructed just above the cascades in order to insure an adequate supply of water for the race. The tract was surveyed into town lots, and a settlement known as East Rochester has already sprung up. A paper mill has recently been built near the Yellow Mill, and water power sites are available for many additional establishments. Aside from the various cabins and shanties that are scattered about, several new houses are under construction on the post road that leads off into the forest to the southeast—the main coach road to Canandaigua and the East [Main Street and East Avenue].

To the north from our vantage point we can see the east river road [St. Paul Street] stretching along the crest of the low ridge on which we are standing, through a partial clearing until it likewise is lost in the forest. 'That road has been opened,' the Colonel tells us, 'to an ambitious improvement at the boat landing below the lower falls. There the village of Carthage has been laid out [along the high banks of the river between the location of the Veterans' Memorial and the Driving Park Avenue bridges]. The use of the water power of the lower falls is being developed, and the construction of a great bridge to span the gorge has already been commenced. A huge wooden arch is being built, said to be the second longest in the world, but many people doubt whether it can ever be completed. However, Carthage Landing is already a busy port, as you can judge from the number of wagons you see on the road.'

Several frame and log structures are scattered along the river road before us, and one rather substantial homestead is in process of construction. 'That fine new house you see some distance down the road,' the Colonel remarks, 'is to be the home of Samuel J. An-



MAP PREPARED IN 1939 BY CARLO ARCARESE, BASED IN PART ON  
THE FENN MAP OF THE VILLAGE OF ROCHESTER IN 1820

draws, another of our principal citizens. Together with Judge Moses Atwater of Canandaigua, Andrews acquired over 120 acres on the east bank of the main falls late in 1812 for less than \$2,000—an exceptionally low price because of the outbreak of the war at that time. The next spring the partners engaged Eli Lyon, the millwright, to erect a sawmill for them at the brink of the falls for \$500, and since then they have built that considerable gristmill you see next on the right. They have joined with Thomas Mumford, the leading promoter of Frankfort across the river, in the construction of the bridge you see partly completed just above the falls. Although it is to be a toll bridge, it will greatly facilitate the hauling of heavy loads between the mills on both sides.'

We ask the Colonel whether he does not fear that these rival "improvements" will stunt the growth of his village. 'Some think so,' he replies, 'but I am not worried. For one thing, our mills will soon have an especial advantage, since, when our race is enlarged, river barges will be able to unload directly into the mills, while other millers, except Mr. Atkinson on this side, will have to haul their grain and lumber as well as their finished products. But the deciding factor will be the location of the canal aqueduct. The surveyors have not yet finally determined where the Grand [Erie] Canal shall cross the river, but the Commissioners have decided to use the waters of Lake Erie as far as a flow to the east can be maintained, and that will induce them to cross the Genesee at the lowest possible point. Our friends at Carthage may be able to build a wooden bridge across the gorge, but no engineer will try to carry a canal over the river below the main falls. I will wager that the canal will cross at about the location of the cascades, for a crossing further north would require the construction of tall piers, while any location to the south would needlessly raise the level of the canal and make it difficult to secure enough water to fill it. If the canal does cross at the cascades it will provide ideal transport facilities for mills and shops on both sides of the river at this point. The growth of this town will then be rapid on both sides of the river.'

As we stroll back toward the bridge the Colonel points to several log rafts tied to the trees along both banks above the cascades. The wheat they brought from farms up the river has already been unloaded and carted to the mills, and the bundles of staves which we see piled around the edges of the rafts will soon be sold to village coopers to make barrels for the flour trade or hauled to Carthage for shipment to Canada. Then the rafts will be broken apart and their logs dragged to the sawmills. 'Only a few rafts get down in the late fall with the products of the summer harvest,' the Colonel tells us, 'but scores of them come down on the first freshets of early spring. The grain flailed out on barn floors during the long winter months, and the staves cut out by blazing fireplaces on cold or wet days, when exchanged or sold here, provide the farmers with funds to make payments on their farms or to buy supplies from our shops. This trade will be greatly increased as soon as the canal opens a new market for us.'

Meanwhile, as we cross the bridge the Canandaigua stage wagon clatters over the loose planks behind us. The coachman sounds his bugle to warn the villagers of his arrival, and pulls up in front of Reynolds' Post Office and Tavern just ahead. A couple of lean pigs, driven from the road by the stage, go grunting past us as they head towards the open field back of Carter's blacksmith shop which stands just at our right. Boys come running from all directions while their elders saunter over to see what the stage has brought. Within a moment or two so many villagers have gathered that we stand aside to avoid the crush.

We note that we are standing in front of a tailor's shop, and Colonel Rochester informs us that the loft of this building of Mr. Barnard's has served the village as a schoolroom, a singing hall, and a meeting house before more suitable accommodations were provided recently.

Colonel Rochester nods to Samuel Hildreth, the stage driver, as the latter, after the mail has been unloaded, pulls on the lines and cracks his whip to bolt suddenly out of the crowd and down the road and pull up again with a jolt in front of the new and much more imposing Ensworth's Tavern. We stroll after the coach through the dwindling throng and smile when an urchin shouts, 'Is that the new schoolmaster, Colonel Rochester?'

Ensworth's Tavern stands on the northwest corner at the main four corners of the village. Here Buffalo [West Main], Carroll [State], Bridge [East Main], and Mill [Exchange] streets, each of them six rods wide, come together, thus forming a large central square. In front of the three-story tavern stands a long watering trough, and on the Carroll Street side is a courtyard, in the back of which appears a log stable, which the Colonel tells us was the first cabin erected on this corner in 1812 by the first permanent settler in the village, Hamlet Scramtom.

Several of the larger buildings are ranged along both sides of Carroll Street, and at the Colonel's suggestion we turn north to follow its dusty route. Across the street a few houses ahead, we notice a modest frame church, perched high on some of the original forest stumps. Colonel Rochester informs us that although the Presbyterian Church is the only religious edifice yet erected in the village, four other denominational groups have already been formed, and a

Sunday school has been organized for the instruction of the children of all faiths.

Carroll Street has been laid out as a broad highway to the north, joining about three miles down with the main coach road to the west, which we learn, terminates at Lewiston on the Niagara River. As we walk leisurely along, a second stage gallops toward us, making a dashing finish to a tedious two-day trip from Niagara Falls. After a few moments we discover that we have left behind the built-up portion of Colonel Rochester's settlement; but over the tops of the surrounding stumps we can see ahead another clump of houses scattered about a stone mill perched on the west bank at the main falls.

'Frankfort,' the Colonel tells us, 'was included within the limits of Rochesterville when it was incorporated last year, and it will not be long before these intervening lots are all taken up. Most of the trade for the lake boats went down this side of the river prior to the late war, either to Hanford's Landing, two miles down the road, or to the village of Charlotte, five miles beyond at the mouth of the Genesee. But the landing at Carthage on the other side is better adapted for large boats, especially for steamboats. Since the *Ontario*, the first steamboat on Lake Ontario, made its appearance here last year, the enterprising promoters of Carthage have attracted much of the trade to their landing.

'However, Thomas Mumford, and Matthew and Francis Brown, the proprietors of this settlement, were not to be caught napping. Mumford, as we have already noted, has joined with Atwater and Andrews across the river in building a toll bridge which will facilitate shipment in either direction. The Browns aided in the construction on their race of a cotton factory equipped with 392 spindles, and the race itself has been extended to provide additional water power sites. A serious blow was suffered here last year when their large and recently remodeled gristmill was destroyed by fire. It was the first large fire in our community and prompted the organization of a volunteer fire company. But the Browns were not discouraged by this event, and you see over to the right the new stone mill almost completed on the same site [the foot of Platt Street, later removed to open the way for Platt Street Bridge].'

We walk over to the ledge on which the stone mill is being erected, and there, from the northeast corner, we command a fine



view of the main falls of the Genesee. Except for scattered clearings made by the growing village, the autumn-colored forest completely surrounds and provides a rustic natural setting for the dramatic plunge of the river. The trees have even crowded down the bank and partially cover Brown's Island at the western end of the falls. The broad but thin sheet of water, which tumbles over the long, smooth ledge to fall ninety-five feet into a foaming pool below, seems more romantic than impressive at this season of the year. The waterfall, gleaming in the late sunlight, appears small and insignificant as it spills down one side of the great gorge it has patiently washed out during the countless centuries that have passed. We cannot help speculating on the function these waters are now acquiring as they are being diverted through millraces and harnessed to the machinery that is making flour and goods for man's use. But, we innocently conclude, man will not need all the water, and he will never mar the beauty of the gorge below.

We return to the Four Corners just in time to see the village band pass up Buffalo Street on its weekly practice march. The young man in the lead is, we learn, Preston Smith from Boston with his clarinet which formerly served him in a band "Down East." A bugle, a serpent, two clarions, and two bassoons complete the equipment, but in addition to the regular players a goodly troupe of young men and maidens follow gaily behind.

We fall in after them but are soon left far in the rear. Here on our right is E. Peck's Book Store and from the second floor come the notes of "Yankee Doodle," whistled, the Colonel surmises, by one of Peck's apprentices, busy setting type for the next issue of the *Telegraph*, Rochesterville's second weekly newspaper, but recently established.

'This broad street,' the Colonel continues, 'is to be the chief street in the village. The pasture on the other side has not been sold or developed, because it is reserved for the Court House. At present we must journey down this road some thirty-four miles to Batavia in order to attend court, and although the road has recently been cleared of stumps, it requires in many cases an absence of two or three days to settle a small legal affair. Our neighbors across the river must go east to Canandaigua for similar purposes. Only last week some of our friends from the eight neighboring townships gathered

here at Mr. Ensworth's to join us in a petition to the Legislature. In short, we are all agreed that a new county must be formed, centering around the Genesee.

'But,' the Colonel adds with a chuckle, 'we cannot agree on the location for the Court House. Mr. Mumford has set aside Brown's Square, in Frankfort, for this purpose and his town plan shows a Court Street [present Brown Street] leading up to that square. East of the river both Elisha Johnson and Moses Atwater have laid out squares for the Court House, the former named after Washington, and the latter after Franklin. A Court Street appears on the Johnson plat for East Rochester, as if to balance that of Mr. Mumford's on this side. We are, you see, determined to have one court house in these parts, if not three or four.'

A beaten path leads off to the left towards a small frame structure which the Colonel tells us is the district school [site of the Education Building today]. 'It was erected in the summer of 1814,' he adds, 'the first district school in the village, but already we have two others in the settlement, and a young matron has recently arrived who says she will open a girls' academy this winter.' We continue along the path which climbs a series of ledges and soon come out at a large, clear spring, where we gladly take the opportunity to refresh ourselves with a taste of what the Colonel tells us is the village water supply.

'My line,' the Colonel remarks, 'runs due west from the river and passes about a hundred feet south of this spring. We have laid the whole hundred acres out in town lots, and many of them have already been spoken for. Some first and second payments have been made, and a few clear titles have been granted. It will not be long before most of the cabins you see scattered about give place to substantial houses as grand as any now in the valley. I myself plan to build on that lot over there in another year or so when the mill-race and Mill Street are extended through my present garden.'

We stroll down the lane known as Falls Street [present Spring Street] toward the Colonel's white house near the river. To our right stands the virgin forest, unbroken except for a small plot that has been cleared, we learn, for a village cemetery. To our left, beyond a foreground of partially destroyed stumps, stretches the scattered village. Several of the houses, shining freshly as a result of generous

coats of white paint, stand out neat and clean amidst their more rustic neighbors, some with bark or log sides. Stone chimneys, many of them occupying an entire end of some of the smaller buildings, indicate the dependence of the villagers on their log-burning fireplaces. Numerous columns of smoke may be seen ascending through the gathering twilight, adding the pungent odor of burning wood to the atmosphere; but in spite of these evidences of warmth and cheer, the whole village seems to be bound in and almost hidden by the surrounding forest. We feel a surge of admiration for the proprietor who at an advanced age has ventured so far into the wilderness to build a new village. Eagerly we express our thanks for his generous courtesy to passing strangers.

So we leave our guide at his gate and turn to follow the uneven course of Mill Street toward the tavern. On our left we note the sign of Dauby's print shop and *Weekly Gazette* office. Realizing that this is the home of Rochesterville's first newspaper, we drop in to get a copy. The latest issue we find is Number 20 of Volume III, and a likely sheet it appears to be. One of Dauby's apprentices, a lad by the name of Edwin Scrantom, offers us a copy of a recently issued pamphlet, the first printed in the village.

But it is growing dark and we hear a dinner bell sounding from Ensworth's Tavern. Hastening along, we take our place in the line at the wash bench near the watering trough in front of the tavern. The gentleman ahead of us is, we learn, a boat captain up from Carthage Landing to buy a load of flour for shipment to Montreal; the man next in line is a rugged farmer from the upper valley, eager to learn what he can get for his wheat; and the young man at the end appears to be a sober and somewhat footsore youth who has just come west to make his fortune. Together we file in to take our places amid a score of diners crowded around the long supper table.

## A HACKNEY RIDE ABOUT ROCHESTER WITH ITS FIRST HISTORIAN IN 1838

If we postpone for twenty years a second visit to the Genesee mill town, we will witness an incredible transformation; aside from the river and its falls, only the rudimentary street plan will remind us of the village of 1818. If we decide again to put up at the Ensworth Tavern, we will find on its site the elegant Eagle Tavern, a comfortable

four-story inn, the most respectable among more than a dozen fine public houses. When we inquire concerning our old friend and guide, Colonel Rochester, we learn that he passed away at the ripe age of seventy-nine, some seven years before. Several of his children are still living in the city, busily engaged in various enterprises. But, for a tour about the Flour City of 1838, we can find no better guide than the newly appointed postmaster, Henry O'Reilly, author of that remarkable volume, *Sketches of Rochester and Western New York*, which we have seen reviewed so favorably in eastern papers this fall.

The elegantly groomed landlord of the Eagle advises us that O'Reilly came to Rochester in 1826 as the youthful editor of the town's first daily newspaper. We learn that he has taken an active part in community affairs, has been an outstanding champion of the cause of the less fortunate, and a loyal supporter of Jackson and Van Buren. We can find him in the Post Office, which is still located at the old Reynolds' Tavern site, but housed on the ground floor of the imposing five-story Reynolds' Arcade.

As we step out of our tavern onto Buffalo Street near the Four Corners, we find ourselves facing a hubbub of activity. It is a sunny afternoon in late October, and a cool breeze seems to have added vigor to the trotting, rattling, and rumbling throng of gigs, light wagons, stagecoaches, and heavy wagons piled high with flour or beer barrels. Shouting drivers and scurrying pedestrians contend noisily for the right of way. We turn east and pass the Bank of Monroe which occupies the corner rooms of the Eagle building, overlooking both Buffalo and State streets—about where Ensworth's watering trough stood in 1818. Dodging between a jolting carriage and a slow load of hay, we cross State [formerly Carroll] Street on our way to the Arcade.

Upon turning into the Arcade we find that we have not escaped the throng, for busy men are rushing to and fro in the long hall that extends through to Works [Corinthian] Street in the back. The hall is open to a glass covered skylight above, while an open gallery guarded by a wooden railing extends around the second story, adding the activity of that floor to the confusion below. On one side of the first floor, near the seed store of Reynolds and Bateham [predecessors of the Ellwanger and Barry Nursery], is the post office in a spacious room, forty-six by twenty-four feet in size. Here

we find Henry O'Reilly, at a desk cluttered high with papers, eagerly reading the latest issue of what we recognize as the Albany *Argus*. We are surprised at his youthful appearance, for his reputation as an editor, author, and leader in civic and political affairs had prepared us to find him considerably beyond his early thirties.

In a moment we find ourselves walking briskly, arm in arm with our cordial guide, toward the Buffalo Street exit of the Arcade. While we are hailing a hackney coach from its stand down the street, O'Reilly launches out upon his favorite topic—the merits of his adopted city: "The suddenness of its rise," he begins, "the energy of its population, the excellence of its institutions, the whole character of its prosperity, render Rochester prominent among the cities that have recently sprung into existence throughout a land notable for extraordinary intellectual and physical advancement. . . . By the national census of 1830, it appears that, notwithstanding its recent origin, Rochester even then ranked twenty-first among the chief places of the United States. . . . Our population then was less than half its present size . . . and we may now predict that the census of 1840, will place it about the fifteenth in rank among the cities of the American confederacy. . . . The population of the city, numbering 17,160 at the close of 1836, may safely be set down at about 20,000 in May, 1838. . . . And it is worthy of note, that among all our present thousands, there are probably not ten persons of manly age who were born within the city limits."\*

During this enthusiastic introduction to the character of the city, we have taken our seats in the hack and headed west along Buffalo Street. In spite of the broad expanse of the paved street, we are forced to weave our way between the wagons and carts that have been tangled almost to a stand-still at the Four Corners. Once beyond this busy intersection we drive past the Eagle Tavern, with its giant golden eagle mounted over the entrance, and approach the Monroe House [site of the present Powers Hotel] with its long veranda flanked by tall Ionic pillars overlooking the Court House.

There, across the street, is the elegant red stone Court House, standing well back from the street. The courtyard in front is covered

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\**Editors' Note:* This and succeeding remarks by our second guide are faithfully quoted from Henry O'Reilly's, *Settlement of the West. Sketches of Rochester with Incidental Notices of Western New York* (Rochester, N. Y., 1838).

by flagstones, providing a convenient space for open air gatherings to hear addresses delivered from the portico formed by four fluted Ionic columns which grace the front of the two-and-a-half-story structure. An octagonal belfry, covered by a cupola, rises over the center of the building. The Court House, O'Reilly advises us, is already inadequate for the needs of the community, chiefly because the city has no hall of its own. The city offices, as a result, are scattered about, most of them occupying rooms near him in the Arcade. The whole of the second floor of the Court House is taken up by the court room, which provides a spacious arena for the talents of some of the gentlemen we see gathered on the steps of the building—a few of the more than two score attorneys now actively practising in Monroe County, as O'Reilly informs us.

We drive to the left onto Fitzhugh Street in order better to view the Court House Square which is the elevated terrace, covered with grass and shrubbery in the rear of the Court House. Facing this Square on the south is the First Presbyterian Church, an imposing structure erected in 1824 to take the place of the outgrown wooden chapel we saw on State Street in 1818. The church is built of stone, covered with cement, and tall buttresses ranged along both sides give it a Gothic appearance which is carried upward by a tall spire. "These buttresses," O'Reilly confides, "were added to strengthen the walls after an alarm occasioned by some imaginary insecurity of the building, owing to the large concourse which thronged to hear the Rev. Mr. Finney during a revival a few years ago."

Two stone buildings on the other side of Fitzhugh Street attract our attention. The church, we learn, is St. Luke's Episcopal, erected in two stages between 1824 and 1828 [and still standing]. The Reverend Henry J. Whitehouse, its pastor during the last ten years, recently declined the Bishopric of Michigan in order to continue the work among his Rochester friends. Next on the north stands the two-story gray stone District Number One School. It was, we learn, erected only a few years before on the site of Rochesterville's first schoolhouse, which we vaguely recall from our earlier visit. There are, we learn, thirteen other school districts in the city, but none as impressively housed as the one before us. Even this structure, O'Reilly tells us, lacks suitable accommodation for young ladies, who as a result favor the private schools. But a Citizens' Committee,

headed by the Reverend Mr. Whitehouse, the pastor next door, has been active for nearly two years, seeking the creation of a Board of Education and the provision of adequate facilities.

A precarious appearing bridge carries Fitzhugh Street across the canal ahead of us, but we turn about to continue west along Buffalo Street. To our right, O'Reilly calls our attention to the First Methodist Church recently rebuilt of stone after a disastrous fire. As our horse jogs along we recall the swampy forest that occupied in 1818 the area now covered with wood and stone structures bearing the signs of various tradesmen. To our left we note the sign of the Rochester Bath House, where, we learn, one can enjoy a refreshing bath in mineral water, heated or cold as one prefers.

Ahead and to our right is the recently completed four-story United States Hotel [later the first home for a few years of the University of Rochester]. It stands almost directly across from still another church, the Bethel Free Chapel, a graceful Doric temple of stone. Just beyond we come upon the tracks of the Tonnewanta [Tonawanda] Railroad, opened to traffic between Rochester and Batavia slightly more than a year before. O'Reilly declares that this railroad is already an important factor in Rochester's system of communication and will become more so when extended to Buffalo. The present thirty-two miles of track and other equipment cost the company only \$375,000, and a lesser sum will open the line to Buffalo, thirty-five miles beyond.

Some distance down the tracks we can see an engine pouring smoke and sparks up through its bulging smokestack. But what attracts our attention is the box-like car attached behind. O'Reilly, observing our interest, remarks that "the construction of the passenger cars presents a different appearance from that of the cars on other railroads; being built on a plan of Elisha Johnson, by which the baggage finds an apartment in the same car wherein the owners are seated."

But, despite the roundabout route of ninety-three miles to Buffalo, the real freight will, of course, continue to go by the Erie Canal. This great trade artery intersects Buffalo Street just ahead, and we stop our hack at the top of the high bridge which carries the street over the canal [at the present intersection of Broad and West Main streets]. On our right the canal stretches away to the west, curving out of sight after a few hundred rods. Within our range of vision we can see

two loaded freight boats, drawn by horses plodding along the towpath, slowly hauling produce from the west.

As we continue out Buffalo Street we observe that the width of the Macadamized surface west of the bridge is reduced to a narrow strip sufficient only for the passage of two vehicles. "Within the last seven years," O'Reilly tells us, "even the main streets of Rochester, cut up by the thousand wagons freighted with the products of the surrounding country, presented during most of the year a spectacle which caused the place to be jocularly called the 'City of Mud.' On this point so essential to cleanliness, comfort and health, there is now, in view of recent improvements [more than five miles of Macadamized streets], much reason for gratification."

Meanwhile our hack had reached another bridge over a ditch similar to that of the Erie. This, we learn, is the northern end of the Genesee Valley Canal which joins the Erie just a stone's throw beyond. A law was passed by the Legislature in May, 1836, to provide for its construction, but as yet only about thirty miles have been put under contract. It may be opened, O'Reilly thinks, to Mount Morris in another year or two, but it will be a costly job to push it over the mountains to Olean on the Allegheny River.

Buffalo Street, we learn, is built-up most of the way out to Bull's Head Corners just within the city limits. But, turning to our left on a dusty lane, we soon find ourselves on Troup Street leading back to the river. Some of these boarded cabins scattered about are occupied by the few Negro families that have settled in Rochester.

Our trotting horse soon slows for a climb up a slight hill, and when we gain its top we see sloping down to the river a pleasant array of elegant homes set among shade trees and shrubbery. This part of the Third Ward, O'Reilly tells us, is the choice residential section of the city. On our left, facing a side street, is a charming white house with a massive portico supported by heavy Doric pillars, [the present home of the D. A. R.]. We turn into short Park Street [Livingston Park] and drive through a grove of young trees, brilliant with autumn colors, past several freshly painted Colonial houses. Several of these were built, O'Reilly tells us, during the last two years by a Connecticut architect, Hugh Hastings, who has a number of graceful buildings to his credit in Rochester. The street soon ends in Spring Street flanked on both sides by charming white houses, the



one on the right occupied by the lawyer, James K. Livingston and that on the left by Dr. Frederick F. Backus [later for many years the Livingston Park Seminary, still standing].

We turn east down Spring Street and find that the forest-bound lane of 1818 is now lined by elegant homes. We note with interest the large brick house erected by our former guide, Colonel Rochester, on the northeast corner of Spring and Washington streets. The autumn colors of the young elms on the street sides and in the garden provide a colorful setting for the homestead where the village proprietor spent his declining years. A short distance down Washington Street we note the imposing mansion of Jonathan Child [occupied today by the Fourth Church of Christ Scientist], erected the year before by the first mayor of the city. Fluted Corinthian columns and a heavy portico, glistening under a rich coat of white paint, establish its character as the most pretentious residence in the city.

Indeed, elegant homesteads, displaying Greek or Colonial architectural features, surround us on all sides as we drive east across Sophia [Plymouth] and then Fitzhugh streets. Here, according to our guide, dwell the leading millers and merchants of the city, especially those who had the wisdom to make early investments in town sites or in adjacent farm lands. To our right on Fitzhugh Street, O'Reilly calls our attention to the stately facade of the Rochester Female Academy, one of the two leading private seminaries for girls recently opened in the city. Two primly gowned lasses walking demurely in the shade across the street add a touch of youth to the sedate environment.

Ahead of us there is evidence of a more commercial atmosphere in the vicinity of the Rochester House, on the corner of Spring and Exchange streets. This, the largest and most pretentious hotel in the city, stands across Spring Street from the house we found occupied by Colonel Rochester at the time of our previous visit. The Mill Street of that day has now been renamed Exchange Street because the location of the canal has made it a commercial center, crowding the mills back to the river bank. Directly at the foot of Spring Street stands the four-story Child Building which houses, along with several offices and small shops, the headquarters of the Rochester Academy of Sacred Music, one of the two singing societies most active in the city. But the dominating structure on this end of the street is the four-story stone hotel which entirely fills the short block between Spring

Street and the canal. Its long wooden verandas, stretching the full length of the building, command an excellent view of the activity on the canal, in the street, around the mills across the way, and on the aqueduct, and the river beyond. It is a popular tavern among fashionable travelers, of whom there will be, O'Reilly predicts, an increasing number, possibly four or five hundred, as soon as the railroads are operating regularly both east and west.

Meanwhile the horse has pulled our hack up the steep grade of the high bridge over the canal, and we stop at the top of the arch to enjoy the view to our right over the aqueduct as it crosses the river. Busy Child's Basin branches off from the canal between the large stone mills on the river bank and the row of merchant houses lining the east side of Exchange Street, ahead of us. A half dozen freight boats are jockeying for place at the docks around the basin. We note in particular one of the boats tied up next to the massive, six-story Aqueduct Mills. One end of this stone mill has a frame addition which partly overhangs the dock where the boat is tied. We are interested to hear that an ingenious grain elevator, invented by General Beach, one of the owners of the mill, is busily unloading the wheat from that boat and carrying it up to the top story where it begins its descent by gravity through various cleansing and drying processes until it reaches the proper pair of grinding stones, of which there are ten in that mill, and is finally barreled for shipment, almost without the aid of a man's hand.

We marvel at the ingenuity of the Rochester millers, whose twenty operating flour mills, O'Reilly tells us, are equipped with "upward of ninety runs of stone . . . capable of manufacturing five thousand barrels of flour daily. . . . The annual product," he adds, "with the late improvements, will not, probably, in seasons of fertility, &c., fall far short of six hundred thousand barrels."

Such an output requires, we can see, an easy means of cheap transport for both raw materials and finished products, and we turn to the Erie Canal with renewed interest. "The toll collected [here] in 1837," O'Reilly tells us, "amounted to \$179,083.54. . . . No-where west of the Hudson is the annual receipt of canal toll so large as at the City of Rochester. Such is the extent to which our citizens are interested in the canal navigation, that the Rochester forwarders have a larger proportion of stock in the transportation lines than the

people of any other city in the state—indeed, it is asserted that they own or control about one half of the whole amount of stock in those lines.”

But great as has been the utility of this canal, it has long since been judged inadequate to the needs of the situation. Henry O'Reilly has, we know, been active in agitating for the enlargement of the canal, a policy which was adopted some years before. Now he calls our attention to the construction work that has already started on the new and larger aqueduct just south of the old one. Many stone blocks already cut for the arches are piled on the river bank, and the massive structure taking shape at this end of the aqueduct is, we learn, the new weighlock designed to expedite the collection of tariffs and the movement of free boats.

We could willingly spend hours watching the activity of this vital trade artery, but we have scarcely seen a third of the growing city and must be getting on. As we drive awkwardly down the northern slope of the bridge into the short end of Exchange Street we understand how effectively the canal with its high bridges has protected the choice residential district behind us from the commercial and industrial life of the city! Here in crowded compass we find piled on top of one another the offices of the various river and canal boat companies, the provision shops of several grocers, and the “clothing emporiums” of rival tailors with ready-made clothing prominently advertised to attract the traveler unable to wait for a proper tailoring. Here on our left is the Bank of Rochester, the oldest financial house in the city, while over there we note the sign of the Rochester Museum, where, O'Reilly tells us, the proprietor, J. B. Bishop, “is steadily accumulating curiosities . . . [such as] the remains of the Mastodon found in Perrinton . . . and whatever may be within his means.”

Again we arrive at the Four Corners and patiently weave through the traffic to continue down State Street, which we recall as the Carroll Street of our earlier visit. Major Carroll's son, O'Reilly tells us, won a suit against the city involving his claim to certain property rights over the river, and the city fathers in pique changed the name of the street. To our right we notice the prominent sign of the City Reading Room, and our guide, with pardonable pride, for he is the president of the Young Men's Association which operates

it, declares: "Here in one room may be found daily supplies of the prominent newspapers from different parts of the United States; and in another room, with a library that will shortly be much increased, there are also to be found a regular supply of the prominent magazines and reviews of Great Britain and the United States. The rooms are well lighted every evening, save the Sabbath, till 10 o'clock."

Standing next on the north is the Rochester City Bank, constructed of Lockport stone and designed after the architectural pattern of the Bank of America in New York City. To our left, as we jog along, stands the First Baptist Church, and in the distance we note a spire identified by O'Reilly as that of the Second Presbyterian, or Brick Church, so named because most of the others are of stone. However, the chapel of the Hicksite Quakers, across from the Brick Church, is of wood, as are those of a few other small parishes. Some blocks down the street, which is now almost continuously lined with attractive wooden homes—recalling the prediction of our previous guide—we notice in the distance a massive tower bearing a tall cross which we learn belongs to St. Patrick's Church, where the Reverend Father Bernard O'Reilly, not related to our guide, officiates. State Street, O'Reilly tells us, is built up for another mile or so down to a new development known as McCrackenville. The frame structures of a modest residential section scatter off to the left, particularly over the area formerly known as Frankfort, and curiously enough a large number of German families have settled in this section of the city.

As we have already passed beyond the main falls, we turn to our right in search of a view of that natural spectacle. Driving down over the platform covering Brown's millrace and into one of the gaps between two of the larger stone mills, we finally reach the brink of the gorge. We find ourselves some distance northwest of our vantage point of twenty years before. The opposite bank is ablaze with autumn color and the gorge below shows but few signs of man's invasion. But the giant mills about us have projected themselves over the brink and reached down into the gorge itself in order to snatch power from the water after the greatest possible drop. Not only do the mills screen the falls from our view but their rumbling machinery drowns out our questions. We soon discover that an unobstructed outlook can only be had from the opposite bank.

Resuming our drive we turn south on Mill Street. Large signs, advertising "Cash for Wheat," mark the flour and gristmills from a distance, and such is the character of most of these five and six-story structures. But sawmills, a carpet factory, the Selye fire engine factory, and firearm and edge tool shops are already competing for place and for water power with the dominant flour industry.

As we drive up Mill Street, turn into Mumford, and then into Front Street, we pass numerous shops of cabinet makers, coopers, saddle and harness makers, shoemakers, carriage makers, upholsterers, marble dressers, pump makers, locksmiths, umbrella makers and a score of other craftsmen who have found profitable trades in the activity of the booming Flour City. On the east side of Front Street we see a low but well designed building which we learn is the newly erected City Market. It is admirably located at the head of Market Street, and thus may easily be approached from three directions. O'Reilly calls our attention to the fact that it backs up to the river bank, thus securing access to an adequate water supply to keep the stalls fresh and clean. He further declares, "There is but one market-house in the Union, and that is in Boston, which can be compared with this market in its general arrangements." Over a dozen butchers have leased the stalls in the main portion of the market while the wings that flank the market yard in front provide rooms for the city's two recently established military companies, the Union Grays and the Williams' Light Infantry.

Continuing along Front Street we soon arrive again at Buffalo Street just at the western end of the bridge. Directly ahead is the busy millyard around which are located several of the large mills that use the Rochester millrace for power and Child's Basin for shipment. But we turn left onto the bridge in order to cross to the east side. A series of one-story wooden shops line the north side of the bridge, completely hiding the river from view in that direction. But a clear view can be had to the south. It is a delightful picture of the broad but shallow river, crossed by the brown stone aqueduct over which slowly glide the freight and passenger boats of the canal. The quaint picture is framed by stone mills in the foreground on both sides, while the only considerable structure that stands out beyond the aqueduct is a three-story brick building identified by O'Reilly as the County Jail, located on the southern end of the island formed by the Rochester

race. The work on the new aqueduct which we saw from Exchange Street Bridge is practically hidden from us at this point by the old aqueduct. In the distance can be seen numerous small frame buildings on both sides of the river, gradually merging with the foliage of the low hills in the background.

At the east end of the bridge, just before Main Street climbs a much slighter hill than we noted on our earlier visit, we come to the tracks of the Rochester Railroad. The cars of this road, which are drawn by horses, run, O'Reilly tells us, "between the east end of the Canal Aqueduct in the southern part of Rochester and the Ontario Steamboat-Landing at the northern boundary of the city—thus connecting the trade of the Erie Canal with that of the Genesee River and Lake Ontario. The road runs close to the east bank of the river, and at some points passes within a few feet of the edge of the perpendicular banks, about one hundred and fifty feet high."

The railroad at this point runs along the edge of Water Street, and we turn left to follow its course. On our right is the North American Hotel, while crowded on the river bank to our left are many small shops and factories, some of them using the power of the Johnson race which has been carried along the bank and under the bridge to this point. Water Street takes us down, past the point where a new bridge is being built at Andrews Street to join it with Mumford Street on the other side, and on to the site of the bridge we saw under construction twenty years before. That old structure has fallen into decay but almost in its place is being erected another much sturdier bridge, which, O'Reilly tells us, is for the Rochester and Auburn Railroad. Work has already begun on portions of this seventy-eight and a half mile railroad, and he adds, "As the whole route between Auburn and Albany will be completed about the same time as the Rochester and Auburn Railroad, we may anticipate that, in the course of three years, the journey between Rochester and New York will be made by railroad and steamboat within twenty-four hours!"

We turn right and drive up Atwater Street hill to St. Paul Street, the east river road of our earlier visit. Rows of houses, chiefly of frame construction, line both sides of the street for some distance to the north, but we find a lane which leads off to our left and follow it down to the brink of the gorge. Here we enjoy an unobstructed view of the falls and of the city beyond. "This spot," O'Reilly tells us,

"affords opportunity for the arrangement of a pleasant promenade."

The outlook from the promenade is agreeable indeed. In the central background is the main falls, not as impressive in its foaming torrent as on our first visit, partly because of the water that has been drawn off to help feed the Erie Canal east of Rochester, but chiefly because of the large diversion of water into the Brown Race on the opposite bank. The extent of that diversion is suggested by the numerous streams gushing out from the lower stories of the several large mills we can now see from our more advantageous post across the river. One large mill stands on the brink of the falls on this side, and a foaming stream issues from a crevice in the rocks beneath it, as though emerging from its hold. But there still remains a sufficient stream in the river bed to make a striking picture. Beyond it, up the river, we see the bridge which, from this distance, appears much like a typical covered bridge because of the row of shops which line the north side. The city stretches off on either hand with numerous spires and turrets standing out over the roof tops. We note a tower on our left which, O'Reilly says, belongs to St. Paul's Episcopal Church. On the other side of the river, among the church towers we have previously noted, we see one prominent turret which O'Reilly identifies as that surmounting the Reynolds Arcade, from which, he adds, one can get a splendid view of the city. Hundreds of large and small chimneys cluster over the eaves of the buildings, and the smoke floating up from many of them tells of a warmth below. Meanwhile a gust of cool wind drives us back to our hack and its blankets.

It is growing late and we start back into town, saving for another day a ride on the Rochester Railroad down to Carthage. We soon reach a fork in the road and turn to our left down Franklin Street. After a brisk trot past scattered houses—many of them, O'Reilly tells us, occupied by friends from his own native land—we come out at an intersection with Main and Pittsford [East Avenue] streets. Following the latter, a broad unpaved road, we soon reach Chestnut Street, where we turn to the right. Pittsford Street, according to our guide, is built up as far as Alexander Street, while scattered farmhouses and cleared fields make it a delightful though dusty drive of more than seven miles to the village of Pittsford, the first stop east of Rochester on the canal.

A short distance on Chestnut Street brings us in sight of a three-story stone building which O'Reilly calls the Rochester High School [site of the Unitarian Church]. The building, we learn, was erected ten years before by the joint action of the school districts in East Rochester, but was later leased to a group of men chartered to operate a joint grade school and academy. Most of its pupils are in the lower division, accepted free of charge from the two neighborhood school districts as payment on the lease, but the abilities of its principal, the Reverend Doctor Chester Dewey, has won for its advanced classes a high reputation. Indeed, O'Reilly adds, "The High-school has now for some years ranked among the largest in the state in the number of its pupils and in the amount of money received from the regents of the university. The whole number of pupils in all the departments of this school are in some terms nearly 300; and it is believed that in no institution in the state is the instruction more thorough or better fitted to the practical purposes of life."

Meanwhile we have turned right onto Court Street which soon approaches Washington Square, laid out, we recall, by Elisha Johnson as a site for the court house, but now serving as an agreeable public square. The state road to Canandaigua and the east [present Monroe Avenue] starts out from the southeast corner of this square.

We continue along Court Street, passing the Universalist Church on our right, and shortly arrive at South St. Paul Street, which parallels the canal at this point. The city plans to build Court Street across both the canal and the river, O'Reilly tells us, but at present the people are dependent, as we ourselves have discovered, upon the single crossing at Main and Buffalo streets. O'Reilly would like to drive us down South St. Paul to the wooded hills we see in the distance—the newly acquired Mount Hope Cemetery, but the afternoon is already far advanced and he will have to return to the post office and check on the work of his clerks.

We cannot, of course, expect to see all of this growing city in one day, so we drive left to Main Street and back across the bridge to the Arcade where we dismiss the hack and take our leave of our obliging historical guide. A few steps carry us back to the Eagle Tavern where we hasten to refresh ourselves at the wash stand in our room before descending for dinner in Rochester's most elegant dining room.