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Reminiscences of the Third Ward

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The Third Ward is not just a geographical division, certainly not merely a political one. It is a village—a Cranford, a state of mind, an aura, a fetish—which only the Third Warder adores and which is an object of amusement, almost of derision to the East Sider. One of my friends (still a friend) told me her daughter had never been there so she had promised to take her "slumming" soon. Yet many East Siders are glad that their roots are in the old Ward and regard it with connotations of affectionate remembrance. One day when I was taking notes of Miss Milly Alling's recollections of the Ward she said, "Virginia, have I forgotten to mention any one?" I thought over those in their late eighties and replied "How about Miss Baker?" "But, my dear, you would not call HER a Third Warder, she was 14 when she moved here." Seventy years of continuous residence were of no avail—her birth outside the sacred precincts debarred her.

In reminiscing about the Third Ward, four possible lines of approach have suggested themselves—its history, its old houses, its personalities and its customs. The first I have purposely omitted because it has been done well by Mr. Peck, Mr. Pond, and Miss Chappell. Instead of following any one of the other lines, I have browsed in all three, covering none adequately, but trying to give you a few pictures of life in the Ruffled Shirt Ward from personal recollections and especially from those of my Mother, who lived there from the time she was four. I have also drawn upon notes I made a number of years ago

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from conversations with Miss Milly Alling, whose recollections went back to 1841 and whose memory for the past was, at that time, phenomenal. I am also indebted to Mrs. Charles Ford, Miss Chappell, Mrs. Henry Buell, Mr. A. J. Warner and several others who have been most kind. So what I have to say will meander, with little chronology, over the better part of a century, and if I refer to your great grandfather please do not necessarily consider me a nonagenarian.

However I probably will not mention him for I have, for the most part, omitted speaking of those whose descendants are still in Rochester.

The old houses of the neighborhood were built for large families, comfortable living, and lavish entertaining. The big, high-ceilinged rooms were at their best when their crystal chandeliers reflected the gas jets on the evening dresses and white ties of guests. The broad mahogany stairs were wide enough for the new arrivals to pass those who were leaving, with chats en route; the large dining rooms with their groaning mahogany tables and sideboards made serving less difficult than to-day and the big homey kitchens and pantries were built to produce large quantities and elaborate menus. The Hart-Pond connections used to gather more than sixty strong for holiday festivals with turkeys, ducks, geese *and* hams and at least six kinds of pie with all the trimmings from soup to nuts.

New Year's Day was a great event in early Rochester. Of course everyone kept open house for callers, but the Third Ward came into its own, for the East Side entertained in the morning, while the west side had the advantageous latter half of the day. Third Ward girls received with their east side friends in the morning and then rushed home to act as hostesses. The gallants clubbed together and rented hacks for the day and, magnificent in full dress suits and silk hats, they set out shortly after ten o'clock in the morning with full card cases and light hearts. One elderly man remembers donning green kid gloves as the last word of elegance. A basket for calling cards hung on the door signified that that particular hostess was off receiving with friends, so the hack moved on to the house of the next friend. All day long they went on, covering the waterfront. Wherever they went, was delicious food

and drink and there must have been a great demand for sodamints and seltzer on January second. The parties of course grew gayer as the day progressed, so that the Ward hostesses had much the best of the custom. In abeyance during my youth, when club day at the Genesee Valley Club eclipsed all other festivities for the men, one is happy to see the custom growing again. Its delights survive to-day in Rochester's most charming Victorian home, not, to be sure, in the Third Ward, but on the west side.

One of the notable parties was given by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Ely (he was congressman) for Fred Grant and his bride (sister of the more noted Mrs. Potter Palmer of Chicago). Their story-and-a-half drawing room with its paintings and marble sculptures made a fitting setting for the affair. Mr. Ely, who was a tiny man, had been unable to get gloves small enough for him and received in white kid gloves which hung at least an inch from the end of each finger. Another famous party, though much later, was a fancy dress surprise party for Mr. and Mrs. Will Chapin when their new music room, now the Greek church, was completed. Then indeed the Ward attics were ransacked and the streets were gay with hoop skirts and beaver hats and ruffled shirts as warders wended their way to Fitzhugh Street.

The biggest balls were of course given in Powers building—first in the art gallery itself and later in Mirror Hall. Here a balcony extended the whole way around where the dowagers could sit and keep tabs on what was happening on the dancing floor—and keep tabs they did. The debutante felt at home here for had she not attended Miss Quinby's dancing class, as her mother had Mr. Cobleigh's. One of the last balls to be given there was the golden wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain, when Mr. Chamberlain, then over eighty, danced the sailor's horn pipe to Mr. Dossenbach's accompaniment.

To speak of social life without mentioning Mr. Teall, himself a Third Warder, would indeed be an oversight. He was recognized as the best caterer in the state outside of New York city, was often called to Buffalo and all gala occasions here depended upon him. His corps of waiters knew "everybody what is anybody." Alfred, dean of waiters, was quite a character. A new waiter passing chicken salad to my mother

was accosted by him—"Go long there—don't pass the chicken salad to Mrs. Smith—I've got lobster for her." The staff arrived early in the day and such good things as were produced. A distinguished English visitor who had a series of dinners given him by prominent hostesses, remarked to the first on the beauty of her plates. He was somewhat nonplussed when he was served from the same plates at each of the subsequent dinners. They belonged to Mr. Teall. Never were such quail and squab and escalloped oysters, such lobster salad, Nesselrode and almond paste cakes. The excitement of seeing one's parents go off in evening clothes was climaxed the next morning by a tiny almond paste potato, purloined and carried home in the pocket of a tail coat for the baby. At the wedding breakfast of one of my friends, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Teall's successor, was bemoaning his overly abundant supply of escalloped oysters. A few minutes later Alfred rushed into the kitchen, exclaiming "Mr. Williamson, you won't have any too many of those oysters—the whole Third Ward is arrivin'."

But the pleasantest entertainments were probably the less formal ones, the supper parties, the going-away and coming-home parties (for travel was no ordinary occurrence), the theatricals and the charades. The Whittleseys always kept a trunk or two of old costumes and properties, so that charades could be indulged in at the drop of a hat, and such wit as sparkled in the extemporaneous lines. Then there were the oyster roasts in the Stedmans' cellar when Mr. Stedman had a barrel sent up from Baltimore. The furnace was especially fitted to roast them to Epicurean fancy. There were hot suppers after sleighriding or bobsledding on Troup Street hill.

Thrifty though the housewives were, there were few left overs, for any delicacy was shared with one's neighbors. To this day, I do not feel right in putting any ice cream back in the refrigerator. Whatever was left, and there was always more than enough, was hurried on one's best plates, covered with an inverted fingerbowl, to some one—preferably to the sick or afflicted. And ice cream in those days appeared, not as bricks or molds but in an upright cylinder as it slid from the freezer, the little nub where the dasher fitted in standing up on top. (However it was an East Side hostess and not a Warder, who filled a conversational hiatus, by exclaiming "Look at the Leaning tower of Babel.")

Wine jelly with whipped cream or charlotte russe was the usual Sunday dessert and one could see younger members of almost every family dispatched about two o'clock with covered plates of such delicacies with injunctions to hurry lest it deteriorate before reaching the neighbor for whom it was intended.

In preserving and pickling season the air was redolent with delicious odors—in fact the season stretched from rhubarb to mincemeat. You always sent a glass or jar of each batch to some neighbor, and since all followed the same generous custom, everyone's preserve closet came out about even, but with greater variety to draw upon for winter treats.

In such an atmosphere clubs thrive and the Ward has had many, from the sedate to the frivolous. The first home of the Genesee Valley Club was on Washington Street. The Pundit club originated at Dr. Morgan's. There was a Shakespeare club, with the members reading various parts. Then there were the "Sweet and Lows" who, as you might guess, sang hymns in the choir of St. Luke's during Lent and secular ditties elsewhere. They were followed by a rival organization called, at least behind their backs, "the High and Shrills." The Roundabout, oldest woman's club in Rochester, began there under the aegis of Mrs. Hough. The Alembic club, a small coterie of congenial men, met behind the blue door in the basement of the Perkins house, or in our unique old book store and, over beer and pretzels, proved that conversation is not a lost art. That shop of George Humphrey, known to bibliophiles from coast to coast, lent an erudite atmosphere to the neighborhood. There was also a dramatic club, called the Trylobites. In the Ward, too, the Century Club was organized at Mrs. Stoddard's, and the Humdrums at Mr. Charles Robinson's.

But the club of clubs was the Browning society which always met in the Fisher's drawing room. No one of to-day could believe the sanctity with which this organization wrapped itself nor the awe which it inspired. Beside the closely chosen membership there were a few guests but only as a royal favor and such an invitation was in the nature of a command appearance. Even people of importance came with bated breath, praying that they might comport themselves with dignity. The

pundits of the town read learned papers when there were no visiting lions to roar. Only once did a woman take an active part in a meeting—one poetess declaimed an original poem. One woman guest asked the speaker a question, one afternoon, and on leaving said to her hostess that she hoped it was right to have done so. "It was a dangerous precedent, my dear," was the reply. You entered over the first marble floor in Rochester; the ladies left their wraps in a red room on the left, the gentlemen in a blue room on the right, refreshments came first and then all repaired to the drawing room for the "hyacinths to feed the soul."

In the sixties there was a club called the Twinkle Stars who called each other Hesperus, Thalia, Riga and so on and whose secretary also flew high in her language saying "As she gives the starry record into worthier hands it is with a beautiful desire that the luster may but grow brighter and its pages be undimmed forever."

But of all the clubs the most thoroughly Thirdwardian were the Kitcats and the Every Little Frequentlies. The former were a reading club who relaxed with refreshments and conversation of (shall we say) neighborly interest. Some of the members grew so old that the favorite refreshments became malted milk and crackers. The Every Little Frequentlies were and are purely recreational. And what good times they have. They meet as the spirit moves one of them to send out invitations and, after a Lucullan banquet, the GUESTS put on the entertainment to surprise the hostess. A Thanksgiving party brought out a bevy of Puritan maids, marshalled by Mrs. William Bush as Miles Standish. A Fourth of July party inspired Mrs. Clinton Rogers to array herself as a firecracker. Sometimes there were going away parties with a ship in the center of the table and passports for place cards. At one party for a returned traveller, every one was asked to tell of the "loveliest walk I ever took." The Roman campagna vied with the Alps and Devon but the prize was unanimously awarded to Miss Agnes Chappell, who described a walk around the block in the Third Ward. It was members of this group who, up to the last few years, donned old clothes and bogie masks and rang doorbells on Hallowe'en. One always prepared cider and doughnuts or other goodies for these highly prized visits.

But life in the old ward was not all entertaining and being entertained. Here originated most of the early charities. The Female Char-

itable Society founded in 1820 in the Everard Peck house, mothered most of the present social agencies and, except for a Board (mostly Warders), consisted of Mrs. Arnold who, in her own person, represented practically all the altruistic work which was not denominational. Her own home, on Washington St. (Little Washington, it was always called for there was a bend in the road) was office, oratory, and storehouse, and a long line of the lame, the halt, the blind, and the impoverished found it indeed a haven.

The Board of the City Hospital (now the General) was largely composed of Third Warders—Mrs. John Brewster, Mrs. James Hart, Mrs. William Perkins, Mrs. Arthur Robinson, Mrs. Arthur Hamilton, Mrs. Oscar Craig, Mrs. William E. Hoyt, and many others. Twigs made their appearance in the eighties, the co-founder being a Warder. The great event of the year was the hospital donation held in Washington Rink, Fitzhugh Rink, or, in my day, at Convention Hall. One year it was at Graves' new store and another at the Elks Club. For months every Twigger labored on all sorts of fancy work; for weeks theatricals or pageants were rehearsed under the direction of Miss Yiager; for days every kitchen in town was in a turmoil of cakes, candies, pies, rolls, and cranberry sauce. White aprons were laundered and the men of the family evicted for two days. Everyone set out early Thursday morning with bundles, boxes, and baskets to man the booths which each twig had erected and trimmed the day before. Every Victorian piece of handiwork imaginable was exposed for sale and some unimaginable such as the hideous egg cozy knitted of yellow and orange wool in the form of six tulips to lie on a plate. It was "so difficult that it should have been impossible." It became a perennial joke in the Parent Stem, turning up each year and being repurchased to be presented, with elaborate wrappings, to one of the members.

In the center of the hall sat Mrs. Warham Whitney in white kid gloves taking in the filthy lucre at a table marked "Donation" while at another table sat Miss Lydia Rumsey taking subscriptions for the *Hospital Review*, a monthly publication. With perfect synchronization you bought and sold, so that a steady stream of cash flowed into the hospital till. Occasionally it seemed wisest to buy back your own contribution, but that too helped the hospital and no one knew so well

how much work it represented, or approved so thoroughly of its taste. All roads led to the hall during the noon recess of business men. Long tables groaned beneath the weight of jellies, pickles, cranberry sauce and salads, while behind the scenes, Mr. Pond and Mr. Charles Gorton, with aprons tied around their necks, carved the succulent turkeys. You whispered to your waitress that you preferred "Mrs. Brewster's pumpkin pie please," and hurried away from your booth to eat with your family. Afternoon and evening saw a continuation of a brisk trade with the variation of treating your friends to tea or ice cream, and seeing that the children on their arrival from school had full purses to enjoy the grab bag, fish pond and Punch and Judy. In the evening, too, came the great dramatic event, more important than any Broadway first night. Whether it was Columbus and Isabella, the Pied Piper or the Kermesse, it was the best show since last year and every minor part was applauded to the echo. Hot mustard footbaths had to be used to fit one for a repetition of the wild orgy all the next day. The medical profession, as well as the Hospital, was the gainer, for many took to their beds as a result and it was some time before life regained its normalcy.

To speak of the ward without the Erie canal would be to leave out Hamlet. Dewitt Clinton may have had other reasons in mind when he built it, but we Warders knew that its prime *raison d'être* was to act as a moat for the Third Ward. Each intersecting street had its drawbridge and we were serene in our isolation from the rest of the town. It was fascinating to stand on the hump bridge at Washington and watch the life that went on beneath one's feet. The long flat canal boats, the housewife sitting rocking and knitting in the doorway of the little deck house as she surveyed the wash fluttering from the deck while a small mongrel dashed back and forth barking at the faithful mules plodding along the tow path. The "spares" showed their long noses and ears out of the stern windows taking a well earned rest while they munched their oats. Sometimes the boats were tethered together in lots of six or seven with two teams of mules. The boys of the Ward, well supplied with tomatoes or cabbages, sometimes bombarded the boats as they passed, and were rewarded by the flow of language which they regarded as highly educational. Warehouses lined the north side of the canal. In the olden days boats were not allowed to blow horns within the limits of town on Sun-

day. When I was a child there were lift bridges at Plymouth and Fitzhugh streets and turning bridges at Exchange and Caledonia. The lift bridges added zest to any trip down town. There was always the alluring thought that one might get caught in spite of the caretaker's warning and wafted up to the level of the little sentry box of a house on top. The bell would clang and everyone would run to get to terra firma before the creaking machinery lifted the whole thing. (I can remember the building of the Fitzhugh Street bridge from a topical song "Oh Fitzhugh bridge is broken down, one more river to cross, To go to church you have to go round, one more river to cross.") The influence of the canal lingers in the mores of the Third Warders to this day. The bridges were narrower than the streets, so everyone crossed the street catty-corner on the bridge. Like migrating birds who pass over shoals where there used to be islands, Warders still pay little attention to traffic lights and still jay walk, particularly in the neighborhood of Broad Street. In winter the canal presented quite a different appearance. Drained about the first of November, it became the repository of tin cans and dead cats and was as unsavory a mess as one could imagine. We never thought to apologize for it—it was a part of the Ward and therefore all right. From Exchange Street to South Avenue it was flooded and provided the perfect skating rink. Here as in Radio City in the heart of the city you could watch the outside edge, the Dutch roll and waltzing couples, while we young fry flopped about and tried to stand erect on wobbly ankles. Barney and Berry skates which locked into plates set in the heel of your shoes were the last word. Mr. Van Dorn, more sure-footed than graceful, spent weary hours in the kindness of his heart holding up youngsters and teaching them the rudiments of the art and sometimes Mr. Ken Alling would demonstrate a fancy stroke. This rink bridged the period between that of my parents when they descended wooden steps at Driving Park Avenue and skated to the lake, returning by train from Charlotte, and the Prince Street rink where we removed ourselves for greater exclusiveness when the hoipoloi became too numerous on the aqueduct.

In the spring, the great excitement was a possible flood. It was in terms of the Genesee that the Ward child thought of Noah and no ark could have been more exciting than it was to see a flatbottomed row

boat navigating Exchange Street. We had been brought up on tales of the "Great Flood" of the sixties, and, like the children of Israel we were always awaiting another. We eagerly watched the angry waters mounting to the top of the aqueduct arches and even beyond and sometimes a great tree would have to be dynamited to save the structure.

Of all the neighborly friends who have stood together with steady affection the most notable are St. Luke's and the First Presbyterian—a very Damon and Pythias of friendships from which the Federation of Churches could learn much. The First was founded in 1815 and St. Luke's two years later, and for many years they stood on opposite sides of Fitzhugh street eyeing each other with friendly rivalry. When the First Church burned, the congregation worshipped in St. Luke's and throughout their lives they have stood by each other with undeviating devotion. Members of the First used to lunch at St. Luke's and St. Lukers used to crowd to the First's chicken pie suppers which Mrs. Chapin's cuisine made famous. Never were such chicken pies—even Heinz's broadcaster could not have made them sound more luscious than they were. (It will be remembered that the Proprietors had offered a lot for the erection of a church edifice for the new settlement. The Roman Catholics and the Episcopalians heard of it simultaneously and both set off up the valley to make application. But the Episcopalian had the better horse and arrived first which accounts for the fact that St. Luke's is the oldest church edifice in Rochester and that legally its title is "St. Luke's Church of Genesee Falls.") St. Luke's was noted for its dramatics as the First for its food. "Mrs. Jarley" and "The Lamentable Tragedy of Julius Caesar" stand out among a galaxy of lesser successes. Members of both congregations are reminded of the friendship at the very Communion Rail, for the cross on the First's table was a centennial present from St. Luke's, and the Ciborium used at St. Luke's was a centennial gift from the First. We like to think of the "communion of saints" of the former members of both parishes.

The Quaker meetinghouse used to stand in Hubbell Park as late as the eighties, and here the Quakers of the whole surrounding country held their services, hitching their horses in the old shed and warming themselves and having coffee in the hospitable kitchen of Mr. and Mrs.

Herman Behn, next door. Their staid costumes made an unusual note in the Ward.

Education was held in high esteem although it was so different in method from that of to-day. Much of the teaching in the early days was based on memory work and the quick child learned to recite from the textbook like a little parrot. The results are enough to refute all present pedagogical theories, for what wonderful men and efficient, charming women evolved, whether because of or in spite of their early training! The Ward boasted several private schools besides Number Three on Tremont Street and the old Free Academy which was not far away, in the present Education building next St. Luke's church. There were numerous small private schools where younger children learned their R's, such as those of Mrs. Arrink, Miss Jane Rochester, and the Misses Marshall.

The present "Fitzhugh" apartments with its imposing columns housed a school for many decades, the large front upstairs room acting as assembly hall and study room. Here my mother and her contemporaries studied Gray's botany and "Moral Philosophy" which seemed to cover everything not assigned to other courses and included physics, chemistry, ethics, aesthetics, psychology, and philosophy. It was a small volume and dry as dust. Miss Doolittle was the principal for a long time, followed by Mrs. Nichols and her daughters.

Miss Bliss had a boarding and day school in the house now the Locust club, on the southeast corner of Spring Street and Washington. It seems to have been extremely modern in that it was co-educational. Her brilliant young assistant, Miss Helen Hollister, who began to teach at the age of eighteen, was later on the faculty of the Mechanics Institute and did much for the educational standards there. Miss Bliss moved the school to Yonkers about 1886, taking with her as boarders some of her Rochester pupils.

Livingston Park Seminary, on the southwest corner of Spring Street, was both a boarding and day school for girls. I can still see the big school room—the double desks with their tilt tops and the cane seated chairs, identical whatever the size or age of the pupil, the hard uncomfortable benches across the front facing the rostrum where some class was always in progress, and the two little class rooms off the west end

of this assembly hall. The desks were beside the windows, so all ventilation had to be in the way of drafts, and boards with little bent stovepipes were inserted at the base. Here Mrs. Curtis presided and after her retirement, Miss Georgia Stone and later Mrs. William Rebasz. It was a Church school, its commencements always being held at St. Luke's, and on Ash Wednesday the whole school marched down two by two to the morning service, a welcome holiday from parsing sentences in neat little boxes or struggling with arithmetic or ancient history. A religious service began every morning and all the pupils knew the first two stanzas of a huge assortment of hymns. The Park made an ideal playground during recess, tho' I remember nothing more active than hop scotch or ringing tag, and usually the time was spent strolling up and down, perhaps indulging in a "frozen delight" if the hoky-poky man happened along. The school was in existence until a few years ago when the property was bought as a gospel center.

The boys of the neighborhood, after the younger co-educational courses, moved on to the Free Academy, or, in my day, to the Bradstreet school, in the then new Cutler building, on their way to boarding school and college. College for girls, even at the turn of the century was something of a pioneering venture. Mrs. Clinton Rogers was one of the first graduates of Vassar after it became a college, but although she had led the way, a "finishing" school and a coming out party seemed the more normal way of entering adult life for many years. For a woman to have a career outside her home was unusual and one ran the risk of being considered something of an oddity, perhaps even a little "queer." One east side matron, as late as 1930 was heard to say "Yes, I thought of sending my daughters to college but I decided I would rather have them have a cultural education."

Comparatively few had their own carriages, but those who had, always filled them with neighbors. The rest of us had recourse to the Third Ward liveries for occasions of especial importance—George Simpson and old Willett. One never went alone but in capacity groups. As Charles Robinson said, in his inimitable *Third Ward Traits*, "The Ward moves in battalion." Sometimes transportation was by invitation (to be carefully returned at the next festivity); sometimes a Dutch treat. Thus the party began at your own doorstep and lasted all the way home.

Simpson's carriages had more style, particularly the phaeton which his assistant called the "canópy." Old Willett's horses and carriages were of his own vintage. My Aunt, deciding to drive herself, asked if the horse was perfectly safe. "Wall," said Willett, "if she should see a dead white cow lying by the side of the road, she might shy a little." One of the great treats of my childhood was the annual drive into the country to pick wild flowers, usually on the last day of April so that I might fill the little May baskets I had carefully prepared and hang them on the doors of our friends next morning.

The tempo of the Ward was measured but never lethargic. Plymouth clock, of recent years kept in repair by a Presbyterian, marked the passage of time for everyone as the radio does today. Clocks and watches were all set by it and if you were late it was your own fault. If your watch showed 8:12 you knew Mr. Hamilton was just opening his door, Dr. Stoddard was sitting down to breakfast, and Mr. Roby was nearing the Four Corners. At noon you knew exactly which husband would return first and in what order you would see them rounding the corner. No luncheon clubs. They dined (not lunched) with their families.

You might think that the tempo would have increased with the advent of the bicycle, but if so you do not know the Ward. Everyone rode but at such slight acceleration from a walk that it made little difference. Scorchers were not Warders—with the possible exception of Miss Fanny Montgomery. There were academies in which to learn and then after a course of lessons, one emerged with a perspiring male running alongside hanging on to the back of the saddle. (One of the Ward fathers, while learning to ride went with a member of his office force and while pedalling on the cinder path by the rapids, fell into the river. Returning for dry clothes the companion felt that tact was necessary and said, "Mrs. Blank, Mr. Blank and the bicycle fell into the river, but the bicycle is all right.") Love of the sport was not easily discouraged. Mrs. FitzSimons, practicing on Spring Street in preparation for a ride all the way to Elmira to visit the Sloat Fassetts, rode right through the basement window of Mrs. William E. Hoyt, to the consternation of the cook. Nothing daunted, she then practiced round and round her dining room table. It must have been annoying to see a next door neighbor,

little Carolyn Sherwood, vault onto her saddle at her doorstep and swoop down both terraces and Troup Street hill standing erect, without a single revolution of her pedals, and usually with her arms folded across her chest.

The traditions of the Ward were shattered by the coming of the automobile. Horror at its speed struggled with pride that we could boast of one. That the basic patents were owned by Mr. Selden, himself a Warder, had in no way prepared us for such excitement. The first in the Ward (second in town) was bought by Mr. J. Foster Warner and its internal workings gave us sufficient warning so that every window was full of admiring faces by the time he got the strange contraption to the street. It was a Locomobile. A gas flame immediately under the seat might easily lead to overheating and dire results. To overcome this danger, the passenger had to work his passage by pumping vigorously. On a memorable trip to Geneseo—unheard of distance—Mrs. Warner arrived exhausted having pumped vigorously all 30 miles. This snorting affair was replaced later by a magnificent open car into the tonneau of which we children climbed through a little door in the rear. Another early Ward car was regarded with jealous eyes by the son of the family, who, after having gone dutifully upstairs to bed, slid down a conductor pipe and purloined the car from the stable (no garages in those days). He drove his friends triumphantly to Charlotte in it but when ready to return, he could only get the gears in reverse, so ignominiously had to back up the whole seven miles to town.

Trees were everywhere in the Ward. Indeed, when you climbed Powers' Tower (exciting eminence) you recognized it as a clump of green pierced by the steeples of the First and Plymouth churches. The sidewalks were, for the most part of brick, sometimes with a double row of flagstones down their center, sometimes laid in herring bone pattern and extending to the curb, with round holes, edged with narrow bricks, around the trunks of the trees whose branches met so far above our heads. Sun dappled through, making orange lights and purple shadows on the bricks. In winter the snow banks were so high that you could not see from one side of the street to the other. Most of the houses were built well back from the street and had fences, either iron

or picket, whose gates made ideal swings. Carriage blocks and hitching posts lined the curbs.

The core of the Ward has always been Livingstone Park—called quite sufficiently “the Park,” with its double terraces and guarded privacy. It remains private property and is maintained by the abutting property holders. There still stand the cement entrances like a growth of mushrooms at both ends. The roadway may seem narrow today when you try to pass the parked cars of the Red Cross workers, but it is broad indeed compared with the little passage just the width of a carriage which used to suffice. In the center was a small circle guarded by an iron deer, around which the coachmen could turn their equipages. The original gates are still to be found on the sidewalk but the ones for the road are no longer closed and locked every evening and all day Sunday, as they were even in my childhood. If the dwellers should do such a wanton thing as use their horses on Sunday, they had to scuttle down the back way to their stables which faced on Caledonia Avenue (now Clarissa Street). There are tales told of community suppers and band concerts and prayer meetings. At the latter Miss Louise Chappell was not too welcome as they said she “prayed too long.” It was here at the wedding of Mrs. Dodd that Chinese lanterns were first used in Rochester. At one end of the park was the Kidd house, one of the best of the Greek revival, later occupied by Dr. Osgood and his family and now the D.A.R. chapter house. At the other stood Livingston Park Seminary with its charming Ionic columns where many Rochester girls received their education. Next the Osgoods were, and are, the Buells, their steps guarded by iron greyhounds. Here one can still see the blue Victorian drawing room with its satin upholstered furniture, its pale blue brocade curtains, its two white marble fireplaces and its beautiful crystal chandeliers. Probably no other room so breathes the spirit of the old Ward. Next was the Cheney house, with its iron lions couchant on the steps, still owned by their great granddaughter, Mrs. Charles Winslow Smith. In the remaining space on that side was my Grandfather’s, later torn down and rebuilt by the FitzSimons and now a stretch of lawn.

Opposite the school and facing Spring Street was the house built by Mr. Chappell, later the home of Miss Wild, and next it the Gaffneys, later the Robert Mathews house, where my mother and her contem-

poraries used to gather on the Fourth of July, clad in wool to reduce the fire hazard, and climb the cherry tree where they spent the day, lighting firecrackers and eating cherries. On the other side of Spring Street stands the Burke house (now the Visiting Nurse Assoc.) where Mr. Will Burke lived with his cousins, Miss Louise and Miss Sallie Hall. The Reynolds house (built by Mr. Hamilton) is one of the most imposing in the Ward, as befitted its owner. Here was celebrated Mrs. Reynolds' centennial birthday when the hundred candles on the cake took fire and caused considerable damage. Mr. Reynolds left the house for the Library which bore his name, and it is now used by the Red Cross. Next door was the Dr. Montgomery house, unfortunately torn down, for it was one of the most beautiful of the Greek revival houses, then the Thomas Montgomery house and beyond that the low-lying pre-bungalow house where Mrs. William Perkins and later her brother, Dr. Dewey, held court. Mrs. Perkins was a grande dame of the old school and she always wore, in the house, her widow's cap of ruching with lawn bows and a fichu of maline about her throat.

The Colonel Rochester house was intact during my childhood though it had fallen from its high estate and was distinctly forlorn and shabby. It was reached from Spring Street by a long flight of wooden steps (where the Bevier building is now), the ground level being much higher than the street. Another member of the original Rochester family was Mrs. William Pitkin (Aunt Louisa to the Ward) whose caustic tongue belied her warm heart. The clan included, of course, Mrs. Montgomery and Mrs. Rogers. The John Rochesters (he was the Colonel's grandson) lived next the corner on Washington St. Mrs. Rochester was a southerner, and no one could sweep into a room with greater distinction, trains and lace scarves floating behind her. She always spoke of herself in the third person, as Mrs. Rochester or Your Cousin Lizzie, and the guest room was known as the "bishop's room," as the visiting episcopals usually stayed with them. When first engaged she invited Miss Rochester to visit her in Mississippi. Her little maid came to her one day, saying "Miss Lizzie, I'se feared dat she's not 'zactly quality. When she drops her petticoats, she picks 'em up herself."

The Potter house on the corner is the site of the original Indian spring which gives the street its name. Whether it flows now I do not

know, but the rockery in the garden marks its grave. In the block between there and the canal were the Hawks, the Craigs, the Maltby Strongs and Gilman Perkins and the Woodworths. Mr. Craig, who founded Craig Colony at Sonyea was very tall, his wife very tiny. Full of good works and interested in any advance movement, she seemed always in a hurry and the lawn bow of her little ruching cap flew out behind her as she dashed about the house. It was her boast that she had sewed with the same needle for thirty years. The Gilman Perkins sold their house to the Genesee Valley Club and moved to their new home on East Avenue which, too, was later to be acquired by the club. Mr. Fitch was the editor of the *Post Express*. They were among the first to have a telephone in their house. One day it rang while Mrs. Fitch was changing her dress. Throwing a shawl about her, she ran to an upstairs window and called to a passing stranger asking him to open the door and answer the phone as she was not dressed. It may be apocryphal, but it was said that she once cut and made a bridesmaid's dress on the pullman between here and Albany.

Mingled were the feelings when these houses were acquired by the Mechanics Institute and others near by were torn down. What price progress! The art department was housed in the building now used for shop classes and the studios reached almost to the canal. Full size plaster casts of famous statues stood along the walls, but Mr. Colby was asked by some Warders, please to hang some drapery about the Venus de Medici who stood with her back to one of the windows.

Mrs. Ives' was not a boarding house. It was an institution. A woman of charm and a superlative housekeeper, Mrs. Ives always had a long waiting list, and to live there was something of an open sesame to the social life of Rochester. She was, first, on Plymouth Avenue in the Austin Brewster house, and from there moved to the Jonathan Child house, now the Christian Science church. Mr. Child was, as you know, the first mayor of Rochester and his wife, Sophia, was a daughter of Col. Rochester. A stately mansion of distinguished beauty, it made a background for the happy life which flowed through its doors. The young people living there eschewed the company of their families at meal time and ate at the "children's table"—Mr. and Mrs. Poinier, my mother and father before their marriage, Mary Adams (Mrs. Foster

Warner), Clarice Jeffrey, Robert Bridges (later editor of *Scribners*, then a cub reporter on the *Post Express*), and several others. Invitations to Mrs. Ives' fancy dress parties where she received as "Auntie Slick" were highly prized. With all her charm, she was something of an autocrat and woe betide any guest who absented himself from any house festivity even if it were only playing beanbags in the parlor.

A unique house was that of Doctor Moore, leading physician and founder of the park system. The ground floor consisted of offices for himself and his two sons, a large waiting room, and the dining room, while upstairs was the large drawing room with its bay window and two fireplaces with their blazing cannel coal, rallying point for the hospitality of the clan. Adaptability must have been the watchword of the family for under that roof lived, as in a feudal castle of old, ten people of three generations, every one of whom was of strong individuality. Here was the meeting place for the friends of all three generations, and what good times were had.

Fitzhugh Street bends a little at Troup so that the Campbell-Whittlesey house, now saved as a museum by the Landmark Society, looks directly down the middle of the street. It is the finest example of Greek revival in western New York saved as a museum. Chancellor Whittlesey bought it in 1848, and it has belonged to the family until recently. What could not *that* house tell of the Ward, for the hospitality and wit of the family made it a gathering place for their friends. When the day came to move in, the Chancellor made a large gesture of assistance in the undertaking by saying at the breakfast table, "My dear, you need not send the carriage for me tonight." He was a brilliant man, leading lawyer, Congressman, Chancellor and Judge of the old Supreme Court, and member of one of the earliest anti-slavery societies of the state. He was one of the committee to investigate the claims of the Fox sisters whose rappings were disturbing the quietness of the Ward. The investigation was taking place in Judge Whittlesey's office when a loud rap was heard on the door. Upon opening it while it was still vibrating they found no one on the other side. So Judge Haskell of LeRoy, another member of the committee, went out into the hall while Judge Whittlesey remained within. Again a terrific rapping sounded. It must have sorely puzzled the learned men as it has many others, and their report

stated that they had not been able to discover any explanation of the sounds.

In the early days, the basement of the Whittlesey house was the scene of histrionic efforts for which the admittance was paid in pins. Twenty-five pins gave admittance to the most ambitious, while more impromptu entertainments could be seen for fifteen. Miss Milly Alling remembered one staged by Seward Whittlesey, Charles Pond and other boys of the neighborhood in which the tomahawking of an early settler was the dramatic climax. When the moment came for the catastrophe, Seward announced that the details would be so horrible that the audience, mostly feminine, better all cover their heads with their skirts. This suggestion was obeyed by all the little girls except Miss Milly, who peeped around the hem and saw red flannel being applied to the victim's head in gory similitude. Irrate at such faking she sturdily rose to her feet and said the show was not worth the admission and was promptly evicted by the producer.

The attic of the house was huge and filled with treasures. It extends over the great columns which are hollow, and children were always warned not to play in that part of the attic or they would "land on their heads in a street in China." Miss Mary Whittlesey, the Chancellor's daughter, suffered from a fear of cats which amounted almost to a phobia, while the family cook was especially fond of them. It was finally decided that the cook might keep one, provided it never passed the back hall. The attic seemed neutral territory and it was often there playing with the children. One day it disappeared. That evening, sitting on the front porch, the family heard pathetic meows, but the neighborhood was searched in vain. All evening the plaintive sounds and the hunt continued. But you cannot stump a Whittlesey and some one had the idea that the sound might come from one of the columns. To the attic they raced, and with an ear to the well-like aperture they located the sounds unmistakably. Mr. Seward Whittlesey took command of the situation and a basket was arranged with a bowl of milk and a sprig of catnip placed well in the center and lowered by a rope fastened to the handle. Down it went, one story, two, until it touched bottom. Surely the cat would enter and could then be drawn to safety. But pussy, perhaps because she was kept back stairs, showed none of the Whittlesey

resourcefulness and refused to enter the elevator so invitingly arranged. All night it spent incarcerated in its classical prison and in the morning Mr. Osborn, the Ward carpenter, was summoned. Soon he was seen walking up the street, his young assistant as always "at heel," carrying a kit of tools (they never walked side by side as that would have spelled equality). A neat little door was cut in the base of the column and a chastened and grimy pussy walked out. After this the house was known as the "Caterpillar House."

One could go on indefinitely telling tales of the old houses and their inmates—the Roswell Harts, the James Harts, the John Brewsters, the Austin Brewsters, the Churchills and Bronsons, the Pomeroy Brewsters, Chamberlains, Littles, Crittendens, Sages, Chappells, and Chapins, but time forbids and if you do not know by this time that the Ward was the best place to live, and a unique spot, the very core of Rochester, multiplication of tales of the life there would not convince you.

The Ward made itself felt outside Rochester. Probably the most famous personality (from Fitzhugh Street) was Lewis Morgan, America's most famous ethnologist, whose studies of the beaver and then of Indian Tribal organization need no comment. Many old Warders claim Jenny Jerome, mother of Winston Churchill, although historians view this claim with doubt. Mrs. Kipling is also a Third Warder—Carrie Balastier, and her brother collaborated with Kipling in some of his books. In art Maude Humphrey, a well known illustrator (mother of Humphrey Bogart), Louise Stowell, Ada Kent, Clarice Jeffrey, and Guernsey Mitchell, the sculptor, whose bronze Mercury gives wing to our industrial life. In music Mrs. Stedman, who gave so great an impetus to the formation of the Tuesday Musicales, Miss Holyland and her more famous pupil, John Warner. Of writers there were Charles Mulford Robinson, the ward's own bard, better known as one of the first city planners, and Robert Bridges of Scribners, and Claude Bragdon and Samuel Adams. For sheer erudition in its most engaging form Doctor Osgood and Doctor Converse stood apart. They had so much of wisdom that they both had the simplicity of the truly great. (As his younger son said of Doctor Converse, "I wouldn't mind knowing as much as Dad but I never want to know as much as my brother.") But as a whole,

the Ward made its contributions, not so much to the life of art as to the art of living.

Miss Milly Alling, who died recently at the age of 96 was an outstanding figure, particularly on Fitzhugh Street where she had spent 85 years. Petite, alert, friendly, with a delightful sense of humor, it was a joy to hear her reminisce about olden days. When her father bought the house on Fitzhugh Street, it stood well back from the street and was terraced down to the river level. Her first schooling came from Mrs. Arrink, and then she went to Miss Hamilton's, between Adams and Atkinson streets where most of the children in the neighborhood studied. Here went, at varying times, Charles Pond, the Miller boys, George and Granger Hollister, Jenny Churchill, and a host of other Ward children. Later she went to the Rochester Female Academy when Miss Doolittle was its head. The children used to swing back and forth on the gate, chanting, "She can do little who can't do this." She then went to a finishing school in New York.

The turning point in her life was when she and her family went to the centennial exposition in Philadelphia and she was carried away with admiration over the ceramic exhibition. This was the beginning of the craze for china painting which, like so many other things, deteriorated until a hand painted plate became an anathema. Then it was an art rather than a Victorian accomplishment and vied with the finest imported china. Miss Milly studied in New York with an Englishman of whom she said, "He was fine but he *would* get drunk." She was in the forefront of the movement and soon had all she could do supplying Tiffany, Gorham and the discriminating local patron. Mr. Kimball refused to buy Sevres or Royal Worcester so long as he could have her work and her master piece was the dinner set he ordered, all designs for which he stipulated should be destroyed and never copied. She was looked upon as an authority and the *Art Amateur* besought her for articles on technical subjects. Hers was a rare personality and her courage never faltered through many vicissitudes.

No one else could write of the Ward without a mention of Miss Agnes Jeffrey whose tall, erect figure was a familiar sight. She lived to the age of 96 with every faculty alert, painting the day she died and the week previously reading aloud from the works of Ian McClaren to

a group of young people who loved to gather about her. She was an authority on the botany and astronomy of her day and took up the study of Italian when over 70 and read it fluently. She read the entire Bible through every year and her knowledge of it was encyclopedic. In the house she always wore lace caps with a touch of colored ribbon covering all her hair except the four white puffs which framed her benign face. These caps she had first donned at the age of twenty-six.

Mrs. John Brewster, leader in all good community effort and one of the matriarchs of the Ward, was equally known for her cuisine. Once, a young housekeeper asked her if she would be good enough to tell her how she made her chicken pies. "My dear, when I want a chicken pie, I get Hannah Pine and go out for the day."

Other cateresses were Bridget Jackway and Mary Connors. They knew who wanted coffee and who preferred tea, and served the proper beverage to every guest at a luncheon party, without asking. There were other figures in the Ward too well known to be omitted: the postman who delivered the mail for a quarter of a century and knew so many handwritings that he could tell you whom your letters were from—a trait which was very disconcerting in long distance courtships. There was Mr. Hopwood, the grocer, who was a veritable Mr. Hobbs. There was Mr. Morgan, the plumber, who not only knew every family in the Ward but the position of every drain and lead pipe. One of the characters of the Ward was Lars Larson who came from Norway in a fifty foot boat and was one of the leaders among Norwegians in America. Old retainers always were called by the names of the families they served. There was Snowy Wild, a little wisp of a woman whom I can still see running through the streets in search of her charges; there were Ann Robinson and Mary Hoyt and Nellie Warner. Nellie, who was a superlative cook, entered a contest for producing new ways of using grape nuts and the family had to eat them from soup to nuts so to speak. But she won the prize. There was funny little Tommy Dayfoot and John Brown, the black whitewasher, and a host of others.

And the dogs of the neighborhood! Sugar Robinson, Rogo Rogers, Jackie Smith, Benny Ford (who wore a black ribbon when his vet died) and Sampson Converse, who was so loathe to leave the Ward that he jumped from a train on entering the Adirondacks and walked all the

way to Fitzhugh Street. It was Sampson's youthful master who called on Mrs. Folsom and presented her with a chocolate drop which he extracted from his pocket much the worse for wear. Thanking him, she said she would eat it later but he insisted that he wanted to see her enjoy it. Summoning all her will power, not wanting to hurt the little boy's feelings, she put it in her mouth saying it was delicious. "I'm glad of that," he said, "Sampson didn't seem to like it."

Certain pictures linger in the memory. Mrs. John Rochester, sweeping down the street in a long skirt with flounces, held, by a dextrous turn of the wrist just high enough to escape the pavement without showing an ankle, her other hand holding, at a jaunty angle, a parasol also covered with flounces. Or Mrs. Alfred Ely, also in a sweeping skirt but of the kind that can stand alone, with nary a ruffle, grabbing the front of her dress with both hands and bobbing a little curtsy when she met you. Or, a much later picture, Mr. Pond knocked down by an automobile driven by a woman, picking himself up, flicking the dust from his coat and apologizing to her for having been in her way. You remember the somnolent Sunday afternoons in summer, when, having been to Church and to the Post Office in the Reynolds Arcade, and having eaten heavily of soup, chicken and the trimmings and wine jelly with whipped cream, and having dispatched titbits to the neighbors, the elders had a siesta and then every one sat on their front steps exchanging cheery repartee with passing Warders. Those were the days when stoops had recently become piazzas, though no one called them porches yet and terraces were unknown. Summer evenings these porches certainly came into their own for every one called on every one else and every piazza kept open house.

A few years ago the Ward seemed doomed with all the old houses about to go to wrack and ruin, but to-day one sees many of them in good condition and serving a renewed purpose. The Hart-Wiltsie and the Reynolds houses as Red Cross; the Childs' and Lyon-Chapin houses as churches; the Kidd-Osgood house the D.A.R.; the Whittlesey house preserved as a museum; the Burke house, the Visiting Nurse Association; the Crittenden house, County Welfare; the Potter house a club; the Mumford-Gordon house a sanitarium; the Mathews house, the real estate board; and many made into comfortable apartment houses.

One queries "What makes a Third Warder?" The English have a saying that the best way to become a noble is to sit on one piece of land for 300 years. Perhaps something of the nature applies to the ward. We were not homogeneous in any sense except in our feeling that the Ward was the best place to live this side of Eden. We were certainly not rich, although some of us were, and we all took a sort of proprietary pride in the house on the hill (the Kimballs') with its private art gallery with walls covered with taupe silk velvet, fitting background for its masterpieces and its vitrines of pepper boxes; its orchid house which vied with the Burrages' in Manchester, the spanking horses, the drags and the Japanese butlers. We were not all well educated, although there were the learned in our midst. (One of our neighbors once told my Mother that she was having her parlor done over in Louis Quince with a tete a tete in the middle). We were not all society people, though the leaders were among us. We were probably just a cross section of the America of the period—no better (though we thought we were), no worse (though others may have been of that opinion). Yet no where in Rochester did the best of the past linger so long as in this neighborhood. The grande dame is not extinct among us. The neighborly spirit is still alive. One feels it among the new comers to the Ward—the young professional people who live in small apartments in the big houses. Perhaps they hear the old walls gossiping of the good old days in the Ruffled Shirt Ward; perhaps they are aware of the swish of satin and taffeta as they pass through the halls or the culinary aromas which the old kitchens used to possess. Perhaps the great trees whisper to them something of what THEY have witnessed. In spite of its fall from greatness, the old Ward treasures some intangibility (perhaps the Good Neighbor Policy of which we hear so much to-day) which makes it what it was—and is.

Editor's Note

This delightful account of Rochester's old Third Ward was read by Virginia Jeffrey Smith before the Rochester Historical Society a year ago this March. The topic is not of course a new one, as the observant reader will learn from Miss Smith herself, but the treatment is so fresh and spirited, so full of the atmosphere of this "much-loved" ward in days gone by, that we take pleasure in presenting it here with the hope that the response may encourage Miss Smith to press ahead with her oft-contemplated book on the history and lore of the Third Ward.