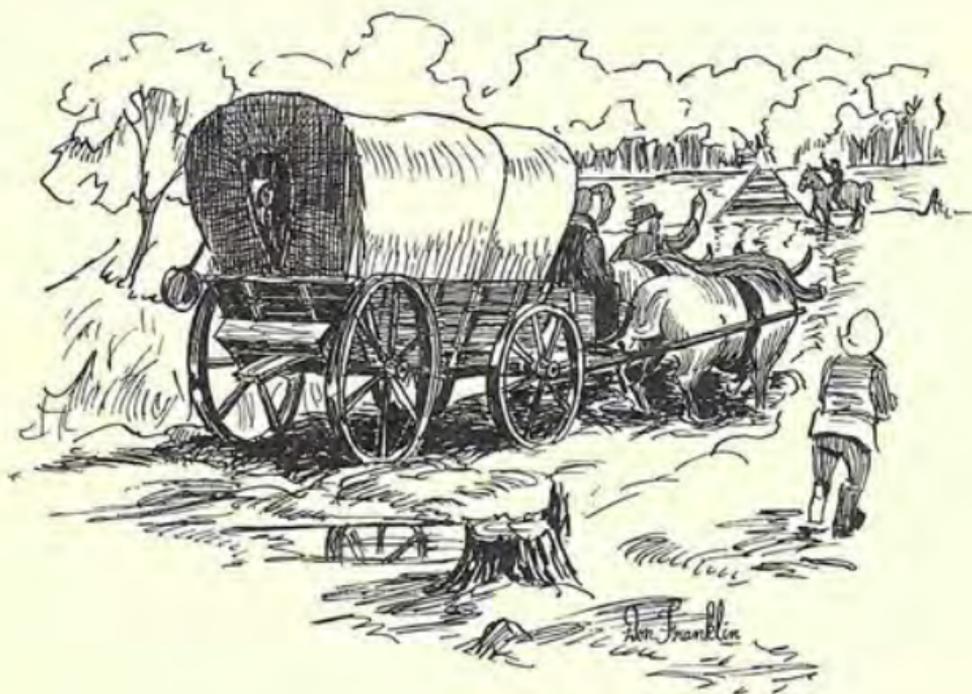


WESTWARD HO! —TO ROCHESTERVILLE



SKETCHES OF EARLY ROCHESTER

presented for your enjoyment by
Scrantom's Book & Stationery Co., Inc.

INTRODUCTION

In the early 1800's, Rochesterville was "far west" to the New Englanders who struck out by oxen cart or horseback to seek new homelands in the wilds of Western New York.

Many fine books and articles have been written about the early years of Rochester and Colonel Nathaniel Rochester for whom the original village was named. This pocket edition attempts to portray some of the more interesting aspects of life in those bygone days. It is dedicated to young and old alike who take pride in the history and heritage of their community.

Scrantom's proudly presents WESTWARD HO! TO ROCHESTERVILLE in celebration of our firm's 100th Anniversary. We gratefully acknowledge cooperation of the Rochester Historical Society in providing valuable reference information. Pen line drawings are by Rochester illustrator Don Franklin.

Published By
Scrantom's Book & Stationery Co., Inc.
1968

Contents can be used freely by anyone for
historical reference material.



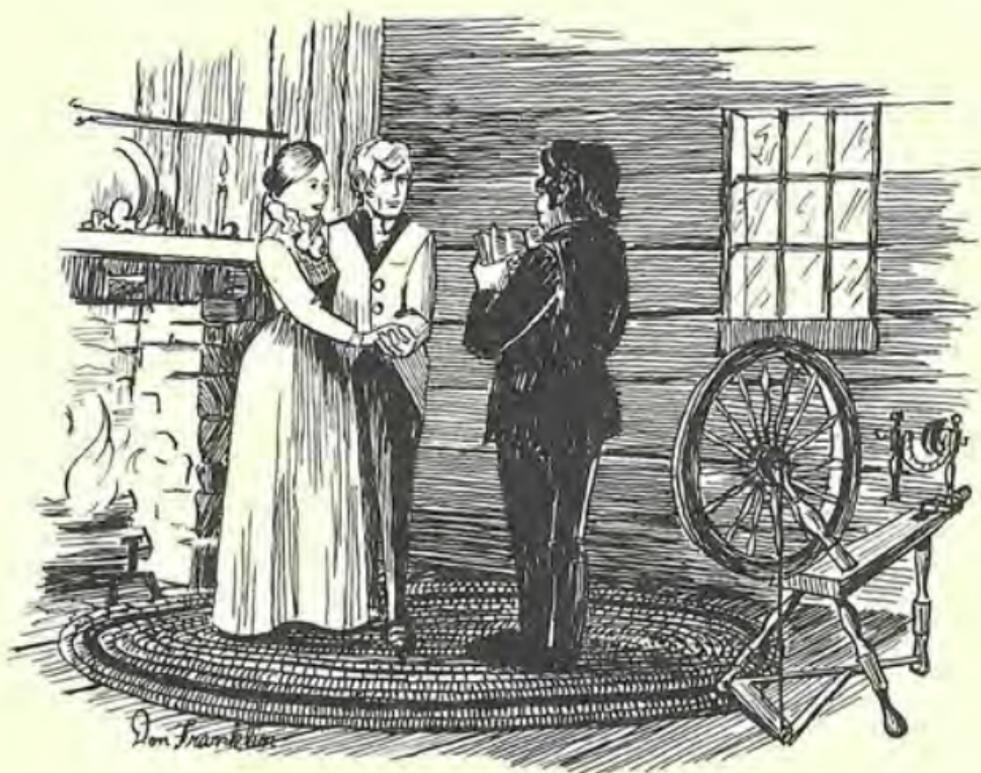
THE MILLS OF INDIAN ALLAN, 1789. A legendary but very real figure in the 1700's was a Royalist called Indian Allan. His nickname was the result of his association with Indian tribes who had remained in the territory to become friends of the white man. Indian Allan built a grist mill, as well as a saw mill, on the banks of the Genesee. The old mills stood just south of today's Race Street. Extending upstream from the brinks of the falls was a small island separated from the west river bank by a narrow channel. This provided a natural raceway for channeling the water into a flume, then into waterwheels which furnished the power for operating the mills.

Standing on the bridge at Broad Street, one can listen to the whir of the river and imagine the mills still standing, with Indian Allan himself going about his milling chores.



THE FIRST HOME IN ROCHESTERVILLE. This is the log cabin built in 1812 by the pioneering Hamlet Scrantom family, first settlers of Rochester ville. Trees were felled for a clearing, logs cut and hewn for construction of the rustic residence. Cabin logs were sealed by a mortar of clay. One stone fireplace furnished heat for the home and fire for cooking. In the bitter months of winter, howling wolves were frequent nightly visitors. Scrantoms called the place paradise in spring and summer. Forest dogwood and garden flowers lent color and beauty to their well-loved cabin.

This site later became the actual location of the original Scrantom-Wetmore firm, book dealers and stationers in the Powers Building.



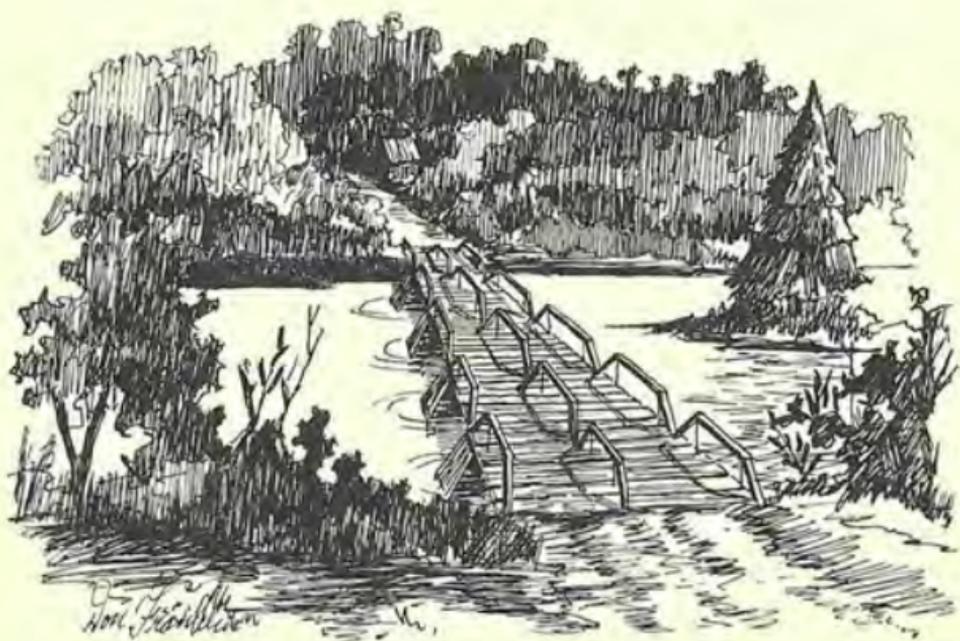
THE FIRST WEDDING. On October 8, 1815, the first marriage ceremony was held in Rochesterville. The bride was Delia Scrantom, the groom, Jehiel Barnard. They were married in the home of Captain Brown at Frankfort, now the northeast corner of Brown and Frank Streets. Two ministers engaged for the rite failed to appear so John Mastick, first attorney in the village, performed the ceremony. It is on record that the happy bridegroom paid Mastick three crowns for his fee instead of the usual one crown.

Ira West, young Jehiel's best friend, provided the wedding party with four gallons of choice Madeira wine. The results of this generous wedding gift apparently were never recorded.



SURGERY, CIRCA 1816. Doctor Simon Hunt performed Rochesterville's first surgical operation. The patient was Delia Scrantom, young daughter of Hamlet Scrantom, earliest settler in Rochesterville. The operation involved the resetting of a badly dislocated ankle. It was reported at the time that the surgery took more than two hours and resulted in complete success. Available doctors were hard to come by in these frontier days of Western New York. Yet the skill and devotion of the pioneer general practitioner, riding over arduous trails from village to village, saved many a life in the Genesee country.

Worthy of note is the unfinished interior of the Scrantom cabin. The log walls and rough plank floors were typical of the earliest homes in Rochesterville.



ROCHESTER'S FIRST BRIDGE. The rushing waters of the Genesee were a formidable challenge to the settlers of Rochesterville. Overcoming swift currents, hardship and even disease, they built the village's first bridge, later to be known as Main Street Bridge. The sturdy wooden structure was completed in the autumn of 1812 at a cost of \$12,000. In those days, the Genesee at this spot was a high level river dotted with islands. The illustration reveals a log cabin across the river. This was the cabin of the Scrantom family, the first home erected in the 100-acre tract which became the incorporated village of Rochesterville in 1817.



VILLAGE OF DESTINY, THE 100-ACRE TRACT.

Here is probably the earliest first-hand view of Rochesterville, saved for posterity by a French visitor, Charles A. Lesueur who sketched the scene at the Genesee Falls in 1816. This drawing, sketched from Lesueur's original primitive, reveals the New England influence in early homes, including the salt box type in left foreground. Crudely built from logs and rough lumber, they were happy homes nonetheless for Rochester's pioneer families. These stalwart folk passed on a heritage of pride in home ownership that became a hallmark of the Rochester way of life.

The pioneer spirit which built Rochesterville will long be remembered and respected by a proud citizenry.



EAST AVENUE THEN. Primeval forests and swamplands were cut and cleared by pioneers to provide roads to nearby settlements. Little more than paths, barely accommodated a man on horseback or oxen-pulled cart. One of these early lanes became Pittsford Road, now East Avenue. It leads past the old Orange Stone House (still standing proudly near Clover Street), winding its way to the village of Pittsford.

Down this primitive road came many of Rochesterville's early settlers, including Jehial Barnard, the community's first tailor and first bridegroom. Our artist envisions rider Barnard with saddle pack, as he neared Rochesterville on a memorable day in the past.



DAYS OF VALOR. Off the shores of Lake Ontario at the mouth of the Genesee, British men-of-war were poised for an attack on Charlotte Harbor. Their plan was discovered by a small band of American volunteers on a foggy morning in May of 1814. At dawn, Colonel Stone, Captain Brown, Captain Ely, six seamen and twelve musketmen rowed with muffled oars one mile into the lake. Through the morning mist, the volunteers made out the silhouettes of the fighting ships. The group then returned to shore. As the fog began to lift, these brave men exposed themselves to the might of the British fleet. Marching in a continuous circle in the breaking fog, they apparently looked like a full-scale army to the ships' lookout.

Imagine the surprise and relief of these Yankee defenders when the English Commodore Yeo issued the command to set sail in retreat. A handful of volunteers had routed the pride of the Great Lakes British fleet!



THE FIRST POST OFFICE. Enos Stone acted as selling agent for Colonel Nathaniel Rochester in the 100-acre Tract. This parcel of land had been surveyed and laid out in lots in 1811. A buyer of two lots was Abelard Reynolds. After he purchased the land, he built this small frame dwelling on one lot in the winter of 1812-13. Then he returned to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, for his family. On a cold day in February, Reynolds, his wife and young son arrived by horse and cutter at their new home. In 1837 the Reynolds home became Rochester's first United States Post Office. Reynolds himself served as the first postmaster.

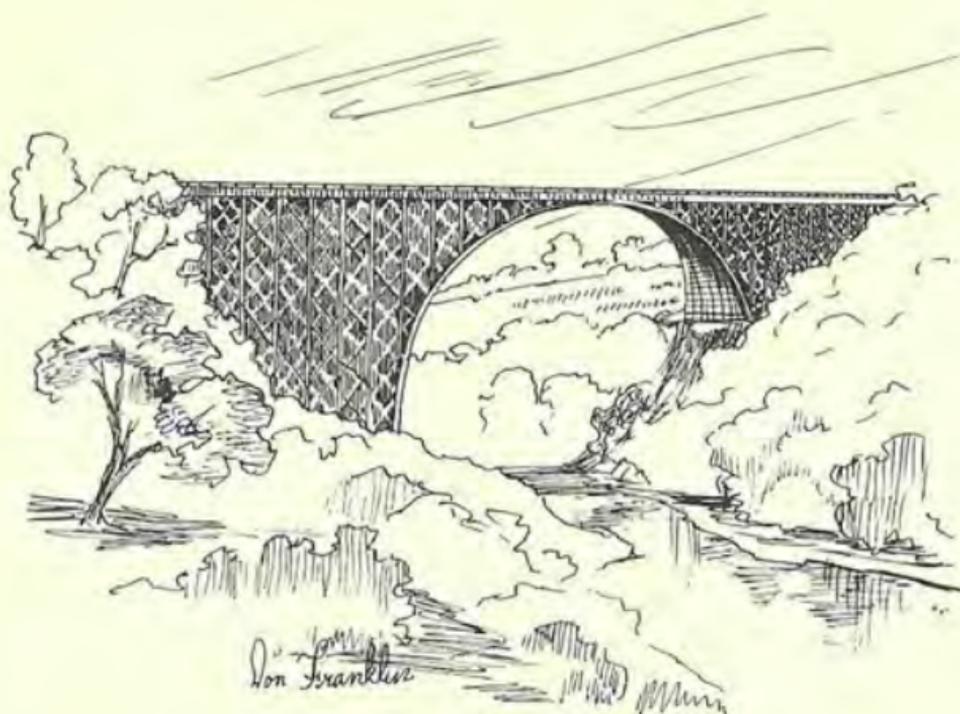
In later years, the old Post Office was torn down to make way for the original Reynolds Arcade, one of the nation's most modern buildings in its day.



THE ROCHESTER-CANANDAIGUA OVER-

LAND STAGE was the fast and dependable means of transportation between these two frontier towns, one-hundred and fifty years ago. On many occasions, streams had to be forded when bridges were washed out. If bad weather struck, the journey often took a day or two. Under these adverse conditions, weary drivers and travelers found food, lodging and hospitality at the nearest stage coach inn—more historically known as the “tavern” of early days.

Vision if you can, you and your family making this rugged journey by horse-drawn stage to Canandaigua; today, a matter of an hour or less on modern highways.



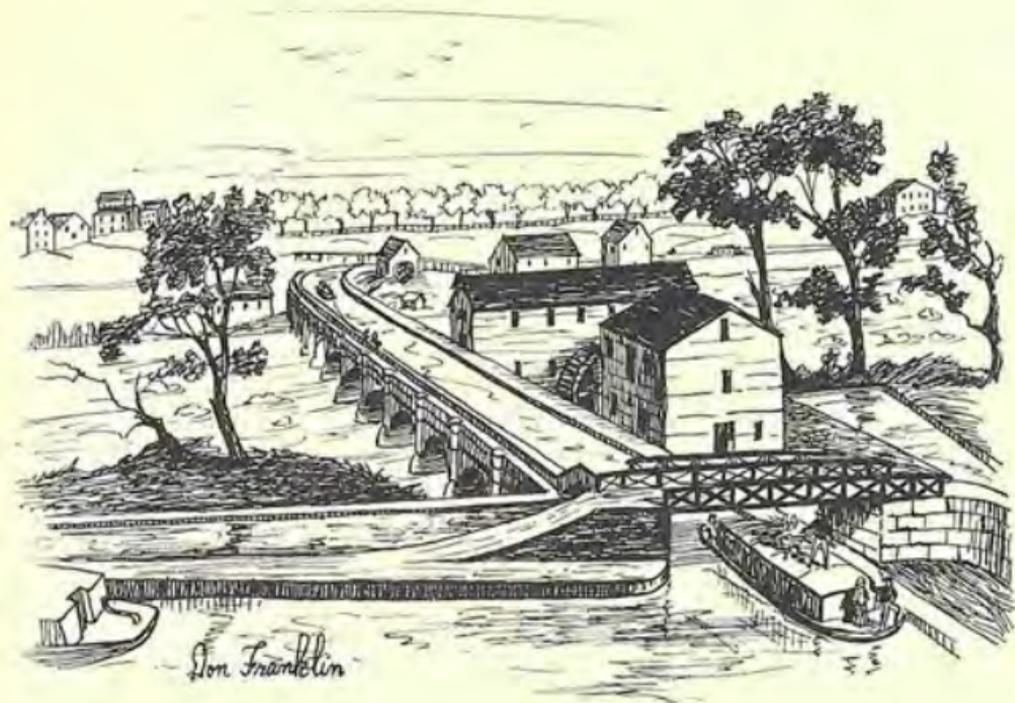
THE DOOMED CARTHAGE BRIDGE. Considered by engineers as one of the great bridge-building feats of the early nineteenth century, the Carthage Bridge spanned the Genesee gorge near the site of the present-day Driving Park Bridge. It stretched 718 feet in a graceful arch 200 feet above the river. Its width was 30 feet. Constructed of wooden beams, the Carthage bridge was completed in the spring of 1819—and collapsed 15 months later! Because of uneven pressures of the timbers at the apex of the arch, the bridge literally fell “up,” crashing with a resounding roar into the gorge below.

Fortunately, no one was on the bridge at the time of the mishap. The builder of the bridge was also lucky. He guaranteed the bridge for only 12 months.



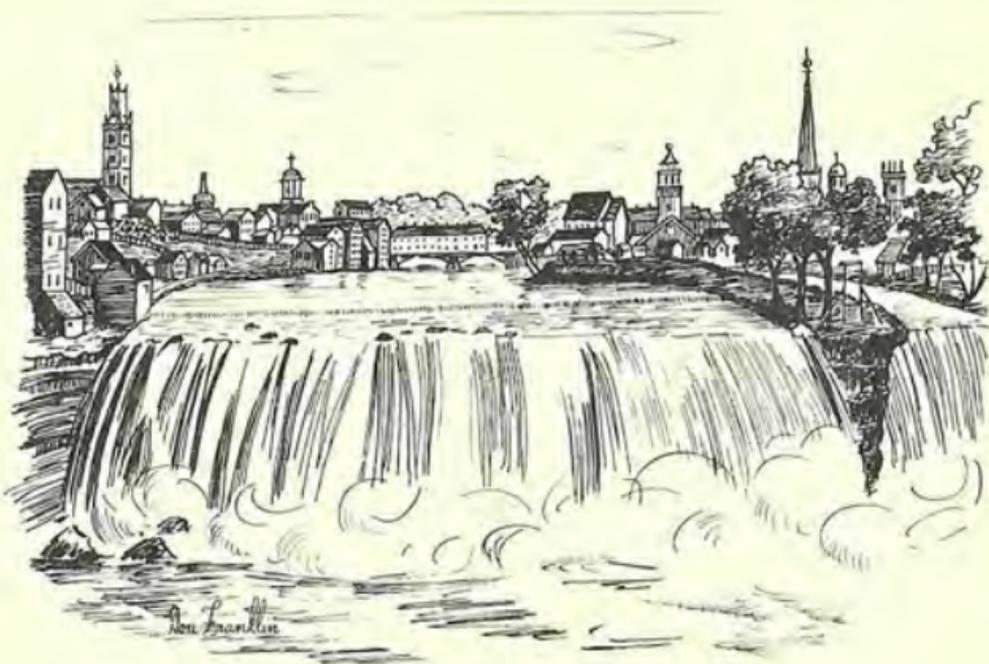
IN 1827, Captain Basil Hall, veteran of the War of 1812, sketched a view like this of old Buffalo Street in Rochesterville. This busy thoroughfare later was re-named Main Street. Captain Hall made his sketch from the balcony of Ensworth Tavern, site of the original Scrantom log cabin.

The city's original court house is the large building at right. Stone used in its construction was quarried on the spot by stone masons. The spired Presbyterian church, the quaint shops and classic court house have long since passed from the Rochester scene. Only foundation dust remains, invisible proof of the vigor and vitality of early Rochester settlers.



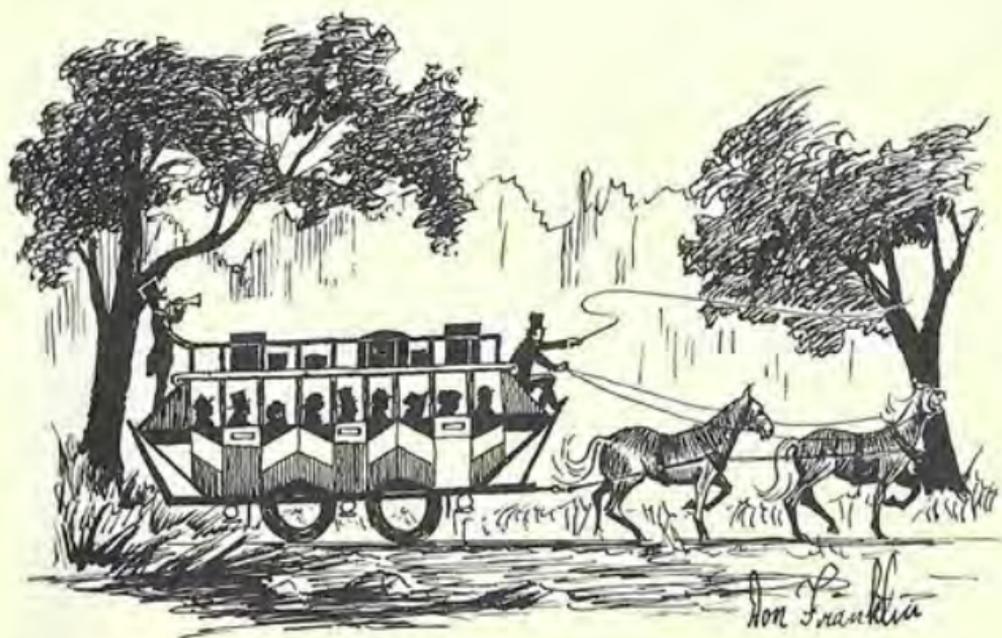
WATER OVER WATER. One of the engineering marvels of its day was the first aqueduct over the Genesee River, completed in 1826. The structure carried the waters of the original Erie Canal, better known as "Clinton's Ditch." The view is looking east from the present-day intersection of Broad and Exchange Streets. The row of trees on the horizon marks the route of today's South Avenue.

The fame of Rochester's aqueduct spread to Europe following the publishing of A. Duttonhofer's "Study Journey Through the United States" (Sutuugart, 1835). Soon the potters of Staffordshire were reproducing views of the aqueduct on their blue china made for the American export market. Rochester had gained international recognition.



THE FLOUR CITY. This was the popular nickname of Rochester in the 1830's—and for good reasons. The mills along the Genesee were grinding out flour for delivery to towns and cities across the young nation. This 1831 view is from the point where the present Platt Street Bridge crosses the river. In the center foreground is the old Main Street Bridge, enclosed by stores and shops at bridge level.

On the precipice of rocks at the right is the jumping platform of Sam Patch. This world traveler and stunt man had survived many daredevil jumps in his day. Patch met his match on November 13, 1829. Before the eyes of shocked spectators, his leap into the swirling pool below the Upper Genesee Falls proved fatal.



TO CARTHAGE BY RAILROAD. In 1833, one could hop on a car of Rochester's only railroad and travel all the way to Carthage—two miles “down river” on the east bank of the Genesee. It was strictly a pleasure trip. Passengers boarded the train at the eastern end of the old aqueduct, alerted by the shrill bugle of Captain Cheshire. The cars, pulled by two horses in tandem, followed fixed tracks along the Genesee. How delightful and relaxing the trip must have been on a balmy day, through the green fields of long-forgotten Dublin Town and along the multi-colored canyon walls of the lower river.

At the northern terminus, a river boat awaited those passengers bent on additional family pleasure on a sunny afternoon.



A VIEW INTO THE PAST. This is Rochester in 1840, as seen by the traveler returning from Niagara Falls and Batavia. The scene is Buffalo Street (Main Street). You are looking east. In the distance, old Main Street Bridge. On your right, Rochester's original court house. On your left the main business district. In just 28 short years a virgin forest had been transformed into a dynamic village, destined to become one of America's truly great cities.

The above sketch was taken from a woodcut appearing in the Historical Collections of the State of New York, 1841.



Historic St. Luke's Episcopal Church, left, still stands on Fitzhugh Street.



PICNIC AT ST. PAUL AND MAIN. In those days, it wasn't known as the corner of St. Paul and Main. It was just a place—a restful spot surrounded by shady groves of trees. Here, the villagers would gather for family and neighborhood picnics, especially on the 4th of July. The struggle for Independence was still indelibly inscribed in the minds of the settlers. Many had fathers who had served in the Revolutionary War. It was a day of reverence and re-dedication to America, as well as a day of fun and relaxation.

The next time you cross St. Paul and Main, pause to reflect on the heritage handed down by these patriotic people of yesteryear.



1868 — 1968
100 years of service

MAIN STORE:

334 East Main Street, Rochester, N. Y.

BRANCH STORES:

Culver-Ridge Plaza

Ridgemont Plaza

Southtown Plaza

Midtown Plaza

Northgate Plaza

scrantom's