Olmsted's Elmwood

The Rise, Decline and Renewal of Buffalo's Parkway Neighborhood

A Model for America's Cities

CLINTON E. BROWN, FAIA AND RAMONA PANDO WHITAKER

Olmsted's Elmwood

The Rise, Decline and Renewal of Buffalo's Parkway Neighborhood

A Model for America's Cities

CLINTON E. BROWN, FAIA AND RAMONA PANDO WHITAKER

A City of Light imprint

Published in association with the **Lipsey Architecture Center Buffalo**

Published with support from **Furthermore**, a program of the J.M. Kaplan Fund

Buffalo Heritage Press
A City of Light imprint
266 Elmwood Avenue, Suite 407
Buffalo, NY 14222
www.CityofLightPublishing.com

Book design by Goulah Design Group

Back cover photograph: A still from "See It Through Buffalo," directed by Gregory Delaney with Korydon Smith at the University at Buffalo, School of Architecture and Planning. Produced by First+Main Films, 2018. Courtesy of Robert G. Shibley, FAIA, FAICP, Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning, University at Buffalo.

Library of Congress control number available upon request.

Printed in the U.S.A.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Brown, Clinton E. (Architect), author. | Whitaker, Ramona Pando, author.

Title: Olmsted's Elmwood: the rise, decline, and renewal of Buffalo's parkway neighborhood – a model for America's cities / Clinton E. Brown, FAIA and Ramona Pando Whitaker.

Other titles: Rise, decline, and renewal of Buffalo's parkway neighborhood – a model for America's cities

Description: Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Heritage Press, a City of Light imprint, [2022] | includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "The fascinating story of the historic Elmwood District in Buffalo, New York, is told for the first time. From its origin as Native American territory to the arrival on the Niagara Frontier of Joseph Ellicott, through the role played by Fredrick Law Olmsted's Buffalo Parks and Parkways System, and into the decline during the Rust Belt years. Grassroots leadership has spearheaded its recent renewal by recognizing the importance of restoring Olmsted's vision for living well in a city. This lushly illustrated and well-documented book educates and enlightens, telling the stories of the people who gave the Elmwood District its enduring character, while transforming it from dense forest to farms and nurseries to a streetcar suburb. It has been named one of America's top ten neighborhoods. Yet the future vitality and value of the Elmwood District and similar places across the nation depend upon an appreciation of how they came to be and adopting a curatorial management of their growth. A new way of understanding communities as everyday living heritage landscapes available to all is key to renewing them. Current planning and zoning regulations fail these heritage communities. A compelling model for America's 19th century industrial cities that are transitioning into the 21st century is offered, one that recognizes that renewing the values upon which a place was built can be a paradigm for achieving civic resilience today" – Provided by publisher.

Identifiers:
LCCN 2022024644 (print)
LCCN 2022024645 (ebook)
ISBN 9781942483373 (paperback)
ISBN 9781942483380 (hardcover)
ISBN 9781942483397 (epub)
ISBN 9781942483397 (kindle edition)
ISBN 9781942483397 (mobi)
ISBN 9781942483397 (pdf)
ISBN 9781942483397 (adobe pdf)
ISBN 9781942483397 (ebook)

Subjects:
LCSH: Elmwood Village (Buffalo, N.Y.)—History. | Elmwood Village (Buffalo, N.Y.)—Buildings, structures, etc. | Buffalo (N.Y.)—Buildings, structures, etc. | Buffalo (N.Y.)—History. | BISAC: ARCHITECTURE / Urban & Land Use Planning | HISTORY / United States / State & Local / Middle Atlantic (DC, DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA)

Classification:
LCC F129.B86 E463 2022 (print)
LCC F129.B86 (ebook)
DDC 974.7/97—dc23/eng/20220615

LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2022024644

LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2022024645

Contents

Acknowledgments

A village made this book. Everyone deserves recognition. Apologies to anyone who is overlooked.

Buffalo Mayor Anthony Masiello and Greg Bernas launched my discovery of Elmwood by commissioning the historic resources survey that showed Elmwood's national significance. Assembly Member Sam Hoyt's state historic homeowner tax credit program, adopted thanks to the advocacy of the Preservation League of New York State's Jay DiLorenzo and Daniel Mackay, provided an economic incentive for National Register listing. Ten years and nearly a quarter of a million dollars later, we made Elmwood Historic District official.

The Clinton Brown Company Architecture team included Meagan Baco, Hannah Beckman, Alma Brown, Emily Coleman, Frank Kowski, Christine Longiaru, Jill Nowicki, Greg Pinto (who was crucial to this book), Dana Saylor, Annie Schentag, Martin Wachadlo, and Jennifer Walkowski, the principal nomination researcher and author.

We worked for Community Advisory Committees chaired by Kenneth A. Rogers and Wyatt Arthurs and hosted by Rev. Phil Dougharty of St. John's Grace Episcopal Church. They raised thousands of friends and dollars. Funding also came from the Preservation League. The Landmark Society of Western New York and Preservation Buffalo Niagara were partners. The Buffalo and Erie County Public Library and the Buffalo History Museum, especially Cynthia Van Ness, generously shared their archives.

We prepared the cases for National Register listing with guidance from the State Historic Preservation Office: Ruth Pierpont, and including Julian Adams, Kathleen LaFrank, Claire Ross, Daniel McEneny, and Jennifer Walkowski.

How to make government documents into a beautiful, readable book? Two people helped turn recitations of old buildings of interest to only a few into fascinating stories to enlighten many. Early on, Tony Bannon recognized the importance of this work and added the dimension of culture being baked into the Elmwood District. Magical Ramona Panda Whitaker was so patient in translating this architect's thoughts into English, and so greatly enriched the book with editorial skill and cultural insight as to merit co-authorship.

City of Light Publishing, led by the indefatigable Marti Gorman and expert readers, raised the book to its high level, with book designer Linda Prinzi. Many thanks to Chuck LaChiusa who contributed as host of BuffaloAH.com and as a photographer. Thank you John L. Shedd, AIA, Vice President of Campus Planning and Operations, for your Chautauqua insights.

Fine teachers prepared me to tell this story: Austin Fox at The Nichols School; Tyko Kihlstedt at Franklin & Marshall College; Peter Reyner Banham at the University at Buffalo; Peter Eisenman, Kenneth Frampton, and Colin Rowe at The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies; and Robin Dripps, Dora Wiebenson, and Richard Guy Wilson, University of Virginia.

Extraordinary women started me on this quest. My grandmother, Helen Rae Salt Brown, taught me the love of place, Niagara Falls, N.Y., also my birthplace, and to look with curiosity about how places came to be. My mother, Jane Kirkpatrick Egbert Brown, taught me that places are related to people and therefore sacred, especially in the Niagara River Region, so much of which her ancestors made, and to leave a place better for my having been there. My wife, Alma O'Connell Brown, whose love, patience, encouragement, criticism, and loyalty have inspired me throughout.

Preface

Elmwood Backwards and Forward

by Anthony Bannon

Along a now ancient Western New York trail, through a tall and expansive stand of elms, a hiker strolled gentle inclines and slopes—a beautiful rhythm of land that might have felt to this pathfinder like entering the cadence of a song.

The hiker could have paused for a moment to reflect in these venerable groves—perhaps about the legend of Orpheus, a sufficiently mythic story for this place—and musical as well. For Orpheus, the musician and prophet of ancient Greece, had played for his wife a lover's tune, and, it was said, upon that very place of music, a grove of elms arose. A rich and hallowed allegory, the elm roots ran deep into the mysteries of the underworld, heartening the majestic growth above. Thus, the elm's provision of ample shade and beauty rallied people to gather, speak, and discover relationships. Through history, elm has been a prompt for the establishment of great places—depicted in great art—among them scenes along the Champs Elysees, or at Trinity College in Cambridge, or in Long Island's Hamptons.

Elms also are a sign of the Earth Mother goddess, and the elm is a water tree, pliable for the creation of boats. How proper, then, that this elm forest near Buffalo's big water and the neck of the Niagara would mark the future into which a young city would grow, a consummate location for signature land development and architecture.

From this forest, located just beyond North Street, citizens first created nurseries, commercial gardens, and thereupon fine homes. This shaped a culture for Buffalo from this Elm Wood, and then an avenue that would also honor its origins. These Elmwood founders, builders of a sustained neighborhood, declared a special way of being in the world: in a particular place that listened to the land, that embraced the natural, the commercial, and the arts alike.

The rest of the city had been built block by block, along a system of carefully planned arteries splayed like spokes of a wheel, great buildings along these ways and through time, which pronounced aesthetic leadership for Buffalo along with its water-driven commercial success as the transshipment nexus east of the Mississippi.

And then, along came Elmwood, laid out along a small way fare that dared through the forest. This would become the gathering place that myth predicted, and for conversations that were on-going and remembered fondly, particularly by those who left these blocks of homes for someplace else. Almost all of these plots of land in the Elmwood District were like pocket parks with a front yard, a back yard, and plantings around: Elmwood loyal to its origins in nature.

The province of author Clinton Brown is all things Niagara, and within the Niagara Frontier, all things Buffalo. Brown is an architect, planner, and thought leader regarding historic building and heritage places in the Northeast, especially in Western New York state. His *Olmsted's Elmwood* illuminates little-known contexts and site-specific developments and proposes several cultural launching points;

- First in a cemetery, called Forest Lawn;
- Then in a huge park, the centerpiece of a city-wide system by Frederick Law Olmsted, a masterpiece of urban design created to situate another planning masterwork by Joseph Ellicott.
- And, finally, a huge hospital for the mentally challenged, designed in the 1870s by Henry Hobson Richardson at more than 500,000 square feet, an icon of American architecture set in an aesthetic landscape of

more than 200 acres, also by Olmsted. The landscape included farmland, used for both self-sufficiency and patient treatment. It is now grounds for SUNY Buffalo State, the largest college in the State University system. The remaining 42 acres are in a careful process of restoration and adaptive reuse.

The Richardson building, which established the design style of the Richardsonian Romanesque, stretches out from two central towers like the wings of a bird. It was an aspirational sign fit for both patients receiving advanced care and for a community setting sights on a future prepared to soar. A sightline along Richmond Avenue, running closely parallel to Elmwood, extends from First Presbyterian Church with its tall Romanesque spire designed in 1889 by the notable Buffalo firm Green & Wicks. It echoes Richardson's towers two miles away.

Olmsted's Elmwood tells about the logic of such sightlines and the invention of Olmsted, who connected his parks by elegant greenswards and roadway circles—quotations of the original Ellicott radial design. The book reaches back to find the skeleton of this first of suburbs: its paths, trails, alleys, roads, streets, avenues, boulevards and highways. It is a lexicon that builds from a grammar of acreage grids for the landowners who filled in the words of just what made sense for this living and commercial space, an artful design of civic controls, codes, laws, and money: a sourcebook composed and colored over significant time. Thus, the book's embrace integrates spirit and practice and both the vulgar and the noble. It is a book of fine manners and methods: a text with the backbone of principled humanism, notably framing the region's origins in the geography of the original nations who were deceived and killed in Western New York.

Elmwood's impact upon the city as a whole was quick and lasting, fueled by such as horse-drawn street cars, created in anticipation of the public magnetism of Olmsted's Park, now the vast Delaware Park, the focal point of the nation's first system of organizing parks and parkways. The Buffalo system was dug and planted between 1868 and 1876.

Land speculation, of course followed, and the little street of Elmwood grew in importance. The necessities of development followed apace: pavement, water, gas, electricity, telephone, among them. The estates of the wealthy along the elm-lined corona of Delaware Avenue's Millionaires' Row were long lots, often extending across Elmwood, Ashland and Norwood to Richmond. So, in addition to grounds for exquisite garden plantings, there was room for staff, sometimes numbering towards twenty.

Elmwood had staked its claim on nature, and it grew from that toward the unique attributes of the arts. Adding to the anchor of The Park was a cultural complex around Buffalo State College, including the Albright Art Gallery, the Historical Society archives and museum in what had been the Pan-American Exposition's New York State Pavilion, and later the Burchfield Art Center at Buffalo State. Across the street, the Public Works of Art Program, the experimental predecessor for the Depression Era federal Works Progress Administration (WPA), put artists and others to work: offices in the basement of the Albright and an exhibition of a first cluster of artists in residence in the main gallery.

The presence of internationally appreciated artists also worked the District, among them the eight men of the Photo-Pictorialists of Buffalo shooting together in The Park; the Buffalo Print Club working in Albright, along with the faculty and students of the Albright Art School; the Art Institute of Buffalo, with Charles Burchfield on faculty; and Ujima Theater Company, created by Lorna Hill shortly after the War in Vietnam. Louise Bethune was the first woman selected in 1889 as a member of the American Institute of Architects; she designed numerous homes in the District, while at the Albright, the first woman museum director, Cornelia Bentley Sage, was appointed in 1910. Jessie Tarbox Beals, living in the District, was the first female press photographer in the nation, and at the same time, Rose Clark and Elizabeth Flint Wade were distinguished, nationally praised portrait photographers.

The District has provided principled leadership through centuries, profoundly under-recognized. Music and movies out of doors … neon art on buildings and homes … festivals and dancing in the streets … flea markets and fine art upon grass or in parking lots … buying and selling … pop-ups before they were so recognized … boutiques, bars, and bistros … crafts

and clothes, and people of many persuasions and personalities. Its streets, homes, and haunts have been permanent and temporary shelters for among the most internationally regarded in their fields, while the District tills the soil to support new art and artists who share and show in spaces up and down Elmwood Avenue and nearby.

The area seems never to stop celebrating. The first museum photography exhibitions were in the Albright in the first decade of the 20th century, and the schools continued this joy of discovery and learning. The Albright-Knox's Festivals of the Arts Today (1965 and 1968) brought maestros and maestras from every field of expression to the District for a major gathering that history remembers. The Burchfield Penney was one of the first in the nation to collect and show every other year a craft art exhibition and grew its archive of the watercolorist Charles E. Burchfield (1893-1967) to one of the largest in the world, always on view here.

Elmwood's promise is that if you walk the avenue, you'll meet or find a friend. It doesn't take long. It's been the place for conversations for a long time—since the elm trees. And each decade it is discovered anew. Carry this book conspicuously. And find your way.

Anthony Bannon is director emeritus of the Burchfield Penney Art Center at SUNY Buffalo State and of George Eastman Museum in Rochester, NY, where he also is senior scholar. He was an arts critic for The Buffalo News and a film artist, whose work is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art. He was awarded the J. Dudley Johnston medal by the Royal Photographic Society in Great Britain for research and criticism. As director of Eastman House, he received a Technical Academy Award from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences for education in film preservation. He is recognized by the OCLC World Catalog of library holdings for his writing in 42 books in 92 editions held by nearly 2000 libraries. Dr. Bannon received his PhD in Culture Studies and his Masters Degree in Media Studies, both from the English Department of SUNY Buffalo. His Bachelor's Degree in Biology is from St. Bonaventure University.

Introduction

Welcome to the Elmwood District

Imagine a pleasant early Tuesday evening in late June. A crowd is already beginning to assemble. Parents and kids are sprawled on the grass on blankets, the littlest ones safe in their strollers. Couples are comfortably seated in lawn chairs brought from home, coolers tucked alongside holding cold beverages and a picnic supper they'll enjoy when the music begins. Still others are chatting and laughing with friends around a table covered in linen, replete with candelabra, and laden with potluck offerings each contributed to their weekly get together for the Elmwood Village Association's free summer concert series at Bidwell Parkway.

Residents of the lovely homes lining Bidwell Parkway between Elmwood and Potomac avenues, shaded by its rows of overarching trees, enjoy front row seats from their porches. From the bandstand set up along Potomac, a cacophony composed by musicians testing their instruments competes with the laughter and conversations of the many hundreds in the waiting audience.

Tonight, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, under the baton of the orchestra's popular Pops conductor, will open the nine-week series. Next week, a rock band is scheduled. The following

An audience of all ages enjoys a recent summer concert on Bidwell Parkway under a canopy of trees that were selected by Frederick Law Olmsted and planted in a pattern of his design 150 years ago.

Photograph courtesy of the Elmwood Village Association

week, an R&B group may perform, or it may be soul, or salsa, or an eclectic combo of several musical styles.

Two evenings from now in Delaware Park, just a short stroll from the concert site up magnificent tree-lined Lincoln Parkway, another diverse audience of hundreds will gather on the grassy hill behind the Rose Garden for the season premiere of Shakespeare in Delaware Park. There, under the stars, they'll enjoy one of two plays by the Bard offered free of charge each season by the eponymous Shakespeare in Delaware Park professional theater company, a popular Buffalo summer tradition since 1976.

Every Saturday morning from May to November, on the other side of Elmwood Avenue, Bidwell Parkway is the site of the Elmwood-Bidwell Farmers' Market. There, Buffalonians from various neighborhoods gather to explore and purchase seasonal fresh produce and other foodstuffs directly from the farmers who produced them—no resale or middlemen allowed!

But it's not just special events like these that bring people to the parkway. Almost any day of the week, in almost any weather, runners run, walkers walk, bikers cycle, and others read, sunbathe, toss Frisbees or footballs, walk their dogs, relax, or, as concerned citizens, demonstrate in defense of their cause. Indeed, Elmwood Avenue and Bidwell Parkway, surrounded by a mix of handsome residential styles and types, as well as cafes, bars, and locally owned boutique businesses, has become the unofficial center, the vibrant heart, of the Elmwood District and, in so many ways, of Buffalo.

American landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and the enlightened entrepreneurial citizen-leaders who brought him to Buffalo more than 150 years ago to design a park would be pleased and proud. The mix of people relaxing and enjoying recreation in a free and open way in the beauty of nature was what they had in mind in 1868 when Olmsted was commissioned to design the Buffalo parks and parkway system in a part of the city that was then virtually undeveloped forest. The handsome properties that over the years have been built along each of the Olmsted parkways fulfill another aspect of their "build-it-and-they-will-come" vision.

Active, vital, beautiful, and beloved, Olmsted's masterpiece parks system has been instrumental in creating a sense of place and a district of great civic value. "A park is a work of art," wrote Olmsted, "designed to produce certain effects upon the mind of men." The success of Olmsted's "effects" is one of the major factors underlying recognition of the Elmwood District as one of the ten best neighborhoods in the nation.

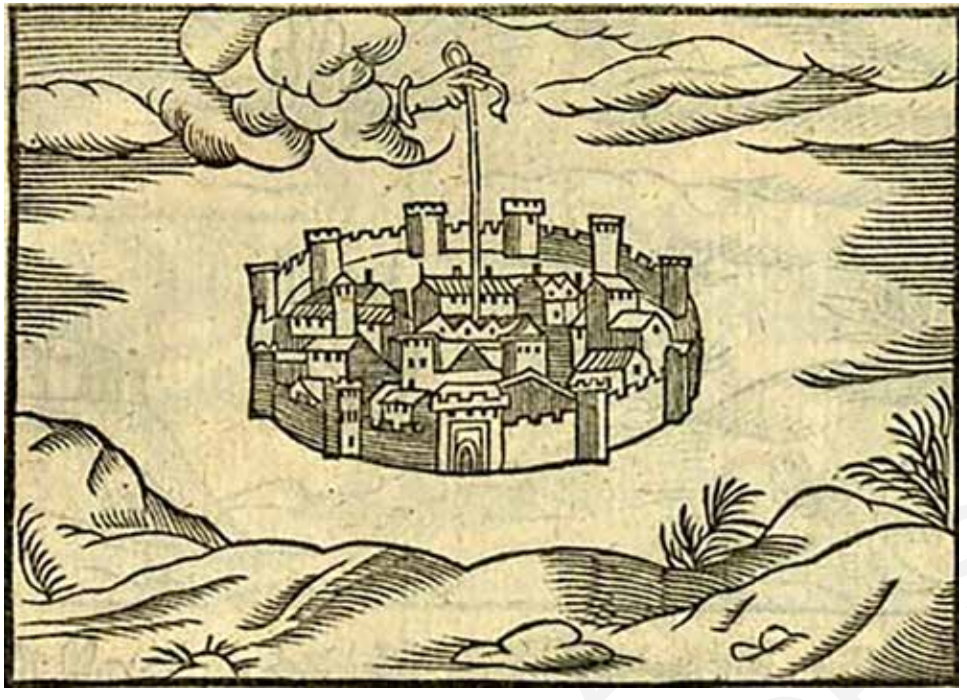
Such recognition is not new. As early as 1902, the *Greater Buffalo* journal, in an article titled "The New Elmwood District," reported: "*Every city has its favorite residence district. The people of Buffalo have decided, and not without good reasons, that their favorite district is that called the Elmwood.*" The publication *Commerce* echoed that sentiment the following year, though with what can be construed as a nod to Olmsted and his English-born partner, Calvert Vaux: "*Nature and man seem to have worked harmoniously in the creation of what is known as Buffalo's 'Elmwood District.'*" Without question, the Olmsted parks and parkway system is a major contributor to the high quality of life enjoyed by residents of the Elmwood District, within whose boundaries the system exists.

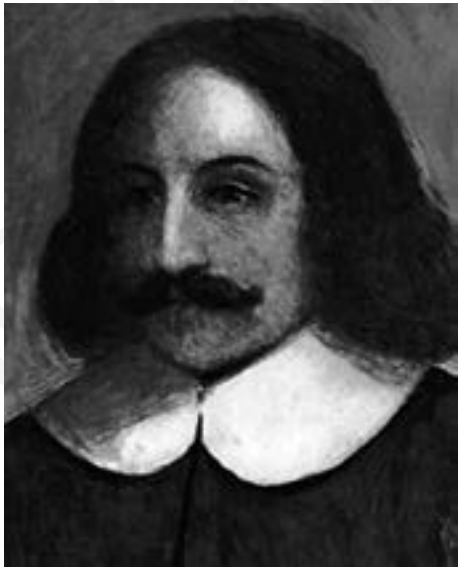
As important as Olmsted was, indeed is, to Buffalo and the Elmwood District, he was not the first visionary to affix his stamp to the area. Olmsted was preceded more than half a century earlier by Joseph Ellicott.

Ellicott, a Pennsylvania-born Quaker, came to Western New York in the waning years of the eighteenth century, charged with surveying and platting for settlement more than three million acres of land purchased by the Dutch-based Holland Land Company from Robert Morris of Philadelphia, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, and a financier of the American Revolution.

It was a monumental assignment. What Ellicott found was deeply forested land crossed only by paths trodden by wild animals and aboriginal peoples for millennia who left few other traces of their civilization.

The Elmwood District's evolution into one of the finest neighborhoods in the nation owes a debt to the spiritual and philosophical values supporting its creation by its newest settlers. Embedded in the character of the Elmwood District are values related to those held first by the indigenous peoples, the Iroquois Indians, who reverenced the land as unownable and open to all long before the arrival of Europeans.





This value would be manifested in Olmsted's design for the park system, which captured the democratic intent of the men who hired him. Elmwood also embraces the seemingly oppositional values brought to this continent in 1620 by the Separatist Protestant Pilgrims that balance the spiritual and the commercial, the ideal and the real, the extraordinary and the mundane, the sacred and the profane.

William Bradford, intermittent governor of the Plymouth Colony they created, said of those early settlers who crossed the Atlantic on *The Mayflower* with him:

"… what could they see but a hideous & desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts & wild men?" "… [T]here was but the mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now as a main bar & gulf to separate them from all the civil parts of the world. What could now sustain them but the spirit of God & His grace." [1]

Having bridged that "gulf," they sought to tame those forbidding forests and fierce beasts, and to create a place that would be their own version of "a new Jerusalem, the holy city," and a right relationship with God in the Garden

TOP: An image of the New Jerusalem descending from heaven to earth based on the 1599 Geneva Bible used by the Pilgrims. In Revelations, the people are the bride and the city is her dress, that is, the city is the connection between heaven and earth.

Image often attributed to St. Augustine of Hippo

BOTTOM LEFT: Surveyor, land agent, Quaker, Mason and visionary, Joseph Ellicott designed commerce and culture into his plan for the Village of New Amsterdam. These traits continue to define Buffalo and the Elmwood District.

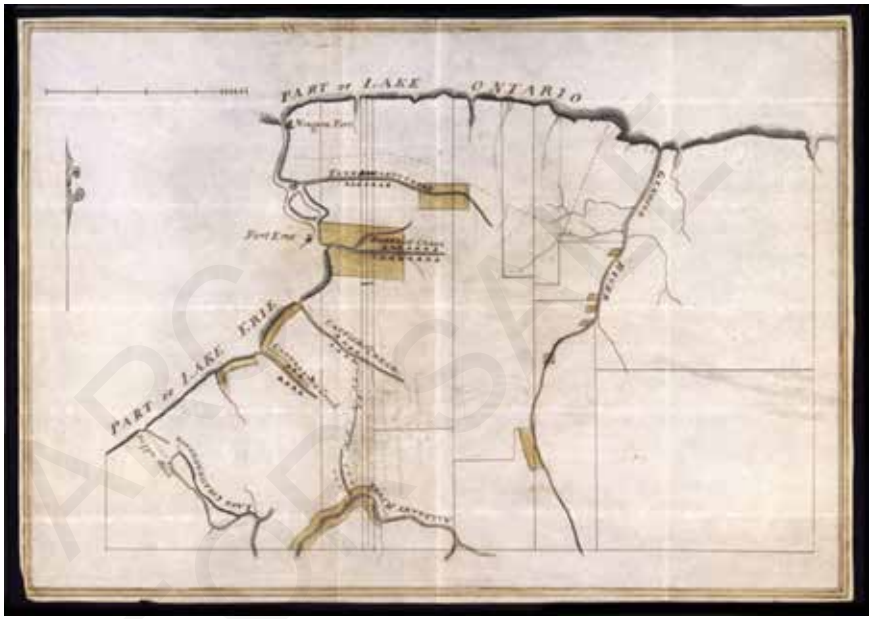
BOTTOM RIGHT: William Bradford, intermittent governor of the Plymouth Colony and author of *Plymouth Plantation*, circa 1620.

ELMWOOD'S FIRST RESIDENTS

The Niagara River Region was the home of the *Onguiaahra* group of the Neutral people (hence the name Niagara) for thousands of years before the arrival of settlers of European descent. These First Nations peoples built in this region a unique, communal building known as the longhouse. These were constructed using natural materials which were not permanent. Therefore, only the paths that they made which became settler roads remain of what these First Nations peoples built in this region.

RECOGNITION OF RECONCILIATION

In seeking reconciliation, we acknowledge that this aboriginal land has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples from the beginning. As settlers, we are grateful to and thankful for all the generations of people who have taken care of this land for thousands of years, the aboriginal peoples who have been the stewards of this place. In particular, we acknowledge the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Ojibway/Chippewa, Attawandaron and Haudenosaunee Peoples.



ABOVE: "Carte du terrein du Genesee cede par le traite de Sept. 1797."

An early map showing the geography of Western New York. In the center of the image are the Seneca and Tonawanda Reservations, established after the Treaty of Big Tree in 1797. The Seneca Reservation straddles Buffalo Creek. Ellicott negotiated with the Senecas for the access the village of New Amsterdam needed to the Creek's mouth to achieve its destiny.

Image Courtesy of State University of New York at Fredonia Archives & Special Collections and Municipal Archives of Amsterdam-Nederlandse Document Reproductie B.V

SIDEBAR: A reconstructed Seneca longhouse at Ganondagan State Historic Site, which opened in 1998, represents the return of a traditional Seneca dwelling to a site razed in 1687 by the French Marquis de Denonville.

Image courtesy of Friends of Ganondagan

of Eden. But they could not have left The Netherlands, in search of religious freedom where they would not have to sacrifice their English culture, without the support of English merchants, entrepreneurs, and business leaders who funded them.[1]

Theirs was a commercial as well as a spiritual journey. English merchant Thomas Weston and 70 partners raised and invested the £7,000 of capital that the Pilgrims needed to finance their venture—more than $1,720,000 in today's dollars—and Weston secured a patent from the Council for New England, which had the franchise for that location. The investors expected to have joint ownership of the colony for seven years. At the end of this period the settlers were allowed to purchase shares, and they agreed to work seven days a week to repay the debt. It still took them nearly three decades to fulfill this obligation.

Ellicott, whose Quaker value of creating a "perfect life" in the colonies, was not unlike that of the Pilgrims, brought with him a similar mission for the land bordering Lake Erie and the Niagara River. His settlement, however, would be for the profit of Dutch investors, and its ethos would differ in its embrace of equality and tolerance of differences in creating a place worth settling in.

By 1804 Ellicott had completed his utopian plan to give order to a wild land.

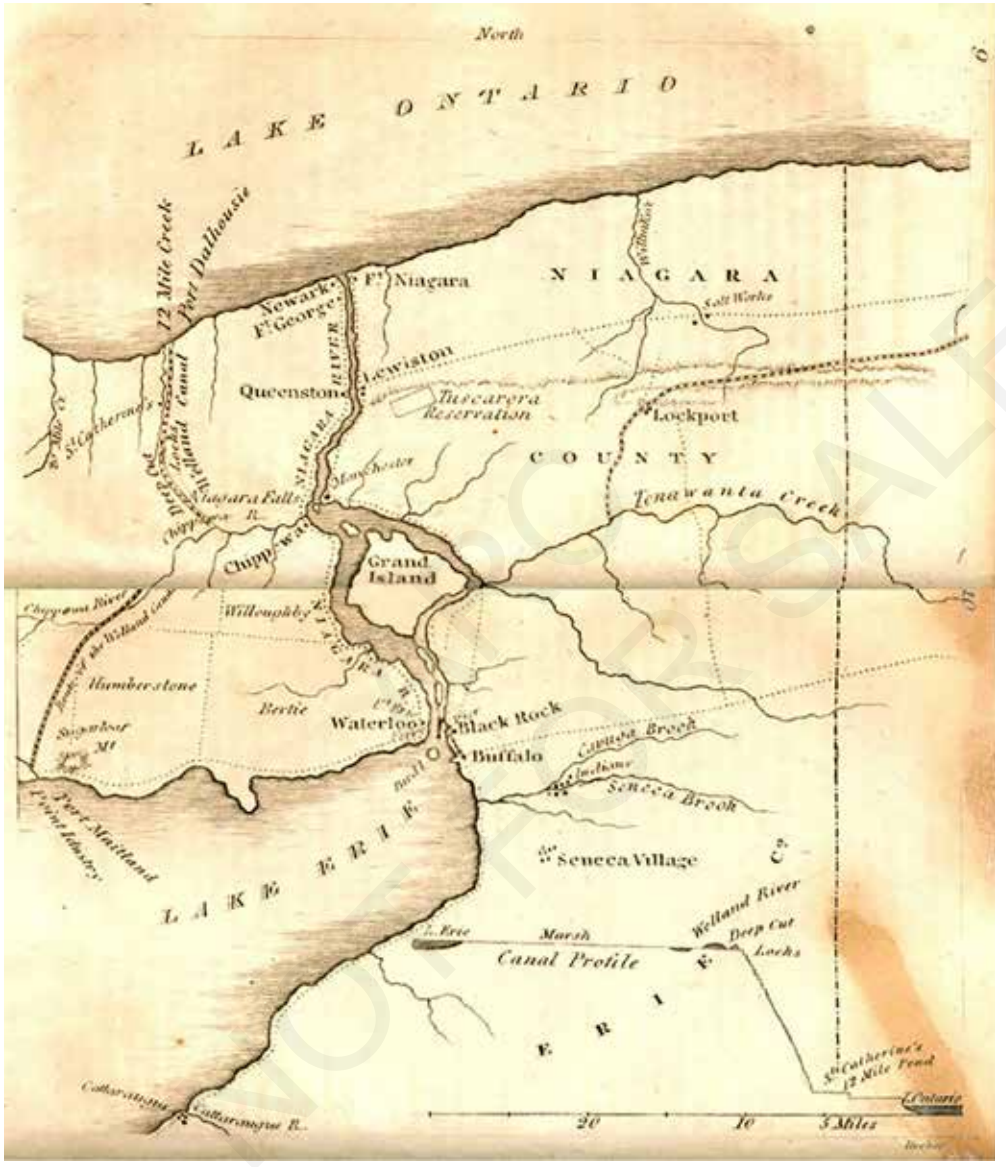
He sited his proposed new settlement on a bluff above the mouth of Buffalo Creek where it met the Niagara River at Lake Erie. Influenced by Pierre L'Enfant's and his own brother Andrew's design for the United States capital, on which Joseph had also worked, Ellicott laid out a plan for a grid of roads overlaid by wider radial roads. His plan for the Village of New Amsterdam combined cultural and cosmic relationships, honoring Indigenous travel customs by incorporating their pathways into his design, naming places after them, and looking to the stars when performing his surveying measurements.

Later, as the Elmwood District developed within a natural and geopolitical framework formed by three waterways and several treaties, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted would elaborate Ellicott's purposeful design. As he laid out his unique parkways joining the three major parks he proposed for the city of Buffalo, he extended Ellicott's streets. This thoughtful design created access from older neighborhoods in all directions toward a central park that would begin to fulfill Buffalo's need for recreational areas and residential growth. It was a visionary plan that would be paid for in part by the commercial land value it created.

These two great planners literally laid the groundwork for the Elmwood District to become the special place of living well that we know today. Ellicott, enabled by forward-thinking investors with commercial interests, was urged to aim higher by his Quaker values. These combined with European and Masonic principles of building gleaned from his work in Washington, DC, and from his older brother, Andrew, who tutored his younger brothers, Joseph, Benjamin, and David, in the art and science of surveying.

An 1868 photograph of 46-year-old Frederick Law Olmsted, taken the same year he presented his parks and parkways vision to Buffalo civic leaders on August 25.

Photograph courtesy of the National Park Service



This map from the 1831 tourist guide, *The Northern Traveller and Northern Tour*, New ed., published by J. & J. Harpe, shows Lake Ontario to the north and Lake Erie to the south. They are connected by the Niagara River, which flows north. Buffalo is at the head of the river, Fort Niagara at its mouth. Before the Erie Canal opened in 1825, all continental trade had to pass by Fort Niagara and continue on the St. Lawrence River. After the opening of the canal, all commerce had to pass through Buffalo. This flow of commerce and people generated the wealth that led to the growth of the Elmwood District.

Having gained renown for creating Central Park in New York City, Olmsted was brought to Buffalo by those prosperous and insightful business and civic leaders who wanted a place of similar beauty for their city and respite for their workers. Not only did they share his vision but they realized that it meshed neatly with what Joseph Ellicott had designed half a century earlier.

The work within these pages attempts to tell how the Elmwood District came to be and how significant a place it is. It is a story of purposefully directed growth and of prosperity geared toward fulfilling higher aims. The more than 200-year history of the Elmwood District required the building of roads and encompassed eras of forest, farmland, nurseries, and parkland. Ultimately, it brought settlement, not only from other areas of the burgeoning city but from other parts of the world. As the residents prospered, they inevitably sought to escape the noise, congestion, and tumult of the many successful businesses and industries that eventually made Buffalo Queen City of the Lakes and a leading world port. For them—a new wave of pilgrims—the Elmwood District became their Eden.

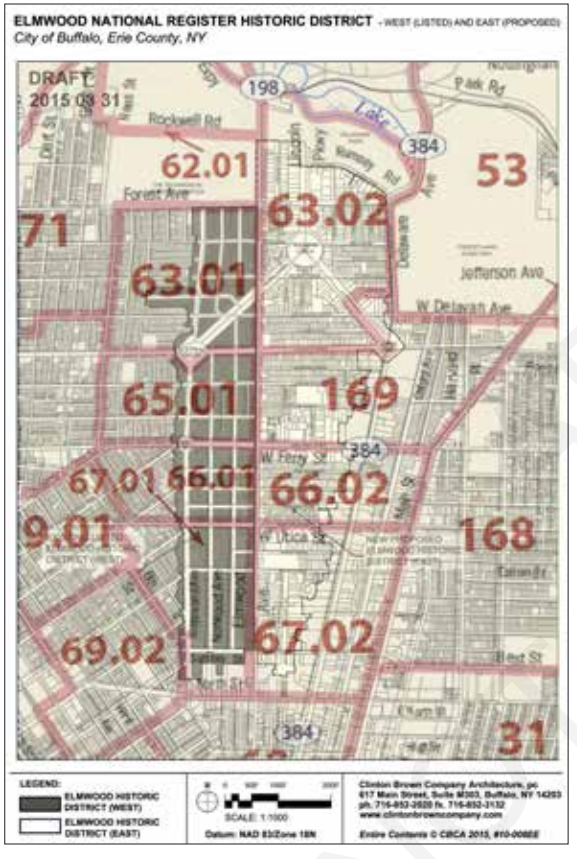
The Elmwood District and the National Register

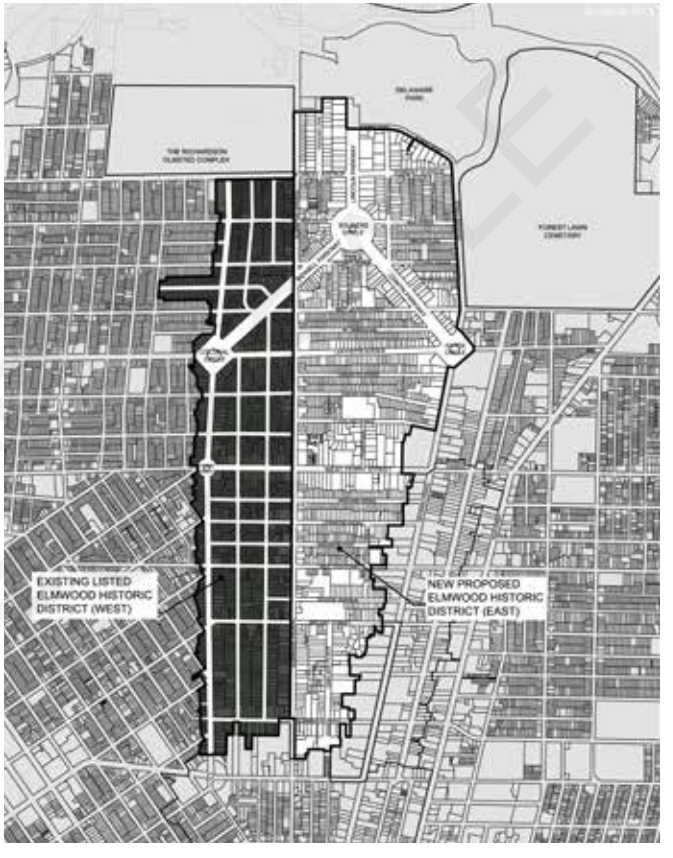
That we are able to tell the story of the heritage we enjoy today in our streets, our buildings, our parks and parkways of Elmwood, owes an enormous debt to the extensive research of the team who produced the two detailed nominations of the Elmwood District to the National Register of Historic Places. Designated Elmwood Historic District West and Elmwood Historic District East, they make up the Elmwood District that is the subject of this book.

In 2004 the Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency commissioned Clinton Brown Company Architecture to survey potentially historic properties in the Grant-Ferry-Forest Good Neighbors Planning Area. This geographic area was an arbitrary choice for an historic preservation survey, but it was the city's priority at that time for the Community Development Block Grant program, and the survey was a funding requirement. At the time, the survey omitted Elmwood Avenue because, as one of the principal commercial streets in Buffalo, it seemed to be its own place, not related historically to the West Side embraced by the Grant-Ferry-Forest planning area. No one seemed to recognize then that Elmwood Avenue's reason for being the way it is was inextricably linked to the history of Ashland, Norwood, and Richmond avenues,the three streets that immediately border Elmwood to the west and were part of the Grant-Ferry-Forest survey and which were established well before Elmwood Avenue was extended to its present full length.

Adding Elmwood Avenue to the historic district nomination was controversial. Some argued over whose turf Elmwood is and would be: that of the few commercial interests or residents of the entire neighborhood. Many Elmwood Avenue commercial buildings were owned by non-Elmwood District residents who had different priorities. They were made fearful by a few who did not understand the benefits offered to the greatest number of Elmwood area property owners by a National Register Historic District designation. These benefits include honorific national significance as an area worth preserving; consideration in planning for federal, federally licensed, and federally assisted projects; eligibility for certain tax incentives; and qualification for federal grants for historic preservation when funds are available. In the end, after being assured that National Register Historic District status did not prevent owners from altering their property unless federal funds or licensing were sought, more than ninety-seven percent of property owners raised no objections to the two historic district nominations that were necessary to complete the Elmwood Historic District.

Such an expansive historic district was too huge an enterprise for Brown's firm—financially, professionally, and personally—to take on as one project. The State Historic Preservation Office approved a two-phase process: the first would include properties from the west side of Elmwood Avenue to the west side of Richmond Avenue between North Street and the Scajaquada Creek; the second, properties from the east side of Elmwood Avenue to the back lots of the west side of Delaware Avenue. The latter boundary was determined because Delaware Avenue was already included in two other national historic districts, Allentown and the Delaware Historic District, familiarly termed "Millionaires' Row" fronting Delaware between the north side of





LEFT: A map showing the area of the Elmwood Historic District West as shaded blocks, overlaid by the Census tracts that were eligible for the State Historic Homeownership Rehabilitation Tax Credit program that took effect in 2010.

RIGHT: A map showing the area of the Elmwood Historic District East. By the time the nomination of Elmwood East was accepted, the census tracts were not a significant issue. Most properties in Elmwood East are located in eligible census tracts as a result of the 2010 census results.

Images Courtesy of Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

North Street and the south side of Bryant Street. It also is part of the local Linwood Historic District between the north side of Bryant to the south side of W. Ferry. Fortunately, the census boundary line down the center of Elmwood Avenue simplified the decision: Elmwood West was in a census tract eligible for the then-new State Historic Homeownership Rehabilitation Tax Credit program, and much of Elmwood East was not.

The boundaries of the two nominations focus more narrowly, however, than the Elmwood District's historic cultural boundaries, a larger territory that is also discussed in this book. Because North Street properties are listed in the National Register as part of the Allentown Historic District, and with portions of Delaware Avenue properties listed in the Allentown, Linwood, or Delaware Avenue designated districts, our property count for buildings and other historic resources contributing to the Elmwood districts is more limited than the buildings that will be described in this book.

Two thousand two hundred forty-six resources, including main houses, garages, commercial and institutional buildings, statues, and other objects and structures that make up the built environment, were surveyed in preparing the nomination for the Elmwood Historic District West. For the Elmwood Historic District East nomination, we surveyed 2,539 built resources: buildings, structures, places, and street furniture.

These 4,785 resources were then determined to be contributing or noncontributing to the historic character of the district. Contributing means that a resource has most of its overall form, historic features, and elements with which it was originally built; that even had there been some changes or losses over time, such as the addition of vinyl siding or a missing porch, the overall original character remains mostly intact and contributes to the historic character of the historic district. Those deemed noncontributing were less than fifty years old (rare) or had been severely altered. Demolished or missing buildings were not considered. When completed, the number of contributing resources numbered 1,988 for the West and 2,449 for the East, a total of 4,437 resources, not including the already listed Olmsted Parks and Parkways components.

What is noteworthy is that almost all of the surveyed resources contribute to the character of the district, and amazingly, no two are identical. The Elmwood Historic District's existing buildings, structures, and other features almost all look now as they did when first built 80, 100, and 120 years ago. In historic preservation circles, this is called integrity. At ninety-three percent, the integrity of the Elmwood Historic District surpasses many other National Register-listed historic districts whose measure of integrity may reach only seventy or eighty percent.

This high level of integrity, though positive, has a flip side: it also means that there has been little investment in growth or change since the Elmwood District was mostly built more than 100 years ago. New buildings recently proposed in the Elmwood District were the first significant investments there for more than a generation. Their size, contemporary building materials, and designs, often deemed ugly by residents, threatened the historic character of this 120-plus-year-old place with its remarkable level of integrity and patina accrued over time. These unsightly new buildings have also reflected the inability of architects trained to design on computers to consider the historic character, scale, and materiality of the special context of such a place as the Elmwood District. The virtue of the National Register nominations and, one hopes, of this book, is that they may help to inspire a more graceful and holistic approach to inserting twenty-first century buildings into nineteenth-century settings in our beloved neighborhood at the heart of Buffalo's current regeneration.

For those who don't know the Elmwood District, it is hoped this work will allow them to appreciate this special precinct of man and nature and to understand the pride of its residents. For those who wish to make their own place as extraordinary, we hope they may take inspiration from our finding the sacred in a place otherwise taken for granted that will guide them in their quest to renew their special district.

For those who already know and cherish the Elmwood District, it is hoped that this work will inform and enlighten them concerning its origins in the nineteenth century and its enduring value in the twenty-first. Above all, we hope that it will stimulate thought and discussion about what this special place should be for its next 150 years, as it once again attracts growth and investment.

Treaties resolving territorial conflicts pave the way for Ellicott's survey of the Holland Land Company's Western New York land purchase

ONE

Before There Was an Elmwood

Early Buffalo

When Joseph Ellicott arrived on horseback at the dawn of the nineteenth century to the densely forested frontier wilderness where the city of Buffalo is now, it was sparsely occupied. Only small groups of Iroquoian-speaking indigenous peoples who made up the Iroquois confederacy, fur traders and interpreters with whom they dealt, and a handful of others lived here. One cannot help but wonder how and where Ellicott and, later, the small army of 130 to 150 men who assisted Joseph and his brothers in surveying the land lived, and how they coped with the region's cold winters. The taverns and inns which he urged to be built and to which he offered land in order to stimulate sales and development, did not yet exist. That such matters were also on his mind is revealed by the ongoing concern contained in his letters to the Holland Land Company office that shipments of large supplies of food and materials be provided for his men. Yet his quiet arrival was a catalyst for the birth of the Elmwood District 100 years later.

The Ellicott brothers were not exactly strangers to the region. Joseph had worked with Andrew in 1785 to determine the western boundary of Pennsylvania. In 1789, all three brothers were hired to determine in which state's jurisdiction—New York or Pennsylvania—Presque Isle (now Erie, PA) lay. This assignment took them to the west end of Lake Ontario, which determined the boundary in favor of Pennsylvania. Presumably, during that journey, they would have encountered and befriended the Senecas with whom Joseph and Benjamin would have to interact while surveying the Holland Purchase.

But even before Joseph's arrival in 1797, a number of international, intranational, and interstate conflicts had to be settled. Disputes between the French and English, both of whom, aided by Indian allies, sought control of the Niagara River route on the Great Lakes, discouraged settlement over the course of a century. The major conflict between these two adversaries, the French and Indian War (1754–1763), ended with the British controlling what is now Western New York and southern Ontario.

Their loss of the battle fought at Devil's Hole at the Niagara gorge on September 14, 1763, to a group of three hundred Seneca warriors caused the British to reinforce their position in the Niagara frontier. The increased strength of the British resulted in the Senecas ceding to them a strip of land one mile wide extending approximately thirty-six miles along both banks of the Niagara River from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie. Known as the Mile Strip Reservation, it effectively cut off the Indians' use of the Niagara River for fishing, hunting, and agriculture. It also effectively ensured supremacy of the British in the area.

Both central and Western New York again saw military conflict during the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783). The 1779 Sullivan Expedition, a scorched-earth campaign by American forces against British loyalists and the four Iroquois tribes allied with them, devastated the Iroquois, or Haudenosaunee, confederacy in central New York. Many fled north into Canada or further west. With the help of the British, the Seneca nation, in 1779–1780, established a settlement along the banks of Buffalo Creek, east of the present-day Buffalo city center.

The 1783 Treaty of Paris, which ended the Revolutionary War, expelled the British from the United States, except for the west bank of the Niagara River and the Niagara peninsula of Upper Canada.

THE HOLLAND LAND COMPANY

Thirteen Dutch investors formed the Holland Land Company to purchase in 1792 and 1793 through American agents, 3,250,000 acres of land in Western New York and Pennsylvania, west of the Genesee River in what was known as Genesee Country. Their idea was to quickly and profitably resell it to settlers anticipated to populate the west after the American Revolution. To make it saleable they had to extinguish Indian claims to the land, which was accomplished with the Treaty of Big Tree in 1797 that cleared title to the lands except for "reservations" of tracts where Native Americans retained ownership.

In 1789, the Company engaged Joseph Ellicott who, along with brother Benjamin and 130 men, began to survey this Holland Purchase, subdivide it into saleable parcels and actively attract purchasers by establishing roads and other improvements. The Land Company opened a sales office in 1801 in Batavia, the seat of Genesee County, where Ellicott located his headquarters. Ellicott made the Village of New Amsterdam—the future Buffalo—the prize in creating value for his clients. By fulfilling his visionary plan of living well in a well-ordered commercial crossroads in the former wilderness, through one lot sale after another, Ellicott made Buffalo the place to be.

By 1840, also the year that Buffalo's horse-drawn streetcar service began, all the Holland Purchase lots had been sold. In the future Elmwood District, Ferry Street, as described by John C. Lord, was "a narrow dirt road, corduroy in some places, and occasionally too narrow for two vehicles to pass each other," when the Holland Land Company dissolved in 1846 after more than half a century of investing in Western New York. The Company's legacy was a commercial boomtown in the former village and a nascent Elmwood District.

TOP: Map of the Holland Land Company purchase in Western New York in 1804, by Joseph Ellicott and Benjamin Ellicott.

Image Courtesy of State University of New York at Fredonia Archives & Special Collections and Municipal Archives of Amsterdam-Nederlandse Document Reproductie B.V.

BOTTOM: Detail from the Holland Land Company 1804 Map above. Note that the current Main Street is depicted here as a road connecting Buffalo Creek, the Black Rock Ferry on early Ferry Street, and the Buffalo Road to Batavia. The saw mill owned by William T. Johnstone at the Buffalo Road on Scajaquada Creek is noted on the map, near present-day Canisius College.

Subsequent treaties were then enacted between the United States and the Iroquois:

The 1784 Second Fort Stanwix treaty would have resulted in the Haudenosaunee relinquishing all their land west of Buffalo Creek, except for several small reservations. That treaty was disputed by several groups of Haudenosaunee for ten years until 1794, when the Pickering, or Canandaigua, Treaty defined the boundaries of Seneca lands and reservations to the other Haudenosaunee nations.

The 1797 Treaty of Big Tree was signed with the Seneca nation. It resulted in the Senecas relinquishing their rights to nearly all of their traditional homeland in New York State, nearly 3.5 million acres.

Now, with the millennia-old rights of its occupants to their lands west of the Genesee River extinguished, this Eden could be more securely opened for settlement by Euro-Americans, some of whom thought it their destiny to do so.

Still, the British continued to occupy Fort Niagara, located at the confluence of the Niagara River and Lake Ontario, leading to small skirmishes in the 1790s. It was not until the Jay Treaty of 1796 finally removed British influence from the New York side of the river that new settlers felt it was safe enough to slowly trickle into the Niagara River region from the east with the hope of securing clear title to this new land.

Although the international and intranational disputes were now largely resolved, both Massachusetts and New York claimed ownership of land west of Fort Stanwix (near present-day Rome, New York). An exception was the Mile Strip Reservation along the eastern shore of the Niagara River, which New York State reserved. The conflict between the states continued to stymy sale and development of the disputed territory in Western New York. Nevertheless, during the following decade, large grants of land were sold to private investors who would begin to open the area to more widespread, permanent settlement.

Once the states settled their claims, Massachusetts, in March 1791, sold its Western New York rights to Founder Robert Morris, who then divided his land into several tracts. For the future Elmwood District, the most significant purchase—some 3.25 million acres of frontier wilderness along Lake Erie, the Niagara River, and Lake Ontario—was made between 1792 and 1793 by the Holland Land Company. Thus, began a century of land speculation and organized settlement.

Records show that among those traders and interpreters who lived in the region among the Senecas was a French fur trader-interpreter named Daniel-Marie Chabert de Joncaire. He was also a French military officer and Indian agent. Both his father, Louis-Thomas, and brother, Philippe-Thomas, were also involved with the Iroquois. Daniel's influence among the Indians "was enhanced by his status as an adopted son of the Iroquois and the fact that he had a Seneca wife and children."[2]

As a young man, when not employed on military expeditions, he traveled among the Indians "to cultivate friendship, check imprudence, dispel plots, or break off the treaties … with the enemy." He settled in the region as early as 1758 but torched his property the following year in advance of the British during the French and Indian war. He is said to have fled to Fort Niagara just in time for the British to gain control of the fort after a nineteen-day siege and was among the French officers who signed capitulation of the fort to the British on 25 July 1759.[3]

There is much irony in Daniel's participation in the surrender of the fort, as his father, Louis-Thomas, had played a significant role in its building in 1726. The elder Chabert first gained permission from the Senecas for a trading post along the Niagara River at Lewiston "as long as it was not a masonry fort." Then Chabert conveyed the Senecas' stipulation to the French officers who were to meet with a delegation of Iroquois at Onondaga to request permission for "a new trading house of stone." To gain permission, they disguised their real purpose and emphasized "their peaceful intent by carefully terming it 'a House of Peace' and a place chiefly to exchange goods for furs." Despite belated protests by the Senecas, only a few of whom had been present at the meeting, the French completed their project the following year. As the Seneca learned, the post—or French Castle, as it is called—at Fort Niagara was intended for much more than trading.[4]

The first American settlement near the area that would become the Elmwood District over 100 years later occurred around 1784 when Ezekiel Lane and his father-in-law, Martin

The first substantial house in Buffalo, built in 1794 by Martin Middaugh, a Dutch cooper, on the south side of Buffalo Creek. The site of today's Canalside would be in the distance and to the right. Middaugh died in this house in 1824.
Published in The Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo *by Frank H. Severance*

Middaugh, a cooper by trade from the Hudson River area came to Western New York.

William Johnston (also spelled Johnstone) was another important early settler. His father was Capt. John Johnston, an interpreter in the British Department of Indian Affairs, and his mother was a Seneca woman, according to an account in Vol. XXVI, *Recalling Pioneer Days*, published by the Buffalo Historical Society. William also was an officer in the British army as well as Indian agent, authorized to interact with the natives of North America by the British government, the British Indian Department, or the provincial governments of British America. When other British officers left in 1796 with the signing of the Jay Treaty, William, married to a Seneca woman, preferred to remain at Buffalo Creek where he had built a log cabin. The Johnstons' son, John, was educated at Yale College and was said to be one of the finest young men in the area at that time. Upon his father's death in 1807, he inherited the forty acres at Scajaquada Creek given to his father by the Senecas in negotiations conducted by Joseph Ellicott described below.

Trader Cornelius Winney (also shown as Winny or Winne), also from the Hudson River area, came here between 1781 and 1791. He set up a log store for trading with the Indians, close to William Johnson's cabin four miles from the main Seneca village. He has been called the first white man to take up permanent residence in Erie County.[5]

Joseph Hodge, a former slave known as "Black Joe," settled in a house close to the Winney

cabin in the Buffalo Creek area as early as 1784, exemplifying the frontier's diversity. By 1796, he became a trader with the Indians on the Cattaraugus Creek, south of present-day Buffalo.

While some initial settlement was occurring during the 1780s and 1790s, it was random, unorganized, and on unpurchased land on locations defined by topography—near a path for access to other parts, near a creek for water, on a hill for a view of impending dangers.

In 1797, Robert Morris succeeded in removing the remaining Seneca title to the land he had sold to the Holland Company, clearing the way for Ellicott to begin his survey.

Ellicott was hired in July of that year by Holland Land Company agent Theophilus Cazenove. In spring of the following year, he brought his cohort of workers and his surveyor brother Benjamin with him to lay out the land into townships. During this time, Ellicott also surveyed New York State's Mile Strip Reservation along the Niagara River at Holland Land Company expense, clarifying its boundaries. With the assistance of his brother, he completed the survey of the Holland Purchase by 1800.

Joseph Ellicott (1760-1826) was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, the fifth child and third son of nine siblings of their parents, Joseph Ellicott and Judith Bleaker. Father Joseph was a second-generation colonist whose parent, Andrew, immigrated to the New World from Wales or Scotland (sources differ), who married Ann Bye, a Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Quaker. Son Joseph has been described as "a practical man of great industry and method, with a high degree of executive talent." He is also said to have had a short temper and to have been very demanding of his workers. That he was a visionary can be seen in his design for the village of New Amsterdam that would become Buffalo. He would introduce a dramatic change in settlement patterns. No longer random and unorganized, his village would be governed by geometry and law on purchased land. Order was being instilled in the "hideous & desolate wilderness full of wild beasts & wild men."

Ellicott conducted his survey work from a location at the mouth of the Buffalo Creek overlooking Lake Erie and the headwaters of the Niagara River, which to him was the ideal location for a settlement. The place was already crowded by other claims, however. They included the southern terminus of New York's Mile Strip Reservation to the north and the large Seneca Buffalo Creek Reservation, which encompassed land seven miles wide to the east on both sides of that waterway. Ellicott, along with the Senecas' friend and translator William Johnston, negotiated to ensure that Holland Land Company land was not cut off from access to the creek and the Niagara River. He knew that access to the river was key to the success of his new settlement. His months-long negotiations resulted in securing his ideal site and in establishing the boundaries of the reservation in his clients' favor. Johnston, to whom the Senecas had given two square miles of land at the creek, instead received forty acres of timbered land for a mill site on Scajaquada Creek six miles north of Buffalo Creek.

In a letter to Cazenove dated June 25, 1798, Ellicott described the advantages of the site he selected, which he called "New Amsterdam." How startingly different is his almost poetic perception of the land compared with the "hideous & desolate wilderness" the Pilgrims had perceived their new world to be two hundred years before.

> *The building spot is situated about 60 perches from the lake, on a beautiful elevated bank, about twenty-five feet perpendicular height above the surface of the water in the lake, from the foot of which, with but little labor, may be made the most beautiful meadows, extending to the lake and up Buffalo creek to the Indian line. From the top of the bank there are few more beautiful prospects. Here the eye wanders over the inland sea to the southwest, until the sight is lost in the horizon. On the northwest are seen the progressing settlements in Upper Canada, and southwesterly, with the pruning of some trees out of the way, may be seen the Company's land for the distance of forty miles, gradually ascending, variegated with valleys and gentle rising hills, until the sight passes their summit.*

When Cazenove failed to respond, Ellicott wrote to Paolo Busti, then the company's agent general, in May 1802, urging him to begin developing the settlement. Ellicott was aware of the advantages of the lands held by New York State in the Mile Strip Reservation and regarded establishment of a village at Black Rock, which

THE ELLICOTT FAMILY

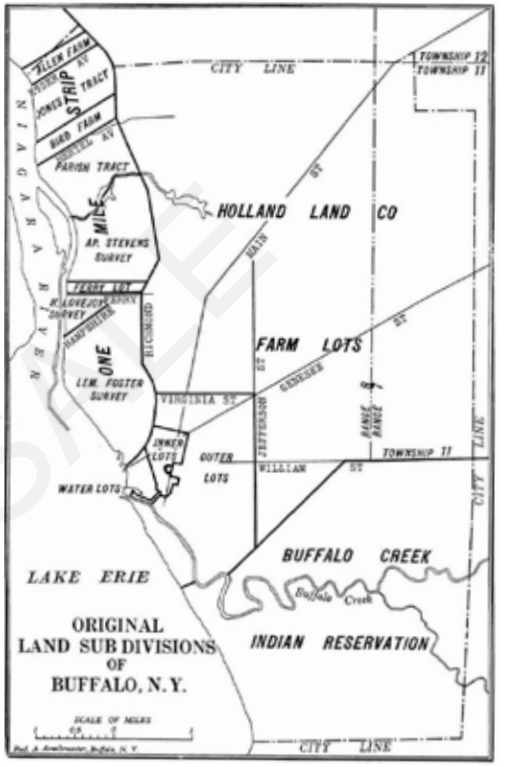
The father of the Ellicott brothers, Joseph Ellicott (1732–1780), was himself one of three brothers who, in 1772, founded Ellicott's Mills on the Patapsco River in Maryland. The brothers also helped revolutionize farming in the area by persuading farmers to plant wheat instead of tobacco and by introducing fertilizer to revitalize depleted soil. Ellicott's Mills became one of the largest milling and manufacturing towns in the East and is present-day Ellicott City, a community that Preservation Maryland considers one of that state's crown jewels of history and heritage. In 2016 and 2018, the historic community suffered two devastating "1000-year" floods from which it was, at publication, beginning to recover.

Just as their father left his mark on history, Joseph Ellicott and two of his brothers, Andrew and Benjamin, distinguished themselves in those early days of the United States.

Andrew (1754-1820), much-in-demand surveyor, mathematician, and astronomer, surveyed the land for what was to become Washington, DC, and finished the design for the nation's capital from memory when Pierre L'Enfant, refusing to share his drawings with the commission overseeing the project, was dismissed by President Washington for insubordination. Andrew surveyed more land in the United States than anyone had done before, including the new country's southern boundary with Spain, was offered but declined the position of surveyor general of the United States by Thomas Jefferson, and later taught mathematics at West Point.

Benjamin (1765-1827) assisted Joseph in the Holland Land Company work. In 1803, he became one of the first judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Genesee County, New York, in Batavia. Elected to the House of Representatives from the state of New York, he served from March 4, 1817, to March 3, 1819. Another brother, David, was a surveyor under Joseph until he moved south and was heard from no more.

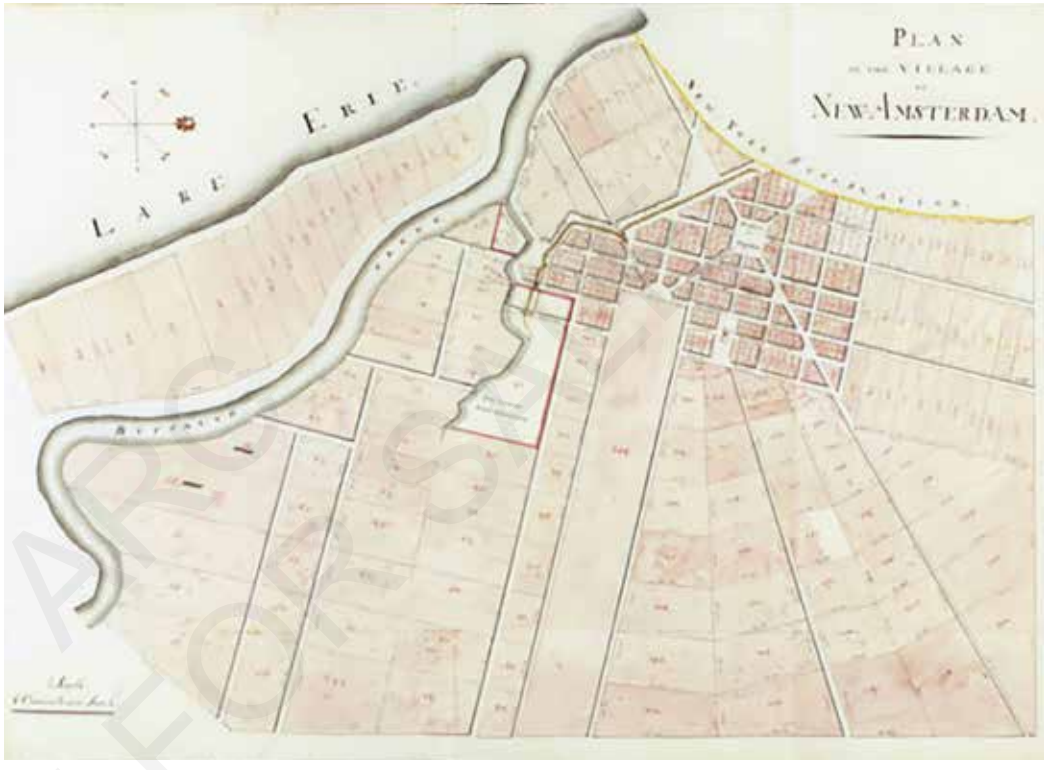
In addition to his vision for Buffalo, Joseph advocated for what thirty years later would become the Erie Canal. In 1821, in declining health and assaulted by public criticism of the Holland Land Company for "failing to provide adequate roads," among other issues, and by the personal criticism of him by Paolo Busti of the company for not backing gubernatorial candidate DeWitt Clinton, Ellicott retired. For a time he traveled, visiting family members in Pennsylvania and Maryland, and finally retreated to New York City in 1824. As with Frederick Law Olmsted and other geniuses, Ellicott was "subject to periods of great depression and melancholy." Admitted to an asylum, he hanged himself in 1826, leaving a legacy of monumental surveying, often generous land sales, and visionary planning that shaped the future Elmwood District, and with the Erie Canal, of the nation.



Original Land Subdivisions of Buffalo, N.Y.

This 1922 map depicts the original circa 1804 land divisions in the Buffalo area with some reference to modern roads (such as Richmond Avenue) which did not exist in the early 1800s. Note the Mile Strip Reservation which contained the Village of Black Rock (at left along the Niagara River). Notice also the division of Inner Lots and Outer Lots, with the Holland Land Co. Farm Lots beyond. The bulk of the future Elmwood District would be established in the Farm Lots area which was subsumed by the City of Buffalo in 1853, when the city line was extended from North Street to the current Kenmore Avenue.

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum, Map .B84 1905



LEFT: Circa 1800 map entitled "Proposed Plan for a Town at the East End of Lake Erie called New-Amsterdam."

The Mile Strip Reservation line is to the left, the Public Square, now Niagara Square, centers the blocks, and Ellicott's lot is to the right, rendered in green.

This may be the most beautifully rendered image of the place "designed by nature for the grand emporium of the western world. …" as envisioned by Ellicott. Perhaps it was his sales pitch to investors and future lot purchasers. Below the terrace bluff to the left is a rectangular future Canal District showing a canal terminus with access to Lake Erie at the mouth of Buffalo Creek conceived by Ellicott 25 years before the Erie Canal was completed at Buffalo. The eventual canal terminus landed at the site of today's Canalside. The Buffalo River became the Canal District of the day.

RIGHT: Circa 1804 survey map entitled, "Plan of the Village of New-Amsterdam."

On this unusual map, North is to the right, and Buffalo Creek is to the left. The curved line of the New York Reservation is at the top right. The proposed village is bounded by the Reservation Line and the edge of the bluff and in the center is the Public Square, today's Niagara Square, from which Lake Erie could be viewed. Ellicott's lot is the rectangle extending from the apse-like half-circle straddling an ancient path that would become Main Street. The site today is Fireman's Park, across Main Street from St. Paul's Cathedral, historically part of Shelton Square and a remnant of the park that Ellicott intended to bequeath to the public.

Images Courtesy of State University of New York at Fredonia Archives & Special Collections and Municipal Archives of Amsterdam-Nederlandse Document Reproductie B.V

the state planned, as "equally or more advantageous for a town than Buffalo." Fortunately for Ellicott, the state did not survey the Mile Strip until 1803-1804 and did not offer lands for sale in the village of Black Rock until early in the following year. Finally, Ellicott was authorized to begin his survey for New Amsterdam. The site was partially surveyed in 1803 by William Peacock under Ellicott's direction and was completed by Ellicott himself in 1804.

With the grand Baroque-influenced radial street plan he had helped realize for Washington, DC, still fresh in his mind, Joseph Ellicott laid out New Amsterdam also with a radial street plan overlaid onto a grid pattern. A gridded city is strictly geometric regardless of topography and is regarded as the most democratic, as all its blocks are equal. A radial pattern, by contrast, connotes power and royalty in its hierarchical geometry of center and edge. The radial plan was unique in early city plans, as a simple grid of streets with the democratic grid of regularly sized lots was easier and cheaper for developers to build on than the angles and curves created by Ellicott's hierarchical design. The state-created village of Black Rock was laid out in grid fashion with rectangular lots with no regard for topography. Ellicott's plan reveals both democratic and powerful aspirations in its vision for "a grand emporium" with which to attract settler-purchasers. In a 1798 letter, Ellicott described his work and writes of the importance which he placed on land around Buffalo Creek. He wrote it is a place "designed by nature for the grand emporium of the western world. I mean the mouth of Buffalo Creek and the country contiguous thereto."

The plan designated inner lots, outer lots, and farm lots. The 234 inner lots were typically about seventy-five feet wide and located around the Public Square, now named Niagara Square. They were bordered by Chippawa Street (later spelled Chippewa) to the north and Ellicott Street to the east and became the center of settlement. Just beyond those boundaries were nearly 150 larger outer lots. At a time when almost all travel in Buffalo took place on foot, it was roughly a fifteen-minute walk from the Public Square inner lots to the then-farthest boundary of the city at Main and Chippewa Streets and twice that to the outer lots.

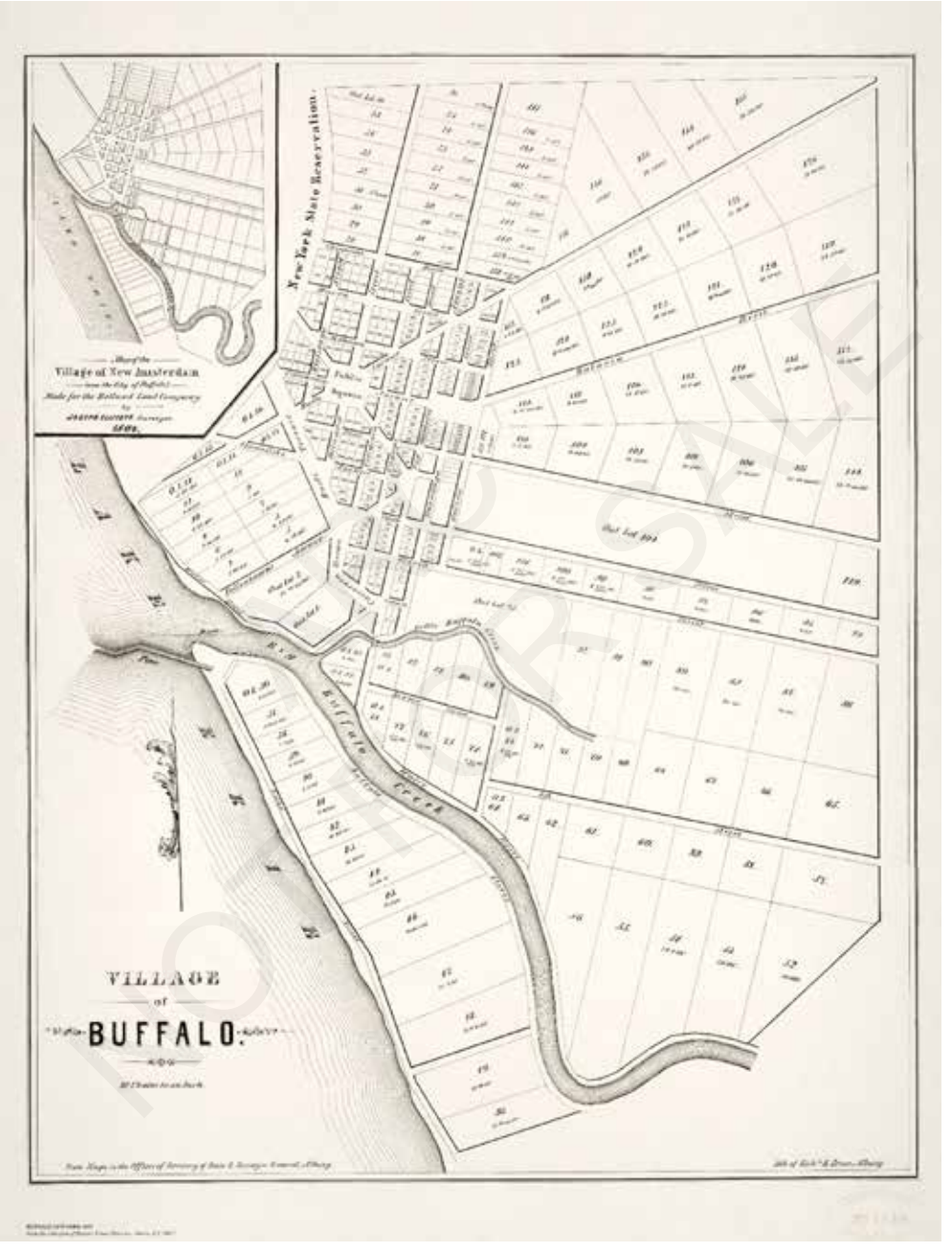
Beyond the outer lots lay farm lots, which would, for the most part, not be developed until after 1853, when the city changed its charter and expanded its northern boundary from North Street to current Kenmore Avenue. This system of inner and outer lots, borrowed from traditional New England community models, was common in upstate New York. It was expected that each resident would purchase one inner lot, which would often be used for a residence or business site or both, and one or several outer lots, generally to be used as farms to support the home or business. As many prospective purchasers would come from New England, this method of subdividing land would be familiar.

Yet, Ellicott had idealistic aspirations for Buffalo, too, and his progressive, forward-looking plan reached beyond the early pioneer era, proposing a future city intended to stand out as beautiful and sophisticated, worthy of settling in to secure and plant one's family fortune. At the same time, it attracted land sales and encouraged settlement through the aspirations and the order of its design, unknowingly presaging Olmsted's Elmwood plan and predicting a brighter future than would have been accomplished in a random setting.

The center of Ellicott's plan was the Public Square, an open, traditional village square intended to serve as a place for public gatherings and a market. He chose that location because of its proximity to the mouth of the Buffalo River, which he viewed as key to commercial development for the new village. Another factor was its location just north of the so-called "terrace," a drop-off separating a generally flat upper plane, or terrace, from the lower, swampy and meadowed areas near the river that were subject to Lake Erie's ebbs and flows.

From the Public Square roads with names honoring the Dutch investors and patrons radiated into the then countryside: Schimelpeninck Avenue (now Niagara Street), Vollenhoven Avenue (now Erie Street), Willink-Vanstaphorst Avenue (now Main Street). Other streets honored Native American tribes: Chippawa, Huron, Mohawk, Delaware, Seneca, Cayuga, and others.

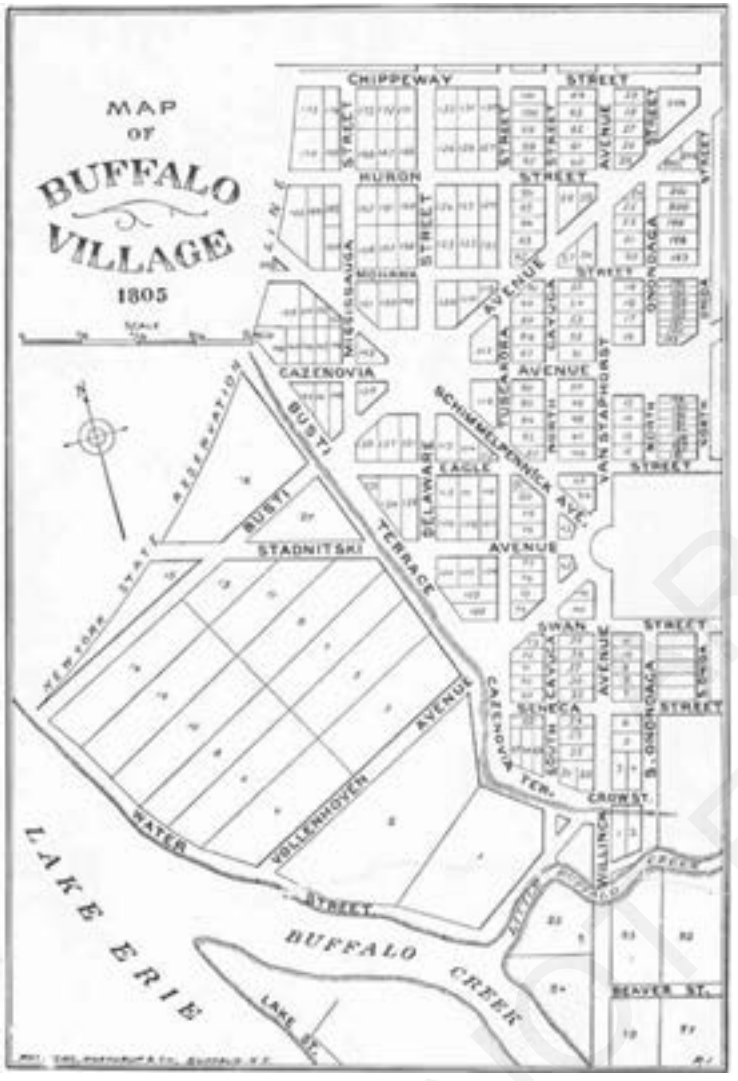
Willink-Vanstaphorst Avenue ran north-south through Ellicott's plan for Buffalo, just to the east of the Public Square, and terminated at the Buffalo Creek. What is surprising is that Ellicott did not plan for this oldest thoroughfare to and from the new settlement, which had been the route of Native Americans for thousands of



An 1854 map of the Village of Buffalo and Outer Lots. Compare this to the inset map in the upper left of Ellicott's 1804 plan.

Together these two maps illustrate the dramatic growth of the village in the fifty years following its conception and in the twenty-five years since the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825.

Map Courtesy of The Library of Congress



LEFT: A map of Buffalo's Inner Lots in 1805 with street names, published by Matthews, Northrup & Co. Some of the street names honor the Holland Land Company investor families, others are the names of the Native American tribes that once lived on this land and of Ellicott's bosses, with some bird and animal names thrown in for good measure. Note that by this time, the proposed Canal District has all but disappeared.

RIGHT: A ca. 1805 map of Inner and Outer Lots with some street names. The Inner Lots were intended primarily for residences and businesses, while the Outer Lots were for farms and growing food. For scale, note Ellicott's lot #104, which was said to be one mile long.

Maps from the Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. History of the City of Buffalo and Erie County by H. Perry Smith, volume 2, page 31, F 127 .E6 S6 1976

years, to run directly through the Public Square, the central location of his plan. As the primary road between the water routes at Buffalo and the Holland Land Company's base of operations in Batavia, as well as Albany to the distant east, this well-traveled road would naturally evolve into a primary commercial section in the young village. It would later be called Main Street and become the Elmwood District's first front door.

Also surprising, Delaware Street, running north-south through the Public Square, from Chippewa Street to the north, terminated, not at Buffalo Creek, but at the terrace, cutting it off from the water and eliminating it as a major artery. Rather than commercial activity becoming the central focus of his new city, Ellicott, by truncating the route, appears to have intentionally encouraged the growth of a fine residential sector along Delaware Avenue and around the Public Square, his plan's most elegantly designed spaces. This ideal was to be adopted by Olmsted and his clients in the design of what would become the Elmwood District half a century later.

For his own residence, Ellicott reserved 100-acre outer lot 104, located to the southeast of the Public Square, fronting on the future Main Street. This mile-long plot featured a gracious curve along Main that ensured that travelers on this well-traveled route would notice his property, making it the second most noteworthy place in the plan after the Public Square. Some historians have inferred, perhaps not unjustly, a sense of self-aggrandizement in Ellicott's design; others contend he may have had more noble goals.

In a paper read to the Buffalo Historical Society on December 26, 1864, Ellicott's grandnephew, Ellicott Evans, LLD, claims that his ancestor was not motivated by personal vanity but by an ideal of civic beautification. His uncle, he said, intended to create a parklike setting surrounding the residence he planned to build on his lot that he would bequeath to the public at his death as a public park. Ellicott was foiled, however, by village commissioners who straightened his curve for road improvements in 1809. Disappointed and perhaps embittered, he built his mansion in Batavia rather than in Buffalo. Still, Ellicott's apparent vision of a large public park accessible to the residents of Buffalo speaks to his desire to create more than just profit through quick and easy land sales for the Holland Land Company; he also considered the intangible needs of future residents as part of his legacy.

Ellicott envisioned great things for the tiny pioneer settlement at Buffalo Creek, grandly proclaiming that the site was "developed by nature for the grand emporium of the Western world." Foreshadowing the goals of Frederick Law Olmsted two generations later in the 1860s, Ellicott clearly intended to create in Buffalo a beautiful and healthy landscape for future generations. In the meantime, however, the growing city lacked any public recreational land. That observation decades later by Olmsted caused him to lament in writing about the park system, "It came about, finally, that while the city remained notable for public and private wealth, its poverty of rural recreation was deplorable. In no other town of comparable population was so little pleasure to be had in a ride or walk to the outskirts."

Despite Ellicott's attempts to call his new settlement New Amsterdam in honor of his Holland Land Company patrons, the name was never popular with residents. Stories range from "Buffalo," the settlement's formally adopted name, being a non-French speaker's corruption of the French phrase *beau fleuve* ("beautiful river") used by French trader-interpreters to describe the the Niagara River waterway, to being named for herds of wild bison in the area. (The existence of wild bison has been alleged but also disputed as the region was heavily forested.) Another legend claims that the name originated from a Seneca Indian, who resided at the creek and resembled the stocky, wooly animal. He was said to have been called Da-gi-yah-goh, meaning Buffalo, and the creek became locally known as "Buffalo's Creek" in his honor. Whatever the true story, the area was locally known as "Buffalo" at least by 1784, when it was referred to in the Fort Stanwix treaty, and use of the name continued in preference to New Amsterdam.

Following official establishment of the village of Buffalo in 1804, the settlement remained a small pioneer community centered around the Public Square, while outlying areas remained forested wilderness. Indeed, the Rev. Timothy Dwight, former president of Yale College who visited the new village in1804, accustomed to the longer-settled and more sophisticated East, described it this way:

> *The village is built half a mile from the mouth of the creek. and consists of about twenty indifferent houses. The streets are straight and cross each other at right angles but are only forty feet wide. What could have induced this wretched limitation, in a mere wilderness, I am unable to conceive. The spot is unhealthy, though of sufficient elevation, and, insofar as I have been informed, free from the vicinity of stagnant waters. The inhabitants are a casual collection of adventurers and have the usual character of such adventurers thus collected, when remote from regular society, retaining but little sense of government or religion.*

He did, however, speak glowingly about the sky, the clouds, the lake, and the vistas from the tiny village.

New residents began to trickle in. "In 1811," noted Judge Charles Townsend, a prominent Buffalo pioneer, "Buffalo contained less than one hundred dwellings, and a population of some four or five hundred." Gradually, new roads were cut through the wilderness, beginning a network of connections between various key settlements in the region, such as Black Rock, Cold Spring, and Buffalo.

The War of 1812 devastated Buffalo. British forces in the Niagara region burned nearly all the buildings along the entire east side of the Niagara River, in retaliation for the United States gratuitously burning what is now the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake in present-day Ontario, Canada, in December of 1813. An assault on Black Rock on October 9, 1813, escalated through several raids and skirmishes along the Niagara River, until on December 30, 1813, the British burned to the ground all but one structure in Buffalo. Sufficient warning enabled most residents to flee in advance of the attack. In some circles, this was thought of as a cowardly abandonment of the village, rather than staying and defending it. Whatever that debate, the result of the fires was that only Ellicott's street plan remained.

Buffalo quickly rebounded, however, and returning residents soon rebuilt. Buffalo "is rising again … several buildings are already raised and made habitable," the *Buffalo Gazette* reported on April 5, 1814. "Contracts for twenty or thirty more are made, and many of them are in considerable forwardness." Then, in 1819 New York State announced plans to build a "Grand Canal" from the Hudson River to the Great Lakes.

A spirited contest took place between two communities, Black Rock, which already had a harbor, and Buffalo, which did not, over which would serve as the western terminus of the canal. A series of debates, presentations, and much persuasion was generated by Buffalo leaders Judge Samuel Wilkeson, Oliver Forward, Judge Townsend, and his friend and partner, George Coit, as well as their pledged funding of $24,000 to secure a loan from the state, with their homes as collateral, for dredging of a harbor at Buffalo. The issue was resolved in 1823 in Buffalo's favor, consensus for which may have been reached at a tavern on Lafayette Square. Such a delay in decision-making was possible only because work on the canal started at its center point in Rome, New York, on July 4, 1817, and proceeded westward and eastward.

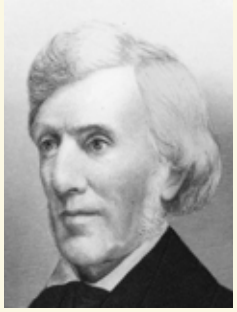
As described in a multipart series in the *Buffalo History Gazette* on Samuel Wilkeson's pioneering leadership in Buffalo,

> … The State Legislature had laid down stern conditions for the loan. It was to run for twelve years and was to be secured by twice its amount in personal pledges of money or property. If the harbor was not built, the security was forfeit. If the work was carried to successful completion, the State could accept or reject it. Should the harbor be rejected, no reimbursement was to be made. The builders could recompense themselves by charging tolls for the use of the port. It was a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. Buffalo took it.

Buffalo business leaders rose to the occasion, beating their more politically connected Black Rock rivals in seizing the prize of the canal terminus that would fulfill Ellicott's vision. Buffalo's selection marked the beginning of Black Rock's decline as an independent community and the rise of Buffalo's fortunes. The spirit of the 1820s business leaders who achieved Buffalo's terminus designation was alive forty years later in the business leaders who would invite Olmsted here. The Village of Black Rock's configuration would influence the shape of the Elmwood District forever.

ABOVE: "The Marriage of the Waters" by C.Y. Turner, 1905. A mural decoration in the DeWitt Clinton High School, New York City, depicting Governor DeWitt Clinton pouring water from Lake Erie into the Atlantic ocean at New York City in a ceremony celebrating the "Marriage of the Waters" between Lake Erie and the Atlantic in 1825.

Image courtesy of the New York State Canal Corporation



BUFFALO'S CANAL MAN SAMUEL WILKESON (1781–1848)

Although he has been called "a true 'city builder'" because of the valuable services he rendered to his adopted city [and state] as 'lumberman, boat builder, government contractor, soldier, merchant, banker, judge, mayor, and senator," Samuel Wilkeson (1781-1848) is best remembered as the "greatest canal man," but not just for his leadership in assuring that the Erie Canal terminated in Buffalo. Wilkeson actually cobbled together a machine to serve as pile driver for the initial harbor dredging and supervised construction, although he had no experience with doing either. He did so because Joseph Ellicott refused to lend or rent the only pile driver in the area. Although he had long advocated for the canal, Ellicott, as well as Holland Land Company general agent Paolo Busti, is said to have opposed the plan, "because experience had shown that public works carried out by private individuals or companies did not have the same assurance of being completed as those undertaken by the federal or state government." Wilkeson was born in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the son of immigrants from Northern Ireland. He came to Buffalo during the War of 1812 when he was asked to build a fleet of ships for the United States Army here. Before the move, he and his family had lived in Mahoning County, Ohio, where he had built a farm and the first grist mill in the area.

Wilkeson once owned the land on which Buffalo City Hall now stands. It has been said that "his handsome dwelling, built in the 1820s, was one of the best examples of the late Federal style of domestic architecture that New England settlers had brought with them to western New York." It was demolished in 1915, and the plot became for a time a parking lot and the city's first drive-in-service gas station.

Wilkeson's later ventures included a partnership with Buffalo's first mayor, Ebenezer Johnson, in shipping and real estate enterprises, building the first steam boiler in Buffalo, and operating foundries or factories in several areas of the city. In 1838, he became general agent of the American Colonization Society, which promoted colonization of African-Americans in Liberia. He died on July 7, 1848, and is buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery. It is interesting to note that Judge Wilkeson's death occurred in Tellico Plains, Tennessee, where it is said his daughter lived. His friend and former associate Ebenezer Johnson had moved to Tellico Plains, and it seems fair to assume that he visited him as well. His substantial memorial in Forest Lawn Cemetery bears the Latin epitaph, *Urban Condidit*—"He built the city."

TOWNSEND AND COIT
A MOST ENTERPRISING FRIENDSHIP

Charles Townsend (1786-1847) and George Coit (1790-1865) were both natives of Norwich, Connecticut. But they had much more than birthplace in common. Lifelong friends, they were also business partners for more than forty years, brothers-in-law, guarantors of the Erie Canal, and each has a street in the Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood of Buffalo's east side named for him. The two friends relocated to Buffalo together in 1811 "with twenty tons of merchandise" to open a drugstore. The store, at Swan and Pearl Streets, was lost to the British burning of Buffalo, although they had escaped to the nearby village of Williamsville the night before with a supply of their goods. At war's end, the two not only rebuilt and continued that business until 1818 but also founded the ship-building and lake transportation firm Townsend & Coit, which was for seven years the only such business in Buffalo. They successfully operated several businesses involved in shipping and trade, Coit founded Buffalo Car Works in 1853 to manufacture railroad freight cars. Throughout their partnership, they "used and owned everything in common," and, first united in marriage when George married Charles's sister, Hannah, they also each named their first-born son after the other.

It is apparent from the stories of these two friends and other enterprising pioneers that they were often called upon due to their intelligence and sound judgment to serve in capacities for which they had no special training. Charles Townsend had no legal training, but in 1813 he was appointed Judge of Niagara County and served in that role until 1826. As a jurist, he is said to have demonstrated "impartiality and good sense which proved sufficient for the needs of the community." Both partners retired from their business in 1844. Afterward, Judge Townsend was elected first president of the Buffalo Savings Bank, which was organized May 9, 1846, and held that office until his death a year later.

George Coit outlived his friend by almost two decades. During that time, he was a prominent member of the Buffalo Historical Society, the Buffalo Board of Trade, and the Water Works Company. In addition to his involvement with the Erie Canal, he is best known for the circa 1818 house he built at 53 Pearl Street at the rear of the lot on which the partners had built their business. He continued to live there for fifty years. After his death, the house, a five-bay, three-story Federal-style residence of frame construction, was moved to 414 Virginia Street in Allentown. It is Buffalo's oldest and most historic house and is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

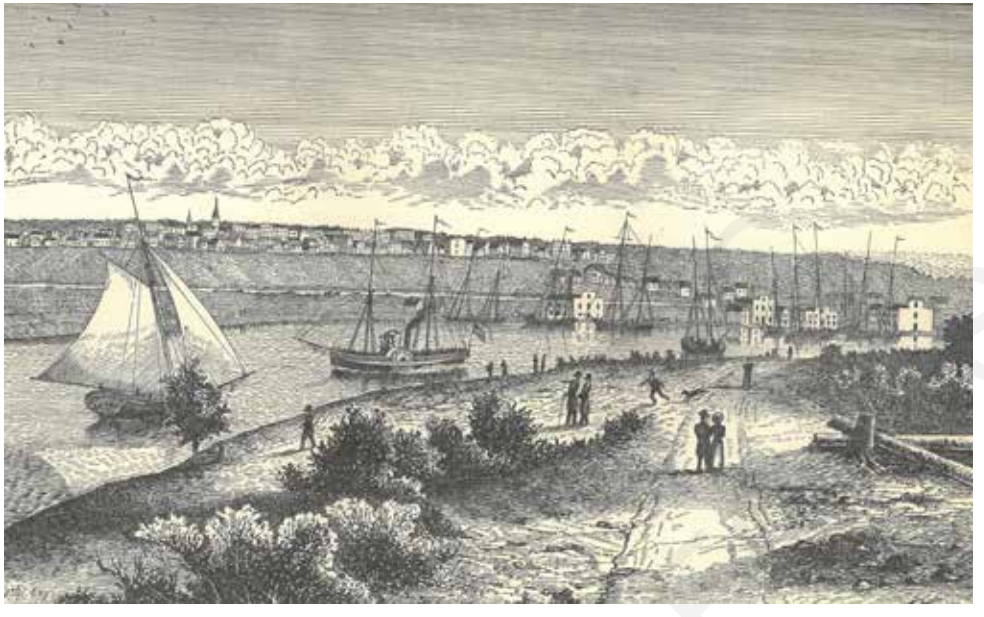
The two men are also immortalized in a bas relief, along with Governor DeWitt Clinton and Samuel Wilkeson, titled "Governor DeWitt Clinton Opening the Erie Canal," that is sculpted on the exterior of the Buffalo History Museum.

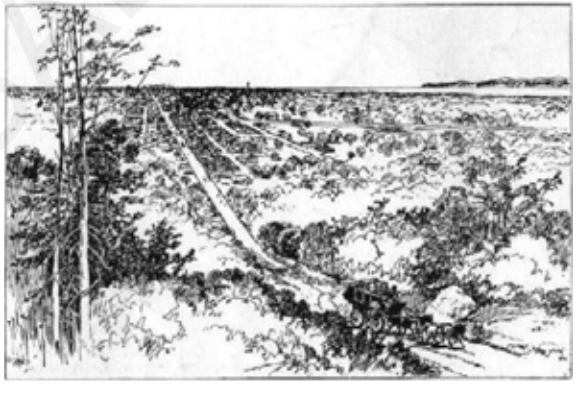
Population Growth

The opening of the Erie Canal in October 1825 did not magically turn Buffalo into the industrial and commercial force it would eventually become. Buffalo's population was only 2,412 in 1824. The canal's most important role initially was as transporter of immigrants from east to west. Before that, settlement in Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana on the western end of Lake Erie was sparse and their resources mostly untapped. Most western settlement had followed the Ohio River to the Mississippi, and thus was in the southern parts of those states, and those two major waterways served their transportation and shipment needs. As the population of Buffalo grew, the needs of the new settlers also increased, driving new services, commercial and industrial, and giving impetus to civic organization and identity.

The village of Buffalo was initially incorporated in April 2, 1813 (prior to the burning of Buffalo in December), then reorganized in 1815, and again in 1822, inaugurating the community's first official government.

The 1830 federal census recorded a population of more than 8,600 residents in Buffalo, a nearly four-fold increase in just five years. Maturing beyond the rough-scrabble, pioneer settlement that had characterized it through the first few decades of its existence, the city of Buffalo was officially incorporated on April 20, 1832, with Dr. Ebenezer Johnson serving as its first mayor. At that time, although elevated North Street was the city's official northern boundary,





LEFT: An image from *Palmer's Views of Buffalo Past and Present*, by Robert M. Palmer, published in 1911, entitled "Buffalo Village From the Lighthouse." Palmer credits *Golden's Memoirs*, published in 1826, for this image, indicating that the view is from Buffalo's first lighthouse, erected in 1818 near the present day Coast Guard Station.

Palmer goes on to explain that 1826 is the year that 26-year-old Millard Fillmore, the future president, was first elected to Assembly, having arrived in Buffalo only four years earlier.

The Erie Canal made Buffalo the place to be for ambitious young people such as Cayuga County native Fillmore, who would be elected president of the United States in 1850.

RIGHT: "Old View of Buffalo from High Street far off in the country," as depicted in *Palmer's Views of Buffalo Past and Present*. This sketched view of Buffalo looking south along Main Street (a dirt path) from High Street, considered "far off in the country" in 1830, shows that Buffalo has not yet expanded into what would become Allentown after the Civil War. The Niagara River is seen in the upper right, with Fort Erie on the Canadian shore in the distance.

Image published in History of the City of Buffalo and Erie County, *edited by H. Perry Smith*

EBENEZER JOHNSON

Dr. Ebenezer Johnson (1786-1849), physician turned politician, arrived in Buffalo in 1809 via his birthplace, Connecticut, and Cherry Valley, New York, where he studied medicine with a well-known physician. He failed in his first attempts to open a drug store and set up a practice in the young village. But after serving as an assistant surgeon to the New York State Volunteers during the War of 1812, he established the drug store.

In 1815, he began his political career, eventually serving as Surrogate of Niagara County (1815-1821); Surrogate of Erie County (1828-1832); village trustee (1822, 1825); and first mayor of Buffalo (1832-1836). He was a charter member of the Erie County Medical Society (1821); member of the first fire department (1824); school commissioner; member of an executive committee on Canadian affairs; and president of the Literary and Scientific Academy. During the Asiatic cholera epidemic of 1832, he organized a Board of Health and established Buffalo's first hospital to care for victims of the disease.

After his second term as mayor, Johnson moved to Tellico Plains, Tennessee, where he owned an iron ore mine with his brother, Elisha Johnson, who was a former mayor of Rochester, New York.

It was said of him that "his name was connected with every enterprise of importance, and his wise counsels and good judgment in all emergencies contributed in a great degree to the success of those projects which developed the resources and business of our city."

the city's built edge was several blocks south at High Street, and most settlement and commercial activity still centered on and near the Public Square, now known as Niagara Square. Smaller settlement pockets continued at Cold Spring and in Black Rock.

The 1830s heralded a period of rampant real estate speculation and inflated values. This dynamic constituted a national trend, which historian Larned called an "orgy of land speculations." Buffalo did not evade the trend, and rapid sales beginning around 1835 resulted in population growth that forced the need for more housing, as well as churches, public service buildings, and stables and liveries for horses, most of them built by master builder Benjamin Rathbun. With the growing success of the canal, new businesses sprang up, and the region also saw construction, in autumn of 1836, of its first railroad, a route from Buffalo to Niagara Falls.

This speculation-growth bubble burst nationally in 1837, partially due to Rathbun's financial ruin in summer of the previous year. Caught up in speculative excess, he borrowed heavily, including on notes totaling $1.5 million forged with the names of the most affluent Buffalonians. The forgery scandal was masterminded by his brother, Lyman, and carried out by his teenaged nephew, Lyman Rathbun Howlett, but Benjamin took the rap for them. While awaiting sentencing, he was held in a jail that was among the countless buildings he had built. Though he served five years in Auburn Prison, he continued to be held in high esteem by many in the city thereafter.

The collapse of the national economy due to financial fraud in Buffalo represented a devastating example of the city's already considerable influence on the nation. Finances would recover in the late 1830s, but this pattern of speculation and bust would reoccur in Buffalo later in the century. Memoirist Julia F. Snow recounted these events, and others, in *Early Recollections of Buffalo*, a work scholars today consider culturally important. She also shared her memories in talks presented in 1908 at the Twentieth Century Club and the Buffalo History Museum:

> *Early Buffalo was, as all know, laid out on grand lines by Joseph Ellicott, assisted, it is said, by L'Enfant, the designer of the city of Washington, D.C. Buffalo men combined these spacious and splendid plans and the important location of the city at the junction of Lake Erie, Niagara River, and Buffalo Creek lured speculators and promised them great fortunes from corner lots, and, indeed, all land investments. They came, they saw, they speculated on the possibilities, and merrily spent all that they expected to make, when, like a flash, came the collapse of 1837, and the financial ruin was assisted and completed by the forgeries of Benjamin Rathbun. It was a city of dreams and had a rude awakening. None escaped, some were crushed, all injured, all suffered.*

Mrs. Snow writes that what saved Buffalo was its residents, about whom she says, "Most of them were plain people, and after they got over the shock of finding that they were not millionaires after all, they went to work, saved the wreckage." Another, almost literal, redeeming factor, she contends, was the "great revival of religion [that] swept over the country in the early forties (and earlier) … Men had felt the want of something more and better than money in the past few years, and knew themselves, actually as well as technically, sinners in need of divine help."

Increased immigration also played a role: "[W]ork was plenty, even if wages were low, and the town grew slowly but steadily." These factors, she says, "transformed Buffalo from a city of speculators and bankrupts, a town of spendthrifts and high livers, of merry, thoughtless (but most agreeable) men and women, to a serious, respectable, and rather slow and staid community."

This transition in cultural character from a frontier Buffalo to a worldly city was crucial for the transformation of the city's physical character from the Ellicott plan for the emporium of the world to the Olmsted plan of a place worth living in well.

During the 1840s, the Erie Canal was reaching the pinnacle of its growth and use as a transportation and freight-shipment conduit. Buffalo saw tremendous development of its rail system, with the region's rail network complementing the canal business. Perhaps the most important rail service established in this era was the line between Buffalo and Albany in early 1843 with completion of the Buffalo and Attica Railroad. Coupled with the growth of midwestern cities such as Detroit and Chicago in the 1840s and the development of Joseph Dart's grain elevator in 1842, Buffalo's national role as a grain port and transportation hub was just beginning to reach its stride.

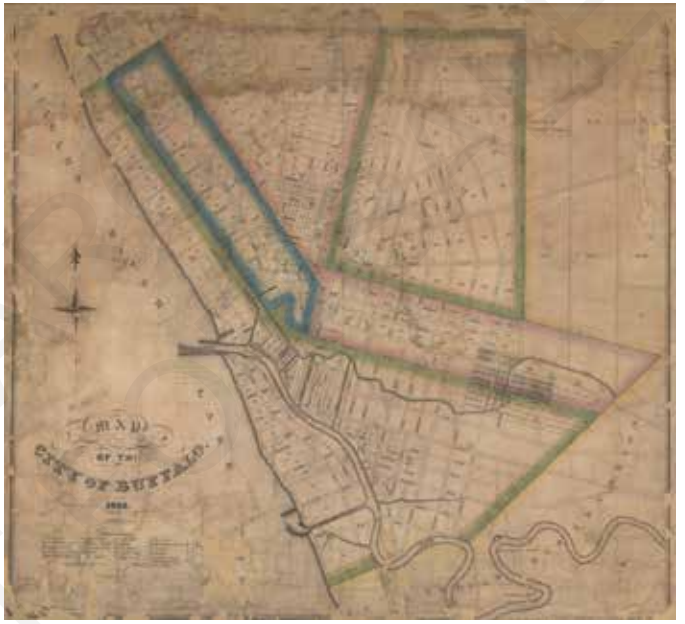
"It was not until the 1830s that grain in any considerable quantities began to pass through this place to the markets of the East and in 1835 the entire annual receipts were only one hundred and twelve thousand bushels"—that is the way Joseph Dart (1799-1879) described grain storage conditions in Buffalo in reminiscences thirty-five years later. By 1840, he then recalls, bushel transfers—grueling work then being done on the backs of men "at immense cost of money and time, to say nothing of pecuniary loss"—increased by four hundred percent. "It seemed to me as I reflected on the amazing extent of the grain producing regions of the Prairie West, and the favorable position of Buffalo for receiving their products, that the eastward movement of grain through this port would soon exceed anything the boldest imagination had conceived." He then set into motion his belief that he could build a large "warehouse for storage, with an adjustable elevator and conveyors, to be worked by steam; and so arranged as to transfer grain from vessels to boats or bins with cheapness and dispatch." His warehouse was built on Buffalo Creek at the junction of the Evans Ship Canal in the autumn of 1842. "It was the first successful application of the valuable invention of Oliver Evans to the commercial purpose for which it is now extensively employed," said Dart.

Other improvements to the city—all of which were accomplished by business leaders, not by city officials—included incorporation on May 8,

JOSEPH DART

Born at Middle Haddam, Connecticut, Joseph Dart (1799-1879) relocated to Buffalo in 1821, becoming a partner in a hat, cap, and fur business on the southeast corner of Main and Swan Streets. Chief Red Jacket was among the Indians who traded with and trusted him. Dart also pioneered in the lumber business for several years. He actively contributed to the progress, culture, and religious life of the city as an originator of the Buffalo Water Works, a founder of the Buffalo Female Academy (Buffalo Seminary), and a member and loyal supporter of the Buffalo Historical Society.

Still, his greatest legacy will always be the Grain Elevator, which was adopted in ports throughout the world. "My experiment from the very first working was a decided and acknowledged success," he said. A historical marker erected along the Buffalo River near Erie Basin Marina pays tribute to Dart's experiment. He was inducted into the *Buffalo Business First* Inaugural Western New York Business Hall of Fame in 2017.



ABOVE: "Map of the City of Buffalo" from 1833 illustrating the early presence of subdivided lots.
Reproduction by permission of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Buffalo, New York

SIDEBAR: A portrait of Joseph Dart, 1799-1879.
Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Persons - D

1848, of Buffalo's first gas light company. An enterprise in which Buffalo pioneer businessman Samuel F. Pratt had an interest, the company built a system for better illumination of the city's streets. On March 15, 1849, the Buffalo City Water Works Company was inaugurated by a group of fifteen prominent men, including George Coit, Isaac Sherman, Henry W. Rogers, William A. Bird, and Joseph Dart, Jr., "for the purpose of supplying Buffalo with pure and wholesome water." A large reservoir at Prospect Hill, a neighborhood on the west side of Buffalo just beyond North Street, was constructed between 1850 and 1851. Pipes laid along Main and Niagara Streets provided city residents with a good supply of water, and the city bought the company in 1868.

The success of the Erie Canal and Buffalo's growing role as a commercial and industrial center linking the east coast with the inland cities in the developing United States fostered a dramatic population boom in the still-new city. The 1845 state census recorded 29,773 residents in the city. In 1850 the federal census tallied 42,261—an increase of about forty-two percent in just five short years. Due to this tremendous population explosion, the city charter was revised in April 1853 to expand the boundaries of Buffalo to include a vast swath of new territory, which included the forested area that would become the Elmwood District.

Little opposition was raised by the village of Black Rock when the new boundaries completely absorbed the former rival into the city of Buffalo. The expansion increased the size of the city from about four and one-half square miles in 1832 to roughly forty-two square miles in 1853. This dramatic increase reflects the city's rapid development in the 1840s and '50s and foreshadowed its future growth and settlement.

With population growth, expanded land on which to grow, rapid transportation, water and gas utilities, and more, the stage is being set for the next dramatic transformation of the city.

Today, little physical evidence remains from Buffalo's earliest history, due largely in part to the devastation of the War of 1812 and later growth that demolished much of the oldest historic features. Pioneer log cabins have long since disappeared, including those that had been located in the current boundaries of the Elmwood District. Several surviving properties in the Black Rock neighborhood, built in response to growth of the nearby Erie Canal, date from the 1820s and 1830s. The George Coit House (ca. 1818), which was moved in 1867 from its original location at Swan Street to a new site on Virginia Street in Allentown, stands as one of the oldest structures remaining in Buffalo, along with the 1833 Lighthouse at the mouth of the Buffalo River.

Perhaps the most lasting physical legacy from early Buffalo history and the most important for our story is Ellicott's plan of radial streets overlaid on a grid, which in large part continues to underpin the structure of the city south of North Street. While the growth of the city has far exceeded even Ellicott's vision, Niagara Square is no longer Buffalo's physical or residential hub. Today, with its landscaped gardens and majestic monument honoring President William McKinley, Niagara Square is surrounded by city, state, and federal governmental and civic buildings, a still vital, though different, center, much as Ellicott envisioned in the 1800s.

Frederick Law Olmsted would, in the 1860s and '70s, graft his impressive network of parks and parkways onto Joseph Ellicott's framework and expand his predecessor's ideal of creating an extraordinary place for future generations. Ellicott, and now Olmsted, can be seen as channeling the Pilgrims in creating a place in which to live well in the wilderness.

The Mile Reservation, swampy land, age-old paths, and a burgeoning village define the future Elmwood District boundaries

TWO

Framing Elmwood

The evolution of the Elmwood District, from a little-traveled forested space into a place that is now so significant and perhaps even central to the identity of Buffalo, can be best understood by thinking about the creation of a work of art—only in reverse. Usually, an artist selects the canvas, uses various pigments to create intended images, and then chooses an appropriate frame. In contrast, the artfully designed place that is the Elmwood District developed last, after its frame—formed by natural and manmade constraining boundaries—was already in place.

The Niagara River and the village of Black Rock are among the first foundational elements in our frame metaphor, beginning with the Seneca Nation's ceding to Great Britain a mile-wide stretch of their land along the full length of the river between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie as reparation for the massacre at Devil's Hole in 1763. Title to that land, the Mile Reserve, eventually transferred to New York State after the Revolutionary War and the settlement of various land claims. Then followed platting of the Reserve by the state and founding of the settlement called Black Rock south of Scajaquada Creek. The Reserve's eastern edge, known as the

TOP: One of the first maps of what would become the Elmwood District, published in 1855 showing "the upper and lower villages of Black Rock, Cold Springs" and more. The Mile Strip line follows the curve of the Niagara River (at left). Batavia Road, now Main Street, angles across the center of this map. It bends at Ferry Street, the area historically known as Cold Spring.

Image Courtesy of the New York Public Library

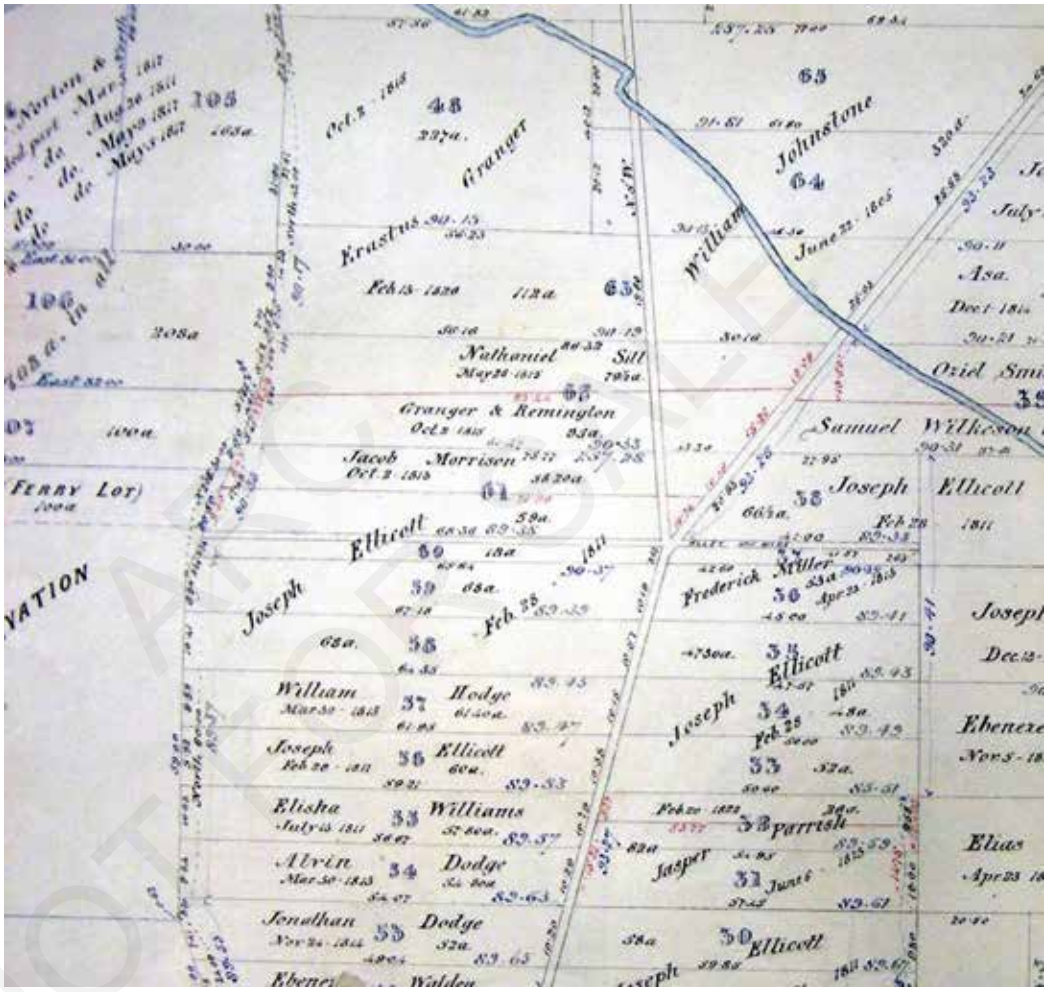
BOTTOM: "A view of Black Rock 1823." The date on this map is suspect because the Erie Canal, which was not completed until 1825, is well developed in Black Rock in this view. It is notable that Black Rock had a head start over the nascent Village of Buffalo in canal development.

Published in the Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo, by Frank H. Severance (1912)

GARDEN CEMETERIES

A variety of factors contributed to the rise of the garden cemetery movement in the United States and relocation of the dead away from cities: increasing land values, a burgeoning population of both the living and the dead, and concerns about the transmission of disease caused by proximity of the deceased interred in residential areas. The spread of cholera in the village of Buffalo in 1832 worsened those fears. These factors were uppermost in Buffalo and resulted in many of the graves in the city being relocated to Forest Lawn. When cholera struck again in 1854, Forest Lawn would be ready.

In this era, for the first time in American history, the cemetery became both a place of beauty for the dead and a place of rural respite for the living. Given the lack of parks and other open landscaped areas in busy, noisy cities of that industrial age, like Buffalo, the living could visit the rural cemetery and enjoy fresh air and green spaces. In Forest Lawn, the hilly terrain often found in rural cemeteries was enhanced. Sections of orderly burial plots were accessed by winding roads, making passage though the cemetery an interesting stroll or leisurely ride through a picturesque landscape, one accessible to the public and funded by the commercial sale of plots.



Map of Township 11 R.8 & W. Part T11 R.7 Holland Cos' Land and N.Y. State Reservation in the town of Black Rock, the first survey of the Ellicott lots that would become the Elmwood District. This 1820s map shows the lots within the boundaries of Scajaquada Creek to the north (in blue), Main Street to the east, North Street to the south, and the undulating Mile Reservation Line (now Richmond Avenue) to the west. From Main and Ferry streets a path leads to the northwest. This ancient path between the Cold Spring there and the Tonawanda Indian settlement would later disappear and then reappear as Chapin Parkway. Only a dozen individuals owned this land in the 1820s, now home to more than 15,000 individuals.

Map of Township 11, Range 8 & Part of Township 11, Range 7. Emslie, Peter. Deed Atlas of Erie County N.Y., part 1, plate 10. [Buffalo, N.Y.] : The Author, 1859

Mile Strip line, would become the western edge of the Elmwood District's frame.

Elmwood's eastern frame at Main Street also began as wilderness, bounded not by the natural line of a waterway, as with Black Rock, but by the ages-old path used by the indigenous peoples between what would become Batavia, gateway to the Finger Lakes, and what would become Buffalo, gateway to the Great Lakes. This eastern edge of the framing element would much later become Delaware Avenue as its Millionaires' Row developed.

The southern portion of the frame was Joseph Ellicott's 1804 settlement plan that began to be more fully developed around 1825 with the opening of the Erie Canal. Because of that extraordinary engineering feat, Buffalo became one of the most important places in the country. Influential and entrepreneurial people from all around the world were drawn here, and population and wealth by midcentury increased exponentially. With this success came the build-out of the city that Ellicott had envisioned half a century earlier. It also marked a turning point in the Elmwood District story.

At the southern boundary of the Elmwood District was a city that stretched from the waterfront to North Street in Allentown, dense with tall buildings filled with shops, offices, and walk-ups where working-class people lived. For others, the walking distance between home—usually a small worker's cottage, an apartment, or tenement on the lower east or west side or in the southern portion of Allentown—and their workplace at a waterfront commercial company or a factory along the Buffalo River had grown to as much as fifteen minutes. But away from the hustle and bustle of the busy, growing metropolis, the entrepreneurial and managerial class built their grander residences and reached their offices in their horse-drawn conveyances, in effect enjoying the culture of a first Buffalo suburb north of Chippewa Street and stretching to North Street, the city's then northern edge that would become the Elmwood District's southern frame.

To the north of Allentown were Ellicott's farm lots, where the wealthiest would, over time, be lured away from the city's commercial density and noise. Fronting Main Street and Delaware Avenue, the huge lots extended west to the Mile Reservation Line. The survey map made in the 1820s reveals that only about a dozen individuals owned all of the land in 14 lots that fronted on Main Street and stretched all the way west to the Mile Reservation Line, now Richmond Avenue. This area, bounded by Main Street to the east, Scajaquada Creek to the north, the Mile Reservation to the west, and North Street to the south, would become the Elmwood District. Today, more than 15,000 persons own and live on this same land.

A natural boundary, the Scajaquada Creek, whose muddy banks were too difficult to cross conveniently, provided the Elmwood District's northern frame. At the northeast corner of the frame of the future Elmwood District, in 1849 the forest began to be converted into Forest Lawn Cemetery. It was one of the earliest rural cemeteries in the nation and part of a worldwide "rural cemetery" or "garden cemetery" movement modeled after Pere-Lachaise in Paris, the world's first such cemetery.

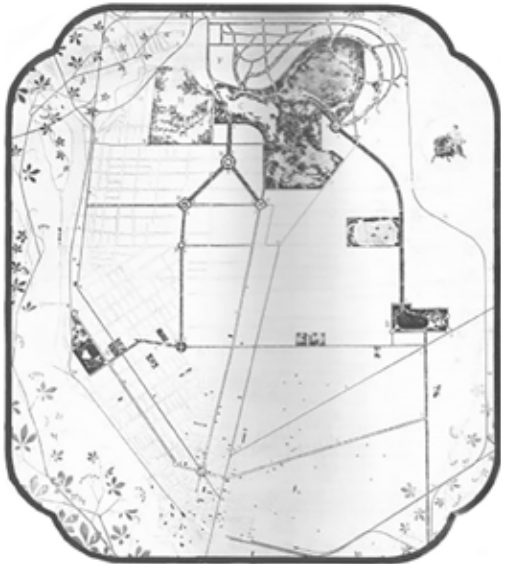
Older cemeteries located in the city, such as the one at North and Delaware, were either church yards, left over lots, or lots reserved at the edge of settlements for relatively random burials where space was available. Forest Lawn, by contrast, represented a shaping of the land into a deliberately designed harmony of man and nature. Forest Lawn, was, after Ellicott's estate, which was to have become a park upon his death, Buffalo's first planned greenspace, and its character influenced Olmsted's Elmwood work.

As the city grew in population and size, the two disparate designs at its origin began to fill. One, the 1802 Black Rock orthogonal street grid, running parallel with and perpendicular to the Niagara River, extended to the Mile Reservation Line, traversed first only by trails that became Ferry Street and Forest Avenue, and eventually by other west-to-east connections.

The other, Ellicott's 1804 plan for Buffalo, running north from the cliff, or "terrace," that overlooked Buffalo Creek and its swampy margins, began to fulfill its promise with a magnificently designed interplay of orthogonal streets, blocks for commercial purposes, radial streets, and public squares of Masonic influence.

Buffalo's first horse-drawn streetcar began service in 1840 between those two populated areas, the terrace downtown and Black Rock.

The frame continued to strengthen as Buffalo's population grew and sprawled across the land. Ellicott's outer lots north of North Street were



Olmsted's map of his Buffalo Parks and Parkways System, 1876. The three main parks: Delaware Park, top; Front Park, lower left; and the Parade (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Park), right, are connected via parkways that follow and extend Ellicott's streets. The Buffalo State Asylum is west of Delaware Park. Forest Lawn Cemetery, which was an inspiration for Olmsted, is south of Delaware Park. Buffalo's version of New York City's Central Park was being realized at this time, as the city continued to expand north from its former village core that was centered around Niagara Square, the circle at the bottom of the map.

Courtesy of the National Park Service

becoming farms to feed the city, especially after 1853, when the city's northern boundary was expanded. With growth both in land and in the public's interest in how to live well in a city, some of the farms eventually became nurseries that produced the ornamental plants and trees wealthier households sought and could afford.

With population and wealth expanding, the city's business leaders, influential industrialists and entrepreneurs realized Buffalo's potential to be as important as New York City. They wanted what New York had. They were also concerned about the well-being and enjoyment of residents. Increasingly, they now had time for and interest in recreation and a better life, earned after the hard work and increased prosperity from Buffalo's role in the Civil War as supplier of volunteers and materiel.

Their vision led to the next, perhaps most important, framing in the Elmwood District, which began to take shape in August of 1868 with the arrival in Buffalo of Frederick Law Olmsted.

The noted Buffalo attorney William Dorsheimer, who would later become lieutenant governor of New York, invited Olmsted and paid his expenses to come to Buffalo to advise an informal committee of Buffalo business leaders that had formed for the purpose of creating a park comparable to New York City's Central Park. They wanted such a park to contribute to civic betterment. These civic leaders gave voice to such matters as civic betterment, not leaving them to the government alone; they wanted such a park out of civic pride and, as did Ellicott before them, to make their city attractive for people and investment.

Olmsted chose not just one site for Buffalo's "Central Park." Instead, he created a system of three parks linked by parkways punctuated by a series of circles that laced through an otherwise unorganized landscape of randomly placed farms among forest. His brilliant plan established an almost literal armature that would organize settlement and connect future populated areas.

This is commonly acknowledged as the origin of the most magnificent parkway system in the United States and of the public park system, as Olmsted would later express, that would keep Olmsted and his heirs involved in the design of Buffalo for the next three decades. It also has defined the Elmwood District for one hundred and fifty years.

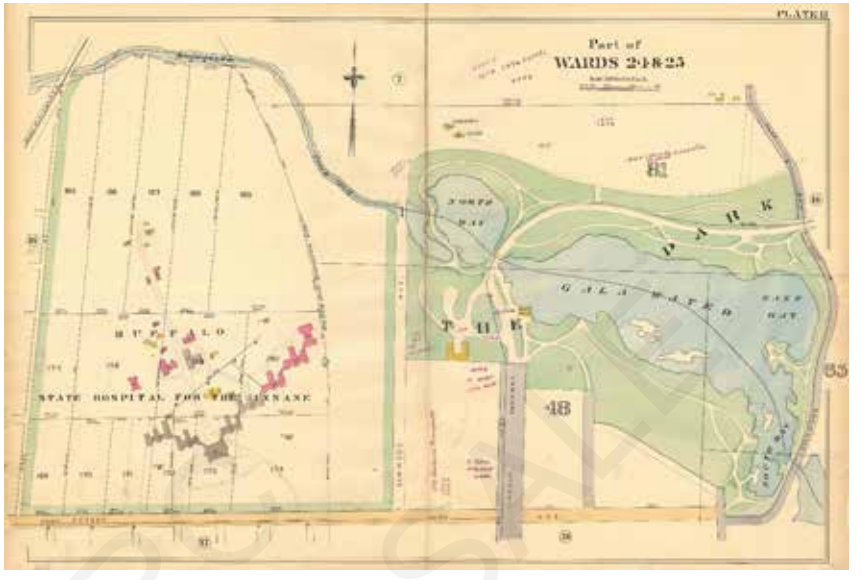
Olmsted's system of parks and parkways can be seen as a model for the highest aspirations of the American standard of living. It raised the bar for what could be done to create spaces worth living in. Olmsted's magnificent vision that the Parks Commissioners fulfilled over 25 years echoed the ideals of the Pilgrims and of Ellicott, and guaranteed Buffalo's future national prominence.

Construction of the Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane in the 1870s completed the northwestern corner of the Elmwood District's frame. By adopting the therapeutic landscape approach of green open spaces and fresh air leading to healing then promoted by Philadelphia psychiatrist Thomas Story Kirkbride, the asylum reaffirmed

the ideal of Eden as a place in which to enhance the health and well-being of residents with a scheme of well-ordered buildings and grounds.

Buffalo business and civic leaders had competed vigorously to have the state locate the asylum in the city, and they brought the best and brightest together to design the building and its grounds. Architect Henry Hobson Richardson and Frederick Law Olmsted, Staten Island neighbors, began the first of their collaborations working together on this project.

Over time, all of these forces of capitalism, culture and commerce, the sacred and the profane, came brilliantly together on this western New York landscape to illuminate how it was possible to live simultaneously in both nature and the city. The frame around the future Elmwood District was now complete as a proscenium for a stage, and the play ready to be performed.



TOP: A map from the *1894 City Atlas* entitled "Part of Wards 24 & 25" showing the Buffalo State Hospital for the Insane to the left and the North Bay and Gala Waters of The Park to the right. Between them are shown, left to right, the curving State Reservation line marking one mile from the Niagara River; Elmwood Avenue, which peters out to nothing prior to the Pan-American Exposition of 1901; and the grand Lincoln Parkway, named for the Great Emancipator. The rectangle of unbuilt land that Elmwood and Lincoln bracket is the future site of the Albright Art Gallery, which opened in 1905. Gallery architect E. B. Green fronted his building on the more important of these two streets, Lincoln Parkway.

Map Courtesy of Erie County

BOTTOM: Historic View of the Frederick Law Olmsted-designed South Lawn (foreground) and the H. H. Richardson-designed Asylum towers (background). This image of the final element of the "Elmwood frame" illustrates the harmony of man and nature that is the foundation of the quality of the neighborhood to come.

Image Courtesy of New York State Office of Mental Health, Buffalo Psychiatric Center

Earliest European settlers are fur trader-interpreters and easterners who become area entrepreneurs and innovators

THREE

Early Settlement in Elmwood

Land transactions in the region began immediately after Ellicott's survey was completed, according to Holland Land Company records. The earliest purchasers of the company's inner lots also purchased a number of the original farm lots. Because the oblique route of Main Street angled generally northeastward, these lots located between Main Street and the Mile Reserve varied in size and acreage. Slightly smaller lots were located closer to North Street and larger lots were located farther north.

The first owners of land in the Elmwood District purchased their lots between 1803 and 1815. William Hodge, the elder, and William Deshay bought lots in 1803, and George Burgar and Isaac Hurlbut each purchased part of one. The following year, William Raymond and Christian Staley purchased theirs. Purchases made by Benjamin Hodge, Sr., William's father; Solomon Spaulding; and Samuel Sturgeon and John Lyon, who bought separate portions of the same lot, took place in 1806. Elisha Williams in 1811, Jacob Morrison and Alvin Dodge in 1813, and Nathaniel Sill and Granger-Remington in 1815 completed those early sales.

Presumably, the Granger of the latter purchase was Erastus Granger, whose sister, Eminence Granger Remington, was the wife of Shadrach Remington, the co-purchaser. Erastus Granger already owned two tracts beyond his sister and brother-in-law's land, having purchased them in 1806 from Indian interpreter William Johnston, who had been gifted the land by the Senecas.

Granger, a Connecticut native and midwest land speculator, was sent to the area by President Thomas Jefferson as Indian agent for the region, responsible for implementing federal Indian policy. He was also charged with establishing the first post office. As postmaster, he designated the area served as Buffalo Creek, rather than New Amsterdam, as Joseph Ellicott had been calling his new village. It was on Granger's land that Forest Lawn Cemetery was later developed. An historical marker in the cemetery reads: "Erastus Granger, Seneca Indian agent, judge, post master & collector of port, lived here 1806-1826. He rallied Seneca to defend Buffalo during War of 1812." His and his family's land holdings extended from Main Street west to the Mile Reserve and south from Scajaquada Creek nearly to Ferry Street.

These Western New York pioneer settlers would find none of the comforts they were used to in the cities and villages of the east with their almost two hundred years of prior settlement and refinement. It was natural then that some of these new land owners would prove themselves to be innovators. It is known, for example, that Jacob Morrison started the first tannery in 1815 near Cold Spring. Arnold Parson started the first pottery nearby in the same year. Elisha Williams was a celebrated attorney with law offices in Hudson, New York. Nathaniel Sill appears to have been a member of a large and influential political committee called "Federal Republicans," who took the position of opposing the 1812 war with Great Britain.

Were awards given for the most enterprising, however, William Hodge, Sr. would have easily won.

Born in Glastonbury, Connecticut, in 1781 Hodge came to Western New York in 1805 as a twenty-four-year-old with his wife, Sally Abbott Hodge, and two young children and immediately "began a series of innovations remarkable for pioneer times."[6] He opened the first tavern and inn in 1807, which his father, Benjamin Sr., who narrowly escaped being shot by the British when they torched it on the first of January 1814,

helped to operate. In 1811, William wove the first wire screen, which he furnished to grist mills in the vicinity and in Canada for separating grain and chaff. A year later, he established the first fanning mills—a winnowing machine used for cleaning coarse grains—which he operated for twenty years. He started the first forge about three years later, built the first brick house here with bricks he made on site, another business he started in 1825, and operated the first nursery and first threshing machine. Having taught school for three years in Otsego County before coming to this area, he was instrumental in establishing a school even before a school district was organized and served as a school trustee for twenty-eight years. "Revered by all who knew him,"[7] he died September 18, 1848.

His son, also named William and often referred to as the Younger, was brought to Western New York by his parents at the age of five months. He witnessed the burning of the tavern and family home and furnishings by the British. He spent the greater part of his adult life working with his father at the tavern, in the nursery, and in the making and selling of bricks. When his father died, William was "content to devote his time and energies to the improvement and beautifying of the large real estate interests that [had] been confided to his care."[8] This he did in part by building several homes on Hodge Avenue, which he had laid out earlier between Elmwood and Delaware avenues, probably for use by the nursery. He was also instrumental in extending Delaware northward from North Street.

A past president and prominent member of the Buffalo Historical Society, he provided in 1885 an early description of the land that would become the Elmwood District. Although many of the residences he mentions appear to have been located along Main Street and thus beyond the Delaware Avenue border of today's Elmwood Historic District East, Hodge's recollections conjure a good picture of the area during the first two decades of the nineteenth century as well as the turnover of property that was taking place:

> *At the present North street, the "outer" village lots terminated and the "farm" lots commenced. The first lot on the east side of Main street, above North, was farm-lot No. 30, and the lots from this to No. 52 were on the east side of the street … On the west side of the street, was No. 53, on which was a small log house occupied by a Mr. Raymond* [most likely William Raymond]. *This house was subsequently the dwelling of Major Noble, and then of Sacket Dodge. The lots number from this upward were on the west side of Main Street. On lot 54 was a log house occupied by another Mr. Raymond, a brother of the one just mentioned. This lot was afterwards owned and occupied by Alvan* [sic] *L. Dodge, for many years. Lots 31, 32, 55, 56, had no houses upon them, except that in 1811 Major Ward Cotton built a log house on lot 55 and occupied it … On lot 57 was a small log house occupied by Michael Hunt. This lot was afterwards the site of Hodge's Brick Tavern … On lot 58 was a small log house occupied by Christjohn Staley* [a.k.a. Christian Staley], *standing back on the side hill near a spring. This house was on the old traveled road, running about where Delaware street now is. On lot 59 was a double log house, the logs being hewed on two sides. This was occupied by William DeShay, and subsequently by Samuel McConnell. It is now the location of Spring Abbey. On this same lot was a small log house occupied by David Reese … On lot 60 was a small framed house occupied by Lyman Persons. On lot 61, near the Jubilee Spring which was on lot 62, was a log house occupied by John Mains and afterwards by George Wormwood. On lot 62 was a small framed house occupied by Shadrach Remington, father of the Reverends David and James Remington, and grandfather of Cyrus K. Remington of Buffalo. An old log house stood on the back part of this lot. On lot 63 was a small log house occupied by Mr. Wintermute. On lot 64 was a small log house standing down the creek at the stone quarry, which was occupied by Ebenezer Averill.*[9]

Hodge describes the approximate course of Main Street from the distant Buffalo Plains neighborhood, where the south campus of the University at Buffalo is today, south through the Cold Spring area to Buffalo around the year 1825:

> *Coming westward, thence, the road bore a little to the left of the present main road, keeping on the "limestone ridge" for about one mile. Then it crossed the present road on "Flint Hill,"* [an area known as the home of Erastus Granger,

between the present Jewett Parkway and Scajaquada Creek] *about sixty rods east of the present parkway* [present Main Street], *still following, or nearly so, the rocky ridge, to Conjockety's creek* [Scajaquada Creek] *at the old fording place, now in Forest Lawn Cemetery. By descending a steep bank, of about twenty feet, and turning immediately to the right, the creek was reached. On this bank, or bluff of high ground, there was a log building called the Lyon house. Mr. Lyon* [presumably the John Lyon noted previously, living at lot 62] *lived there as early as 1806; but I do not know whether he or the Indians built the house. Near the traveled track, at the bottom of the hill, and before it crossed the creek, was a spring of good water and near the house were several apple trees, planted by the early white settlers, if not by the Indians. When I first saw them, more than sixty-seven years ago, they were quite large. And I remember, by the way, several apple trees which stood on the same (the north) side of the creek, near its mouth where the Indian chief, Conjockety (whose name it bears), had his dwelling-place. The Indians may have planted both these clusters of trees. They however disappeared long ago, through neglect, or by the ruthless hand of the white man.*

Crossing the creek, and continuing a short distance on the 'flat,' and passing a beautiful spring of water, the road, after a westerly course of thirty or forty rods, ascended to high ground, and turned southward. Soon it crossed the old Gulf road, now Delavan avenue. This road took its name from the deep gulf caused by the running water from the Jubilee spring [today, located in what is now Delaware Avenue near Auburn Avenue] *and the Staley spring* [presumably located on lot 58 owned by Christian Staley]. *The gulf was bridged as soon as the Holland Land Company's lands were surveyed, about the year 1804. This Gulf road was the first and nearest one from our Main street in the vicinity of Conjockety's creek and "The Plains" – to Black Rock. But it was little traveled, at an early day, and only in a dry time, or in winter when the ground was frozen. The old Guide-board road* [present North Street] *mentioned below, was the principal traveled road to Black Rock ferry from the East.*

After crossing the Gulf road, the old main road followed about the course of the present Delaware street, passing close by the Jubilee spring. Just north of this spring was a second log house, on what we used to call the Remington lot, or farm, Shadrach Remington and family having come and occupied this farm before the War of 1812 [apparently the south half of lot 62]. *To the south of this Jubilee spring was a third log house, which was, I well remember, occupied by John Mains, and afterwards by George Wormwood. The road still following nearly the course of Delaware street, crossed lot No. 58, lying on the north side of the present Utica street; on which lot was a fourth log house, occupied by Christjohn Staley* [Christian Staley]. *Down the hill, east of this house, was a fine large spring of water, which*

Portrait of Conjockity by Lars Sellstedt, 1850.

Published in From Forecastle to Academy, Sailor and Artist: Autobiography by Lars Gustaf Sellstedt, Issue 1, *by Lars Gustaf Sellstedt*

> *I remember visiting as early as 1810. The spring is still* [in 1885 when this was being written] *in the same place and looking very much as it did more than seventy-four years ago.*
>
> *Near the present Utica street the road bore a little eastward, and after crossing this street, continued about parallel with Delaware, crossing lots 57, 56 and 55, (the "Cotton" lot); then bearing a little westward again, it crossed lots 54 and 53 to the old Guide-board road (now North street).*

Hodge explained the rationale behind these early roads and described some of the conditions faced by travelers and residents:

> *In a new country such paths usually go from one watering-place to another, and this course would be more than half as far as the wagon-track by way of the breach. But, in fact, in those days the road from the Cold Spring to near Conjockety's (or Granger's) creek, consisted of a log-way or causeway, and I have seen much of this road many times in the spring and fall flooded with water.*

The lack of improvements and the makeshift quality of roads and utilities in the region before the late 1840s to 1850s boom in real estate development is obvious from Hodge's descriptions:

> *It should be noted that before the Gulf road above-mentioned was opened and the gulf bridged, those who lived in the vicinity of "The Plains" used to reach Niagara river by following the north bank of Conjockety's creek. Many continued to do this for years after the Gulf road was opened, as it was better traveling.*
>
> *People from the neighborhood of the Cold Spring reached the river by going through the woods on the north side of lot No. 58, starting in about where Utica street now is, and keeping on the high ground passing near Staley's house and spring, and keeping on in a nearly direct course to the river.*

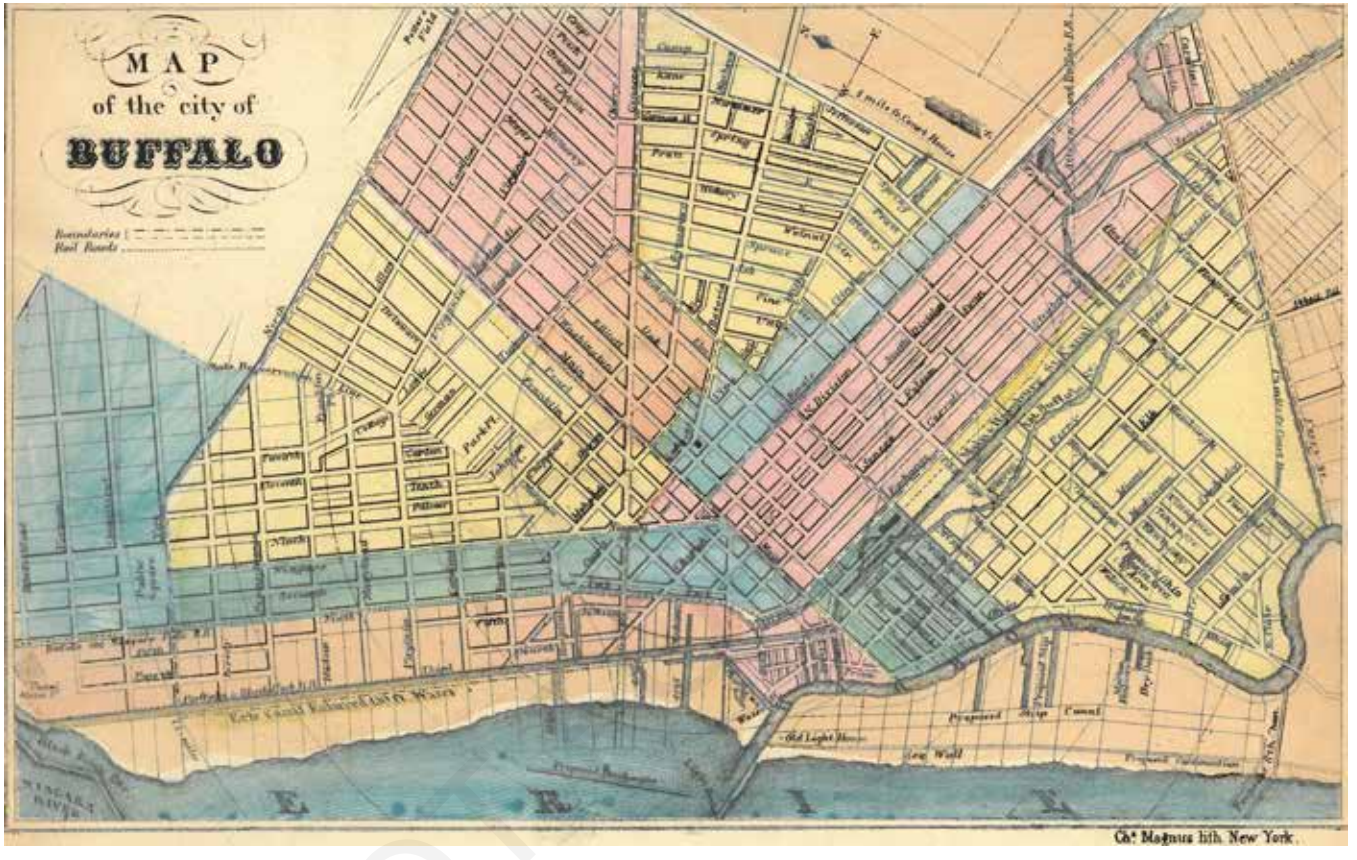
The future Elmwood District was predominantly forested and becoming rural as settlers arrived in the first half of the nineteenth century. William Hodge, Jr. was said to have hunted deer and fox "on grounds now occupied by the most elegant residences of the city." The Rev. Dr. John C. Lord, an early resident who served as pastor of Central Presbyterian Church for many years, known nationwide as being proslavery, then antislavery, but always anti-Catholic, built a stately Gothic Revival mansion on Delaware Avenue at Chapin Place and later recalled the 1825 landscape:

> *North of Chippewa and Niagara, was an almost unbroken forest, where the huntsman often pursued the game abounding in the primeval woods. I remember well, that within a year or two after I became a resident of this city, an enormous panther was killed a little beyond North street, in the rear of what was then called the Cotton farm.*[10]

During the 1830s, growth in the city had been slowed by an 1832 cholera epidemic and the 1837 national economic depression. Even then, a realization started to take hold that commerce based largely on the transshipment of goods, all of which were grown or manufactured elsewhere, would not alone sustain the growth necessary for Buffalo to fulfill its potential. Buffalo needed its own manufactories, and by the mid-1840s, this crucial need was being satisfied, as Buffalo historian Mark Goldman observed, by "an incredibly rich manufacturing economy based on the processing of a huge variety of other products shipped to Buffalo via the Great Lakes."

Manufacturing meant jobs. Jobs required workers. The need for workers created growth. And growth, additionally fueled by immigration, pushed the city northward beyond its then-present boundary at North Street.

The Rev. Dr. Lord's "game abounding primal woods" would begin to be tamed by the incursion of new roads … and new development.



This very unusual map portrayal of Buffalo in 1855 is oriented with north to the left and the Niagara River at the bottom. The harbor, bottom center, juts into the river. The faint, radiating circles are showing distance in tenth of a mile increments from Lafayette Square, the business center of Buffalo. Compare this plan with Joseph Ellicott's of 50 years earlier. The Public Square remains, but the city is now centered on commerce a generation after the opening of the Erie Canal. This is a map of a city in growth mode. Although Buffalo had expanded its northern boundary in 1853 by many miles to what is now Kenmore Avenue, this 1855 map portrays wards by colors extending only to North Street, the diagonal line at the upper left of the map, which is the southern boundary of what would emerge as the Elmwood District a generation later. The roads of what would become the 11th Ward and the Elmwood District were just being laid at this time, but they are not yet recorded on this map of 1855.

Image courtesy of Clinton Brown

The Erie Canal opens, industry diversifies, the city quadruples in size,
and nurseries and new aesthetic aspirations replace farming

FOUR

Becoming the Eleventh Ward

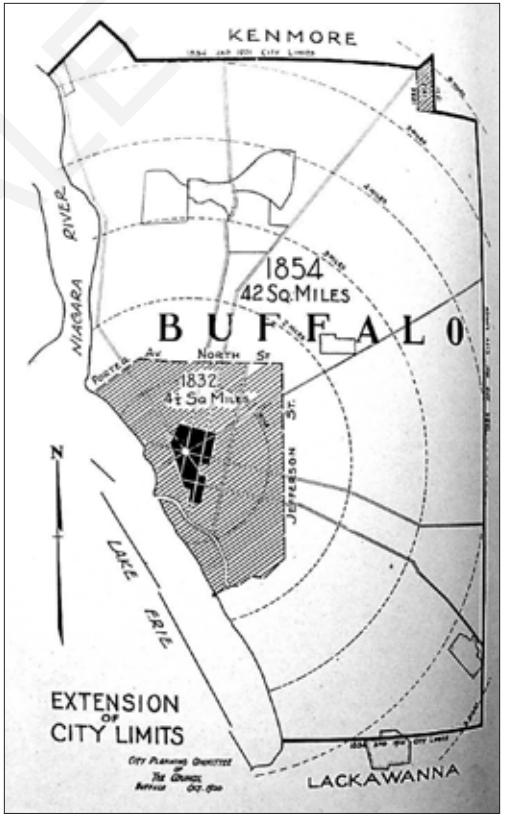
The city of Buffalo revised its charter in 1853 in response to the rapidly growing population and new development of the late 1840s. The new charter dramatically expanded the municipal boundaries north to what is now Kenmore Avenue, annexing the village of Black Rock and creating thirteen wards from which were elected Common Council representatives. It was then that the land characterized by William Hodge and Dr. Lord as a rural fringe area was made a part of the city.

Under the political divisions of the revised charter, the newly created Eleventh Ward encompassed land stretching eastward from the Niagara River, including the former Mile Strip Reservation, to Main Street, and running from North Street as far north as the Scajaquada Creek. This included not only all of the land that would become the Elmwood District but also the established east-west street patterns of Upper Black Rock and the undeveloped areas near Delaware and Main Streets.

To prepare the new territory for development, the city council hired city surveyor George Cole in the spring of 1855. Cole began to lay out roads through the new territory. With the charter's absorption of Black Rock into the city of Buffalo, efforts were made wherever possible to knit together the village's streets from the west and Buffalo's from the south. Although a few north-south streets, primarily Main, Delaware, and Rogers (now Richmond Avenue), were already established, many of the new roads first created in the Elmwood District were west-east streets, originating from Black Rock. At the time, many of them would have been simple dirt roads, not widely used for traffic. Some of these roads conform to Ellicott's long, narrow farm lots, either tracing a dividing line or bisecting a larger parcel. Others were extensions of original roads running west-to-east from the Niagara River and the Erie Canal to the Mile Strip Reservation line. Elmwood's becoming the Eleventh Ward meant roads began to become streets.

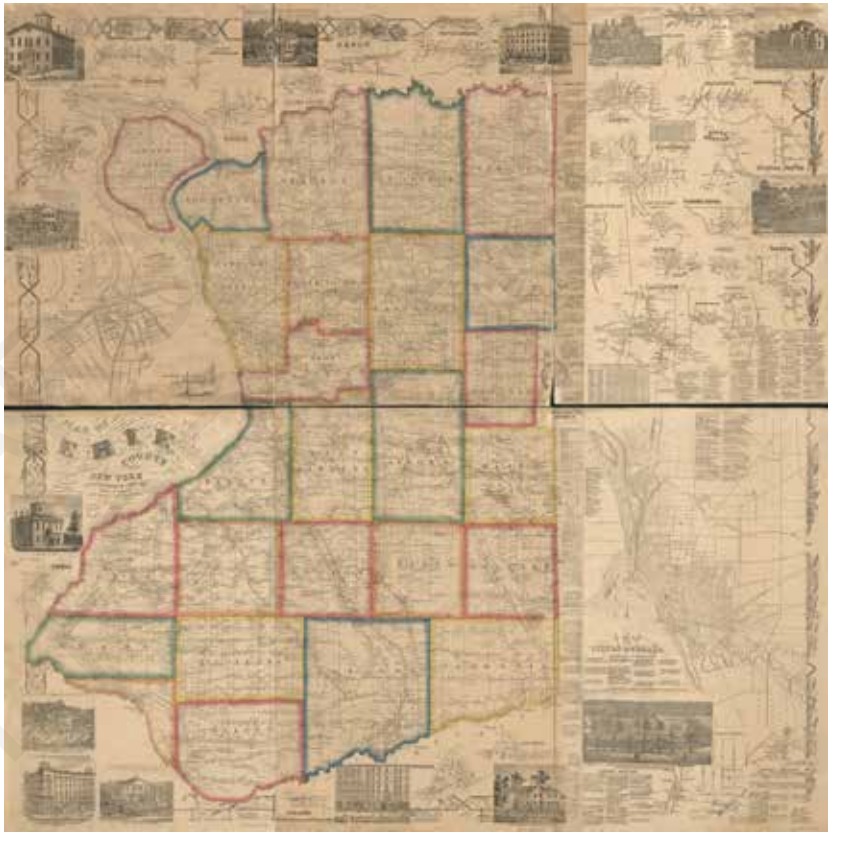
New Streets

A map of the new city boundaries published in 1854 shows the street pattern in the newly annexed territory. The well-developed grid pattern in the former village of Black Rock contrasts with the few streets in the less-developed



This 1920 map entitled "Extension of City Limits" clearly highlights the boundary expansion of the city of Buffalo. The black-shaded area is the original 1804 city established by Ellicott. Visible here is the tremendous growth from the original 1832 city area to the vast territory subsumed in 1853/54.

Reproduction by permission of the Buffalo & Erie County Library, Buffalo, New York

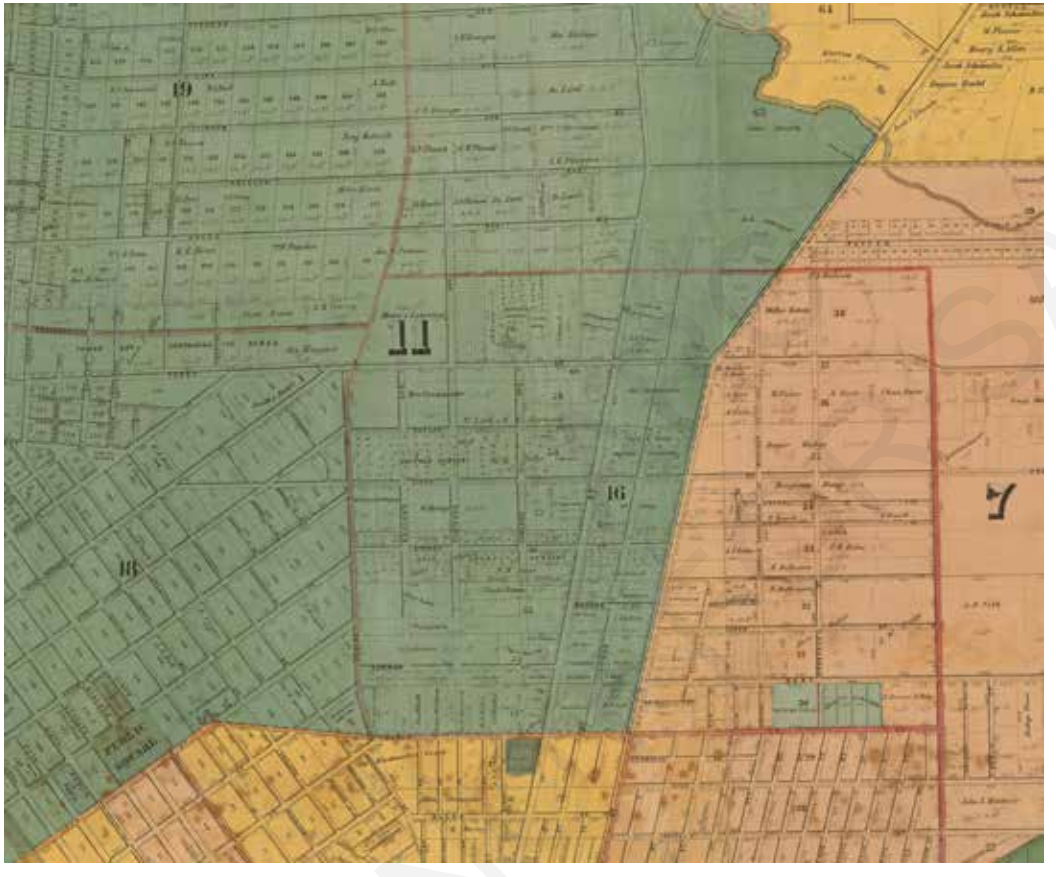


LEFT: Detail, "A New Map of the City of Buffalo..." (1854) from surveys conducted in 1853 shortly after Buffalo annexed the Town of Black Rock, this detail shows the area around the future Elmwood district. Note the indication of Rogers Street (now Richmond Avenue) along the Mile Strip Reservation line, and some early west-east streets have been established. Notice also the "Buffalo Nursery" territory from Main Street to Rogers Street.

Reproduction by permission of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Buffalo, New York

RIGHT: This 1855 map from the *Atlas of Erie County* features fourteen important landmarks around its periphery, among them Oaklands Gardens and Nurseries located on W. Ferry Street in the Elmwood District. A detailed view of this can be found on page 54.

Published by Gillette Matthews & Co, Publishers. Accessed from the Library of Congress.



Detail of the 1855 map entitled "Williams' New Map of the City of Buffalo." This map indicates land ownership and development shortly after the city expanded in 1853.

Reproduction by Permission of the Buffalo & Erie County Library, Buffalo, New York

Elmwood District. South of Ferry, in the area known as Allentown, the streets also form a dense grid.

Ferry Street is one of the oldest in the Elmwood District. As William Hodge noted, many early trails and roads through the vicinity of early Buffalo connected to sources of water. This appears to have been the case with Ferry: it connected Cold Spring in the east, a longtime source of water for native travelers where Main Street bends at Ferry Street, to the Black Rock ferry at the Niagara River. In its earliest days, though, its conditions were rudimentary and "flooded with water" during much of the spring and fall.[11] The street's present route likely dates to the 1820s, when the ferry was moved northward from its original site at the large outcropping of limestone along the river from which the village of Black Rock and the ferry took their name. The rock was being blasted away to make way for the Erie Canal. The move took the boat to the Ferry lot, an approximately 100-acre tract, as designated in the Mile Strip Reservation in 1826. By 1835, Ferry Street extended from the Mile Reservation Line to Main Street. At a substantial four rods wide, or 66-feet, it would become a primary west-east route in the Elmwood District, along which some of the largest and finest examples of residential architecture in the area were built. Even more importantly, Ferry Street may be Elmwood's most nationally significant. It was the last leg of the Network to Freedom as the Underground Railroad's principal Western New York route of the enslaved to freedom a half-mile

Looking north on Delaware Avenue at W. Utica Street in 1890. This view portrays a mature Delaware Avenue, the broad main street of what would be known as Millionaires' Row due to its legacy as the best suburban street for early estate owners moving north from the increasingly crowded downtown. Note an exemplary mansion on the right. The street is evenly paved for smooth travel for bicyclists, mostly women, and horseback and horse-drawn carriage riders. Common automobile ownership was still half a generation away. There are Medina sandstone curbs, broad paved sidewalks, a cast iron street sign, a fire hydrant at the corner, and maturing trees in the public right-of-way, all signs of robust infrastructure for public health, safety, and welfare.

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Streets - Delaware Ave. & Utica

ferry ride away in Canada from the 1830s until the Civil War.

Another early street was Delaware Street, now Delaware Avenue. Its southern extension at Niagara Square was populated earlier, Ellicott having visualized it as a fine residential area. As originally laid out, Delaware extended only as far north as Chippewa Street, the city's then-northern boundary. According to Rev. Dr. Lord, Delaware's northern extents remained for several decades a crude pathway carved roughly through the forest. Figuratively, inch by inch, the road crept northward as settlement expanded: by 1827 it was built out to North Street; between 1835 and 1836, roughly through lot 53 to lot 62; and in 1842, it was lengthened to meet the Buffalo-Tonawanda road. There, the two streets were joined to form one continuous road, reaching from Buffalo northward some six miles to the growing Erie Canal community of Tonawanda at the northern edge of Erie County. This alteration also removed the Buffalo-Tonawanda road from its previous location at the intersection of Main and Ferry, turning the then-five-point intersection into the four-point one that exists today.

This northward extension of Delaware was significant, as it bisected Ellicott's mile-deep farm lots between Main and Rogers Streets. However, ownership of the lots did not immediately change hands. Many of the lot holders had already built their houses and farms close to Main Street, and thus had access to the only north-south road to traverse this area through much of the early 1800s. But the extension of Delaware clearly

begins to divide the older settled areas of the Cold Spring neighborhood from what would become, by the late 1800s, the Elmwood District. It also attracted land sales into the newly accessible area, helping to begin the process of settlement, subdivision, and suburbanization.

North-south Rogers Street was established in 1837. It traced a portion of the Mile Reservation Line, the eastern boundary of Black Rock. Named in honor of Henry W. Rogers, a prominent local attorney, Rogers Street ran only between York (now Porter Avenue) and Utica Streets. Three decades later, it would be reimagined by Olmsted and incorporated into his park system as "The Avenue" between Porter Avenue and Bidwell Place at Bouck, later Lafayette Street.

East-west Summer Street, between Rogers and Delaware, just north of North Street, dates to 1835, when it was surveyed as a four-rod-wide (66-foot) road between Main Street and the Mile Strip Reservation line, running through lot 54. It was necessitated by the existence of several houses and farms beyond North Street, the city's then-northern border, south of which the population was already well established.

Bryant Street, cut through lot 56 and running between Rogers and Main, was first officially recorded in 1854, although a road used by the Bryant nursery already existed there. North of Bryant, in lot 57, Utica Street is shown extending from Massachusetts Street in Black Rock all the way to Main. William Hodge notes that such a road existed there as early as 1816.[12] Linking Bryant and Utica is a small unnamed street that is later identified as Oakland Avenue (now Oakland Place). It apparently took its name from the nearby Oaklands Nursery. Today, one-block-long Oakland Place, a north-south street of beautiful homes, runs between Bryant and Summer Streets.

North of Utica Street, was Butler Street (now Lexington Avenue). Although no street records are available before 1854, this street apparently existed earlier. The long stretch of Ferry Street is also noted on the map, but greatly extended, running from the river to what is now Bailey Avenue on the far east side of the present city. Although it was one of the earliest and primary routes from Black Rock to Main Street, even Ferry was not well-developed in the mid-1800s. According to an 1840s description, it was "a narrow dirt road, corduroy in some places, and occasionally too narrow for two vehicles to pass each other."[13]

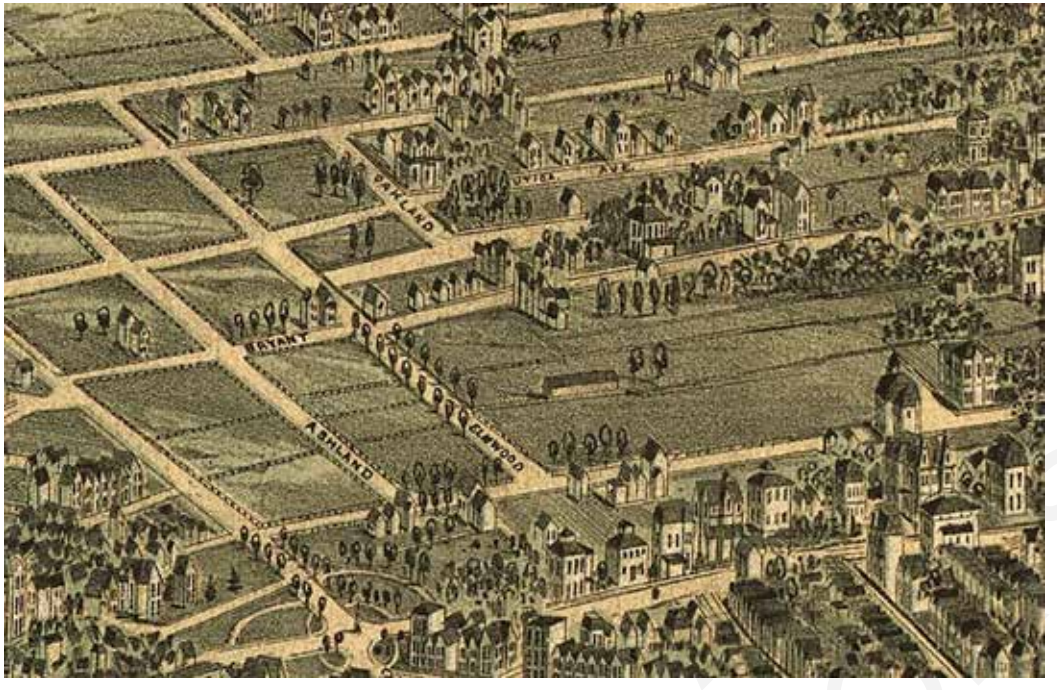
North of Ferry, all the streets shown on the map have their roots in Black Rock. Among these are Bouck, originally known as Batavia Street and now as Lafayette Avenue, apparently named for 1840s New York Governor William C. Bouck. Clinton was perhaps named for the former governor, DeWitt Clinton, but George DeWitt Clinton owned a grove there, which became a popular site for dancing, dining, and drinking for some in Buffalo. Thus, it may have been named for the owner. Clinton is today's Potomac Avenue and runs to Delaware Avenue.

A street is also shown between Ferry and Clinton, roughly tracing the Mile Strip Reservation line; it appears on slightly later maps as Putnam Street, named for local land owner James O. Putnam.

Then there is Bird Avenue, which was laid out in Black Rock in 1853, before being extended eastward to Delaware Street that same year. It was named for Col. William A. Bird (1796-1878), who came to Western New York in 1818. He settled in Black Rock where his uncle, General Peter Buell Porter, with whom he had served in the War of 1812, lived. Credited with laying out many of the streets in Black Rock, Col. Bird built a large Federal-style residence at 1118 Niagara Street at Ferry, where Rich Products is located today, and lived there for fifty-eight years. He may have witnessed freedom-seekers making their way to Canada. He also built the first grain mill in the region. The eastern end of Bird formed the early entrance into Forest Lawn Cemetery, crossing the Scajaquada Creek to arrive at the cemetery site on the north bank.

The northernmost street in the Eleventh Ward, running just south of the creek, was Forest Avenue, named for the thick, dense forests of the area. Although a roadway here probably already existed, the first official record of the street is dated 1855. Because this area was described by Hodge as swampy, travel on an earlier road would have been affected by weather.

In those days, roads that became streets were built and, in most cases, maintained by the city. More north-south streets exist in earlier-developed Elmwood District West, creating shorter east-west streets and blocks



This image reveals an emerging Elmwood District circa 1880. It reflects Olmsted's influence as well as a mix of both actual and proposed developments. The District is growing so quickly that it is clearly difficult to maintain up-to-date maps!

Olmsted's The Circle, now Symphony Circle, is shown at the bottom left corner, and North Street, the former northern boundary of the city, passes through it. Olmsted's The Avenue, now Richmond Avenue, travels north from The Circle. The Avenue knit together the back lots of Black Rock's grid with the back lots of Delaware Avenue's Ellicott grid. The width of this image represents about half the distance between Elmwood Avenue and Delaware Avenue.

Note the large, fenced lots to the left of The Avenue, one featuring a barn, in contrast to the built-up Black Rock lots on the right. The road parallel to North Street is now Summer Street. From there, Ashland Avenue flows north, which is still the case, and Elmwood Avenue begins at Summer Street. The road north of Summer Street, Bryant Street, is illustrated with trees representing the nurseries in the vicinity of Bryant Street and what would become Hodge Avenue. A two-block long Oakland Place is illustrated, but not as connecting Summer and Bryant streets as its current one-block location does.

Next to the north is W. Utica Street, and north of that is an unnamed road which may have become Lexington Avenue. W. Ferry Street is at the top of the image. Today, there are three east-west streets between W. Utica and W. Ferry streets.

This is an enlargement of a portion of a larger image shown on page 88.

Image Courtesy of the Library of Congress

of relatively same-sized building lots. By contrast, there are only a few north-south streets in Elmwood District East between Elmwood and Delaware avenues, which developed later, resulting in some of the longest east-west blocks in the city.

This was due in part to the incremental sale of lots subdivided from large estates in Elmwood East. More importantly, mayors were reluctant to incur the costs of new street construction by the time lot subdivision of the estates was occurring.

Responsibility for street maintenance in the Elmwood District was always a contentious issue. The city would commission and pay for the work of *repairing* a street that it had originally built. When it became necessary to *rebuild* a city street, however, the cost was to be borne by the property owners whose lots fronted the street.

Summer Street offers an example in which residents, some of them among the city's most prominent, tried to define the work needed as the city's responsibility. The city disagreed, and the issue was taken to court and decided in the city's favor. Each property owner was then assessed a portion of the cost for the rebuilding of their street based on the lineal footage of their lot fronting it, something unheard of in Buffalo today.

Street addresses are not uniform; they begin where the street starts. Some rise from low to high traveling from east to west, and some rise from west to east.

The First State Census of the New Area

The first New York State census to record the expanded city of Buffalo was conducted in 1855, just two years after the Eleventh Ward was created. It provides a great deal of information on the buildings and residents of the time. The ward covered territory larger than the future Elmwood District. Thus, much of the information likely pertains to the more developed Black Rock section. Still, it paints an interesting picture of this yet only lightly settled region of the city:

- Ward total acreage: 2,778 acres, or just over ten percent of total city acreage of 25,343.
- Total ward population: 3,314; total city population: 74,214, making the population of the enormous Eleventh Ward only 4.5 percent of the total population.
- 1,431 residents were born in New York State; 281, outside of the state; and more than 1,600, in another country. Most of the foreign-born residents came from England, Ireland, Germany, and Canada.
- 657 families resided in the ward.
- There was a total of 596 buildings, including two churches, three schools, seven grocery stores, two hotels, and five retail stores.
- Also living in the ward were 252 cows, 229 horses, 140 hogs, and 57 pigs under six months of age. Roughly one animal per family suggests that more traditional agriculture was still important.[14]

The last statistic underscores the striking contrast at this midcentury transition between the area's Joseph Ellicott-era farm-lot character and the nationally significant villas being constructed on Delaware Avenue in the Elmwood District.

Also notable about the changing landscape is that, while William Hodge, Jr. had described in great detail the number of log houses in the area in the 1810s and 1820s, a generation later, as recorded in the 1855 census, only one such house remained in the entire Eleventh Ward.[15]

The new area was still sparsely settled. Buffalo's 1855 city directory lists some residents on Summer Street, the future Elmwood District's southernmost street. Later recollections recount that the earliest houses were located on the south side of the street, owned by individuals named J. E. Allen, Thomas Sulley, William Miller, A. R. Rost, and Sara E. Smith.[16] They were said to serve as coachmen's houses attached to the large residences fronting North Street. While none of these residences were given street numbers, many were located near Delaware Avenue. A few houses were also located along Ferry Street, again, near Delaware. The resident of one of these was Amasa Mason, a nurseryman, whose "large and costly residence" was being constructed in 1854 on Ferry on Oaklands Nursery property.[17] In fact, many of the early residents of the area in 1855 were employed as gardeners at the area's large nurseries. Many others among the listed did not name an occupation, suggesting that they possibly worked off their land.

Nurseries

One of the most successful enterprises to emerge when streets were gradually being carved through the Elmwood District's remaining forest and farmlands was the nursery industry. Its development during this transitional era marks an important shift in the culture of Buffalo and in the character of the Elmwood District.

As in every region in early America, the earliest Buffalo settler-residents were concerned with ensuring their basic human needs of food, shelter, and water, all of which had to be obtained using their own skills and labor. By the 1840s and 1850s, with the growth of commerce, industry, and government in Buffalo, the increasingly wealthy population could concern themselves with the cultural pleasures of art, design, architecture, and recreation in their newly achieved free time.

Some of the nurseries in the future Elmwood District were established relatively early, providing fruit trees and plants to area farmers. Here's how local author Julia Snow remembered them in her 1908 presentation to the Buffalo Historical Society:

> *The grounds above North Street, then the city limits on the north, was* [sic] *occupied largely by nurseries of fruit trees and shrubs, by Mr. William Hodge and Mr. John Bryant and his three sons. … The Bryant nurseries reached nearly to Cold Spring, a long walk for me in those days. And there were many lovely gardens all over town.*[18]

Image of the City of Buffalo viewed from the tower of the Westminster Presbyterian Church circa 1873, with Allentown in the foreground and the commercial harbor in the distance. Note the many Delaware Avenue mansions of the day.
Published in Picturesque America; Or The Land We Live In, *by D. Appleton & Company*

The industry was fueled by the emerging naturalistic and picturesque aesthetic promoted by the influential writings of the landscape designer-horticulturist-tastemaker Andrew Jackson Downing. His 1841 work, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America*, was widely popular. In it he expressed his belief that "[p]eople's pride in their country is connected to pride in their home," saying, "if they can decorate and build their homes to symbolize the values they hope to embody, such as prosperity, education, and patriotism, they will be happier people and better citizens."

Downing's direct influence can perhaps be attested to through the early existence of a Buffalo Horticultural Society. The society was founded by nine men who met for that purpose on June 9, 1845, in the lecture room of the Young Men's Association. They were Benjamin Hodge, Lewis Eaton, Warren Bryant, Augustus Raynor, Robert McPherson, J. D. Sheppard, John R. Lee, Elihu Tyler, and C. T. S. Thomas, and Lewis Eaton was elected the organization's first president. Less than a month later, the society held its first flower show at McArthur's Gardens. One can imagine that it was well attended, as Buffalo was described even then as "a nice little city of some 27,000 inhabitants, most of whom raised flowers, fruits, and vegetables in their own garden patches."[19]

In 1848, Downing, by then "the nation's most celebrated expert in landscape gardening, architectural taste, and fruits," and his brother, Charles, also spent over a week in Buffalo

exhibiting numerous varieties of apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, and plums at the New York State Agricultural Society's Pomological Convention. The convention's president that year was Lewis Falley Allen, businessman, politician, and gentleman farmer "whose grazing cows had begun to create Allen Street only nineteen years earlier" and after whom Allentown is named.[20]

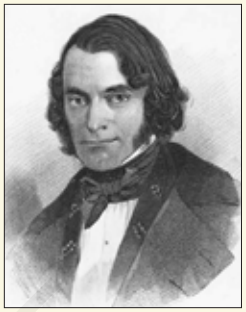
An advertisement appearing on page three of the September 26, 1853, edition of *The Buffalo Daily Republic* indicates that the Buffalo Horticultural Society collaborated in the planning of an annual county fair. It confirms the acceptance of an invitation extended by Warren Granger, son of the late Judge Erastus Granger and then-president of the Erie County Agricultural Society, to members of the Buffalo Horticultural Society to participate in a committee charged with decorating a floral fall for an upcoming fair. As might be expected, members of that committee included nurserymen Benjamin Hodge, the grandson of Benjamin Hodge, Sr.; Isaac Bryant; John. B. Eaton; and a Miss A. Maria Eaton, presumably a relative of John B. Eaton.[21]

The county agricultural society of that year appears to have been an informal body dating to 1841, as the official Erie County Agricultural Society was reorganized under a state law in 1856 and official county fairs date from that year, although numerous fairs had previously been held even before Niagara County was divided and Erie County was formed.

Downing's influence in Buffalo would also be felt more than a decade after his untimely death in 1852 in a ship fire, through the collaboration of Buffalo business leaders, Frederick Law Olmsted, and his partner, architect Calvert Vaux, in the creation of Buffalo's parks system. Vaux emigrated to the United States from England at Downing's behest and was a partner in Downing's landscape business for two years before becoming Olmsted's partner. Olmsted was a friend of Downing, and it seems likely that he and Vaux met through their mutual acquaintance. Both were strongly influenced by Downing's philosophy and approach.

The newly emerging field of landscape architecture, which Downing is credited with founding, fanned the desire among Buffalo's growing and appreciative residents to plant rare, unique, and beautiful trees and plants on their properties. The Buffalo Horticultural Society in 1853 reported: "Buffalo has many wealthy citizens, who take pride in ornamenting their grounds with choice trees and shrubs, as well as cultivating the finer variety of fruits."

William Hodge, Sr. set the stage[22] for this aspect of Elmwood's character when he established one of the earliest known nurseries, not only in the Elmwood District but in the Western New York frontier. When he purchased lot 57 in 1809, the parcel already contained apple trees that had been planted by the previous owner, a Joseph Husten. In 1825, to celebrate the opening of the Erie Canal, Hodge, his wife, and a group of Buffalonians traveled through the canal with Governor DeWitt Clinton in a flotilla of boats that "came eastward on the crest of a wave of



ANDREW JACKSON DOWNING

Born near Yonkers, New York, to a nurseryman, Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852) educated himself in botany and landscape design. He became editor of *The Horticulturist* and established himself as a national authority. His partnership with Calvert Vaux resulted in the design of both houses and grounds for a number of Hudson Valley and Long Island estates.

Downing was a great advocate of the Italianate Style, promoting it in house pattern books published in the 1840s and '50s. In keeping up with these national fashion trends, many Buffalo residences were built in this style in the early development of the Elmwood District, especially on rural estates. Although none of those houses survived, there is an excellent, intact example of the Italianate Style in the Elmwood District at 172 Summer Street.

In 1851, Downing prepared designs for the grounds of the Capitol, the White House, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. His untimely death in 1852 prevented him from carrying out his vision.

E. B. Jewett's 1862 map of the city of Buffalo, fully six years before Olmsted's arrival, clearly shows the dense grid of streets representing the growth of Joseph Ellicott's 1804 plan into a mature, urban district as seen at the bottom of the map. The nascent roads of what would become the Elmwood District can be seen at the top of the map. The area between downtown and the meandering trajectory of Scajaquada Creek (from left to right on the map) shows fewer than a dozen roads.

Reproduction by permission of the Buffalo & Erie County Library, Buffalo, New York

popular rejoicing" to New York City.[23] There, the iconic "wedding of the waters" took place as the governor mingled fresh water from Lake Erie with ocean water at the New York City harbor. During this prestigious trip, Hodge was said to have visited nurseries on Long Island and to have purchased new trees to take back on the return trip for his nursery.[24]

In 1834, Hodge sold the nursery to Abner Bryant, who owned farm lot 56, just south of the Hodge property. It is said that most of the apple orchards in Western New York can trace their origins to the Hodge nursery.[25]

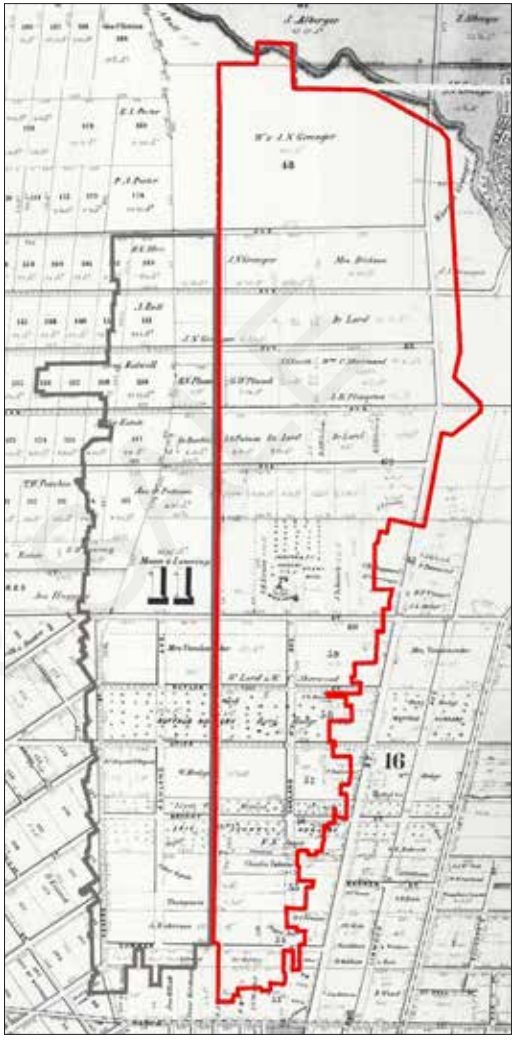
Following Hodge's early success, other nursery sites also developed. An 1862 map of the area shows three large nurseries stretching between current Richmond Avenue and Main Street: the Erie County Nursery, operated by Henry C. and Isaac Bryant, sons and successors to Abner Bryant; the Buffalo Nursery operated by Col. Benjamin Hodge, at this late date probably William the Younger's nephew; and J. B. Eaton & Co. Nursery and Greenhouses, also known as Oaklands Nursery. Located on lot 61 just east of present-day Elmwood Avenue at Ferry Street, Oaklands Nursery featured large, state-of-the-art greenhouses, constructed by the firm of Mason & Lovering in the fall of 1853 shortly before it was taken over by Eaton. A plan of the greenhouses was published in *The Horticulturalist* journal in 1854, the popular national publication edited for many years by Andrew Jackson Downing, lauding them as "the most complete and elegant plant houses which we have seen in this country."[26]

The Oaklands Nursery greenhouses were among the most architecturally and technologically sophisticated buildings in this area of Buffalo at the time. Constructed of hollow brick and glass, the greenhouse complex must have stood out in its otherwise natural surroundings. With its expanses of glass, marble walks, and complex steam-heating system, the building introduced a higher level of design, materials, and technology into the landscape. It provided an exemplary precedent of the intersection of culture, cultivation, and business that would characterize development in the Elmwood District in the decades to follow.

The Need for Open Space

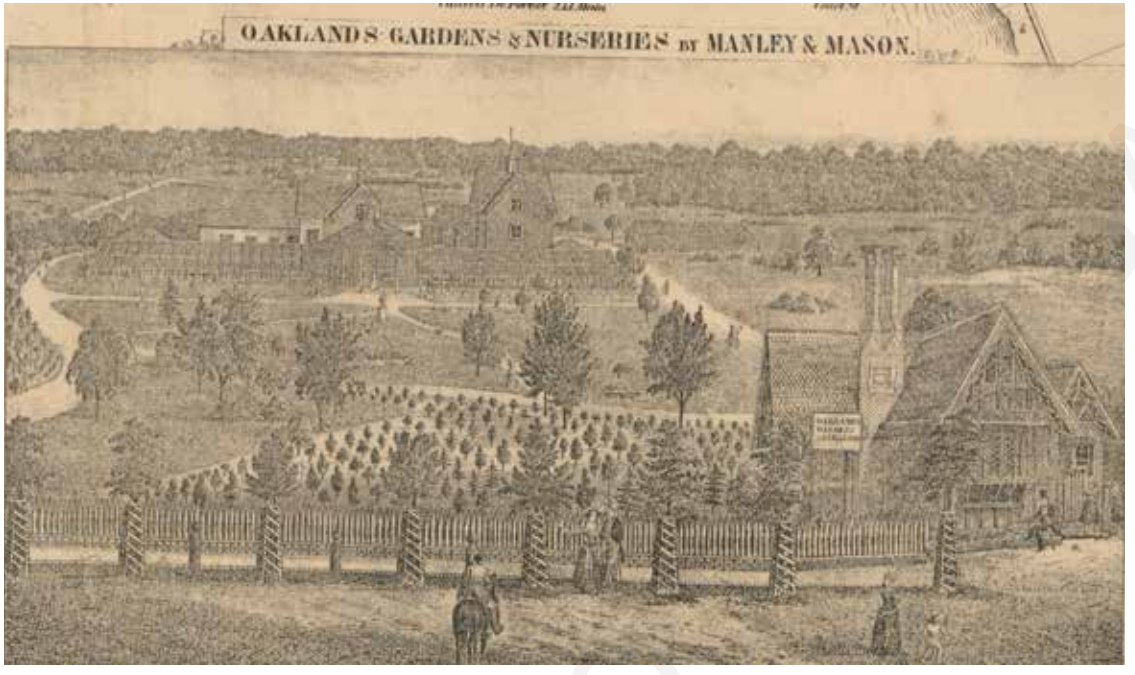
The new wealth and opportunities for residents created by the success of the Erie Canal allowed the city to mature from its rough-scrabble pioneer existence to a society whose members had both the means and the opportunity for leisure and recreation.

As Buffalo began to swell in population and size in the mid-1800s, growing to more than 42,000 in 1850, many residents looked to the still undeveloped and unspoiled regions in the Eleventh Ward as places to breathe fresh air, picnic, and socialize. Improved roads, such as Delaware Avenue and the Buffalo and Williamsville Macadam Road (now Main Street), provided the primary routes for escaping the downtown core at midcentury. This trend underscores a new way of living which was then emerging; city residents now had more



LEFT: Detailed view of the E R Jewett "New Map of the City of Buffalo" (1862) on page 52. The approximate boundaries of the Elmwood Historic District (East) are in red and Elmwood Historic District (West) are in gray. Note the Manley greenhouses, historically known as the Oaklands Nursery. Note that Linwood Avenue extends less than a block north of W. Ferry Street, and that this map predates by six years Olmsted's arrival in Buffalo in 1868.

RIGHT: Detailed view of "Williams' New Map of the City of Buffalo" from 1855, which illustrates the largely undeveloped land in the area. The approximate boundaries of the Elmwood Historic District (East) in red and Elmwood Historic District (West) in gray are superimposed on this map. Notice the three prominent nurseries in the area: the Erie County Nursery, owned by the Bryant family; the Buffalo Nursery, run by Col. Benjamin Hodge; and Eaton's Oaklands Nursery on Ferry Street. Rogers Street (now Richmond Avenue) in the 1850s was a much shorter street, only extending from Summer to Ferry Street. Note that the Mile Strip Reservation Line, the curved gray line starting at the top of the map and bisecting the upper half of Elmwood West, is still noted on this 1855 map which predates Olmsted's arrival in Buffalo by thirteen years, but is no longer notable by the time the 1862 Jewett map to the left was drawn.



COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER DIRECTORY. 79

BUFFALO

NURSERIES.

SITUATE BETWEEN MAIN AND UTICA STREETS.

Entrance on Utica, West of Delaware Street.

These Nurseries have for the coming Fall and Spring Trade, a large and finely grown

STOCK OF

FRUIT TREES

EMBRACING

APPLE, PEAR,

PEACH, PLUM, CHERRY, APRICOT, NECTARINE,

QUINCE AND FIGS.

AND

RASPBERRIES, STRAWBERRIES,

CURRANTS AND GOOSEBERRIES,

Of all the STANDARD varieties, as well as those which are NEW and RARE.

THE ORNAMENTAL DEPARTMENT

IS FULL AND COMPLETE, INCLUDING

Evergreen & Deciduous Trees & Shrubs

OF EVERY DESIRABLE KIND,

Most perfect specimens for

Streets, Parks, and Private Grounds and Gardens.

Orders addressed to the proprietor will reach him through the Post Office, and be promptly attended to. All inquiries will be cheerfully answered, and Descriptive Catalogues and Wholesale Lists sent to those who desire them.

D. S. MANLEY, Proprietor.

LEFT: This circa 1855 advertisement for Oaklands Gardens & Nurseries by Manley & Mason was an inset in a wall map of Erie County. It is especially interesting because it shows in a single view a cross-section of the Elmwood District at that time. In the foreground is a manicured lawn and decorative fence. The middle ground is of the domestic-scaled nursery as a model estate. In the near background are farmed lands, and the original forest is visible on the horizon.

Image Courtesy of The Library of Congress

RIGHT: D. S. Manley, Proprietor of Buffalo Nurseries, advertised in 1855 as having available "Most Perfect Specimens [for] Streets, Parks, and Private Grounds and Gardens." The Nurseries' then-distant, rural location north of downtown would become the center of the Elmwood District once construction of the park system began a mile north fifteen years later.

Published in The Commercial Advertiser Directory for the City of Buffalo, *by R. Wheeler & Co*

leisure and a growing desire for open spaces in which to relax and enjoy recreation.

When in 1849, Buffalo lawyer Charles E. Clarke recognized the need for a cemetery of substantial size to serve the city's booming population, he purchased land "out in the country" two and one-half miles from downtown Buffalo and developed Forest Lawn Cemetery. Its rural location featured "rolling hills and charming valleys, spring-fed lakes, and a meandering creek." What the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser* called "one of the most lovely resting places of the dead in the country" soon attracted so many of the living that it became one of the most popular places for strolling, relaxing, and picnicking in all of Western New York. Eventually, Forest Lawn's grounds were said to have become so crowded with picnickers and visitors that the management had to sell tickets to control the crowds and maintain the consecrated space.[27]

Enterprising local florist Johann Westphal provided an alternative. About the same time as the cemetery opened, he "prettily and cozily" established a "Citizen's Garden" at his property on the east side of Delaware Avenue, just south of the cemetery. The following year, the first large picnic, sponsored by the German Young Men's Association and called "Das Erste Volksfest," took place in the garden on St. John's Day, June 24, to great excitement among Buffalo's German population. "Westphal's Garden," as it became known, soon was a favorite location for drinking and picnicking. A description published elsewhere confirmed its beauty:

> *From the street nothing is particularly observable but a forest of native trees, occupying a large portion of the entire territory, but when this forest is once entered upon, the visitor finds avenues and walks laid out among hills and dells, all of them beautiful and many of them entirely impervious to the sun.*[28]

Another popular private park in the 1860s was Clinton's Grove, or Clinton's Forest. Located west of Richmond Avenue at the south corner of Forest and Grant streets and extending to Baynes Street and Bird, the grove was owned by George DeWitt Clinton. It featured a large, unsheltered platform used for dancing. People enjoyed bringing their lunch and potables here.

The emergence of these privately owned, for-profit parks indicates how desperate Buffalonians were for recreation and outdoor entertainment in the mid-1800s: such was the market demand for parks and recreation areas that even being charged a fee for their use did not dissuade them.

By the 1850s and '60s, Buffalo had largely transitioned from its early pioneer wilderness into a booming industrialized city. Noise and pollution were increasing at the waterfront and on the east side. With growing density in the city's core, civic leaders and residents, out of concern for the welfare of the city, began to call for a clean, safe natural environment for recreation.

The desire to establish a free public park, not one open only to subscribers or to those who could afford an entrance fee, became a great source of concern. An 1856 editorial in the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser* took this stand:

> *Public grounds are of the last importance in a large and growing city like Buffalo…we should be glad to see any plan adopted by which so beautiful and capacious a park might be secured for the recreation of all inhabitants. We incline, however, to the opinion that this can only be effectually done by purchase of the property by our city authorities and converting it into a public park, free for all.*[29]

A timely observation in an 1867 history of Forest Lawn Cemetery underscored the "poverty of rural recreation" faced by Buffalo residents. It said: "We know that, aside from our noble lake and river, the suburbs of Buffalo are somewhat deficient in variety of natural scenery, the area embraced by the cemetery grounds being a marked exception."[30]

The willingness to create a public park was also inspired by an increasing spirit of social reform. Buffalo's wealthy industrialists were highly influenced by a prevailing moral sense that their wealth was to be used for the larger common good to help elevate Buffalo to the status of an important American city. It was this altruistic paternalism and public health consciousness that encouraged the development of the Buffalo park system and spurred one of the largest and most dramatic projects ever undertaken in the city of Buffalo, one that would come to define the appearance and character of the Elmwood District.

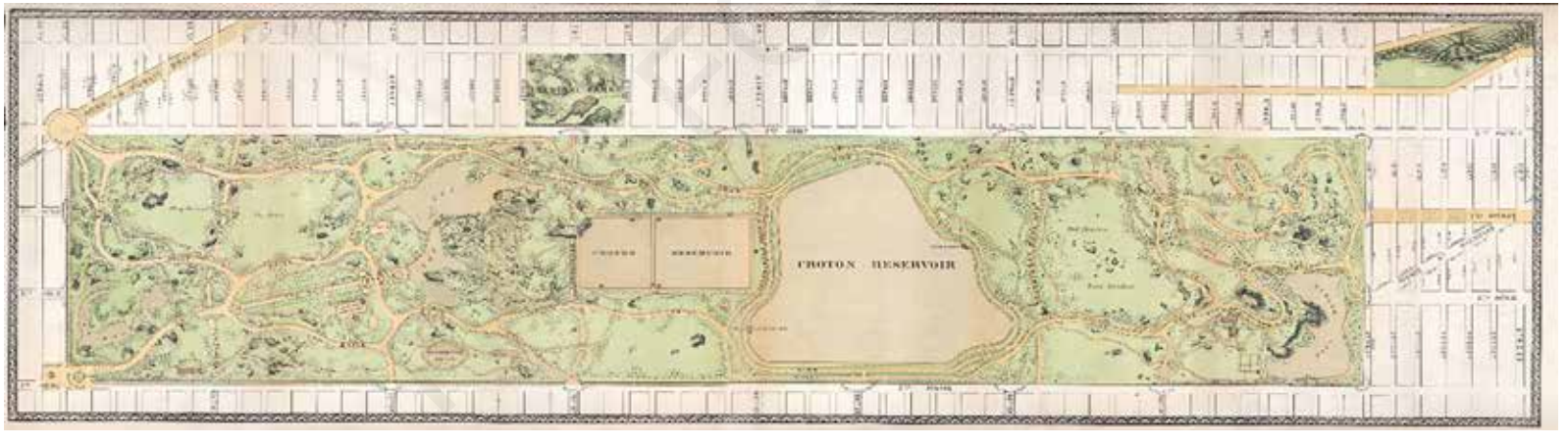
Recreational green space is lacking, Buffalo business leaders invite Olmsted to design a park to rival New York City's Central Park

FIVE

Olmsted Comes to Buffalo

And so it was that Buffalo businessmen issued their invitation to Frederick Law Olmsted through William Dorsheimer, who headed the ad hoc committee formed to address the issue of a public park for Buffalo that they hoped would rival Central Park in New York City. On the committee with him were Sherman S. Jewett, owner of an iron foundry and board member of several railroads; Joseph Warren, publisher of what were recognized as the city's official newspapers, the morning *Courier* and the evening *Courier & Republic*; Pascal Paoli Pratt, a real estate mogul; and Richard Flach, who owned a successful grocery business.

Olmsted had made his name as an author of newspaper articles about life in the antebellum South where he traveled widely before the Civil War. During the war, he served as general secretary of the United States Sanitary Commission, a civilian organization authorized by Congress to provide medical and sanitary assistance to Union soldiers, similar to the work of today's Red Cross. This private relief organization raised funds and organized ways to care for sick and wounded U.S. Army soldiers during the Civil War and the health and hygiene of its veterans afterwards. Its pioneering work in public sanitation, health and healing and enhancing hygiene in war-torn wildernesses is known to have influenced Olmsted as can be seen in his design of the Buffalo park and parkways system. Among his fellow Sanitary Commission colleagues were future Buffalo Board of Park Commissioners General William F. Rogers and



1868 Vaux and Olmsted Map of Central Park, New York City. The completion of Olmsted and Vaux's winning entry in the competition for a great park in New York City had been delayed by the Civil War, but the designers were already nationally known even before the War. Buffalo business leaders wanted the famous landscape architects to create a park that would allow Buffalo to keep up with its rival New York state metropolis.

THE EDUCATION OF FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED

While Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) was growing up in his Hartford, Connecticut, birthplace, he and his family spent vacations on "tours in search of the picturesque" through northern New England and upstate New York. Deciding not to enter Yale College in 1837 when his eyes became weakened—ironically by a plant, poison sumac—he embarked for the next twenty years on an astounding variety of activities and experiences that nurtured the skills and developed the philosophy that would characterize the landscape work for which he is famed.

Those diverse activities included a year-long voyage as a deckhand aboard a China trade clipper ship. A voracious reader, he studied surveying, engineering, chemistry, and scientific farming, and even operated a Staten Island farm for seven years. He went on a six-month walking tour of Europe and the British Isles visiting numerous parks and estates and taking in scenic countrysides. He made other excursions on the continent, visiting parks and gardens. In the 1850s, he traveled as a newspaper reporter through the slave-holding South and later published numerous articles and books chronicling the observations and analyses of his travel experiences.

Much has been written about Olmsted, and readers are encouraged to not only avail themselves of other perspectives but also to read some of Olmsted's own writings for a better understanding of the man (any Internet search of his name will provide titles). What is clear is that those early tours set him off on a lifetime of observational travels that shaped his social and political values and instilled a highly sophisticated view of landscape design as a way of improving the quality of life and as an art intended to move the emotions.

A 2018 Buffalo History Museum exhibit offered a succinct summary of the intertwining of Olmsted's experiences and values in three ways: Barely remembering his mother who died when he was only three, Olmsted came to understand that those boyhood tours of the picturesque were his grieving father's way "to find beauty and relief" and thus, that "*nature was solace.*" Forced to do hard chores at boarding school, Olmsted as student would wander into the woods where he learned that "*nature was escape.*" And through his myriad wanderings as a young man, he came to sympathize with the exploited and the disrespected, believing that "[f]or all of them, *nature would be elevating & redeeming*" … [and] could alleviate the miseries of crowded cities, demoralizing work, and dehumanizing industry. Bringing "the reviving power of parks to the people" became Olmsted's way "to be in nature, to serve society, and [to] improve the human condition."[31]

"I want to make myself useful in the world—to make others happy—to help advance the condition of society …."

Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., in a letter to his friend Frederick Kingsbury dated June, 1846.

Sherman S. Jewett. Together they conceived and implemented this healthy and hygienic healing landscape the centerpiece of which is the system's grandest circle, aptly named Soldiers Place. Following the war, he resumed a career as a park designer begun in 1857, when the Greensward Plan that he and English building and landscape architect Calvert Vaux devised became the winning entry for the design of Central Park.

While en route to Chicago on business, Olmsted stopped in Buffalo for a visit. As described in Olmsted scholar Francis R. Kowsky's *The Best Planned City in the World*, Olmsted was given a horse and carriage tour of three sites: land on a bluff overlooking the headwaters of the Niagara River at Lake Erie, where Ellicott's Buffalo plan and the former Black Rock plan intersected at Porter Avenue; undeveloped land on the east side of Main Street that was being used by the military; and a forested area to the north of Allentown crossed by ancient paths that extended to the swampy areas adjacent to Scajaquada Creek. Olmsted then departed for his business in Chicago without a definite plan in mind.[32]

Returning to Buffalo the following week, he learned that he was expected to present a plan two evenings later at a public meeting chaired by former president Millard Fillmore. He and the colleague with whom he was traveling spent all of Monday and part of Tuesday retracing their earlier tour and formulating the expected plan. On Tuesday evening, he told the large gathering of Buffalo's elite assembled in the 256 Delaware Avenue mansion of Sherman Jewett that Buffalo

THE NEW PARK PROJECT

It seems to have been conceded on the part of the thinking people of the city – those who believe that men, women and children should have some place of recreation and refuge from the toil and drudgery of the office, the workshop, the factory and the nursery – those who are willing not only to do something to promote the health and enjoyment of the present generation, but have an eye to the future – that Buffalo should have a Public Park, and one that shall be adequate to the present and prospective wants of its population.

As an initiatory step towards the ultimate consummation of this object, a number of our most prominent citizens, together with several members of the municipal government, accepting the invitation of S. S. Jewett, Esq., met at his residence on Delaware street last evening, for the purpose of consulting on the matter, and hearing the views of Mr. Fred. Law Olmstead (sic). Mr. O., it is generally known, is the architect of the Central Park of New York, and also of the Brooklyn Park, and recently came to this city and looked over the ground at the solicitation of a few of our public-spirited gentleman who had communicated with him.

The meeting at the residence of Mr. Jewett, which was of an informal character, was presided over by ex-President Fillmore, and Mr. Joseph Warren acted as Secretary.

After a few explanatory remarks by Mr. William Dorsheimer, made at the request of the Chairman, Mr. Olmstead was called upon. He remarked that during the two days he had been in the city he had made a cursory examination of the grounds on which it had been proposed to erect into a park, but the time had been insufficient for him to mature a specific plan.

He spoke of the natural and other advantages which the city possessed: the favorable location of the grounds for the purpose desired; the facility with which the necessary improvements could be made; the reduced expense – in comparison with what other cities had incurred – with which the park could be constructed, &c., &c.

He suggested that, commencing with the baseball lot and grounds in the vicinity, a small auxiliary Park might be constructed, giving a beautiful river front; from this a Boulevard could be laid out, with roads for business and pleasure travel, leading to the land on either side of Delaware street north of the cemetery, where the Central Park would be located. Thence, by another roadway or Boulevard similar to the one first mentioned, to the elevated land in the neighborhood of High and Jefferson streets, where another small Park of thirty acres, more or less, for the accommodation of citizens in that vicinity, might be established, and in which, if the city carried out the plan of enlarging the Water Works, the tower could be erected.

The territory suggested for the Central Park Mr. Olmstead thought peculiarly adapted to the purpose. The soil was of a desirable character; there were groves of splendid forest trees upon it; the land was undulating and would require less labor in beautifying and improving; and a lake could be formed from Scajaquada creek, which runs through it.

In addition to what he had already stated, there were few buildings on the land, and it could be bought cheaply. The contemplated area of the main or Central Park would include about four hundred acres.

Mr. Olmstead's remarks were of a very interesting character and were highly encouraging to all who favor the project of having a Park calculated to meet the wants of the people and do credit to the city. When he had concluded, Mr. P. P. Pratt offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed by the Chair to procure from Mr. Olmstead a more detailed plan of a Park for Buffalo, and to present this plan and report to the Common Council and the public in a matter as they shall think proper.

The chair appointed as such committee: Messrs, P. P. Pratt, William Dorsheimer, Sherman S. Jewett, Richard Flach and Joseph Warren.

After some further conversation, the meeting adjourned.

From the character of the gentlemen, and the interests and determination manifested, we feel assured that the steps which have been taken will not be for naught; that the subject will not be allowed to drop; and that we are in a fair way, at last, to have a PUBLIC PARK.

Transcribed from *The Buffalo Commercial*, August 26, 1868

Olmsted's Sketch Map of Buffalo Showing the Relation of the Park System To The General Plan of The City. Matthews, Northrup & Co., circa 1881

The "head" of the system at the top of the map is Delaware Park. Tentacles linking to other system features and Joseph Ellicott's 1804 plan will create the armature for the development of the Elmwood District.

The bottom map is a detail of the first. From left to right are the Buffalo State Asylum, Gala Waters, The Park, and Forest Lawn Cemetery. Together they form a therapeutic, picturesque landscape of health, wellness, and eternal repose.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

should have not one, but three parks—the three locations he had visited.

Winning the commission, Olmsted, between 1868 and 1870, laid out his masterpiece, the Buffalo Park System, with his partner Calvert Vaux. Through a framework of parkways and circles, the system linked one large destination park on the city's northern outskirts, which he called, simply, The Park (now Delaware Park), with two smaller parks within the developing city: The Front (now Front Park) along the Niagara River and The Parade (later Humboldt, now Martin Luther King, Jr. Park), northeast of the city center. Together, the parkways and circles form what Kowsky has termed "sylvan tributaries" running throughout the city.[33]

The design would transform this raw forest and farm land into a carefully crafted landscape. It would shape, inspire, and determine future development in an area that had grown sporadically and with only Ellicott's farm lots as a plan in the first seven decades of the century. What resulted is a green armature embracing settlement patterns that are today still prominent in the Elmwood District. Designed to be free and accessible to all, without fences or gates, unlike the private groves, this citywide park system not only embraced neighborhoods that had already developed, but also extended to areas that Olmsted and Vaux predicted would become populated over time.

The crowning centerpiece of this elaborate system was 350-acre The Park, aligned along Scajaquada Creek just north of Forest Lawn Cemetery at the edge of the city. To create a naturalistic landscape, The Park featured an area that Olmsted and Vaux termed "greensward"—rolling meadowland dotted with trees—and a 46-acre lake, which they would call Gala Waters. Typical of Olmsted's designs, the greensward was ringed by dense trees intended to insulate the park from the city beyond. A series of bridle paths, carriage drives, and footpaths wound through the park, an arrangement that Olmsted called "orchestration of movement." As Olmsted had done at Central Park, he separated pedestrian travel from vehicular travel to create safe and relaxing spaces.

Olmsted had been attracted to and obviously appreciated the existing natural features and lay of the land in the area where he situated The Park. But the proximity of parklike Forest Lawn Cemetery had also appealed to him. Using the cemetery's expanse of trees and meadow as a visual southern extension of The Park, he blurred the lines between the two naturalistic environments.

Beyond the creation of natural landscapes for recreation, Olmsted's plan also finally reconciled the crisscrossed Black Rock and Ellicott street grids about 15 years after the village was annexed by Buffalo. The Avenue (then Rogers, now Richmond) connected Allentown to The Park, south to north, and broadly accommodated, zipper-like, the streets of Black Rock to the west and Elmwood to the east.

Olmsted deliberately located The Park outside the existing population centers of Cold Spring, Black Rock, and downtown to where land was vacant and inexpensive, and population growth was likely to go. Yet he wanted it to be accessible to all and joined it to those existing population centers with the "parkways," a term he coined and defined as "broad thoroughfares planted with trees and designed with special reference to recreation as well as for common traffic."

Olmsted both integrated existing roads and created new ones. He designed a hierarchy of streets, from stately 100-foot-wide avenues to broader 200-foot-wide parkways to an even more grandiose 400-foot-wide approach to The Park. At the intersection of York, North, and Rogers Streets, near the sites of what had been the former Black Rock Burial Grounds and the Buffalo "Pest House," an early quarantine hospital, Olmsted created The Circle (now Symphony Circle).

North of The Circle, he reconfigured Rogers Street as The Avenue. Underscoring his vision for the roadway as one of the most prominent approaches to The Park from the southwest, he called for widening and planting it with a double-row of elm trees on either side. Where the original Rogers Street had terminated at Ferry, Olmsted created Ferry Circle and extended it northward through unimproved land.

Where The Avenue would intersect with Bidwell Parkway at what is now Lafayette Avenue, Olmsted designed Bidwell Place, a spacious rectangular, beautifully treed area. Bending slightly northeastward, Bidwell Parkway linked the western elements of the plan to its eastern elements, taking travelers toward Soldiers Place. It

also explains the narrowing of Richmond Avenue north of Bidwell Place as less important to The Avenue's main purpose of connecting Allentown to The Park.

By naming the two sites Bidwell at Mayor William F. Rogers' suggestion, the city and Olmsted honored Buffalo's own hero of the Civil War, General Daniel Davidson Bidwell, who was killed in action at Cedar Creek, Virginia, in 1864. A handsome statue of the general on horseback stands in the center of Bidwell Place, today inexplicably renamed Colonial Circle. The general's statue also marks the southeast corner of his family's farm that extended north to the creek and was one of the last properties to be developed as the Elmwood District grew.

Mirroring Bidwell Parkway, Chapin Parkway, angling northwesterly from Chapin Circle along the tract of the early road from Cold Spring to Tonawanda, similarly linked components on the eastern side. Olmsted honored another Buffalo casualty of the Civil War by naming the Chapin sites for Brig. General Edward Payson Chapin. A year after Col. Chapin was wounded in battle in 1862, he was killed at Port Hudson, Louisiana, receiving his promotion to general posthumously.

Olmsted's understated design for Chapin Place was elaborated by Buffalo architects Green and Wicks in 1902, funded by Mrs. Charles W. Pardee as a memorial to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. George B. Gates, and renamed Gates Circle in their honor. With ornamentation designed by E. B. Green, it is the most ornate of all the circles, perhaps reflecting the progressive tastes of the City Beautiful Movement that was then being embraced in Buffalo and sweeping the nation. Gates Circle is a large circular granite garden structure featuring beautiful acanthus-leaf-decorated light standards, continuous carved granite benches, and a fountain whose tall spray can be seen from the surrounding streets.

Bidwell and Chapin parkways were established as 200-foot-wide parkways with a broad, tree-lined central median for both pedestrians and equestrians, and a roadway on either side. At their juncture, Olmsted situated a generous 700-foot-diameter circle, the crowning centerpiece of his parkway design. Although it was at one time intended as the location for the Soldiers and Sailors Civil War Memorial that today stands in Lafayette Square in downtown Buffalo, the circle, with its simple name, Soldiers Place, honors the hundreds of thousands of men who served and died in that horrific war of American against American. Olmsted put the common soldier at the center of this grand healing tribute.

Finally, at Soldiers Place, Olmsted's crescendo parkway, Lincoln, flowed north to The Park. The parkway's vast size not only reflected the gathering of traffic for that final approach, it may also have epitomized the combined energy of the two introductory parkways, indeed of all of Buffalo, toward the destination park as a fulfillment of man's Edenic aspirations and named for the country lawyer who as president saved the Union, Abraham Lincoln.

Daniel D. Bidwell at 42 years of age. Bidwell enrolled in the military on August 1, 1861 in Buffalo. He was mustered in as a colonel on October 21, 1861 for a three-year tour of duty. Appointed Brigadier General on January 20, 1862, he was mustered out on August 18, 1864.

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Persons - B

Statue of General Daniel D. Bidwell, Bidwell Place on Colonial Circle, Buffalo, NY.

Photograph courtesy of Chuck LaChiusa

Photograph of Gates Circle taken in 1911. Note the Porter Norton estate to the left, and the dirt street paving in the foreground. Olmsted's parkway circles had been in place for a generation by 1911, and the City Beautiful Movement was all the rage when this circle attracted new investment.

The City Beautiful Movement started at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where architect Daniel Burnham championed a traditional European architectural and urban design style, in sharp contrast to the chaos and haphazard design of the post-Civil War industrial cityscape. While Louis Sullivan and later Frank Lloyd Wright championed an "American" style in skyscrapers and other new structures being built in America at this time, the redesign of Gates Circle by Green & Wicks reflects the Classical style of the City Beautiful Movement intended to "improve" on Olmsted's more understated and naturalistic parkway circle designs.

Photograph Courtesy of The Library of Congress

THE BIDWELL FARM AS ELMWOOD CHANGE MARKER

The evolution of the Elmwood District from rural hinterland to posh suburban enclave is perhaps best captured in the transition of the land owned by General Bidwell's parents, Benjamin (1790-1862) and Jane Harvey Bidwell (1791-1875).

By 1810 Benjamin Bidwell built what became known as the Bidwell farm on the Gulf Road (now Delavan Avenue) in what was then Black Rock, just to the west of the Mile Strip Reservation line. Though situated on a large tract, the farm was modest in scale, comprised of a small one-and-a half-story house with a one-story rear projection, a large barn, a hen house, several other sheds and outbuildings, and a small burial ground, used between 1811 and 1823 before Forest Lawn Cemetery was established. The farm served as a summer retreat for the Bidwells and their five children from their house on Cottage Street in what became Allentown, two miles to the south.

The elder Bidwell was a prominent and successful shipbuilder, co-owner of the Stannard and Bidwell Shipbuilding Company that had constructed ships for Commodore Perry during the War of 1812, and the first steamer on the Great Lakes, the *Walk-in-the-Water*. Following her husband's death in 1862, Mrs. Bidwell continued to live on the farm until she died in 1875. Five years later the farm was owned by the Buffalo Iron and Nail Company for undetermined use, although that company provided Buffalo's first metal rolling mill and later became Pratt and Letchworth.

By the time of her death, Mrs. Bidwell would have seen incredible changes at her doorstep. For nearly fifty years the property was part of Black Rock, until it was absorbed by the growing city of Buffalo in 1853. What was once a remote pioneer farm in a war zone during the 1810s was by the 1870s adjacent to Olmsted's The Avenue in one of the most sophisticated urban projects ever undertaken in Buffalo. Where once Mrs. Bidwell would have had to travel perhaps a mile or more to visit friends and neighbors, by the 1870s, the surrounding Eleventh Ward was on the verge of tremendous residential construction and development.

Remarkably, the farm property survived largely intact until the turn of the twentieth century. In 1900, it appears as an island of buildings in the middle of a large property.

Juxtaposed against the proliferation of smaller urban lots dominating the neighborhood by 1900, the large swath of property contrasts the old against the new ways of living in this area of Buffalo. By 1902, development pressures were great in the Elmwood District, and the Bidwell farm was demolished and subdivided to make way for numerous new houses arranged in neat rows and the opulent Beaux Arts-style Lafayette High School to serve the children of its new residents.

Detail of the *1894 City of Buffalo Atlas* showing the Bidwell Farm occupying two blocks in the midst of increasing suburban development in the Elmwood District. The original farmhouse and barns constructed circa 1810 by Benjamin Bidwell are still standing more than eight decades later.

Courtesy of the County of Erie, New York

"Bidwell Parkway," circa 1908. The view looking northeast up the Olmsted-designed parkway. Visible is the lush canopy of trees planted a generation before this photo was taken that created the park-like setting of the street and helped make the Elmwood District so attractive for residential development.

Yet the District was far from fully developed. Note all the open land in the photograph. Although St. John's Church was built in 1892 and a duplex at 21 Bidwell Parkway was built for Katherine B. French in 1905, both out of sight in this view, the rest of the land in this photo was not built on until 1909 and thereafter. Four houses were built by W. B. French in 1909.

Published in A History of the City of Buffalo: Its Men and Institutions: Biographical Sketches of Leading Citizens *by the Buffalo Evening News*

Lincoln Parkway was designed with a broad central road, divided from narrower access roads by a grassy, treed median, and included separate pathways for pedestrians, carriages, and, later, automobiles. The parkway's distinctive layout fulfills high aesthetic standards and effectively regulates traffic patterns on this residential street. Connecting Soldiers Place to the Gala Waters (now Hoyt Lake) and, eventually, the Albright Art Museum, Lincoln Parkway attracted some of the city's wealthiest citizens, who built mansions there in the early twentieth century. Today, it is one of Buffalo's most beautiful streets and retains much of the original character, plantings, and naturalistic elements of Olmsted's plan.

It is clear that with Lincoln Parkway, the grandest of the parkways, named for the recently assassinated president, the other parkways and circles named for heroes of the Civil War, and a memorial to those who fought planned for Soldiers Place, Frederick Law Olmsted intended his design to be an homage to that costly and devastating war just three years after its end. Combining engineering, nature, and commerce in a way that physically united diverse sectors of Buffalo, Olmsted's design perhaps psychologically helped to heal the wounds of war. Given this perspective, the later renaming of these important elements is as much a violation of the Olmsted design as are the other changes and incursions that have occurred to it over time, like the Scajaquada Parkway and the Kensington Expressway, which today many in Buffalo would like to see reversed.

Olmsted and Vaux's park system effectively brought the influence of sophisticated English picturesque landscape and European urban planning to what, at the time, was a rural hinterland harkening to a more innocent era before the industrialization of antebellum pioneer life and culture. Influenced by the work of Baron Georges-Eugene Haussmann in his bold redesign of Paris streets between 1853 and 1870, which made it the grand city that it is today, Olmsted, in designing a similar network of formalized boulevards, broad vistas, and terminal monuments in Buffalo's northern regions, defined this former farm and nursery outskirts as attractive, civilized, and cultured. He appreciated Joseph Ellicott's early plan—itself influenced by grand European models—and sought to integrate earlier elements of it through his linkage of new streets with Ellicott's preexisting ones and by expanding his predecessor's vision.

Olmsted and Vaux were so thrilled with their accomplishments in Buffalo that they exhibited their Buffalo parks and parkways plan at the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia and at the Exposition Universelle in Paris two years later, declaring that Buffalo was "the best planned city, as to its streets, public places, and grounds in the United States, if not the world."[34] The implementation of this visionary plan is a fascinating story.

A Park Commission Forms

Shortly after Olmsted's arrival in Buffalo and presentation at Sherman Jewett's home that late August day in 1868, the citizens who had invited him

formed the Buffalo Board of Park Commissioners, known as the Buffalo Park Commission, electing as their chair Pascal Paoli Pratt. Given then-Mayor William F. Rogers' blessing, they formed an innovative public-private-partnership with the city using each other's unique skills to complete their shared project, which would stretch over the next nearly fifty years.

Elsewhere in the city, public works of this scale were not being undertaken. The original city plan and its subsequent buildout were the work of the Holland Land Company and the people to whom it sold land in those first three decades. The city had provided only police, fire, public health, and sanitation services, and public works were limited to building rough roads, which were to be repaired by those owning property along them. Under the new arrangement for the park, the commissioners took the lead, with authorization and financing from the city.

First, they requested that a survey be conducted of the area from north of North Street to the Scajaquada Creek. This survey was completed by Marsden Davey, who was among Buffalo's most prominent and most active surveyors. It was a time when rapid growth required surveying to subdivide the land, determine where streets and roads would go, and to lay out commodity lots to be sold for houses and other buildings in only broadly surveyed tracts beyond the reaches of Ellicott's plan.

Davey's topographic map—if it still exists—would be important in understanding the Elmwood District story. It would show how the land actually looked in 1868-1869 when it was drawn, with remnants of forest, farms, nurseries, buildings, roads, and paths. Several nodes are known to have existed when Olmsted began his work. One, at North Street, is today Symphony Circle. Another was at Cold Spring near the intersection of Ferry and Main Streets, where a path or road extended northwesterly toward a Scajaquada Creek crossing near the present-day Grant Street bridge, an ancient Native American path to the Tonawandas' homeland. That connection between Main Street and the subsequent destination park took the form of today's Gates Circle, within sight of Forest Lawn's southwest entrance where the since-disappeared path or road crossed Delaware Avenue. The third node was an enlargement of swampy Scajaquada Creek that would become the Gala Waters, the culminating centerpiece of the parkways at The Park. And who today would not like to know what the land was like at today's Delaware Avenue S-curves along Forest Lawn's western border?

It is likely that two copies of the topographic map were made: one for the city and one for Olmsted's use. To date, unfortunately, no record of these maps has been found. Without access to Davey's map, why Olmsted located his circles where he did remains a mystery. Just as topography influenced L'Enfant's plan for Washington, DC, and Joseph Ellicott's in laying out his New Amsterdam, perhaps topography alone grounded Olmsted's visionary design.

MARSDEN DAVEY

Born in Canterbury, England in 1834, Davey emigrated to Buffalo in 1857. He worked during the "War of the Rebellion" under noted Buffalo surveyor Peter Emslie (1814-1887) before starting his own business.

In 1859, he married Alma Emily Lucie Haehn, who was born in Germany and had emigrated to Buffalo in 1854. They lived for many years at 297 Bryant Street (since demolished for a parking lot) and had four children, none of whom survived their parents.

Davey surveyed Forest Lawn Cemetery, where he was engineer for 14 years, the park system, the State Asylum, the Driving Park and many subdivisions across Buffalo. He was also Chief Engineer for the Buffalo Creek Railroad, the Lehigh Valley Railroad, and the Buffalo Street Railway, the streetcar company that served the suburban lots he had surveyed.

"There is not one among Buffalo's leading surveyors and civil engineers who sustains a higher reputation for skill or reliability, as few if any, are widely or so favorably known as Marsden Davey … a master of his art in all its branches," according to George M. Bailey in 1890 in *Illustrated Buffalo*. Accurate surveys were crucial to commoditizing lots to assess their relative value and for adjudicating land disputes in the growing city. According to his obituary in 1911, he "laid out a large portion of the city." Marsden Davey rests in peace in Forest Lawn Cemetery.

Buffalo Park Commissioners

The self-established, and ultimately officially authorized, Buffalo Park Commissioners who oversaw the design, construction, and financing of the Buffalo parks and parkways system were men of nationally significant achievement in business, professional prowess, and elected and volunteer public service who may rank as among the best group ever assembled in Buffalo, and perhaps New York, to undertake a public project for a public purpose.

William F. Rogers (1820–1899)

The son of General Thomas J. Rogers, a newspaper publisher, William Rogers was truly "his father's son." William seems always to have been interested in the military, despite an early Quaker education. And he also began his life's work at a newspaper, first as a "printer's devil" and then as a typesetter. Rogers was twenty-six years old when he came to Buffalo after working at several local newspapers in his native Pennsylvania. In Buffalo, he worked for the *Courier* and the *Express* and operated an anti-slavery publication published by Democrats.

As soon as he came to Buffalo, he became involved with the state militia and between 1847 and 1861 achieved progressively higher ranks. From 1861 to 1863, as colonel, he led the 21st New York Volunteers, called Rogers' Rangers, in battles at Antietam and Fredericksburg and was breveted brigadier general by President Andrew Johnson for his service.

During his one term as mayor of Buffalo (1868-1869), General Rogers approved the commission of Frederick Law Olmsted to design the parks system that provided the scenic frame for the buildout of the Elmwood District. He helped create and appointed the Buffalo Board of Park Commissioners. Initially, he was an *ex officio* member as mayor, but when he did not seek reelection, he was appointed to the board and served as its secretary and treasurer. In later life, he was elected to Congress as a Democrat. In Congress, his military experiences urged his lobbying for a Soldiers' and Sailors' Home for New York. When it was built in the town of Bath in 1887, he was appointed superintendent and held that position for ten years. It seems reasonable to presume that he was influential, along with his colleagues, the former United States Sanitary Commission members, in the concept of the parks' postwar healing power and the honoring of Buffalo's war heroes.

Pascal P. Pratt (1819–1905)

As a third generation Pratt in Buffalo, Pascal Paoli Pratt's pride in his native city came naturally. His pioneer grandfather, who arrived in Buffalo from Vermont in 1804, and his father founded the primitive village schools Pascal attended before heading to Hamilton (New York) and Amherst (Massachusetts) Academies. He took great pleasure in giving back to the community by actively supporting many businesses and social and cultural organizations throughout his professional life as merchant, industrialist, and banker, variously through membership, executive leadership roles, and philanthropy.

He began working at age sixteen as a clerk in his brother Samuel's hardware business and eventually became a partner. In 1848, with William P. Letchworth as partner, he and his brother also organized Pratt & Letchworth, and by 1872 it became the country's largest manufacturer of saddlery hardware and related metal castings. "Largest" and "best" were adjectives commonly ascribed to his enterprises. When the company diversified in 1889 to produce cast-iron toys, they were among the finest produced. From business success, he founded the Manufacturers and Traders Trust Company in 1856, with Bronson

Rumsey, and served as a director, vice president, and finally as president from 1885 until his retirement in 1901.

Pascal Pratt is perhaps best remembered as the Parks Commission chairman who served the board for ten years (1869-1879) during a time when Olmsted's designs were being finalized and construction was underway. So able was he that he was selected with two other men to appraise the land for the state reservation at Niagara Falls, America's first state park.

He was honored by having three Great Lakes vessels named for him. The only "survivor," a 273-foot-long wooden bulk-cargo boat that was run aground to save the crew after a fire, is today a popular dive site and fish sanctuary at Long Point, Ontario.

SHERMAN S. JEWETT (1818–1897)

Industrialist, banker, insurance magnate, merchant, railroad operator, philanthropist, arts patron, civic leader—Sherman Skinner Jewett was all those things, but his support and sterling leadership as president of the Park Commission from 1879 until his death constitute a large part of his legacy. A fine tribute to him is that under his leadership, the Park Board was known as "the most incorruptible municipal body in Buffalo."

Described as "a most companionable man, extremely cordial and genial, a capital story teller and a delightful, pleasant, agreeable colleague," Jewett was born in Moravia, New York, near Syracuse, the eldest son of farmers who had migrated to central New York from Connecticut. Buffalo became home in 1834. He started working at his uncle's foundry, learning the business from the bottom. When a fire closed his uncle's business not long afterward, he began the first of three industrial partnerships, one of which included his uncle, before, in 1878, forming his own business, Sherman S. Jewett & Co., in partnership with his sons Henry and Josiah. The company became renowned for its stoves.

During the Civil War, Jewett was a member of the United States Sanitary Commission. In the private sector, he filled numerous founding or leadership roles in businesses and associations involving manufacturing, banking, insurance, and railroads. He also served as a trustee for Forest Lawn Cemetery, was active in the Baptist Church and the Young Men's Christian Association, particularly in its efforts to develop a public library, and was a founding director and president of the Buffalo Club.

In the public sector, in addition to his appointment to the Parks Commission, Jewett was elected to the Buffalo Board of Alderman several times, was nominated to run for Congress in 1878 but declined, and, in 1880, was chosen a presidential elector.

WILLIAM DORSHEIMER (1832–1888)

At his death, friends eulogized William Dorsheimer, saying: "He was really one of the great men of the country—one of the best men in the state," and "In effect he was the originator of the Buffalo park system."

Dorsheimer earned those accolades in part because he was the man who not only initiated discussions about a park for the city with other business leaders but took action. He invited Olmsted to visit Buffalo and agreed to personally pay his expenses, and he accompanied him on a tour of three possible sites during the visit.

But Dorsheimer also had an impressive resume of public service in several highly responsible roles, both appointed and elected. A lawyer, he served as United States District Attorney for

both the Northern (1867 to 1871) and Southern (1885) Districts of New York and was elected to two terms as Lieutenant Governor (1872-1876). He ran for but lost the gubernatorial nomination, and then was elected to Congress from the seventh district of New York in 1882.

He was also a published man of letters, among them, Grover Cleveland's presidential campaign biography (*Life and Public Services of the Honorable Grover Cleveland*, 1884). Ultimately, he purchased The New York Star newspaper in 1885 and resigned his federal position. He not only served on the Parks Commission but was appointed by Governor Grover Cleveland to the commission overseeing the state reservation at Niagara, serving until his death.

Dorsheimer was a charter member of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences and a founder of the Buffalo Historical Society, the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, and the Buffalo Club. He helped the not yet well-known H. H. Richardson's career by commissioning him to design his house at 434-438 Delaware Avenue. As a result, Richardson obtained several additional Buffalo commissions, including the Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane and, with Dorsheimer's influence, was chosen to complete the state Capitol at Albany.

This man, so important to the existence of Buffalo's park system, died of pneumonia while on a trip to Florida.

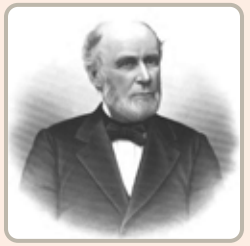


Image published in History of the City of Buffalo and Erie County, Volume 2, *by H. P. Smith*

DEXTER P. RUMSEY (1827–1906)

Adjacent to Lincoln Parkway and the main Delaware Park entrance are seven acres of finely treed land called Rumsey's Woods. When parceled, it complemented the park and provided a right of way for Rumsey Road, a new street that formed the park's southern border. Many people think that the Rumsey family lived nearby and, thus, the name of the woods and the road. Not so. In fact, Dexter's estate was built on Delaware Avenue, as was that of his father, Aaron. Rumsey's Woods was so named because it was a part of Dexter Rumsey's vast real estate holdings, much of which was located in the northern parts of the city. After Rumsey's death in April of 1906, his widow, Susan Fiske Rumsey, and daughter, Mary Grace Rumsey Wilcox, donated the woods to the city. When in 1909 John D. Larkin, president of Larkin Soap Co., purchased a heavily wooded parcel of Rumsey's Woods on which to build his estate, Mary Grace's husband attorney Ansley Wilcox, handled the transaction.

A native of Westfield, New York, in Chautauqua County, Dexter Rumsey was one of two sons of Aaron Rumsey, who moved his family to Buffalo in 1831 to establish a tannery operation. Dexter and his older brother, Bronson C. Rumsey, eventually ran the company.

In addition to his service on the Buffalo Park Commission, Rumsey was a principal in the organization that commissioned Frederick Law Olmsted to design the Parkside community. He was involved in early Buffalo banking as a director of the Erie County Savings Bank; an original trustee of the Buffalo City Cemetery, formed in 1864 and still operating Forest Lawn Cemetery; a founding member and a president of the Buffalo Club; a member of the Buffalo Country Club; and a significant supporter of the Buffalo Fresh Air Mission.

DR. LEWIS P. DAYTON (1822–1900)

Just two years after Dr. Dayton graduated from the Medical Institution of Geneva College in Geneva, New York, in 1843, he began to serve in so many appointed or elected positions unrelated to his profession that one wonders how he had time to practice medicine. That service began in his new home, the village of Black Rock, in 1845 when he was elected school commissioner. When Black Rock was annexed to Buffalo in 1854, he was elected to serve two successive terms on the Buffalo Board of Aldermen (1856-1858), serving as president in 1857, and a single term from 1864 to 1865, again as president in 1864. He then served two years in the New York State Assembly and was Erie County Clerk from 1865 to 1867.

In 1868, Dr. Dayton was appointed to the first Board of Park Commissioners and served through 1873. His election as mayor of Buffalo in 1874 made him, *ex officio*, again a member of

the commission. That role lasted for only another year, as he did not seek reelection, instead retiring to practice medicine. More aligned with his chosen field, he served as vice president of the Erie County Medical Society in 1858 and president in 1859. He was also selected as the Health Physician for the City (1872-1873). In 1892, Dr. Dayton suffered a heat stroke, essentially becoming an invalid, and died eight years later.

One of nine children and born on the family farm in Eden, south of Buffalo, Dr. Dayton left an impressive legacy of service. He is buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery.

DR. JOHN CRONYN (1827–1898)

Like his Park Commission colleague, Dr. Dayton, Dr. John Cronyn served as a superintendent of schools—for him, in Fort Erie, Canada—and was elected to an early public-service position as chief executive officer of the county. However, unlike his colleague, Dr. Cronyn remained throughout his life "a beloved physician."

A native of County Cork, Ireland, he emigrated to Canada in 1837 with his widowed mother and received his medical education and license there. But discriminatory test oaths designed to exclude Catholics from the professions prevented him from receiving his degree until eight years later when the laws were rescinded and it was awarded to him with honors. He left his medical practice in Fort Erie in 1859 and relocated to Buffalo. In Buffalo he built a large medical practice and maintained a close association with Sisters of Charity Hospital, initially as a surgeon, and later as the chief physician.

Dr. Cronyn became marine surgeon of the Port of Buffalo for eight years and served as president of the Buffalo and the Erie County Medical Societies, and the New York State Medical Association. He was also an honorary member of the Ontario Medical Association and a member, and for several years president, of the Board of Managers of the Buffalo State Hospital. "Ever the scholar," he was awarded an honorary PhD (1883) and LLD (1893) by Niagara University for his service as professor, president of the faculty, and key figure in the 1883 founding of the university's medical department.

Against a backdrop of virulent anti-Catholicism led by Buffalo civic leaders in their fight to have the state rescind its financial support of Sisters of Charity Hospital just years earlier, it is remarkable that the Buffalo park commissioners included Dr. Cronyn among them as a peer.

JAMES MOONEY (CA. 1830–1910)

In the words of that era, it was said that James Mooney's Irish blood "flowed strongly in his veins." Although he left his Irish birthplace at age twelve when his family immigrated to Buffalo, he remained a lifelong enthusiast of Home Rule for Ireland. And in him the Irish "way with words" is said to have produced "an orator of rare power."

Mooney attended the Buffalo State Normal School before dropping out at age 14 to go to work. He later studied law but real estate became his passion, and he achieved great wealth and leisure from it. That leisure allowed him to participate in various activities aligned with his Irish heritage. These included serving as president of the Irish Land League of America as well as reputedly participating in the Fenian invasion of Canada in 1866. His real estate knowledge as well as the multiple times he served as president of the real estate and brokers' board and vice president of the merchants' exchange were qualifications that served the Park Commission well during his time as a commissioner. His experience on that board also made him an attractive appointment to the commission formed to appraise the land for and oversee the state reservation at Niagara Falls along with Pascal Pratt and William Dorsheimer.

Mooney served the state, county, and city in many other ways, without compensation. His single paid position was as commissioner of public works in Buffalo.

At a time when Roman Catholics were discriminated against, the Park Commissioners welcomed Mooney and others of his faith.

EDWIN T. EVANS (1837–1909)

Edwin Townsend Evans and his father, James, were pioneers of Great Lakes shipping. They commissioned the construction at Buffalo of the 720-ton *Merchant*, the first iron propeller boat to sail the Great Lakes. That vessel was followed by eight others over the years.

In 1865, their line contracted with the newly formed Erie and Western Transportation Company, which was

closely associated with the Pennsylvania Railroad, to furnish ships connecting the Pennsylvania railroad's operations in Buffalo with those of the Northern Pacific Railroad at Duluth, Minnesota. Renamed the Anchor Line, their company became one of the leading freight and passenger lines operating on the Great Lakes. Edwin continued to be a principal of the line and of the Erie and Western Transportation Co. He was also a member of the executive committee and of the board of directors of the Lake Carriers Association from that organization's founding in 1880 until his retirement from active business in 1905.

In addition to his role on the Buffalo Park Commission, he was a member of the executive committee of the Board of Trade and Merchants Exchange, a president of the Charity Organization Society of Buffalo, a trustee of the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, and one of the 104 founding members of the Buffalo Club who paid one hundred dollars each for the purpose of organizing a club to promote social interaction.

JOHN GREINER, JR. (1823–1891)

John Greiner, Jr. served on the Park Commission from 1887 to 1889. In other public-sector roles, he was a Republican elector for Lincoln in 1860 and a delegate to the national Republican convention, chairman of the Buffalo Civil Service Commission, and a member of several ad-hoc committees for the city, including one established to construct the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument at Lafayette Square.

He was born in Upper Alsace, France, near Strasburg, the son of a baker. The family emigrated to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, when John was eight years old. His first work was as a typesetter-apprentice for the newspaper founded by his father. When Greiner relocated to Buffalo in 1836, he was hired as a compositor by the *Buffalo Demokrat*, a newly founded German-language newspaper. His business success came when he joined the grocery business of A. D. A. Miller at age seventeen, becoming a partner eight years later. Greiner was a key figure in the construction of the Buffalo Music Hall, a member of the Orpheus and Leidertafel singing societies, and the Society of Masons. Apparently stricken by a heart attack, he died unexpectedly on a downtown Buffalo street corner.

Published in Joseph Warren *(H. B. Hall & Sons), University at Buffalo Libraries, Digital Collections*

JOSEPH WARREN (1829–1876)

Joseph Warren brought a fine classical university education and experience as an instructor of Greek and Latin to his lifelong work as a journalist. Born in Waterbury, Vermont, he came to Buffalo in 1854 with previous newspaper experience to become local editor and reporter for the *Courier*, which published weekly. Four years later, he purchased an interest in the paper, later increasing his ownership under subsequent reorganizations, and in 1869, when the Courier Company was formed as a joint stock company, became its president. Under his leadership, the *Courier* gained stature in the community and promoted many local interests, including the Buffalo parks. He served as president of the New York Press Association in 1870 and continued as the *Courier*'s editor-in-chief until his death.

Warren also held the position of superintendent of Buffalo schools and became the recognized leader of the Democratic party in Western New York. One of the many founding members of the Buffalo Club, he served as a park commissioner from 1871 until his death.

RICHARD FLACH (1832–1884)

Richard Flach was said at the time to be an "exemplar of German good citizenship." Born in Saxony, now a part of Germany, he emigrated to Buffalo at about age fourteen, in a decade when thousands of German immigrants arrived in Buffalo and transformed it. Here, he became a prominent merchant and a Democratic politician. He was elected Erie County Supervisor (1860), Fourth Ward Alderman of Buffalo (1862-1866), and New York State Assemblyman (1868). He was among the early core of business leaders who began discussing the prospect of a public park for Buffalo. All the members of that cohort were ultimately appointed to the Park Commission.

His personal life also involved military service at Gettysburg as lieutenant in the 65th New York Infantry, and he was later promoted to colonel of that regiment from 1865 to 1879. In the Buffalo community, he was a president

of the Saengerbund of Buffalo, a German singing society, and an active member of other German-American organizations, some of which used Westphal's Gardens as the site of German festivals.

DENNIS C. BOWEN (1820–1877)

Dennis Bowen was a prominent Buffalo attorney, who, it is said, served more as an advisor to his clients—"perhaps the largest number … in the city"—than as a litigator, seldom appearing in court. Before becoming mayor of Buffalo, governor of New York, and president of the United States, Grover Cleveland studied law in Bowen's firm for four years and remained with the firm for another four years after he was admitted to the bar in 1859.

A prodigious worker, in addition to his busy law practice, Bowen represented Buffalo's Tenth Ward on the city council for one term (1855-1856) and served on several commissions, including one overseeing construction of the State Normal School at Buffalo (later Buffalo State College), one charged with revising the Buffalo City Charter in 1869, and another that guided construction of City and County Hall. He also served as a trustee of the Buffalo Horticultural Society and of the Buffalo Female Academy (later Buffalo Seminary) and was a founding member of the Buffalo Club and of the Falconwood Club, a private resort on Grand Island for Buffalo's wealthy that was founded in 1858 by Grover Cleveland's uncle, Lewis F. Allen, after whom Allentown is named.

Bowen was born in the town of Aurora, south of Buffalo. Upon his death, the *Buffalo Courier* eloquently eulogized his many admirable characteristics, saying of him: "He was as simple and modest as he was grand; as quick and luminous of faculty as he was straightforward and honest; as tender-hearted and patient as he was profound; and as inflexible for the right as he was strong in the prime of his manhood."

The qualifications of the Buffalo Park Commissioners is reminiscent of a famous toast, here paraphrased: The Commissioners were among the most extraordinary collection of talent, of human knowledge and experience that had ever been gathered together, with the possible exception of when Frederick Law Olmsted was alone.

FROM THE SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BUFFALO PARK COMMISSIONERS, JANUARY 1872

To another generation the Park will be the object of the municipal pride and will be associated with the holiday pleasures of the people ….

This system of public grounds, including the purchase of the land, will cost us less than one million dollars …. Experience elsewhere, not only in the larger cities, but even more noticeably in the small ones, has shown that Parks are the sources of public profit. The eminent statistician, Mr. David A. Wells, … demonstrates that the millions expended upon Central Park have so enhanced the value of the adjacent property, that, by the increase of taxable valuation, the Park has not only cost New York nothing, but has actually yielded to the city a large revenue. Similar results will follow here. Already a large increase has been made in the valuation of neighboring lands. Important improvements are in progress upon the lines of the parkways; a railroad has been located with reference to conveying visitors to the Parade and the Park; a line of omnibuses is projected upon Delaware street, and a number of citizens have purchased building sites in the vicinity of those grounds. Instances have come to our knowledge of persons, who, seeking a residence, have been drawn to this city by the attraction which this enterprise has given to Buffalo. If these influences are so powerful now, when there are no walks nor completed roads, nor places of resort, to what force will they not grow when lawn and lane, shaded walks and easy drives, shall every day draw thither thousands of our people?

This work is peculiarly a popular one. The rich do not need it. They can easily surround their houses with beautiful grounds. The Park is for the people, for the masses of the people. This popular quality already shows itself in the fact that a large proportion of the visitors last year came in the carts and wagons which they use in their business.

Financing the Park System

With the design emerging, the commissioners were busy determining how to finance its construction. No one in the private sector had sufficient funds to build so large a project and donate it to the city, as Ellicott had once envisioned doing with his estate. Nor would the park produce income with which to repay private investors, as did, say, a toll road of the time. The city stepped in once again, and with the commissioners, petitioned the state for permission to issue about $2.5 million in bonds, a huge sum in those days. Equivalent to about $43 million today, it was more than twice what the city currently spends in all its capital improvements each year.

The bonds provided the capital to undertake construction. They were to be repaid by the city in two ways: one-half of repayment would come out of normal city revenues; the other half, through special assessments levied on the lands fronting the parkways. Facing the parkways made these properties beneficiaries of both a greatly enhanced parkway or park view, as well as road access to the lot on which they were situated. It worked. The bonds were paid off as the city grew and the Elmwood District was built out to accommodate the growth, a financing method known today as tax-increment financing.

In addition to organizing financing, the commissioners were in charge of construction. With the scale of the project too big for one firm to undertake, they divided the massive project into multiple phases and contracts. Although it took more than twenty years to finish the project before the commissioners turned Olmsted's vision over to the city as actual parks and parkways for the city to manage, the citizens of Buffalo benefitted from the project even before it opened for their pleasure.

According to the commissioners' annual reports describing the work and the circumstances under which it was accomplished, the project was a social as well as public enterprise whose hiring practices responded to the needs of the community. During recessions, when employment opportunities were few elsewhere, the city advanced funds so the commissioners could hire more workers. During one recession, the commissioners rationed jobs to maximize the number of workers employed and to spread the income around by splitting the number of days worked among them. In this way, this gigantic public works project functioned simultaneously as a parks project, an economic development project, and a social welfare project.

Nothing like that had been done in Buffalo before, and perhaps not afterward until the Works Progress Administration during the Great Depression. But a comparable arrangement surfaced in our own time when private citizens formed the Richardson Center Corporation to undertake the adaptive reuse and historic rehabilitation of the H. H. Richardson- and Frederick Law Olmsted-designed former Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane hospital and grounds. An ongoing project, it is now the Richardson- Olmsted Campus, financed in part by a generous state grant, but directed and administered by a private, not-for-profit corporation run by volunteers.

This public-private partnership is how pioneering Buffalo and its leaders, both civic and political, worked in that earlier time. The result: a magnificent park system around which to build, one that organized the development pattern of the emerging Elmwood District and whose value benefited the entire city. This notion echoes Ellicott's concept in creating New Amsterdam both for his business employers and in fulfillment of his Quaker values.

Nevertheless, the park commissioners were not experts in the construction of such a project or in horticulture. Thus, early in 1870, on Olmsted's recommendation, they first hired George Kent Radford (1827-1918), an English civil engineer whom Calvert Vaux had met in England and whom Olmsted came "to regard as the best civil engineer in the country,"[35] to be the park system's chief engineer. They also hired William McMillan as superintendent of planting. When Radford left his position after three years, McMillan, a trained engineer as well as horticulturist, assumed management of the parks in addition to guiding their planting and maintenance, and faithfully "guarding the Olmsted-Vaux design philosophies."[36] He remained in that position until 1897.

William McMillan with his wife Jean and daughters, Annie and Jean.
Photograph courtesy of the McMillan/McCarthy Family Archives

WILLIAM McMILLAN — TRUE TO OLMSTED'S VISION

William McMillan was not Olmsted and Vaux's first choice for the position. They had recommended his older brother George, but George died unexpectedly. The design partners had gotten to know William when he worked with his brother on Prospect Park. Thus, Olmsted could vouch for him.

McMillan's involvement in the design and maintenance of the parks is said to have been "intense and personal." One published account describes it this way:

> Year by year he planted and watered, he dug down and leveled up, always with an eye to appropriate landscape effects. There is hardly a spot anywhere in the system that does not bear witness to McMillan's skillful touch.[37]

Another recounted an incident in which, attempting to prevent thieves from stealing materials intended for a bridge in Delaware Park, McMillan suffered a broken nose and was knocked unconscious by one of the thieves striking him across the face with an iron bar.

A native of Nairn, Scotland, William McMillan was the eldest of several children in a farming family. Although his early education was provided by tutoring whenever farm duties would permit, it was supplemented by intense home studies. As a young man, he learned the fundamental principles of civil engineering while erecting a bridge over the Ness at Inverness. McMillan emigrated from Scotland to America in 1859, settling first near Orange, New Jersey, where he married fellow Scot Jane McNair. In New York City, he learned horticulture and landscape gardening from his uncle, James McMillan, a recognized authority, and soon gained his own positive reputation. For a time, he operated a Bayside, New Jersey, nursery farm that supplied shrubs for Prospect Park and other Olmsted projects.

Much more than a parks administrator, William McMillan was a widely recognized practical horticulturist and landscape gardener, lecturer on those topics, advisor to cities constructing Olmsted-designed parks, a respected member of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, and author of several papers, lectures, and articles on park design and management. He maintained a steady correspondence with Olmsted concerning Buffalo's parks, landscape design, and general horticulture.

The fervor with which he held his views and the reverence in which he regarded Olmsted's led in time to conflict with the Board of Park Commissioners. He refused to bow to politics—indeed, had no use for politicians—and though scrupulously honest, was regarded as "obstinate, unconciliatory, and chronic in his opposition to almost every measure proposed for popularizing the Parks."

Conflict between the park commissioners and the superintendent resulted in an unsuccessful attempt on May 4, 1897, by Commissioner David F. Day, to have McMillan dismissed as parks superintendent. Two weeks later, Day succeeded in essentially having McMillan demoted to superintendent of the North Parks, along with appointment of another man to a similar position for the South Parks. Finally, when it was privately suggested to McMillan that he resign, and he refused, the commissioners voted ten to four to dismiss him effective December 31, 1897. "After twenty-seven years of dedicated service to the city's parks and Olmsted's ideals," McMillan left Buffalo the following March. He died two years later. Soon afterward, friends worked to commemorate his service to the parks. On September 12, 1905, a large fountain built of rough-hewn blocks of red Scottish granite, the topmost stone bearing his name, and containing separate basins from which animals and people could drink, was dedicated in his honor in Delaware Park.

An image of the city of Niagara Falls, New York, circa 1870, at the current Prospect Point.
Image Courtesy of the Niagara Falls Public Library

NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK, BEFORE THE PARK

Many of the Buffalo Park Commissioners also fought in the Civil War, served on the U. S. Sanitary Commission, and were founding members of the Buffalo Club and similar organizations. Three of them: Pascal Pratt, William Dorsheimer, and John Cronyn, played roles in the establishment of Niagara Falls State Park in the City of Niagara Falls, New York, championed by Frederick Law Olmsted during his visits to Buffalo. Olmsted's first trip to see Niagara Falls occurred in August 1869, a year after his first, landmark visit to Buffalo. Pratt, Dorsheimer, and Cronyn joined Olmsted and others in forming the international Free Niagara Movement. They intended to free the natural wonder from its "industrial harness" of factories crowding Goat Island, and to tear down the fencing that forced tourists to pay to see the falls. Niagara Falls State Park opened to the public 1885.

Olmsted's Design as a Magnet for Growth

Olmsted was a firm believer that parks and parkways improved the quality of life in cities, both for living and working:

> *A park fairly well managed near a large town, will surely become a new centre* [sic] *of that town … It is a common error to regard a park as something produced complete in itself, as a picture to be painted on a canvas. It should rather be planned as one to be done in fresco, with constant consideration of exterior objects, some of them quite at a distance and even existing as yet only in the imagination of the painter.*[38]

Although some residential growth was already occurring in the future Elmwood District by the 1860s, Olmsted's placement of the parks was a deliberate attempt to encourage residential development in the area as his business-savvy clients had intended. He envisioned creating neighborhoods much like his parks, with spaciousness that was lacking in the densely developed urban center to the south. He saw freestanding houses with yards and space around them as parts of a new model for late nineteenth-century residential living that would replace the crowded tenement-type housing previously found in older regions of cities. He was keenly aware of the influence of the park system on residential growth and intentionally set the stage for the future Elmwood District to become one of Buffalo's most fashionable and desirable new residential neighborhoods.

Olmsted's vision for the park influenced city leaders and the Buffalo park commissioners, who noted in their 1872 *Second Annual Report*,

> *The Act of the Legislature requires us, in selecting and locating the lands, to have 'in view the present condition and future growth and wants of the city.' The plans which were adopted were meant to meet this double purpose—not to be beyond our present ability, and yet to be sufficient for the future … To another generation, the Park will be the object of municipal pride, and will be associated with the holiday pleasures of the people, and it is hardly worthwhile to speculate as to the expenditure which will then be cheerfully made for its improvement and ornamentation.*[39]

Buffalo park commissioners and Olmsted were correct in their assumption that former undeveloped farm lands near the parks and parkways would increase in value. A review of a map of the city from 1866, prior to Olmsted's design, and one from 1872, when it was under construction, reflects how popular the Elmwood District became in just a few short years.

Surveyor Peter Emslie's 1866 *Map of a Part of the City of Buffalo* depicts the Eleventh Ward as sparsely settled east of Black Rock. Although it does not show parcel boundaries or note individual owners in most cases, it does give a good impression of the general density of areas of the city, as well as existing streets.[40]

Several buildings are shown on Delaware Street, Ferry Street is also fairly well developed, and Summer and Bryant Streets, where a few buildings are recorded, is still fairly open. Other streets contain no buildings, and generally the area of the future Elmwood is undeveloped.

The map does reveal the development of new roads in this part of Buffalo. Elmwood Avenue is now visible, comprised of several street segments that were later gradually connected. The portion located in the Elmwood District originated in 1854, when it was laid out between Ferry Street and the Gulf Road (Delavan Avenue) and was named Oakland Avenue. To the south, Elmwood extends between Ferry and Butler Street (now Lexington Avenue) and from Utica to Bryant Street. It is only a vague dotted line between Butler and Utica Street as well as near Summer Street, indicating that the road had not yet been run through these blocks. With several nurseries in this area, the road may have existed as an informal path though nursery grounds and was not connected until later.

Ashland Avenue, an informal road laid out in the 1850s, and Oakland Place (corresponding to the current street, not to the original name of a portion of Elmwood Avenue), are also indicated by dotted lines, running from Summer Street to Ferry, signifying that they were not well established in the 1860s prior to the creation of the park system. They may also have been private roads.

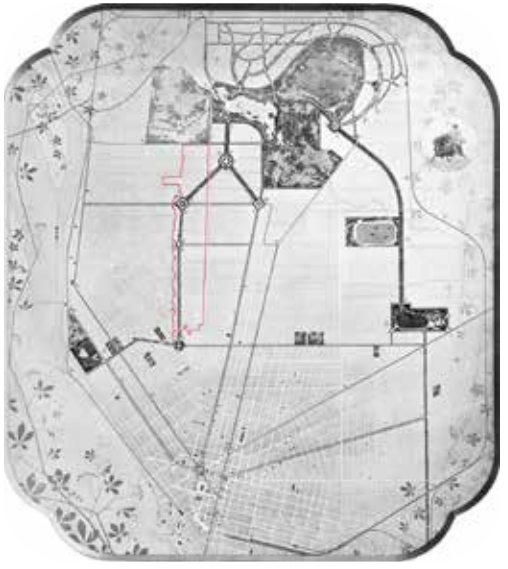
As early as 1872, commissioners' reports noted that the vacant land around the parks was already in demand, and many new roads were

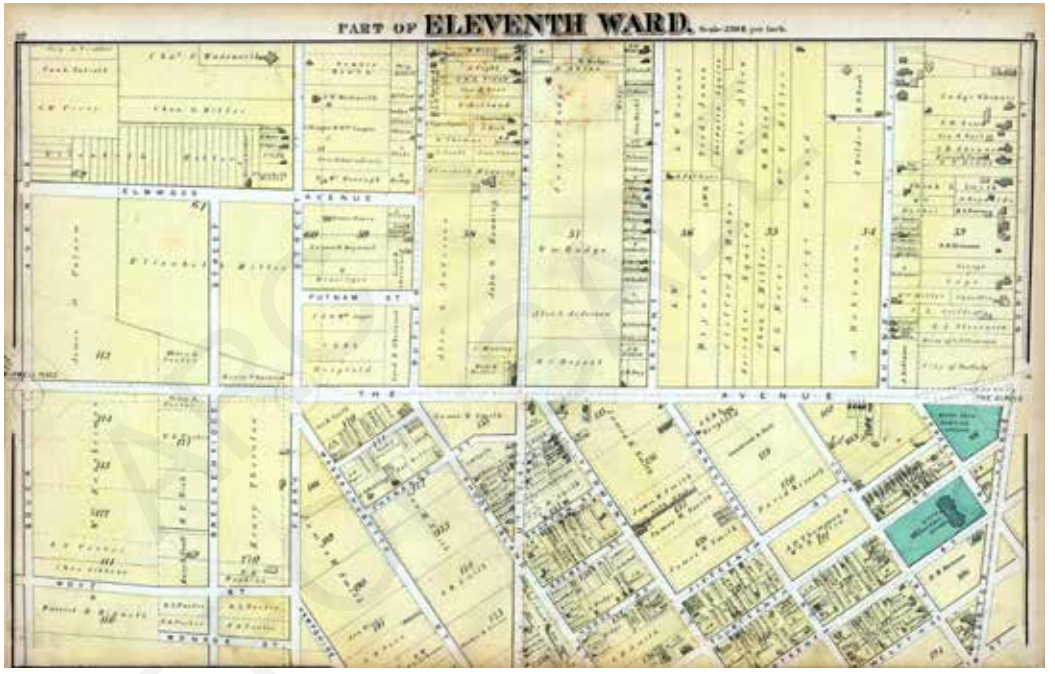
LEFT: George W. Reese's New Map of the City of Buffalo (1876). While buildings are shown here as indistinct squares, note the lack of any real construction in the future Elmwood district in the 1860s. By comparison, the pre-Civil War Allentown neighborhood is already densely built. It would take the arrival of streetcar lines to foster the build-out of Elmwood after the Civil War.

Reproduction by permission of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Buffalo, New York

RIGHT: City of Buffalo from the *Stone and Stewart* Atlas (1866). Note the development of the street pattern east of Black Rock in the former Mile Strip Reservation, primarily a few west-east streets but little else.

Reproduction by permission of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Buffalo, New York





LEFT: Frederick Law Olmsted's 1876 map of Buffalo showing the Parks and Parkways and the Buffalo State Asylum. The approximate boundaries of the Elmwood Historic District (West) have been overlaid on this map showing the design and installation of the parks and parkways and the asylum grounds.
Courtesy of the National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

RIGHT: "Part of the Eleventh Ward" from the *Hopkins Atlas* (1872). This informative map (north is to the left) shows how relatively unsettled this swath of land was in the 1870s, with some development, notably along Bryant and W. Utica Streets. While indicated on earlier maps, north-south routes such as Ashland Avenue had been surveyed but were not yet established, publicly-opened roads. Elmwood Avenue orginates at W. Ferry Street at this time. Also note Elizabeth Miller's ownership of a valuable parcel of land at Elmwood and Breckenridge avenues, surrounded by already subdivided parcels.
Image Courtesy of the New York Public Library

being introduced. The *Atlas of the City of Buffalo*, published that year, provides visual evidence that the farm tracts once owned by Buffalo's pioneers were being subdivided into smaller plots suitable for the construction of houses. Other large tracts used as nurseries have also disappeared by this point, as land was now more valuable for development. Olmsted's established streets and parkways were generally open even while planting and finishing work continued.

Because of the new desirability of the area, real estate speculation between 1866 and 1872 fueled the rapid physical transformation of the Elmwood District. Buffalo park commissioners feared that new streets in the area would be haphazard and irregular, ruining Olmsted's orderly vision for the region. From a financial perspective, they were also concerned with maintaining and increasing the value of land around the parkways, informing the Common Council in their report:

> *The vacant lands in the vicinity of the Parks are eagerly sought after. New buildings are constantly being erected, and our population is gradually but steadily creeping towards its borders.*
>
> *With this fact in view it may not be amiss to call the attention of your honorable body to the importance of causing a survey to be made of the whole northern and eastern portion of the city, with the view of having the streets so laid out as to harmonize with a general system, with the Parks and their approaches as the objective points. It is not too soon now to block out the vacant lands within the city limits and mark the lines of streets which must at no distant day be required for the section of the city. … The adoption of some general plan as here indicated would enhance the value of the land and bring it speedily into market, soon to be occupied by suburban homes.*[41]

A New Need: Improved Transportation

One of the biggest challenges to realizing the vision and potential for the park and parkways system as a place of social and economic egalitarianism was in their relative lack of accessibility to most citizens of the sprawling city of Buffalo. Although Olmsted's design promoted accessibility to already-populated centers by extending his parkway system from existing streets, it was still a difficult, expensive, and tedious trip from the more settled parts of the city to the distant northern area. Already by 1873, just a few short years after construction of the parks began, the Buffalo park commissioners made a plea to the city for improved public access to them.

In their *Fourth Annual Report* of January 1874, they reported that although many visitors to the park arrived in private carriages, sometimes as many as one thousand a day, many walked from the W. Ferry and Main Street horse-car station at Cold Spring. It was a long walk that could be especially difficult in inclement weather. Their recommendation: "A cheap and convenient line of stages or a branch from the horse-car lines would be a great boon to this class."[42]

Improvements to the transportation system did not take long. The horse-car line was extended from Cold Spring to The Park in 1879, providing an easier and more affordable means of traveling to and from it. In the following decade, the Buffalo Street Railroad would also open additional lines in the area, including one along Ferry Street in 1885, and another on Forest Avenue in 1888, that connected to The Park. These lines helped to speed and broaden access between downtown, Black Rock, east-side neighborhoods, and the Eleventh Ward and the Elmwood District.

The establishment of the Buffalo parks and parkways system marked important turning points in the city's history, characterized by advancements in transportation that facilitated people's easier and quicker internal and external movement. It was an impetus toward suburbanization spurred by the desirability and high standards of Olmsted's unique and revolutionary design. Most importantly, it was the beginning of Buffalo's maturation on the national stage.

Design Principles

The Design Principles of Frederick Law Olmsted

The National Association for Olmsted Parks is the only national organization solely dedicated to preserving the Olmsted legacy. Its mission is to advance the "Olmsted principles and legacy of irreplaceable parks and landscapes that revitalize communities and enrich people's lives." They define his design principals as:

A Genius of Place

The design should take advantage of unique characteristics of the site, even its disadvantages. The design should be developed and refined with intimate knowledge of the site.

Unified Composition

All elements of the landscape design should be made subordinate to an overarching design purpose. The design should avoid decorative treatment of plantings and structures so that the landscape experience will ring organic and true.

Orchestration of Movement

The composition should subtly direct movement through the landscape. There should be separation of ways, as in parks and parkways, for efficiency and amenity of movement, and to avoid collision or the apprehension of collision, between different kinds of traffic.

Orchestration of Use

The composition should artfully insert a variety of uses into logical precincts, ensuring the best possible site for each use and preventing competition between uses.

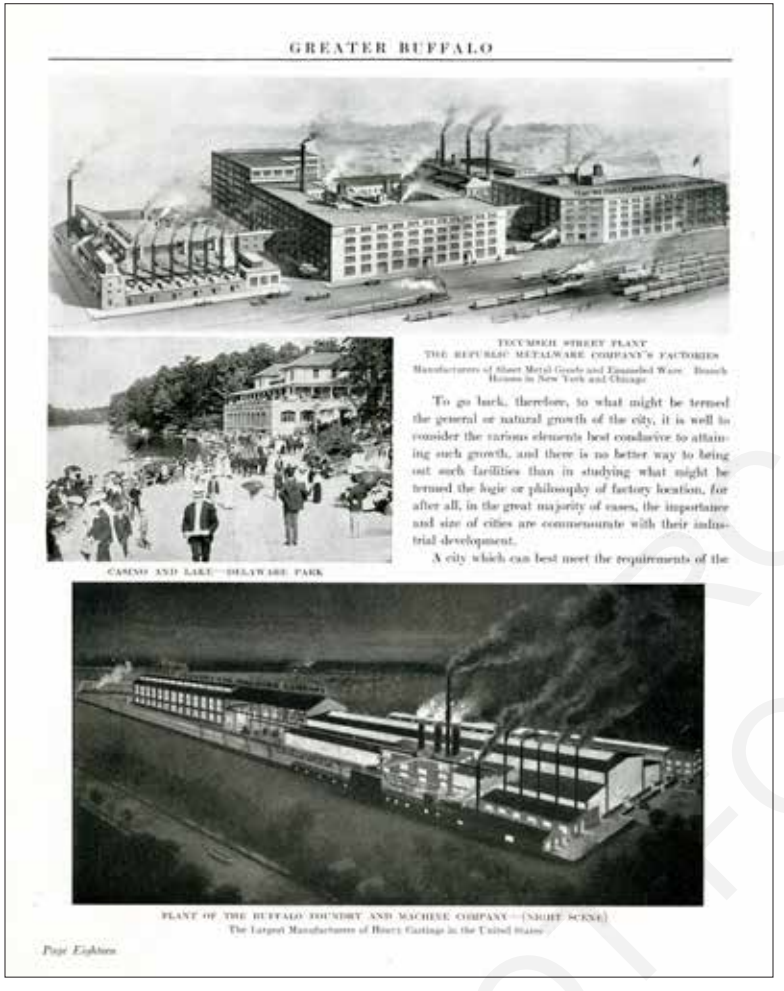
Sustainable Design and Environmental Conservation

The design should allow for long-term maintenance and ensure the realization and perpetuation of the design intent. Plant materials should thrive, be non invasive, and require little maintenance. The design should conserve the natural features of the site to the greatest extent possible and provide for the continued ecological health of the area.

A Comprehensive Approach

The composition should be comprehensive and seek to have a healthful influence beyond its boundaries. In the same way, the design must acknowledge and take into consideration what surrounds it. It should create complimentary effects. When possible, public grounds should be connected by greenways and boulevards so as to extend and maximize park spaces.

From the National Association for Olmsted Parks



GREATER BUFFALO

TECUMSEH STREET PLANT
THE REPUBLIC METALWARE COMPANY'S FACTORIES
Manufacturers of Sheet Metal Goods and Enameled Ware. Branch Houses in New York and Chicago

To go back, therefore, to what might be termed the general or natural growth of the city, it is well to consider the various elements best conducive to attaining such growth, and there is no better way to bring out such facilities than in studying what might be termed the logic or philosophy of factory location, for after all, in the great majority of cases, the importance and size of cities are commensurate with their industrial development.

A city which can best meet the requirements of the

CASINO AND LAKE—DELAWARE PARK

PLANT OF THE BUFFALO FOUNDRY AND MACHINE COMPANY—(NIGHT SCENE)
The Largest Manufacturers of Heavy Castings in the United States

Page Eighteen

GREATER BUFFALO

carries beneficial effects to the youth of Buffalo, as well as to the city's industrial life. In its ramification the work of this bureau reaches directly into the homes of our citizens, penetrates the tap-root of our educational system, and lays a foundation of permanency upon which to base the successful operation of Buffalo industry and industries.

Retail Merchants' Association—As is the case with all allied organizations of the Chamber, members of such asso-

MIDDLE PATH, CHAPIN PARKWAY

ciations must be members of the Chamber of Commerce. Through the Retail Merchants' Association all matters having any bearing whatsoever upon retail business of Buffalo are considered and passed upon by this association.

Wholesale Merchants' Association—This association does for the wholesale business in Buffalo what the Retail Merchants' Association does for the retail trade. In addition, the association makes a practice of conducting trade excursions to places within Buffalo's trade zone, and this practice has gained for Buffalo much desirable publicity and trade.

Real Estate Association—As below set forth, the objects of this association include the following:

"To advance the real estate interests of Buffalo and its citizens by fostering public improvements, and an equitable system of assessments and taxation and the enforcement of laws for the protection, welfare, and convenience of real estate owners and leaseholders; and generally to devise, advocate, and support legislation calculated to improve the city of Buffalo."

These various bureaus and allied organizations, as well as the several committees of the Chamber, are prepared to cope with any problem pertaining to the welfare

STORE OF C. A. WEED & COMPANY
Three floors devoted exclusively to Men's and Young Men's Clothing

MUTUAL ELEVATOR
Owned by Mutual Terminal Company. Capacity, 2,500,000 bushels

Page Sixteen

LEFT: Much of Buffalo's wealth came from gigantic factories that were even then understood to be unhealthy workplaces. Buffalo business leaders responded by building Olmsted's parks and parkways system. This page from a 1914 Buffalo Chamber of Commerce publication displays the community's pride in the contribution of both industrial production and parks to the "… natural growth of the city … [and] the various elements conducive to attaining such growth …"

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. Greater Buffalo and Niagara Frontier, *Buffalo Chamber of Commerce, p.18.*

RIGHT: A photograph taken in 1914 illustrates a pleasant jaunt on horseback along a gravel path under the elms of Chapin Parkway's west median while an automobile travels on the smooth macadam of the Parkway. This image illustrates three of Olmsted's design principals: Unified Composition, Orchestration of Movement, and Orchestration of Use.

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. Greater Buffalo and Niagara Frontier, *Buffalo Chamber of Commerce, p.61.*

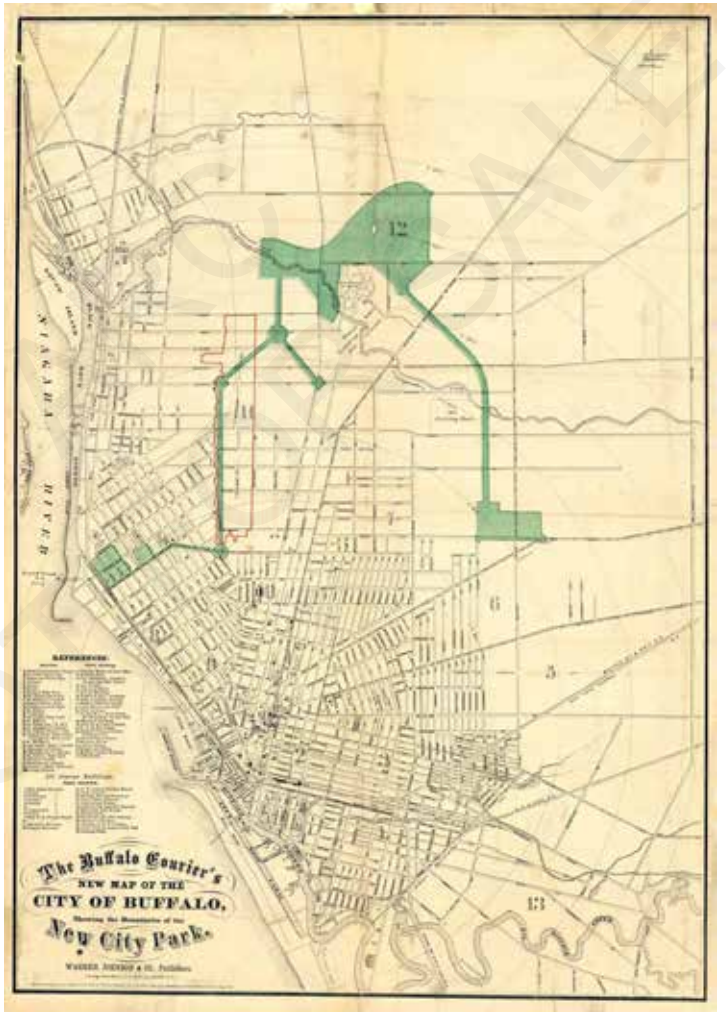
Improvements in transportation and services open up the new Elmwood District for development

SIX

Becoming a Streetcar Suburb

Throughout a large part of history, cities were built to provide safety. Often founded on a hill and contained within walls, cities were veritable fortresses against invasion by others. The place to be was within the walls, where life was fully lived, relations interacted, and commerce conducted. Inferior status lay outside. And those who lived immediately in that borderland outside the walls "wanted little else than to join the walled-in fortunate, to achieve citizenship," Harvard University history professor John R Stilgoe has written. "As individuals, they aspired to owning real estate within the walls. As a group, they dreamed of annexation, of the municipality extending its walls and enfolding their chaos into order."[43] On the dark side, of course, cities inevitably became the place where diseases bred and crime occurred.

The concept of suburban living implied the nobleman's or aristocrat's villa or country estate, far beyond the city wall and the borderland. Typically, those estates, owned by only the wealthiest and most prestigious and often independently operated and self-sufficient, were refuges from extreme city heat and, occasionally, from outbreaks of disease, but also from different and disagreeable people.



This 1869 map portrays in green the proposed Olmsted parks and parkways, overlaid on the existing street pattern. The approximate boundaries of the Elmwood Historic District (West) have been added in red. This image shows the importance of the Mile Reservation Line, now transformed into Richmond Avenue, to create the western edge of the frame of the nascent Elmwood District.

"The Buffalo Courier's New Map of the City of Buffalo Showing the Boundaries of the New City Park," by Warren, Johnson & Co, published in the Buffalo Courier *in 1869.*

Today, scholars regard cities as living organisms. As such, like the people living within them, cities are subject to stresses and to stimuli. Conditions like crowding, pollution, growth, technology, traffic, immigration, and more impact both, as do whatever responses to those conditions are undertaken to mitigate them. It is, indeed, possible to observe both the symbiotic relationship of these two different living organisms: cities and their inhabitants—what happens to one affects the other—and the synergy of the relationship as well: when city officials and agencies work together with the citizens, what can be accomplished is often greater than either could achieve alone. Both Ellicott and Olmsted understood this relationship.

The idyll of the orderly and superior city was dramatically impacted during the late eighteenth century, however, by the Industrial Revolution, which arrived in Europe and even in eastern United States cities like Boston much earlier than it did in Buffalo. Along with great prosperity for some and minor improvement in their lives for others, industry brought noise, dirt, pollution, congestion, immigration by "different others," housing and educational needs, and a strong concomitant desire by more affluent city dwellers for "something better."

Those factors turned the ideal of city life on its head. Life outside "the walls" was now more alluring, and those who could afford to would pursue its idealized promise.

Improvements in Transportation

Another important factor was developing that could contribute to successful pursuit of life outside the city: improvements in transportation. With these improvements, the "streetcar suburb" was born, not just in the Elmwood District, but in cities across the country.

In the 1850s the majority of travelers to the cemetery or the private parks took their own farm wagons or carriages, but the cost of maintaining vehicles and horses was an expense not all Buffalonians could afford. As a result, walking was the primary means of travel in the first half of the nineteenth century, even among the middle and upper classes, and many people necessarily resided close to their places of business and near shops.

The earliest form of improved public transportation in the city took the form of horse-drawn street cars on rails with fixed routes. The first such line was established on Main Street by the Buffalo Street Railroad on June 17, 1860. It extended from "the Dock" at Buffalo Creek northward to Edward Street and was continued on to Cold Spring (likely terminating at the intersection of Main and Ferry Streets) on July 14, 1860.

The impact of the horse-car systems in Buffalo by the mid-1860s has been described this way:

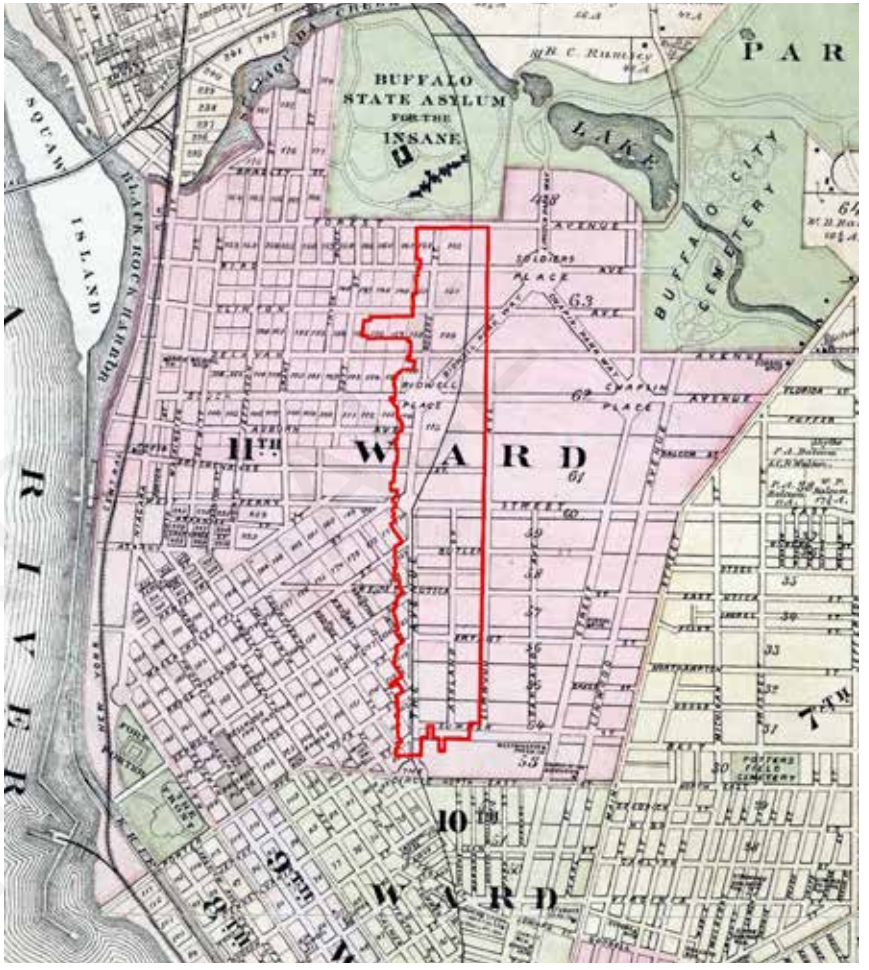
> *A very material addition to the comfort and convenience of our citizens has been made by the Street Railroads. They have rendered distant parts of the city readily and cheaply accessible, and have correspondingly enhanced the value of lands outside its more settled limits.*[44]

Other improvements to the transportation system did not take long. The horse-car line was extended from Cold Spring to The Park in 1879, providing an easier and more affordable means of traveling to and from the park. The Buffalo Street Railroad also opened additional lines in the area, including a Ferry Street line in 1885 and a Forest Avenue horse-car route that connected to The Park in 1888.

These lines helped to open up access between downtown, Black Rock, and east side neighborhoods to the Eleventh Ward and the Elmwood District, which only a decade before had been regarded as a distant region.

For the Elmwood Historic District, the most significant improvement to Buffalo's streetcar system was the establishment on July 1, 1889, of a horse-car line on Elmwood Avenue that ran from its foot at Virginia Street to Forest Avenue, 2.1 miles and a more than 40-minute walk, away. The line immediately improved access to the park. It also dramatically opened the still largely vacant land in the Eleventh Ward to development. Almost immediately, advertisements began to appear marketing the new "Elmwood District" to prospective home builders and purchasers, ushering in an era of booming real estate sales and speculation.

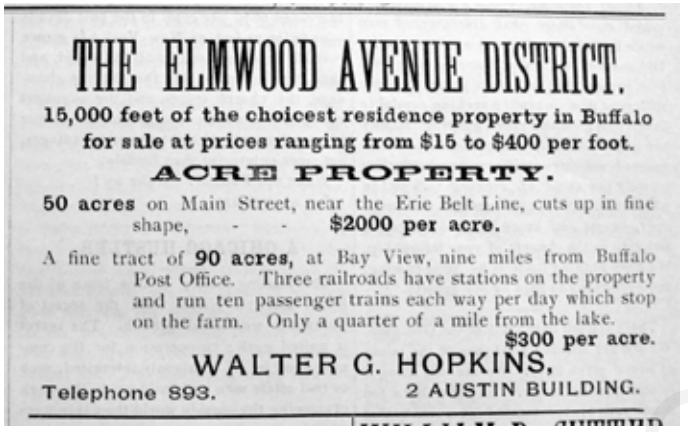
But as early as 1881 the Brush Electric Light Company had opened the first electric plant in Buffalo on Ganson Street and installed carbon arc electric lights along a mile stretch of the street



LEFT: City of Buffalo map circa 1880, from the *Beers Atlas*. The approximate boundaries of the Elmwood Historic District (West) are indicated. Note the size of the large 11th Ward, which in the early 1880s was still sparsely settled. New roads have been established, such as Ashland Street (now Avenue) and others have been extended. It is interesting to note that Mr. Beers did not forget to include the Mile Strip Reservation Line that was so influential in the development of the Elmwood district..

Image courtesy of the New York Public Library

RIGHT: Detail of the City of Buffalo map circa 1880 from the *Beers Atlas*, to the left.



THE ELMWOOD AVENUE DISTRICT.

15,000 feet of the choicest residence property in Buffalo for sale at prices ranging from $15 to $400 per foot.

ACRE PROPERTY.

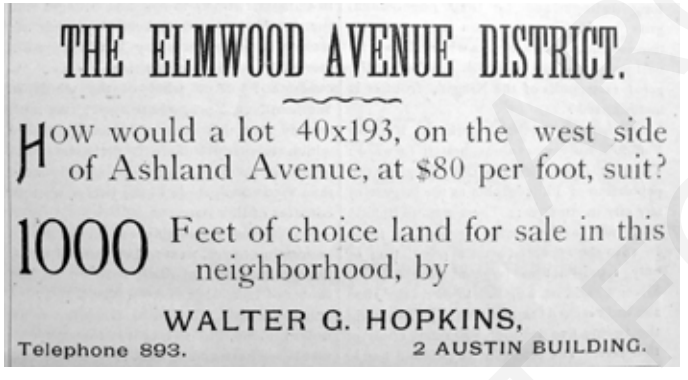
50 acres on Main Street, near the Erie Belt Line, cuts up in fine shape, - - - **$2000 per acre.**

A fine tract of **90 acres,** at Bay View, nine miles from Buffalo Post Office. Three railroads have stations on the property and run ten passenger trains each way per day which stop on the farm. Only a quarter of a mile from the lake.

$300 per acre.

WALTER G. HOPKINS,

Telephone 893. 2 AUSTIN BUILDING.



THE ELMWOOD AVENUE DISTRICT.

How would a lot 40x193, on the west side of Ashland Avenue, at $80 per foot, suit?

1000 Feet of choice land for sale in this neighborhood, by

WALTER G. HOPKINS,

Telephone 893. 2 AUSTIN BUILDING.

TO ALL { **Renters, Flat Dwellers** —AND— **Seekers After Homes**

I am going to build twenty (20) or twenty-five (25) single and two-family houses in the best part of the **ELMWOOD DISTRICT** to be completed at different periods between next month and May 1, 1910. These houses and flats will be for sale and for rent as they are finished.

Plans and water colors of these dwellings, showing exactly how they will look when ready for occupancy, may now be seen at my office. These homes will contain every known modern convenience:—

Built-in Refrigerators	**Screens**
Outside Sleeping Rooms	**Storm Windows**
Awnings	**Sound-proof Walls**
Electric and Gas Fixtures	**Clothes Chutes**
Tile Bath Rooms	**Modern Plumbing**
Perfect Sanitation	**Ideal Heating Arrangements**

In fact the houses will contain every advanced development known to the science of ideal home building.

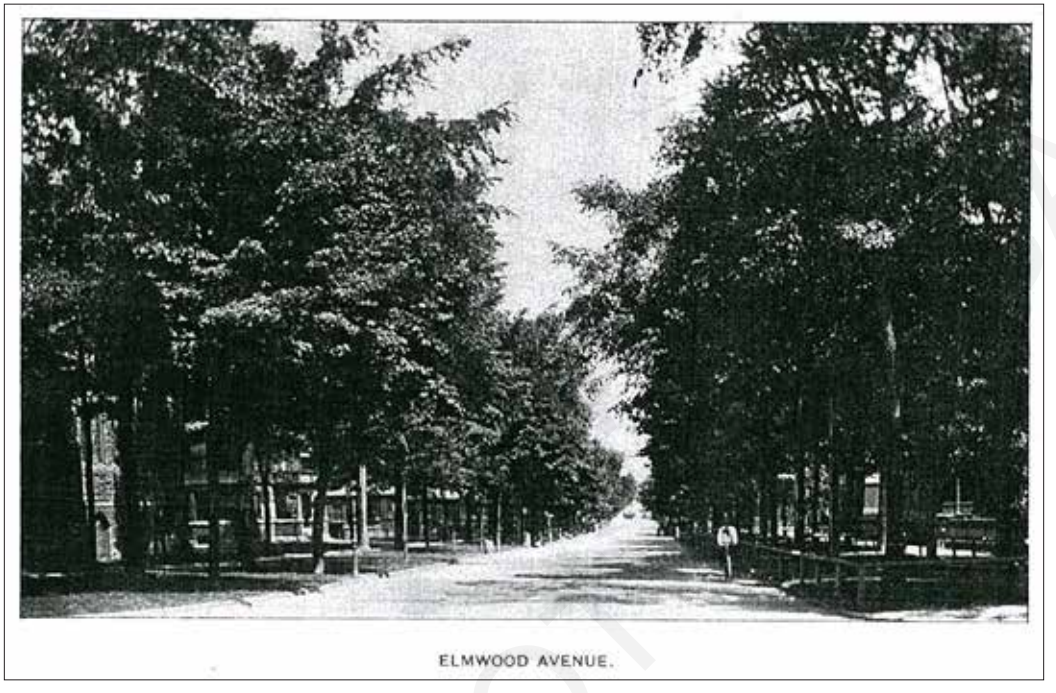
Intending buyers or renters should come to my office now and make selections and reservations. My methods of buying material and supervising work enable me to sell these houses on the installment plan for less money than others could duplicate them for cash.

To Be Sold on Small Payments Down; Balance Same as Rent

HARRY E. PHILLIPS, 85 West Eagle St.

LEFT: These advertisements by realtor Walter G. Hopkins in an 1890 issue of the *Buffalo Real Estate and Financial News* constitute the earliest known use of "Elmwood Avenue District" to refer to this streetcar suburb that will become a neighborhood. These advertisements reveal the transformation of the Elmwood District at this time, since Hopkins was selling both very large parcels, as well as smaller, already subdivided residential lots. Lots were sold and valued by linear street front footage, perhaps a legacy of the tax increment financing that helped pay for the construction of the parks and parkways system. Hopkins also appears to be an early adopter of the new telephone technology, listing telephone number 893 in the ad. How many potential Elmwood purchasers could ring him up?

RIGHT: This 1910 advertisement by realtor Harry E. Phillips, 20 years after the ads by Hopkins, lays out his plan for developing what is by now known as the "Elmwood District" by constructing 20 to 25 single and two-family houses. Note the amenities that he lists to attract the most "outstanding" home buyers to this new streetcar suburb, such as built-in refrigerators, tile bathrooms, electric and gas fixtures, sound-proof walls—even clothes chutes. He combines the "science of ideal home building" with modern financing options that made these "ideal homes" accessible to a wider range of purchasers, not just the monied few.



A view down Elmwood Avenue from an unknown location on the street. Note the rail fencing to the right of the image, a remnant of its recent rural past. By contrast, modern sandstone curbing is also apparent in this photo, and is still present on many Elmwood District streets. The dense canopy of trees, while partially lost on Elmwood Avenue itself, remains on many of the streets in the district to this day. The last vestige of this early Elmwood streetscape is on the 300 block of Elmwood, between Summer and Bryant streets. Note that the City of Buffalo's current form-based building code would not allow this streetscape to be built today without variance.

Published in A History of the City of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, *by John Devoy*

and in the J. N. Adam department store. By the following year, several other streets and churches, meeting places, hotels, and other businesses were equipped with arc light service. It was inevitable that electric streetcars were next.

Although in 1885 no streetcars were powered by electricity, in 1890 there were twenty-five along eighty-seven miles of track in Buffalo. The city's first experimental electric streetcar service was installed in 1889 on a line that started at Main Street and Michigan Avenue and ran to Delaware Park via Harvard Place, Delavan, Delaware, and Forest avenues. It was immediately successful, given its park destination.

When asked how many lines were operating to The Park, Henry M. Watson, president of the Buffalo Street Railroad Company, proudly told a *Buffalo News* reporter, "No less than five lines," adding "… we run twenty-eight cars an hour to and from the park. That is a car every two minutes. No city in the world gives such a service to its park."[45] Other extensions and improvements followed. The entire line of streetcars was converted to electric power beginning in 1891 and progressed quickly. The Elmwood Avenue line began in 1892.

The faster speed of electric cars meant that riders could travel greater distances in less time. As a result, they could live farther from their workplace, making the Elmwood District increasingly attractive as a place to live. Streetcars made frequent stops at short intervals, creating continuous corridors of growth as they radiated out from the city core. Because the streetcar provided visibility and accessibility to riders, stores and shops and

other commercial enterprises frequently developed either at key intersections or along much of the whole route. Apartment buildings also were often built along these routes, providing a less expensive living option with good access to transportation and shopping. On the down side was their proximity to the noise of the streetcar lines.

At nearly the same time, the New York Central Railroad opened the Belt Line, so named because it circled the city, carrying both freight and passengers. The railroad had operated a track in the northern area of Buffalo in 1880, known as the Niagara Falls Branch, with a station on Main Street near present-day Jewett Parkway. The Belt Line expansion in 1882 was an attempt to decentralize the industrial development occurring on the east side and create connections to factories in other locations, a nineteenth-century version of logistics in service to manufacturing and public transportation connecting people and jobs, and people and The Park.

Olmsted's park gave the railroad a reason for being in this area of the city. Tracks were cut through largely unsettled areas, running north of The Park and Forest Lawn Cemetery, and excavated so as not to interfere with the parks or their suburban surroundings. Stations convenient to the park were located at Central Park, near Main and Amherst Streets, and on Delaware Street, north of the park. On December 24,1890, a permanent electric streetcar line was opened on Main Street, running between Cold Spring and the Belt Line station near Jewett Parkway, which allowed for even better park access.

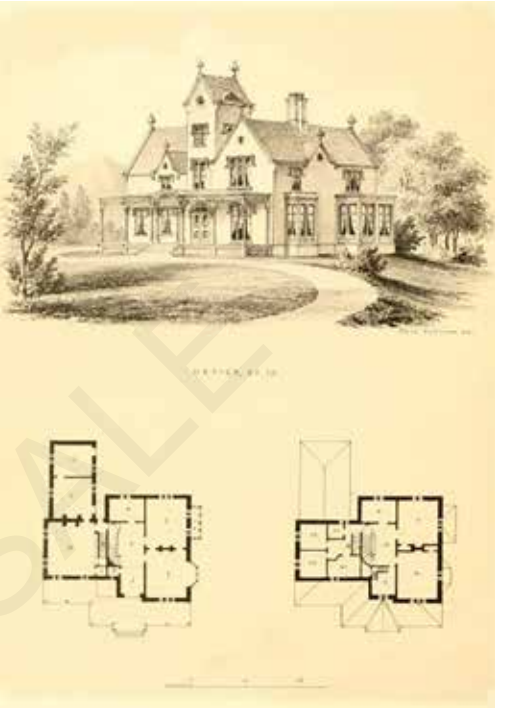
The Move is On

By the 1850s, many of Buffalo's wealthiest families were already building their houses far from the city center, especially along Delaware Avenue south of North Street. As early as 1848, they had begun to build northward on Delaware Avenue into what would become the Elmwood District. By that year a Gothic Revival house, designed by renowned New York City architect Richard Upjohn, who designed St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral downtown, filled the southwest corner of Delaware Avenue at Utica Street. It was owned by George B. Webster, an attorney and member of the Cathedral Vestry, St. Paul's governing body.

In the 1850s, a small coterie of tannery owners built their estates within the proverbial stone's throw of each other in Elmwood.

Aaron Rumsey, head of the prominent Buffalo Rumsey family and partner with his two sons in a tannery bearing his name, owned a house on the northwest corner of Delaware Avenue and North Street. His younger son, Dexter Phelps Rumsey, lived a block north on the southwest corner of Delaware Avenue and Summer Street.

In 1859-1860, Myron P. Bush, co-owner with George R. Howard of the prominent Bush & Howard tanning business, built his house on five and a half acres of beautifully planted and maintained land at the northwest corner of Delaware Avenue and Summer Street. Designed by architect J. D. Towle of Boston, it was considered a Buffalo showpiece.



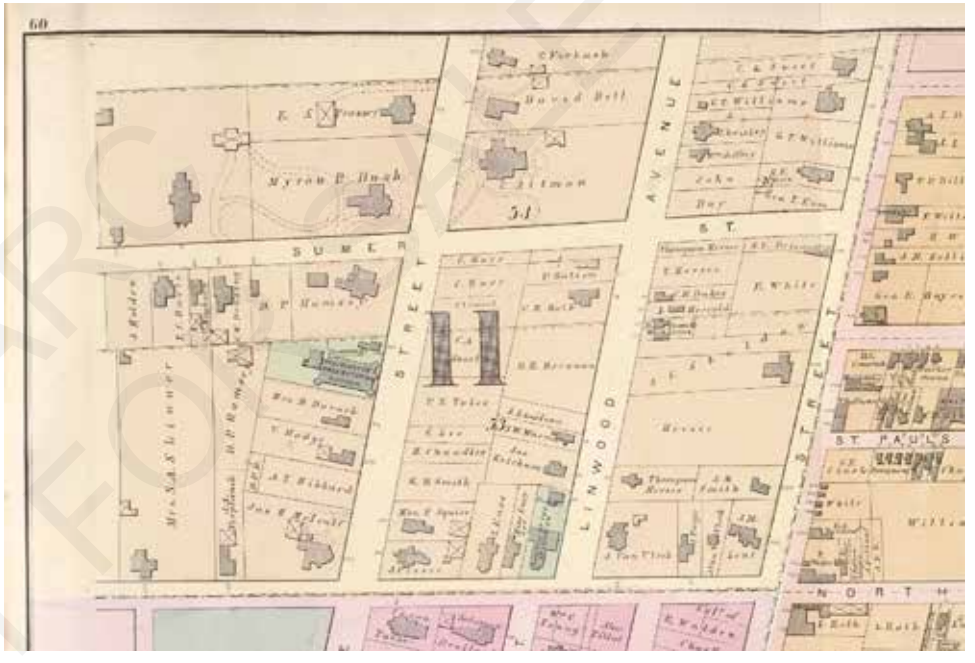
Holly's Country Seats Containing Lithographic Designs for Cottages, Villas, Mansions, Etc., With Their Accompanying Outbuildings; also, country churches, city buildings, railway stations, etc., etc.,

Henry Hudson Holly, (1834-1892) published in 1863, this extraordinarily influential book that set the tone for domestic architecture of its time across America, especially popularizing the Italianate style in house, furniture and landscape design. Pictured is Design No. 10. This "strictly Tudor" design was to recall "choice localities in rural England." Holly noted that, "Such picturesqueness and diversity of feature, as characterize the treatment of this little villa, are well adapted for association with the wild, romantic scenery of many parts of our country …."

There are many examples of Holly-influenced houses in the Elmwood District. This illustrates the national prominence and high fashion tastes of early Elmwood estate owners that would influence the cache and character of the emerging Elmwood District.

Published in Holly's Country Seats: Modern Dwellings, *by Henry Hudson Holly*

MYRON P. BUSH built this home in 1860 on the northwest corner of Delaware and Summer. It was removed in 1903 for erection of Frank H. Goodyear's home, also razed.

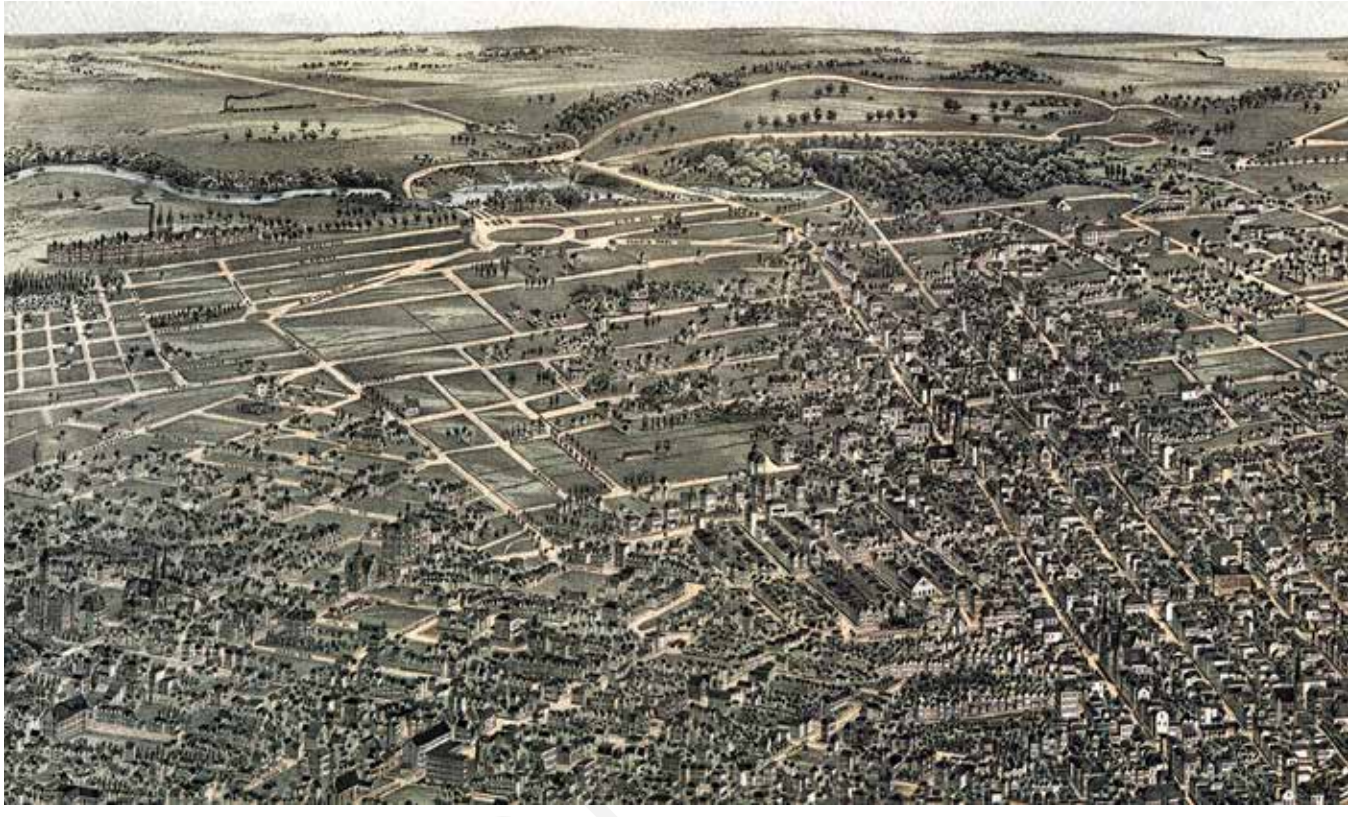


LEFT: This photograph of the Myron P. Bush House portrays a design influenced by Henry Hudson Holly. The first floor logia, prominent central tower and bay windows all reflect Holly's tastes This house stood on the site until it was demolished and became a parking lot.

Published in The Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo, *by Frank Severance*

RIGHT: Detail from *The Hopkins Atlas* (1872) showing the location of the Myron Bush house at the corner of Summer Street and Delaware Avenue. The curvilinear paths linking the buildings on the estate are a notable feature of Holly's estate designs. The Rumsey Estate is across Summer Street, next to Westminster Presbyterian Church, the first building in this location, and across Delaware Avenue is the Altman Estate. This site is currently occupied by the Jewish Community Center.

Image courtesy of the New York Public Library



This circa 1880 illustration of the City of Buffalo shows the rough boundaries of the Elmwood Historic District. While not precise, this image shows how open and undeveloped the future Elmwood District was as late as the 1880s. Note the much more developed areas surrounding the future district: Black Rock to the west, Allentown to the south, and Cold Spring to the east. Scajaquada Creek and the Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane are in the upper left quadrant of the map, and densely forested Forest Lawn Cemetery is in the upper right. The train shown at very top left of the image is running on the Belt Line tracks that encircled the city to serve the industrial production needs of suburban factories. The Belt Line also provided rapid transit access North Buffalo that would foster residential development there after the Elmwood District was built out.

Image courtesy of the Library of Congress

In 1872, Howard, Aaron Rumsey's partner before joining forces with Bush, commissioned Towle to design a massive Second Empire mansion with a five-story tower, also on Delaware Avenue. The house was razed in 1915 by Grace Millard Knox, widow of Woolworth tycoon Seymour H. Knox, for construction of a million-dollar French Baroque mansion designed by Charles Pierrepont H. Gilbert, prominent architect of many New York City Fifth Avenue residences.

In 1861, a George C. Vaughan, about whom information was not readily available, built his residence at the corner of Ferry Street and Delaware. The house was purchased in 1888 by England-born John G. Milburn, a prominent Buffalo attorney known for "his excellent legal preparations, his polished public speaking style, and his warm personality." It was in this house that President William McKinley would die on September 14, 1901, of a gunshot wound inflicted by anarchist Josef Czolgosz at the Pan-American Exposition.

By 1885, industrialist John J. Albright had bought the James Adams house on Ferry Street between Elmwood and Delaware, as well as adjoining properties that would become a grand estate. The fact that the Adams house had been lived in by the Coatsworth family before the Adamses attests to its early construction in Elmwood.

With improvements in public transportation, the middle and upper-middle class would soon follow.

At the same time, more and more immigrants settled into dense communities where they shared a common language and heritage.

German immigrants, who were primarily Catholic, at midcentury made up sixty percent of Buffalo's population. They had their own enclave on the east side, and keen to preserve their ethnic identity, in a kind of self-isolation, they held onto their Old World customs and language. Many were well educated and few were unskilled. Many owned successful businesses: tanneries, breweries, bakeries, grocery stores; some were physicians or industrialists. Often regarded as "ideal citizens," they included several early Buffalo mayors: Philip Becker (1876-1877, 1886-1889), Solomon Scheu (1878-1879), and Conrad Diehl (1898-1901). In fact, the official guidebook published for the great, and then tragic, Pan-American Exposition of 1901 that put Buffalo on the world stage described the Germans of Buffalo this way:

> "*There is probably not a nation in the world whose people adapt themselves more readily to all the elements which contribute to good citizenship than the thrifty, sturdy Teuton Race.*"[46]

Some German Jews settled on the lower West Side, others along North, Franklin, and Tupper streets, just south of the Elmwood District.

In 1847, 6,300 Irish immigrants made their home in the Old First Ward in South Buffalo. There, as described by historian Mark Goldman, "The tightly knit, ethnocentric bonds of Irish nationality and Catholicism provided a supportive and comforting environment for this highly vulnerable immigrant community."[47] Poor and working class, many were part of the Irish diaspora in the first half of the nineteenth century that resulted from poor treatment, low wages, disease, and the Great Potato Famine of 1845-1850.

When Italian immigrants arrived, they settled on the West Side, where they had their own markets, stores, and places of worship. Polish families who settled in Buffalo before 1865, nearly all of whom were Jewish from the Russian section of partitioned Poland, also settled on the lower West Side. Most were peddlers, who, "in the absence of department stores," carried "utensils and modest fineries" to neighborhood residents on foot and later by cart. Eventually, they prospered.[48]

Other ethnic working-class immigrants would fill the inner-city neighborhoods vacated by those moving into the new Elmwood District.

The fact that the earliest residents of the new Elmwood District were the very wealthy and among the middle and upper-middle classes did much to shape the face and character of Elmwood throughout its history: a mostly white, largely Anglo-Saxon Protestant enclave. Evidence can be found in the denominations of the houses of worship that lay then and now within the district: two Episcopal churches, one Methodist-Episcopal, one United Church of Christ, one Unitarian, three Presbyterian with a fourth—Westminster, among the first suburban churches, built in 1858-1859—adjacent to the district's

This handsome home of Gustave J. Weil, proprietor of the Electric City Box Co., is located on Bidwell Parkway at Elmwood Avenue. When Weil lived at 236 N. Division Street in 1884, his factory was located at 11 Terrace, both in downtown. He had a 13 minute walk between home and work.

By the time his Bidwell house was built in 1907, his factory had moved just north to 144 Broadway. The commute between his downtown factory and his "suburban" home in the Elmwood District that would have taken an hour to walk took only about 15 minutes by streetcar. High speed transportation technology conquered geography that separated home and work, defining this era.

TOP: Image published in *The American Architect and Building News*, March 23, 1907.

BOTTOM: Exuberant letterhead reflects the Electrical Age in the City of Light.

southern boundary, and three Jewish temples. There has never been a Catholic church within the Elmwood Historic District's boundaries. A Catholic cathedral, since demolished due to construction flaws, and a smaller church building, which remains, were built at the intersection of Delaware Avenue and Utica Street, which today is within the boundaries of the Linwood Historic District, not Elmwood. The only Catholic place of worship in Elmwood, the Newman Center, did not arrive until the 1940s. This is not to say that there are no Catholics living in Elmwood, as changes in property ownership over the decades long ago created a more religiously diverse neighborhood. Finally, there were no African-American or Latino places of worship in the Elmwood District until relatively recently when those congregations began to make historically white, Protestant-built houses of worship their new homes after their original congregations moved out. Yet no increase in Elmwood District Black residency has been noted to date.

The move to the Elmwood District haven then, however, was certainly not solely to escape the noise, pollution, and crowding of the city. An increasingly anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant sentiment was growing among native-born Protestant residents of Buffalo. Buffalo's own leading politician, Millard Fillmore, then president of the United States, in 1852, became the nominee of the anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant Know Nothing Party when the Whig Party, whose candidate he had been when elected vice president under Zachary Taylor, refused to support him. Indeed, anti-Catholic sentiment was inherent in the Protestant belief system from the very fact that, critical of Catholic doctrine, practices, and perceived corruption, they separated from the Roman Catholic Church during the great Protestant Reformation beginning in the sixteenth century.

Thus, human nature being what it is, the movers and shakers who left the center city also sought to escape the influx of the poor, working-class, and other immigrants who were so different from themselves. It was a pattern occurring at the same time in cities all across the country, especially in the northeast, where European immigrants disembarked at the end of their journey across the Atlantic. These were not religious-freedom seekers, as were the Plymouth colonists, yet they had similar aspirations for a better life that would eventually take them to Elmwood generations later, starting as laborers and household help.

New, and newly wealthy, residents of Elmwood brought with them new ideas about "the good life" and gave visible expression to their prosperity in the homes they built. Both Elmwood West and Elmwood East, especially the latter, are filled with houses that range from large and architecturally significant to, in some cases, opulent mansions surrounded by acres of professionally landscaped grounds. There's no denying the gracious beauty of such properties. But the fact that they are expensive to own and to maintain has contributed to the Elmwood District possibly never becoming as diverse as it might be.

Other Improvements

Beyond the convenience afforded by the streetcar route, developers took advantage of cheaper land prices, lower building costs, and improved public transportation to create new middle-class residential development. Public utilities also played a significant role in shaping the growth and character of these early suburban developments. As properties were dependent on connections to utilities such as water, sewer, gas, and, later, electricity and telephones, it was common for developers to divide lots into rectangular parcels with narrow frontage on the street. This allowed for more houses to be built and maximized access to utilities, as well as profitability for the builder.

These long, narrow lots with houses sited at a regular setback from the street also allowed front and back yards, fulfilling residents' desire to be surrounded by a natural landscape and to breathe fresh air. While these are now typical elements of suburban development, in the 1880s and '90s they were a new concept as people fled the high-rise tenements of the dense older city. Despite relatively small lots and closely spaced buildings, residents in these new streetcar suburbs enjoyed more light, air, space, and better sanitary conditions than those in urban centers and older residential areas.

As streetcar suburbs became more widely settled, the desire to regulate and ensure their "quality" became common. In an era before true zoning regulations, the most common method for controlling the nature and character of community growth was through deed restrictions that could stipulate the type, use, and size of a building, and, in some instances, even its cost and architectural style.

Cities or housing organizations can also use deed restrictions to ensure permanently affordable housing, as was suggested in a 2017 article titled "Affordable Housing Strategies for the City of Buffalo." An affordability deed restriction, it claims, would ensure that any housing placed on city-owned vacant land would permanently remain affordable. Had such a deed existed as Elmwood was being developed, it might have ensured a population of greater economic diversity.[49]

Because it is legally enforceable, property owners can also use a deed restriction, or restrictive covenant as it is also called, to dictate how future owners may use a property. The deed can dictate just about anything—whether trees can be removed, the type of building materials used, require that the home be owner occupied, insist that stained-glass windows not be removed, and more. By purchasing the property, the buyer is bound by the deed's provisions. Additionally, deed restrictions "run with the land," meaning that a change in ownership does not impact the restriction; it applies to all future owners. Houses with such deed restrictions might be harder to sell, but they could prevent future changes that would be harmful to the structure's historical integrity.

Deed restrictions against apartments are common in Buffalo's Central Park neighborhood, which was built out roughly at the same time as the Elmwood District. Central Park was developed by Lewis J. Bennett, who in 1892 formally signed the zoning ordinances governing its build out. Stringent deed restrictions disallowed commercial R3 businesses and permitted only one dwelling and one barn per lot. Only single-family homes of at least two stories were allowed, and minimum costs of houses were specified according to street.

In the Elmwood District properties located at Elmwood and Forest contained deed restrictions dated 1892 limiting property use to residential, but these were recently overturned in court. Perhaps the telling of this story will uncover similar deed restrictions in Elmwood as were featured by other contemporary streetcar suburbs to maintain resident and physical restrictions.

The Streetcar Suburb Succumbs to the Automobile

The introduction of the automobile and its widespread popularity in the early decades of the twentieth century spelled the eventual end of the streetcar suburb as it changed the means of transit. Eventually, it also changed housing. Initially, automobiles were incorporated into the streetcar neighborhoods, spurring the conversion of carriage houses or the construction of new buildings to serve as garages. New driveways were installed.

By the 1920s automobiles and buses quickly began to dominate transportation. As streetcar ridership declined, many streetcar lines were removed and replaced with buses for more

flexible routing. By the 1940s, removal of track and streetcars was accelerating nationwide. Like the streetcar of a half-century earlier, the increased speed and wide-ranging independence of automobile travel allowed for further growth and expansion away from city centers.

New automobile suburbs even more remotely located were created, such as the Parkside subdivision in Buffalo, marking the end of the era of the streetcar suburb and the beginning of the suburb as we have known it from the 1950s: a bedroom community where people mostly commute to the city or work nearby in service organizations.

The Emergence of Large Estates in the New Suburb

Although the east and west parts of the Elmwood District developed somewhat contemporaneously, they underwent quite different settlement patterns: denser, streetcar-suburb-style development was occurring on commoditized lots west of Elmwood Avenue, while east of Elmwood Avenue was becoming an area of residential estates established on large tracts pieced together from earlier farm lots that had fronted on Main Street and Delaware Avenue.

The farm lots' proximity to Olmsted's park system made them especially desirable and valuable. Members of the city's elite already resided in prominent mansions on nearby Delaware Avenue in what became known as "Millionaires' Row," especially between Summer and Ferry Streets. Now officially designated as the "Delaware Avenue National Register Historic District," the Row lies on the west side of Delaware Avenue between the north side of North Street and the south side of Bryant Street. Those magnificent properties provided instant status to those nearby, and other wealthy citizens built their large estates on the streets radiating westward from Delaware Avenue toward Elmwood Avenue, making proximity to Delaware Avenue highly desirable then, before Elmwood Avenue was extended south to connect to downtown, and even today because of the avenue's estate legacy.

Among several definitions of the word *estate* are these: social standing or rank, especially of high order; and a landed property usually with a large house on it. Other more complex interpretations of the word have been made over time, but it seems agreed that describing a property as an estate references the power, status, wealth, and privilege of the owners as well as a large private place of buildings and gardens. The fact that a significant number of estates were created in Elmwood reinforced the WASPish dynamic alluded to earlier.

As noted before, the division between urban life and suburban or rural life was of popular concern during this time. In the 1850s, architect-tastemaker Andrew Jackson Downing had influenced this thinking. In the '60s, New York City architect Henry Hudson Holly, directly influenced by Downing, echoed him: "Though compelled to spend the business hours of the day in the city, [people] gladly hasten when those are over to peaceful homes, removed from the bustle and turmoil of the crowded town." He viewed this trend optimistically: "Taste has improved greatly since the days of Downing ... many young Americans of intelligence and culture are studying and assuming its values."[50] Influenced by the kind of taste-making found in his books, *Holly's Picturesque Country Seats* and *Holly's Church Architecture*, wealthy citizens began to retreat to a quieter residential setting at the end of their workday. And when the very wealthy escaped, they created estates in which to enjoy their peace and quiet.

As one of the most prominent cities in America at this time, Buffalo would be at the forefront of this trend. Many of the tracts on which its wealthy citizens built their grand manor houses resembled carefully manicured "estate parks" reminiscent of Olmsted's nearby public park system. Indeed, the milieu thus created was what Olmsted had hoped would result for the future development he knew would occur in the areas surrounding his designs.

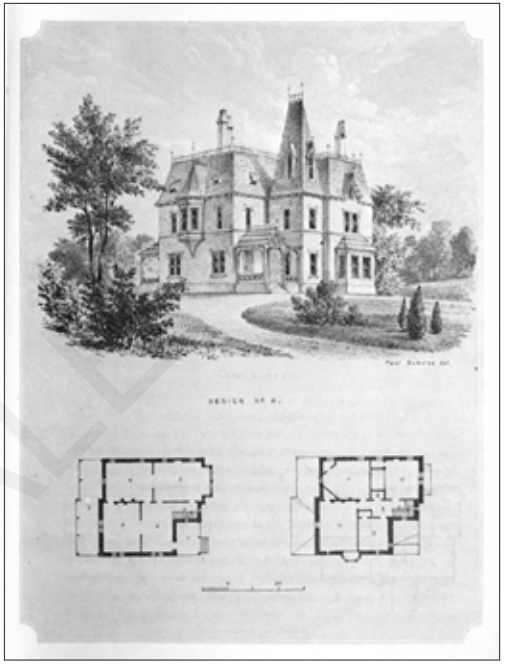
Several Delaware Avenue estates were designed by professional landscape architects, reflecting the widespread belief that an aesthetic environment could elevate one's physical and mental health, and a professional brought the expertise needed. In fact, Holly insisted that the planning of the grounds of an estate is "something so peculiar and intricate that none but a professional can do it justice." Far more than simple gardening was required, he suggested, in order to create a "truly harmonized setting."[51] For property owners wealthy enough to replicate

Olmsted's visions on their own land, these estate parks demonstrated both their social prestige and reflected the broader popularity of these beliefs during the late nineteenth century.

Holly's vision of the ideal residential setting included his belief that "the heads of families are not only recuperating from the deleterious effects of city life, but are, with the aid of fresh air and wholesome food, laying the foundation for greater strength and increased happiness for their children."[52] Encouraging the wealthy aristocracy to consider their estate as an investment that would extend beyond their own lifetime, Holly compared the establishment of a family estate to the planting of a tree: "People who build [in this manner] are often like those who plant trees, whose full luxuriance they themselves can never expect to enjoy; and the children who come after them reap the benefit of the generous forethought." Indeed, Olmsted, the quintessential "tree planter," expressed that very thought when he said: "I have all my life been considering distant effects and always sacrificing immediate success and applause to that of the future." The generous forethought of Olmsted and his clients, Buffalo's civic leaders, was for those who could not "build their own luxuriance." As the Commissioners stated in their second report, "… the Park is for the people, for the masses of the people."[53]

However, Henry Hudson Holly had a different audience. While establishing an inheritance in the form of extensive, private real estate development was likely beyond the means of most people during the mid-to-late nineteenth century, for those who could afford to do so, a family estate was best achieved through a process Holly called "clubbing." Rather than purchasing a single property for the head of household, a family or a group of families would band together to expand the scope of their real estate holdings. "It is by a number of families clubbing together, and procuring an attractive spot … which, by mutual agreements and some slight restrictions, can be laid out in a picturesque manner for building," Holly wrote.[54]

This phenomenon occurred early in the future Elmwood District, as was seen with the Grangers and the Rumseys. Later, it continued in the Elmwood District, where some of Buffalo's wealthiest families—the Albrights, the Goodyears, the Larkins—purchased several lots and combined them into one large estate. Each will be detailed in the following chapter. Some of these estates were located directly adjacent to the mansions on Delaware Avenue, effectively creating a region that comprised some of the city's most elite citizens.



A prototypical Modern Dwelling by H. Hudson Holly.

"We would take advantage of this opportunity to advise the application of some distinctive name to every detached country house, however small, since it cannot be distinguished by a number, as in town," wrote Henry Hudson Holly. "The name should, of course, be suggestive of some fact connected with the house, its owner, or its location, and should be original, or at least not copied from any in the vicinity … We would offer, as names not yet become common among us, the following taken from country seats in England, which may serve as suggestions …." Among the 136 names that Holly suggested are Elm Cottage, Elm Grove, Elmstead, and Elmwood among the 37 names associated with trees and wood. This may be the source of the name Elmwood in Buffalo and in several other cities in the United States.

Published in Holly's Country Seats: Modern Dwellings, *by Henry Hudson Holly*

Women lead home building in the new Elmwood District's west while estates develop in the east

SEVEN

Becoming a Home to Houses and Estates

The pioneer-settlers who had encountered a naturally forested, sometimes swampy environment at the beginning of the nineteenth century started to tame the landscape by clearing the forest for their houses and farms, even outside of Ellicott's outer lots. Beginning in the 1840s and continuing into the 1850s, another generation began to change that landscape into a human one that mimicked nature while simultaneously replacing it—or, paraphrasing how Olmsted described his work, *art completing nature*.

The early farms of the pioneers became commercial nurseries that developed to satisfy the demand by increasingly sophisticated later-generation residents for exotic trees and ornamentals. These dramatically impacted the transition to the naturalistic, especially in the Elmwood District. During this period, Buffalo was moving from the pioneer era to the high design and high-mindedness of the world-class city it aimed to be.

By the 1870s, Forest Lawn Cemetery, Delaware Park, and the Buffalo State Asylum in the northern part of Elmwood contributed enormously to the new art-completing-nature approach and the new look of Buffalo's growing suburb. They encompassed more than 500-acres of carefully manicured, naturalistic *greensward*—to use Olmsted's term—and they ignited an explosion of growth in Elmwood that accommodated Buffalo's booming population and wealth at a very sophisticated level. Today, several of the city's most important cultural institutions, the Buffalo History Museum, the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, the Burchfield Penney Art Center, and the Richardson Olmsted Campus and its Lipsey Architecture Center of Buffalo, bridge both sections of the district along its northern border.

The result is a significant community of places of varied styles but generally similar scale, much of it grand, wrought over time by the people and forces at work in that former forest. The whole built environment of the Elmwood District is organized in varying degrees by the Olmsted parkways and circles, and is crowned by Delaware Park, Buffalo's grandest. The circles orient the setting for all of them, connecting Olmsted's parkways to major streets.

As gracious and beautifully landscaped as they are, however, the circles are not scenes of activity. Instead, they are islands of grandeur ornamented by a beautiful Victorian multilight standard here, a large working fountain there, and still another by a bronze statue. All are embellished by colorful plantings cared for by the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting, enhancing, and maintaining the Olmsted legacy. The Conservancy is the formal successor to Buffalo Friends of Olmsted Parks, a grassroots group formed in 1978 by local park advocates inspired by a 1970s "national reawakening to the Olmsted legacy." With a goal of preserving what remained of Buffalo's parks and parkways, Friends was founded by former Erie County legislator and dynamic preservationist and environmentalist Joan Bozer. The group was led by Gretchen Toles, a national leader in the conservancy movement for urban parks who served as president, and her husband, Tom Toles, Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist formerly with *The Buffalo News*, more recently nationally syndicated by the *Washington Post*. Both Toleses are renowned for their commitment to the environment, social consciousness, and political activism. All the circles are surrounded by asphalt and traffic, and their size accommodates only a limited number of people, but Bidwell Place (now Colonial Circle) and Chapin

TOP: A contemporary photograph of the Parkes' Residence at 759 Bird Avenue.

BOTTOM: A contemporary photograph of 805 W. Ferry, home of Walter Jenkins.

These properties illustrate Holly's call for integration of residence and landscape that so characterized the Elmwood District at its birth. While much of this character remains intact today, Elmwood District residents cannot take for granted that current development will respect and retain this legacy that gives the Elmwood District and indeed the city of Buffalo, so much value three centuries hence.

Photos by Gregory Pinto, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

Place (now Gates Circle) can be visited, and their beauty makes them worth seeing. It is the parkways that unite the various sections of the district and provide venues for the people and activities that engender so much vitality and excitement about the quality of life enjoyed in the district.

An Explosion of House Building

By the mid-1890s, the Elmwood District was poised to become Buffalo's most attractive and fashionable neighborhood. During 1898 and 1899, the city issued about two thousand building permits (nearly four per day!) many of them for residential buildings and many to be built in the Elmwood District.

Although Elmwood was already developing, the Pan-American Exposition scheduled to take place from May 1 through November 1, 1901, on grounds located just north of Delaware Park, accelerated further growth. The Exposition had been planned to open several years earlier but progress was interrupted by the Spanish-American War. In the years leading up to the fair, new streetcar lines were added to the transportation network. By the fair's opening, the Elmwood Avenue line brought travelers directly to an Exposition main gate, greatly enhancing movement within the area for those already living in the district and improving access and attendance at the fair. Apartment buildings were built, in part to provide housing for some of the expected thousands of fairgoers.

Showing an entrepreneurial spirit and taking advantage of their proximity to the fair, many homeowners rented out rooms to Exposition visitors. The Parkes at 759 Bird Avenue offered guests lodging and breakfast in their newly built 1892 residence, as well as maps so they could find their way in the city. A Mrs. Cleves at 383 Bryant Street advertised a "delightful location" ten minutes from the Pan-American grounds. Walter S. Jenkins offered guests a ground-floor room and a private bathroom in his house at 805 W. Ferry.[55]

Few remember that restaurateur-hotelier Ellsworth M. Statler built a hotel at the northeast corner of Forest and Elmwood, across from the Buffalo State Asylum, for the convenience of Exposition visitors. The hotel's location was just one trolley stop away, across Scajaquada Creek. It was the first major building known to be built on Elmwood Avenue.

Statler's plans were always grandiose, and the hotel was no exception. At the time the largest in the world, Statler's Pan-American Hotel was three stories high, sprawled over four acres, had 2,100 sleeping rooms, many with attached bathrooms, and could accommodate up to 5,000 guests. All the sleeping rooms had exterior windows, many of them with views of the bucolic grounds of the the Richardson- and Olmsted-designed State Asylum right across Elmwood Avenue. The price for a room, including breakfast and dinner (lunch could be had at the Exposition) ranged from two to five dollars per night. The contemporary book, *Buffalo – Old and New*, has more to say about the view: "*From the towers of the hotel*

a magnificent view meets the eye in every direction and especially in the evening when the exhibition grounds are lighted up with myriads of glistering electric lights; the sight is entrancing."[56]

The Pan-American Hotel did not have, or need, a parking lot because few cars were available for purchase in 1901, even if you could afford one, and the Elmwood Avenue and Forest Avenue trolleys now stopped in front of the hotel. When the fair ended, the hotel became a financial liability, and Statler had it demolished. Penhurst Park and the relatively new houses facing Elmwood between Forest and Penhurst Place occupy the site today.

The fair was a daily presence throughout the city and increased traffic everywhere. Along Lincoln Parkway, where few of the mansions that would soon be built yet existed, fairgoers made their way to the Exposition entrance located at the end of that grand boulevard. The Pan-Am's influence on Elmwood's development is difficult to assess, but it is reasonable to assume that the excitement and energy it generated in the years leading up to its opening had a positive impact on growth.

Though it had been touted as "an unprecedented opportunity to trumpet the virtues of Buffalo as an emergent center of American industry," the fair ended badly.[57] The traumatic assassination attempt on President McKinley at the Temple of Music on September 6 and his death a week later were tragedies that sent the nation into mourning. People's muted desire for the excitement of a fair resulted in a precipitous loss of attendance. Tourists stopped coming and locals stopped going. Financial losses exceeded

The Pan-American Exposition Company promoted, planned, and implemented a world's fair in Buffalo in 1901, supported by $500,000 from Congress. With the "Pan-Am," the city promoted its stature as the nation's eighth largest city (population 350,000) and one of the wealthiest. Buffalo was among the largest railroad centers, offering connections within a day's train ride to 40 million people, and was also an internationally significant port. Hence the Pan-Am's crossroads theme: "Commercial well being and good understanding among the American Republics."[58]

Located at the northern edge of the Elmwood District and adjacent to Delaware Park, the Pan-American Exposition succeeded in enhancing Frederick Law Olmsted's Elmwood District of the streetcar era. It also sparked Parkside, among America's first automobile suburbs, designed by the successor Olmsted Brothers firm.

Buffalo was a cultural crossroads, as well. Its Beaux Arts/City Beautiful layout and Spanish Renaissance style architecture looked backwards even as the U.S. became a world power after the Spanish American War of 1898.

The Electric Age began in Buffalo. The Pan-Am was illuminated with the new alternating current power transportation system that conveyed electricity generated at Niagara Falls, 25 miles away. Buffalo became known as the City of Light.

The Pan-Am was marred by the assassination of President William McKinley during his visit in September 1901. And it should be noted that its exhibits of peoples and cultures featured an American ethnocentrism that is abhorrent today.

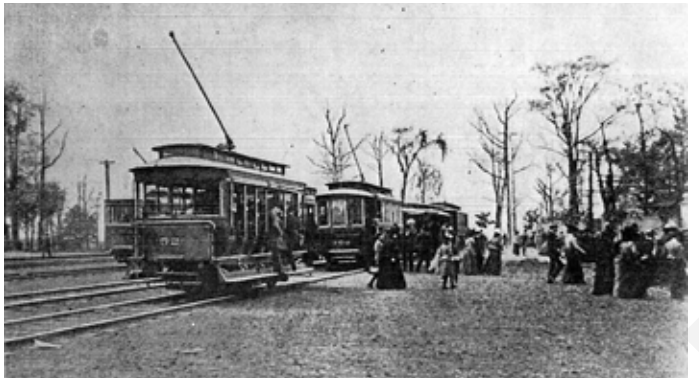
Bird's eye view of the Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, May 1 - November 1, 1901.
Image Courtesy of the Library of Congress

$6 million. The palpable spark to life in the area that was felt for a great part of the six months during which the fair lasted died with the president, and gloom and anger took its place. On closing day, November 2, which had been designated "Buffalo Day," angry residents stormed the site and began tearing down the elaborate temporary structures.

Just as Buffalo had bounced back after its burning a century before, residential construction continued apace in the Elmwood District. In November 1902, the journal *Greater Buffalo* quantified Elmwood's development, reporting that fifty-seven buildings ranging from stone mansions to four-family apartments were then being built. Only one, a store building at the corner of Elmwood and Auburn avenues, was not residential. Here's how the numbers and locations broke down:

> *Hoyt, 5; North Norwood, 2; North Ashland, 5; Richmond, 2; Norwood, 3; Ashland, 1; Elmwood, 5; Brantford Place, 2; Lincoln Parkway, 2; Bidwell Parkway, 5; Auburn, 2; Lafayette, 4; W. Delavan, 7; Potomac, 3; Bird, 2.*[59]

All but one of these streets were in Elmwood West, where the greatest number of large lots existed and, therefore, the most subdivisions and new residences; few of those streets crosses into Elmwood East, whose large estates had not yet been substantially subdivided. In addition, construction on more than two dozen houses was said to have been recently completed. The article estimated that



TOP: Unloading at the Elmwood Gate on Dedication Day of the Pan-American Exposition (1901). While the growth and popularity of the Elmwood Historic District preceded Buffalo's Pan-American Exposition, held nearby on grounds adjacent to Elmwood Avenue, the fair did improve Buffalo's streetcar lines and brought scores of visitors to the area.

Published in 90 Years of Buffalo Railway, 1860-1950, International Railway Company, *by William Reed Gordon*

BOTTOM: Photograph of Statler's Pan-American Hotel on Elmwood and Forest avenues. This is early Elmwood District at its most "urban." The site of the hotel would become the residential development Penhurst Park—and a gas station.

Photograph courtesy of Susan Eck, retrieved from PanAm1901.org

at least seventy-six new residences were built in the Elmwood District between May and November 1902, a rate of about three per week.[60]

The Face of Elmwood West

Elmwood West is characterized by handsome single, double, multifamily, and apartment dwellings reflecting the popular architectural styles of the latter decades of the nineteenth century. They range from elegantly simple Italianates such as that at 170 Ashland to imposing Colonial Revivals, one of which can be seen at 25 Colonial Circle, and from ornate Queen Annes exemplified at 54 Claremont Avenue to the grand and imposing French Renaissance Beaux Arts design of brick and Medina sandstone at 356 Richmond Avenue. There are also Arts and Crafts-type bungalows and vernacular Victorians.

Although a number of definitions have been applied to vernacular architecture, basically it is a style based on local needs and available materials that reflects local traditions. When the houses in the Elmwood District were built, nearly all were designed by local builders, not trained architects, and the designs were often based on pattern books. A small number of such houses at the south end of Richmond Avenue, one of the district's earliest streets, date to the 1870s and are among its earliest buildings.

As two of the Elmwood District's oldest north-south major thoroughfares, Richmond and Elmwood avenues were originally wider than other streets in the West section of the historic district.

TOP: Row of residences on Elmwood Avenue just north of Bidwell Parkway. Three are completed and three are being built by John W. Gibbs, of The Niederpruem, Gibbs & Schaaf Co." (1902). While the houses shown here are on the east side of Elmwood Avenue, part of the Elmwood Historic District (East), this is an excellent view of houses under construction in the Elmwood District. Although constructed by the same builder and sharing some similarities in form and detail, each house is rendered slightly differently. This gives the district a cohesive feel while allowing buyers to feel as though they were purchasing their own custom-designed house.

BOTTOM: "New Houses in Course of Erection on W. Delavan Ave." (1902). While the exact location of these houses is unclear, this is an excellent historic image showing how these houses were built in groups by a common builder or developer. Note the use of horses and mules in the construction process. While electric lines are evident in the top photo, electric tools are apparently not yet in wide use.
Published in Greater Buffalo: A Monthly Publication Devoted to Promoting the Prosperity of the Power City of America

Images of a Newly Emerging Elmwood District, 1890-1910

Model of Perfection

The ideal two-family flat. Examine it.
Ideal in construction. Ideal in location.
One of these flats in the Elmwood District purchased under the Phillips plan will provide its owner with Free Rent and pay for itself.
These flats combine every improvement known to the modern science of home building.

FOR SALE OR RENT

Floor Plan of One of the Latest Phillips Flats

Observe the numerous advantages: Communication with the front and back doors without passing through the living-room. As much room as there is in an ordinary single dwelling and much more convenient. Look at the living-room with its library and French swing doors to both bookcase and dining-room. See the large bedrooms and the superb tile bath-room. Sound-proof walls and floors.

Buy one of these flats in the heart of the Elmwood District for a small payment down and the balance the same as rent. The rent from one flat will pay all the carrying charges, interest and principal installment.

BUY NOW

Only 25 Lots Left in the Elmwood District—for Flats

Harry E. Phillips No. 9 Niagara St. Both Telephones

Phone office for automobile to show you properties for sale or rent
Phones—Bell, Seneca 910; Federal 304

SAY YOU SAW IT IN THE LIVE WIRE

TOP (LEFT TO RIGHT):

A 1913 newspaper advertisement for "The ideal two-family flat."

Buffalo Live Wire, March 1913

Example of a two-story flat as advertised, commissioned by Harry E. Phillips and constructed at 808 Richmond Avenue.

Photograph courtesy Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

592 W. Ferry Street, built circa 1890 by J. Adam Lautz, is for sale. Note 408 Ashland Avenue to the rear.

Photograph from Real Estate and Building News, *May 1891.*

BOTTOM (LEFT TO RIGHT):

A house on Dorchester Road designed by Green & Wicks in 1907 takes full advantage of a corner site.

From The American Architect and Building News, *March 23, 1907*

Proud pair of Tudor duplex townhouses on Bidwell Parkway designed by Esenwein & Johnson for Ernest C. Colter, 1907.

From The American Architect and Building News, *April 27, 1907*

266 Richmond Avenue, home of Charles P. Stevenson, who was active in real estate in the 1890s.

Photograph from A History of the City of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, *by George Washington Englehardt (1896)*

TOP (LEFT TO RIGHT):

Circa 1890 photo of Ashland Avenue, looking north from Summer Street. Note the recently planted saplings and new electric poles.

Collection of the Buffalo History Museum. General Photograph Collection, Streets-Ashland & Summer

View looking north on Richmond Avenue from The Circle (now Symphony Circle) along its notoriously muddy surface, newly paved with Trinidad Asphalt pavement. The Buffalo Asylum Towers loom in the distance.

Photograph from A History of the City of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, *by George Washington Englehardt (1896)*

MIDDLE (LEFT TO RIGHT):

Architect William L. Schmolle designed this four-family house at 576 Potomac Avenue for Flora J. Tharle in the Queen Anne style. Tharle simultaneously developed houses at 572, 576 and 580 Potomac Avenue, as well as at 721 Ashland Avenue.

Photograph courtesy Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

The Bidwell Park, 188-196 Bidwell Parkway, advertised rooms for visitors to the Pan-American Exposition.

Image originally published in All about the Pan-American city and vicinity *by Baldwin Publishing Company*

BOTTOM (LEFT TO RIGHT):

Circa 1908 house at 781 W. Ferry Street designed for ice and coal magnate Edward H. Webster, also designed by Esenwein & Johnson.

From Our Country and Its People: A Descriptive Work on Erie County, New York, *by Truman C. White*

This Craftsman style home at 48 Dorchester Road was designed by George F. Townsend and built in 1907.

Image from The American Architect and Building News, *April 27, 1907*

TOP (LEFT TO RIGHT):

This lovely image shows streetcar tracks on a compressed-fill street with curbs, automobiles, streetlights, and overhead electrical wires above the tops of mature trees planted when the residences were built at the turn of the century, probably on the west side of Elmwood Avenue.

Date and source unknown

E. B. Green's blueprint for the home of prominent business leader and a founder of the Jewish Community Center, Emanuel Boasberg, 1296 Delaware Avenue, circa 1911.

Courtesy of City of Buffalo Department of Permit and Inspection Services

Gates Circle, newly remodeled in 1903.

Source unknown

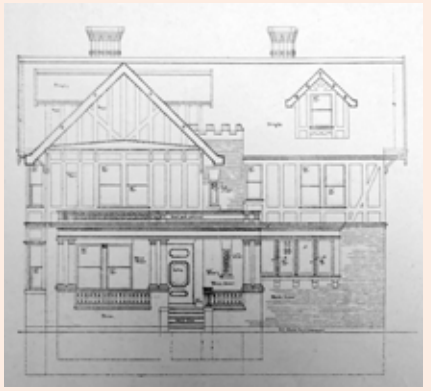
BOTTOM (LEFT TO RIGHT):

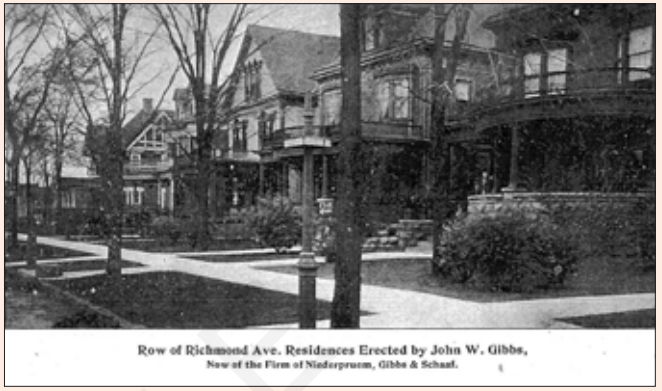
Circa 1896 view of Elmwood Avenue near Summer Street showing rows of lush trees and hitching posts curbside. Only the 300 Block, north of Summer Street, retains the original streetscape today.

From A History of the City of Buffalo and Niagara Falls *(1896)*

A view of Elmwood Avenue at Summer Street, looking north. Although the date is unknown, the Buffalo Tennis and Squash Club, which opened in 1916, is visible on the left. Note the masonry paving, curbs, and streetcar tracks. The streetcar changed the bucolic residential street seen in the 1896 photo by fostering commercial development.

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Streets - Ashland & Summer.





TOP (LEFT TO RIGHT):

Circa 1900 photo of Summer Street, captioned "one of many pleasant thoroughfares." Note the more mature trees and broad concrete sidewalks for strolling.

Reproduction by Permission of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Buffalo, New York

House designed by W. L. Schmolle for a lot on Dorchester Road near Norwood Avenue, circa 1902, featuring Tudor Revival styling, which was popular in the Elmwood District.

Image from "The New Elmwood District," Greater Buffalo: A Monthly Publication Devoted to Promoting the Prosperity of the Power City of America, *December 1902*

"Row of Richmond Avenue Residences Erected by John W. Gibbs." Note the elaborately designed cast iron street marker and signage.

Image from "The New Elmwood District," Greater Buffalo: A Monthly Publication Devoted to Promoting the Prosperity of the Power City of America, *December 1902*

BOTTOM (LEFT TO RIGHT):

The mansion of D. Y. Leslie at 578 Richmond Avenue. A wholesale lumber dealer, the elaborate trim on this home features Leslie's lumber. The house and Its distinctive porte cochere retain their grandeur today.

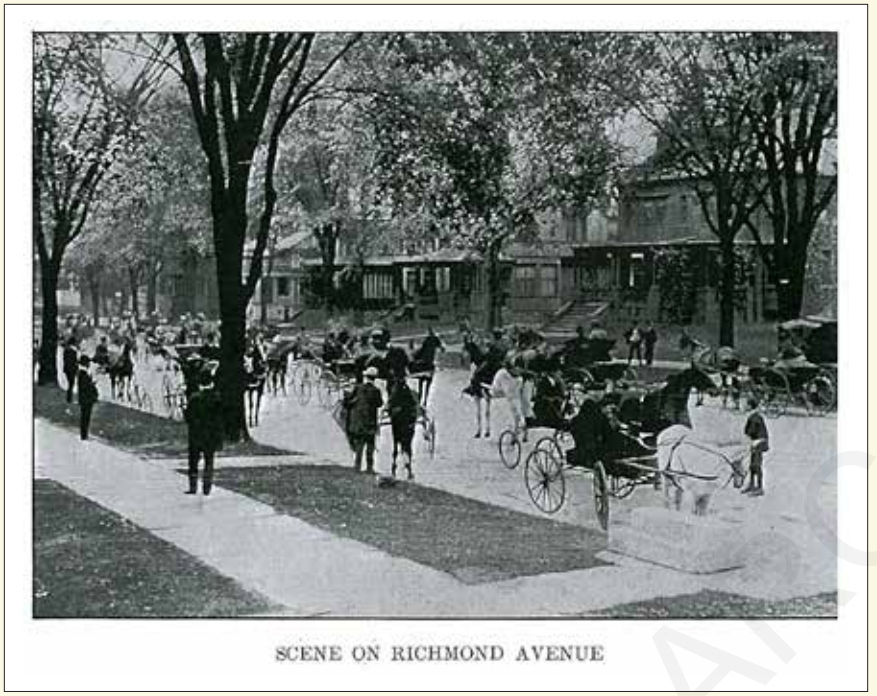
Image from A History of the City of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, *by George Washington Englehardt, 1896*

The circa 1908 Charles Mosier House at 96 Bidwell Parkway features a stone carriage block engraved with the owner's name. Carriage blocks allowed graceful mounting and dismounting to and from horse-drawn carriages.

Photograph retrieved from buffaloAH.com

The Charles Dudley Arnold House at 123 Bidwell Parkway at Elmwood Avenue. Built in 1895 and designed by nationally known architect Joseph Lyman Silsbee in whose office a young Frank Lloyd Wright was working at the time.

Photograph Courtesy of the Thomas Yanul collection


SCENE ON RICHMOND AVENUE

TROTTING: A SPORT FOR ELMWOOD'S WEALTHY

Many of the residents who purchased or built houses in the Elmwood District had made their wealth through Buffalo's growing industrial economy. They were generally managers, upper-level staff, or owners of some of Buffalo's thriving companies. Unlike Buffalo's working-class neighborhoods closer to downtown or on the east side, the Elmwood District was characterized by modest to great wealth, social standing, and leisure time, and the residents enjoyed recreations appropriate to their elevated standing. In the 1890s, one of the most common activities among the residents was known as "trotting," which consisted of pricey thoroughbred horses and carriages (sleighs in the winter) being raced on Richmond Avenue. This activity initially took place on Main Street, then later on Delaware Street, until it was eventually shifted to the wide and less trafficked Richmond Avenue.

An excellent image of carriage racing or "trotting" that was popular on Richmond Avenue. Note the carriage block in the right foreground. One gracefully mounted or dismounted a carriage with the help of these blocks.

Published in A History of the City of Buffalo Its Men and Institutions: Biographical Sketches of Leading Citizens *by the Buffalo Evening News*

One-hundred-foot-wide Richmond Avenue has remained very much as Olmsted's tree-lined The Avenue, which he intended as a gracious link to Delaware Park from the more settled neighborhoods of Allentown and Black Rock to the south and west. The street is listed separately on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Delaware Park-Front Park System in the Olmsted Park and Parks System Thematic Resources nomination.

Many of Richmond Avenue's residences are among the grander and statelier of Elmwood West houses, as may be seen in the images of 356 Richmond Avenue and 25 Colonial Circle. Two, the Mrs. E. H. Noye House (1883) at No. 35 and the William W. Tyler House (1884) at No. 39, are particularly noteworthy as rare remaining residential designs by Bethune, Bethune, and Fuchs, the architectural firm of America's first professional woman architect, Louise Blanchard Bethune, who practiced her profession in Buffalo. Also notable is No. 570, the William Wendt House, the lifetime home of Wendt's daughter, Margaret L. Wendt, founder of the regional philanthropic foundation bearing her name.

Richmond Avenue is also abundantly graced with numerous houses of worship; all will be discussed in some detail in Chapter Eight: Elmwood Becomes a Village. This wide, beautiful avenue afforded residents a scenic place both to promenade and to stage horse and carriage races—an unlikely place for a drag strip of its day.

Three other north-south streets make up Elmwood West: Norwood Avenue runs one way southbound from Lafayette Avenue to Summer

Street. Ashland Avenue, one-way northward from Summer Street, is truncated at Bidwell Parkway and then picks up again at Potomac Avenue, extending to Forest Avenue. Claremont Avenue, originally planned as the northern extension of Norwood Avenue, is one-way north from median-lined Dorchester Road to Forest Avenue and one-way south from Dorchester to Delavan Avenue. All were later streets, platted at sixty-six feet in width and with similar characteristics, including houses of comparable size and scale generally dating to the 1890s. Claremont Avenue features more flats than other streets farther south.

Norwood and Ashland avenues retain some early farmhouses among grander new residences. The houses on these streets tend to be set back twenty-five to thirty feet from the curb, as is also true on Richmond Avenue. These streets still have some of their original slate sidewalks, are still lined with the original Medina sandstone curbing, and many still feature the many trees planted by the original developers. Today, among the trees lining Norwood Avenue are many Norway maples, from which it takes its name. Similarly, Ashland Avenue was named for the many ash trees planted along it. The trees on Claremont Avenue are mostly linden. Though remnant trees from pre-Elmwood days may exist in the district, especially in Elmwood East, most trees extant today were planted by developers as they built subdivisions on cleared former farm lots.

Among the east-west streets in Elmwood West, the 100-foot width of the two oldest, W. Ferry Street and Lafayette Avenue, immediately

RESIDENCE OF W. H. SCHMIDT, 356 Richmond Avenue.

Mr. Schmidt is a leading Buffalo Contractor, with offices in the Builders' Exchange.

TOP LEFT: The William H. Schmidt House is one of the most lavish and recognizable houses on Richmond Avenue, with its elaborate use of Medina sandstone and Beaux-Arts design.

Published in Buffalo, New York: The Book of Its Merchant Exchange *by George Washington Engelhardt*

BOTTOM LEFT: A photograph of the Noye house at 35 Richmond Avenue, designed by Louise Bethune.

Photograph by Chuck LaChiusa, BuffaloAH.com

TOP RIGHT: The Charles Lee Abell Residence, 43 Lexington Avenue, was designed by Louise Bethune in 1889-90. Respected for her prowess as an architect and her professional demeanor, Bethune earned many commissions from prominent business leaders like Abell.

Photograph by Gregory Pinto, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

BOTTOM RIGHT: This Colonial Revival style house at 25 Colonial Circle features a full-width, open front porch with Ionic columns, pedimented dormers, a center dormer with a broken pediment and Palladian style window, all in a highly detailed yet serene composition befitting its prominent location.

Photograph by Chuck LaChiusa

THE WENDT FAMILY AND THEIR ENDURING LEGACIES

William F. Wendt is perhaps the quintessential *male* resident of the Elmwood District as it developed in the late nineteenth century, as well as an honorable representative of Buffalo's prominent German and German-American community that emerged as leaders in business, industry, and politics. Born in Buffalo in 1858, the son of German immigrants, Wendt, while still in his early twenties, purchased for a small sum a half-interest in the newly established Buffalo Forge Company, which at the time was struggling. In 1883 Wendt bought out his partner and assumed control of the company; in 1909 he was joined in the business by his brother Henry. The Buffalo Forge Company became one of the city's most prominent and diverse machinery companies, selling a variety of heating and ventilating equipment and high-speed automatic engines. With employee Willis H. Carrier, Buffalo Forge pioneered air conditioning systems in the early nineteenth century.

In 1895 Wendt engaged one of Buffalo's most prominent architects, George J. Metzger, to design a stately brick mansion and carriage house at 570 Richmond Avenue. The 1910 census records as its residents William and Mary Wendt, daughter Margaret L., and two household servants. In the large carriage house lived George Griffon, the family's chauffeur, and his wife, Mary. Wendt retired in 1916 and died October 31, 1923. Mary and Margaret Wendt remained in the Elmwood District. After her mother's death in the 1940s, Margaret continued to reside in the house until her own death in 1972, giving the Wendt family a presence on Richmond Avenue for nearly eighty years.

Margaret L. Wendt exemplifies the type of *woman* who lived in the Elmwood Historic District. After the death of her parents, Margaret inherited both the house and the family fortune. With this inheritance, Margaret established the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation, a charitable entity that was one of the first of its kind in Buffalo. Margaret's directive for the foundation was to improve the lives of city residents. Still prominent today, the Wendt Foundation has contributed millions of dollars to Buffalo and Western New York communities in support of their efforts to protect and preserve historic places and cultural institutions.

LEFT: A contemporary photograph of the William F. Wendt House at 570 Richmond Avenue where Ms. Wendt lived her entire life. A single family house built for a family of three and servants is now subdivided into multiple apartments, the circumstance of many Elmwood District mansions over time.
Photograph by Chuck LaChiusa

RIGHT: Portrait of Margaret L. Wendt around the time of her graduation from Buffalo Seminary in 1903.
Photograph courtesy of Buffalo Seminary

distinguishes them, and the residences on these streets match their grandeur. Both streets are home to some of the largest and most architecturally significant homes in both sections of the Elmwood District. The massive temple-like front gambrel façade of the circa 1895 Colonial Revival at 580 W. Ferry Street epitomizes the grandeur of the homes in Elmwood West. Most of the homes on Summer Street, another fairly early avenue that is the southernmost in the historic district, were built in the 1890s and early years of the twentieth century, although there are some that date to the 1880s. The street's canopy is provided by ash, cherry, maple, and linden trees.

Lexington Avenue is a shady, tree-lined street of handsome residences extending between Richmond and Delaware avenues. The presence of a unique, historic commercial center at the intersection of Lexington and Ashland avenues that has served the neighborhood since the late nineteenth century reflects the importance of this cross-roads location before Elmwood Avenue was connected to downtown, after which Elmwood became more dominant. Two three-story buildings anchor diagonal corners. The upper floors of both feature apartments; the ground floor, store fronts. At the northwest corner, The Hyatt, dating to 1888 and designed with modest Commercial Italianate styling and cast iron storefront framing typical of that time, today hosts a stained-glass artisan's atelier, a hair salon, and a small shop featuring products from a local farm.

Its counterpart on the southeast corner, is the Lexington which opened in 1905, seventeen

TOP: The 3-story, gambrel-roofed, beige brick high Colonial Revival style house at 580 W. Ferry Street is unique because of its 2-story, full-width, shed roof portico supported by Ionic columns, Palladian windows in the gable, and porte cochere on the side. The towering copper beech tree is among the most magnificent trees in the Elmwood District.

BOTTOM: The Lexington and its neighbor The Hyatt, date back to the time before Elmwood Avenue connected with downtown, when this Ashland and Lexington Avenue intersection was the commercial center of Elmwood District West.

Photographs courtesy of Clinton Brown

years after The Hyatt building. The Lexington's confident design, with its Queen Anne styling, multi-chrome sandstone and brick, and diamond-shaped panels at the third story, displays the greater sophistication of the new century. Its storefronts house a ballet school, two cafés, and a shop featuring artisanal jewelry that was celebrating its thirtieth anniversary at that site in 2018. A women's apparel boutique occupies the frame property at the southwest corner. Cater-corner from it is the "granddaddy" of the intersection, a two-story frame building constructed in 1878 and housing one of the oldest taverns in Buffalo, long known as The Place. For many years a popular restaurant, it has been recently remodeled by its newest owners who have retained many of the popular menu items.

Located at the eastern corners of Ashland Avenue and Bryant Street are two more long-standing neighborhood commercial buildings: in one, designed by Louise Bethune, is a popular Italian restaurant; in the other, a ground-floor empty storefront and two floors of apartments. Lining the remainder of both sides of Bryant Street to Elmwood Avenue are more-recent commercial enterprises.

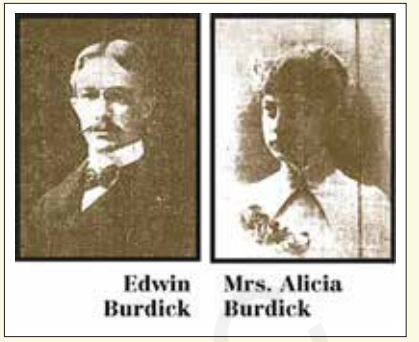
An exceptional east-west street is seventy-six-foot-wide Dorchester Road, which runs from Bidwell Parkway through Richmond Avenue to Baynes Street on the west side. Developed in the 1900s, slightly later than surrounding streets, it is the only non-Olmsted street in Elmwood West that is divided by a well-manicured median, flanked by two twenty-foot-wide roadways. Its design appears to have been an effort to create an exclusive street commanding higher prices, as the Olmsted parkways were destined to do. Contributions from Dorchester resident-volunteers today provide a neighborhood beautification fund for plantings, which they install and maintain. Most houses on the street were built in the early twentieth century. Excellent examples by noted local architects E. B. Green and William Wicks are the William H. Scott House at No, 20, built in 1904; the H. C. Gerber House at No. 23, built in 1908; and the Fred Dullard House at No. 49, built in 1910.

Women's Role in the Growth of Elmwood

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, Buffalo's economy was based almost entirely on commerce. Its area was still small and pedestrian travel to the workplace was a norm for many workers. Some even walked home for lunch.

With the rise in the mid-nineteenth century of Buffalo's industrial might, the building of forges, manufactories, and other developing enterprises created different new jobs that took workers farther from home and kept them longer on site. Additionally, even though advances in transportation began to make distances more accessible and traveling to them less onerous, women simply did not work in such places.

As a result, the work and roles of men and women began to diverge: the man left his home for his job, and the woman remained behind



ASHLAND AVENUE MURDER SCANDAL

The spotlight was focused on one of the most scandalous episodes to rock the Elmwood District on Friday morning, February 27, 1903, when Edwin Burdick, an executive and part owner of the Buffalo Envelope Company, was found murdered in his luxurious 101 Ashland Avenue home. Burdick, felled by head wounds, was discovered wrapped in a carpet on his sofa. Only a few months before, Burdick had filed for divorce from his wife, Alicia, who was rumored to have been conducting an affair with family friend and local lawyer, Arthur Pennell. At the time of her husband's death, Alicia was in Atlantic City; only Burdick's mother-in-law and three children were in the house. Many speculated that Pennell killed Burdick in a fit of jealous rage.

Nationwide newspapers carried the story, emphasizing the high-society angle of the Burdicks and the Pennells. They came to epitomize perceptions of Elmwood District residents as young, married, wealthy bon vivants who led decadent, unscrupulous lives filled with drinking, partying, dancing, and other activities considered morally questionable by an older generation of Buffalonians. The case was never officially solved, and Pennell and his wife were killed only a few weeks after the murder in March 1903, when their carriage plummeted into a quarry on Kensington Avenue in Buffalo. Some suspected Pennell had taken his own life because of the scandalous accusations about him.

TOP LEFT AND RIGHT: The Burdick Home at 101 Ashland Avenue and photographs of the ill-fated Burdicks published at the time of the scandal.
These photographs appeared in the December 2008 issue of Buffalo Spree*, in "*Fear and Loathing and Sex and Death, Buffalo-Style*," by Elizabeth Licata.*

to manage her household. Depending on the family's financial status, she may have had part-time help, and if wealthy, a full-time maid, cook, or laundress, and sometimes even all three … perhaps more. She, in fact, became a household manager of a small, and in some instances large, estate business, sometimes consisting of a main house, ancillary buildings, and flower and vegetable gardens, all under a canopy of selected trees.

It was not until 1848, however, that married women could own property in New York state. Single women and widows had more rights in that regard. In the mid-1830s, Polish immigrant Ernestine Rose initiated a campaign coordinated with suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton and abolitionist Paulina Kellogg Wright for a state law governing the property rights of married women. Through their efforts, the legislature passed the "Married Women's Property Law." The new law protected the real and personal property and any rents, issues, or profits derived from it owned by women before marriage from disposal by a husband after marriage. It also freed her from liability for his debts. It did the same for already married women except it did not exclude her from such liability. A third provision made it lawful for married women to receive gifts, grants, or bequests of property "from any person other than her husband for her sole and separate use, as if she were a single female." Here, too, her property was not subject to the disposal of her husband, nor liability for his debts.[61]

Three months after passage of the law, the first women's rights convention, organized by Stanton

and others, took place in Seneca Falls. As a result of the law, those attending, as she later wrote: "… [could] believ[e] that the first step had been taken to right [their wrongs.]"[62]

In 1862, the legislature passed the Earnings Act, a significant reform giving women legal status to own separate wages and to enter into contracts. These laws had great consequence for women, especially women in the rapidly growing Elmwood District. Still, in the late Victorian era of the 1880s and 1890s and into the early years of the twentieth century, it was rather uncommon for a woman to work outside the home and to own property. It was an era when women still could not vote and many venues were closed to them, and where numerous societal restrictions governed their behavior and stifled their voices.

Perhaps, given their strengths and skills in managing their households, plus an entrepreneurial spirit that seemed embedded in the Buffalo psyche, it should not be surprising that now, supported by law, women overturned the long-held societal norm against their owning property. This development ushered women into the new position of publicly negotiating and contracting with men and introduced new roles and relationships for them, particularly in real estate transactions.

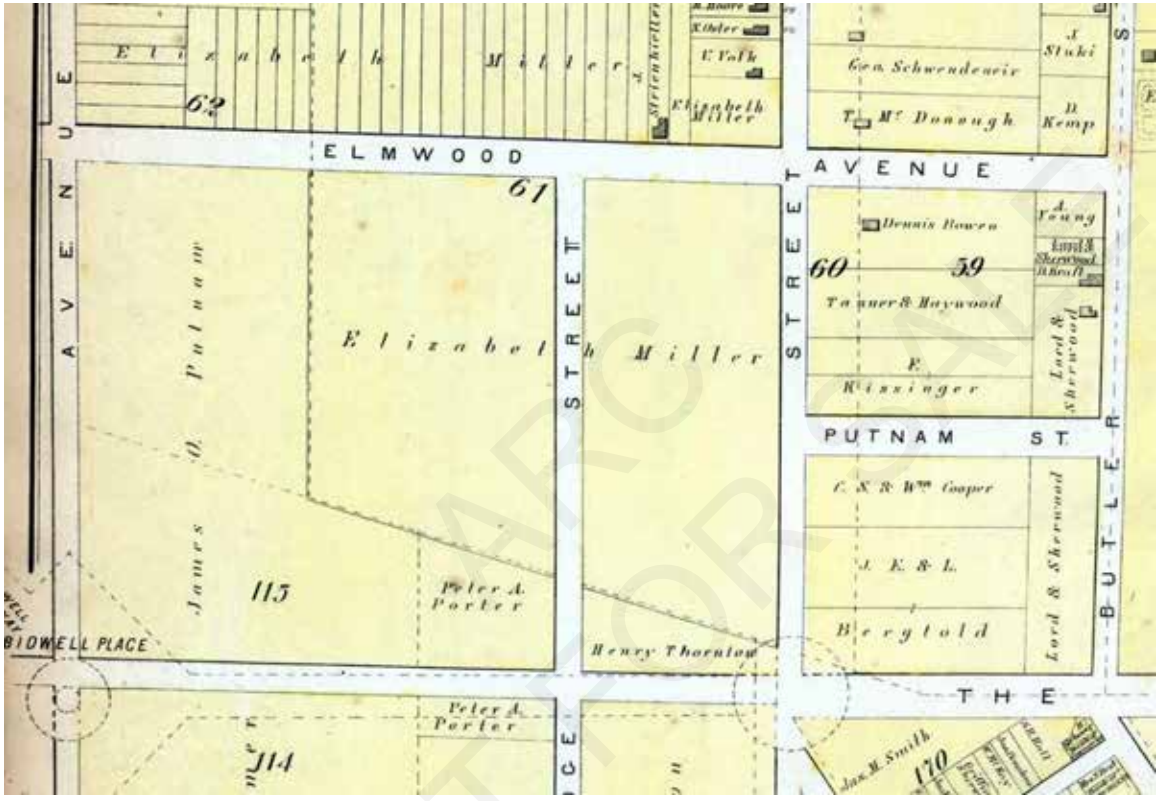
Many examples exist in the Elmwood District, especially in Elmwood West, of women commissioning the design and construction of their house and sometimes a similar one next door to rent or sell. Real estate ownership by women, in fact, was encouraged. Ads especially promoted their commissioning a two-flat: she and her family could live in one "free"; renting out the other would pay for the property. These multiple-unit dwellings took several forms:

- A two-story house with a flat on each floor, a basement below and an attic above. This type can usually be identified by its double front porches, similar window patterns on each floor, and a single entrance leading to a shared vestibule of two doors, one to each residence.
- The duplex, side-by-side two-floor homes with a shared inner wall, within the envelope of one house, usually each having its own entrance.
- Another version of the duplex had four flats, upper and lower, two each on either side of a common center wall, one flat being the mirror image of the other on the same floor. Plumbing was concentrated on the shared inside wall, while rooms needing light and windows or view were located on outside walls.

One of the earliest women landowners in the Elmwood District was Elizabeth Miller, the widow of William T. Miller, who had been president of the Buffalo and Williamsville Macadam Road Company. Upon his death in 1847, Elizabeth inherited the bulk of his estate, which included a house in the Cold Spring neighborhood in which they had lived in the 1830s and '40s. Based on an 1872 map of the area, the estate contained significant acreage straddling Elmwood Avenue near Breckenridge Street. Although at the time most of the surrounding neighborhood was still made up of large, undeveloped plots, her property on the east side of Elmwood Avenue appears to have already

These structures, excellent examples of multi-unit dwellings in the Elmwood District, include 110-112 Bidwell Parkway (top) designed in the Tudor Revival style with Flemish gables and built circa 1905 for Albert Meyer, and the 3-story, I-plan Lazarre Apartments (bottom) built that same year at 273 Richmond Avenue. Its Colonial Revival style features generous porches.

Photographs Courtesy of Chuck LaChiusa



Detail of the Eleventh Ward map from the *Hopkins Atlas of 1872* highlights Elmwood District developer Elizabeth Miller's properties on either side of Elmwood Avenue.

At the top of the map, one can see that Miller has already subdivided the large parcel that she owned there into 24 building lots fronting Elmwood Avenue. However her two very large parcels fronting Elmwood Avenue and W. Ferry Street have not yet been subdivided into building lots. Note the dashed outline of the future Ferry Circle at the intersection of The Avenue, now called Richmond Avenue, and W. Ferry Street on the right, and to the left, the future Bidwell Place, now Colonial Circle at Lafayette Avenue. Putnam Street may never have existed here; a street west of Richmond Avenue now has that name. Miller's small lot at the NE corner of Elmwood Avenue and W. Ferry Street is now home to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo.

This Elmwood District landscape would later change with the construction of Cleveland and Lancaster avenues between Elmwood and Delaware avenues, and Ashland and Norwood avenues between Summer Street and Lafayette Avenue, about a decade after this map was published. These streets were necessary to grant access to building lots for the mass market as this section of the Elmwood District transitioned from large estates to single family houses.

Image Courtesy of the New York Public Library

been parceled into the narrower urban lots later developed in Elmwood West. No built structures are visible on this map, but the parceling of the lots indicates that Elizabeth Miller may have been a developer of Elmwood Avenue as early as the 1870s.

Other women played an even more active role in developing the Elmwood District. Some were not just building their own homes; they were engaging in speculative development:

- In 1890, Adelaide C. Burns Howe purchased a large parcel of land from John B. Manning. Bound by Ashland Avenue, Anderson Place, and Utica Street, it comprised around 700 or 800 lineal feet on which she intended to "build up the entire tract with modern houses."
- Margaret Brennan, the principal at School 13, developed a sizable parcel of property on Ashland Avenue on which, in 1902 she built homes at 731, 735, and 739.
- Antoinette Pleuther hired architect William L. Schmolle to design 503 Lafayette Avenue in 1903 and in 1907 had another built at 541 Lafayette.
- Side-by-side Queen Annes were constructed in 1904 for Elizabeth A. Stall at 539 and 541 Norwood Avenue.
- In 1914 Margaret T. Chamberlain had architect Stephen R. Berry design and build a pair of Craftsman-style houses at 499 and 503 Richmond Avenue.

Other women who hired architects to design their houses included Emma Voltz, who chose Thomas W. Harris to design her house at 32 Dorchester Road in 1905, and Mary Hogan and Bertha T. Wood, who in 1906 commissioned William Schmolle for 598 Ashland Avenue and 68 Dorchester Road, respectively.

The architectural styles that women chose varied. Alice W. McLeod, at 14 Dorchester Road, and Anne A. Wooley, at 33 Dorchester Road, in 1904; Katherine B. French, at 21 Bidwell Parkway, in 1907; and Mrs. J. C. Gagger, at 564 Lafayette Avenue, in 1909, all built Colonial Revival-style single homes. The Queen Anne style was favored by Laura V. Mosher, whose house was designed by architect William W. Carlin at 510 Lafayette Avenue as early as 1887. It was also the choice of Caroline W. Behrends at 527 Norwood Avenue in 1902 and of Elizabeth Watkins at 101 Dorchester Road in 1908. Amelia W. Christgau chose the new, modern Craftsman style for her 1907 house at 48 Bidwell Parkway, and Emily Swift, at 21 Colonial Circle, selected the similar Bungalow style for hers two years later.

Then there is the list compiled by architectural historian Martin Wachadlo of the fine Elmwood District homes designed by the Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs firm founded in Buffalo in 1881 by America's first professional woman architect, Louise Blanchard Bethune:[63] William W. Tyler House, 39 Richmond Avenue; Mrs. R. K. Noye House, "The Circle"; G. W. Fields Stable, Delaware Place; Spencer Kellogg House, 211 Summer Street; Mrs. E. Baldauf House and Mrs. John Pierce House, both on Hodge Avenue; George L. Thorne House, Elmwood Avenue; White Brothers Livery

TOP: A current view of the house at 503 Lafayette Avenue, designed by William L. Schmolle who was commissioned by Antoinette Pleuther in 1903 in what is believed to have been a speculative venture. In 1907, Ms. Pleuther had another residence built at 541 Lafayette.

BOTTOM: A photograph of 21 Colonial Circle, a Bungalow Style residence commissioned by Emily Swift as her home. Women developers appear to have favored high architectural styles.

Photographs by Chuck LaChiusa

AMERICA'S FIRST WOMAN PROFESSIONAL ARCHITECT: LOUISE BLANCHARD BETHUNE

Buffalo educated and trained, Jennie Louise Blanchard (1856-1913), came to the city from her Waterloo, New York, birthplace. She acquired her architecture education working for five years with other Buffalo architects, including the well-known Richard A. Waite and F. W. Caulkins, a common practice at the time. She founded Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs in 1881 with her husband, Robert Bethune, a fellow architect. Louise Bethune became active in the community and in her profession and was so well regarded that she was named the first female member of the American Institute of Architects in 1889, and thus perhaps Buffalo's most nationally significant architect.

In an era when feminists were still seeking the voting franchise, Louise Bethune exhibited an early feminist position on equal pay for equal work by refusing to participate in a design competition for the Women's Building at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago because of a prize-money disparity between the men's and women's awards. Known principally in Buffalo for her school designs, she personally refrained from residential commissions because they paid poorly.

Philadelphia architect Susan Maxman became the first woman elected as president of the American Institute of Architects in 1992. She is said to have not been interested in becoming the first woman president of the AIA. However, her work with other women architects at the institute revealed that they faced hostility and felt downtrodden. Thus, by assuming the position, she sought to lead by example to show that women could "get beyond the barriers and … not think about being a woman, just about being the best you can be at something," echoing the sentiments of Louise Bethune.[64]

As America's first professional woman architect, she was inducted into the 2017 inaugural class of the *Buffalo Business First* Western New York Business Hall of Fame, located at the Buffalo History Museum. Although most of her school designs have been demolished, her masterpiece, the 1904 neoclassical Hotel Lafayette, still stands prominently in downtown Buffalo following a $35 million restoration in 2012 by developer Rocco Termini. Among her best-known works are fifteen residences, two livery stables, and a grocery store (now Trattoria Aroma restaurant) in the Elmwood District.

Louise Blanchard Bethune is interred in Forest Lawn Cemetery, where a new marker was installed on the centenary of her death, December 18, 2013.

Photograph of Louise Bethune
Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Persons - B

Stable, 13th Street (just outside the district); Miss Martin House, Bouck Avenue; George W. Comstock House, 45 Lexington Avenue; M. F. Warren House, 41 Lexington Avenue; C. Lee Abell House, Lexington Avenue; H. Messersmith House, 392 Summer Street; Fred Jehle grocery store and residence, 309 Bryant Street; Mary A. Reiman House, 186 Ashland Avenue; The Davidson House, 354 Ashland Avenue; George R. Thorne House, 40 Bidwell Avenue; and Roger W. Graves House, 310 W. Utica Street.

These and the many other houses in the area attest in a visible and lasting way to the prominent role women played in developing the Elmwood District. Perhaps their strong influence was responsible for establishing the familial and cultural character of the district that even today is more pronounced than that of other Buffalo streetcar suburbs that developed at the same time.

The Elmwood District provides physical testimony to the growing independence and empowerment of women in those days. It was spurred, in part, by the differentiation of men's and women's work and their roles in the home and in the culture. The expansion of industry, more efficient transportation, and modern housing stock featuring indoor plumbing, natural gas lighting, and other conveniences, unheard of before the Civil War, that made life easier were factors contributing to those diverging roles.

Today, of course, that differentiation has been blurred, even eliminated, as both men and women can perform the same work as well as share the responsibilities of their traditional gender roles.

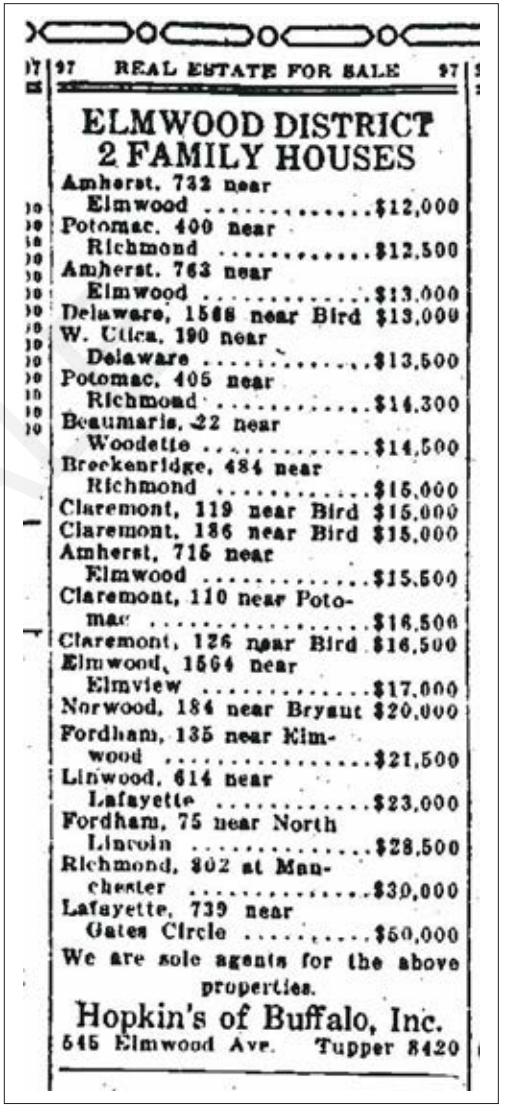
The Changing Face of Elmwood Avenue

As the Elmwood District's central major north-south thoroughfare, Elmwood Avenue from north of North Street to Forest Avenue began as a residential street just as did its flanking major counterparts, Richmond, Norwood, Ashland, and Delaware avenues. It was broad and canopied by overarching trees, mostly elms. Grand Victorian homes of varied architectural styles were fronted by expansive lawns, the wide sidewalks edged by sandstone curbs. In that incarnation, some of which remains today in the 300 block between Summer and Bryant streets, it could be compared to the adjacent Ashland or Norwood avenues. North of Forest, an intact row of single-family bungalows reflects the 1920s development of that section after the Pan-American Exposition; it visibly contrasts with the 1880s development of Elmwood Avenue south of Forest Avenue.

The introduction first of horse-drawn conveyances in 1889 followed by the laying of tracks for electric streetcars in 1892 began to change the face of Elmwood Avenue. Although both provided convenience to residents, particularly those living north of North Street, there was also a down side: with the one, there was the residue left by the horses; with the other, the clanging and rumbling of the large streetcar machines. In addition, neither mode of transit connected to downtown until much later.

The reason Elmwood Avenue did not extend downtown was the existence of Rumsey Park, a large, sprawling estate owned by prominent businessman and benefactor, Bronson Case Rumsey, which straddled the future Elmwood Avenue south of Allentown. The expansive grounds, extending east-west from Delaware Avenue to Carolina Street and north-south from Tupper Street to Tracy Street in downtown Buffalo, included a lake, a wooded island, and a chalet designed by English-born building and landscape architects Henry and Edward Rose. Some options were considered for extending Elmwood Avenue downtown through streets that would circumvent Rumsey Park, but they were not implemented. It was not until about 1912, when the Rumsey family—both Bronson and his brother Dexter, Buffalo's first millionaires, having died earlier in the new century—sold Rumsey Park. The lake was filled in so that Elmwood could extend south to connect to downtown beyond Niagara Square, to the Terrace, and nearly to the Buffalo River. The division of an original suburban estate of the Joseph Ellicott era allowed the nascent Elmwood District to connect to downtown for the first time.

The width of Elmwood Avenue has changed many times over its history. Initial widening took place in 1910. To relieve automobile congestion in the late 1940s, the paved portion of Elmwood Avenue was widened from 42-feet to 48-feet, resulting in almost wholesale removal of trees and landscaping—another sad sacrifice to the automobile deity that dramatically reduced the former beauty of the horse-era street. Today, Elmwood Avenue is a narrower two-lane roadway with parallel parking on both sides and, according



97 REAL ESTATE FOR SALE 97

ELMWOOD DISTRICT
2 FAMILY HOUSES

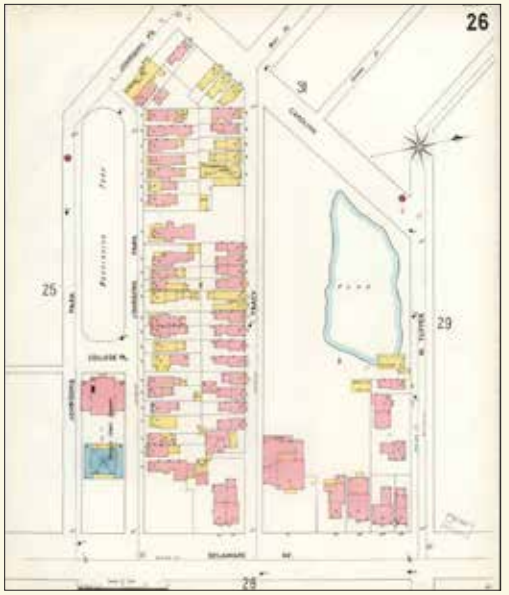
Amherst, 732 near Elmwood $12,000
Potomac, 400 near Richmond $12,500
Amherst, 763 near Elmwood $13,000
Delaware, 1568 near Bird $13,000
W. Utica, 190 near Delaware $13,500
Potomac, 405 near Richmond $14,300
Beaumaris, 22 near Woodette $14,500
Breckenridge, 484 near Richmond $15,000
Claremont, 119 near Bird $15,000
Claremont, 186 near Bird $15,000
Amherst, 716 near Elmwood $15,500
Claremont, 110 near Potomac $16,500
Claremont, 126 near Bird $16,500
Elmwood, 1564 near Elmview $17,000
Norwood, 184 near Bryant $20,000
Fordham, 135 near Kimwood $21,500
Linwood, 614 near Lafayette $23,000
Fordham, 75 near North Lincoln $28,500
Richmond, 302 at Manchester $30,000
Lafayette, 739 near Gates Circle $50,000

We are sole agents for the above properties.

Hopkin's of Buffalo, Inc.
545 Elmwood Ave. Tupper 8420

This advertisement from Walter C. Hopkins indicates that the name "Elmwood District" was still associated with this neighborhood well into the 1920s even when most of the district had been built out. By this time, Hopkins has apparently moved his office from downtown to 545 Elmwood Avenue.

Published in the Buffalo Morning Express by Hopkin's of Buffalo, Inc.



The Elmwood District attracted Buffalo's growth from the south even though Elmwood Avenue did not connect to downtown until after 1912. Access was via Delaware Avenue and Niagara Street. This relative isolation from the hustle and bustle of downtown and the waterfront may have added to the District's desirability.

The pioneering and nationally-significant tannery-owning Rumsey family had created a large park estate between Niagara Square and the future Elmwood District just after the Civil War. At one time, the Rumsey family owned nearly half of Buffalo's land and had extensive landholdings in what would become the Elmwood District. Bronson Case Rumsey (1823-1902) was a Park Commissioner.

By 1912, the patriarchs had died. Their survivors sold the estate, Elmwood Avenue was extended to Niagara Square, and the Elmwood District was finally connected to downtown.

A significant contribution to the Elmwood District was made by the Rumsey Family circa 1906: the donation to the City of the woods along Rumsey Lane to expand Delaware Park. Today, Rumsey Woods is one of most perfect additions to Olmsted's The Park, and one of the few remnants of the primeval forest.

Sanborn Map of Rumsey Park.
Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Buildings - Residences - Private - Rumsey

to code, like all Buffalo streets that are rebuilt or repaved, is marked for bicycle travel.

In an effort to restore a more pedestrian-oriented experience on Elmwood Avenue, the city in recent years planted a variety of trees, including ornamentals, and installed some landscaping. Volunteers from the Elmwood Village Association tend floral hanging baskets and street planters. The association is a business and resident membership organization that was founded in 1994 as Forever Elmwood by businessman and Elmwood booster Michael Attardo and others at a crucial time in the Elmwood District's history.

It was 100 years ago, when the streetcar line was installed, that commercial development began to take off. Many of the houses along the street were converted into shops through additions to their front elevations built on their former front lawns. Initially, the commerce that developed provided neighbors the convenience of easy availability of everyday needs within walking distance. On the street were an A&P Supermarket, Gottesman's Market and Samuel's Delicatessen, a shoe shop and a bicycle store. At the northeast corner of Elmwood and Auburn avenues was a lunch counter and on the southeast corner, an M&T branch bank managed by one of the bank's pioneering women executives, Florence Pantano. Next door, to the south, a dry goods store sold cloth and sewing supplies, and purchases were rung up on a manual cash register as ornate as a work of art. Gas pumps installed in the early 1940s along the curb on Elmwood Avenue at Cleveland Avenue fueled the growing

number of automobiles that eventually resulted in widening of the street to accommodate them. Today, three bona fide gas stations exist, dotted between Bryant and Forest streets, to supply this need, while, with a modicum of sweet irony, the store in front of which the gas pumps once stood now rents and sells bicycles.

The commercializing trend over the decades has given Elmwood Avenue its characteristic balance of residential and commercial appearance today, and the high number of business-fronted residential buildings mixed with homes is unmatched elsewhere in Buffalo. Also on the street are a number of multistory commercial and apartment buildings dating from around the turn of the twentieth-century, as well as more recent modern multiuse, built-for-commerce developments with second- and third-floor apartment units. The Lexington Cooperative Market, a popular member-owned grocery market founded in 1971, which moved to 807 Elmwood Avenue from its original location at the corner of Ashland and Lexington avenues, now occupies a new facility built in 2005. Nearly two hundred businesses in the stretch from North Street north to Forest Avenue include convenience stores, branch banks, cafes, coffeehouses, bars, restaurants, and retail boutiques.

At least theoretically favoring small local businesses, Elmwood District residents have over the years vocally resisted the movement of national chains onto the avenue. In the early '90s, they protested expansion of the small Rite Aid drug store at Elmwood and Bryant streets that would

LEFT: "Corner of Elmwood Avenue and Breckenridge, by Willard T. Baldy (1940)."

A good example of a commercial conversion of an older house on Elmwood Avenue. Modern post-World War II city zoning ideals stripped these buildings of much of their ornament, awnings, sidewalk sales tables and street front character, all of which are currently coming back into fashion during the reanimation of street-scale life in the renewal of today's Elmwood District.

RIGHT: "Elmwood Avenue looking south-west from Cleveland Avenue, by Willard T. Baldy (1940)." This excellent image depicts the transformation of Elmwood Avenue to accommodate automobiles. Early 20th century commercial blocks were added to the fronts of late 19th century residences that characterized Elmwood Avenue at that time, still barely visible behind. Note the gasoline pumps at the curb. Ironically, today, that building is a bicycle shop, reflecting the return of the use of bicycles as a form of urban transportation.

Published in "The Old Photo Album: Elmwood Avenue" in Western New York Heritage *by Natalie Green Tessier*

These prominent Elmwood Avenue buildings, built between 1905 and 1910, represent an affordable opportunity to live in the Elmwood District in an apartment building designed to look like a large, elegant manor house. These handsome buildings were designed to artistically fit the Elmwood District's residential character and also embodied the science of efficient living, served by electrical, mechanical and plumbing technology, not available to previous generations.

Photographs taken by Gregory Pinto, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

have eliminated two large adjacent residences. More recently, perhaps because it resulted in eliminating a chain franchise, there was little opposition to demolition of a KFC at Elmwood Avenue and Bryant Street in favor of a three-story apartment building with first floor retail. Elmwood residents loudly opposed the construction of a Wendy's chain restaurant between W. Delavan Avenue and Bidwell Parkway but lost. Today, a locally owned taco restaurant occupies the site, reusing the original drive-through lanes. Later, it was Starbucks' proposed opening near Bidwell Parkway, where a locally owned coffeehouse had already located, that brewed opposition. Starbucks won. Competition marked by the growth of boutique businesses on Hertel Avenue, a thriving commercial corridor in neighboring North Buffalo, where some businesses relocated from Elmwood Avenue, appears to have softened resistance somewhat, as is evident in the unopposed opening in 2013 of a Panera Bread café and bake shop on Elmwood Avenue near Cleveland Avenue.

Today, Elmwood Avenue is more than neighborhood convenience stores; it is a shopping, dining, and cultural destination, not just for Buffalonians from other neighborhoods, but from visitors to the city who have heard about its energetic character.

The Different Face of Elmwood East

Elmwood East today is primarily characterized by the former estates and grand mansions on Delaware Avenue that were designed by well-known architects for the wealthiest residents of the city more than 100 years ago. It is also home to a number of high-rise luxury apartment buildings. Tucked amid the grandeur and architectural treasure trove all represent are three small "farmhouses" dating to the late nineteenth century: 794 Potomac Avenue, built circa 1880; 638 Lafayette Avenue, built circa 1888, along with a carriage house; and 700 West Delavan Avenue, built circa 1892. All three of these two-story homes were constructed in a simple Folk Victorian style displaying a variety of modest decorative elements. They are historic reminders of the area's rural origins.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, apartment-living became increasingly popular for all types and social classes, and many more such buildings exist in Elmwood East than in Elmwood West. For those of more modest means, renting an apartment was often a cost-effective alternative to individual home ownership at a time when obtaining a mortgage was difficult. The three-story circa 1905 Colonial Revival-style building at 385 Elmwood Avenue is an example of this type of building, as is the similarly styled circa 1910 house at 415 Elmwood Avenue, former home of the Community Music School, now being reconfigured to once again be an apartment building. With their location on Elmwood Avenue, both would have been affordable, and residents enjoyed the convenience of the Elmwood streetcar line outside their front door.

Elmwood East also contains examples of luxury high-rise apartment buildings located

away from the commercial district that catered to a cultural change in the lifestyles of the upper and upper-middle classes then occurring in the early twentieth century. Both in Buffalo and in other parts of the nation, many of the wealthy elite abandoned their large residential estates for these newly fashionable luxury apartments, trading in a pastoral way of life for a denser, urban one. Particularly in the 1920s, elegant, amenity-rich apartment living became immensely popular in major cities like New York, San Francisco, and Chicago, and Buffalo joined the trend. Mansions and landscaped grounds were laborious and pricy to maintain and required space for a live-in staff on real estate that had grown more valuable and in demand as the city's population grew. The offer of seductive, competitive packages to prospective wealthy tenants successfully persuaded some to sell in favor of such amenities as private maids on hand twenty-four hours a day, a kitchen staff for each apartment, technologically sophisticated elevators, large apartments filled with light, gymnasiums and pools, a concierge, valet parking, special rooms in which to store steamer trunks, and rooftop terraces. These distinguished high-rise apartment buildings provided a luxe experience for wealthy residents looking to "discard some of their domestic cake yet keep the flavor."[65]

Two examples of these are The Stuyvesant at 245 Elmwood Avenue and 800 W. Ferry Street, both of which were developed by Darwin R. Martin, son of Frank Lloyd Wright benefactor Darwin D. Martin and his wife Isabelle Reidpath Martin.

Forty years of Living in the Elmwood District.

TOP LEFT: A photograph of a simple, L-shaped single-family farmhouse built circa 1880 on a rise of land at 794 Potomac Avenue. Its unusual lot also fronts Inwood Place.

Photograph Courtesy of Maria Melchiorre

BOTTOM LEFT: The Stuyvesant Hotel, built as The Stuyvesant Apartments 40 years after the farmhouse at 794 Potomac Avenue, is pictured in a postcard that shows the impressive, U-shaped, 7-story hotel framed by the towering Elm trees that characterized the Elmwood District. Elmwood was so significant a neighborhood that it justified such a large and elegant place in which to rent a room in "Buffalo's Most Charming Hotel, With The Best of Everything," or lease an apartment. The management made it a residential hotel in 1923, offering the personal and utility services of light, heat, janitor, laundress, silver, linen, maid, phones, restaurant, private kitchen, and dining room help, barber, manicurist and "other necessary features."

Postcard Courtesy of Patrick J. Mahoney, AIA

TOP RIGHT: A 2-story gable front and wing Folk Victorian frame farmhouse, set back on its lot at 700 W. Delavan Avenue, featuring a front and side hipped porch with spindle balustrade and square supports with ornate jigsaw cut and spindlework brackets and trim, built circa 1892.

Photograph Courtesy of Alan Pawlowski

BOTTOM RIGHT: A postcard of the fireplace in the drawing room of the Governor Stuyvesant Suite in The Stuyvesant Hotel. The internationally famous Peter Stuyvesant Room nightclub featured a painted glass dance floor.

Postcard Courtesy of Patrick J. Mahoney, AIA

WILLIAM GRATWICK

William H Gratwick (1839-1886) arrived in Buffalo in 1877 to work in the lumber business and prospered sufficiently by 1888 to engage H. H. Richardson to design for him a mansion next to the Goodyear estate at Delaware and Summer streets. In 1905, his son purchased the Holt House at 800 W. Ferry Street. Built circa 1873, it was among the first suburban mansions built there. Although he and six other homeowners purchased and cleared adjacent lots to prevent the building of an apartment house, "800' was sold to Dr. George T. Moseley in 1923 for the development of home sites. It was Darwin R. Martin who developed the site in 1929. A forested tract owned by Joseph Ellicott in the 1820s, by the 1920s it had become an eleven-story home to 21 families. Harry Gratwick, meanwhile, developed the magnificent Linwood estate in Livingston County, famous to this day for its tree peonies.

This image was originally published in *A History of Buffalo, Delineating the Evolution of the City*, by Josephus Nelson Larned, Charles Elliott Fitch, and Ellis Henry Roberts.

The circa 1921 Stuyvesant, a seven-story U-shaped building fronted by a spacious courtyard, was one of Martin's first endeavors as a real estate developer. It was so profitable that he was able to construct the luxury high-rise at 800 W. Ferry Street eight years later. Martin and his first wife, Margaret Wende, lived on the top floor of the Stuyvesant after their wedding in 1926, before later moving to 800 W. Ferry Street.

The building's name evoked his mother's purported distant relative: Margaret Stuyvesant, sister to Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch seventeenth century director-general of Manhattan. The Stuyvesant name figures prominently in that borough's early history, and thus lent an air of aristocratic distinction to Martin's family line and to his building at a time of great social change. The name also recalls the grander historic original Stuyvesant building in New York City. Designed in 1869 by Richard Morris Hunt, that Stuyvesant was one of the first American examples of a Parisian-style luxury apartment building. Its elegant design helped to debunk previous assumptions that urban apartments were solely for the lower classes. Martin was likely trying to lend an air of grace to the Stuyvesant, as the building's accommodations were more modest than those he would propose for his Ferry Street building. Yet they effectively attracted an upwardly mobile middle class who would not have been able to afford the more expensive other location.

Martin owned the Stuyvesant for most of his life, operating it as both an apartment complex and a hotel until the early 1970s. Guests could stay for one or two nights as in a hotel or could rent an apartment for an extended stay. The Stuyvesant is currently operated by the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority as senior social housing. Across the street is another reminder of change that occurred during the Elmwood District's evolution. Stuyvesant Plaza is one of Buffalo's first "strip plazas," also developed by Darwin R. Martin, Jr. In contrast to the pedestrian and streetcar modes of traveling to shop, Stuyvesant Plaza was built to accommodate shoppers arriving by automobile once automobile ownership became widespread in the 1950s.

Opened in 1961 on the site of the former estate of the Episcopal bishop which extended south along Elmwood Avenue from Summer Street towards North Street, Mr. Martin's "New Orleans colonial-style" one-story plaza featured a cast iron colonnaded exterior porch connecting a supermarket, a beauty parlor, a restaurant, a gift shop, a men's custom tailor, a travel office and a laundromat, along with office space located in the Tudor-style former Bishop's residence that anchored the strip plaza.

In contrast, Martin's aim for 800 W. Ferry Street was to attract some of the wealthiest and most prominent residents in the city, as well as the descendants of earlier industrial giants who would be comfortable transitioning from the mansions they had known to the luxe quarters he was offering. Designed by architect Duane Lyman of the Bley and Lyman firm, the building was completed at a cost of about one million

LEFT: Photograph of the W.H. Gratwick, Jr. Estate at 800 W. Ferry Street taken during the 1920s. Only the retaining wall and pillars remain today.
Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Streets - Ferry

MIDDLE: Front cover of the sales brochure for 800 W. Ferry Street, 1929. The apartment building was designed by Duane Lyman and developed by Darwin R. Martin, son of the Larkin Company executive. The exuberance of the rendering exemplifies the optimism of the pre-Great Depressions Roaring Twenties.
Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. 800 W. Ferry Street, 1929. Call Number: Oversize NA 7862 .B8 F47 1929

RIGHT: Sanborn map that shows 800 W. Ferry Street. Delaware Avenue is at the top of the map, W. Ferry Street in on the right, and the X-shaped building is the newly constructed 800 W. Ferry Street. Note the large scale of the building complex facing Delaware Avenue that is now Canisius High School. The demolition of the Gratwick Mansion to make room for the construction of a building as large as 800 W. Ferry would engender controversy today. And yet, all of these years after its construction, it has earned respect as a beloved architectural icon.
Image Courtesy of the Library of Congress

PORTER NORTON

Porter Norton was a successful corporate attorney among whose clients were several railroad companies and the Bell Telephone Company of Buffalo, He was described by a friend as "gentle, thoughtful, cheerful, and charming … [with] a gay sense of humor," and as "a former member of Col. Cornell's gifted troupe of amateurs," he loved acting. His wife, Jeanie Watson Norton, whom he married in 1879, was "a noted patroness of music, and no mean pianist herself," according to the same friend. The Nortons had two children, son, Porter Huntington Norton, and daughter, Gertrude.[66]

Porter Norton's magnificent Gates Circle estate represented the height of grandeur of 19th century Buffalo wealth and taste when it was built at the turn of the century.

Norton died in 1918, and life changed after World War I. The descendants of the Delaware Avenue millionaires could not afford their estates and sold the land behind them to Elmwood developers. They sold, demolished, or abandoned the mansions. Yet they needed a prestigious place in their neighborhood in which to live.

While the Norton mansion became a fine restaurant, the estate land became home to the Parke Apartments to accommodate this new generation. Handsome "Commercial Classical" design clothed sturdy modern fireproof steel and concrete construction that guaranteed privacy and safety. Inside, commodious and comfortable apartments fit the circumstances of the Delaware Avenue grandchildren in the new century.

The first condominium in Buffalo, today the Park Lane maintains that prestige. Would Elmwood preservationists allow such a building to be built today? A key to the fit of the Park Lane is that its scale relates favorably to the spacious Gates Circle and broad green swath of Chapin Parkway which it overlooks.

Photograph courtesy of Niagara Frontier Magazine

TOP: The Parke Apartments, now the Park Lane Condominium, was originally built to appeal to the descendants of the Delaware Avenue mansion builders who could no longer afford to live as their families once did. A century later, Park Lane Condo homeowners continue to maintain their home to the highest standards.

Photograph by Jill Nowicki, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

BOTTOM: A rare historic photograph of what is likely the preferred view of the Park Lane restaurant in the former Porter Norton mansion, foreground, within the enveloping arms of the Park Lane Apartments in the background.

Photograph from Your Host, Peter Gust of the Park Lane Restaurant - His Story, *by Ellen Taussig, published in 1979.*

dollars just a few months before the stock market crash that triggered the Great Depression. Its location was the site of the William Gratwick residence, which, demolished that same year, had once been part of the Albright estate.

Built of brick and stone in Gothic Revival style, the apartment building's exterior was ornamented in Tudor Revival elements. The Tudor style was becoming popular then, again as a nostalgic style at a time of great social change, but the fact that so many of the new homes then being built on parts of the newly subdivided Albright estate were built in that style may also have been a tribute to the Albright family who were still residing in their mansion. That mansion would stand for five more years until it, too, was demolished in August of 1934.

Darwin R. Martin's 800 W. Ferry originally contained twenty-one duplex units and, on the first floor, four single units; today, the latter are the only apartments still in their original form. A 1932 advertisement for a two-floor duplex unit offered this description: "Six bedrooms, five baths, living room, dining room, library, large kitchen, separate pantry, two dressing rooms, lavatory, light, heat, gas, refrigeration, garage space for $450 per month—40 percent less than regular rate."[67] Were the units still apartments—the complex was converted to condominiums in 1977—today's equivalent rate would be about $7,000 per month.

The modestly styled Second Renaissance Revival ten-story Park Lane Condominium is another fine example of a luxury high-rise apartment building.

Built in 1924 on the grounds behind the massive 1901 Georgian Revival-style Porter Norton mansion, this then-modern fireproof steel and concrete structure was named The Parke Apartments after one of its developers. Colonnaded on two sides on its distinctive exterior and with an interior described as "the stuff of dreams," it overlooks Gates Circle at Lafayette and Delaware avenues.

In 1926, the name of the building was changed to The Park Lane. In 1977, the building was again renamed as the Park Lane Condominium when it became Buffalo's first "vertical neighborhood" of individually owned apartment homes. It was listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007.

Its name may have changed but its essential character as one of Buffalo's best residences has endured. The building's six high-speed elevators were placed strategically to serve just two residences at each stop, whisking residents of the nearly seventy apartments to the shared lobby on their respective floors. Within the apartments were three to seven rooms, two to three bathrooms, and woodburning fireplaces. Some had extra rooms for servants or chauffeur, who parked the automobile in a large service garage in the rear.

The historic character of this noteworthy building is continuously renewed by its homeowner association. For example, the Park Lane recently restored its century-old windows overlooking Lafayette Avenue to meet current performance standards while retaining their historic appearance and replaced all the other windows with new ones designed to match the original windows. The New York State historic tax credit helped fund this substantial investment.

The Norton mansion was not demolished to accommodate the apartment building in 1926, but instead was converted into the associated Park Lane Restaurant, once one of the finest in the city. This building was destroyed by fire in 1971 and was replaced with an English Tudor-styled restaurant that became a popular gathering place for Buffalo's movers and shakers. In 2008, the last iteration of the Park Lane was demolished by Uniland Development Company which planned to build a glass and bronze tower of sixty-eight high-priced condominiums. However, construction was thwarted by the Great Recession and other better real estate opportunities available to the developer.

Uniland is instead completing low-rise luxury townhouses facing Gates Circle as well as Lancaster Avenue, designed by architect Gwen Howard, an Elmwood District resident who helped create the Elmwood Historic District. Howard could be said to be following in Louise Bethune's footsteps in renewing its distinctive character, as are several other women architects in the neighborhood today. Uniland's Gates and Lancaster Townhomes, even in their current incomplete construction, appear likely to be exemplary models of new investment and design that renew the historic district and hark back to Rev. Lord's residence, the first one at that landmark location.

Elmwood East Estates and Clubbing

Unlike the streetcar-suburb style of tract development that was occurring in Elmwood West at the time, in Elmwood East, the large estates that were being built precluded for many years other substantial development immediately adjacent. Instead, one's neighbor was often a member of one's family or a closely related family, rather than a stranger. As architect Henry Hudson Holly had advised, "If each one takes pains to keep up his own place and contributes to the care of the roads, he enjoys the advantages of cultivated surroundings as if the whole were his private estate."[68]

Whether owned by a directly related family member, a colleague, or a friend, these estates provided their owners with a fine place in which to live well and sense of security for their investment. Clubbing ensured that a stable community would persist even amid the rapid change occurring in other parts of the district.

Holly also promoted the concept of "clubbing," combining "fine scenery and agreeable company." These Elmwood East estates exemplify his notion of "a number of families clubbing together, and procuring an attractive spot, filled with shady nooks and pleasant streams, which, by mutual agreements and some slight restrictions, can be laid out in a picturesque manner of building."

The Albright Estate

One of the first, largest, and most prominent estates in the East section of the Elmwood Historic District belonged to John J. Albright, who left an indelible mark on the city through both his public pursuits and through the significant institutions that he funded, the Albright Art Gallery and The Nichols School. After achieving great financial success in the iron and steel industry as co-owner of the Lackawanna Steel Company, Albright purchased a large tract of land that stretched from Delaware Avenue to Elmwood Avenue between what was then an unpaved Cleveland Street (now Avenue) and W. Ferry Street. Spanning a transformative period for the historic district, the Albright family occupied this property—in two different houses—from 1885, the beginning of Elmwood's rapid growth, into the mid-1920s, its zenith.

Albright acquired land for his estate through a series of purchases that included property from sellers James and Catherine Adams, Frederick and Amelia Lautz, and the City of Buffalo to create a fifteen-acre estate that took up almost the entire block. Albright made an excellent investment, carving out a luxurious amount of property at a time when such large purchases were about to become much rarer.

Albright moved into the Gothic Revival former Adams residence at 730 W. Ferry Street in 1885, accompanied by his wife, Harriet, and their three young children, Raymond, Ruth, and Langdon. Harriet died in 1895, and two years later Albright married Susan Gertrude Fuller, with whom he fathered five more children. In 1901, the house was destroyed by fire, and Albright hired renowned Buffalo architect E. B. Green to design his new house. By 1901, the surrounding Elmwood District was bustling with new development, much more than had characterized the neighborhood when Albright first established his estate. Construction was completed by 1903, and the Albright family was able to move into the new mansion, which was now surrounded by a handsome, but formidable brick wall.

The size of the new Ferry Street residence is attested to by the number of staff required to run it: five maids, two cooks, seven gardeners, a laundress, and a chauffeur. The two-and-a-half-story stone mansion was inspired by St. Catherines Court, a sixteenth-century manor house in Bath, England. Located behind it were a stable, houses for the chauffeur and the gardener, a carriage house, tennis court, large courtyard, three greenhouses, and chicken coops. The mansion was surrounded by an elegant landscape boasting ash, buckeye, elm, horse chestnut, maple, pine, poplar, and fruit trees, and various other ornamentals, designed and maintained from 1890 to 1907 by the Olmsted firm of Brookline, Massachusetts.

Although the original estate has been divided and reconfigured since Albright's time, the park-like ambience of the tract remains due in no small part to the reuse of the original houses as a school and the presence of many of the original deciduous trees. Other lasting elements of the Olmsted

RESIDENCE BUILT 1855, NOW No. 730 WEST FERRY STREET.

FORMER HOME OF CHARLES WADSWORTH, JAMES ADAMS (WHO BUILT THE TOWER), JESSE C. DANN AND JOHN J. ALBRIGHT. BURNED 1901, AND REPLACED BY MR. JOHN J. ALBRIGHT'S PRESENT RESIDENCE.

TOP: Residence built in 1855 at the current 730 W. Ferry Street. Former home of Charles Wadsworth, James Adams, (who built the tower), and Jesse C. Dann, it burned to the ground in 1901 while John J. Albright owned it and while he and his family resided there.

Although it was constructed eight years before Henry Hudson Holly's first book was published in 1863, the Wadsworth Estate anticipates Holly's pattern book of standard, primarily Italianate residential designs. Buffalo estate builders were trend setters.

BOTTOM: Photograph of the John J. Albright estate manor house, designed by Albright's friend, prolific Buffalo architect E. B. Green to replace the house that burned down. Landscape design was by Frederick Law Olmsted. The house was abandoned during the Great Depression and later demolished. The elaborate front gate, most of the estate's encircling wall, and many of the trees planted by Olmsted remain today.

Published in The Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo *by Frank Severance*

THE GOODYEAR FAMILY: BUSINESS AND CULTURAL TITANS

The Goodyear name was instantly recognizable as one of high achievement and status. With immense success in the lumber and railroad industries, the Goodyears were extremely wealthy. The family patriarch, Charles W. Goodyear (1846-1911), practiced law for more than fifteen years before joining his brother, Frank H. Goodyear (1849-1907), in the lumber business in 1887. In 1901, they acquired a large tract of land in Louisiana, where they established the town of Bogalusa. There, they operated what was then the world's largest sawmill, the Great Southern Lumber Company, and quickly became the largest distributor of hemlock in the world. They built shops, offices, a bank, and residences that were all oriented to better serve their sawmill operation.

In 1902, the two brothers formed the Buffalo and Susquehanna Iron Company south of Buffalo along Lake Erie. They also built two freighters to transport ore from their company's mines in Michigan and Minnesota. In 1906, they built the Buffalo & Susquehanna Railroad to transport their own lumber. These enterprises were, in a sense, family businesses. Not only were they established by the two brothers, but they continued to provide opportunities for their descendants long after Charles and Frank Goodyear had passed into history. Charles Goodyear's eldest son, Anson Conger Goodyear (1877-1964), served as vice president of the Buffalo Susquehanna Railroad (1907-1910), and as president (1920-1938) of the Great Southern Lumber Company after his father's death.

The Goodyear family exerted considerable influence at the turn of the twentieth century. They were also known for their prominent involvement in several cultural institutions. Charles and his wife, Ella, were personal friends of President Grover Cleveland and were the first guests he invited to the White House following his wedding to Frances Folsom. Charles had been largely responsible for the president's earlier nomination for governor of New York following his stint as mayor of Buffalo. Their son Anson was a pioneering patron of modern art. In addition to figuring prominently in his family's companies, he served as a major general in the National Guard during World War I and had substantial investments in the lumber and rail companies in the South. An avid art collector, he succeeded his father as director of the Albright Art Gallery in 1911. His interest in the burgeoning modern art scene led to the divisive decision to eject him from the board a few years later, but not until he had influenced Seymour H. Knox, Jr.'s interest in the subject, which eventually led to the museum's large contemporary collection today. After moving to New York City in the 1920s, Anson Conger Goodyear founded the Museum of Modern Art and served as its president for a decade.

TOP: Portraits of Charles Waterhouse Goodyear and his wife, Ella Conger Goodyear.

MIDDLE: The Charles Goodyear home on "Millionaires' Row" at 888 Delaware Avenue

Published in Our County and it's People: A Descriptive Work on Erie County, New York. *Edited by Trumen C. White. The Boston History Company, 1898.*

BOTTOM: Map of the Goodyear Estate properties on Delaware Avenue, Bryant Street and Oakland Place.

Image courtesy of the Library of Congress

firm's work are the formal, elegantly ornamented wrought iron gates flanked by two square pillars with ornamental crowns from which hang iron lamps. These "Queen Anne" gates afford entry beyond the brick privacy wall remaining along Ferry Street, which originally circled the perimeter of the grounds.

The later history of the Albright estate reflects a notable transition into the next era of development for the Elmwood District. Albright faced many financial difficulties in the 1920s, and in 1921 he sold off nine parcels of the estate to the Niagara Finance Corporation. Developers immediately began to build new residences on the former Albright property, marketing them to upper and upper-middle class buyers as an opportunity to purchase a more modest version of the Albright estate. To facilitate these new houses, roads were soon laid throughout the former grounds, creating present-day Tudor Place and St. Catherines Court in the northeastern portion of the estate as early as 1922.

In 1926, forced by continuing financial difficulties, the Albrights sold the stone mansion in which they had lived for twenty-three years. It stood vacant for several years, and after Albright died in 1931, the building was demolished. The destruction of this once opulent property marked the end of an era, but the designs and elegance of its subsequent build-out recall Albright's high aspirations for art completing nature here.

The Goodyear Estate

Among the most notable of those who established large estates in the eastern portions of the Elmwood District was the Goodyear family, one of the most influential in the city's economic, cultural, and social realms during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Evidence of their prominence could be seen in the number of their real estate holdings in the district. For several generations, they owned and occupied at least seven residential properties along Delaware Avenue, Bryant Street, and Oakland Place that constituted a veritable Goodyear village. Their many other property investments were dotted throughout the city and region.

The prestige of the Elmwood Historic District East was already established in the early 1900s and suited the eminent Goodyear family well. From 1902 to 1924, they "clubbed" together with their extended family members to combine several individual lots into one substantial continuous property. This effectively enabled them to carve out a large, patchwork estate at a time when this portion of the city was becoming more densely populated, attracted by the newly established park system and increased mobility due to the streetcar. Spanning two desirable areas, the Goodyear estate linked the prestige of Delaware Avenue's Millionaires' Row to the more recently established Elmwood District.

In 1902, Charles Goodyear and his wife Ella Conger Goodyear erected a grand mansion at 888 Delaware Avenue to serve as the crowning focal point of their massive estate. Designed by the prominent Buffalo architectural firm of Green and Wicks, the three-story mansion was built as a high-style example of Beaux Arts classicism. Its French Renaissance Revival attributes affirmed the importance of its residents to any visitor or onlooker. Those French details can be seen in the slate mansard roof, its dormers ornamented with semicircular stone pediments, large keystones, and curved pilasters, and the balconettes featuring a guilloche décor seen in other French architectural examples. Most recently a charter school, 888 Delaware Avenue is being remodeled as apartments, returning it to residential use.

Charles's brother and business partner, Frank, lived in a mansion at 672 Delaware Avenue on the northwest corner of Summer Street on land now occupied by a parking lot. Charles and Ella purchased several plots of land on Bryant Street and Oakland Place for their children that connected to the rear of their own property on Delaware Avenue. Their eldest son, Anson Conger Goodyear, lived at 160 Bryant Street (ca. 1908), in a two-and-a-half story brick house built in Colonial Revival style. Just down the street, Anson's younger sister, Esther, lived for several years with her husband, Arnold B. Watson, at 180 Bryant Street in a two-and-a-half-story brick house. These Bryant Street addresses are situated firmly within the Elmwood Historic District East, yet they were also connected to the Goodyears' properties on Delaware Avenue through their extensive, park-like backyards.

Ellsworth Statler at age 18.

ELLSWORTH STATLER: A MAN WHO AIMED BIG

Born near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to a large, impoverished family of a clergyman, Ellsworth Statler (1863-1928) began working in a glass factory when he was just nine years old. At age thirteen, he began his hotel career as a bellboy in a Wheeling, West Virginia, hotel. He advanced to clerk, studied hotel management and—like John D. Larkin—bookkeeping, and eventually managed his own luncheon and billiard hall in that city. At age thirty-three, he relocated to Buffalo, where he took over the restaurant concession at the new Ellicott Square Building, the world's largest office building at the time.

The designation "world's largest" apparently appealed to Statler. Just five years later, he opened the world's largest hotel, a temporary massive structure of 2,100 rooms to accommodate visitors to the 1901 Pan-American Exposition. It was demolished after the fair. That enterprise earned him a positive reputation and the call to build an inn at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri. Between 1905 and 1908 he built his first permanent hotel in Buffalo at Swan and Washington Streets. With a slogan of "The customer is always right," he provided numerous innovative amenities to his guests, including hot and cold running water in each room and private baths. He then expanded, building a chain of hotels in Cleveland (1912), Detroit (1915), St. Louis (1917), New York City (1919), and Boston (1923), accumulating, by the mid-twenties, hotel holdings that were the largest in the nation owned by a single individual.

Statler built his second Buffalo hotel, a nineteen-story building at Niagara Square in 1923, giving it his name and changing the name of his first hotel to the Buffalo Hotel.

Statler and his wife raised four adopted children, only one of whom survived beyond their twenties. He was an officer in various associations, a member of several clubs, a Thirty-third degree Mason, a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor of France, and a member of the Hospitality Industry Hall of Honor.

One of the best-known hotel proprietors in the United States, he died in his suite at the Pennsylvania Hotel in New York of double pneumonia on April 16, 1928.

In 1911, the Goodyears expanded the scope of their influence even further by purchasing the preexisting house at 178 Bryant Street, a two-and-a-half-story Queen Anne built in 1892. Following the "clubbing" pattern, Mrs. Goodyear purchased the house in hopes of having all three of her children living in properties adjacent to her own backyard on Delaware Avenue. To achieve this, she had the house moved to its present location at 123 Oakland Place in the early years of the twentieth century on land that she also already owned. It was lifted, pushed backwards, and rotated ninety degrees onto its new lot. In early 1912 her son Charles and his wife, Grace Rumsey, moved into the house.

When in 1924, Ella's son and daughter-in-law moved into a new property designed by architects Bley and Lyman at 190 Bryant Street, she used 123 Oakland Place as a rental property until 1936, when she transferred the deed to her daughter, Esther Watson. Esther's previous house at 180 Bryant Street was then occupied by Ella's own daughter, Ellen Jr., who lived there with her new husband, S.V.R. Spaulding, Jr. Esther Watson's daughter, Esther Watson Crane, the wife of architect David Crane, resided until the 1970s in a house on St. George's Square, which was developed by Hugh Perry and architect Gordon Hayes on land formerly owned by her grandmother. Thus, for several generations, Goodyear family members continued to live on the estate created first by Charles and later enlarged by Ella Goodyear.

During this time, the southern portion of Elmwood East became an increasingly dense settlement within close reach of the city's expanding industrial and commercial center. Although this portion of Bryant Street had once been outside the city limits prior to the 1850s, by the turn of the twentieth century it was only the southern portion of a much larger, rapidly developing Elmwood District.

The Statler Estate

Ellsworth Statler, the hotel magnate, was another prominent resident to create a private estate in Elmwood East. In 1909, Statler purchased property at 154 Soldiers Place, a prominent, highly visible location with easy access to the greenery of Delaware Park as well as Bidwell, Lincoln, and Chapin Parkways. Until this time, Statler had been living with his wife and their infant son on the top floor of his first hotel, at the corner of Washington and Swan streets downtown. Having achieved great financial success, Statler wanted a quieter, more spacious place in which to live, away from the bustle of the city.

Statler hired the renowned Buffalo architectural firm of Esenwein and Johnson to design a mansion for his family at Soldiers Place. The architects, also known for their designs of the first Hotel Statler, the Calumet Building, the Buffalo Museum of Science, and the Temple of Music at the Pan-American Exposition, quickly got to work fulfilling their client's request for a California-type bungalow. Completed in 1910, the result was a stunning example of an Arts and Crafts-style bungalow, a three-story mansion ornamented with Art Nouveau details. Included in the $100,000 cost of the architects' commission was the city's first outdoor swimming pool, a lagoon, gymnasium, greenhouse, and a garage connected by an underground tunnel to the house. In the interior were six bedrooms, six bathrooms, two dining rooms, several sunrooms and parlors, a ballroom, and a grand entrance hall with an organ, complete with an organist on staff for concerts.

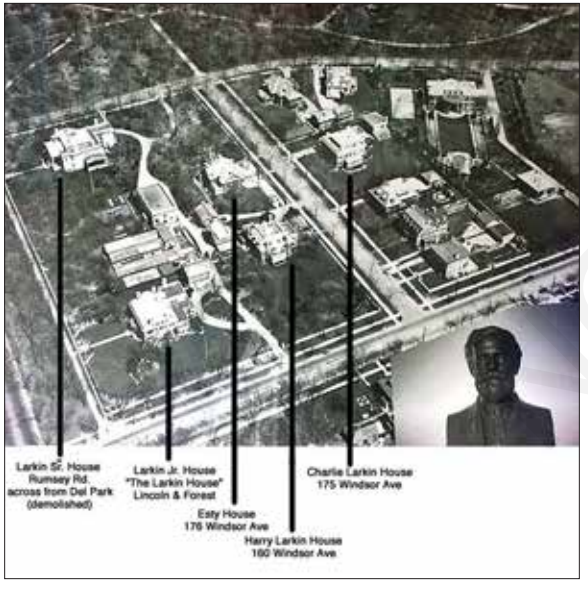
The exterior, encircled by a waist-high wall so as not to obstruct views, was a grand sight for the whole neighborhood: extensive landscaped grounds and water features, and an attractive façade that required innovative materials to accomplish aspects of the design. In construction of the roof, for example, to achieve the desired look of a rustic thatched roof, the architects fashioned a rolled edge using brown 'Creo-Dipt' shingles made by a nearby Tonawanda, New York, company especially for this commission. The effect was the crowning achievement of the impressive mansion that was instantly recognizable, situated as it was on its very visible site at Soldiers Place and Bird and Windsor avenues.

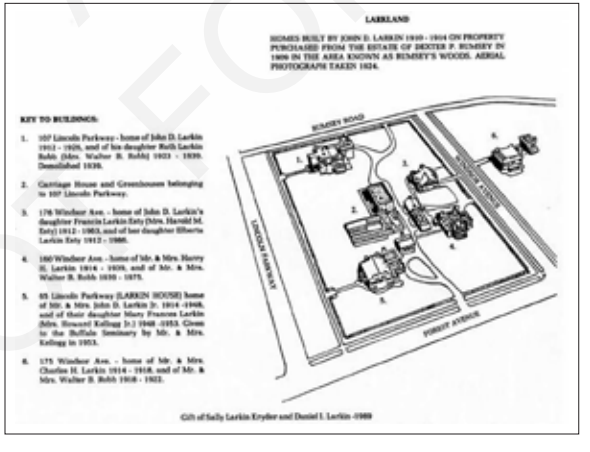
When the Statler family moved to Manhattan for other business pursuits in the 1920s, they retained the property for rental purposes. In 1938, the residence was demolished, a victim of the depression and changing settlement patterns in the Elmwood District. It was a considerable loss for the neighborhood. Today, a 1950s ranch house has replaced it. Only a remnant of the former estate remains: waist-high roughhewn stone walls with supporting pillars connected by decorative wrought iron that can be seen at the corner of Bird and Windsor. The walls are contributing elements to the Elmwood District and attest to the former grandeur of Statler's estate.

The Larkin Estate

Up the street from Ellsworth Statler's residence, John Durrant Larkin, Sr. was also building his own massive estate. Having achieved great wealth from the Larkin Soap Company, which he established downtown, Larkin purchased a large block of land near Delaware Park in 1909, in an area that had been part of Rumsey's Woods. There, he had five houses built: one for him and his wife and one for each of his four children. Bordering Rumsey Road, Forest Avenue, Windsor Avenue, and Lincoln Parkway, Larkin's estate came to be known as "Larkland" and served as the family's enclave for several decades, creating the kind of generational heritage in clubbing that Holly would have applauded.

Larkin almost immediately built a low, straight Onondaga limestone wall surrounding his property as a plinth that would elevate and distinguish Larkland from neighboring Delaware Park as well as the other estates then under construction. Adorning its entire length are capstones that unify the various-sized and -shaped limestone blocks. At shoulder height, the wall delineates property lines also without





TOP: Photograph of Statler's house at 154 Soldier's Circle. Remnants of the stone and wrought iron wall remain today.

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Buildings - Residences - Private

BOTTOM LEFT: An annotated aerial photo of Larkland, a village of family villas illustrating Holly's concept of "clubbing."

Image courtesy of Buffaloah.com

BOTTOM RIGHT: A diagram created in 1959 showing the properties built by John Larkin along Forest Avenue known as Larkland.

Image courtesy of Buffaloah.com

TOP: John D. Larkin's Greek Revival residence at 107 Lincoln Parkway represented the traditional design and comfort often adopted by people with new wealth. He and his wife, Frances, had come a long way uptown from their first downtown residence at 213 Eagle St. in 1875, when he founded the Larkin Soap Company. They lived on Lincoln Parkway from 1912-1926. John D. Larkin died in 1926; the house was demolished in 1939.

Published in Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo *by Frank Severance, scanned by Todd Treat*

BOTTOM: The Administration Building of the Larkin Company at 680 Seneca Street, represented the source of John D. Larkin's wealth. Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1903 and built 1904-1906, this radically modern building was at the time the most advanced workplace in the nation. Ultimately, the ailing company lost the building to tax foreclosure in 1945, and it was demolished in 1950 to make way for a truck stop that was never built. It remains a parking lot to this day.

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. Larkin Company photograph collection, Picture .L37 Series I, Folder 1.

JOHN DURRANT LARKIN — FROM TELEGRAPH MESSENGER TO SOAP TYCOON

John Durrant Larkin (1845-1926) and Ellsworth Milton Statler (1863-1928) had more in common than the Lincoln Parkway neighborhood where each built his estate. Both were the third child of their parents, both stated working at an early age, and both built successful businesses after first working and learning from others in the same field. When he was twelve, Larkin, a Buffalo native, became a telegraph messenger for Western Union. Five years later, he entered the soap manufacturing industry, working for and learning from the company's owner, his brother-in-law Justus Weller, and studying bookkeeping. After eight years, he moved with the company to Chicago, married Frances Hubbard, sister of Weller soap salesman—and future Larkin salesman and vice president—Elbert Hubbard, and became a partner in the firm Larkin & Weller.

Returning to Buffalo, he founded J. D. Larkin, Manufacturer of Plain and Fancy Soaps, and began to offer increasingly larger premiums with purchases. The premiums were redeemable for a host of unrelated products—furniture, china, bottles, and other sundries—whose manufacture the company began to undertake through various subsidiaries as demand grew. By 1901, the company was big enough to have its own building at the Pan-American Exposition. Soon, the number of products offered in its catalog exceeded 115, and by 1912, the Larkin Catalogue was second only to the Sears Catalog in the variety of products offered.

A pioneering business leader, Larkin developed a distribution system via housewives that empowered women entrepreneurs. In "Larkin Clubs of Ten," ten families worked together to purchase products and share premiums, essentially becoming a forerunner of Avon, Tupperware, and other types of products similarly sold primarily by women. A generous benefactor of the University at Buffalo, Larkin at the time of his death, was one of Buffalo's most respected citizens.

The Larkin Administration Building, Frank Lloyd Wright's first business commission, was completed in 1906. The height of modern technology, it featured clean, fresh air circulated through a rudimentary type of air conditioning system, a large interior courtyard infused with natural light, and an elegant restaurant to ensure the best space for all of its 1800 employees but also to attract women to be willing to work in the industrial neighborhood. A pipe organ provided music. European and American architects, critics, and historians hailed it as a triumph of modern architecture and office-building design. It was demolished in 1950, a loss that Buffalo and Wright aficionados have ever since lamented. Various remaining components of the Larkin complex were repurposed in recent years as corporate offices and form the core of a rehabilitated and restored neighborhood called the Hydraulic District centered by Larkinville, a Howard Zemsky family enterprise that is a model for the Richardson Olmsted Campus in the Elmwood District West.

obstructing views. Today, the wall serves as a reminder of the scale of this special precinct's original property lines.

From 1910 to 1915, Larkin hired the architectural firm of McCreary, Wood, and Bradney to design all five houses. Perhaps best known for their design of the Sidway and Spaulding Buildings, located downtown at Main and Goodell streets, McCreary, Wood and Bradney were charged with designing not only all five houses but also their adjoining stables and garages. Each house featured a matching carriage house with a steam-heating plant below and quarters for the chauffeur's family above. Greenhouses and utility buildings also dotted the massive estate—an entire block of houses across the street from Delaware Park.

Of the five residences, John D. Larkin, Sr. and his wife, Frances, commissioned 107 Lincoln Parkway as their own. Built 1910-1912, this two-and-a-half-story mansion was constructed of white brick and Georgia marble in neoclassical style. Set far back from the street amid a cluster of trees, the templelike front façade featured a grand portico, complete with a large pediment, two-story Ionic columns, and marble-staired entrance. The mansion's imposing exterior and expansive interior epitomized classical grace and easily conveyed a sense of the importance of both the estate and its owners. Larkin, Sr. lived there with his wife until his death in 1926, and their daughter lived in the house thereafter until it was demolished in 1939. Despite the unfortunate loss of this building, the four remaining houses continue to remind us of this Elmwood District estate and a fabled era.

All four residences were completed in 1915 and were deeded to Larkin, Sr.'s children by 1917. The Larkins' eldest son, John Larkin, Jr., lived at 65 Lincoln Parkway, a Georgian Revival-style house with neoclassical ornamentation. After his death, the property was deeded to his daughter, Mary Frances Larkin Kellogg. In 1954, Mary Frances donated the house to the Buffalo Seminary, which used it for programming and events until 2007, when it once again became privately owned and occupied.

On the eastern end of Larkland, the other three children lived in mansions built along Windsor Avenue. Harry Larkin resided at 160 Windsor in a two-and-a-half-story, red brick Colonial Revival-style house with monumental Ionic columns and a portico reminiscent of his father's house on Lincoln Parkway. Charlie Larkin lived at 175 Windsor, also a Colonial Revival-style house built of Onondaga limestone that matched Larkland property walls. When he moved to California after only two years, the property was transferred to sister Ruth and brother-in-law, Walter Robb. Across the street, 176 Windsor was known as the "Esty house," where a second daughter, Daisy, lived with her husband, Harold Esty. The two-and-a-half-story, red brick Colonial Revival-style mansion featured a symmetrical, five-bay façade decorated with classical details including a small portico with Doric columns.

Although each of these properties was designed in the common language of the Colonial Revival style and featured neoclassical elements, each is distinct in its siting, materials, and ornamental details. Together, they attest to the immense wealth of the Larkins and the high value of this land in the first decades of the twentieth century. Today, the former Larkland estate still represents an era of the Elmwood District when the city's aristocracy invested their time and money here to reside near Olmsted's The Park in their own version of Eden.

The Bush Homes

When tannery tycoon Myron P. Bush died, his son John ran the tannery business for the next two years, then sold out to founding partner George Howard. During that time and for a total of eleven years, he lived in his father's Delaware Avenue mansion as his own house. That house, in turn, was razed in 1938. The site is now a shrub-shielded parking lot for offices that occupy the adjacent Stephen M. Clement, Jr. mansion.

By 1902, John had a lavish Beaux Arts classical style mansion built at 6 Lincoln Parkway, designed by the prominent architectural firm of Lansing and Beierl. The firm was also commissioned to design two residences for John's children. Side by side with John's at the Lincoln Parkway and Soldiers Place location were the Colonial Revival home of his son, Myron P. Bush, at No. 14, built the same year as his father's, and the frame Craftsman-style home of his daughter,

Katherine Bush Hotchkiss, built two years later at No. 20. Myron and Katherine's husband, William Hotchkiss, were law partners.

The three properties are yet another example of the concept of clubbing as estate building promoted by architect Henry Hudson Holly decades earlier.

Frank Lloyd Wright's William Heath House, 1904-1905

In 1903, William R. Heath commissioned the young architect Frank Lloyd Wright to build a residence at 76 Soldiers Place, located just down Lincoln Parkway from the estate that his employer, John Larkin, would build four years later. The two-story brick residence features several architectural elements characteristic of Wright's signature Prairie-style design, including art glass windows, cantilevered hipped roofs, and an emphasis on horizontality. Situated at a unique juncture of three Olmsted parkways, the house is a stunning example of Wright's work and an exceptional contribution to the Elmwood District.

William Heath had made his fortune as head of the legal department and eventually vice president of the Larkin Company. Both Larkin Sr.'s wife, Hannah Frances, and Heath's wife, Mary, were sisters of Elbert Hubbard, who worked in sales and marketing at the Larkin Company before he left in 1893 "to pursue his ambitions as a writer" and two years later to establish the Roycroft Arts and Crafts community which became a haven for artists, writers and philosophers in the suburban Village of East Aurora. Thus, Larkin and Heath were brothers-in-law as well as colleagues. Because he built his house first, it is reasonable to believe that Heath encouraged John Larkin to build nearby, not only because of the desirability of the area but so the sisters could be close.

Set on a deep, narrow strip of land that faced Olmsted's major circle, Soldiers Place, and multiple street intersections, placement of the house became one of the primary determinants in Wright's vision for the residence. The lot was completely atypical of lots Wright had worked with before. The horizontality, contiguous spaces, and broad, sweeping views characteristic of many of his early Prairie-style designs were at odds with this narrow, angular, and very publicly oriented parcel.

Particularly in the context of the other residential commission that Wright was working on in Buffalo at the time, the Darwin D. Martin House, this lot required an innovative design solution. The Martin house was similarly situated within the context of an Olmsted design in Buffalo's Parkside district located just north of the park. There, Wright reconciled the strong contrast between his characteristic rectilinear style and Olmsted's curvilinear roads by placing the complex at a deep setback from the street. In the Elmwood District he was presented with a similar relationship to the curving traffic circle and radiating parkways Olmsted had designed, yet he encountered the additional challenge of building on a corner lot that was much closer,

Although it is the most modern of the early houses built around Soldiers Place, the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Heath House is also the most subtle. Perhaps the largest house on Soldiers Place, it is gracefully tucked into a tight corner site and takes advantage of the lot depth for large floor area. Wright provided privacy despite the mostly glazed main floor walls by raising the main floor half a story above the sidewalk. The interior is bright with natural light, yet its height is no greater than that of neighboring structures. Its deep front porch and large eaves pull the outside deep into the interior of the house, and vice versa. So many of the newly wealthy residents of Soldiers Place chose traditional designs to give pedigree to their new status. Perhaps Heath was influenced by his unconventional and flamboyant brother-in-law, Elbert Hubbard, founder of The Roycrofters, to make a confident, modern statement for his home with this design by his unconventional and flamboyant architect.

Accessed from the Library of Congress

JUST IMAGINE ...

Imagine if the Soldiers Place residents of the day had held a block party. Some of the most extraordinary people who were creating 20th century America would be gathered under the tent at the center of Olmsted's tribute to the 19th century's ordinary soldiers who made that America possible.

There is real estate magnate and amusement park owner J. Homan Pardee, whose 1897 Richardsonesque Shingle-style mansion at 66 Soldiers Place represented the rural-estate style of early Elmwood. Pardee helped transform the Snake Hill picnic grove established in 1885 on a lovely beach in Fort Erie, Ontario, into the Erie Beach Amusement Park that attracted thousands a day into an electric light-lit, million dollar fantasy land for workers and their families who may still have had outdoor plumbing at home. The park did not survive the Great Depression. Pardeee pioneered mass leisure and outdoor amusement before Walt Disney.

Next door, at 76 Soldiers Place, Larkin Soap Company vice president William R. Heath built in 1904 and 1905 his Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Prairie Style mansion. This iconic Wright design received international attention for its brilliance. Heath and the Larkin Soap Company were transforming American retailing, empowering women to be entrepreneurs and inventing modern business practices based on high speed transportation, logistics and communication. It was the Amazon of its day.

Nearby, hotelier Ellsworth Statler built his Arts & Crafts-style showplace estate in 1901 at 154 Soldiers Place. This retro-style design was perhaps a nostalgic look back to the days before the mass market, railroad hotels with state-of-the-art services and technology that Statler pioneered. His innovations made continental business travel the norm in America at the turn of the last century. Statler, through his patronage of a school of hospitality at Cornell University, invented the modern hotel business.

The leader of a pioneering institution that was already more than 50 years old when it moved into the neighborhood, Miss L. Gertrude Angell, legendary Head of School of Buffalo Seminary from 1903 to 1952, of the 1909 Buffalo Seminary all girls high school was an equal neighbor. The large Collegiate Gothic-styled school fit its neighborhood and its mission. Then, as now, "at SEM, girls from diverse backgrounds – united in their ambition for a superb and challenging education – can find a comprehensive program that prepares them well for both college and lifelong endeavors."[69] Graduates of Sem have made their marks on the world in all fields.

We can only imagine their conversations during their block club meetings, but we don't have to image what a place the Elmwood District's Soldiers Place was at that time—an outdoor gallery of masterful architectural styles created over the course of fifteen years for masterful makers of modern America, because all but one of those impressive homes—since joined by additional imposing mansions—exist today.

This postcard dated September 9, 1906 is of a view of Soldiers Circle looking south along Chapin Parkway. Olmsted's simple design is of a low grassy mound with floral plantings at the center illuminated at night by twin gas lanterns suspended from a floral-shaped cast iron pole. The cannons and piled cannon balls were added later by the city. Note the sporty automobile rounding the circle.

Although Olmsted named the centerpiece of his park system after the common Civil War soldier, real estate realities of the times meant that only the very wealthy could afford to buy and build on the surrounding lots.

This postcard was sent from Buffalo by a man named Harry to "Frank Eckam, Troop M. 3rd Cav. Manila, P. I." It was received at Camp Stotsenberg in the Philippines on October 26, 1909. Harry writes, "Do you recall the night we returned with the 13th reg't. Yes, no –". The 13th New York Infantry Regiment was part of the Union Army during the Civil War. It mustered out on May 14, 1863, 43 years before the date on this postcard.

Photograph Courtesy of Clinton Brown

ERIE BEACH AMUSEMENT PARK

What began in 1885 as Snake Hill picnic grove amid the trees lining the sandy shore of Lake Erie in Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada, across the Niagara River from Buffalo, developed over the next 45 years as the Erie Beach Amusement Park.

In contrast to the older, passive, naturalistic Olmsted-designed parks, the post-Civil War generation enjoyed Erie Beach as a whirling, blaring, and blazing magical fantasyland open to nearly every Buffalonian who could afford to take the streetcar to the foot of Main Street, board a cruise ship-style ferry to the park, and pay to enter—and who had the time to do so.

It attracted thousands of visitors each day during the "Golden 90 Days of Summer" between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Visitors may have had the most grueling jobs, outdoor plumbing and gas lighting at home, but here they played on amusement rides, enjoyed games and food at concessions, and swam in pools and on the beach by day. At night they strolled wide, concrete sidewalks illuminated by thousands of electric lights, enjoying live, big band music and dancing at the casino. They could return by the last boat or stay the night at a 65-room hotel with hot and cold running water and telephone communication to Buffalo.

Erie Beach Park finally succumbed to competition, the Great Depression, changed transportation, the rise of public pools in neighborhoods, and free radio and later television entertainment indoors. The Park closed at the end of the 1930 season. The casino was destroyed by fire after the park closed and was demolished in the 1970s. Still remaining are the pools, the ferry pier, the promenade and the ride bases, although the rides themselves were either torn down or sold to other amusement parks.

Today, nearly everybody's backyard is a mini-Erie Beach Amusement Park, and many Buffalonians have come once again to appreciate the refreshment of the Elmwood District's Olmsted parks.

Image from secretswithinthefog.wordpress.com

HOW THE MAJORITY LIVED: A RISING MIDDLE CLASS

The Elmwood District also boasts hundreds of more common houses for more common residents. They are part of the fabric of the district, the understory beneath the grand, treed estates. The stories of the residents of 76 Lincoln Parkway represent one facet of the Elmwood District story, but a more typical story may be found at 408 Ashland Avenue, near W. Ferry Street, nearly the geographic center of the Elmwood District (and home to author Clinton Brown and family for more than 30 years).

The lot that is now "408 Ashland" was first recorded as owned by the Holland Land Company in 1783. The first transaction recorded on 408 Ashland Avenue's title search describes it as "all that certain piece or parcel of land situate in the City of Buffalo, County of Erie and State of New York, being part of Lot No. 61, Township 11 and Range 8 of the Holland Land Company's survey…".[70] The transaction is the sale of the land that would become 408 Ashland Avenue by Wilhem Willink and others of the Holland Land Company to Joseph Ellicott on February 8, 1811.

On August 26, 1815, Joseph Ellicott conveyed the land to Frederick Miller. On September 21, 1817, Frederick Miller and his wife Elizabeth sold the land to William T. Miller, who, along with his wife Elizabeth, owned the parcel for 35 years (the longest period of ownership) before selling it to Amasa Mason and Francis H. Tows on November 1, 1852. Miller held a mortgage for $18,604.25.

After this transaction, more than 64 transactions occur over the next 138 years until the purchase in 1991 by the author's family of this now tiny lot and its house that was built in 1891, 100 years earlier. Those transactions in between represent the continuous sub-division of the parcel into smaller pieces, sales and purchases, mortgages, deaths, foreclosures and bankruptcies, good times and bad, that mirror the ups and downs of the city. The residents were primarily regular people whose names do not readily come up on a Google search, like most of the regular people who have populated the Elmwood District over time. For instance, the 1920 census lists Mr. and Mrs. Baker, both 52 years old, and two sons, 23 and 17 years of age, as living at 408 Ashland Avenue. They had three boarders from Illinois, Mr. and Mrs. Roy, 36 and 23 years old respectively, and their 6-month old son, Junior, all listed as being "white," in the column Color or Race. Both Mr. Baker and Mr. Roy were listed as being "salesmen." Seven people lived at that time in a small, four-bedroom house with one bathroom.

The exception to these ordinary residents is Bruce M. Shanks (1908–1980), the Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist of the *Buffalo Evening News*, who lived at 408 Ashland Avenue with his wife Mary Louise from 1951 to 1969. He built an addition on the house in 1953 and made 408 Ashland a two-family house. Shanks famously created a cartoon character, " Olaf Fub," which is "Buffalo" spelled backwards. A drawing of Fub and the phrase, "Olaf Fub sez" continue to this day to introduce comments about local events in *The Buffalo News*.

TOP: A circa 1891 photo of 408 and 410 Ashland Avenue, ready for sale and occupancy after construction debris is removed. Note the newly-planted trees.

BOTTOM: The same view of the houses at 408 and 410 Ashland Avenue in 2021, 130 years later. Taste in paint colors has changed, the street is paved, and a new driveway reflects widespread automobile ownership not imagined in the streetcar suburb of the 1890s. Note the mix of mature original trees and maturing new ones.

Photographs by Gregory Pinto, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

and more visible, to neighboring properties on the several adjacent, intersecting streets.

Wright faced this challenge head on. Because privacy was a central issue, he set the house back from the circle. Although the official address is on Soldiers Place, the house is aligned with Bird Avenue. Boldly pushing the exterior walls of the house virtually up to the sidewalk, Wright provided additional privacy by raising the house's main interior spaces above a pedestrian's sightline, thereby greatly limiting what passersby could see. Rather than place a grand entrance at the front of the lot, Wright provided a small, modest entrance on the Bird Avenue side. The small entrance, along with a wide chimney and multiple art glass casement windows, served as additional screening devices that prevented onlookers' curiosity despite the house's proximity to the street. This orientation had the effect of essentially hiding the residents in plain sight, enabling the house to command a prominent architectural presence befitting Heath's commission while providing privacy for his family.

Unlike the sprawling lawn Wright was able to provide at the Darwin D. Martin house, the Heath house was close to neighboring residents. Because the property culminated in a public space, Wright could assume that the Heath residence would not be compromised by new buildings arising on the edge of the property line. To create a landscape befitting a residence of this stature, Wright set the house at the back of the lot, leaving substantial open space where the property faced Soldiers Place. This placement effectively doubled the "front yard," creating a contiguous green zone that joins the lawn to the greenery of Olmsted's circle and parkways just beyond the property lines. In this way, Wright thoroughly integrated the Heath residence into the preexisting Olmsted landscape that shapes the district.

Several architectural elements reinforce Wright's innovative approach to this lot and its relationship to the surrounding district. A substantial porch covered by a cantilevered roof with square pillar-supports faces the front lawn. Accessed only from within the house, the porch also provides a visible display of and for the house's residents, taking advantage of their prestigious location in a manner simultaneously private and public.

Behind the house, Wright also included a single-story stable for the family's horse and carriage. The early presence of a garage affirms the Heath family's elite status, and, by extension, the prestige of the Elmwood District where they chose to build their residence.

The William R. Heath house remains one of Frank Lloyd Wright's most influential contributions to global modernism. Constructed five years before the Frederick C. Robie house (1910), which is also located on a narrow corner lot in Chicago, the Heath house is an important precedent to his later work in Chicago. Wright's solution to the unique size, shape, and orientation of the lot in relation to the surrounding Elmwood District proved useful to his Robie house commission, which he similarly situated on a corner lot amid the Hyde Park neighborhood and University of Chicago campus. His approach to providing privacy for the residents, as well as demonstrating public prestige in the context of the surrounding community, directly echoed his earlier work at the Heath house.

The Heath house also proved to be internationally influential through its inclusion in the internationally renowned Wasmuth portfolio. Published in 1910-1911 by the Berlin publisher Ernest Wasmuth, the portfolio compiled 100 lithographs of Wright's major works in America. The portfolio focused on twelve Wright works, three of which were located in Buffalo: the Darwin D. Martin House, the Larkin Administration Building, and the Heath House—accompanied by a monograph written by Wright. The Wasmuth portfolio was the first publication of Wright's work to appear anywhere in the world, predating his own publications by several years. The publication was extremely important for Wright's career and directly influenced many important architects across the Atlantic, including Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Walter Gropius, who would later be considered the "fathers" of European modernism.

The inclusion of interior and exterior photos and the floor plan of the Heath house in the portfolio testifies to the pivotal importance of its design to the history of architecture, to Wright's career, and to the Elmwood District. The distribution of the portfolio, and the images of the Heath house that it contained, to this powerful group of European architects demonstrates the

cultural distinction and social prestige present in the Elmwood District during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Of the twelve works described in the portfolio, two have been demolished and nine have been listed on the National Register as National Historic Landmarks, the Register's highest designation for individual buildings. The William R. Heath house is the only one of the twelve that has not been individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Yet, the Heath house represents a profoundly important and influential contribution to both the local and global history of architecture and the development of modernism.

Just as the Elmwood Historic District West boasts houses that stand out for reasons of their architecture, or the architects or builders who designed and built them, or the celebrity of their occupants, Elmwood East does as well. One such residence is 76 Lincoln Parkway. Within the walls of this 5,204-square-foot mansion have lived residents who were attracted to Buffalo from out of town and whose life's work has been conducted in industries having not just regional or national, but worldwide impact. And it exemplifies some of the changes that have occurred in the Elmwood District over the past 100 years.

The two-and-a-half-story Craftsman-style frame house was built circa 1908 for a John A. Kinney, a Jamestown, New York, native and graduate of Cornell University in Arts (1899) and in Law (1901). In 1903 Kinney was practicing law in the 1896 Prudential Building office of fellow Cornell alums and Chi Psi fraternity brothers E. L. Parker and G. C. Miller. By 1908, he had moved his office to the tenth floor of the newer Green & Wicks-designed Fidelity Building, home to the prominent Fidelity Trust Bank founded by John J. Albright, and was clearly doing well enough to commission his new suburban mansion at 76 Lincoln Parkway while still in his early thirties.

The subsequent occupant of 76 Lincoln Parkway was the better-known Glenn Hammond Curtiss (1878-1930). Curtiss, the father of naval aviation and a founder of the American aircraft industry, relocated here from his native Hammondsport, New York, then the center of America's nascent aviation industry. Buffalo was attractive because Curtiss needed more space for manufacturing, as well as for the 18,000 employees that would eventually be hired. Although he was in Buffalo in 1910 to give testimony in a lawsuit filed against him by the Wright Brothers and Buffalo was also a center of aviation activity, it was not until 1915 that he opened factory operations here. In that same year he applied for a building permit to construct a garage at the Lincoln Parkway property. His company moved to Long Island in 1918, but he later returned to open another factory. He died in July 1930 in Buffalo following complications of surgery.

The next known significant occupants of 76 Lincoln Parkway were John and Susan Surdam, who purchased the property in 1942. They were among the founders of the Osmose Wood Preserving Company of America. John L. Surdam had a long and distinguished career in business and civic life in Buffalo with a national impact. Born in New York City in 1915, the son of an F. W. Woolworth Company executive, he graduated from Williams College in 1937, married Susan Fiske, a Rumsey, in 1940, and served in the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946.

The Woolworth Company had purchased the Osmose company of Germany, inventors of a patented process and formula for preserving wood through infused chemicals. The widespread application of the process, from underground mines to above-ground utility poles, made Osmose a worldwide industry leader.

Surdam was a trustee of Erie Savings Bank, the Buffalo City Cemetery Association (Forest Lawn Cemetery), a director of First Empire Corporation (now M&T Bank), and a founding commissioner and treasurer of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority from 1967 to 1977.

The current owner of the 110-year-old house is Jeffrey Gundlach, a billionaire investment manager and founder of DoubleLine Capital LP in California. He has assumed a substantial role in Buffalo's renewal as benefactor to the city's—and the Elmwood District's—premier cultural institution, the Albright-Knox-Gundlach Art Museum, known as the Buffalo AKG Art Museum.

A native of the Buffalo suburb of Amherst, whose mother took him to the Albright-Knox as a child, Gundlach left Buffalo for Los Angeles in 1983 with the city's post-industrial image of itself mired in defeat firmly fixed in his mind. "I was in Buffalo in the '70s and they did these crazy things

like slogans to try to motivate people,"[71] he said, referring to the "Buffalo Talkin' Proud" tourism campaign. Still, he returned to Buffalo for family holiday visits and jaunts to the Albright, and with each visit in the past decade noted a growing civic pride and optimism. During a July 2, 2015, visit to speak to a meeting of the Buffalo chapter of the Chartered Financial Analyst Society in the Albright-Knox auditorium, Gundlach "ventured into the Elmwood Village." According to his own words, the experience was inspirational:

> *I was there a year ago for a visit, and there was that Garden Walk they have in the downtown area, where people open up their back yards and their beautiful gardens and you get a chance to walk through those neighborhoods and see how these once nearly dilapidated homes now have all kinds of pride. … This was all going on, and I found out there was this* [art gallery] *capital campaign. And I thought, this is something that would make a difference.*[72]

According to *The Buffalo News*, "Transformational projects are a specialty of Gundlach's."[73] His $52 million gift to the Albright-Knox expansion project will transform it, and his name will be added to the Elmwood District's internationally renowned institution along with historic business magnates and Elmwood District residents John J. Albright and Seymour H. Knox, Jr.

Distinctive Streets

Elmwood East has a number of streets that are distinctive for various reasons, for example, their size and scale, how or when they were formed, the existence of medians, or for being rare cul-de-sacs.

Modest at only fifty feet wide, **Saybrook Place** is a one-block long street between Delaware Avenue and Chapin Parkway, running parallel to east-west Potomac and W. Delavan avenues until it bends and widens to sixty feet to intersect the angled parkway at ninety degrees. The predominantly Craftsman, Prairie, and Colonial Revival houses built on Saybrook were all constructed within a ten-year window between circa 1905 and circa 1915. Lined with a mixed canopy of mature deciduous trees and stone curbs, Saybrook Place's small size and scale and unique angle all create an intimate sense of place in contrast to grand Delaware Avenue and Chapin Parkway that it connects.

Median Streets

Its median and many of its houses designed by architect W. L. Schmolle, **Argyle Park** was established in 1904 by Sylvanus Nye, the same developer responsible for Dorchester Road in Elmwood West, which also features a median.

Nye was then a prominent developer in Buffalo; he developed two other communities in the district, Ardmore Place on the West Side and in the 1920s the residential neighborhood


OCTOBER 31, 1908.

REAL ESTATE

NEW SEMI-PRIVATE PARK
TO BE LOCATED IN SITE OF
Y. M. C. A. RECREATION PARK


ENTRANCE TO PENHURST PARK
Adjoining Delaware Park. Showing portion of residences recently completed

TOP: Argyle Park Development Advertisement, 1908. 'Argyle Park,' an exclusive high-grade residence district, really a semi-private park, is about to make its debut in Buffalo.

BOTTOM: "Entrance to Penhurst Park, 1914 photo showing stone entry gate and recently completed housing." This was the site of Statler's Hotel built for the Pan-American Exposition of 1901. The demolition of the hotel left such a large parcel that the Penhurst Park developer was able to create an exclusive enclave that made a statement about living well in the city. The Albright Art Gallery was just being completed on its park site at the end of the street. Penhurst Park represents a lovely intersection of sylvan park and urbane city. Is this what the Pilgrims had in mind with their heavenly city of Revelations?

Image published in the Greater Buffalo and Niagara Frontier Commercial and Industrial *annual publication*

THE AUTOMOBILE AS STATUS SYMBOL

The streetcar was still the dominant mode of transportation at the turn of the century. In the early 1900s, only the wealthiest citizens could afford this luxury. In this sense, the automobile represented much more than a means of transportation; it served as an indicator of upper-class status.

With the greater availabililty of automobiles and no restrictions on who could drive them, the woman in this 1917 photograph from the Library of Congress could easily be an Elmwood District developer surveying her farm and forest lot being cleared for the construction of the house she plans to build there. It will probably include a garage suitable for her Buffalo-built Pierce-Arrow motor car, among the most magnificent of the day.

This trend starts the transformation of the Elmwood District from a streetcar suburb to a more urban, automobile landscape. Within just a half a generation, the streetcars will give way to automobiles and buses for private and public transportation.

known as Nye Park on the land once occupied by the Pan-American Exposition.

Argyle Park was built on the former site of a Young Men's Christian Association park. It was intended to be an "exclusive, high-grade residence district, really a semiprivate park … after the style of the English private place."[74] Similar to many suburbs today, Argyle Park allowed access only to the wealthy and assured future residents that "the property will be efficiently restricted."[75] In addition, its stone gates and wrought iron-work suggest the restricted entrance to an ancient castle.

Price was used as a method of regulating the socioeconomic status of the residents, ensuring that only the wealthy could afford to purchase property in this new, desirable development. Landscape design and architectural style were used to attract such residents, and some even further suggested that communities like Argyle Park were not only opportunities for personal investment, but also represented an investment in the city at large.

Its width of seventy feet is divided by a landscaped median. With **Penhurst Park**, the two are the only streets in Elmwood East with medians not designed by Olmsted. Most of the modest-to-large, eclectically styled houses on the street were built between 1905 and 1916, but the final three were built between 1922 and 1924. The street is rounded at both ends, forming a long ellipse that is punctuated at both of its termination streets, Potomac and Delavan avenues, by handsome, imposing stone gateways. Aside from more recent tree and flower plantings, the street has scarcely been modified, thus retaining an aura of refined exclusivity reflecting the high-design ideal set by Olmsted for the area half a century before and predicting the automobile-oriented cul-de-sacs of half a century later. As the *Buffalo Courier* article commented,

> *It is difficult to estimate the immense advantage which accrues to a city through this class of development. These little beauty spots certainly become a matter of civic pride and general public benefit, besides enhancing the value of the land employed and that adjacent thereto. By this beautifying process and the employment of the high grade of art in landscape and architecture, all in harmony, yet individual in characteristic, a man's home becomes a solid asset, ever appreciating value.*[76]

Although the earliest residents of Argyle Park likely first used the streetcar for their commutes, the development's design anticipated the future dominance of the automobile. By 1917, using the street as her classroom, Mrs. Daniel Stucki offered driving lessons from her home at 32 Argyle Park to "female autoists," indicating the presence of experienced car owners then on the street.[77] In addition, garages were being built during this time, often designed in stylistic accord with the main structure. The Prairie-style frame house built in 1909 for Court T. Champeney at 55 Argyle Park features such a garage, with a hipped roof and dormer providing stylistic unity

with the house. Several other elements in the design of Argyle Park allude to the presence of the automobile, including ample space for driveways, a relatively wide street, and the graceful, curving median.

Two-way, 100-foot-wide **Penhurst Park**, built circa 1909, bears similarities to Argyle Park in its wide, green medians, rounded ends, and imposing stone entryway at Forest Avenue, though there is no matching gateway to the north where the street terminates at Delaware Park. The houses on the street, the majority of which are of Tudor and Colonial Revival styling, were built between 1909 and 1957. A diminutive, 400-foot-long sister street, **Penhurst Place**, connects Penhurst Park with Elmwood Avenue. Only one residence, the former Anson Conger Goodyear house at 88 Penhurst Park, is located on it. As described by Buffalo architectural historian Austin Fox, that house is one of a "number of quietly tasteful, prosperity-suggestive Buffalo residences [E. B.] Green designed."[78]

A principal distinction of the 50-foot wide **Tudor Place** arises from its construction on land that was originally part of the John J. Albright estate, which was sold off in parcels after the great industrialist's death. These newly subdivided parcels needed street frontage to be marketable. The southwest portion of the street is lined with a brick wall that marks the estate's former boundary. The majority of houses on Tudor Place (two of which were previously individually listed on the National Register) are large, architect-designed Tudor and Colonial Revivals built in the 1920s.

An alternative technique for subdividing the Albright Estate was the "cul-de-sac." An example next to Tudor Place is St. Catherines Court.

Cul-de-Sacs

The small **St. Catherines Court**, the Elmwood District's earliest cul-de-sac, shares with Tudor Place the distinction of having been platted on part of the former John J. Albright estate. Although Albright sold a portion of his property to the Niagara Finance Corporation in 1921 to alleviate his family's financial stress, he continued to live on his (now smaller) estate. In order to maintain the historic standard and high quality of his property, design standards were enforced as a condition of the sale. St. Catherines Court could contain only single-family houses, placed with specific siting requirements and built with minimum cost requirements. Accessed from Cleveland Avenue near Tudor Place, most of the houses on the Court were built soon after the sale and tended to echo Albright's Tudor Revival mansion, indicating he and his associated style still had cache among prospective neighbors. The cul-de-sac has a small island of lawn in the center and wide sidewalks. A unique feature in the otherwise relatively flat Elmwood East landscape is the dramatic rise in elevation from Cleveland Avenue up to the level of St. Catherines Court, which is flanked by retaining walls on either side.

Built circa 1940, **Lincoln Woods Lane** is entered from Bidwell Parkway. It includes several model midcentury houses as well as rear garage access for houses on Soldiers Place, including the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed William Heath house. The 1897 Coatsworth House, architect Williams Lansing's copy of H. H. Richardson's Stoughton House in Cambridge, Massachusetts, that originally faced Soldiers Place, was moved to Lincoln Woods Lane circa 1950 when the lot on which it stood was subdivided. The lane has no sidewalks but includes a small central island with closely planted cypress trees and bushes.

Rumsey Lane is the result of collaboration between prominent builder Hugh Perry and architect Gordon Hayes. On the grounds of the former Larkland block, the small cul-de-sac accessed from Rumsey Road is divided into two narrow parcels which, combined, are twenty-four feet wide. It contains only three houses, built between 1949 and 1952. Though its name might suggest otherwise, no Rumseys ever lived on the lane. They did, however, own the land that is called Rumsey's Woods facing the lane.

Although termed a "square" with large trees shading the street until it loops around a small, communal parklike island, **St. George's Square** is a private cul-de-sac largely also developed by prominent builder Hugh Perry and designed by Gordon Hayes in the 1950s and '60s. Its Colonial Revival houses mimic Colonial Williamsburg in style. This colonial branding explains why the houses on the newer St. George's Square appear to be older than the Mid-Century Modern architecture of the older Rumsey Lane. Once the backyard of the Arnold Watson and Esther Goodyear residence (part of

ELMWOOD DISTRICT CUL-DE-SACS

Cul-de-sacs, dead end streets, have been a form of urban planning for protection and privacy for 4,000 years. Elmwood District cul-de-sacs, mean more: They are about living in a park in a city.

Elmwood District models that developed over the course of the 20th century share the aspiration of how one might live here in a balance of home, park, and automobile. An ancient form of city planning was an answer as homeowners acquired cars as the district lost its streetcars.

One of the first cul-de-sacs, **St. Catherines Court**, built in 1921 off Cleveland Avenue, may be related to the Garden City Movement advocated in 1898 by Sir Ebenezer Howard in the UK. The idea of planned, self-contained communities surrounded by "greenbelts" that balanced residences, industry, and agriculture was introduced in the U.S. by progressive planner Clarence Stein and others in the 1920s.

This approach made commercial sense in Buffalo: A ring of house lots around a central green space was an efficient and attractive way to subdivide a large square piece of the former Albright estate with little street frontage. The houses were designed in the Tudor Revival style, lending credence to the English precedent that was popular after World War I. The name? The design of Albright's mansion followed that of St. Catherines Court in England.

Buffalo architect E.B. Green designed **Mayfair Lane** at 155 North Street in 1924. He lived in a castle-like house at the head of the deep, narrow, two-level structure. Cars enter at the lower level and park in garages that are the lowest story of the three-level Tudoresque townhouses above. The front doors for guests who arrive by foot flank a raised, shared, stone-paved pedestrian street edged by planting boxes.

Melbourne Court, developed in the 1930s and 1950s, mixes individual houses that form one side of a common, raised greenspace that is open to Melbourne Place to the west, and an L-shaped apartment building that forms the other two sides. Each house has a garage underneath in this two-level design.

Lincoln Woods developed in 1940 off Bidwell Parkway, was the result of the subdivision of the former Homan Pardee estate after the relocation of his mansion that had faced Soldiers Place to the estate's "back 40." However, the common space is not as purposely formed as it was at St. Catherines Court.

Rumsey Lane, developed off Rumsey Road by Hugh Perry in 1949 to 1952, subdivided a portion of the former Larkin estate using the cul-de-sac concept. His **St. Georges Square**, built off Bryant Street in the 1950s and the 1960s on a portion of the Goodyear family "club," included a house designed for a Goodyear descendant. The central green space hosts a lighted Christmas tree each season.

St. Andrews Walk was also developed by Perry a decade later, in 1963. It consists of two ranks of six row houses, each designed in a variation of a contemporary Georgian style, that flank a treed and grassy elevated park open to Oakland Place to the east. Twin driveways access lower-level garages.

While all of these cul-de-sacs remain desirable and valuable, the most urbane of them, Mayfair Lane, may be the Elmwood District's most Edenic balance of tradition, nature, and modern transportation in an Olmsted city, even nearly 100 years after it was designed and built.

TOP: A 1928 advertisement in the *Buffalo Courier-Express* for apartments in the new Melbourne Court cul-de-sac development.

Published in the Buffalo Courier Express

BOTTOM: A map of the St. Catherines Court cul-de-sac development which was carved out of the former Albright Estate, annotated by Clinton Brown Company Architecture pc to show the perimeter of the site and its central median outlined in green and the first houses constructed rendered in pink.

Map image originally in the Draft Registration Form for the nomination of the Albright Tract Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places prepared by Kathy Howe.

the Goodyear Family "club", St. George's Square was laid out in 1956, extending south from Bryant Street, parallel to Oakland Place.

No list of distinctive streets would be complete without **Oakland Place**, which took its name from the Oaklands Gardens Nurseries by Manley & Mason once located nearby. Unusually wide at ninety-five feet for a street not part of the Olmsted park system, Oakland Place is home to grand, variously styled houses and mansions, the majority of which were built in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Over the years, these residences have been inhabited by such prominent Buffalo individuals as Seymour H. Knox, Jr. and such institutions as the official residence of the Catholic bishop of Buffalo and the rectory of Trinity Episcopal Church. The histories of Oakland Place buildings have been well-documented and are the subject of Martin Wachadlo's intimately detailed book, *Oakland Place: Gracious Living in Buffalo*. Indeed, the book is an informative read as a succinct case study of the effects of the 1930s and '40s on the lifestyles of the wealthy and the neighborhoods in which they lived.

A notable example of actions taken by Oakland Place residents because of real and perceived threats to their lifestyle was the deed restriction dated February 20, 1928, formulated by all the owners of property fronting the street and two on neighboring Summer Street (173 and 185). "Dismayed" and "scandalized" by the evolution of Delaware and Elmwood avenues into commercial districts and "once-grand mansions [becoming] rooming houses or [being] replaced by stores and offices," the homeowners sought to forestall such changes happening to their street and to ensure that Oakland Place's ambiance and property values were maintained. The deed restriction was extended several times to 1958. At some point the owners of 173 and 185 Summer Street opted out of the agreement; the former became a rooming house in 1943 and the latter, an apartment house in 1949, and its address was changed to 2 Oakland Place.

Still more change came to the street. In a few cases, original houses were demolished and replaced, and secondary buildings were left standing. Two houses were moved to Oakland Place from other locations. In the middle of the twentieth century, the subdevelopments of **St. Andrews Walk** and Blackfriars Lane were added by developer/builder Hugh Perry, whom Wachadlo describes as "the major force on the street during the postwar period." The model for these might be the nearby Mayfair Lane, designed by E. B. Green in 1928, with its townhouses facing a landscaped lane above and automobile parking below. St. Andrews Walk embodies "picturesque domesticity."

Despite its evolution over the past century, the grand and exclusive nature of the street is very much intact—a good deal of the original Medina sandstone pavement on which the first property owners walked remains intact today.

The street earned yet another distinction: More Oakland Place women appear to have been responsible for commissioning the building of their home than was true of any other street in either section of the Elmwood Historic District. The earliest to do so in 1891 were Clarissa F. Griffin and Margaret Shortiss. Clarissa built her frame Shingle-style house at No. 32; it later became Trinity Episcopal Church's rectory. Margaret's frame Colonial Revival was converted to two units and bears the addresses 62 and 64. A year later Anna L. Burnett had a gambrel-roof, three-bay Colonial Revival built at 130. In 1896, Ann F. Walbridge hired architect Martin C. Miller to build a two-and-a-half story brick Richardsonesque house at 120, and about the same year, Charlotte Wright hired architects Loverin & Whelan to build a four-bay, frame Colonial Revival at 27. Architect Williams Lansing designed a frame semidetached Colonial Revival for Bessie Sweet Truscott at 33 in 1898.

A decade and a half later, in 1913, Mabel Letchworth Wilson hired architects Wood & Bradney to design her brick Tudor residence at 96. A similar lapse of time appears to have occurred before two additional woman-commissioned houses were built: In 1927, Georgia M. G. Forman used the prestigious E. B. Green & Sons—Albert Hart Hopkins firm to design a Tudor masonry residence with massive paired chimneys at 79. Five years later in 1932, in the early stages of the Great Depression, Mabel McCarthy had a one-and-a-half-story brick house with slate Mansard roof built at 91 Oakland Place. It was formerly a secondary building for 87 Oakland Place.

In an area dominated by the names of wealthy men, several other women were behind the

THE FACE OF CHANGE ON A SINGLE ELMWOOD STREET

Though not one of the earliest houses in Elmwood, the circa 1888 Folk Victorian farmhouse at 638 Lafayette appears to be the first house built on this section of Bouck Street, as it was then named. How much the culture of the street—as well as that of the city—had changed in ten years when 619 Lafayette Avenue was built: from a simple farmhouse recalling the earlier farm era of the city to the ostentatious Hewitt mansion epitomizing the prosperity of Buffalo's industrial Golden Age!

In 1898, thirty-year-old North Tonawanda lumber baron Asa K. Silverthorne commissioned a Queen Anne-style mansion at 665 Lafayette Avenue. Behind the house was a two-story barn with room for carriages, stalls for four horses, a tin-lined bin for the horses' feed, and an apartment for the coachman. Just eight years later, Silverthorne moved to a stone mansion at 877 Delaware Avenue designed by Buffalo architects Esenwein and Johnson, and the Pennypackers, also lumber barons, took residence. By that time, horses no longer the prime means of transportation, the barn became a garage for their automobile, and the feed bin became a clubhouse for the Pennypacker children. When Clinton Brown's family moved into 665 in 1963, he found a paper in the bin written by those children that expressed the sentiment, "We vigilantes of Lafayette Avenue do not want any more houses built here because we are losing our open lots!"

But Lafayette Avenue continued to fill with residences until 1925, when the last one, The Parke Apartments, was built on the grounds of the Porter Norton mansion at Gates Circle. Not until more than eighty years later was a new house built, at 647 Lafayette, but it required the controversial demolition of a 5,289-square-foot existing house built in 1920. That house was purchased by a young couple for their growing family with the intention of rehabilitating it; however, its poor condition caused a change in plans to demolition and replacement. Because it was a contributing property to the Elmwood Historic District East, preservationists and block club groups opposed its demolition, while neighbors considered it an eyesore gratefully removed. Today it can be described as an excellent example of a new house with a design that respects Elmwood's historic character and provides for the needs of family living in the 21st century.

TOP: A current view of 638 Lafayette Avenue, the oldest intact house on the block. This farmhouse sits directly across Lafayette Avenue from the Hewitt Mansion.

Photograph by Chuck LaChiusa

MIDDLE: Built in 1898, the Herbert Hewitt Mansion is architecturally the most sophisticated structure on the block. It was converted into a rooming house in 1943 during the war years' housing shortage, and ultimately restored and converted into an elegant boutique hotel in 2015 by Joseph and Ellen Lettieri.

Photograph by Chuck LaChiusa

BOTTOM: The newest house on Lafayette Avenue is at 647, built in 2018 by Brian and Gia Manley. It, too, faces the Civil War era farmhouse!

Photograph courtesy of John Wingfelder Architect

building of their own house on other streets in Elmwood East:

- 36 Brantford Place, designed by E. B. Green & Associates in 1892, is known as the Josephine Looney House, the woman for whom it was built.
- 696 Auburn Avenue, a Queen Anne, was built for Margaret B. Clark in 1901.
- 2 Gates Circle, separately listed on the National Register as contributing to the Olmsted Parks and Parkway Thematic Resources, was designed by E. B. Green for Mrs. Charles W. Pardee in 1902, the same year she funded the Green & Wicks redesign of Chapin Place as a memorial to her deceased parents.
- 36 Lincoln Parkway, a 1916 Colonial Revival, was designed by architect Frank Henry Chappelle for Minnie G. McLean,
- 1179 Elmwood Avenue, a Colonial Revival, was built for Ella K. McMullen in 1921.
- 86 Cleveland Avenue, built in Tudor style, was designed by Bley & Lyman for Geraldine Baker in 1924.

Certain properties can be singled out for other reasons:

- 90 Lexington Avenue was built on property formerly owned by a Buffalo mayor, New York governor, and United States president, all in one: Grover Cleveland.
- 71 Highland Avenue is the former childhood home of author F. Scott Fitzgerald.
- 180 Summer Street was E. B. Green's own residence, built in 1900 and showing elements of the Classical Revival style he favored.
- 60 Hodge Avenue was built in 1884 for William C. Hodge, whose reminiscences of early Buffalo can be read in Chapter Two.
- The Dr. Alexander Main Curtiss House at 780 W. Ferry Street today provides lodging as the Ronald McDonald House to visiting families of children undergoing medical treatment at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.
- The 1911-1912 David Gunsberg House at 152 Lincoln Parkway, designed by the Lansing, Bley & Lyman architecture firm, serves as official residence of the president of Buffalo State College.

The 1898 Herbert H. Hewitt House at 619 Lafayette Avenue is another that stands out, not only because it was a relatively early build on Lafayette when the late nineteenth-century building boom in the district began, but because its over-the-top, eclectic, Stick-style ornamentation, Richardsonian Romanesque porch, Arts & Crafts siding, and Queen Anne stained glass design by architects Lansing & Beierl was so different from neighboring structures. And always, its grandeur contrasted markedly with the modest 1,896-square-foot farmhouse built about ten years earlier across the street at 638 for a J. Simpson, likely by a carpenter using a plan book as a style guide. In 1943, the 10,000+ sq. ft. mansion was converted to a rooming house by Flora M. Baird, wife of industrialist Frank Baird, as were many other grand houses in the 1930s and during World War II.

Those dramatic conversions of grand and beautiful properties were partly a response to declining fortunes attributable to the universal financial collapse of the Great Depression and, later, to an effort to accommodate the expanded work force employed in local defense plants during World War II. In 2015, new owners, Ellen and Joseph Lettieri began a successful restoration and conversion of the property into a nine-suite boutique hotel called InnBuffalo off Elmwood.

Indeed, the changes in fortune of the Hewitt House over the years stand as a microcosm of the evolution experienced by the Elmwood District, and in fact the entire city, that began midcentury. It was an evolution that took Buffalo from its early twentieth century Golden Age as industrial giant, eighth largest city in the United States, great world inland port, and home to more millionaires per capita than any other city in the country, gradually but inexorably, to a place with an inferiority self-image, a seemingly despairing place of loss. Gone, starting in the thirties and continuing into the seventies, were fortunes, industry, iconic buildings, parkland, dynamic leadership, people … and the civic will that had created so much wealth for more than 100 years.

Until a spark of regeneration, fueled by grassroots energy and dedication, took hold in the late '70s with fledgling preservation activities that began to awaken others to the great architectural legacy and common wealth that they were in danger of losing. Three decades later—though

Image published in Buffalo Morning Express *and* Illustrated Buffalo Express*, May 7, 1922.*

HERBERT H. HEWITT

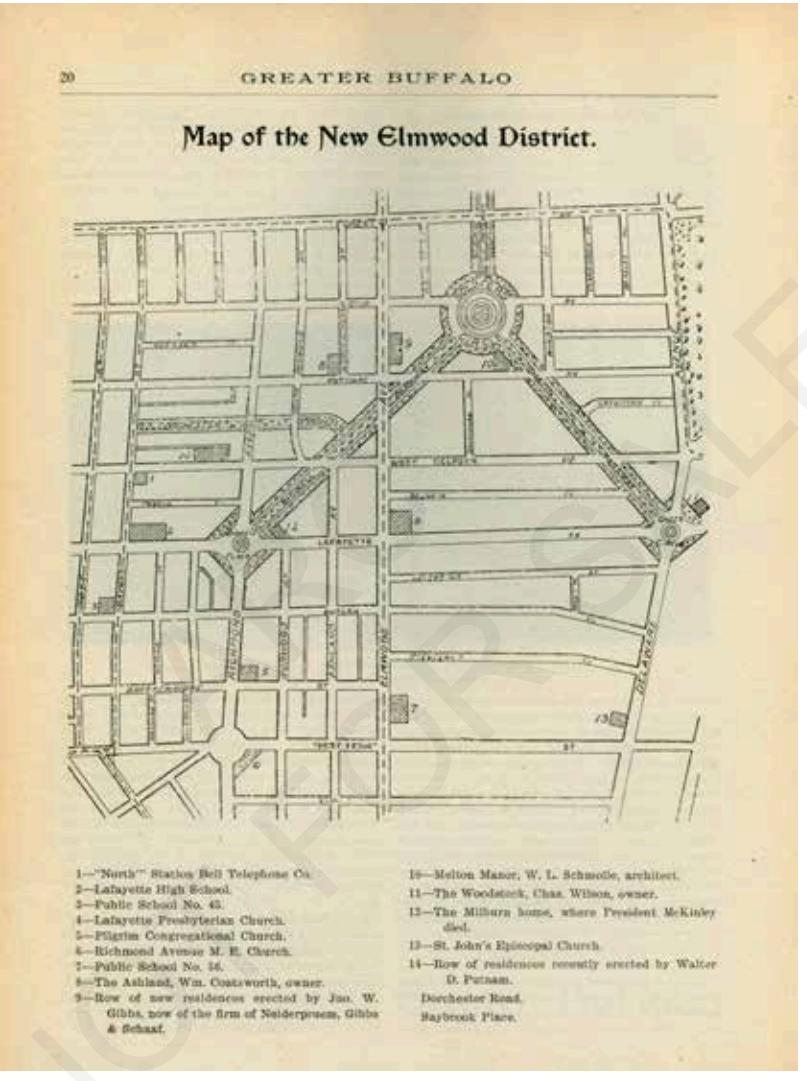
Herbert H. Hewitt, a native of Detroit born in 1855, seems destined to have been involved in some way with transportation. As a young man he was employed at the Michigan Central Railroad in Detroit. Later, he was general manager for the Pullman Co. in Chicago, where he lived from 1886 to 1893. The holder of six patents related to rail car design, in 1893 he moved to Buffalo where he engaged in the construction of, and afterward managed, the Union Car Co., a firm organized by John J. Albright, Daniel Spore, and Henry C. French.

Hewitt founded and served as president of the Hewitt Rubber Co., manufacturers of tires and rubber supplies, a firm with 700 employees and plants located on Kensington Avenue. He was also active in the organization and management of the Reading Car Wheel Company. In addition, he founded the Buffalo Brass Co., the Metric packing company, and several large bronze companies.

Hewitt held memberships in numerous prestigious private clubs in Buffalo, Chicago, and New York City. Wheeled transport, though principal, was not his only interest: one of his horses won the Kentucky Derby.

In 1922 he died peacefully in his home at 619 Lafayette Avenue, with his wife, Sarah Dutro Hewitt, at his bedside. Among his thirty-two honorary pallbearers during funeral services held at St. John's Episcopal Church were fellow industrialists John J. Albright, George F. Rand, John D. Larkin, Jacob F. Schoellkopf, Sr., and Charles R. Huntley.

many in Buffalo had lamented, "Not in my lifetime"—those unstinting efforts and sometimes lost battles on the part of activist-residents were followed by new institutional and commercial reinvestment, rebuilding and new building, restoration and reuse, and change that carries so much promise … but also serious concern, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters.



20 GREATER BUFFALO

Map of the New Elmwood District.

1—"North" Station Bell Telephone Co.
2—Lafayette High School.
3—Public School No. 45.
4—Lafayette Presbyterian Church.
5—Pilgrim Congregational Church.
6—Richmond Avenue M. E. Church.
7—Public School No. 16.
8—The Ashland, Wm. Costsworth, owner.
9—Row of new residences erected by Jno. W. Gibbs, now of the firm of Neiderpruem, Gibbs & Schaaf.
10—Melton Manor, W. L. Schnolle, architect.
11—The Woodstock, Chas. Wilson, owner.
12—The Milburn home, where President McKinley died.
13—St. John's Episcopal Church.
14—Row of residences recently erected by Walter D. Putnam.
Dorchester Road.
Haybrook Place.

Map of the New Elmwood District

This 1902 map shows that the Elmwood District had become an area of Buffalo with a distinct character and identity. The southern area of the district was well developed by the turn of the century, so this map focuses on the growing northern area. Some key landmarks noted include the "North" Station Bell Telephone Company at W. Delavan Avenue and Baynes Street; the newly constructed named apartment blocks: The Ashland, Melton Manor and The Woodstock, as well as residential row houses; and The Milburn house at Delaware Avenue and W. Ferry Street, where President McKinley died on September 14, 1901,

Reproduction by Permission of the Buffalo & Erie County Library, Buffalo, New York

Cultural, commercial, educational, religious, and public services elevate Elmwood's quality of life

EIGHT

Becoming a Village

By 1900, the city's population had grown to more than 350,000, and the Elmwood District's popularity as a place to live deepened during that first decade of the new century. In addition to residential and commercial construction, new cultural and educational institutional buildings were taking shape, helping to create a sense of place and enhance the neighborhood's desirability while serving the social and cultural needs of the expanded population.

According to Greater Buffalo in 1902:

> *"Altogether the northern part of the Elmwood district has advantages which the southern has never had, and for that reason it is developing more rapidly than any district in Buffalo."*[79]

Cultural Institutions

Two buildings to be built in time for participation in the 1901 Pan-American Exposition, both in Elmwood East, were planned for already existing cultural institutions that would move from cramped old quarters downtown to new and expansive facilities in this emerging suburban district.

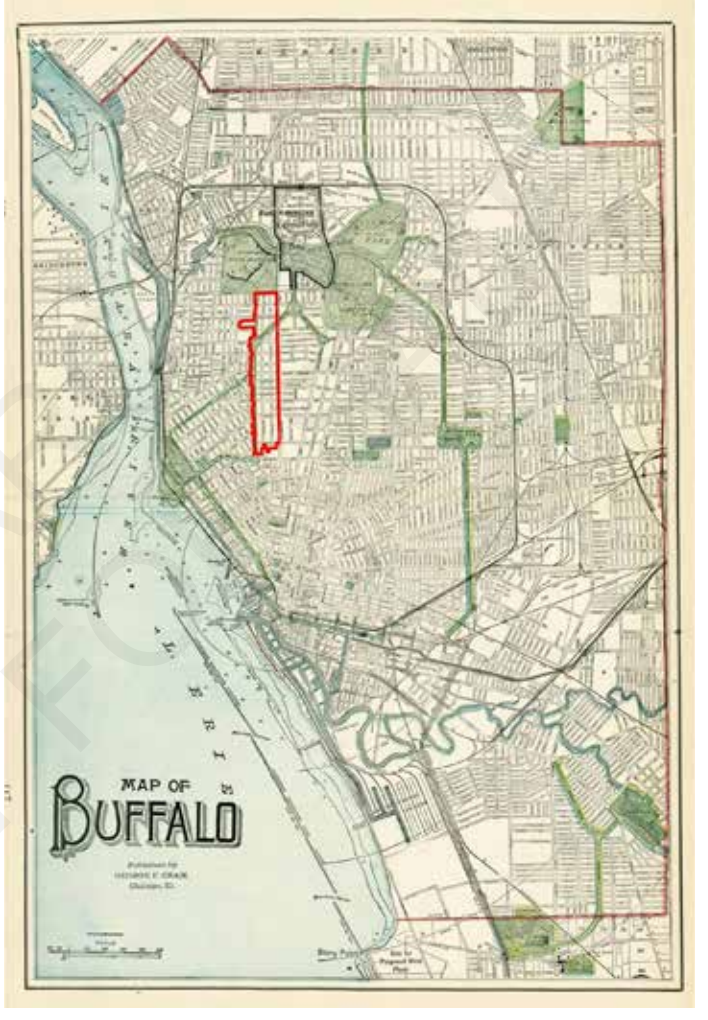
Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society

The New York State Pavilion was intended as the eventual home of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society (renamed the Buffalo History Museum), which was founded in 1862 as the Buffalo Historical Society by former United States President Millard Fillmore, who became its first president, and other civic leaders. It was the only permanent building erected for the Pan-Am Exposition.

Prominently positioned on a bluff overlooking the Gala Waters in the northwestern corner of Delaware Park, the Vermont-white-marble building was designed by nationally known Buffalo architect George Cary, the first Buffalonian to study at the famed Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. The building's Doric style was, according to a description written by architecture and Olmsted scholar Dr. Frank Kowsky, "the style of architecture perfected in Athens during its golden age in the 5th century B.C. … [and] apparently chosen for the New York Pavilion to assert to the Exposition's visitors the roots of the democratic heritage of the United States, then recently victorious in the Spanish-American War over European monarchy."[80] The erstwhile Pavilion thereby almost literally reflects the "temple in a park" picturesque English landscape admired by Olmsted and designed by him for The Park. Listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places, the museum building was in 1987 designated a National Historic Landmark, the Register's highest designation.

The founding of the Historical Society just fifty years after the village's burning by the British may be no coincidence. Research would likely show that many communities begin to think about celebrating their origin through a summary of their history at the fifty-year mark. Buffalo had sufficiently outgrown its pioneer settlement past by that time to think of the city as having a history. Yet waves of immigrants to the country and to Buffalo when the Society moved into its new building made for a time of uncertainty and change. It was appropriate that the building's design evoked the rock-solid values of the ancients just as Elmwood was being born as an enclave for the descendants of its pioneering families.

Today, the museum regularly furthers its architecture's democratic ideal cited by Kowsky



LEFT: New York State Pavilion of the Pan-American Exposition, now the Buffalo History Museum.

Photograph Courtesy of Maureen Jameson

RIGHT: "Map of Buffalo," by George Cram (1901). A map of the city of Buffalo, showing the grounds of the Pan-American Exposition (outlined in black). The approximate boundaries of the Elmwood Historic District (West) are also noted. This map highlights the Olmsted parks and parkways in and around the city, and also the close proximity of the Exposition grounds to the historic district.

Courtesy of Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps, Inc.

The Burchfield Penney Art Center, designed by Charles Gwathmey, and the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, designed by E. B. Green (original building, 1905), Gordon Bunshaft (south addition, 1962) and OMA/Shohei Shigematsu (west addition, opening in 2022) respectively, are internationally significant cultural institutions. Their stunning designs reflect both the high aspirations of Joseph Ellicott for Buffalo as embodied in his 1804 plan and these institutions' high statures today.

The designs of both the Burchfield Penney and the Albright 2022 addition went through extensive and sometimes contentious public design review processes. The Burchfield design had to meet the high standards of the adjacent Richardson Olmsted designed asylum campus, part of whose site it would occupy, as well as honor its original home, the adjacent Rockwell Hall, Buffalo State College's signature 1931 building.

For its 2022 addition, the Albright-Knox had to respect the work of Green and Bunshaft as well as its Olmsted park setting, while establishing its own rightful identity for the gallery's next 100 years at this location.

The Burchfield, Albright and the Richardson Olmsted Campus all achieve balance in the exemplary ways in which they exhibit the contemporary renewal of a heritage place, a goal to which every new building in the Elmwood District can aspire.

LEFT: Burchfield Penney Art Center in its Buffalo State College Setting, with its original home, Rockwell Hall to the right.

RIGHT: An aerial view of the Buffalo AKG Art Museum's campus with a rendering of the new Gundlach Building.

Image courtesy Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York. Photograph by Blake Dawson, 2015

through its eclectic mix of programs and events catering to varied interests. Not all serious and educational, these events are capped by a series of popular free outdoor "Party on the Portico" happy hour musical performances staged in summer on the building's magnificent portico overlooking the Japanese Garden and Mirror Lake.

Albright Art Gallery

The Albright Art Gallery (now the Buffalo AKG Art Museum) would be the exhibition facility after the Pan-American Exposition for the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, which had been exhibiting in temporary spaces downtown. The Academy was also founded in 1862 with leading citizen Millard Fillmore as one of its incorporators. The building was intended to be the Exposition's Fine Arts Building, but material delays postponed its opening until 1905, too late to participate. Also of neoclassical style, the work of Buffalo's own highly regarded, most prolific architect E. B. Green, the gallery is said to follow "almost exactly the high Ionic order of the Erechtheion,"[81] the iconic temple to the Greek gods Athena and Poseidon that stands atop the Acropolis in Athens. The eight caryatids flanking the gallery's main portico, four on each side, overlooking Olmsted's Gala Waters, were designed by America's greatest late-nineteenth century sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens.

The gallery's construction at a cost of more than $750,000—the equivalent of about $21 million today—was funded by a gift of that amount from Buffalo industrialist and philanthropist John J. Albright, whose new mansion on W. Ferry Street to replace one lost to fire was being designed by Green at the same time.

Of all the potential locations for the gallery, Albright deliberately sited it away from commerce and the central business district, in Delaware Park on city-owned parkland on Lincoln Parkway overlooking the Gala Waters (now Hoyt Lake). Its rear entrance was accessible to the general public via the Elmwood streetcar line. "It was City Beautiful thinking," according to Albright biographer Mark Goldman.[82]

The careful, thoughtful classical architecture of these two cultural institutions epitomizes the view that there is more to buildings than the materials with which they are constructed, however grand, expensive, and beautiful. The design of the history museum embodies the concept of civic order; the design of the art gallery, religious order. Both concepts reveal what was important to Buffalonians at the time they were built, just as the symbolism inherent in the Doric and Ionic architecture of Athens captured what was important to the people of that ancient city. Given the fundamental nature of that symbolism, both buildings fit more than comfortably into the sacred and picturesque contexts of the Elmwood District.

Albright Hall, today known as Clifton Hall, the other building on the museum's campus, was constructed in 1920 to be the home of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences. Although designed by E. B. Green, the building's full design, never realized at this location, came to life as the Buffalo Museum of Science on Humboldt Parkway. In 1929, Clifton Hall became the home of the Albright Art School, and two wings were added in 1938 and 1945.

Over the course of ten years, the art gallery collaboratively planned an expansion to better house and display its internationally renowned collection of modern and contemporary art. The project would affect the classical building as well as the 1962 modern addition designed by Pritzker Prize-winner (architecture's equivalent of the Nobel) Gordon Bunshaft (1909-1990), a Buffalo native and Lafayette High School graduate. Funds had been raised, but no shovels had yet been employed when a controversy arose over the initial proposed design's compatibility with the historic and modern buildings and their park setting. The controversy stemmed from a lack of knowledge about how the gallery's Elmwood District context came to be and a lack of consensus about what the Elmwood District should become in the 21st century.

The public's dissent illuminated the inability of even highly respected boards, managers, and their architects to design the Elmwood District's future in ways that fully satisfy the district's beloved architectural and historic legacy, which city standards do not acknowledge and which the public struggles to describe. This issue has arisen from time to time, but in the past decade it has gained special vigor as developers recognize the enormous popularity and appeal of the Elmwood District.

The most recent news is good. The leaders of the Albright-Knox heard and appreciated the public's concerns and responded by pivoting the "AK360" expansion project. The result promises to be a respectful and exemplary accommodation of the historic and the contemporary for both the newly-named Buffalo AKG Art Museum and the Elmwood District.

Returning to the 1900s, both the museum and the gallery continued the trend of high-style architecture in the largely residential Elmwood District and provided attractive places to study, visit, learn, and enjoy. The presence of these cultural institutions also encouraged larger and grander residential development in the area. It was then, in those early years of the new century, that the uber wealthy began to build their estates and mansions around Soldiers Place and along Lincoln Parkway. Within two decades of the Exposition and the arrival of these cultural temples, new tracts of housing would be developed on land made vacant by the demolished Exposition buildings.

Burchfield Penney Art Center

In recent years, completing an ensemble known as "the Museum District," a new cultural building was added across Elmwood from the Albright-Knox: the Burchfield Penney Art Center (BPAC). The center, which originated at Buffalo State College in 1966 and had been located in the college's Rockwell Hall, is dedicated to Western New York art, with a special focus on the watercolors of renowned regional artist Charles E. Burchfield (1893-1967). The new, 84,000-square-foot Gwathmey Seigel Architects-designed building was completed in 2008. It is the first museum in New York and one of few in the country that has been awarded LEED silver certification, meeting rigorous standards in sustainability, efficiency, water use, energy, and atmospheric impact unthought of when the nearby cultural buildings were conceived. Not constrained by a historic context and located on the site of the long-lost magnificent formal gardens of the former asylum, the BPAC was allowed the freedom of its sculptural form that few other sites in the now densely built Elmwood District could have afforded.

BPAC benefactor Charles Rand Penney was raised in the Elmwood District and became a world-wide traveler and collector. His fascination with all things led him to create more than 100 significant collections, including one of Charles Burchfield paintings. More comfortable living outside of Buffalo, from which he felt estranged as a young man, he nevertheless "came home" in later years to the respect he deserved and to the benefit of his Elmwood District home.

Though seemingly different from the Elmwood District's character at first glance, the BPAC's Front Yard installation embodies the dialogue of nature and man and making place. The stylae of the Front Yard, "the world's first permanent, environmentally-responsive, 24/7/365, outdoor audio and image experience," project onto the gallery façade images related to the weather, Burchfield's pictures and images from other artists that are generated and selected by elements of the weather, temperature, light and humidity. Twenty-first century Elmwood, too, links the heavens and the earth.

Ujima Theatre Company

A lesser-recognized but proud and respected Buffalo institution that for thirty-nine years until 2018 made its home in the Elmwood District is the Ujima Company, Inc. Theatre. Named for the Swahili word meaning collective work and responsibility, Ujima was founded in 1978 by Lorna C. Hill, actor, director, poet, playwright, teacher, and community resource. The oldest professional repertory theater company in Western New York, Ujima, as a vehicle for African-American performers, theater crafts people, and administrators, has through the years enlightened and entertained diverse area audiences with solid professional performances. Success has given Ujima the opportunity to move into new quarters in a rehabilitated former school building on Buffalo's West Side. In the Elmwood District, Lorna Hill not only established Ujima as one of the most important theater companies, she also launched lesbian and Latino theater companies and worked on social justice and economic equity coalitions which have enhanced District diversity.

Educational Institutions

Education had been an important component of American life since the 1820s, and Buffalo was no exception. The city inaugurated its public school system in 1838, and although New York

LEFT: Photograph of Buffalo Public School 30, located on the east side of Elmwood Avenue between W. Ferry Street and Cleveland Avenue. This building was declared obsolete and demolished in the late 1970s. It was replaced by a branch of M&T Bank, of contemporary design and which accommodated parking, a rarity on Elmwood Avenue at the time. Elmwood District leader Wendy Pierce was a lone voice in seeking to retain and adaptively reuse the obsolete school. Hers was a pioneering historic preservation initiative. It would take a generation for historic preservation to achieve a seat at the table in determining the Elmwood District's future.

Source of photograph unknown

MIDDLE: The architect's rendering of School 16. One of the most elaborate school designs of its time, this building designed by architect Frederick Mohr aspired to the level of architectural quality found on Delaware Avenue when it was still "Millionaires' Row." Located between Bryant and W. Utica streets, the school was closed in 1976, and subsequently converted into the Schoolhouse Apartments, among the first such instances of adaptive reuse of school buildings in Buffalo.

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. Geschichte der Deutschen in Buffalo und Erie County, 1898. Call number: F 127 E G47 2000x

RIGHT: Historic photograph of the newly built Buffalo Seminary building on Bidwell Parkway at Potomac Avenue. The school moved to this location in 1909 to be in the suburbs, away from its noisy former location downtown. The building's Collegiate-Gothic style reflected the high aspiration of "Sem" for the educational attainment of it graduates and fit in well with both the residential scale of the neighborhood and the cultural stature of Olmsted's Bidwell Parkway and Soldiers Place.

Published in History of Erie County 1870-1970 *by the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, scanned by Todd Treat*

City's system was older, Buffalo's was the first in the state to be supported by local taxes.

Well-educated themselves, the elites of the city wanted quality education for their children in order to prepare them for the the higher educational institutions they would attend. The existence of older, already established educational institutions that had been serving the needs of Buffalo young people in the Elmwood District since the mid-nineteenth century added to the attractiveness of the area for new growth.

Reflecting the wealth and status of Elmwood's early residents, most of the schools were private, either independent or Catholic, and located in Elmwood East, except for Buffalo State College.

No public high schools were located in the Elmwood District. However, on Lafayette Avenue just west of the Richmond Avenue border of Elmwood Historic District West, Lafayette High School served district high-school-age youths who attended public schools. The elaborate French Renaissance Revival structure was built in 1901-1903 and is the second oldest high school in Buffalo in continuous service. Designated a local landmark in 1979 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places the following year, it was designed by Buffalo's prestigious architects Esenwein and Johnson.

Only two public elementary schools, No. 30 and No. 56, were located in the Elmwood District, and neither is in use as a school today. PS No. 30, located on Elmwood Avenue where a modernistic M&T Bank branch is today, was demolished to make way for that bank branch in 1976. Its loss, as well as that of fourteen other schools throughout the city in that decade, was a response to well-intentioned court-ordered busing to achieve racial integration and the closing of neighborhood schools to which children had walked. A spate of school closings had also occurred in the 1950s, generated by a nationwide flight to the suburbs following World War II that dramatically changed urban demographics. Both series of closings also represented the decline of the family-ratio of the Elmwood District and the declining number of schoolchildren in the declining city.

The proposed demolition of PS 30 prompted the Elmwood District's first historic preservation outcry. Led largely by life-long resident and community leader Wendy Pierce, the group's dissenting voices proved too little and—ironically, because the incentive of historic tax credits was still many years away—too soon for the school to be saved through state and federal subsidized rehabilitation and adaptive reuse. In addition, the Elmwood District at that time was feeling old and tired, and a shiny new branch bank to upgrade and replace its long-time home as a tenant at Elmwood and Auburn avenues, where Clinton Brown as a teenager opened his first bank account at a branch he walked past each day as a PS 30 student, seemed very attractive. Moreover, it would have a parking lot, a rarity in a district designed in the streetcar era.

Of the school's loss, architect David Steele said in an article published online in 2013 by BuffaloRising.com,

> *Today, if still standing, that old school building would likely be housing thirty or so highly sought-after apartments. It likely would be paying the city far more in taxes than the bank does and would be providing local businesses with more customers. It would have also been adding far more interest to the street as well. The old school is gone for good. Lamenting its loss is not an exercise in nostalgia. It is a lesson in the pitfall of short-sighted thinking.*[83]

In stark contrast, Public School 16, built in 1899 at 939 Delaware Avenue near Bryant Street and closed in 1976, the same year as PS 30, was successfully converted to twenty-six one- and two-bedroom luxury apartments through the vision and personal financing of early preservation developer and Elmwood District resident Ted Flemming. As the Schoolhouse Apartments, it is a landmark building in the local Linwood Historic District.

In 2007, PS 56, on W. Delevan Avenue between Elmwood Avenue and Chapin Parkway, was sold for conversion into apartments and office space. Its closing occurred during a multiyear, $1.4 billion Buffalo Public Schools Reconstruction Program which began in 2002. The project, conducted via a public-private partnership of architectural and construction firms and the City of Buffalo, resulted in refurbishment, renovation, and modernization of more than sixty antiquated

public-school buildings and the closing or demolition of about a dozen other underutilized schools in the city. The conversion of School 56 into market-rate apartments by Carl and Bill Paladino's Ellicott Development firm preserved a historic resource and added to the residential character of Elmwood. Its adaptive reuse was aided by the then-new availability of state and federal historic tax credits and other incentives that made adaptive reuse financially feasible.

Buffalo Seminary

The oldest of Elmwood's private schools, founded in 1851, SEM, as it is familiarly called, is the city's only nonsectarian college-preparatory school for girls, the second oldest such school in the country, and one of the earliest amid few such institutions in New York State.

Though the education of women was then still a debatable topic in antebellum America, Buffalo business leaders wanted their daughters to have the same quality education their sons were able to enjoy. The idea for the school originated with Rev. M. La Rue Thompson, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, who called together a group of prominent business and civic leaders to explore the topic. Among the school's founders were such still-familiar names as hardware business owner Samuel F. Pratt, who was for twenty-eight years president of the Buffalo Gas Company and became the first president of the school; tannery business owner Aaron Rumsey; and real estate titan George Tifft.

The present building was constructed in 1909 in the Collegiate Gothic design of Boston-based architect George F. Newton at a cost of more than $100,000. In 1929 the West-Chester Hall and gymnasium were added. Because of its location on Olmsted's Bidwell Parkway overlooking Soldiers Place, the school was able to advertise its bucolic surroundings in "the most desirable residence section of Buffalo" as convenient to the Elmwood Avenue streetcar line yet "sufficiently far away to avoid noise and dust, while the whizzing [street] cars afford convenient means of transportation to and from the school."[84]

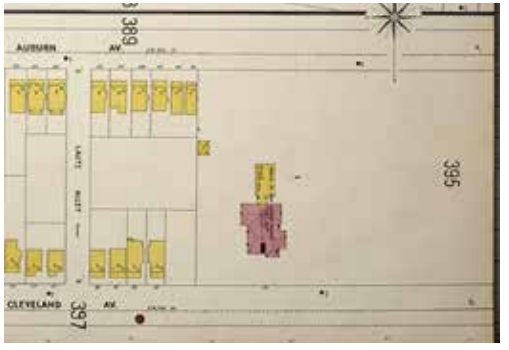
Buffalo Seminary has been uniquely significant to the culture of the Elmwood District for more than a century. In 1954, a portion of the former Larkland estate at Lincoln Parkway and Forest Avenue was donated to the school by John D. Larkin, Sr.'s granddaughter, Mary Frances Larkin Kellogg. The mansion became living quarters for the head of school and the grounds, a playing field for Sem's athletic teams. As a result of the school's stewardship, that last large remnant of the Elmwood District's fabled estates was saved from being subdivided into smaller plots.

In 1999, an international spotlight was shone on the city and the Elmwood District in particular through Buffalo native Lauren Belfer's book *City of Light*. The Buffalo Seminary Class of 1971 graduate's fictional story of Buffalo during the 1901 Pan-American Exhibition centers on the headmistress of a school, modeled on Buffalo Seminary, for the daughters of Buffalo's prominent citizens, most of whom are associated with both the Elmwood District and the beginning of hydropower at nearby Niagara Falls. Her best-selling story of power and light enlightened worldwide readers to the drama of this place in that era and revealed something of its origins to the Elmwood District family.

Buffalo Seminary was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2011 by Clinton Brown in honor of his mother, who attended Sem, and his daughter, who graduated recently. The national recognition and school pride generated by its National Register designation have rekindled interest in and respect for this nationally significant, more than 150-year-old educational enterprise on behalf of girls and women.

Nardin Academy

Housed in a handsome building on Cleveland Avenue dating to 1890, its third site, Nardin is the oldest private Roman Catholic school in Western New York. It was founded by the Daughters of the Heart of Mary in 1857 as the first Catholic academy and free school in Buffalo. Officially named "St. Mary's Academy and Industrial Female School," the school was known in the community as "Miss Nardin's Academy," after one of the three Daughter-founders, Ernestine Nardin. The academy's mission was to educate the children of the diocese, particularly girls, in a faith-based culture, operating the academy during the day and a free school for girls without means at night.



TOP: Nardin Academy was built on a large lot when the large lots in this neighborhood were just starting to be subdivided and built on. It is the structure shown in red, sitting in lonely splendor on this magnificent site.

Image Courtesy of the Library of Congress

BOTTOM: The George F. Rand, Sr. & Jr. House at 1180 Delaware Avenue, between W. Ferry Street and Cleveland Avenue, was among the last and greatest of the Delaware Avenue mansions when it was completed in 1923 to the design of prominent Buffalo architects, Franklyn J. and William A. Kidd in a Jacobean Revival/Tudor Revival style.

Following the deaths of his parents, George F. Rand, Jr. sold the house to the Scottish Rite Masons in 1925. It has been home to the Jesuit Canisius High School since 1944.

Photograph courtesy of Tom Bastin

Today, Nardin operates a college preparatory high school for young women, a coeducational elementary school, and a Montessori preschool through grade three. Upon moving to its Elmwood suburb site, Nardin over time built a complex of attached brick masonry buildings centered by English Gothic-styled buildings and several more-modern additions, all of high design quality. The main entry door features a Gothic-arched entrance flanked by two three-story polygonal bays capped with battlements. The whole portrays a castle of learning in what may have been farmland when it was first built. Meanwhile, the school's Montessori classes are conducted in a large circa 1927 Tudor-style residence located at 700 W. Ferry Street, and now named the Julia R. Oishei Campus, after its benefactor, who donated a portion of the Oishei estate to the school. It is significant that the Elmwood District, which was built up by so many women, would have two pioneering and significant schools focused on the independence and success of girls and women.

Canisius High School

This Catholic college-preparatory school run by Jesuits at the northwest corner of Delaware Avenue and W. Ferry Street was founded downtown in 1870 for boys in grades nine through twelve. The last private school to arrive in the Elmwood District, Canisius High School, occupies the former Masonic Consistory, which was built during 1918–1923 to be the Tudor Revival mansion of George F. Rand, a prominent local businessman once president and chairman of Marine Midland Bank. In 2017, Canisius added to its campus by purchasing the 1908 William J. Conners stone mansion directly across W. Ferry Street. Conners, publisher of the *Buffalo Courier Express*, was known as "Fingy" for the loss of several fingers as a young man working on the Buffalo waterfront.

Three generations of the Conners family lived in the mansion until 1951. Eventually, the 13,000-square-foot building was sold and converted to apartments and offices, as was happening to other grand homes in the district during the hard times of the Great Depression and World War II. Most recently the building served for a time as home to Gilda's Club of Western New York, which provided services to families touched by cancer. According to the school's website, Canisius's purchase enabled the school "to expand its campus and deepen its commitment to the arts as part of a quality Jesuit education."[85] While celebrating its 150th year in 2020, Canisius High School alumni may count themselves among the largest group with the most impact on the life of Western New York, especially over the six decades since the school's arrival in the district.

The Elmwood School

The Elmwood School was founded as a kindergarten in 1889 by two women, Miss Jessica E. Beers and Miss Emma Gibbons, on W. Utica Street. The school moved in 1892 to a new brick

MILBURN HOUSE — THE SITE OF TWO HISTORIC LOSSES

At the same corner of Delaware and Ferry where the Canisius campus sprawls today, stood an 1861 residence purchased in 1888 by John G. Milburn, partner in the law firm of Sherman Rogers and Franklin Locke. As president of the Pan-American Exposition, Milburn hosted President William McKinley and Mrs. McKinley in this house when the McKinleys came to Buffalo to visit the Exposition. After the president was shot at the fair's Temple of Music, he was brought to the house for treatment and hoped-for recovery. With his death eight days later during the midst of a violent thunderstorm that seemed a fitting response to the murder of a popular sitting president, the nation was plunged into mourning and the Exposition into decline. Milburn left for New York City in 1904, where he became a partner in the firm of Carter and Ledyard. He died on a visit to London in 1930, just three weeks after his wife's death.

For the public, the house became a shrine to the martyred president. Thousands approached it through the years. For a time, Buffalo police patrolled the sidewalk in an attempt to prevent souvenir hunters from chipping stone and brick from the house and cutting branches from the shrubbery. After the Milburns left for New York City, the house went through a succession of owners as well as interior changes. On January 10, 1907, it suffered serious fire damage, ruining the room in which President McKinley had died. Only the dining room was relatively undamaged. Restored, the house was converted into four apartments in 1919 and "let to a discriminating class of renters," a description no doubt intended to reassure neighboring property owners, as renters were then a new phenomenon on posh Delaware Avenue. In 1928, it was further remodeled into eight apartments.

The Jesuit community of Canisius High School purchased the Milburn property for living quarters in 1948. Then in 1957, the school demolished the historic structure for additional campus space. That space today is a parking lot.

A simple marker along the curb is all that remains to remind the public of the historic house and the historic event that took place within it.

A 1909 postcard of the home of John G. Milburn, where William McKinley died. This house, which was built early in the development of Buffalo, was occupied and owned from 1884 to 1904 by John G. Milburn, the leading attorney, and a close friend of President McKinley. When the President was shot on September 6, 1901, he was taken to this house, where he was tenderly cared for until his death on September 14th. Mr. Milburn removed to New York about 1904, and afterward parted with the house.

building at 231 Bryant Street adjacent to the then-new Children's Hospital at the head of what was developing as beautiful Oakland Place.

In 1895 it incorporated as an independent not-for-profit K-8 school and prided itself on offering a wholesome curriculum considerate of children's total needs. For a time there was also a high school. Some of Buffalo's best families sent their children to the Elmwood School, where they were offered a progressive curriculum. The children could be seen exiting or entering their parents' fancy carriages every morning and afternoon as they were dropped off and picked up from school. As for the children, architectural historian Martin Wachadlo has written, they loved the school's location: "The large [then still] open lot at the southeast corner of Bryant Street and Oakland Place was 'their favorite foregathering place, which was lush with fruit trees and had a rolling, grassy terrain ideal for any kind of game during recess, on Saturdays, or when playing hooky.'"[86]

In 1941, the Elmwood School merged with the Franklin School, which was founded in 1891 by Mrs. Bryant Glenny and was affiliated with the Department of Pedagogy at Buffalo Normal College (now Buffalo State). The merged institutions, renamed the Elmwood Franklin School, in 1951 moved to its current location, a five-acre campus beyond the Elmwood District boundaries in a centrally located, residential section that once held buildings of the Pan-American Exposition. With enlarged classroom and field space, the school in 1981 became fully coed by adding boys to grades five through eight one year at a time.

The Nichols School

Nichols School opened in the fall of 1892 in a Tudor-style wood-frame house at 35 Norwood Avenue with three faculty members and about twenty students (photograph on page 159). It was the brain-child of Elmwood residents industrialist John J. Albright, lumber and shipping magnate William H. Gratwick, and other Buffalo men of note who were concerned about the education of their sons. The group hired New Englander William Nichols as the school's first headmaster. He had been recommended by Harvard University president Charles Eliot who shared with Nichols deeply traditional educational views and advocated a progressive agenda. The curriculum adopted for the school was rooted in Greek and Latin, science, and math.

The school is said to have struggled even before the turn of the century. A year after Nichols died in 1907, John Albright offered $25,000 to build a new school "with demanding educational goals" and a lengthened school day that would "improve the educational, athletic, and moral dimensions of the school" and provide "increased contact between teachers and students." The new school, opened in 1909, was built on grounds located along Amherst Street just beyond the northern boundary of Delaware Park and thus outside the Elmwood District. Today, Nichols School is a nationally recognized independent college preparatory coed school whose mission is "to train minds, bodies, and hearts for the work of life, [using] the highest ideals of character and service."[87] The school occupies a beautiful thirty-acre campus that, among its varied facilities, includes sports fields and a performing arts center.

Community Music School of Buffalo

Since 1924, Community Music School has provided musical instruction to more than six hundred people of all ages each year. Nearly thirty percent are from racially diverse communities, more than three-quarters are children, and more than one-third receive financial assistance from investments through various funding sources.

Originally called First Settlement Music School, CMS was founded, with support from community leaders, by the Chromatic Club, a more-than-century old organization that promotes the appreciation and performance of music. The school grew out of Welcome Hall Social Settlement, a South Buffalo facility run by First Presbyterian Church to serve low-income individuals and families. The State University of New York immediately chartered First Settlement for the "musical education of young people unable to pay standard prices for expert teaching."[88] Renamed Community Music School of Buffalo in 1948, the school had, since 1959, been in a former apartment building located at 415 Elmwood Avenue between Bryant and Summer streets, one of the still-intact blocks representing the now-commercial street's residential past. As of this writing, the school is moving to the nearby Hamlin Park neighborhood, having sold the building to a developer for conversion back into apartments.

Buffalo State College

Buffalo State College, the Elmwood District's only institution of higher education, was founded in 1871 as the Buffalo Normal School to train teachers for Buffalo's rapidly growing public-school population. When classes began on September 13 of that year in a three-story Victorian building in Buffalo's lower West Side neighborhood, eighty-six students were enrolled: seventy-five women and eleven men, and there were fifteen faculty members. The School of Practice, where teachers-in-training performed their practice teaching, had an enrollment of 195 students.

At the same time the Buffalo Normal School was outgrowing its dense urban location and looking to expand, the Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane found that it no longer needed its farmland to sustain the food and therapeutic work needs of patients. The school established its new "suburban" campus at the northern edge of the asylum on one of the last large sites then available in the Elmwood District. The campus's east-to-west layout and 1300 Elmwood Avenue address demonstrated a shift from the importance of Richmond and Forest avenues reflected in the front entrance of the asylum of the 1870's to the new importance of Elmwood nearly eighty years later. It also emphasized the school's independence from the asylum, even as it took over

TOP: The Buffalo State Asylum site is in the center of this 1901 USGS map. Elmwood Avenue runs top to bottom at the center, and Forest Avenue runs east-west. The large open area is the Asylum's farmland bordering Scajaquada Creek. It was still in use when this map was made a generation after the Asylum opened, yet within 20 years, therapeutic methods changed and the farmland became obsolete. The growing Buffalo Normal School, now SUNY Buffalo State College, opened its campus here in 1931.

Image from USGS topographic map, Buffalo quadrangle, 1901

BOTTOM: Buffalo State College opened its new Elmwood Campus in 1931 featuring a five-building collegiate quadrangle campus of commercial Georgian styled architecture that fronted Elmwood Avenue.

Today the Buffalo State campus is comprised of 50 buildings and occupies approximately 3.3 million gross square feet of space on 125 acres.

This image shows the substance of what is arguably the Elmwood District's most substantial institution. Buffalo State is a magnet that attracts new people to the Elmwood District from across New York, the nation and around the world, many of whom remain after graduation and enrich Buffalo.

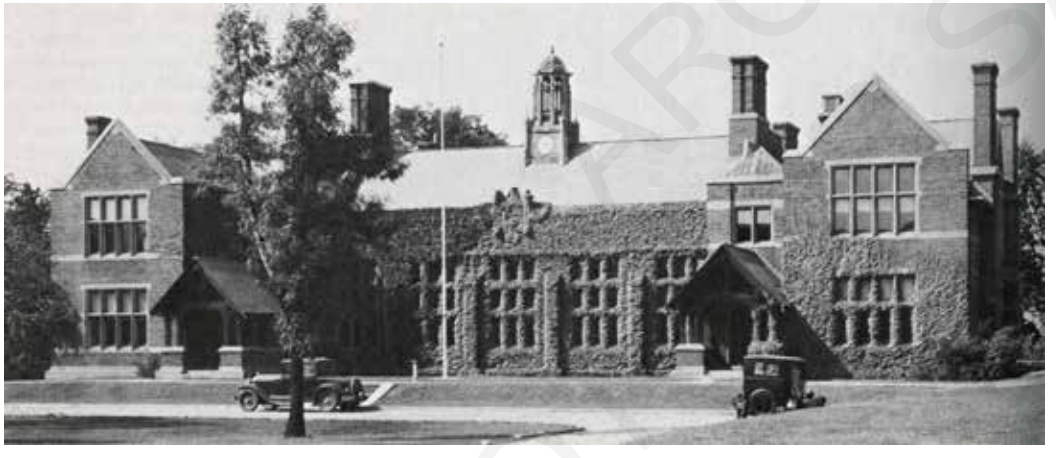
What began as a teaching school is now also a cultural force. Starting with the establishment in 1930 of the first Art Education Department in the nation maintained under state auspices, "Buff State" is currently also home to the Burchfield Penney Art Center and the Patricia H. and Richard E. Garman Art Conservation Department, one of the leading programs of its kind in North America.

and demolished some of the asylum's most beautiful gardens and structures for its new home.

Today, the college is among the largest comprehensive four-year colleges in the State University of New York system and is officially called the State University College at Buffalo. It occupies a 275-acre campus adjacent to the Burchfield Penney Art Center, across Rockwell Road from the Richardson Olmsted Campus, and across Elmwood Avenue from the Buffalo AKG Art Museum. As an accessible commuter school with an urban service mission, Buffalo State College continues to make an affordable college education possible for thousands of residents without the necessity of their leaving the area.

Religious Institutions

The great number of churches built in the Elmwood District, especially in Elmwood West, is evidence that Buffalonians in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries practiced their religion with faithful attendance at religious services within walking distance of where they lived. So many of these houses of worship are located on Richmond Avenue that the street might have been renamed Church Street had there not already been a street by that name downtown, so named due to its being the location of the historic 1847 Richard Upjohn-designed St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral and several other denominations. While the cathedral remained, others eventually relocated, many to Elmwood, when that former downtown residential area became commercial.



TOP: The Elmwood District birthplace of The Nichols School. In April of 1892, William Nichols was invited from Boston to found a boys' college preparatory school in Buffalo and by that September classes began in Westminster Presbyterian Church's Sunday School rooms. Later that autumn, the school moved to a new house at 35 Norwood Avenue. This house, although altered, still stands today.

Photograph courtesy John and Ann Sessions

BOTTOM: After Headmaster Nichols' death in 1908, Elmwood resident John J. Albright led an initiative to re-establish the school in the "country," on Amherst Street. In 1909, the Amherst campus is purchased and construction begins on Albright Hall and a gymnasium to the design of Elmwood resident E. B. Green, architect. Joseph Dana Allen, the second Headmaster, establishes country-day philosophy, fostering academic, athletic, and moral growth of students.

Published in History of Erie County 1870-1970 *by the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, scanned by Todd Treat*

The late-twentieth century phenomenon of dramatically reduced church attendance—not just in the United States but in Europe, Australia, and Canada—has over time negatively impacted the city of Buffalo. Many houses of worship of all denominations have closed, and their diminished congregations have dispersed or merged with others of like denomination. There is no single reason to explain why this has occurred. Many factors were at play, among them the widespread movement in the 1950s to established and newly developed commuter suburbs following the war and in some cases changes in beliefs, in attitudes about religion in general and about church attendance in particular. The flight to the suburbs had its own varied reasons for occurring, not the least of which was the changing demographics of cities. In Buffalo, a result was the beginning of population loss and its impact on churches as well as on schools, as has already been mentioned.

Just the fact of reduced regular attendance at services by otherwise faithful adherents and the failure to recruit others, as has also been the case in many urban areas, certainly affected a church's ability to sustain itself and to maintain its premises. This has been particularly true of Roman Catholic churches, which are so important to the integrity of the streetscape and life in many Buffalo neighborhoods. So many closings by the Catholic diocese of these grand houses of worship, most of which were built for a particular ethnic community, have created a crisis of abandonment and preservation concerns, because their size and grandeur render their adaptive

reuse both difficult and expensive. Fear remains that unless they are maintained, mothballed, or safeguarded under a conservation plan that they will be demolished, taking a part of history to the landfill, or continue to deteriorate, undermining property values.

In this case, the Elmwood District has mostly been spared, as nearly all of its houses of worship are Protestant or Jewish. Although four have closed, three are adaptive reuse success stories, and reuse is in the planning stages for the fourth.

Anchoring Richmond at North Street and Symphony Circle along with the Eliel and Eero Saarinen-designed Kleinhans Music Hall, is the 1889-1891 Medina sandstone Richardsonian Romanesque-styled **First Presbyterian Church**. A Buffalo Landmark designed by Green and Wicks, it is the lasting legacy of the city's very first congregation, established in 1812 when Buffalo was still a small village. It then became one of the first suburban churches after Westminster Presbyterian church several blocks east. The church's 163-foot-tall bell tower at the southern end of Richmond can be construed as a tribute to the twin towers of the Richardson Olmsted Campus at the northern end, as can its sandstone construction. At this writing, a $1 million fundraising drive was initiated for roof and other repairs, just one example of the cost of church-building maintenance.

One block north at the southeast corner of Summer Street is a small church that began as St. Luke's Episcopal in 1886. Its design has been attributed to E. B. Green; an addition was built as a parish house at the front of the structure in 1893. St. Luke's celebrated its last religious service in 1940. Today, the building serves the community as **Symphony Bible Church**.

Between Summer and Bryant streets on Richmond Avenue is the grand 1909 former **Temple Beth El**, the largest non-Christian house of worship in the district. According to a history written in 1947 for the congregation's centenary, the temple had "grown from a group of twelve men meeting in a hotel room on a Sunday afternoon to its [then-] present position as a bulwark of Conservative Judaism in America."[89] Its congregation merged in 2008 with Temple Tzedek in the Buffalo suburb of Amherst to become Temple Beth Tzedek. One of two adaptive reuse successes on Richmond, the temple building was sold in 2017 reportedly as a private house for a large Buffalo family.

At the northeast corner of Utica Street is **Pilgrim-St. Luke's United Church of Christ**. The tower and the gray limestone blocks with which it was built so resemble those of the Hellenic Church on Delaware Avenue that one might believe they were designed by the same architect. A significant difference is Pilgrim-St. Luke's much weightier appearance due to the larger stones used in its construction. One of the few growing congregations in the city, Pilgrim-St. Luke's has outlived many other congregations by accepting a diverse population and many neighborhood activities, to the extent that a Clinton Brown Company Architecture-designed addition was built in 2002. Now known as Pilgrim-St. Luke's and El Nuevo Camino UCC, the church has become home to Buffalo's growing Spanish-speaking worshippers, perhaps a new wave of worshippers who will help revive Elmwood.

One block farther north at Bryant Street is the former **Full Gospel Tabernacle** church. Built of Medina sandstone, this beautiful former house of worship became Richmond's first adaptive reuse success when it was converted to sixteen condominium units in 1994 and renamed Bryant Parish Commons.

At Richmond Avenue and W. Ferry Circle stands the former **Richmond Avenue Methodist-Episcopal Church,** built in 1891-98. Another Richardsonian Romanesque design in Medina sandstone, and listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places, its majestic architecture adds to the beauty of the intersection centered by Olmsted's Ferry Circle. The structure was at publication privately owned with plans for its adaptive reuse as a multiarts facility.

On the northeast corner of Richmond Avenue and Breckenridge Street is a 1911 Lansing, Bley & Lyman-designed yellow brick church building, modestly ornamented with Gothic Revival-style stained-glass windows. This historic church has served three congregations over its history, first as the Pilgrim Congregational Church, then as New Hope Baptist Church, and today as **Hope & Restoration Ministry's Religious Center**. The center's pastor is David Rivera, a retired Buffalo police officer, current member of the Buffalo City Council, and strong supporter of

TOP LEFT: Richmond Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church at Ferry Circle. The modest chapel built in 1885 on W. Ferry Street was soon too small for this growing suburban congregation, and an addition was designed in 1898 to front Ferry Circle. Members of the congregation served as missionaries around the world. However, their descendants moved out of the city into the inner ring suburbs, and the building was abandoned. It may one day be repurposed as an arts center.

TOP RIGHT: First Presbyterian Church at Symphony Circle. The oldest continuous congregation in Western New York, First Presbyterian was one of Buffalo's first suburban churches. Its tower, designed by E. B. Green, mirrors the H. H. Richardson-designed Buffalo State Asylum towers at the north end of Olmsted's The Avenue. It remains vibrant today by hosting many community organizations in its vast interior.

MIDDLE LEFT: The Bread of Life Baptist Church at the corner of Richmond and Summer. The current church features a more recent "front" addition to the earlier, pioneering Episcopal mission church seen to the left.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The former Pilgrim Church. Today it is Pilgrim-St. Luke's United Church of Christ, an active congregation and community center at Richmond Avenue and W. Utica Street. Among the last of nearly a dozen Richmond Avenue houses of worship built during the 20th century, Pilgrim St. Luke's is among the most active of the Elmwood District places of worship today because it has long welcomed everyone and has been a home to community organizations offering activities for all ages every day.

BOTTOM: Bryant Parish Condomimiums. An exemplary case of adaptive use as residences, located at Richmond Avenue and Bryant Street. The former Richmond Avenue Church of Christ was designed by architect Cyrus Porter and opened in 1886. Its conversion to condominiums represents a successful adaptive reuse that renews the character of the Elmwood District.

Photographs courtesy of Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

"Bidwell Place. Elmwood Ave. District." (1902)
An excellent view of what is now Colonial Circle, looking east toward Lafayette Avenue, showing Olmsted's original design. Note St. John's Church on the right, prior to the addition designed by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue just before his death in 1924 which opened in 1927.
From "The New Elmwood District," *Greater Buffalo, October 1902.*

ST. JOHN'S-GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. John's-Grace Episcopal Church played a founding role in the Elmwood District story. When Clinton Brown was looking for a free venue in which to schedule a meeting to kick off the initiative, he approached Church Rector, Reverend Phillip Dougherty. The clergyman not only hosted the meeting but embraced the cause. The church became the nonprofit partner to accept donations to fund the effort. He did this because, Rector Dougherty explained, "We were among the first institutions to be in Elmwood, and we have always thrived since by serving all our new neighbors as they have arrived here."[90] St. John's-Grace Episcopal Church, which is one of the oldest congregations in the Elmwood District, stays current by welcoming new neighbors with public activities and making its historic faculty available for modern needs. For instance, the church kitchen has been the home kitchen for the Whole Hog food truck.

the Elmwood Historic District National Register nomination. To judge from the exuberant singing heard from the street on a summer evening when the doors are open, the future seems strong for Pastor Rivera's ministry.

A few blocks farther north at the magnificent Bidwell Place that was the northern terminus of Olmsted's The Avenue, is **St. John's-Grace Episcopal Church**, one of the few still-functioning houses of worship on Richmond Avenue. The present congregation began its life as St. John's Episcopal Church, which was the third Episcopal congregation in Buffalo when it was founded in 1845 and was located at Washington and Swan streets downtown. About 1892, the congregation sought a new location and looked first in Allentown, Buffalo's first ring suburb. They selected a site on St. John's Place, perhaps named in anticipation of their arrival. However, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, having arrived in the Elmwood District sooner and located only a quarter of a mile away at Richmond Avenue and Summer Street, reportedly objected to this encroachment. St. John's found its site a mile north at Bidwell Circle. Here they built a church to the design of James H Marling. By 1927, the growing congregation expanded into a new worship space, an English Perpendicular Gothic design with Art Deco elements that was designed by nationally-significant architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue and built of Onondaga limestone from the nearby Granger Quarry. The original church became the new church's parish hall.

Elmwood Avenue Churches and Temples

Joining Richmond Avenue as a major "church street" is Elmwood Avenue. Although today Elmwood Avenue is the district's principal commercial street, it was originally residential, a handsome tree-lined avenue lined with grand Victorian residences and dotted with several beautiful churches, very much like Delaware Avenue. Today, only the block between Summer and Bryant streets retains its residential appearance, although many of its buildings contain businesses and offices.

On the southwest corner at Bryant Street once stood a small Richardsonian Romanesque gem of a church whose congregation eventually merged into Pilgrim-St Luke's. It has been replaced by a small, nondescript Rite Aid drug store. In the 1990s when Rite Aid was planning an expansion that would have necessitated demolition of two adjacent mansions, hundreds of neighboring residents protested at a public meeting, and the plan was abandoned. This threat to the streetscape resulted in the creation of Elmwood Avenue nonmandatory design standards being formulated for the Elmwood District's popular shopping and dining street.

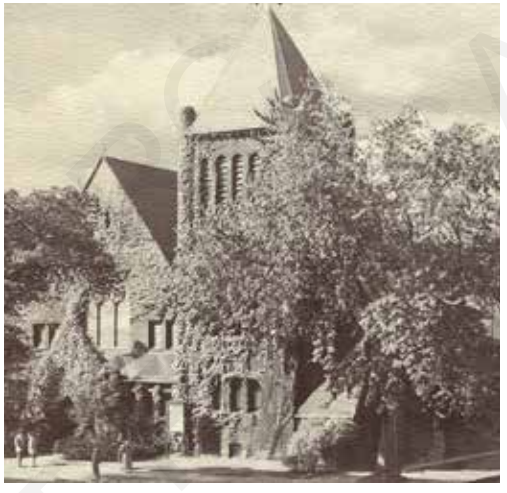
Two substantial church buildings are located diagonally from each other at W. Ferry Street. One, at the southwest corner, was adapted in the 1990s to a multiservice medical complex called Parish Commons. With a redesign in 2007 after a fire, *Buffalo Rising*, a popular online local news source, said that the new look,

"resembles the interior of an Aspen ski chalet more than a medical complex,"[91] which was no doubt intended as a compliment. The complex's physician-developer prided himself on having created something for patients "to think about rather than the condition that brought them for treatment."[92] Unfortunately, the conversion required that the original, generous lawn and shade trees be paved to serve as a parking lot.

The 1904-1906 **Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo** stands diagonally opposite the complex on land and with money donated by John J. Albright, who lived on W. Ferry Street to the east of the church and was at the time developing his estate. Accompanying Albright's largesse was his right to approve the building's design, which we can assume he approved. Built of Indiana limestone in English Village Gothic style with an Arts and Crafts interior, the church was the work of architects Edward A. Kent and his brother William. This designated Buffalo landmark is thought to be Edward's last commission before perishing on the Titanic. Buffalo civic leader and former United States president, Millard Fillmore, is associated with the congregation's founding. This handsome church embraces a greensward close, representing the best of the Elmwood District's character at this busy intersection.

Up Elmwood Avenue is **Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church**, colorfully described by Buffalo historian James Napora:

> *On 8 November 1894, amid the pastures and farm lands of the northern section of the city,*



LEFT: Photograph of the First-Pilgrim United Church of Christ taken before its demolition. This corner church represented the best of the Elmwood District in its iconic Richardson Romanesque style and verdant landscaping. It served parishioners who walked or took the streetcar to attend services. As Elmwood District residents began moving to the suburbs, church buildings could not follow them. This congregation merged with St. Luke's United Church of Christ on Richmond Avenue and W. Utica Street to form First-Pilgrim Congregational Church of Christ in 1928. It is now Pilgrim-St. Luke's United Church of Christ.

Image Courtesy of Pastor M. Bruce McKay

RIGHT: A current view of the southwest corner of Elmwood Avenue and Bryant Street, site of the First-Pilgrim United Church of Christ.

Photograph Courtesy of Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

LAFAYETTE AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Clinton Brown has many fond memories of the enjoyment that he and some of his sons experienced participating in the activities of Troop 2 Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts in the basement of Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church: "Making them even more fun was that they took place in a log cabin there," he says. "The former bowling alley in the next room made a wonderful soap-box-derby minicar track, and the gym upstairs provided the only indoor recreation space available to us neighborhood kids. Outside, the spacious front lawn, the largest on the block, was our football and capture-the-flag field."

He also remembers the church as a home for community service, explaining: "The Right Place for K.I.D.S. day care center at the church helped spawn the Tapestry Charter School movement, led by families who lived on adjacent St. James Place. Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen, sponsored by Concerned Ecumenical Ministries and housed at LAPC, nourished a group of Elmwood folks who, though suffering hard times, added diversity to Elmwood that has since been lost with its closing."

TOP: An early photograph of the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, among the Elmwood District's first suburban churches. Note the maturing trees, the concrete sidewalks and Medina sandstone curbs, the crushed stone street surface, and the Elmwood streetcar tracks and electrical wires. In the upper left corner an electric arc street lamp is visible. Looking closely at the street corner, one can see the cast iron street identification sign and post, typical of the Elmwood District at this time.

Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Buildings - Religious - Churches – Presbyterian

BOTTOM: Circa 1907 postcard view of the Unitarian Church, Buffalo, NY.

The Unitarian Church congregation was founded by Millard Fillmore and others in downtown Buffalo in 1833. Two generations later, they built this new church in what was considered the suburbs on the former Albright estate, on land at Elmwood Avenue and W. Ferry Street, sold by John J. Albright to the congregation at a "bargain price."

Postcard courtesy of Clinton Brown

the [Lafayette Presbyterian] congregation broke ground for their new house of worship. With the completion of the new building, they moved from Lafayette Square. At that time, the street in front of their new church was known as Bouck Street. The church requested that the city rename the street Lafayette in honor of the congregation. In doing so, it became one of the few churches in the world to have a street named after it.[93]

The congregation's early history of reorganizing and name-changing predicated on physical relocations forced by growth and fire no doubt prompted their unusual request. They could keep the name they had adopted in 1878 when the square adjacent to the church was renamed to honor the Marquis de Lafayette who had visited Buffalo in 1825 and spoke nearby.

Individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the church was designed by architects Lansing & Beierl. It was built of Medina sandstone in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, as were so many Buffalo churches of that era, so strong was the influence of Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane designer, Henry Hobson Richardson.

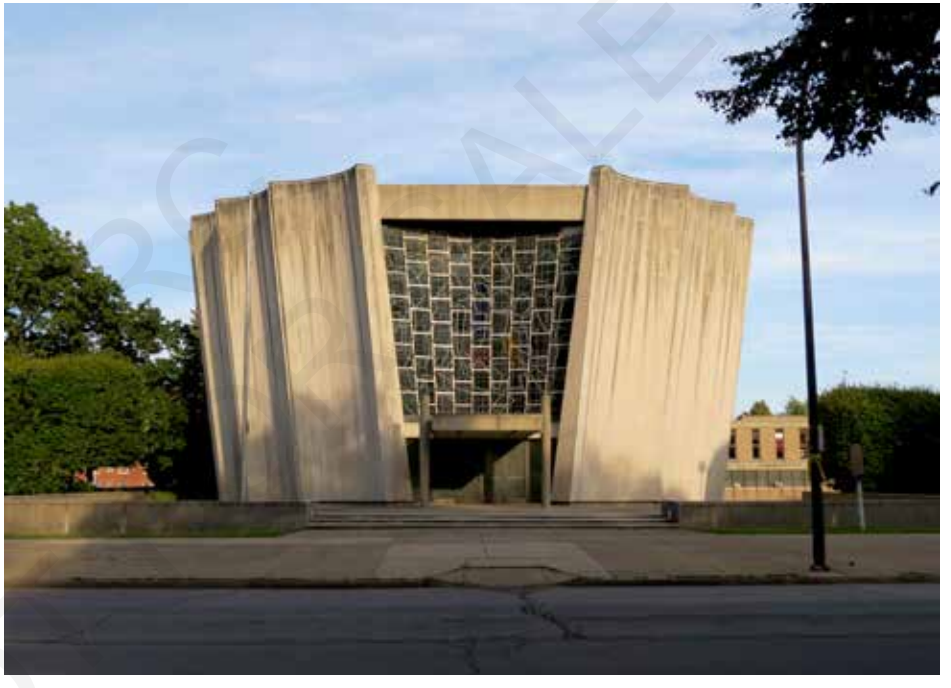
Facing declining membership, the congregation at the turn of this century oversaw the adaptive reuse and historic rehabilitation of much of the large building complex into a mixed-use, multitenant facility called Lafayette Lofts, combining residential, commercial, and meeting and event space, while restoring the worship space. Conceived by Clinton Brown Company Architecture under the leadership of civic leader and long-time parishioner Mark Kostrzewski, Lafayette Lofts is a fine, if too-rare, example of a parish remaining alive and converting its too-large complex into income-producing complementary uses to sustain itself. The sanctuary continues to function as a place of worship for its 186-year old congregation as well as a popular Elmwood District community meeting hall.

Congregation Beth Abraham is one of the oldest Jewish congregations in Buffalo. Located on Elmwood Avenue just north of Bird Avenue in a frame Victorian building, it has been an active congregation since 1922. The synagogue does not hold regular daily or weekly services. It conducts a musical service once a month on Fridays, High Holiday services in the fall, and various events throughout the year. A former shul at 1045 Elmwood Avenue once associated with this congregation, has been an art gallery and will soon become an office building. Another synagogue was reportedly located on the northwest corner of W. Utica and Atlantic streets. It later became the Church of the Divine Humanity and currently houses the nondenominational Word of Life congregation.

Today, the largest and most beautiful Judaic temple in Buffalo is the 1964-1967 modern **Temple Beth Zion** with its unusual Alabama limestone scalloped exterior walls designed by architect Max Abramovitz and magnificent stained-glass window by Ben Shahn. The temple may be the modern building that best captures the historic splendor of Delaware Avenue since the arrival of Westminster Presbyterian Church nearly 120 years earlier. Located in the Linwood local historic district on the periphery of Elmwood, Temple Beth Zion is home to a large Reform congregation founded in 1850. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2017, helping to make the combined Elmwood, Linwood, and Delaware historic districts one of the richest troves of National Register-listed historic resources anywhere in the nation.

One of the most important religious and community centers in Buffalo is the **Jewish Community Center** of Buffalo. Originating on the east side of Buffalo in the 1890s, a new state-of-the-art building was built at 787 Delaware Avenue at Summer Street in 1948, the same year the State of Israel was founded. One of the most diverse community gathering places in Western New York, it provides services to people of all ages, religions, and backgrounds as the Elmwood District's community center. Former Temple Beth Zion and Jewish Community Center president Kenneth A. Rogers was also instrumental in creating the Elmwood Historic District out of his love for the community where he has lived all his adult life.

The only facility providing Roman Catholic services in the Elmwood District and to the Buffalo State College community is the **Newman Center** located on Elmwood Avenue. A late-comer to the historically Protestant Elmwood District, the center is housed in a two-story red-brick former residence adjacent to the Buffalo AKG Art Museum and across Elmwood Avenue from the Burchfield Penney Art Center and the college.



LEFT: The home of one of the earliest Jewish congregations in Buffalo, Congregation Beth Abraham has been an active congregation at this location on Elmwood Avenue near Bird Avenue since 1922.

Photograph courtesy of Congregation Beth Abraham

RIGHT: Founded in 1850, Temple Beth Zion is the largest Jewish congregation in Western New York and one of the oldest and largest Reform congregations in the nation. It occupies nearly an entire block at 805 Delaware Avenue, the former estate of C. Altman, one of the first Jewish residents of this section of Delaware Avenue that was known as "Millionaires' Row." The sanctuary pictured here, which features a stained glass window designed by Ben Shahn, is part of a sprawling four-acre campus of interconnected buildings designed in the Modern Style by Max Abramovitz. One of the most significant Modern sites in Buffalo, it opened in 1967. The estate-like Temple Beth Zion campus also exhibits the Edenic character of two of the Elmwood District's framing places: Forest Lawn Cemetery (1849) and the Buffalo State Asylum (1872).

Photograph from Temple Beth Zion National Register Nomination

Delaware Avenue Churches and Temples

None of the several churches built on Delaware Avenue are in the Elmwood District. Two, however, are contiguous: **Westminster Presbyterian Church**, the first church built in then-rural Elmwood, and the Hellenic Eastern Orthodox Church of the Annunciation. Westminster especially has played a significant role in the development and character of the Elmwood District.

The Westminster congregation was founded in 1847 by tannery businessman Jesse Ketchum who owned property on North Street near Delaware Avenue. Ketchum donated land between North and Summer streets for the Romanesque Revival church, which was designed by Harlow M. Wilcox and completed in 1858-1859, making it Buffalo's first suburban church. (First Presbyterian Church at Symphony Circle arrived a generation later.) Among its many Gothic-style stained-glass windows are two handsome but plain opalescent Tiffany windows, the first of which was contributed by the Jewett Richmond family. The church is a contributing building to the Delaware Avenue Historic District.

Westminster was the birthplace of Buffalo Seminary, the Nichols School, and the Community Music School. It also fostered many settlement houses and other private-sector social enterprises to serve the needy, the newly arrived, and others. Its pioneering Early Childhood Program was among the first post-World War II high-quality preschool programs. Clinton Brown was a member of its second class, held in the masonry former carriage house of a Rumsey estate, which started his development as a lifelong child of the Elmwood District.

The English Village Gothic building at the southwest corner of W. Utica Street, where today the Greek Orthodox congregation worships, was originally home to the **North Presbyterian Church** congregation. In 1952 that community moved to a modern church in Williamsville. When the **Hellenic Eastern Orthodox Church of the Annunciation** took over that same year, changes were made to the interior to accommodate the liturgy of the orthodox tradition. Every year in early June, the church congregation holds a Greek festival; it is the Elmwood District's longest-running festival. The popular event raises funds that help to maintain the facility and serves to acquaint festivalgoers with the history and traditions of the church and the Greek community. This church is part of the Linwood Historic District.

The corner site itself has a rich history. Even before the city's expansion and the start of suburbanization, it held the George B. Webster home designed by New York architect Richard Upjohn, who designed St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral in downtown Buffalo. In 1912, as a fine example of Gothic Revival domestic architecture and then the home of an E. S. Dann, it was pictured in *The Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo* published by the Buffalo Historical Society.

Nearby, at 181 W. Utica Street, is the neighborhood gem **Word of Life Church**, a two-and-a-half-story cross gable frame house built circa 1916. Converted to a church, the building

Historic Photograph of the Word of Life Church.
Photograph Courtesy of Clinton Brown Company Architecture p.c.

EARLY DELAWARE AVENUE CHURCHES

The first suburban church north of North Street was Westminster Presbyterian Church. Founder Jesse Ketchum purchased land in the country, at Delaware Avenue and North Street, in 1845. He built a small frame chapel in 1847, but it was too remote to attract worshippers. By August 1850 he had built a parsonage, recruited a minister, and attracted a sufficient number of congregants to form a strong organization. By 1858, they were able to hire master mason Henry Rumrill to construct the current church designed by architect Harlow M. Wilcox. It opened in 1859.

The Baptists then constructed the Delaware Avenue Baptist Church circa 1883, between Summer and W. Utica streets. It was designed by nationally prominent Buffalo architect John Hopper Coxhead.

The first Roman Catholic Church in the Elmwood District was Blessed Sacrament Church on the northeast corner of Delaware Avenue and W. Utica Street that was designed by Albert Post and completed in 1887. It was moved 300 feet north in 1909 to make room for St. Joseph's New Cathedral, which was built on the same corner in 1912-1915.

Building these churches for the Elmwood District's growing population was changing the rural country estate landscape of Delaware Avenue and of the entire district. For example, the E. S. Dann House on the southeast corner of Delaware Avenue and W. Utica Street, was demolished in 1903 to make way for the construction of North Presbyterian Church, 1904-1907.

Nearly 50 years later, the North Presbyterians built a new church in the automobile suburbs of North Buffalo, and the congregation of the Hellenic Orthodox Church of the Annunciation took over ownership in 1952. The church remains their home today and is the site of the annual Buffalo Greek Festival.

TOP LEFT: Contemporary photograph of Westminster Presbyterian Church.
Photograph courtesy of Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

TOP MIDDLE: Contemporary photograph of Delaware Avenue Baptist Church.
Photograph courtesy of Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

TOP RIGHT: Historic postcard of St. Joseph's New Cathedral (demolished in 1976). Note the new luxury automobile crossing the W. Utica Street streetcar tracks and the elegantly dressed ladies walking to church.
Postcard courtesy of Clinton Brown

BOTTOM LEFT: Residence of E.S. Dann on Delaware and W. Utica, demolished to make way for the construction of the North Presbyterian Church which opened in 1906.
Published in Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo *by Frank Severance*

BOTTOM RIGHT: Historic photograph of the North Presbyterian Church, the Hellenic Church of the Annunciation since 1952.
Collection of The Buffalo History Museum. General photograph collection, Buildings - Religious - Churches - Presbyterian

now has a concrete foundation and fish-scale wood shingle decoration above reddish-brown brick siding.

Also on Delaware Avenue, but on the periphery of the Elmwood District, were three other churches. The magnificent 1894-1895 **Delaware Avenue Baptist Church**, between Bryant and Utica streets, was designed by Buffalo architect John Coxhead, a member of the congregation, and a nationally significant architect with a long and illustrious career. Coxhead has been called "Buffalo's forgotten architect," because, according to an article in *Buffalo Spree Magazine*, although Coxhead's career "was nearly as long as Frank Lloyd Wright's and his style was as inspiring as H. H. Richardson's," few people recognize his name. "He designed hundreds of other buildings in Buffalo and across the nation in more than twenty states," the writer explains, and "[t]here are verified Coxhead buildings still standing in six states, and more than one dozen listed on the National Register of Historic Places."[94] The congregation's leader Arthur Hedstrom, a prominent Buffalo coal dealer, in 1904 was among the first of Buffalo's businessmen to purchase farmland for a country estate in the Town of Amherst, recalling Buffalo's nineteenth century business leaders who first built in the then-rural area now occupied by this church.

Though they may have arrived in the Elmwood District later than others, Roman Catholics soon arrived *en masse* and created a significant legacy. The marble-clad **St. Joseph's New Cathedral**, the seat of the Catholic diocese's bishop that was completed in 1912-1915 at the northeast corner of W. Utica Street to the design of architect Aristides Leonori of Rome, was demolished in 1976. The smaller 1887-1889 Medina sandstone **Blessed Sacrament Church** that remains on the site was built as a chapel for the bishop adjacent to his new residence. The bishop's move to this location was forced by the changes from residential to "railroads and businesses" taking place downtown where the first cathedral had been built. The bishop's daily masses at the chapel became so well attended by 1909 that its 288-seat capacity was enlarged to 600 and it was designated a parish church. Still, the congregation again outgrew capacity. It was then, only two years later, that the chapel was moved eastward on the site, and construction of the New Cathedral was undertaken.

The **Unity Church of Practical Christianity** at Auburn Avenue served its community in an unpretentious facility that was built on land previously occupied by a mansion destroyed by fire.

The presence in the neighborhood of these houses of worship affirmed a sense of place, and their beauty enhanced it. Those whose congregations are the most active have survived because of their service to the Elmwood District community and beyond. All served lofty aims, just as did the plans of Joseph Ellicott and Frederick Law Olmsted.

The Elmwood District is the unique place where the predominately earthbound values of Ellicott and Olmsted joined hands with the aspirations of spiritual communities. Where else in America have so many significant architects and congregations worked so well together in connecting man and nature, heaven and earth?

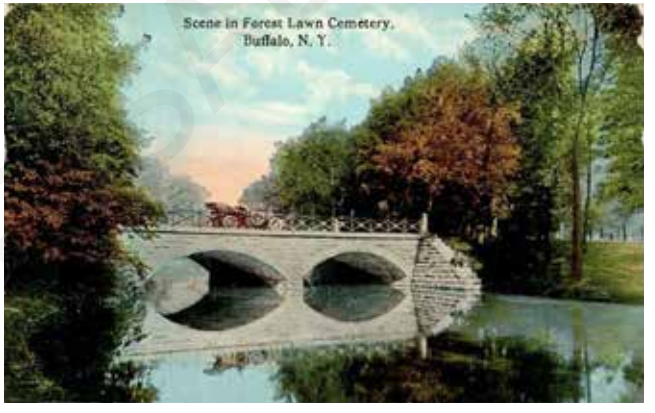
Service Institutions

Another institutional category too important to be labeled merely "Miscellaneous" is the service institution. For purposes of this history, hospitals, the cemetery, the fire station, and social clubs are included in this category. After the institutions that address educational, religious, and cultural needs, it is these that round out the various aspects of life that contribute to the Elmwood District's becoming a village worth living in.

The origins of district's two oldest service institutions, Forest Lawn Cemetery and the Buffalo State Asylum, were outlined in earlier chapters, but no description of them would be complete without recognition of their continued contribution to the vibrant life of the district and to its architectural legacy.

Forest Lawn

Forest Lawn Cemetery is one of the city's earliest, longest lasting, and most important service institutions. When public-spirited lawyer Charles E. Clarke in 1848 purchased land more than two-and-a-half miles north of the city center on lots 64 and 65 initially owned by William Johnston(e) to develop a cemetery, its eighty acres were secluded and rural. Today, at 269 acres, the cemetery is surrounded by busy streets, an Olmsted-designed park, a beautiful, prestigious neighborhood, and



ABOVE: The Blue Sky Mausoleum in Forest Lawn bridges eras and realms. It was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1925-28 in homage to his best friend, Darwin D. Martin. It was not built until 2004, when a rendition of Wright's design by one of his disciples was built as a commercial enterprise. It is possible to purchase a vault in this beautiful funerary architecture.

The mausoleum structure emerges upward on the slope of a hill from a small pond nestled in the earth below toward the broad blue sky above. Thought of in the context of Olmsted's Elmwood, this special place embodies the commercial and the cultural, the earth and the heavens, and living well in nature and the city eternally, that harks back to Joseph Ellicott's vision 200 years earlier.

Photograph courtesy of Kim Smith Photo

RIGHT TOP: A 1906 penny postcard entitled, "Scene in Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo, NY." A picturesque view taken half a century after the cemetery was established and before ownership of automobiles became common. Note the unpaved roadway alongside Scajaquada Creek, the double-arched bridge made of local limestone, all in a lush landscape of grasses, bushes and trees that inspired Olmsted's design of the parks and parkways nearby. This postcard needed no message other than the photo.

Postcard courtesy of Clinton Brown

RIGHT MIDDLE: This 1914 postcard shows that the automobile has arrived, yet little else has changed in this timeless place. Only the density of the foliage has increased, which is notable when compared to the 1906 postcard of the same scene.

Postcard courtesy of Clinton Brown

RIGHT BOTTOM: By the time this highly stylized ca. 1921 postcard was designed, the picturesque cemetery landscape is downplayed in the background in this view that features the new, formal entrance on Delaware and W. Delavan avenues. Its design reflects the influence of the City Beautiful Movement as does the nearby Gates Circle.

Postcard courtesy of Clinton Brown

Canisius College, a private Catholic institution run by Jesuits. Presaging Olmsted twenty years later, Clarke enhanced nature by deliberately shaping the land's rough topography and carefully manicuring the existing vegetation.

While Forest Lawn is important to all of Buffalo, it has particular significance to the Elmwood District because its existence and public popularity encouraged Frederick Law Olmsted to locate the centerpiece of his park system at the cemetery's doorstep. His design blurred the two almost as one to enlarge the green space open to the public and made Elmwood a desirable place for future residents. As has been seen, Forest Lawn became a popular picnic ground upon opening, and, throughout its history, in addition to being a dignified and beautiful resting place for the dead, it has always provided a place for quiet recreation and renewal for the living. In this contemporary era, cemetery personnel welcome visitors with a summer series of Sunday walking and trolley tours with costumed volunteers enacting the roles of historical characters.

As part of the early rural cemetery movement, Forest Lawn's picturesquely landscaped grounds are dotted with elegant works of art and architecture in free-standing sculpture, sarcophagi, memorials, monuments, and mausoleums. Cemetery president Joseph Dispenza has said, "The various motifs used on headstones or on monuments have always been a reflection of the people's morals, tradition, and tastes of the time."[95] Reflecting more modern tastes is the white granite Blue Sky Mausoleum™, designed in 1928 by Frank Lloyd Wright for the Darwin D. Martin family.

With the stock market crash of 1929 intervening, the mausoleum was never built for the Martins. A 1994 initiative of then-cemetery-president Fred R. Whaley, Jr. that was "given impetus [a decade later] by restoration of Wright's Martin and Barton houses in Buffalo and Graycliff in Derby,"[96] the mausoleum was completed in October 2004 on a knoll overlooking two ponds at a cost of $500,000. The cost was funded largely through grants from the Baird, Seymour H. Knox, Margaret L. Wendt, and John R. Oishei Foundations, and *The Buffalo News*. Its twenty-four crypts were being marketed to the world.

Many well-known Buffalo names are interred in Forest Lawn, as well as some of wider repute, like former president Millard Fillmore, William Fargo of Wells Fargo note, Seneca Chief Red Jacket, Congresswoman and presidential candidate Shirley Chisholm, and entertainer Rick James. In addition, Forest Lawn is home to many forms of wildlife and 700 kinds of trees. With its winding paths and lush vistas, it is a lovely place for a stroll, a run, or quiet reflection.

Finally, Forest Lawn has successfully built on its past and inheritance by making its treasure trove of nearly 170 years of cemetery records—more than 1.2 million historic documents—widely available through its Margaret L. Wendt Archive and Resource Center, funded largely by the charitable foundation of Elmwood's lifetime Richmond Avenue resident Margaret L. Wendt.

With this 21st century integration of place and technology, Forest Lawn Cemetery, the first character defining place in the Elmwood District, is leading the way to Elmwood's future through its past.

Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane

Known by different names over the course of its existence, including Buffalo State Hospital and the Buffalo Psychiatric Center, the central-building complex and park-like land on which it rests are today known mainly as the Richardson Olmsted Campus. The campus occupies a central portion of the large site that also still services the mental health needs of thousands each year. The founding of the asylum constituted an enormous undertaking that not only became the northern boundary of the Elmwood District but, like Forest Lawn Cemetery and the Olmsted parks system, helped to shape its essential character.

In what proved to be a break-out project, soon-to-be nationally prominent architect Henry Hobson Richardson collaborated for the first time with his friend and neighbor Frederick Law Olmsted, who designed the grounds. The grandeur and dominance of Richardson's massive Medina-sandstone twin-towered central building and its two wing-like pavilions surrounded by Olmsted's park grounds helped to establish the high standard of architecture subsequently built throughout Elmwood. Today, of course, Richardson is one of "the Recognized Trinity of American Architecture," along with Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan.[97]

The hospital grounds, surveyed by Marsden Davey in 1870, designed by Olmsted between 1871 and 1881, and improved and refined between 1881 and 1899, were a physical manifestation of Dr. Thomas Kirkbride's philosophy of the landscape as therapy, where ample natural light, fresh air, and healthy activity, with an orderly building lay out, were thought to improve physical and mental wellbeing. In turn, this concept of the salutary nature of open space and natural landscape influenced the various types of residences, all with front- and backyards for gardens, that began to be built in the Elmwood District.

The closing and abandonment of the central asylum building by the state of New York in the 1970s in favor of more modern facilities on the premises, combined with the national trend of outpatient mental health care, was a source of enormous consternation for Buffalo, but especially for residents of the Elmwood District. The building's verdigrised-copper-topped towers are beloved landmarks within the surrounding neighborhood and, lit at night, are awe-inducing beacons visible throughout the Museum District. Despite the odds, preservationists never lost hope or ceased advocacy on behalf of saving and reusing the building. But it took legal action in 2002 to force the state to address its responsibility toward the National Historic Landmark. The suit against the state was brought by the Preservation Coalition of Erie County, headed by Tim Tielman, executive director. It was one of two local grassroots preservation organizations—the other, the Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier—that merged in 2008 to form Preservation Buffalo Niagara. Finally, Governor George Pataki's administration allocated $76 million dollars to jumpstart restoration of the iconic building.

In an immense collaborative effort, the nonprofit Richardson Center Corporation was founded by visionary business leader Stanford Lipsey to undertake the renaissance of the campus. Lipsey, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and long-time publisher of *The Buffalo News*, owned by Warren Buffett, had since 2006 engineered and managed the entire enormous and still incomplete project. In addition to restoration of the building, Olmsted's South Lawn has been restored and, following the democratizing philosophy of its designer, is open to the public. Work also continues to develop the Lipsey Architecture Center of Buffalo and the remaining two-thirds of the massive campus.

The centerpiece of the campus's rehabilitation was the Hotel Henry Urban Resort Conference Center housed in the 146-year-old building. Opened in 2017 with eighty-eight rooms and suites, the Hotel Henry distinguishes itself from other resorts. Instead of beaches, pools, sand, and sun, the resort promotes the surrounding Elmwood District cityscape, the neighboring cultural institutions and college campus, Olmsted's nearby Delaware Park, and all the district's cafes, coffeehouses, and boutiques as its amenities. As of publication, new management was reopening the hotel that had been closed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Millard Fillmore Hospital

In the nineteenth century, traditional (allopathic) medical practices were often harsh and dispensed by unlicensed practitioners. Thus, the healing art of homeopathy became widely followed in Buffalo. Because the two existing city hospitals did not allow access to homeopaths, the first facility where homeopathy could be practiced here was ensured by a group of women. Led by Mrs. Augustus Hoxsie, wife of one of the area's most successful homeopathic practitioners, they formed the Homeopathic Hospital Aid Association and raised enough funds to rent a modest house downtown at Washington and Division Streets. Eventually, demand so forced the need for more capacity that in 1908 land was purchased at then newly renamed Gates Circle on which to build a modern homeopathic hospital.

The Buffalo Homeopathic Hospital's new building facing Lafayette and Linwood avenues was completed in 1911 with capacity for 150 patients. In 1923, the hospital's name was changed to Millard Fillmore Hospital to honor Buffalo's most distinguished historic citizen, and, given a decline in the practice of homeopathy, its policy was altered to allow allopathic medical practice. In subsequent years, additional structures, including a central multistory hospital building, were built around the original homeopathic facility to become the Millard Fillmore Hospital complex that is mostly remembered today. "Remembered," because the Kaleida Health System in 2010 consolidated its urban

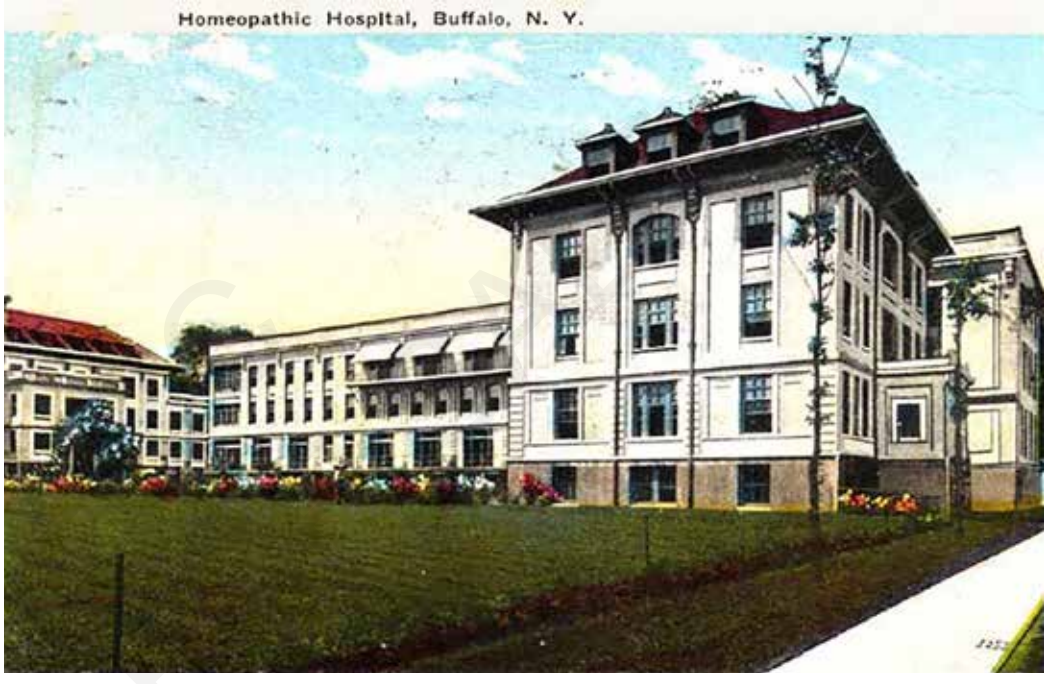
health facilities at Buffalo General Hospital with the opening of newly built Gates Vascular Institute as part of the expanding Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus adjoining Allentown, making Millard Fillmore Hospital obsolete. In 2015 the vacated buildings were imploded to make way for creation of an almost self-contained new "neighborhood" by developer T. M. Montante for for the Elmwood District's newest enclave.

Planned for the vast new complex were a market, work-out emporium, the extension of Lancaster Avenue, and other amenities. Because of the historic nature of the area, surrounded by the National Register-listed, Olmsted-designed Gates Circle and Chapin Parkway, the National Register-listed Elmwood Historic District, and the locally designated Linwood Historic Preservation District, much public input was solicited and given.

The first new building is Canterbury Woods. This handsomely designed independent senior living facility caters primarily to Elmwood District residents seeking quality housing suited to their age and circumstances, much as did The Parke Apartments right across Gates Circle nearly 100 years earlier.

Women and Children's Hospital

The brainchild of Dr. Bainbridge Folwell, a prominent Buffalo physician, and many prominent women, some of whom were wives of physicians at Buffalo General Hospital where their ideas were rejected, the Women and



Historic postcard view of the Buffalo Homeopathic Hospital's newly built facility completed in 1911 on land overlooking the newly remodeled Gates Circle.

The second healing campus in the Elmwood District was built a generation after the first, the Buffalo State Asylum. This home of the healing art of homeopathy can be said to also represent a holistic path and place to wellness. However, similar to the progressive change in the medical model at the former asylum, which became the Buffalo Psychiatric Center, this facility became the Millard Fillmore Hospital. It was well known for its School of Nursing.

However, by the 21st century Buffalo had too much hospital capacity and Millard Fillmore Hospital was closed and partially demolished. The former homeopathic facility on Lafayette Avenue and Linwood Avenue awaits its rehabilitation for a new use. The underlying theme of this institution persists however, in the newly-opened Canterbury Woods independent senior living facility facing Gates Circle on the campus.

Photograph courtesy of BuffaloAH.com

Children's Hospital of Buffalo became one of the first institutional buildings established in the posh environs of Oakland Place. Dr. Folwell promoted the concept of a separate medical facility for children because he believed "they should not be cared for in adult hospital wards where they could see and hear the seriously ill and dying."[98]

To further the doctor's concept, Mrs. Gibson T. Williams and her daughter Martha in 1892 purchased a brick house at 219 Bryant Street to serve as a twelve-bed hospital. In the next decade, the addition of several adjacent houses along Bryant and Hodge streets became necessary to accommodate the need for expanded capacity. Finally, a new two-story hospital designed by Green & Wicks was built between 1906 and 1908 on the same site. A 1930 photo of the building reveals that it was far more substantial and intentional looking than the large, irregularly shaped complex of interconnected buildings, centered by the 1911 Nurses' Home building, that were constructed at various times following demolition of the original in 1969.

In 2017, the Bryant Street complex was vacated in favor of a newly built modern facility on Main Street, one of several major components of a 20/20 visionary plan articulated at the millennium for the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and anticipated to be completed by 2020. The facility was renamed the John R. Oishei Children's Hospital after the Trico founder and former Elmwood resident whose local legacy foundation supported construction with generous funding.

What was to happen to the vacated complex in the Elmwood District that has thus far avoided the imploding fate of Millard Fillmore Hospital was the subject of great community concern as two developer-purchasers presented proposals for its transformation into multiuse purposes. Plans and artistic renderings unveiled in autumn 2018 showed that the proposed new nine-acre neighborhood within the Elmwood District was to feature twenty-seven luxury condominiums in the top three floors of the former hospital's Variety Tower and Alfieri buildings, with priciest units costing up to one million dollars. The complex, to be called Elmwood Crossing, was also expected to be completed in three phases and to eventually feature for-sale townhouses; a range of market-rate, affordable, and senior apartments; a daycare center; and an urban grocery store and other boutique retail.

Social Clubs

It is a serendipitous blessing, perhaps, given the stresses and concerns experienced by many Elmwood residents because of the dramatic neighborhood changes, not confined to but epitomized by loss of the two former hospital complexes, that three historic clubs continue to offer either a genteel or an energetic form of escape.

The Saturn Club

In 1885, three young men, Carleton Sprague (1858-1916), William F. Kip, and Francis Almy, finding the 1867 Buffalo Club, the club of their fathers, too dignified and conservative and too generous to the newly wealthy in its admission policies, decided to form their own club for whist playing and drinking on Saturdays, hence the name. Ten other men, including such resonating names as John C. Olmsted, stepson of Frederick Law, and Ansley Wilcox, whose home would later become the inaugural site for his friend, Theodore Roosevelt, to the United States presidency, immediately joined them. Initially, the club met in each other's homes, eventually triggering numerous complaints and warnings from neighbors about raucous boozing. This should have come as no surprise, given that their annual meeting was called a Saturnalia, after the unrestrained revelry of the Roman festival honoring the god of agriculture.

With growing membership and wealth, club headquarters moved numerous times during the early years. By late 1890, the club had finally incorporated, built its own clubhouse at 417 Delaware, near the Buffalo Club, introduced a more genteel tenor to proceedings, and on some occasions, to a limited degree, began to include women as guests, though not as members until 1985.

In February 1921, the club commissioned architect-member Duane Lyman to design the elegant Tudor-style building that is today's Saturn Club at 977 Delaware Avenue. On October 21,

1921, the cornerstone of the new building was laid, and exactly one year later, an elaborate ceremony featured members in full academic regalia parading from the old clubhouse to the new one. In recognition of its national historic significance, the members in 2005 listed the Saturn Club in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Garret Club

This private women's social club, located at 91 Cleveland Avenue, in a circa 1929 building designed by E. B. Green, Jr., is the brainchild of 27-year-old Margaret Scatcherd. Women's social clubs were part of a trend following the Civil War, when women in the United States began to form various organizations to promote their well-being and advancement, leading eventually to what has been an ongoing struggle for gender equality in all occupations and areas of modern life.

Daughter of a well-to-do Buffalo family, Margaret invited a group of her friends to meet at her Delaware Avenue home to discuss the formation of a congenial place in which to socialize away from home. Within weeks, in March 1902, the club officially constituted itself with a limited membership of 100 young women.

Because the furnishings for their first rented space at 18 Ashland Avenue consisted of items donated by members from their attics, they called their fledgling organization The Garret Club. Immediate success necessitated a move in 1903 to larger rented space in a house at 205 Bryant Street. In 1905, club members started a

The Saturn Club at 977 Delaware Avenue. The founders of the Saturn Club were members of the third generation of wealth in Buffalo. The founding generation prospered beyond survival largely due to trade associated with the Erie Canal. Some of their descendants prospered during the industrial era and the Civil War. They founded the Buffalo Club, the city's first significant gentlemen's club. Their descendants eschewed their fathers' club, and formed their own, The Saturn Club, in 1885. This view is of their Tudor-styled "clubhouse" which opened in 1922. The architecture reflects their by now genteel, collegiate culture. To this day, the club is operated by a Dean and Faculty elected by the members.

Photograph by Chuck LaChiusa, BuffaloAH.com

TOP: The Garret Club at 91 Cleveland Avenue.
Photograph by Gregory Pinto, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

BOTTOM: Buffalo Tennis & Squash Club at 314 Elmwood Avenue.
Image published in American Lawn Tennis, *Volume 13*

building fund. Eleven years later, they purchased the lot at 91 Cleveland Avenue and hired architect Robert North to design a frame building, which, at a cost of $18,000, was built by the end of the year.

Having outgrown the North design, the club in 1928 turned to E. B. Green, Jr., the son of Buffalo's most prodigious architect, to design a new building on a new site. Instead, however, the north side of the house was demolished to make way for the expansion, and the new clubhouse opened on December 21, 1929.

Through the early years, members' entertainment consisted of the production of plays, ensemble recitals, and often well-known performers in the world of classical music. With professional actress Katherine Cornell an active member, "The Show," an annual original production, was often the high point of the club's entertainment.

As the club has grown in membership, responsibilities for its care and member enrichment have kept pace. To match the broadening interests of membership, the club now offers education seminars; lectures of local, national, and global interest; trips to places of interest in Western New York; fine dining; an investment club; an active art committee; and, more recently, wellness activities. Additionally, reflecting the many changes in women's lifestyles over the years as well as to attract younger, working women, the club offers space and opportunities for quiet work, meetings, or dining for working members and their guests. Its members listed the Garret Club in the National Register of Historic Places in 2007.

Buffalo Tennis and Squash Club

The Buffalo Tennis and Squash Club is a private sporting club with 180 members. Located in a historic clubhouse building designed by Duane Lyman and built from 1915 to 1916, the club throughout its history welcomed many of the most prominent businessmen and professionals of the city as members; many of their descendants are members today. The clubhouse is located on the west side of the Bryant-Summer Street block along a residential part of Elmwood Avenue that remains mostly intact. The clubhouse is a two-and-a-half-story Classical Revival-style building, enlarged in 1929 with the addition of two doubles squash courts. It is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Offering year-round activity, the club has three singles and two doubles squash courts; one outdoor and two indoor tennis courts. and second-floor club rooms for social gatherings. It also hosts many tournaments and events. Membership is by invitation.

Public Services

Every village needs the public services that we so often take for granted to safely function. The Elmwood District came of age right before the dawn of the 20th century with the construction of a state of the art telephone exchange in 1892 on Bryant Street near Elmwood, and the construction of a firehouse of its own on Cleveland Avenue 1894.

Chemical No. 5 Firehouse

One of Buffalo's most exceptional historic public-service buildings is located at 166 Cleveland Avenue at the corner of St. Catherines Court. Built as a firehouse in 1894, the building occupied land at the northern edge of the John J. Albright estate.

Designed by noted architect Edward Austin Kent, who also designed the nearby Unitarian Universalist Church, this is a rare and stunning example of a late nineteenth-century firehouse with Art Nouveau detailing. The high, steeply pitched gabled roof created plenty of space for fire hoses to hang while drying. During a time when firefighters still relied on horses, the building accommodated ground-floor stables for the animals and second floor space for the firefighting crew, as well as for the horses' hay and feed. A crane used to raise hay to the second floor can still be seen on the exterior of the building.

The words "Chemical No. 5" adorning the brick-arched center bay indicate the unit's function in the first decades of the twentieth century. The Buffalo Fire Department's Chemical Units created a special chemical mixture that included baking soda, which increased water pressure in the hoses. There were six such units in service; this was the fifth and it is the last remaining remnant of the units in the city. As pressurized hose systems advanced, Chemical No. 5 was disbanded in 1920, becoming Engine No. 37 until 1966, when it moved to the West Side at Chenango and Rhode Island Streets, where today it continues to serve the Elmwood District.

The Chemical No.5 Firehouse at 166 Cleveland Avenue was an elegantly designed public necessity in a section of the city dense with wood framed and finished houses built closely together. Its design and function combine the dynamism of the nascent Art Nouveau, also known as the Modern Style, that was a reaction to the romantic styles of the late 19th century, with a more scientific approach that added baking soda to the water applied to fires using pumps. This was much more effective than bucket brigades. Chemical No. 5's taut brick skin is highlighted by whimsical decorative steel structural elements that contrast with its more conventional neighboring houses even 125 years after its construction.

Photograph by Gregory Pinto

TOP: A 1935 map of Buffalo showing street car and bus routes illustrates the transition of modes of transportation from the street car system that fueled the development of the Elmwood District, to more flexible bus routes that connected many parts of the city. Within a generation, most Elmwood residents would travel by automobile.

Published by the International Railway Company

BOTTOM: 1958 Photograph of Buffalo State students boarding a bus. Buses remained an essential means of transportation for people who could not afford an automobile. Buses have proven to be the most durable public service and are still essential today in the Elmwood District.

Photograph Courtesy of Buffalo State Archives & Special Collections

In 1989, the Chemical No. 5 Firehouse was converted by owner Bruno Freschi, then dean of the University at Buffalo's School of Architecture and Planning, into a unique and elegant residence and studio.

Telephone Exchanges

It is interesting to note that no schools, libraries, fire stations, or other service buildings existed in Elmwood Historic District West. Instead, residents of that section of the Elmwood District received such services either from utilities located west of Richmond Avenue or from those located in Elmwood East, where the few vacant sites on which to construct these facilities still existed, while Elmwood West was mostly built out.

Two exceptions housed one of the newest service technologies of the era: telephone exchanges.

The former Bell Telephone Company Bryant Exchange building at 296 Bryant Street was built circa 1892 when the city had 2,100 telephone stations or exchanges. This small L-plan brick building, located behind 298 Bryant Street, would have been one of the key early telephone exchanges in the Elmwood Avenue area. By 1915 the number of exchanges had grown to 42,000, reflecting increasingly widespread use of the telephone. By then the technology had also improved, and this exchange was combined with the Tupper exchange. The building was later converted to residential use.

The combining of smaller exchanges into larger facilities continued as telephone equipment became even more sophisticated. The result for Elmwood in 1931 was construction of the three-story Art Deco brick building at 554 Elmwood Avenue at the corner of Anderson Place. One of the more modern buildings in the Elmwood Historic District West, it was built as home for the New York Telephone Company's Lincoln-Grant-Garfield and Elmwood Telephone Exchange and played a key role in keeping commercial and residential customers in the Elmwood Avenue area connected.

At the beginning of the 1920s, in an optimistic environment that pervaded the city of Buffalo after the First World War—one might add, especially for women, who now had the vote!—the Elmwood District reached its apogee. It was an artfully planned, beautiful community built-out almost entirely of architecturally significant or otherwise handsome homes lining tree-shaded Olmsted-designed parkways and other streets. Residents could find recreation along those parkways and in the centerpiece of Olmsted's masterwork, Delaware Park. They could walk to locally owned neighborhood businesses for everyday needs or travel easily and quickly via streetcar to a flourishing downtown for more adventuresome shopping. Their educational, religious, and cultural needs could be satisfied in meaningfully designed neighborhood "temples" of learning, worship, and enrichment. Elmwood had it all and had at last truly become a village.

But, just as the Pan-American Exposition started with great promise in May 1901 and ended badly five months later, the Elmwood District's fortunes were destined to decline by the end of the decade along with those of the rest of the city and, indeed, the nation.

Grassroots leadership reverses government-led decline related to white flight to the suburbs and the city's industrial and population losses

NINE

Decline and Renewal

Culture describes how we come to know and name ourselves. The core values of the Elmwood District were constantly built mindful of culture. – Anthony Bannon

Mary Bronson Hartt (1873 to 1946), a 1890 graduate of the Buffalo Seminary and a nationally prominent writer at the time, predicted in the *Buffalo Courier* in 1901 that the impact of the Pan-American Exposition on Buffalonians would be, "Incomparably the finest legacy of the experience will be an awakened civic consciousness. The rush and vigor of a thoroughly lively town are going to leave behind them a divine discontent with the old order of things. And that means civic regeneration."[99]

It would take more than two generations for that civic regeneration to begin to occur, and Elmwood District and City of Buffalo residents are still working on leaving behind them a "divine discontent" and on achieving an "awakened civic consciousness" 120 years after she wrote those words.[100]

To be fair, nearly every place in our nation is working to reconcile their 19th century inheritances in all things during the extraordinary 21st century. This is the Elmwood District's story during this period.

The 1920s through the 1940s

By the beginning of the 1920s, the Elmwood District is well settled within and around the beautifully planned Olmsted design. Its shape, scale, and character as a premier place to live are established. But as early as 1921, the first fissures begin to appear where least expected. Facing grave financial stresses, Buffalo's philanthropic industrial giant John J. Albright begins to sell off parts of his grand estate. The property is carved up for Tudor Place and St. Catherines Square, and a number of substantial, but less palatial, homes are built, swallowing up parts of the landscape long tended by the Olmsted firm.

It is a harbinger of selloffs and loss that will last for several decades.

The great commercial and industrial companies and railroads that made their founders and Buffalo wealthy begin to be gobbled up by national conglomerates like General Motors, Union Carbide, and the New York Central. Descendants who no longer shared their grandparents' pioneering drive, or are lured by financial gain, sell to distant owners who lack the same principled concern for the city and its people demonstrated by those earlier resident-founders and their sons and daughters.

The stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression follow. By 1934, Albright's home is demolished. Ellsworth Statler's follows in 1938 and John D. Larkin's "Beautiful Mansion" meets the "Wreckers' Hammer," a year later.[101]

Although the Melbourne Court townhouse-style apartment complex between Auburn and Cleveland avenues is completed about 1930, the last substantial construction in the Elmwood District in the twentieth century occurs in 1931 when a new campus is developed for the Buffalo Normal School (later SUNY College at Buffalo; now Buffalo State), then located in a Thirteenth and Jersey Street mansion. It, too, involves loss. Gone are the Olmsted-designed gardens and farm fields at the northeastern and western parts of the Buffalo State Asylum/Buffalo Psychiatric Center property. Lands that had once been an essential part of the fresh air and green space therapeutic treatment approach that previously characterized this Edenic park for those with mental illnesses give way to new medicine-based treatments in the twenties that render the gardens "superfluous." The fact that the property constitutes a large expanse of land belonging to New York State makes it an appropriate fit for

Hunched in two sections is the old Coatsworth home at 66 Soldiers Pl., a replica of a classic in American architecture. CE 5-12-58 1,8

Coatsworth home at 66 Soldiers Pl. before being cut in half

In two sections, house will be moved to new site, then re-joined

House Is Halved for Move to New Site

Wreckers' Hammer Will Level Beautiful Mansion

THE JOHN D. LARKIN HOME IN LINCOLN PARKWAY

LEFT: A 1958 newspaper article describes how the Coatesworth Pardee House was cut in half and relocated to the back of the large lot facing Soldiers Circle. The front of the lot was then divided into sections to accommodate three new small houses. Subdivision of increasingly valuable larger lots, especially in the Elmwood District East, had been occurring for two generations and often resulted in the construction of fine new, smaller houses that fit in gracefully. What was new during this period of decline was the demolition of large estate houses, and the subsequent construction of apartment houses of lower quality that completely filled the lot with a design that was often incompatible with the character of the neighborhood.

Published in the Buffalo Courier Express

RIGHT: A photograph of the John D. Larkin House taken in 1939, prior to its demolition. As was the case with so many of the descendants of men of great wealth, John D. Larkin's family was unable to keep up with the cost of maintaining the family estate amid rising property taxes during the Great Depression and its aftermath. Many, including the Larkins, chose instead to demolish portions of the estate in an attempt to survive by subdividing, a practice that began just as the Elmwood District transitioned from rural estates and a streetcar suburb to an automobile-dominated culture.

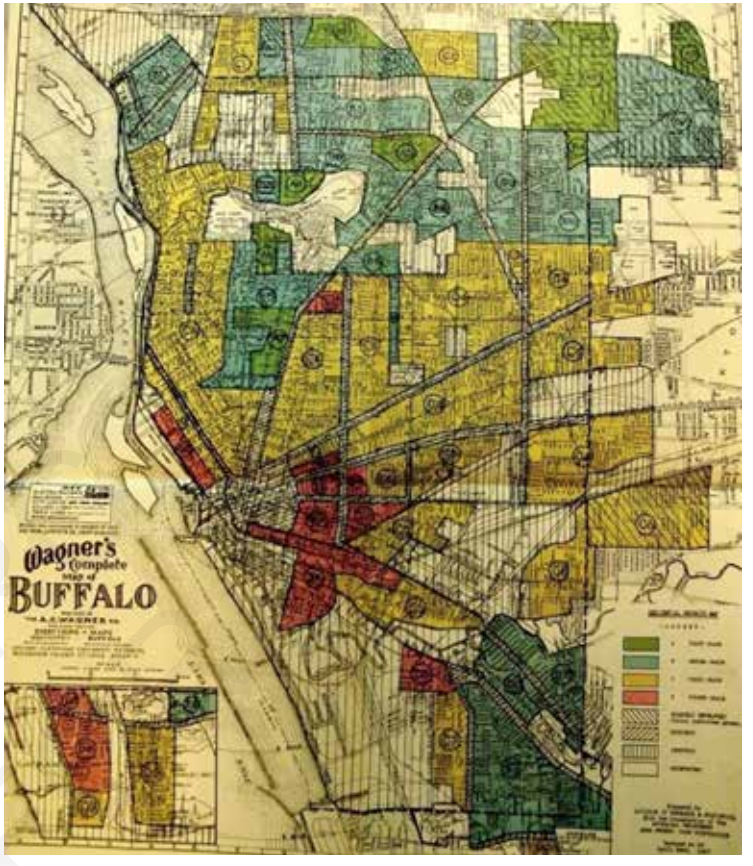
Retrieved from Buffaloah.com

a state educational facility. The school proves a cultural fit for Elmwood as well, bringing the Art Education program it founded the year before, the only such state-sponsored program in the United States, and a complement to the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy of the Albright Art Gallery across the street.

The Depression years are hard, as in many other places, but when the United States joins the war effort in 1941, the defense industry begins to boom in factories located on properties near and around the Belt Line in North Buffalo. A housing shortage brings change to the Elmwood District. Former single-family homes on streets between Elmwood and Richmond avenues and elsewhere in the city become boarding houses to accommodate the large numbers of men who come to work in the defense industry. Thousands of African-Americans stream into the city from the South between 1940 and 1970, lured by the promise of these and other industrial jobs. The Black population grows by 433 percent, but there is no accommodation in the Elmwood District for these new arrivals. In fact, the District, historically a white upper and middle-class neighborhood, escapes federal redlining, an institutionalized system of discriminatory lending in government-backed mortgages largely affecting low-income minority neighborhoods.

The 1950s

In the 1950s, while the Korean conflict (1950-1953) goes on in Asia, a different, less heated

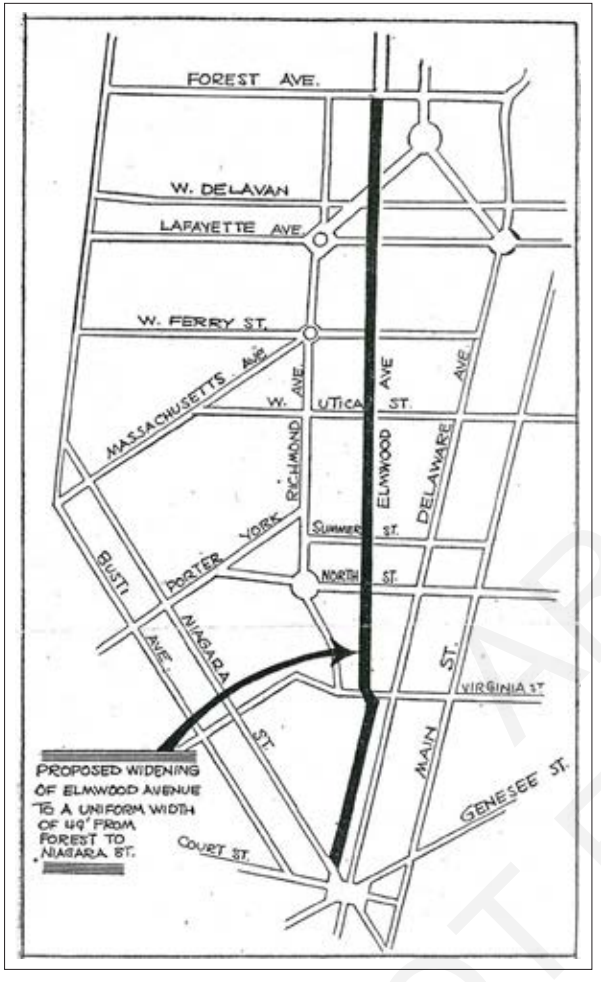


1937 "Redline Map" of Buffalo.

The Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) was born out of the Great Depression and the New Deal to train home real estate appraisers to assess the risk of the federal government in offering Americans financing to purchase houses and other financial services. The result was rankings on maps of neighborhoods by financial risk and ethnicity on a scale of A - Best (rendered in green), B - Still Desirable (blue), C - Declining (yellow), and D - Hazardous (red). Many banks declined to lend to yellow- and "red-lined" neighborhoods, thereby dooming residents to poverty, with no access to homeownership.

The predominately upper- and upper-middle class, white, U.S.-born, and ethnically homogeneous complexion of the Elmwood District (top left quadrant of the map) earned it green and blue colorization, meaning it was a safe place in which to invest and had room for growth. This system was made illegal with the passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, a generation later. Today, such characterizations are seen as White Privilege as our country still struggles with making desirable places to live accessible to everyone.

Image Courtesy of Residential Security Map, Buffalo, N.Y., City Survey File. Record Group 195, National Archives II, College Park MD



LEFT: "Widening of Elmwood is Proposed," map (1935). This map shows the proposed area for widening Elmwood Avenue to better accommodate the increased automobile traffic between the commercial core downtown and the Elmwood district. It marks a shift from the streetcar transportation that developed the area to the auto age which contributed to the overall decline of the city as residents moved to the outlying suburbs.

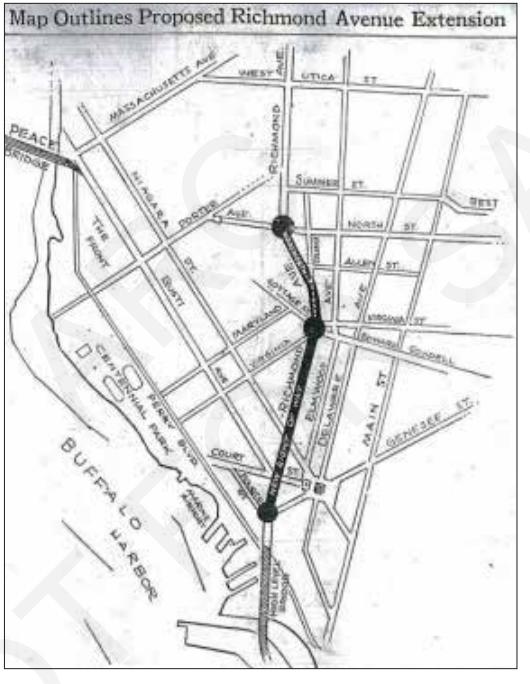
Source unknown

RIGHT TOP: "Elmwood-Utica Section, looking north on Elmwood; Bryant St. in Foreground." (undated, ca. 1940s/50s) Close examination of this undated image reveals an Elmwood Avenue stripped of the majority of its trees and transformed with commercial buildings and parking lots.

Courtesy of the Buffalo & Erie County Library, Vertical files collection. Published in The Buffalo News *on August 14, 1935.*

RIGHT BOTTOM: A 1948 image showing the tree removal on Elmwood Avenue between W. Utica Street and Lexington Avenue.

Published in the Buffalo Courier Express



LEFT: A Section of a 1940 map of Buffalo by Division Tire & Auto Parts Inc, showing the layout of Buffalo's streets. *Retrieved from Buffaloah.com*

RIGHT: "Map Outlines Proposed Richmond Avenue Extension," (1935). Another idea spurred by the growing auto-centric planning was this concept of extending Richmond Avenue through The Circle (Symphony Circle) to a "high level bridge" to the Hamburg Turnpike. Fortunately, this plan was never realized, as it would have encouraged Richmond Avenue to transform from its stately, Olmsted-designed appearance to a commercial zone like Elmwood and Delaware avenues. *Published in* The Buffalo News, *August 14, 1935*

conflict begins in this country, one between city and suburb. It is started by a transportation revolution.

The automobile had already asserted itself in the twenties as pretender to the transportation throne, but after World War II, it becomes king. Almost all streetcar tracks in the city are torn up, replaced by buses and cars. Former defense manufacturing plants are converted to producing automobiles, appliances, and other life-easing household products not available during the Depression and war years. Some plants move to the suburbs and more space.

The GI Bill and other postwar federal programs make homeownership possible for veterans. They choose the less congested towns of Tonawanda, Cheektowaga, West Seneca, and Hamburg to raise their families. Their move out of the city is facilitated by the automobile. The loss of population that begins then from Buffalo's apex of 560,000 has never been recovered and there is little real prospect of growth. Its deleterious impact is felt in every aspect of Buffalo life. Schools close due to population loss, and job and tax revenues decline as businesses close, move to the suburbs, or leave for better business climates elsewhere in the nation. The opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway and the expansion of the Welland Canal through the Ontario peninsula in 1959, along with other factors, sound the death knell for industrial Buffalo and its historic 150-year role as a significant intermodal transshipment nexus.

BUFFALO'S FIRST URBAN RENEWAL LOSS

The state's first urban renewal project begins in 1959 and causes additional incalculable loss to the east side, just as African-American immigrants of the Second Great Migration are making their place in the city. Thirty-six blocks in the densely populated historic Ellicott District are demolished. Every house, hotel, shop, and factory between Michigan, William, Jefferson, and Swan Streets is torn down. The loss is still visible. The neighborhood loses seventy-seven percent of its largely black population over seven decades beginning in 1950, and few stores remain in business today. According to University at Buffalo professor Henry Louis Taylor, Jr., director of UB's Center for Urban Studies, Buffalo is nationally recognized as a "tough place" for African-Americans, despite many gains over the years. Joblessness is the main reason.[102]

If that is true in the city as a whole, the case for a better integrated Elmwood District appears glum, as the Elmwood Village Association unveiled its 2018 Strategic Plan with illustrations that fail to portray visible minorities and with priorities that lack economic, social, racial, or religious diversity.

Urban renewal, spurred in part by federal funding, accelerates by the end of the decade. The city begins constructing the below-grade Kensington Expressway in 1958, an automobile-driven project to speed downtown workers to and from their new homes in the suburbs and business travelers to the airport. Its negative impact is almost totally absorbed by the emerging African-American East Side and the Elmwood District. Extending about ten miles from downtown to the airport, it divides the East Side in half, joined by only an occasional cross street over the expressway. The unrecoverable blow to both neighborhoods results in the loss of tree-lined Humboldt Parkway, the Olmsted-designed link between Delaware Park and The Parade, and the quiet, natural beauty and recreational opportunities it had provided. At the time, it seemed like progress, but those "improvements" cost the city dearly in separating so many places and communities.

The 1960s

The next blow comes when Elmwood is severed from its reason for being as the long, grand culminating entranceway to Delaware Park. The culprit is the New York State Department of Transportation, which in 1960-1961 converts the Olmsted-designed carriageway, Scajaquada Drive in Delaware Park, into a four-lane, fifty-mile-per-hour, uncrossable divided surface expressway similar in intent, if not size and grade, to the Kensington Expressway. The Elmwood District, thus cut off, reaches the nadir of its decline.

It takes the Elmwood District almost the remainder of the 1960s to begin to awaken from the stupor into which it settles following a series of bad decisions beyond its control. But it awakens … in ways that build on its cultural legacy.

Buffalo State reenters the picture by offering extracurricular activities geared to that legacy: a Reader's Theatre, directed by Mina S. Goosen, and a Children's Theatre, led by Professor Julia C. Piquette. In addition, the college's participation in 1967 in the newly organized national Educational Opportunity Program brings hundreds of minority students from the New York City boroughs to Elmwood. Coming from diverse racial, economic, and geographic backgrounds, they inject a new vitality into the district's monoculture. The Campus School, a state-of the art teaching laboratory, attracts a diverse group of elementary students to the Elmwood District, many of whom would remain in the neighborhood. Buffalo State College makes another significant contribution to the Elmwood District as a cultural hub. Peter Yates (1909-1980) arrives in Buffalo to teach at Buff State and became Chair of the Music Department. Previously, he and his wife had founded a concert series called Evenings on the Roof at their Rudolph Schindler-designed house in Los Angeles as an opportunity for pioneering composers and musicians to perform. In Buffalo, Yates was active with the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in a Buffalo-version of Evenings on the Roof, Evenings for New Music, from 1964 to

1980, described as "stunning evening[s] of talk and music."[103]

This background set the stage for another significant cultural event centered in the Elmwood Distict, the Buffalo Festival of the Arts Today, in 1965 and 1968. As then *Buffalo Spree* Editor Elizabeth Licata recounts.

> *In 1965, Time magazine called the first Buffalo Festival of the Arts "the most all-encompassing, hip, with-it, avant-garde presentation in the U.S. to date," and* Life *termed Buffalo "the acropolis of the avant garde." Organized by the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, the University at Buffalo, and the Buffalo Philharmonic (and generously underwritten by Gallery patron Seymour H. Knox III), the 1965 series of events and exhibitions was attended by nearly 200,000 people, encouragement enough to hold another festival in 1968. One of the first art events covered by city magazine,* Buffalo Spree*, the Second Festival of the Arts Today featured artists John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Naum Gabo, Jonas Mekas, Cecil Taylor, John Barth, and Edward Albee. Among the attendees was Marcel Duchamp.* Time *called its review of the second festival "Where the Militants Roam," but they meant it as a compliment."*[104]

These extraordinary events left lasting memories of these explosions of creative energy that still reverberate in the Elmwood District's character today.

The Burchfield Center opens at Buffalo State College in 1966 under the directorship of Edna Lindeman. Its collection of Western New York painter Charles E. Burchfield's art and archives grows to become over time one of the largest holdings of a single artist in the world. Burchfield's home studio was located in rural West Seneca east of Buffalo, however, because nearly all of his works deal with the interrelationship of the natural, spiritual and built realms, the collection is at home in the Elmwood District, built on these themes.

The 1970s

At the beginning of the 1970s, Buffalo graphic artist and Elmwood District resident Michael Morgulis founded New Buffalo Graphics. His work helps to define and portray Buffalo and its brand in new ways. He creates the "Buffalo, City of No Illusions" poster that celebrates the city's grit. Another shows the iconic Buffalo City Hall as a rocket ship blasting off into the future. A print of Buffalo's waterfront portrays giant buffalo silhouettes striding along the beach with downtown in the background.

Images like these illustrate the old Elmwood District becoming the new place to be. A small group of District residents takes the initiative with the kind of spirit exhibited by their nineteenth-century predecessors and begins to drive a gradual renewal based on the District's inherent cultural values. Those earlier leaders envisioned what was needed or desired and acted to make it happen. The new modern-day leaders do the same, but they also lament what is left, appreciate what is left, and want to protect it.

CORRECTING A MID-CENTURY TWO-MILE MISTAKE AT NIAGARA FALLS

A similar decapitation occurs in the city of Niagara Falls, where the Robert Moses State Parkway cuts off access to the scenic Niagara River when it opens in 1964, based on highway master planning of the 1950s. This mistake is being rectified, while restoring Delaware Park is still under discussion.

The "Parkway" plowed through the actual pastoral park designed by Frederick Law Olmsted nearly a century before. The construction of the highway for the automobile coincided with the decline of the industry that had shaped the city for more than two generations. Now Niagara Falls seeks to restore its natural health and beauty which attracted visitors from around the world since the 17th century. In a costly reversal of what appears to have been a bad idea, the state is removing most of the parkway along the river at a cost of more than $40 million. The green space of Niagara Falls State Park, the state's first park so designated in 1885, will be expanded, restoring the spirit Olmsted's vision, a model for Delaware Park.

Map of Buffalo ca. 1974.

The Olmsted Parks and Parkways System map framed with the caption: IN 1874 BUFFALO HAD A PLAN. IN 1974 BUFFALO NEEDS A PLAN.

This statement reflecting the hard times of Buffalo in the 1970s was joined by the infamous billboard, NOTICE: Will the last worker out of Western New York please turn out the light that was erected outside City Hall as Buffalo was struggling to recover from the devastating Blizzard of '77 that shut down the city for weeks.

This map belonged to former City of Buffalo Community Development Commissioner, Joe Ryan. A community activist, government official, and civic leader, Ryan helped reverse Buffalo's post-industrial decline by setting up the community development block grant program at towering City Hall and by fostering the growth of nonprofit neighborhood groups on the ground. Ryan then became a developer of affordable and special needs housing, a example of people rising to the occasion by rebuilding Buffalo building by building and block by block.

Courtesy of Eileen Ryan, scanned by Todd Treat

For instance, Morgulis and many others convene the Re-Imagining Buffalo conference under the auspices of the Jungian Analytical Society (founded by Elmwood District residents Barbara Moot, Constance Stafford, and others, and housed in Chemical 5 on Cleveland Avenue) featuring Jungian Archetypal psychologist James Hillman, entitled *Imagining Buffalo*.

In 1970, a preservation movement begins to take shape, motivated by the threatened demolition of Buffalo's oldest residence, the circa 1815 Coit House that had been relocated to Allentown from its original downtown location. A small group of residents from both the Elmwood District and Allentown—architects Frederic Houston and Olaf (Bill) Shelgren, Jr., preservationist/gardener Gertrude (Gerry) Notman, designer Mary Jo Broquedis, travel agent/tour guide Louise McClive, and businessman Appleton (Tony) Fryer—are invited by host Olive Williams, to meet for tea in her Allentown home to devise a strategy to save the historic house. Out of this effort, they also found the Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier.

The society's mission is to enhance appreciation of the region's built and natural landmarks through advocacy and education. Its work saves other landmark buildings in Buffalo, including four adjacent Delaware Avenue mansions that are now part of the "Millionaires' Row" historic district, Louis Sullivan's iconic Guaranty Building, the so-called "Victor Hugo" mansion where a boutique hotel now functions, and four century-old houses on Buffalo's East Side,, among others. In 2008, the society combines with the Preservation Coalition of Erie County to form Preservation Buffalo Niagara, the region's current professionally staffed preservation organization.

Continuing Buffalo State College's cultural initiatives, Muhammad Ali becomes a featured speaker in 1971 at the Black Liberation Front Board-sponsored third annual Black Arts Festival—a celebration that predates similar festivals in other cities like Atlanta and Denver by decades. Today, in Buffalo, other African-American celebrations seem to have replaced it: Juneteenth, started in 1976 by B.U.I.L.D., a community-based organization, as a culturally relevant alternative to the country's Bicentennial Celebration; the annual jazz festival; the Pine Grill reunion; and Kwanzaa in December, a celebration of family, culture, and community.

During the same year, seventeen Elmwood District residents meet to discuss banding together to provide a source for the kinds of food they want to buy and prepare for their families. Thus is the Lexington Cooperative Market born, a staple at the southeast corner of Lexington and Ashland avenues for years. In 2005, it moves to a larger facility on Elmwood at Lancaster avenues, reinforcing the District's tradition of local retail for local residents.

The cultural revival accelerates. Academy-Award-nominated character actress Mildred Dunnock appears in two 1971 performances of *A Place without Doors* in Upton Hall Auditorium at Buffalo State, enhancing the reputation of the college's growing theater department.

Deborah Ott, who feels her life was transformed at age fourteen by a poem written by the nationally influential University at Buffalo-based poet Robert Creeley in 1975, creates the community-based Just Buffalo Literary Center. Over its history, the nonprofit center supports award-winning writers early in their careers and implements or produces numerous interdisciplinary poetry, jazz, and sign-language initiatives, and themed and focused writing programs for all ages and skills. In 2008, the center begins to host Babel, a renowned invitational program that brings four of the world's top writers to Buffalo each year for readings to appreciative audiences so large that the program was forced to move to Kleinhans Music Hall.

SUNY Buffalo Professor of Theater Saul Elkin starts a summer apprenticeship program performing free Shakespeare plays in Delaware Park in 1976, helping to make the park safer for residents to again enjoy. Today, Elkin is a SUNY Distinguished Professor of Theater Emeritus, who continues to act in or direct productions for the program he founded, and the highly successful Shakespeare in Delaware Park is still free to the thousands who attend each season.

The ground is prepared for Lorna Hill to found the Ujima Theatre Company in 1978 under the sponsorship of the Center for Positive Thought (1974-1985), a multicultural arts center on Utica Street near Main Street. Hill establishes the ensemble and initiates training. Over time, Ujima becomes the longest-established acting company in Buffalo and is located on Elmwood Avenue from its inception until 2018.

Although a local newspaper cartoon asks, "Will the last person leaving Western New York please turn out the lights?"[105], 1978 becomes a watershed year for grassroots action … and results. Allentown is designated a local and National Register Historic District and Linwood becomes a local landmark district. The Buffalo Friends of Olmsted Parks comes into being, with a goal of reversing the lack of appreciation of Olmsted's parks and parkways—long neglected for want of means to properly maintain them—and to preserve what remains. Friends is started by activist, community leader, and County Legislator Joan Bozer, a woman in the mold of the original Buffalo park commissioners. She is joined by Gretchen and Tom Toles and others. The group reflects a national reawakening to the Olmsted legacy that started earlier in the decade. They are instrumental in the formation in 1980 of a National Association for Olmsted Parks that today advocates for the Olmsted legacy throughout the United States. In Buffalo, the Friends' work continues through the nonprofit Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, formed in 2000.

The 1980s

The Junior League of Buffalo, which celebrated its one hundredth anniversary as a women's community-service organization in 2019, collaborates with *The Buffalo News* to inaugurate its biennial Decorators' Showhouse in 1981. The

TOP: Photograph of some of the founding members of the Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier. Pictured from left to right are Alfred S. "Fred" Marzec, Helen J. Robinson, Secretary, and Olaf W. "Bill" Shelgren, Jr.. The Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier was founded in 1970.

Photograph courtesy The Baird Foundation Olaf William Shelgren, Jr., Collection.

BOTTOM: Aerial view of a summer's eve production of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. For 45 years, "Shakespeare in Delaware Park" has tamed the urban wilderness of Delaware Park for many from across the region by presenting free productions each summer from a temporary theater facility that is removed each fall. Winter sledding on "Shakespeare Hill" has been enjoyed for many generations.

Photograph by David Phillips, courtesy of Shakespeare in Delaware Park

JOAN BOZER (1928-)

A modern-day version of the nineteenth-century Buffalo business-leader cohort, Joan Bozer is a change-maker, a self-declared gadfly who has made a practice of shining light on slighted issues. Founding the Buffalo Friends of Olmsted was just one of her numerous accomplishments. She was also a founder of the National Association for Olmsted Parks.

In 1976 she was elected to the Erie County Legislature, a position she held for eighteen years before retiring. She was described as a "principled … lawmaker who could be counted on to take the long view."[106] "Retiring" for Joan meant pursuing full tilt her other passions. One of the most fervent of those was protection of the environment through elimination of air pollution and the use of sustainable energy. All three of her major activities, she felt, related to those goals. She founded the Western New York Sustainable Energy Association to promote the use of solar and wind power. As president of the Buffalo Chapter of the League of Women Voters, she advocated against urban sprawl as increasing the need for roads and automobile traffic, and she chaired the government relations committee of the Citizens Regional Transit Corporation, a nonprofit dedicated to reducing automobile traffic through metro rail expansion.

Joan Kendig Bozer was born in Pelham, Westchester County, New York, was educated there and in Massachusetts, and later earned a bachelor's degree in history and government from SUNY's Empire State College. Like her father, Thomas Hart Kendig, who mentored her, Joan saw foreign markets as offering the best growth opportunities and so founded the International Trade Council here. The organization's annual award is named for her father. She served as president of the Junior League of Buffalo, chair of the then National Conference of Christians and Jews, and proved her preservation bona fides by leading drives that resulted in legislation to save the historic Old Post Office building and convert it to the downtown campus of Erie Community College. Her most recent efforts pushed for installation of the Buffalo Heritage Carousel, Inc.'s solar powered 1924 DeAngelis Carousel at Canalside, Buffalo's reconstructed terminus of the Erie Canal.

Photograph courtesy of the Bozer family

Showhouse is a weeks-long fundraising event in which local interior designers and crafts persons undertake a major decorating makeover of a Buffalo area mansion. Through the years, a number of Elmwood District residences served as show houses, allowing the public to see inside lavish homes that they would otherwise never have had the opportunity to visit. The organization's twentieth anniversary Showhouse in 2019 was a Lincoln Parkway residence. Since its inception, the event has raised and contributed more than four million dollars to various community projects. In addition to the financial benefit to the community, the Showhouse is an excellent example of what can be accomplished when groups of individuals with vision and creativity collaborate toward the greater good.

Also in 1981, Stanford Lipsey, a jazz aficionado newly arrived in Buffalo the year before to manage *The Buffalo News*, funds the free Summer Sunday Jazz series at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery. The tree-studded, grassy terrain overlooking the Gala Waters continues more than 40 years later to be a marvelous venue for combining art, architecture, nature, and music.

Nineteen-eighty-one proves to be still more significant with the publication of the book, *Buffalo Architecture: A Guide*, a minitrove of photos and descriptions of the rich architectural heritage that Buffalonians enjoy and why it is important. William Clarkson, the force behind the book, explains that it is intended "to help us learn more about what we have, to look at it with understanding, and to hold up our heads

with pride," adding, "knowing what we have today will enable us to envision what we could have tomorrow." *The Buffalo News* calls it "the first comprehensive appreciation of the city's rich heritage of landmark buildings, which at the time was little recognized."[107]

In 1983, the Art Conservation program that originated in 1970 as the Cooperstown Graduate Program in the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, affiliated with SUNY Oneonta, is administratively transferred to Buffalo State College, but remains in Cooperstown. In 1987, the highly selective program, one of only three in the country, which admits only ten students per year, is relocated to the Buffalo State campus. Today, the program occupies a modern facility in Rockwell Hall specially designed to support conservation teaching and research. The program's later director, Patrick Ravines, is a leader in the creation of the Elmwood Historic Districts.

Also at the college, the Fine Arts department begins an annual exhibit by student artists, showcasing their talents preparatory to their transition into Buffalo's growing arts community.

Other cultural institutions with deep roots, like the Community Music School, the International Institute, the Arts Players/Studio Arena, and the St. John's-Grace, Unitarian Universalist, Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian, and Pilgrim-St. Luke's congregations broaden their secular and religious activities. They are joined by new institutions of social and cultural welfare often created by Elmwood District residents. The Allentown Community Center/Clarkson Center and Benjaman's Gallery are such examples, and there are many others, large and small.

But Buffalo, especially the Elmwood District, is not then—nor is it yet—the racially integrated city that, given its "blue" political leanings, that it might be. Artist Charles Burchfield teaches classes at the Art Institute of Buffalo, founded by a group of painters in second-floor space above the Elmwood Lounge at Utica Street and Elmwood Avenue. The artist takes his students, among whom is a young black man, to the downstairs bar one day. Someone in authority at the lounge, asks the student to leave. The student leaves, and Burchfield and his fellow students accompany him.

Public Schools 30 and 56, the Cathedral Catholic Elementary School, Nardin Academy, and Buffalo Seminary broaden their student outreach geographically and racially, even as they are joined by new progressive schools such as the Campus School at Buffalo State College. Early charter school initiatives were born in the Elmwood District.

Social gathering is important, and private social clubs—the Buffalo Tennis and Squash Club, the Saturn Club, the Garret Club, the Twentieth Century Club—cater to Elmwood District residents. But it's the pubs and bars, where "everybody knows your name," and restaurants, where membership is not required, that are favorites for gathering and incubators for a neighborhood's social capital. In fact, the Elmwood District's renaissance today can be linked to generations of bars on Elmwood Avenue, from Cole's, established in 1934 during the depression; to No Name's at 944 Elmwood, where the Allman Brothers might be found jamming after a concert downtown; to Bullfeathers, an interracial gathering place and site of political meetings; to Mr. Goodbar, since 1968, the cornerstone of what becomes known as the Elmwood Strip. They all contribute to the District as a place of great social capital. A little farther south on the street, there is jazz at the Stuyvesant; hot fudge and chocolates at the Quaker Bonnet located at Bryant Street; larger-than-life entertainer Lance Diamond wowing his many fans with more jazz at the Elmwood Lounge at W. Utica Street; and at Breckenridge, Merlin's is a biker bar.

Rick Naylon and partner Jim McLaughlin, in 1981, buy a small neighborhood watering hole, the Shamrock Bar, at Elmwood Avenue and Anderson Place, build a trendy greenhouse on its north side, fill it with ferns and artworks, and call it Jimmy Mac's. For decades it's a favorite gathering place.

A gathering spot for both the working class and the well-to-do is The Place Restaurant at Lexington and Ashland avenues. It has filled that role for so long that when it was built, the surrounding neighborhood consisted of orchards, farms, and a few dirt and plank roads, and its address was Butler Street before it was renamed Lexington Avenue. Its early traditions of Flynnie's Thinnies, sandwiches inspired by an east side German woman's tavern during World War II, and holiday Tom & Jerrys continue today, only with new owners and recent physical improvements.

The Legacies of Two Great Elmwood Icons

Two practical and visionary Buffalo business leaders, William M. E. Clarkson and Stanford Lipsey, through their recognition of Elmwood's significance and their roles in its renewal, followed in the footsteps of their nineteenth-century counterparts who created the Elmwood District. Both came to Buffalo from elsewhere, both grew to appreciate the place that was their home for the rest of their lives, and both left legacies that will resonate for decades.

Courtesy of Alison Clarkson

William Melbourne Elliot Clarkson (1926–2018)

Born in England and educated there and at the University of Toronto, Will Clarkson in 1970 became CEO of the internationally prominent Graphic Controls Company in Buffalo, a company founded by his father and one of the brightest lights in the city's business community during the darkest days of the post-industrial 1970s. The company practiced modern business techniques based on the principles of management consultant, educator, and author Peter Drucker and Warren Bennis, former provost of the University at Buffalo. It also boasted one of the first IBM mainframe computers in upstate New York.

But Clarkson also appreciated Buffalo's historic built inheritance. He led the Buffalo Architecture Guidebook Corporation in the publication of *Buffalo Architecture: A Guide*, in which internationally respected scholars Reyner Banham, Charles Beveridge, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and Francis Kowsky describe for the first time as significant what many Buffalonians had for decades taken for granted.

Clarkson lived in the Elmwood District, and he and his brother Max and others created the Clarkson Center, a human service organization that started as the Allentown Community Center. Will also served in several public capacities locally and in Albany, and was a member of the boards of numerous educational, theatrical, philanthropic, and preservation organizations.

Once an adjunct professor with the University at Buffalo's School of Architecture and Planning, he and his wife endowed the university's William and Elisabeth Clarkson Visiting Chair that provides a residency for distinguished visiting scholars. In 2011, the Clarksons donated a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed art glass window to the Martin House Restoration Corp. for display in the reconstructed carriage house from which it came at the Martin House complex.

Will was named a Citizen of the Year for 1981 and a 1993 Buffalonian of the Year by *The Buffalo News*, received the University at Buffalo Alumni Association's Walter P. Cooke Award in 1992, and shared the Buffalo History Museum's 1994 Red Jacket Award with and his brother, Max Clarkson, who continued Will's work at the Clarkson Center.

Courtesy of Derek Gee, The Buffalo News

Stanford Lipsey (1927–2016)

Stanford Lipsey came to Buffalo in 1980 from his native Omaha, where he owned and published the Omaha Sun Newspapers. *The Sun* chain was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for its exposé of the finances of Boys Town, a charitable village in Nebraska founded by a Catholic priest to help at-risk children. It was the first weekly newspaper to win the top journalism award. He sold the chain to his close friend Warren Buffett, intending to retire to San Francisco and enjoy his passion for jazz.

Buffett, who had begun to invest in newspapers, including ownership of *The Buffalo News*, at Lipsey's urging, had other ideas. He wanted his experienced newsman-friend to come to work for him, enticing him with occasional visits to Buffalo. After discovering the Elmwood Village, Lipsey found there was a lot to like about the city, and so signed on full-time to manage *The Buffalo News*, a then-evening publication in a death spiral. Three years later, he became its publisher, and not only prevailed in the 1980s competition with the *Courier-Express*, but turned *The News* into one of the most profitable and widely read papers in its market in the United States. His success made him one of the most powerful business leaders in upstate New York.

From his penthouse at 1088 Delaware Avenue, Stan Lipsey enjoyed all that the Elmwood District had to offer, becoming a regular diner at Jimmie Mac's, enjoying jazz at the Elmwood Lounge, getting to know small-business owner Michael Attardo.

His love of Elmwood, art, Forest Lawn, and jazz combined in his founding and funding the Jazz at the Albright series of Sunday concerts each summer. Held on the steps of the Albright-Knox overlooking Hoyt Lake with Forest Lawn beyond, this enduring event precedes nearly every other celebration of Elmwood's cultural character.

The late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan piqued Lipsey's interest in the rehabilitation of Louis Sullivan's historic Prudential Guaranty Building, a National Historic Landmark. As a result he took on leading roles in championing and advancing two of the largest and most historically significant historic restoration and reconstruction projects in the nation. The first was the historic rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Darwin D. Martin House. In 2006, he and his wife also donated a display that included a first-ever reproduction of a Tree of Life window, a signature design of the house and one of the architect's most complex with more than 750 pieces. It was showcased during dedication of the reconstructed Martin Carriage House.

After receiving honors from then-Governor George Pataki and Senator Hilary Rodham Clinton at a ceremony marking a phase of that project's completion, Lipsey submitted his resignation from the Martin House board of directors to take on the historic rehabilitation and adaptive use of the former Buffalo State Asylum and to turn into reality his dream of creating within it a Buffalo Architecture Center. "I will never get to finish it in my lifetime," he is said to have, unfortunately presciently, told his wife, Judi, "so I had better get started right away."[108] The Richardson Olmsted Campus is indeed Lipsey's *piece de resistance*. Its centerpiece Hotel Henry upon opening in 2017 received international acclaim, and one year later, its expansion was already being considered.

An art aficionado, Stan was also an award-winning photographer, whose fine-art photography, inspired by nature, abstracts, and architecture, is featured in two books. *Forest Lawn Cemetery: Buffalo History Preserved* was published in 1966 and accompanied a pioneering exhibition at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, the first in the gallery to focus on the built environment as art. His second book, *Affinity of Form*, published in 2009, features 100 of Lipsey's color photographs that "suggest a sense of the inexplicable universal links that bond the elements and matter." In Lipsey's words, "I'm rather eclectic in what I shoot, but all forms of nature, abstracts, and architecture inspire me to create imagery that escapes the naked eye."[109]

Just as his *Buffalo News* cosponsorship of the Junior League Decorators' Showhouse featured the design talents of area interior designers, Stan championed high-quality design in forums hosted by the *News* and chronicled by its urban design reporter, believing as did Clarkson that "knowing what we have today will enable us to envision what we could have tomorrow."[110]

In addition to the Pulitzer Prize, Stan Lipsey was honored in his lifetime by numerous awards for his work in journalism, preservation, art, and philanthropy. Perhaps the longest lasting component of his towering legacy will be the Lipsey Architecture Center of Buffalo at the Richardson Olmsted Campus, which he conceived and funded with a contribution of $5 million. The center, in the stunningly restored former asylum, will tell the world about the significance of the city's built inheritance first told to Buffalo through *Buffalo Architecture: A Guide*. Fittingly, Lipsey is buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery.

ELMWOOD AVENUE SHOPS VS. THE MALL: A PERSONAL REMINISCENCE

The shop that housed Positively Main Street was the neighborhood shoe store when I was a child. We would walk there from our house every August, just before school started, to buy new shoes. We wore those shoes as we walked daily to School 30, located just south on Elmwood, and to and from home for lunch. But retail changed, and people began to drive to the mall for shoes and other goods. The Elmwood Boot Store became Linda Burke's Positively Main Street gift shop. Her shop, Michael Attardo's Get Dressed men's shop, and others became sort of personal, even counter-cultural places to shop, in contrast to the mass merchandising at the big, post-World War II, auto-dependent suburban malls. In addition to selling to the neighborhood, they now were adding customers from a broader area. My mother was one of these pioneering Elmwood entreprenuers. She and a partner opened Boutique Caprice in the 1970s, located between the traditional high-end retail stores clustered at Delaware Avenue and Tupper Street, and the renewing Elmwood District.

— *Clinton Brown*

New shops and galleries emerge within the retail spaces vacated by the original neighborhood retailers who had occupied the storefronts in the 1920s. The antiques shops of lower Elmwood Avenue in Allentown are complemented by Elmwood Frame & Save in the Hotel Stuyvesant, operated by two proud gay men during a still-closeted era. Across the street, Carol Hoyt and friends open a trendy gift shop in the Stuyvesant Plaza. It pioneers higher quality artistic retail that traditionally had been available only at shops on Delaware near Tupper Street downtown, a legacy of the avenue's mansion era. Similarly, Linda Burke's Positively Main Street store not only has perfect gifts for the Elmwood District crowd, it has Karl Kowalewski, a comic-strip artist, actor, and Elmwood philosopher, as clerk. It attracts shoppers from outside the neighborhood and, with other shops, revivifies the District as a specialty shopping place, an alternative to the new suburban malls.

History and loyalty to place characterize a number of Elmwood District shops. The Place, located at the historic Lexington-Ashland business corner since the late nineteenth century, and Wild Things, its across-the-street neighbor for thirty years, are good examples. On Elmwood Avenue, many happy customers frequent the Half & Half Trading Co. at 1088 during the more than forty years it is owned by Debbie and Bill Sidel before they sell the business to Jennifer and Kilby Bronstein in 2016. Elmwood Pet Supplies not only has occupied the storefront at 706 since 1947, but it is a social center where only some of the conversation is about animals. Next door at 712, Bob Petryk's Mother Nature Plant Emporium celebrates forty years there before closing in 2018 with Bob's retirement. When open, Bob and his dogs are a legend surrounded by plants and flowers, and the best source for news and gossip about "Elmwood happenings."

In fact, the Elmwood Avenue and Breckenridge Street intersection nearby was then—and arguably is still—the commercial and social center of the Elmwood District. Located there were the post office, a drugstore, bike shop, delicatessen, bookstore, and, perhaps most famously, Chick's Barber Shop, whose bare light bulb hanging in the front window never goes out until his shop is destroyed by fire.

The 1990s

In 1993, Michael Attardo and other Elmwood Avenue shopkeepers form Forever Elmwood. Its founding becomes a real turning point in the Elmwood District's renewal. Stakeholders in the community start taking care of their prime commercial street, plowing sidewalks, picking up litter, advertising. The popular Elmwood-Bidwell Farmers' Market at the unofficial center of the Elmwood District, is one of the organization's initiatives. Light-pole banners, hanging flower baskets, and trash bins are others. In time, Forever Elmwood morphs into the Elmwood Village Association, a force in the District's consumer and cultural vitality in the twenty-first century.

The Elmwood District's character as a cultural and social place is enhanced by the work of a

new generation of Elmwood District residents who brand their neighborhood as a cool place to live and to visit. Their desire for historic street lights is turned down by the city and Niagara Mohawk, but results in a city-funded Elmwood Avenue storefront facelift in 1981 that is part of a revitalization program of the city's Department of Economic Development, then headed by Elmwood resident Larry Quinn. Through the program, ribbons of trendy blue neon lighting are installed on buildings between Delavan and Forest avenues as part of the Elmwood Avenue Neon Project. In addition, Quinn approaches lighting technologist-designer Daniel Sack to submit a proposal. With Laura Rankin as artist-designer and filmmakers Andy Ferullo and Anthony Bannon as consultants, they develop two then-progressive neon artwork murals, the *Tango Dancers* and *Moon Phases*, to be installed on the exterior walls of two Elmwood Avenue businesses to highlight the entertainment aspects of the Elmwood Strip corridor, complementing the blue neon lights that dance cornice-to-cornice down the street. Adding to the "cool" vibe in more recent years, residents host occasional porch parties featuring musical performances as audiences gather on their front lawns.

The Elmwood District's origins as a home to nurseries in the 1850s left a legacy of fine trees and plants on streets and in backyards throughout the district ever after. In 1993, proud and avid backyard gardeners Marvin Lunenfeld and his wife, Gail McCarthy, conceive of Buffalo Garden Walk. In July 1995, their Norwood/W. Utica Neighborhood Association hosts the first event. Twenty-nine Elmwood District homeowners open their gardens over a weekend for free visits.

Today, GardenWalkBuffalo, which attracts more than 85,000 garden fans annually, is part of a summer-long regional festival organized as "Gardens Buffalo Niagara" that attracts even more visitors to more than 1,000 gardens. Yet the mission remains the same: "To create more vibrant and beautiful communities by sharing our gardens."[111]

This event puts the Elmwood District on the map internationally, as it attracts thousands of people from around the corner and around the world to enjoy hundreds of otherwise private gardens of all sizes and shapes. The cultural legacy of those nurseries that gave birth to the Elmwood District enlivens the place to this day, more than 16 decades later, with an estimated economic contribution of $4.5 million.

Like many northern cities, Buffalo abounds in summer festivals. The Elmwood District's artistic character is celebrated on a weekend in August since 1999 at the Elmwood Avenue Festival of the Arts, founded by Elmwood icon, Newell Nussbaumer and organized by Joe DiPasquale. Hundreds of local and national artisans and artists exhibit their wares, and great food, live music, dance, entertainment, and artful activities are available for all members of the family. Every Saturday in summer since 1998, the culture of food is celebrated at the Elmwood-Bidwell Farmers' Market, and every day at the Lexington Co-op Market, now housed in a new building at Elmwood and Lancaster avenues.

Michael Attardo and family participate in a Art of Garbage Cans day, May 1996. Making art objects of street necessities has characterized Forever Elmwood's, and, later, the Elmwood Village Association's family fun approach to branding the Elmwood District.

Photograph courtesy of Michael Attardo

PULLING WEEDS, GROWING GRASSROOTS

It was a Sunday morning in the mid- to late-'90s, and I was starting my run. I noticed that this guy is weeding a planter at a bus stop on Elmwood near my house. I finish my run an hour later, and he's still weeding the bus stop. So I stopped to talk with him and learned that he was Mike Attardo, a merchant on Elmwood Avenue. He told me his whole philosophy about the neighborhood, which was that we couldn't just wait around for the city to clean up for us. ... The citizens needed to make their own decisions about caring for the street, and then just get to work. That's how I got involved in Forever Elmwood.[112]

— Michael Ferdman, second board president of Forever Elmwood after Michael Attardo

ELMWOOD'S SIGNATURE ELECTRIC MURALS ARE RESTORED

Over time, both neon murals suffered the effects of age, and the impaired *Tango Dancers*, depicting a couple engaged in the sensual dance, was removed in 2015 from the south wall of the building near the Elmwood-Bidwell Parkway intersection that it had illuminated, no longer wanted by the new owner. In 2016, the mural, lighting, and mechanics were completely restored with funding provided by the Buffalo Arts Commission and the mural is being reactivated in its original location, 976 Elmwood Avenue at Bidwell Parkway.

Daniel Sack, who along with fellow artists Laura Rankin and Andy Ferullo created the art deco sign for the Buffalo Arts Commission in 1982.

Moon Phases, a multimedia mural, featured a painted sky of shades of blue, from darkest to light, and phases of the moon, outlined in neon, shining over the rendering of a metal cityscape. It was installed on a billboard at the north elevation of the Half & Half Trading Co. building on Elmwood between Bird and Forest. At some point in its history, a handsome Michael Morgulis painting featuring his signature buffalo and advertising *Artvoice*, a local alternative weekly newspaper, was superimposed on the wall below the billboard mural. Today, *Moon Phases* has been cleaned and its phases outlined in LED lighting rather than neon at the expense of the Half & Half Boutique's mother-daughter new owners, Jennifer and Kilby Bronstein. The entrepreneurial duo also purchased an adjacent 100-year-old former mortuary. Its remodeling features a contemporary façade that fits Elmwood's character well.

The restored Tango Dancers sign at the Elmwood-Bidwell intersection.
Photograph courtesy of Daniel Sack

Both celebratory sites are favorite centers for social commerce as well. Indeed, the farmers' market is where a group of Elmwood District residents led by Kenneth Rogers, Alma and Clinton Brown, and others raised friends and funds for the resident-driven designation of the Elmwood District as a National Register Historic District, one of the largest, intact, Register-listed streetcar suburbs in the nation.

Elmwood District people start taking pride in and responsibility for their neighborhood.

In 2011, the Buffalo preservation community hosts the National Trust for Historic Preservation's annual conference. The event, led by Catherine Schweitzer of Preservation Buffalo Niagara and supported by the Visit Buffalo Niagara tourism promotion agency, numerous local and Canadian sponsors, and generous grants from three local foundations, is enormously successful. Twenty-five hundred preservationists descend on the city and enthusiastically extol Buffalo's architectural treasures, many of which are in the Elmwood District. They also praise Buffalo's people as friendly, helpful, and welcoming. Positive words about Buffalo go out via those visiting conference goers and are printed in numerous national publications. Reports reverberate back to city residents who had not heard much positive about their hometown from outside Buffalo in decades. Buffalo's spirits are lifted!

State and federal historic tax credits are available and, with them as incentive, homeowners and developers are beginning to appreciate the lessons promoted by the preservation community

about the economic value of rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of Buffalo's old and underused, abandoned, or deteriorating buildings. They are applying for tax credits for numerous projects downtown and in other Buffalo neighborhoods.

In 2012, the Elmwood Historic District West is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, enhancing community pride and attracting investment with historic tax credits. The listing of Elmwood Historic District East follows in 2016, culminating in the Elmwood District's distinction as one of the largest and most populous historic districts in the nation.

The Hotel Henry Urban Resort Conference Center opens at the Richardson Olmsted Campus in April 2017 in a portion of the iconic former Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane. Considering the many decades during which the asylum building sat empty, neglected, and deteriorating, Hotel Henry deservedly calls itself "a symbol of Buffalo's renaissance."[113] A huge accomplishment, the hotel is operated by the City/Inn Buffalo Group, whose principals, Gino Principe, Diana Principe, and Dennis Murphy, also restored and continue to operate the long-unused "Victor Hugo" mansion at Delaware Avenue and Edward Street as a boutique hotel called the Mansion on Delaware Avenue, one of the finest such places in upstate New York. The Hotel Henry brings positive attention to the Elmwood District from around the world from the start, just as did the original asylum when it opened nearly 150 years before. This is so partly because the principles of residing in a therapeutic landscape are as important today as they were when the hospital opened.

Just as the vision and action of Buffalo's enlightened nineteenth-century leaders resulted in the Elmwood District's dynamic investment, growth, and prestige more than 100 years ago, the Elmwood District today is once again, thanks to its dedicated residents, a desirable place worth investing in, and it is attracting developers. Because the district is thoroughly built out and intact buildings have generally been maintained, the growth developers propose must come from new construction.

Circumstances in the mid- and late-nineteenth-century Elmwood District were very different, however. Then, it was essentially a blank canvas. Today's challenge is one of balancing the Elmwood District's beloved nineteenth-century character, developed by men and women who recognized and valued the sacred nature of their project—as did Ellicott and Olmsted when they laid the foundations for the Edens of their vision, but with twenty-first century social conditions, financing, and building philosophies. During those earlier times and for those builders, "money was no object" and physical impediments were fewer. How very different is the challenge for twenty-first century new construction in a city often touted as one of the poorest in the country and in an already built neighborhood. Conflict is sure to arise. And it does.

VISIBLE SIGNS OF RENEWAL: A PERSONAL REMINISCENCE

In the early and mid-1990s, I used to drive to my home at Linwood and Bryant down Richmond Avenue from the Buffalo State College center on Letchworth Avenue near Grant Street where I worked. One spring or summer season, I was alarmed at the sight of twenty-seven For Sale signs fronting Richmond houses in the approximately one-and-a-half mile stretch between Forest and Bryant. Why were so many residents leaving? I worried. What would become of Richmond Avenue?

The reasons for leaving no doubt varied: senior owners downsizing, job relocations, perhaps illness, and more. The result of this seemingly "wholesale" turnover, however, was almost uniformly positive. Proud and invigorated new owners began to spruce up their homes, rehabbing and painting, and within a year or two, they joined others in creating the beautiful gardens that since 1995 have attracted so many visitors during Buffalo's nationally regarded Garden Walk tours and gardening experiences.

Those uncoordinated investments undertaken by the new property owners provided twenty-seven visible examples of the emerging renaissance and heightened appreciation of the Elmwood District that was taking place through varied individual and grassroots efforts. It appears, as well, that those efforts also influenced the rebirth of nearby streets, as the historic Linwood neighborhood was experiencing the stirrings of rebirth at that same time.

— Ramona Whitaker

Renewed interest in development raises awareness of the Elmwood District's significance as well as concern for its future. The case for an Elmwood Conservancy

TEN

A Place in Which to Live Well

The Case for an Elmwood District Conservancy

"Yet anyone, local or outsider, who comes here to build nowadays, must know that the quality of the work can—and will—be measured by tough standards. … The context of quality, however eroded, is still physically present, still inspiring, and still very demanding on the conscience of anyone who knows enough of architecture to care about it." – Reyner Banham, in *Buffalo Architecture: A Guide*

"We are stewards of a sacred place." – Rev. Matt Lincoln, Trinity Episcopal Church, Buffalo

On April 3, 2017, after a nearly seven-year effort that involved thousands of community members in neighborhoods throughout the city, the new Buffalo Unified Development Ordinance governing zoning and land use in the City of Buffalo, commonly called the Buffalo Green Code, became law. The new measure, a "form-based" approach to building, marked the first substantive changes to the city's zoning ordinance in more than fifty years.

Almost immediately, two developers with proposed projects on Elmwood Avenue, the principal commercial street within the Elmwood District and arguably Buffalo's and upstate New York's most valuable, vibrant, and beloved neighborhood, petitioned the Zoning Board of Appeals and were granted numerous substantive variances to allow their projects to exceed various height and mass limits stipulated in the new code to ensure that new buildings harmonize with their historic settings.

Village residents, vociferous in their dismay, held numerous meetings to protest what they perceived as the "stillbirth" of the new zoning ordinance on which so much time and energy had been spent and expressing their hopes for the city of Buffalo's built future. They also protested the demolition of numerous buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places to make way for new structures proposed by developers. They objected to the proposed designs of the new buildings, their excessive height and mass, the building materials, the aesthetics that were so different from and incongruent with what they loved about their historic neighborhood. They liked what they had and did not want to see its character change as it grew more popular and attracted new development.

They had reason to be concerned. The first major new building on Elmwood Avenue in decades turned out to be a nondescript three-story, 30,000-square-foot mixed residential, retail, and parking structure at 770 Elmwood Avenue, between Cleveland and Auburn avenues. When it opened in 2016, it had been touted by its advocates as demonstrating the intent of the coming Green Code. No historic buildings were lost in its construction because the site had been a parking lot for decades. But the bland box building had few friends or admirers.

A year later, another three-story multiuse new build, with decorative elements some compared to prison bars, replaced a former gas station at the corner of Elmwood and Delavan avenues. The lack of congruence and aesthetic value of these buildings provided a lesson about the potentially negative impact of the Green Code on the Elmwood District because it failed to provide for retaining and enhancing the Elmwood District's one-of-a-kind and significant character. A letter

to *The Buffalo News* captured the views of many Elmwood District residents:

> *Anybody can put up a big, unattractive box and ruin a neighborhood. But what if the people in charge did not allow projects to be built unless they conformed to the surrounding scale and structures? … [They] could reject projects that are not complimentary to the surrounding architecture and scale of the neighborhood. Instead, it seems the Common Council, zoning board, and courts have a tendency to pander to the moneyed interests whose projects—with their hefty taxpayer subsidies—drive up rents and thus drive out small businesses and average income renters.* [114]

A year later, with the Green Code in place, one of the earlier variance-seeking developers succeeded. The devastating result was the demolition of eleven two-and-a-half-story 19th century houses along Elmwood Avenue between Forest and Bird avenues that contributed to the historic character of the Elmwood District. Planned to replace them was a massive five-story multiuse building with a 320-foot uninterrupted front elevation that exceeds the new code's limit by almost 300 percent.

Oddly, this project was not subject to the same vigorous opposition as the other project on Elmwood Avenue near Bidwell Parkway for which variances were at the same time being sought, right up until the developer cancelled the project. Perhaps the explanation lies in the fact that the Elmwood and Forest Avenue location is somewhat removed from the Elmwood-Bidwell Parkway heart of the Elmwood District and residents felt less invested in it. Or perhaps they were simply suffering from battle fatigue.

A lesson was beginning to be learned. A sophisticated group of residents, elected officials, and advocates emerged. Some who had previously shown no interest in or who were even antagonistic toward listing the Elmwood District in the National Register of Historic Places were starting to see the value of that listing.

National Register listing does not automatically prevent demolition but does require under state law a more rigorous review. National Register designation was cited in 2018 to prevent demolitions and to restrain requests by developers for variances for their projects. The City Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals were beginning to listen: The variances needed to allow the proposed demolition of two historic houses on W. Delavan Avenue for two new houses with garages facing the street for their tenants' cars and for a mid-block parking lot serving an adjacent new mixed use, midrise structure were unanimously denied by the Zoning Board of Appeals in 2018. The board said the demolition and proposed design would adversely impact the character of the neighborhood.

Developer William Paladino said they "may just redesign the site in a way that we just don't need any variances and proceed … But the result will be 20 more cars parking on the street rather than off, because the need for cars won't go away … The Elmwood area will never be dense enough to alone support the retailers and businesses [in] Elmwood so they need suburbanites to patronize occasionally to help drive their revenues." Paladino continued, "Really no one wins here even if we do rehab the houses."[115] Opponents argued that preserving, renovating, and reusing the designated historic buildings and complying with the Green Code were more important than attracting more commercial activity to their predominately residential neighborhood.

While it took twelve years to list the Elmwood Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places, it took only one year following the adoption of the Buffalo Green Code for the value of the Elmwood Historic District National Register designation to prove effective in changing attitudes. So many long-empty and deteriorating buildings were being successfully rehabbed and converted into desirable lofts, apartments, or condominiums downtown and in other neighborhoods with the assistance of historic tax credits since 2011, that the day had finally arrived when historic preservation was being regarded as equal to or even more important than the big, shiny new structures proposed by developers and subsidized by other incentives.

The Green Code's provisions governing the height and mass of buildings vary by zone. In the Elmwood District, those limits are fairly congruent with the historical scale of the neighborhood. The conflict arises because developers want "bigger" and "higher." Both are more advantageous for them in recouping the development costs of new builds in the absence of tax credits or subsidies for new buildings. Rents spread

over a greater number of tenants bridge the gap between costs and profit. There is a great deal of irony in the fact that today, driven by economics and profit concerns, developers and urban planners alike want density and mixed use. In 1958, when Buffalo's first urban renewal project destroyed everything built within a 36-block area on the East Side, the goal was to eliminate density and mixed use.

Developers, neighborhood leaders, elected officials, and preservationists agree that the Elmwood District needs to continue to renew itself by attracting new growth and investment. For decades, no buildings of significance were constructed in the district. Were this to continue, the Elmwood District would not only veer from the arc of its dynamic history but would likely shrivel. Evidence of this already starting to occur exists in the number of retail stores moving from Elmwood Avenue to Hertel Avenue and to Grant and Niagara streets, leaving behind a discomfiting number of empty storefronts.

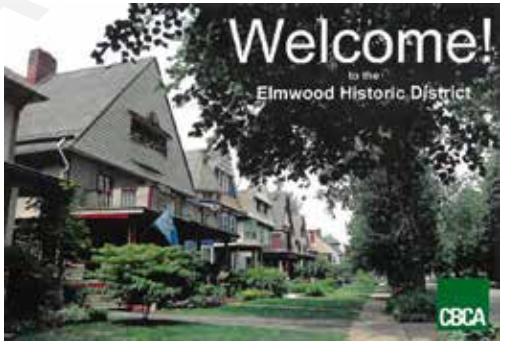
The questions are: What is the correct balance of owner-occupied properties and rentals, of residential and commercial properties, of parking and parks? How to mitigate the negative impacts of the Green Code? How to prevent Buffalo's authentic heritage buildings from being sent to landfills in favor of the twin evils of unimaginative generic or false historic architecture? How to prevent the rise of "zombie" storefronts? And who decides? And by what open, public process?

These questions are important not only to the Elmwood District in Buffalo, they are also the essential questions to be answered about any historic district anywhere in the nation that is struggling to adapt to the current realities of demographics, economic activity, mobility, and diversity.

The answers in Buffalo, New York, it seems clear, lie in appreciating the Elmwood District's distinctive qualities and extending them into the future. For developers, that means understanding the ethos that underlies the design of the Elmwood idea: The mid-19th century aspirational goals of Dorsheimer, Pratt, Jewett, and their fellow Buffalo business leaders, and of Frederick Law Olmsted, whom they hired to help achieve them.

Individually, these leaders built homes of architectural grandeur and significance and surrounded them with beautiful landscapes. But their aspirations also compelled them to push for the health and well-being of all through a park system, where the beauty of nature would enhance the quality of all lives, and to hire the designer of the country's first municipal park to design it. Beauty and well-being through free and open access to scenic greenery were Olmsted's foremost considerations as well, inspired by his tours of the American wilderness and the beauty of European parks, and his response to the trauma of the Civil War. The result: A common wealth, a community founded and managed for the common good.

For their part, Elmwood District residents must acknowledge the profit-seeking that has always been an aspect of the Elmwood District's



Clinton Brown Company Architecture mailed this post card to welcome new property owners to the newly designated Elmwood Historic District and to inform them about the State Historic Homeowner Rehabilitation Tax Credit. It was at the time the only way they would learn about this opportunity.

Image courtesy of Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

Generational transition of an Elmwood storefront from the 40 year home of Bob Petryk's Mother Nature Plant Emporium to "What Should Go Here?"

Photograph taken by Newell Nussbaumer, Buffalo Rising

development. First, there was the need for government-backed bonds to finance the building of the parks and parkways system. Later came the common speculative building and advertising of houses to attract future buyers and residents for the growing district. Then, early in the 20th century, the advent of the streetcar system made it advantageous to transform formerly single-family houses along Elmwood Avenue into storefronts to accommodate the commercial needs of neighborhood residents, and multiunit apartments that made the Elmwood District accessible and affordable for people of lesser incomes and social status.

Joseph Ellicott and Frederick Law Olmsted and their very different clients in very different eras understood and acknowledged the time-tested values of harmony of man and nature, the sacred and the profane, the cultural and the commercial in making a place worth living in. It is important that everyone with an interest in the Elmwood District today also understand and acknowledge these tenets today.

When Bob Petryk closed his Mother Nature Plant Emporium after 40 years at the same Elmwood Avenue storefront location, the building's new owner posted signs on the shop's windows that asked the provocative question: "What do you want to see here?" This is an important question for the entire Elmwood District, and it deserves a consensus answer—not win-lose or even majority-rules, but one reached through a shared understanding of how the Elmwood idea came to be. The answer requires conversations about renewal, change, and growth that enhance and extend the special character of any historic district based on shared and documented definitions of that character. Many communities adopt design guidelines for this purpose to guide decisions about factors other than land use.

Until recently there had been no significant new construction in the Elmwood District since 1961, when the Scajaquada Expressway was completed. Thus, residents of the district lack experience with growth and the graceful insertion of new building into the historic district. The result is new development that is scrambling the Golden Egg. If developers and their architects designed their buildings better, the neighbors might welcome them more enthusiastically. We need to share a common vocabulary for such a conversation. It is not enough for Elmwood District residents to recognize that nearly all architects currently designing in the Elmwood District are working in a generic design vocabulary that is universal, not local. Defining the character of the Elmwood District in words and pictures, such as are commonly developed in heritage community design guidelines, are needed. Contextual design is vital to continuing the renewal of the Elmwood District as a place worth living in when there are so many other choices.

A similar task was faced by Ellicott and Olmsted's clients two centuries ago. They chose quality. The result? "Nature and man seem to have worked harmoniously in the creation of what is known as Buffalo's 'Elmwood District'."[116]

At present, absent an organization within the Elmwood District that can facilitate such a conversation and build consensus, the Buffalo Preservation Board is really the only available official venue for this discussion. Its deliberations about changes to the exteriors of existing buildings or the exterior design of new buildings within locally designated historic districts, and about the demolition of buildings citywide, are governed by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation to guide decisions about planning and building rehabilitation.

These are time-tested standards by which change and growth are accomplished while retaining community character in thousands of communities across the nation. They begin with the simple premise to "measure twice and cut once" and must include engaging in informed dialogue to develop consensus about renewing historic buildings and heritage places.

In 2018, Preservation Buffalo Niagara (PBN) and the Elmwood Village Association (EVA) announced that they were partnering on a market analysis and commercial district planning process to be conducted by the National Main Street Center, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, through its UrbanMain program. According to a PBN news release, the initiative was set to begin immediately with the Center collecting and analyzing data, surveying community members, and meeting with stakeholders. A community-wide meeting hosted jointly by PBN and EVA would follow, with final recommendations to be announced early in 2019. State Assembly member Sean Ryan and City Councilmember David Rivera supported the initiative as a way to develop a comprehensive plan for making the Elmwood District an even better place to live, work, and shop. It would include an Elmwood Village Retail Committee to help build collaborative strategies to combat storefront vacancies.

This was a hopeful sign that the conversations necessary for preserving the vitality of the Elmwood District were about to begin. However, the plan appeared to be heavily business-oriented and did not seem to address the historic and aesthetic issues that have confounded residents with the advent of new builds on Elmwood Avenue. Neither the results of the market analysis nor the commercial district planning process had been announced at time of publication.

When the National Register designation was granted, there was no inclination on the part of Elmwood District residents to apply for local historic designation, which offers greater protection to historic buildings and encourages appropriate alterations that enhance value while retaining a structure's essential character. If Elmwood Avenue were separately to become a locally designated landmark district, the Buffalo Preservation Board could play an important role in mediating resolution of conflict among the existing, the ideal, and the commercial in renewing the district. There is great value in a public discussion of proposed changes to historic places—following that adage of measuring twice before cutting once and forever.

Still, more than this is needed to retain the beloved and valuable character of the Elmwood District and to ensure that it remains the place in which to live well that it was originally designed to be. There is one person who deserves to be recognized for his devotion to that very concern: Daniel Sack. Although not an Elmwood District native, Dan, a Lancaster Avenue homeowner since 1976, has been one of the most ardent, active, and effective guardians of the district's unique character for decades. He has made a practice of attending nearly every community and government agency meeting and public forum where the Elmwood District's future has been at stake and has used his intellect and gentlemanly voice in support of treating the Elmwood District as a special place. But safeguarding this district's significant character, and the significant characters of historic districts in other cities, is too important to be left in the hands of just one person, one block club, or one municipality, however well they may currently serve.

Conversation and context about renewal and change are needed. It is the intent of this book to provide the context for recognizing and understanding what we have and why it is significant and worth conserving. The task now is to honor our forebears and benefit our successors by allowing the Elmwood District's past to inform its future.

Absent preservation provisions, the new Green Code falls far short of the task of managing a living heritage landscape well. We need to do better. Recognizing that we live in a place of high cultural values and resources, we need

a cultural management plan and a cultural management organization to implement it, an Elmwood District Conservancy, so to speak, to conserve a place in which to live well.

Creating an Elmwood District Conservancy

The idea that there are special places with significant character in the world that embody features of landscape and/or cityscape, heritage, and sustainable community development is becoming widely used around the world to identify, officially recognize, and protect those special places with greater priority and care than places which do not have such significant features and character. The definitions of cultural landscapes and of living heritage landscapes are being developed as 21st century urbanization, densification, and economic globalization ignore or threaten historic buildings and heritage places.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been a leader in extending recognition formerly given only to what some call "dead monuments" also to heritage places still in active use, especially large landscapes:

> *There exist a great variety of Landscapes that are representative of the different regions of the world. Combined works of nature and humankind, they express a long and intimate relationship between peoples and their natural environment. …*
>
> *Cultural landscapes—cultivated terraces on lofty mountains, gardens, sacred places … —testify to the creative genius, social development and the imaginative and spiritual vitality of humanity. They are part of our collective identity.*[117]

The Cultural Landscape Foundation states that:

> *Cultural landscapes provide a sense of place and identity; they map our relationship with the land over time; and they are part of our national heritage and each of our lives. … Neglect and inappropriate development put our irreplaceable landscape legacy increasingly at risk. Too often today's short-sighted decisions threaten the survival and continuity of our shared heritage. It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard our nation's cultural landscapes. The ongoing care and interpretation of these sites improve our quality of life and deepen a sense of place and identity for future generations.*[118]

The United States National Park Service also weighs in:

> *The National Park Service defines a cultural landscape as a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person, or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values.*[119]

Renowned heritage practitioner Gamani Wijesuriya developed some criteria for defining Living Heritage in a paper for the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), an intergovernmental organization dedicated to the preservation of cultural heritage worldwide. He begins with the understanding that conservation is not the "museumification" of a place, but rather the management of change, especially the management of continuity between the past and the present. These include continuity of use or function, community connections, cultural expressions, and continuity of long-term care for a place.

Pablo de Olavide University professor Antonio García García has shown how this thinking may be applied to a section of Andalusia and elsewhere. He presents a way of seeing public spaces with a pioneering heritage landscape approach that considers their physical, social, political, and symbolic nature, and concludes with strategies and decision-making based on examples of cities in Andalusia, Spain, especially the Historic Quarter of Seville. His concepts of authenticity and integrity as applied to public spaces are valuable to our quest to renew the Elmwood District, and other similar heritage places, through attracting new investment that renews heritage character without copying it or contesting it.

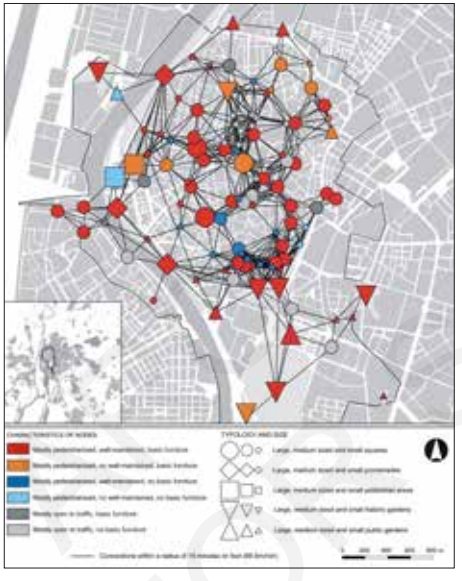
Bringing leading international thinking home to the Elmwood District and similar historic districts in the United States, we can reimagine them as "everyday living heritage landscapes." And we can then imagine the management of such places by means of a conservancy. In Buffalo, this might

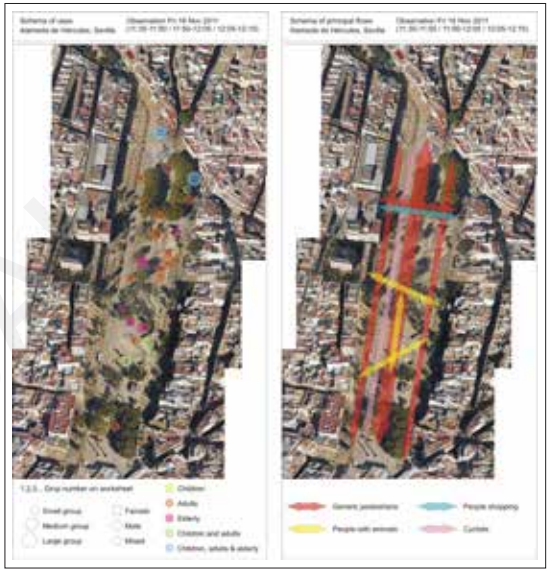
be called *The Elmwood District Conservancy*, a curatorial organization founded on the principles across 200 years of the history of the City of Buffalo and the Elmwood District, of conserving the harmony of nature and man, of public health and business wealth, and of renewal of culture and commerce. It would be Elmwood-centric and regionally collaborative. It could restore and maintain—while fostering the renewal of—the Elmwood District's historic character and commercial and intrinsic value.

What would an Elmwood District Conservancy do to manage an everyday living heritage landscape in the Elmwood District? Buffalo-area readers will be familiar with several existing similar organizations. If these existing agencies are thought about in new ways, their work serves as examples for the Elmwood District. Readers in other communities may recognize similar organizations whose day-to-day work keeps a place healthy, and even elevates a place by means of a curatorial approach that goes beyond normal maintenance.

In Buffalo, there are not-for profit examples. The **Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy** (BOPC) founded by Joan Bozer and others in 1978 as the Buffalo Friends of Olmsted Parks to advocate for those parks, now manages Buffalo's Olmsted Parks and Parkways system so well that it may occasionally be taken for granted.

An Elmwood District Conservancy could manage the Elmwood District arboretum and floriculture beyond what the City can do on its own. In addition, it could design, build, and





These two images portray the emerging art and science of understanding places worth being in, everyday living heritage landscapes. These examples are in the Historic Quarter of the city of Seville, Andalusia, Spain. Figure 6, on the left, portrays data from a survey of the type and size of public spaces in a district and the characteristics of street furniture and pedestrian and vehicle traffic in each space. Figure 7, on the right, portrays data about who is using each space in this district by group size, age, and sex in the left image and by their movement through the space in the right image. Movement is sorted by Generic Pedestrians, People with Animals, People Shopping, and Cyclists. García notes, "By overlaying planes of place description, we get a precise first x-ray of its functioning, basic deficiencies, diversity of situations, as well as other types of scenic or dynamic consideration." Although this work is more than a decade old, it remains cutting edge. An Elmwood District Conservancy could apply this art and science to its historic district as another way for the Elmwood District to refresh its character as a place worth living in well.

Images published in An Everyday Living Heritage Landscape: Reading Public Space As a Complete and Complex Expression of the Contemporary City; Applications Based on Andalusia Cases *by Antonio García García*

maintain public common spaces and foster beneficial new development, much as the **Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus** (BNMC) does. This organization of medical and related institutions came together to make their neighborhood a safer, more attractive, and collaborative place. An Elmwood District Conservancy could complement the City's work to clean the sidewalks, empty the trash, and provide and water the flowers, as **Buffalo Place** does in the downtown core. An Elmwood District Conservancy could bridge the public and private sectors, as Buffalo Place also does, and, like Buffalo Place, it could afford to do so through special district taxes and contracts with the City.

A private sector example of this in Buffalo is **Larkinville** in the Hydraulics District. There, rehabilitated buildings dating from the district's 19th century historic origins coexist with new buildings, structures, and spaces in an exemplary place created by the Howard Zemsky family by the artful blending, balancing, and maintaining of the sentimental historic, the pragmatic commercial, and the dynamic new. It started with the rehabilitation of the former Larkin Soap Company warehouse into fully occupied corporate office space and superbly managed shared employee amenities. Now, this special place attracts visitors and customers from across the region to a variety of social and cultural activities.

Another private sector example is **Silo City** on the shore of the Buffalo River. A visionary project by practical business and community leader Rick Smith who grew up in the Elmwood District, Silo City is the transformation of a formerly derelict, fenced-off, industrial island of concrete grain elevators. Often called eyesores from a failed past, the grain elevators today mark Silo City as an environmental, ecological, and equitable cultural and commercial hub that is restoring the land and renewing the buildings. A former 20th century industrial desert is being managed so as to become a 21st century oasis, a new harmony of nature and humans, culture and commerce, a place worth living in well.

Finally, a modern example of the public-private partnership that gave rise to the Buffalo Park Commission and then the Elmwood District itself is the **Richardson Olmsted Campus**. The Richardson Olmsted Campus (ROC) is the reimagination, adaptive use, and historic rehabilitation of the original Buffalo State Asylum that formed the northwestern frame of the Elmwood District.

Just as the Buffalo State Asylum's fundamental format was a therapeutic landscape in which to improve residents' mental health and well-being, a similar mission led to the creation, funding, and operation of the Richardson Center Corporation. Based on a cultural management plan, the corporation started and continues the work of ensuring the restoration and rehabilitation—that is, retaining and repairing historic features while adding new usefulness—of the Richardson Olmsted Campus for the benefit of the public through a not-for-profit organization and private enterprise. It has done this by balancing the relationship of public and private development. The former is being accomplished through the rehabilitation and reuse of a masterpiece building complex and the restoration of a large part of the Olmsted landscape for public use. It has achieved the latter through the creation of a hotel and urban resort as a profit-making enterprise which it owns but that is run by hospitality professionals; this is also the model for other partnerships underway on the Campus.

An exemplary everyday living heritage landscape that has been in continuous residential, communal, and community use since its construction started in 1862, is the National Historic Landmark **Oneida Community Mansion House**. Built by the Oneida Community, a utopian spiritual communal group who had settled in Oneida, in Madison County, New York, in the "Burned-Over District" of religious and utopian fervor after the opening of the Erie Canal, it was the nation's longest running and most successful utopian commune until its conversion to a joint-stock company in the 1880s.

Today the Mansion House campus is a connected collection of 1- to 4-story brick and wood buildings totaling 93,000 square feet that house a museum, educational and cultural center, residences— some occupied by descendants of the founders—and an inn, all located on 250 acres of landscaped grounds with gardens, public nature trails, a lake, and a golf course. By way of reference, the Elmwood District comprises about 700 acres. The not-for-profit Oneida Community of today manages the campus as a

multipurpose living heritage landmark and landscape that is open to the public.

Their mission is to make the Mansion House campus available to current and future generations as a place in which to respectfully tell the story of the people who built it in the 19th century. Their uniquely American experiment embodies ideals of living well with each other and with our earth that remain relevant today.

Its continuous operation in the realm of ideas and as a National Historic Landmark heritage place are guideposts for charting America's future. The Mansion House campus embodies three American aspirations highlighted by Dolores Hayden in *Seven American Utopias*. First, of agricultural productivity and living in an ideal landscape; of efficient design, industrial productivity, and political inventiveness; and finally, as a model of living, of an ideal home and perfect lifestyle.

Keeping the Oneida Community Mansion House in good condition keeps these American hopes healthy, as well, and is a model for managing the Elmwood District and others like it across the nation by managing intrinsic values and renewing physical place, a process that may be called "placekeeping."

Among the best examples known in Buffalo as well as around the world of an everyday living heritage landscape is the **Chautauqua Institution**, Chautauqua County, in southwestern New York. Founded as a summer retreat and renewal center for Sunday School teachers nearly 150 years ago, today Chautauqua describes itself as, "A shared community where people with

A small group known as Christian Perfectionists who sought to live spiritually well on earth even before entering heaven formed a utopian community in Oneida, New York, which they called the Oneida Community. There were many such groups, such as the Shakers, who arrived in upstate New York at a time of great transformation in America during the decades spanning the Civil War with the intention of living well with each other and with the land. Frederick Law Olmsted and his work embodied similar values.

American professor emerita of architecture, urbanism, and American studies at Yale University, Dolores Hayden's work has been devoted to describing the social importance of urban space in the history of the built environment in the United States. Her pioneering book, *Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism, 1790-1975*, described the Oneida Community and other such communities of the time in words that can guide our understanding of the Elmwood District today:

"The ideal community became a symbol of broad persuasive power. It could be presented as "garden," in terms of horticultural and agricultural productivity and its placement in an idealized landscape. It could be presented as "machine," in terms of its efficient design, industrial productivity, and its relationship to an American tradition of political inventiveness; or it could be presented as "model home," in terms of its design and life style. Sectarian communities tended to emphasize pastoral themes; non-sectarian ones, technological themes; but the most successful experiments united pastoral and technological symbolism in support of the larger goal of an ideal home." [120]

The myriad of developers, architects, and builders who created the Elmwood District from forest and farms drew upon a full palette of styles and the latest construction techniques to create a place that was described by the journal *Commerce* in 1902: "Nature and man seem to have worked harmoniously in the creation of what is known as Buffalo's 'Elmwood District'."

Photograph courtesy of Oneida Community Mansion House

TOP LEFT: After a decade of advocacy, a group of Allentown District and Elmwood District homeowners led the reconstruction of traffic circles at Symphony Circle and Ferry Circle (show here) to the designs of Frederick Law Olmsted that were completed in 2002. The city had removed them in the 1930s, the era of streetcar removal and the rise in automobiles, leaving at Ferry a 300-foot diameter asphalt free-for-all at this intersection. Today, Ferry Circle is professionally tended by the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy. The reconstruction led to increased property values.

Photograph by Chuck LaChiusa, BuffaloAH.com

BOTTOM LEFT: A photograph of "The Heart of Larkinville," described by the Larkin Development Group as Buffalo's urban park and event venue located in the Larkin District, offering free community events, concerts, and gatherings weekly. The setting at the intersection of major streets is a blend of rehabilitated historic buildings and contemporary structures within the arms of historic warehouse and factory buildings, a well-managed and welcoming setting for people of all ages. Speaking recently about the newly opened, mixed-use apartment building, Kayla Zemsky remarked, "We needed a place like this—a community, if you will—for small businesses and young entrepreneurs … what we've created now is a true 24/7 community."

Photograph courtesy of Joe Cascio

RIGHT: Buffalo Place was founded in 1982 by downtown Buffalo property owners and city leaders to improve the downtown core as a safer, more attractive, and fun place to be at the time Main Street was being converted into a light rail transit route and pedestrian mall. They enacted a Business Improvement District tax to fund a management organization that complements and enhances the city's municipal services and provides programming for public spaces. This image of well-kept plantings and colorful banners for a downtown country market exemplify the success of this initiative nearly 40 years later as the formerly business-dominated downtown transforms into a mixed-use, multipurpose community.

Photograph courtesy of Buffalo Place

TOP: The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) is so significant a district that it merits a place on the Visit Buffalo Niagara tourism promotion agency website. It describes BNMC as "… a consortium of the region's premier healthcare, life sciences research, and medical education institutions, all located on 120 acres in downtown Buffalo, New York … dedicated to the cultivation of a world-class medical campus for clinical care, research, education, and entrepreneurship. [BNMC] coordinates activities related to planning, development, and enhancement of a 120-acre space, facilitates collaboration among its member institutions and the community, and works to create a distinct environment that provides opportunities for active and healthy living." This well-managed district of collaboration of programming and place has unleashed energy that is being felt in the community, across the region, and around the world.

Photograph courtesy of the University at Buffalo | Douglas Levere

RIGHT: Although British architectural critic Reyner Banham called the place a "Concrete Atlantis," many people living in the shadows of the massive concrete grain elevators and other abandoned apparatus of Buffalo's once thriving waterfront maritime industry along the banks of the Buffalo River had long hoped someone could afford to demolish them out of sight and out of memory. Yet Rick Smith, third generation president of Rigidized Metals Corporation, whose factory was next door to the best of these grain elevators, saw something else. He purchased them. Now, working with many partners, Smith is creating Silo City. By interweaving nature, natural regeneration, repurposed heritage structures, arts and cultural activities, and commercial enterprise, he is creating from what some call ruins an exemplary everyday living heritage landscape. Yes, of course, Rick Smith does wear a white hat.

Photograph courtesy of Rick Smith

LEFT: This 1974 aerial photograph of the Chautauqua Grounds, looking south, shows the precinct's principal boundaries of Chautauqua Lake to the left and W. Lake Road to the right. This photograph illustrates one form of an everyday living heritage landscape then, and the aerial view today would show that this place of living well in a park endures.

Similar to the Elmwood District historically in that it started as a forested enclave and having grown as a streetcar/steamboat neighborhood into a primarily residential, mixed-use neighborhood with great appeal from far and wide, today Chautauqua, like the Elmwood District, also faces the contemporary issues of appropriate growth, enhancing environmental quality, and improving social equity. The Chautauqua Institution handles these issues well, through public consensus, wise leadership, and professional management that could be a model for an Elmwood Conservancy.

TOP RIGHT: This 1904 map shows the organic nature of the layout of Chautauqua. Its growth, from a forest grove of tents at a point at the bottom of the image, spread across a varied hilly topography. Residents and visitors mostly arrived by boat at this time and walked the Grounds, so the map is oriented for the visitor entering the Grounds from the steamboat pier (bottom), less significant than the trolley line entrance at the top. Individual civic structures and places are labeled.

BOTTOM RIGHT: This contemporary map underplays the organic nature of the layout of Chautauqua and highlights the uses of blocks of lots according to zoning criteria. The concept of zoning did not exist in 1904. Now all residents and visitors arrive by automobile or bus, so the map is oriented for the visitor entering the Grounds from the landside road. While the 1904 map labels individual civic structures and places in an otherwise uniform community, the zoning map represents the maturing and multiplying of many more uses. This map labels areas of the Grounds into districts by their predominant character.

Images courtesy of Chautauqua Institution Archives

a thirst for learning and an interest in ongoing self-development are drawn and thrive."[121] While its emphasis is on the programming and conversations that it hosts, our interest is in the place, the Chautauqua Grounds, an everyday living heritage landscape on the west shore of Chautauqua Lake.

The Chautauqua Grounds is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and also has the highest honor of designation as a National Historic Landmark, yet its buildings and the spaces between them are continually being maintained, restored, rehabilitated, and built new within a set of design standards that seek to assure that its character as a place continues to be renewed and not lost.

Among the four key objectives of the Chautauqua Strategic Plan is: "Drive the implementation of a comprehensive, science-based approach to improving the health and sustainability of Chautauqua Lake and elevate its conservation as the centerpiece of the region's economic prosperity."[122]

Imagine a similar objective in an Elmwood District Conservancy strategic plan. It might read: "Drive the implementation of a comprehensive, heritage-based approach to improving the health and sustainability of the Elmwood District as a place by attracting complementary new investment and development as the centerpiece of the region's economic prosperity."

An Elmwood District Conservancy could also look forward and mimic Chautauqua's vision for its Grounds in 2028: "Chautauqua is lauded as a legacy organization and community that

A medley of historic and contemporary postcards of Bestor Plaza, the civic center of Chautauqua. They demonstrate the stewardship of the Grounds over time. The result: A place worth making a postcard of, then and now.

LEFT: A recent panoramic view of Bestor Plaza.

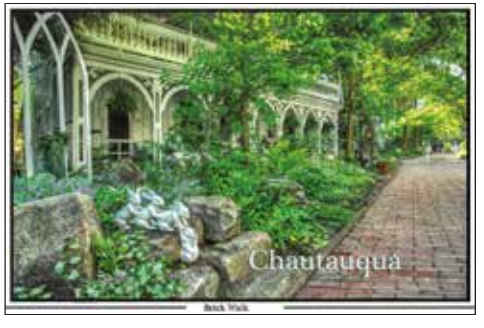
TOP RIGHT: A quintessential Chautauqua Grounds image today. It recalls the ideal community of mid-19th century American utopias. It could predict what an Elmwood District Conservancy might achieve. To paraphrase Dolores Hayden, this photograph shows the Chautauqua Grounds as a horticultural garden, an efficiently designed machine for living, and as a model home in terms of its design and lifestyle.

Photograph courtesy of Paul H. Benson

MIDDLE RIGHT: An historic view of the 1907 Colonnade Building office and retail center on the left, and the 1909 Post Office Building, home to the famous Bookstore, on the right.

BOTTOM RIGHT: A recent view of the plaza during an Independence Day celebration.

Images courtesy of Clinton Brown



Miller Park, named in honor of Chautauqua founder, inventor Lewis Miller, recalls the origins of the Institute as the Chautauqua Lake Sunday School Assembly. Teachers began gathering in a tent community in a glade of the forest on the lakeshore in 1874. The Elmwood District deserves the quality of stewardship that Chautauqua exemplifies to make it a place worthy of a postcard now as it once was.

TOP: A contemporary view of Miller Park. A portion of the 1874 National Historic Landmark Lewis Miller Cottage is visible on the left.

LOWER LEFT: A contemporary view of cottages that replaced tents and of the brick walks, both features for which Chautauqua is famous.

LOWER RIGHT: An historic view of Vincent Avenue which descends the hill from Bestor Plaza to Miller Park. The lake is in the background.

Images courtesy of Clinton Brown

prioritizes inclusion, diversity, equity, and access, and the Institution's strategies for broadening its circle of engagement have begun to form a new model for diversity transformation."[123]

The curatorial approach with which the Chautauqua Institution carefully treats its approximately 250 acres of the Grounds is stewardship in action. As John L. Shedd, AIA, an architect who is Chautauqua's Vice President of Campus Planning & Operations responsible for this daily stewardship, puts it, "Chautauqua is a National Historic Landmark. We are highly attentive to our Chautauqua Institution as a place and continue to work hard at preserving this incredible environment with the help and cooperation of the property owners here."[124] Chautauqua is managed as an everyday living heritage landscape.

Chautauqua regularly updates its Architectural & Land Use Regulations which are administered and enforced by a full-time Administrator of Architectural & Land Use Regulations and an Architectural Review Board that is comprised of members of the Institution's Board of Trustees. The architectural training and experience of the Administrator of Architectural & Land Use Regulations underpins the credibility of the review and enforcement processes.

Each project that a property owner wishes to build on their private property must be reviewed by the Campus Planning & Operations office and approved before a building permit is issued. Chautauqua Institution-owned buildings and landscapes are also the responsibility of that office. The emphasis is on careful consideration

of the natural and built environments from the standpoint of the historic fabric, historic cultural characteristics, neighborhood aesthetics, neighborhood human considerations, and the greater good of the neighborhood, the overall community, and Chautauqua Institution's mission.

The review process and criteria are not arbitrary. According to Shedd, "Chautauqua takes every effort to adhere to the federal Secretary of Interior's Guidelines used across the country, while understanding that the evolving culture of Chautauqua Institution is also a balancing and guiding principal."[125] There is a Campus-Wide Master Plan developed with Urban Design Associates of Pittsburgh, PA, that is followed closely in executing projects identified in the Master Plan.

Chautauqua has also created a Shoreline Protection Plan for its 1.25 miles of Chautauqua Lake shoreline, with a project each year. This complements a stringent stormwater management plan that helps protect Chautauqua Lake and the environment through wetland improvements, rain gardens, tributary protection projects, and tree planting and conservation projects. There are maximum impervious surface ratio regulations to which property owners must adhere.

A professional staff led by the Vice President of Campus Planning & Operations addresses questions about things related to Institution-owned lands, garbage pickups, boat and residential vehicle parking, docks, community transportation systems, directions, issuance of Compliance Certificates, and related information for home construction work and contractor authorization certificates.

There is an Operational and Administrative Support person for the buildings, grounds, gardens, housekeeping, and vehicle maintenance areas of Chautauqua Institution who addresses questions regarding leaf and brush cleanup, garbage service concerns, snow removal, road and walkway maintenance and repairs, tree trimming and removal, stormwater management, traffic and direction signs, and concerns related to Institution-owned lands, buildings, and infrastructure of all kinds.

Finally, there is a Director of Campus Safety/Security and Chief of Police. This person addresses enforcement and interpretation of the Rules & Regulations of Chautauqua Institution and local/regional/state laws, parking and traffic violations, road closures, poor road conditions and interfaces with local/regional law enforcement, Chautauqua Institution alarms, and community safety and security concerns.

These activities are paid for with fees for the Architectural Review process that help cover a very small portion of the costs for reviews. The Chautauqua Institution capital project work and the general administration of the department are funded through entrance gate revenue and other fees each year, combined with philanthropy for some projects.

The Chautauqua Institution is a national model of an everyday living heritage landscape, an example worthy of emulation by an Elmwood Conservancy or similar agency in your historic place, especially if, as in Buffalo, the level of care needed to maintain and enhance character and value is greater than an overwhelmed city hall staff can deliver alone, given priorities across the city.

The foundation of an Elmwood District Conservancy rests on energizing historic places through thoughtful development while also understanding that the evolving culture of a heritage place is a balancing and guiding principal. Progressive historic preservation fosters economic growth and civic renewal with a catalytic impact.

It's Not as Easy as It Looks

Gracefully balancing the many complicated factors—revered historic places, new investment to meet contemporary needs, planning, zoning, and historic regulations that seek to predetermine outcomes—is not as easy as it looks, particularly within the public arena of a heritage place. This is why it is worth celebrating when it works. However, sometimes failures illustrate this as well.

Former leaders at the Chautauqua Institution promoted and eventually implemented the replacement of the beloved vernacular Amphitheater that represented for many the heart of the Chautauqua experience and character with a modern approximate replica structure. They saw it as a production facility with which to feature the promotion of its presentations locally and worldwide, leveraging technological

advancements that needed to be housed in a more modern facility. Historic preservationists who could not imagine the loss of a beloved authentic and comfortable icon of this heritage community were defeated and left the debate feeling bitter.

Although visitors in the future who did not know the charm of the historic amphitheater will not appreciate what the historic preservationists feel they lost, the resulting building does fit the historic context better than what was originally proposed, thanks in no small part to the work of the historic preservation community in making Chautauquans more aware of the love many feel for its special inheritance as a heritage place. Nonetheless, many historic preservationists feel they lost this contest.

On the other hand, at the Richardson Olmsted Campus in Buffalo, in winning the debate over keeping historic character over renewing it, historic preservationists won, but the community lost. The conversion of a portion of the former Richardson-designed Asylum from its 1870s mental health origins into a 21st century hotel featuring wellness, did not work as well as it needed to.

The need to strictly adhere to rigid historic preservation rules required by public funding and for access to lucrative historic tax credits precluded altering the building in ways that could have allowed a hotel to efficiently and profitably operate around the limitations of the historic features of the building. The functional inefficiencies of hotel operations that challenged good service and required more staff were a factor in making the economics of having a magnificent hotel in this magnificent building too thin to compete in a marketplace featuring new hotels built to be hotels. The hotel was not sufficiently profitable to withstand the pandemic and it was forced to close. Historic preservation regulations that seek to predetermine outcomes prevailed, but the renewal of the Elmwood District was set back.

Gracefully balancing place and profit in the development of the Elmwood District is not as easy today as it was when developers first built it. Three fundamental changes have taken place. Developers and their architects don't know how the Elmwood District came to be and fail to understand its special character, there is now a demand for quick profit rather than creating long term value, and the City of Buffalo's Green Code regulations do not recognize the value of historic character. These seem to be conspiring to produce blockish new buildings that stick out awkwardly in the Elmwood District's finely grained, historic context created by more than a century of developers who had access to a myriad of architectural styles and state of the art construction technology and yet managed to construct buildings that respected their neighbors and the values of the neighborhood.

The designs of recent buildings on Elmwood Avenue have shown little sensitivity to the character of the neighborhood. The designs are a trendy pastiche of generic building products embedded in computer-aided design programs without regard to the context in which the buildings reside. The result: no graceful growth. Although a long-time owner of a 120-year-old Elmwood District house, upon selling it and moving into a new Elmwood Avenue apartment building, exclaimed, "Finally, after all these years, I have electrical outlets for 3-pronged plugs!", a neighbor of that same apartment building sighs, "I am trying to get used to it."

Increased density may be a positive, and renters may overtake the homeowners for whom the Elmwood District was created and revitalize it, the result to-date does not support the Elmwood District's character and value as a place to live well in a park in a city.

The Elmwood District does need increased investment and more people to continue to be an attractive place in which to live. However, graceful growth has not yet been achieved. The current culture of developer desire for immediate profits, architects trained only to design shiny new buildings, and ham-handed building regulations have not produced what the Elmwood District deserves.

This is the challenge. The notion of building new in a historic context gracefully within current regulations and expectations is uncharted territory. The awards go to cutting edge, look-at-me architecture and/or for retro, look-at-me historic restoration. Currently there are no awards for doing both well in the same place at the same time in the same design. We are still learning how to gracefully balance the commercial and the cultural, renewing rather than

replacing ,and bringing an ecological approach to renewing places that are worth living in by thinking of these places as everyday living heritage landscapes worthy of humble cultivation.

Getting it right is worth the effort. Among the benefits will be enhanced community pride and higher property values. Higher property values produce greater tax revenues for a municipality without increasing taxes on individual properties. This was recently shown in a city-wide reassessment that increased overall value, especially in the Elmwood District, likely due to increased investment thanks to the state homeownership tax credit. But this assessment did not increase property tax payments for most individual properties. Historic designation made the entire neighborhood more valuable.

Increased property values could also make it affordable for property owners to pay modest assessments to fund the activities of a community-based, district level managing entity, such as an Elmwood District Conservancy. Expert advice is that homeowners should budget 1% to 4% of home value on annual capital maintenance. A similar practice could produce income to maintain the Elmwood District. This concept is not new. It was just this type of assessments on the sale of lots fronting the newly constructed Olmsted parks and parkways that helped pay back the bonds that funded their construction under the aegis of a public-private partnership. This model from the 19th century could be a model for the 21st century.

The Work of an Elmwood District Conservancy

The Elmwood District deserves an Elmwood District Conservancy to manage an everyday living heritage landscape in ways that retain and enhance its character, retain and enhance its real estate value, and that retain and enhance the common wealth of this portion of the city. The work of the Elmwood District Conservancy would be infused with a curatorial spirit and informed by a cultural management plan.

The process of developing a cultural management plan would establish the "Elmwood District Principles" and standards that would guide, change, and foster contextual growth. The implementation of a cultural management plan by a cultural management organization, such as an Elmwood District Conservancy, is our best hope of ensuring that the Elmwood District remains and continues to grow as the preeminent place in which to live well as it was originally designed to be and mostly remains today.

This is a natural next step, among many across the city, that could make the City of Buffalo a significant leader in the 21st century as it was in the 19th century. Your initiative in your neighborhood may offer the same opportunity to help transform your city based on the principals on which it was created.

It is our opportunity, indeed our urgent obligation, to work together to take now whatever steps are necessary and effective to safeguard for the next 150 years, the rich social, cultural, commercial, architectural, and historic inheritance that nature and man have worked so harmoniously to create over the past 150 years. In the Elmwood District, in Buffalo, and where you live, residents, property owners, developers and friends will best manage these as places in which to live well if we recognize that, as we attract investment in its renewal, we are doing so as stewards of a sacred place.

A Model for America's Cities

What lessons from this story about how the Elmwood District came to be could be applied to where you live?

For new communities in the process of being created, the lesson is to design a common place available to all and to imbue it with sacred as well as practical purpose. In Buffalo, Joseph Ellicott and Frederick Law Olmsted's values aligned with those of their clients to create significant places that endure to this day.

In Buffalo, Joseph Ellicott's central ideas in his plan for the nascent Village of New Amsterdam were the Public Square and the streets radiating from it to everywhere one would want to travel. The purpose of this connected common place was to make a home for the Grand Emporium of the World on the Lake Erie shore. The Public Square that was modeled on commons found in early New England villages put nature in the center, on equal footing with commerce.

Similarly, Frederick Law Olmsted designed a common place, Soldiers Place, from which

emanated a connecting and embracing armature to give form to an idyllic residential community within a park, one that organized commercial growth, to make a place worth living in.

For historic or heritage communities everywhere, renewal begins at the beginning, with an understanding of the people, the natural place, the cultural ideals, and the commercial drive that gave them birth and have sustained their growth. They may have been temporarily lost during a community's slow decline, but it is not too late to rediscover them. Identifying, officially recognizing, and protecting these origins through a collaborative, conversational and conservational approach can help align the stars for a reinvigorated future for the special heritage place in which you live. Like the Elmwood District in Buffalo, it is infused with spirit.

Your quest for the renewal of your community for the future begins with an essential question about its past: How did this place come to be? That was the question that sparked the renewal of the Elmwood District—and this book.

Find your way to tell its sacred story, refresh its spirit, and renew where you live to be a place in which to live well.

LEFT: The repair of the façade of this house overlooking Ferry Circle features new gable shingling that is artistically rendered. Horizontal rows of sawtoothed shingles extend the square window's cornice, two rows of flat shingles ripple out from the sunburst window, and the ensemble culminates in a diamond pattern at the peak of the gable. The shingling in the gable was not painted like the rest of the house but was instead coated with a clear sealer that highlights the art of the carpenter's craft. The renewal of the façade of this house is a small but significant model for renewing the Elmwood District.

Photograph by Clinton Brown

RIGHT: A photograph of the centerpiece of Frederick Law Olmsted's arterial armature around which the Elmwood District was molded, which he called Soldiers Place. The confluence of Chapin and Bidwell Parkways, ribbons of trees and lawn extend from early Buffalo nodes to create the grand boulevard of Lincoln Parkway that extends to The Park. In honoring common soldiers in this grand, yet simple and serene setting amidst boulevards dedicated to generals and The Great Emancipator, Olmsted offered a vision of civic places of health and healing for everyone. Historic designation honors this place. An Elmwood District Conservancy can aspire to renew the historic place and to fulfill Olmsted's values every day.

Photograph courtesy of Clinton Brown

The not-for-profit Richardson Center Corporation has been breathing new life into the obsolete erstwhile Buffalo State Asylum portion of the site that is still the home to the people of the Buffalo Psychiatric Center for whom this place was originally created, to become the Richardson Olmsted Campus (ROC). Working through a public-private partnership much like that of the Buffalo Park Commissioners who created and implemented the Olmsted-designed Buffalo Parks and Parkways System within whose armature the Elmwood District was formed, the ROC embodies a past, present, and future place as an everyday living heritage landscape that can be emulated in the Elmwood District and where you live.

This stunning photograph by Christopher Payne captures the countenance of the celestial orb overhead on the Medina sandstone quarried from the earth. This reflects Joseph Ellicott's use of Masonic principles in his 1804 street plan of Buffalo, blessing this place from its start.

APPENDIX A

Architectural Styles of the Elmwood District

A walk through the Elmwood District is a walk through the history of American architecture compressed into just the several decades during which it was designed and constructed. The myriad developers, architects, builders, and their customers who created the residential and commercial Elmwood District out of forest and farms drew upon the full palette of trending styles and leading-edge construction techniques to create a place worth living in. It is remarkable how few buildings look exactly alike, and equally remarkable how these various distinctive architectural styles have enough in common to create the lovely architectural harmony that graces the Elmwood District.

The information in this appendix will illuminate the wide variety of architectural styles that you will encounter when you journey through this special district with this book proudly in hand.

Architectural styles evolve and change over time, reflecting the tastes and priorities of the generation and society producing the buildings worth singling out when they accrue enough common traits to be designated as belonging to a particular style. Tried and true styles of the past are often revived when it suits an era.

For instance, although most of Elmwood's mansions are designed in revival styles reflecting the certainty of the past for their modern, nouveau rich owners, exceptions that prove the rule in the Elmwood District include Frank Lloyd Wright's Heath House and Darwin Martin's 800 W. Ferry, both strikingly unabashed modern designs for their time that reflect the confidence of their owners.

Architectural guidebooks typically list architectural styles chronologically. This Appendix follows that chronological order in describing the architectural styles found in the Elmwood District, illustrating each with some of the best examples of houses and buildings that seem to have changed very little since they were designed and built.

An architectural tour of the Elmwood District is particularly interesting for several reasons. While the variety of styles represents architecture through the ages, most of the Elmwood District was built over a generation. Vernacular farmhouses are amid more sophisticated residences with ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman references that were built only 10 years after the farmhouse was erected. That's how rapidly the Elmwood District transitioned from forest, to farm to nursery to streetcar suburb.

So many residences in the District were built by developers and contactors who followed pattern books and style guidelines. Therefore, we can assume that they hewed closely to their customers' desires in curb appeal. Who would want to build a speculative house that no one would buy?

Yet, the architectural historians who viewed, documented and described the nearly 5,000 structures in the Elmwood Historic Districts did not find two that are exactly the same. As with snowflakes that follow general characteristics of form but no two are said to be alike, so too are Elmwood's thousands of houses.

Finally, the Elmwood District you find your way through while walking its avenues looks very much as it did when it was born, there has been so little change in its appearance. In the historic preservation business, we call this integrity, that is, the ratio of the number of buildings that "contribute" to the distinctive character of the historic district to the number that do not, due to being less than 50 years old, having been too altered or otherwise not fitting in. The integrity ratio in the

Elmwood District is about 93 percent, a remarkably high ratio anywhere.

Paraphrasing the concluding comments of Dr. Bannon's Preface to this book, Elmwood's promise also is that if you walk the avenues, it won't take long to meet or find a favorite historic building among its remarkably rich collection of so many architectural styles in one place.

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE

The growth of the Elmwood District occurred very rapidly, with the bulk of buildings being constructed between the 1890s and the 1910s. Given this relatively short development period, there is a great deal of cohesiveness in the vocabulary of architectural styles, materials, sizes and features present in the district. However, despite this overall harmony, most of the buildings in the district are individually articulated and detailed, giving each one a unique character and personality which adds to the overall richness of the Elmwood District. Whether architect-designed or built by a local builder or developer, the vast majority of buildings reflect common American architectural trends around the turn of the century. While a few excellent examples of earlier vernacular houses still remain as the earliest types of buildings present in the Elmwood District, the bulk of the residential building stock in the district is comprised of examples of Queen Anne, Shingle Style, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Craftsman styles. Common elements shared by these styles are elevated front porches with stair, regular fenestration typically in the form of double-hung wood frame windows, chimneys and other features. Residential architecture types include individual free-standing houses (originally designed for one family but now sometimes divided internally into apartments), and multiple family dwellings which include duplexes and flats. There are also a handful of excellent examples of larger apartment buildings present in the Elmwood District. Most residential examples are of frame construction, although a few brick or stone examples are also present.

The commercial buildings in the Elmwood District are in two general forms: a small handful of buildings specially designed for commercial or mixed commercial and residential use, generally located within the interior of the district, and also those buildings which were initially constructed as residential buildings and later converted with an addition for commercial use. These buildings predominate along Elmwood Avenue, and were generally transformed in the early decades of the twentieth century as this street became a prominent commercial thoroughfare in Buffalo. While this type of converted commercial building can be found throughout the city of Buffalo, there is a high concentration of them along Elmwood Avenue, which gives the street an eclectic architectural vocabulary. Architectural styles for commercial buildings also reflect the common architectural styles of the era, primarily Queen Anne. Those commercial buildings on Elmwood Avenue, where an older frequently Queen Anne or Shingle Style house is obscured either partially or entirely by a commercial addition on the front, reflect styles popular in the early twentieth century such as Classical Revival.

Another prominent building type serving the largely residential neighborhood is churches. The majority of these religious buildings are constructed of stone, although one early wood frame church still remains. Like the houses, these churches also reflect typical styles used for church construction in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, primarily Romanesque Revival and Gothic Revival. They form notable landmarks in the neighborhood, with towers rising above the rooftops, and are generally sited at prominent locations such as at corners of intersecting roads or at Olmsted's landscaped circles.

The vast majority of houses constructed in the Elmwood District are of Queen Anne or Colonial Revival styling, with examples of other typical styles from the era. These styles were the most popular during the 1890s and into the 1900s, when most of these buildings were erected. As historians Warner and Whittemore noted, building in suburbs such as the Elmwood District often kept to tested, fashionable, popular styles, as builders attempted to appeal to the greatest number of people. While there are several examples of houses designed by architects, many more buildings were built by developers and contractors, often in groups or clusters. This phenomenon is reflected in the appearance of some neighboring houses, such as 536 Potomac Avenue and 540 Potomac Avenue, which were built by H.H. Lanctot in 1900. Both houses

share similarities in their pedimented porches and unique second-story bays with pilasters and polygonal bay windows.

Vernacular Houses

The earliest extant architecture in the Elmwood District is a small collection of vernacular houses, and they are significant as rare remaining examples of early residential architecture in the area. Many of the smaller, early houses and cottages from the 1850s-1870s, notable on maps, were removed or demolished to make way for larger, more stylish houses in the later nineteenth century, but a few survive intact. Some of the earliest houses built in the area would have predated the construction of good, traversable roads in the area, which began to appear in the 1870s and 1880s. While some of these houses appear to have been part of small farms, others appear to have served as housing for those workers and tradespeople who were employed in the area, then the outskirts of the city. City directories indicate that many of the early residents of this period were carpenters, gardeners who worked in the large nurseries, or servants and coachmen for the larger houses on Delaware Avenue or North Street. Based on their architectural appearance and information from maps, these houses appear to have been constructed primarily in the 1860s and 1870s, just prior to the more widespread development.

In general, these houses are of relatively smaller size and scale compared to their late nineteenth century neighbors. They are one-and-one-half stories or two stories in height and many are front gabled houses, generally three bays wide. Also common among the early vernacular houses is the L-plan variant, sometimes with a side porch. They are simply or plainly ornamented. Some examples may feature interpretations or modest elements derived from contemporary Italianate and Queen Anne styles. As many of these early houses predated the construction of neighboring properties, in many instances what distinguishes these buildings is that they are set back far from the street and don't align with the more standardized setbacks of houses constructed later. Construction is of frame, with simple wood clapboard sheathing, set on a fieldstone foundation.

There are several examples of the front gabled type of vernacular residential architecture toward the south end of Ashland Avenue. The house at 112 Ashland Avenue is an excellent representation of this early vernacular house type. Although its setback generally conforms to neighboring properties, the house is of the small scale and modest elaboration common to this type of building. Its one-and-one-half story size, simple clapboard on wood frame, lack of a front entry porch and unornamented window and door surrounds are typical of the vernacular housing stock from this era. No. 77 Ashland Avenue is another similar example of a small, one-and-one-half story front gable frame vernacular house, with a small entry porch crowned with cast iron cresting.

Perhaps the best example of the L-plan variation is the house at 170 Ashland Avenue. Given a modest Italianate treatment with paired brackets and arched windows, this L-plan is of frame construction, with wood clapboard, original 2-over-1 and 1-over-1 wood double hung windows, and a small side entry porch. This house is set relatively close to the sidewalk, and its few feet of grassy front yard are surrounded by a historic cast iron fence. This house and its relationship to the street are more typical of the nearby Allentown neighborhood, where rows of Italianate houses that are set close to the street, than to the Elmwood District, where houses typically contained more generous front yards. The south end of Richmond Avenue also contains a handful of modest L-plan vernacular houses, such as those at 38 Richmond Avenue and 50 Richmond Avenue. Both houses feature a front gabled portion facing the street, wood frame construction with wood clapboard sheathing, and simple detailing. These examples feature prominent porches that wrap around the front of the building. The porch of 38 Richmond Avenue features modest Eastlake detailing, with a pierced tympanum and turned columns, while the porch of 50 Richmond Avenue is simply treated with square classical-derived columns.

Some older houses were updated with later Queen Anne elements and features to make them more stylish. No. 216 Ashland Avenue was likely originally constructed in a modest Italianate style, as evinced by its three round-headed windows on the upper story; however, the applied paneled frieze and decorative shingle indicate that it was likely "updated" with some Queen Anne elements to make this early house more fashionable in the later nineteenth century.


216 Ashland Avenue


638 Lafayette Avenue


700 W Delavan Avenue


170 Ashland Avenue


172 Summer Avenue


170 Ashland Avenue, detail


215 Lancaster Avenue


587 Ashland Avenue


294 Ashland Avenue

The house at 638 Lafayette Avenue, a frame L-plan vernacular house, is one-and-one-half stories in height, features paired entry doors with a transom, and has a porch with simple Italianate columns that wraps around the front and side elevation. Notably, this house is set far back from the street, and its lot is more generous in width, making it stand out amongst its turn-of-the-twentieth century neighbors. Likewise, 700 W. Delavan Avenue also stands out on its street as an excellent example of early vernacular housing. This two-story frame, L-plan house features wood clapboard sheathing, round headed windows on the upper story and a wrap-around porch. The porch is elaborated with a turned balustrade and frieze and carved brackets, suggestive of Eastlake or Queen Anne style ornamentation. Like the house at 630 Lafayette Avenue, 700 W. Delavan Avenue is set far back from the street on a more generous lot.

These houses are significant as rare remaining early examples of housing that date to the era just after Olmsted's parks and parkways began to attract attention to Buffalo's 11th Ward but were built prior to the widespread real estate and development boom that replaced many existing buildings with larger Victorian-era houses.

Queen Anne and Shingle Style Houses

The predominant architectural styles in the Elmwood District, the Queen Anne style and the Shingle Style, were popular in Buffalo during the late decades of the nineteenth century and into the early decade of the twentieth century, corresponding to the era of the construction of houses in the district. These two-story or two-and-a-half-story buildings contribute much of the size, scale and architectural character of the Elmwood District. Because many were constructed on narrow urban lots, these types of buildings almost entirely feature their elaboration and detailing facing towards the street. Side elevations are much more simplified, as they were hidden from view by neighboring buildings.

These architectural styles were employed both by architects and by builders and contractors. Architects working in the Queen Anne and Shingle styles typically designed one-of-a-kind buildings for their clients, sometimes creating complex examples of Queen Anne and Shingle Style buildings with turrets, varied decorative shingles, elaborate surfaces and other features common to the style adhered to the basic box-like mass. Architect-designed buildings are typically more sophisticated, skillfully balancing the wide variety of ornamentation and design elements utilized in these styles. Builders and contractors employed the popular style in a more simplified manner, working from pattern books and plans, and often duplicated houses on multiple lots throughout the district. Often built speculatively, these builder-designed houses were intentionally crafted to be fashionable but also to appeal to the greatest number of potential buyers, so they were of a more conventional design. Queen Anne and Shingle Style buildings predominate in the Elmwood District, with their variety of peaks, gables, towers, porches, carved details and ornamental shingle work. These houses form the character of this area, where each individual building is distinctive but taken together they create a unified, harmonious architectural composition.

Architect-designed examples of the Queen Anne and Shingle Styles include works by some of Buffalo's best known and most prolific architects. Louise Blanchard Bethune (the country's first professional woman architect and first woman fellow of the American Institute of Architects) and her firm of Bethune, Bethune and Fuchs produced several fine examples in the district, such as the George L. Thorne House at 40 Bidwell Parkway and the Mrs. E.H. Noye House at 35 Richmond Avenue.The Thorne House features a polygonal tower, beltcourses and bands of decorative shingles, a broad porch with Doric columns and a finely detailed spindle balustrade and the overall irregularity in massing and silhouette characteristic of the Queen Anne style. With a brick first story and frame above, the Noye House demonstrates another variation of the Queen Anne style, with variety in its shingled surface, projecting bays, and its irregular roofline with numerous dormer windows.

Buffalo's most prominent architectural firm of the era, Green and Wicks, also contributed several excellent Queen Anne examples to the district, including a house built for Robert M. Harding at 528 W. Ferry Street, a two-and-a-half-story hipped roof with deck example, with decorative brackets at the eaves and a scroll-work bargeboard featuring a seashell motif in the front gable.

Two examples of contractor or builder constructed Queen Anne buildings are 292 Ashland Avenue and 294 Ashland Avenue. These two buildings are similar in their form and detailing and were likely built by the same developer or builder. Another excellent group of similarly designed houses is 353 Ashland, 355 Ashland, and 357 Ashland Avenue. The basic design and form of these buildings is also common throughout the district, with some slight modifications to detail, ornament and elaboration. These examples on Ashland Avenue are of frame construction, front-gabled, two-and-one-half stories in height, and feature a full-width front entry porch. The second story contains a polygonal bay, and these examples feature curved or square bays with a single window. The pedimented front gable features attic windows. In other examples this window may be paired, or even tripled, and some are set in decorative frames. Another good example, 533 Auburn Avenue, is also an excellent example of this model of Queen Anne style house. This basic typology for many Queen Anne houses in the Elmwood District could be elaborated with decorative porch details, carved pediments above the entry stairs, decorative carved panels in the front gable, stained-glass windows, and other features selected from a builder's catalog of building elements.

The Elmwood District has a few buildings rendered in masonry, primarily in brick. One excellent example of a brick house is 309 Highland Avenue. The two-and-a-half-story side gambrel building features some decorative shingle work in its large front gable dormer. Common to the Queen Anne style, this house mixes the texture of a high rusticated stone foundation and watertable with the brick walls and wood shingles. The projecting wood shingled bay on the side elevation, supported with brackets, is another characteristic feature of the Queen Anne style.

Examples of the Shingle Style share many similarities with the Queen Anne style. The house at 76 Norwood Avenue is a good representative of the style. The large, cross-gabled building features a skin of wood shingles that wraps the building, including the porch columns. A small porch on the second story is brought within the mass of the building, simplifying the profile and outline of the building mass. The broad gables are more simplified than those typical on the Queen Anne style. Another good example of the Shingle Style is the house at 445 Norwood Avenue, a two-an-a-half story side gable example with a broad roof slope that forms a recessed front porch simplifying the mass of the building. A two-story rounded corner tower is pulled into the building, and the entire surface is wrapped in a skin of shingles.

Colonial Revival Houses

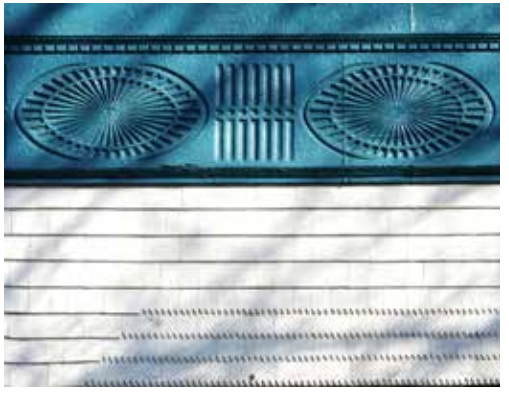
The Colonial Revival style is just as prominent and common as the roughly contemporary Queen Anne and Shingle styles in the Elmwood District. The Colonial Revival style became popular in the country following the 1876 centennial and regained popularity slightly after the Queen Anne style in the 1890s and 1900s. The Colonial Revival, with elements derived from classical architecture, gained further interest during the many world fairs and expositions, including the influential 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The style broadly interpreted forms from America's colonial past such as simple massing, symmetrical facades, often with three or five bays, gambrel roofs, and mixed in classical elements such as columns, balusters, dentils and other elements.

Like the Queen Anne and Shingle styles, the Colonial Revival style examples in the district are also typically two or two-and-a-half-story buildings, of frame construction, and feature much of their elaboration and detailing on the front-facing façade. Here, the massing is typically more simplified than in the Queen Anne style. Although the Colonial Revival style is scattered throughout the district, many of the buildings in the style can be found in the northern area of the Elmwood District, as this area developed slightly later than the southern area, with widespread construction occurring in the 1900s when the Colonial Revival style was at the pinnacle of its popularity. Some buildings reflect a mixed influence from the Colonial Revival and the Queen Anne style, reflective of the similarities and eclecticism between the styles and also the overlapping periods when these styles were popular. Like the Shingle Style and Queen Anne examples in the district, the Colonial Revival features many contractor or builder-constructed works and several more high-style, architect designed examples.


197 Summer Street


54 Claremont Avenue


31 Brantford Place


197 Summer Street, Detail


54 Claremont Avenue, Detail


31 Brantford Place, detail


357 Ashland Avenue


357 Ashland Avenue, detail


357 Ashland Avenue, detail

Architect William L. Schmolle designed many houses in the Elmwood District, including several notable examples of the Colonial Revival style. For developer Russell H. Potter, Schmolle designed a group of seven houses on Ashland Avenue at the corner of Lafayette Avenue, all constructed in 1904, that were built in either the Queen Anne or Colonial Revival styles, indicating the overlapping popularity of the two Victorian-era styles. The house at 587 Ashland Avenue is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style, as its side-gambrel design, oval window, Ionic columned porch and gabled dormers with tracery are all characteristic of the style. Schmolle's design for the nearby house at 603 Ashland Avenue is also an example of the Colonial Style, being a two-and-a-half story frame building with a four-bay front façade. This example features fluted columns and a turned balustrade in its full-width front porch, with prominent modillions. On its hipped roof, which is not uncommon in the district, the building features a hipped dormer with grouped round headed windows with keystones.

The Charles Mosier House at 96 Bidwell Parkway, designed by prominent architects Esenwein and Johnson as the residence of a prominent contractor, is an excellent example of a masonry Colonial Revival house. Masonry in any style was uncommon in the Elmwood District, as it was more expensive to construct and required more time and skilled labor to construct than did a frame house. This example features a side-gabled symmetrical mass with a three-bay front elevation. Prominent stone quoins mark the building's corners. Perhaps the most elegant feature of the building is the semi-circular porch with its Ionic columns and turned balustrade. Three pedimented dormers with fluted pilaster are located on the roof.

The aptly named Colonial Circle displays many examples of Colonial Revival styles, including some of the largest and most ornamented. Many examples on the circle are large frame examples with spacious front porches and classical details. One of the most elaborate examples of the Colonial Revival style is the house at 25 Colonial Circle. A large two-and-a-half story building with a hipped roof with deck, 25 Colonial Circle features an elaborately detailed full-width front porch with Ionic columns, a festooned frieze and balustrade. Polygonal bays on the second story flank a decorative Palladian window group featuring decorative panels. The dormers include a central Palladian unit with a swan's-neck pediment. Neighboring 29 Colonial Circle is similar in form and massing, although it has an enclosed front porch and slightly more modest ornamentation; the two buildings were likely built by the same architect or builder.

Also found in the Elmwood District is a side-gabled Colonial Revival building type, drawing on many early American influences. Designed by Esenwein and Johnson for John C. Greey, the house at 768 Richmond Avenue is one example of this type, featuring a three-bay façade with a slightly overhanging second story on its side elevation. Wood shingles further augment the early Colonial appearance. Common to the Colonial Revival style are three front-gabled dormers featuring pilasters and keystone motifs, elements almost never present in early American construction. Similarly designed is a house at 770 Ashland Avenue. Its symmetrical, three-bay front elevation features a small entry porch with Ionic columns and large sidelights flanking the door. Also sheathed in wood shingles, this building features a modillioned cornice and fanlight in the side gables, elements inspired by early Colonial architecture.

Richmond Avenue is home to a group of several excellent examples of the Colonial Revival style built by the builder-developer James Gibbs. Although each building is individual in its overall appearance, the houses at 601 Richmond Avenue, 605 Richmond Avenue, and 613 Richmond Avenue, were built at about the same time and share many similar Colonial Revival features, such as full-width front porches with classical columns and turned balustrades and rock-faced stone foundations and piers. Their second stories feature polygonal or curved bays crowned with a modillioned cornice, and corner pilasters are employed in all of Gibbs's examples. These houses feature hipped roofs with decorative dormers on the front elevations, utilizing either swan's-neck pediments or decorative front-gabled shapes. Overall, while each individual building gets a slightly different treatment with detailing, this group of Colonial Revival houses shares many common features that tie them to the single builder-developer.

One of the largest and more grand examples of the Colonial Revival style is the house at 580 W. Ferry Street. The massive three-story building features a unique mix with Classical Revival influence, most notably the gambrel pediment with a two-story high colonnade of large Ionic columns. The recessed front wall features tripartite window hoods and a door surround with an elliptical fanlight; a hallmark of the Federal style. This large building is an excellent example of how Colonial Revival architecture from around the turn of the twentieth century took details and elements from the Colonial architectural styles, such as Georgian, Dutch and Federal, and combined them in unique and historically uncommon ways.

Many examples of the Colonial Revival share similarities in form, massing and overall design as houses designed in the Queen Anne style, with a hipped roof with dormer or front gable design, full-width front porch, and polygonal or projecting bay on the second story. By applying classical or colonial details to this basic form, rather than Queen Anne elements, this basic house form could be translated into the various styles by builders or developers. The house at 526 Auburn Avenue is such an example. A relatively modestly ornamented building, the house has a hipped roof, full-width front porch, and paired polygonal bays on the second story, elements common for many houses in Queen Anne, Craftsman and other styles in the area. Here, corner pilasters, simple square columns and eared window and door headers indicate the Colonial Revival. A Palladian-motif front dormer also suggests the use of classical elements common in Colonial Revival styles. Another good example is the house located at 20 Bidwell Parkway (built for Dennis R. Warden), a modest example of this type with only a Palladian-influenced window in the front gable to distinguish it as Colonial Revival. A house built for Delphine Hudson at 557 Richmond Avenue is also a good example of this type of Colonial Revival model, featuring a full-width front porch, paired tripartite windows on the second floor and a hipped roof with a large bonnet-top pedimented gable. Elements that distinguish the house as Colonial Revival include Ionic columns on rusticated stone piers, full-height fluted Ionic pilasters at the building's corner, and the use of Ionic pilasters around windows and doors. The house at 503 W. Delavan Avenue is also a good example of this basic model, with modest Colonial Revival elements (here, a Palladian window in the front gable on its hipped roof) to establish its architectural character.

Tudor Revival Houses

The Tudor Revival grew in popularity in Buffalo around the turn of the twentieth century and remained popular for several decades. Influenced by the medieval architecture of Europe and England, the style is commonly identified by its stucco and faux half-timbered surfaces and occasional use of brick or stone to add texture and character. Often, projecting bays, oriels, or entire second stories were common elements. Perhaps the most significant Tudor Revival house in the district is the house designed by Joseph Lyman Silsbee for Charles Dudley Arnold at 123 Bidwell Parkway. While the front porch is a later sympathetic addition, the house itself features a brick first story and faux half-timbered upper story, characteristic of the style. The flared, steeply pitched cedar shake roof is a rare remaining example of this early roof covering method (once common in the district, but largely replaced by asphalt shingle roofing) that also draws on medieval thatched roofs.

Architects Green and Wicks demonstrated their take on the Tudor Revival style with the unusual William H. Scott House at 20 Dorchester Road. Guided by the odd angle of the parcel as the road bends, this house features a curved, apsidal-like bay. The raised stone watertable, wood clapboard first story and faux half-timbered upper level are all typical of the style. Here, Green and Wicks employed curved and decorative planks in the faux half-timbered section, with some decorative inlayed cross details. The overhanging eaves are supported by heavy carved brackets, and the building features several windows with small diamond shaped panes, reminiscent of medieval windows.

Another excellent example of the style can be found at 460 Richmond Avenue. With its brick construction and use of faux half-timbered elements such as the pediment above the porch, small side porch, and projecting front gable, the house at 460 Richmond Avenue is an excellent


815 Auburn Avenue


587 Ashland Avenue, detail


526 Auburn Avenue


815 Auburn Avenue, detail


587 Ashland Avenue, detail


526 Auburn Avenue, detail


96 Bidwell Parkway


96 Bidwell Parkway, detail


96 Bidwell Parkway, detail

example of the Tudor Revival style. The shaped bargeboards used for the gabled dormers and front gable are also commonly employed Tudor style elements, as is the use of large, simple brackets that seem hand carved.

There are also a small handful of Tudor Revival houses that appear to have been built by the same developer or contractor, possibly James Newton. One of the best examples of this group is 74 Bidwell Parkway. Although painted in non-traditional colors, the building features a brick first story and stucco upper level, with a faux half-timbered pedimented porch, a slightly projecting front gable with a shaped parapet, and a broad molding at the eaves accented with corner crocket-like elements. A carved window surround groups three round-headed windows in the front gable. This model appears to have been replicated with subtle variations in several locations through the Elmwood District, indicating a common builder or developer. The house at 113 Bidwell Parkway is also a Tudor Revival house similar in appearance, featuring the same projecting front gable with corner pendant motif, heavy molding at the eaves and three windows grouped into a decorative molding. Another possible example of this pattern may be the house at 566 Richmond Avenue. This house, built by James Newton as his own private residence, also features that identifiable shaped front gable, with a brick first story and wood shingle above. Like the previous examples, this building also features three grouped windows in the peak of the front gable, although lacking the more ornate frame. The house located at 615 Richmond Avenue (built for James Newton) also shares many common features, such as that prominent front gable with the shaped parapet and corner details; however, it has been rendered in a rough, rock surface that gives it more of a Craftsman style appearance. This basic model may have been specially modified to suit that client's needs and tastes.

At least one building in the district utilizes that common model of full-width front porch, varied second story bay, and front gable design, applying more Tudor Revival style elements than Queen Anne or Colonial Revival. Designed by architect Stephen R. Berry for Charles J. Smith, the house at 746 Richmond Avenue features that basic scheme, although drawing from the Tudor Revival in the use of a brick first story and faux half-timbered upper story.

Craftsman Style Houses

Craftsman (or Arts and Crafts) architecture was popular in the early twentieth century in Western New York, and the style was especially popular in Buffalo thanks to the Prairie style influences of Frank Lloyd Wright, furniture designer Charles Rohlfs, and Elbert Hubbard and the Roycroft arts and crafts community in nearby East Aurora. The Craftsman style was simpler and easier to build in comparison to the earlier Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. Its design and plan also reflected the new ways of living of the early twentieth century, as it was no longer affordable for most families to maintain a large live-in staff. Houses were built smaller and more economically for purchasers of more modest means.

Architecturally, the Craftsman style in the Elmwood District is present in two basic forms: the Craftsman Bungalow and the American Foursquare. The bungalow, typically a one or two-story side gable building with a prominent front porch that is deeply recessed, is less common in the district than in other areas of the city. The American Foursquare, characterized by a two or two-and-a-half story form, square or rectangular massing, generally with a hipped roof and front dormer, is the more common interpretation of the Craftsman style in the Elmwood District. Many examples were constructed in stone, brick or wood shingle and feature elements such as exposed rafter tails and simple, battered square columns or posts on porches. Developed in the first decade of the twentieth century, Dorchester Road features many examples of Foursquare and Bungalow style houses from the 1910s and 1920s.

The house built for William Owens at 147 Claremont Avenue is a good example of a Craftsman Bungalow. This one-and-a-half story side gable frame example features a large full-width front porch, drawn into the mass of the house by the continuous roof slope, and a large front-gable dormer. Modest brackets hold a simple bargeboard, and the building is sheathed in wood shingle. The house at 108 Dorchester Road is also an excellent example of a Craftsman Bungalow, with its large recessed front porch

with brick knee wall and piers and prominent front-gabled dormer, here with mullions shaped in a pattern typical of the Craftsman style. This example features knee-braces under the broadly overhanging eaves at both the side gabled elevations and the dormer, a hallmark of the style.

Foursquare examples are more common in the district, especially in those areas that developed slightly later, in the early twentieth century, primarily north of W. Ferry Street. The house built for Sol Morrison at 516 Lafayette Avenue is an excellent example of this variation, with its full-width front porch (here historically enclosed) with flared gable above the entry stair supported on paired brackets typical of the Chinese-inspired joinery often incorporated into Craftsman style buildings. This example features a brick first story with wood shingle upper story and broad hipped roof with hipped roof dormers, both with exposed rafter tails. The George E. Weisner house at 487 Norwood Avenue is another example of a similar Foursquare house, with its rectangular massing, rock-faced stone foundation, and wood clapboard surface. The open, full-width front porch features a simple balustrade with a decorative X-motif and simple raked columns. Characteristic of the Craftsman style is the flared eaves of the broadly overhanging roof, supported with large paired knee-braces. The large house designed for George S. Staniland by architect William S. Brickell at 617 W. Ferry Street is another variation on the Foursquare model, here with a partial width enclosed front porch. This example also features a hipped roof with flared overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails. Here, decorative shutters are used, with a geometric cut-out, and most windows feature a multi-light pattern. The example located at 573 Richmond Avenue is a typical Foursquare, here with a Roman brick first story with shingles on the upper story and exposed rafter tails at the broad eaves. The house at 497 Richmond Avenue is also an excellent example of a Foursquare, with its brick first story and stucco upper level. The entry porch is accented with a herringbone pattern in the brick piers, and exposed rafter tails are visible at the eaves. The windows are fantastically detailed Craftsman-style leaded glass windows with a geometric pattern reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright windows.

Some Craftsman style houses utilize a stone or pebble finish on their exterior, drawing on associations with natural, hand-made architecture. This finish appears to be a particular favorite of architect Stephen R. Berry, who designed several houses in the Elmwood District. One example of this type of treatment is the house designed by Berry for F. N. Trevor at 90 Dorchester Road, which features a pebbledash surface to accent its otherwise typical Foursquare design. Berry also designed the house for Margaret T. Chamberlain at 499 Richmond Avenue, a Foursquare with a first story rendered in a pebbledash finish and shingle above. Nearby, the Foursquare Berry designed for Chamberlain at 503 Richmond Avenue features an opposite effect, with brick used for the first story and front porch, with pebbledash surfacing on the second story above.

Other Residential Styles

There are several houses that utilize less common and unique architectural styles in their design. Some of these examples are from the district's early development in the 1860s and 1870s, prior to the widespread formulaic construction of houses. Still others were constructed by individual owners, often wealthier clients working to their own individual tastes and desires. Many other examples are an eclectic mix, combining elements and influences from the popular styles of the day.

The Second Empire style is represented by a few extant houses in the Elmwood District, but by the time it was reaching the boom era of construction in the late nineteenth century, the Second Empire style had faded from popularity. This style is generally associated with some of Buffalo's older residential areas, such as Delaware Avenue and the Allentown area. Located on the fringes of the district close to settled areas in Black Rock and Allentown, these houses were likely built in the 1860s or 1870s. The house at 330 Richmond Avenue is a small, wood frame, one-and-a-half-story example, with a bracketed cornice below the signature Mansard roof with dormers. Another example of this style is located at 172 Ashland Avenue. This house is also one-and-a-half stories in height, and features a high stacked stone foundation. Its hallmark Mansard roof is curved with several segmental arched dormers, with a frieze band at the eaves. These modest, small-scale examples of the Second Empire style are rare in the Elmwood District.


292 Ashland Avenue


204 Lancaster Avenue


601 Richmond Avenue


603 Ashland Avenue


204 Lancaster Avenue, detail


601 Richmond Avenue, detail


109 Chapin Parkway


109 Chapin Parkway, detail


109 Chapin Parkway, detail

Buffalo is home to several notable Prairie style buildings designed by master architect Frank Lloyd Wright, including the Darwin D. Martin House. This style was frequently mimicked by other builders and contractors, although they lacked Wright's genius and used more conservative forms. In many instances, including examples in the Elmwood District, the Craftsman style was infused with elements of the Prairie style, such as ribbon windows, broadly overhanging eaves, side entries and other elements. A rare example of a house that has a strong Prairie style influence, with some Foursquare elements, is the house at 34 Bidwell Parkway. The house features an overall Foursquare massing rather than the low-slung profile common to Wright's examples, but has a brick first level that extends nearly the full height of the building, with a stucco band just beneath the eaves. The building features knee-braces, typical of Craftsman style, but has broadly overhanging eaves and a low-pitched hipped roof, which are common elements of the Prairie style. Across the street, architect Stephen R. Berry designed another house with Prairie influences, located at 37 Bidwell Parkway. This two-story house is finished in stucco and features a beltcourse set above the level of the first floor. Connected by this beltcourse are several groups of windows, set just beneath the eaves and in such a way to suggest the ribbon windows typical of Wright's designs. The windows themselves are of intricate leaded-glass design, reminiscent of Wright. The broadly overhanging eaves are also present in this example.

Perhaps one of those most unique and distinguishable houses in the Elmwood District is the French Renaissance style house with Beaux-Arts inspired ornamentation at 356 Richmond Avenue. The house appears to have been constructed for William H. Schmidt, a leading contractor in Buffalo who was said to have worked with stone. His house is a colorful masterpiece of Medina sandstone, with its rusticated first story and "piano nobile"-type upper level of ashlar stone. The recessed arch at the second level features a variety of rich carvings, adding to the exuberance of ornament on the building. An attic course features festoons between each window, beneath the modillioned cornice. This house is a rare example of the highly ornamented, high-style Renaissance Revival style utilized for an upper-middle class neighborhood. Its symmetrical, classical façade with colorful stone and fanciful detailing makes it a notable building on a street dominated by gabled, frame constructed Queen Anne and Colonial Revival buildings.

Multiple-Family Dwellings, Duplexes and Flats

While individual single-family houses dominate the residential architectural of the Elmwood District, the widespread popularity of the area led to the development of many two-family or multiple-family dwellings. These buildings were meant to cater to the middle-income residents who could not afford to purchase a house outright and often were financed or rented directly from real estate developers. Some of these two-family buildings were marketed to buyers who could live on one level and rent out the other to help finance the purchase. These houses indicated new ways of living that were becoming prominent in the country after the turn of the twentieth century, offering an attractive option between living in a tenement house and owning a single-family residence. Architecturally, these multiple-family dwellings were designed to fit into the surrounding neighborhood and are often difficult at first glance to discern. Their appearance was generally due to two factors; deed restrictions and zoning that governed the type and size of building that could be constructed and the aspiration of individual home ownership. They utilize the same architectural styles as previously described for individual residences and were generally of the same height (ranging between two and three-stories in height) and materials as the surrounding buildings. Many of these buildings were built around the turn of the twentieth century or in the early decades of the twentieth century. As a result, many of these buildings were constructed in the northern area of the district, which developed slightly. There are three broad categories of multiple-family dwellings in the district: small apartment buildings, duplexes (also called twin units), and flats. These latter two types strongly resemble the individual, single-family house in size, scale, materials and architectural design.

Multiple-family small residential apartment buildings generally feature one primary entry

door, with apartments accessed via a common hallway or corridor. These buildings are frequently symmetrical in plan, featuring a double-loaded corridor with mirror-image apartments on either side. The building at 77 Richmond Avenue is characteristic of this type, being a brick Colonial Revival style building. The two-story with a flared side-gambrel roof created an additional residential floor, while still correlating to the surrounding building heights. Although it is wider along the street than many single-family houses, the full-width front porch and projecting bays on the second story relate it to the vocabulary of form that is common on the street. This example features an elaborate central entry door, is clearly a double-loaded corridor layout, and appears to feature at least six units in its three levels. There are also two buildings of this type on Potomac Avenue, designed by architect William L. Schmolle for Flora J. Tharle. The building at 576 Potomac Avenue is a Colonial Revival style with a two-and-a-half story design featuring a full-width two-level front porch, polygonal bays on the second story and a central entry, indicating a double-loaded corridor interior plan. Again, a hipped roof with dormers provides an additional level of occupancy while maintaining a similar scale to the surrounding single-family houses. The example at 580 Potomac Avenue is similarly detailed in the Colonial Revival style, and features a similar design and layout.

Another type of multiple-family building found in the Elmwood District is the duplex, which indicates two individual residential units, each featuring its own separate entry, that share a common party-wall and typically share common features or architectural elements. The overall effect emphasizes the appearance of two similar parts combined as a whole, rather than mimicking the appearance of the individual single family house. Sometimes, these duplex buildings are created as mirror-image buildings. Buffalo architects Esenwein and Johnson designed two separate duplex buildings for Ernest C. Coulter at 130-132 Bidwell Parkway and 136-138 Bidwell Parkway. Both buildings are two-and-a-half story, front gable, brick Tudor Revival style buildings, and each individual unit is accessed via a small recessed entry porch at the building's outside corner. Each unit of both buildings features a projecting polygonal oriel at the second level, with brackets tied into the framing of the first-story windows. Projecting above this oriel is a full-width overlapping double gable, which forms a sort of M-shape, also supported with brackets. While each unit is defined, the overall architectural effect unifies the entire building, typing the two units together. A frame example of this type of duplex is the building at 406 W. Utica Street, which features individual entry porches at the far ends of the building, articulated corner bays on the second story, and a continuous bracketed cornice.

The third type of multiple-family dwelling in the Elmwood District divides its residential units vertically, typically with one unit stacked on the other. This type of building is known as a flat. Flats are common in the city, especially in neighborhoods that developed in the 1910s and into the pre-war era. These types of buildings, as advertised by local developers such as Harry E. Phillips, offered homeowners the chance to rent out one unit and apply that rent towards their own mortgage or house payment. These buildings were also popularized in the pattern books of the era. Streets lined with these types of houses characterize the Hertel Avenue/North Buffalo area and the East Side of the city and not the Elmwood District. However, there are a few examples located in the district, primarily constructed in the early decades of the twentieth century. Like the other types of multiple-family residential buildings noted, this type was also built in the same architectural styles as single-family residential houses.

Flats are generally two-and-a-half stories in height, frequently are of brick (generally brick veneer over wood frame) on the lower story with wood clapboard or shingle above. They often have a hipped roof with front dormer window, although sometimes they have a front-gable profile. One of the most definable features of a flat is the dual level full-width front porch, allowing access to the outdoors for both the upper and lower level flats. Sometimes the lower level porch is partially or fully enclosed, with an open porch on the second story. In some instances, both the upper and lower porches were enclosed. As this type of housing was popular in the early decades of the twentieth century, the majority are decorated with modest Craftsman or Colonial Revival influenced elements, although there are


603 Richmond Avenue


605 Richmond Avenue


613 Richmond Avenue


603 Richmond Avenue, detail


605 Richmond Avenue, detail


613 Richmond Avenue, detail


25 Colonial Circle


25 Colonial Circle, detail


25 Colonial Circle, detail

examples that feature late Queen Anne forms such as front-gable massing, shaped shingles and polygonal bays.

Flats became popular during the later development period of the Elmwood District; therefore, they are more common in the northern areas of the district. In 1911, developer Harry E. Phillips had built an excellent collection of flats at the north end of Richmond Avenue, including 804 Richmond and 808 Richmond. They exemplify the hallmarks of the form, including the dual-level front porch. The house at 804 Richmond Avenue is the more standard example of the type, with a hipped roof with dormer and modest Craftsman style influences. The building at 808 Richmond Avenue applied a modest Colonial Revival style to the model but still retains the characteristic dual-level porch. Other excellent examples of the model are located at the northern end of Claremont Avenue and include the house at 151 Claremont Avenue. This example is largely intact and features the characteristic two-and-a-half story, hipped roof configuration, with a recessed entry porch and enclosed porches on both levels. This example features brick veneer on the lower front level with wood clapboard on the side elevations, while the upper level is clad in wood shingle. The house at 151 Claremont Avenue also exhibits its original wood windows, which feature a Craftsman style mullion pattern. Other good examples of the range and variety of the type are located at the north end of Ashland Avenue, including 817 Ashland Avenue. This building draws from the Queen Anne vocabulary that is common in the Elmwood District and is two-and-a-half stories with a front-gable profile. Like many Queen Anne houses in the neighborhood this example features a full-width front porch, a polygonal bay on the second story and a pedimented gable. However, the partially enclosed lower level with a recessed entry porch and an open porch on the second level indicate that this building has two residential units, vertically stacked. The use of brick veneer, wood clapboard and wood shingle also relates to numerous other examples of this type of housing.

Residential Apartment Buildings

While apartment buildings are also multiple-family dwellings, they differ from the previously discussed category in that they are larger buildings, usually several stories in height, and feature numerous apartment units that would be rented from a single landlord or owner. In some instances, they combine commercial space on the ground level with residential floors above. In the Elmwood District they are generally of masonry construction, rather than the more common frame construction of individual single-family or multiple-family houses. Practically, this provided better fire protection for the multi-story, multi-unit buildings, but it also added a level of prestige and elegance to the design and appearance of the building. Most are three to four stories in height, indicating they may be walk-up type apartments without an elevator originally installed. Some apartment buildings were constructed mid-block, surrounded by houses, while other, typically larger, examples were constructed at street corners and intersections, allowing for two sides of the building to face the street and maximizing light in the building. Many apartment buildings were located at or near streetcar stops. Whatever their construction method and materials, apartment buildings were given an architectural treatment in keeping with the popular architectural styles of the day. They are present in the district in a wide range of styles, including Queen Anne, Classical Revival, Tudor Revival and others common throughout the area.

Apartments building living became increasingly popular for all types and social statuses of people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. For those of more modest means, renting an apartment was often a cost-effective alternative to individual home ownership at a time when obtaining a mortgage was a difficult process. Apartment living also became popular for the upper-middle class, especially with younger or unmarried people. This type of living did not require the high cost of upkeep or employing a large staff, like owning a large individual house required.

Two examples of mid-block apartment buildings that are set in the midst of individual houses are located on Richmond Avenue. Similarly designed, the Navarre Apartments at 269 Richmond and the Lazarre Apartments at 273 Richmond are both three-story, brick apartment buildings with an I-plan. Both are rendered in the Colonial Revival style with classical

revival elements, each with a monumental two-level porch with full-height columns. Quoins, cast-stone window headers and a prominent modillioned cornice at the buildings' parapets are also present on these twin buildings. Set on one of the district's most fashionable streets, these elegant buildings would have provided comfortable and stylish accommodations at a reasonable cost. Bidwell Parkway also contains a small selection of examples of this type of apartment building, notably 110-112 Bidwell Parkway (built for Arthur W. Meyer). A three-story Tudor Revival brick apartment building, this example is given the same sort of twin unit appearance of a duplex; however, it extends significantly in the rear and contains several units.

An example of a corner-located, slightly larger apartment building is the Ashland Apartments located at 560 Potomac Avenue (designed for Henry C. Lanctot by architects Carson & Byrens). Located at the prominent intersection of Ashland Avenue and Potomac Avenue, this building is a good example of the slightly larger apartment building type located in the district. This example features a three-story symmetrical design, is constructed of buff brick masonry and features three-story polygonal bays. While modestly ornamented, a beltcourse and diaper patterned brickwork at the parapet give the building an elegant appearance.

The Elmwood District also contains an example of a later form of apartment building, one constructed with a skeleton of steel reinforced concrete. While this construction system had been widely used for factory and commercial building construction, by the 1910s and 1920s its use became more widespread in other building types. Reinforced concrete construction provided benefits such as being relatively inexpensive to build, generally fire resistant, and the internal cage-like steel skeleton allowed for interior partitions to be located in the building with great freedom. The non-structural exterior walls allowed for large windows, perfect for illuminating apartment spaces. Architect Edward H. Moeller designed 400 Elmwood Avenue with a U-shaped plan using reinforced concrete. While the structure is expressed on the exterior, the building is given a modest Classical Revival styling. Concrete piers are turned into pilasters, a decorative motif is molded into a frieze-like band above the first level, and the building's parapet is emphasized. While this economically designed building would have targeted the middle-class resident of more modest means, located on the busy streetcar and automobile thoroughfare in the 1920s, it was given a decorative treatment to make it suit the surrounding architecture within the limited detailing available with concrete.

COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Elmwood Avenue is the primary commercial corridor of the Elmwood District. This corridor largely developed beginning in the early decades of the nineteenth century along the streetcar route, which later became a prominent automobile thoroughfare. Commercial architecture broadly takes two forms. One form is the converted residential building, and the other is those buildings that were originally built as commercial buildings. Some examples of both types of commercial buildings also incorporate residential apartments. There are examples where a residential building has been converted to commercial functions but is otherwise architecturally and visually intact. Architecturally, both types of commercial building were generally designed utilizing the common architectural vocabulary and styles of the day. Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival and Craftsman style commercial buildings are all present in the district.

An early example of an overtly commercial building in the Elmwood District is the building at 312 Bryant Street. An example of a mixed-use building, this three-story brick Italianate style building has a ground floor commercial space, with intact bulkheads, store windows and cast-iron pilasters and decorative elements. The three-bay upper stories, with their segmental arched windows, would have housed the shopkeeper and perhaps other tenants. This is a rare example of a true mixed-use commercial building in the district, located at a key intersection of Bryant Street and Ashland Avenue and pre-dating much of the residential development in the area. This type of building is more common in the Allentown neighborhood.

An example of a commercial building that was constructed during the development of the Elmwood District is located at 298 Ashland Avenue, at the corner of Lexington Avenue.


17 Tudor Place


58 Tudor Place


615 Richmond Avenue


20 Dorchester Road


20 Dorchester Road, detail


64 Tudor Place, detail


460 Richmond Avenue


460 Richmond Avenue, detail


460 Richmond Avenue, detail

Originally housing a real estate office, this large, two-and-a-half story cross-gabled Queen Anne style building resembles a residential building, but was originally designed as a mixed-use commercial building. This frame building features a large half-round display window on the ground floor that appears original to the building, and the recessed corner entry is marked with two arches springing from a single column. Above this lower level commercial space are residential floor, clad in wood shingle and featuring a prominent overhanging gable with brackets. This building is a good example of the attempt to blend the commercial architecture into the residential areas of the district.

There are also examples of larger scale mixed-use commercial buildings, with a handful located in the residential area but others located on Elmwood Avenue. One of the most elegant examples in the district is The Lexington, located at 220 Lexington Avenue. The Lexington is a three-story mixed-use building, with ground floor commercial spaces and residential apartments on the upper two levels. The building is of yellow brick construction, with a brick and Medina sandstone ground level, and features elegant Queen Anne ornamentation. The four storefronts are historic and feature paneled bulkheads, recessed entry doors and a large transom spanning each space. Two-story projecting polygonal bays on the two primary facades feature carved panels, and windows feature shaped sandstone headers with voussoirs. Another comparable example of this type is the building at 914 Elmwood Avenue at the corner of W. Delavan Avenue. This three-story Queen Anne style mixed-use commercial building features ground floor retail with upper residential levels and two-story polygonal bays on the upper floors.

As the historically residential Elmwood Avenue continued to develop into a commercial strip serving the growing Elmwood residential neighborhood, commercial buildings designed during the early twentieth century continued to utilize popular designs and styles from that era. One of the best examples of a commercial building is located at 520 Elmwood Avenue. This two-story terra-cotta Classical Revival style building wraps the corner at W. Utica Street and features full-height Ionic pilasters and a broad entablature with cornice surmounting the entire building. An excellent example of the high level of architectural detail present in even the commercial buildings in the district, this example retains its wood storefront windows and pedimented entry doors. The building at 1000 Elmwood Avenue is a good example of an early twentieth century commercial building. With its rounded corner facing Elmwood and Potomac avenues, and slight shaped parapet with modillioned cornice, the building is vaguely classical in style. Like many commercial buildings along Elmwood Avenue, this example is two stories in height, with several commercial spaces at the street level and residential spaces or office spaces above.

While there are a handful of these designed commercial buildings constructed in the Elmwood District, most of the buildings that serve a commercial function are former residential buildings that have been converted through additions into commercial buildings.

Converted Commercial

The residence converted to commercial building is highly prevalent in the district and gives Elmwood Avenue its significant character. Individual residences had been constructed along Elmwood Avenue beginning in the late nineteenth century, and examples of Queen Anne, Colonial Revival and others were built along the street, as can still be seen in the 300-block of Elmwood Avenue, which is a remnant of early streetscape. Within a decade, many of these houses elsewhere on Elmwood Avenue were converted to serve commercial purposes. While some of the older residential buildings were demolished for purpose built commercial buildings, many of the old houses were adapted to commercial use through the addition of a one or two-story front addition. These additions were sited in what was once the residence's front yard and adhere to the sidewalk edge. These additions may conceal only a portion of the original house or nearly the entire front elevation, with the original house only visible from the side or from a distance and only a tower or roof peak visible above the commercial block. In some instances, the front commercial block addition does obscure the house behind, and it is only visible using aerial maps or from the rear of the building. This type of addition and

conversion is considered significant if it occurred during the period of significance and tells the story of Elmwood Avenue's transition into an increasingly prominent commercial artery for the district.

While there is great variety in this category of building type, there are several excellent examples. A good example of a converted commercial building is located at 712 Elmwood Avenue. For this particular example, the original modest Queen Anne style house is easy to see above the one-story commercial block addition. Other examples, like 746 Elmwood feature larger two-story commercial additions that more completely obscure the original house behind. In this particular example the two-story ashlar Classical Revival commercial block attempts to completely conceal the older building, even resorting to a parapet wall with rail; however, the conical tower roof and a portion of the front gable of the large house behind are still visible. From the street, this type appears to be a purposefully built commercial building. An excellent example of this type is located at 976 Elmwood Avenue. While the original two houses located at the site were built in the 1890s, shortly after a large two-and-a-half story addition was constructed, connecting the two houses into one larger commercial building. One of the earlier commercial conversions along the Elmwood Avenue corridor, the commercial façade almost entirely conceals the older houses behind and gives the appearance of a vaguely classical styled commercial block with decorative moldings, small upper level attic windows with patterned mullions and a paired gable front elevation. While in many examples, especially those located midblock, the commercial addition is located just on the front façade of the house, in some instances the addition wraps around the house. This is the case for the building located at 528 Elmwood Avenue at the corner of W. Utica Street. The two-story masonry 1920s-era commercial addition rendered in a vaguely Craftsman style wraps two sides of the older house, of which only a portion of the conical tower roof is visible above the commercial building's parapet.

ECCLESIASTIC ARCHITECTURE

Illustrations of the buildings cited in this section are located in the main text, especially in Chapter 8.

As the city's population shifted northward beginning in the 1880s, many of Buffalo's existing churches and religious organizations also began to migrate from downtown to be closer to their congregants and because their downtown land was in demand for commercial growth. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Buffalo's religious buildings were located close to the population center, with many on Church Street or Main Street. As residents moved northward out of the rapidly commercializing downtown area after the Civil War, churches were forced to choose between relocating or closing due to dwindling congregants within walking distance. Still many other congregations were founded in the Elmwood District because of the number of residents and the variety of religions in the area.

Many of the church buildings reflect traditional Protestant religious groups such as Presbyterian, Lutheran and Episcopal denominations. These Protestant faiths reflect the background of the Elmwood Avenue community during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as many residents were of Western and Northern European descent. Later, as the city's Jewish population grew and located in the Elmwood Avenue area, a Jewish synagogue also was also built in the Elmwood District. Interestingly for a city with a predominantly Roman Catholic population, there were no Catholic churches constructed in the district.

Churches and religious buildings in the Elmwood District are typically of stone or brick construction and later feature structural steel skeletons. Many of the earliest wood-frame church buildings in the district, noted as being founded as early as the 1870s, were subsequently demolished or removed to make way for more permanent, large-scale religious buildings by the late nineteenth century. They frequently occupy highly-visible sites in the district, located at street intersections or at Olmsted's landscaped circles, allowing the church to be visible from many angles.

Architectural styles present in the churches and religious buildings in the Elmwood District are typical of those designed and built during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These styles include the Gothic Revival and Romanesque Revival styles that were nationally popular during this era. During the early


90 Dorchester Road


90 Dorchester, detail


573 Richmond Avenue


172 Ashland Avenue


94 Windsor Avenue


94 Bidwell Parkway


356 Richmond Avenue


356 Richmond Avenue, detail


356 Richmond Avenue, detail

twentieth century, more modern tastes prevailed, and churches built during the 1920s display influences from simplified and streamlined Art Deco architecture.

The earliest known religious building built in the Elmwood District was a small chapel building. Westminster Presbyterian Church, located on Delaware Street, constructed the Hope Chapel at the northeast corner of Rogers Street (Richmond Avenue) and Utica Street around 1870. The small building was used for Sunday School functions. One of the earliest churches in the district was the Richmond Avenue Methodist-Episcopal Church, located at Ferry Circle. Because it was one of the earliest churches in the Elmwood district, many who worshiped there were of other denominations. In April 1885, plans for establishing a new church were put before the Buffalo Methodist Union, who authorized the selection of a site. A parcel at the corner of Richmond Avenue and Ferry Street was donated for the site of the new building, and a wooden chapel was constructed in August of 1885. Because of the influx of parishioners, the church underwent several expansions. The original wood chapel was enlarged in 1889 before a new stone chapel building was constructed in 1891. Only a few years later, the congregation continued to grow, precipitating the construction of a large new addition. Designed by local architects Metzger and Greenfield, the "temple" addition, as it was called, was a large Medina sandstone building with a prominent corner tower, constructed in 1898.

Another of the earliest church buildings to be built in the Elmwood District was St. Luke's Episcopal Church, located at 79 Richmond Avenue at the corner of Summer Street. The congregation was initially founded in 1857, growing out of a Sunday school run by the Episcopal Diocese to establish a presence in Buffalo's West Side. The St. Luke's congregation met at the corner of Niagara Street and Virginia Street in the 1850s before relocating to a small frame chapel building on Maryland Streets near Niagara Street in the Black Rock neighborhood. The congregation continued to grow, moving to a larger building on Niagara Street between Hudson and Maryland Streets. By 1886, the congregation was again looking for a larger building, and it purchased a lot on Richmond Avenue, constructing a 400-seat frame church building. A Guild Hall was built on the west side of the building in 1893. This building is the sole remaining wood-frame church in the neighborhood. Although modified with non-historic siding, the simple front-gable church profile is still clearly visible.

At about the same time as St. Luke's Episcopal Church was being founded in the Elmwood District, the Richmond Avenue Church of Christ was also established, located at Richmond Avenue and Bryant Street. The Buffalo Church of Christ congregation was initially established in 1870, holding services in a building at Tupper and Ellicott Streets. As with other churches developing in Buffalo at the same time, the number of parishioners grew. The congregation built a small brick chapel at Maryland and Cottage Streets in 1873, which was quickly outgrown, precipitating the construction of the building on Richmond Avenue in 1886-87. This new Medina sandstone church was designed by prominent local architect Cyrus K. Porter.

One example of a church that migrated northward was the Lafayette Street Presbyterian Church, which was founded initially as the "Park Church Society," the congregation dating back to 1845. In 1863, the congregation constructed a Gothic Revival church building on the north side of Lafayette Square in downtown Buffalo. Once the city's population began to shift northward, the church was forced to follow suit, purchasing a large parcel of land on the east side of Elmwood Avenue at Bouck Street in what was described at the time as vacant farmland. In 1894-1896, a large Medina sandstone church building was constructed on the parcel by the architectural firm of Lansing and Beierl. No longer located on Lafayette Square, questions were raised about what to name the new building. Some parishioners suggested "Elmwood Avenue Presbyterian Church" in deference to their new location; however, in July of 1898 the congregation successfully petitioned the city to change the name of the street from Bouck Street to Lafayette Avenue, ending the debate. Thus, the new church was able to retain its original identity, carrying the name of "Lafayette" from downtown to the northern suburbs, becoming the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church.

The Pilgrim Congregational Church constructed its first building at Richmond Avenue

at Breckenridge Street in 1890. The congregation was originally founded in 1884 as part of the First Congregational Church of Buffalo, who held services in the old Niagara Square Baptist Church (demolished). Pilgrim Congregational Church was established out of a Sunday School program run by this church. Although noted as being a frame building, by 1894 the building had been replaced by a brick structure.

Unlike many of the other churches which originated downtown and moved northward, St. Luke's German Evangelical Church was founded in the 11th Ward. The congregation began in 1873, when a group of thirty men met at the home of William Mueller at 470 W. Utica Street, looking to form a German language church, known as St. Lucas in German. In 1873, the congregation purchased the Hope Chapel building from Westminster Presbyterian Church to house their services. This small building was quickly outgrown and was taken down and replaced with a new larger frame church building in 1897. This sizeable new building featured a 132-foot tall steeple, which made it a notable landmark on Richmond Avenue at the time. By the twentieth-century, the building no longer suited the congregation's needs. Buffalo architect Robert A. Wallace was contracted to design and build the new limestone church building in 1911.

The congregation responsible for building St. John's Episcopal Church on Lafayette Avenue at the head of Howard Street (now Norwood Avenue) dates back to Trinity Episcopal Church in 1845. In that year, a group splintered from the church due to the practice of pew rental and later built a new church on Washington and Swan Streets in 1848. By 1883, the church was reorganized as St. John's Free Church, which was entirely supported by its congregation. Due to the dwindling number of members in its downtown location, in 1892 the church broke ground on a new stone Gothic Revival chapel on Lafayette Street in the new district, abandoning the downtown building.

Another good example of the Gothic Revival style is the former English Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer at 625 W. Ferry Street. Again located at a prominent intersection, this example of an English Gothic style features the characteristic buttressing and gablets that are typical of Gothic Revival designs. The Former Pilgrim Congregational Church at 531 Richmond Avenue is also a good example of the Gothic Revival as it became simplified and more streamlined in the early twentieth century. This T-plan church features Gothic Revival elements such as a large, pointed stained-glass windows with tracery and buttressing. Its smooth brick exterior, rather than rough, rock-faced stone, begins to hint at the more simplified modern church designs that would become popular in the 1910s and 1920s.

Another example of this transition away from medieval forms such as Gothic or Romanesque Revival style is the former Temple Beth El building located at 155 Richmond Avenue, now a residence. This two-level transitional Stripped Classicism building is clad in brick and features several cast-stone elements that surround the entry doors and forms a huge frieze with the Star of David. Crowning the building is a massive verdigris copper dome that indicates the presence of a central plan, vaulted interior space. While this building does not occupy a prominent corner lot and is located on an interior lot, it maximizes its appearance through its colorful red and green exterior and its dramatic entry portico.

Designed by nationally prominent architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue shortly before his death, the addition to the current St. John's-Grace Episcopal Church at 13 Bidwell Parkway is one of the more modern styled churches in the Elmwood District. The earlier chapel building is an excellent small example of a Gothic Revival building, and the larger addition designed by Goodhue reflects the modernization of the Gothic forms, a hallmark of his proto-Art Deco architectural style. The ornamentation is rendered in a flat, bas-relief style that hints at later Art Deco carvings. Even the flat nature of the bell gable hints at the flat, planar forms of the emerging Art Deco style. Goodhue's church turned the orientation of the church towards Olmsted's Bidwell Place/Colonial Circle, shifting the orientation of the church towards this feature.

Appendix A concludes with a description of St. John's-Grace Episcopal Church. This is significant because this congregation is the result of several congregations which arrived together during the early years of the future Elmwood District to erect a chapel overlooking an Olmsted

273 Richmond Avenue

808 Richmond Avenue

110 Bidwell Place

273 Richmond Avenue, detail

32-34 Granger Place

110 Bidwell Place, detail

Elmwood Avenue streetscape

The Lexington

Park Lane Condominium

circle. Built in the 19th century, the chapel design is reminiscent of the Gothic style that has been associated with the Episcopal Church for centuries. Significantly, the design of the addition, built in the 20th century, speaks to the renewal of that tradition in a forward-looking, proto-Art Deco style. The congregation endures because it has welcomed the neighborhood as an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible place.

St. John's-Grace Episcopal Church hosted and supported the neighborhood-led initiative to nominate the Elmwood Historic District for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The result is this book.

"Nature and man seem to have worked harmoniously in the creation of what is known as Buffalo's 'Elmwood District'." –*Commerce*, 1902

May we renew this legacy for another century in Buffalo and in similar communities across the nation.

St. John's-Grace Episcopal Church, the place where the Elmwood District Conservancy was conceived.

Photograph by Clinton Brown, FAIA

APPENDIX B

Selected Examples of Contemporary Architecture in Historic Contexts in Buffalo, New York

The principle thesis of this book is that the Elmwood District needs to continue to renew itself by attracting growth and investment to retain the arc of its dynamic history well into another century for a greater and more diverse population.

This will be possible and practical through appreciating the Elmwood District's distinctive qualities and extending them into the future. With an understanding of the ethos that underlies the design of the Elmwood idea, a place built around a public park where the beauty of nature would enhance the quality of all lives, the Elmwood District will rise in value. Its common wealth will be cultivated and enhanced if it retains its intrinsic character as a community renewed and managed for the common good, as a place in which everyone can find their way to live well.

Recent and current new growth and investment are producing new buildings that fall short of these ideals. A walk along Elmwood Avenue today would reveal newly built buildings of breath-taking unimaginative generic character ignorant of their setting or are a pastiche of false historic architectural elements. One Elmwood District resident decried that "a dozen of the indigenous buildings were demolished for cookie cutter mixed use buildings that are out of scale for the neighborhood." Another sighed, "I am making peace with this new corner building."

Yet signs of understanding are emerging in the Elmwood District and nearby that an appreciation of the balance of commercial and cultural is emerging, as portrayed in some examples of exemplary contemporary architecture in historic contexts. These examples illustrate an aesthetic set of principles concerned with the nature and appreciation of beauty complimentary to the surrounding architecture and scale of the neighborhood. These can be summarized as compatibility and congruence of mass, height, and building materials that acknowledge and reasonably conform to the surrounding scale and structures while at the same time expressing one-of-a-kind and significant, distinguishing character reflecting the Elmwood District's historic nature that no two buildings were exactly alike. Witold Rybczynski has labeled this "localtecture," that is, the notion of relying more on architects who know their city to design its renewal from within.

The Chautauqua Institution Grounds show how this is done well, as described by John L. Shedd: "Chautauqua takes every effort to adhere to the federal Secretary of Interior's Guidelines used across the country, while also understanding that the evolving culture of Chautauqua Institution is also a balancing and guiding principal."

This book was conceived and written in the humble and ardent hope that the case has been made that understanding and appreciating the Elmwood District in its regeneration will continuously renew the common wealth of this heritage place. The result? Appendix B of a future edition of this book will include many more examples of structures that gracefully integrate new design into an everyday living heritage landscape both in Buffalo and in similar neighborhoods nationwide.

One Elmwood District family is returning their formerly grassy front lawn on a prominent corner lot to its forest origins through participating in the Western New York Native Plants Collaborative's initiative that encourages re-establishing native plants in gardens. This natural restoration complements the improvements the family has made to their residence, including adding a geothermal heating and cooling system. The first Elmwood District residents lived well here before there was an electrical grid. This family is living well here off the grid.

Photography by Clinton Brown, Sign courtesy of WNY Native Plants Collaborative

A simple approach to accommodate growth gracefully is to adaptively use and historically rehabilitate existing obsolete buildings constructed for a purpose that is no longer marketable to accommodate new uses that are marketable. The Bryant Parish Condominium, created in 1992 in the former Richmond Avenue Church of Christ, designed in 1886 by Cyrus Kinne Porter, at the corner of Richmond Avenue and Bryant Street, illustrates the value of this approach. Resident automobile parking is accommodated beneath the building with little exterior impact. Residential condominiums that fill the interior retain historic features of the former church, connecting past and present in one form of an everyday living heritage landscape.

Photograph courtesy of Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

This single-family house located on Penhurst Park was built circa 1911 with a masonry first floor and a central projecting entry, a stucco-finished second floor and a "jerkinhead," or "clipped gable," roof. During a recent addition and alteration project, these essential public-facing features were restored and strikingly painted so as to highlight their formal characteristics, and a large addition of steel and glass in a contemporary design was added at the rear. Its presence is hinted at in the side elevations. This is a graceful accommodation of the new and the old for the home of a long-time Buffalo business leader and philanthropist and his family and their notable collection of contemporary art.

Photographs courtesy of John Wingfelder Architect

This recently constructed house on Chapin Parkway at Potomac Avenue replaced a modest one-and-a-half story, vernacular wood frame house that was built circa 1950 on a triangular lot situated among some of Elmwood's most impressive mansions. The design of the new house includes the scale, masonry, projecting porch leading to an elevated first floor, flanking two-story window bays and hipped roof characteristics of its older neighbors, yet they are combined in a refreshing and confident early 21st century design that fits with dignity among its imposing early 20th century neighbors.

Photographs courtesy of John Wingfelder Architect

This recently built house on Lafayette Avenue, between Elmwood and Delaware avenues, replaced a like-sized residence that had been listed on the National Register of Historic Places as contributing to the Elmwood Historic District East. Yet, after investigating whether to rehabilitate that house or to build new for their growing family, the owners decided that the condition of the house did not allow it to be economically rehabilitated, despite the historic tax credit, nor did it fit a 21st century family lifestyle. For instance, early Lafayette Avenue houses featured small kitchens operated by staff while the family sat in the living room or den; today's families prefer live-in kitchens. The Buffalo Preservation Board agreed and allowed the demolition of the older house for the construction of a new house that fits its Lafayette Avenue context.

Photographs courtesy of John Wingfelder Architect

Some of the Elmwood Avenue block between Bird and Forest avenues retains its original streetscape of large residential buildings that are set back from the street with front lawns and without the commercial storefront additions that were built in the 1920s and '30s. This coffee house on the west side of Elmwood Avenue exhibits a nice balance of a mostly restored historic façade with a contemporary storefront that is accessed by a generous front porch of contemporary design and a front lawn that is half planted and half paved. The historic and the contemporary architecture and uses are each clearly expressed in graceful balance.

Photograph by Clinton Brown

Located on the northwest corner of Main and W. Ferry streets, just east of the Elmwood District, is a model for addition and alteration projects. Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME), a fair housing organization, purchased a dilapidated building and vacant lot to become a headquarters and multi-family residence. The architect designed the rehabilitation of the historic building and added a distinctively contemporary yet compatible addition. Some of the architectural elements of the addition extend along the first floor W. Ferry Street storefront of the historic building in a way that visually embraces the historic and contemporary.

This is a particularly fitting architectural approach to integrating historic and new for HOME, an organization which promotes the value of diversity and ensures that the voices of all people are heard. This could be emulated in the Elmwood District, which lacks examples of this inclusive approach to architectural and population diversity.

Photographs courtesy of Charles Gordon Architect

The developer was able to acquire eight ruined and blighted buildings and a vacant lot on this 19th century historic Genesee Street block in downtown Buffalo for Genesee Gateway, an adaptive use and historic rehabilitation project that is notable for two important reasons.

Inside, the reconfiguration strategy was to unite the interior floors across the multiple buildings in the hope of renting large floor areas to prospective office tenants; outside, the original historic façades were retained and restored. This approach preserved the individual street identities of buildings originally constructed for families who lived above their stores, while meeting today's market demand for new office space. The rental income from these offices would underwrite the cost of the project. Returning to their historic uses would not pay for the restoration of these historic buildings that constitute an important gateway to downtown Buffalo.

Another notable aspect of this project is the infilling of a vacant lot in the middle of the block with a contemporary building. The flush location of the front facade and the height of the new building closely align with its neighbors. The design of the new building's façade both acknowledges and borrows from the architectural features of its 19th century neighbors, yet it is masterfully designed to clearly express its own identity as a 21st century building.

As of this writing, no similar progressive heritage project has been completed in the Elmwood District.

Photographs by James Cavanaugh Photography, courtesy of Flynn Battaglia Architects

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

[1] William Bradford, "OF THEIR VOYAGE, AND HOW THEY PASSED THE SEA; AND OF THEIR SAFE ARRIVAL AT CAPE COD," in *Of Plymouth Plantation: 1620-1647* (New York: Modern Library, 1981), http://www.histarch.illinois.edu/plymouth/bradford.html.

ONE

[2] in collaboration with Walter S. Dunn Jr, "CHABERT DE JONCAIRE DE CLAUSONNE, DANIEL-MARI," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* 4, no. University of Toronto (1979), http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/chabert_de_joncaire_de_clausonne_daniel_marie_.

[3] in collaboration with Walter S. Dunn Jr.

[4] "History and Collections," *Old Fort Niagara* (blog), accessed February 10, 2022, https://www.oldfortniagara.org/history.

[5] Buffalo Historical Society, *History of Buffalo*, vol. I, n.d., 67.

TWO

[6] Buffalo Historical Society, "Personal Sketches," in *Commencement of Settlement in Erie County*, n.d., 697.

[7] Buffalo Historical Society, 698.

THREE

[8] Buffalo Historical Society, 698.

[9] Hodge William, "The William Hodge Papers," in *Recalling Pioneer Days*, ed. Frank Severance, vol. XXVI (Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Historical Society, 1922), 202–4.

[10] William, "The William Hodge Papers."

FOUR

[11] William, 232.

[12] William, 176,291.

[13] "Deer Shot in Utica Street," *Buffalo Courier*, February 19, 1911.

[14] Franklin Hough, "Census of the State of New York for 1855: Commencement of Settlement in Erie County" (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1857), http://nysl.nysed.gov/Archimages/88819.PDF.

[15] Hough, 233.

[16] *Atlas of the City of Buffalo, New York* (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins & Co, 1872).

[17] *The Commercial Advertiser Directory for the City of Buffalo* (Buffalo, NY: Thomas and Lathrops, 1855).

[18] Julia Snow, *Early Recollections of Buffalo* (Buffalo Historical Society, 1913), 141.

[19] Frank Severance, ed., "Two Old Time Societies," in *Publication of the Buffalo Historical Society: Recalling Pioneer Days*, vol. XXVI, 1922, 328–39.

[20] Christopher Brown, The Coit House Mystique: *The Story of George Coit's Historic Home*, 2007, 18–19, https://buffaloah.com/a/va/414/coit.pdf.

[21] "Benjamin Hodge Esq," *The Buffalo Daily Republic*, September 26, 1853.

[22] A.J. Downing, "The Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste.," J*ames Vick Jr* IV (1854).

[23] Frank Jr. Sadowski, "Historical Images of the Erie Canal," *The Erie Canal* (blog), accessed February 11, 2022, https://www.eriecanal.org/general-1.html.

[24] William, "The William Hodge Papers," 184–85.

[25] William, 177–78.

[26] "A Public Park," *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*, July 16, 1856.

[27] David A Gerber, "The Germans Take Care of Our Celebrations," in *Hard at Play: Leisure in America*, 1840-1940, ed. Katheyn Grover (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 52–53.

[28] "A Public Park."

[29] "A Public Park."

[30] *Eleventh Annual Report of the Buffalo Park Commissioners* (Buffalo, NY: Young & Lockwood, 1881), 76.

FIVE

[31] *Our Better Nature: Celebrating 150 Years of Olmsted in Buffalo & America's 1st Urban Park System*, April 10, 2018, Buffalo History Museum Exhibit.

[32] Francis Kowsky, *The Best Planned City in the World: Olmsted, Vaux, and the Buffalo Park System* (Library of American Landscape, 2018).

[33] Kowsky, 56.

[34] Kowsky, 49.

[35] Kowsky, 50.

[36] Kowsky, 50.

[37] S.M Broderick, "William McMillan-Superintendent of Parks," *Olmsted in Buffalo* (blog), n.d., February 18, 2022.

[38] Kowsky, *The Best Planned City in the World: Olmsted, Vaux, and the Buffalo Park System*, 62.

[39] *Second Annual Report of the Buffalo Park Commissioners* (Buffalo, NY: Young & Lockwood, 1872).

[40] Peter Emslie, *Map of a Part of the City of Buffalo*, 1866, 1866.

[41] *Third Annual Report of the Buffalo Park Commissioners* (Buffalo, NY: Warren & Johnson, 1873), 11.

[42] *Fourth Annual Report of the Buffalo Park Commissioners* (Buffalo, NY: Warren & Johnson, 1874), 19.

SIX

[43] John R Stilgoe, *Borderland: Origins of the American Suburb, 1820-1939* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 1.

[44] Sanford B Hunt, *The Manufacturing Interests of the City of Buffalo Including Sketches of the History of Buffalo: With Notices of Its Principal Manufacturing Establishments* (Buffalo, NY: C.F.S. Thomas, 1866), 24.

[45] J.N. Larned, Charles E. Fitch, and Ellis H. Roberts, *A History of Buffalo, Delineating the Evolution of the City* (New York: Progress of the Empire State Co, 1911), 148.

[46] Mark Goldman, *High Hopes: The Rise and Decline of Buffalo, New York* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1983), 63.

[47] Goldman, 78–79.

[48] Scott G Eberle and Joseph A Grande, *Second Looks: A Pictorial History of Buffalo and Erie County* (Norfolk: Donning Co, 1987), 85.

[49] Partnership for the Public Good, "Affordable Housing Strategies for the City of Buffalo," December 2017.

[50] Henry Hudson Holly, *Holly's Country Seats: Containing Lithographic Designs for Cottages, Villas, Mansions, Etc. with Their Accompany Outbuildings* (London, U.K.: Appleton, 1863), 21.

[51] Holly, 30.

[52] Holly, 21.

[53] Holly, 27.

[54] Holly, 22.

SEVEN

[55] "Advertisements," *The Outlook* 68, no. 18 (August 31, 1901).

[56] Otis H Williams, *Buffalo, Old and New: A Chronological History of the Queen City of the Lakes, Its Government and Public Institutions, Its Manufacturing, Commercial and Financial Industries* (Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Courier, 1901).

[57] Goldman, *High Hopes: The Rise and Decline of Buffalo*, New York, 131.

[58] Len Hendershott, *A Spot On The Lake* (Lulu.com, 2015), 112.

[59] "The New Elmwood District," *Commerce*, August 1903.

[60] "The New Elmwood District."

[61] New York Historical Society Museum & Library, "New York State Married Women's Property Law," n.d., Resource 16:

[62] New York Historical Society Museum & Library.

[63] Martin Wachaldo, "Louise Blanchard Bethune: America's First Professional Woman Architect," January 20, 2021, The Buffalo History Museum.

[64] Heather Livingston, "Doer's Profile: Susan Maxman, FAIA," *Face of the AIA*, 2008, https://info.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek08/0215/0215dp.htm.

[65] Ellen Taussig, *Your Host, Peter Gust, of the Park Lane Restaurant, His Story* (Boston: Herman Publishing, 1979).

[66] Susan J. Eck, "The Porter Norton Mansion," *Western New York History*, 2016, http://www.wnyhistory.org/portfolios/more/HOTELS_RESTAURANTS/norton_park_lane/norton_park_lane_1.htm.

[67] Alison Fleischmann, "800 West Ferry Street- An Elegant Address," *Buffalo as an Architectural Museum* (blog), accessed February 25, 2022, https://buffaloah.com/a/wferry/800/af.html.

[68] Holly, *Holly's Country Seats: Containing Lithographic Designs for Cottages, Villas, Mansions, Etc. with Their Accompany Outbuildings*, 29.

[69] "About Sem," *Buffalo Seminary* (blog), accessed February 25, 2022, https://www.buffaloseminary.org/about/about-sem.

[70] "Title Search for 408 Ashland Avenue," n.d.

[71] Colin Dabkowski, "How Fate, His Mom and the Garden Walk Brought Gundlach's Gift to the Albright-Knox," *The Buffalo News*, September 24, 2016.

[72] Dabkowski.

[73] Colin Dabkowski, "Jeffrey Gundlach: The Man behind the Millions," *The Buffalo News*, June 30, 2017.

[74] "New Semi-Private Park to Be Located on Site of Y.M.C.A Recreation Park," *Buffalo Courier*, October 31, 1904, 12.

[75] "New Semi-Private Park to Be Located on Site of Y.M.C.A Recreation Park."

[76] "New Semi-Private Park to Be Located on Site of Y.M.C.A Recreation Park."

[77] "Mrs. Daniel K Stucki to Instruct Women Autoists in Buffalo," *American Artisan* 74 (July 14, 1917).

[78] Austin Fox, "The Greening of Buffalo: How Architect E.B. Green Shaped the Profile of the City," *Buffalo as an Architectural Museum* (blog), n.d., https://buffaloah.com/a/archs/ebg/fox.html.

EIGHT

[79] "The New Elmwood District," *Greater Buffalo*, 1902.

[80] Francis Kowsky and Cherie Messore, "Buffalo's Best" (The Preservation Coalition of Erie County, 1987).

[81] Chuck LaChiusa, "Albright Knox Art Gallery: East Elevation of the 1905 Building," *Buffalo as an Architectural Museum*, n.d., https://buffaloah.com/a/elmwd/1285/alblake/.

[82] Mark Goldman, *Albright: The Life and Times of John J. Albright* (Buffalo: City of Light Publishing, 2017).

[83] David Steele, "Then and Now: School 30 Vs M&T Bank," *Buffalo Rising*, October 29, 2013, https://www.buffalorising.com/2013/10/then-and-now-school-30-vs-mt-bank/.

[84] Clinton Brown Company Architecture pc, "'Buffalo Seminary' National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form" (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, n.d.).

[85] "History," *Canisius High School*, 2020, https://www.canisiushigh.org/about-us/history.

[86] Martin Wachaldo, *Oakland Place: Gracious Living in Buffalo* (Buffalo, NY: City of Light Publishing, 2006), 16.

[87] Goldman, *Albright: The Life and Times of John J. Albright*, 39–40.

[88] "History," *Community Music School* (blog), accessed March 1, 2022, https://communitymusicbuffalo.org/history/.

[89] "History of Temple Beth El: The First 100 Years" (Temple Beth El of Greater Buffalo, 1947), https://www.btzbuffalo.org/tbe-1st-100.

[90] Phil Dougharty, Interview with Rector Dougharty, interview by Clinton Brown, January 2010.

[91] Newell Nussbaumer, "Parish Commons Is Anything but Common!," *Buffalo Rising* (blog), April 12, 2012, https://www.buffalorising.com/2012/04/parish-commons-is-anything-but-common/.

[92] Nussbaumer.

[93] James Napora, *Houses of Worship: A Guide to the Religious Architecture of Buffalo, New York* (Buffalo, NY: State University of New York at Buffalo, 1995).

[94] Nancy Blumenstalk Mingus, "John H. Coxhead: Buffalo's Forgotten Architect," *Buffalo Spree*, n.d.

[95] "Forest Lawn: A Buffalo Landmark and an Early Part of the Rural Cemetery Movement," *The Landmarker*, Fall/Winter 2004.

[96] "Wright-Designed Mausoleum Is Complete in Forest Lawn," *The Landmarker*, Fall/Winter 2004.

[97] James F. O'Gorman, *Three American Architects: Richardson, Sullivan, and Wright, 1865-1915* (University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[98] Wachaldo, O*akland Place: Gracious Living in Buffalo*, 16.

NINE

[99] Mary Bronson Hartt, "By-Products of An Exposition," *Buffalo Courier*, October 20, 1901.

[100] Hartt.

[101] "Wrecker's Hammer Will Level Beautiful Mansion," *The Buffalo News*, May 26, 1939.

[102] Henry Louis Taylor Jr., "Black in Buffalo: A Late Century Progress Report," *Buffalo: Magazine of the Buffalo News*, 1996.

[103] Peter Yates, "The Peter Yates Musical Composition and Material Collection, Mid 20th Century," n.d., Buffalo, NY, State University of New York, College at Buffalo.

[104] Elizabeth Licata, "1967-2007: Forty Years, Forty Events," *Buffalo Spree*, n.d.

[105] Steve Cichon, "Buffalo's Most Infamous Billboard: Will the Last Worker out of WNY Turn out the Light?," *Buffalo Stories Archives & Blog* (blog), March 16, 2016, blog.buffalostories.com.

[106] "Joan Bozer's Special Career Retiring Lawmaker Gave Voice to Slighted Issues," *The Buffalo News*, December 27, 1995.

[107] "William M.E. Clarkson, 91, Headed Graphic Controls, Shaped Downtown Development," *The Buffalo News*, May 4, 2018.

[108] Judi Lipsey, Correspondence with Judi Lipsey, interview by Clinton Brown, Email, September 2018.

[109] Stanford Lipsey, *Affinity of Form* (powerHouse Books, 2009).

[110] "William M.E. Clarkson, 91, Headed Graphic Controls, Shaped Downtown Development."

[111] Gardens Buffalo Niagara, "Mission & Core Values," n.d., https://www.gardensbuffaloniagara.com/about-2.

[112] "It Takes a Village … to Make a Place: Elmwood Avenue in Buffalo," *Center for Community Progress* (blog), January 30, 2014, communityprogress.org/blog/it-takes-a-village-to-make-a-place/.

[113] "Meet, Stay & Play 2018: Western New York's Executive Travel Guide," 2018.

TEN

[114] "Letter: Elmwood Village Is Being Compromised by Development," *The Buffalo News*, August 31, 2015.

[115] Jonathan D. Epstein, "Gates Circle and Waterfront Village Projects Advance, but Ellicott's Elmwood Project Blocked," *The Buffalo News*, July 20, 2018.

[116] "The New Elmwood District," August 1903.

[117] "Cultural Landscapes," *UNESCO World Heritage Convention*, accessed February 25, 2022, https://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape/.

[118] Carol Valentine Garden, "About Cultural Landscapes," *The Cultural Landscape Foundation*, n.d., https://www.tclf.org/places/about-cultural-landscapes.

[119] "Understand Cultural Landscapes," *National Park Service*, accessed February 25, 2022, https://www.nps.gov/subjects/culturallandscapes/understand-cl.htm.

[120] Dolores Hayden, *Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism, 1790-1975* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1976), 14.

[121] "150 Forward: The Strategic Plan for Chautauqua Institution 2019-2028" (Chautauqua, NY: Chautauqua Institution, 2019), https://150fwd.chq.org/.

[122] "150 Forward: The Strategic Plan for Chautauqua Institution 2019-2028."

[123] "150 Forward: The Strategic Plan for Chautauqua Institution 2019-2028."

[124] John Shedd, Correspondence with John Shedd, interview by Clinton Brown, Email, July 2021.

[125] Shedd.

Bibliography

"150 Forward: The Strategic Plan for Chautauqua Institution 2019-2028." Chautauqua, NY: Chautauqua Institution, 2019. https://150fwd.chq.org/.

Buffalo Commercial Advertiser. "A Public Park," July 16, 1856.

Buffalo Seminary. "About Sem." Accessed February 25, 2022. https://www.buffaloseminary.org/about/about-sem.

"Advertisements." *The Outlook* 68, no. 18 (August 31, 1901).

"*Atlas of the City of Buffalo, New York.*" Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins & Co, 1872.

The Buffalo Daily Republic. "Benjamin Hodge Esq." September 26, 1853.

Bradford, William. "OF THEIR VOYAGE, AND HOW THEY PASSED THE SEA; AND OF THEIR SAFE ARRIVAL AT CAPE COD." In *Of Plymouth Plantation: 1620-1647*. New York: Modern Library, 1981. http://www.histarch.illinois.edu/plymouth/bradford.html.

Broderick, S.M. "William McMillan-Superintendent of Parks." *Olmsted in Buffalo* (blog), n.d. February 18, 2022.

Brown, Christopher. *The Coit House Mystique: The Story of George Coit's Historic Home*, 2007. https://buffaloah.com/a/va/414/coit.pdf.

Buffalo Historical Society. *History of Buffalo*. Vol. I, n.d.

_____. "Personal Sketches." *In Commencement of Settlement in Erie County*, n.d.

"CHABERT DE JONCAIRE DE CLAUSONNE, DANIEL-MARI." *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* 4, no. University of Toronto (1979). http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/chabert_de_joncaire_de_clausonne_daniel_marie_4E.html.

Cichon, Steve. "Buffalo's Most Infamous Billboard: Will the Last Worker out of WNY Turn out the Light?" *Buffalo Stories Archives & Blog* (blog), March 16, 2016. blog.buffalostories.com.

Clinton Brown Company Architecture pc. "'Buffalo Seminary' National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form." Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, October 2010.

_____. "'Elmwood Historic District (East)' National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, March 2016.

_____. "'Elmwood Historic District (West)' National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, December 2012.

_____. "Historic Resources Intensive Level Survey, Grant/Ferry/Forest Neighborhood, City of Buffalo." February 2006.

_____. "'Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church' National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, August 2009.

_____. "'Multiple Resources Associated with the Suburban Development of Buffalo, New York' Multiple Property Documentation Form." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, December, 2005.

_____. "'Parke Apartments / Park Lane Condominium,' National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, March 2009.

_____. "'The Scajaquada Historic District' Application for Landmark / Landmark Site Local Historic District." August, 2013.

UNESCO World Heritage Convention. "Cultural Landscapes." Accessed February 25, 2022. https://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape/.

Dabkowski, Colin. "How Fate, His Mom and the Garden Walk Brought Gundlach's Gift to the Albright-Knox." *The Buffalo News*. September 24, 2016.

_____. "Jeffrey Gundlach: The Man behind the Millions." *The Buffalo News*. June 30, 2017.

Buffalo Courier. "Deer Shot in Utica Street," February 19, 1911.

Dougharty, Phil. Interview with Rector Dougharty. Interview by Clinton Brown, January 2010.

Downing, A.J. "The Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste." *James Vick Jr* IV (1854).

Eberle, Scott G, and Joseph A Grande. Second Looks: *A Pictorial History of Buffalo and Erie County*. Norfolk: Donning Co, 1987.

Eck, Susan J. "The Porter Norton Mansion." *Western New York History* (blog), 2016. http://www.wnyhistory.org/portfolios/more/HOTELS_RESTAURANTS/norton_park_lane/norton_park_lane_1.htm.

Eleventh Annual Report of the Buffalo Park Commissioners. Buffalo, NY: Young & Lockwood, 1881.

Emslie, Peter. "Map of a Part of the City of Buffalo." 1866.

Epstein, Jonathan D. "Gates Circle and Waterfront Village Projects Advance, but Ellicott's Elmwood Project Blocked." *The Buffalo News*. July 20, 2018.

Fleischmann, Alison. "800 West Ferry Street- An Elegant Address." *Buffalo as an Architectural Museum* (blog). Accessed February 25, 2022. https://buffaloah.com/a/wferry/800/af.html.

"Forest Lawn: A Buffalo Landmark and an Early Part of the Rural Cemetery Movement." *The Landmarker*, Fall/Winter 2004.

Fourth Annual Report of the Buffalo Park Commissioners. Buffalo, NY: Warren & Johnson, 1874.

Fox, Austin. "The Greening of Buffalo: How Architect E.B. Green Shaped the Profile of the City." *Buffalo as an Architectural Museum* (blog), n.d. https://buffaloah.com/a/archs/ebg/fox.html.

Gardens Buffalo Niagara. "Mission & Core Values," n.d. https://www.gardensbuffaloniagara.com/about-2.

Gerber, David A. "The Germans Take Care of Our Celebrations." In *Hard at Play: Leisure in America*, 1840-1940, edited by Katheyn Grover. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992.

Goldman, Mark. *Albright: The Life and Times of John J. Albright*. Buffalo: City of Light Publishing, 2017.

_____. *High Hopes: The Rise and Decline of Buffalo, New York*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1983.

Hartt, Mary Bronson. "By-Products of An Exposition." *Buffalo Courier*, October 20, 1901.

Hayden, Dolores. *Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism, 1790-1975*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1976.

Hendershott, Len. *A Spot On The Lake*. Lulu.com, 2015.

Canisius High School. "History," 2020. https://www.canisiushigh.org/about-us/history.

Community Music School. "History." Accessed March 1, 2022. https://communitymusicbuffalo.org/history/.

Old Fort Niagara. "History and Collections." Accessed February 10, 2022. https://www.oldfortniagara.org/history.

"History of Temple Beth El: The First 100 Years." Temple Beth El of Greater Buffalo, 1947. https://www.btzbuffalo.org/tbe-1st-100.

Hodge, William. "The William Hodge Papers." *In Recalling Pioneer Days*, edited by Frank Severance, Vol. XXVI. Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Historical Society, 1922.

Holly, Henry Hudson. *Holly's Country Seats: Containing Lithographic Designs for Cottages, Villas, Mansions, Etc. with Their Accompany Outbuildings*. London, U.K.: Appleton, 1863.

Hough, Franklin. "Census of the State of New York for 1855: Commencement of Settlement in Erie County." Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1857. http://nysl.nysed.gov/Archimages/88819.PDF.

Hunt, Sanford B. *The Manufacturing Interests of the City of Buffalo Including Sketches of the History of Buffalo: With Notices of Its Principal Manufacturing Establishments*. Buffalo, NY: C.F.S. Thomas, 1866.

Center for Community Progress. "It Takes a Village … to Make a Place: Elmwood Avenue in Buffalo," January 30, 2014. communityprogress.org/blog/it-takes-a-village-to-make-a-place/.

J.N. Larned, Charles E. Fitch, and Ellis H. Roberts. *A History of Buffalo, Delineating the Evolution of the City*. 2 vols. New York: Progress of the Empire State Co, 1911.

The Buffalo News. "Joan Bozer's Special Career Retiring Lawmaker Gave Voice to Slighted Issues." December 27, 1995.

Kowsky, Francis. *The Best Planned City in the World: Olmsted, Vaux, and the Buffalo Park System*. Library of American Landscape, 2018.

Kowsky, Francis, and Cherie Messore. "Buffalo's Best." The Preservation Coalition of Erie County, 1987.

LaChiusa, Chuck. "Albright Knox Art Gallery: East Elevation of the 1905 Building." *Buffalo as an Architectural Museum* (blog). Accessed February 28, 2022. https://buffaloah.com/a/elmwd/1285/alblake/.

Larned, J.N., Charles E. Fitch, and Ellis H. Roberts. *A History of Buffalo, Delineating the Evolution of the City*. 2 vols. New York: Progress of the Empire State Co, 1911.

The Buffalo News. "Letter: Elmwood Village Is Being Compromised by Development." August 31, 2015.

Licata, Elizabeth. "1967-2007: Forty Years, Forty Events." *Buffalo Spree*, n.d.

Lipsey, Judi. Correspondence with Judi Lipsey. Interview by Clinton Brown. Email, September 2018.

Lipsey, Stanford. *Affinity of Form*. powerHouse Books, 2009.

Livingston, Heather. "Doer's Profile: Susan Maxman, FAIA." *Face of the AIA* (blog), 2008. https://info.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek08/0215/0215dp.htm.

"Meet, Stay & Play 2018: Western New York's Executive Travel Guide," 2018.

Mingus, Nancy Blumenstalk. "John H. Coxhead: Buffalo's Forgotten Architect." *Buffalo Spree*, n.d.

"Mrs. Daniel K Stucki to Instruct Women Autoists in Buffalo." *American Artisan* 74 (July 14, 1917).

Napora, James. *Houses of Worship: A Guide to the Religious Architecture of Buffalo, New York*. Buffalo, NY: State University of New York at Buffalo, 1995.

Buffalo Courier. "New Semi-Private Park to Be Located on Site of Y.M.C.A Recreation Park," October 31, 1904.

New York Historical Society Museum & Library. "New York State Married Women's Property Law," n.d. Resource 16:

Nussbaumer, Newell. "Parish Commons Is Anything but Common!" *Buffalo Rising* (blog), April 12, 2012. https://www.buffalorising.com/2012/04/parish-commons-is-anything-but-common/.

O'Gorman, James F. *Three American Architects: Richardson, Sullivan, and Wright, 1865-1915*. University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Our Better Nature: Celebrating 150 Years of Olmsted in Buffalo & America's 1st Urban Park System. April 10, 2018. Buffalo History Museum Exhibit.

Partnership for the Public Good. "Affordable Housing Strategies for the City of Buffalo," December 2017.

Rybcznski, Witold. *A Clearing in the Distance: Frederick Law Olmsted and America in the 19th Century*. Simon and Schuster, 1999.

_____. *Charleston Fancy: Little Houses and Big Dreams in the Holy City*. Yale University Press, 2019.

Sadowski, Frank Jr. "Historical Images of the Erie Canal." *The Erie Canal* (blog). Accessed February 11, 2022. https://www.eriecanal.org/general-1.html.

Second Annual Report of the Buffalo Park Commissioners. Buffalo, NY: Young & Lockwood, 1872.

Severance, Frank, ed. "Two Old Time Societies." In *Publication of the Buffalo Historical Society: Recalling Pioneer Days*, Vol. XXVI, 1922.

Shedd, John. Correspondence with John Shedd. Interview by Clinton Brown. Email, July 2021.

Snow, Julia. *Early Recollections of Buffalo*. Buffalo Historical Society, 1913.

Steele, David. "Then and Now: School 30 Vs M&T Bank." *Buffalo Rising*, October 29, 2013. https://www.buffalorising.com/2013/10/then-and-now-school-30-vs-mt-bank/.

Stilgoe, John R. *Borderland: Origins of the American Suburb, 1820-1939*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.

Taussig, Ellen. *Your Host, Peter Gust, of the Park Lane Restaurant, His Story*. Boston: Herman Publishing, 1979.

Taylor Jr., Henry Louis. "Black in Buffalo: A Late Century Progress Report." *Buffalo: Magazine of the Buffalo News*, 1996.

The Commercial Advertiser Directory for the City of Buffalo. Buffalo, NY: Thomas and Lathrops, 1855.

"The New Elmwood District." *Greater Buffalo*, 1902.

Commerce. "The New Elmwood District," August 1903.

Third Annual Report of the Buffalo Park Commissioners. Buffalo, NY: Warren & Johnson, 1873.

"Title Search for 408 Ashland Avenue," n.d.

National Park Service. "Understand Cultural Landscapes." Accessed February 25, 2022. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/culturallandscapes/understand-cl.htm.

Valentine Garden, Carol. "About Cultural Landscapes." *The Cultural Landscape Foundation* (blog). Accessed February 25, 2022. https://www.tclf.org/places/about-cultural-landscapes.

Wachaldo, Martin. "Louise Blanchard Bethune: America's First Professional Woman Architect," January 20, 2021. The Buffalo History Museum.

_____. *Oakland Place: Gracious Living in Buffalo*. Buffalo, NY: City of Light Publishing, 2006.

The Buffalo News. "William M.E. Clarkson, 91, Headed Graphic Controls, Shaped Downtown Development," May 4, 2018.

Williams, Otis H. *Buffalo, Old and New : A Chronological History of the Queen City of the Lakes, Its Government and Public Institutions, Its Manufacturing, Commercial and Financial Industries*. Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Courier, 1901.

The Buffalo News. "Wrecker's Hammer Will Level Beautiful Mansion." May 26, 1939.

"Wright-Designed Mausoleum Is Complete in Forest Lawn." *The Landmarker*, Fall/Winter 2004.

Yates, Peter. "The Peter Yates Musical Composition and Material Collection, Mid 20th Century," n.d. Buffalo, NY. State University of New York, College at Buffalo.

About the Authors

Clinton E. Brown, FAIA and Ramona Pando Whitaker

Clinton E. Brown, FAIA

Clinton Brown's life work builds on his Elmwood District roots and his passion to propel its legacy forward. The historic preservation architect is a lifelong resident of the Elmwood District, living in houses built during its heyday for more than six decades. A member of the second graduating class of the Westminster Early Childhood Program, he attended Buffalo Public School 30 and The Nichols School. After graduating from Franklin & Marshall College and attending as a fellow the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, he earned a master's degree at the University of Virginia School of Architecture. He returned to Buffalo to be part of its renaissance. His Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc is a leading full service historic preservation, architecture, and grant services firm that led the initiative to nominate the Elmwood District for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Brown is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects.

Ramona Pando Whitaker

Ramona Pando Whitaker moved to Buffalo from California via Egypt, having traveled widely in Manchester, England, to explore industrial archaeology sites created from the huge fortress-like mills and warehouses of the Industrial Revolution. She is an ardent preservationist and a professional editor.

Clinton E. Brown, FAIA
Photograph by Somsamay Homphothichak

INDEX

C

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W

The fascinating story of the historic Elmwood District in Buffalo, New York, is told for the first time. From its origin as Native American territory to the arrival on the Niagara Frontier of Joseph Ellicott, Olmsted's Elmwood describes the role played by Fredrick Law Olmsted's Buffalo Parks and Parkways System and documents the decline during the Rust Belt years. Grassroots leadership has spearheaded its recent renewal by recognizing the importance of restoring Olmsted's vision for living well in a city.

Read the stories of the people who gave the Elmwood District its enduring character, while transforming it from dense forest to farms and nurseries, to a streetcar suburb. It has been named one of America's top ten neighborhoods.

Yet the future vitality and value of the Elmwood District and similar places across the nation depend upon an appreciation of how they came to be and adopting a curatorial management of their growth. A new way of understanding communities as everyday living heritage landscapes available to all is key to renewing them. Current planning and zoning regulations fail these heritage communities.

A compelling model for America's 19th century industrial cities across the nation that are transitioning into the 21st century is offered, one that recognizes that renewing the values upon which a place was built can be a paradigm for achieving civic resilience today.

$29.95 US | $39.95 CAN

Buffalo Heritage Press
A City of Light imprint
www.CityofLightPublishing.com