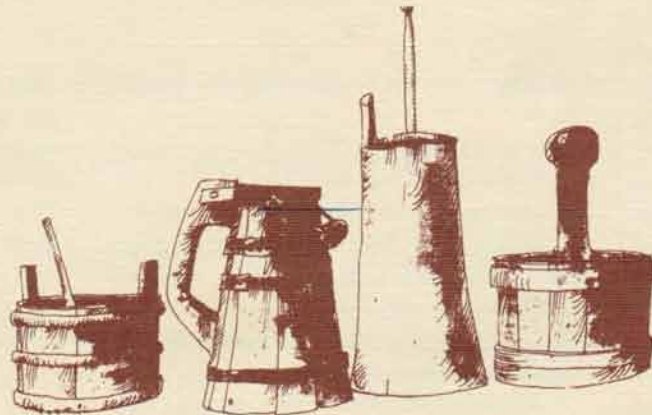


A Special Bounty

A Culinary Journey into Regional History
Andrew D. Wolfe



A 200 Year-old Tradition of Fine Dining in Rochester and the Genesee Valley



In collaboration with
THE ROCHESTER SOCIETY OF LANDMARK RESTAURANTS

Banker Erickson Entertains

MENU.	
Count.	OYSTERS, Discount.
	SOUPS.
Bullion.	Clear-ing House Turtle
	* Southern Shad.
Southdown Mutton.	Preferred Stock.
	Current Sauce.
	"Take thy pound of flesh."
	Brussels Sprouts.
	Philadelphia Coupon, a la financiere.
Baked Tomatoes.	Green Peppers.
	Alaska and Vesuvius.
	Celery. Cheese.
	Coffee.
* Subject to protest. If not accepted, telegraph Union Bank.	
GENESEE VALLEY CLUB.	
Monday, February 16th. 1891.	

Frederick Cook	D. W. Powers
G. H. Perkins	Jas. E. Booth
W. S. Kimball	J. Moreau Smith
H. F. Atkinson	C. B. Woodworth
S. L. Brewster	H. Austin Brewster
	Lewis P. Ross
	Henry C. Brewster
	W. C. Barry
	E. H. Satterlee
	Haywood Hawks
	F. P. Allen
	Geo. Wilder
Mr.	
Chas. C. Morse	
F. Goetzmann	
J. H. Rochester	
Samuel Sloan	
H. B. Hathaway	
Michael Filon	
P. B. Viele	
W. A. Waters	
C. H. Palmer	
Chas. F. Pond	
T. H. Husband	
G. N. Perkins	
W. G. Mitchell	
W. J. Ashley	
A. E. Perkins	
A. Luetehford	
David Hoyt	

BUSINESS Leaders of Rochester a century ago didn't shun the pleasures of fine dining. That's shown by this menu for a banquet given by Aaron Erickson, president of the Union Bank, for officers and directors of his bank, as well as other prominent businessmen.

The date was Feb. 16, 1891. The locale was the Genesee Valley Club.

The menu shows that Erickson could be whimsical, since it includes numerous puns on financial themes.

The reverse side of the menu shows a seating chart for the guests. Included were many

movers and shakers of the day. Notable guests were Daniel Powers (he built the Powers Building and the Powers Hotel, now the Executive Office Building), W.S. Kimball (tobacco magnate), and Michael Filon (onetime mayor of Rochester).

These gentlemen evidenced solid Victorian appetites, and Erickson showed he appreciated fine dining. The repast started with oysters, and continued with turtle soup, shad, mutton, Brussels sprouts, capon, baked tomatoes, and green peppers.

For dessert there was baked Alaska, followed

by cheese and coffee.

Presumably, several different wines accompanied this bounty.

Old photographs show that many of these gentlemen reflected their interest in pleasures of the table with handsome "aldermen," an expression of the day for a large stomach.

The club, incidentally, was noted for its dining excellence.

The bankers dined royally that Feb. 16. The tradition continues.



Old Genesee Valley Club, East Avenue at Gibbs Street, Rochester

Sibley's Famous Apple Pie

WHEN Sibley, Lindsay & Curr opened its new retail Rochester headquarters in the Granite Building in 1893, it went big time and quality dining in the restaurant business.

The store's restaurant was the height of elegance for the Gay Nineties. The dining room was lighted with combination gas and electric lights, had stained glass in some of the windows, and the coffered ceiling was painted with floral designs.

Making a bid for the quality dining business, the company offered more than the standard fare found in all but a few retail stores in the nation.

In the wake of the great fire in 1904, Sibley's moved to a large new building at Main Street and Clinton Avenue. Customers there could make use of a grand and luxurious new restaurant on the sixth floor, reached by special elevators.

Impressive cabinet work, much in golden oak, and striking brass chandeliers were features, and a platform above the entranceway provided space for stringed trios, quartets, and quintets.

Businessmen's luncheons and elaborate teas were notable, as was a garden room which provided welcome relief when the Winter weather was cold and snowy.

Banquets and other meetings offered elaborate menus, and Christmas was a "must" on many December calendars for eight decades until the store was closed several years ago.

The Tower Restaurants, as it was known, was operated in coordination with a large

gourmet grocery on the store's first floor. For many years it was Rochester's largest.

Much of the Tower Restaurant's acclaim was owed to the Sibley's bakery, which became known throughout western New York.

The bakery provided a bounty of desserts for the restaurant and the grocery – breads, specialty rolls, cakes of all description, strudels,



In this elegant restaurant in the old Granite Building, Sibley's operated a restaurant from 1893 until 1906, which attracted customers from as far away as Elmira and Corning. The Tower Restaurant in the Sibley's Building at Main Street and Clinton Avenue was successor to the Granite Building restaurant.

pies, tortes, an endless variety of doughnuts, mousses, all kinds of frostings, and much more.

But it was Sibley's famous apple pie which drew customers year after year, according to Alfred Larter. Larter supervised the store's food service and grocery for many years and recently headed Cook's World in Monroe Avenue, Brighton.

When asked how the apple pie recipe could be found, he gave the name of George Demmel, a veteran Sibley's chef who now lives in retirement in Tucson.

Trained in his family's third-generation bak-

ery in a small town near Munich, Germany, Demmel went through exhaustive training before coming to the United States as a young man.

He courteously scaled down the apple pie recipe to make it work for a 9-inch pie.

He also noted that this recipe is the same one used at Sibley's for generations. Here is the recipe:

Sibley's Famous Apple Pie Crust

Use pastry or all purpose flour
2 1/2 cups unbleached flour
14 tablespoons (7 ounces) regular shortening
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon confectioner's sugar
5-6 tablespoons cold milk

Sift flour, salt and sugar. Break down shortening with fork into lumps 1/4 to 1/2 inches long. Add milk; mix (don't over-mix).

Filling

6 to 8 apples, tart, like Granny Smith or Rome
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon flour
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 tablespoons melted butter

Now sift together sugar, cinnamon, salt, flour; add lemon juice. Core and slice apples and mix together.

Put shell in 9-inch pie tin. About two-thirds of the crust will go on the bottom and one-third on top; fill with apple mixture, topped with melted butter.

Brush heavy cream on the top crust, then punch holes in top.

Bake in 400-to 450-degree oven for 30 to 40 minutes.

Güten appetit.

The Whitcomb Hotel

TAVERN keepers in early America performed a special role. Not only did they provide simple food, drink, and lodging for travelers, but they provided a community meeting place for towns and villages. The proprietors were community leaders.

Indeed, before and during the American Revolution they frequently were officers of the units supplied to the army by the various communities.

As the 1800s advanced and Rochester grew, the small frontier taverns grew. By the 1850s, city historian Blake McKelvey has noted, the "Era of Plush Hotels" had developed.

Now entered Alonzo G. Whitcomb, one of the notable hosts of 19th-century Rochester.

Born in Pittsford in 1834 and described as "ambitious and enterprising," he entered the hotel business in East Parma. His first job in a tavern in that small community, probably involved everything from looking after the visitors' horses to cooking. He probably was in his early teens. Later he moved to Clarkson, and later went to the then-noted Exchange Hotel in Rochester.

He leased and managed the National Hotel in Rochester for some years.

Finally, in 1872, he and a partner, Wesley Crouch, with backing of leading citizens, built an impressive hotel known for years as the Whitcomb House on Main Street, just west of Clinton Avenue.

Surviving menus show a menu less complicated than the Powers Hotel or the Hofbrau House of the 1890s, but still impressive.

Here's a sample dinner menu (to the right).

Whitcomb and Crouch enlarged the hotel twice, creating one of the finest hotels in western New York.



Whitcomb Hotel on Main, west of Clinton—1880's.

WHITCOMB HOTEL

Dinner Bill of Fare
Thursday June 5th '78

SOUP
Andalouse Consomme of Rice

FISH
Bottled Salmon Trout - Parsley Sauce
Saratoga Chips

RELEVES
Lobster Salad
Cold Pork and Beans

BOILED
Beef Tongue
Corned Beef and Spinach

ROAST
Breast of Veal - Tomato Sauce
Steak of Beef - Brown Gravy
Ribs of Beef - Brown Potatoes
Spring Lamb - Mint Sauce
Pork - Apple Sauce

Price 1.95

Mainspring to Whitcomb's success seemingly was the host's ability to create a warm and friendly atmosphere.

He is described as having "few equals" and being "very genial."

He also is said to have "looked after every amenity, and "made guests perfectly at home."

He became a leading citizen, serving as a member of the Common Council and three times as a supervisor in the city. He also became heavily involved in harness racing.

When he died in 1880 at 56, a lengthy obituary in the *Daily Union and Advertiser* hailed

him as one of the city's most prominent citizens.

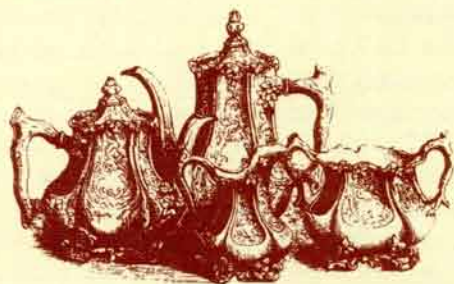
Here is the kind of recipe used for his menus:

Roast Breast of Veal Stuffed

Stuff a 5-pound breast of veal with Bread Dressing. Season well with salt, pepper, and ginger. Heat some fat in roasting pan, put in veal and cook in hot oven until brown and crisp, basting frequently. Reduce heat in oven and add 1 cupful hot water, cover, and cook about 2 hours, or until tender. If desired, a few slices of onion may be placed on top of veal. Serve with gravy from plan slightly thickened.

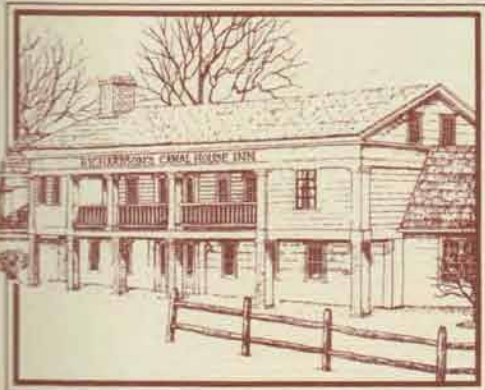
Pork and Beans

Wash and soak 1 quart pea beans in cold water overnight. Drain, put in kettle with cold water, and heat to boiling point. Drain again and cover with boiling water. Scald rind of 1 pound fat salt pork, cut through rind every 1/2 inch, making cuts 1 inch deep, and put pork with the beans. Cook slowly until the skins of beans burst, then remove the pork, drain beans and put them in an earthen pot, placing pork in the center. Strain about 1 pint of the water in which the beans were boiled, season with salt and pepper and 2 tablespoonfuls molasses, and pour over top. Bake in very moderate oven from 6 to 8 hours, removing cover 1/2 hour before taking from oven, to allow the pork to become crisp and brown. If desired, 1 1/2 pounds brisket of beef may be substituted for pork.



Landmark Restaurants

Member restaurants of the Society of Rochester and Monroe County Historic Restaurants.



1818

Richardson's Canal House, oldest surviving Erie Canal tavern still on canal water. Period restoration of colorful interior and American folk art gallery with exceptional folk quilt collection. Oliver Loud's Country Inn is on property.

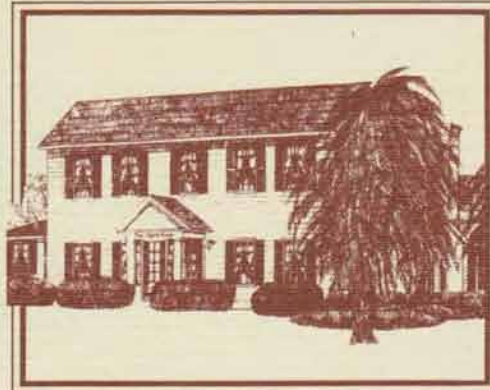
1474 Marsh Road, Bushnell's Basin, Pittsford, New York.



1822

The Spring House has been a landmark for 177 years. This building resembles an impressive Southern mansion. Carved interior has been carefully preserved by the O'Neill family which has operated it for more than 38 years.

3001 Monroe Avenue, Rochester, New York.



1832

The Clark House dates to a log cabin built by pioneer settler Alpheus Clark in 1832. The original homestead is now the federal style Blue and Clark Rooms of the restaurant. It is surrounded by appealing gardens and lawns.

600 Whalen Road, Penfield, New York.

Odenbach Restaurants

(Continued from page 11)

low prices – all delivered with style and atmosphere.

The Hofbrau Haus and the Odenbach Coffee Shop offered menus of astonishing variety. The Hofbrau, for Feb. 20, 1911, offered more than 100 regular menu items, with more items available on a special a la carte menu!

Specialties? Clams and oysters "served in all styles," including bluepoints and littlenecks, not to mention numerous lobster and crab meat favorites.

German specialties provided much of the restaurants' appeal – such as Hungarian goulash, veal Holstein, boiled leg of lamb, pigs' knuckles with sauerkraut, Wiener schnitzel, Deutscher beef steak, and much more.

For more than 150 years Rochester folks have eaten well, nowhere better than at the Odenbach tables.

Isaac Teall

(Continued from page 13)

them and roast in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes.

Dice the flesh. Make a stock of white wine, fish fumet, and meat juices, flavored with chervil, tarragon, and chopped shallots. Boil it down to a concentrated consistency. Add to this a little very thick béchamel sauce and some English mustard.

Boil the sauce for a few seconds, then whisk in fresh butter (one-third of the volume of the sauce). Line the two halves of the carcass with a little of this sauce. Fill them with the flesh of the lobster, cover with the remainder of the sauce, sprinkle with grated Parmesan and melted butter, and brown quickly in the oven.

This dish is often prepared in a different way. The tail of the lobster is split in half and grilled, then the flesh is cut into thick slices and put back in the shells, which have been coated

with a little cream sauce seasoned with mustard. They are covered with the same sauce and browned in the oven.

Oysters Mornay

Poach the oysters, and allow two per shell.

Set the hollow shells, thoroughly cleaned, on a tray covered with rock salt. Cover the bottom of the shells with Mornay sauce; put two poached oysters into each; cover with the same sauce; sprinkle with grated cheese and melted butter, and set to glaze quickly. Serve instantly.

Teall, a compact man with impeccable manners, was so popular a figure that when he died at 71 in 1915, active to the end, Rochester's centennial history, written nearly 20 years later, included a full-page picture of him, plus a sizeable tribute.

It was well-deserved recognition for a man who changed the way of life in this area.

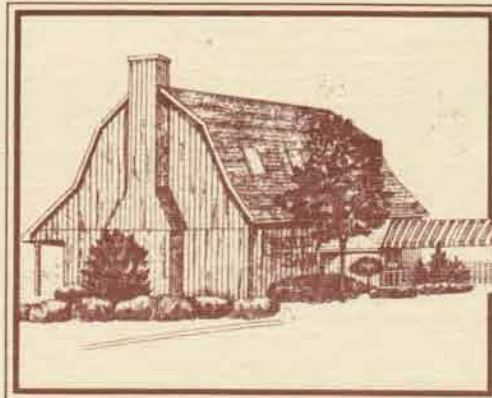




1848

Daisy Flour Mill. The 1848 mill long produced Genesee Flour, esteemed by leading bakers and favored for pie crusts. The building, with handsawn beams, retains intriguing old mill equipment and 19th century atmosphere. It is the only survivor of the Rochester area's storied mills.

1880 Blossom Road, Penfield, New York.



1860

Crystal Barn. Looming high on the Pittsford landscape, Crystal Barn blends crystal chandeliers and the rugged appeal of a 140-year-old barn interior. The old barn courtyard includes a landscaped fountain. A wide variety of restaurant activities take place in the barn's unusual setting.

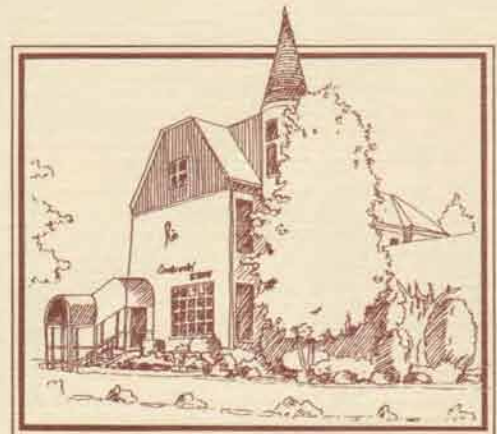
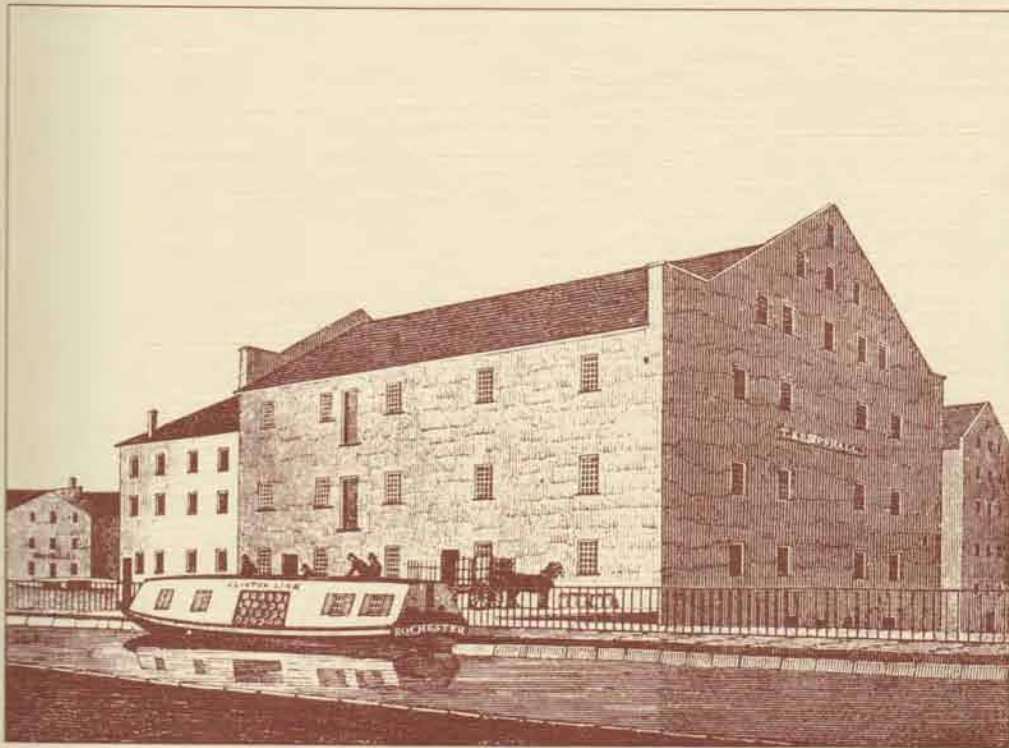
Clover and Jefferson Roads, Pittsford, New York.



1874

Edwards Restaurant. Located in an admired landmark building designed by Rochester's celebrated 19th century architect, A. J. Warner, Edwards has emphasized an atmosphere recalling downtown turn-of-the-century Rochester. Once the Rochester Free Academy, the building continues a key role in the center city, housing a leading restaurant.

13 South Fitzhugh Street, Rochester, New York.



1880

The Rio restaurant and its stylish building recalls the fashionable Rochester of the 1880s and 1890s. Lodged in a turreted building with French antecedents, the Rio carries on its businessman builder's life style win appointments, food, and wine.

Flour for the World—

Thomas Kempshall's giant mill and Clinton Line, canalboat, captured in 1838 engraving.