The Legacy of Nathaniel Rochester
Si monumentum requires circumspice
“If you would behold his monument, look about you.”

Col. Nathaniel Rochester scouted the Genesee Country with his business partners William Fitzhugh and Charles Carroll. Riding on horseback from Hagerstown, Maryland, the three men saw in the ruins of Ebenezer (Indian) Allan’s sawmill and gristmill, the potential to build a community. Purchased in 1803, the One Hundred Acre Tract lay undeveloped until 1811 when Col. Rochester began to sell lots from a hand-drawn map.

Through the 19th century, the One Hundred Acre Tract became the nucleus of today’s Rochester, absorbing the settlements that once lined the Genesee River. Rochester is strategically located in the Genesee Country on an international lake port, the Erie Canal, an interstate and an international airport. In 1834 Nathaniel Hawthorne described Rochester as having “sprung up like a mushroom” because it grew so rapidly.

Though the One Hundred Acre Tract lay seven miles south of Lake Ontario, the war with the British (War of 1812) stalled land sales as settlers moved away from the battles on the lake.

When the War of 1812 ended in 1814, land sales became so brisk that the settlement became the village of Rochesterville in 1817.