Center of Government and Commerce
The rapid growth of population and commerce brought by the Erie Canal gave Rochesterville the nickname “Young Lion of the West.”

Exchange Street Bridge
The early 19th century bridge that crossed the Erie Canal at Exchange Street was once called the “Loafer Bridge” after the “loafers” who watched the canal boats as they passed underneath - coming and going at Child’s Basin. Pioneer Edwin Scranton wrote that numerous “Loafer Jims” idled away the day watching the humorous positions of the canal boat passengers as they ducked under the bridge when the Captain unexpectedly called, “Low Bridge, everybody down.” One day there were so many loafers on the bridge it fell into the canal, bringing laughter from the passengers.

Blue Eagle Jail
The Blue Eagle Jail was given this nickname when the famous 19th century circus clown, Dan Rice, scrawled the words to a song on the wall of his Monroe County jail cell. Rice was accustomed to staying at the more sumptuous Eagle Hotel at the Four Corners. The jail stood secure on a one-half acre plot at the southern tip of the island created by the Genesee River and the Rochester, Fitzhugh and Carroll Raceway. This was the site of the last hanging in Monroe County.

Kimball Tobacco Company
stood on the site of Ebenezer (Indian) Allen’s mills along the riverside between Court Street and the Erie Canal aqueduct. William Kimball built the largest tobacco manufacturing company in America. When he died in 1895, the company was sold to the American Tobacco Company. It closed in 1905.

Winged Mercury:
Mercury, the Roman god of commerce, has towered over Rochester’s center city since 1881. Tobacco giant William Kimball commissioned his brother-in-law, J. Guernsey Mitchell, to sculpt the statue of Mercury to stand atop the smokestack of his Kimball Tobacco Company. After a brief period of storage, Mercury again graces the Rochester skyline on a building across the street.

Community War Memorial
Following WWII, the Kimball Tobacco Company was demolished, the statue of Mercury from atop the smokestack was stored, and the Community War Memorial was built. Dedicated in 1953, an eternal flame burns inside the northeast corner of the building in honor of those who gave their lives preserving this nation’s freedom.