Child's Basin: Center of Commerce and Intellect
Passengers brought inventions, entrepreneurship, political and social ideas to Child's Basin

“Within the city, Child's Basin was the busiest point on the canal.”

“Passengers boarded and those going farther west sometimes disembarked to take the stage coach, for it was a shorter trip before the canal was straightened and the stage could travel faster....”

“The 'runner' is picking up passengers... the ice man goes from boat to boat offering his 'cold comfort,'...”

“The measure is only filled up by the din of horns, the profanity of boatmen and drivers, and the orders of the 'captains,' whose voices loom, up amid the general confusion.”

Jonathan Child (1795-1860), Owned Child's Basin and Child's Slip. Married Sophia Rochester, daughter of city’s founder Nathaniel Rochester. First mayor of the city of Rochester in 1834, resigned after refusing to sign liquor licenses. His residence on Washington Street in Corn Hill overlooks the old Erie Canal and is a registered historic landmark.

The Underground Railroad
Its proximity to Canada made Rochester one of the most active sites on the Underground Railroad and a center of the abolitionist movement.

Frederick Douglass, former slave, anti-slavery orator and publisher of *The North Star*, and Susan B. Anthony, suffragist, abolitionist and temperance advocate, made their homes in Rochester.

Many activists, speakers, conference attendants and fugitives from slavery passed through Child’s Basin. Nearby Main Street was an abolitionist hotbed.

The Erie Canal cut the cost of shipping one ton of goods from Buffalo to New York City from $100 to $10.