

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND  
January 11, 2011\

# THE SCHWINN-MANDEL BUILDING

111 Genesee Street, Buffalo, Erie County, NY 14203



Prepared by:



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## **The History of the Schwinn-Mandel Building**

The Schwinn-Mandel Building is a rare mostly intact remaining example of late-nineteenth century commercial architecture in the Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood. Once a part of one of Buffalo's most thriving commercial districts, this building is now under threat from neglect, previous failed rehabilitation attempts, modern development along the Route 33 corridor along Oak Street to the immediate east and other factors. The Schwinn-Mandel Building is a contributing building to the local Genesee Gateway Historic District based on Criterion C for its architecture. The period of significance for the architecture of the Genesee Gateway Historic District is ca. 1840s- ca. 1930s. The exterior of the building remains an excellent example of Italianate commercial architecture from the post-Civil War era; an architectural era which is becoming increasingly rare in representation in Buffalo. Throughout its over 120 year history, spanning four generations, the Schwinn-Mandel Building has served as a vital commercial location and has served a wide variety of purposes. The Schwinn-Mandel Building should be considered eligible for the State and National Register of Historic Places based on Criterion C, as an embodiment of the Commercial Italianate style, as well as Criterion A as a rare remaining building which reflects the growth and prominence of Buffalo's once-thriving Genesee-Ellicott-Oak commercial neighborhoods.

Constructed ca. 1878 by an unknown builder, the Schwinn-Mandel Building was not the first building located at this site. Like the adjacent H. Seeberg Building at 113-125 Genesee Street, it appears that an early ca. 1850s building occupied the site before being replaced by the Schwinn-Mandel Building. This earlier building was a small, two-story frame building which was owned by Louis P. Adolf in 1866, and at which address he is noted as residing in the 1860 Census. Originally from the Alsace region of France, Adolf was identified as a grocer in 1860; a not uncommon trade, given the proximity to the Washington Market nearby.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps given the rapid growth and the rising property values in the area surrounding the prosperous Washington Market, Adolf demolished the previous structure at 111 Genesee Street and had a larger four-story mixed-use commercial and residential building constructed ca. 1878. Adolf appears to have retired as a grocer by 1870, and possibly sought speculation in real estate as a second career. Adolf appears to have never operated his grocery store from the new building, but the first known occupant was Jacob John Schwinn (image 7).<sup>2</sup> Schwinn relocated his umbrella and parasol manufactory from 137 East Genesee Street into the elegant new building and appears in the 1878 Buffalo City Directory at this new address (image 5). Schwinn advertised as a manufacturer and repair shop for fine canes, umbrellas, parasols and walking sticks. Schwinn came from a family of German

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<sup>1</sup> Also in the 1860 census, a 7-year old Henry J. Urban is noted as living with the Adolf family. Perhaps Henry Urban Senior, the grocery who ran a shop from 123-125 Genesee Street throughout the 1850s-60s, had died, leaving his son in the care of his neighbor and perhaps colleague, Louis P. Adolf. Henry J. Urban apprenticed at Adolf's grocery store until he is noted as running his own grocery store at 123-125 Genesee Street, perhaps inherited from his father.

<sup>2</sup> The 1870 census records Adolf as a "retired grocer" at the age of 39.

umbrella makers, which included his brothers and father John W. Schwinn who ran his own umbrella shop located at 521 Washington Street in Buffalo, and for a time Jacob and John Schwinn operated the only two umbrella manufactory and repair shops in the City of Buffalo. By 1883, Schwinn partnered with his brothers, Frank R. and Frederick E. Schwinn, in the firm of Jacob J. Schwinn and Bros. Schwinn died young in 1884 at the age of about 34, and it appears that his brothers took over the umbrella shop at 111 Genesee Street in 1885. The 1889 city directory notes that Frank R. Schwinn was operating an umbrella shop from the building, carrying on the family tradition (image 8).

While 111 Genesee housed a wide variety of smaller commercial and residential tenants including hairdressers (including briefly Gotthilf Buckenmaier in 1898 who was a long-time tenant in neighboring 115 Genesee Street in the 1900s, see image 9), cigarmaker, jewelers, physicians and other tenants, the building was associated with the rather uncommon trade of umbrella manufacturing for well over 60 years. The Schwinn company was succeeded by the umbrella maker Henry L. Mandel around 1893. Born in Berlin, Germany, Mandel immigrated to the United States in 1867 as a child and worked for fifteen years as a salesman at the cane and umbrella counter of the S.O. Barnum store (located at 211 Main Street before it went out of business in 1880) before operating the umbrella shop. Like the Schwinn family, the Mandel family also appears to have made umbrella making the family business; Henry's sister Augusta ran her own umbrella and parasol retail and repair shop from 211 Eaton Street in Buffalo's East Side for over a decade. Mandel began his operations in the building at 111 Genesee Street around the year 1893. Perhaps due to the success and strength of Mandel's reputation as a maker of fine quality products, the building was renovated slightly with "first floor alterations" in 1922. Interestingly, Mandel appears to have rented commercial space in the building which was at the time still owned by J.P. Adolf (although perhaps by his son). Mandel continued in business until 1940 when he passed away at the age of 74. Nearly 60 years old, the east façade of the Schwinn-Mandel Building still retains some traces of Mandel's painted signage near the roofline of the building, faintly visible today (image 11, E-4).

Following the occupancy of 111 Genesee Street by Mandel's umbrella manufactory, the building was by 1950 occupied by the H. Seeberg Company and used as warehouse space. The successful H. Seeberg men's clothing factory and shop, located in 113-125 Genesee Street just to the east of the Schwinn-Mandel Building, was another example of a commercial operation which housed both manufacturing and sales within one building, a throw-back to the Civil-War-era economy and way-of-life represented so well in the Genesee neighborhood. 111 Genesee Street likely served in this capacity for two decades before it was purchased in the early 1980s by Willard A. Genrich of PlatinumDome, Inc. Genrich, who owned many of the neighboring Genesee Gateway buildings, had high hopes for the rehabilitation of such a prominent row of rare commercial buildings. In 1986 he started a rehabilitation project which removed the interiors of all the buildings down to the studs and brick and removed the first floor structural system in 1988. Genrich's

misguided attempts were to secure the structure of the building and to modernize its fire resistance. After several years of legal issues between Genrich and the City of Buffalo who took Genrich to housing court seeking a demolition of the buildings, the future of the Schwinn-Mandel Building appeared bleak. In 2007 the H. Seeberg Building was purchased by Genesee Gateway LLC, with support from the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation. Spearheaded by CityView Construction Management, the Genesee Gateway project is rehabilitating the vacant buildings along Genesee Street between Ellicott and Oak Streets, creating a series of commercial and office spaces that will restore the luster of this once dazzling commercial block for its next 120+ years.

### **The Genesee-Ellicott-Oak Neighborhood**

The Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood has its origins as a rural area which was located on the north-eastern fringe of the Buffalo settlement areas. The first landowner in the area was Major Andre Andrews. Born in Cornwall, Connecticut on July 8, 1792 and trained as a lawyer, Major Andrews relocated to Buffalo in 1820 at a time when the city was rapidly growing, where his likely business was investing and dealing in real estate. His arrival was well timed; Major Andrews arrived in Buffalo only about 16 years after Joseph Ellicott formally laid out the city streets. He arrived at a time when Buffalo was quickly emerging as both a commercial and economic powerhouse following the heated battle and ultimate victory over the neighboring community of Black Rock for the western terminus of the Erie Canal, and the subsequent construction of the canal between 1817 and 1825. Major Andrews' first known land purchases were lots 202 and 203 from the Holland Land Company at the intersection of Genesee and Huron Streets (site of the current General Electric Tower) made in 1821, where he constructed his residence. He also purchased lots 120 to 132 totaling 79 acres at the edge of the growing village of Buffalo, including lots 131 and 132, in the area known as the "Outer Lots," which would develop into the site of the Genesee Gateway buildings (image 19). While Genesee Street was a primary road leading east at the time, the lack of any other notable intersecting roads indicates that this area was largely unsettled field and farmland during the early 1820s.<sup>3</sup> Andrews likely realized the potential for dividing and selling this land in the future, as the growth of Buffalo pushed into this area. Major Andrews became a significant figure in early Buffalo history and was active as a lawyer in addition to his real estate dealings. In 1824 he served as a Presidential elector (one of the popularly elected representatives, or electors, who formally elect the President and Vice President of the United States), and in 1826 began his term as a Trustee for the Village of Buffalo. In 1833, Major Andrews was elected as Buffalo's second mayor, serving a one year term in office. Major Andre Andrews

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<sup>3</sup> On August 18, 1821 Genesee Street (or Busti Avenue at the time) was recorded as being 99 feet wide to Oak Street at the edge of the current Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood, then narrowing to 66 feet to the village line which was at about Locust Street to the east. This change in street width is a good indication of where the settled village area ended and the rural, unpopulated areas began. Bureau of Engineering. *Index of Records of Streets, Public Grounds, Waterways, Railroads, Gas Companies, Waterworks etc. of the City of Buffalo from 1814-1896*. Buffalo: Wenborne Sumner Company, 1896: 285.

died in Buffalo on August 18, 1834 after a bout of cholera, and is thought to be buried in Forrest Lawn Cemetery.<sup>4</sup>

As the settlement in Buffalo continued to increase and expand in the wake of the burning of Buffalo in 1813 during the War of 1812, the developing Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood began to be settled by primarily German immigrants. While initial German settlers came to Buffalo via Pennsylvania, by the 1820s many Germans became arriving directly from Germany and German regions of France in greater numbers. Aided and encouraged by the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, by 1828 the wide-spread settlement of Germans in Buffalo began. On June 19, 1826 Genesee Street was declared a public highway, marking increasing settlement and growth along this corridor.<sup>5</sup> As a major route in and out of the village, Genesee Street would have been a natural location for commercial development to occur as it was more highly traveled and visible. It was a midway point between the rural farmland further east and the rapidly growing Buffalo population and this area became a natural location for the transfer of farm produced goods to the growing consumer base. An 1828 map of the Village of Buffalo reflects that the Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood, while still being located on the north-east fringe of Buffalo, had notable settlement (image 20). Early settlement of Germans was located primarily along Broadway and on Genesee Street, occupying these peripheral regions. In the 1830s and 1840s, nearly one-third of Buffalo's population was German, becoming a politically, culturally and socially significant group.<sup>6</sup>

By the 1850s, people of German ancestry numbered about 15,000 of the approximately 42,000 total residents in the City of Buffalo. During this period, there began to emerge from the uniformly working-class German population in Buffalo a rising group of merchants who had seemingly become successful and wealthy rather suddenly. This rising class of German businessmen had largely remained in their homeland until they had received an education and had learned a trade, arriving in Buffalo as highly skilled and intelligent workers. Many German immigrants brought their skills as butchers, bakers, millers, brewers, blacksmiths, tanners and grocers to the growing city and were able to forge successful and profitable businesses located in the heart of their ethnic neighborhoods, including along Genesee Street.<sup>7</sup>

It is in this climate that the growth and character of the Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood developed by the 1840s into a self-sufficient commercial and residential center for many German immigrants. Spurred by the multitude of skilled tradesmen, retailers and producers coupled with the increasing needs of local residents, this neighborhood was a logical location for a public market. In 1856 the Washington Market was established, located on the city block between Ellicott and

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<sup>4</sup> Rizzo, Michael. *Through The Mayor's Eyes: The Only Complete History of the Mayors of Buffalo*. Buffalo: People's History Union, 2001.

<sup>5</sup> *Index of Records of Streets*, 286.

<sup>6</sup> James, Isabel Vaughan. *Some Outstanding Germans in Buffalo*. Manuscript, BECHS.

<sup>7</sup> German families in the buildings at 113-125 Genesee Street include the Urbans, the Datts, the Wagner family, and the Korn family, who were all among the early founders of businesses in this neighborhood. Goldman, Mark. *High hopes: the rise and decline of Buffalo*, New York. Albany: State University of New York, 1983: 76-77.

Washington Streets at Chippewa Street just south of St. Michael's Church (original 1851, present building 1867).<sup>8</sup> The market cleared what had been a sparsely-settled block which had contained a few assorted frame structures as well as the one-story Greek Revival-style Public School 13 (1838), which was subsequently relocated about a block south on Oak Street (1891-1915, NR 2005).<sup>9</sup> This neighborhood over the span of two decades transformed from Major Andrews' greenfields to the pre-Civil War era "suburb" of lightly populated settlement into a post-Civil War commercial center for the expanding metropolitan zone of Buffalo. The large market, which covered over 2.5 acres, was known as the largest market west of the Hudson River.

The Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood became a more thriving commercial neighborhood based largely on its proximity to the Washington Market. The market was a significant center for life in Buffalo. Owned and operated by the City, it featured hundreds of vendors, selling a wide variety of produce, meats, cheeses, flowers and other products, most produced by the skilled local German community (image 13, 14, 15). The centerpiece of the market was a large brick Romanesque Revival market building which housed the stalls for dozens of Buffalo's finest butchers. Against the exterior walls of the building were housed stalls for poultry, butter, cheese, fruits and vegetable vendors, and stalls for merchants of crockery, tins, knit products, and other assorted products were arranged around the block. Overall, the market was a center of activity, noise and socializing, especially on the primary market days of Tuesdays, Thursdays and especially Saturdays, when the market was so crowded that moving around the more than 400 stalls was especially difficult.

Because of the significance of the Washington Market as a center for trade, commerce and business, buildings in close proximity to the retail area also reflect the commercial character of the market. A majority of the buildings constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries adjacent to the Washington Market along Ellicott, Genesee and Washington Streets were commercial buildings. One of the most notable buildings in this area is the Market Arcade Building (1892 by E.B. Green) which is a Beaux-Arts Classical style arcaded indoor commercial building which connected Main Street to the west with Washington Street and the Washington Market to the East. This neighborhood also featured streets which were lined by commercial buildings dating from the 1850s to the early twentieth-century, typically featuring additional commercial vendors. Businesses in the immediate

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<sup>8</sup> St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church was founded in 1851 following a schism in the nearby St. Louis RC Church. Rev. Lucas Caveg and 19 other German-speaking families splintered from that church to form St. Michael's, constructing a small wood-frame church on the church's present site on Washington Street near Chippewa Street. Soon after, the parish founded a grammar school to educate the children of the local German community. Records indicate that the present church building was constructed in 1867, and in 1870 the parish established Canisius College, a Jesuit institution, to the north of the church. The college would relocate to its present location on Main Street in 1910. Following a devastating fire resulting from being struck by a lightning bolt in 1962, the parish rebuilt the building utilizing the remaining exterior shell, reconstructing the church's signature domed tower. Refer to Condren, Dave. "St. Michael's Church, Jesuits' original base in area, to mark 150<sup>th</sup> year with Mass." *Buffalo News*. 29 Sep 2001, A-7.

<sup>9</sup> Refer to the State and National Register of historic Places nomination for School 13 (03NR05199), section 8, page 1.

Washington Market area include the McClure Bloesser & Eggert Boot and Shoe Factory, P. Messner's Chair Factory, and several saloons and boarding houses on Ellicott Street. In the same area were also located George Urban, Jr.'s Urban Roller Mills (founded in 1881) and his father's retail flour shop on Oak Street. Genesee Street was also lined with commercial buildings and included businesses such as Frank Pfennig, retailer of tobacco products at 95 Genesee Street, cutler Gabriel Giesser at 99 Genesee Street and Henry Urban who ran a successful grocery store located at 123 Genesee Street for many decades. Because of the attraction of the Washington Market, this neighborhood around Genesee, Ellicott and Oak Streets was one of Buffalo's thriving commercial and retail centers throughout the nineteenth- and early-twentieth centuries.

By the late nineteenth-century, the stretch of Genesee Street between Ellicott and Oak Streets became one of the most recognizable centers for photography in Buffalo. While Main Street had served as Buffalo's earliest hub of photography studios, and remained as such throughout the nineteenth-century, by the late nineteenth-century new buildings constructed along Genesee Street, with primary north-facing facades, were ideally situated for photography studios. The Caulkins Building at 85-87-89 Genesee Street was the earliest constructed in 1886 by master architect, F.W. Caulkins. Combining both utility and function with artistic design, the Caulkins Building's most identifiable feature was the convex "waterfall" skylight at the center of the building which brought additional north light into the upper studio spaces. In 1895 Mrs. Frederike Giesser commissioned Richard A. Waite, one of Buffalo's preeminent architects, to design the elegant Werner Photography Building at 101-103 Genesee Street. Like the Caulkins Building, the Werner Building's signature feature is its expansive curving skylight. No other buildings like these are known to have been constructed elsewhere in Buffalo, and these buildings are the only known currently existing examples of specialized, high-style photography studio in the City of Buffalo. Not only was the neighborhood associated with the thriving market and commercial activity of the day, but it also can be identified as Buffalo's most elegant and sophisticated centers of late-nineteenth-century photography.

Over the past few decades, this neighborhood has declined due to several factors. When the New York State Thruway opened in 1959, many traditional commercial neighborhoods in Buffalo saw the migration of stores and retailers following the population growth to the suburban regions. The opening of the Kensington Expressway (Route 33) in the 1960s which connected downtown Buffalo to the eastern suburbs also served to channel both residents and businesses out of the crowded urban core. The Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood suffered greatly both economically and culturally as a result of these new highways and with the opening of the Elm-Oak arterial of the Kensington Expressway in 1967/68. The neighborhood saw a dramatic loss of commercial tenants as a result of this trend, and the Washington Market itself closed in 1965, after several failed attempts to boost business and the construction of new, modern market buildings, as business dwindled (image 16, 17).<sup>10</sup> It was also generally an age which saw the

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<sup>10</sup> "Washington Market to Close July 1, Banas Announces." *Buffalo Evening News*. 11 Jan 1965.

transformation of commercialism, with the separation of manufacturing, sales and corporate headquarters to separate facilities. St. Michael's RC Church, one of the centerpoints of the traditionally German community, blames the "death" of the church directly on the construction of the neighboring Elm-Oak arterial, charging it with the removal of hundreds of houses, and therefore parishioners, from the church neighborhood.<sup>11</sup> During the 1960s and 1970s, this area faced the Urban Renewal wrecking ball, and numerous historic buildings were demolished to make way for "shovel-ready" parking lots which dot this area of the city. The Washington Market itself was razed in 1965 shortly after it closed and now is a large parking area (image 18). As a result of demolitions and the construction of the Elm-Oak arterial, the blocks along the east of the neighborhood at Oak Street have been cleared of all historic fabric, with either vacant lots or new sterile, modern development being constructed. The downturn of commerce in the area as well as the increased vehicular traffic from the Kensington Expressway have also contributed to the general neglect and decay of the architecture of the neighborhood. The buildings along Genesee Street between Ellicott and Oak Streets, along with several key buildings along Ellicott and Oak just to the north on this block, constitute one of Buffalo's last remaining intact nineteenth- and early-twentieth century commercial streetscapes reflecting downtown's prominence when Buffalo was a major American city. Today, this contiguous row of historic commercial buildings marks the point at which the suburban fringe of the city accessed via the highway transforms into Buffalo's Downtown, a region quickly blossoming with new rehabilitation and development. In this capacity, they act as a "gateway" welcoming suburban travelers into Downtown.

In the face of the decline of the neighborhood, the promise of the Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood envisioned for the past two decades is now taking shape. Despite a somewhat shabby exterior, the buildings along the south side of Genesee Street between Ellicott and Oak Streets have been considered for rehabilitation projects dating back to the 1980s. Willard A. Genrich purchased the collection of buildings, hoping to transform them into "The Next Great Place" as part of a campaign to locate a new convention center in the neighborhood. In a failed attempt to save and transform the buildings at the eastern end of the block, Genrich replaced the existing structural systems with steel framing, attempting to stabilize and reuse the building and to bring their fire resistance to modern standards which unfortunately did not take the "first, do no harm" stance of current rehabilitation practices. Genrich posed concepts of turning the buildings into housing, offices and restaurants, with no success. Jessie Schnell Fisher of Triangle Development purchased the buildings at the western end of the block at 85-87-89 and 91-95 Genesee Street in an attempt to secure the buildings for a misguided attempt at rehabilitation. However before plans could develop and begin, the buildings were damaged in a November 2002 windstorm, halting any work. At that time, Genrich-owned buildings at the eastern end fared no better, ending up in Buffalo Housing Court in 2006 where he was found guilty of three building code violations and fined after the City of Buffalo

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<sup>11</sup> Today, the church has about 200 registered members. Refer to Condren, A-7.



threatened to take the buildings by eminent domain in 2004 to demolish them.<sup>12</sup> The vacant buildings stood as reminders of Buffalo's once-great commercial heritage as well as symbols of the unsuccessful attempts at rehabilitation; the only potential future for these dead buildings appeared to be demolition, creating more vacant lots or stark, modern low-rise office buildings in the neighborhood.

Today, there is one last opportunity for the rehabilitation and revitalization of the once vibrant Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood. Purchased in 2007 by Genesee Gateway LLC, the collection of nineteenth- and twentieth-century commercial buildings is being developed into a multi-million dollar commercial and office complex which promises to bring new activity and business to the neglected neighborhood. Unlike previous attempts, the new design based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards gracefully respects the form, footprints and design of the original historic fabric, while once again transforming the buildings into viable new space which functions for today's commercial and spatial needs.

The Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood along Genesee Street and running north on Oak and Ellicott Streets retains numerous significant examples of commercial architecture from a period which spans over 120 years. While this neighborhood features a wide variety of architectural styles from simple, builder-designed utilitarian Italianate examples to elegant architect-designed, highly styled Beaux-Arts examples, the Genesee-Ellicott-Oak area has a period of architectural significance which spans between ca. 1850s and the early 1930s. This period of history for the City of Buffalo reflects dramatic changes in commercial trade and commercial architecture, shifting from small owner-occupied shops built for simple functionality, to larger shops which created ample glitzy showrooms. Several of the buildings, including the Schwinn-Mandel Building and the H. Seeberg Building at 113-125 Genesee Street, also combined manufacturing with the retail shop. The Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood reflects a significant period of Buffalo's history, representing the city at the pinnacle of its international prominence. This area reflects a largely intact and contiguous collection of rare, remaining and highly threatened small-scale commercial buildings; buildings which are disappearing rapidly from Buffalo's urban center.

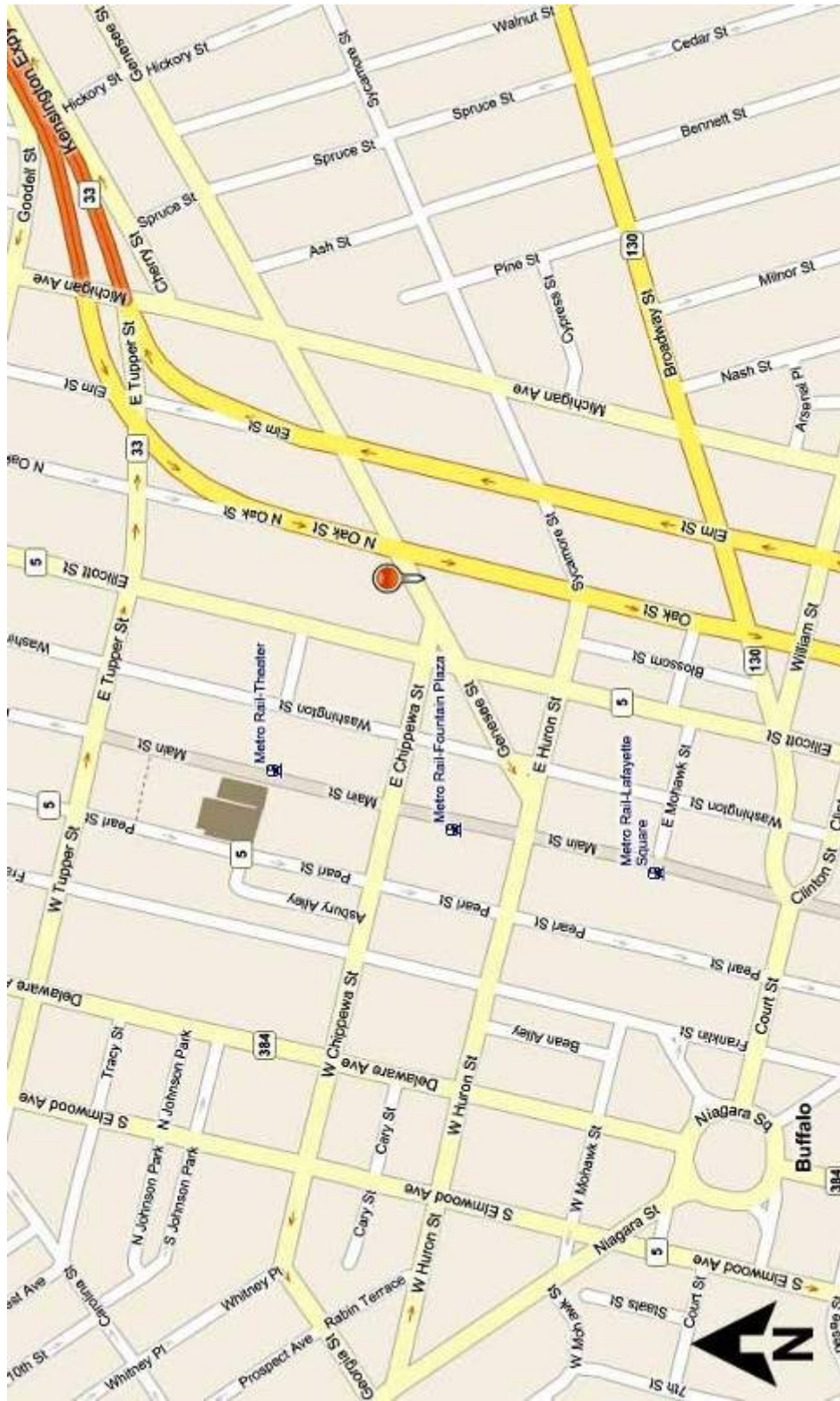
The success of the umbrella industry in 111 Genesee Street for two generations reflects the character of urban life in Buffalo from the mid-1800s to the early 1900s. In an age before people zipped everywhere in enclosed, climate controlled automobiles, people walked wherever they needed to go. They could walk from their house to the Washington Market to get their daily groceries and supplies. Umbrellas protected them from the rain, and parasols protected women from the sun. In an age of pedestrian travel, umbrellas were a key part of daily life. The prevalence of such items reflects a culture where stylish ladies and gentlemen strolled the street, and a cane, walking stick, umbrella or parasol of elegant wood, rich silks and fine craftsmanship was a status symbol. Both Jacob Schwinn and Henry Mandel were

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<sup>12</sup> Linstedt, Sharon. "Historic but vacant Genesee St. strip for sale." *Buffalo News*. 7 July 2006; D-7. Also Linstedt, Sharon. "Purchase of 99 Genesee confirmed." *Buffalo News*. 15 Aug 2007; B-2.

master craftsmen of a now-dead art form, and often were each one of only two people who made such items in the entire City of Buffalo. This building housed one of the rarest industries in the entire city which produced items used by every man, woman and child. The Genesee Gateway project hopes to recapture some of this essence in their project, incorporating a pedestrian-oriented commercial streetscape with restaurants, offices, shops, parks and green space. Perhaps an umbrella specialty shop will be required once again.

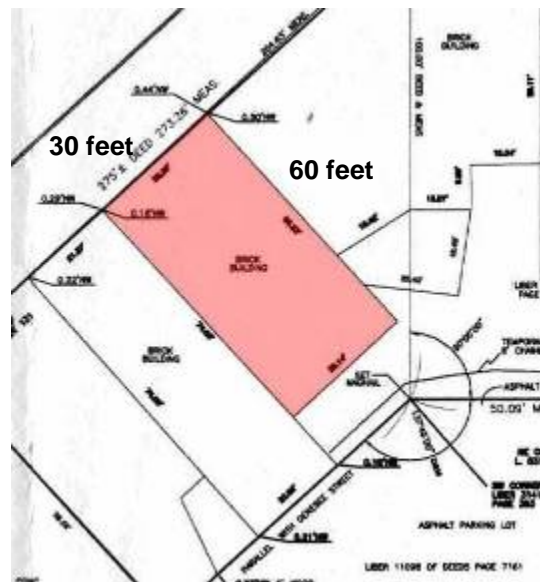
- The Schwinn-Mandel Building at 111 Genesee Street is an excellent example of the development of commercial architecture within the Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood, and it is an increasingly rare example of post-Civil War era architecture in the City of Buffalo. The building is a contributing building to the local Genesee Gateway Historic District as an excellent example of commercial Italianate architecture. The building is also associated with a unique industry in Buffalo, the manufacture of umbrellas and parasols, a trade with which it was associated for nearly seven decades. The building, constructed and owned for many years by a French-German immigrant and occupied by two prominent businesses run by people of German extraction, is also an example of the growth and prosperity of the notable



(1) Location of the Schwinn-Mandel Building, 111 Genesee Street, Buffalo, Erie County, NY 14203



(2) Detail, Survey (2008)  
 Showing location and parcel size of The Schwinn-Mandel Building







(3) Aerial View, facing south  
Note the regular, continuous line of the Genesee Gateway facades along the south side of Genesee Street. The Schwinn-Mandel Building is one of the most regular in mass and form compared to the other more oddly angled buildings.



(4) Aerial view, facing north



**JACOB J. SCHWINN,**  
Manufacturer and Dealer in the best kind of  
**UMBRELLAS**  
PARASOLS AND CANES.

No. 111 E. GENESEE STREET, BETWEEN ELLICOTT AND OAK.

Umbrellas and Parasols promptly repaired and re-covered in the best manner. All kinds of Umbrella and Parasol material for sale.

(5) Jacob J. Schwinn Advertisement, 1878 City Directory  
This appears to be from the same year that the Schwinn-Mandel Building was constructed or completed.



**JACOB J. SCHWINN,**  
MANUFACTURER OF  
**UMBRELLAS AND PARASOLS**  
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DEALER IN FINE  
Gold, Silver, Ivory and Bone Headed Canes.

**No. 11 EAST GENESEE ST.**

Between Ellicott and Oak.

Umbrellas and Parasols promptly repaired and re-covered in the best manner. All kinds of Umbrella and Parasol material for sale.

(6) Jacob J. Schwinn Advertisement, 1880 City Directory  
Similar to the design of the 1878 ad, the copy in this lists some of the fine quality products which Schwinn specialized in.






(7) Jacob J. Schwinn, two undated photographs

**FRANK R. SCHWINN**  
MANUFACTURER OF FINE  
**Umbrellas, Parasols**  
**WALKING STICKS.**  
*111 East Genesee Street.*  
Umbrellas and Parasols re-covered and repaired.

(8) Frank R. Schwinn Advertisement, 1889 City Directory  
Following the death of Jacob Schwinn, his brothers took over his umbrella company which they ran for several years.



**G. C. BUCKENMAIER,**  
 111 E. Genesee Street.  
 Ladies' Hair-Dressing Parlor

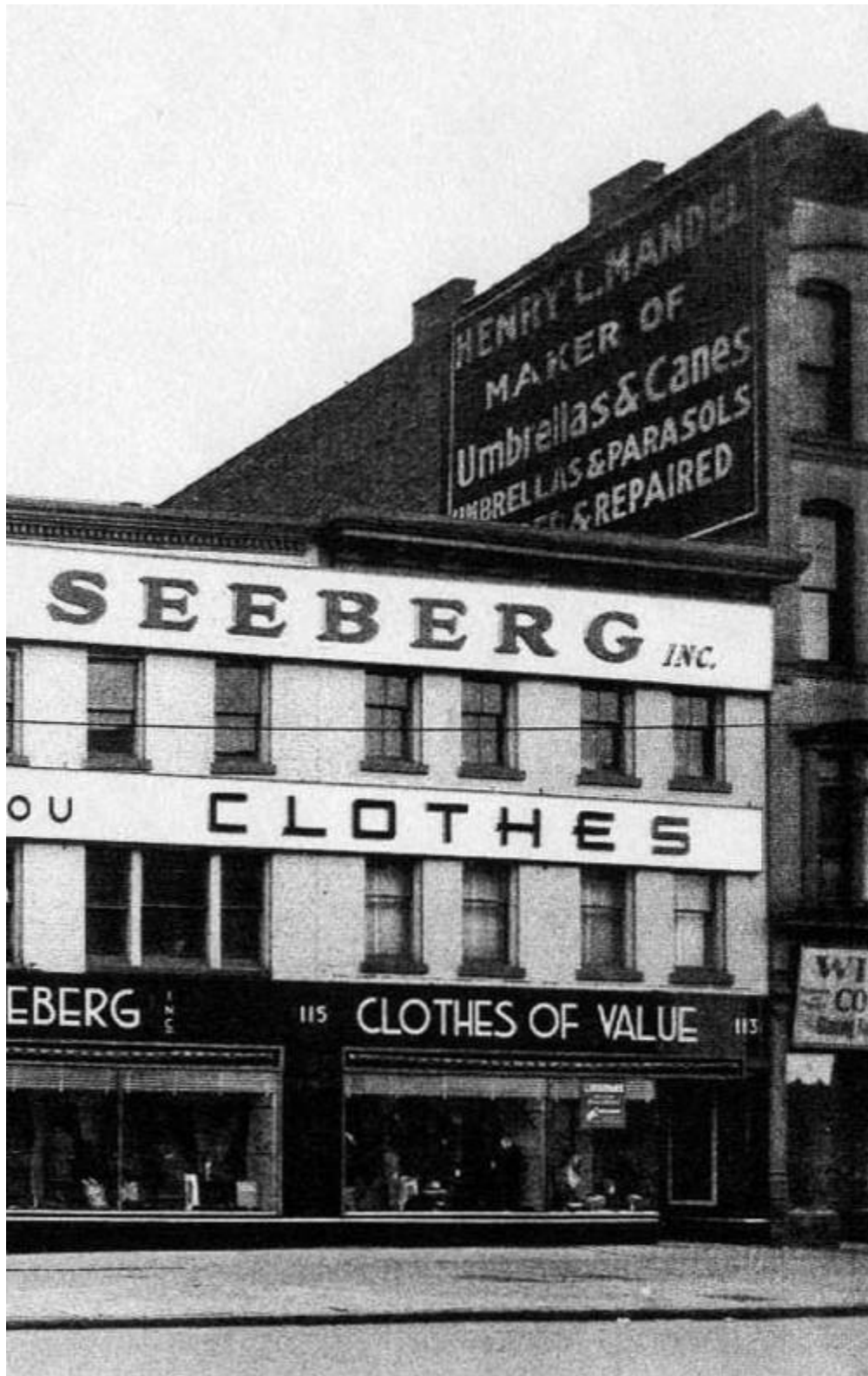
Dealer in fine Human Hair Goods, all long Hair  
 Switches from \$1.00 to \$10.00. LADIES' and  
 GENT'S Wigs Made to Order.

(9) Gotthilf Buckenmaier Advertisement, 1898 St. Michael's Church publication  
 A brief tenant in the Schwinn-Mandel Building before he relocated in 115 Genesee Street,  
 Buckenmaier put out this elegant advertisement.

**MANDEL HENRY L. Manufacturer of Fine  
 Umbrellas, Parasols and Walking Sticks,  
 We Do Recovering and Repairing. We Call  
 For and Deliver 111 E Genesee, Tel Seneca  
 5503, h926 Washington, Tel Tupper 0854-R**

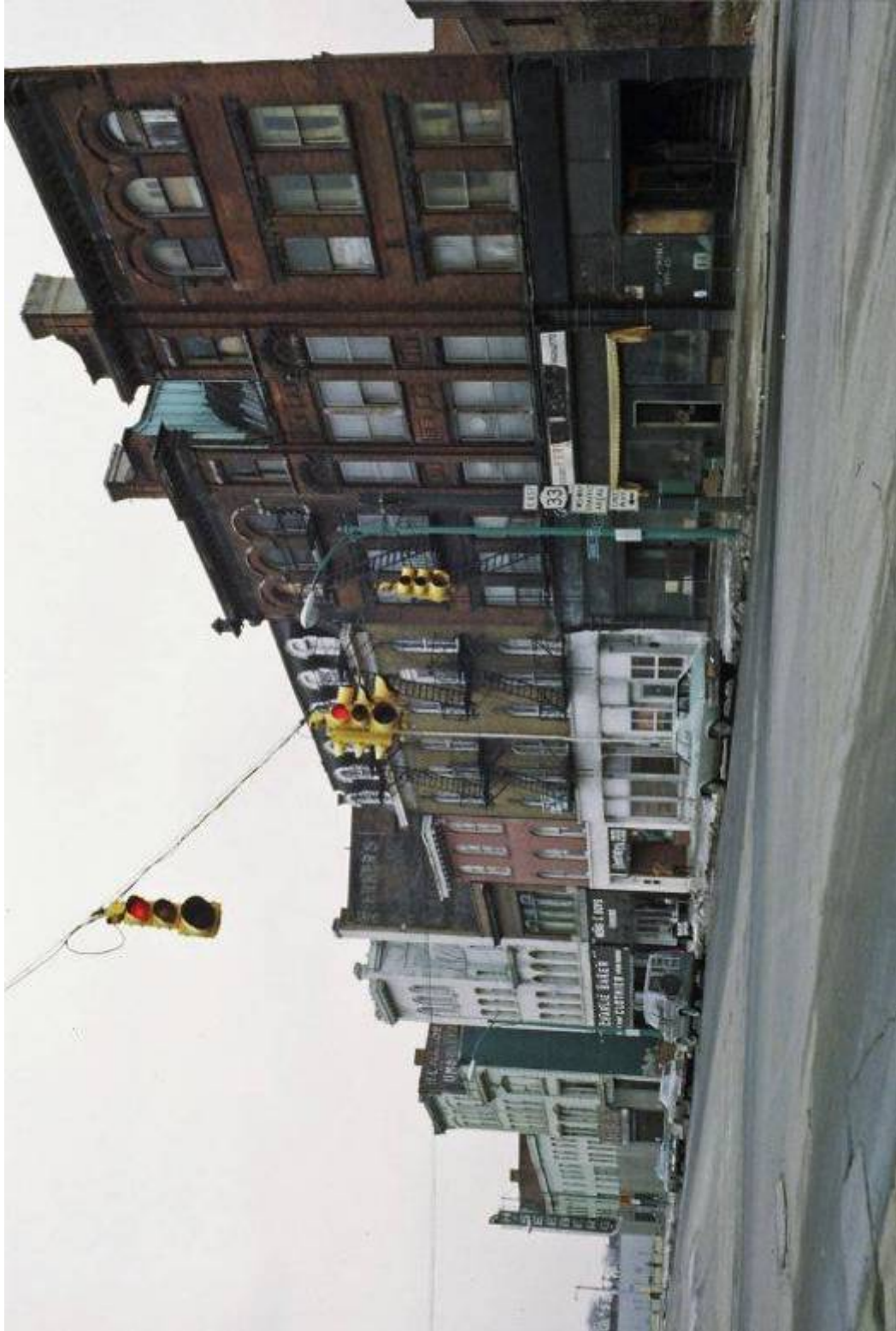
(10) Mandel, Henry L., 1928 City Directory entry  
 Mandel appears to have carried on the same tradition of quality craftsmanship as the Schwinn.





(11) Detail, ca. Early 1940s Photograph

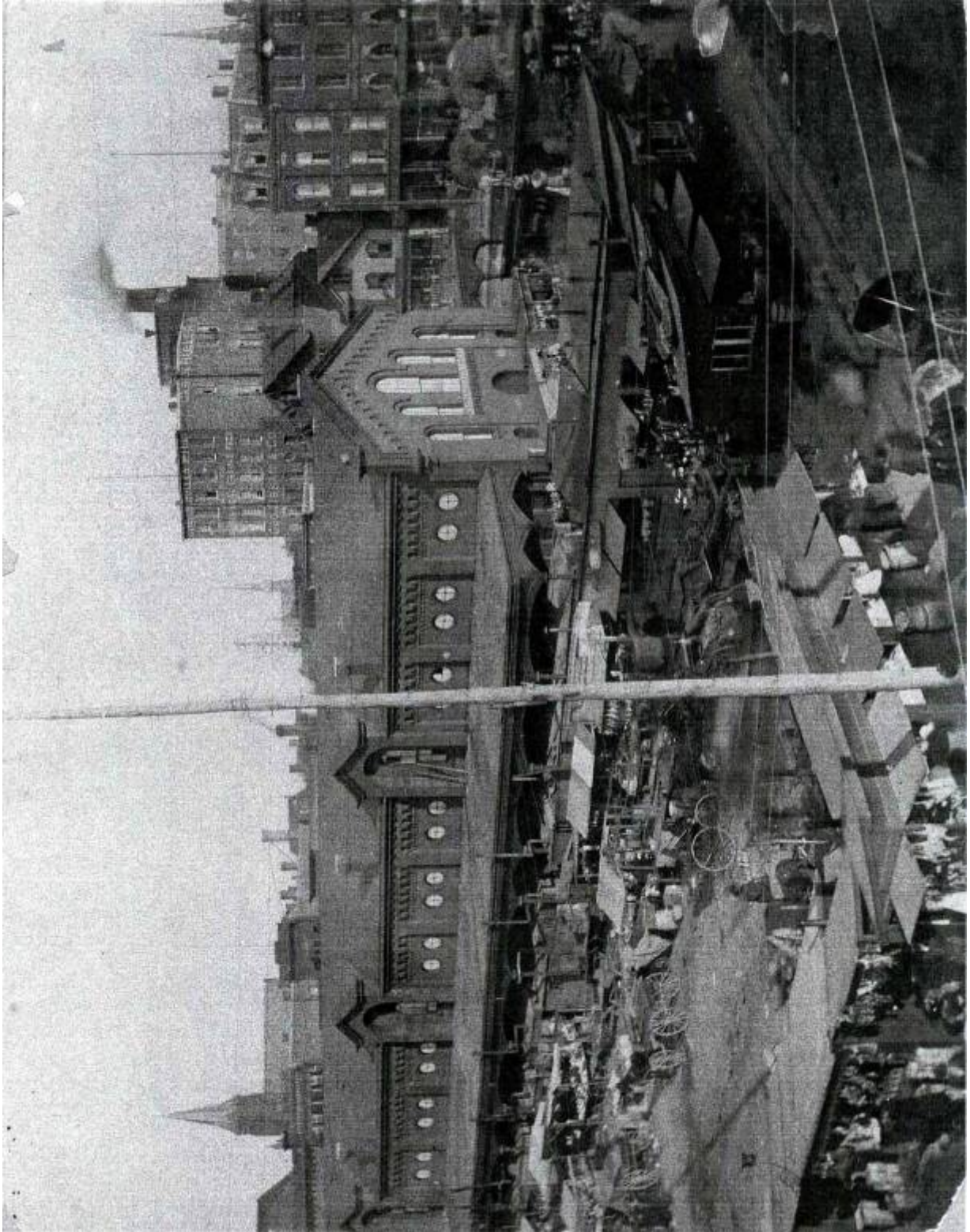
The only discovered historical photo of the Schwinn-Mandel Building, here it is barely visible in a photograph of the adjacent H. Seeberg Building. Note the crisply painted advertisement for Mandel on the eastern façade of the building.



(12) The Genesee Gateway Buildings, ca. 1986

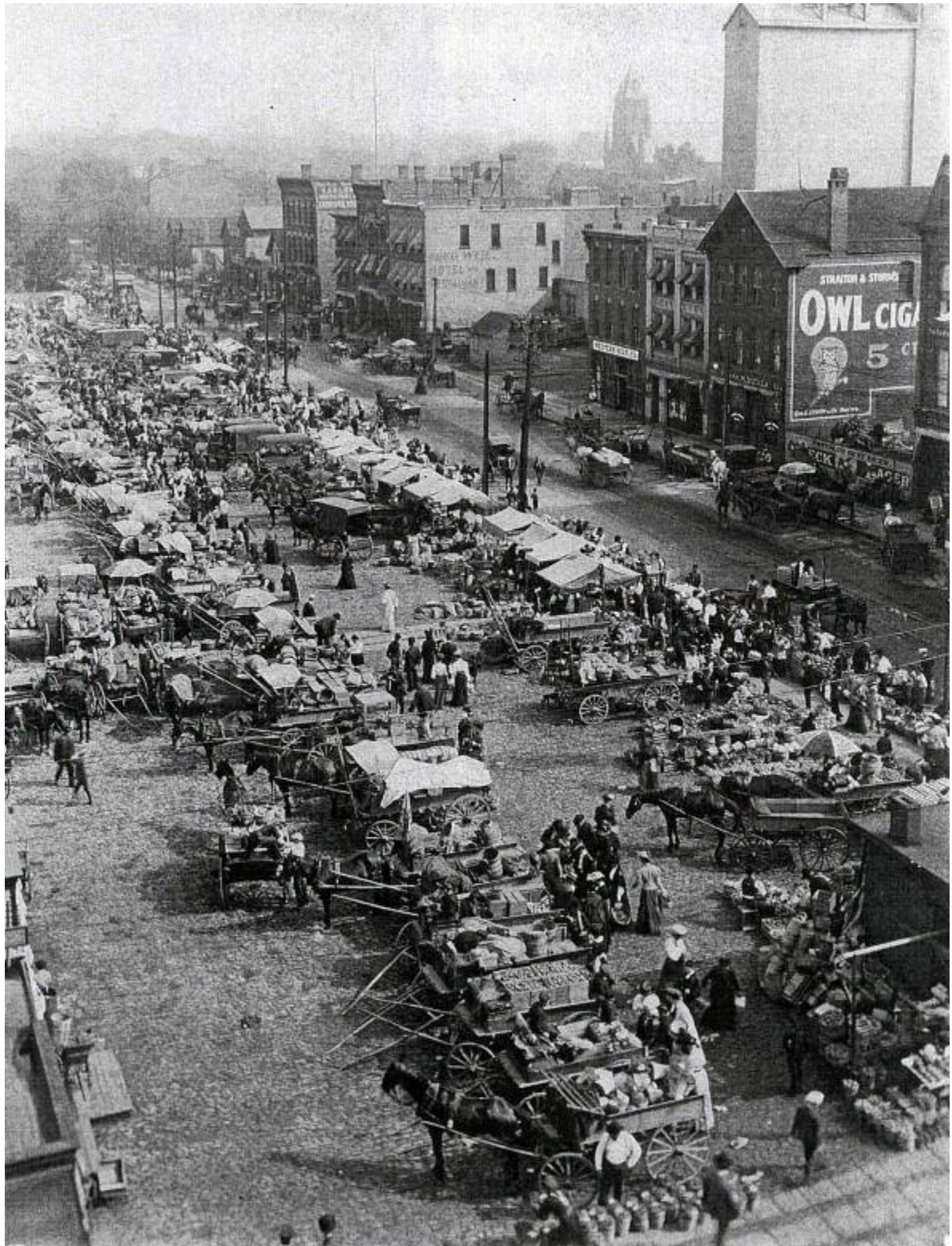
Note the presence of the Caulkins Building and the mansarded Denzinger-Sigwalt Buildings towards the image foreground, which were lost in 2002. The Schwinn-Mandel Building is visible towards the left middle-ground of the image.





(13) The Washington Market looking east towards Ellicott Street, 1890  
Note the growth of other commercial buildings along Ellicott Street which developed as a relationship to the bustling market. The tall structure in the right background behind the market building is the Urban Roller Mills milling building in its original appearance.

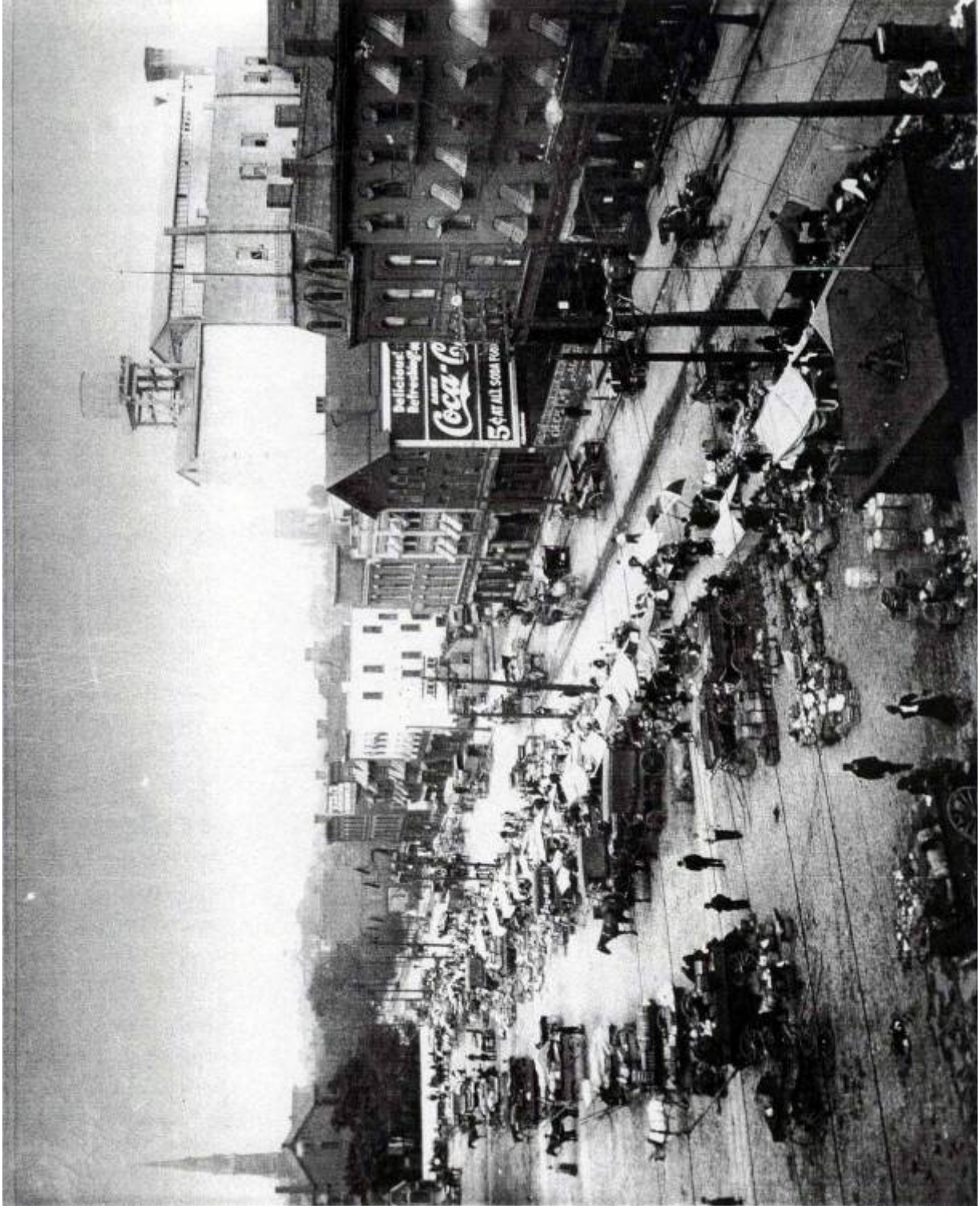




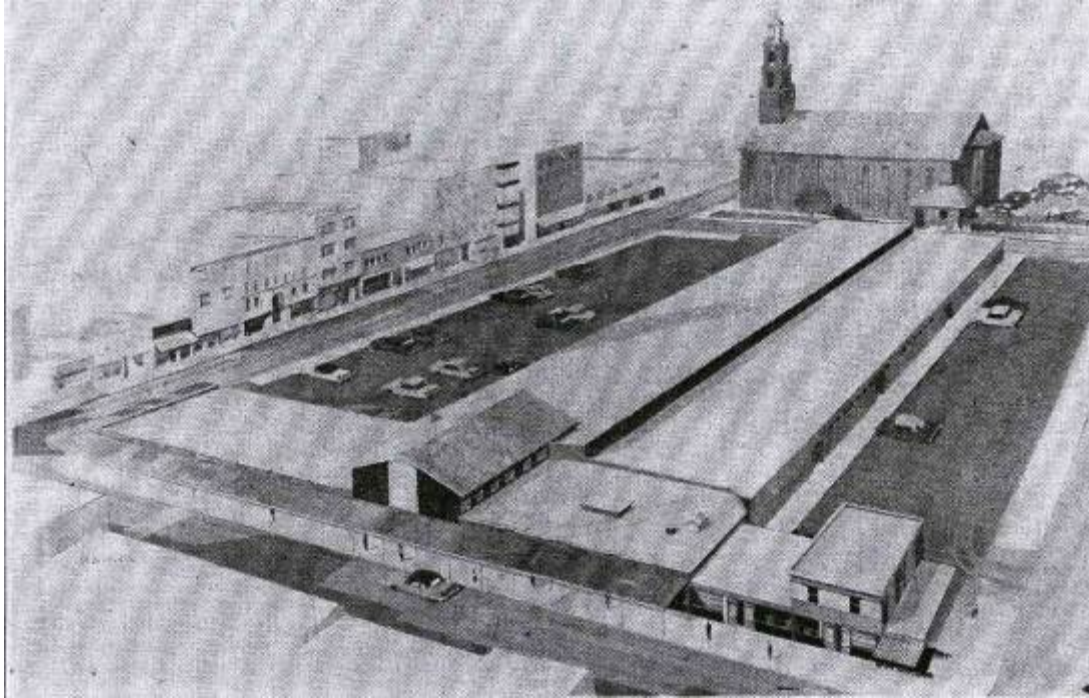
(14) The Washington Market looking north-east along Ellicott Street, 1905

This view on a crowded market day shows the type of commercial neighborhood which had grown up around the Washington Market by the turn of the twentieth-century. The tall structure just visible in the upper right corner of the image is the Urban Roller Mills milling building.



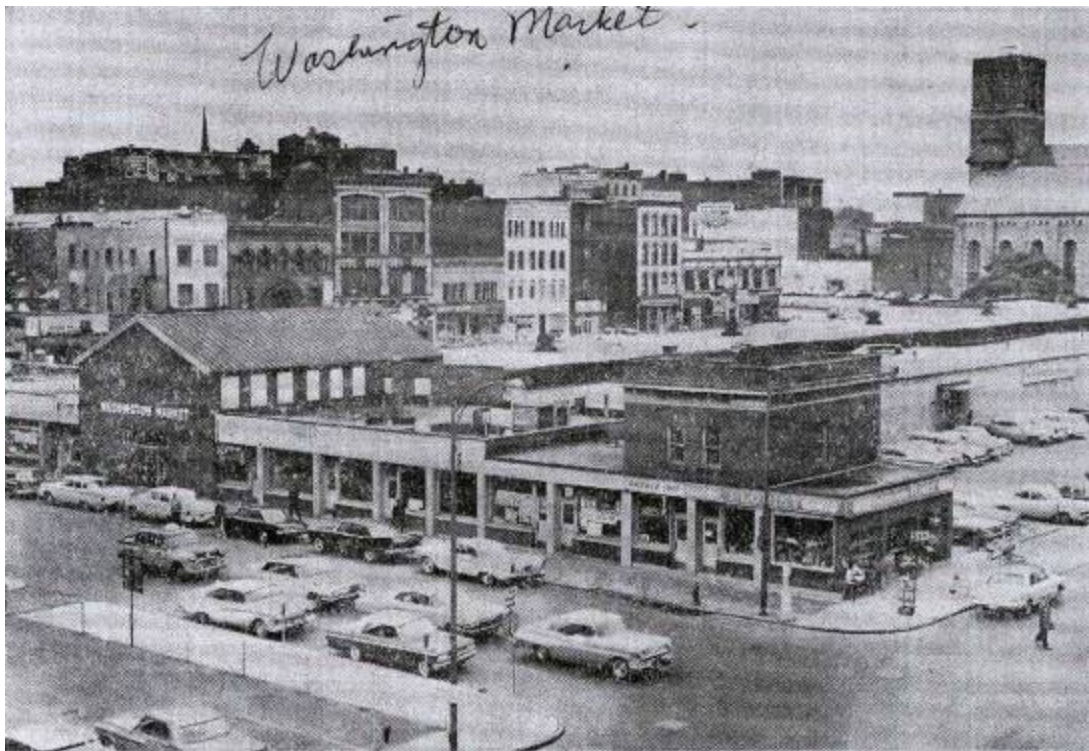


(15) The Washington Market looking north-east along Ellicott Street, 1912  
A view of the fine collection of nineteenth- and early-twentieth century commercial architecture which characterized the Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood at this period.



(16) "Architects Sketch of New \$400,000 Washington Market"

This 1955 drawing done by the architecture firm of Backus, Crane and Love shows the new design for a modern, concrete block market which replaced the brick Romanesque market building.  
Buffalo Evening News 4 Feb 1955.



(17) The Washington Market in view from Ellicott and Chippewa Streets

With the neighborhood in decline, and dubbed "a losing proposition with no bright hopes in sight," this 1963 image reflects the appearance of the market during its final days.  
Buffalo Courier Express, 22 Sep 1963:1.

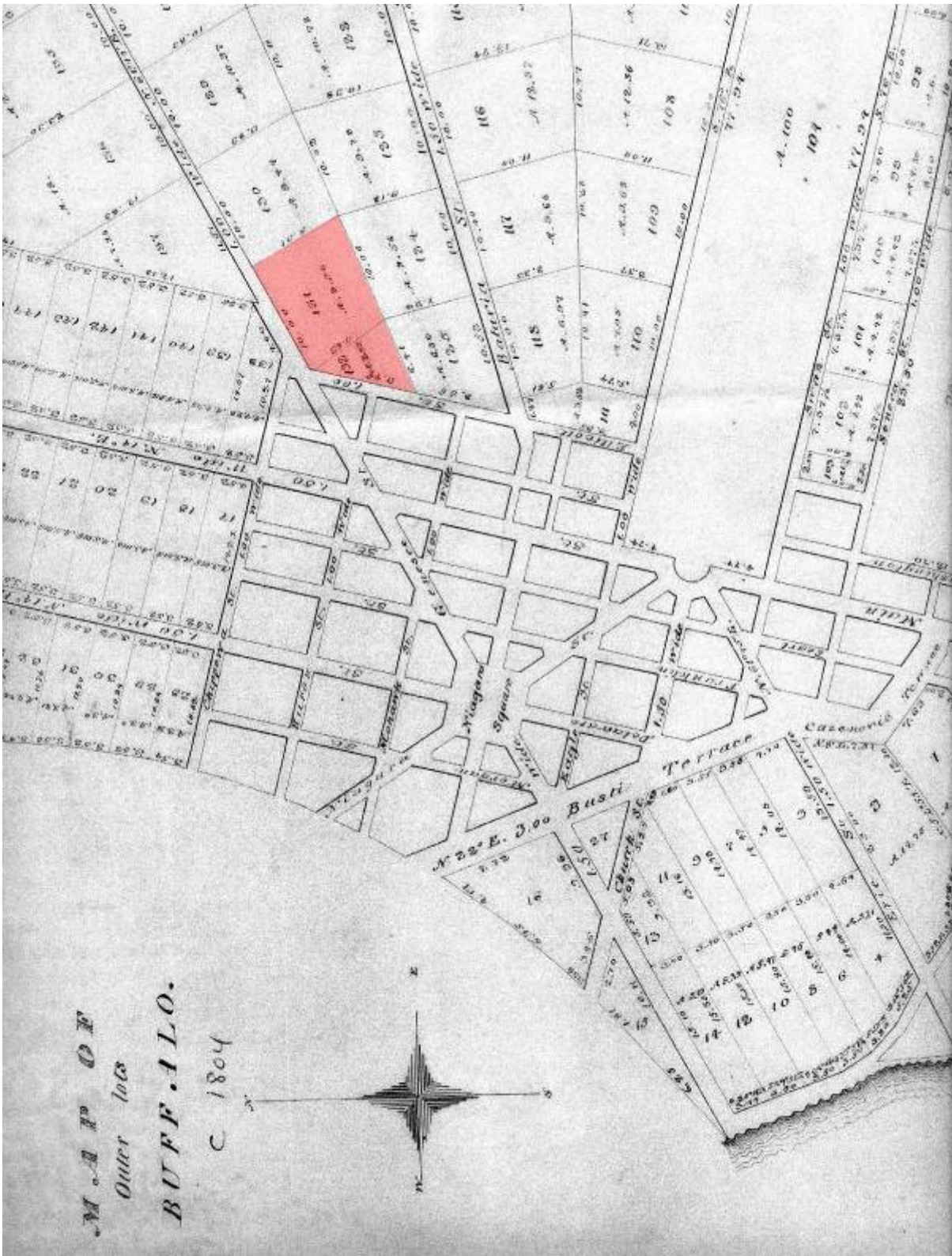




(18) "A New Downtown Parking Lot Opened Today."

This 1965 photograph reflects the ultimate fate that has plagued much of the historic architecture in the Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood. Here a new surface parking area is opened on the site of the then-recently demolished Washington Market site, marking the end of an era for Buffalo's commercial history. Today this is still a parking lot, and there are no reminders of the once-great market which was once located on this plot. St. Michael's RC Church stands in the center background.





(19) Detail, Map of Buffalo Outer Lots, 1804/05

The red highlight indicates plots 131 and 132, purchased by Major Andre Andrews circa 1821 at the outer edge of Buffalo at the time, and current location of Genesee Gateway buildings. Notice how the road narrows just past the corner of Ellicott and Genesee Street.



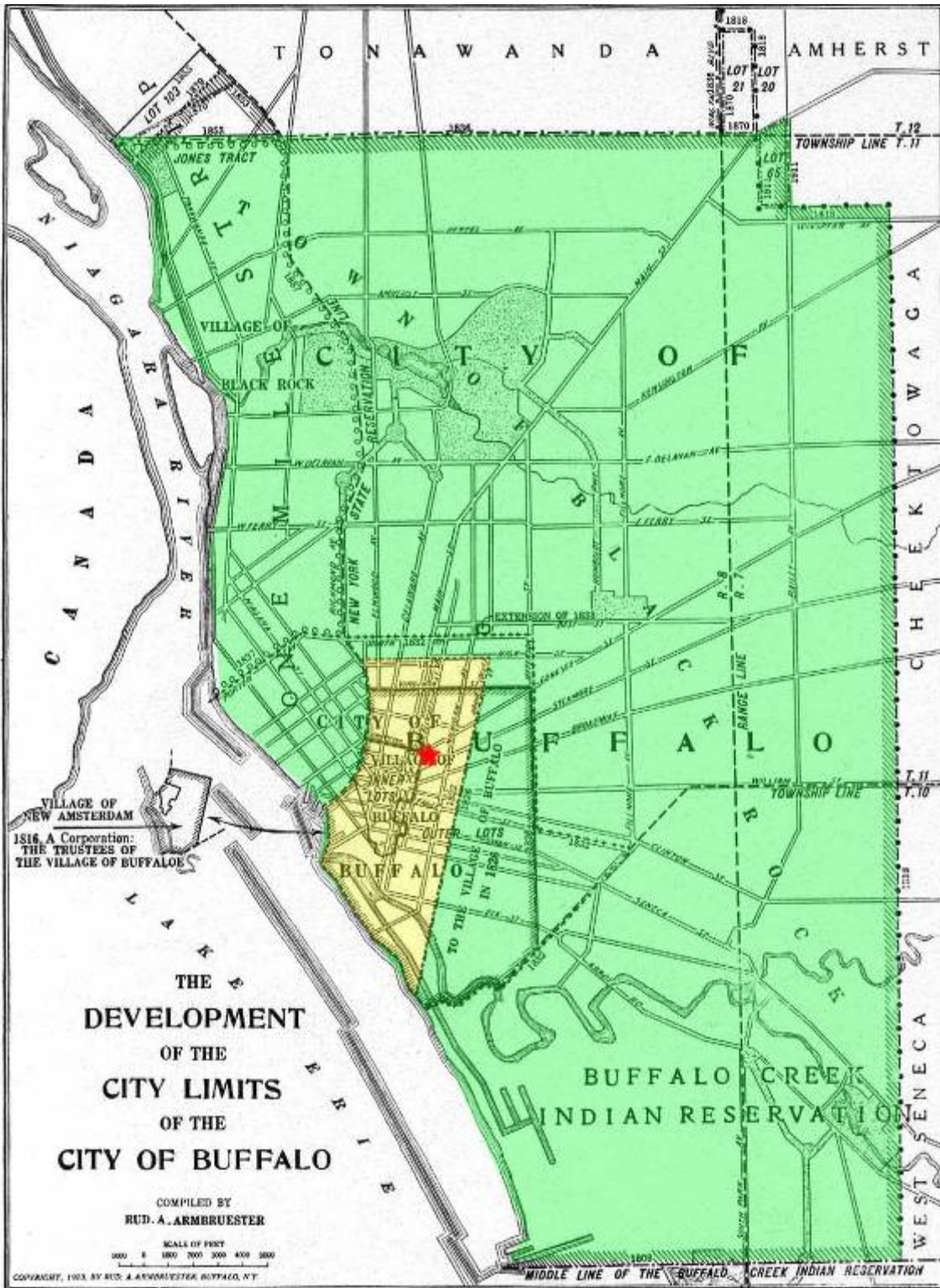




(21) Pocket Map of the City of Buffalo, 1847

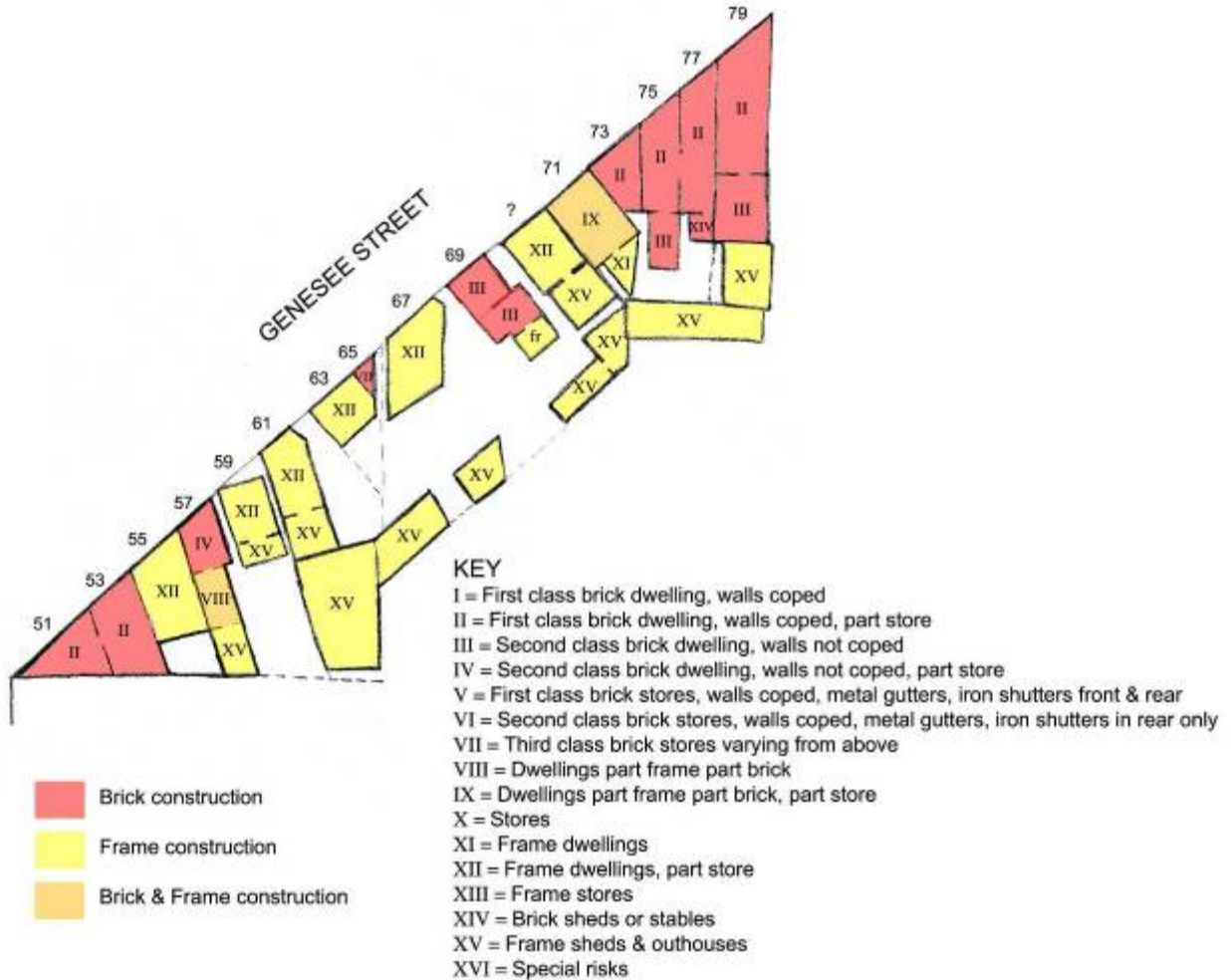
Enlarged map detail highlights the Genesee Gateway area as it appeared in the late 1840s. Note what appears to be a small street, called Blossom Street, which bisects the block north to south, possibly the reason why brick buildings aligned in continuous blocks or rows were constructed at the corners of the block and an assortment of oddly shaped frame buildings filled in the center, possibly as later urban development taking over the former right-of-way of the street. This configuration may also account for the configuration of individual lots on this block





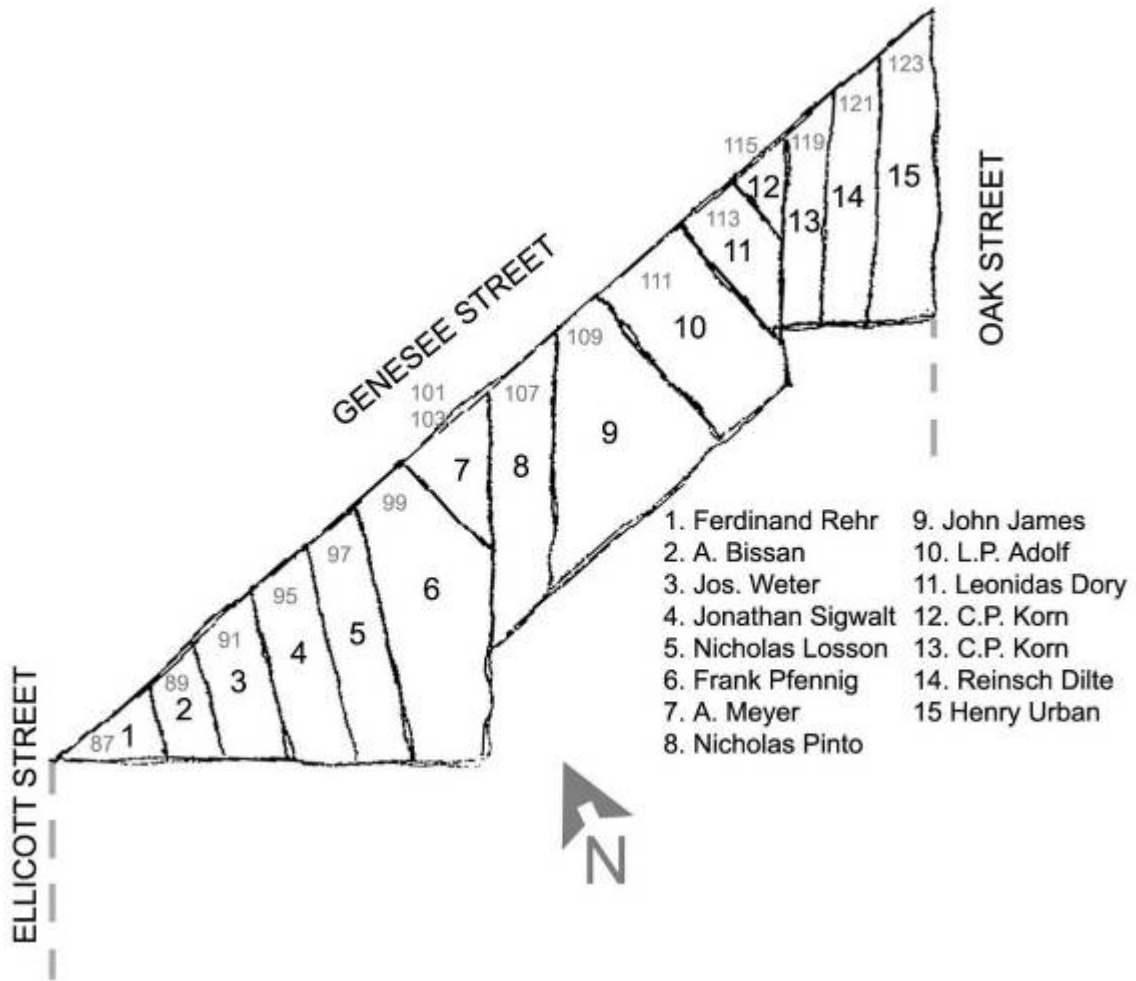
(22) The Development of the City Limits of the City of Buffalo (1923)

Yellow indicates the boundaries of the then Village of Buffalo in 1822 around the time the Genesee-Ellicott-Oak neighborhood was founded. The red star indicates the location of the Genesee Gateway buildings in relation to the overall size of the city at the time; compare to the green 1923 boundaries of the city.



(23) Sketch detail, 1854 Fire Insurance Map of the City of Buffalo

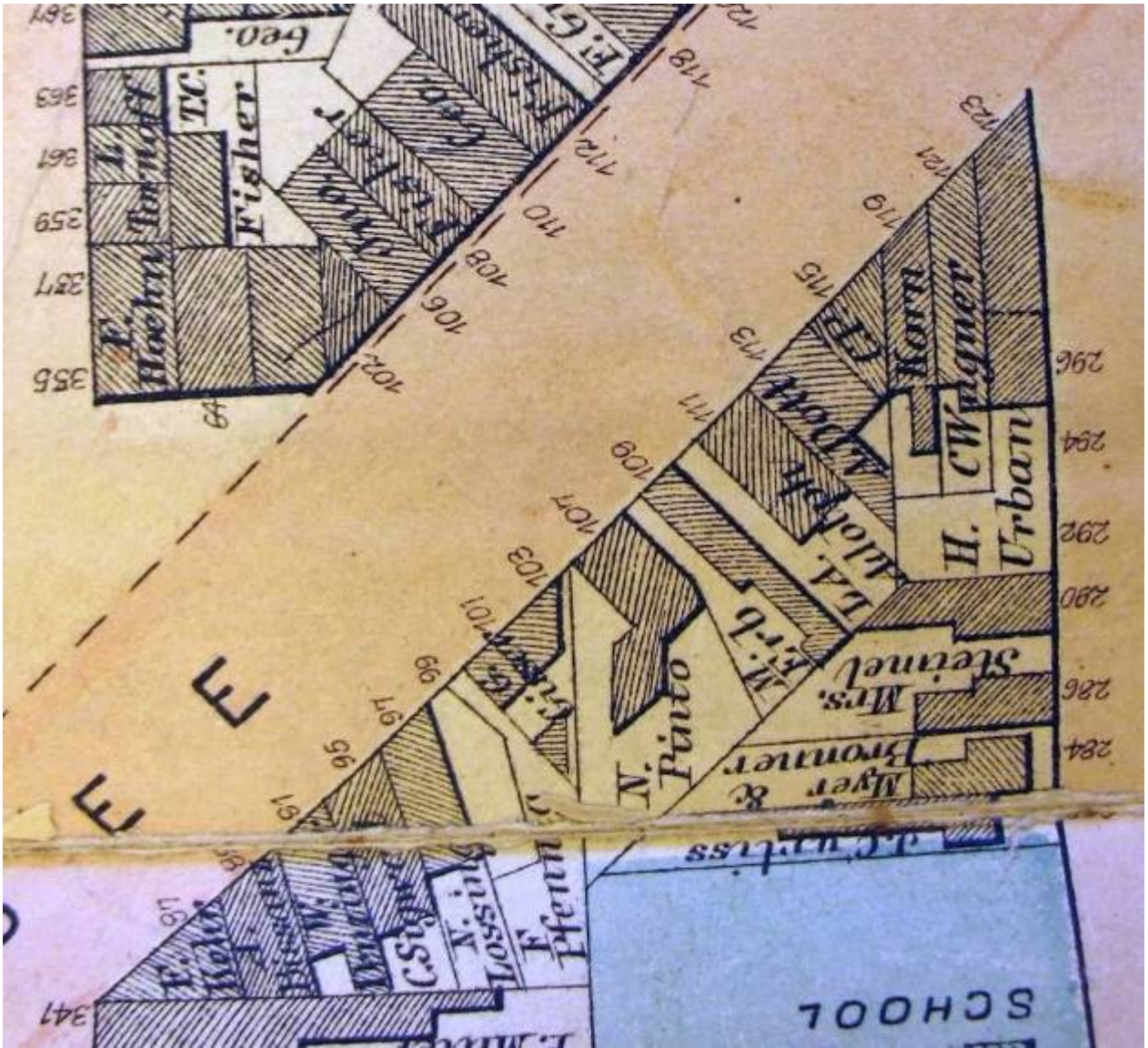
This map represents the earliest record of buildings along Genesee Street. Note that brick construction was used at both corners of the block, but a majority of the building fabric was of frame construction. 111 Genesee Street is approximately labeled as 71 Genesee Street on this map; note the presence of a brick and wood framed dwelling/store building at this site.



(24) Sketch detail, 1866 Deed Atlas of the City of Buffalo

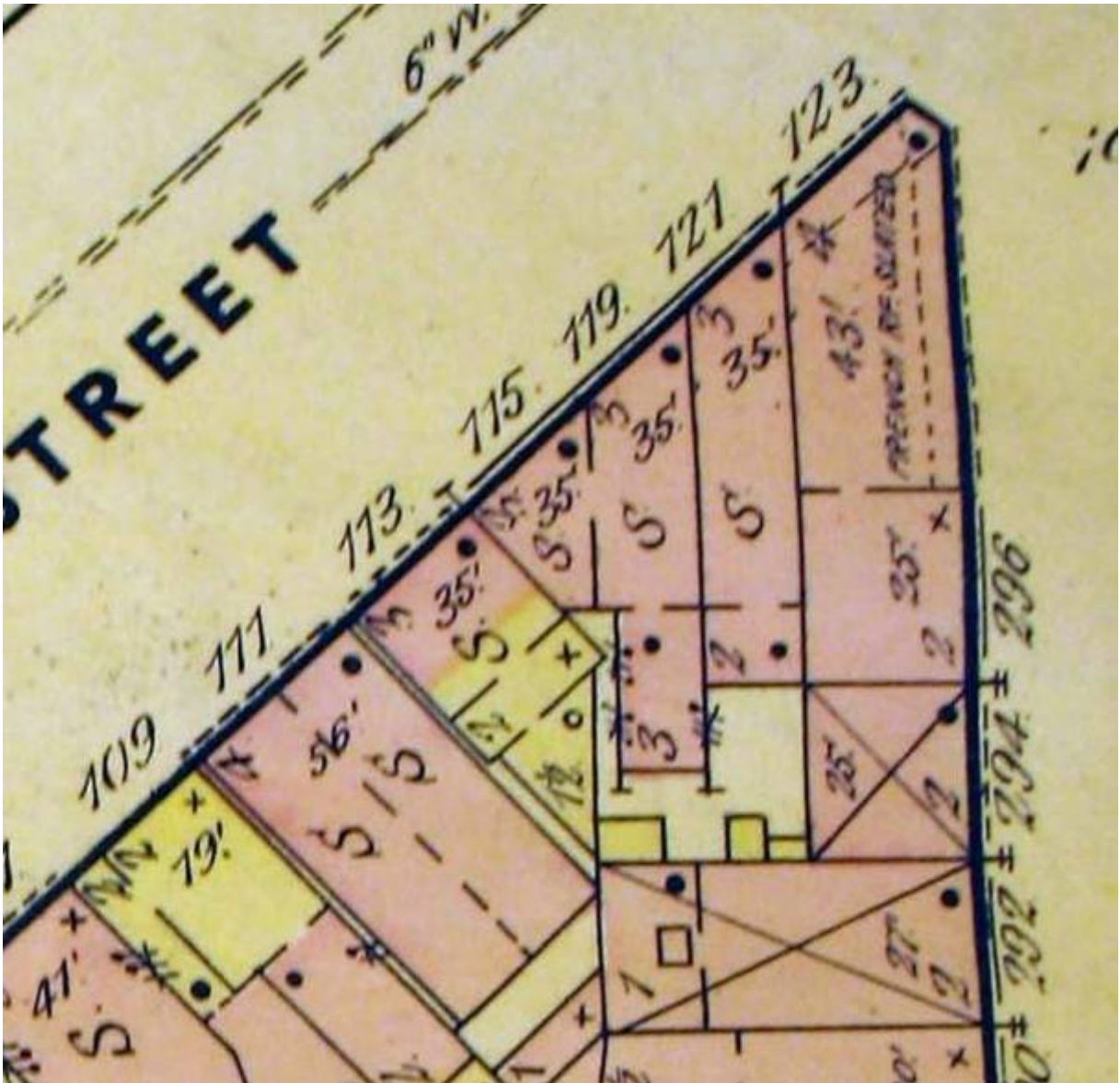
While this map does not indicate buildings or structures which were constructed, it does list the owners of the various Genesee Gateway parcels. Note that L.P. Adolf was owner of the property numbered 10, the current site of the Schwinn-Mandel Building, in the 1860s.







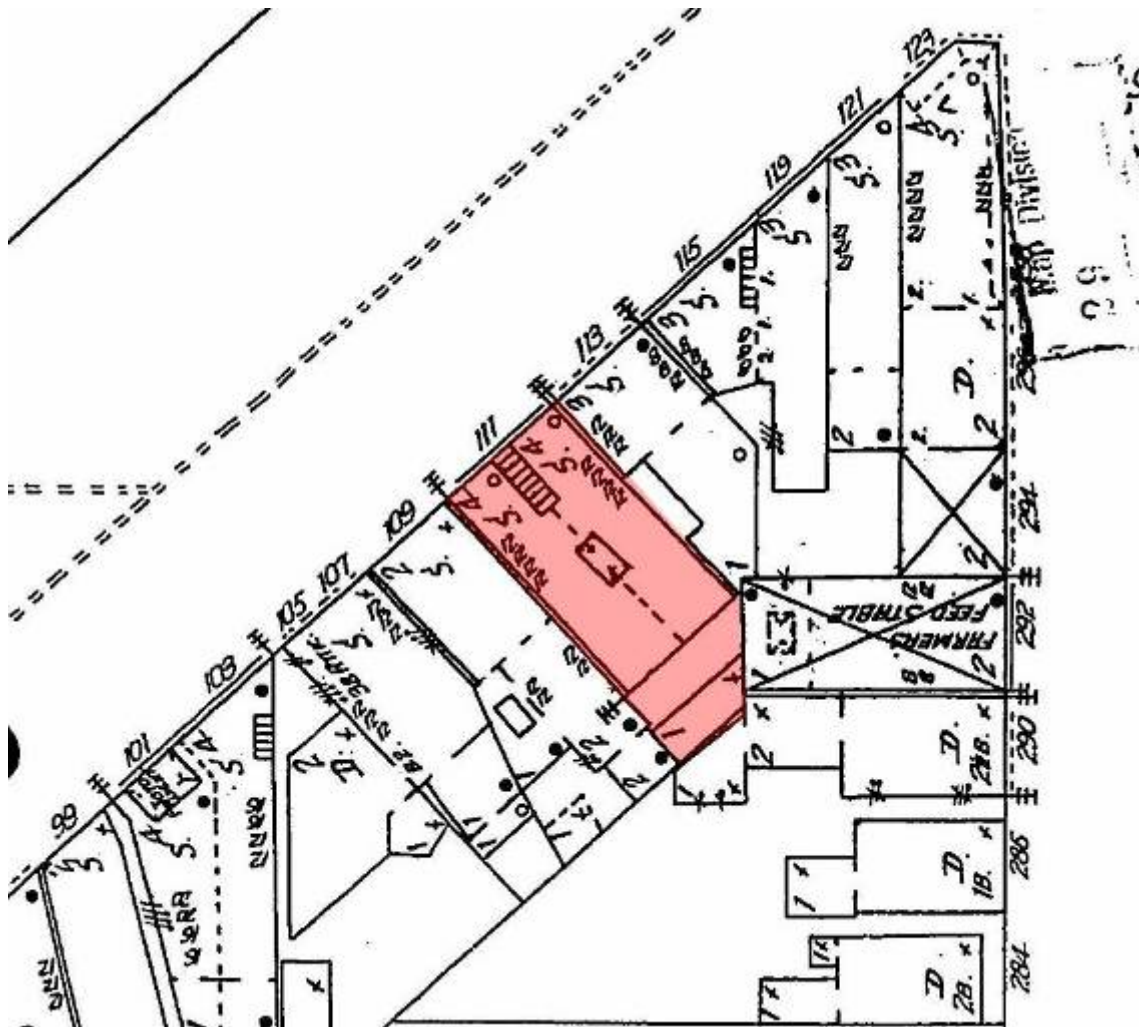




(27) Detail, 1881-1888 Sanborn Map

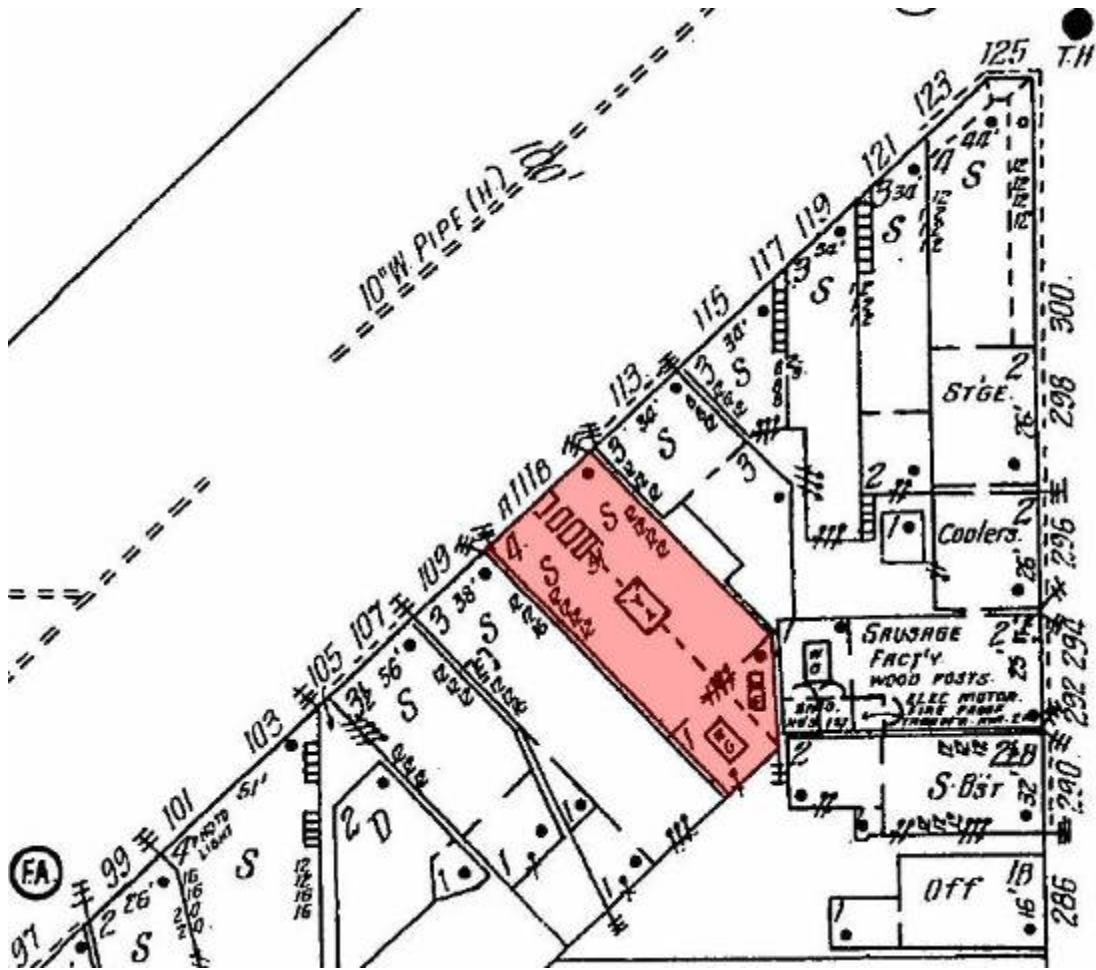
The earliest indication of the interior layout of 111 Genesee Street. Note the building appears to have contained two commercial tenants, and featured a small shed or storage building at the rear.





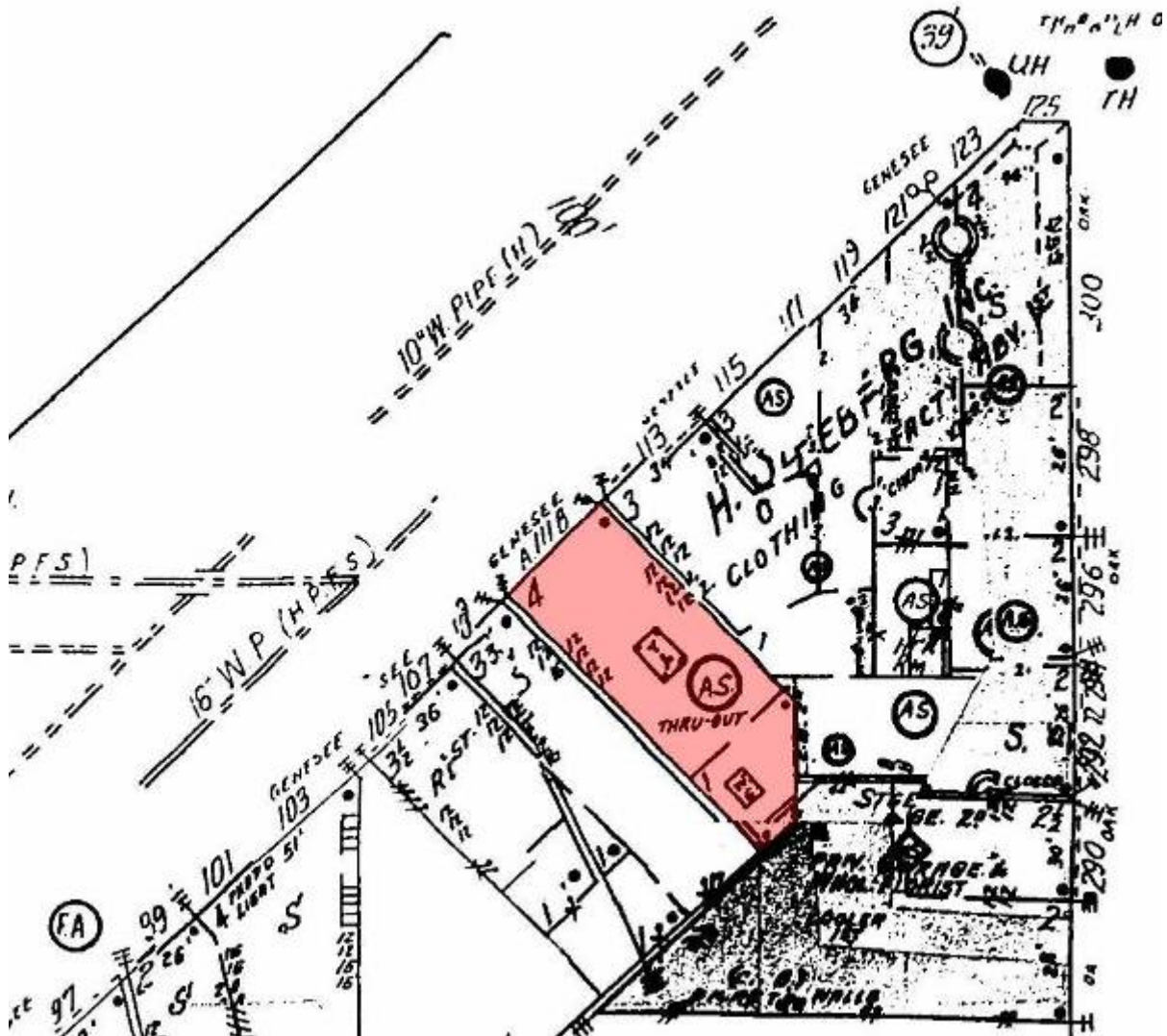
(28) Detail, 1899 Sanborn Map

Note that the Schwinn-Mandel Building features a center stair which led to the upper residential floors, and now appears to feature a rectangular skylight on the roof.



(29) Detail of 1925 Sanborn Map

The two commercial tenants appear to have been assigned "A" and "B" designations. Also note a one-story addition to the rear of the property, filling the property boundaries completely.



(30) Detail of 1925-1951 Sanborn Map

There is no indication that 111 Genesee Street is occupied by a commercial tenant in early 1950, and indeed served as a warehouse building for the adjacent H. Seeberg Company.