



222-230 Mill Street

Discouraged after several years, Charles Harford sold the mill to the Brown brothers and Thomas Mumford. The mill building was improved in 1812, but it burned in 1818. A replacement was constructed immediately, though it now shows the results of several rebuilding cycles occasioned by fire and partial demolition. The building features brick corbels and unusual twelve-light single-sash with thick wood muntins. Exterior walls are stone except for the brick south wall that was constructed after a large portion of the building was removed to build the bridge.

Walk out onto the bridge, and look right (south) toward downtown for one of Rochester's most spectacular sights: the Genesee River Gorge and the High Falls.

5. **The Pont de Rennes pedestrian bridge and park** were created in 1982 from what was the Platt Street bridge (1891), an 858-foot-long, truss bridge.

6. Looking out over the **Gorge**, you can see rock formations of shale, limestone and sandstone, with bands of iron ore. These sedimentary rocks, formed by the accumulation of deposits that came from what is now the Hudson Valley, are over 400 million years old. Soils from the then Alpine-like mountains were washed into a shallow sea. The sediment compressed and cemented to form layers of rock. The red sandstone, locally called "Medina sandstone," provided an excellent building material and is often found on Rochester's sidewalks, curbs and older buildings.

Starting about 10,000 years ago, deposits from the retreat of the last glacier diverted the Genesee to its present course. From Rochester to Lake Ontario, the river drops about 300 feet. Waterfalls occurred as the river met rock resistant to erosion. This main cataract—the 96-foot **High Falls**—once called the Upper Falls—was considered one of the wonders of the American wilderness. The 67-foot Lower Falls is about one mile downstream, near Driving Park Avenue. The gorge was created by the upstream migration of these falls.

Rochester schoolchildren know the story of Sam Patch, a 19th-century daredevil, who had conquered Niagara Falls, but jumped from High Falls to his death on Friday the thirteenth of November, 1829.

By the early 1800s, the Genesee River was supplying the power, initially via Brown's Race, that made Rochester the flour capital of the world. Its commercial accessibility attracted millers, toolmakers and other settlers. At least nine of Rochester's two dozen mills were situated on Brown's Race. Rochester remained a flour-milling center until the 1880s, when production followed the migration of farmers to the Midwest. The last flour was milled at Brown's Race in 1927.

7. On the northwest bank of the river gorge is **Beebe Station of the Rochester Gas and Electric Company**. One of RG&E's predecessor companies established a combined stream and hydroelectric plant here in 1892. Beebe station produced electricity from coal, gas and oil. However, RG&E still uses Brown's Race for hydroelectric power with a water turbine now housed in a block structure at the southwest base of High Falls.

8. **The High Falls Brewing Company**, initially established as the Genesee Brewing Company in 1878, is located along the east bank of the gorge. The company stopped manufacture during prohibition but was reorganized by a former brewmaster, Louis A. Wehle, in 1933. Several former breweries are now part of this complex.