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Lights of Home

JESSAMINE JOHNSON

1952

When I have wandered far apace
And come again to my home place,
My heart with rapture fills anew,
Each time her hills return to view.

They rise above the lake's blue floor
Like battlements along the shore,
And deep within her gorges rift,
The roar of rushing waters lift.

At eve the twinkling lights appear
To scatter diamonds far and near;
Be-jewelling all the hills around
Till ne'er a king more richly crowned.

Each glow that streams from nestled home
Gently beckons all who roam;
Within is warmth, and love, and rest.
Here lights of home are heav'n blest.

Remembering Ithaca

1930--1970

By JESSAMINE KELSEY JOHNSON



1971

Published by the Author for

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Contents

Lights of Home (a poem) Frontispiece

Chapter I Cayuga’s Waters 1

Chapter II Depression Days 4

Chapter III World War II Years 8

Chapter IV Changes in Midtown 10

Chapter V Housing and Expansion 18

Chapter VI Schools and Health Services 21

Chapter VII Cultural Centers and Parks 28

Chapter VIII Religious Organizations 34

Chapter IX The Game of Names 39

CHAPTER I

Cayuga's Waters

The situation of Ithaca, below and around three hills at the southern end of Cayuga Lake, is like no other place in our land. Settled by white men soon after the Sullivan expedition drove the Indian out of the region in 1779, its location at the head of the longest of the Finger Lakes is very advantageous.

It has four major streams flowing into the Inlet, besides Fall Creek running through the northern section of the city with its own approach to the lake. Since several of these creeks flow through deep gorges and fall in many cascades, they furnished waterpower for early settlers; and the lake was used for early industries and transportation, especially after the northern canals were opened. These practical purposes plus the surrounding natural beauty add up to a truly unique situation.

To newcomers approaching from the south through Danby and past many peaceful dairy farms, their unexpected glimpses of the magnificent view from South Hill often brings breathtaking responses as they catch sight of the long stretch of the lake northward, deep below, among the cliffs and wooded hillsides.

Though it does not have the stupendous impact of a Yosemite, or the excitement of Niagara Falls, it has captured an endearing loveliness that seems to linger and remain with one throughout life, whether one is here or away. For Cayuga Lake has many moods and its hillsides change from season to season.

Sometimes, looking at the lake, you think you are seeing an

entirely different lake than the same one you witnessed the day previously, its aspect changes so rapidly.

On a freshly-washed spring morning from the west shore, the rosy-tinted sky of dawn was laced with pine branches, and later in the morning the clear cerulean blue of the sky was reflected in its calm waters.

In contrast, on a July day in 1935, the angry face of its seething waters foretold a cloudburst which soon descended, leaving roaring gorges and flooded lowlands.

Then in August, the heat of the day sent the sun down in a round, red ball making a fiery path across the surface of the lake.

When fall comes, the azure blue of its waters are bordered with glowing autumn foliage lining the hillsides all around.

For several months of the year, winter casts a steel-grey surface on its face and after a thaw, floating ice cakes move northward down the lake, and ice fringes the shores all along the way.

The loveliest day of all is when soft, fluffy clouds float across the sky, changing the colors of lake and hills from cobalt blue to the deep purple under the shade of the clouds.

Some days the lake is scattered with white sailboats and assorted pleasure craft which cruise in and out between the red and white channel markers at the entrance of the Inlet, and far down the lake.

In the spring the Cornell crew often has its sculls out cutting the waters in smooth, even rhythm, preparing for the collegiate regatta. When it comes to town, people crowd around in boats on shore. At one time a train was dispatched down east shore, carrying a load of spectators to a good vantage point.

But the lake is sometimes treacherous with a choppy, white-capped race of water whipping across from side to side, even at sundown, frustrating the best boatmen.

Besides furnishing transportation before the days of the automobile, Cayuga Lake powered (and still does) several industries—the salt works, and a cement plant at Myers. Now it is mostly a pleasure center with a yacht club and many surrounding marinas and parks.

Stewart Park, at the head, closest to the city, has always been very popular with its picnic grounds, small zoo, and a wild-bird refuge. Many barbecues and rallies, both political and family, are held here. At one time it had a bathing beach with a float offshore, but water pollution has now made bathing impossible.

Fortunately, however, the bird sanctuary on the south side of the park has still been preserved in spite of the closing in of construction and traffic noises surrounding it, the Louis Agassiz Fuertes Preserve is a handy place for bird watchers.

These two tracts border the east side of Fall Creek, and a small lagoon opens from it into Stewart Park. On the west side of the creek and connected to them by two footbridges, what used to be a boggy marsh and a garbage dump, has now blossomed into a fine municipal golf course extending to the east shore of the Inlet. Beyond the Inlet, westward, another bog has been filled by dredging the Inlet to become Cass Park with a boat-launching ramp, a good-sized marina with service house. Here, too, the small fry hold their little-league ballgames.

A little farther on, the old city airport grounds are now used for circuses and the County Fair. More land acquired from the railroad is still to be developed. An ice-skating rink is in the planning stages.

Northward from all these parks, along the shores of the lake, cottages and year-round homes dot the shores on both sides as far as the eye can see, only where the cliffs rise abruptly, and then onward down the lake. Ithaca is the focal point of all these activities and homes. Cayuga Lake is its drawing card.

CHAPTER

Depression Days

When the depression days came, Ithaca was not immune from their inroads. Although there were not many visible evidences, many people really had to “skimp” to get along.

If a salary was cut ten dollars a week in those days, it meant some hardships and devious ways of scraping up living expenses. Sometimes insurance policies were allowed to lapse; people drove to the farm and carried their milk (unpasteurized) and eggs home; ice from the icehouse; lived on twenty dollars-a-week unemployment insurance plus odd jobs, and rented a room or two. Supper sometimes consisted of a thirteen-cent can of pink salmon made into a casserole with bread crumbs and an egg. The children and mother, too, wore “hand-me-downs” sent by some cousin in better circumstances.

The mortgage was refinanced to a longer, lower rate, and savings accounts or favorite bonds disappeared into expenses.

Families who lived on the edges of town raised their own produce, and many “week-end farmers” sprung up.

But life was not entirely devoid of pleasure. People living on “The Flats” south of the Six Mile Creek could watch a circus set up its “Big Top” on the old Fair Grounds on Meadow Street. The elephants were paraded along Meadow to Wood Street where a hydrant was opened for watering them, much to the delight of assembled children.

Then in August came the County Fair with all kinds of farm animals and produce exhibited annually, some under tents and

some in old buildings later torn down. There were the usual sideshows and carrousel with music going on all afternoon and evening, and the race track with various amusements or sports.

One summer there came a sudden flash flood during Fair time. People fled home in their cars, but the animals with water filling up their pens had to be released if no truck was on hand to take them away. The cloudburst let up, but it drizzled all night and the next morning, as nearby residents gazed out across the meadow, what a sight they beheld! Pigs, cows and sheep all wandering in various directions, bellowing in alarm, the water dripping from their backs.

It was said that the carnival man had lost two alligators and a large blacksnake. The alligators were later recovered far over in the marsh, but no one heard about the snake, and the women in the neighborhood were fearful for many days afterward about setting foot in their backyards.

But the worst disaster was the flood of 1935! The rains began on an early July evening, increasing continually until by midnight all the creeks were full and roaring madly. The lightning, too, increased without thunder, in constant flashes, till the pounding rain on the roof and the blinding flashes woke many people out of their beds to look out on a deluge never seen before in our town.

Soon the creeks were overflowing their dikes, and the water from the Inlet began to stretch across the meadows until practically all of the flat section of the city was covered and filling up cellars. Yet it poured on and on. At 2 a.m. the demonlike siren of the Morse chain works sounded off four blasts and people still asleep were aroused to rush to their cellars to save what they could. Others tried to start water-logged cars and often failed, so they walked sometimes thigh deep in spots, carrying smaller children to friends' or relatives' living on the hills.

By daylight the storm abated, and excepting for houses set

low on the ground, most damage was to cellars and in gardens newly grown with peas ready to pick.

Daylight a day later showed downtown Ithaca with a mass of slime and mud coating everything. Now the cleanup jobs were plentiful.

The aftermath was, of course, a plague of mosquitos! Even after a thorough spraying operation they pestered throughout the night. Small ones crawled through fine screening to make a constant battle for weary folks.

“Flood control” was now the talk of the town. How to influence legislators who had not been here and seen the real thing! It took thirty years to do it. So, now we have our meadows safe and useable—but for what? Used carlots, supermarkets, motels and eating places. What price progress! At least, the mosquitos have gone!

As the depression waned, many people divided up their large homes into apartments and rented them out to college people. For, if one sold his house, it usually was at a loss. Some men went into business for themselves and remodelled old places as one family did in the “Goose Pasture”—now the Fall Creek area. This, too, was once a meadow where Ezra Cornell allowed people to pasture their cows and geese between Cascadilla and Fall Creek.

The old hospital on North Aurora was replaced by a larger one on South Quarry Street. This hospital, too, had its battle with floods. One summer the downpour came so rapidly that it overflowed the hilltop above and ran down into the basement of the hospital and through the kitchen and dining room. As it poured out of the farther door, it looked like a veritable river, carrying pots and pans on the muddy waters.

The hospital had to send home all “near-able” patients, and the Cornell infirmary nearby on East State Street cooked and sent in hot food for the rest until the cleanup job was executed the following day. Volunteers deserved credit for their prompt

services that day as not one patient was allowed to suffer from the incident.

Women had little opportunity before the war to work outside the home. Then they were well occupied with canning in the old Mason jars all the vegetables and fruits they could lay hold of so as to get the family through the long winter. When a woman had cut up and peeled a hard pumpkin, boiled it, put it through a collander, added eggs and milk (usually evaporated), then cut in lard and flour and rolled out the crust, if she had the ill fortune to slip and drop the whole on the floor while on the way to the oven, it was a catastrophe that resulted in tears and no dessert.

But sewing on the old treadle machine was nearly the only home occupation which might be remunerative, and this she had learned at the Home Bureau.

CHAPTER III

World War II Years

Ithaca sent its quota of young men to the front when the new war started in the early 40's. But people did also many things on the home front.

"Victory Gardens" were planted on all available land, including the Bergholtz Tract where the high school now stands. People spent their evenings planting and hoeing instead of driving around since gasoline was rationed.

Sugar and coffee also were rationed, and the Red Cross set up "Nutrition Classes" to teach people how to make the best use of what they had while providing a balanced diet. If you wanted to make a wedding cake for a war bride you had to learn how to use Karo syrup in place of sugar, and that took a little know-how in order to avert a "flop" of a cake.

Grandparents were pressed into service as housing facilities were needed for the wives of service men and for families whose husbands left for overseas duty.

War bond rallies were held and Kate Smith came to town to sing on State Street and stir up interest.

The worst thing that happened, other than a lost son or husband, was the coal shortage in mid-winter. No one could get coal except through his own dealer, and even then only a small amount at a time. If you were lucky enough to have a good, old kitchen coal range you *might* keep the pipes from freezing or, if you could get large chunks of wood for the furnace, you might achieve the same result. Many people still relied on coal

while the Lehigh was bringing it in from Pennsylvania, but soon after that many coal furnaces were converted to gas.

Alas, the only benefit of the war at home (and this is questionable) was the increase in employment, both industrial and commercial. Even women went to work in factories and other jobs left by servicemen. As there were few day-care centers for children then, neighbors were sometimes pressed into baby sitting as their "patriotic duty." Mothers donned their blue jeans, hoisted their lunch pails and left their children—even on the night shift.

As the list of the dead or missing grew in the county, it became necessary afterward to erect another large memorial in DeWitt Park opposite the one for World War I dead.

When the war was finally over, there was no frenzied jubilation, as before, but more interest was taken in Memorial Day and Armistice Day. The Veterans of Foreign Wars built a new building on West State Street, and fine parades were organized with Gold-Star Mothers riding in cars. Floral tributes were laid annually in DeWitt Park and flags placed in the cemeteries. But no one seemed to enjoy the march of the military and guns through the streets. It was now time to forget. The peace movement began to grow and has continued to this day.

CHAPTER IV

Changes in Midtown

Before long, many changes began in the center of town. As soon as cars became numerous, after the second World War, parking became a problem; parking meters were placed along the main streets and were followed by "meter-maids" in uniform to check periodically and hand out tickets. A few new businesses sprang up, but a shopping plaza on the Elmira Road near Meadow Street took some of it. Supermarkets began to replace the small corner store.

The Cooperative Consumers Society started one of the first. It had very early held a market on West State Street where farmers and their wives brought produce, eggs, chickens or home-baked goods to sell for themselves. The "Co-op" had also their own packaged or canned goods and other items for sale. This grew in popularity, and as members joined, a large shopping center was finally built on West Clinton Street. It continues to be a favorite shopping place for housewives, with a branch drugstore and a few other businesses on the premises.

Several old businesses once downtown have been given up. Knight's meat market on North Aurora Street was an old and reliable place to purchase excellent meats, and Rumsey's hardware long held forth in the 200 block of East State Street. Both have now gone out of business.

The old Tompkins House hotel, at the corner of North Aurora streets, was one of the first buildings near central town to be torn down; its site was replaced by a parking lot.

Traffic through town was alleviated by construction of the "tuning fork" at the foot of East State Street hill. All westbound traffic was then channeled to Seneca Street; eastbound traffic from Green Street had access to East State under a new bridge on South Aurora. The crossover from East State to Seneca has been termed the Seneca Way.

A little later north- and southbound traffic was better accommodated when North and South Meadow streets were widened and joined with Route 13. A gradual ascent up East Hill for trucks removed them from dangerous grades on Mitchell and State Street hills.

One of the greatest losses to Ithaca's landmarks was the demolition of the old brick Cornell Library building of Italianate design at the corner of North Tioga and East Seneca streets. Ezra Cornell founded this library in 1866. For a time the second floor assembly room was used for lectures and later movies. When the library was moved upstairs it was a pleasant place to drop in for a rest and reading after a weary shopping trip. The basement was long used by lodges, the GAR and lastly by the Senior Citizens, and for many years the First National Bank had quarters on the first floor. The site is now a parking space.

Soon the Central Fire Station was relocated in new and larger quarters on West Green Street. After being used temporarily to house several commercial places, the old station was razed and the site became a municipal parking lot.

Another great loss was our beautiful colonial City Hall at the corner of Tioga and Seneca streets. Its bell tower had long been empty, with the bell on a block behind the building. This old cast-iron bell, long used as a fire alarm, now reposes in Thompson Park at Cayuga, Farm and Marshall streets. After its demolition, another parking lot resulted. The city now went in search of another City Hall and purchased the former Gas & Electric Building, corner of South Cayuga and East Green.

The post office became crowded and needed an addition. This expansion resulted in the razing of the remaining buildings on the west side of the 200 block of North Aurora Street, which provided also parking space for post office vehicles.

The former Eagles Building at the foot of East State Street hill has seen many internal changes but outwardly few. After Hickey's Music Store moved into its new location on South Tioga Street, the Eagles Building was used by the city to house offices for some time. The upper rooms were occupied by the Youth Bureau and others.

After the chamberlain's office was moved from the Eagles Building to the new City Hall, the Miller Paper company purchased the block and occupied the first floor as a salesroom. The firm sold its old building on North Tioga to the Urban Development Corporation so as to provide for the block's future rehabilitation. In fact, it seemed like a game of checkers with businesses moving here and there until Urban Renewal caught up to them.

The Ithaca Savings and Loan Bank bought from Ithaca College the former Williams Hall property at the corner of Tioga and Buffalo streets. Here a modern-style bank building was erected after the college had moved. The old Savings and Loan Building at the corner of East State and Aurora streets still awaits the demolition ball.

Along the south side of East Green Street and on both sides of the 200 block of Cayuga businesses began to move out, and after these buildings were torn down a new, large Woolworth's department store nearly filled the block, using part of the area for parking space. The former Woolworth store on East State Street is to be remodeled by its owners, Rothschild's. Another tenant, the Senior Citizens, has moved to its new home on South Geneva Street.

The biggest stumbling block seemed to be the south side of 200 East State Street. The old Sport Shop Building has been

destroyed by fire several years back, and now great plans seemed in the making for that whole block after the buildings were razed. But for several years a vacant lot has been surrounded by a board fence—the best site on our main street!

Ithaca Hotel was for nearly 100 years an important landmark and the center of many business and social affairs. Its banquet hall was used by women's clubs before their new building was erected. Rotary and other service clubs met there regularly, and in the famous Dutch Kitchen many families and friends regaled themselves, but as a rooming house it had become outmoded. The Urban Development began to present many rosy pictures of a future large hotel-restaurant-shopping center complex, yet for the several intervening years these have not materialized, and the block remains a very much chewed-over bone of contention. It seems that a parking ramp proposed at the rear of Rothschild's was the "fly in the ointment." If this is built or abandoned—this has yet to be seen. Until then nothing else moves in that big dreamed-up picture.

The old Clinton House on North Cayuga Street, still stands, although its best days are past. Many older people recall its beautiful dining room with turkey-red carpeting and red upholstered chairs around gleaming white tables surfeited with the finest cooking and friendly atmosphere. Its fate is uncertain, since it is a large, wooden structure with tall, white columns on a wide front porch—a picture of colonial days we would like to keep.

Opposite this on Seneca Street, facing North Caynga, once stood a tall, Victorian brick house belonging to the Federation of Women's Clubs of Ithaca. It had served well as a rooming house for young working girls, as a meeting place for groups and for suppers. In the basement was a second kitchen and rooms for dancing classes, nursery school or other similar purposes. In time, this facility had outgrown its usefulness: larger quarters were badly needed.

Since the women owned a small house in Seneca Street adjoining this, it was decided to raze both and build a more suitable facility with parking space. All clubs of the Federation conducted a campaign for funds. The result was a beautiful new Women's Community Building standing as evidence of their hard work. It has a good-sized auditorium, smaller meeting rooms, kitchen, rooms for working girls to rent on the second floor, and offices—all grouped about a small but delightful patio with tropical plants and a stonewalk. A side door is the entrance to the basement shop of the Service League where used clothing is sold to benefit the Mental Health Clinic. This fine building is the site of many lectures, classes in crafts, concerts, club meetings and teas for all women of the city to enjoy.

Ithaca College, whose headquarters were in the Boardman House on East Buffalo Street for many years, started originally as a conservatory of music which became well known for the artists it produced. As it grew, more courses were added such as speech correction, physical education, physiotherapy, and drama. It finally became a full arts college, and had purchased or rented many buildings throughout the downtown area. It built a radio-television studio and classroom building plus library east of Boardman Hall; a cafeteria and infirmary came to occupy the site from here to Tioga Street. The Little Theatre, facing DeWitt Park, long was the scene of innumerable Ithaca College drama and musical productions.

Other structures such as a gymnasium on East Seneca Street, a converted theatre on North Aurora Street, and even a quonset house on East Buffalo, above Terrace Place, were used for various purposes. When the hospital moved out of its buildings on South Quarry Street and Valentine Place, Ithaca College took over these as dormitories for men.

For many years Ithaca College students just about filled all downtown streets at times, eating places and movies as well.

Residents took them for granted and businessmen welcomed their trade.

The college sorely needed a campus, so when in the 1960's Dr. Howard Dillingham, then president, succeeded in procuring funds and lands on South Hill, a new campus with modern buildings began to rise like a miracle out of pasture lands overlooking the gorgeous panorama of the lake northward. The Quarry Street dorms are still in use, however, as the college growth has been faster than its building of additional dormitories. Ithaca College is now a large, well-known institution of arts and sciences with special schools providing many auxiliary services. Its move to the new campus naturally brought about many changes downtown.

Another major change came to Ithaca when the Grange League Federation moved headquarters from its several buildings along Pleasant and Clinton streets on South Hill to Syracuse. This, a well-paying employer, was a great loss to the city as it took many fine people with it. Its buildings stood vacant for a few years. But the city badly needed a new police headquarters and jail, facilities which it found very satisfactory in the abandoned Bibbins Hall it purchased. Subsequently, the office buildings were rented to private firms.

One of the greatest losses to our city and county was its railroads. In the late 50's the Lehigh Valley Railroad gave up its run between New York and Buffalo, leaving Ithaca comparatively stranded for transportation, with poor air service and truck service for mail very precarious during winter months. For many summers a carload or two of city children came by train to vacation with friendly local families, and similarly the circus was brought to town.

The train ride through the hills of Pennsylvania to New York made a pleasant beginning to vacations southward; and to Buffalo or Canada, a boat trip on the lakes. The old railroad station stands converted to an eating place with a few cars on

the tracks for atmosphere; for many these reminders are nostalgic with memories.

The west end of town has gradually undergone many changes—nearly all the old houses on West State Street are gone, except a few used for businesses. The Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Sons of Italy each have halls near the Ithaca Theatre in the 400 block. The large brick building at the corner of State and Meadow streets, formerly a restaurant and then a funeral parlor, is now used as a special children's center where many of the handicapped are cared for during the day.

Many businesses, large and small, have moved or built in the westend where parking is freer. Smith's Hardware has a large, new place on South Meadow Street; plumbers and heaters and lumber businesses carry on here. Laundries, car-repair services, a television shop and a supermarket add to this busy end of town, with many eating spots lining this section of Meadow Street.

As the government flood-control project started, many buildings at the foot of West Hill were demolished to make way for another new course of the Inlet and resulting bridges. Among losses were the old Beebe Chapel mission at the foot of Cliff Street, West Side House, and several business buildings and residences. The main Inlet was widened and the Lehigh Valley railroad tracks taken up. This all took about three years before the bridge was opened. With five approaches to it from the west and three from the east, the result has been a frustrating bottleneck of traffic during busy hours, thus calling down upon it the derisive name of "The Octopus."

But flood control has been a problem so long it is hoped that when another cloudburst comes along this will be the solution.

Another great problem owing to the terrain came from runaway cabs and trucks on the steep grades of the busier streets. East State Street hill was for a time the busiest hill street and

in the days when sand or cinders were used in winter instead of salt, it was often very slippery, especially in the early stages of a storm. Cars were sometimes seen coming down East State Street hill, skidding and slewing at all angles. Even on dry days runaways were a hazard. Some very close shaves came when a car ran into the busy streets at the foot of the hill, narrowly missing pedestrians. Eventually, trucks were rerouted to the new Route 13 and less traffic resulted, although the hill is still used by many cars.

South Hill, especially South Aurora Street, has taken a toll in lives and property, and is still a menace even though through trucks are rerouted from Candor through Spencer and over the lower, safer road, down Inlet Valley. On West Hill the danger comes from the narrowness and crookedness of Cliff Street, at present the only direct route to the hospital. Plans are being made for a new route over the old railroad bed, with a second bridge spanning the Inlet at Court Street. All agree, these alterations should be made before more serious tragedies occur on that hill.

CHAPTER V

Housing and Expansion

About the only way for Ithaca to expand was to go onto the hills. With Cornell on East Hill and Ithaca College on South Hill, this move was inevitable.

Along with need for new homes came that for supermarkets with branch stores and banks nearby on the eastern outskirts; so far few shops have located on South or West Hills, but there are supermarkets on the flats to the north and west. After the Plaza was built on the flats, about the next shopping center developed was Community Corners at the junction of five roads that has since become a traffic headache.

Close enough to serve the Cornell community well, and being the center of Cayuga Heights, it has expanded with the years. A little north of the Corners, another center was developed where the new Route 13 crosses Triphammer Road. This center has motels, a movie house, supermarkets, bank branches, eating places, car service and sales, with apartment houses built nearby.

There is also a supermarket on Judd Falls Road east of College Town, with plans for more shops hanging fire while awaiting a water supply which the Town of Ithaca at first denied the area.

The so-called College Town on College Avenue, across a bridge from the campus, has seen few changes, although after the Hill drugstore was burned out a branch bank was located there, the local food store enlarged, and the fire station has been replaced by a new structure. But bookstores and small

shops catering to student needs continue as do nearby rooming houses.

Housing for young and old is still a problem. New home building grew fairly rapidly in all directions until interest rates began to soar along with taxes, and as the 70's approached building seemed at a standstill, excepting for federally assisted projects. There was controversy in some instances regarding a number of students renting a completed house against a zoning ordinance. For the most part, however, residents have accepted the student population as a part of our way of life, and business welcomes their trade. In fact, students have carried out many voluntary projects about the city, both at the settlement houses and on the northwest side of town; many do work in the schools and service agencies. In short, Cornell's relations with the town have been very good. Recently a new director of Community Relations has been appointed which should assure a continuance of this cooperation.

Within the past decade, several federally assisted housing projects have been in progress. A housing development was planned for the vicinity of Franklin and Fourth streets which necessitated the reluctant giving up of several old homes. Planned as a development of individual homes with good adjacent space for lower- and middle-income families, it dragged on for years before any real progress was made.

A high-rise apartment house supposed to be for lower- or middle-income retirees now nears completion on South Geneva Street. This structure is to replace "The Home" for elderly ladies on South Aurora Street which has become outmoded.

Another high-rise apartment house for the elderly is rising (1971) on Titus Flats near the Plaza shopping center. It is hoped that it will fill the need of some senior citizens on small incomes.

There are also "Turnkey" projects, houses privately built and sold to the government, a plan which has proved fairly successful.

TOMPCO, sponsored by several churches, is working to help individuals buy their own homes at a reasonable price with low-cost financing.

Expansion of a town is not completely successful without good transportation. This has been one of Ithaca's problems since cessation of railroad service; however, bus service has been improved with a newer and better station on West State Street. Air service, with an airport off Warren Road on East Hill, has been an important link with the outside, especially for Cornell personnel who travel often, but its service has not always been satisfactory or dependable. As car service in and out of Ithaca during the long winter months is often difficult and hazardous, and sometimes it is impossible, good air service is a must for the city.

CHAPTER VI

The Schools and Health Services

The Ithaca district schools are considered among the best in the country. They have kept pace by building new schools when needed, adding the latest equipment, using the newest methods and by keeping teachers continually aware of and familiar with them.

Early in the 30's education for the handicapped child began in Ithaca under Superintendent Claude L. Kulp. Since then it has gradually increased in scope and methods as the need arose until the Board of Cooperative Educational Services took over many aspects in its especially equipped new home on Warren Road.

The Belle Sherman School on Mitchell Street took over the first four grades in the twenties, which meant the pupils did not have to go to East Hill School. It gradually added to the school buildings to accommodate the fifth and sixth grades, then a gymnasium-auditorium and finally an annex was added across Cornell Street from the main building plus playground space.

The South Hill School was early replaced with a new building on Hudson Street. Its old school on Columbia Street still stands, though condemned, and has been used many years as a central processing center for elementary school library materials.

West Hill, too, had a new building on Chestnut Street, north of the old one. Not long afterward the vacant old facility was burned.

Additions were soon made to East Hill, Fall Creek and the Heights schools. The last two were not sufficient for long, and soon the old parts were torn down and newer additions joined earlier ones. Two other schools were added: at the east, the Northeast School off Warren Road, and to the west of the lake Glenwood School.

The biggest undertaking, however, was the construction of the new high school on the Bergholtz Tract north of Fall Creek. It is a campus-style school, with auditorium and activities rooms in a separate unit; cafeteria, gymnasium, swimming pool, library, lecture hall and classrooms built around a small patio. The area has plenty of grounds for parking and a sports

The former high-school building then became the DeWitt Junior High School as a second one to Boynton was needed. Central and St. John's elementary schools have remained about the same with some remodeling.

Two new junior high schools now nearing 1971 completion will open soon, one at the north end of the Bergholtz Tract, the second on Warren Road. Boynton will then be taken over for elementary school use, but the future of the DeWitt building is uncertain at this time, although its possibilities as a cultural and recreation center are under consideration.

Because of the growing school population, the cost of teachers and the nearness of two large colleges, a new department was developed for volunteers under professional supervision, to help out in various ways in the schools. They serve as teacher's aids, tutors or library helpers. They were briefed at several sessions and their work was followed up during the year for evaluation and assistance with individual problems. One college group furnished a science center at some schools; another organized a "kit" of various materials and books for teachers to use.

Others helped in the new learning centers which are annexed to elementary school libraries. Here audiovisual aids are used

either individually or in groups. A child may choose what he wants to do during certain periods, and progress as rapidly as he is able, in reading or arithmetic, for example.

The "Head-Start" program helps the disadvantaged child become oriented to a group environment and provides a better chance for him to keep up when first entering school.

East Hill School was used as an experimental school where some of the new methods were tried out. Some parents liked them, others disapproved.

A special Junior High School was organized in 1970 at the old Educational Services Building on West Court Street. This school allows the child free choice of subjects and lets him develop whatever interests follow. Each child has a counsellor and many of them are children who lacked any interest and did poorly in regular junior high. There is an informal atmosphere, and the desire is to create more enthusiasm for studying so that he will go on learning and not become a drop-out after age 16.

During the 40's and 50's the School Music Department had exceptionally equipped and talented teachers. Miss Bernice Finch headed the instrumental music department which provided classes and sometimes private lessons to children from the fourth grade through high school for an incidental fee.

Every Christmas-time a concert was held in the High-School Auditorium in which children of all ages who were pupils took part. The concert attracted all ages. It included a variety of numbers on different instruments each year, always keeping the Christmas spirit and ending with the High-School Orchestra.

In June of each year one was held as a recital of progress made during the year. These two concerts were continued until the number of pupils—between 200 and 400—made it impractical. Since then these teachers have retired and funds for

school music have been curtailed, with very little musical education carried on in the schools.

The Ithaca Community Music Schools began to grow and fill some of the void. Recently, they have been working at the East Hill Experimental School, holding both vocal and instrumental lessons; recitals are held periodically. But nothing seems to take the place of those small bands of youngsters with fiddles and horns in those delightful concerts held in earlier days.

At present the only concert at Christmas is the High-School Concert. The High-School Marching Band, however, has been honored with several invitations to play at half-time at out-of-town ball games and parades.

Some other interesting programs are Driver Education, Health Program, and Black History.

The Parent-Teachers Association was well developed during World War II days. In the 40's, before the days of television, the children read a great many comic books, some of which were filled with horror and violence; many were passed from child to child without approval by the parents. The PTA organized a campaign against the sale of objectionable comic books that were filled with crime pictures. All newsstands were contacted and were cooperative, saying they would return censored ones to the publishers. A Committee on Censorship was chosen, and soon after this a few less of the objectionable publications were found for sale.

For many long years the Ithaca Evenings Schools have held classes in a variety of subjects for adults. Some went to make up high-school courses, some wished to become naturalized citizens, and others sought to learn new or old hobbies. John Mack was long director of this excellent work which carries on since his retirement. Its shops and classes have proved helpful to many, both young and older persons.

In a city with two large colleges and a Community College

nearby, there are many opportunities for further education in evening and summer schools, and Continuing Education as well as vocational at BOCES.

The Cornell College of Agriculture and Homemaking, now called Human Ecology, for years held an unique event annually until the 60's. It was "Farm and Home Week," but farmers and homemakers were certainly not the only ones attending; in fact, thousands of all ages were present during the week held in February or March. There were many fine attractions including lectures by guests such as Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, exhibits, demonstrations, and movies in Bailey Hall. One very popular place was an exhibit of fine old-fashioned gowns, some once worn by well-known presidents' wives at Cornell. There was always a crowd in the amphitheatre watching a bread-making demonstration, and men were offered farm programs and other interesting attractions. Mothers enjoyed visiting a nursery-school demonstration where they could look through the one-way screen at the children attending and observe their activities. All these features for the general public are now greatly missed.

Health Services in the district schools have usually kept pace with advances. Early in the 30's Ithaca was one of the first cities in the state to test children's hearing with the group audiometer and follow through when needed as indicated by individual testing. Eye testing also was made as the doctor visited each school periodically for checkups. At the time there were two school nurses for 2,000 children.

But the city had a special facility which has since been discontinued. It held a Health School on the fourth floor of the old High School at Buffalo and Cayuga, quarters that were reached by elevator. Here about 25 children with special health problems—such as poor eyes, deficient hearing, cardiac and other ailments—were given lessons suitable to their needs. The open roof with fence was their playground; a hot lunch was

brought up from the cafeteria, and rest mats were provided for naps after lunch. These children, greatly benefited by this special attention, and usually after about one year went back to their regular schools and classes. This school was discontinued about 1945.

Today the percentage of nurses per pupil is less, but much more has been done on prevention since then. Now the State requires immunization of each child for smallpox, measles, German measles and polio before entering school. At school the emphasis is on prevention by periodic hearing and eye tests, since a child's progress depends so heavily on them. Nurses do some teaching also. Their problems with the older pupils especially are much more serious than formerly, since they now include drugs, emotional problems at all ages, and in high school, smoking.

City Health Services also have made progress. Here, too, prevention is the key, with special clinics as the tool. Emotional and drug problems have increased. Population growth has caused the sanctioning of abortions which must be done at hospitals, however.

A laboratory was first established in connection with the city hospital on South Quarry Street, and this was moved along with the hospital when it became Tompkins County Hospital at the Biggs Memorial Hospital on Trumansburg Road. This formerly was a tuberculosis institution belonging to the state.

With Willard State Hospital fairly near, it became imperative to have a Mental Health Clinic in the city to guide those who have been released as well as any other troubled people.

The County Hospital holds chest X-ray clinics at certain times. This department has been greatly improved: the hospital has added an intensive-care unit and a recovery room. A full-time physician is in charge of the Emergency Department.

The Senior Citizens have sponsored glaucoma clinics, and a Planned Parenthood group has been organized.

There is a long-term care unit, a psychiatric section, and a separate building has been equipped for severely handicapped children. This equipment is added to by the work of the Women's Hospital Aid and others.

Refresher courses for nurses are held periodically. A school for practical nurses is conducted annually. There are nurses' aids, "candy strippers," and a few internes to assist the registered and the licensed practical nurses.

An addition to the present hospital, on the same grounds, is in the planning stage. Nursing homes and proprietary boarding homes for the elderly are good, but quite often have a waiting list. The Reconstruction Home, once used solely for polio patients, now has a greater proportion of the elderly.

CHAPTER VII

Cultural Centers and Parks

Ithaca was fortunate in having a fine, Italianate-design library building given by Ezra Cornell in his latter days. But this, like so many other buildings in midtown, had succumbed to the years. It stood at the corner of Tioga and Seneca streets; after its demolition, the library rented temporary quarters in the Sons of Italy Hall in the 400 block of West State Street to await completion of plans and erection of the new building. It was several years before all this was accomplished.

First, there was the choice of a site, a very debatable question for a time; then demolition of two buildings on the new site. But the final decision was excellent: the corner of Cayuga and Court streets opposite the Presbyterian church and partly facing DeWitt Park. A large, white colonial house then stood on the corner in which the Ithaca College Music Department had its headquarters, office and classrooms. Next door to it on Cayuga Street stood the square, brick structure of the Odd Fellows Temple.

The Music Department was able to obtain temporary quarters in the old Congregational church until the department was moved to South Hill, while the Odd Fellows have their temple on West Buffalo Street. After these two buildings came down, the new library quickly rose in their place, posing an impressive sight with its dark-and-light contrasts, its curves and ramps, and a sweeping stairway leading to the main entrance. This arrangement made possible large, light rooms on the

ground floor now used mostly by the Finger Lakes Library Association, with lecture room and offices in front.

Entering the front door, one comes immediately to the large checking-out counter, with stacks lining all the walls around, and a stairway to the balcony at the south side. On the north side, in the round room, is the delightfully attractive children's room. Although it is now called the Tompkins County Library, Ezra Cornell has not been forgotten, for a plaque honoring him hangs on the wall near the front door, and his portrait is displayed prominently.

Paul Bradford, the library's long-time treasurer, also is honored with his name in the Local History Room. Mrs. John Vandervort worked unselfishly for twelve years, devoting many hours toward this final accomplishment, and Lincoln D. Kelsey was an able and understanding helper. Now, we all are proud of our library.

After the loss of the West Side House to the flood control project, more efforts went into other centers, such as Southside and Northside Houses to make up for this loss. Here many activities, both sports and arts, are carried on for all ages, with volunteer help coming from the colleges.

The YMCA Building on East Buffalo Street has outgrown its quarters and a solution is still being sought.

Since the old Central Fire House on East Seneca Street had to come down to complete the parking lot in that block, the Youth Bureau, which occupied rooms there, has acquired new quarters at the former Naval Reserve Station near the entrance to Stewart Park. This is now facetiously called "The Tin Can." Here, too, occupying a section of the building is the Community Nursing School, long domiciled at St. John's School.

Other projects in various places are a Half-Way-House for patients leaving Willard Hospital; the Challenge Industries, a shop for handicapped to make or repair for sale donated mate-

rials and appliances; Open House for teenage problems where anyone may walk in and privately discuss his problems, and Meadow House for mentally retarded children.

But the largest group in our town community by far consists of the Senior Citizens. About the earliest group was the Golden Age Club started by the late Mrs. Merrill Shipherd at Salvation Army headquarters. Soon other groups formed and a center was sought. For a number of years activities were held in the basement of the old Cornell Library Building, where classes in handwork, luncheons, a shop, and an annual fair were featured.

As urban renewal approached, they moved to South Tioga Street and then to 147 East State Street where they became a power in the community by forming a council of all county groups under one head, instituting a building campaign for its own home, and finally acquiring one at 213 South Geneva Street.

Here a homey, convenient place with a large meeting room will better serve their very worthwhile activities. The Senior Citizens of the community are a force to be reckoned with as their ranks swell and their voices are heard.

For many years Ithaca has been the fortunate location of the annual New York State Craft Fair, most of whose members are talented artists in some handcraft. Many professionals once a year bring their work in ceramics, weaving, woodworking, silk-screen design, batik, jewelry making and other crafts, to exhibit and to sell. At first the fair was held in Ithaca College's Buffalo Street library and classrooms; later in the new High School on North Cayuga Street, and recently at Ithaca College in its Terrace Dining Hall. The fair is an attraction that brings thousands of visitors annually.

The Ithaca Civic Opera Association stages periodic productions with good talent; the Community Players form a drama group; the Children's Matinee Series brings delightful shows for youngsters; the Ithaca Community Music School is a coop-

erative effort which has its home on Auburn Street. It works with many teachers in teaching music of different sorts to all ages and presenting recitals at various times.

The Garden Clubs for both men and women interest many and provide tasteful arrangements for events and often at the hospital. The number and variety of women's clubs run the gamut and suit almost any interest. The DeWitt Historical Society has a developing museum, an educational program for school children, and is publishing pamphlets of historical interest in keeping with the State program. Historic Ithaca is working to preserve old landmarks, and the Art Association thrives, also; its "Art-in-the-Park" is annually anticipated.

Around the lake water sports prevail, with the Ithaca Yacht Club on the west side leading in season. There are several good golf courses nearby, many college sports to attend plus winter skiing and snowmobiling to make Ithaca a center for all year-round sports.

Although Stewart Park still holds its attractions by the lake, Ithaca has several very useful and delightful smaller parks. Washington Park on Buffalo Street and Park Place serves many westside children during summer months. This park formerly provided a practice field for the High-School Marching Band before it moved to its new home on North Cayuga Street.

DeWitt Park, at the junction of Cayuga and Buffalo streets, has long been the cultural and historic center for Ithaca residents. Besides the Presbyterian and Baptist churches, it has on the northeast corner the old Courthouse, considered the oldest example of Gothic Revival architecture in New York state; it is the home of DeWitt Historical Museum. On the east side, facing Buffalo Street, is the Boardman House of Italianate design. It was purchased from the family by Ithaca College which used it for administrative purposes for many years and later as a museum of art. Between this and the Baptist church

stands the "Little Theatre," the former center of drama and musical recitals for Ithaca College.

On the west side of the park, beside the new library, the Halsey house presents a lovely example of Federal-style architecture. Next to it is the large neo-colonial Williams-Speno house with its superb interior designs, especially in the hallway. DeWitt Junior High School to the south completes surroundings of the park.

Recently a group of interested persons has been working toward beautification of the park. Since its stately old elms have succumbed to the fatal elm disease, the group has planted new shrubs and trees, including a permanent Christmas tree, and even placed a small fountain at the south side of the park. At Christmastime a creche is set up facing Cayuga Street and lighted at night to show lifesize figures. This park with its pleasant atmosphere in the center of town furnishes a gracious welcome to people from any direction.

The city gradually obtained more small parks in various locations. The Ithaca Gun Company donated a piece of land along Fall Creek, just below the big falls, which has been improved by the summer youth program with a trail to the foot of the falls. Now the neighborhood has taken over its care and plans to add to and improve it gradually.

This sort of cooperative effort is going on at the south side of town. Here small plots are prepared for the youngsters who would otherwise play in the streets.

Then two later parks were acquired. First was the McDaniels Park on West Hill, about three acres of land to be developed as naturally as possible for recreational purposes.

The second is the Belle Sherman Park lately turned over to the city by the Board of Education. It includes about five acres, some level, some along a small stream in a glen. This, too, is to be developed so as to keep it as near as possible in its natural state.

There is also a small park at the foot of Cascadilla Falls. These along with our beautiful state parks nearby at Buttermilk, Enfield Falls and Taughannock furnish the residents and many thousands annual visitors with a variety of recreational areas.

CHAPTER VIII

Religious Organizations

Early in the 19th century the first church established in the city was the Presbyterian. It was soon followed by several others as the population grew. At that same early time Simeon DeWitt owned considerable land in the center of the town, and he was most helpful in aiding the growth of churches and worthwhile projects. The former Congregational church, now St. Catherine's Greek, at the corner of West Seneca and Geneva streets, bears a plaque with his name as donor of the lot, which was then for a Reformed Dutch Church.

In the pre-war days before united efforts for community welfare projects were organized, the women of the churches did much of the charitable assistance for the less fortunate. Later they donated money toward hospital equipment, and still do. Then the Salvation Army came to town and later the United Fund, then called the Community Chest, organized efforts of all agencies under one roof and director in 1965. The churches began to unite, too.

The churches cooperated in many ways. They formed a ministerial group and a mainly Protestant County Council of Churches. This resulted in more coordinated mission work, such as the Beebe Mission chapel at the foot of Cliff Street, now gone.

The smaller churches and those in outlying towns used lay pastors and, sometimes, a team of college students organized services before a church had a leader of its own or even a building.

For a time the Tompkins County Council of Churches maintained a camp at South Danby where church members could send their children for two weeks at a nominal fee. Then some of the churches acquired denominational camps, the Danby camp was discontinued and later sold to Ithaca College.

Protestant churches in the city cooperated in holding union services on special days such as Thanksgiving and Good Friday. An Interchurch Missions Committee of laymen held a series of union programs annually for several years, since their topic was the same, using overseas students, professors, visiting or retired missionaries to bring their messages of other lands to the whole group.

The County Council held a series of teacher-training courses for a time, conducted in the autumn with several ministers and trained religious education instructors. Now many of the churches here have their own director of religious education.

In the 20's classes were organized for released-time weekly religious education in the Protestant churches. These were implemented by Professor Ralph Felton, sociology instructor at Cornell, and directed by the Reverend William F. Hastings of the Congregational Church. Through these classes, held at various churches, many children were brought inside of the church for the first time, with parents' consent. Miss Elsa Oberg was for many years their excellent instructor. The Immaculate Conception School held its classes at its own church, one block away.

An annual event of the County Council of Churches was World Friendship Day, led by Mrs. Anna McCurdy. Here the children met and talked with people from different lands, attired in their native costumes, and were entertained with stories of their different customs.

The Ithaca Council of Church Women was the first real ecumenical effort in the locality. It holds two or three special events annually, such as World Community Day at which

materials and funds are collected for some overseas project, or one nearer home. The World Day of Prayer joins women all over the world in a day of prayer. Different churches are hosts to these affairs.

In the late 60's, however, the churches became more ecumenical in their programs, holding joint services, family suppers, and fellowship. Both Protestant and Catholics meet together.

Now the churches have organized within the area and call themselves Area Churches Together (ACT). After the demolition of Beebe Chapel owing to flood control, the resulting funds were used for two projects: 1. An itinerant pastor to help young people who seemed to be in trouble; 2. A much-needed day-care center which is still in operation.

They have coordinated services to the various nursing homes near by; cooperated in carolling at Christmastime and Easter Dawn service; a clothing drive for the homeless is underway; an Interfaith Drama Group put on several fine plays, moving from one church to another. The churches have coordinated in carrying on the "Meals-on-Wheels" program for elderly shut-ins, and another widespread agency called FISH (Friends in Service Here) helps out in various neighborly ways.

Now the Protestant churches are also sponsoring a housing program called TOMPCO for lower middle-class income families who desire to purchase their own home. These people are given help in low-cost financing and aided in any way needed to help them become independent homeowners with pride. This is a difficult problem at this time (1971) since so many issues enter into the picture that involve location (zoning), water resources and environment in general.

Church buildings have seen many changes, some gone, some new, others restored. When the State Street Methodist had to be demolished, its members joined with those of the First Methodist Church about 1961, and the name was changed to St. Paul's Methodist Church. This church had previously com-

pleted a new, large parish house joined to the main building, which includes a small chapel, a youth room, more Sunday School rooms and other useful space.

The Tabernacle Baptist church also was demolished and a new, larger structure replaced it on East Lincoln and Cayuga streets.

The Presbyterian church underwent extensive repairs and took over a residence facing it on East Court Street for offices. This church and St. John's Episcopal both recently acquired new pipeorgans.

The First Congregational Church, however, found itself too cramped and its repairs so extensive that it decided to build new home on East Hill, the center of its church population, where it has plenty of parking space and more room for its church school. Its new building, completed in 1959 at 309 Highland Avenue, has become a truly community church with a variety of activities, including a nursery school.

Soon afterward St. Catherine's Greek Orthodox Church bought the old Congregational church building at Seneca and Geneva streets. After extensive alteration and replacement of some stained-glass memorial windows, which the former church had moved, the new congregation has made a suitable and very attractive church for their smaller numbers.

Then a second Catholic church was built on a large lot on Hanshaw Road, called St. Catherine's of Sienna, to serve that growing area.

Two new smaller churches were built on East Hill and several others in the outskirts. The city counts thirty different churches within its limits. This does not include the Salvation Army, Sage Chapel or Ithaca College services.

The Cornell religious work, formerly called Cornell United Religious Work, has ample space since the erection of Anabel Taylor Hall, with convertible chapel, meeting rooms, and larger hall, but the most popular room is the One World Room

which bears the inscription, "For God has made of one blood all men of the earth."

Its program, too, has become more ecumenical and its chaplains work closely together, coordinating their efforts on many problems. Sage Chapel is made appealing to the college population with excellent music and speakers from out of town who relate modern problems of youth to the old Biblical words in stimulating sermons. The various churches are striving to make their work relevant and meaningful to the modern students. The Cornell population of visiting and graduate students are a valuable asset to their work, which attempts to make use of personal talents during their often brief periods of residence in town, and to welcome them into the fellowship of their faith, even if temporarily.

CHAPTER IX

The Game of Names

Anyone who studies a map of Ithaca streets and its surrounding roads in Tompkins County will have an entertaining, often amusing, experience. They will find here names from the picturesque Indian ones to the quaint and sometimes hilarious title.

It seems rather ironic that, although the white man did not hesitate to drive out his red-skinned bothers, he nevertheless likes the sound of their place names and has claimed many of them for our streets and lakes of this region. Locally, they include Iroquois, Seneca, Tioga, Cayuga, Oneida, and Taughanock (meaning "The Great Falls in the Wood.")

Another Indian name has been adopted from Virginia: Chichahominy Road. The word has not only a nostalgic sound, the whole road itself is filled with beauty, history and the romantic atmosphere of moldering old home sites with the houses long since gone. Here "Daddy" George once lived before he established, not far off, the famous George Junior Republic for disadvantaged youth. Here, also, is found "Aching Back Farm"—a name full of memories of the days before mechanization on the farm. Here, too, one may drive leisurely in summertime amid banks of black-eyed Susans and Queen Ann's Lace; and at one point capture a memorable view of beautiful Caroline hills. Whoever named the road probably had no idea of all these assets, yet its origin still remains a mystery.

The Indians are mentioned in other ways such as Red Man's Run, Indian Fort, Indian Creek Road and Red Mill.

Other nationalities and places have named roads along which people settled, as Irish Settlement Road, German Crossroad, French Hill, Connecticut Hill, Delaware Avenue, Geneva Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, and Texas Lane.

Sports and hunting possibilities were noted in naming Rabbit Run, Buffalo Street, and Turkey Hill Road.

Tree names are always favorite for places, and here we have Willow Creek, Oak, Elm, Maple, Chestnut, Cherry, Hawthorne Place, Pine Tree, Pine Woods Road, and Orchard Place.

A more interesting cataloging is one that pictures the landscape of this region as Cliff and Fall streets, Hill Crest Road, Hillside Drive, Hill Top, Hill View, plus Woodcrest, Grand View Avenue, Overlook and Ball Hill roads. All these describe the variety of the terrain while Pleasant Valley, Pleasant Grove, Forest Home, Floral Avenue, Level Green Road, Meadow Street and Cold Spring Road depict quiet, serene valleys topped with such highlights as Sunrise Terrace and Mount Pleasant Road.

One may even have a choice of beverages from Waterwagon Road to Vinegar Hill, or back to Water Street and Buttermilk Falls.

For the whimsical there are Monkey Run, Flatiron Road, Shindagin Hollow, Fiddlers Green, and Podunk ("wide spot in the road.") The name Triphammer Road, they say, came from the old gunshop which was located at the site of the present Beebe Lake dam. Sapsucker Woods Road was for the bird which people hoped to see in the woods at the bird sanctuary there. Crowbar Point, on the lake, is said to be a roosting place for crows, while Whippoorwill Lane gives a picture of a quaint country evening near a wood where the bird sang.

There are some historical names which have lingered many years—Old '76 Road, Old Stage Road, Honeypot (an old Indian Trail), Hardscrabble, so called because of the poor soil on the hilltop), and Rogue's Harbor at South Lansing, where forbid-

ding characters are said to have gathered at the old inn.

But to really enjoy these places, one must take a leisurely drive along the back roads, and soak up the atmosphere around Cayuga Lake with its hillsides and glens. There are long views of breath-taking loveliness, plus the close-up serenity of sheltered valleys: this is the true Finger Lakes Region with Ithaca at its center.