

## FOLKS, MEET EDWARD ROTH, FATHER OF THE BROADWAY MARKET AND OLDEST RESIDENT OF THE EAST SIDE

By SAMUEL W. HIPPLER  
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**F**RRIENDS of Edward A. Roth, "The Father of the Broadway Market," claim that he's also the oldest resident of the East Side. And when they say East Side they mean that mythical subdivision of Buffalo that extends roughly from Main street to Fillmore avenue and is bounded on the north by High street and on the south by Seneca. At one time it was populated almost entirely by families of German extraction.

Roth's home is at 505 Emslie street and he has lived in the vicinity for 65 years. And they have been eventful years too—years laden with terrific import in the growth of Buffalo.

During them the population of the city has doubled and trebled.

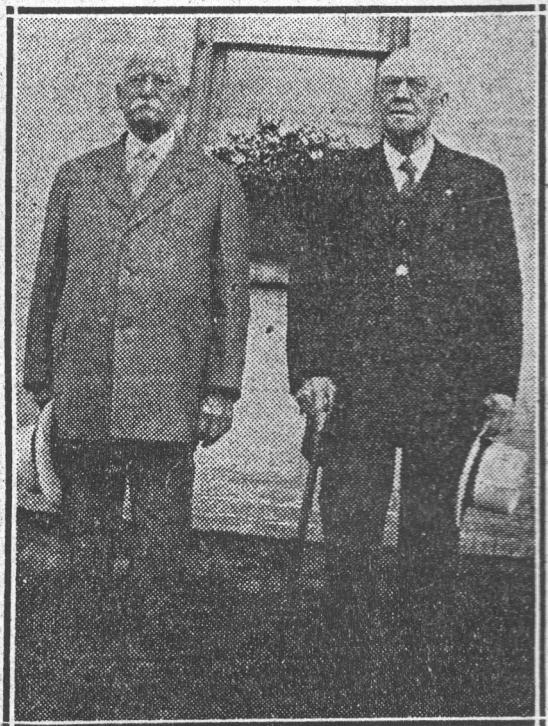
**R**OTH can remember when the Genesee street cars were of the bob-tail variety, pulled by one horse and reversed at each end of the line by a metal turn-table that revolved on wheels. The line was a single track one, with switches for passing at intervals. When the in-bound car reached a certain switch, it had to wait for the outbound car and vice versa. Sometimes a driver became impatient and thought that he could reach the next switch before the other car came along. When both drivers had the same idea, as sometimes happened, the cars met on the single track between switches, and then there was real excitement.

**R**OTH can remember too, when the Broadway auditorium was a small grey stone turreted building set well back on a deep lot. It was the home of the 65th Regiment, New York State militia, and during the Civil War it was filled with hastily organized companies of the home guard who spent the nights under arms, ready to help defend the city if Meade's army broke at Gettysburg and allowed Lee's Confederate hordes to overrun the North.

Some time after this a big drill shed was built before the armory and here for many years the 65th Regiment grew and expanded into one of the finest infantry regiments in the state. It was from this building that the regiment marched away to the Spanish-American War. Later on when the new armory was built on the Best street site, the city took over the old arsenal for a city convention hall. And if you were down there just the other week, to see Donovan nominated for governor by the Republican state convention, you may have noticed the wall of the original old building at the south side of the big hall, where it still stands.

**W**HEN Roth was a boy few of the streets on the East Side were paved and almost every family had a kitchen garden in the back yard. The family that didn't keep chickens was the exception; there were quite a few cows in home-made but comfortable barns and the only sidewalks in many blocks were grass lined paths. Flower gardens flourished and water came from wells that were rigged with old-fashioned wooden pumps.

In the days when Roth was very young there wasn't much beside open country east of Emslie street and mighty nimrods used to penetrate the dense woods, hunting for game about where the Best street reservoir now stands.



*Joseph and Edward Roth*

**R**OTH can remember when Broadway was paved with wooden blocks and was known as Bavaria street. He can remember, too, the excitement there was 45 years ago when the question of building a new market for the East Side came up. At that time he ran a grocery store and saloon at Sherman street and Broadway and he attended a meeting of business men, called to discuss the market project.

The plan was to locate the new market at Genesee street and Fillmore avenue. But Roth objected.

"Genesee street already has one market," he said referring to the Chippewa market, still at the original location. "Why put two on the same street? Give Broadway a chance."

Roth claims that this little speech of his was the germ idea out of which grew the great mart of trade located in the Broadway-Fillmore section, so that he is both the oldest citizen of the East Side, and "The Father of the Broadway Market." Indeed, when it comes to matters of this kind Roth has almost as many credits as Babe Ruth has world series records. Just for instance, Roth is the oldest living Knight of Saint John in Buffalo. He has been a member of Commandery 13 since its organization in 1874. And he is as spry as any 81-year-old man in Western New York today.

An accompanying illustration shows Roth and his brother—Joseph C. Roth of Hamburg (N. Y.), standing before their boyhood home—an old brick house at 68 Sycamore street, near Michigan. The Roth boys, as their friends call them, between them have lived 165 years. Joseph was born in 1848 and Edward in 1851.