



Many stone buildings scattered in the western end of Racine County are considered unique. The Russell house in Rochester is considered one of the finest rural, Italianate villa homes in southeastern Wisconsin.

Andrew J. Russell, proprietor of the mill across the street, built the house in 1867, taking four years to complete. Stone was hauled from Lannon, Wisconsin by ox cart. Mr. Russell carved his own woodwork which is still beautiful today.

Though some remodeling has been done, a frame wing and garage attached to the rear, the original beauty is still there.

It is said that on a clear day one can see five counties from the widow's walk or cupola on top. Present day owners are Elaine and Rolland Draves.

Several mills have been erected on the site of the Russell mill. It seems mills are prone to catch on fire. The first grist mill here on the west bank of the Fox River was built by Philo Belden, J. Ford, and T. Green. Other names connected with the various mills were Hogeland, Hurbut, Scott, Jones, Titus, Merrill, and Rose.

Andrew Russell built his mill in 1884 and it lasted to within present memory. The last owner was Henry Davis, who ran it for the longest period of time, 1939-1976. He sold it to Ray Kempken who had it razed in 1977.

Others before the settlers found this a favorite spot. For many years a huge oak tree called the Indian Council Tree stood just south of the mill.

*Eileen Albright*