

## *Arterial Scrapbook No. 14*



**LAST CHANGE** - These structures extending from 8 - 14 on the east side of Bridge St. underwent many changes over many years, the face-liftings successfully concealing parts of the buildings inherited from the previous century. There is no visible evidence, for instance, that the building on the right, originally of three-story design, had a cellar that was at one time a first floor drinking spot. Garish decorations,

executed by some long-dead artist, were discovered by the demolition squad and the murals attested the beer garden atmosphere of rathskeller times. The first floor of buildings on both east and west sides of Bridge St. went underground in 1896 when the New York Central tracks were overpassed and Bridge St. took on a sharp grade in leading south from East Main Street. (Donlon)

# *Departing Bridge St. Block Once 'Oasis' for Wayfarers*

As the Gay Nineties were ushered in, this section of Bridge Street offered the thirsty wayfarer plenty of opportunity to refresh. The building on the left was owned by George Finchout who operated a cafe. Another saloon, operated by Mary Hartig was in the smaller building, this spot taken later by Paul Heubner.

Construction of the railroad overpass brought changes but the bars, stools and tables were realigned and business went on as usual. Fred Friday, who had been in business at 56 Market St. bought the larger building in 1898 and until 1918 "Fred Friday's" was a meeting place for the politicians, tired business men and others with enough manhood to carry home a load of "Tiger" Ale.

Drinkers who didn't turn in at the right door found themselves in the building on the right, operated by Shannon

Bros. during the first decade of the century and by numerous others, including Louis DiDonna, during the years following. Competition was both brisk, and healthy.

A fire of Nov. 1, 1925 gutted the building then known as the "American Hotel," that in rejuvenation lost much of its old-time atmosphere. Here was located Sons of Italy Hall, scene of many social activities, and some of the other businesses that may have familiar ring to longtime residents:

#### **Among the Occupants**

Michael Cantiello, fruits; Perillo's Fresh Coffee House; Amsterdam Auto Parts started here in the late '20's; William H. Snyder, fishing tackle; John Pantalone's "Steamship Agency."

The Western Union telegraph office was here for 20 years from 1939, Luciano Bros. Jewelry and the Carbonelli Insurance

Agency, Edmund G. Carbonelli having been the last owner. Last occupant of the building at the right was the Marcuccio Screen Paint and Printing Shop.

Second floor hall rooms in the big building were used by the Ancient Order of Hibernians within recent memory but recognition as "Sons of Italy Hall" will be easier in identification of the premises.

There can be no objection if some followers of the ponies prefer to recall the upper section of the building as the scene of a race room that reportedly flourished a couple of decades ago.

Unlike the undeniable wall decorations of the rathskeller found buried in the section next to the Overhead Crossing, the Yorkville wreckers found no evidence of race charts or other data or equipment to substantiate the alleged happenings of 20 years ago.