

Arterial Scrapbook No. 55



ANOTHER LANDMARK TO GO - The Market and Main corner has been an important one since Amsterdam was a village and any listing of occupants is certain to include some of the most widely know businesses in the community. A four-story office building was once scheduled for the site but the deal fell through. Still needed to make the corner feel natural to the

Old Timers would be the McNally Lunch Wagon, horsedrawn to the Main St. curb every afternoon, and the place where "Charley Beans" flipped the best western egg sandwich to be found from coast to coast. Like other buildings of the area, the old structure, changed by ground floor widenings, has heard the arterial death knell. (Donlon)

Westerly Corner of Market and Main Featured Many Businesses Over Years

By H. P. DONLON

The highly informative map of Amsterdam in 1852 shows the westerly corner of Market and Main Sts. occupied by a building with offices of several insurance companies.

Other activities at this segment of the busy corner were not well recorded through the years, or if so they are not readily accessible, and the earliest identification that probably will ring the bell is about 1890 when A. Marks & Son sold dry goods and millinery at 2-4 Market St.

By 1895, women's wear had been replaced by the men's clothing store operated by Tefft & Boswell and later by Henry J. Boswell. He was joined by his son, J. Arthur Boswell, and the "Oak Hall Clothiers" were at the corner until 1914. Upon retirement of the Boswells, a new combine continued to supply clothing needs of the Amsterdam area men under the name of Allen, Schmidt & Wright. George M. Allen and Karl M. Schmidt, Utica merchants, continued with former City Treasurer Charles D. Wright for three years when Allen was succeeded by Frank A. Howlan in 1917.

Big Plans in 1920

Listed under "What Might Have Been" was big news for Amsterdam on Aug. 19, 1920, when it was announced that the Market and West Main corner had been purchased by a business combine headed by John Barnes, president of the Montgomery County Trust Co.

On the property was to be erected a four-story office building in which the Adirondack Power & Light Corpora-

tion was to centralize offices in Amsterdam. The deal that came out of a partitioning sale of the James Blood Estate, William K. Quilhot holdings and other realty partners, saw 85 feet on Market St. and 91 on West Main purchased for \$67,500.

Included were the Howlan, Schmidt corner, the Cross Cigar Store, and in the onetime "Pulling Homestead" immediately north, insurance offices of James A. Smeallie & Son, the Adam Betz Barber Shop and other widely known business firms of the times.

And Eureka Alleys

This old home, last of the 19th century residences to endure in the commercialized Market St. area, housed many businesses recalled by the real Old Timers: Frank Fufferd Jr., bootblack, E. E. Devendorf & Co., George I. Herrick office, Dr. Joseph F. Gaffney, dentist.

In this same section, at 6½ Market St., during the first decade were the Eureka Bowling Alleys, first conducted by Donald D. Conover and William K. Reid, and later by Reid and Earl P. Watkins.

Prospects of a new four-story building were encouraging. Also the proposed concentration of the Adirondack Power & Light Corp. in Amsterdam offices. This utilities group had grown in mergers of 1912, these including the local electricity supply as distributed by the Hudson River Electric Power Corp. since 1905. In 1920 Adirondack covered territory between Albany and Onondaga, and an announcement that same year said that George J. Hell-

ing, who had been with Edison for 14 years, would be the new local manager.

Renovation of 1923

However, three years passed without realization of the big hopes. In November of 1923, announcement was made that a \$35,000 renovation of the corner property would be made by the Barnes group. The Howlan, Schmidt front would be moved back, an extension would be made to the south, and eight offices would be provided on the second floor.

Other changes of the times included demolition of the former Pulling Homestead, next north from the corner, and the Trust Company acquired part of this site.

Business directories of the years that followed show frequent turnover in businesses at the corner area, also bring recollection that many familiar names became that way through longtime occupancy. A few of the many include:

Suzanne Shoppe of Suzanne Moran and Lucrètia Remillard, the Fufferd shoe parlors (changed to Fufferd Bros.), the Miracle Shop, Bahn's Men's Shop, George Betz Barber Shop, Mohawk Valley Rose Garden, Kreisel Bros. (coal) office, and Charles E. Cross (featuring Joe Piska).

The space turnover came faster and faster and the purchase of the Market and Main corner by the Olender Furniture firm, in 1946.