

Pictures of the Past

Changes evident on Main Street

The Griswold Block

Homes along Main Street were converted into commercial space after the Civil War and farm land was subdivided and stores built. The Elias Linsley farm included what is now Castellon's Bakery, Horwitz Department Store, Hair On Main north to Hillside Avenue including the present post office.

Samuel B. Miller had a cabinet making and undertaking business on Main Street for 20 years until he moved to New Jersey. The site was purchased in 1896 by Samuel Ames Griswold of Essex from the Linsley family and included the business of Mr. Miller. Griswold built a new three-story building on the site to house his store where he sold hardware, pot belly stoves, furniture and school supplies. The building would be known as the "Griswold Block."

Sam Griswold also ran a funeral home on South Main Street in addition to his other enterprises. He eventually became

very involved in the antique business and the "Griswold Gallery" was known throughout the state. In 1938 he moved the gallery to the second floor of the Griswold Block and rented the first floor to the A & P, which remained a tenant until 1963. Sam Griswold was one of the town's colorful characters and was one of the first in Connecticut to get a driver's license which he renewed every year yet he never drove, always had a chauffeur. He also kept bees and was one of the largest honey dealers in the state. Sam Griswold died Sept. 1, 1951, at the age of 84.

The Griswold Block was purchased in 1953 by Henry C. Castellon from the Griswold estate. Castellons moved their bakery from 1000 Main St. in the Wilford Block to their present location in 1963.

Jane Peterson Bouley

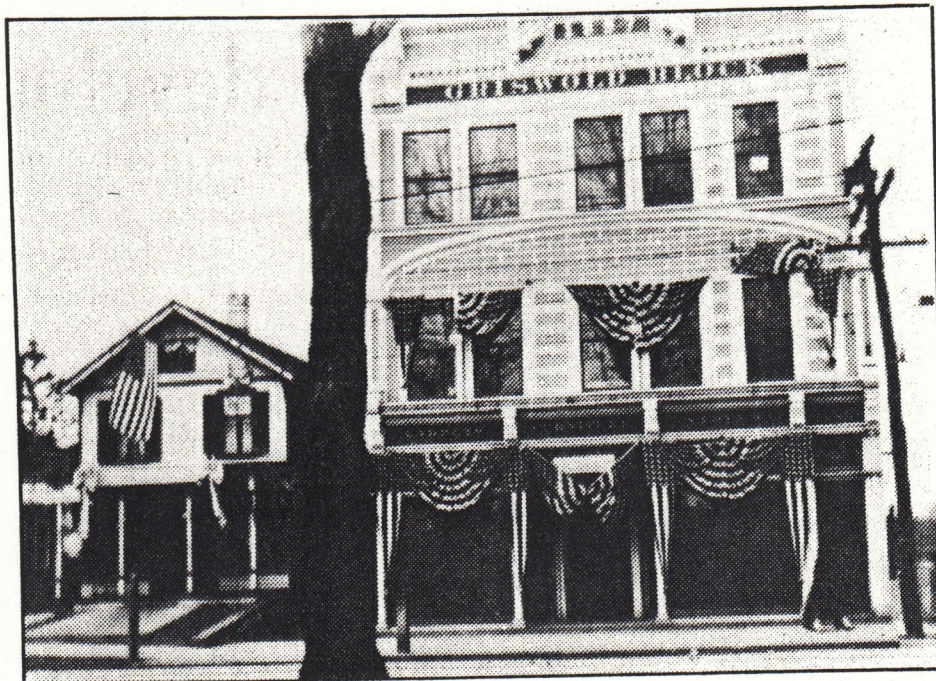


Photo by Charles A. Blackstone

THE GRISWOLD BLOCK, now Castellon Brothers Bakery, was built in 1897 by Samuel A. Griswold. To the left is John Barnes Bike Shop, now Hair On Main. Photo courtesy of Pearl Blackstone Milne.