

At the corner of Kirkham and Main Street...



PICTURES OF THE PAST

Jane Bouley

The section of Branford known as the Fourth Ward was originally called the "Quarter" or "Quarter District." The "Quarter" also included part of Main Street, several side streets and the Bradley Street triangle.

The original settlers of this area were the Bradley, Harrison, Linsley, Morris and Parmelee families. Immigrants from Ireland began arriving in Branford

about 1850 and many settled in the Quarter or Fourth Ward. Side streets such as Kirkham and Monroe Streets were developed with new housing occupied by Irish families. A catholic cemetery was established on Monroe Street and many natives of Ireland are buried there.

Among the early Irish immigrants was Lawrence Buckley, who built a store and home around 1875 at the corner of Kirkham and Main Streets. He ran a grocery and saloon at this location until his death in 1897. The corner was known as "Buckley's Corner" for many years.

In the early 1900s this building – which today is known as 571 Main Street – was used as apartments and an ice cream parlor. A rock ledge on the opposite side of the street was removed in 1916 and a landmark

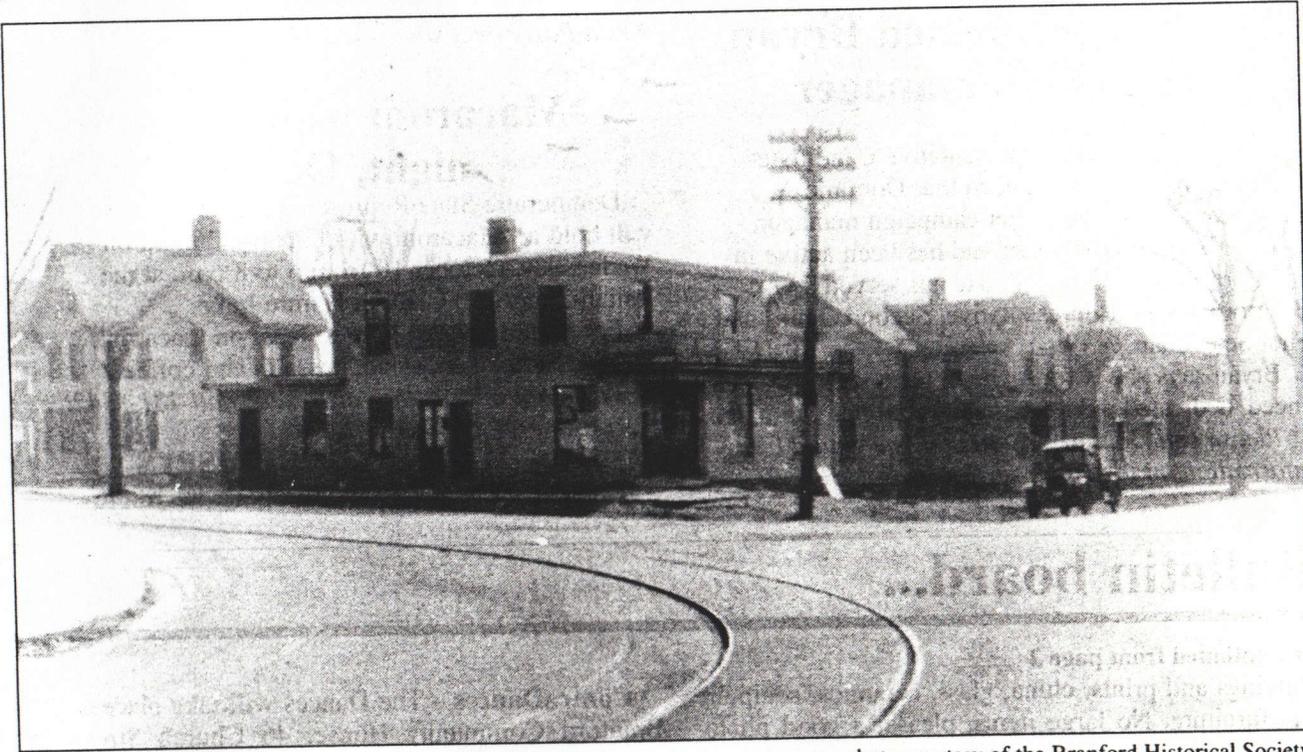


photo courtesy of the Branford Historical Society

For many years the building at the corner of Kirkham and Main Streets was Smitty's Restaurant.

stone wall was built on the west side of Kirkham Street. After Prohibition the building became the Stonewall Restaurant. Peter Lipkiewicz operated it. Since the 1950s, the building was known as Smittys or Smitty's Stonewall Restaurant and was operated by John A.

Schmidt. Subsequently, it became the Garage Café, which was damaged by a fire in 1971 and rebuilt.

In recent years it was called the Short Beach Saloon, which sustained heavy damage from a fire on August 7, 2002.