

## Mr. Gelinas and his excellent stable of horses

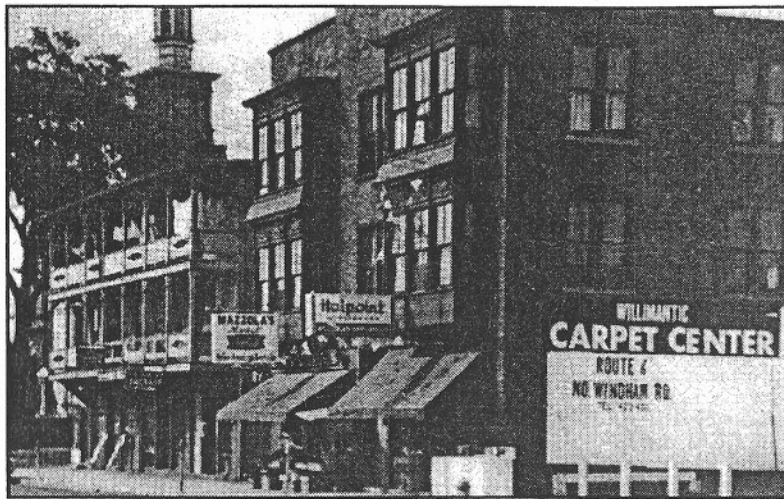


Tom  
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In 1892, Daniel Flaherty invested his earnings from professional boxing and pool hall winnings to build a stylish new business block on Main Street. He ran a saloon and pool and billiards hall in the new building's west store, and in 1894 Flaherty occupied one of his apartments. On Oct. 5, 1897, Daniel Flaherty sold the block to William Ross of Chaplin, and moved to Hartford. Ross hired Flaherty's friend, John J. Murphy, to manage the saloon.

This amiable Irishman was also a champion pool player well known for taking on all-comers for sizable purses. He ran the saloon until 1900, and then followed Flaherty to Hartford.

The Flaherty block's first commercial tenant died in tragic circumstances. Aman Trudeau moved his business into the new



This 1963 view of Main Street shows the Mazzola block and the Frink block. The latter building was built in 1850 and stood on the parking lot adjacent to the Main Street Cafe.

building's east store and remained there until 1898. Trudeau continued in the grocery trade in various locations around the city until his death.

On the morning of May 31, 1928, he was found hanging in the cellar of his son's second-hand furniture store at 35 High Street shortly before he had informed his family that he intended to frame some pictures. When Trudeau did not appear for

dinner a search was made of the building. He was found in the cellar.

Trudeau's lifeless body was dangling from a beam, hung by clothesline. He was 65 years old. Despite extensive inquiries no reason was uncovered for his suicide. He left a wife, Mary and a son and two daughters. Arman Trudeau had been a grocer in the city for almost 40 years, and had conducted a grocery at 35 High

St. until 1927, until his son Heliodore changed over to the store sale of second hand furniture.

On July 26, 1905, William Ross sold the Flaherty block to Alphonse L. Gelinas, a well-established French Canadian businessman, and the building slowly began to lose its original Irish identity. Hector Chabot (1902), Eli Blanchette (1903), Joseph Dubreuil and Anselme Bernier (1904), Louis Beauregard (1905-06) and Louis Belanger (1907-12) operated the building's saloon at 935.

The following account of Alphonse Gelinas' varied business ventures appeared in the Illustrated Review of Northeast Connecticut in 1891.

"Alphonse Gelinas, livery, feed and sales stables are on Valley Street opposite Center Street.

"One of the best-equipped and most enterprising livery establishments of northeast Connecticut is that owned and conducted by Mr. Alphonse Gelinas at the above named location. He keeps a number of superior driving horses and all kinds of vehicles so that any kind of a rig can be had at his stables on the shortest

notice at any hour of the day or night.

"He makes a specialty of furnishing horses and carriages for funerals and does a large business in this line. He also does trucking and hauling of all kinds with the greatest care and promptness and at the most moderate prices.

"Another prominent feature of these stables is the boarding department that Mr. Gelinas maintains for the benefit of his customers and patrons who have fine animals that they wish to have cared for and fed in the best possible manner.

"Mr. Gelinas gives all such horses entrusted to his care the same scrupulous attention as his own stock and many of the leading horsemen of Willimantic have horses in his stables.

"As a citizen, Mr. Gelinas is highly respected and esteemed and his name ranks well in the commercial circles of this section of the State. Mr. Gelinas opened an undertaking department in connection with his business, in April 1891 at the corner of Spruce and Jackson streets."

*Continued next week*

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