

## A Tour of Main Street: #3698 – Buckley's General Store - Part 2

By Gordon Youngman and Aaron Fernaays

*Editor's Note: The east-side tour of Main Street continues from our November 2017 issue which featured Part 1 - the building at #3698 Main Street owned by the K.O.T.M. (Knights of the Maccabees). Part 2 spotlights the first-floor store operated by Charles M. Buckley. We are grateful to Gordon and his grandson, Aaron, for sharing their memories of this building and for the time they spent researching and documenting this information.*



### Buckley's General Store

**left:** (1940) Sign over the front door reads "Chas. M. Buckley General Store." Gordon Youngman photo.

**right:** (1940) Interior view of Buckley's store. Hank Mastin (left) and Charles Buckley (right). WHS file photo.



According to Gordon, apparently Charles and Vivian Buckley rented the store from the K.O.T.M. organization in the mid 30's. As the operators of their new business, Charles and Vivian made some drastic changes to the type of establishment the K.O.T.M. had originally formed. The Buckleys ran their store as a hardware and grocery store, the same as Joe Finley did (their business neighbor to the north). In addition, the Buckleys sold oil and Esso gasoline. The post office was moved there in the late 30's from the Finley store; Charles was postmaster from 1941 - 1944.



**left:** 1943: Charles Buckley sitting in front of his store. Gordon Youngman photo.

**right:** 1976 Bicentennial Parade Float - replica of Buckley's Store. Walworth Historical Society received a first place plaque in Walworth History category. The float was constructed by members and friends of WHS. WHS file photo.



Charles passed away in 1944 and Vivian purchased the building in June 1945. At one time there was a restaurant on the second floor where the K.O.T.M. had held their meetings and dances. Vivian and their daughter Jean continued with the store until 1948, when they sold it to Jack and Blanche Wick.

### **Information shared by Gordon and Betty (Brown) Youngman at Walworth Memories programs:**

- You never wanted to go in the store when the 6 o'clock news was on the radio. If Charles needed to wait on you, he would make you sit down and wait until the news was over before he would get what you needed.
- The young lads from town used to go there to buy \$.25 corn cob pipes to smoke corn silk and Charles would say "You kids aren't using these to smoke are you?" We would tell him we used them to blow bubbles; I'm sure he knew better. We took the silk off the ears of corn and pushed the silk into the pipe.
- Betty (Brown) Youngman worked for Vivian and their daughter Jean. Vivian operated the restaurant on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Arlene Suwijn worked for Charles in the store.

*(To Be Continued: Part 3 – Wick's Hardware)*