

Sisitzky's Market

by Mel Montemerlo

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David Sisitzky started his market at 108 Main Street in about 1915. Mr. Sisitzky bought the entire brick building, which housed his store before 1920, when he was less than 30 years old. He rented the stores on the first floor, and offices and tenements in the building as well as in other buildings.



Sisitzky's Market, 108 Main St, Windsor Locks, Conn

David's family name at birth was David Jisitzky. He was born to Aron and Sarah Jisitzky in Kovno, Russia in 1893, and emigrated to the Bronx, in New York City, with his family in 1908. Over the decades, David's last name changed from Jisitzky to Sissitzky to Sisitzky to Sisk. However, the name of his market did not change during its existence from 1915 to 1961.

The story of the Sisitzky Market on Windsor Locks' Main Street is a rich one, with three major characters: David Sisitzky, William Buckley, and James Price. David Sisitzky opened his market in about 1915, when he was only 22.

Mr. Dan Kervick of Windsor Locks remembers Dave Sisitzky very well. He remembers going to the store in the late 1940s. He found Dave to be a friendly, outgoing person. He also remembers the two men who took over the Market so that Mr. Sisitzky could focus on his large rental business. They were Mr. William Buckley and Mr. James Price. Originally, Mr. Sisitzky hired Bill Buckley as a butcher, and a young James Price, as a delivery boy. Bill Buckley taught Jim Price the butcher's

trade. Bill Buckley bought Sisitzky's Market business sometime in the 1940s. Bill retired in about 1955, when Jim Price bought the business from him.

Beth Price Knecht, the daughter of Jim Price, knew the store well. She said: "I remember it had green and white tile floor. The cash register was in the front of the store. I think there were two aisles. The meat counter was in the back. My dad was a meat cutter, so that was his domain. I remember him grinding fresh hamburger and cutting roasts to suit each customer's needs. Everything was wrapped in butcher paper back then. ... The very best part of Sisitzky market was that they used to deliver groceries after you called in your order. My dad was a delivery boy in the late 1930s. He delivered groceries to my maternal grandparents farm in Warehouse Point. That's how my parents met! If not for the market, I wouldn't be here!"

Dan Kervick said: "My dad owned "Kervick's Express," a trucking company that operated between Hartford and Suffield, and in surrounding towns. My dad would have stops at Sisitsky's at least two times a week, bringing fresh meat from Hartford meat packing houses such as "Armour". Each delivery usually included a leg of beef and a whole lamb."

Kervick continued: "In the large walk-in cooler in the market, there were two wooden barrels. There were pickles in one, and corned beef in the other. Dave Sisitzky bought cucumbers from local farmers and put them in Bill Buckley's special brine. Soon you had great pickles, and they only cost a dime. You could go into the store and pick out a piece of meat for corned beef. Bill Buckley would mark the piece of meat with a colored stick, and then record in a little book, and put the meat in the wooden barrel for you to pick up a week later. You got "melt in your mouth" corned beef which was perfectly flavored. I had personal experience selling fresh eggs to Dave from chickens that I raised. I also sold him shad from the canal. I would catch a shad or two. I was not a fisherman. I speared them. I would get on my bike, and take them to Sisitzky's and sell them for ten cents per fish. On the way home, I would stop at the Windsor Locks Bakery and buy one jelly doughnut for a nickel."

David Sisk died on October 7, 1979 at the age of 87, while living in Bloomfield, Connecticut.

If you are interested in reading my other articles on the history of Windsor Locks, they can be found and downloaded on the website:
windsorlockshistory.com