***THE HIGBEE-HOWER CONNECTION***

***TO TRACE THE HOWER-HIGBEE CONNECTION WE MUST START IN 1835, WHEN JEREMIAH HIGBEE CAME TO LODI AND BUILT A LARGE STORE BUILDING AND OPENED A MERCANTILE BUSINESS. IN 1835 WHEN HARRISVILLE WAS SET ASIDE AS A POST OFFICE, JEREMIAH WOULD BECOME OUR FIRST POST MASTER. HE WAS ACTIVE IN CIVIC AND CHURCH AFFRAIRS AND HELPED ESTABLISH THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK.***

***BORN IN LODI JOHN G. HOWER AND EDWIN CONVERSE HIGBEE BECAME FRIENDS. EDWIN BORN IN 1837 ATTENDED THE LODI PUBLIC SCHOOLS; HE WOULD ENTERED THE BAPTIST COLLEGE (NOW DENISON COLLEGE) IN GRANVILLE.EDWIN WOULD QUIT COLLEGE TO JOIN JOHN HOWER IN OPENING THE CLEVELAND STORE ON SEPTEMEBER 10. 1860. HE WOULD MARRY A LODI GAL, MARY HAINES (HANES) IN 1860.***

 ***N.W. HOWER AND HIS BROTHER JAMES A. HOWER. STARTED OUR LOCAL HOWER STORE IN 1889, BECOMING THE OLDEST RETAIL BUSINESS IN LODI. N.W. HOWER BOUGHT OUT HIS BROTHER IN 1909 AND BECAME HOWER & SON, WITH HARRY C. HOWER OF LODI MANAGING THE LODI STORE. THEY ALSO OWNED THE STORE IN BURBANK, WHICH CHARLES WILLIAM HOWER MANAGED FOR HIS FATHER.***

***THE HOWER-HIGBEE STORE WAS LOCATED AT 238-240 SUPERIOR STREET IN CLEVELAND IN 1860. ON OPENING DAY, JOHN HOWER AND EDWIN HIGBEE TOOK IN $100. TO HELP ON THEIR OPENING DAY THE PERRY MONUMENT WAS UNVEILED AS 100, 000 PEOPLE GATHERED IN PUBLIC SQUARE. THEIR EMPORIUM SPECIALIIZED IN DRY GOODS AND READY-TO WEAR APPAREL, STAFFING THE BUSINESS WITH FIVE EMPLOYEES. THE 1860S WERE NOT AN EASY TIME TO BE IN BUSINESS. BECAUSE OF THE CIVIL WAR, PRICES DOUBLED IN 1860-1864, BUT WAGES INCREASED LESS THAN 50 PERCENT. REGARDLESS, HOWER AND HIGBEE PROSPERED. IN 1870, THE MOVED TO A NEW LARGER LOCATION IN THE NORTHUP AND HARRINGTON BLOCK (NOW THE SITE AT STOUFFER’S TOWER CITY PLAZA HOTEL). BY 1886 EDWIN’S SON, WILLIAM JOINED THE FIRM AND HOWER-HIGBEE BECAME THE FIRST CLEVELAND STORE TO HAVE ELECTRIC LIGHTS AND TELEPHONES. DELIVERY WAGONS WERE PURCHASED, AS WERE 25 “CASHBOYS”, WHICH TOOK CUSTOMERS’ MONEY TO THE STORE CASHIER AND HIS “NEWFANGLED” CASH REGISTER. ON JUNE 10, 1897, JOHN HOWER WAS KILLED IN AN ACCIDENT AND EDWIN HIGBEE BECAME PRESIDENT. THE HOWER-HIGBEE COMPANY REORGANIZED IN 1902 AS THE HIGBEE CO.***

 ***BY THIS TIME, THE LOCAL HOWER BROTHERS HAD STARTED IN LODI AND BURBANK.***

***BOTH HARRY C. HOWER AND CHARLES W. HOWER 1 PASSED AWAY IN 1937, HARRY E. HOWER RAN THE STORE FOR HIS GRANDFATHER UNTIL 1939, WHEN N.W. HOWER PASSED AWAY. HARRY E. AND CHARLES W. HOWER 11 PURCHASED THE STORE FROM THE ESTATE AND RETURED THE NAME TO HOWER BROS. NAME. HARRY DIED IN 1950 AND CHARLES WILLIAM HOWER 11 DIES IN 1956. G.W. (BILL) TOOK THE STORE OVER WITH SON SCOTT LATER ON UNTIL SOLD.***

***LODI LUMBER COMPANY***

***Everything To Build Anything***

***THE RICE FAMILY CAME FROM PENNSYLVANIA AND ORIGINALLY SETTLED ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF WWOSTER. THEIR FARM BECAME THE OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER AND THE ORIGINAL FARMHOUSE IS STILL THERE.***

***PRECEEDING THE LODI LUMBER COMPANY, JOSEPH & BROTHER CLEMENT RICE LEARNED THE SAW MILL AND GRIST MILL RAFE FROM HIS FATHER, JOHN RICE. THE RICE BROTHERS BUILT MANY FINE OLD HOMES IN THE VILLAGE OF LODI.***

***JOSEPH & CLEMENT RICE STARTED THE LODI LUMBER COMPANY IN 1889 AT A SITE ON THE RIVER BEHIND THE OLD SOMMER CHEVROLET. SOON CLEMENT MOVED TO SPENCER AND STARTED A GRIST MILL ON THE BLACK RIVER.***

***THE LUMBER COMPANY MOVED TO THE PRESENT SITE IN 1911. THE WORST THING THAT CAN HAPPEN OT A LUMBER COMPANY IS FIRE. LODI LUMBER HAS BEEN BURNED OUT TWICE, BUT RECOVERED EACH TIME.***

***IN 1911, THE FORMATION OF THE PRESENT COMPANY FORMED WITH HIS TWO SONS, G.A. AND N.A.***

***IN 1920, JOHN RICE, YOUNGER BROTHER OF GROVER AND NOBLE JOINED THE PARTNERSHIP. ABOUT THIS TIME, THE LODI LUMBER COMPANY PURCHASED THE KNAPP AND SANFORD LUMBER COMPANY. MR. SNAFORD CONTINUES WITH LODI LUMBER COMPANY UNTIL HIS DEATH.***

***LODI LUMBER ORGINALLY DEALT PRIMARILY IN HARDWOODS. FOR 25 YEARS, THEY MADE THE BLANKS FOR THE LOUISVILLE SLUGGER BRAND OF BALL BATS. THEY ALSOHAVE MADE HICKORYARTILLERY CANNONTONGUES DURING WW1 AND GOLF BLANKS FOR THE KING OF ENGLAND.***

***DURING WW11, NEARLY ALL THE FACILITIES OF THE COMPANY WERE GIVEN TO WAR PRODUCTION. THE LARGEST ITEM MANUFACTURED WAS BENT WOODEN SUPPORTS FOR SELF-SEALING GAS TASKS ON FIGHTER AND BOMBER PLANES, INCLUDING B-29.***

***JOE, CHUCK AND DAVID, SONS OF NOBLE RICE, PHILLIP ROVER’S SON AND FRED, THE SON OF JOHN.***

***EIGHT GENRATIONS OF RICE MILLMEN STARING WITH BARNHART, FRED (1753), PHILLIP, JOHN, JOSEPH, GROVER/, PHILLIP AND JIM.***

***HALL GROWERS/GARDEN ISLE FARM***

***THE HALL GROWERS/GARDEN ISLE FARM “THE MUCK” HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A BIG PART OF OUR HISTORICAL COMMUNITY. IN 1887, MESSRS WEAN HORR WARNER COMPANY PURCHASHED 575 ACRES OF HARRISVILLE SWAMP. IN 1908, THE EXPANDED THE ACREAGE. THE SWAMP WAS DRAINED THROUGHA SERIES OF DITCHES AND PUMPS. ON THE NORTH, IT DRAINS TO THE BLACK RIVER TO LAKE ERIE. THE SOUTHEND DRAINS INTO THE OHIO RIVER BY WAY OF THE KILLBUCK CREEK. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING A BARN STANDS DIRECTLY ON THE WATERSHED, THE SOUTHERN HALF OF THE ROOF DRAINS TO THE OHIO RIVER, THE NORTH TO LAKE ERIE.***

***THE FARM WAS THE LARGEST SINGLE GROWER OF ONIONS AND CELERY IN THE UNITED STATES. AT THIE TIME, THE MESSRS WEAN HORR WARNER COMPANY OWNED FOUR FARMS: LODI HAD 1208 ACRES, ONE FARM IN CRESTON AND TWO IN ORRVILLE. THEY CULTIVATED CELERY, ONIONS, POTATOES AND CABBAGE, EMPLOYING 400-1000 PEOPLE IN A SEASON. THE FARM OFFICE WAS LOCATED AT THE END OF HARRIS STREET. THE BUILDING STILL STANDS WITH THE NAME HORR WARNER ON A BLOCK.***

***JOE WARNER PLACED MANY PICTURES OF THE WORKERS, INCLUDUNGCHILDREN: MANY FROM LODIKNOW AS “MUCK ANGELS” IN NEWSPAPER POSTINGS CALLED “THE WAY WE WERE”. VALERIA GAST MAPES, MY HUSBAND’S GRANDMOTHER MET GRANDPA JAMES MAPES WHILE SUPERVISING THE “ANGELS”. JAMES WORKED FOR THE RAILROAD IN WILLARD OHIO THAT PICKED UP CROPS FOR DISTROBUTION.***

***IN THE LATE 1930, MR RUBIN FOR SHAKER HEIGHTS PURCHASED THE COMPANY. ROBERT HALL WAS THE FARM MANAGER ASSISTED BY SONS WESLEY AND KENNETH. THE HALL FAMILY PURCHASED THE FARM IN 1960.***

***DEWEY, SON OF WESTLEY AND HIS SONS NOW OWN AND MANAGE HALL GROWERS. IT REMAINS THE LARGEST PRIVATELY OWNED FARM IN MEDINA COUNTY KNOWN COUNTY WIDE FOR THEIR SWEET CORN.***