DESTINATION LODI

A HISTORICAL JOURNEY

THE TAYLOR INN/PART 2

 There has been much written about the Taylor Inn, it was a grand place torn down to make room for a Sohio station.

I received an email from former Lodian and history buff. Jan Van Doren was a helper of Joe Warner, coauthored, and published an article of our railroad history. She has been researching why A.B. Taylor donated the Taylor Inn to Oberlin College. She did find an article on the concession of owners, how Sohio bought the property and acknowledgement from Oberlin regarding the gift.

To remind all, according to the History of Medina Co. Albert .B. Taylor was born on July 12, 1846 in this county. His father was John, one of the prominent and self-made men of the Twp. He was a tinner.

A.B. worked for T.G. Loomis in his store starting at age 14 for 18 years, at which he joined the business under the firm F.R. Loomis Company of Lodi. Then F.R. Loomis pulled out and T.G. Loomis stepped back in. The company then known as “Loomis & Taylor” until 1877.

A.B. was the Postmaster since 1874. Banker and a sawmill owner among other items, manufactured stepladders and clothes racks. He was the main man behind our Woodlawn Cemetery. He built the Taylor inn for $80,000 as a monument for his family. Later known as “Taylor Folly”.

From the College of Oberlin Annual Report, 1899 it stated “ A unique and valuable gift to the College during the last few months is the new Taylor Inn in Lodi, Ohio which comes from the generous hands of Mr. & Mrs. A.B.Taylor. This certainly one of the most beautiful structure of the kind in the state. The College accepts it with most grateful appreciation, and hopes that it may prove with Mr. & Mrs. Taylor’s desire, a long lasting ornament to the village where it is situated and a means of aiding the work of Oberlin.” The College owned and operated the Inn for 18 years. Why did Taylor donate? It is said a prominate Cleveland man left a large sum of money to Oberlin, A.B. Taylor wished to match.

Jan found the following information from an article, I found interesting…INN IS SAVED FROM SHERIFF/OIL BOOM HELPS INN, It will be recalled that an oil boom struck the vicinity of Chatham in 1917 and the center of industry turned almost overnight to Chatham. Great times enjoyed in Chatham and Harrisville Townships and income from the wells flowed abundantly. The Taylor Inn was always full.

V.A Homan of Lodi completed negotiating with Oberlin College for the purchase of the Taylor Inn in June 1918. The Inn would flourish thru the next two years. Homan reportedly bought the Inn for $8000. Its 30 rooms always filled and the dining room gained a good reputation. Oil speculators were attracted to the newly opened fields.

WANTED ROOM, the next year the story goes, a man named Lee A. Walton came to Lodi and wanted a room but the Inn was full. He demanded a room. He said he would buy the hotel, when asked if asked if he meant it, his answer was “sure”. He bought Taylor Inn for $25.000. The oil boom continued from 1919-1920 and profits continued. He always had a room.

In May 1922, it was sold to Frank Reardon, in 1924 sold to Hyman Shainkin, December 1925 the Inn was transferred to the Northern/Southern Finance Co. and their president E. H. Huggett. In 1930, Emily Krepela, daughter of Anna Krepela bought the inn and in 1933, it was up for a Sheriff Sale for $2161.04 back taxes. The family called in Frank Vlshek of Cleveland who owned the largest auto tool manufacturing for help. The taxes were paid.

“Taylor’s Folly “now appraised at $12,000 and Standard Oil was interested. Another report of an Ashland man offered $13, 500 to buy and run the Inn but turned downed, I am sure for a higher price from Standard Oil. We all know what happened. So sad. It remains an eye sore.

Embracing our extraordinary history, I am hoping that someday we will establish a Historical District down town, there would be guidelines on what our building should strive to look.