



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A venerable landmark

BY C.W. LATTIN

Over the last 60 years Albion has lost many of its venerable old mansions that once graced South Main Street. Only a few remain in other parts of the village that carry the stature of those torn down. One such residence that still stands was known as "Grey Stone Villa" when this picture was taken of it back in the 1890's. Can you detect what landmark this is?

Guessing aside! It is located on the west side of North Main Street across from the Orleans Chapter DAR house. At the time of this photo, the house was home to Dr. Tousley Lewis, a physician. The little back wing on the left side was his doctor's office. It was built along with the rest of the dwelling probably in the 1860's. This is when the Italianate-style buildings were in vogue following the Greek Revival period of the second quarter of the 19th century.

Residential architecture in the Italianate style frequently boasted dominate towers, low

pitched roofs with bracketed over hangs and decorative balconies.

"Grey Stone Villa" was made of native sandstone then stuccoed over with a faux finish to give the surface of the outer walls an elegant finish. Our photo shows that many of the window blinds are closed, which was often done years ago to keep out the sun or cold.

During the early years of the 20th century this residence was home to Doctors Cora and H.W. Lattin, who were also physicians who used the doctor's wing.

In the mid-1940s, the Albion Lions Club purchased the house and used it for its meetings. It was known as the Lions Jungle. Unfortunately, during their ownership the wooden decorative features were removed, thus denuding the villa of its Victorian decorative features that gave true character to such architecture. However, the lofty tower remains a landmark to all those who pass by today.

Currently, this venerable landmark is owned and cared for by Joe Martillotta.