

CHESTER TIMES – January 6, 1912

GRADYVILLE HOTEL SOLD TO H.J. RILEY – Well Known and Prosperous Stand Changes Ownership – Ancient Tavern Site

Hubert J. Riley, the well-known hotel man of Chester, has purchased from J. Watson Fell, the hotel property and 22 acres of land at Gradyville in Edgmont Township. Mr. Riley has filed his petition for a transfer, and application will be made to the court for permission to take possession of the property.

The Gradyville Hotel is a commodious, twenty-room house, with a stable, shedding, blacksmith shop, tenant house and 22 acres of land. It is located at the corner of the Edgmont and Chester great road and the roads leading from Glen Mills and Upper Providence. It is one of the oldest and best stands in the neighborhood. Mr. Riley is one of the most competent hotel men in this section and will unquestionably make a success of the business. With the improvement of the roads leading to Chester, Media and West Chester, Gradyville Hotel will undoubtedly become a popular stopping place for automobile parties and tourists generally. Edgmont Township has improved the Chester road for about three miles, and as the state will shortly take this road over as a main highway under the Sproul Road Bill, the further improvement of this important avenue is assured. Beginning at Edgmont Avenue in Chester, and extending through Chester, Middletown and Edgmont Townships, this highway continues directly across the West Chester Pike through the villages of Rocky Hill and Goshenville to Downingtown, and was, in the early day, the main highway from the Chester Valley to the court house, Chester being until 1876, the county seat of Chester County.

ANCIENT SETTLEMENT – The village of Gradyville, which was formerly known as Howellville is a very ancient settlement. The hotel known as the Gradyville Hotel was formerly called the Rising Sun and for a great many years, it was kept by Hiram Green, and was an important stopping place on the road from Chester to the upper sections of Chester County. In 1872 Isaac Yarnall presented his petition desiring the approval of the court for "Keeping a Public House of Entertainment." That joining privilege was extended to him and he was followed as Landlord by John Hoopes, and later by John Neal. In 1778, William Dunwoody was granted the license. In 1813, Nathan Baker petitioned for the license, and following him came Edward B. Green. The hotel has been continually licensed since that time. During the administration of Grover Cleveland as President of the United States, Senator John C. Grady of Philadelphia, having purchased much ground in Edgmont Township, the name of the post office was changed from the ancient and honored name of Howellville to that of Gradyville. Recent proprietors of the hotel have been David Johnson and J. Watson Fell, both of whom have maintained the excellent reputation of the hostelry.