

The Early Years of Lathrop M. Taylor, The Fur Trader

*Bert Anson**

Lathrop Minor Taylor was the second white man to make South Bend, Indiana, his permanent home. He was an Indian trader and merchant who took an active part in establishing the town, and whose diverse interests spread his influence to many areas of pioneer life. He was born February 4, 1805, at Clinton in Oneida County, New York. The family moved to Buffalo, New York, in 1808, and to Detroit in 1811. The War of 1812 caused their removal to Malden in Canada early in 1812, and to Cleveland, Ohio, that summer. The family lived in Sandusky, Ohio, from 1813 to 1817, and in Montgomery County, Ohio, from 1817 to 1823, before they moved to Fort Wayne in 1823. One of the daughters, Eliza, soon married Samuel Hanna, an agent of the American Fur Company. Young Taylor became a clerk for his brother-in-law.¹

His later career may be divided into distinctive periods of business activity and can be understood more easily by briefly introducing its general course. The first business period was that in which Taylor was a clerk of S. Hanna and Company of Fort Wayne in charge of a trading post at the south bend of the St. Joseph River. He transacted business with the neighboring Indian bands, sent outfits to trade for furs among bands farther removed from him, and supplied a few necessities to other white traders and squatters of the area. His post was not a significant one for its financial returns. The post was established to reach Indians who no longer came to Fort Wayne or were being contacted by other traders. More important, Samuel Hanna was interested in the opening of northern Indiana to white settlers. The station must then be considered as an infiltration move, and Taylor as an advance agent to prepare for white settlement. Taylor

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¹ South Bend, Indiana, *Daily Tribune*, August 30, 1892. This obituary of Colonel Taylor was the source used for his biographies in several county histories.

was an excellent agent for this purpose, and Hanna and Company shared in the benefits from his farsightedness.

Taylor served a satisfactory term of apprenticeship from 1827 to 1831. He was rewarded with a partnership in the South Bend store, which was then called Hanna and Taylor, but not in the main store of the company, which was located in Fort Wayne. He was given greater financial freedom to exercise his own initiative, while still able to call on the resources and influence of Hanna and Company. He continued to expand his business, while taking a leading part in the community. The community future was an enterprise for him, for his establishment's future depended on the growth of South Bend. His land investments and good will were dependent on the white immigration because of the prospective end of his primary Indian trade. That trade was still important, but a progressive businessman would not depend on its continuance for very many years.

The partnership of Hanna and Taylor was ended in 1836. Hanna may have decided that it was time to consolidate his interests closer to Fort Wayne. We know that the friendship and assistance continued on each side. Hanna continued to share in the returns from some of the real estate investments until 1852 and to interest himself in Taylor's affairs.

The Panic of 1837 came soon after the firm's name was changed to The L. M. Taylor Store. This was a period of severe struggle to find markets in which to buy at the most advantageous prices and to collect on the credit sales made in the past. Taylor was so successful that he emerged in a stronger financial position than he had occupied before the panic. He owed much of his success to profits from fur trade and the certainty of collection of Indian accounts by the United States treaties with the Indians. A movement to bring a bank to South Bend was an effort for financial survival. He relinquished the public offices of County Clerk and Recorder that he had held, after attempting unsuccessfully to gain re-election to the office of Clerk of the Circuit Court.

A careful inventory in 1841 showed that he had survived the panic, and he once more interested himself in community affairs. Railroad building was again possible. Taylor was an active leader but was defeated in a factional

struggle for control of railway routes in 1847. He sold his store and stock of goods to his brother, E. Pitts Taylor, a few months later.

The final chapter in his business career extended from 1847 to 1856, when he retired. He operated as an independent fur buyer and handled more furs than before but without the other lines of the general merchant. Despite the Potawatomi removals of 1838 and 1840, there were still Indian bands, especially on the Kankakee River, and the white settlers added to the winter's fur catch. The peak years of his fur trade were 1851 to 1853.

Taylor was retired from 1856 to his death in 1892. He took no part in civic or business affairs except to manage his estate. This was probably composed of some farm real estate and rental properties in South Bend. It was supposed to be modest and appears to have been well distributed and concealed. He was content to be regarded as a survivor of the pioneer days.

* * * * *

Taylor was not the first trader or white resident to locate at the south bend of the St. Joseph River. Antoine Leclare became the first resident of the St. Joseph Valley when he settled a few miles up the river from the site of Fort St. Joseph in 1781, soon after the fort was destroyed by Spaniards. He remained until 1800. He married an Indian, bought furs, and practiced his blacksmithing trade. About 1791, William Burnett of New Jersey built a warehouse near the mouth of the St. Joseph River. He was known to have been at St. Joseph as late as 1804. Joseph Bertrand located on the river opposite the present town of Bertrand in 1808. This was just below the mouth of Pokagon's Branch, near the crossing of the Great Sauk Trail. He married an Indian girl, Madeline, the daughter of the Potawatomi chief, Topenebee. He was the agent of the American Fur Company for a time. He died in Kansas in 1860, but there is no accurate date for his removal. Pierre Frieschutz Navarre was the next resident of the valley and the first at the south bend of the river. He was sent there in 1820 as the agent of the American Fur Company. He remained about a year, sold his agency to Alexis Coquillard, but later returned to

South Bend.² Coquillard may be regarded as the first permanent settler of South Bend. He established a trading post for the American Fur Company in 1824.³ Taylor became the second permanent resident and the co-founder with Coquillard of the town of South Bend.

In 1827 there were numerous small villages of Potawatomi in northern Indiana and southern Michigan. Raccoon and Rum Village were within the present site of South Bend. Others which were close were the villages of Topenebee, Pokagon, Wesaw, Chebass, Moccasin, Weesemo, and Matchkee.⁴

This was the period in which the United States acquired most of northern Indiana by treaties with the Indians. The Potawatomi, Chippewa, and Ottawa at Chicago on August 29, 1821, had ceded a ten-mile strip across northern Indiana, extending east from a line drawn due north through Rum Village.⁵ The Potawatomi ceded the corresponding strip west of Rum Village on October 16, 1826, at a treaty made near the mouth of the Mississinewa.⁶ The Indian title, therefore, was ceded first to the north half of St. Joseph County. The southeast part of the county was included in the treaty cession at Carey Mission on September 20, 1828. The Potawatomi made their last large cession on October 27, 1832, at Tippecanoe, of the land between the Wabash River grants and the strip ceded in 1826. This included the southwest part of St. Joseph County.⁷ The area between the Carey Mission cession and the cession of October 27, 1832, is that of the present area of Marshall, Kosciusko, and Wabash counties, which included many of the Indian bands which traded with Taylor's agents. The Potawatomi ceded it at

² Timothy E. Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana* (2 vols., Chicago, 1907), I, 128-132; George A. Baker, *The St. Joseph-Kankakee Portage* (South Bend, Indiana, 1899). Baker was secretary of the Northern Indiana Historical Society, of which Timothy E. Howard and David R. Leeper were presidents.

³ Taylor Memorandum, The Taylor Collection, Northern Indiana Historical Society, South Bend, Indiana. The histories of St. Joseph County also give 1822 and 1823 for the date of Coquillard's settlement. M. G. Coquillard, *Alexis Coquillard* (South Bend, Indiana, 1930), contains most of the material on Coquillard.

⁴ David R. Leeper, *Some Early Local Footprints* (South Bend, Indiana, 1898), Series III, 4. Series III was reprinted from the South Bend, Indiana, *Daily Times*, March 28, 1898.

⁵ *United States Statutes at Large*, VII, 218-221.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 295-299.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 399-403.

Tippecanoe on October 26, 1832.⁸ The Tippecanoe Treaty of 1832 was actually a multiple affair of three treaties made on October 20, 26, and 27.

The peak of Indian trade at Fort Wayne had passed⁹ when the young Taylor was first sent to the south bend of the St. Joseph River to establish a trading station, a position similar to that given to two of Samuel Hanna's brothers.¹⁰ Hanna and Company which was owned by Hanna, James Barnett, and Allen Hamilton of Fort Wayne had built a substantial business. Taylor arrived at the south bend on September 25, 1827, to establish a trading station for that company, and he soon demonstrated his aptitude.¹¹

Taylor followed the system of maintaining a permanent location while supplying agents who traveled to the Indian villages at their own risk. This is best illustrated by a note in the sales book: "Navarre selling the goods to the Pottawatomies. To account to Taylor for the goods at stated prices, but selling them at his own discretion for his profit."¹² The station was a retail outlet of a diverse line of merchandise. The first outfit entered in Ledger A, 1827, is that of Edward Smith, copied in Table I. It illustrates the goods stocked by the store, as well as that which was supplied to the Indians. It also illustrates the degree to which the Indians had adopted white people's commodities. There were several pairs of blankets, graded as to quality by "points," probably thickness. List cloth is frequently mentioned in Taylor's invoices but without explanation of its quality or use. The Indians had apparently acquired a preference for cotton clothing and a willingness to sew, as seen from the quantity of calico, shirting, and other cloth carried. There was the usual assortment of decorative objects of high price, but the larger part of the goods was utilitarian.

Smith was apparently successful in his trading, for his first outfit was supplied in the same winter season by addi-

⁸ *Ibid.*, 394-397.

⁹ Nellie A. Robertson and Dorothy Riker (eds.), *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1916-), XXIV-XXVI (1942), XXIV, 10.

¹⁰ G. W. Wood, *The Life and Character of Honorable Samuel Hanna* (Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1860), 15. This biographical sketch was printed in Wallace A. Brice, *History of Fort Wayne* (Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1868).

¹¹ South Bend, Indiana, *Daily Tribune*, August 30, 1892.

¹² Taylor Sales Book, 1833-1855, pp. 33-36.

TABLE I

Edward Smith Dr On Commission
(from Hanna and Company Ledger A, 1827, p. 20.)

December 16, 1827	To 1 pr.	3 pt Blanketts		9 04½
	" 1 pr.	2½ pt Blanketts		6 50½
	" 1 pr.	2 pt Blanketts		4 65
	" 1 pr.	1½ pt Blanketts		3 49
	" 1 pr.	1 pt Blanketts		3 32
No. 27	" 1¾	gray List Cloth	3.19½	5 58
No. 33	" 1¾	yds List Cloth	2.36	4.15
No. 17	" 1¾ yds	White List cloth	2.46	4.31
No. 62	" 1¾ yds	White List cloth	1.57	2.74
	" 3½ yds	Shrowding	1.80	6 30
	" 2 yds	Blue Molton	.62	1.24
	" 2 yds	White Molton	.62	1 24
	" 27¾ yds	Blue Callico	.32	8 88
	" 12 yds	Stripe Fast Cotton	.18¾	2 25
	" 14½ yds	Bleached Shirting	.18¾	2 71
	" 28	plad cotton	.18¾	5 25
	" 1	green shawl	1.32	1 32
	" 2	Red shawls	1.05	2 10
	" 3	shawls	.84	2 52
	" 4	Blue Hankerchiefs	.29	1 17
	" 3	pr. Ribbon	1.12½	3 37½
	" 4	cock Feathers	.37½	1 50
	" 2	Ostridge Feathers	1.05½	2 11
	" 2	Fox tail plums	.50	1 00
	" 3 doz.	Cut glass beads	.75	2 25
	" 1 Card	Short Neglasses		1 12½
	" ½ doz.	Scalping Knives	2.29	1 12½
No. 2	" 2	Broaches	1.37½	2 75
No. 3	" 2	die	1.12½	2 25
No. 5	" 4	"	.30	1 20
No. 7	" 12	"	.18¾	2 25
	" 24	Pr. Earbobbs	.12	2 88
				102 58

tions until he was charged with a total of \$220.64 for merchandise. He balanced his account in January, February, and April of 1828 by returning furs and maple "Shugar," secured from the Indians, and a small amount of unsold goods. The Alex Provonsile outfit took out a total of \$221.11 in March, 1828, and returned in April with the same products as had Smith.¹³ The Shi-i-no outfit was stocked with \$49.67

¹³ S. Hanna and Company Ledger A, 1827-1828, pp. 20-21. The S. Hanna and Company Ledgers, L. M. Taylor, Clerk, are a part of the Taylor Collection in the possession of the Northern Indiana Historical Society, South Bend, Indiana.

in trade goods on commission, but there is no account of his return. The Kankakee outfit was not charged with goods taken on commission, but there was an invoice of \$583.48 of unsold goods returned in May, 1828.¹⁴

The "Inventory at end of First Winter" of Taylor's station (see Table II) shows the accounting made by Taylor

TABLE II

Inventory at end of First Winter		
Inward St. Josephs Station		
From S. Hanna and Company, Invoice Book, 1827-1828, pp. 1-22.		
Total	to March 18, 1828	\$1,825.66
Invoices of Kankakee Outfit of goods returned—May 1828		583.48
Inventory of St. Joseph Outfit, July 1, 1828		2,779.27
Goods	\$1,974.58	
House	84.00	
Indian Credits, acc'ts	89.00	
White acct's	367.46	
Pd. Navarre	100.00	
Kankakee Acc't	91.08	
White notes	83.01	
Incidentals	[10.14]	\$2,799.27
	September 22, 1828	
	from Day Book A	
Stock Invoice	\$2,522.28	
Stock in New York	788.61	
Debit in Ft. Wayne	449.70	Settled
Credit in Ft. Wayne	2,199.07	
	June 1, 1829	

to his employers for his first winter's business. The items are of especial interest, for they indicate the manner in which the merchant conducted his business. There was a surprisingly large stock of goods stored in Taylor's little building. The difficulties of transportation required that a business whose important seasons were the fall and the spring should stock its shelves during the summer months. Apparently Taylor was able to get only a limited supply of articles from Fort Wayne after his season started. S. Hanna and Company received all the goods from the St. Joseph station and credited the sums to the station's account. This bookkeeping was to avoid unnecessary transfers of cash and simplify wholesale buying. The stock in New York was

¹⁴ S. Hanna and Company Invoice Book, 1827-1828, pp. 1-8.

probably for supplies from the usual sources, to be sent directly to Taylor via the Great Lakes and St. Joseph River, rather than transshipped by the way of Fort Wayne.

The amount of the notes and accounts accumulated by the few whites of the area is indicative of pioneer business methods. Accounts were purchases charged to the buyer for future collection. Notes were time payments, usually for six months at ten per cent interest. They could be renewed for years. Notes were used for large purchases and were sometimes used as currency. Drafts on firms were more commonly used for currency, however. Lewis E. Atherton clearly states some of the evils of credit sales by the western merchants,¹⁵ and Taylor's Letters and Orders show many attempts to collect bad debts.

The Indian accounts were small and resulted from Taylor's local trade at South Bend. This indicates the wisdom of dealing with the Indians through outfits which assumed the risk of collection. As Taylor's business expanded he sent his own agents in charge of his goods, and the duty of collection then became Taylor's problem. This procedure will be explained in a study of the Tippecanoe treaty.

TABLE III

Furs Forwarded to Ft. Wayne, May 12, 1828.
From S. Hanna and Company, Ledger A, 1.

1536 Muskrat	18 Wild Cat
100 Mink	93 Deer Skins
7 Otter	2 "Bare"
3 Fisher	3 Cubs Skins
1 Martin	5 Wolf Skins
3 Red Fox	15 Muskrat
19 Grey Fox	3 Dozen Rabbit
416 Raccoon	681 lb. "Shugar"
Paid Navarre for furs \$100.00	
Kankakee Outfit account \$91.07¼	

This was not a large shipment of furs, but is the only one given in the ledgers, daybooks, or invoice book, and is probably a complete record. Taylor competed with an established trader, Coquillard, and did well to acquire this many furs. He did not get many furs directly from the South Bend

¹⁵ Lewis E. Atherton, *The Pioneer Merchant in Mid-America* in the University of Missouri *Studies* (Columbia, Missouri, 1926-), XIV, No. 2 (1939) pp. 102-116.

area, for Smith, Provonsile, and Shi-i-no had taken outfits to the bands, and the sum paid Navarre was for furs which Taylor could not secure directly from the Indians. It is plain that the St. Joseph station had a modest beginning in which it secured the less desirable pelts. It was a beginning, which could be developed by establishing successful relationships with the Indians and their trusted traders, such as Navarre. He was also engaged in trade with the white squatters of the county, and in formulating plans for the future, when treaties would permit white land entries.

Taylor sent fifteen packs of furs to Fort Wayne, April 16, 1828. There is no record of the price credited for them or the contents of the packs. This may have been the amount of furs accumulated to that time since later accounts show that April and May were the months in which the winter's business was concluded.

It is very difficult to assemble a satisfactory valuation of Taylor's goods, due to the variation in quality. In 1841 the store carried thirteen grades of red flannel. The prices paid for furs depended on many factors: the season when the animal was taken, the expertness of "dressing" the skin,¹⁶ and finally the bargaining abilities of the hunter.¹⁷ The price received by the hunter was affected by the number of times his product paid a middleman's commission. The outfit secured the pelt and sold it to the permanent station, which in turn sent it to the parent station and received credit. Then it was resold to the American Fur Company, which transported it to the eastern markets for sale and processing. Taylor later eliminated two of these steps by sending out his own outfits and selling directly to the American Fur Company. This gave him opportunity to make a larger profit, offer higher initial prices, or sell at a lower figure. In return he assumed the risks of theft, accident, competition, and fluctuating prices. His position while agent restricted his methods of buying and marketing. He was quite dependent on the main station at Fort Wayne, which was the chief wholesale supply source and market.

Taylor had direct contact with a small number of In-

¹⁶ Taylor Letters and Orders, 193-194. Most of the skins at this period were Indian dressed, which the traders preferred. Taylor spoke of white handled furs as "no good."

¹⁷ Atherton, *The Pioneer Merchant in Mid-America*, in the University of Missouri Studies, XIV, No. 2, pp. 43-46.

dians, but there was a considerable amount of whisky sold directly to them. The total in 1827-1828 was sixty-one quarts, fourteen gallons, and one keg.¹⁸ The same ledger shows that whites bought a total of ninety-one quarts and six gallons of whisky from January to November, 1828. There were no purchases of whisky during July and August. Several men bought small quantities at regular intervals, others occasional large quantities. The latter were usually men whose names are also given as agents to the Indian bands at a distance from the station. After Taylor became a partner of Hanna and in control of the South Bend store, there were no sales of whisky directly to Indians.

It is interesting to conjecture on other purposes which Hanna may have had in starting this station. The treaties of 1821 to 1832 with the Potawatomi and Miami made them less accessible to the Fort Wayne fur store. The treaties also were made to aid the Michigan Road and Wabash and Erie Canal projects. Hanna was one of the champions of internal improvements in Indiana.¹⁹ The part he played in the founding of the new town may have been determined before he selected the site for his branch trading post, and he may deserve a great deal of credit for foreseeing the strategic position of the site.

Taylor's books are not satisfactory for the winter of 1828-1829. Monease (Monis) and Sanscomb took outfits to the Indians in November and settled their accounts in April. The goods were valued at \$403.30.²⁰ The invoice of goods at the station was valued at \$1,356 on May 23, 1829.²¹ This total is only slightly less than that of the inventory of 1828, and the volume of business in the two seasons was probably about the same.

The Chandonnia outfit was charged with \$588.33 in trade goods and Indian accounts, November 18, 1829.²² There is no record of the villages he visited. The outfits had evidently traded there the preceding winters, and Chandonnia was to collect previous debts, as well as sell new merchandise and buy furs. No other outfit was recorded.

¹⁸ S. Hanna and Company Ledger A, 1827-1828.

¹⁹ Wood, *Life and Character of Honorable Samuel Hanna*, 16-21.

²⁰ S. Hanna and Company Invoice Book, 1828-1833, pp. 150-167.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

²² *Ibid.*, 168-177.

The inventory of May 13, 1830, is useful.

Credit from Hanna	\$2,769.85
Debit to Fort Wayne	967.36
Debit to Cyrus Taber	80.75
Accounts due—White	311.82
Accounts due—Indian	218.34
Inventory of stock	1,590.04

The stock of goods for the next season was not yet purchased, so that Taylor's credit was probably at its maximum. The debits were undoubtedly for goods purchased to replenish stocks during the winter season and not yet deducted from Taylor's credit balance. Cyrus Taber had gone to Logansport as a partner of Allen Hamilton.²³ This item in the inventory means that he occasionally supplied goods to Taylor to replace shortages due to the custom of annual buying from wholesale houses.

The credit extended to whites had decreased from the amount of 1828. The logical explanation is that Taylor found collection difficult and attempted to limit credit sales. He could depend on his familiarity with the settlers of the area after a three-year period. He did not abandon credit sales, as later inventories show.

TABLE IV
Furs Sold by St. Joseph Outfit to American
Fur Company May 9, 1830.
1829-1830

5-9-30		Bought from St. Joseph outfit.	
American Fur Company			
893 Bear Skins	5/		433.12½
1112 Raccoon	3/		492.00
28 Gray Fox	3/	9.75	
20 Otter	5.00	100.00	
19 Wild Cat	.40	7.60	
8 Fisher	8/	8.00	
63 Mink	.40	25.20	
		<hr/>	
		150.55	
	Discount 5%	7.52	143.03½
Grey's bill of Furs			17.70
Green's " " "			20.21
Malin and Lacey—2 Bills			7.00
Cash for 1 Fisher and 1 raccoon			1.00
2 "Barre" skins 5 cub			14.00
			<hr/>
			1128.07

²³ Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections*, XXIV, 507.

Beaver skins were not a part of the fur trade of Indiana in 1830, and Taylor did not have an opportunity to secure them. Deer, raccoon, and bear skins were still secured in large quantities. Of the total value \$915.12 was from bear and deer alone. This does not account for the complete take of the season, as it does not include muskrat. The most significant features of this list of furs is that it appears to be a transaction made directly between the American Fur Company and Taylor, and that the less desirable varieties of skins were discounted five per cent.

Taylor did not record previous fur sales in this manner. He may have been instructed to ship these furs down the St. Joseph River and around the Great Lakes to Detroit. This would eliminate the overland haul to Fort Wayne. William Brewster or Ramsey Crooks of Detroit bought most of Taylor's furs in the 1830's.²⁴

The year 1830 was of great importance to the South Bend area. Taylor was very active in events in the community. St. Joseph County was formed in January, 1830.²⁵ Taylor was appointed postmaster of Southold, the name first given to the trading post, June 6, 1830.²⁶ An election, held August 1, gave Taylor the offices of County Recorder and Clerk of the Circuit Court.²⁷ Taylor and Coquillard were bondsmen for William Brookfield as agent of the county to locate the county seat and to sell lots.²⁸ The name of the settlement was changed from Southold to South Bend October 18, 1830,²⁹ and Taylor's commission as postmaster was reissued the next year.

Brookfield had located a site for the county seat several miles northwest of South Bend's present location, at the site of the portage, and on land owned by himself.³⁰ One hundred twenty-eight citizens petitioned the state legislature to relocate the county seat at South Bend.³¹ This was a

²⁴ Taylor Letters and Orders, 188.

²⁵ *Laws of the State of Indiana, 1829-1830*, pp. 28-29.

²⁶ Official Notice of Taylor's Appointment as Postmaster of Southold.

²⁷ Taylor's Commission as County Recorder and Commission as Clerk of Circuit Court.

²⁸ Howard, *History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, I, 162.

²⁹ United States Post Office Notice—Change from Southold to South Bend.

³⁰ Howard, *History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, I, 173.

³¹ Taylor Memorandum.

vital affair to Hanna and Company. It can be understood by a study of the "Gebo affair."

A part of the original area of South Bend was obtained by Taylor from Peter Gebo (Jebo, Geboo) in 1830.³² There is no detailed account of the transaction, but the Taylor books give enough information to stimulate speculation. This was undoubtedly one of Taylor's most important business transactions and most profitable. It has a definite influence on the future settlement of northern Indiana. Hanna and Company Ledgers A and B are the only ones showing accounts with Gebo. The time extended from October 20, 1828, to April, 1830.³³ In this period Gebo was debited \$189.10 and credited with the same amount. Credits consisted chiefly of ear wheels, earbobs, and broaches brought to Taylor and repair of the same kind of articles. March 24, 1828, he sold Taylor four hundred pairs of earbobs. There are other similar entries. It appears probable that he was a minor agent to the local Indian bands, but there were no fur transactions. The most important items in the Gebo account are the whisky debits and the demand note for \$48.33 by which the account was balanced August 14, 1829. There is no clear record of the original transaction by which Taylor secured the title from Gebo.

Gebo bought the following whisky from Taylor during the eighteen-months period: 8 pints, 13 quarts, 1 gallon, 20 bottles—pint and quart—and 4 pints of wine. This was not a great amount when compared to that purchased by some white individuals and may have been for his own business. There is no trace of Gebo in the records after the compromise was reached with Elisha B. Harris in 1832.

Taylor was given financial backing by the partners of Hanna and Company as he and Coquillard laid out the new town site on March 8, 1831,³⁴ and made the necessary donations to attract support.³⁵ After the project had progressed through its preliminary stages and considerable money had been expended, Taylor's claim was disputed and he was unable to get title from the government. Finally a compromise

³² Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections*, XXV, 478-479.

³³ S. Hanna and Company Ledger B, 1828-1832, pp. 104-112.

³⁴ Taylor Memorandum.

³⁵ Bonds filed with the County Clerk to establish county seat at South Bend and Donation lists.

was reached which left Taylor in possession. The real estate book shows Taylor's own record of the transactions. See Table V.

The *Tipton Papers* give a clear account of the dispute. Hanna wrote to General John Tipton, then United States Senator from Indiana, on December 25, 1831, and again on March 22, 1832.³⁶ Hanna stated that the Ewings had dishonestly secured a rival claim from Gebo. Harris and others had later taken over the Ewing's support of Gebo. Hanna urged Tipton to use his influence to get Taylor's claim allowed and patented. David H. Colerick wrote to Tipton on June 16, 1832,³⁷ and Hanna again wrote on July 5.³⁸ Colerick wrote July 18 insisting that Taylor be supported. The matter was evidently of concern in South Bend as Colerick states

TABLE V
Taylor, Real Estate, 1826-55, p. 11
South Bend
Purchased of United States

1830	The S. ½ N.W. Sec. 12 T 37, R 2 E. 71 A	89.63
	Ceded the undivided half, Patent in Sam Hanna hands	
Mar.		
1831	to Alexes Coquillard and in consideration	filed in Courtin-
		in a case with John-
		Bequette—& E.B. Harris
	of his deed to me for the undivided half	
	of the North half of North West Qu. Sec.	
	Sec. 12 T. 37 R. 2 East by deed also	
	3—1832, and gave Coquillard	125.00
1831	Bot of Benj. Potter, South part	
Mar. 18	of South West Fractional Qu. Sec. 1, T 37, R 2 E.	
	containing 44 50/100 acres	380.00
	Paid Gebo to relinquish title	1500.00
	Paid to secure County seat all—	600.00
	Expense laying out—	130.35
	Laid out town of South Bend	
	On the above ground Mar. 28, 1831.	
	Making 408 lots numbered from 1 to 408	_____
		2824.98
	Sales out of the above by	
	Lathrop M. Taylor and A. Coquillard	

³⁶ Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the Indiana Historical Collections, XXV, 478-479, 557-558.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 628-629.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 651-652.

that Harris was bringing a \$3,500 suit against Coquillard for "tarring & feathering his back & legs."³⁹

Finally Colerick and James Barnett wrote to Tipton in August that the matter was settled.⁴⁰ Barnett and his friends paid to Harris, Gebo, and John Bequette twelve hundred dollars in cash and ceded four lots to them. Taylor was to receive the patent. Lots 34, 162, and 185 are listed for Gebo, but the fourth lot is not on the record.⁴¹ The record shows that it was an involved process to secure the land, but the 408 lots sold finally yielded a return of \$21,076.35 to the partners.⁴²

Taylor found time from his community activities to expand his store's volume of business. His inventory made in the spring of 1831 shows this expansion.

Inventory of May, 1831
From S. Hanna and Company Invoice Book.

Stock of goods	\$1,507.00	
Silver works	486.00	
Cash	312.00	
White Accounts	414.65	193.22 (bad)
Indian Accounts	429.92	100.56 (bad)
Notes	845.21	138.04 (bad)
Hanna debit to St. Joseph Outfit	2,670.65	June 1, 1830

Purchased (July 30, 1831)

Hanna	\$ 735.88
	137.60
	579.12
	1,051.64
	47.50
	<u>501.36</u>
Coquillard (American Fur Company)	214.47
Auiberg	57.18
Kercheval	526.44
Mason	216.00
Wood	271.27
Biquette	486.06
Taber	<u>83.73</u>
	\$4,908.25

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 660.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 691-693, see 692.

⁴¹ Alex Coquillard—L. M. Taylor, *Sales Book of Samuel Hanna, 1830-1832*.

⁴² Taylor *Real Estate*, 126, 130-131. The best summary of the division of returns from the South Bend lots is on a loose paper in this book.

The inventory was followed by a note. "The aforesaid acct's were settled of this day by L. M. Taylor and paid over to Hanna and Company and the residue that is uncollected reverts to Hanna and Taylor"—Sept. 23, 1831.⁴³

Taylor had reached the end of his initial period in South Bend and became a partner in the local store. A brief comparison with the spring inventory of 1828 shows: the store had made considerable expansion in goods stocked; the yearly credit with Hanna was more than doubled; there were now several sources of wholesale supply in addition to Fort Wayne, and credit extension was becoming large. A more detailed examination of this inventory can be made. The silverworks on hand were for use in carbobs, broaches, arm bands, and other trinkets. Taylor sold these to the Indians. He also bought other trinkets from them after they had added their own workmanship. Gebo collected these trinkets by the hundreds for sale to Taylor and was hired to repair many of them. Taylor then resold the silverworks to Indians of other villages. The South Bend Historical Museum has many samples of this silverwork.

The inventory lists about one-half of the white accounts as "bad." These were probably cases where credit was given to people who then migrated without leaving any clue to the new address. It is evident from his letters and orders that Taylor traced many delinquent debtors to various parts of Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio and secured court judgments. The Indian accounts were usually viewed in a liberal manner by the government agents. Taylor was later called upon to prove some of his Indian accounts and could not do so but this occurred only once, and the incident is explained in connection with General William B. Mitchell's report of September 1, 1840. Taylor had forwarded sufficient merchandise to Hanna to build up a credit of \$2,670.65 by July 30, 1831. He purchased \$3,053.10 in new goods from Hanna the next month to begin the fall season with a balance in the home company's favor. The other purchases were of articles which Hanna could not supply from his Fort Wayne stock or which could be transported more easily to South Bend from other cities. Most of these transactions were with St. Joseph or Detroit merchants, although Taber was located in Logansport.

⁴³ S. Hanna and Company Invoice Book, 1827-1828, p. 56.

The most important influence on Taylor's business career was the increased white population due to the sale of public lands begun in 1830. This would alter his lines of merchandise and products secured in exchange. The whites required many articles which he had not stocked for the Indian trade, their products would likewise be more diversified. Taylor required a larger stock of goods, more sources of supply, and more markets.

Taylor had been a leader in the establishment of South Bend. "In many cases merchants took the lead in establishing towns, motivated by the desire either to follow frontier trade west or to profit from the sale of town lots. . . . Possessing money, marked as leading citizens, and realizing that support of community undertakings was a business asset, the merchant class bore the brunt of such enterprises in towns all over the middle West."⁴⁴ These quotations are applicable to S. Hanna and Company and to L. M. Taylor.

Hanna was evidently satisfied that his clerk had demonstrated his ability during 1827-1831. He had become a leader in the internal improvement and banking movements and entered politics on these platforms.⁴⁵ His later career was in politics, banking, and road construction. His stores were of minor importance.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Atherton, *The Pioneer Merchant in Mid-America*, in the *University of Missouri Studies*, XIV, No. 2, p. 9, 29.

⁴⁵ Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections*, XXV, 677-678. Hanna was elected to the State Senate in 1832. He was opposed by Tipton's friends.

⁴⁶ Wood, *Life and Character of Honorable Samuel Hanna*, 16-44.