**OLD SIXTY ONE ROAD**

by

Wanda Aldridge

The Old Sixty One road did not run like it does now when the depot sat on the corner of Main Street by the side of the railroad track where you turn to go to Sixty One now. It turned at where John Moore's corner is and went toward Cecil Chastain's house around behind where the house is now sitting. There used to be a cottonwood tree on the branch in his pasture where some remains of the old bridge was. Mother said she could show this spot to anyone. The first 40 acres that Grandpa Hurd bought here in Dyer was on the South side of this road. There was a small house facing the North side of the road. It was a little closer to where the bridge crossed the Branch than the one we remember, The road wound around up through the field and came out about where the present driveway of Albert Cranford's is and went on down like the Harris Cemetery is today and on to Alma. Grandpa Hurd bought this property from Mrs. Bryant, (she was a sister of Mrs. Gussie Ayres and Mrs. Jimmy Simmons, also the mother of Gus Bryant). Later he purchased 40 acres across on the North side of this road from Mrs. Ella Leavitt, this was a part of the formerly Hurd property. When the railroad went through, it divided the Hurd property. Later the depot was moved across East of where it was sitting and people gave land so the road would follow the railroad. When this happened Grandpa Hurd owned land on both sides of the old road and finally he and Mr. Mason closed the road and only used it to visit each other. There was also another two-room house that sat on the Mason place East of the Branch where the house Mrs. Bryant lived in was.

**HIGHWAY 64**

How happy we were when we learned that this highway would be built through our town or about two blocks from the main part of town. We had traveled the mud road between Dyer and Mulberry and Dyer and Alma so long when horses would mire up in rainy weather and when we began driving the Model "T" Fords we did have troubles.

For about a year we had a detour that we had to travel while the road was being built and it cut through Ben Rhodes and Bill Renfroe Places on the West end of town.

Many people came into town while working on the road and Thomas William Moss had a grocery store and began keeping fresh vegetables for those camping or living here at this time.

**INTERSTATE 40**

I-40 was completed about 1973, and this highway is at the foot of the range of mountains on our North. Many people travel this highway coming from Little Rock and going into Oklahoma or farther West.

**PETITION FOR CHANGE OF ROAD**

Filed February 14, 1878

D. A. Scott, Clerk

This hand-written petition to change the road, located between Alma and Dyer, was found in some old papers at the Crawford County Courthouse. A hand-drawn picture at the bottom of the petition shows the location of the homes mentioned in the petition with a broken line showing how the road went and a straight line showing how they proposed to change the road. Note many of the names of early day settlers who signed the petition.

State of Arkansas In the County Court

County of Crawford of Crawford County.

To the Honorable Judge of the County Court of Crawford County:

The undersigned, your petitioners, would most respectfully state that there should be a change in the Country Road, leading from James Smith, by way of Manna Thurston to Mrs. James Hoards.

Beginning at or near James Smith's house on the Northeast and West line of SW1/4 of SE1/4, Section No. 34 Town 10, North Range 30W thence on or near that line to the Branch at Mr Thurston's old house, thence East between the Northeast and Southeast 1/4 of East SE1/4 half, Section 34. Thence East on line between North half and South half of SW1/4, Section 35, between the NW1/4 and SW1/4 of Wl/4 & SE1/4 Section 35, to the end of the lane between Eckles and Mrs. Heard's house to intersect the present road at the Branch which runs East of Mrs Hoard's house. This change will shorten the distance and place the road on subdivision lines between different owners and on a good route. And we therefore most respectfully ask that the Court will grant a survey of this route and we unduly bound will ever pray ."

(The picture is at the bottom of the page and on back is a list of the subscribers names (Petitioners). ***[Editor's note: No picture was included in the original document, thus, not included here.]***

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| SUBSCRIBERS NAMES |
| Allen Heard H. M. Mullins Thomas Wells G. W. Smart George Dyer John W. Moss Wm. C. SulliventR. Thomas A. M. LipscombS. M. Dyer J. S. Heard S. W. Settle  | Robert W. Anderson W. J. Simmons E. B. Mosely Samuel Morse Mack Dyer Robert Harris N. A. Roe J. N. Cowart E. C. Lipscomb Martha I. Heard R. M. Thurston J. H. Dougan  | James A. HaireElthie Morse G. O. Mosely S. A. DyerJ. W. WalrodJ. C. Rogers J. Wm. Story G. B. GrahamMary Whittington R. Q. HeardJames H. Smith  |

Let us take a look at the roads and streets that our ancestors traveled while they lived in Dyer and are almost same today. An early citizen says that in the beginning of Dyer there was only one road that lead out of town to the Old Wire Road on the North. This road began at Main street and went through the Stephen Dyer property, to us would be between Bonnie and Frank Rhodes houses. Just a few years ago one could see the tracks on Bennett place where wagons and buggies traveled.

The Old Wire Road ran East and West and was much traveled by the early settlers as they had to go to Alma to buy groceries and see a doctor. Asa Dyer told how his father, Mack Dyer, as a small boy remembered the wagon trains coming through on Wire road, stopping for water and rest before traveling on West. It was on this road that Joel Dyer had settled and reared his family. The stage coach stopped here, leaving mail, and it became known as "The Dyer Station." Many of us can recall traveling on this road in buggies, some with the fringe on top, going to other towns, or attending Revival meeting at old Shiloh Church at Vine Prairie and even as late as early twenties ***[1920s]*** when we rode over this road in our Ford cars, until highway 64 was built.

Floyd Loomis asked that the road in front of his place be opened to the Wire road which was opened in first decade of this Century. The road went on the South side of School house and in front of Baptist Church and Loomis home on to Wire road and if going to Mulberry one went pass Ben Hill and Charley Morsel on East end of Wire road and if going West you went by John Jordon and cemetery.

These two roads are still the exit routes out of Dyer to Highway 64, which was built in 1927 and came nearer to town than Wire Road. Business picked up while this work was in progress and brought new people to town.

The River road runs South from Highway 64, passing Fayette Morse, John Nelson, Sweeney and Oxford houses down the side of Heard Branch ending at the Arkansas River.

Flatwood or 61 road began at Main street by Ernest Cottrell's and ran down side of railroad West, turning at corner of Manuel and Hurd property on pass Harris, Cottrells, and to Red Hill. Back at the Manuel place a road went West, leading to Simmons, Shellys, and Garrett houses. A short cut road to 61 is given on another page.

Interstate 40 was completed about 1972 or 1973. This lies North of Dyer at foothills of mountain range on North side of town.

It might be interesting to name the streets and people who have resided on them in the past. In 1884 the Press Argus carried this notice, "George Dyer and John Moss laid out the town of Dyer in lots and named some of the streets." Later there was another notice by them that lots would be given away in Dyer to encourage settlers.

**THESE ARE THE STREETS RUNNING NORTH AND SOUTH:**

**MAIN STREET:** This was probably the first street because once the stores were along this end of the street. Some remember when a large apple and peach orchard was from the railroad tracks to the highway 64 .This street is the first entrance into town on the west end. Its runs North and South, crossing railroad and going to South part of Dyer. Some residents of this street were: Stephen Dyer; Laura Wagner, Kate and Buck Rogers; Terrell Rhodes; Millage Chitwood; Pierce Selby; Brashiers; Columbus Chitwood; Sarah Joplin; Maynard G. H. McNutt; Meisenhammer; Richardson; Ursula "Sula" Moss; Bill James; Joe Wells; Jake Wells; Harve Chastain; Pink Winfrey; Seth Davidson; Frank Wells, John Moss; Joe Wright; E. D. Chastain; H. M. Mason; Wylie Chitwood; Bill Holt; John C. Jones; John Chitwood; A. N. Jean; Tom Wells; Mack Mason; B. M. Allen; Len Cline; James Cottrell; Will Harness; Jim Renfroe; Red Wilson; Thomas Cupp; L. R. Pigg; Jeremiah Eichelbarger; Barkley; James Moore; Dick Powell and Sweeney.

**WASHINGTON STREET** is located in front of stores and usually thought of being Main Street. This is the second entrance into Dyer or first coming from East. Starts at Highway 64, passes Baptist Church, Church of Christ, through town, by depot, Methodist Church and to Hancock Street. Some residents were: Mary Chitwood; Floyd Loomis; W. N. Brashier; Jim Yates; Will Mason; John Smith; Dan Chitwood; Preserved Morse; also the only Negro family that ever lived in Dyer lived on the corner of James Ration's property, who brought the family here; Quincy Wells; Dick Wells; Jake Wells; James Patton; John Moss; Mr. Hines; W. H. Spencer; A.L. Johnson; Lou T. Bennett; Sam Taylor; Louis Wells; Mrs. Lawrence; and Dan Black.

**KURKENDALL STREET** another that lies North and South on East side of town. This one starts at railroad and crosses Line Street on to Hancock street. Some of early residents were: John Nelson; Thomas William Moss; James H. Cowards; America Osborn, E. D. Chastain; Milt Chastain; Charley Floyd; H. L. Coker; Frank Taylor; O. L. Thomas; Dr. Joseph Ayres; William Fleming; John H. Warrick; Charlie Moss.

**RIVER ROAD**  is the last street on East side of town starting at Highway 64 and continuing to Arkansas River. People living on this street were Percheval Morse; Fayette Morse; A. M. Lipscomb; John Nelson; Robert Selby; Dan Black; Squire Sutton; Son Eichelbarger; Dick Wells; Mr. Ables; Mr. Sweeney; Mrs. Redding; George Weaver; Thurman Hurd; Ben Lawson; Smiths; Jesse Porter; J. M. Oxford; Mr. Pinkerton.

**Rhodes Street**: On the North side of Hwy 64 a street runs in front of J. O. Stephenson up to the old Wire Road. This street is called Rhodes Street. These people were found living there in early days: Herbert Cravens; T. J. James; Chester Rhodes; Floyd Winfrey; Susie Bennett.

**CHITWOOD LANE** continues the road to the Settle Williams place; Walter Patton; John Chitwood; Fred Patton; Ben Fines; Henry Winfrey once lived on this street along with Fletcher Chitwood.

**CEMETERY LOOP** starts at Rhodes Street on West, formerly the Old Wire Road on East by Ben Hill place. Residents were John Jordon; H. A. Bennett; Milt Chastain.

There are four street that runs East and West on North side of town. **LOOMIS STREET** on East side of city runs from Washington Street by where school once stood and to Jim Moore today. Former residents were: H. A. Bennett; Joe Lawrence; Ben Rhodes; George Meadors; Will Wright; Lige Hunter; McVey lived in house on end of street going East built for a teacherage. Later Thomas J. Davidson; Virgle Davidson; lived there. W. N. Brashier built the house on that street. He lived in next one and then D. C. Cottrell; Jane Keifer and mother; Sallie Morse; Orel Rhodes; Willard Blevins.

Over on West side of town are two street called **North** and **South**. These are very short streets. Only one house on **North Street**, not sure but Bill James may have built that house. At least he lived there and then Layton Sloan.

**South Street** is the next one and these people resided there: Marcet Bennett; Henry Burrough; Sanford Keifer; Tom Stewart; Frank Taylor; Grover Cottrell. He lived in two houses on that street.

**ALMA STREET**: Runs West to East from Main to Washington Streets. This street is much traveled for it leads people to Washington Street where stores are located. Some say there was a house on West corner of street where Frank Wells lived and the mother of J. O. Stephenson. On the Southeast corner was a small house where the telephone exchange was located. Across street on the Northeast corner was a green house that faced Alma Street. It was enclosed with a fence and two gates, one on Alma and one on Washington Streets. The first person I knew who lived there was Jake Wells; Pierce Selby; Vilus Manuel and in 1919 Vilus Manuel built the yellow house from lumber of frame school building. Today this belongs to the Alamos.

Om South side of railroad are **Line,** **Hancock,** **Paul,** and **Hazel** **Streets.** Some have said that John Moss named the last two streets for a son and a daughter. **LINE Street** runs from MAIN to Meadors farm on East. Early residents were F. J. Hester; Mr. Jackson; Garland Ayres; Shelton Chastain; Dr. Ayres; James Selby; Frank Selby; George Weaver; Mr. McCullough; Tobe Hankins; Lee Meadors; Willie Dew Burkhead; Susan 0'Bar; William Flemings; John Warrick; Louis Wells; W. M. Mason.

Residents on **HANCOCK Street** were Old Sexton House on far West side. Henry Burrough; Emzy Arbuckle; Mrs. Lawrence; Charley Moss; E. D. Chastain; Jeremiah Eichelbarger; Robert Selby; Ed Isaac; F. J. Hester; Ed Cummings.

**Paul** and **Hazel** are two small streets. Paul is just Southeast of Assembly of God Church running to a dead end by Thomas William Moss place. Former residents were: Lee Meadors; Charley Warrick; Ben Lawson; Milton Chastain; Thomas William Moss. At end of this street lived Sam Kelly; Boss Flemings; Ellis Kincy; Parmenters.

**HAZEL STREET** is really an alley between house of George Weese and Richard Leakey, leading to another road which has no name.

***Filename: LookingBackAtDyer 1838-1976 Book 01, 012-016 ~ roads & streets***