**POST OFFICE**

The records of the Post Office Department in the National Archives show that a Post Office was established at Dyer on July 20, 1885, The names of the Postmasters who served at this office and their dates of appointment through September 30,1971 are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Walter A. Dyer  John W. Moss  Tilghman M. Lay ton  Robert N. Anderson  John S. Chastain  Stephen M. Dyer  John S. Chastain  Marion T. Rhodes  Hiram M. Bennett  William C. Creekmore  Walter D. Patton  Kate Rogers  Marion T. Rhodes  H. Clay Cottrell  Mrs. Lucille Moss  William J. James  H. Clay Cottrell  H. Clay Cottrell | Jul 20, 1885  Jul 31, 1886  Jun 20, 1887  Jun 07, 1888  Jun 15, 1889  Jun 29, 1893  Jan 08, 1898  Apr 07, 1904  Jul 19 1918  Jan 03, 1919  Feb 04, 1921  Jul 08, 1921  Sep 09, 1921  Jun 01, 1940  Sep 08, 1942  Dec 02, 1943  Feb 28, 1946  1976 | (assumed charge)  (assumed charge)  Returned to duty from military) |

Someone sent in data that Shelton Chastain would meet the river boat and get the mail. Deliver mail at Riverside and bring out the Dyer mail to the Post office.

The Post Office was moved from store to store, depending on whom was the Postmaster. First in Stephen Dyer Store when Walter Dyer was the Postmaster. In 1886 in the John Moss store. Think the next two were in the little store next to John Moss store. Then moved across the street to the Chastain store when he was Postmaster. Then in the shop where Roe Cottrell barber shop is today. And in T. J. James store when Marcet Bennett was Post Master. About 1912 Terrell Rhodes said he would build a building for the Post Office so that it would not be moved around, and it has remained in that building until 1975 when a new Post Office was built in the South side of town on property owned by Ernest Cottrell. Clay Cottrell is the Postmaster today.

**DEPOT**

This is the third building for the Depot in Dyer. It was moved to the East crossing in 1913 and closed in June 24, 1936, with William A. McNeely the last station master and removed in 1936. Retired the Mail Crane in April 1962.

The Railroad Company surveyed the land for a railway in 1875 and tracks were laid about 1876, and it was a great day when the first train came puffing through the Community. Daddy said they all went down near the tracks where they could see the train pass by. He was eight years old at this time. In a copy of the Heritage it was stated that the first train to enter Van Buren was on the morning of June 24, 1876.

Until 1887 this was a flag stop. When one wanted to ride the train you would flag it down and buy a ticket on the train.

About 1887 Floyd Loomis built the first depot, located at the West crossing on the South side of the railroad. Data sent in says that George Dyer, Steve Dyer, and John Moss donated the material for this first depot. All the descriptions we have is that it was a one room.

Cyrus and Charlie Dyer were the first agents, the sons of Joel Dyer and brothers to Steve and George Dyer. This depot burned but have no dates when this happened. It was then replaced by the railway company with a larger station perhaps the one we knew and it was moved later to the East crossing where we knew it situated.

Do you remember all the large oak trees that were on the depot lot and how the Gypsies would camp there? The medicine show and Circus would pitch their tents on this lot under the trees.

The depot was a large yellow building. The waiting room for the Whites had a door facing the North. I can close my eyes and visualize this waiting room as I often waited there to catch a train going to Fort Smith or Mulberry. A window was on the North side by the door and one in the South wall. The ticket window was on the East wall. I was always fascinated with the wireless in the office as it tapped out messages. A gum machine was on the wall by the ticket window where one could put in a penny and a ball of gum would roll out. A large pot bellied stove sat in the center of the room which never seemed to warm the room on a cold day. Benches were built on the South and West wall. The floor was rough flooring if I remember right.

There was a freight room on the West end of the waiting room with a sliding door on the North, a platform on the West side, and also a ramp and platform ran along the South side of building. This is where the children ran up and down while waiting for a train. And when going to the stores we would have to take a run up this ramp.

On the East side was the door that lead to the office passing through the room which had a sign, "Colored Waiting Room." Don't recall ever seeing any colored people using this room.

A Baggage truck sat in front of the Depot which was pulled to the trains and packages were unloaded on it then pulled to the freight room to be unloaded.

Remember the excitement when you heard the whistle of the train coming around the bend and you would go outside, not too close, to see the train pull into the station?

The Station was a gathering place for people to see who was arriving and who was leaving the community. On Sunday afternoons the young people gathered there to wait for #103 and #104. There were five passenger trains that came through Dyer in the 1900s. One called the "Dinky" which came from the East about 10 A.M. and returned about 4 P.M. in afternoon. This gave one time to do a little business in Alma and Van Buren. In the afternoon #103 and #104 rolled in, one from the East and one from the West. Then there was a midnight train from Fort Smith and did not stop unless a passenger or was flagged for one to get on the train.

There was a certain Dyerite who passed away a lot of time sleeping on the baggage truck at the depot.

Layton Moss had a horse and sled that he hauled freight from the depot to the stores. Mr John Smith had a carload a flour and he hired Layton to haul the flour thinking that it would take him all day to do the job so he set the price accordingly. Well, Layton used his head beside for a hat rack and unloaded the flour on the baggage truck, hooked the horse to the truck and hauled it all in one load. Yes, Mr. Smith was surprised.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Some of the depot agents were:** | | | |
| 1887  1903  1904  1910 | Cyrus and Charlie Dyer  Thomas William Moss  Mr. Harroway  Matt Hopper | 1913  1918 | Sebe Phillips  Bill McNeely  Mr. Riddle  Charley Floyd ( For Bill McNeely)  Charley Jeans |

**THE BANK OF DYER**

There has been only one bank in Dyer, THE BANK OF DYER. Have some old checks with the name on them. It was established in either 1909 or 1910 after the brick buildings replaced the old buildings that burned. It was located at the end of the stores on the South end. The building faced the East and had a large glass window north of the door of entry to deposit or withdraw your monies. Plants were stored in the window for protection during the winter. Recall that some one had a lemon or orange tree in there. I believe that I am correct in saying that David T. Bryant helped establish the bank and Henry Burrough became the first cashier. He was living at Mulberry at the time so walked back and forth down the railroad tracks. He finally moved to Dyer and lived here several years.

Walter Patton was also cashier. There is a picture in the Library of the inside of the bank with Mr. Burrough at one window and Mr. Patton by the window in the foyer.

Ervin Morse followed Walter Patton as cashier. Others who worked in the bank were Willie Cottrell, Velma Burrough, and Eulalia Taylor. It went "for broke" in 1925. Robert Moss who was under school age was very upset when he heard about it for he had about 19 cents deposited there. He would take a penny at a time and have Velma deposit it for him.

Someone asked Ernest Cottrell if they were hurt because of the closing and he replied that they had their "77" cents in the Alma Bank. But many lost all their savings.

| **CASHIERS** | **>>>** | **1923 DIRECTORS** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| W. T. Bryant  Henry Burrough  Walter Patton  Irvin Morse | President  Vice President  Cashier | Charles H. Moss  T. J. James  Irvin Morse  C. W. Morse  H. M. Hayes  John W. Smith |

January 17, 1911, statement of Bank of Dyer in compliance of Section 848 Kirby's Digest of Law of Arkansas: "We, R. L. Lester, president, and W. H. Burrough, Secretary &. Cashier:"

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Resources** | | | |
| Cash & Exchange  Bills Received  Bldg & Fixtures  Overdrafts  Total | 29, 699.75  19,342.12  2,870.18  42.50  51,954.55 | Capital Stock  Undivided Property  Deposits  Cashiers Checks | $10,000.00  1,101.82  40,741.96-  110.77 |

THOMAS WM. MOSS N.P.

**BARBER SHOPS**

The first Barber Shop was run by Edward Osborn who lived on what we know as the John Wright place. He first lived at Riverside with his mother, America Aldridge Osborn, and his sister Elizabeth Osborn. They probably moved to Dyer after the 1898 overflow ***[Editor's note: Arkansas River flooded]***. They purchased Block C from John W. Moss and sold it in 1908 to E. D. Chastain who built the two story house there. Several have mentioned they remembered going to the Osborn home and getting fruit and the lovely needlework that Elizabeth did. She was an invalid. Ed had the barber shop in back of Moss store and when they moved to Oklahoma he sold it to Monroe Nelson. Someone says the barber chair is the original one that Edward used. Monroe built the brick shop after 1910.

Bryan McDuffie was the next barber in the shop. By 1925 Roe Cottrell had been making his living by using other "heads" for some time. Vance Moss did barber work on their back porch on Saturday afternoons.

Carl Reavis was also a home barber. There is a story that one of his friends came for a haircut and both had been drinking something stronger than water so he kept cutting hair and cutting more hair until there as just a tiny swig on top of his friend's head. When the friend asked why, he said, "I gave you a red top curly." And they both laughed.

Other barbers were Gene Larrimore, Alfred Barnard, and in 1928 Debs Peevy. Today Roe Cottrell has the only Barber Shop here located in the little store on Washington Street. Here the men gather and settle the problems of the world.

**DOCTORS**

There are no doctors in Dyer today but many of us can remember when we always had a Doctor living here and sometimes two at a time. They say the first Doctor was J. F. Livingston. He came here about 1890 and was an elderly man and lived here about 20 years and died in 1915 and is buried in the Dyer Cemetery. Have found abstracts where he bought land. He had brother named John C. Jones. I was told the parents had separated and one used name of father and one the name of the mother but probably they were half brothers.

There was a Dr. J. D. Brawley and a Dr. W. Harve Murphy. No data on them. Dr. Joseph H. Ayres came to Dyer in late 1800s. He boarded with John Moss and shared a room with Thomas Moss. They became good friends. Heard Daddy tell how he would pick up Dr. Ayres, who was a small man and Daddy was a large man, and punch his head against the ceiling. He married Gussie Bryant in 1897 and they lived on corner of Line and Kurkendall Street. He was a familiar figure traveling around on horseback to see the sick. He died in 1918 during the Flu epidemic. Daddy sat up with him every night and had come home for breakfast when Garland came running over to tell Daddy that Dr Ayres had regained consciousness and was asking for him but by time Daddy got there Dr Ayres was dead. They had three sons: Garland, Clifton, and Vernon.

Dr Westbrook came here about the same time as Dr. Ayres and they practiced together. He lived in the house where Joe Wells lived so long. They had two children, Cleo and Bertha Westbrook.

Dr. Haney was a single man when he came to Dyer as the Doctor and boarded with Milton Chastain when they lived in the John Wright house. He married while he lived here and they lived in house that was located where the Rhodes store is today. He continued to reside in that house after it was moved to South Street. He drove a buggy to make his calls. He was a brother to Emma Haney Chastain, wife of Harve Chastain.

Dr. Hunt followed Dr. Haney and also lived in the same house. He came about 1916 and had a son and twin daughters: Lee, Lula, & Laura. Mrs. Haney worked in the Methodist Sunday School and Dr. Haney's office was back of Rhodes Post office in a small building.

Dr J. H. Baker came here about 1920 and first lived on the Mark Loftin place by the cemetery. Then later moved to the Susan O'Bar house.

Quince Galloway was studying to be a Doctor and during the summer months he helped Dr. Ayres for practice experience. He settled at Alma when he became a Doctor. He was kin to Miss Ella Burkhead who was one of the first teachers here. His father was a Methodist Minister.

Granny Bounds, name being Eva, born 1884 and died 1913. She lived at Alma but would come to Dyer and would stay the last two weeks with the family who was expecting the "Stork" to fly over their home. She helped many a baby see the first light of day in Dyer. Once when she was staying with us before the stork dropped brother Charlie and I was begging to do the dishes and she told me, "Don't bother, you will get enough dishwashing before your life is over," and you know, she was right.

Other doctors who healed the sick were Dr. Rankin; Dr. Euhart; Dr. Tilgham Layton; Dr. E. M. Lowrey; Dr. M. S. Dibrell; Dr. W. R. Reeves; Dr. Campbell. But mostly we used Dr. Kirksey. One woman made this remark about him, "I can be ill but when he darkens the door I am already feeling better."

**DR. KIRKSEY**

February 11, 1960

DOCTOR NOT RETIRED, JUST SLOWED DOWN

40 YEARS A DOCTOR AND STILL GOING STRONG.

Dr. O. J. Kirksey, the only doctor at Mulberry, has been practicing medicine for over forty years. He started in February 1920 in Mulberry and, after delivering his 4,266th baby last week, decided to give up obstetrics.

The baby, a 6½ pound girl, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Terry Robertson of Alma. However Dr. Kirksey will continue his other practice at his office

During his career as a doctor he has several times delivered babies into the third generation and once delivered triplets.

About 12 years ago he delivered 5 sets of twin boys in a 6 week period.

Regular hours for the doctor ran from 10 to 12 hours a day, but he says that he has been working as much as 15 to 16 hours for the past several weeks because of the increase of flu in the community.

During the early years of his practice he drove a model "T" Ford and often had to "walk the rest of the way" during the rainy season.

Many farm families did not have phones in those days and they would often walk 3 or 4 miles to the nearest phone to call me to come tend their sick.

However it was during the "depression" that Kirksey was "hard put" to make ends meet and take care of all the farm families in the community.

"People often paid in produce, frying chickens, hams, canned goods, and vegetables," Dr. Kirksey said.

Dr. Kirksey lives on a 700 acre farm four miles west of Mulberry where he raises black Angus and polled Shorthorn cattle during his "spare time," "Even as a small boy I wanted to be a doctor or a farmer," Dr. Kirksey said, "and now I am both.

Actually Dr. Kirksey and his wife, Blanche, supervise and live on the farm with it being managed by his son, Joe Kirksey, and together they "tend" a herd of over 200 head of cattle on it at present time.

Dr. Kirksey, who is a graduate of K. S. College of medicine and surgery, has been advertising for another doctor for Mulberry for over a year with no takers to date. "They can have regular hours and can specialize in one field," Dr. Kirksey said.

"Perhaps they think a 10 or 12 hour day is too long, but I have always enjoyed my work and the many friends I have made in Mulberry. I wouldn't live anywhere else."

Dr. Kirksey's oldest son, Ozell, died in World War II; however his other son, Joe, is resident of the Crawford County Farm Bureau and his daughter, Avanelle, will graduate from Pennsylvania State University this year with her Ph.D.

**FIRST DOCTORS IN DYER**

1. Dr. Livingston, who is buried in Dyer Cemetery, and a brother to John C. Jones.

2. Dr. Ayres who died in 1918 when we had an epidemic of flu.

3. Dr. Westbrook who left Dyer in 1898.

4. Midwife Granny Bounds 1898-1913 and lived at Alma.

5. Dr. Haney, 1912-1915 and he married while he was here.

6. Dr. Baker 1920.

**TELEPHONE EXCHANGE**

1910 Walter Warfield of Mountainburg installed this office in Dyer so says one of older residents. It was located in Ira Griffin's home. Roy Porter and Joe Jeans helped run the exchange.

I recall when Joe and his wife lived in back of the house, located on Washington and Alma Streets and the exchange was in the front room. In those days a few people had wall telephones. The kind that one cranked. And often when returning from school a crowd would gather in front of office and Joe would get us to hold hands and he would make contact with wires and we would get a shock.

Then there were years when there were no phones with exception of one that was in Thomas William Moss's store. They say that Will Mason had the first phone in his store.

Then in the thirties dial phones were installed and today most everyone has one of the "necessary evils." But very handy thing to own.

**MOVIES**

Well, the first would be the "Little Magic Lantern" kind. My brother Thomas had one and it entertained the neighborhood boys. The pictures were flashed onto a sheet hung over the door.

George Weaver had the first movie house in town on the first floor of the two story building. He also had a second one when the Town Council gave him permission to run one.

A Mr. Keathley also had one. Someone remembered that one of the serials was "Tom Mix."

Today we watch the "Little Box" in the corner for weather, news, and what have you.

***Filename: LookingBackAtDyer 1838-1976 Book 01, 103-109 ~ USPS, trains, bank, doctors, etc***