**HOUSES**

As far as we know the oldest house in the Community is the old Lipscomb or Nelson house which is located South of the railroad. This house was a double two room house with two steps leading from the lower floor to the upper room. There was also a large hall between the two parts of the house. At present this house is owned by Mary Chastain Little.

I am told that two rooms of the East of Bill Renfroe house are the original rooms that Stephen Dyer built when he first married. If this is so, then this may be the oldest house in Dyer.

Part of the old James Patton house across from the Store on Washington street, they say, is the original house which was built. This house has been remodeled two or three times and is now owned by Alamos.

When the early settlers came to Dyer some of the houses were built by House Raisings. The owner would cut the logs and have them ready, and the neighbors would come in and help raise the house. At noon the women would bring in a basket lunch and a community fellowship was made of the day. I know of one house that was built in this manner. The John Jordon house, where Milt Chastain built his home. At present this old Jordon house is located on the H. A. Bennett place near the Cemetery. This house was built without a nail in it. When Milt Chastain sold the house to the Bennetts, they took down the logs, numbering them and replaced them as formerly and it was used as a barn. This is where Mrs. Jordon lived when as a girl age 14 I went for data on the Methodist Church. In the hallway there was a closed-in staircase which went up to a upper room.

Monroe Lipscomb built a house on Washington Street located where the Rhodes store is today. It was a white frame building with five or six rooms, a long porch on the East, North, and South sides of the house. John and Columbia Nelson lived in this house in about 1900. Thomas W. Moss and his new bride, Dora B. Haydon, also lived here in 1902. John Chitwood and Jake Wells bought it from John Chitwood. Dr. Haney lived there when he married and the house was moved over on South Street and he continued to live in it for a few years. Then Dr. Hunt and family lived in it. Grover Cottrell bought this house and it is still in the Cottrell family possession.

**MOSS HOTEL**: John W. Moss had Floyd Loomis build this two story house just south of the railroad on Main Street for a hotel as drummers had to ride trains and had no place to spend the night. Built about 1886, they also kept the teachers and Dr Ayres stayed with them until he married. He roomed with Daddy. Daddy was a tall man and Dr Ayres was a short man. He told us how he would lift up Dr. Ayres and bump his head against the ceiling, and Joseph would say, "Tummy, let me down." Other people who stayed in the old hotel were: Addie Davidson, John Chitwood, Virgil Davidson, Mrs. Faraway, her father who was the depot agent, Dora B. Haydon, Stella Whittington a niece of Sula Moss. Tom and Dora Moss were married there, with a large supper and all the trimmings. Two things happened at this event. Thomas had worn a mustache for some time and Dora had never seen him without one, and Thomas came down to be married clean shaven, and Mother said she felt that she was marrying a stranger. Candles had been placed under which the wedding took place and about half way through the ceremony the candles began to drip and Tom had on a new suit, but he did not budge and let the candles drip on him. Addie Davidson made Mother's wedding dress. I suppose some of the Moss girls were married there, too.

**VILUS MANUEL HOUSE**

This house was built from material from the old frame school house that was built in 1902 and sold when the brick school was built in 1917 or 1918. They made a lovely house of this and it was always painted yellow. For a few years this house fell into neglect and was an eye sore in the community. A former girl who had lived there as a child bought this property and it was remodeled and now it is a nice sight to the eye. Susan Horne Alamo. They have also remodeled the former Bill James house and built two new duplex type houses behind this house on Main Street. Remodeled the old store across the street from the yellow house and made a place of worship. Remodeled the James Patton house in front of the Rhodes store as well as built several housing units back of this area. It is called the Alamo Foundation which is a rehabilitation place for dope and alcoholic victims.

**THE HOMEPLACE OF JOHN AND ADDIE CHITWOOD**

by Lois Chitwood Williams

In January of 1911 we moved to our country home. We were living in a house where the Rhodes store is in Dyer. My Dad bought the place from Walter Patton. He had built a new house where our road meets the 64 Highway (J. O. Stephenson). My mother wanted this place so badly. My Dad didn't think there was a possible way to afford it but with Mama's determined ways she had a plan that they could afford the house.

Grancy and Uncle Jake Wells lived at a green house where the present Alamo home is and Grancy wanted our place, someone wanted their place and in no time it seemed to a child of 5 we were moving to this country home.

The history on our place to the best of my memory: It belonged to Joel Dyer, don't know the number of acres that he had but he lived on Old Wire Road during the Civil War. When Uncle Mack Dyer, Joel's son, married Elizabeth Hagood they built their home over in the field, which is a part of our present house, might have been one big room on the East, later a long low room was built on for a kitchen, which is still there, don't know who built it. Nor do I know how long Uncle Mack lived here.

Fletcher Chitwood also lived here and he built the fireplace on the East side of the house, don't know if he owned the house or how long he lived here.

Mr. John Carter bought the place, and Fred Patton and Dora Carter Patton lived there until they built a new house South of this place and nearer the Wire Road on the road to our place. When they moved to their new home, then Walter Patton and Lena Humphreys Patton moved to this place until when we bought the place and moved here in 1911.

In about 1920 my Dad had another room built on the Northwest corner and the house stayed about the same until the early 1930s. They also added a large front porch which changed the looks of the old house. My Dad lived there until he passed away January 1956, and Mother stayed on until her death in May of 1964.

In April 1960 a tornado took off the front porch but it was built back like the original one.

In the summer of 1962 we tore away the old smoke house with Mama's consent and built a 15 x 25 screen porch on the East side of the house. After Mother's death we built a room to fill the Northwest corner, a 22 x 22 room with a basement under it and a big 30 foot car port on the West side. The inside of house has been redone to some extent. It is a very dear old house with a lot of memories.

Some interesting facts about some of these houses are: At north end of Main Street, Stephen Dyer built his home and reared his family there, dying in 1903 and is buried in the family cemetery on his property. Many of us remember the Easter egg hunts and Sunday School picnics that Miss Annie Dyer gave on that lawn. About 1920 Mrs. Betty Dyer and Annie moved from Dyer to Tulsa, Oklahoma. Terrell Rhodes bought this property and rebuilt the house, selling to Millage Chitwood, he moved to California and sold to Virgle Rhodes. Bonnie Rhodes lives there today.

Crossing Highway 64, the first house of yesterday on the left was one that Terrell Rhodes built and lived in until after 1935 when he sold it to Henry Furr and they built a new home in Alma. Mr. Terrell came here as a teacher in late 1800s, teaching in the first school house by Baptist Church. He was also postmaster for many years.

A little two room house sat on south side of Rhodes property. For several years Mrs. Laura Wagner lived there, also Kate and Buck Rogers, W. N. Brasher.

A large two story house was built on corner of Alma and Main Street, probably by a Mr. Richardson, who was once a merchant here. He lived there when the stores burned in 1908, his store among them. A Mr. Meisenhammer lived there, and after 1910 Ursula Moss bought this house and lived there until 1920. Emzy Arbuckle bought it and so did Bill James and was living there when it burned.

He rebuilt there and several have lived there the last few years. Today it has been remodeled and owned by the Alamo's.

Joe and Florence Well's Boarding House was on this street. They must have started their boarding house after John Moss sold his hotel in 1907. Mrs. Florence kept some of the teachers. Mr. Brasher, Depot agents and drummers for the night. Mrs. Bertie Wagner lived there and today Nita Wagner Dyer owns a nice brick home there.

Someone told me that Lee Meadors built the house on corner of Main and Railroad Street and sold it to Jake Wells, who lived there until his death in 1926. Today one of his grandsons, Mack Dyer, has a brick home on this site.

Down South street is the Elsie Cottrell House. This house once was located where Rhodes store is today. John Nelson owned this house in 1900. Thomas W. Moss lived here with his new bride in 1902. John Chitwood lived here, and sold to Jake Wells. Dr. Haney lived here after his marriage. The house was moved to its present location and Dr. Haney continued to live there until he moved away. Dr. Hunt who became our next resident doctor also lived in this house. Grover Cottrell must have been the next owner, and it is still in the ownership of the Cottrell family.

The house across the street from stores is also an old one. James Patton built this in late 1800s. He had a store on end of property where Post office was so long. He sold this 1907 to John W. Moss who died there in 1910. Sula Moss sold it to Harve Chastain. Henry Burrough lived there several years. It was remodeled in later years and Nancy Whitlow became the owner. Recently it was sold to Tony and Susan Alamo and they have also remodeled it.

On Main Street out by the Baptist Church was the Floyd Loomis house which he had built to take his new bride in. They reared their family there and lived there until his death. It was sold to Ben Rhodes and after his death his widow lived there. Later sold to Avery Morse who built a new brick home there. Rosella Morse still lives there.

At the end of Line Street to the East was a house where a suicide was committed by hanging. The house was remodeled and the wife and son lived there awhile longer. Not sure who lives there or if this house is still standing.

On River Road and just south of Railroad was house that A. M. Lipscomb built. Later John and Columbia Lipscomb Nelson lived there. Today Mary Chastain Little owns this house. This is the oldest house in town outside two rooms that I have been told Stephen Dyer built on what we know as Bill Renfroe house. The house was added to in later years.

The Tom James house was built by Herbert Cravens in about 1903. He bought the first school building when it was torn down and used this to build this home. Sold this to Tom James who reared his children there and lived there until his death. Today xxx Morse lives there.

The Settles Williams House has an interesting history which you will find elsewhere.

Jim Selby built or had his house built on Line Street. Selbys have always lived there ever since. Frank torn down the old house, was building a new bungalow type house for he and his mother, but she died just before it was finished. Marvin bought the house and today one of his sons lives there. He remodeled the house.

Ed Chastain built a house near railroad on south side of town. This was also a two story house. Milt Chastain also lived here and Dr. Haney stayed with them when he came here as a young man, before he married. John Wright owned this property when the house burned. This property once belonged to my great grandmother, America Osborn. Who bought it from John Moss. And she sold to Ed Chastain. Our daughter, Jane Rhea Lancaster Dodson bought it in 1972 and sold it to Jerry Moore who has built a new home there.

Jeremiah Eichelbarger first lived down on corner back of Moss place. He sold that place to Charley Moss and bought the Ed Chastain place on Line Street. Jim Chastain built that house and he sold and went to Mulberry. Then Ed lived there. He sold to Eichelbarger, they sold to Bob Selby. They sold to Cecil Chastain, and they sold to Ed Isaac who sold to Johnny Aldridge. Destroyed in tornado and Isaac rebuilt it.

John Nelson built a house behind the Moss store on Kurkendall Street. He moved there from the house where stores are. Then he moved to the Lipscomb house and Thomas William Moss moved to that house to be near the store. His first child was born there. 1902. Cowards lived here. Charley Floyd's girls grew up there. Penson's. It burned

House where Lucy Thomas lives must be an old one. Cokers once lived there as did Frank Taylor for many years. Then Oliver Thomas bought it. They still own it.

Mark Loftin house on old road leading out of town to Wire Road. Sold to Terrell Rhodes. He rebuilt it and Dr. Baker lived here for awhile. Today Rev. McIvers lives there.

On the site where Ernest Cottrell built a rock house, Floyd Loomis built a hotel for John Moss in 1884. This was a large two story house with large porches on both upper and lower levels. They kept teachers, drummers, and some of the men who worked on farm and store for John Moss. Addie Davidson, Virgle Davidson, Emzy Arbuckle, John Chitwood, Stella Whittington, Dora Belle Haydon, and Fannie Carroway boarded there. Lena Moss and Elisha Dyer were married there, as was Thomas William Moss and Dora Belle Haydon. It is told that Thomas had a new suit of clothes for the wedding. Candles were hanging overhead where the marriage ceremony was taking place. The candles began to drip, but Thomas would not move so the candle wax fell on his new suit.

There was another two story house on that street which E. D. Chastain built from lumber from the old Riverside School. Joe Wright and Aunt Piddy Wright lived there for a long time. Sam Stephens bought and remodeled the house, and Bertha Stephens lives there today.

The Old Sexton house sat next on this street and it was once situated on the north side of town near the railroad. It was used for the Sexton foremen to reside in, therefore, called the Sexton House. Not sure when moved to the location most of us remember it being. Mr. Nichols, Sebe Phillips, Matt Hopper, and Al Jean lived there. A Rankin lived there when it burned.

On Line Street the Shelton Chastain house was built, and it was two story with two long porches in front. It was razed in 1976, and a new brick home built there.

There were seven two-story house in Dyer: Jim Davidson upon Alma highway or #64; Samp Heard place of that road; old John Wright place; John Moss hotel; James Selby; Shelton Chastain; E. D. Chastain or the Joe Wright house. The architecture was similar so wonder if the same carpenter built all of them?

Another two story house was built in 1919 by Vilus Manuel, located on Washington Street and now owned by Tony and Susan Alamo. This was built from the four room school house that was razed in 1818 ***[Typo?? 1918?]*** when the brick school was built. Susan Horne (Alamo) lived there a few years when a small girl, and they have since remodeled it and making their home there. Once, before Vilus Manuel built his home, there was a small house, painted dark green that sat there. Pierce Selby lived there when first married. Jake Wells also lived there when he first came to Dyer. The yard had a fence around it, and there was a gate on the front (Alma Street) and a gate on the East (Main Street).

Reported to me that a Methodist Parsonage was built across from the Methodist Church in late 1800s, and later the church bought the house on the south of the church for a parsonage, selling it and donating the money to the church at Mulberry when they built a parsonage. Some of the families who have lived in the old parsonage are: Sam Taylor, Martha Eichelbarger, and the present owner is Myrtle Morse.

On the site where Mack Dyer has built a new brick home, once his grandfather's brother, Stephen Dyer had a store which also housed the first post office for Dyer. Lee Meadors built the house and sold it to Jake Wells.

Steve Dyer built a home where Bonnie Rhodes and Frankie live today. The house sat upon a high knoll there and Miss Annie always had an Easter Egg hunt there for the Sunday School. West of the house was the Dyer family cemetery which is very well kept today. When Aunt Betty Dyer and Miss Annie moved to Oklahoma, the place was sold to Millage Chitwood. Then Terrell Rhodes became the owner. He tore down the house and rebuilt, selling it to Virgle Rhodes.

Where Terrell Rhodes built near the 64 Highway and lived there for many years, selling the property to Henry Furr. Today Dockie Brasher owns a home there.

Fletcher Chitwood had a home near the south side of the cemetery. In fact many years ago, there was a road by the house which was used for funeral processions to travel into the cemetery. George Henson also lived there many years. Then Mitch Chitwood. Today the house has been torn down.

**Cemetery Road**: I can remember several roads that were used to get into the cemetery. This was before the new cemetery was added to the old and the fence line was just north of T. W. Moss lots. The above was the first one I remember, by Chitwood house. Then we cut through the pasture which belonged to Mark Loftin. Then began to travel around H. A. Bennett and came into the cemetery just east of their home. Then when the new cemetery was added, the road went down farther east.

In 1870 John Moss first lived in a two room log house upon what we know at the Thurman Hurd farm. I don't know if he built it or not but think he did since he homesteaded this forty acres. Later he built the house where Thurman Hurd lived until he had the hotel built in town. Thurman Hurd remodeled the house. Today there is a new home there that Rob Wilson built.

When Charlie Moss married he built two rooms on property he bought from his father, John Moss. They lived all their lives here with the exception of last few when they lived with their daughters in Pennsylvania. The original two rooms was what we knew as the dining-room-kitchen, and, as their family grew, they added more rooms. This house was razed in 1975. Property is still in the hands of the Moss heirs.

Thomas William Moss built the house known as the Grandmother Cottrell house in 1903. About 1906 he traded that house for where we have lived so long. This property had been John William Moss property that he purchased from S. M. Dyer back in 1890. Milt Chastain first built three rooms here, and this is what Thomas Moss bought in 1907 and added to. Tom had plowed this land when a boy, seen bear, deer in the cane brakes. Today, his daughter, Alma Lorena Moss Lancaster, wife of Irl Scott Lancaster, owns this property, and they are building a new brick home there. This property has belonged to the Moss family since 1890 with the exception of two or three years that Milt Chastain lived there.

And Dr. Ayres place, with the big porch all around two sides of the house. Remember the paling fence. After Mrs. Gussie and boys moved to Fort Smith, several people lived in this house. John Kelly razed it and built a new brick home. Morris Herring lives there today.

**THE HAUNTED HOUSE**

(Old Sullivent House upon Heard Branch)

Lewis Wells lived in this house after the Sullivents. They claimed to hear noises under the beds and in the yard by the well. Iven Lipscomb said he talked to the noise and asked it to come up close to the fire awhile and it came and got under his chair,

Sula Moss was sitting up with the sick there one night and after midnight she laid down to rest awhile and something blew in her face three times. She was scared.

Jim Cummins lived there after the Wells family. Mrs. Cummings told Florence Bennett that they put the cotton in a side room and she would hear chains rattling. Their two bird dogs would jump into the cotton and dig and bark and tear the cotton up.

Three of us girls spent the night with Vance and Lillian Moss when they lived there, and they showed us blood stains near the fireplace and told us to not be afraid if we heard chains rattling.

Ed Malone bought the place and lived there. Then Charley Moss was the next purchaser and Vance, his son, lived there. Neither of these families ever heard any noises. Someone reported that black cats would squall and jump in the well.

**SOME FIRES IN DYER, ARKANSAS**

The first little depot that was built by Floyd Loomis at the West crossing of the railroad burned

This item was mailed to me: In 1907 John Wm. Moss sold his hotel located where Ernest Cottrell lives today to Harve Chastain. Moss bought the Jim Patton house located in front of the stores and part of the original house remains in the remodeled house the Alamos own. There was a large two story barn full of feed and stock near the railroad track and South 6f his house. One night in the fall of 1907 it caught fire. Guns were shot to alarm the neighbors. They managed to save the mules and horses but the feed and barn burned. It was thought a spark from a passing train had set the fire.

**1908**: The whole business part of town burned. All stores and it was thought that it was arson. These were replaced with the brick buildings.

**1912**: Mr. Means lived in first house North of Baptist Church. His barn burned one afternoon. Thought that a cigarette started the fire. The hogs penned inside and their skin was burned to a crisp. They were walking around outside and it was a horrible sight. They were killed.

Somewhere about 1916-1920 Mr. J. M. Oxford was running a little store in the old James Patton store, located where the Post Office has been so many years. This store was situated in front of the large store on corner where Virgle Davidson had a store and he lived in the back of his store. The Oxford store caught on fire one night. Virgle was awaked by the noise and bright glow of the fire one night. Virgle could see the fire burning into his store and could see over the partition that separated store from living quarters. He kept saying to Cora, his wife, "Now, Cora, stay calm and get dressed," he thought it was his store on fire; suddenly, he got excited and yelled, "Good xxx, Cora, where are my pants?"

**Some other fires:**

Vance Moss barn. Stacy and Velta Fern Well were small and they were playing in the barn. Stacy decided to boil them some eggs and built a fire in one of the horse mangers and of course the hay caught fire. The children hid, workers putting out the fire did not know if they were inside or not. After some time they were located hiding under the bed.

Sweeney Barn: This happened one night during an electric storm. They had a lot of horses. Lightning struck and caught it afire. I think they were able to save the horses but the barn burned to the ground.

Jim Tomlinson barn, one afternoon.

Bill James house. This was a large two story house located on the north side of town. Very little was saved in this fire.

John Wright house.

Old Oxford House down on River Road.

**1923**: Brannon Gin.

Dan Chitwood House.

Charley Floyd house beside railroad.

Sexton house which was a landmark in town. Once had sat on north side of railroad and then moved to where it was located when burned. Allie Jeans lived there many years.

***Filename: LookingBackAtDyer 1838-1976 Book 01, 140-147 ~ houses, fires***