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Author: Janette Goulder-Frick
daytontxhistory@gmail.com

Old School Museum: The Old School Museum is located next to Parker Hall at 111 West Houston St. in Dayton and is open Saturdays from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M.

Dayton Historical Society: The Society meets in Parker Hall at 6 P.M. the last Monday of each month for a historical program presented by guest speakers. The program is preceded by a Society business meeting and followed by refreshments.

Dayton History News

Pomella's Recollections

Our hometown has been blessed with residents who took the time to write/share insights into life in Dayton throughout their years.

One of those locals was Pomella Moran (1904-2004) who lived to be 99 years of age. She was the wife of Guy Eaton (1897-1974).

At the age of 18, she received her teaching certificate and was a Dayton ISD teacher for 30 years. She also achieved a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree.

On 5 March 1987, Pomella was guest speaker at First Baptist Church's monthly Joy Luncheon. This newsletter quotes the transcript of her Joy Group speech.

Texas is my adoptive state. I am not a native Texan. I was born in Mississippi in the little town of Ansley out from Bay St. Louis.

How I got to Texas – My brother was an extra gang foreman for the Missouri Pacific Railroad.

The gang was stationed at Eastgate. My mother was living with him and his family. He found out that the owner of a general merchandize store wanted to sell so he talked my mother into buying the store – which was in about 1918.

I was staying with my oldest sister in Slidell, LA and going to school. So, the

summer of 1920, I came to Texas. I continued to go to school until I graduated from high school in 1922.

Eastgate was a thriving community and since many of the people had no cars, my mother's business was prosperous.

Eastgate had 4 one teacher schools. I taught 2 years at one (the Connor School). Eastgate had 2 churches, a Catholic which was about 1 mile from the store and a Baptist which was about 4 miles from the store which often had 150 in Sunday school as the Bentons, Shipmans, Izards, Conners, Copelands, McGowans, Evans, Aoules, and Bagleys.

About the time (1920s) Eastgate was thriving, Dayton was a bustling town. It boasted of a big sawmill, a veneering mill, a chicken hatchery, a picture show, two banks, three doctors, a dentist, several rooming houses, two white churches, four black churches, two general merchandizing stores, two dry goods stores, two barber shops, three laundry and dry cleaners, a bakery, a hardware, several grocery stores, a small jail, a weekly newspaper (The Daytonite), a central telephone office, blacksmith, a railroad from Dayton to Macedonia. The train to Goose Creek made two runs a day with a coach behind the cars for passengers.

Pomella's Recollections (2)

There were two pumping stations – the Humble station on Hwy 146 and the Gulf station on South Winfree.

I'll begin with the change in hi-way 90. It was called O.S.T. Highway. Came into Dayton about 1 block south of where Houston Ave. enters 146. It stayed on Houston Ave. to S. Winfree turned left, crossed the railroad, turned right and followed north of the railroad to the Trinity River; crossed the railroad and went over Trinity River on the high bridge.

Many times the hi-way was closed due to high water so if people needed to go to Liberty, they would travel by train as there were many passenger trains passing and stopping in Dayton. [showed pictures of ferry and high bridge]

Churches: 2 white, 4 black Since there were 3 black settlements, there was a Baptist church in each settlement. A Methodist church was accessible for each settlement on 321 at present site.

There was a Methodist (white) located where Neuman's Gulf Station is now. The Baptist was where it is now only somewhat farther north on the same lot.

The Methodist parsonage was on Clayton between Mike Fielder's office and the Neighborhood Grocery. The tall palm tree was in the yard of the parsonage.

The Baptist parsonage was on the corner of Cook and Winfree where the fire station is now.

Both churches had big bells in a frame. One such bell is on Beauty Street at Mt. Olive Baptist Church.

Someone said it was the one from the Methodist Church, others said it was from the Baptist church.

When a member died, they would toll the church bell (1 for each year of age).

Schools: There was one 2-story building (for whites) across from Roy Deanes home and a 4 room school on place where FFA is now and a long frame bldg. next to highway where home economics and agriculture were taught (for blacks).

Businesses: The sawmill was located north of 1960. It had a company doctor in Dr. Payne – also a commissary run by Mr. Michael. Mrs Farris ran a boarding house near the sawmill. Other businesses included:

- A veneering mill was on Waco next to railroad where Harris used to have his lumber yard.
- The blacksmith was where present Dayton State Bank is located.
- A garage owned by Harringtons was on corner of Main at Hwy 90.
- 3 Pressing Shops: 1 on Main St., 1 on Depot St. and a 1 on Cook St.
- A shoe repair shop on Depot St. Two restaurants: 1 on Depot St. and 1 on Main St. owned by Martin Griffin.
- A two-story rooming house on corner of Depot and Winfree owned by Mr. Hunnicut.

Pomella's Recollections (3)

- A hotel on Main St. above present business of Book Store, The Place & Barbershop operated by Martin Griffin.

- A Bakery on Main St. owned and operated by Robert Dobbs (Mrs. Fouts brother).

Stores: DeWeese (grocery and general merchandise) on corner of Main and Clayton later sold to Wilford Moorace who later built a feed store on the west side.

The Dayton Mercantile Co. (I think was owned by R. S. Sterling) was where (White's Auto) J & A Auto Service.

L. Friedman's – General merchandise on the corner of Depot and Church Streets. Klines Clothes and Dry Goods on corner of Main and Depot St. and L. Friedman's. Later moved to the corner of Church and Highway 90. Behind the counter, you'd think Mrs. Bozeman was a man. She had a short haircut, shirt with a tie and jacket with a full long dark skirt and smoked a cigar.

Heal's Pharmacy on Main St. where the Attic Store is now was later sold out to the McGinty brothers Abe and Drew.

Wards Cleaners was on the corner of Bryan and Main next to McGinty's Pharmacy. Later became post office.

Atlantic City was not the only city that had a board walk as Dayton had a block of board walk on Depot Street from Main to Church St.

On the corner where the Dollar Store is now used to be Gajdosik Meat Market. Next to it was a restaurant – then Daniel's Cleaners, a barber shop, a shoe repair and a small building something like a fruit stand. The entire block burned but not the boardwalk.

M. W. Jackson had a grocery store on Main St. next to Voygts variety store.

Ashley's Hatchery, east of Pam's, hatched eggs for people and shipped baby chicks to customers.

Dayton had city water for \$1.50/month but many people had own wells. Some had cisterns but no sewage system until about 1932 when Mr. Neal was Dayton's First Mayor.

Judge Wilson's home was where Bole's parking lot. He was a Justice of the Peace but not related to Dr. Wilson. On parking lot of present bank was Louis (Little Lewie) Friedman's home, Mrs. Kline's, Dayton telephone exchange and another house. Clothes and Dry Goods was on west side of Main St. that later became Western Auto.

To Be Continued