My Remembers
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Published by University of North Texas Press

Stimpson, Eddie and James Byrd.
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The Stimpson and Drake families make up a very important part of the black community in Plano, Texas. Andy and Easter Drake and Mose and Millie Stimpson all come to Texas from different states. Andy came from Alabama, Easter from Kentucky, Mose from Tennessee, Millie from Virginia.

Andy Drake was born in 1833 and died in 1933 at age 100. Andy married Easter who was born in 1851 and died December 1934. Andy and Easter had these children: Willie, Amon, Port, Lacy, Earl, Frank, Ronney (Ronnie), Cecil, Minnie, Bula, Lula, and Corrie (or Cary), Eddie Stimpson's grandmother.

Mose Stimpson was born April 1830 and died June 1930 at age 100. He married Millie, who was born June 1866 and died August 1934. Mose and Millie had nine children: Will, Rufus, Mitch Graylie, John, George (Eddie's grandfather), Mallory, Grady, Emma, and Maggie.


These were among the first black families in Shepton and in the Plano area. Now they have all died and are only a memory. Uncle Andy and Aunt Easter, Uncle Mose and Aunt Millie—these name are well remembered in this community. In Plano we recently marked the graves of these patriarchs and matriarchs of the community.

Andy Drake lived on the east side of Preston Road and Mose Stimpson settled a mile and a half east of Andy Drake, just west of what is now called Coit Road.
Andy Drake worked two hundred acres west of Preston Road and Mose Stimpson worked two hundred acres east of Preston Road. The land they worked belonged to Silas Harrington, son of Alfred Harrington. Andy and Mose worked the land on the thirds and fourths, a responsible arrangement. They owned all the farm tools, mules, horses, cows, and barn animals.

The Drake boys did all the work on the farm until all married and moved away, some to town and some to Oklahoma. Andy Drake stopped farming in the early 1920s and he and Easter moved to town and stayed with his daughter Corrie Stimpson. He died in Plano in 1933. His wife Easter died there in 1934.

Mrs. Sallie Harrington set aside land to build a church. Before she gave this land, the Drakes held church in the Drake home. When they began meeting in the church, they named the church the Harrington Missionary Baptist Church. When all the families moved away, the land went back to the Harringtons.

When the church would baptise it would be in the W. O. Haggard tank about a mile and a half west of the church. To get there they would use wagons and buggies. As new families moved into the community, the church would grow.

When Andy's and Mose's kids went to school it was in a building on the Huffman farm, north of what now called Park Boulevard. It was called Shepton School and Shepton Church. Shepton ran from the Shepard Ranch as far north as Clint and Clyde Haggard's farms. North of this was considered Lebanon.

It would be fun for the kids to walk to school four and six miles. The elder ones would have a chance to court. The school year began at the end of July or early August and then closed down after a month for picking cotton. Sometimes it was not open again until December or whenever the bad weather came.
In the spring if the weather was pretty, it was back to the field for some children who had to chop corn or cotton, but not for all.

When the school moved to the Harrington Baptist Church, it grew to the seventh grade. In the late thirties when families moved to other communities, the school closed, leaving the church to continue meeting for a time until it closed too. The place where the Stimpsons and Drakes lived is now covered with streets, homes, and stores.

But I can remember when Preston Road was not even called Preston Road very much. It was just a dirt road, a wagon and buggy trail. In the early twenties it was made a highway. They used mules to plow up dirt and make a bed with a dirt ditch on each side of the bed. They hauled red gravel from Camey Switch and dumped it on the bed. Each wagon hauled two loads a day. In the late twenties or early thirties it was black topped. From a trail to Highway 289 at the present time.

*Originally given as a speech in 1995, for Black History Month.*