



This building was erected in the mid-60s to house Butler's Furniture Store. Today it is home to "The Lighthouse."

19.  
**BUTLER FURNITURE STORE**  
 (mid-1960s)

**LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY CENTER**

At one time the Meaders family owned land all the way from Meaders Corner on the Public Square to Meaders Street at the end of the block. Some of it was the Meaders' garden, but a 1880s photograph shows a two-story frame structure on the back corner. It was replaced in time by a Sinclair gas station.

When Butler's Furniture Store outgrew its space in the Butler Building across Main Street, R. J. Butler and his son-in-law Sherman Green purchased land from the Meaders as a site for a larger store, which they built in the 1950s.

A devastating snow and ice storm which hit Dahlonega on March 3, 1960, destroyed many large chicken houses, and the weight of the thick coating of ice caused the roof of the Butler Furniture Store building to collapse. Fortunately, it happened during the night when nobody was in the building.

In the mid-60s, a new and larger Butler Furniture store was built, extending from Meaders Street to the old Meaders residence. As the business continued to expand, even that building became too small. In 1999, Butler Furniture Company remodeled the building fronting East Main Street that formerly housed Green's Department Store and moved into it.

The building formerly occupied by the Butler Furniture Company is now leased to the LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY CENTER (706-864-7300).



This photo shows the antebellum Payne House on the right when it was Goodman McGuire's store. The mail carriers are gathered in front of the c. 1900 Tate Hotel, which housed the Dahlonega Post Office 1901-1914 when W. H. C. Tate was postmaster. The hotel was torn down in 1965. (Photo courtesy of Georgia Department of Archives & History)

20.  
**PAYNE HOUSE (c. 1855)**  
**PARKS CLOTHING STORE**

Jeremiah Payne came to Dahlonega soon after it was settled. A military tailor by profession, he was apparently an educated man, for he served as Clerk of the Inferior Court of Lumpkin County 1836-1838 and as both Coroner and County Treasurer in the 1840s. He either built or purchased the Payne House several years prior to the Civil War. His son was killed at the first battle of Bull Run.

Payne sold the house to T. C. A. Dexter, who was a director of the Boston-based company that built the first aqueduct to provide water for hydraulic mining in Lumpkin County. However, Payne remained in the house and rented from Dexter.

After the South seceded from the Union, the Confederate government seized all property owned by what it considered "enemy aliens," including the Payne/Dexter house. It was sold at sheriff's sale to Amory Dexter, also from Boston but who was exempted from the seizure law because he remained in the



The c. 1855 Payne House has served as stores and residences over the years and has housed Parks Clothing Store for over half a century.

South and served in the engineering corps during the war.

The house next belonged to Goodman Hughes, who retired from being a circuit-riding Methodist minister to becoming a shopkeeper. The back portion added sometime after the Civil War may have been built by Hughes or by his successor Goodman McGuire, who purchased the property for \$1,000.

The Buck Cochran family lived in the house in the 1920s and sub-leased the store part of the building to R. J. Haney, who operated the "Dahlongega Cash Store." Buck was a mail carrier and kept his horses and buggy in the large barn located behind the storehouse. When Buck wrote to their landlord, Judge Richard B. Russell, Sr. of Winder, that the house needed repairs, Judge Russell sent his son to do the work. Young Dick Russell later served his state with distinction both as governor and U.S. Senator.

"The Dahlongega Cash Store" was later a meat market and grocery store owned and operated by Frank Parks, M. H. Garrett, Boyd and Will Housley. People could phone in their grocery orders and soon have their groceries delivered in a one-horse wagon. The store opened early enough to have bread in time for breakfast. Folks gathered around the store's potbellied stove until closing time at 11 o'clock Saturday nights.

After the Housley Brothers opened a store of their own on the square, the name was changed to "Parks & Garrett Store."

The Garretts lived upstairs and boarded college coeds.

The antebellum building has housed "Parks Clothing Store" since the late 1940s. It is owned and operated by 89-year-old Woodrow Parks, who delivered groceries for his father's "Dahlongega Cash Store" as a youth and has worked in the building all of his life. Woodrow is a descendant of Benjamin Parks and has donated several of his famous ancestor's personal items to the Gold Museum where they are on display.

An interesting entry in the property records prohibits the construction of any structure on the open space at the southwest end of the building, perhaps because this was intended as a firebreak. The gable end of the building was reportedly draped in water-soaked quilts to keep it from catching fire when the Burnside Hotel burned in 1904.

**PARKS CLOTHING SHOP** offers nationally advertised brands of women's clothing and accessories. Telephone 706-864-3518.