Founded by Ford Crawford, one of the original settlers of the Freedman Town, Crawford General Store was an economic and cultural force within Quakertown. Moreover, as a major business within the Quakertown neighborhood, it was one of the few businesses within Denton that functioned outside of the strictures of the Jim Crow laws of the time. At Crawford’s store, as in other businesses within Quakertown, residents knew they could find good products and services, and they knew they would be served rather than ordered to leave—or worse.

Indeed, it was here in Quakertown, at Crawford’s store, that locals could buy and trade the goods they needed. When times were tough—and they were often tough, as in 1913 when the school burned down and a temporary classroom was needed—Crawford stepped forward. It served as a classroom until the schoolhouse could be rebuilt. It was a community space, where meetings about important matters could be held, and where civic organizations like the local chapter of the Black Odd Fellows could gather. Informally, Quakertown residents could pop in to do their shopping, play a friendly game of checkers with their neighbors, and catch up on the latest news and goings-on. Like Crawford himself, the store was a pillar of the community. His son, Bert, also took a prominent role in the neighborhood as the director of the local funeral home. One could almost say that, between the two of them, the needs of Quakertown’s living and dead were covered.

Among the many meetings held at Crawford’s store was the fateful one in December 1920, when the people of Quakertown learned that the fate of their community would be decided in an upcoming election by the white voters of Denton. In the aftermath, Crawford and his family left Denton forever, relocating to Wichita, Kansas, to start over.

Today, the site of the Crawford General Store is occupied by the parking lot of the Emily Fowler Library.