

[Mrs. Ollie Sisco]

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[White Pioneer?] FOLKLORE

Mrs. Ada Davis, P. W.

McLennan County, Texas.

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Mrs. Ollie Sisco, Waco, McLennan County, Texas.

Charles Marion Yowell was born in Missouri, August 8, 1858. At the close of the Civil War, his father went to Mexico City with a construction company to lay the first street car tracks in Mexico City, the cars were drawn by mules. On the way to Mexico City they were twelve days out of sight of land. The mules were unloaded at Vera Cruz, and Mr. Yowell remembers how the mules were swung on cranes, or something of that type, while they were being unloaded. The trip was made overland from Vera Cruz to Mexico City. While in Mexico City, they lived in a large stone structure, The Cathedral, that faced on the main plaza or what is now known as the Zocalo. Often times they played on the steps of the National Building, or the capitol. They also played around the "House of Tiles", which was built in the sixteenth century, by the son of the old Count of the Valley of Wrizoba who said, "My son, will never build a house of tiles!" Fifty thousand blue and white tiles cover the building, which are valued at five dollars each. Today there can be

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no market value placed on the building, because the government has ordered that the building be preserved as an architectural monument. Today it is occupied by Sanborns, and is the most famous meeting place in Mexico for tourists. On one occasion, while the boys were at play, a cannon ball was shot through a brick wall near them. This was when Napoleon's soldiers and the Spanish were having their skirmishes. At this time, Maximilian, the Archduke of Austria was made Emperor and he reigned from 1864 to 1867. C. - 12. Tex. 2 Mr. Yowell remembers the gold carriage in which Maximilian rode on special occasions. C. M. Yowell vividly remembers the elaborate costumes worn by the nobles during Maximilian's reign, and the magnificent balls which were given by the Emperor. They gathered oranges, lemons, limes and fruit growing wild; often they caught a small fish from a nearby stream and roasted them in a shuck.

Mr. Yowell remembers very well the peculiar sensation he had from trying to run on the ground during an earthquake. Many times the dishes were shaken out of the safe but he doesn't remember any buildings falling. He remembers the famous aqueduct with nine-hundred and four arches built by the Aztecs and the [rbo] de Morteuma, also, the famous cypress tree, now measuring forty-five feet in circumference and close to two hundred feet high, which stands in the park at the foot of Chapultepec, meaning the "Hill of the Grass-hopper." Maximilian spent his summers in Chapultepec Castle. Many of Empress Charlotta's personal belongings and furnishings for her room are still there. The wonderful aqueduct built by Cortez was in use at the time that Yowell lived in Mexico. Mr. Yowell also played under the Noche Triste Tree, under which Cortez sat and wept when his army had been shattered by the Aztecs on the causeway. This tree is presumably five hundred years old and has a protection railing, hammered from [menacles], chains, and implements of torture that came from the quarters of the Inquisition in Mexico City.

Mr. Yowell was very apt in picking up the Spanish language and was soon engaged as an interpreter, on market days, in the sale of vegetables, fruits, and other products. 3 In January, 1868, a few families started for Texas. They drove six mules to each wagon. They were paid forty dollars to bring the corpse of a soldier some distance out of the city

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and to bury it in order to keep the body from mutilation. Soldiers accompanied them on horseback.

The journey back to Texas took three months. They crossed the border at Laredo on a ferry (or maybe forded it—he can't remember). They arrived at Waco, April, 1868, and took up their residence in the log cabin on the east bank of the Brazos where the Washington Street bridge now stands. As a coincidence, he was county commissioner (1901) when they had the Washington Street bridge built and also the court house on Washington Street, which is in use now. In April, 1858, they spent the first night in the little log house. Yowell's grandfather got a job on the ferry, which crossed the river between Washington bridge and the Interurban bridge. A road wound around, out of Rat Row (now Bridge Street). There were trees along the river on the west side, the east bank was covered with timber. His ferry charges were: wagon and team, twenty-five cents, or if heavily loaded, he some times charged fifty cents; foot passengers, five cents; horse, ten cents. If they didn't want to take the horse across, he took them in a skiff for five cents each way; there were usually three or four passengers at a crossing. One of Mr. Yowell's favorite passengers was Miss Kellum, who later married Ed Rotan, later president of the First National Bank in Waco. She was a teacher and lived in East Waco. Several people used their own skiffs to go to school. Among these were Judge and John Sleeper, B. H. Hatcher and Cal Shelton. Cal had to wash his mouth 4 with a big white and red cob in front of school because he called the teacher a liar. Later in '71 or '72 Yowell moved up on the hill in East Waco to about the end of Elm Street. Miss Mary Beatty was Mr. Yowell's teacher at that time. She “took him through the “Blue Back” Speller twelve times, and McGuffey's Second Reader thirteen times. Miss Mary Beatty's niece, Miss Adene Beatty teaches in East Waco schools now, (1937).

In 1869, the suspension bridge was started; Yowell's father and a negro moved the first shovel of dirt for the bridge. His father kept the toll bridge about a year. Mr. Oglesby, Mr. Westbrooks, and Mr. Cassiday assisted.

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Dr. W. G. [Trices?]'s mother visited Yowell's grandmother; (Simon [Trice?]) they lived between Second and Third on Franklin Street. They lived in piers on the west side of the bridge about a year. They then moved up at Sally Mann place. The H. and T. C. Railroad built in 1872.

From there they moved to Sally Mann's farm on the east side, down the river and lived there for three years; this farm joined the Clinton farm. Crockett Vaughn owned the land at that time.

C. M. Yowell bought a place seven miles east of Waco on William's Creek, three miles east of Tehuacana. It consisted of eleven leagues and cost seven dollars an acre. There were little huts of squatters on it, and all kinds of game. You could see ten to twelve deer near the yard most any time, also wild turkeys. C. M. Yowell lived in the hut two years; then he bought lumber in Waco and built a real Colonial-style home that stood till 1937, when a crazy negro set it afire; he worked horses and mules and raised cotton and corn. He [ginned?] at Waco. His grandfather died April, 1886. They moved on the farm joining, December 1887. They got their mail at Waco. This farm joined his father's place.