

Funeral Services Set For Sam D. Myres, 81

Funeral services will be held at 9 a. m. Monday in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for Sam D. Myres, pioneer saddlemaker, who died last night in an El Paso hospital.

He was 81. He suffered a heart attack several days ago.

Mr. Myres, colorful civic leader known as Tio Sam, was a favorite with El Pasoans, young and old. He resided at 5030 Aurora street.

Mr. Myres had been a saddle maker for 65 years.

An unusual figure, he was known to thousands for his resemblance to Buffalo Bill. He wore fringed, pioneer style costumes and western hats, with a wing collar and black tie. He had long white hair and chin whiskers. To many he was El Paso's living link with the Old West they themselves had never seen.

Born in Cleburne

Born in Cleburne in 1871, Mr. Myres experienced the hardships of frontier life. When he was a lad Indian raids and scalping were still hazards.

His father, D. R. Myres, a native of Pennsylvania, had settled as a farmer in Johnson County and had been a captain and company commander in the Civil War. Mr. Myers' mother was Mary J. Dale, a native of Lexington, Ky.

Mr. Myres was born in a two-room log cabin. Among his early memories were fishing on the banks of the Brazos, shooting squirrels with a percussion cap rifle, and walking five miles to school. He used to astonish his hunting companions by driving wildcats out of tree branches with his bare hands.

While attending classes in a schoolhouse that had a dirt floor and log seats Mr. Myres was admonished by a taciturn schoolmaster to heed a motto, "He can who thinks he can." Although he attended only three terms of school Mr. Myres credited the motto with guiding him through a successful business career.

Sets Up Own Business

Mr. Myres learned his trade in Cleburne, starting as a janitor in a saddle company. He worked three years as a "saddle-cub" to earn a total of \$100, along with his board, room and clothes. He took part of the earnings to get a degree in Masonry. He put away the \$33 remaining to go into business for himself.

For a while he worked in West Texas as an itinerant saddle maker, earning \$12 a week. When he was 21 he went to Dallas to work for a saddle company. In 1897 he found the saddle business poor and turned farmer. But in 1900 he set up the

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Sam D. Myres

Service Set For S. D. Myres

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S. D. Myres Saddle Co. in Sweetwater.

Mr. Myres spent 23 years in Sweetwater, which was a tiny village when he opened up shop there. He served as mayor for two terms, without pay. He also served as a Texas Ranger and deputy sheriff while in Sweetwater.

Once, while mayor, he was credited with preventing a Negro lynching.

Moved to El Paso

Mr. Myres established his saddle business in El Paso in 1920.

He made various kinds of quality saddles, some made to order at a cost of thousands of dollars. He once filled a large order for saddles for Pancho Villa. He presented a hand-tooled saddle to President Lazaro Cardenas of Mexico.

From his shop have gone saddles for the late Will Rogers, Col. J. C. Miller, Capt. John R. Hughes of the Texas Rangers, and Movie Star Gene Autry.

During World War I and II the Myres Saddle Co. turned out leather goods on a large scale for the Army. Many Ft. Bliss cavalrymen rode on saddles made at the Myres plant. In War I he was cited by the secretary of war for turning over his plant to the Government.

Encouraged Rodeos

For years Mr. Myres rode in El Paso parades and attended various functions and celebrations, clad in his western outfit. He encouraged the annual Kids Rodeo, contributing hand made saddles to the prize list.

Survivors include two sons, W. J. Myres of El Paso and S. D. Myres Jr., of Dallas; a daughter, Mrs. M. M. Taylor of Denver, Colo.; two brothers, Carlos Myres of Cleburne and C. C. Myres of Fort Worth; a sister, Mrs. Annie Elliot of Cleburne; a nephew, Dace Myres of El Paso; and four grandchildren.

The body will lie in state in the chapel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Monday from 8 a. m. until 9 a. m. Bishop Willard Whipple will officiate at the funeral service. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery under the direction of Kaster and Maxon Funeral Home.