

EL PASO COUNTY'S OLDEST RESIDENT DIES AT 106

MRS. VICTORIANA H. DE VIELMAS, 106, probably the oldest life-long inhabitant of the county was buried Saturday in Concordia cemetery.

Surviving her are six children, 90 grandchildren, 99 great grandchildren and 18 great great grandchildren.

Mrs. Vielmas was born in Socorro in 1823. Without leaving the vicinity of her birth Mrs. Vielmas has lived under the government of three nations.

She was born during the period of political strife in Mexico of which Texas and New Mexico as now known were a part just before her birth there was the struggle for

Mexican independence, followed rapidly by the downfall of the republic and crowning of Iturbide as emperor. He, in turn was overthrown and the Mexican republic reestablished about the time of her birth.

When she was 13 years old Texas overthrew the Mexican rule and became an independent nation. The next year she was married. In 1846, when she was 23 years old the nation of Texas was annexed by the United States and she became a citizen of the United States.

But all these political changes probably meant nothing to her. In fact there was no change in the government in the district about El Paso during all these years.

When she was born there were no English-speaking settlers near El Paso. There was no settlement of any kind where El Paso stands today.

Possibly Mrs. Vielmas's earliest recollection of English speaking men was an event that occurred at Socorro, the town of her birth, in 1850. In that year the first boundary commissioners came to El Paso. The county had just been organized with San Elizario, near Socorro, as the county seat. San Elizario had a population of 1200 then. El Paso only had 200 inhabitants.

One night during the year 1850 right after the boundary commissioners came, a band of desperadoes was driven

at Socorro. Perhaps Mrs. Vielmas, then 27, was one of the pretty señoras attending.

A fight started and a man with the boundary commission party was killed by five overland teamsters. The next morning four of the men were arrested, tried and sentenced to be hanged. The judge recognized no right of appeal and the four were hanged next day. The fifth man was captured in Guadalupe, Mexico, rushed back over the boundary without extradition papers, and also hanged.

The six living children of Mrs. Vielmas are Mrs. Isidora Moreno, Mrs. Chavez, Mrs. Ascencion Gomez, Mrs. Francisca Escajeda, Mrs. Adelita Madrid and Rafael Vielmas.