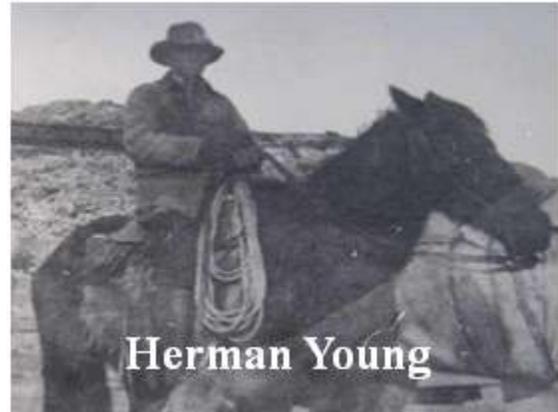


Museum News: The Herman Young Family

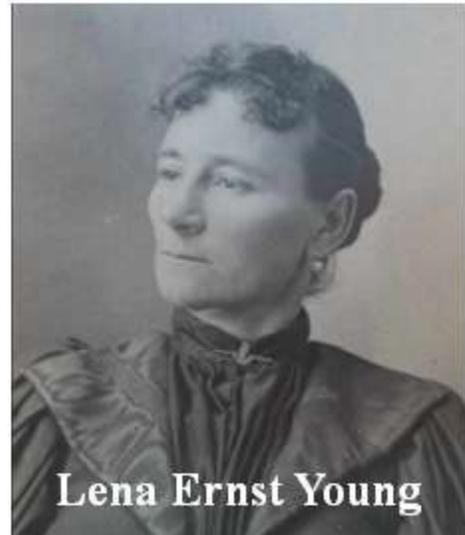
By CW (Bill) Smith

In Anna Lee Allen's *A History of Terrell County* (1936) she states that in 1892 the only Anglos living in Sanderson were Charlie Wilson, the Boozer family and the Herman Young family. At that time there were only a few buildings in Sanderson, mainly the Boozer home, a railroad bunkhouse, two adobe houses and a few Hispanic homes on the east side. Charlie Wilson, the Boozers and the Youngs were the earliest known Anglo residents of Sanderson, Wilson and the Boozers having moved here shortly before the arrival of the railroad in 1882 and the Youngs coming soon after.



Ferdinand Herman Young was born in Prussia in 1853, and immigrated to the United States at a very early age, settling in San Antonio. His wife, Lena Ernst Young, was born in San Antonio to German immigrant parents. They were married in San Antonio in 1877, and their first child, Helen, was born there.

Herman Young is listed in the 1880 Pecos County census as living in Precinct 1, the area of Fort Stockton, with his wife and child living in San Antonio with her parents, William and Christine Ernst. It is speculated that Hermann moved west to find work, in this case, listed in the census as a tailor, and his wife and child stayed behind until he had established himself. Young's brother, Frederick William Young, was already established at Fort Stockton as a store owner, and eventually was elected for two terms as the county judge.

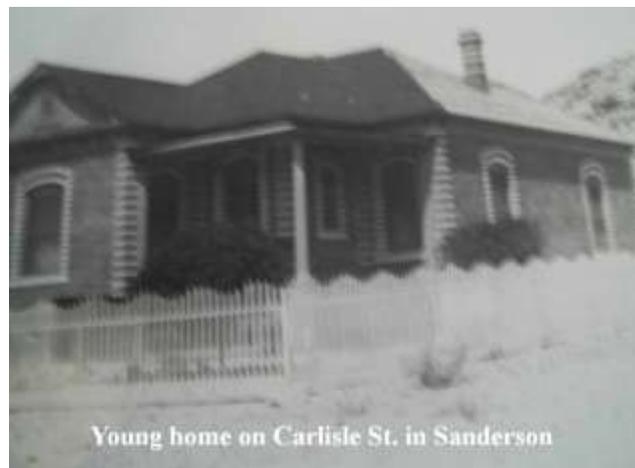


At some time in the early-1880s, Herman Young bought property outside of Sanderson and moved from Fort Stockton to live at Sanderson and run his ranch. His wife, Lena and daughter Helen joined him at this time. In the next few years five more children were born to the family: Herman, Della, William, Herman Frederick and Ethel. The children started school at Sanderson in the first school built there.

The Young children led an idyllic life at their ranch in Sanderson. Living in a bilingual world, the children learned to speak Spanish, and even learned Chinese because of the presence of a small population of Chinese in the community. Some of the Young boys ran with a group of boys in Sanderson, known to the Sheriff as the "Hell Cats." They were boisterous and pulled pranks frequently, but the Sheriff had them under control using this warning, "Don't break the law or I'll break you."

The children had access to horses when they were growing up. They learned to rope and could lasso a steer, a horse, sheep or even a goat. They became proficient at ranch work.

William's grandson described his grandfather's gear when growing up on the ranch: "You could find him wearing jeans, boots, always a long sleeve shirt, a wide brim hat, a red bandanna, and the most important were



leather gloves. This dress was best explained as 'protection', from the sun, sagebrush, territory weather, snakes, and sheer hard work with cattle, horses, the land and more. That bandanna was definitely needed on ranch territory with lots of dust from the cattle making themselves (sic) known, by stampede."

The Young's built a home in Sanderson on the outskirts of town as a place to live so the kids could attend school. During the summers they lived at the ranch. The Young's home was the red brick house at the beginning of Carlisle Street, still present in this day. The house was small for six children and their parents, but they spent happy years there.

As the years passed, Herman and Lena's children grew up and left home to marry or pursue their life work. The last child, Ethel, entered an unhappy marriage and was soon separated from her husband. Needing assistance to raise her little grandson, as Ethel worked to support them, Lena decided to move to El Paso to help out. She stayed on for 15 years, and in 1928, she was struck by a streetcar on Stanton Street in El Paso and died from her injuries. She was buried at Evergreen Cemetery in El Paso.

Herman continued on the ranch, but finally retired and sold out, moving into Sanderson in the 1930s. In 1935, in an event filled with irony, he was struck by an automobile and severely injured. He died a few hours later and was buried in El Paso by his wife's side.

The earliest residents of Sanderson are hard to track down, especially when they spent most of their time on their ranches and were not involved in many of the town functions. Herman and Lena Young were important early pioneers of Sanderson, and supported the town and its school as much as possible in the earliest days of the community. In true pioneer spirit, they toughed it out and made their ranch a success. Such is the story of most of our early pioneers.