

I, Mrs David M Young, am the Mrs E C Harner referred to in the stories about David E George, which appeared in the Enid, Oklahoma, papers in 1903 with reference to the suicide of D E George at the Grand Avenue Hotel at Enid, Oklahoma, on January 13, 1903.

During the year 1900 I lived near the family of J W Simmons at El Reno, Oklahoma. During this period I was almost a daily visitor at the Simmons home, being a great friend of May, the daughter of J W Simmons. During this time I became quite well acquainted with with Mr George, who several times entertained Mrs Simmons, her daughter and myself by repeating passages from Shakespeare and various poets. I remember that one night he repeated a part of Othelo, which was as good as anything I have ever seen on the stage. We thought that Mr George must have acted on the stage to be able to give this so well. His enunciation was very clear and his diction excellant; his motions very dignified and graceful.

He was a man five feet ten or eleven, of medium build and walked with his shoulders well thrown back. He had very large deep blue eyes, his hair being sprinkled with gray; he dyed both hair and mustache. During the time I knew Mr George he was a house painter and worked quite steadily at this trade; when not at work he dressed in a good suit of clothes and was a very fine looking old man. His eyes as I remember were perfect matches as were also his heavy dark bushy eye brows.

Mr George quite often talked about various characters of history, and would often wind up by saying that Abraham Lincoln was one of the greatest and best men that ever live

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During the time I knew Mr George he spent most of his evenings at home, that is, at the Simmons where he boarded; he spent his evenings reading histories, magazines and papers and a great amount of poetry. Whenever the weather was bad Mr George limped slightly in his right leg and complained that he had rheumatism in his right knee. I do not remember of ever seeing any scars on his face or neck, and he didn't show the slightest indication of stiff neck. He had a rather long straight nose and square chin, a slender face of good shape and a mouth very firm in shape when shut, his complexion was a creamish olive.

The tin-type of John St Helen shown me today, while it may be Mr George in his younger days, does not look much like him as I knew him; his eyes were not the same and the shape of the face does not seem to be the same. Mr George's eyebrows were heavier and his face was longer; in fact, Mr George's face was more like that of John Wilkes Booth, whose picture, a copy of which was shown me, the original of which is in the possession of Clara Morris. Mr George's eyes looked the same as those of John Wilkes Booth, particularly when in a sad mood. As I remember Mr George was not drunk often, in fact, he possibly took a little morphine every once and a while, more often than whiskey. Mr George quite often drew pictures of animals, scenery and buildings with paper and pencil. He wrote an old time sort of a hand with letters big and of different shape than usually seen now days. Mr George would quite often talk about Shakespeare's plays and tell and show how different parts should be acted. He loved classical music and songs of home expressing deep sentiment; would often sit in the yard, or in his room, and sing to himself.

I remember that he went to the Methodist Church ~~with~~ once to hear Reverend Harper, who afterward became my husband. After the church services Mr George said that it was fine when people could believe in what the church taught, but said that it was not for him, that he was beyond pardon; said that he didn't belong to any church, but that there was good in all of them. At another time he said that he was a spiritulist and told of different ones who ~~he~~ had had experiences ~~with~~, which proved spiritulism true; he read a great many books and papers on this subject. At the time I knew him he was 64 or 65 years old, carried a cane a greater part of the time and occasionally had trouble with his throat, which he said was asthma; when not bothered with this trouble he had a very deep clear musical voice. At times Mr George had the most sorrowful look and when alone would groan terribly as if in deep remorse. I was told by a friend, whose name I do not remember, that at one time a traveling troupe of players were going through ~~the country~~ El Reno, and that Mr George went to see them; that one of them who took the part of a drunken sailor was ill and Mr George offered to take the part and filled it very creditably. At one time he told me that he had been all over Europe and described very vividly a visit he had made with some Methodist Bishop, whose name I do not remember, to the hill upon which Christ was crucified, and told me about the discussion he and this Bishop had with reference to that event. While I am not sure, I believe that Mr George showed me some tatoo marks on his arm at one time, this being some sort of design

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and not initials.

Mr George asked both Mrs Simmons and myself several times if a man could be forgiven who had committed a crime wherein he thought he was benefitting a great many people, but afterward found that he had done a great injury to the world and himself, and asked us to pray for him. About the middle of April, 1900, and I fix the time by the fact that I was married to Reverend E C Harper on May 21st of that year and left El Reno, living in Medford for two years, and then moving to Enid, Oklahoma, in about October, 1902, I was at the Simmons home when Mr George came in looking very ill and went up to his room. Mrs Simmons said something must be wrong with him and went up to see; she asked me to come up to the room, saying that she believed Mr George had taken poison, and that she would make some coffee as an antidote. Mr George, when the suggestion was made that we send for a doctor, requested us not to do so. I sat down on a chair at the side of his bed, and he said: "Dont you think I have been more than an ordinary house painter", and I answered: "Yes", and he then said: "Can't you guess whom I am", and I answered: "Why no". He then asked for a piece of paper and wrote on it John Wilkes Booth and Abraham Lincoln. I did not realize the importance of this paper at the time and did not keep it. Mr George continued: "But you can't imagine how miserable I have been all these years and not only deprived the world of one of the best men that ever lived, but ruined my own future." He said that he came from a family of actors, had been educated for an actor and had started out with a brilliant future; that at times his desire to act had been so strong that he could not resist the temptation to take part in a play a time or two.

He said that he had gone under a great many different names and had disguised himself in different ways. He said that he had friends in Washington, who, after he escaped from the theatre in which he killed Lincoln, had hidden him in a trunk, and got him on a boat for Europe where he had remained for ten years; that he then disguised himself and came back and had since that time lived on the frontiers of Texas. He said that he had remained away from all of his people, and they did not know that he was alive; said he had never been married for he could not give a woman a home and a name; said he had run a little grocery and sold whiskey several times on the Texas frontiers, but when it got too thickly settled he would sell out and go to other places.

He said that after he was dead a man who knew all about his life, and who kept in constant touch with him, and to whom he sent a picture of himself once a year, would write a book about his life. He further said that he had a friend in the South, who I thought was the same party referred to above, who would send him money any time he wanted it, but that he was too proud and would rather work; he did not mention the name of the man in either case. He said: "You know what a fine actor my father was, I was going to carry on the Booth name, but I disgraced it and ruined my career." He said Mrs Surrat was not guilty and that Andrew Johnson, the then Vice-President of the United States, and some of the high officials, had hired him to kill Lincoln; said that they had fired his emotional temperament; that he did not realize what a terrible thing he had done until after he had shot the

President, and that he had been sorry ever since. He said that he had done different kinds of work, but that he had money in the bank and did not have to work; that he had to do something to pass the time.

I later heard that Mr George had filed a claim on a farm near Geary, and had disposed of his equity in this to Mr Simmons for about \$1500.00. He repeated the fact that he had a friend in the South who would write his story after he was dead and give it to the world. When Mr Bates called on me after the suicide of Mr George at Enid he told me that people would attempt to prove that Mr George was not John Wilkes Booth, that I should not believe them, that he was; that he, Mr Bates, had kept in constant touch with Mr George and knew for a certainty who he was. I remember what Mr George said to me about the friend who would write his life, which Mr Bates said he intended to do, and I thought that he, Mr Bates, was surely the same man that Mr George had referred to as his friend in the South.

After Mr George had made his confession to me in April, 1900, he asked me faithfully to promise not to repeat it, since he would be hung if people found it out. Mrs Simmons had come into the room and heard Mr George talking, afterwards I told her about his confession, and after my marriage I told Reverend Harper. During the two or three ^{months} ~~years~~ ^{Weeks} intervening from the time of the confession until I married and left El Reno, Mr George asked me several times what he had told me while ill. He looked at me so straight, and rather fiercely, that I was afraid of him and passed it off by saying that he had told me nothing.

I saw the body of David E George, who committed suicide at Enid on January 13, 1903, and am absolutely sure that he was the same David E George I knew in El Reno, and who made the confession given above.

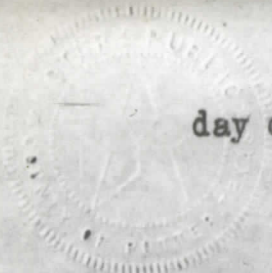
Mrs David M Young

I, Mrs David M Young, upon my oath do state that the above and foregoing statement is true in substance as I remember and to the best of my recollection, and that I signed same as I remembered the facts to be.

Mrs David M Young

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this the 21st day of January, A D 1921.

Earl Nyass
Notary Public, Potter County,
Texas.



Marilla Texas
Potter County