

OBITUARY OF CHARLES MORTIMER FOWKES, SR.



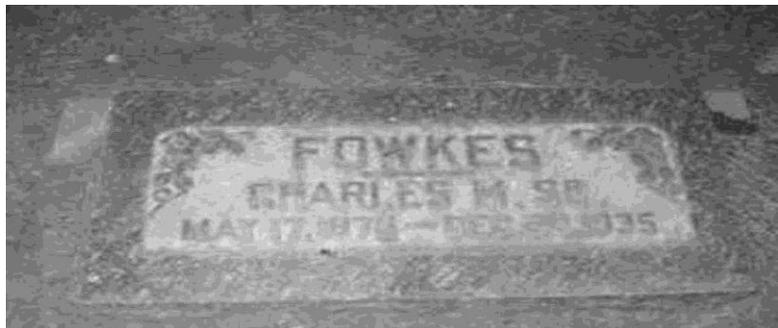
Charles Mortimer Fowkes was born 17 May 1876 at Almy, Wyoming, the son of Reuben W. Fowkes and Mary Francis Bacon Fowkes.

He was married 9 October 1900, to Edith Louise Bell of Almy, Wyoming. To this marriage nine children were born, eight of whom, with their mother, survive their father. They are Mrs. Mary Cook, of Evanston; Mrs. Ethel Kirk, of Salt Lake City; Charles M. Fowkes Jr., of Evanston; Mrs. Lillian Freston, of Mt. Pleasant, Utah; and Emily Fowkes, Arnold Fowkes, Vida Fowkes, and Clarence Fowkes, all of Evanston. Mr. Fowkes was also survived by six grandchildren and by three brothers and seven sisters. His brothers and sisters are Mrs. Edith Wanlass of Victor, Idaho; Mrs. Esther Thomas of Evanston; Mrs. Mae Starkey of Evanston; Mrs. Carrie Harris of Evanston; Mrs. Nora Harris of Magna, Utah; Mrs. Lily Hood of Frontier, Wyoming; R.W. Fowkes of Winton; Mrs. Kate Sellers of Rock Springs; R.B. Fowkes of Salt Lake City; and Joseph V. Fowkes of Riverton, Utah.

Mr. Fowkes was a coal miner, stockman, and rancher. He died of pneumonia on Friday, 20 December 1935.



Charles Fowkes Sr. and Edith Louise Bell on their wedding day?



**Gravestones: FOWKES, Charles M. Sr. and Edith Louise Bell
Evanston City Cemetery**

PHOTOS OF CHARLES M. SR & EDITH LOUISE FOWKES FAMILY



SONS & DAUGHTERS: Lillian, a cousin, Charles Jr., Ethel and Mary



Son Arnold and grandson Kay outside the log ranch home



CHARLES SR CHILDREN at ranch corral, from left: Arnold, Vida, Ethel, & Clarence



Arnold and Emily about 1967



SONS AND DAUGHTERS, July 1983, L to R: Vida, Clarence, Lillian, Arnold, and Ethel

STORIES OF THE FOWKES FAMILY

Being a collection of stories and anecdotes collected by Bill Fowkes, a son of Charles M. Fowkes, Jr. Included are some stories by or about Mrs. Reuben (Mary) Fowkes, Charles M. Fowkes, Sr., Charles, Jr., Arnold and Clarence Fowkes.

A STORY RELATED TO BILL FOWKES BY CLARENCE FOWKES, 11/30/91

I remember when I was a very small boy an incident which is clear in my mind's eye but which is not corroborated by any of my other brothers or sisters. Once in the wintertime Dad (*Charles M. Fowkes, Sr.*) was butchering a calf in the lean-to part of the barn of the Fowkes ranch. The area was lit by sunlight coming through the opening of the sliding door of the lean-to. I was watching Dad as he went about his business.

While Dad was dressing the carcass, I looked toward the door and saw the eyes of a gray wolf peering in on the action. The animal must have been very hungry and was attracted by the smell of the carcass. I shouted at Dad that there was a wolf, which, of course, startled the animal and he took off at full speed. Dad ran to get his .33 Winchester rifle but by the time he got ready to fire, the animal was going full speed across the north pasture between the Harris ranch and our place and was headed for the hills, never to be seen again.

Arnold thinks maybe I was dreaming but I remember that incident well to this day.

STORIES RELATED BY ARNOLD FOWKES TO BILL FOWKES, 8/4/89

DRIVING OFF THE "BLUE DUGWAY"

This is a story about Uncle Clarence and Dad (*Charles M. Fowkes, Jr.*) driving off the end of the infamous "Blue Dugway" in the early spring many years ago in an old Model T Ford truck with an open cab. It had been the mainstay of ranch operations for some time. It was muddy and late in the evening with the roads beginning to freeze. Dad was driving, bringing Clarence home from school. A small leak in the radiator was dripping water onto the steering tie rod and forming ice. It was developing that a left turn could be made but ice was building up to the point where a right turn movement was being blocked. Suddenly, the time came to make a critical right turn in the road to stay on the dugway, but the turn couldn't be made. The "Blue Dugway" was a dangerous section of the road between the highway and the ranch, being narrow and on the side of a high hill overlooking the Bear River. The river is at the bottom of a nearly vertical drop-off of over 150 feet. The road at this point was curved, with a little incline, and composed of the infamous blue clay made of decomposed material from the "Fowkes Formation." In muddy weather it was a treacherous section of road. When the steering froze on the Model T, Dad lost control and the car plunged off the road. Fortunately, they came off at the end of the worst section which had much less incline and did not go down into the river. Yet, even then it was a hairy ride. Arnold said Dad had sense to jump clear of the car, but Uncle Clarence stayed with it until it stopped at the bottom of the hill on top of a willow tree. Happily, no one was hurt.

The usual process was to hike back to the ranch house, over two miles away at this point, get a team of draft horses, come back and in the mud and goo pull the car back on the road. The job was done the next day in about an hour.

THE 10-GAUGE SHOTGUN

When Uncle Arnold was about 12 years old and Dad (*Charles M. Fowkes, Jr.*) about 21, both were hunting on skis near the ranch in the winter. There was plenty of snow on the ground and they were

hunting rabbits. Both were well dressed for the cold with mittens. Arnold had a .22 rifle and Dad had the notorious 10-gauge double-barreled shotgun with external hammers.

The 10-gauge had an interesting history. Apparently, it was a murder weapon used by a man who lived north of Evanston in killing his partner. The man was apprehended, tried and convicted for the killing. Clarence Cook, close friend and relative of the Fowkes family, was a court reporter for the trial. At the end of the trial, he somehow persuaded the Judge (Judge Arnold) into giving him the gun, perhaps as payment for his services. He used the gun for a while and then gave it to Charles M. Fowkes, Dad's father.

During this particular hunting trip, Dad and Arnold jumped a rabbit. Both drew down on it and then Arnold heard a tremendous explosion and saw the rabbit disintegrate. He turned around to find Dad who had also disappeared. He finally found him digging himself out of a snow bank and heard him say the only swear word he ever heard Dad say, "bitch!"

Dad, in the excitement of flushing the rabbit, had had both barrels of the gun cocked and, with his mittens still on, had pulled both triggers off at the same time!

ANOTHER 10-GAUGE STORY

My grandfather, Charles M. Fowkes, Sr. had often warned Arnold about the dangers of the big 10-gauge shotgun and after one experience Arnold had with it, he was not allowed to shoot it again.

Arnold had been annoyed by a pesky and teasing magpie by the barn on the ranch. Arnold was determined to put an end to the rascal, but everything he tried had failed. The magpie just would not let him near enough to dispose of him by conventional means.

Then Arnold came upon a plan. He found that the magpie frequently landed and perched on the eave of the barn roof at a particular location. He got the 10-gauge shotgun and carefully tied it to a cedar fence post nearby. The thing was configured to be pointed at the location on the eave of the barn where the magpie perched. The butt of the gun was placed securely on the fence post. One of the triggers of the gun was tied with a wire which Arnold ran from the post to a hidden location in the carriage shed (a lean-to section of the barn). The trigger was cocked and the tension was pulled up on the wire. At the other end of the wire Arnold waited patiently in the shed until his guest announced his arrival. By the sound of the magpie's cackle he knew he had landed at the right spot. Excitedly, Arnold yanked the wire which resulted in the expected explosion occurring along with the unexpected sound of a splintering fence post. Arnold was not sure he ever got the magpie, but at least he never returned. Meanwhile, his Dad, Grandfather Charles, came along and rebuked Arnold for pulling a stunt like that. For one thing, it was a dangerous thing to do and, secondly, the stock of the gun could have been badly damaged. The recoil of the 10-gauge was so great that if the fence post hadn't given, the stock would have.

We're not sure what happened to the old 10-gauge shotgun. Whether it was stolen, traded off, or lost, neither Arnold nor I know. It would sure be nice to know what it looked like. I, (*Bill*) do have some of the shot casings of the gun that have been salvaged from the ranch which I have in my safe keeping.

CHARLES M. FOWKES, SR. SAVES THE SCHOOL TEACHER

This event about Grandfather, Charles M. Fowkes, Sr., occurred during the spring runoff one year early in the school life of Uncle Arnold and Aunt Emily. There was an old one-room schoolhouse that was built across the river northwest of the Fowkes ranch close to the Coles property. Near this schoolhouse was a long slough which in the spring became a drainage course for thawing snow. At this particular point in time the slough was a river with swift flowing water. The slough passed under a property fence made of woven wire and at this point was a point of crossing for people as they came from the school to the homes across the river.

The school teacher, Mrs. McGraw, was attempting to help Arnold and Emily across the slough at this time when she fell into the rushing water and became trapped against the woven wire fence. She was struggling against the water and having a hard time of it while Arnold and Emily looked on helplessly. At this time, for some reason or another, even though he had no reason to be there, Grandpa came along on horseback.

He jumped down from his horse and began to reach down to help Mrs. McGraw out from the bank where she was at. The bank, which was undercut by the rushing waters, gave way, tossing Grandpa into the water himself. They both ended up together against the woven wire fence. Grandpa was able to gain control and grabbed the hapless school teacher and put her up on the bank. Then he dragged himself out.

After Mrs. McGraw was taken care of, Arnold and Emily pleaded with their Dad to let them go ahead and cross the slough on the wire fence. Grandpa was not enthusiastic about that in light of recent events, but since the alternative was to go all the way up the road quite a distance away to get back, he relented. After carefully negotiating the fence, Arnold and Emily went on home.

CHARLES M. FOWKES, SR., ARNOLD and the 33 WINCHESTER CENTER FIRE RIFLE

Deer hunting was always a great tradition with the Fowkes family. Grandpa, Charles M. Fowkes, Sr., was probably a legend in the area with his ability with his favorite rifle, a model 1886 Winchester lever action in .33 W.C.F. caliber. It was a powerful weapon which was well adapted to the close-in aspen woods or long distance shooting that was done in the mountains of the Fremont Butte near the ranch.

One year, Arnold and his Dad went out hunting the mule deer in these mountains and got on the trail of a couple of bucks. Grandpa had the .33 W.C.F. and Arnold another rifle. They both jumped the bucks the same time and as they started to run off, grandpa told Arnold to wait. Grandpa saw an interesting thing develop as they ran by his position. In beautiful timing he pulled off one shot, the magnificent rifle bellowed, and both bucks fell. The bullet had hit the first deer in the neck, killing it instantly and passed through and hit the second deer behind the shoulder, passing through the heart.

With the two clean merciful kills as this, Grandpa took his beloved Winchester, turned to Arnold and said, "Well, I guess this is a good one to retire on," and gave the rifle to Arnold. Arnold didn't take him seriously until Grandpa passed away the following year (1935).

Arnold has the Winchester Model 1886 lever action now and it will be passed on to his son and grandchildren.

The following are letters sent to Bill Fowkes from Arnold Fowkes in September 1989:

Dear Bill,

Here is another story that your grandfather, Charles M. Fowkes, Sr., used to tell about his mother:

Mrs. Reuben (*Mary*) Fowkes was a very strong-willed pioneer woman. Due to poor health later in the life of her husband, Reuben, she had to run the ranch with the help of her four sons, William (*Bill*), Richard, Charles and Joe. When she said something, it was law as far as her sons were concerned.

One day Grandmother called the four boys to her side and said, "You boys come with me. We are going to build a ditch to get some water to the corral and the plot of land below the barn." The boys smiled at each other because the corral was much higher than any available water source, but they went with their mother to the field below the hill bordering the corral. Grandmother told Bill to go to the east end of the hill and walk up the hill until she told him to stop. Bill did as he was told. When he was stopped, she told him to put a pile of rocks where he stood. She did the same with the other three boys at different

locations on the hill. When this was done she told them to get the horses and the plow and run a furrow directly from one pile of rocks to the next. When that was done, she told them to dam the creek coming out Fowkes canyon and turn it into the ditch they had just made.

The four boys went ahead and did what they were told because they dared not cross their mother, even though they all knew that water would not run uphill. They sat down prepared to have a good laugh when the project turned out to be a dud.

Their amusement turned to amazement for when the water level got to the ditch it very obediently followed the ditch to its end. They all agreed that it didn't dare do otherwise.

Dear Bill,

There are a lot of stories I could tell you about the old days on the ranch. I should tell you about the fancy cowboy boots your dad bought.

Charles (your dad) worked at odd jobs and saved his money until he had enough to buy a pair of really fancy cowboy boots. I do not remember what brand they were, Justins or some other real high quality brand. He thought a lot of his fancy boots and only wore them a few times on special occasions.

One day when the rest of the family had gone to town, I had to go around my trap line. I was about ten years old at the time, and I thought I would be a big cowboy, so I "borrowed" Charles' new boots, even though I knew it was wrong.

When I came to one of my traps up by the bog springs, I realized I had either a coyote, skunk or some other large animal caught in the trap. The animal had dug down in the ground so deep that I couldn't pull him out, so I tied my lariat to the chain and to the saddle horn and used my horse to extricate the animal from the hole. After a hard struggle, the horse pulled a very large and angry badger out of the hole. Though I had a .22 rifle with me, I didn't want to damage the hide by putting a bullet hole in it, so I grabbed a big stick to hit the badger with. The first swing I made only partially stunned the badger, and he retaliated by attacking me! He grabbed my right foot in his mouth and clamped down! I vacated the boot immediately. It was a good thing the boot was several sizes too large for me or I would have lost at least a toe! I grabbed my rifle and dispatched the badger very quickly. It was then that I learned that a badger's jaws lock when they bite down hard on something. I could not get the boot out of his mouth. After skinning the hide from the badger's head, I had to cut the muscles that held the jaw closed before I could get the boot out of his mouth. To my horror, there were only two little strips of leather holding the toe to the rest of the boot. Boy, was I going to get a real "larruping" when Charles saw his beautiful boots completely ruined!

When I got home I decided that there was no use to hide the boots, because sooner or later the truth would come out, so I put them back where they were and waited for the axe to fall.

When the family got home, I confessed to Charles what I had done, and how stupid it was of me. Charles looked sadly at the remains of his boots and then said I should be more careful--that I could have been badly hurt. He said it was all right because when he wore the boots, he was afraid people would think he was a snob or something.

If it takes a better man than Charles to get into heaven, then it is a lonely place indeed!

**RECOLLECTIONS OF GRANDMA FOWKES, (EDITH LOUISE BELL)
JAY AND GENE FOWKES**

Our best recollections of our Fowkes grandparents, Charles M. Fowkes Sr. and Edith Louise Bell Fowkes, are confined to Grandmother, Edith Bell Fowkes, since grandfather Fowkes had died before Jay was a year old.

Jay Fowkes:

These are some of the first things I can remember when I was a child. My grandmother Fowkes (Edith Louise Bell Fowkes), apparently according to what I've been told, taught me how to speak. She listened to me whenever I had anything to say because my parents being deaf weren't able to fully accomplish this. I was told I really didn't learn to talk until I was about three years old.

I'd often visit my Grandmother Fowkes who lived just a few yards from us and watch her cook meals. She would tell me many things. For instance she used to tell me how well I could tell her what time it was when the sun went down. One time when she asked me what time it was, I noticed that the sun had just gone down so I said, "Well, it's 8 o'clock" and sure enough it was right when she checked it with a battery powered radio she had. (A big battery had to run it, not like the little transistor ones today.) We didn't have electricity in those days; we had kerosene or white gas lanterns. One day when Grandmother asked me what time it was, I said, "Well it's about 8 o'clock" -- the sun had just gone down. She went to check, but couldn't find out what time it was. They'd never say on the radio and apparently I'd been completely wrong. It had been much earlier in the evening, but being young as I was I forgot that the sun goes down earlier and earlier in the later part of the year.

My grandmother also taught me many things. I used to stutter and she would work with me trying to get me to overcome my speech defect. She also taught me how to whistle.

Gene Fowkes:

I. Earliest recollection of Grandma Fowkes (Edith Bell)

A. I remember visiting her in the big log house on the ranch. She would always be cooking things on a big coal/wood stove and would give us (Jay and I) cookies to eat. She had a battery-operated radio and used to listen to soap operas. (One as I remember, was called "Kitty Foil".)

B. I remember driving with the family to Logan, Utah to visit grandma. She was living there and taking care of Uncle Clarence while he was going to Utah State University (USAC at the time). She had a plum tree in her yard and we boys had great fun picking and eating them.



**Mary, mother Edith Bell Fowkes, Ethel
(mother and daughters)**



**Grandmother Edith Bell Fowkes,
about 1944**