

Selected excerpts from:

Missing Stories, by Leslie G. Kelen and Eileen Hallet Stone

Nathan "Woody" Wright
(Assembly-line Worker, Sperry UNIVAC),

pg. 96

"I was born in Havana, Cuba, but the first thing I can recollect is living in a tenant house on 127th Street and Fifth Avenue in New York. I lived there till I had my accident...In New York City, you don't have too many places to play but the street, see. So me and some kids had built this car from an orange crate and skate wheels. Well, it wasn't really a car. Just an orange crate, a board, and some wheels. Anyway, we was on 127th Street, trying it out. The street ran off a hill down into Fifth Avenue. And me and this boy were on the wagon. It had brakes and everything. But when we got down to the bottom, we couldn't stop. The brakes went out right when this bus arrived. He [the other boy] got killed - instantaneously. I didn't. I was luck-lucky. The doctors didn't give me twenty-four hours to live, but well, here I am. I was seven years old then. I'm sixty-seven now.

...my parents had bought a home in this ethnic neighborhood. That's what they call it now. We just called it "neighborhood" then.

It was an area composed of Italians, Poles, Irish, and Germans. And the kids in the neighborhood took to me; and that helped me come out of myself. They'd take me out in my little wagon and pull me around the block. They'd take me to the fields where they played ball, like nothing had happened. And when I started back to school, walking on crutches, they helped me learn to use my artificial legs. See, at that time, we had to walk to school, because there was no such thing as a school bus. We lived about a good half mile from school, as I recall. So, in the morning, they'd come and get me, take me to school, and I walked. When we came out, we used to go to an Italian grocery store across from the school, but a pop or an ice cream cone, then head for home.

Well, these guys would take my crutches and make me walk without them. First, they made me walk about eight or nine feet. Then they'd increase it. Eventually, I just threw my crutches away...those kids helped me realize I could do anything anybody else could do with two good legs.

Now, my parents worked as domestics in the town of Greenwich. They lived on the estate of the people they worked for and came home on weekends. My father's sister, my aunt, took care of me while they were gone. My parents had their own living quarters, and they were servants...

Though they weren't well educated as far as books were concerned, they would sit down and explain things to me. My dad talked to me about the ways of the world, how things operated, what the government was up to, what was happening. He'd take me fishing, take me to ball games. I was his only child; so anywhere my dad went, I went. My mother also sat down and explained things to me...

In the house, we had lots of books. My dad had oodles and goodles of books. You see, whatever the boss man, Mr. Mallory and Mrs. Mallory, bought for their kids, they would buy for me...My folks never had to buy me clothes either, because Mr. Mallory had a son my age. When he'd buy his son a suit, he'd buy me one. So I was fortunate that way. I had things the average poor kid didn't have, and I never had serious problems with the opposite race.

Oh, every now and then, I'd get into a little fight, but that's part of life. You know, some kid would call me "nigger," or I'd call him "guinea" [Italian] or "Polack son of a _____." But...we all went to school in the neighborhood. And it didn't really didn't make no difference whether you was black, green, or purple."

Harry Isadore Smith
(Chicken Farmer),

pg. 139

"Originally, both of my parents were from what was Poland at that time...I remember that because, as a young boy going to junior high school, I was the one who was instrumental in bundling up bags of clothing for our relatives and writing their address on at least ten different labels so that each package had the right permission to be delivered to the right person in Poland. Of course, we didn't know whether those packages ever got to them, but that didn't deter us from trying."

I did a little of everything on the farm...I would feed the chickens, gather the eggs, and candle them for blood spots. In the warmer weather, I'd say I worked six hours a day after school."

**Norman Nathan
(Musician, Businessman),**

pg. 143

My father emigrated from Russia in 1889; and he came to Salt Lake in 1890; and he became a citizen in 1895. Since he was the first in his family, uncles and cousins followed. He helped them come, and they settled near us in the blocks around Ninth South and West Temple."

**Joel Shapiro
(Merchant),**

[photo pg. 154]

pg. 153-155

My father was born in Russia, near Minsk or Pinsk. He was born in 1874 and entered this country with his father and another brother in 1890 or 1891. He came in the great Russian-Polish exodus to America, and whether they came because the two sons were threatened with conscription, I don't know. It's an unusual story. The grandfather came first, then the mama [grandmother]. The eldest son contracted consumption, as they called it in those days, and he was sent to Denver [Colorado] to cure it. Accompanying the eldest son was my father, who was the time seventeen. Not long after they settled in Denver - within a year - the brother died. So that is how my father, at the age of seventeen, came West.

His first job, he would often tell me, was selling soap. Somebody in those days gave young boys soap to sell door to door. The idea as to ring a doorbell, and when the lady of the house answered, instead of launching into his products, he would give her a little bar of the soap as a present to get the door open. He told this story many times. He no sooner started out on his first job than he was arrested for selling without a license. They took him to the precinct headquarters, and he was horrified. What a terrible thing, he felt, to be arrested and all he was trying to do was sell soap. Two bars for a nickel."

**Helen Frank Sandack
(Housewife),**

pg. 156

My father was born in Grodno, Russia, in 1873. His name [was] Arthur Frank. The family name was originally Fratovnick, I think. It was changed, as many were, when people came here. My father arrived in America in 1903. He was already married to my mother, and they had three very young children who were all under the ages of five or six. My grandparents never came over. I never knew them. Of course, it seems astounding to us "now" that families could leave families, knowing that they'll never see them again. But I didn't think much about that when I was little."

**Rose Arnovitz
(Housewife),**

[photo, pg. 163]

pg. 163-164

My parents were Anna and Abraham Leibowitz. They were from Romania and married there. I have a copy of their wedding invitation. I have the ribbon that was on the candles of the wedding table. I have the coat my father wore to his wedding. It looks brand new. They came here because he didn't want to serve in the army because of the pogroms. During a pogrom, soldiers would steal everything from you and beat you if you were Jewish. My father's sister was beaten during a pogrom. They killed her husband and left her for dead. Well, she wasn't; she came to America, too. But she was left with a tic from that beating. She could never stop her head from shaking. She used to tease, "you know, I always say no."

My grandmother lived in a little town, what they called a dorf, a country town. She had a restaurant, but it wasn't like a restaurant, as we know it here. You could call it a little inn. People knew what a fine cook she was and made reservations to eat. This is where my mother learned to cook as well. Of course, they brought this knowledge to America and [used it] at every gathering at our home, where taste and presentation of food is very important.

My mother, father, and grandmother, and my mother's single sister and my brother left Romania in 1906. They got as far as Holland when my father was detained because of an eye ailment. My grandmother and my aunt traveled on but my father and mother and their son had to stay until he was declared cured. Then they came to America. They came by boat, of course. And they went to Cleveland, because my mother's two brothers were living there.

My family was not destitute, even though no one was allowed to take anything out of the country and my family left much behind. My grandmother used to tell us how she made a slit in the lining of her coat and fitted gold pieces inside."

Sidney Matz
(Crane Operator, Kennecott Mining Company),
[photo, pg. 172],
pg. 171-173

"My grandfather was a rabbi in Russia. He was also my dad's only teacher; he learned him how to read down in the basement of the shul. Who knew how my dad learned more, since that was the only schooling he ever had. But he was a genius at numbers. He added faster than a machine..."

My dad literally walked out of Russia and into South Africa when he was thirteen years old. He used to tell me about pogroms in his village. Cossacks came in on horses and just slaughtered the Jews in the town. When they started killing the young Jewish boys, my grandfather gave [my father] a two-and-a-half-dollar gold piece and sent him to an older brother in South Africa. He had to do this on his own. He made his way through walking, working on a boat, then joining a caravan going across the desert. To this day, we have that gold piece.

After a few years in South Africa, he worked his way to Canada. He got a team of horses and a wagon and put some pots and pans and dry goods...and traveled around the country as a trader - a peddler. Soon he made his way down into Idaho, where he heard about this Russian Jewish family that had a farm. He went out there and met my mother, Annie Fogel. She came from a Russian village near his, but they had never met before. Somehow, she was put on this farm and worked like a slave. That's what they did: brought kids over and worked them on the farm as cheap labor. My mother was illiterate - never learned to read or write. But she had a natural instinct about people and money, and she could never be fooled."

Raymond Hong
(Restaurateur),
pg. 203

"I come to the United States with my uncle [in 1937]. And when you are young, it's not sad to leave [your home country]. It's kind of exciting. We come to Seattle. We have to go to some kind of [immigration] enter there, like [a] jail, you know. You couldn't go anyplace until they interview you. I forget how long it takes - maybe a couple of weeks. Some stayed several months. In those days, you can't bring a wife. Just men come. Those people ask you a lot of questions...And when they ask my father [who met me at the immigration center], both [sets of answers] have to be correct.

After that, I come to stay with my father. In those older days, there's no place for Chinese to rent in Salt Lake. My dad, like other Chinese men, lives in a little hotel in Plum Alley...That's Chinatown. In our hotel room, there was not heat. You burned coal to keep warm. There was only one toilet for ten rooms. Downstairs, they got some kind of store. People sit. The Tong men...gamble.

When I first come, there are only two young guys like me that come from China. They both live in Plum Alley. Then there is a boy named Gim. He is born here and lives just a few stores up. That's the only children I remember."

Ed Kim
(Restaurateur),
[photo pg. 202],
pg. 205-207

My father came here in 1922. He came by the cheapest method, steerage, which occupied the bottom two layers of the boat. In fact, they were not allowed on the deck with the higher-class passengers. So, the travel conditions were, at best, terrible. The ship was very cramped, the food was terrible, and the journey was long. It took something like forty-five days on the sea, with several stops in the Far East, before they arrived in Seattle,

where the immigration authorities got hold of them. My father went through an inquiry that lasted from four to seven days. As he told us, the interrogation was arduous and very searching. They were looking for things at the time. They tried their utmost to trip him up into making statements that would not be beneficial to him.

After that, he came into Lewiston, Idaho, to an area that Chinese has settled in. Once there, he went right to work to repay their financial indebtedness for his piece of paper, which, as I understand, with passage and everything was several thousand dollars. He worked seven days a week, fifteen hours a day, for fifteen cents an hour washing dishes in a restaurant.

[If they ask, explain...] Immigration difficulties for the Chinese began right after the completion of the [continental] railroad. All of a sudden, the coolies, or the laborers, found themselves unwelcome. There was even some conservative thought of sending all of them back to China. Instead, an immigration law was passed that compelled every Chinese to register with Immigration, regardless of how they had entered this country. The law permitted them to come and go, provided they documented their going and approximate return. But families were not allowed to unite from the old country. Chinese women were prohibited from joining their husbands here. And the law allowed no immigration of relatives. Son and daughters [could come] only prior to their sixteenth birthday. So it was a very, very restrictive law.

[To enter the country.] Chinese immigrants developed ways of beating the system. In a span of anywhere from three to six years, they made several trips [back to China]. Each time they returned to the states and passed through Immigration, they declared a larger and larger family - mostly sons, of course. A man may have had only two sons, but by the time he came through for the third time, he declared four, with two being fictitious. These fictitious sons, called "paper sons," he could then sell off to various other candidate, who would assume his family name in order to get into this country."

Helen Ong Lousie
(Restaurateur),
[photo, pg. 211],
pg. 212-213

My grandfather has three sons and one daughter. The oldest son, he decided to stay home and take care of the family. So my father, the third son, came to the states when he was fourteen years old...When my dad first came to Utah, he and his father lived in Salt Lake. They even spend time in Plum Alley, which was full of gambling joints. Of course, my grandfather smoked opium. And they slept in the same room, so the smell of the opium went right into my dad's clothes. When he'd go to school, the teacher would question him about it. My dad was in high school then, at West High. That's when he found out about discrimination. He found out he couldn't go to certain theaters or swim at Wasatch Springs. And when he'd go to school, they'd call him "Chink, Chink, Chinaman," which is a disgrace, you know. Nowadays, anybody call you that, you just go sock them in the face. But that's when he said he learned to keep to himself. He was afraid of being deported.

...When the war [WWI] started, Grandpa got scared he'd be drafted, so he took him back to China and got him married. After the war, my father left his wife in China and returned to the U.S. As soon as he saved a little money, though, he would go home and visit his family. I was born during one of those visits. My brother was born during another.

When my brother was four years old, my father brought him and my mother to the U.S. They left me back in the old country, where I went from relative to relative. Of course, wherever I'd go, my father always sent money, so each relative fought for me to stay with them, just to get the money. Then, when war broke out [with Japan] in 1937, Dad decided he better bring me over to the United States before the war got too big."

William W. Louie
(Principal in the Architectural Firm of Scott, Louie, and Browning),
[photo pg. 211],
pg. 215-217

"My father left Toishan, a farming district close to Canton, in 1909 and like his father and grandfather before him came to the United States, to San Francisco, to find work. As with most Chinese men of the time, he left his wife behind in China. While [he was] in Park City, my father's first wife died, and it wasn't until 1919, when he was thirty-four years old, that he went back to China to marry [my mother]. In October 1921, he brought her to Ogden. My brother Harry was born the following month. I was born two years later...

Now, my father was an uncommon member of Utah's Chinese community, because he had a family here. In Ogden in the '30s, there were only three Chinese families among two hundred men. Most of these bachelors

talked about going back to China, whereas my dad - especially after he started to raise a family in the U.S. - never did...My father never became fluent in English. And it didn't matter; because in the restaurant, he was usually in the kitchen, and even as a waiter he would hardly have to use it. My mother never spoke much English either...

I did not speak English until the first grade. But then I learned quickly. My dad always wanted us to get a good education. Both of my parents pushed us to better ourselves. For themselves, though, they never had any big goals. Every day, they were just trying to subsist. My father never had a car. We always rented a house. We didn't have many luxuries...

We rented our house in Ogden for twenty-five dollars a month...The house had a living room two bedrooms, a kitchen, and kind of a dining room. Seven kids (there were nine in our family) slept in one bedroom, while my mother and father slept in the other. In the living room, the sofa opened into a bed for my older brother and me. My mother did our cooking on a gas burner, like a hot plate, that sat on top of a table that had rollers on its legs. For meals, she would roll the table into the kitchen, prepare food on the tabletop, then roll it back into the dining room. Everybody sat around it and ate.

Eugene Robert Barber
(Railroad Worker, Truck Driver),
[photo pg. 256],
pg. 251-254

I'll tell you what I know about my father. He came from a little town in the province of Calabria, right in the toe of the boot. He had two brothers, one older and one younger. The older brother came to America first. When he got a job in a mine in Pittsburgh, he sent for the other two. My father was about thirteen years old when he got here, and he was kind of a little rebel. They used to work different shifts [in the mine], so they could all live in a one-room place. They worked these shifts so the apartment wouldn't be too crowded. But the other brother kept the money and doled it out as he thought they needed it.

Well, my father decided he didn't want to live that way. So, he just took off and hitchhiked back to the West. He came West and wound up in Salina, Colorado, and got a job on the Rio Grande Railroad. He worked there for quite a number of years. That's where he met my mother. Then the railroad transferred him to Salt Lake City. He worked for the railroad up until 1922.

I'll tell you a story. About Twenty-first South, in that area, it was all farmland in the days when we were growing up. And there were a lot of garden-type farmers. It wasn't trees and orchards. It was vegetable-type farming. Well, we [kids] went down there one night and stole a sack of potatoes out of some guys's garden, and my father made us bring it back. Times weren't good for us. We lived in the Depression era. In fact, I'll tell you, it got so bad for us at one time that my mother had to keep us out of school. This was 1932, ...I was going to Franklin Elementary School, and I remember staying home because we just didn't have enough clothes [to wear]. But that's how honest he was. He was a good, honest, strong man.

...We'd go down to the Fifteenth Ward [the Mormon chapel]...The caretaker lived next door, and we'd ask him if we could play ball. He'd say, "Sure, as long as you don't wreck the joint."

So, we used to play basketball all the time. Everybody played. Gee, we had blacks, Greeks, Italian, Mormons.. We all grew up together, and we didn't realize [differences]. So I can't tell you why in my lifetime becoming adults made such a difference. As children it didn't make a difference. But as soon as we became adults, all of sudden you culture, your color, my culture, my color, made a difference in our lives. I don't understand it. Never did. Growing up, I didn't have that problem. I don't have that problem now. As far as I'm concerned, I don't care if a black or a Jew or a Greek lives next door to me. I don't care. He's got as much right to that house as I have. But to a lot of people that seems to be a big problem. [They worry] the Vietnamese are moving in; the Tongans are moving in. I don't know why. I can't answer that.

Mary Juliano
(Housewife),
[photo pg. 263],
pg. 264-265

I was born in Calabria, Italy, and raised in my grandmother's house. I was raised in her arms. I slept in her arms. She was the love of my life, more so than my mother. That's why it almost killed me when I had to leave her. My father had left earlier to come to the United States, the country of providence and work. He worked in the mines back East and then moved to Sunyside, Utah. After five years, he saved enough money to

send for my mother and me. I was five years old when we came to this country. We came by ship, I can remember going on deck to the edge of the ship and watching the fish jump up and splash me in my face. And I remember going right to Price, Utah, and then Moreland. But leaving my grandmother behind was the biggest trauma in my life. That's why I'm so much like, "Hey, everything is hunky-dory!" on the outside, but on the inside I'm a very sad person.

...When I was about ten or eleven, my father bought a farm just past the city limits going towards Wellington...We worked hard on the farm. Besides keeping up with the vegetable garden and weeding the wheat, Mama and I kept the ditch banks clean of weeds...It wasn't easy, but we made a living from it. I went to school, but I had my chores to do, and so I used to run home and beat the school bus. By the time it passed us, I would be in the garden working.

...I worked hard all those years. By the time I was in high school, I'd get up early in the morning to milk the cow and get my brothers and sisters ready for school. I sewed their shirts, cobbled their shoes, cut their hair, and took care of the gardening. I cut Papa's hair, too. We didn't live fancy, but we lived good. We had good food, fresh vegetables, fresh milk, and we made a living.

Filomena Fazzio Bonacci
(Housewife, Seamstress, Laundry Worker),
[photo pg. 276],
pg. 275-278

"My full name is Filomena Fazzio Bonacci. My father's name was Rosario Fazzio. My mother's name was Filomena Bonacci Fazzio, the opposite of mine. They were married in Decollatura, Italy, and then my dad used to migrate. He migrated four or five times. He'd come back here and go to work, then he'd go back, stay a year, come back, and go back again. My mother finally told him "If you're going back [to America] again, don't come back anymore. I can't live like this." ...But he loved Mama too much to leave her, so he brought his family over in 1908, and they move to Sunnyside. Mama had three children and was pregnant with my second brother when they came, so he was born here in the United States. A year later I was born...Then she had four more...There were nine of us [in the family].

My father was a coal miner...He was a quiet man; yet when he talked, you'd think he was arguing with the world.

My mother...was a jewel...She was friendly to everybody. She rarely got mad. When there was trouble, she was always there to make peace. Always. If anybody was arguing, she'd say, "Now, come on, come on. Can't we talk this out without getting our tempers up?"

...When I was a young girl, she would take me out in the fields. Starting at about the age of seven, she'd say, "You come with me." So, to this day, I like working outside in the garden better than I like being in the house, because I was "the outside girl." My sisters worked in the house, and I'd be outside with mother, planting our garden, hoeing and cultivating...She couldn't read or write - neither could my dad - but she was very good in everything she did.

Oh, my mama, she'd always make some little party for us...But when she had time, she'd sew our doll clothes, show us how to play with our dolls and how to take care of them. Then, when my sister got married, she [and her husband] moved [beside us]. And once she started having babies, we started taking care of them. It was a lot of fun. We grew up not like nieces or cousins but like one big family.

Mary Kavarino
(Housewife, Teacher),
pg. 295

My parents left Trentino, the beautiful Alps of Italy, for the desolate, treeless, sandy hills of Wyoming. I asked my mother once, "How could you stand being in that kind of environment?" "When you're hungry," she said, "you move to where you find food."

My father was from the little village of Brezarsio. His family lived in a large castle that had been converted into many small apartments. Their home over looked the Valle d'Non, which is a picturesque little spot, really. But they had only a small piece of farmland to glean a living from, and they had many mouths to feed: six boys and two girls. So they were very poor, and it was a hard life for them. My mother was born in a neighboring village called Castilfondo, which means "castle." Her family had a little farm in the bottom area of the castle grounds, but they were very poor, too. She told me [that] once her brother was so hungry, he wanted to eat the last of the potatoes, but his mother said he couldn't. "If we eat all the potatoes, we won't have nay to plant for

the next year," she said. He went into the garden and ate three radishes for his lunch - radishes. It was a hard life. So hard, I don't think my father ever wanted to return after he and my mother made America their home.

Chiyo Matsumiya
(Housewife, Seamstress),

[photo pg. 318],

pg. 319-320

My [maiden] name is Ogino Chiyo. I was born in Fukui Ken, Onyu Gun, on April 10, 1899. When I look back at my village, I realize it is a lot like Salt Lake. Near the Japan Sea, the mountains are always covered with snow and pine trees. By my village, a big stream borders on the back side. My home was a small place quite a distance from our [regional] school. I remember as a child walking to school and wearing long snow boots. I also remember, making steps up to the temple roof in the snow and sliding down on a straw mat - just like skiing...

I stayed with my family until I graduated from grammar school and went to Kyoto. Since my school records were good, my father wanted me to become a schoolteacher. But in those days, the custom was to go to Kyoto and work as a maid to learn manners and etiquette - and then to marry. Besides, my mother said, "Oh, this child is just like a boy, and if she becomes a teacher, she will be so conceited, we won't be able to do anything with her."

So I went to Kyoto. I didn't work as a maid, because I learned I was going to go to America [as a bride]. My parents had arranged the marriage. But I didn't see or know my future husband, although we were from the same village. At the time, he was working in the United States, and I went to the Kyoto Jogakko [a girls' school] for about three years to learn English...

When Matsumiya returned to Japan, and I saw him for the first time, I remember thinking he was rather tall for a Japaese. I was too, for that matter. We got married in Japan and came together to America in 1918...

Jim Yoshio Tazoi

(Farmer),

[photo pg. 347],

pg. 348

My parents were from Kumamoto-Ken. That's down in the southern end of Japan. My father came over as a young man [in] 1910, about the time a lot of young Japanese fellows were coming over. He came to Hawaii first, then San Francisco, then inland to Wyoming, and then to Utah. We used to have a sugar beet factory here, and they recruited stoop labor. That's the reason he came. He probably worked in the fields a while, then started renting ground and sharing rent, and eventually he bought our little farm here [in Garland].

Peter George Condas
(Shepherd, Miner, Businessman),

[photo, pg. 376],

pg. 377-378

My name is Peter George Condas. I'm born on April 15, 1897. So I'm a pretty old man. I was born in a little village by the name of Strome, ninety miles west from Athens. My father, he was a famer's son. He didn't have no education. He married a village girl named Helen Charchalis. They had eight children - four boys and four girls. The girls, they died when they were young. The boys, they grow up and die old. In our town, we didn't have no doctor, no hospital. To get a doctor, you had to go thirty-two miles. And by the time the doctor come, the person was dead. [The villagers] didn't have anything. Let me tell you, they was living a pretty bad life.

In the year 1904, my oldest brother, John, left for the United States. He was eighteen. I tell you what make him leave. Rumors were going around town: If you can only get into the United States, that's all it takes. You can live a rich and happy life. You don't have to work hard. All yo got to do [is] go out in the fields, pick up flowers, especially roses, sit down in one of the big streets in a corner, [and] a man with his wife or girlfriend will buy your flowers. That's what they heard. So my mother started crying day and night: She won't be able to see her son anymore. She died on account of that [in 1908].

Then, my two other brothers come to Utah. I stayed back with my father. My father had two pieces of land. He was raising potatoes, corn, and wheat. He also had grapevines and thirty or forty goats. Eit, I might as well

tell you, it was a poor existence. He worked all day with a hoe. And when dinner came, he had a bowl, a bottle of vinegar, and garlic. He cut the garlic up, put it in the bowl, added the vinegar, and put in dry bread to soak it up...

So, in 1916, when my brothers wrote "We're sending \$200: sell everything, and come over," my father sold everything. Well, he gave it away. We [only] got eleven hundred dollars for everything, because the people who lived there were poor, and we came to America.

Andrew Katsanevas
(EIMCO Plant Superintendent),
pg. 406-407

My parents are from Crete, Greece. My mother...she followed her first husband to Sunnyside, Utah, where he worked in the mines. That's what Greek men did at the beginning. Through one relative or another writing home, they found out where the jobs were. That's how it worked. My mother's first husband was killed in the mines. As close as I remember the story, he was digging for coal when a slab of rock dislodged and crushed him, leaving my mother a widow with children.

In those days, though, families didn't allow young Greek women to stay single. So, several years later, when relatives insisted she marry again, she married my dad. In 1922, I became their firstborn child. Two years later, my brother Mike was born. Five days after his birth, my dad, who was home because of the birth, returned to work. My mother tried to get him to stay, but he insisted on going back. At about eight o'clock that morning, the 8th of March, 1924, an explosion occurred which killed my dad and a number of other miners. Oh, it was very tragic. Families were left with seven, eight, nine children. There was no such thing as compensation. And while funds did exist, like the one set up by Governor Mabey, they were very minimal.

I had some uncles who would have been killed, too, in that explosion. But they were trying to organize a union elsewhere and were involved in a strike-breaking situation that very day. So, they were lucky! Of course, my mother never got over it. From that day and for forty years, she wore black: cotton black hose, black shoes, and a black dress. As was the custom, she mourned all her life and raised all of us on her own.

Mary Pappas Lines
(Social Worker),
[photo, pg. 411?],
pg. 418-421

My parents were both from Mavrolithari, a remote village in the province of Rumeli...They were both homesick. My father used to tell us how strange it was initially to be here...The people were kind to him. That's how he always felt. But their customs were different...My mother wasn't [formally] educated, but she was smart. She ran the house and ran our lives, and she wasn't a willing violet. Though she spoke broken English, if there was a conflict at school, she'd put on her hat and her good shoes on and march up to school to talk to the teacher [and] work it out...

I'm trying to recall when I first knew [my mother and I] were different. I must have known it as soon as I started school, when I was five or six years old. I didn't compare myself with the French family, who lived next door, but with the Americans. And I had some self-consciousness about having American kids come to our house. I can remember feeling embarrassed that we were different, that as soon as we stepped in the door my mother would talk Greek.

In the first place, the kids made fun of me. "Your mother says blah-blah-blah..."...but my mother would always make short shrift of it...she would infer it was too bad for them they weren't also Greek. Then they'd have something to be proud of.

John Florez
(Social Worker, Community Activist, Field director for the National Urban Coalition, Director of Equal Employment Opportunity at the University of Utah),
[photo pg. 444],
pg. 450-453

My parents were born in the state of Zacatecas, which is in the central part of Mexico. I don't know how they crossed the border [into the United States]. But they ended up in San Antonio, Texas, [in 1916] and from there my dad said they were recruited to go to Idaho as farmworkers. They were put in a boxcar, given a piece of

bologna and bread, and brought up North. They ended up living in tents here. To this day, my dad has a little nick on his ear where the rats gnawed away at him while he was sleeping in a tent.

In Idaho, they followed the crops. Then, in about 1920, they came down to Utah, and my father became a laborer on a track gang with the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. That's what he ended up doing most of his life. He was a hard and loyal worker...

We lived in an old boxcar - the wooden type they used for passenger cars in the olden days. There were six cars, and Mexican and white families lived in them. They were quite narrow, but long, so we divided ours in half. One half was a kitchen, with an old potbelly stove and a table. The other half was our bedroom. An outhouse was way down - far from us. There was no running water...The ground was all black-cinder covered...Yet around our porch, around the edge of our railroad car, my mother always has nasturtiums. She had a green thumb, and that was a very important part of our lives, being able to see something grow and flower. I also remember my mother scrubbing the wood floor with soap and lye. So our little house was clean.

In the evenings, after she got supper, my mother would pray with us and tell us stories. She knew a lot of what they call *Cuentos*, traditional Mexican folktales. In every culture, you have what they call the Llorona, the legend of the crying one. According to ours, it's a nun that fell in the well or in a mine shaft. At nighttime, you hear this wailing in the wind, it's usually a Llorona. So I grew up with these stories and her accounts of Aztec culture.

On the weekends, we [the Mexican families] would come together. We would have dances at each other's homes. We'd start Saturday afternoon and go till three or four o'clock the next morning. The musicians would play until their fingers were bleeding. There was no baby-sitting. We kids were all part of the milieu, part of the package. My godfather, Julio Lemos, was always there...And after eating, we kids would go bed. In the middle of the night, he would come and pick me up...and he'd dance all around with me. And if you think about significant others, the extended family, it was there. There was a...lot of love there. And those ties were important. They gave me a sense of community, a sense of belonging.

*Father Reyes Garcia Rodriguez
(Catholic Priest, the Guadalupe Church, Salt Lake City),
pg. 455-456*

Maria Hinijsa Garcia de Rodriguez - my mother - was from Fresnillos [in] Zacatecas, Mexico; Guadalupe Gonzalez Rodriguez - my father - was born in Bolanos, a mining town off the beaten track in Jalisco. I'm not sure what his father's livelihood was, except Bolanos was a poor area with a few mines. My father had a sister and two brothers. His older brother had a carpenter's shop; his younger brother ran a little dry goods store.

My mother was actually born in Rio de Medina. I said Fresnillos, but these were little ranches, small communities. They call them ranchos. There were two [children] in her family; her brother and herself. He mother died either giving birth to her brother or shortly thereafter. So they were raised by her father, until the time of the [Mexican] Revolution. In the Revolution, her father was killed; at which time they were taken in by grandparents. When [the grandparents] become too old to take care of them, their godparents took over. And when [the godparents] got too old, about 1920, they were sent to live with an aunt in Salt Lake City.

My mother told me it was [all] very hard because they were very poor. Her grandparents just had their little farm where they raised corn and beans. They had a few animals, and life was very simple and plain. When they moved in with their godparents, they were asked, "What do you want - good clothes or full bellies?" That was the choice they had to make. They naturally chose to be able to eat.

During the Revolution, my father left Mexico and went up to California as a migrant worker. He followed the migrant path that went through California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Utah. He just followed the seasons. Wherever there was work, he would move.