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María Boevidé De Rosas

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Mining in Mexico
Oral History Project

María Teresa Beovide de Rosas
By Michelle G. Benavides

November 28, 1996

B: This is an interview with María Teresa Beovide de Rosas. The interview, by Michelle Benavides, is part of the Mining in Mexico Oral History Project. We are located at the ranch of the Rosas family in Búfalo, Chihuahua, Mexico. Today's date is November 28, 1996.

How about if we start with a little biographical information, Mrs. Rosas. If you could tell me when and where were you born, please?

R: I was born October 21, 1913. I was born in Matehuala, San Luis Potosí. When I was thirteen years old we transferred to San Luis Potosí and that's where I went to *la preparatoria* and then to the university for two years. I didn't finish because I got married.

B: Well, let's back up a little bit. I'd like to have you tell me a little about your parents.

R: I never knew my parents. I was two years old when my father died and three years old when my mother died, so we were raised by my mother's sister. She was very young. I think she was in her early twenties when she took care of us. We were four: three girls and one boy.

B: What were their names?

R: My older sister was Concha, Concepción. I was the second one. The third one, her name was Carmen, but she died in Matehuala when she was thirteen years old- I think it was typhoid or something like that- and my younger brother. We were all very close. My father and mother were married for eight years and for the first four years they didn't have a family. And on the fourth year the first one was born. No, I think it was the third year that the first one was born. Two years later I was born; one year later, Carmen and then my younger brother a year after that. So for the first four years there were no children and then in the last four years there were four of us.

B: How did your parents pass away?

R: Well, it was after the war. I don't know what kind of disease they got in Mexico. They thought it was typhoid, but I don't think it was because they say- of course, I never knew this because I was just two years old- they got some red spots and the whole family ended, I think, in three months...died. My father was a businessman and he had a brother-in-law that was a doctor. He was coming from the States and went to visit his son-in-law. He got this disease. He was a doctor and was infected by some of the patients he had. My father, they say, he had gotten close to see when they were giving him a shot and something dropped in his eye. Forty days later he got the disease, too. Two months later my father died; his sister,

and the doctor, his brother-in-law, died, also. My mother got very, very sick. They say that she was that way for forty days...almost unconscious. She recovered, but within a year she died. I think she was too weak and she died from upset stomach or something like that. Of course, in those days, the doctors didn't know as much then as they do now.

B: Where were your mother's parents from?

R: My mother's father was one of the richest land owners. He had a ranch and he married twice. From the two marriages, I think, he had eighteen children.

B: Eighteen?

R: Eighteen. From his ranch, when he died, he gave a farm to every one of his children...all eighteen. Everyone got a farm.

B: In which state?

R: Monterrey, Nuevo León, and San Luis Potosí. All, because it was such a large area, got farms. The biggest place is called San Francisco in, I think, Nuevo León. He was a very wealthy man. He was my great-grandfather. My grandmother married a lawyer who was from Nuevo León, from Monterrey. García is my mother's name. My father's [family], they were Basque. They came to Mexico. The Count de la Maza brought him to that mining place, El Real de Catorce. Of course, they were very good friends. I think my grandfather was of nobility, *un título de nobleza*, something like that. My grandmother was very clever and she said, "Here, we live in American

defense...not a penny." So they were in Real de Catorce and they were raised with the sons of the Count de la Maza. They brought professors from Europe especially to teach them over there. I don't know too much about this, but you can imagine. When they grew older they went to the seminary. And in those days the seminaries were the best places to learn.

My father's family had three boys and one girl. The girl married a doctor. My Uncle Raymond, when he grew up, was very smart. At one time, years later, he was the Director of the Universidad de Morelia in Michoacán. He never married. The other son married when he was older and they had two girls. His sister had six girls. They were the only cousins I ever knew. After this, the other son, Edmundo, he got married. He was old and they had two children. We came to the north and never kept in touch with them, except with the one sister. We were almost raised like sisters with the six daughters. Well, this is the story of my family.

So when we lost my father and mother, my mother's sister took care of the four of us. Of course, we didn't have to worry about money because my father left enough for us. He owned that place in Matehuala. He owned- he was partners with someone- the telephone company and the power company. He had a factory where they made candies and *chocoláte*. You know, in those days they used to have, especially all the Spanish families in the afternoon, *chocoláte* liquid- not like *cacao*. They make it in *tabletas*. He had *molinos* to grind the corn,

but this kind of machinery- now they run on electricity- they were machines they brought from Switzerland. They burned charcoal to make steam. I think he had four of this kind.

We lived in San Luis. My older sister got married when she was sixteen years old. She married with this American named Bob Ross. After they got married they moved to Los Angeles, [California] and lived there. About that time my younger sister, Carmen, died from typhoid. I think, maybe, she drank water from the school that was not good and she got typhoid. In those days typhoid lasted about forty days. They didn't feed them, so I think that the reason they died, more so than the disease, was the diet they gave to them. They just got a little bit of milk and *sidra*, or something like this, so you can just imagine.

B: You're saying they died from lack of food?

R: From lack of food. It's different now; they feed you and feed you everything...a lot of food, but in those days they would just give milk for forty days. After this she had *púrpura*, you know, something like hemophilia. She bled from everywhere. In those places the hospitals were not very good, so she died. My younger brother studied medicine and became a doctor. Well, he died in Houston. Well, that is the story of my family. We were raised by my aunt. I was eighteen years old when my aunt died. When I was going to school I lived with my grand-aunt-in-law. But we always looked to her as if she was our grandmother because she was so close to us.

She was quite a lady.

B: Did she support you?

R: She was a very rich woman. You know, in those days, the only thing they did, those kinds of people, was own houses. I don't know how many she had. And she was owner of part of the Mina de Santa María del Oro. Now, Santa María in San Luis Potosí in Matehuala was one of the richest silver mines. Whenever she needed to she sold one house and then she sold another house, then she sold another house. (chuckles) That was the thing. But we didn't need to because we still had something; even when I got married I sold the rest of the things we had and kept the money in the bank so my brother could finish school...the one who was a doctor.

B: Was he a medical doctor?

R: Yes, a medical doctor. He died of cancer. I took him to Houston, but there was nothing they could do. I stayed with him for six months in that hospital in Houston. I knew the hospital well. I was very popular. Since I didn't have too much to do I used to do a lot of social work, so I introduced people and told them to go to this doctor or that place. I belonged, in a way, to the hospital. After six months of being there nearly twenty-four hours a day...can you imagine?

B: You were almost like the social administrator.

R: Yes. Everybody knew me.

B: When did he die?

R: He died...I don't remember exactly, but I think it was [19]66

or [19]67.

B: How did you meet your husband?

R: I went on vacation to Estación de Catorce where my sister and her husband lived. He was the manager of the rubber company there. They made the rubber from the *guayule*. During the war they used that kind of rubber because they made a very special rubber, a very strong rubber, that they needed in the war. I went there on vacation and the last year before I got married I taught school for that company...the Continental Rubber Company. Of course, since my brother-in-law was the manager they gave me that position and we taught Spanish. That was a school just for...not the workmen.

B: Children of the managers.

R: Yes. I taught from the first through the sixth grade. And I taught over there for one year before I got married.

B: How old were you when you were there for that year?

R: I was about twenty-one...between twenty-one and twenty-two. Then I got married.

B: How did you meet your husband?

R: There was a pretty close place to that one. And in that place, the next *estación* was about fifteen kilometers away. He worked for a British company. I don't remember the name of the company. He and Vicente Cisneros belonged to El Paso, to the UTEP, [The University of Texas at El Paso]. The two of them worked over there in Catorce. So that is the way... . It took me four years before I decided to marry him.

B: Who introduced you to him?

R: Everywhere, you know, the families get too close.

B: What did you think of him when you first saw him?

R: That I was never going to marry him.

B: Why?

R: I don't know. I liked to have at these times...I had a lot of friends. We were so different. You know, he was so quiet. He was a good boy, but he was quiet, well, different. He started insisting and insisting and insisting and one day I said, "Okay, I'll marry you."

B: Where did he propose to you?

R: In El Real de Catorce where my brother-in-law was the manager. There was a lot of socializing between the two places. There were quite a few Americans in the other company, so we would get too close. One time [this fellow], he was the manager of the other place, wanted to come to see me, but I was very, very young. In those days I was very young. And when this fellow came they told him that I wasn't there. He came to visit me and I said, "No." He was divorced and you know, for people like us, [divorce] was one of the things that was out of the other world, so they never let me even say a word to him. He came to visit me and they told him that I wasn't there. Of course, there were some fellows at the school. There was this lawyer. He wanted to marry me, but I didn't... . I liked to have a lot of friends and I liked to study and I was happy. But one day, I don't know, I decided to get

married with him and I have been very happy with him. We have made a very, very nice couple. We have been through so many things.

B: Where did you have your wedding?

R: Different than my family. You know, by that time my aunt had died, so it was just my brother and I. We were living with that grand-aunt. She had a daughter who had died and that was the only daughter she ever had. For ten years she wore black because she was in mourning. By that time my sister was living in California because they had some business in California with the same company. They had closed the place they had in Catorce, but they went to California. They had another place, so he was working over there. So the only ones that stayed were my sister and my brother. He was even younger. He was still in school. To have had a wedding in San Luis Potosí would have been a very big affair. It would have to be a very big reception and my family would have spent a lot of money. I didn't want to do that, so I said, "I will go and marry in the States." I was married by the law in Mexico, but I stayed in my house. Oh, they wouldn't let me go, of course, no. Then I went to San Antonio, [Texas] and got married there.

B: Why in San Antonio?

R: Because it was the closest, you know, and at this time the train, El Aguila Azteca, passed by San Luis Potosí. It goes straight to Laredo, [Texas] to San Antonio. The bishop in San

Luis Potosí wrote a letter to the bishop in San Antonio and told him that I wanted to marry. But the reason I went to marry over there was because I didn't have anybody to help me in my family to make the reception. I needed to spend a lot of money and things like this, but at that time things had been going and going and I decided I was going to marry in the States. I was going to get married in El Colegio del Sagrado Corazón- the Sacred Heart Sisters- but the train was delayed because in those days the trains were not as accurate. By the time I got there there was no mass and there was no service, so I went and got married *en la iglesia*, in a church. I think it was a cathedral.

B: Did you have a chaperon riding with you on the train from your home to San Antonio?

R: My brother-in-law, of course.

B: And where was Mr. Rosas at the time?

R: He came the next day because I sent him to buy the rings and things like that. We got married in San Antonio.

B: He took time off from work?

R: Yes. As a matter of fact, the bishop was busy at a luncheon someplace or something. My brother-in-law had to go because his wife, my sister, was expecting a baby...Peggy. She was born in Long Beach, [California]. That's where they lived and he needed to go because his wife was having a baby. He told me, "I won't leave you here. I'll take you with me." I told Ramon and he said, "Okay, we'll go to Los Angeles and get

married over there." So we got in touch with the bishop and he said "Okay." He knew him, he had a maid from the other bishop in San Luis Potosí...

End of Tape One

Side A

Beginning of Tape One

Side B

R: We went on our honeymoon to Dallas, [Texas]. It was [during the] centenary of Dallas. They celebrate this. We stayed there and, of course, there were a lot of new things for me.

B: Did you speak English?

R: No. You know, the thing with me, I have my ears used to hearing English, but I didn't speak because I had my brother-in-law and I had two cousins married with the Americans. As for the cousins, as I told you, there were six. Three got married with the Americans and the other three...we got married with Mexicans.

B: But your husband spoke English because he came to the United States as a young boy.

R: Yes.

B: Did he give you a wedding gift?

R: He gave me a watch.

B: Do you still have the watch?

R: No, (laughs) I don't. He didn't know too much about how one marries in Mexico because he was raised in the States. He doesn't know too much about that. So we stayed in San Antonio and then after San Antonio we went to Dallas and stayed in this fair because there was a big fair, you know, a lot of things. You know, it was the centenary when we stayed in Dallas. As a matter of fact, there is no difference where I go on a honeymoon. I think you just waste your money because (laughs) the whole thing is the same.

When we came back from the honeymoon we went to live in the place that he worked. The name of the place was Wadley. And he was up on the mine and he was, like, the foreman. Vicente Cisneros was over there. The manager was Stover. We went on the weekends down the hill because that was up on the hills. We needed to ride horses to go up to the mine.

B: Where did you live in Wadley? Was there a mining camp?

R: Yes, it was a mining camp, but the mining camp was half up the hill...where the mine was. And down the hill was the station. They would bring the ore down by wires in *canastillas*, you know. They brought it down to Wadley. As a matter of fact, when I was married for about five or six months Ramon's mother died...from one day to another. There was no time for anything. The doctor- we have a doctor over there and he was a very good doctor- said, "I always thought that the lady had a tumor or something." Maybe that broke or something because

she died within twenty-four hours. And with this I was also expecting my daughter.

B: In Wadley?

R: In Wadley. I was expecting her, so when she was born I named her after Ramon's mother, Esther. She was never called Esther. She was called Tappy all her life.

B: When you lived in the mining camps, was there a town?

R: No, up there there was not a town.

B: Can you describe to me how you lived in Wadley?

R: There were three [types of] houses there. There were the ones for the miners because the mines were there, but we didn't have anything to do with the miners. There were a few for the employees. But the biggest one was for Stover, his wife, Virginia, and her children. There were the two bachelors, Ramon and Vicente Cisneros and some fellows who worked in the office. There was a couple, Jenkins (?). They lived over there, too. But every weekend we would go down and stay in Wadley, because we were up on the hill and the office was down. We went up and down these hills all the time...riding horses. But he had too much of this place because after a few months he decided he was going to the Philippines. They offered him the job.

B: You had already delivered your baby?

R: No.

B: You were pregnant?

R: Yeah, I was expecting the baby. She was born thirteen months

after I was married...thirteen months. He went to the Philippines. The two of us had already the reservations to go on the same boat to the Philippines, but he decided that I was going with him. And he said, "Let's go to San Francisco and we'll ask the doctor of the boat. If he takes care of you, you will go with me and if he doesn't, then you stay in San Francisco." I said, "I'm not crazy enough to go and stay in San Francisco where I don't know anybody and I don't even speak English! No, I'll stay in my own house!" One doctor told me that I could go when I was sure that I could not ride over there. I went to see another in San Luis and he told me, "You are in perfect health condition, but you need to be sure that this baby is not going to be born on the way." And it was exactly like that. Ramon left and the day he arrived in Japan was the day my baby was born. So when this happened...

B: You were in San Luis Potosí?

R: I went to San Luis Potosí and stayed with my aunt, my grand aunt.

B: So your baby was born in San Luis?

R: In San Luis Potosí. When the baby was fifteen days old... . You know, in those days they would keep you in bed for quite a bit of time. I think they kept me in bed for ten or twelve days. I got up the next day, got my *moisés*. In those days they were made out of bamboo, the little things to carry the baby. I took my baby and went from Catorce to San Antonio, and from San Antonio to Long Beach near Los Angeles. Of

course, over there were my sister and nieces. I never knew them and they never knew me. When I arrived over there, I went just where the people went. I said to myself, "I think maybe I'm going the right place to get out to the..." And this black boy, he took my luggage. I didn't know which one was mine because they all were exactly the same. I didn't know the difference between one and another. And I just ran away, of course, with the baby in my arms. I think maybe somebody gave them the sign, you know, a reference of what I looked like, because somebody called me by my name. It was my brother-in-law and my sister. I stayed in Long Beach a couple of days then one of my sister's daughters took me up to San Francisco to get the boat.

B: Just you and your baby?

R: Yes, me and my baby. I went to San Francisco and then to the Philippines. I left when the baby was two weeks old and I arrived in Manila when the baby was two months old. Can you imagine? Bueno, that was another thing, you know, when Ramon and I, before we got married...

B: When you were courting?

R: Courting. He even gave me a present one time, a lighter- it was gold- to light my cigarettes. And right after we got married, he said, "¡Oye! You smoke too much. You better quit your smoking." A little later he would tell me, "I don't want you to smoke." Just like... . (snaps fingers) So now my problems started. The only thing we ever had fights over,

ever had problems, were over the cigarettes. He would find my cigarettes, take my cigarettes and do it like this (imitates breaking a cigarette) and throw it out. I wanted to kill him, but I couldn't. That was the thing.

So when he met me in Manila, you know, he was down [on the pier] and I was up [in the cabin] and I wanted to try to see him. And he was coming up to see me. Finally, we got together in my room. Of course, I traveled first class, with everything and I had a wonderful time on the boat. I knew how to play bridge.

B: You learned how to play bridge on the boat?

R: I learned how to play bridge when I stayed with my sister because they needed somebody to make the fourth and that was the way I learned to play bridge. There was a German fellow who was over there and he was with some friends, a Swiss couple. And this fellow, with me and the two of them, we made the four. And we played bridge all the time.

B: This was on the boat?

R: On the boat. You know, there was the nurse who took care of... . I forgot to tell you another thing, the main thing. After about a couple of days on the boat the baby started having diarrhea. But, you know, I had never seen children because we almost grew up together. So I called the nurse and told her about it. They brought one Marine who was in Panama. A lot of these people were being taken to Manila. And a lot of these officials and the wives of the officials were over

there. So they brought one of these to be my interpreter to tell the doctor. You know, they took me out of my room and closed the door and I didn't know what was going on. So with this fellow...he spoke just a few words in English. One day I decided to tell the doctor that maybe I didn't have enough milk. I remember when I was on the train a lady was over there and told me that her daughter had a little problem because her baby started having diarrhea. So when I started seeing that there was a little blood I said that the thing was because she doesn't have any milk. So I told this fellow to tell the doctor, "Maybe I don't have any milk." Of course, I always have had too much in here (chuckles and points to breast) but all was lost because I had no milk. So the doctor said, "Yes." Every morning they brought a tray like this (demonstrates dimensions of tray) with little bottles, a bunch of bottles for the baby. After that, she was the best baby I ever had in my life. You know, when we arrived in Honolulu I wanted to go and see the town because the boat goes so close to the town...inside of the town. But the baby, when they gave her the first bottle she slept eight hours...all day long.

B: Eight hours?

R: She was starving because she had no milk. So after this the doctors told me, "Look, you're just going to have to use powdered milk every time you travel because it is easy to fix. But as soon as you get to the Philippines, you start giving

the baby Carnation milk." And, you know, he did not have any space, so when I got to Manila the first thing I did was I bought the Carnation milk and started changing. You know, you're supposed to start changing it little by little. No, I changed it all at once. She never got sick. Another thing he told me was, "You are going to this very hot place, so the baby should not wear any clothes but her diapers or she will get sick." Until she was two years old, when she started using one and a half size shoes, a diaper, and she was... . Because it was so hard...so terrible a time. And that was the way... .

B: When you arrived at the port and disembarked, was that the first time your husband had seen his daughter?

R: Yes. And do you know what he did? I wanted to murder him. I said, "I don't care now Ramon, I brought my pack of American cigarettes that I had on the dressing table." The first thing he did instead of going and seeing the baby, he took out my pack of cigarettes and threw it out the port hole into the ocean. Oh, I was so mad with him! I said, "I want to come back on the same boat!" But I didn't have the money to do it.

So, let me tell you, we went to the Manila Hotel and we wanted the fifth or sixth floor because when you're above the forth or fifth floor the mosquitoes don't go that high, so you can leave the windows open. But I looked through the window and (gasps) I saw something I thought it was a shark. You know, it was an alligator. Well, it was a big one, and it

said, "Chako, chako." Well, I was so scared that I put my arms around Ramon and I forgot that I was so mad and I forgot about my cigarettes. I really wanted to go back. That day I was so mad.

So we stayed, but we needed two or four more days to go from that place to Manila because we lived in Surigao. We stayed in Surigao and went to the mining camp. That was my trip. Of course, when I was on the boat I had a very nice time, you know. There were nurses; I paid them to keep the baby so that I could go to the movie theater. They had theaters on the Japanese boats, but not on the American. They had a Casino Night and there I played bridge with these people. One night they had a picture show; another night they had casino gambling; and in another they had a dance. I went to the dance, of course. I was in my first twenties, so I really enjoyed that trip. Yes, by the time I got over there, the extra three hundred and fifty dollars I had in money I spent on this and that. But I had a good time.

From there we went to this place. And we needed to leave the Philippines. In the main house where we stayed...because they were just building the houses for us. The first one they finished was for the manager. That was Thomson. His name was Joe Thomson and he was married to this lady. She was quite something. You know, this woman...she didn't drink; she didn't smoke; she didn't want to eat anything with garlic, because she was one of these Puritans. It was a horrible

thing, but the good thing was that they taught me how to take care of my baby. You can imagine, me being between twenty-two and twenty-three, and the old one, she was pretty close to fifty, and the other lady who was over there was forty-five or something like this. Mrs. Jones, the trail boss's wife, lived in the best house, so for a while we were alright. You know, they liked the baby very much and things like this, but you start going to one point. I had a servant and she wanted me to get rid of that servant. She was a nurse, this servant, but with the money we paid her she wanted to take care of the baby. She wanted me to fire her because they thought she was going around here or there and, of course, I said, "No." I said, "I'm not getting rid of her. I don't know what I would do. I don't know how to wash the clothes for the baby. I don't know anything." Of course, I didn't know. The only thing I used to do is wash and iron my brasserie and my stockings and my pants. That was all I knew how to do. So we started having some problems with this one. She even told me once that I was a countess, *la condesa*, because I couldn't do anything. I said, "Well, I have never done this in my life, so what should I do?"

One day we had a big problem. I don't know what because...it doesn't matter what it was, but we had a problem and I told Ramon, "I am leaving this place. If you want to stay you can stay. I am leaving this place. I cannot stand it any longer." You know, Mrs. Jones and I, we even went and

cooked the bread for the whole week because there was no other place. We were just almost in the jungle. And this woman came and took the bread that we had baked and took it to her house. I just couldn't stand it, you know. I was not used to those things, so I said to Ramon, "If you want to stay you can stay." And, you know, she even went and told me, "Oh, you are losing your opportunities that you may have here." And things like this. I said, "Well, if he wants to stay he will stay, but I am leaving. I am not going to stay here one more day."

As a matter of fact, I was very good friends with this German woman who was married with this Swiss fellow and they owned a market, a supermarket, where we go and buy all of our groceries and things like this. And when I was going on the boat I met a girl, Filipino, half...she was part Filipino and her father was a Spaniard. They owned *tinavieras*, all the big boats that made the trips to the islands. And there are about five thousand islands. And they had different kinds of boats that made these trips. And I told this German woman that this girl had told me if I wanted to go to Cevu. She had the house of her sister who was a widow- her husband had died- and that she could open that house for me and that we can go and stay in that house. So when I told this to the German woman, she said, "Don't do it. You don't have any idea how wealthy these people are. You cannot afford to go have this house opened." She said, "You don't worry. I will fix a place for you. Let me call a friend of ours. Her husband is Swiss. He is the

Swiss consul and he and his wife live in Cevu. If you want to go... ." I wanted to go and breathe and stay a little while away from that place.

So I went to that place without knowing them. In the morning when the boat arrived- of course, I took my maid to take care of the baby and me when were going over there- I looked through the window and saw that there was nobody waiting for me. Well, I waited and waited then I decided that I'd better go. I kept the address and I took a taxi to that place. That was the first time I had seen a Filipino house. You know, these houses have steps going one way and a flat place here and steps going another way and full of slippers because they take their shoes off to go about. They have these floors. They are like murals...beautiful wood. I went up the steps and Sonny- that was the name of the fellow that I was going to meet and that was the Swiss consul- and a little boy, very nice boy, came to meet me. He told me that they had a party the night before and his wife was asleep, but if I wanted to buy anything or if there was anything I needed he would take me to the drugstore or wherever. He showed me to my room and my bathroom; they had an extra bedroom and a bathroom. He was the Swiss consul and at the same time he represented one machinery company for mining...big machinery. He was in charge of this thing. Well, he went to work and he said, "My wife will come down a little later."

Yes, she got up about noon and when she looked at me, she

was so surprised. And when I looked at her I was surprised, too. You know, I was very blonde until I was thirteen and then my hair started getting darker but my hair was still a little light, so when she looked at me and I looked at her...she was kind of short and a little- not white- a little dark and a little plump. We were so surprised to see each other, but she was very nice. Oh, we got along alright. She said, "We are going to have a party tonight. Did you bring an evening dress?" I said, "Yes." You know, in those days, every time you go to a dinner you always wore an evening dress- "We are going to have a party tonight and I want you to meet our friends." I said, "Of course, that would be very nice." She said, "But, you know, we are going to play a joke on them. We are going to introduce you as if you are my husband's sister." They invited a big bunch of people and she introduced me as her sister-in-law. And, you know, everybody looked and thought, "Oh, they look so much alike. Of course, anyway, they don't know a word of German." I was so tired after I had the first drink. I just went to bed and fell asleep because of the trip and all the things I did.

After this I made such good friends of them. I used to go and stay with them one or two months and, actually, I really raised...and Sonny and I would play bridge. We used to go and play bridge everywhere. His wife, at first, used to go with us, but we played much better than she did. After she would lose part of her money she would decide to go to the

movies. We kept playing bridge and after she would return we would go off together to the house. We would play bridge two or three days a week. They were very happy with me there and I enjoyed them very, very much. Trub...their name was Trub.

End of Tape One

Side B

Beginning of Tape Two

Side A

B: You were telling me how to spell Trub.

R: I used to go at least two times a year and stay with them for a month or a month a half. We were such good friends. When I had this problem with these people, as I told you, I was going to leave. I told Ramon to call and tell the Trubs' that he wanted to make a reservation to bring me back, because we were going back. Then he got a wire that told him: "YOU'D BETTER COME HERE. THERE IS AN OFFER FOR YOU." So we went to that place and there he got a better job than the one... .

B: This was still in the Philippines?

R: In the Philippines, yes, on another island. He got in connection with these people who were looking for somebody to take care of this mine. We went to this other island and stayed there.

B: Were you happier on that island?

R: Yes, very nice. There used to be a Canadian fellow over there, but I don't know if he was an engineer because there were a lot of things that were not right. You see, they were not recovering all the gold and silver that they could, so Ramon got charge of that place. He became the manager of that place, so we stayed there. One day there was a typhoon and the whole hill melted. You know, you could see the big trees just coming down. Everything came down on top of the mill. I think he will tell you what happened. The whole thing was covered with thousands of tons of dirt and mud and trees and everything, so that was the end of the mine. There was gold, silver...gold and silver they mined there.

At the same time we were over there the brother of the Thomsons' was over there. Ramon offered him a job and he went over there. There was a Canadian fellow who was married to an American girl. They had a little boy, but when they got a divorce he kept the child and sent him to Canada. There was also a couple of other young people, the Fields. He was an American and she was half German and half Filipino. There was an Italian, too.

We stayed over there, but what Ramon did- I thought that was the end of the mine because it was covered- but Ramon changed the course of the river and, with the whole river, put it over the mill. You know, that was like this (illustrates positions of river and ocean). And here is the ocean. With

the river they washed all the dirt and washed it out of the mine to the ocean because that was the main [river] going to the ocean. With the *canales* he got enough *amalgama* and gold to pay for these expenses and reveal the mill. That day that the whole thing came down he tried to rescue the gold bars and I ran after him. I said, "Don't go! It is too dangerous." You know, two Filipinos took me by my arms and held me back. Ramon got out of there with the gold they had and, I think, five or ten minutes afterwards the whole thing...

B: Collapsed?

R: Collapsed. Just in time. But they rebuilt it and we stayed there until things started to get a little bit dangerous because of the war, you know, just before the Japs invaded the Philippines. Then we went to Manila and it took us a little over a month to get transportation to come back. We went on a Canadian boat. Of course, all was dark because by that time they had already bombed Pearl Harbor. Then we arrived in San Francisco very happy. We got to Los Angeles and that was the end of the trip, but when we got over there, they [customs] told Ramon, "Stop. You'd better wait." I asked why. They just said, "You'd better wait." My brother-in-law and my sister were waiting for us, but they never let me talk to them. I don't know what they wanted. Afterwards they said, "Just get in the car." We got into the car and I could see and hear the sirens. I asked what was going on. Well, I was in a police car. They just took me to one place and Ramon,

they took him to another place. And here I was in a concentration camp.

B: Where?

R: In Los Angeles.

B: In a concentration camp?

R: Well, that was in San Pedro, Saint Peter. You know, we stayed three days in that place.

B: Why did they put you in the concentration camp?

R: They thought that I was a German spy. (laughs) Yes. They said that they had found, or they thought they had found, some Mexican passports. I don't know how or what but, anyway, I was in this place in Saint Peter. I got up the next morning, looked through the window, and I asked myself, "What is this? Is this baseball?" "Oh no." They said, "Those are the prisoners. There is Al Capone." (laughs) The problem was that they said we did not have a passport for my baby, but we had a letter from the consul over there that said all this. But because of that we stayed three days. Another thing, I had a gun that had belonged to Ramon. I didn't want to lose it, so I had it in my purse. I spent three days in that concentration camp or jail, or whatever you call it, with the gun and a bunch of shells. When we left they said that since one day was Sunday and the other one was Labor Day, or something like this, *dia de fiesta nacional*, a national holiday, we stayed three days over there.

The next morning when I got up they served the food.

They said, "Come on and have breakfast." When I saw it I said, "I'm not going to eat this." I couldn't tell what it was: corn flour, or something like this, or oatmeal.

B: Like a gruel? A cornmeal?

R: Yes. "I'm not going to eat this." I said. They said, "You can eat whatever you want, but you'll have to pay." "Of course," I said, "I'll pay." They asked what I wanted. I said, "I want ham and eggs and a cup of coffee." I started to eat it and when I looked up there were forty pairs of eyes looking at me and my plate. I said, "Take this thing away." Of course, I was not going to eat that.

But they were so afraid. There was some Jews over there. There was this one who really talked, a Canadian, because he kept getting into the country illegally and his mother. The rest were Japanese and all kinds of people. Well, after these three days they investigated and found nothing. Finally they decided that we could go. At first they said that Ramon could leave, but not me. Of course, they took Ramon to one place and I was in another. Ramon said, "How can I leave you here?" I said, "You go ahead and leave. Go and see the consul or a lawyer or whatever. I do not want to stay here. You'd better get out." At that time he got permission for me to leave, but I stayed three days and three nights in that place...and with the gun. They never found it.

B: Where did you hide the gun?

R: In my purse. When I went to take a shower I took my purse and

put it on top of the shower. By then, I was getting scared.

B: And your baby was with you the entire time?

R: Of course. Then they told me, "Now we can send you and your baby to any place, the best hospital you want." Because she had caught a disease over there and had a stomach...hookworm. You know, we used to go to the beach and play in the sand. I never thought that there was anything. But there were some people living up in the hills. You wouldn't have known because you never saw any houses there. It was just full of trees and things and piles... . It was the jungle, so the germs came from there. She was playing with the sand and these things. You get the eggs from here and they get to your stomach. They call it hookworm because they have two hooks that get into your intestine. They drink your blood. This is why they call it hookworm. Oh, I was so insulted. I said, "I don't want anything from you. I can go wherever I want to. Let me go." So we came back here. By the time we came back they offered him the job in South America, so then we went to South America. We stayed seven years in Bolivia and one year in Buenos Aires. I stayed a whole year in Buenos Aires and there was born my second child.

B: In Buenos Aires?

R: In Buenos Aires.

B: Tell me about the time you spent in Bolivia. You went straight from Los Angeles to Bolivia?

R: No. He went. By the time he got here, he got that offer. He

went to Bolivia first.

B: Which company? What was the name of the company?

R: It was German. A very rich German fellow, Hochfield, a German Jew, a very rich German Jew...

B: And he offered your husband a position?

R: Yes. He offered this position because the manager was going to be the manager in Huanchaca. He used to be the manager in Wadley. So when he found Ramon he told him, "You just come with me to Bolivia." He was the manager over there. So we went, but Ramon went first.

B: And where did you wait?

R: I waited here in my house in San Luis Potosí.

B: And you waited?

R: Yes. I waited just a couple of months. When he arrived they asked, "Why don't you bring your wife?" Well, he said, "The contract says that you need to be sure that you can stand the altitude because we are at an altitude that is four thousand five hundred meters high." Coming from the Philippines, that hot place, and going up to a place being so terribly cold and so high, but we lived very well.

B: So how did you get from San Luis to Bolivia? Would you tell me about that?

R: Well, that was the thing. The things were not very...you know, because of the war. The men had priority to go, but the women, we needed to have an opportunity to go and the planes, we didn't have any, so I went on a Japanese boat. They

stopped the boat in Panama, so here we were in Panama for two or three weeks. Of course, I stayed on the boat. They treated me well. I had a room and I had everything. Ramon sent me a wire asking me, "WHEN ARE YOU LEAVING?" and, "WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME WHEN YOU ARE ARRIVING?" Well, because they held the boat. We were in the canal. As a matter of fact, that boat, when we went back, never reached the Orient. They blew up the boat themselves because a few days after this, after I got over there, they bombed Honolulu and they wiped the place out. What was that place?

B: Pearl Harbor.

R: Pearl Harbor. When they bombed Pearl Harbor.

B: And to think you were held a prisoner, again, in Panama.

R: Well, there was no prison because we went downtown. As a matter of fact, I found a lady over there. She was a Basque girl. The poor girl, she was traveling in third class and she had a little baby. Her husband was a pilot. He was a Basque during the revolution in Spain, so he was in Colombia. She started working in a little town here as a teacher or something like that. Of course, she didn't have any money. So some Argentineans went over there. They told me that there is a Spanish lady here with the baby and that they were having problems because the baby didn't have anything to eat. She was so sick and she couldn't feed the baby. So what do you think? We got together and we changed her to tourist class because in this place they just have the tourist class and the

third class. And we paid the difference of the ticket. I said, "Yes, of course." They introduced me and I went to meet the girl and we became such good friends. When they arrived in Panama I needed to pay the whole ticket for the girl because the boys disappeared. I never saw them. They left. (laughs) I needed to pay, but I didn't blame them because she helped me so much and we got along so well together. That was a good thing because we stayed two or three weeks in Panama. I don't know what she would have done without having any milk to feed the baby.

B: Were you worried while you were waiting?

R: No. I had a good time. (laughs)

B: What did you do?

R: We played cards; we talked; we got together for dinner and, oh, we really enjoyed it.

B: I think your husband was more worried about you than you were.

R: Well, I met one Spaniard who had been married to this American girl. The thing didn't work, so he was so disgusted and he was going to leave, but he stayed to help me with Tappy, my little girl. Ramon met him over there and he offered him a job. He could go and work with him when he was in Argentina.

But Ramon was so disgusted because I couldn't tell him what day I was leaving Panama. I couldn't tell the American army to let the boat go. We were held on the boat, but they would let us go down because we were so tired of the food after being held for three weeks. Finally they let the boat

go and he met me in Antofagasta. We went to Bolivia and a few days after when we arrived over there they bombed Pearl Harbor. So that was the thing.

So then we stayed seven years...two contracts. You know, they make the contracts for three years and after three years they give you three months salary and pay your tickets to come back to the place you are or you stay while they give you the money. We decided to stay over there another contract. They gave Ramon the money, the expenses for making the trip from Mexico and to come back. This is why we stayed in Bolivia two contracts. Then, of course, they sent him to Argentina. He stayed in Argentina. By that time I was expecting my second baby.

B: Wait. You got pregnant in Bolivia?

R: In Bolivia.

B: I would like for you to tell me about the time you spent in Bolivia, about life there.

R: Oh, what a life we had there. They were all young people. Of course, we were there during the war, so the parties were a little bit rough, but they were very nice people.

B: Did you have a house?

R: Of course.

B: Tell me what the house was like.

R: Oh, it was a very nice house. I had a very nice veranda. They call it a veranda, a porch, and the porch was covered with a screen. I planted things over there, like the *papayo*,

spinach. I grew it in a little basket. I had a heater there, so that was my sun-house where I grew these and my little flowers.

B: But was it a mining colony?

R: In a mining colony, yes. I had a house with three bedrooms, a big living room, a dining room, and a big patio outside. I had a very good servant who loved the children and I had another one who would do the washing, too. We had such a social life. Sometimes it was a little bit rough because of too many drinks, too many drinks...you know, young people. Also there was nothing to do but have parties, but they were a little bit rough, maybe, for me because I was raised in a different way. But we were alright.

B: Where did you purchase groceries?

R: They sent them from the States before the war. After that, during the war, it was difficult. We paid quite a bit of money for whiskey, a lot of money. There was a Scot over there, McIntosh, and he used to make mixed drinks and he made one drink that used thirteen different kinds of... . (laughs) That was a McIntosh drink, but you can imagine what happened with those.

B: He was quite a mix-master, wasn't he?

R: Yeah.

B: How did you spend a typical day? *¿Por ejemplo, un lunes, qué hizo?*

R: Well, I played bridge; I did [cleaning] in my house...cooking.

I had servants...very good wonderful servants. As a matter of fact, I had one servant that kept two children. I don't know if she was ever married or if she was just living with that man but, anyway she had two children; one boy and one girl. I think the father was- this one stayed and had the fight later in Layog, they were [from] Layog... . We had too much of a social life.

B: Too much?

R: Picnics, cocktail parties, dances, and we had a movie once a week in the bachelors' house.

B: Were there many bachelors living there?

R: Yes. Well, that was a very big company. There were five thousand workmen.

B: Did the workers live in the same area that you did?

R: No.

B: Where did they live?

R: On the other side of the hill.

B: Was your community surrounded by a gate?

R: Yes. You know, we were up in the hills. It was cold like nobody's business. You can't imagine. I had some rabbits and one day one of the rabbits went outside and its ear froze, so they were always like this. (demonstrates position of frozen ear) No, it was horrible. We didn't have refrigerators over there. We had what they called a Mormon Cooler. Through the window they made a box with shelves around the window. They took out part of the glass and put that thing in with the

screen and they covered it with some cloth so that it wouldn't get sand in it. That was not there every day, but there was sand. If I left the drinks, the cokes or soft drinks, outside they would break.

B: Because it was so cold?

R: Oh, yes. It was freezing. Twenty degrees below zero.

B: Was your house warm?

R: Oh, yes. We had everything. We had the fireplace burning twenty-four hours a day and we had heaters in each room. It was nice and warm.

B: It was cold.

R: You know, the first time I got over there I used wool underwear. They were very, very fine wool underwear...my slacks and a fur coat even to go to the supermarket. I didn't wear this to be elegant, but because you needed to have a fur coat.

B: Because it was so cold.

R: By the third year I was over there I was without stockings. You get used to it.

B: You got acclimated?

R: Yeah. At night I used to fill a pan with water and in the morning I would have a block of ice.

B: So could your children go play outside?

R: Yeah, but, well, they were too little, especially Bobby. They didn't know I had another baby. Some of the people knew me very well. They weren't all our friends, but since we were

all together... . They never knew that I had a baby because I never took the baby outside. As a matter of fact, the servants would leave their uniforms when they left and when they returned they would get dressed here because there was a lot of smallpox. Since it took so long for the baby to get his vaccines, I didn't let the baby go out until I knew for sure that it was safe for him to go out. We had a case of smallpox from one American who went over there and she had smallpox.

End of Tape Two

Side A

Beginning of Tape Two

Side B

R: We needed to be sure. This is why I kept my baby inside. Nobody knew, I mean, of the workmen. Our friends, of course, they knew.

B: This is your second baby?

R: My second baby.

B: And what was his name?

R: Roberto. This is the one in that picture. (points to picture) Oh, he was so mad there. I think he was twelve years old in that picture. The servants needed to change and

put their uniform on when they got in the house because we didn't want them to bring in any of these diseases...for the protection of the child. Another thing they had over there was pneumonia and all of these things that were natural for that kind of weather.

B: Was there a hospital there?

R: Yes.

B: In the mining camp?

R: We had a company hospital with a doctor. Of course, they needed to have one and it was a big hospital. There were five thousand workmen. But the thing I was telling you was that sometimes I got nervous because they had a lot of accidents. I remember that in about a month there would be two or three killed.

B: A month?

R: A month. When Ramon went over there, he and Dick Clark changed things so well that, I remember, when we left there were hardly any accidents, maybe one if any. They changed things because of the very bad conditions. They needed to have more ventilation.

As soon as the power would go off I would wake up because the telephone would start ringing and Ramon would answer it and give instructions over the phone. I would wake up and I couldn't go back to sleep until I knew that the whole thing had turned out alright. Then I would ask what had happened. At the beginning, as I told you, maybe two or three a month.

When we left, hardly any, once in a while, but they needed to have a good hospital.

One of the things they recommended to me- I was very thin in those days- they told me that I needed to have some calcium shots. They gave me one and I almost went into shock.

B: From the shot?

R: From the shot. Because it was calcium. This hospital brought a lot of chemicals and a lot of people that were Jews from Germany, from the best hospitals in Germany. I don't know how it could be, but he got the passports for them and brought them to Bolivia. One of these once told me, "Never, never in your life let them give you a calcium shot in the vein unless it was made in Switzerland. Then you could be sure that you would be perfectly alright because if a little got into your brain or something like that you could be dead in a matter of seconds." When I heard that I really had that shock. But that was over. I remember the superintendent of the mine was Dick Clark and Ramon was his helper. He also had a shot, but he was really very sick, too.

B: From the shot?

R: Yes, but in a different way from me, because mine was shock. It was shock. After so many years I couldn't have any children. You know, there are eight years difference between the second one and the third one. You can see (points to picture) the second one. The third one was a baby over there. I had my hands like this (shows positioning of hands) because

I didn't want him to fall.

B: That picture was taken in Bolivia?

R: Yes. It was taken in Bolivia or Buenos Aires. No, not in Bolivia. The second was born in Buenos Aires. The third one was born in Mexico...this one, Ramon.

B: Ramon was born in Mexico?

R: Yes. There's thirteen and a half years difference between the first one and the third one.

B: That's a big space of time. How come?

R: Well, this is the way they came. I was never careful.

B: No birth control or *planificaciones*?

R: No. They say that maybe once in a while the *ritmo* would work, especially when you are regular, but, like, I wasn't. I was not very regular, so...

B: It didn't work.

R: It didn't work because I never got pregnant. If I had been pregnant- I am a very good Catholic, so maybe I would have had a dozen- but I didn't need to use birth control. Then we transferred to Argentina with the same company that I was with in Bolivia. I was pregnant. By that time I was pregnant with Bobby.

So we went to Argentina. As a matter of fact, I needed to get out of Bolivia because any person who wasn't a native of the country wasn't used to this altitude lost their children. So we went to Argentina. I stayed in Buenos Aires and he was in the north part of Argentina not too far from the

Bolivian border. That was the place where they had the mine. I had to go to Buenos Aires and stay there until the baby was born, but I was there for so many months. One day I got so desperate. He had been telling me that they were going to build the houses- they didn't have houses built yet. They were planning to build the houses and then when the houses were ready we could go. But one day I was desperate and I sent a telegram. I told him: "MEET ME AT THIS PLACE." This was a place that he had showed me where the train stopped and a truck was sent over to pick anyone to go to the mine. The name was Londres.

B: London?

R: Londres. And I didn't give him any time. He had to rush and wait for me over there. By that time I was about five or six months pregnant. And I went over there and he said, "What am I going to do with you? There are no houses. Why did you come?" I said, "Well, I need to come because I can't stand it any longer." I stayed over there. And I stayed in this little place until he found a room for me to stay over there. They didn't have houses.

B: You stayed in Buenos Aires?

R: No. I stayed in the place where they have the mine in Catamarca with my little baby. The only way I got to stay was to stay in the hotel in this little town until he could fix a place for me to stay. You can imagine how I was when I went over there and I found that all there was were just the walls

and some tin and tacks with their ropes because they had just started making the plans to build the houses. I was just going to stay for a little because I was expecting the baby. And the baby needed to be born in Buenos Aires where there was a hospital and things like this.

There was no water. They would bring water down on burros. They had some deposits made out of cement and they would pour the water into these. We never drank that water. We were afraid to drink that water, so all we drank was orange juice and vermouth.

B: Orange juice and vermouth?

R: And vermouth. That was what we drank. Of course, we had tea and coffee, but only if the water had been boiled. But raw water we never drank. The orange juice was fine. They had millions of oranges and vermouth, bottles and bottles of vermouth. That was all we drank. So when I saw this place I told Ramon, "I'm am not going to stay. This is too hard." He said, "No, no, no. You are going to stay. You said that you were going to stay a month and you will be here one month." I suffered like you just can't imagine. You know, the bathroom and the dining room they had made in one corner one place. When you closed the door that was the *regadera*.

B: The shower?

R: The shower. Home-made of course. Then the toilet...you could see into it. The toilet was far away in a little room and it was covered with a *costal*. Do you know what a *costal* is?

Well, that was the door...well, into the ditch, to the river and down. Oh, that was horrible. My luck was so bad, you know, I got diarrhea, I think, maybe from nerves. I told Ramon, "Everyday is just one day more, one day more, until my thirty days is over. It is just so bad."

Then he took me to that place where the little town was to take the train. It was so hot. Maybe forty-two or forty-three degrees. You could see the mountains, but to see the top of the mountains you almost needed to put your head on the floor of the train to even see it because they were so high. And they were full of snow, but in the town we were burning. The whole place was filled with the smell of lot of *azahar*, you know, orange blooms. That is what you call *azahar*...the flowers of lemons and oranges. They have this beautiful smell. We call it *azahar*. I remember this little town.

So I went back to Buenos Aires. Not too much longer after this they told him that they wanted him back in Bolivia, so he went back to Bolivia and I stayed in Buenos Aires until the baby was born. When the baby was born I was just by myself. I had rented a house with people who were...well, her mother was Irish and maybe her father was, too, or maybe English. I don't know. I never knew the father, but he was married with this- what nationality was he? He was British but- I don't know exactly if he was British, but he had a temper and he was a little bit rough, so they killed him one day in the mine in Brazil...because they were in Brazil.

Before they went over there he told me that they were going to kill his mother. The one who was in the same house that I rented. She was there because they needed to fix her passport or something to take her out. She was a very old lady and very heavy. We had a couple. The man was supposed to take care of the garden. I had a big garden. And the girl, who was much younger than he was, she could have been his daughter. She was doing the cleaning and helped me wash dishes and things like that. Granny needed to be in the house until they fixed the passport for her.

We had one Christmas over there and, of course, I made my Christmas the way we were used to. I had made a turkey. They were so surprised because they had never in their lives seen a whole turkey for Christmas. It was a Christmas almost with forty or forty-two degrees of heat because, as you know, it was summer over there. Oh, they were so glad when we had our Christmas dinner and everything. Of course, Ramon wasn't there because he was in Bolivia. When New Year's came he told me, "How are we going to celebrate New Year's?" I said, "Nothing. I had my dinner for Christmas and that is all. No, I'm not going to do anything."

This man, Joe Banini (?), was the son of Italians, but they never wanted to say that they were Italians. As soon as they got into Buenos Aires they said that they were not Italians. They said that they were from Buenos Aires. I imagined that these people were a poor family when they

preferred to say that they were Argentineans. He brought a tray that big (indicates dimensions) with a lot of canapes. They were delicious because they made them in Buenos Aires...very good. There were all kinds of fruits and things like this and a bottle of champagne. I would say, "Oh, poor Joe Banini, going on and spending his money." He was supposed to take care of the garden- because we had a big garden- and I would pay the girl because she helped me with Granny. She took care of Granny. At the end of one month they sent me the bill. She had gone out, took everything, and charged it to my name, so I exploded. That time I was really mad. I was screaming and I said, "I didn't come to this country to feed you!" Oh, but that was not the only thing. He had a daughter from another marriage. Before, he had been a widower. Then he married this very young girl. She could have been his daughter. She was much, much younger than he was. He told me that this daughter was going to be a nun, you know, from the church, *una monja*, but then she had changed her mind and she was coming back to the house. Of course, I was supporting every one of them. But poor Granny, she hardly ate anything, but the other ones... . I said, "I am not going to stay here anymore." I wrote a letter to Lucy- Wagner (?) was her name- and told her that I was going to move. "I am not going to stay here. Not one more day. And I am not going to take the whole the family with me." So I moved with this Italian lady- I called her Granny- and they were wonderful. The husband of

her daughter used to work in the same mine of Hochshield up in Huanchaca where Ramon and I lived. I stayed over there until the baby was born. The day the baby was born Joe Banini (?) took me to the hospital and I said, "Well, I'll take both of them to deliver the baby. I'll take the electric train, the subway." I wanted to do this. The doctor, MacClean (?), he told me, "You don't need to worry. Let your husband go. I will be responsible for you and I will take it." That was at the British hospital, so the baby was born. I said, "That's alright. I don't want to wait three days like I did when my first baby was born." I waited three days when Ramon was born, but he was a baby who weighed five kilos and three ounces. There was a huge difference.

B: He's tall now, isn't he?

R: Yes, he was huge. Oof! I almost died. It was horrible. Well, three or four months after the baby of born, I think, I went back Bolivia because they transferred Ramon again to Bolivia. This is the time when in Bolivia they started all this business with the revolution in Bolivia. One day they killed the president and they hung him off the post of a light, a light post, and dropped him off a balcony. Oh, it was horrible. You know, the worst of them were the women. They went and attacked the castle of the president and they killed the president. That was the revolution...very bad. There was *un oficial*. He was a military *sargento*. I don't remember what his name was, but he was a very nice fellow. He

came and told Ramon, "Well, you know, things are getting very bad." They were part of the revolution. But they were on the other side, so we were scared. I said, "Ramon told me what happened. We went out in the middle of the night. We went out where we could be safe. We needed to stay here." All of us got in one of the houses, because one day they started throwing out dynamite in front of the house. The real reason we left Bolivia was because of this situation with the revolution. We went to La Paz and asked the consul for protection. He said, "Who's going to protect me? You see, these people don't understand." He said, "I cannot be in my suit with...because they will know that I am the ambassador here. So I can't give you any protection." So we stayed just until we found a place to come back from Bolivia.

After this there was a strike one time with the workmen because one wanted the workmen and the other one was the police. So the two were on different sides of the problems. I heard on the radio that there were four thousand people coming to my house to get Ramon out. He was the only one who spoke Spanish. The bosses and the other ones, they left. By that time they got the leader from La Paz, Lechin, who is still the leader of the workmen over there, and he stopped the people. He said, "There is another way," and things like this. So then they were still coming, but they killed quite a few. They killed an Irish man who was married to a Mexican girl and they almost killed her. They were just ready to

shoot at him when one of the Bolivians opened a window and told her to run away, so she ran away. That was horrible. I never knew anything about the revolution in Mexico because I was very little, so I never knew anything about it. Then I need to come over to Bolivia and start getting in this problem. So then we decided we were coming. By that time, Ramon had written to San Francisco mine and we came back to Mexico and stayed with that company for seventeen years.

B: In San Francisco?

R: In San Francisco del Oro.

B: And what was Mr. Rosas's position there?

R: He went first and stayed two months as a foreman in Frisco. I think after five months or six, I don't know exactly how long it was, they sent him to Clarines to be the superintendent there. That was a smaller place than San Francisco, but he still had about five hundred workmen over there. One time when the ores went down- the company was not in a very good condition- the one who kept running the company was Clarines. Ramon used to get very good ore from that place. But, of course, all my social life and everything I had was with the Frisco people.

B: You lived in the mining colony there?

R: Yes, I lived in the mining colony. As a matter of fact, before we went over there they said, "You know they have distinctions." You know, it was the biggest company. I don't know why, but when we went over there we went straight

to the American district. It was very nice. As a matter of fact, we were very good friends of Hanson and, of course, they knew Ramon had done very good work with that place and that mine, too.

B: How many *colonias* were there for the workers of San Francisco del Oro?

R: There were three. In Santa Bárbara there were four, but that was the American Smelting [and Refining Company]. That was the one for the high employees. Then there was another one. And there was a third for the workmen everywhere. The workmen had union houses and they make them pay just two or three pesos. The reason they did this was because if the men didn't work they could tell them to leave and the place would still belong to the union. If they gave it free to them they would be there forever. They would never move from that place.

B: So it was more of a symbolic amount to give?

R: Yes, symbolic. That was one reason. The other one was so they would know they would argue that they were getting rent paid for the places that didn't belong to them. It was not a gift. That was just rent to them.

B: Can you describe the *colonia* to me? Do you remember how it was laid out?

R: Where? At the one we lived?

B: In San Francisco.

R: Oh, very poor. It was a very poor place. We had a club, a very nice club. In front was the hotel for the bachelors. In

that place that was supposed to be the bar. The men would go after work everyday and have drinks over there. At the beginning, when we first got over there, they played a lot of poker for money. When Ramon started playing I said, "No. You are going to play poker. I'll go with you. I play, too. I am a better player than you because, you know, they make you think that you win the first night. Then you will see what will happen." No, he stopped because I knew that this would go on and he was not a very good player.

B: You were a card shark?

R: Of course. I didn't let him. I said, "If you are going to play in that place I am going to play, too. You two and the boss just go and play." I knew that they are just going to be... .

B: How old were your children at the time you were moved there?

R: Well, they went all to first school over there. Mrs. Araujo was the teacher. She graduated in El Paso and worked in El Paso as a schoolteacher and then she married Araujo. He is from the School of Mines in El Paso, [The Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy], the same that Ramon went. The only thing was that he was about three or four years older than Ramon, but he graduated after Ramon. He worked, too, so it took too long for him to finish his school.

B: So you had three children in school there or two?

R: I had three. I had the three. The three went to school.

B: Was their schooling in English?

R: In English. This is what they learned...English. Ramon went only to the fifth grade and then we moved to Parral and he made the sixth grade in Parral.

B: You mentioned that the manager there was Hanson?

R: Hanson.

B: And his wife's name was?

R: Well, his first wife was May.

B: May?

R: May Hanson. And his second wife was Kitty.

B: She was in a very important position. Would you say so?

R: Yes.

B: Did she more or less dictate the social activities of the colony?

R: Well, let me tell you. His first wife, she was an alcoholic. The second wife...

End of Tape Two

Side B

Beginning of Tape Three

Side A

R: I told you that Kitty was a very, very nice lady. I don't know something about her family. I think that her mother maybe was Mexican or something. What the story was

then...they never knew what happened with the mother. I would hear from some of the other people, you know, that there were a lot of these people from Pachuca, the Pachucos. They stayed too long in Mexico. As a matter of fact, some of them were born in Mexico. I knew that Kitty's father sent her to Switzerland to school and she stayed in school, but her mother... . What happened to the mother, I never knew. I never knew anything about her. I don't know what happened.

We had a very good time in Frisco. Hanson was the general manager, but after this the man who was in charge of the mine was Creigie. Creigie was a wonderful person. He was very strict and he was very clever. He knew exactly... . The third one, the one who was in charge of just the mine, his wife was an alcoholic, too. Then they got a divorce. She had two children, two girls, and then he married his second wife, who was- I don't know where he picked her up- much younger than he was and...I don't know.

B: She came after he was manager then, right?

R: Yes.

B: The second wife?

R: Yes. He was not the manager. He was the head man in the mine.

B: Superintendent?

R: Superintendent of the mine. O'Neill..his name was O'Neill. After, he divorced his first wife. And this one, he... . (unintelligible) After this he shoved her out. But she was

one of these girls who came with the little ring here in her ankle (points), you know, one of these things. As a matter of fact, I had a problem with her once. As I told you, I like to say what I think. After I had one drink, or two, maybe- I should have never said it- but I told her, "You are very nice Peggy, but you need to refine yourself a little bit." Oof! She said, "Are you going to refine me?" I said, "Oh, no. It's just advice. Take it or leave it, but never forget it." She never forgot that.

B: Who planned the social activities?

R: In the office. Kitty and Hanson, they liked to... . Hansen kept a daughter from his first wife, Shirley. We liked her very, very much. Anyone she finds over there, she would still ask about me. The teacher was Mrs. Araujo, the teacher in Frisco. I needed to send my children to Frisco's school every day but, of course, my daughter, the older one, she was a little girl. And I never let her go that year with the driver to take her, you know, because it was about fifteen kilometers away. I went with the driver everyday when he took them to school and I went and picked them up.

B: In San Francisco?

R: In San Francisco. I didn't drive in those days because Ramon said, "No. You don't need to learn. You are too nervous." Look at me now. I am the driver. Even at my age I am the driver and I do everything. What I forgot to tell you is this; with the money we made in Bolivia- you know, he took two

contracts- we saved the money. With the money they paid us for travel and the three months vacation instead of taking it...we saved that money. And if he started working [we also saved that money]. With this money we got here we bought this [house].

B: When you were in San Francisco?

R: Yes. We were in San Francisco. One time when we were in San Francisco we had very bad luck with the cotton. I had built a beautiful home in Torreón. Very pretty, huh? (points to picture) It had five bedrooms, four bathrooms, a huge living room, dining room, and a garden. Well, it was really a very pretty house. I wanted to stay and live in Torreón and I wanted Ramon to quit because that year we were going to make a fortune with cotton. I wanted him to retire. We lived in Torreón because I didn't want my daughter to marry a miner. I said, "I don't want her to go from one place to another and another and all these things." This is when we had this big problem with cotton. At the end of the year, he owed. We had never owed a penny to anyone. At the end of the year we owed two million pesos. In those days the peso was three to one for the dollar. I was in Torreón with my children and I lived in that house for a couple of years.

B: While he was still in San Francisco?

R: He was still in San Francisco. He came, maybe, once a month. I lived in Torreón; the children were at the school, El Francésa de la Laguna (?). My daughter, when she got out of

college, she worked with Anderson Clayton [Company] in the cotton business and, oh, she had a good time. She enjoyed her house so much. She had a wonderful time. One day our friend, Chuck Greene- he used to be our neighbor in Bolivia and I used to be good friends of them. She was an alcoholic. He liked to drink, too, but she was an alcoholic and they had a lot of problems. So one day he came to my house and said, "I look at Ramon and I worry about Ramon. He is not very well. What happened?" I said, "You know, with this business that we have been in with the cotton I have seen him and he is really depressed. You know, everybody who comes up asks him." He said, "Yes. I am going to pay. I am going to pay you, but with what? We don't have anything to pay." So he was worrying. But, no...here and there and over there. I rented my house in twenty-four hours. I let my daughter live with my sister. Then she lived close to me. I rented my house already furnished to these people from work who were very wealthy people in Torreón. When I got here I told Ramon and he said, "What? No. I don't care. The man can take everything we have. I said to him that I have my job, a very good job. I have this house." We have this very nice house in Santa Bárbara that belonged to Frisco in Clarines mine. I had two *hectáreas* of land and this building was supposed to be a historic building. They couldn't do anything to the outside because they thought that is was a historic place, but inside they would fix everything just perfectly. The only thing they

didn't change was the outside...the construction outside. That used to be the house of the governor of the Nueva Viscaya, you know, when he stopped there on his way Santa Fe. That is the road that came from Durango, through Santa Bárbara, out from the mountains, and then to Santa Fe.

So I told Ramon, "Okay." I came back. I had that house that the company gave it me. You know, Hanson had changed the furniture for me the way that I liked. He really was very nice with me. Every time that the British, the owners of the mine, would come I offered my place. They could stay. Of course, it would be like a vacation to them. I would take them to my place if I needed to entertain them for a little bit or invite them for dinner, lunch, drinks or whatever. It was very nice. I fixed that place very nicely. I had a beautiful garden and I made it very nice.

B: Did the company place furniture in the house for you?

R: Yes. He even sent his secretary to go out and buy new furniture.

B: He liked you.

R: Yes, he was very nice. So I told these people, oh, because Ramon told me, "I don't care. I have my job. Let the bank take everything." I said, "Oh, no. We have spent all the money we have. We spent it on the farm and we are not going to lose it." I wrote a letter and I told them, "You need to wait and we will pay."

B: You wrote the letter to the bank?

R: Yes, the same letter to every one of the people we owed. "We are going to pay you, but you need to wait. The first one will be the bank or you will never get any money because the bank could take everything we have." And then I went to Chihuahua and I talked to the manager of the bank in Chihuahua. I said, "I need money. Already I have planted a hundred *hectáreas* of wheat and the wheat is coming out with that fertilizer." We put so much fertilizer in the cotton, so it still was on the ground. And in three months I came here and stayed seven years...plus having four kids.

B: While Mr. Rosas was still in San Francisco?

R: In San Francisco. He was over there in San Francisco. And I planted the wheat. In three months I got enough money to pay the bank. After I paid the bank I said, "We are safe." So in these seven years I stayed here. I paid all the money. Of course, he helped a little bit with his...they lent him fifty thousand dollars. But, really, I stayed here for seven years. I paid everybody, but one of these machines...because the wheat is started with the cattle. Now, this last year we sold a lot of them because, you know, they were four years without rain in here, so we needed to sell a lot of them so they can leave the rest because there was nothing to feed them. Of course, we bought a little bit but not enough, not enough. See, they eat too much, so we needed to sell a lot of them. Now, they are coming. Now, we just have just *vaquillas*, you know...the ones we have, the new calves. And I bought them.

I started forty years ago with them. I started with forty heifers, calves, and I bought three bulls from the States with the Registry. And then after this he quit the mine. He resigned and he was going to be working for himself. He came here and the ranch was saved, so I helped him that much... with both of us. And that is all.

B: How did you feel about leaving San Francisco because you said it was such a nice place and safe?

R: Yes, but I knew then that Ramon needed to start thinking about retirement because I knew, like I told you...Oof! I guess I talked to Hanson too many times. He told Ramon, "She is going to tell you to do everything. She did this, then she did this." I said, "You just wait." (chuckles) Probably because I said, "Look at me working here so many times. And look at me; in one year I made this and that, and I did this and did that, and I bought this and I bought that." Like he never did here.

B: How old was he when he retired?

R: Well, he was not retired. By the time that he came to the farm... .

B: Retired from working in mining?

R: Well, I think it was time for him.

B: How old was he?

R: Well, it was in [19]65.

B: So he was at San Francisco del Oro during Mexicanization?

R: Yes.

B: Could you explain to me what happened during Mexicanization?

R: What is this?

B: When they passed the mining law.

R: Well, I don't know what this is.

B: And the mining companies became owned by the...

R: Oh, about the different way...when they sold these places. Well, things have changed. It is not exactly the same place and, especially now, it is completely different. They say that they are making now good money, but in a different way. They are getting in some other kinds of businesses together. I don't know what it is. And they changed laws; they don't have the big syndicates, you know. They were quite something. They were quite something. In those days they were hard. They were hard.

B: Have you gone back to visit at San Francisco del Oro?

R: Oh, yes. I have gone a lot of times.

B: Have you been there lately?

R: No. Now, no.

B: Did you have a best friend when you were living there?

R: Oh, yes. A lot of them.

B: Who were some of your friends?

R: Of course, Julia, the teacher.

B: Araujo?

R: But she was not, exactly. Later, after her sister, yes. Her sister was my best friend, Margarita. You know, she is still alive, but she has Alzheimers, so she is- what did I tell you-

like a dead person, but is still alive. She is still in San Francisco. And her daughter Julia was the teacher. After this Julia moved to Parral and they retired. They lived very close to me. After Arnulfo died we became very close. I look after her. She is about twelve years older than I am, so I take care of her. I help her all I can.

B: Did the people that lived in the other *colonias* interact with the people that lived in the *colonia* that you were living?

R: Well, socially, every one of them. The one that I told you that was a little rough was Peggy. For this...it was my fault. That was the only one, but I got along perfectly alright with every one of them. There was Dolly Evans. As a matter of fact, we were friends even before I was married. She was a friend of mine. I used to come to Matehuala, from San Luis to Matehuala. And her mother and father lived in Matehuala. They worked in the American Smelting. And I have a cousin. Her husband lived in the colony in Matehuala of ASARCO. I would go. I would get out of school and spend my vacation over there because there was a lot of social life and things like this, so I stayed with them. We were very good friends. By that time Dolly was married and was living in Frisco. But every one of them, we were very, very good friends. There is another one, the Greniers'. Now they live in El Paso. He used to work in the mine. He is a Canadian, a French-Canadian, but, I don't know exactly what kind of French he speaks. He spoke very poor English and he spoke

very poor Spanish, so maybe he spoke a very poor French. I don't know. (laughter)

B: What was his wife's name?

R: Ofelia Grenier.

B: And they live in El Paso?

R: They live in El Paso.

B: What did you do to keep up with the styles in clothing or hair styles? Did you read fashion magazines? How did you know what was in style?

R: Of course, we had magazines. We had a beauty parlor where we went. As a matter of fact, we have now one very good one in Parral, but let me tell you. I just quit going with him because I heard a story that I don't like very much. You know, he was kind of funny. I said, "No, I'm afraid." Of course, they don't know, but, you know, even with the...you are always afraid to be infected with this new disease.

B: The SIDA.

R: The SIDA. This is the kind of a guy...that kind, you know.

B: So there was a beauty salon in the *colonia*?

R: Yes. There was still a beauty salon in the *colonia* and there was another one in Santa Bárbara where I used to go and fix my hair and everything.

B: You would go to the one in Santa Bárbara?

R: Yes, I used to go to the one in Santa Bárbara. Sometimes I would go to the one in Frisco.

B: You rotated?

R: Yes. I would go to Santa Bárbara in the morning with the driver. And I would go to pick up the children in the afternoon, but by that time I would stay until I finished playing bridge. I played bridge and at four o'clock, when they go out of the work, we stopped. And I picked up my children and I came home with my children.

B: Was there a company store in San Francisco? Where did you buy your groceries?

R: Oh, no. There was a store in the town. The company didn't have a store. We came to Parral and bought all our foodstuffs in Parral. There was another store in San Francisco, but that fellow...they killed him one night. They wanted to rob him, oh, and they made him suffer so much because I don't know how many times they...with the knife. He was a wonderful person.

B: Was there any crime in San Francisco?

R: Well, there was just one of the worst I have seen.

B: It happened in San Francisco?

R: Yes, in San Francisco del Oro.

B: Did they have any problems with prostitution?

R: Well, there was a house over there that I told you about. You know, my language, when I was in the Philippines and I started to speak English... . There were two ladies; one was the one I told you about, the manager's wife, and she was a Catholic, but... . Oh! She was such a Puritan. She just didn't want to do anything like this. And the other one. She was just the opposite. The other one, she used to have a restaurant

for the railroad men, so you can see her language. Of course, I don't know. I learned from her, so I thought that was the right way to say it. When I came to Frisco, one time we passed from a big building that I knew over there. And you knew it was a red district. So the lady who was next to me asked, "What is that?" And I said, "This one..." because I learned it from Mrs. Jones. That was the way she talked. She used to have a restaurant for the railroad men, so you can just imagine. I told that woman, "Well, I better not say it." Yeah, so I told her, so that was the right way. I saw Ramon, [and he asked me], "Where did you hear this?" I said, "Well, from Mrs. Jones. (laughter) She was my teacher." As soon as we got here, I told you, we have been doing alright.

B: Would you have changed anything in your life?

R: In what way?

B: In your life...living in mining camps.

R: Well, no. We didn't change. I married Ramon and we have been very well...living almost sixty years of marriage. We'll be sixty years married, can you imagine? So we have been very, very happy, helping each other. Of course, you know, once in a while we have...we are humans. (laughs)

B: You have words.

R: Look it, I even went to the *farandula*. Do you know what is the *farandula*?

B: No, I don't.

R: To the stars. You know, in that club we used to have in

Parral we needed money, so they decided that they were going to make...

B: A raffle?

R: No. In the stage. Represent something in the stage.

B: A pageant?

R: No. *Una obra teatral*, theater, and very, very nice. This fellow, who was in charge of *Bélla Artes*...that we had that place in Parral. Now, he loved to do this. Of course, I used to, and I told you, that I taught English in that place. As a matter of fact, let me tell you how I got to the *centro juvenil*. One day, a friend of ours, Rangel, from the School of Mines of El Paso... . He even was quite a few years before Ramon. Now, he's the general manager of all the *Tecnológicos de Monterrey*. Rafaelito Rangel...wonderful, this boy. He and my boy, they were such good friends and so close. It was not too long ago he came to Parral because they are going to have this kind of a school where they could get their masters, but masters by the television. Not only by television, but they could talk back and forth to the... .

B: Like teleconferencing?

R: No, not teleconferencing. They can get the degrees, their masters. They can get their masters that way.

B: And not have to leave their homes.

R: Without leaving their homes because, you know, quite a lot of them now, they don't have the money. And they are so expensive now, *El Tecnológico de Monterrey*, that very few can

afford to attend...terribly, terribly expensive. I told you I have sent six of the seven. One we didn't send because he was going to be a farmer. And another one, he wanted...

End of Tape Three

Side A

Beginning of Tape Three

Side B

R: He didn't get a degree, but, still, he stayed two and a half years in the Tecnológico de Monterrey, but now in Chihuahua. He was having a good time, so he didn't really go to school. After we told him that we were not going to pay for his school anymore he went to a government university in Chihuahua and stayed another year. "So if you don't finish this up, you can go work by yourself." But now he had a very good job, of course, as one of these boys that are very economically smart. He's an exporter. He fixes things like a book, his work, and he has done very, very well. As a matter of fact, he had a baby just a few days ago, the grandchild I told you about. And I have two grandchildren.

B: So you're a great-grandmother?

R: A great-grandmother, yes.

B: Let me ask you one final question and we'll stop for the day.

What advice would you give to a woman accompanying her husband, who is a mining engineer, to another place in the world to work? What would you tell her?

R: Well, that is alright. You know, ours was a special experience because we had such bad luck to loose our two older children; one, Tappy, because she got hookworm in the Philippines. After some years she got this yellow jaundice, but not yellow jaundice. There is a different name they have.

B: Hepatitis?

R: Hepatitis. And it developed in her liver. Almost the same damage like when somebody drinks too much. This is why she died. When we took her to Houston the doctor looked at her and said, "This is not cancer what she has, but it's just as bad because she is not going to last six months." That was true. She didn't last six months. She was twenty-five. My boy...I don't know too much about medicine, but he was a big boy and strong. He played American football. And I think maybe this is what happened to him. As a matter of fact, we have a friend not far from here. The boy got cancer. He had a little tumor. I wouldn't be surprised if he was hit playing football, maybe, because such big and strong and healthy boys... . Those are the things that have made us sad.

Living in those places was a very good experience and you enjoy it. You know, if you want to learn something, there is nothing else to give you more experience- and you will know more- like traveling. I have traveled Europe- and I know

almost the whole thing- and the Philippines. I know some places in China. I know Manila. I know Hong Kong. We have been to China twice and in Hong Kong once. Japan and Tokyo and Yokohama...I have been twice, too. In South America I have been in Argentina, and Peru, and Chile, and Bolivia. I stayed in Panama, too...my three weeks that I told you about that I was in the boat. I have known a lot of them, but really very nice. If they have a chance to go, of course, do it. Of course, you need to be good at what you are going to do. After you start getting connections you go on to another one and... . Do you know what happened? That fellow, when Ramon was in Wadley, he was the manager. He was the superintendent of the mine...Stover. He came to Clarines later, when we were in Frisco, and he was working under Ramon. Ramon was the superintendent and he was a foreman...Stover.

B: The mining world is a small one, isn't it?

R: Yes, of course. And things change. You need to be good and you need to be responsible and you will be good everywhere you go. That is the main thing. There is not a place; there is not a city; there is not a country. There is yourself.

B: How about we stop for today?

R: I think that was okay.

B: You did fine.

R: Okay.

B: This is the end of the interview.

End of Interview