

***Latinos of Boulder County, Colorado,  
1900-1980***

**Volume I:  
*History and Contributions***

**Chapter Two:  
*Early Hispanic Immigration  
to Boulder County, 1900-1940***

by

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Written for:

**Boulder County Latino History Project**

With assistance from:

**Longmont Museum**

Endorsed by:

**Department of Ethnic Studies,  
University of Colorado at Boulder**



**Old John Publishing**  
Palm Springs, California

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McIntosh, Marjorie K. (Marjorie Keniston)  
Latinos of Boulder County, Colorado, 1900-1980  
Volume I : History and Contributions / M.K. McIntosh.  
332 pages. 229 cm.  
Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-9863873-3-3 (hardcover)  
978-0-9863873-2-6 (paperback)

1. Hispanic Americans--Colorado--Boulder County--History.
2. Colorado--History, Local--20th Century.
3. Boulder County (Colorado)--History.

2015961054

References to Internet Web sites (URLs) were accurate at the time of writing. Neither the author nor Old John Publishing is responsible for URLs that may have expired or changed since the manuscript was prepared.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Early Hispanic Immigration to Boulder County, 1900-1940**

Nearly all of the Hispanics who came to Boulder County between 1900 and 1940 derived originally from Mexico or New Mexico, though some of their families had lived in southern Colorado for several generations before moving further north. Immigration to this area started slowly. The U.S. Census records for 1900 and 1910 include no more than six households headed by people with Spanish surnames or who were born in Mexico in any of the three towns (Longmont, Lafayette, and Boulder) in either year.<sup>1</sup> Beginning in the 1910s, however, the pace increased. The first set of new arrivals came from central Mexico in the 1910s and 1920s, and by the later 1930s they were joined by people moving from the northern part of New Mexico. In this chapter we look first at what was happening in Mexico and northern New Mexico and how those events contributed to the difficult decision to leave one's home, relatives, and friends to undertake a journey to an unknown place. We turn then to people who came to this area from southern Colorado, concluding with some quantitative information about patterns of migration.

#### **A. Immigration from Mexico**

Many of the earliest Spanish-speaking arrivals in Boulder County, or the parents or grandparents of people who later moved to this area, were from central Mexican states lying west and northwest of Mexico City. Some came initially as single men, but married couples and whole families came too. The few women who migrated singly or with their

<sup>1</sup> See App. 1.2. The towns were all very small in 1900. Longmont's population was 2,201; Boulder's was 6,150; and Lafayette's only 970 (see App. 1.1).

children, sometimes escaping abusive marriages, posed a challenge to familiar gender roles.<sup>2</sup> Mexican migration to northeastern Colorado reflects the existence of an extended trans-national borderland in the Southwest during the early decades of the twentieth century, across which people could move with relative ease.

Interviews and family histories indicate that Mexican immigrants came mainly from three states. The largest group was from Zacatecas, with smaller numbers from Guanajuato and Michoacán and a few from the adjoining states of Jalisco and Durango. (See Map 2.1.) It should be emphasized that none of these states lies close to the border with the United States: this was not merely a matter of traveling a short distance for temporary employment.<sup>3</sup> To the contrary, the nearest place at which one could cross into Texas was 350-500 miles away from those areas; to reach Ciudad Juarez and El Paso, a common entry point into New Mexico and then Colorado, immigrants had to travel 700-950 miles.

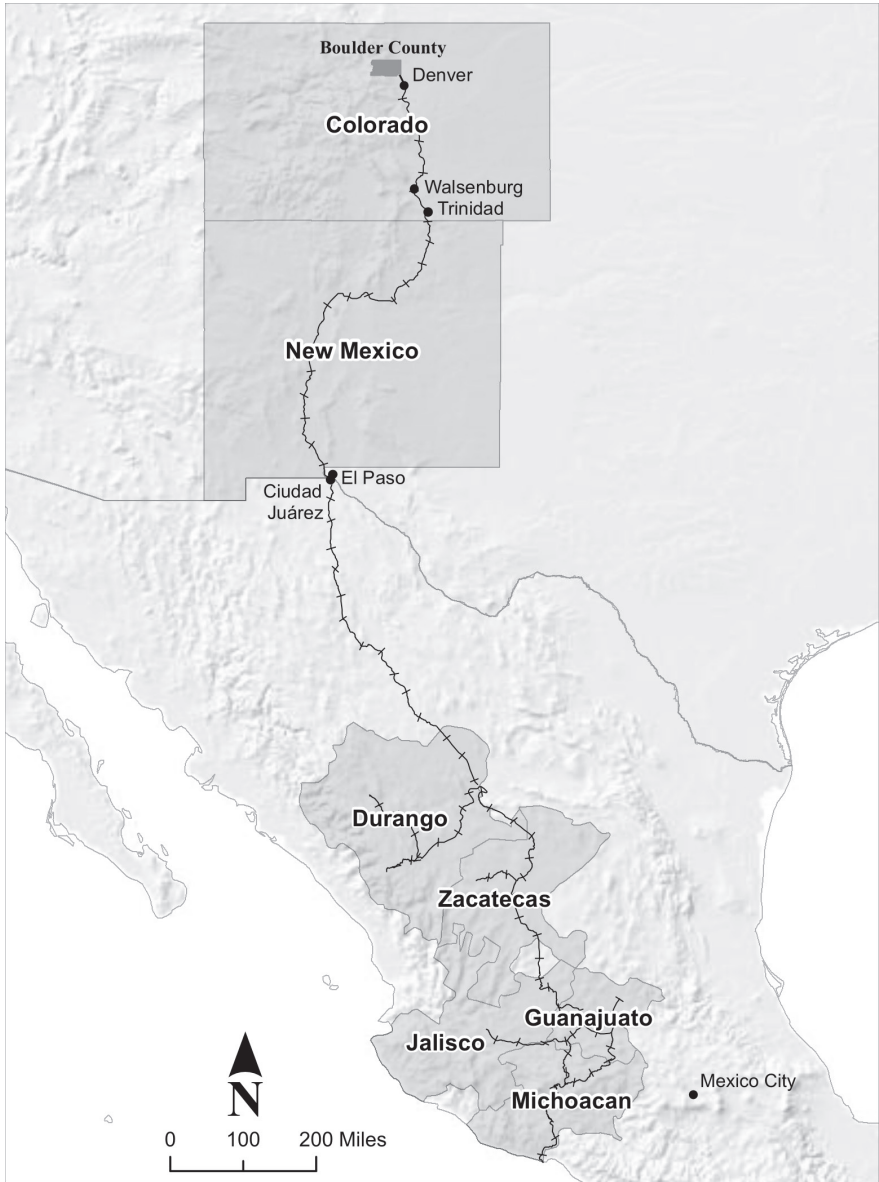
The three main Mexican states shared some features with Colorado. Zacatecas had for centuries been famed for its extremely profitable mines, especially silver. By around 1900, however, production had decreased. During the Mexican Revolution of the 1910s, its capital city was the scene of a major battle between government forces and the troops of Pancho Villa, a popular rebel leader, which resulted in Villa's victory but at the cost of thousands of lives on both sides. Guanajuato was likewise a mining center. One of its mines, La Valenciana, had accounted for two-thirds of the entire world's production of silver at its peak, but by the early twentieth century it and many of the other mines had either declined markedly or ceased production entirely. Michoacán, ridged with high mountain chains, featured a mixed economy of mining, forestry products, and agriculture. Because farming in that area generally required irrigation, some immigrants to Boulder County brought useful experience.

Mexico underwent considerable violence during the 1910s and 1920s.<sup>4</sup> The country was torn apart in the 1910s by a revolution against José Porfirio Díaz, the nation's president (and increasingly its dictator)

<sup>2</sup> For the special problems faced by female migrants, see Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows*, ch. 1.

<sup>3</sup> The exceptions were people who lived in the Rio Grande Valley or Ciudad Juarez/El Paso, where Latino communities existed on both sides of the border and local residents moved back and forth.

<sup>4</sup> For film footage from the Revolution, see "La Raza de Colorado: La Historia."



**Map 2.1:** Mexican states from which immigrants came to Boulder County, 1900-1940, showing routes of main railroad lines

during the previous 35 years.<sup>5</sup> Armed conflict, which started in 1910, continued on and off for nine years, as the initial revolt against Porfirio Díaz turned into a civil war between multiple factions with conflicting goals. The U.S. government intervened at several key points to support American economic interests in Mexico, especially control of oil producing regions. In this conflict as in earlier Mexican tradition, some women took active part in the armies. *Soldaderas* travelled with and sometimes fought alongside male soldiers, and they smuggled weapons across the border from the U.S.<sup>6</sup>

After Porfirio Díaz was overthrown, the new government adopted a Constitution in 1917, and a new political party, later called the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, was founded.<sup>7</sup> The Cristero War, an unsuccessful counter-revolution by conservatives who objected to the efforts of the post-Revolutionary government to limit the power of the Roman Catholic Church, brought renewed fighting in the later 1920s. Because warfare was widespread, if sporadic, most Mexicans were affected by the war at some point during the 1910s and 1920s. Some fled their country, at least temporarily, to escape the danger: in 1916, the U.S. Commissioner of Immigration said that more than one million Mexicans were living in the U.S.<sup>8</sup> We know that Boulder County residents were interested in the war, for several newspaper articles in 1916 described its causes, suggested that some local Mexicans were returning to their home country because of it, and laid out the reasons that might lead the U.S. to become involved in the war.<sup>9</sup>

In analyzing why Mexicans decided to leave their homes to venture into a foreign country, scholars often refer to “push” and “pull” factors.<sup>10</sup> The former consisted of problems within Mexico that made life there difficult, while the latter included the availability of work and the possibility of a more successful future for their children in their new home. For

<sup>5</sup> As Hart has shown in one of his foundational studies, three interest groups with contradictory class and cultural backgrounds participated in the Mexican Revolution: the elites of provincial towns and *pequeña burguesía* (the “petty bourgeois”); working class people in rural areas; and urban and industrial workers: *Revolutionary Mexico*, pp. x-xv.

<sup>6</sup> Salas, *Soldaderas*, esp. ch. 4. The long history of Mexican female warriors contributed to an emerging Chicana identity in the later 1960s and 1970s (*ibid.*, chs. 6-7).

<sup>7</sup> The PRI monopolized power in Mexico until 2000.

<sup>8</sup> Hamilton, *Footprints in the Sugar*, pp. 265-266.

<sup>9</sup> “Mexicans going south” and “Causes of the Mexican trouble.”

<sup>10</sup> E.g., Acuña, *Occupied America*, pp. 154-155.

both kinds of factors, large investors or companies in the U.S., part of an expanding economy that treated Mexico essentially as a colony, played an important role.

Many Mexicans migrated primarily because of economic hardship. As part of his “modernization campaign,” Porfirio Díaz opened up opportunities to foreign—mainly American—investors for building railway lines and setting up large-scale commercial agriculture. By around 1900, U.S. investors owned more than a quarter of all land in Mexico, including many of the country’s most valuable mining, industrial, and agricultural properties.<sup>11</sup> Mines and factories run by foreign companies had little incentive to concern themselves with the well-being of their workers. In rural areas, most of the millions of *campesinos* (peasants) who had previously held and worked their land through a variety of property systems lost their holdings between 1870 and the end of the century. By 1910, 90% of the *campesino* population was landless. For many of these men and women, the only options were to become paid workers on large *haciendas* devoted to export-based agriculture, or to take industrial jobs if they were available.

These economic problems were compounded by a rising birthrate, which caused the Mexican population to increase by 50% between 1875 and 1910.<sup>12</sup> Population pressure added to the difficult labor conditions on *haciendas* in central Mexico.<sup>13</sup> Due in part to a surplus of labor, real wages dropped during the Porfirio Díaz period, and a growing number of workers were caught up in the system of “debt peonage” which required them to stay with their current employer until they had paid off their debts to him.

By 1910, “famine stalked the dispossessed peasants and working classes” of Mexico.<sup>14</sup> The use of so much land for export purposes had raised the cost of food for domestic consumption. The Revolution caused the Mexican economy as a whole to weaken and made it impossible for the government to provide even the minimal social benefits that had formerly been available. If people no longer had their own piece of land and could not find enough work to support their families, it might be worth the massive dislocation of uprooting themselves and starting from scratch in hopes of creating a better life in the north. A common

<sup>11</sup> Hart, *Revolutionary Mexico*, pp. 158-162 for this and below.

<sup>12</sup> Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows*, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Katz, “Labor Conditions.”

<sup>14</sup> Hart, *Revolutionary Mexico*, p. 162.

element of their faith in this better life was that their children would be able to get an education and have a brighter future.

Fighting in Mexico provided additional motivation to leave. Because the conflict became a civil war, support for any of the factions could be dangerous. For those facing physical violence, a “better life” might simply mean a safer existence. Among Boulder County people, Pete Salas’s grandfather left Mexico to flee the Revolution; Rich Lopez’s grandfather left to avoid conscription in Pancho Villa’s army.<sup>15</sup> Captain Manuel Bracamontes, who later came to Longmont, is commemorated by a statue in Zacatecas for fighting alongside Pancho Villa.<sup>16</sup> Al Ramirez’s mother slipped out from Guanajuato to San Antonio to escape marrying a much older general, a match arranged by her father.<sup>17</sup> Virginia Alvarez’s uncle was hanged during a conflict of the 1920s, and her father left by way of El Paso to escape a similar fate.<sup>18</sup> Some of the Mexicans whose families eventually settled in Longmont brought with them visual souvenirs of the war: photographs of Pancho Villa or officials in the new government.<sup>19</sup> Later, however, personal ties with Mexico weakened, even though social and cultural practices were often sustained.

The primary “pull” factor was the availability of jobs north of the border. Many Mexicans left because they were actively recruited by agents or contractors sent to Mexico by U.S. employers—especially railroad companies, mine operators, and sugar beet producers—to sign up workers.<sup>20</sup> The 15,000 miles of railway lines in Mexico recently constructed by U.S. capitalists made travel from that country to and across the U.S. border easy.<sup>21</sup> Recruitment of Mexican workers was especially common during World War I and after the passage of the Immigration Act of 1924 but before the Great Depression.<sup>22</sup> The 1924 measure was intentionally designed by the U.S. Congress to restrict

<sup>15</sup> Conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, Nov. 4, 2013; “Lopez, Rich, notes for his interview.”

<sup>16</sup> Gonzales, Alex, interview, c. 1987.

<sup>17</sup> Ramirez, Albert, interview, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> “Alvarez, Virginia, notes for her interview.” For another Revolution example, see “Arguello, Alfredo and Donaciana and family, biography.”

<sup>19</sup> Included among the family photos gathered by the Longmont Hispanic Study in the late 1980s.

<sup>20</sup> For railroads, e.g., see Garcilazo, *Traqueros: Mexican Railroad Workers*, pp. 48-54.

<sup>21</sup> “Eracism: Exploring the Roots.”

<sup>22</sup> The measure was formally titled the Johnson-Reed Act, including the National Origins Act and the Asian Exclusion Act (Pub.L. 68-139, 43 Stat. 153), enacted May 26, 1924.



immigration of people from the Middle East and Southern and Eastern Europe, including Jewish refugees; it prohibited entirely the entry of East and South Asians. Because natives of countries in the Western Hemisphere were excluded from the quota system, American employers who could no longer bring in cheap labor from places like Bulgaria or Italy turned to Mexico. When E. P. Archuleta returned to the Longmont area after serving in the U.S. Army in World War I, he was hired as a labor agent for a Colorado railroad company, recruiting workers in Mexico.<sup>23</sup> At the peak of this practice, more than 2,000 men crossed through El Paso every month to take jobs with the various railroads.<sup>24</sup>

For people who decided to leave Mexico early in the 1900s, entering the U.S. was a great deal easier than it was to be a century later. After 1917, people who crossed the border were supposed to stop, take a literacy test, pay a tax, and be given written documentation, but these requirements were not enforced rigorously. Some stretches of the boundary had no checkpoints at all, so people could just walk across. Even at formal entry stations, some Mexicans were allowed through without question, especially those brought in groups by large employers. Only after the beginning of the Great Depression in 1929 were Mexicans viewed as unwelcome competition for scarce jobs.

The leeway enjoyed by U.S. border agents in deciding who should be allowed to enter and what paperwork they needed to show or receive is illustrated by the experience of David Toledo. Born around 1902, Toledo grew up in a town in Michoacán where he began work as a tailor.<sup>25</sup> But when he was 20 years old, he decided to see what life was like “on the other side.” When he reached the border, he put on the one suit he owned, which he had made himself. The officials looked at him and a friend who was travelling with him, who was equally well dressed, and put them into a different group from the people who were obviously manual workers. He and his friend paid an \$8 fee and were given a certificate or receipt showing that they had come in legally, with a six-month pass. If he had returned to Mexico, he would have been reimbursed his \$8. As it happened, he never went back to his home country and later became an

<sup>23</sup> Archuleta had moved to Colorado from Mexico with his parents in 1905, when he was eight years old. When he enlisted for the military during the war, he was assigned to Special Services because of his ability to speak four languages; he used that skill in doing translation and spy work (*They Came to Stay*, pp. 13-14).

<sup>24</sup> Hamilton, *Footprints in the Sugar*, p. 266.

<sup>25</sup> Toledo, David, interview, c. 1978.

American citizen.

Early migration from Mexico to Boulder County followed several different geographic routes. A few families came directly to the Denver/Boulder/Longmont area. Leslie Ogeda reported that in the 1910s five men from Zacatecas came together to Boulder.<sup>26</sup> The group included her maternal grandfather and two of his brothers, named Zaragoza (later spelled Saragoza), who set up small ranches on the western edge of the town. Eleanor Montour's grandparents emigrated in 1914 from Durango, settling in Lafayette; her grandfather started working in the fields but later became a coal miner.<sup>27</sup> Victoria Gerardo, born in Jalisco in 1894, travelled alone across northern Mexico and through El Paso, Texas, reaching the Lafayette area in 1925; there she met and married Crescencio Martinez, who was employed at the Columbine Mine.<sup>28</sup>

Many of the Mexicans who ended up in Boulder County had gone somewhere else first. The most common pattern was that new immigrants started by working in the coal mines around Walsenburg and Trinidad in southern Colorado. As mining slowed in that area in the 1920s and 1930s, men moved their families north in hopes of finding work in the mines in or near Boulder County. Phil Hernandez's maternal grandparents moved from Zacatecas to the U.S. around 1909.<sup>29</sup> His grandfather, who had been a miner in Mexico, worked initially in the southern Colorado coal fields. During the summers, the whole family did migrant field work, including in eastern Boulder County. Later his grandfather found mining work here, and around 1934 the family settled in the town of Boulder. Linda Arroyo-Holmstrom's paternal grandparents travelled from Mexico first to a community near Trinidad, where her grandfather mined coal, and then to Lafayette, where he worked in the mines during the winter and did handyman jobs during the summer, before moving the family to Boulder.<sup>30</sup> Some immigrants worked in other states before coming to Colorado.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, April 13, 2013.

<sup>27</sup> Montour, Eleanor, interview, 2013.

<sup>28</sup> "Martinez, Victoria Gerardo, biography." For other examples of direct early migration, see Alvarez, Teresa, interview, 1976, and Alvarez, Virginia, interview, 2013.

<sup>29</sup> Hernandez, Philip, interview, 2013.

<sup>30</sup> Arroyo-Holmstrom, Linda, interview, 2013.

<sup>31</sup> "Madrigal family of Boulder, biographies" and Gonzales, Alex, interview, c. 1987.

## B. Arrivals from Northern New Mexico: A Complex Heritage

The other large group of Spanish-speaking immigrants to Boulder County prior to 1940 came from the villages and small towns of north-central New Mexico and the southernmost part of Colorado's San Luis Valley, which formed part of the same cultural community. Most northern New Mexicans had deep roots within the region, which had been colonized by their ancestors. Those settlers had moved from further south in Mexico, mainly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Dispossessing many of the indigenous peoples, they created agricultural communities in the hills and mountains around Santa Fé and to the north of it. Northern New Mexico had been part of the Spanish empire and then of independent Mexico since 1598, but because the region was at the very edge of New Spain and the Republic of Mexico, it experienced relatively little control from outside.<sup>32</sup> Santa Fé was 1,200 miles away from the center of the government in Mexico City; some villages were as much as 100 miles beyond Santa Fé, connected only by trails over difficult terrain. Hence these communities were largely free to function as they chose. Although some were located near Pueblo villages and their residents interacted with native peoples, they continued to think of themselves as part of the Spanish or Mexican cultural world.

Some Latinos living in Boulder County in the decades around 2000 could trace their families far back in northern New Mexico. Don Archuleta's father was a direct descendent of Ascencio de Archuleta, a Basque soldier in the original Oñate colonization expedition of 1598; Ascencio later brought his wife and children with him to New Mexico.<sup>33</sup> The family of Maria Sabina Maes (Cortez) had a line of ancestors stretching back to the Santa Fé area in the 1630s or 1640s.<sup>34</sup> Linda Arroyo-Holmstrom followed her grandmother's relatives back seven generations through southern Colorado into northern New Mexico.<sup>35</sup> Ester Quintana Matheson traced her ancestry even earlier, to Coronado's exploratory expedition to New Mexico in 1540-42 and then to early settlers in the northern part of the province of Santa Fé.<sup>36</sup> When people

<sup>32</sup> See Ch. 1C above.

<sup>33</sup> Archuleta, Don, interview, 2009.

<sup>34</sup> Maes, *Following in the Footsteps*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>35</sup> Arroyo-Holmstrom, Linda, interview, 2013.

<sup>36</sup> Conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, April 4, 2013.

asked Ester, rather insultingly, when her family moved to this country, she pointed out that it was before the Mayflower and asked them when their ancestors arrived in the U.S.!

Jessie Velez Lehmann was one of the organizers of the 1977-8 project called “Boulder’s Chicano Community: Where Is It?” When she was herself interviewed, Jessie described what she had learned about northern New Mexican life from conversations with older people whose parents or grandparents had moved from that area.<sup>37</sup> Most residents had lived in those villages and little towns for many generations and spoke no English. Nearly all the families held only small plots of land but might have communal access to the surrounding wooded areas. People cooperated, with everyone helping each other to plant and harvest food and maintain their families. They had many practical survival skills, which were necessary in isolated communities. They made their own clothes, butchered and cured their own meat, stored food in cool, earthen cellars, and made tools and kitchen utensils. If they needed something they could not produce themselves, they bartered (trading one kind of goods for another), rather than using money. They knew how to utilize medicinal herbs for treating illnesses, and for more serious physical or emotional problems, they had their own *curandero* or *curandera* (traditional healers). Their midwives delivered babies and looked after new mothers. Many people believed in black or white magic: *la bruja* (a witch or evil woman) was very real. Music was an important part of their culture. They played instruments and sang at baptisms, birthdays, and weddings, to celebrate a good harvest, or just to entertain themselves.<sup>38</sup> We can visualize some of these people and their activities thanks to photos preserved by later relatives living in Boulder County.

Even in the mid-twentieth century, some New Mexican villages retained a strongly communal nature. Secundino Herrera, who moved to Longmont from Mora County in 1951, commented later, “I was used to a small society and to being involved with it—for instance, the educational business and the community business in general—even constructive projects, such as food processing, road work, irrigation systems. I was also in charge of some of these programs myself.”<sup>39</sup> But when he got to Colorado, he was expected merely to follow orders from the Anglo

<sup>37</sup> Lehmann, Jessie Velez, interview, 1978.

<sup>38</sup> See Vol. II, Illus. 1.13.

<sup>39</sup> Herrera, Secundino, interview, c. 1987.



*Illus. 2.1. Espinoza family portrait, 1912, probably in no. New Mexico*



*Illus. 2.2. Engagement announcement, Pedro and Merenciana Chavez, aged 20 and 17 in 1911, probably no. New Mexico or so. Colorado*

farmers who employed him.

Immigrants to Boulder County from northern New Mexico were joined by a few people from small communities at the southern end of the San Luis Valley in Colorado. The San Luis Valley is a large and high plateau surrounded by mountains except at the very south, where it adjoins New Mexico. Settlements in the southern tip of the San Luis Valley had been founded under the Conejos Land Grant, awarded by the Mexican government in 1833, and the Sangre de Cristo Grant of 1843. Both grants completely ignored the rights of the Ute Indians who lived in that area. In 1851, settlers from around Taos, New Mexico founded the town of San Luis de la Culebra, the oldest continuously occupied community in Colorado (though it was part of New Mexico until 1861). More New Mexicans arrived in the region after the Utes were dispossessed in 1868. The town of San Luis and its surrounding villages have maintained many older traditions to the present time.

While many accounts stress the Spanish characteristics, conservatism, and social and cultural cohesiveness of the northern New Mexican and southern Coloradan villages, there was also considerable ethnic, racial,





*Illus. 2.3. Farm workers with mules, with adobe building in background, probably northern New Mexico or southern Colorado*



*Illus. 2.4. Large group at a traditional wedding, with musicians, probably northern New Mexico or southern Colorado*

and religious diversity among the residents of those communities.<sup>40</sup> Some people had recent European ancestors, and not just from Spain. This is unsurprising if we remember that during the nineteenth century and first part of the twentieth, Santa Fé was situated at the western end of a great overland transportation route that connected the lower Missouri River west of St. Louis with the Southwest. Traders from the eastern and midwestern regions of the U.S. travelled along the Santa Fé Trail, as did immigrants from many European countries. Ancestors of Boulder County people include Tomás Estipol Rivera, who had come to the U.S. from Spain with his three brothers around 1840 and settled in Santa Fé.<sup>41</sup> There he met his wife, a local teacher and lawyer. On one side of Emma Suazo Valdez's family, her grandparents were a mixture of Spanish, French, Mexican, and English forebears.<sup>42</sup> Both William ("Hank") Blazón and Tony Montour got their French surnames from earlier paternal relatives. Conversely, Oli Olivas Duncan's great-grandparents, living in Las Truchas, New Mexico, had seven children by birth but also adopted four children named Hays who came west on an orphan train from New York City.<sup>43</sup>

Many northern New Mexicans had some Native American ancestors, not surprising since Spanish-speaking and indigenous people had lived in close proximity for several hundred years. Whereas until about 20 years ago, many Latinas/os were not comfortable talking about native parents or grandparents, the emphasis of the Chicano movement upon the constructive mixing of indigenous peoples with those of European background has led to more open discussion of the topic. The advent of DNA testing has also demonstrated that many families do indeed have Indian forebears, a matter of interest and even pride for some. Among Boulder County people, one of Emma Gomez Martinez's grandmothers was a Comanche; one of Virginia Maestas's was part Pueblo, part

<sup>40</sup> Southern California had an even more diverse population in racial/ethnic terms by around 1900, including American Indians, long-established Spanish-speaking residents, whites, recent immigrants from Mexico, Japan, and China, and a few African Americans. Almaguer argues that race became "the central organizing principle of hierarchical group relations in California," more powerful than class or gender (*Racial Fault Lines*, p. 209 and, more fully, pp. 4-9).

<sup>41</sup> "Salazar, Jose Benito and Isabelle, biography." For another immigrant from Spain, see Maestas, Virginia, interview, 2013.

<sup>42</sup> Valdez, Emma Suazo, interview, c. 1987.

<sup>43</sup> "Olivas, Ralph and Rose, biographical account." For the problems that could arise from such adoptions, see Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction*.



*Illus. 2.5. Clefos and Apolonia Vigil,  
from northern New Mexico  
but living in Alamosa, Colorado, 1930s*

Navajo.<sup>44</sup> Augustine Eliseo Cordova had an Apache grandmother, while Cleo Estrada thought that half of her forebears were Utes and Apaches.<sup>45</sup> Several local families who were not from New Mexico likewise had Indian ancestors.<sup>46</sup> Some early photos show people with what appear to be indigenous features, stemming perhaps from the *mestizo* background of their Mexican ancestors or perhaps through more recent relatives. The photograph in Illustration 2.5 above shows the grandmother and great-grandmother of one of the participants in the BCLHP. The family believes they have Indian antecedents, though they do not know from which nation.

Intermarriage between Spanish-speaking and indigenous people was intensified by the abduction of children. In this practice, common through the end of the nineteenth century and apparently even in the early twentieth, Indian or Hispanic children, usually around four to eight

<sup>44</sup> Martinez, Emma Gomez, interview, 2013; Maestas, Virginia, interview, 2013.

<sup>45</sup> Cordova, Augustine E., interview, 2013, and “Estrada, Cleo, autobiographical information.”

<sup>46</sup> Hank Blazón’s maternal grandmother was part Sioux (Blazón, William [“Hank”], interview, 2013); Oli Duncan’s paternal grandfather Francisco was born in Texas to an Indian girl and a European father (“Olivas, Ralph and Rose, biographical account”).



years old, were kidnapped from their birth families, treated almost as slaves, and raised to be part of the other culture.<sup>47</sup> Western American mythology has emphasized the capture of white children by Indians in the Southwest, and our study does provide a few examples. Andrew Borrego's great-grandfather came from New Mexico to homestead on 100 acres at the base of the Spanish Peaks, northwest of Trinidad; he established his water rights before 1876.<sup>48</sup> That area was the home of Ute Indians, and Borrego family tradition says it was common practice "for the Spanish settlers as well as the Indians to increase their male populations by kidnapping each other's boys." Because the Utes believed that redheads brought luck, and the Borregos were red-haired, three of their sons were taken.<sup>49</sup>

Girls too might be brought up by native families. Don Archuleta's grandmother, Donaciana Manchego, was born in 1848 somewhere in northern New Mexico.<sup>50</sup> When she was about seven years old, she was abducted by a group of Indians fighting the settlers. A few years later a military troop came from Texas to help put down the resistance. One of the soldiers entered a native camp and saw a girl who did not look indigenous. He took her back to Texas to live with his mother, and—when she was fifteen years old—married her. Dolores Silva's Spanish-speaking grandparents lived in Taos prior to their death in a car accident when Dolores's mother was just a baby.<sup>51</sup> She had Indian blood, "but we don't know for sure just what nation they were." The residents of Taos Pueblo adopted the infant and raised her until she was seventeen.

More commonly, however, Indian children were abducted and brought up within Hispanic households. Such people are sometimes described as *genízaros*.<sup>52</sup> Young Native Americans, especially girls, were sometimes kidnapped by bands of armed raiders and sold to Hispanic

<sup>47</sup> See, more generally, Brooks, *Captives and Cousins*.

<sup>48</sup> "Borrego, Andrew, biography."

<sup>49</sup> Family legend also says that Andrew's grandfather, who was raised as a Ute, later made his way home to his birth family, reportedly driving "2,000 fine horses and good blooded cattle" before him (ibid).

<sup>50</sup> Archuleta, Don, interview, 2009.<sup>51</sup> Silva, Dolores, interview, 2013.

<sup>52</sup> The term comes from the practice of the Ottoman Turks to demand an intelligent, strong young boy from each of the Balkan villages within their empire. The boys were taken to Istanbul, trained, and often became part of the elite imperial household guards known as the Janissaries. Spanish and Mexican officials sometimes placed *genízaros* in frontier buffer communities like Abiquiu and Belén (Thomas Andrews, personal communication).

families.<sup>53</sup> There they lived initially as household servants, in most cases gradually forgetting their own culture and absorbing the ways of their new families. As adults they usually married Hispanic men. Leslie Ogeda's paternal grandmother was a Ute who was "adopted" at age six by a family named Archuleta in New Mexico.<sup>54</sup> Oli Olivas Duncan's paternal great-grandmother Cecilia was the daughter of a Comanche chief named White Horse; she was "somehow" raised by a Spanish-speaking family named Roybal.<sup>55</sup> Virginia Maestas's paternal great-grandfather was adopted at age three from the Yaquis of Arizona by a Spanish rancher in New Mexico and as an adult thought of himself as Hispanic.<sup>56</sup>

Other social and cultural interactions with indigenous people were more casual. Roy Maestas recalled going to Taos Pueblo as a child in the late 1910s when his father went to visit people or trade; Roy would play with the native boys though they could not talk to each other.<sup>57</sup> Every Sunday he went to visit his grandparents in San Geronimo, now a ghost town; the Indians in that pueblo taught his father how to make a tea from an evergreen that grows in the mountains that cured his rheumatism. George Abila, who as a child in the 1910s was living in the foothills northwest of Walsenburg, mentioned a Spanish-speaking Apache named José Antonio who used to stay at their ranch.<sup>58</sup>

Another component of northern New Mexico's complex heritage was people of Jewish background, sometimes described as "crypto Jews."<sup>59</sup> They were the descendants of Jews who had been forced to convert to Catholicism in Spain or Portugal in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. To escape persecution, they came to Mexico but then had to flee again as an arm of the Inquisition became established in Mexico City. Little by little their families moved further north, to get farther away from powerful and potentially dangerous authorities. For them, the

<sup>53</sup> Or children might be stolen from Mexico and carried to New Mexico for sale: e.g., Valdez, Emma Suazo, interview, c. 1987.

<sup>54</sup> Conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, April 12, 2013.

<sup>55</sup> Duncan, "Hispanic History."

<sup>56</sup> Conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, July 31, 2013, and Maestas, Virginia, interview, 2013.

<sup>57</sup> Maestas, Roy, interview, 1978.

<sup>58</sup> Abila, Mr. and Mrs. George, interview, 1978.

<sup>59</sup> That term is not ideal in this context, however, for it suggests that people were deliberately hiding their Jewish faith. In northern New Mexico, many Latinos no longer remembered any Jewish ancestry. For a broader discussion, see Jacobs, *Hidden Heritage*.

remoteness of the isolated New Mexican communities was a plus. Recent DNA testing has found that a number of people in northern New Mexico and some in Colorado's San Luis Valley bear a distinctively Jewish gene. Some of these families have intermarried with Catholics and considered themselves Catholic for many generations, with no cultural memory of Judaism within their histories. A few recognize that certain traditions (such as avoiding pork, lighting candles on Friday evening with the curtains of the house closed, putting small stones on graves, or spinning tops at Christmas) were shaped by earlier Jewish practices.

The ethnic diversity and deep roots of some New Mexican families are illustrated by the research done by Al Ramirez, a retired professor at the University of Colorado at Boulder, about the background of his wife, Vera.<sup>60</sup> Vera was part of the thirteenth generation of a family that had lived in Mexico and New Mexico since the sixteenth century. Some of her ancestors were Jews who had arrived in Mexico in 1590, having escaped from Spain to Portugal and then across the Atlantic. Vera had other relatives who were part of the original Oñate expedition, while a third group included Native Americans who participated in the revolt of Pueblo Indians against the Spanish in 1680, forcing colonists to pull out of the region for many years. After the Spanish re-conquest, her Spanish and Indian ancestors began to amalgamate, a process that continued over the next two centuries.

Most of the northern New Mexican and southern Coloradan villages were economically and ecologically fragile. They generally had only a small amount of agricultural land, and limited rainfall made irrigation necessary if crops were to be grown. A common pattern was for all the residents to work together in maintaining the ditches and deciding how scarce water would be allocated. Animals, especially sheep, were an important part of the local economy, requiring use of the surrounding mountain areas for summer grazing. The need for wood for building and fuel together with *piñon* nuts and other mountain resources put a premium on access to forested hillsides. Most of the communities or their *patrónes* had been granted royal Spanish or Mexican charters, confirming their rights to these secondary areas as well as the central farm land of the village.<sup>61</sup> But because the U.S. government did not honor its promise in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to respect the

<sup>60</sup> Ramirez, Albert, interview, 2013, and see Ramirez, *Vera's Journey*.

<sup>61</sup> See Ch. 1C above.

earlier charters, other people moved in and claimed title. Gradually the residents lost their property. More than 11,000 New Mexicans migrated to southern Colorado during the first decade of the twentieth century alone.<sup>62</sup>

The situation became desperate for many New Mexican villagers during the 1920s and 1930s. A two-year drought starting in 1917 had already made farming difficult, and the 1920s saw a series of economic recessions, with sharp changes in price. Further, after New Mexico became a U.S. state in 1912, it began to introduce property taxes, a factor that pushed some people over the edge financially. The 1930s offered the double blow of the Great Depression and bad weather. The period of sustained drought during the 1930s, which caused the Dust Bowl in parts of New Mexico and eastern Colorado as well as other states, sharply reduced agricultural yields. For all these reasons, many small farms were no longer able to support a family. Some people who were forced to leave eventually found their way to Boulder County.

Interviews and biographies describe some of the hardships that led Hispanics to abandon their homes in northern New Mexico. Maria Medina was born in Arroyo Seco in 1891, where her father had a small piece of land.<sup>63</sup> She never went to school and could not read or write. After her marriage, she and her husband both did field work around Arroyo Seco. They were resigned to poverty, but life became even more difficult during the Great Depression. They were paid only 50 cents per day for their labor, and it would take three days to earn enough just to buy lard for cooking. They ate only one kind of food until it ran out, and then tried to find something else. During the 1930s they decided to go to Colorado to look for better paying work.

Other New Mexicans had previously held land but lost it during the 1920s or 1930s. Reina Jaramillo Gallegos was from Belén, where her ancestors had received a land grant; when her parents failed to hang on to their property, they moved north.<sup>64</sup> Juan and Josephine Martinez came from families in San Geronimo, Cimarron, and Clayton, New Mexico,

<sup>62</sup> Acuña, *Occupied America*, p. 98.

<sup>63</sup> Medina, Maria, interview, c. 1978. Although Maria had lived in the Boulder area for many years prior to her interview, she spoke no English. Her interview is filled with regional usages from northern New Mexico and spoken with a strong local accent.

<sup>64</sup> Gallegos, Reina, interview, c. 1987. By that time, after many years of court battles, the family had recovered title to their land. For later New Mexican grants, see "Homestead Record of Land Patent, 1862" and "Homestead Record of Land Patent, 1915."

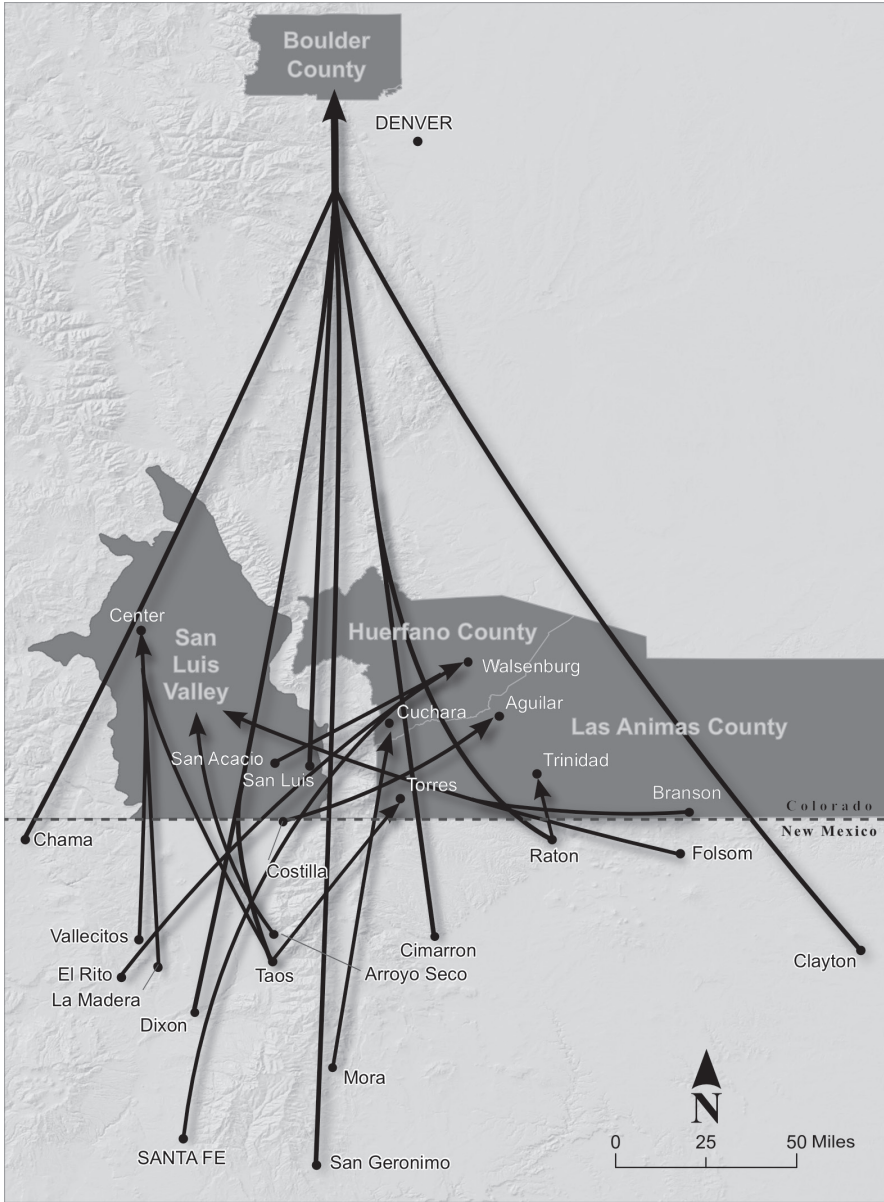
where they had a little property.<sup>65</sup> But due to the economic recessions of the 1920s, they had to abandon their land and became migrant workers. One of Oli Duncan's grandfathers was descended from a large landowner in the Chama Valley, New Mexico, but the family gradually lost its property; by the 1920s they were reduced to share-cropping, and during the Great Depression they came to Colorado as migrant farm workers.<sup>66</sup> Her other grandfather still had some land in Chama around 1920, but an epidemic killed all of his animals and those he was tending for other people, leaving him destitute after he had paid his creditors. He moved to Longmont and became a foreman for C. W. Pace, one of the biggest local ranchers.

We can trace the migration patterns of 26 people who left northern New Mexico or the adjacent area of the San Luis Valley between 1910 and 1940, observing where they went after moving away from their original homes. (See Map 2.2.) All these people or their children or grandchildren ended up in Boulder County, but they had often lived in other places first. Seven families or individual people went first from New Mexico to the coal mining area around Trinidad and Walsenburg. Six others began as seasonal agricultural workers in northeastern Colorado, in some cases spending the winters in the San Luis Valley. Seven settled first in the middle San Luis Valley, especially near the little town of Center, where large-scale production and storage/packing of potatoes on commercial farms owned by Anglos offered the possibility of year-round employment. Only six came directly and permanently to Boulder County. Because travel from northern New Mexico was relatively easy, many Hispanics who ended up in this area maintained close ties with their communities of origin and relatives at home. That cultural borderland stayed largely intact across the twentieth century.

The form of transport used by many New Mexicans who traveled north is interesting. American school children commonly learn about the brave settlers who crossed the prairie from the eastern or midwestern U.S. in covered wagons. But we are not told about the immigrants who moved into Colorado from the south, who used the same means of travel. A covered wagon filled many functions when there were no motorized vehicles, or if they were too expensive to buy. It provided shelter while

<sup>65</sup> "Martinez, Juan and Josephine; Marcella Diaz, biography."

<sup>66</sup> "Olivas, Ralph and Rose, biographical account," Duncan, "Some Notes," and Duncan, conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, April 12, 2013, for this and below.



**Map 2.2.** *New Mexican villages from which immigrants came to Boulder County, either directly or after an initial move to southern Colorado*





*Illus. 2.6. Covered wagon (with old car) like those used by Latino migrants*

the family was on the road, it could be pulled by animals that would be useful when they reached a good place to stay, and it carried all the essential household supplies and tools that the family might need later. Roy Maestas, later a Boulder resident, was born in 1909 near Taos, New Mexico.<sup>67</sup> When his parents abandoned their 5-acre tract of land and set off for Colorado, the family travelled in a covered wagon for two weeks before reaching the little community of Torres, west of Trinidad. It took Joseph and Emiliana Borrego a month in their wagon to move to Lafayette in 1912.<sup>68</sup> When Joseph Martinez's parents went north from southern Colorado in March, 1923, the trip took 17 ½ days because they ran into a bad snowstorm.<sup>69</sup> Covered wagons were used by early migrant workers too.<sup>70</sup> We should recognize that these iconic emblems of "The Western Movement" represent "The Northern Movement" as well.

<sup>67</sup> Maestas, Roy, interview, 1978.

<sup>68</sup> "Borrego, Joseph Garfield, biography."

<sup>69</sup> "Martinez, Joseph and Pauline, biography." See also Marquez, Sonia, interview, 2013.

<sup>70</sup> José Esquibel, who later owned pharmacies in Longmont, Boulder, and Denver, moved away from New Mexico with his parents when he was three; they had been living in a covered wagon while doing migrant work there (Esquibel, Jose, interview, 1979). When Juan and Josephine Martinez left their land in New Mexico in the mid-1920s, they travelled with a group of 20-25 other farm workers in covered wagons across northern New Mexico and southern Colorado ("Martinez, Juan and Josephine; Marcella Diaz, biography").

### C. Newcomers from Southern Colorado

By around 1930, an increasing fraction of the Hispanic arrivals to Boulder County had lived in southern Colorado before settling here. A few were members of families that had ranched or farmed near the slopes of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains since the second half of the nineteenth century. Maria Sabina Maes's family had homesteaded in the mid-nineteenth century in the area that became known as Maes Creek in Huerfano County.<sup>71</sup> Shortly after her marriage to J. H. Cortez in 1899, the couple and their children began coming to the Longmont area as temporary farm workers; they became year-round residents around 1915. Frank Martinez, born in Huerfano County in 1890, grew up on his father's ranch.<sup>72</sup> In 1911, he came to the Longmont area as a beet worker. Early in the twentieth century George Abila's father was raising grain, hay, and sheep on his 120-acre ranch near the mountains of western Huerfano County.<sup>73</sup> Later the family moved to Walsenburg, because of employment opportunities in the mines and associated industries; from there they travelled to Boulder.

Other families had come initially from Mexico or New Mexico to the coal mining area around Walsenburg and Trinidad. As the mines there declined, they moved north, in some cases becoming migrant agricultural workers in northeastern Colorado before settling in Boulder County. Henry Rosales was born in the Spanish-speaking mining community of Aguilar (between Trinidad and Walsenburg), the son of parents who had immigrated from Mexico.<sup>74</sup> In 1933, his father brought the family to Lafayette, where Henry began work as a coal miner and crop harvester. Another Aguilar native was Emma Gomez (Martinez), born in 1928; her father had come from Mexico in the earlier 1920s, and her mother was from New Mexico.<sup>75</sup> After the family's move to Erie in 1929, her father worked in the coal mines in the winters and did field work in the summers.

<sup>71</sup> Maes, *Following in the Footsteps*, pp. 33-34, Cordova, Patsy, interview, c. 1987, and "Cortez, Jose Hilario ("J. H.") and Maria Sabina, biography."

<sup>72</sup> *They Came to Stay*, p. 158.

<sup>73</sup> Abila, Mr. and Mrs. George, interview, 1978. For another farmer, see "Archuleta family, biography."

<sup>74</sup> "Rosales, Henry and Alice, biography."

<sup>75</sup> Martinez, Emma Gomez, interview, 2013.



The former coal miners did not always remain in that type of work once they got to Boulder County. Romolo Martinez was born in Trinidad in 1886, part of a family that had lived in the Southwest for many generations.<sup>76</sup> After working as a miner near Trinidad and Raton, New Mexico for some years, he and his wife moved to Longmont in 1927. In this new setting, Martinez worked first as a carpenter and builder and later became a full-time employee on a local farm. David Manzanares, born in Walsenburg in 1917, came to Lafayette in 1938 looking for work in the mines; his wife Maggie had lived in the town since 1922.<sup>77</sup> Dave was a coal miner near Lafayette for 15 years, serving as president of the local United Mine Workers of America, but then he became a plumber.

Prior to around 1940, some degree of distance and even tension existed between immigrants from Mexico, New Mexico, and southern Colorado. People in the latter two groups were generally better educated than newcomers from Mexico, and they had generally had some previous contact with Anglo culture, even if they came from Spanish-speaking communities. Some New Mexicans, who were accustomed to running their own communities and might be lighter skinned, looked down upon Mexicans, whom they regarded as peasants.<sup>78</sup> But as adults from both groups came to know each other, and as their children and grandchildren went to school together and began to intermarry, those distinctions largely disappeared over the next two generations.

#### D. Quantitative Evidence about Immigration

The information presented above, drawn largely from family stories, is reinforced by quantitative measures of Hispanic immigration into Boulder County. The U.S. Censuses, taken every ten years between 1900 and 1940, provide valuable information about where residents and their parents were born.<sup>79</sup> Although the U.S. Censuses include a category for "Color or Race," those designations are not useful in identifying people from Spanish-speaking backgrounds, as a variety of terms were used

<sup>76</sup> *They Came to Stay*, p. 159.

<sup>77</sup> "Manzanares, David J. and Marguerite, biography."

<sup>78</sup> For similar tensions in New Mexico itself and other border states during the 1910s and 1920s, see Acuña, *Occupied America*, pp. 90-91 and 180-181.

<sup>79</sup> "Information about Latino-Headed Households in U.S. Census Records for Boulder," "Information about Latino-Headed Households in U.S. Census Records for Lafayette," and "Information about all Latinos in U.S. Census Records for Longmont."

from one census to the next, and even by different census takers in any given year.<sup>80</sup> In order to extract complete information from the Census materials, one must go through long files name by name. For Lafayette and Boulder, our analysis is incomplete, resting on information about households headed by someone with a Spanish surname as listed in Ancestry.com. Fuller information is available for Longmont, thanks to the painstaking analysis of the Census records done by Rebecca Chavez for her M.A. thesis at New Mexico State University.<sup>81</sup> She has included everyone who had a Spanish surname, was said to be Mexican, or was born in Mexico. That means that she has picked up not only household heads but also the children living in those families and boarders or roomers. In the information about birthplaces discussed below, it is important to remember that the evidence is much better for Longmont than for Lafayette and Boulder.

But even the Longmont analysis probably does not include everyone. Census takers may have written some surnames in their English equivalents. Although they went door to door to gather information, some residents—especially if they did not want to interact with a government representative—may have chosen to stay out of sight. Further, it seems highly likely that migrant workers were under-represented, perhaps excluded entirely. Because we cannot determine what fraction of all Hispanics were listed in the U.S. Censuses, we must regard the quantitative data displayed in Appendices 1.2 and 2.1 as showing only general patterns.

No one with a Spanish surname was included in the U.S. Census for 1900 in Longmont or Lafayette, but Boulder had two Hispanic households. An unmarried man from New York State was the co-owner of a farm, and a day laborer from New Mexico lived on university property with his wife and nine children, the oldest of whom was a student. A decade later, Lafayette and Boulder had no Hispanics, but six households in Longmont were headed by Hispanics or had at least one Hispanic living in them. Of the 17 adult men and women listed, eight had been born in Colorado, eight in Mexico, and one in New Mexico.

By 1920, Hispanic immigration was increasing. Lafayette now had 13 households headed by people with Spanish surnames, Boulder had 1, and Longmont had 31 that included Hispanics. The gender balance was almost entirely even. Of the 106 adults recorded, about one-fifth of the

<sup>80</sup> See Ch. 1A above.

<sup>81</sup> Rebecca Chavez, "Making Them Count."

men had been born in Colorado, as compared to two-fifths of the women. Some incoming men thus appear to have married women from this state. Two-thirds of the men and half of the women had come from Mexico, presumably reflecting poverty and the violence of the Revolution during the 1910s. Some may have lived in southern Colorado before reaching Boulder County. Only four people were born in New Mexico, implying that economic and weather-related difficulties had not yet become acute there. Four people had arrived from other states in the U.S., and two were from Spain.

The 1930 Census shows a different pattern. The number of people with Spanish surnames had risen sharply, to 294, 2.8 times more than a decade before. There were now somewhat more men than women (56% to 44%), indicating that some of the incoming males were single or had not brought their wives with them. A larger number of both men and women had been born in Mexico than in the previous Census (a total of 92 as compared to 61), probably a sign of ongoing disruption and economic suffering in that county during the 1920s. But the relative percentage of Mexican-born residents had dropped to just over one-third for men and one-quarter for women. A total of 69 men and women had been born in New Mexico, forming around a quarter of all Hispanics. Hard times in that state were obviously taking a toll. The largest group in 1930 consisted of people born in Colorado itself: 40-50% for both sexes. Some of these were presumably the children of people who had arrived from Mexico or New Mexico earlier in the century, while others came from Colorado's older Hispanic communities.

It should be emphasized that as early as 1930, the majority of the Hispanic population of these three towns (69%) had been born somewhere in the United States. Because they were by definition U.S. citizens, as were all future children of foreign-born immigrants living in this country, they should have been freed from any possible problems about their legal status. That was not always the case.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, if we examine where the parents of Colorado-born agricultural laborers and miners in the Longmont Census had themselves been born, we find that half to two-thirds of those parents were born in this country. That means that as early as 1930, the majority of these workers' families had been in the U.S. for at least three generations.

By 1940, the U.S. Census reports 354 Spanish-surnamed adults in

<sup>82</sup> See Ch. 4C below.

the three towns, a rise of only 20% over the past decade. The sharply diminished growth rate was probably affected by lack of employment during the Great Depression and possibly by deportation of Mexicans.<sup>83</sup> The proportion of men to women was almost identical to 1930, indicating that some men were still arriving on their own. The number of Hispanic residents born in Colorado had increased significantly (197 as compared to 128 in 1930); they now accounted for more than half of the total, for both men and women. More people had likewise been born in other American states than a decade before, some of them probably the children of migrant workers. The number of men born in New Mexico rose again, the result—one assumes—of the combination of the Great Depression and the terrible drought of the 1930s. The most surprising change was the marked decline in Mexican-born residents. That number had dropped to just 57, down from 92 ten years earlier. First-generation Mexicans now constituted only 16% of all Hispanics living in these towns; more people had been born in New Mexico than in Mexico. As of 1940, 84% of all Hispanics listed here were American-born.

Another source of numeric information is the annual School Census reports required by the state of Colorado from sometime in the late nineteenth century through 1964. On a given day each spring, all schools were required to fill out an entry book that asked for information about every student and sometimes his/her parents. For the children, most listings provide name, home address, birthdate, and grade in school; in some years and towns they also give the child's birthplace, previous school attended, the birthplace (or "nationality") of the parents, and occasionally whether the parents were literate. By searching for Spanish surnames, a labor-intensive task, volunteers with the Boulder County Latino History Project pulled out information about these children and families for one year per decade between 1905 and 1964 and entered it in spreadsheets.<sup>84</sup> The children listed in the school records were said to belong to "resident" families and hence probably excluded migrant workers. Further, we must be cautious in accepting the self-reported information about where parents were born: examination of entries for known people shows that several were listed as having been born in the U.S. who were actually from Mexico. Children's birthplaces seem to be

<sup>83</sup> See Ch. 4A and C below.

<sup>84</sup> "Latino-surnamed children in Boulder schools," "Latino-surnamed children in Lafayette schools," and "Latino-surnamed children in Longmont schools." For the limitations of this approach, see Ch. 1B above.

more reliable. Wherever possible the records were sampled for a middle year in each decade. The Longmont lists are complete for that full span, while the surviving books for Lafayette and Boulder are spottier.<sup>85</sup>

Starting in 1925, some of the school books provide information about the children's birthplaces, an indicator of their parents' migration history (see Appendices 2.2 and 2.3). Very few of the children were foreign-born, with the highest proportion (10%) seen in Lafayette in 1925. If they came from Mexican families, most of their parents had already moved to the U.S. before these children were born. In Longmont in 1925 and 1935, just under three-quarters of the Spanish-surnamed students had been born in Colorado; the others were born primarily in New Mexico. By 1945, 93% of Longmont's Hispanic school children had been born in Colorado or New Mexico. In Lafayette in 1935 and 1944, and in Boulder, 1935 through 1955, 89-100% of the children had similarly been born in those two states. This was an overwhelmingly American-born group of children.

We can trace immigration in the previous generation through the 1925 and 1935 School Census books, which indicate where the father and mother of each child were born.<sup>86</sup> In Longmont, nearly half of the children's fathers in 1925 were self-reported as having come from Mexico, with another quarter born in Colorado. Strikingly, however, just over half of the mothers were Colorado natives, with nearly a third from New Mexico. This again suggests that Mexican men were marrying American-born women. By 1935, fewer of the Longmont fathers were Mexican-born, with more from New Mexico, the same pattern visible in the U.S. Census data. In that year, around three-quarters of fathers and mothers alike said they had been born in this country.

The Lafayette and Boulder books record only the "nationality" of the parents. Those born in Mexico are described as "Mexican," people with Spanish names born in the U.S. are called "Spanish," and all other whites are called "American." So we can distinguish between Mexican-born and U.S.-born parents but cannot determine in which states the latter were born. In Lafayette in 1925, just over a quarter of both parents were said to have immigrated from Mexico, but by 1935, the proportion of U.S.-born parents was 78% to 89% for both Lafayette and Boulder.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>85</sup> For the grade level and age of school children in the three towns, see Vol. II, Ch. 6 and Apps. 6.1 and 6.2.

<sup>86</sup> See App. 2.4.

<sup>87</sup> See App. 2.4.

A small number of parents and children had been born in American states other than Colorado or New Mexico. Some of those from Texas may have lived in established Hispanic community near the Mexican border, such as Brownsville or El Paso, while others were probably the children of migrant laborers. Children born in Kansas or Nebraska were presumably the offspring of agricultural or railroad laborers, while the fathers of those born in Wyoming may have been beet workers, railroad men, or coal miners.

This chapter has shown that Hispanic immigrants to Boulder County during the first four decades of the century, who came mainly from three countries or states, commonly left their place of origin to escape severe poverty and/or fighting. After their arrival here, they initially formed fairly separate communities in social terms and identified themselves in contrasting ways. Over time, however, the groups moved closer together, in part through their interactions at work. It is the nature of that work that we explore next.

## List of Illustrations, with Credits

All the images listed below are hyperlinked to their original online sources. They can be viewed by clicking on the underlined blue text at the end of each entry. Those that have a reference number beginning with “BCLHP” are on the Boulder County Latino History website:

<http://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/>

It contains hundreds of additional photos and other types of material as well.

- 2.1. Espinoza family portrait, 1912, probably in northern New Mexico. Courtesy of Gilbert Espinoza. [BCLHP-FP-089](#).
- 2.2. Engagement announcement, Pedro and Merenciana Chavez, aged 20 and 17 in 1911, probably northern New Mexico or southern Colorado. Courtesy of Mary Ellen Chavez. [BCLHP-MKM-778](#).
- 2.3. Farm workers with mules, with adobe building in background, probably northern New Mexico or southern Colorado. Courtesy of El Comité de Longmont. [BCLHP-LHS-495](#).
- 2.4. Large group at a traditional wedding, with musicians, probably northern New Mexico or southern Colorado. Courtesy of El Comité de Longmont. [BCLHP-LHS-225](#).
- 2.5. Clefos and Apolonia Vigil, from northern New Mexico but living in Alamosa, Colorado, 1930s. Courtesy of Thomas Martinez. [BCLHP-FP-141](#).
- 2.6. Covered wagon (with old car) like those used by Latino migrants, 1910s, in Nebraska. Courtesy of National Archives. Photo no. 30-N-9006. <http://www.archives.gov/research/american-west/images/042.jpg>

# Sources

## Explanations

Most of the items listed below are hyperlinked to their original online sources. They can be viewed by clicking on the underlined blue text at the end of each entry.

**BCLHP Collection, Carnegie Library.** Materials collected by the Boulder County Latino History Project, 2013-2014. Deposited at Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder Public Library.

**BCLHP references.**<sup>1</sup> These provide the ID number for items accessible on the Boulder County Latino History website, [bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu](http://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu). It contains hundreds of other sources, which can be searched in various ways.

If a given item contains multiple pages on the website, only the initial ID number is shown here; the following pages are linked to that one.

**Carnegie Library.** Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder Public Library.

**LM.** Longmont Museum.

**LPL.** Lafayette Public Library.

**MROHP.** Maria Rogers Oral History Program, Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder Public Library.

**Valdez Papers.** Materials preserved by Euvaldo Valdez concerning two organizations in the 1970s: Mexican Americans of Boulder County United (MABCU); and the Boulder County Council of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). University of Colorado at Boulder Archives, Norlin Library.

Information cited as from a conversation with Marjorie McIntosh on a stated date has been confirmed in writing and approved for use in this study by the authors of those statements.

All websites listed below were last accessed November 10-18, 2015.

<sup>1</sup> For entries with a BCLHP reference:

- Items labelled as FP are family photographs loaned by community members and digitized by the BCLHP. The photographers are unknown unless specified.
- Items labelled as LHS are photos loaned to the Longmont Hispanic Study in 1987-8 by a relative or descendent of the people shown. They were converted into slides by Oli Olivas Duncan for use in public presentations associated with the 1988 publication of *We, Too, Came to Stay: A History of the Longmont Hispanic Community*, which she edited. In 2014, the BCLHP was given permission to make digital copies of the slides, many of which showed unidentified people. The dates, locations, and photographers of these photos are unknown unless specified.



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“Borrego, Joseph Garfield. Biography,” in *Lafayette, Colorado*, F55. [BCLHP-SCW-184](#).

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