

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

TAPE INDEX

NAME: Mr. Antonio A. Aguilar
DATE OF INTERVIEW: April 23, 1991
LOCATION: Inkom, Idaho 83245
INTERVIEWER: Angela Luckey

TAPE ONE - SIDE A:

Tape Min.

- 0:30 His uncles were corredores in Mexico. They would seek goods needed by whomever, buy them, and deliver them back to the people who ordered them.
- 5:00 He talks about why he lives in the place where he does. He likes the open space of the country. At eight years old, he read in a book that those who live near vegetation are healthier. He has noticed that those who live in the city die earlier. He said that when he was in the Army, he became used to eating early in the morning because they never knew if or when they would have time to eat again.
- 11:00 The family came to this country to escape the persecution because Antonio was in the Mexican army. He knew two words in English, "Yes" and "No." His parents stayed in New Mexico because there were more Spanish-speaking people there.
- 13:00 The family came by train. He sings a song that people sang while on the train on their way to the U.S. Pancho Villa is an alias. He assumed the name of a man whom he killed. Antonio can see in his mind's eye the whole picture of that time but now it seems like a dream. He worked in the roundhouse of the railroad.
- 18:00 Pancho Villa's real name was Doroteo Arango. Today the people have elevated him to a pedestal but he is not a hero for Antonio because he came to the U.S. and he was chased out at gunpoint and he disconnected the railroad tracks in northern Mexico. They rode on horseback to chase him. The Mexican government would use Fulton 1 ton trucks, put a platform on them. The soldiers would sit around the perimeter of the platform. They would hook arms to keep from falling off. At that time there were many ox carts used also.
- 22:03 He remembers the train as a youngster. He talks about the first airplane that landed in Mexico. He talks about how people couldn't believe that a machine could fly.
- 25:00 He worked for \$.25/hour. He considers his family American. They are not Mexican. When they are asked if they are Spanish, they say no. They want to know how a Mexican can have blue eyes. He said that his mother had blue eyes. His grandfather came from Spain. He had red hair. He says it was "rusty". When he was about 10 or 11 years old, he remembers that his grandfather already had grey hair but the red was still prominent. That is why his coloring is as it is. After his mother's death, his uncles sent him a picture of her. He had the photo blown up and wanted to have it tinted. He told them that her eyes were blue but ...

SIDE B:

- 0:30 They tinted his mother's eyes brown because she was Mexican. His eyes are clear grey. His brother was four years younger than he. He is buried in Albuquerque. His eyes were blue. In Mexico his brother used Juan Aguilar Hernandez because there were other Juan Aguilars.
- 4:30 His was the first house in that area (Blackrock). People in the roundhouse called him Tony. When someone says, "Mr. Aguilar," he turns to see who they are talking to because everyone around here calls him Tony.
- 7:30 They named their boy Luis Evaristo Aguilar after a good friend who was named Eva. He lived to be almost 50 years. He was born and buried in Pocatello.
- 9:30 At 17, Antonio joined the Mexican Army. He had the misfortune to "cool a plomaso". He was near death. The doctor said that he was terminal. He had lost all color. He could hear but he could not talk. He could not contradict the doctor. His eyes were slightly open and he saw his mother crying but when he asked why, she told him that he was dying. He told her that he did not feel that and to not cry until he did.
- 13:30 He wishes to leave his past across the river. He did not know how to work because he entered the service at 17 and when he left at 22 all he knew was how to fire a gun. He was wounded four times. After the last time, he decided to quit the Army. They did not have a time commitment in the Army so he asked to be released. Since then, he has not kept up with the news from Mexico because he received no newspapers. His family is in this country.
- 18:30 He came over alone. He was in Chihuahua when he was released. He did not have any intention to come to the U.S. but he was tired of being fired at in battle. He was in Arizona and Colorado.
- 19:00 He went from Kansas City, Missouri to Kansas City, Kansas. He decided to find his people. He remembered his brother who had problems with people trying to pronounce his name. So, he took the name Martinez after a little place near Albuquerque.
- 22:00 He knew Pocatello in her infancy. He talks about it as a child in diapers. The Indians traveled to Pocatello from Fort Hall. They would set up their teepees in the center of town. Rourke (?) kept the horses. The Indians would stay for a few days or a week. He talks about a brick factory located a block from railroad where it crosses the highway. There were excavations. People would go find the girls. They would pick peas.
- 26:00 From 8 a.m. until late, he did what he pleased because his shift was the late one. He would go talk to the girls and help them pick the peas. Albuquerque was small when he first went there too. But it started to grow when the air base was established.
- 28:00 He was a boarder in a home on Fourth Street. He enjoyed going out to where the Pocatello Greenhouse is now to shoot his gun. He enjoyed hunting. He still does. There were only 3 or 4 Mexican families. They did not want to mix with him because he had been in the Mexican Army. So he stayed away from them.

TAPE TWO - SIDE A:

Tape Min.

- 2:30 Families here were Gonzales and Soto, only three or four. All the girls had their boyfriends. Today he has no friends.

- 4:35 His wife's maiden name was Graham. She had been married to an Edmo before. Her sister was married to an Indian. The young men were all called to the service during the war. Bill Edmo took him fishing in Fort Hall. So he became friends with them. A woman made him quit drinking. He talks about Mormons saying that he would be a good Mormon since he doesn't smoke, drink or gamble.
- 9:30 He knew "La Presidenta." Her name was Maria.
- 13:00 He talks about the smells of fresh air, hay and flowers. He likes the outdoors.
- 14:34 He worked in Big Springs, Texas and other towns in Texas picking cotton. He went there on Reganche. There was a boy there who taught him how to pick cotton.
- 16:30 He describes the finer points of cotton picking. They paid them \$2.00/100 pounds of cotton. Their backs ached from bending over all day.
- 18:00 His father was an aborigine of his land because he was born and died in the same land.
- 20:00 He gives his theory on why Chinas Poblanas are so called.
- 24:00 He talks about the other ethnic communities in Pocatello.
- 25:00 He moved from Pebble where he first lived to Blazer. This is about three miles from Lava Hot Springs. He talks about the different groups that lived in Mexico identified by their surname. Some people would address him in their native language and he soon learned to tell which language they spoke. He did not attend school here at all. He felt bad that the small children could understand English but he older did not.
- 28:00 His friend Genaro taught him some English. He earned \$.25/hour. He'd go to the restaurant where one had to pay for the atmosphere as well. His friend took him home. He would go to the Rio Bravo or Rio Grande as it is called here. He could say sugar, coffee, matches, and cigarettes. He learned some more English. He would study peoples lips and mouth to get the correct pronunciation of words. He confused "dirty" and "daddy" for example. He asked how the tongue was placed to say the words correctly. He still has the habit of watching peoples lips.

SIDE B:

- 1:30 Some people didn't like for him to be "reading" their lips.
- 2:30 He enjoys learning and he tries to say the words correctly. He talks about a man he knew in Arizona. He would translate to the workers what the boss wanted done.
- 5:00 He talks about how bridges were constructed.
- 8:00 He continues to talk about how they built the bridges. He would be the go-between for the boss and the workers. They used a board to write their messages to each other. He talks about Mr. Stephens' Irish accent. He talks about the differences in accents and he was trying to learn English.

- 11:00 He enjoys reading. He must read aloud. He has several dictionaries to use as he reads. He cannot remember the words.
- 12:00 He completed his education in Mexico. He wishes to forget his Mexican life. He talks about how the railroad round house no longer exists.
- 13:30 He describes the roundhouse and how the trains came in from different directions. He talks about the work that he did when he worked there.
- 19:00 They used jackhammers to close up leaks in the engines. Five lines came in to the roundhouse. He drew a diagram of how the lines ran.
- 21:00 They would clean the engines with vapor. The workers would work in chambers under the tracks to work on the engines. He describes what the roundhouse looked like.
- 24:30 He talks about the Flappers' dress. He showed me some postcards in an album of Washington of the 1800's with people dressed in that style.
- 28:00 He hasn't been back to the railroad since he retired. He likes thinking about things as they were.
- 30:30 He refers to the exercise bike he has in his living room.