

# NATIVE SON HONORS THE HERITAGE OF AN ANCESTRAL SPIRIT

THE LEGACY OF BAPTISTINA S. APARICIO. WRITER, POET, AND TRAVELER.  
BEQUEATHED TO HER GRANDSON, SNAKE BLOCKER.

These are some of my memoirs, as long back as I can remember, since 1912.

## TROUBLED TIMES

The Mexican Revolution had begun in 1910. The City of Monterrey was nearly normal. It had not yet been attacked. I remember that my mother and aunts were worried about their sister, who was married to **General Mendoza**. They were also worried about a brother, **Colonel Brijido Sepulveda**, who was serving in the Army of the Federal Government. **Brijido** later became a Presbyterian Evangelist.

The President was Jose Porfirio Diaz, a cruel Dictator for about 30 years (1876 – 1911). I heard all the talk of what was happening, as the family was alert to all news. The newspapers printed pictures of the battles, and I too began to feel my mother's worries. I was paying attention to all that was around me. Adding to the family's worries, my grandfather, who was a judge in the town of Hualahuises, was taken prisoner by the revolutionaries. They thought all public employees were loyal to the government.

The Revolution was started by Francisco Madero. He was against the government of Dictator Jose Porfirio Diaz, who favored just the rich families.

Poor people were treated like slaves with no right to vote, no access to school and no right to defend themselves. Dictator Diaz was overthrown on May 24, 1911. Francisco Madero became President from 1911 – 1913.

Back then the daily pay for a field laborer was 12 cents plus about 5 pounds of corn, no matter how many were in the family. Laborers lived on the property of their landlord. It was like Feudalism. The middle class was a little respected. Francisco Madero belonged to a rich family of Industrialists. He was a good lawyer and a compassionate man, who wanted to see Mexico free, all equal and all respected.

During this time, my grandfather was brought up on charges. Before proving that he was not against the Revolution, my grandfather was taken to the state capital at Monterrey. My mother took me to visit him, when he was in jail. He was found innocent of the charges against him and freed two weeks later.

In the middle of 1913, the city of Monterrey was attacked without warning by troops loyal

to the Federal Party. Many men were on their way to work. At 8:00 a.m., the American Smelting (Fundicion) Company, all factories and industries, began sounding alarms. But it was too late. The assault had already begun. All who were on the streets ran for safety. Some made it. Others were caught in the cross fire. Many were killed in our neighborhood.

We all looked for shelter in the sturdiest houses. In the big house where we stayed, there were about 300 people. There were babies crying and frightened children. The men tried to calm the panic, while leaning mattresses against the walls as shields against bullets.

The battle lasted three days. When the soldiers gave us notice that it was safe to return to our homes, we found them riddled with bullet holes. The soldiers had occupied some of our homes as barracks.

The next day, city employees began removing the dead bodies from the streets. There were too many corpses to be buried. The soldiers burned them outside the city limits.

President Madero was betrayed and assassinated in 1913. Victoriana Huerta became President but only for one year (1913 – 1914). Venustiano Carranza next occupied the office from 1914 – 1920. Francisco “Pancho” Villa rebelled against Carranza. Some soldiers went with Villa, while others remained loyal to Carranza. The President ordered his soldiers not to fight inside the city, when hostilities broke

out, and for a short time it was peaceful. The Mexican Civil War lasted from 1911 – 1914, but there were small battles and civil conflict until 1920.

By 1914, Monterrey was controlled by General Francisco “Pancho” Villa. He was the first General of the Mexican Revolution. “Pancho” Villa printed his own money. Then he called the poor people to his military train, where he gave

everyone 200 pesos. My mother took me to see him. That’s how I came to know “Pancho” Villa.

Carranza came back in 1916 to attack Villa. The first General of the Mexican Revolution left the city peacefully. “Pancho” Villa became a bandit, raiding trains, ranches, and whatever else he could. Some say he became a very bad person.

### GENERAL MENDOZA’S ODDYSSEY

When the Mexican Revolution ended, my aunt’s husband, **General Mendoza** had been wounded. So he left the Army and boarded a ship from Yucatan to Florida. From there he went to Galveston, Texas and ended up in Laredo, Texas.

With enemies in pursuit, at one point, he dressed in woman’s

clothes to keep from being recognized. It was known that he had gold, obtained while in the Army. Somehow he got word to my aunt, whom he’d left in Mexico City, to come meet him in Laredo. My aunt and their children embarked to Veracruz, all using aliases, so they wouldn’t be discovered. They made it to Galveston and then to Laredo, where her

husband was waiting. They managed to get a lot of gold across the border. This was the start of a new life for them. They opened a grocery store in Laredo, which remained in business until 1932, when my uncle died of a heart attack. My aunt died in 1985. She was 102 years old.

### BAPTISTINA S. APARICIO’S STORY

I went to school in 1915 and finished my first year. My aunt, who was the principal of a Christian College, enrolled me and my sister in a college named Instituto Christiano. Professor Enrique Westrup was the Superintendent of the School Board. The college had been founded by the Board of Missions of the Christian Church from Cincinnati, Ohio. All the teachers received their checks from the U.S.A. I finished my second school year there.

We came in 1916 to stay in the U.S.A.. In those years, nothing was required to cross the border. Just leave your name and pay a nickel. We stayed in Laredo, Texas for a short time. We moved to Sequin in 1917, then to San Antonio, then to Kennedy, and then Aransas Pass, Texas. We lived in Aransas Pass for eight years.

World War I had started on June 28, 1914. It ended on November 11, 1918. During those years, the U.S.A. was

sending troops to France. Supplies were scarce. Sugar, coffee, flour, and other commodities were in short supply because they went overseas for the war effort. The victorious soldiers came back home in 1918, and the first Armistice Day was celebrated.

The next year, in 1919, a strong hurricane hit Aransas Pass. The town was nearly destroyed. We barely escaped, but thank God. He cares for us at all times and through all hardship.

In October of 1929, the Great Depression brought hardship to the entire nation when the stock market crashed. It got worse until 1933. Banks closed. The stock market was at an all time low, and all industries seemed to be failing. There was little to no work in those years. There was no welfare. It was hard times, until Franklin Roosevelt became President of the U.S.A. He was a great President and a good man. He began to put men back to work and recruited teenagers to work in the forests. It's a long story, but things got better.

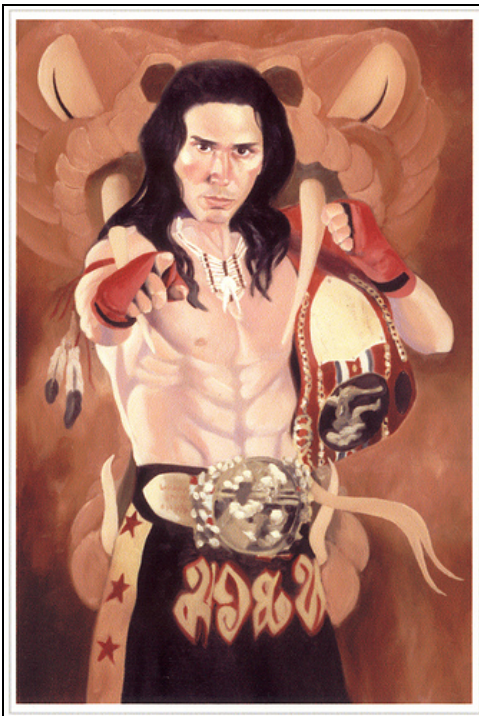
With WWII, every citizen tried hard to help. Even children helped in everything they could. Everyone worked harder to support the country in time of war. Temples and churches remained open, so everyone who wanted to could go and pray. At work, all businesses and factories gave employees five to ten minutes to pray for peace. Catholics and Protestants put

aside their differences to pray for our soldiers. It's another long story, but the U.S.A. and our Allies won the war against Adolf Hitler and the evil Nazis.

I can't say much about dates of some of my elders, only those given to me by my mother, when she too came to the U.S.A. I lost the trace of other relatives, except my mother's brothers and sisters.

All I know of my grandfather is that his name was Jose Sepulveda. The book I have says that my great-grandmother was a widow at the time she was converted to the Gospel in 1865 by a Baptist Missionary named James Hickey. It was written about the family by Mr. Thomas Westrup. He was an Englishman. Mr. Westrup was in Mexico to open a flour mill and to establish the First Baptist Church in Monterrey.

The Sepulveda family was living at that time in Villa de Garcia, N Leon State. My great-grandmother and eight of her children were baptized. Only one remained a Catholic, Guadalupe Sepulveda. I already mentioned **Colonel Brijido**. Eugenio Sepulveda was a book keeper and the first elder of the First Baptist Church in Monterrey. Tomas Sepulveda was an Inter-Denominational Evangelist. Anastacio Sepulveda was killed by Catholic fanatics while distributing Christian literature. Octaviano Sepulveda was a judge and lawyer. Dominga Sepulveda was married to Jose Garza. Juanita Sepulveda was married to a Mr. Dominguez. And Luciana Sepulveda was married to Jose Uranga. These were my mother's side (uncles and aunts). The Sepulvedas also owned a hotel in Sabinas Hidalgo.



**B**aptistina S. Aparicio of 2226 Howard Street, Corpus Christi, Texas passed away on Sunday, November 10, 1991 at the age of 84. She was preceded in death by her husband, **Alejandro Aparicio** (a **Lipan Apache**) in 1978 and a daughter, Esther A. Galvan in 1983. The survivors were two daughters, **Nancy Dalia Blocker** of California (**Snake Blocker's** mother), Gloria Morgan of Colorado and five sons: Neftali Aparicio of Texas, Alejandro Aparicio of Texas, Ricardo Aparicio of California, Samuel Aparicio of Washington, Abel Aparicio of Arizona; one brother, Ike Saldana of California; 38 Grandchildren; 56 Great-Grandchildren; over 100 Great-Great Grandchildren.

It is only through honoring the heritage of our ancestral spirits that we can obtain their benediction.

**Snake Blocker.** 