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Faith and Family for Early Mexican Immigrants to Chicago: The Diary of Elidia Barroso

Introduction by Deborah Kanter
Albion College

Abstract: Elidia Barroso emigrated as a young woman from Mexico to the United States in 1917 and settled in Chicago in the 1920s. She kept a hand-written diary that reflected her family history, internal migration within revolutionary Mexico, and her first years in Texas and Illinois. The Barroso diary offers an unusually personal story from the first wave of Mexican immigrants in the early twentieth century. The following selection features a Spanish-language transcription of the diary and its English-language translation, thus offering an accessible primary source about a female Mexican immigrant. The introductory essay considers how Elidia Barroso’s story exemplified the gender and kinship norms of her era, as well as the personal piety and more formal Catholic worship that colored many immigrants’ experiences.

Keywords: Mexico, Immigration, Mexican-American, Women, Diaries, Catholic Church, Mexican Revolution.

INTRODUCTION

Elidia Barroso emigrated as a young woman from Mexico to the United States in 1917, and eventually settled in Chicago in the 1920s. The following Spanish-language transcription and English translation are from her hand-written diary. Elidia Barroso wrote intimately about her family and youth in Mexico, the circumstances that caused her emigration, and her first seven years coping as a mexicana in the U.S. Elidia and her siblings formed part of the first wave of Mexican immigrants in the early twentieth century; nearly one-tenth of Mexicans left their homeland between 1910–30.

Born into a degree of comfort in Guanajuato, Elidia’s early years were disturbed by the upheaval of the Mexican Revolution (1910–17). Orphaned by age 19, she and her siblings joined family in Texas. Following initial months of family dispersal and work on isolated Texas farmsteads, Elidia was able to settle in urban areas and rejoin her siblings, due to the efforts of relatives and kind members of the growing Mexican colonias in Ft. Worth and San Antonio. Like most mexicanas, Elidia only found low-paying work, including five years in a San Antonio cigar factory. Economic necessity and tradition kept this young woman tightly bound to her kin. Her Mexican landlady in Ft. Worth introduced Elidia to another young Mexican émigré, with whom she fell in love. Elidia reflects much on their on-again, off-again six-year courtship which, it seems, brought her to Chicago and their marriage in 1924. Elidia filled her compact diary with nostalgia for saints’ days and serenatas in Mexico, and grief for her lost parents. Her notes about living in the U.S. are punctuated by train rides, mail correspondence, hard-earned dollars, separations and joyful reunions with her loved ones, and devoted gratitude to divine providence. Overall, the diary expresses the many episodes of dislocation that Elidia, like most immigrants experienced, tempered by connections to kinsfolk and a deeply Catholic piety.

A diary kept by a Mexican or Mexican-American woman of that generation is an unusual treasure. Men formed the vast majority of early immigrants from Mexico and have often been the focus of scholarship. We know quite a bit about men fixing tracks in the Great Plains, picking cotton in Texas and hoeing beets in Michigan, or lounging in the pool halls of Chicago and St. Paul. Women comprised a minority of that generation’s immigrants, and their lives prove more challenging to document. Moreover, few women (or men) had the habit of recording their own lives. Only a minority of women in Mexico were fully literate. Elidia Barroso did not write about her education; she mentioned neither teachers nor books. But she grew up in a large and comfortable rural family that encouraged the literacy of its daughters as well as its sons. As a girl, Elidia witnessed the importance of letters and documents to her businessman father. Years later, letters proved pivotal as her love affair developed with her fiancée in Texas and in maintaining family ties between siblings in Texas and Illinois. Elidia unquestionably recognized the utility and power of writing. As she noted in the final entry, “My Diary continues, today I spent the morning arranging my books and other mementos that I keep.”

The spelling in the diary indicates that she had little formal
schooling, but her vocabulary is rich, as is her degree of self-reflection at several points. Elidia Barroso’s diary adds to the growing literature that brings *mexicanas*’ lives “from out of the shadows.”

Elidia Barroso was born into a world of privilege, but the turbulent years of the Revolution and her immigration transformed her into part of the Mexican working class in the U.S. Until she married, she worked and paid her wages into a family pot, probably keeping little for her own enjoyment. She kept notes of her small savings and her remittances to siblings who remained in Texas. Yet this diary offers vital details that make clear that all Mexicans did more than work. They found solace and support with family, friends from work, the fictive kin of a boarding house, and, crucially, with other faithful on Sundays and holidays at church.

Elidia’s constant expressions of piety and attachment to the Catholic church exemplify the religiosity of most Mexican immigrants. She grew up in a world shaped by the Catholic liturgical calendar, its obligations, and celebrations. Living in Texas and Chicago, Elidia continued to refer to the Catholic calendar and likewise she regularly noted the intercession of the Virgin of Guadalupe or other divine providence. With nostalgia and affection, she recalled the Virgin of Loreto in Silao (Guanajuato) and the fiestas there; she rejoiced that her first niece, born in Illinois, was named for this Virgin Mary, essentially resurrecting memories of faith and place in her family’s homeland.

Much Mexican-American scholarship ignores or discounts the role of Catholicism for Mexicans in the U.S., often asserting a secularizing process in which, at most, *mexicanas* followed “folk” Catholic rituals in the home.8 Like thousands of her generation in Los Angeles, Texas, Chicago and elsewhere, Elidia Barroso maintained her faith and actively sought connection to Catholic congregations.9 This may not have been possible in her first months in rural Texas. Yet as soon as she arrived in San Antonio, Elidia found refuge and fellowship at San Fernando parish, where she attended Masses, took part in rosary gatherings, and enjoyed religious fiestas.10 She was fortunate to settle in Chicago where the rapidly growing Mexican population caught the interest of an Archdiocese long attentive to the dozens of ethnic groups within its care.11 The Archbishop saw the need for Spanish-speaking clergy and worked to establish two parishes: Our Lady of Guadalupe in South Chicago and St. Francis of Assisi in the Near West Side. These churches, strategically located amidst the two largest concentrations of Mexicans, soon came to anchor each *colonia*. Both parishes were staffed by the Claretian Missionary Fathers (C.M.F.), an order that originated in Spain; many of its clergy in Mexico would serve the growing numbers of the Mexican diaspora in the U.S.12 These two parishes would draw those arriving from Texas and Mexico for decades to come.

Elidia Barroso married in the recently established Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in October 1924. This Spanish-language wedding would not have been possible just a year earlier, as the first mass for Spanish-speakers took place on December 8, 1923. The marriage took place in a make-shift wooden church (a former army barracks) that housed the parish for several years; ground-breaking for the permanent church would wait until 1928.13 Elidia never notes her address in Chicago, but likely lived on the Near West Side. At the time of her arrival, the only formal church that served Spanish-speakers was in distant South Chicago, and that required a train trip. But in June 1925, she wrote with obvious joy about going to Mass with her husband. Perhaps they were among the Mexican faithful that attended Mass at a storefront church, probably within walking distance from their apartment, under the administration of Fr. James Tort C.M.F in the summer of 1925.

Finally, after many years of migrations and uncertainty, Elidia Barroso was settled enough in Chicago that she could fulfill a long-standing desire: she requested a Mass for her parents’ souls for late that summer. She could communicate her desire to the accommodating Claretian priests. With the date set, certainly her siblings in Rockdale and Chicago would join her at the Mass. Five months after her Mass intention, the Claretians began to minister at St. Francis of Assisi, an old German church, in the heart of Chicago’s largest Mexican *colonia*.14 There, Loretta Cabrera, the first Barroso grandchild, would celebrate her first communion; her siblings would be baptized there, followed by weddings, and more baptisms until the present. The Catholic church in Chicago became a place for the Barroso family to pay homage to past generations and to establish new Mexican-American lives.15 After a sad departure from Mexico and long periods of ambiguity in this country, going to church meant Elidia Barroso was finally home in Chicago.
A NOTE ON THE FORM OF THE DIARY

Regarding the diary’s format and timeframe, most of its writing would be better described as a memoir. Elidia Barroso formally began to keep this diary on October 10, 1924. At that point, she was a newlywed, living in Chicago. The diary indicates that at the time she did not work outside of the home. For the first time in her adult years, Elidia had the leisure to reflect at length upon her past. The entry dated October 10th, 1924 thus begins with recording her date and place of birth, describes her childhood and youth in Mexico, and then recounts her years in Texas. (Possibly, Elidia recalled this based upon earlier, piece-meal writing—she refers to such in the first sentences.) The contemporary diary entries, in fact, are few. About ten entries chronicle Elidia’s first year (1924–25) in Chicago.

In the Spanish transcription, I have corrected the spelling. Illegible and unclear words appear in brackets. In the English translation, I bracket such phrases and those that lose something in translation. I have edited dates, added some paragraphing and punctuation for clarity, and included some explanatory notes. I try to remain faithful to Elidia’s original writing, while sometimes replacing her own phrases with more modern language (for example, I chose “romance” to translate “relaciones amorosas”).

Finally, I thank members of the Cabrera and Jaimes families for sharing this unique piece of family history. Elidia’s story offers a personal perspective on the travails and the joys that came with leaving home in Mexico and making new homes in Chicago and elsewhere in the U.S.

THE DIARY OF ELIDIA BARROSO
Chicago, Illinois
October 20, 1924

Today has been memorable for me. Besides, I have decided to write a little today. I wish that I could be a poet in order to tell a story, but I can’t even spell. Besides, why wish for something that you can’t have? Some time ago, due to my curiosity, I have kept a small diary, in which I have some [notes?]. But today, I want to put together the past entries with the present.

I’ll begin this way, to record a diary, as simple as poorly written; I will speak of my childhood.

Sr. Don Pedro Barroso, Rancho de González, Guanajuato State, México.
Sr. Don Pedro Barroso and Savina M. de Barroso

Rancho de González, December 29, 1897

Sr. Don Pedro Barroso
Sra. Savina Méndez de Barroso

These sacred names are those of my parents. I was born in this place, a truly lovely village [aldea]. Five years later, I recall that my grandfather was the overseer of that place; additionally he had many friendships. Many wealthy señores respected him. I recall some of their names, Sr. C. Guerrero, Sr. V. Gómez, Sr. L. Veltrán, Sr. P. Bionda, la Sra. Acendada, J. de C. Prieto, Sr. S. Pármas, S. F. Banquín, Sr. G. Álvarez, Sr. J. Razo, Sr. Licenciado Romero, Sr. Doctor. Salm [?], and most of my grandfather’s friends held similar status to these individuals. Don Nicolás Barroso also had six sons, married by that time, named Amado, Pedro, José María, Francisco, Eduardo, José; the younger daughters Tiburcia and Gregoria; his daughter-in-laws, Guiorgue Fausto, Teodora Sánchez, Savinita Gracia Méndez, Gregoria Caudillo, Andrea Ortiz, Eguinia Rodríguez; and son-in-laws, Epimenio Sánchez and Rafael. That was the entire family whom I knew then in the house of my grandfather [mi papá, grande] and his wife, Eugenia M. de Barroso. That lady was very nice. Of her six daughter-in-laws, one was the nicest, of regular height, white, chestnut hair which she covered. Indeed, they were all attractive, in addition to well-dressed. They took carriage rides. My grandmother [mi mamá, grande], by contrast, preferred to ride on horseback; dressed in the Spanish style, she rode elegantly. Her husband accompanied her. He rode fine horses and had a good deal of wealth, also good livestock and a herd of horses. He was a gentleman who saw all realistically, with a charitable and sincere demeanor. They held big parties in the house on Christmas, New Year, June 24 and 29, September 10, October 4 17, and also weddings and their little grandchildren’s baptisms.

Then my grandfather passed away; I was his favorite, although I barely understood such things. I wanted to be near his cadaver. Dying, he signed his testament and each of his sons received an inheritance, except for my father. But my father did not take offense, not in the least. When he returned home after his business, he went immediately to his father, who had been sick some months. One day he got worse; the doctor and the priest were summoned, his testament arranged. Then my father, a modest and just gentleman, went to his father who, just minutes before his
death, told him, “Pedrito, I’m not leaving you anything because you don’t need it, son.” And my father replied, “That’s fine, Father” and he received his blessing. My grandfather told him to take care of various tasks and so my father did.

Two years later, three of the brothers went in on a deal and bought a nice piece of land, 15 caballerías.\(^{18}\) The land made a good profit, but they were unable to live there, because the move would hurt them or I don’t know why. Four years later they sold the property, and they all ended up poor. My father suggested buying and selling livestock, pigs, corn and other grains, and loaning money, at an interest rate that stood then at 2% in 1903–04, and later at 3%. In 1909, we moved to the hacienda owned by Martín López, where we lasted six months; my father did not like it there. We moved to a small rancho called Luz de Maciaz, where we remained two years. That place has very good neighbors and furthermore a chapel featuring a Holy Cross venerated by those good people. We were very happy there. My mother suffered just one illness, but that was after giving birth to a boy, who was my father’s passion \(el delirio\), born April 29, 1910 and baptized May 7. He was named for the day of his birth, Pedro, and for his baptismal date, Ladislao.

Well? Then the Revolution erupted and it became difficult to live in places that lacked government, because of the abuses committed by those bad people. My father, distrustful of everything that was happening, moved my oldest sister and the box containing his money and documents to his cousin’s house. This gentleman, Eulogio Barroso, greatly respected my father. Soon my father bought a house that stood a block closer to the center than my uncle’s, on the streets Salazar y Echivaría, #67 to North and 66 to South, standing a block behind the nuns’ school.\(^{19}\) Just two blocks from the center of town, we were even more content, but we had to leave that house suddenly; not just us, but a multitude of people, who could no longer stand the scandal there, given how the revolucionarios treated the civilians \(pacíficos\) and we were almost all killed from the horror.

Then one day, many of my father’s friends decided to tell him that they would move as soon as possible to Silao, Guanajuato, where we went on January 9, 1916. My father brought just me and my older sister to this same uncle’s house; he returned home right away with my mother and little siblings, Sofía, Merced and Pedro. Well, we didn’t agree with this, but we went out often with my cousin Ignacia and her aunt, Teofila Rodríguez. Together we went to dances and serenades. But, in the end, we always missed my mother as she missed us. On January 9, we had a great scare: a great flood developed overnight. We feared we would hear bad news at dawn, but God didn’t want anything to befall my parents or us. Because all our clothing was wet, however, we could not leave the house to eat something. Many people perished in that catastrophe, carried away by the water. By 10 in the morning, the water began to recede and my uncle went to the restaurant to bring us breakfast. At 2 in the afternoon, we moved to my aunt’s cousin’s house, located on La Aurora Street #96, where we waited for the water to recede in the house, before returning home. But in these days, my father arranged a safe passage with the majority of people there and he moved us, confident that no one could enter the house. This time the police chief in the village provided little defense. More disorder unfolded and those bandits mercilessly disturbed the townspeople.

We returned to Silao on February 6, 1916, and took up residence in a house at Calle Real de León #14, and here I was happier. My father, accompanied by good friends, began to travel by train, shipping goods to Morelia, Michoacán and so his capital did not decrease much, despite the fact that his debtors proved less punctual than before. Nonetheless, he kept his faith in God and nothing worried him. Returning from his trip, he brought many sacks of maize, which he began to sell straight away; just an hour or two proved enough to make some of these 1,000 bills that were the Carranza’s forgery-proof notes.\(^{20}\)

On August 24 that year [1916], we all went home again. In the end, the happiness that had previously existed in that blessed home \(Hogar Santo\) would disappear. Due to the war and other injustices, a horrible epidemic, or rather a wave of sickness, broke out; every home had 3 or 4 sick and in some, entire families were stricken.\(^{21}\) Still healthy, we went out with a young friend and her husband to a ranch near our town and that was perhaps enough to sicken my sister and then my father. He died October 20, 1916, at 7 [?], Friday. From then on, our peace was destroyed completely. My poor mother, who cried very much, tried to see to the property our father had left us. She fell ill and died November 15, 1916, Wednesday. We bought a burial spot for my mother in a municipal cemetery and we built a tomb for her. She was buried in the cemetery’s center, along with my uncle Eulogio, of whom I have told you, and my father. At the cemetery
entrance, to the right hand side, there are two [crypts?].
In the first his body was buried, with the date October 21, 1916 at [10 m], my uncle on November 13, and my mother on November 16. Oh! My God, have mercy on the souls of these people I have just named.

Panteón Municipal, R[ea]l?. Guanajuato
October 20 and November 15, 1916

Romita, Guanajuato, Mexico
November 17, 1917

Here we remained a year, orphans, and we rid ourselves of everything our parents left us and we resolved to emigrate, accompanied by a family and an uncle (my uncle Eulogio's family, and his older brother). Leaving our homes on November 17, 1917, we arrived in Laredo, Tamaulipas, México. We stayed here five days and my sister, little brother and I crossed on the 22nd. The next day we went to a female cousin's house. Here lived our only aunt, María Guadalupe, and S. de Aguilar, my mother's cousin. There, we girls, now alone, decided to go to Derby, Texas, on November 29, 1917, to work. On the same date, La Madam, owner of that ranch 6 miles from Derby, came to see us. Here we were well respected; I don't complain, despite the fact that we were entirely alone and young [solas y chicas todas]. Well the family that I told you about found it hard to work there and they were obliged to continue elsewhere, and my sister went with them so that they could repay the money they owed her. They stayed in Lillan, Texas, and on October 12, my sister sent me 30 pesos, so that my two brothers and I could join her in Sabin and Mercer. From there we left on October 16, 1918, and went on to San Antonio, Texas. Unable to find tickets for the place my sister was, we bought tickets to Fort Worth, Texas, a village [Pueblo] somewhat worthy of memory for its factories. There I met a gentleman named Merced Rioz, who opened his house to me. He helped me to figure out where my sister was staying. I wrote her a letter which he mailed. Upon receiving it, my sister came right away. This good gentleman went to meet her.

Fort Worth, Texas
October 18, 1918

Here we lived, receiving even more attention. These first days seemed very odd to me, but I don't know how many days went by, and it seemed odder to me still that I didn't know what I felt: some happiness. Since my parents left me, I hadn't had such a feeling. As I got used to things, in these good people's house, now with my sister there, in those same days I met many young people.

The Señora spoke to me about a young man, who she believed put on airs, but she had a high opinion of his good behavior. In effect, I met him a few days later. We had a meeting [entrevista] and kissing a bit, something happened between us. As our hearts seemed won over, on the third day he gave me a letter in which he spoke of entering into a sentimental friendship. And I almost felt like somebody else's [casi ajena] and not free to think right away, but I answered his letter and, in effect, nursed a romance [relaciones amorosas] for a long time. My novio first proved his sincerity to me when, before I gave him his desired answer, I contracted the Spanish Influenza. He could have stopped coming to the house where I was, with my sisters and little brother. But the young man, notwithstanding a bad woman who sought to keep him from me, did not allow this to happen. I don't know what attracted me to him so sincerely. Additionally he was then rather young, but he had already seen something of life. Yet he spoke to me so intimately, that I began to suppose that that man truly loved me, something I had never imagined before. Well, it wasn't unusual for him to visit me; there I was in the same house, I in my room, as each of us who comprised the family, in that two-story house, containing I don't know how many people. But the case was that my new novio and I acted with such indifference that my sister did not believe it. When she did know, she became extremely upset, but her displeasure did not bother me much. Besides, I was in love with my novio, and not because I was taken by his gallant way of dressing or anything of the sort. Simply gratitude made me believe that, in effect, he had a noble and sincere heart, and I was not mistaken. Yet, at times, I was unsure.

Finally, on December 15, 1918, he gave me a garnet necklace to adorn my neck and we continued. These are my most pleasant memories from this time. He came to win my heart completely. He was so modest and gentlemanly with me, so that beyond love, I felt confident to get close to him. So it happened that he spoke to me of marriage and I did not refuse to answer him. When he saw my letter in which I answered his proposition, he went on the date listed and...
February 26, 1919
it was not true what I said. I felt so deceived that I had to say that was not the date that my novio had selected for our union.

February 26, 1919
Due to the aforementioned incident, there was some trouble at home, and my sister and I went to San Antonio, Texas, to see my aunt. My uncle, that gentleman was no more to us than just a good friend. And at the same time he made an effort for my marriage, he got seriously upset, but he bought us the tickets. He took us to the train on April 3, 1919, and my poor novio passed by the same place. What bad news he heard knowing that might be a pretext to end our friendship. This had been, in fact, my sister’s idea. But my novio knew to endure all that had taken place and he spoke of different things or I don’t know what. What I do know is that he greatly felt my absence. He spoke to my younger sister, and she wrote me and told me to write to my novio. And so I did, despite the fact that my older sister had prohibited it completely. Later he received my letters and

San Antonio, Texas
April 5, 1919
We obtained new cover, and here we bided our time. On April 17, Holy Monday, I began to work in the Cigar Factory\(^{25}\), and there I met many girls, including two from my village. I was happy working. All the women who I was getting to know were surprised by my character and they treated me with consideration, thank God. On Easter Saturday, I went to a church, and then began going to another, which is San Fernando Cathedral. Here I often went to Mass, to fiestas and rosaries.

And so, on December 22, my novio came to visit me; he had been in good stead with my sister for months by then. The landlords \([los Señores]\) had called her; they had been so displeased with how we had departed for San Antonio. Now with everyone’s consent, we courted. This time my novio gave me a ring as a token of our friendship, and also a watch \([worth?]\) $32.50 of his [?] he then returned to his job. He came back to visit me the following year. He arrived on December 12, 1920, and he went back on the 15th and for

San Antonio, Texas
January 15, 1921
On January 15, 1921, he surprised me that he was going to Tampico, Tamaulipas. After that date, I had no more news of him until August 8, 1922, when he returned to San Antonio, Texas, and right way he left for F[ort].W[orth], and from there to [?]. He first wrote me September 17, 1922, and so we continued our relationship.

On June 12, 1924, I left the factory where I had worked five years and two months. That blessed June 13\(^{th}\), I confessed, and with all my soul’s pleasure and satisfaction, I bid farewell to all my girlfriends. Those who I esteemed most accompanied me to the depot \([dipo]\).\(^{26}\) I embarked on a trip to Joliet, Ill., with the purpose of visiting my younger sister who lived in Rockdale, Ill. and her husband, J. G. Cabrera. My novio, who lived in Chicago, Ill., a big city in the state, came to visit me right away on June 22, with my older sister’s permission.

… Well, I lived in my sister’s house for three months and twelve days and as I have already told you of our courtship.

Rockdale, Illinois
September 27, 1924
On this date, my civil marriage ceremony was celebrated in the house of my brother-in-law, J.G. Cabrera, and my sister, Sra. Sofia R de Cabrera, 10 S. Central Ave. Rockdale, Ill.

And the 28\(^{th}\), we left for Chicago, Ill. [my husband and I], where I remain to this day. Thanks to God and the Blessed Virgin I have lived very happily with my husband, to the point that we adore each other. We are a single soul.

My youngest and older sisters wrote and the 19\(^{th}\) my husband and I went to

Chicago, Illinois
October 19, 1924
visit my sister in Rockdale, returning at 8 p.m., arriving home at 10:30 p.m.

Chicago, Illinois
October 23, 1924
I have wanted to add up the money my husband gave me during our courtship before his absence of a year and seven months was $= 118. Until December 11 was
$70. Now from June 21, 1924, to the day we married was
Total $ 263 ($85. 9-27-24

October 24, 1924
Today, a happy day for us on this blessed day of Friday,
October 24, 1924. Our union was blessed in Our Lady of
Guadalupe Church, by the Reverend Father Miguel M.
García, Chicago, Ill.27

Chicago, Illinois
January 9, 1925
This is a memento of the names of my
padrinos de casa-
miento, from the Civil [ceremony],
José Baulista, single
Jovita R. de Cordero, married
From the Church [ceremony]
Ramón Parra, single
Soledad Rodríguez, single [Señorita]

November 11, 1924
At 11 in the morning, I have wanted to write something.
This is to comment that every day including today, thanks
to God and Nuestra Señora de la [Ea] my husband and I
have been very happy and, to D . . .
My Diary continues

Chicago, Illinois
December 22, 1924
Thanks to God I have resumed my activities. On December
8, I was struck by an unknown illness. I was gravely ill for
twelve days and today, thanks to God, I’m feeling better.
On the 9th, my little brothers and older sister arrived at
my place; they live in San Antonio in the house at 916
W. Houston. I lived in that house for five years with my
siblings. I often saw that little house as mine. First I paid
$8 in rent, then $12, and then $10. I came to Joliet, as I
have told you, on June 13, 1924, but from here I sent rent
and some coins to my little brother; from June 15 to [al
dia 25-16 de 9] it was $40.00 plus 5 plus 7. And November
29, it was $70 or what paid their way here. And right now
the two little ones are with me and my big sister is with
my sister Sofía, who lives in Rockdale, Ill.

On the 7th of this month, my sister gave birth to
a girl. That is why my older sister is with her; they tell
me she has a doctor and a nurse for the baby girl who
is already 16 days old. And today makes 15 days since I
fell ill, but now I have given thanks to Nuestra Señora de
Guadalupe, I’m already recovered.

I have received a letter from my sister Sofia, in which
she tells me to visit her on the 28th and to take part in
naming her little daughter; probably she will be named
Maria Loreto Barroso Cabrera. My sister asks if the name
pleases me. I do greatly esteem that name because of an
image of Nuestra Señora de Loreto, venerated in Silao,
Guanajuato, México. I recall this image from when I was
very young; I went to her feast days several times and I
often went to her temple. So I recall fiestas in her honor,
and I still rejoice.

Chicago, Illinois
December 24, 1924
Thanks to God’s divine providence, today I have been very
happy. The day is lovely. It had snowed heavily before, but
today the sun has been so clear and beautiful that it truly
lifts the heart. The ground all carpeted with white show
and with the golden sun, it gives an appearance of grace
and virtue. So I sent my little brother out to do the shop-
ning and he had the luck to find $10. Thanks to God . . .

Chicago, Illinois
December 28, 1924
Thanks to God today I went to visit my sister Sofía, she
seems completely well. And I saw her girl, who is very
nice and I love her very much.

December 30, 1924
Today at 2 in the morning I turned 27. I was born the 29th
at 2 a.m. So today I have had the luck to survive thanks
to the Supreme Being, who has allowed me to live up to
this date. And I bless this holy year which will end in a
few more hours, leaving only pleasant memories and the
new year will replace it. Good-bye leap year 1924, what
pleasant memories you leave behind . . .

Chicago, Illinois
June 26, 1925
Thanks to God, I have returned to my diary and I’m hap-
py. Sunday, my husband and I went to hear Mass. I have
requested a Mass for souls of my father and my mother.
This will take place on A[ugust] 29th.
I have something else to write,
My Diary continues; today I spent the morning arranging my books and other mementos that I keep;

**EL DIARIO DE ELIDIA BARROSO**

Chicago, Illinois

Octubre 20 de 1924

Hoy fecha memorable para mí. Además he hecho propósito de escribir un poco hoy. Quisiera ser una poeta para narrar una historia, pero no puedo aun ni deletrear, ¿además para que es desear lo que no puede conseguir? Hace mucho que por mi curiosidad he acostumbrado un pequeño diario, en el cual tengo algunos R. Pero hoy, he querido juntar los pasados con los presentes. Empezaré así, para narrar un diario tan sencillo como mal anotado, hablaré de mi infancia,

Sr. Don Pedro Barroso, R. de G.  
Estado de Gto. Mex.  
Sr. Don Pedro Barroso y Savina M. de Barroso  
Rancho de González, Diciembre 29 de 1897  
Sr. Don Pedro Barroso  
Sra. Savina Méndez de Barroso  
Estos sagrados nombres he aquí, son los de mis padres; yo nací en este lugar, es verdaderamente una hermosa aldea, 5 años más tarde, recuerdo de mi abuelo, dicho Señor, era el entendido de aquel lugar, además tenía muchas amistades. Era estimado de muchos señores, de dinero. Recuerdo yo algunos nombres, el Sr. C. Guerrero, Sr. V. Gómez, el Sr. L. Veltrán, el Sr. P. Bionda, la Sra. Hacendada, J. de C. Prieto, el Sr. S. Pármas, el S. F. Banquín, el Sr. G. Álvarez, el Sr. J. Razo, el Sr. Licenciado Romero, el Sr. Dtr. Salm[?], y así de la categoría de estas personas, era el mayor número del Señor, de sus amistades. Don Nicolás Barroso, tenía además seis hijos, casados para este tiempo y dos hijas, sus nombres, Amado, Pedro, José María, Francisco, Eduardo, y José, el menor; hijas Tiburcia y Gregoria, sus nueras, Guiorgue Fausto, Teodora Sánchez, Savinita Gracia Méndez, Gregoria Caudillo, Andrea Ortiz, Eguinia Rodríguez, y yernos, Epimenio Sánchez y Rafael. Esta era toda la familia que entonces conoci en casa de mi papá, grande, y su esposa. Eugenia M. de Barroso, dicha Señora, era muy simpática. De sus nueras había una de las seis era la más simpática, de estatura regular, blanca, pelo castaño, y muy cubierta, su cabellera. No cabe duda, todas eran guapas, aparte de eso, bien vestidas. Paseaban en carruajes, mi mamá, grande, por el contrario, se complacía pasear en caballo, vestía a la española; paseaba elegantemente. Su esposo la acompañaba, el que portaba buenos caballos, y contaba con un buen capital, y buen ganado a la vez y manada de caballos. Era un señor que todo veía con realidad, caritativo y sincero en su porte. En casa, se tenían grandes fiestas, en la Navidad, año nuevo, 24 y 29 de junio, 10 de septiembre, 4 de octubre y en fin en casamientos y bautizos de sus nietecitos.

Pues bien falleció mi papá grande; yo que era la consentida de él sin darme cuenta todavía de las cosas. Quería estar cerca de su cadáver. Él al morir, tuvo que firmar un testamento y a cada cual de sus hijos, heredó menos a mí padre. Pero mi padre no se sintió ofendido, ni mucho menos cuando volvía a casa después de sus negocios, inmediatamente se presentaba con su papá, que estaba enfermo hacía algunos meses y un día se empeoró, y hubo de venir el licenciado, el doctor y un sacerdote, arreglado el testamento; en seguida vino mi padre, un señor modesto y justo sobre todo, fue con su padre, que ya minutos le faltaban para terminar su existencia; y le dijo a … “Pedrito, no te dejé nada porque tú no necesitas, hijo.” Y le dice él, “está muy bien, papá” y recibió su bendición, y le dijo que jugara varias encomiendas, y así lo hizo mi padre.

2 años después, se convinieron 3 hermanos, fueron a hacer una compra y en efecto compraron buen terreno eran 15 caballerías de tierra, ese tiempo en que poseyeron este terreno les fue muy beneficio, en fin, no pudiendo radicarse en éste, debido a que les perjudicaba el cambio o no sé que. Después de 4 años vendieron, todos fueron quedando pobres, y mi padre sugirió esa compra y vender ganado, y cerdos, comprar y vender maíz, y demás semillas y prestar dinero, con interés; en ese tiempo era el 2 por ciento, esto era en 1903 y 4–y más después con el 3 por ciento. Para 1909, nos cambiamos a una hacienda del dueño Martín López. Aquí duramos 6 meses; a mi padre no le gustaba aquí. Y nos cambiamos a un rancho pequeño pero muy pacífico: se llama la Luz de Maciaz, y en éste permanecimos 2 años. En este lugar, hay vecinos muy buenos y allí además una Capilla, y en ella una Santa Cruz, que veneran aquellas buenas gentes. Aquí fuimos muy felices; nada más una enfermedad sufrió mi madre, pero fue después de haber dado a luz, un niño, que era el delirio de mi padre, éste nació el día 29 de abril de 1910, y se bautizó el día 7 de mayo, se llamó
por el día de nacimiento, Pedro, y por el día en que se bautizó, Ladislao.

Bueno? A ese tiempo estalló la Revolución, y se fue poniendo dificultoso para vivir en los rumbos en donde hace falta el gobierno, para los abusos que comete esa clase de gente mala; pues, entonces mi padre, desconfiado de todo lo que pasaba, trasportó a mi hermana mayor y la caja del dinero y sus documentos, y escrituras, a casa de un primo suyo. Este señor se veía muy bien con mi padre, se llama Eulogio Barroso, y enseguida compró mi padre una casa, que quedaba a una cuadra más al centro que la de mi tío, citada en las calles, Salazar y Echivaría, No. 67 al N y 66 al S. Es una cuadra atrás de la escuela de las madres, así es que hay 2 cuadras al centro, de este pueblo que estuvimos aún más contentos, pero tuvimos que abandonar en seguida esta casa y no sólo nosotros, sino una multitud de personas; ya no pudiendo soportar más allí con el escándalo, con que los revolucionarios trataban a los pacíficos y de horror casi estábamos todas las personas muertas.

Y un día se resolvieron muchos amigos de mi padre, y le dijeron que se pasaran en cuanto antes para Silao, Guanajuato, nos fuimos a este el día 9 de enero de 1916. Nada más nos llevó mi padre, a mí y a mi hermana mayor, a casa de este mismo tío, y él se regresó en seguida a casa con mi madre y mis hermanitos Sofía, Merced y Pedro. Bien, a nosotros no nos parecía esto aunque nos paseábamos mucho con mi prima, Ignacia, y su tía, Teofila Rodríguez. Con ellas nos paseábamos a bailes y a serenatas, en fin, siempre extrañábamos a mi madre y ella a nosotras. El día 9 de enero, sufrimos un terrible susto, debido a que en el paso de la noche se desarrolló una fuerte inundación, y nosotras temerosas de que al amanecer fueramos a recibir alguna mala noticia, pero no quiso Dios que no les pasara nada a mis padres, ni a nosotros aunque no nos podíamos salir de la casa para tomar algo de alimento, porque todas nuestras ropas estaban mojadas; allí en esta catástrofe perció mucha gente arrastrada por el agua. Bueno, para las 10 de la mañana, ya estaba bajando el agua y mi tío se fue al restaurante a traernos desayuno, y para las 2 p.m. nos cambiamos a casa de una prima de mi tía, ésta vivía por la calle de La Aurora #96 para esperar que la casa se le injutara el agua para regresarnos luego. Pero mi padre en estos días arregló un salvo conducto con la mayoría de la gente que estaba allí y nos fue a traer confiado, en que nadie entraría a casa y así esa vez vuelve a dejar poco resguardo el jefe de armas en el pueblo, y vuelve a ver más desordenes y todo ese desvelar a la gente del pueblo aquellos hombres bandidos y sin piedad.

Nos fuimos de nuevo a Silao, el día 6 de febrero de 1916 y nos radicamos en esta casa, calle Rial de León #14. Aquí fui más feliz, y mi padre empezó a viajar acompañado de buenos amigos en él tren, embarcaban mercancías para Morelia, Michoacán y así no dejaba disminuir tanto su capital, a pesar de que para este tiempo ya no eran tan puntuales todos sus deudores como antes lo habían sido. Pero no obstante, él tenía fe en Dios y nada le preocupaba. A su vuelta de viaje, traía gran cantidad de sacos de maíz y abrió venta en seguida, nada más 1 ó 2 horas era suficiente para hacerse de unos 1,000 papeles que era el Infalsificable de Carranza.

El día 24 de agosto, del mismo año, nos regresamos a casa todos de nuevo y en fin a fracasar la felicidad que antes en aquel Hogar Santo había permanecido fue debido a la guerra, y tantas limiquidades [iniquidades?] hubo una epidemia horrible, o más bien, una peste de enfermedad. En todas las casas había 3 y 4 enfermos y en otras toda la familia. Y nosotras todavía buenas, fuimos a pasear con una amiguita y su esposo, a un rancho no muy distante del pueblo donde residíamos y tal vez fue suficiente el motivo para empezar a estar enferma mi hermana, y en seguida mi padre y él falleció el día 20 de octubre de 1916 a las 7 de la M.M. Viernes. Y a aquí quedó destruida la paz, por completo para nosotras. Y mi pobre madre, que lloraba muchísimo, arregló un poco nuestros bienes que nos había dejado mi padre, y empezó a ponerse enferma, y falleció el día 15 de noviembre; 1916–miercoles en una gaveta, de las de Municipalidad y a mi madre le compramos campo, y construimos una para ella. Ésta era en el centro del cementerio y junto con la de mi tío, Eulogio, de quien te he dicho, y la de mi padre, a la entrada del cementerio a mano derecha hay 2, y en la primera se sepultó su cuerpo, con esta fecha, 21 de octubre de 1916 a 10 m, y mi tío el 13 de noviembre y mi madre, el 16 de noviembre. ¡Ay! Dios mío apiadados del alma de estas personas a quien acabo de nombrar.

Panteón Municipal, R. Guanajuato
Octubre 20 y Noviembre 15 de 1916
Romita, Guanajuato, Mexico
Noviembre 17 de 1917
Aquí permanecimos un año, huérfanas, y nos deshicimos
de todo lo que nos dejaron nuestros padres y nos resolvimos a emigrar, acompañadas de una familia y un tío, éstos eran la familia de mi tío Euligio, y su hermano mayor, saliendo de nuestros hogares el 17 de noviembre de 1917 y llegamos a Laredo, Tamaulipas, México. Aquí demoramos 5 días y pasamos yo y mi hermana, y mi hermanito, el 22 y el día siguiente nos pusimos en casa de una prima, en donde estaba la única tía, prima de mi madre, ésta se llamaba María Guadalupe, S, de Aguilar. Aquí ya solas nos determinamos [ir a ?] Derby22, Texas, 29 de 11 de 1917 a trabajar y con la misma fecha nos vino a ver La Madam, dueña de aquel rancho 6 millas de distancia de Derby, Tex, 11, 29-17. Aquí también fuimos bien vistas no me lamento, a pesar de que éramos enteramente solas y chicas todas; pues la familia de que te digo, no les fue muy fácil trabajar allí y se vieron obligados a seguir adelante, y mi hermana, se fue con ellas para que le pagaran una suma de dinero que le debían. Permanecieron en Lillan23, Texas, y para el día 12 de octubre me mandó 30 pesos mi hermana, para que me fuera a donde estaba ella, yo y mis dos hermanos, Sabín y Mercer24, de aquí nos fuimos el día 16 de 10, 1918, y seguimos a San Antonio, Texas. No hallamos boletos, para el lugar en donde estaba mi hermana, y compramos para Fort Worth, Texas, es un pueblo algo digno de recuerdo, por sus fábricas, y allí conocí yo a un señor, éste es su nombre, Merced Rioz, el cual me franqueó su casa directamente a mí. Y me ayudó a informar en dónde quedaba el lugar en donde estaba mi hermana, escribí yo una carta y él la puso al correo. Al recibir mi hermana mi carta se vino enseguida y este buen señor la fue a encontrar.

Fort Worth, Texas
Octubre 18 de 1918
Aqui fuimos, más dignas de consideración todavía aun, estos primeros días me parecieron sumamente extraños pero fueron no sé cuántos días, y me parecía más que raro sentiría no sé que; algo de alegría pues desde que mis padres me habían faltado, no había tenido cierta idea parecida. Después de irme acostumbrando, en casa de estos buenos señores, ya con mi hermana allí, en estos mismos días conocí muchos jóvenes.

Y la señora me hablaba de un joven, que según ella presumía, le estimaba por su buen comportamiento. En efecto, le conocí, no a muchos días después, tuvimos una entrevista, y besando un poquito, dimos lugar a algo. Como parecía prender nuestros corazones, al 3º día me entregó una carta, en esta me hablaba de entablar una amistad amorosa. Y yo casi aguena [ajena?] y libre de pensar no enseguida; pero le contesté su carta y en efecto, abrigamos relaciones amorosas por mucho tiempo. Las primeras pruebas que me hizo de sinceridad mi novio fue que en estos mismos días antes de dar una contestación quería estar yo, yo caí en cama de la influencia española, y él, pudiendo dejar de ir a esta casa, en donde yo permanecía, con todas mis hermanas e hermano chiquito, el joven, a pesar de que hubiese alguna mala mujer que lo hubiera apartado de mí, no sucedió esto. No sé que cosa lo atrajo a mí tan sinceramente, aparte de eso él, contaba para esta época con poca edad, pero ya había cruzado algo la vida. Por otra parte, se dirigía tan íntimamente a mí, que me fui figurando algo, así como, que aquél hombre, en verdad me amaba, yo que nunca me había figurado semejante cosa. Bien que me visitaba, no era raro; allí estaba en la misma casa, yo en mi cuarto, y así cada cual de los que componíamos la familia, aquella casa era de 2 pisos, había no sé cuánta gente. Pero el caso es que no veíamos tan distingutamente, yo y mi recién novio, que yo hubiera sufrido nunca de alegría. Más yo le fui queriendo a mi novio también no porque me provocaban sus galantes modos de vestir ni nada parecido. Sólo que la gratitud me hizo creer, que en efecto tenía un corazón noble y sincero, no me equivocaba. Pero siempre en veces dudaba.

En fin, el día 15 de diciembre de 1918, me regaló una gargantina, con un granate, para adornar mi cuello y así seguimos. En este tiempo fueron mis recuerdos más gratos. Llegó a ganar mi corazón por completo. Éra tan modesto y caballero conmigo, que tenía además de amor, confianza acercarme a él. Así sucedió que me habló de casamiento y yo no me rehusé a dar contestación. Viendo él mi carta donde contestaba su proposición se fue a la fecha citada y no

Fort Worth, Texas
Febrero 26 de 1919
fue cierto lo que yo decía. Me sentí decepcionada, de tal manera, que tuve que decir, que no ésta era la fecha que había fijado mi novio para nuestra unión.

Febrero 26 de 1919
Hubo algún disgusto en casa a causa de lo consabido y nos fuimos yo y mi hermana con motivo de ver una
día, a San Antonio, Texas, mi tío, o ese señor, que no era para nosotros más que un buen amigo. Y que a la vez se esforzaba por mi casamiento se disgustó en serio pero nos compró los boletos, y nos llevó a tomar el tren el día 3 de abril de 1919, y a la vez pasaba por aquel mismo lugar mi pobre novio, que tan mala noticia recibió sabiendo que tal vez era un pretexto para perder nuestra amistad. Así había sido la idea de mi hermana. Pero mi novio, supo sobrellevar todo lo ocurrido, y habló de cosas contrarias o no lo sé, pero lo que sí se decir es que él sintió demasiado mi ausencia, y habló con mi hermana menor, y ella me escribe a mí y me dice que le escribe a mi novio, y así lo hice aunque mi hermana mayor me lo había prohibido por completo. Más después recibió él sus cartas que yo le había escrito y

San Antonio, Texas  
Abril 5 de 1919  
obtuvimos nuevamente correo y así fuimos pasando el tiempo.  

Yo empecé a trabajar el día 17 de abril, Lunes Santo, en la Fábrica de Cigarro, y allí conocí muchas muchachas y encontré además dos de mi pueblo. Y trabajaba muy contenta, con todas las gentes que iba conociendo, o que trataba. Les extrañaba mi carácter, y me trataban con consideración, gracias a Dios. Y yo fui el Sábado de Gloria a un templo, y luego empecé a ir a otro, éste es la Catedral de San Fernando. Aquí asistí muchísimas veces a misa y a fiestas y rosarios.  

Y así, para el 22 de diciembre fue mi novio a visitarme y ya había quedado en buen armonía con mi hermana que meses atrás, la habían llamado los señores, que tan disgustados se habían quedado al marcharnos para San Antonio. Bueno ya todos en buena conformidad, seguimos. Mi novio me regaló esta vez un anillo en nuestra amistad, y algo más un reloj $32.50 de su [?] Así se regresó a su trabajo y volvió a visitarme el año siguiente. Llegó el día 12 de diciembre de 1920 y se regresó el día 15 y para

San Antonio, Texas  
Enero 15 de 1921  
Me sorprendió una mañana que iba a Tampico, Tamaulipas. Y desde este día no tuve más noticias de él, hasta el día 8 de agosto de 1922 que regresó a San Antonio, Texas y se fue enseguida para F.W. y de allí para [?] Me escribió la primera carta el 17 de septiembre de 1922, y así continuamos nuestra amistad.

Y el día 12 de junio de 1924, salí de la fábrica, en que había trabajado 5 años y 2 meses. Emprendí un viaje para Joliet, Ill., con objetivo de visitar a mi hermana menor que vivía en Rockdale, Ill., y su esposo, J. G. Cabrera. Mi novio que residía en Chicago, Ill., gran ciudad del estado, fue en seguida a visitarme el día 22 de junio del mismo en que yo me vine de mi casa, con permiso de mi hermana mayor. Y este día Santo 13 de junio, me confesé, y con todo el gusto de mi alma y satisfacción me despedí de todas mis amigas, y los que me acompañaron al dipo eran varias que yo estimaba más, ...bueno, en casa de mi hermana viví 3 meses, 12 días, y como ya he dicho de nuestras relaciones yo y mi novio.

Rockdale, Illinois  
Septiembre 27 de 1924  
Con esta fecha, se celebró mi matrimonio civil, en casa de mi cuñado, J.G. Cabrera, y mi hermana, Sra. Sofía R de Cabrera, 10 S Central Ave, Rockdale, Ill.  

Yo y mi esposo, en donde permanezco hasta este día. Pues gracias a Dios y a la Santísima Virgen he vivido muy feliz con mi esposo, aun hasta ahora nos adoramos los dos. Somos una sola alma. ¡Ah! Ya se escribieron mis hermanas, la chiquita y la mayor, y el día 19 fuimos yo y mi

Chicago, Illinois  
Octubre 19 de 1924  
espido, a visitar a mi hermana a Rockdale, y regresamos a las 8 p.m. llegamos a nuestra casa a las 10:30 p.m.

Chicago, Illinois  
Octubre 23 de 1924  
He querido hacer la suma de dinero que me regaló mi esposo, en tiempo de nuestras amistades de antes de esa ausencia que tuvimos de un año 7 meses eran $ = 118. Al 11 de diciembre, fueron $70. Ahora del 21 de junio de 1924, a la fecha en que se efectúa nuestra unión, fueron Total $263 ($85. 9-27-24)

Octubre 24 de 1924  
Hoy día feliz para nosotros en este santo día viernes 24 de 10 de 1924, se bendijo nuestra unión, en la Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, por el Reverendo Padre Miguel M. García, Chicago, Ill.  

Diálogo  
ARTICLES 31
Deborah Kanter

Chicago Illinois
Enero 9 de 1925
Éste es como un recuerdo de los nombres de mis padrinos de casamiento, los del Civil,
José Baulista, soltero
Jovita R. de Cordero, casada
los de la Iglesia,
Ramon Parra Joven
Soledad Rodríguez, Señorita

Noviembre 11 de 1924
A las 11 de la mañana he querido escribir algo. Pues esto es para comentar así diario hasta esta fecha, gracias a Dios y Nuestra Sra de la E. hemos estado muy felices yo y mi esposo, y a D...

Continúa mi Diario

Chicago Illinois
Diciembre 22 de 1924
Gracias a Dios que he vuelto a tomar mis ocupaciones. El día 8 de diciembre, me atacó una enfermedad no sé de qué ocurrida. Tuve 12 días de gravedad y hoy y a, D, ya me siento mejor. El día 9, llegaron a mi lugar mis hermanitos y mi hermana mayor que residen en San Antonio, Tex., en la casa [en?], 916 W. Houston. En esta casa, viví yo y mis hermanas 5 años. Esa casita yo la frecuentaba como propia pagaba primero $8 de renta, después $12, y después $10. Yo me vine para Joliet, ya te he dicho, el 13 de junio de 1924, pero de aquí mandaba la renta y unos cuantos centavos que les mandaba a mis hermanitos del día 15 de 6 al día 25-16 de 9 fueron $40.00 y más 5 y más 7. Y el 29 de 11, fueron $70 o fueron con los que se vinieron. Y ahora actualmente están conmigo los dos chiquitos, y mi hermana mayor está con mi hermana Sofía, que reside en Rockdale, Ill.

El día 7 del actual, dio a luz una niña, mi hermana. Y con este motivo está mi hermana mayor acompañándola ella, según me dicen, tiene doctor y enfermera para la niña, pues [?] tiene 16 días la niña, y yo hago hoy 15 días que me enfermé pero ya he dicho gracias a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, ya estoy aliviada.

He recibido una carta de mi hermana, Sofía, en donde me dice que vaya a visitarla el 28 y me participa del nombre que ha de llevar su hijita que probablemente se le dirá María Loreto Barroso Cabrera. Y me dice mi hermana, que sí agrada el nombre, además [é-ado], ese nombre lo estimo en extremo, por una imagen de Nuestra Señora de Loretito, que se venera en Silao, Guanajuato, México. Le conocí cuando era yo muy pequeña, y asistí algunas veces a sus fiestas y asistí a su templo muchas veces su fiesta se le hace con gran recuerdo de ella y me regocijo aún.

Chicago, Illinois
Diciembre 24 de 1924
Gracias a la Divina Providencia de Dios, hoy he estado muy contenta el día está hermoso. Con anterioridad, ha nevado mucho, pero hoy ha estado un sol tan claro y hermoso, que verdaderamente anima el corazón. Todo el suelo cubierto con una alfombra de nieve blanca y con el sol dorado, hace a parecer un aspecto de gracia y virtud, a y para esto mi hermanito, le he mandado a mandado y ha tenido la suerte de encontrarse $10. Gracias a Dios...

Chicago, Illinois
Diciembre 28 de 1924
Gracias a Dios en esta fecha he ido a visitar a mi hermana, Sofía, ya ésta parece enteramente buena. Y he visto a su niña, es muy simpática, y le quiero mucho.

Diciembre 30 de 1924
Hoy a las 2 de la mañana, cumplí 27 años. Yo nací el 29 a las 2 de la m.m. Así es de que hoy he tenido la suerte de vivir aún gracias al Ser Supremo, que me ha concedido vivir hasta esta fecha. Y bendigo este santo año que ha de terminar en pocas horas más dejando sólo gratos recuerdos y vendrá el nuevo sustituirle. Adiós año biciesto, 1924 que gratos recuerdos dejas...

Chicago, Illinois
Junio 26 de 1925
Gracias á Dios.
He tomado de nuevo mi diario y estoy contenta. El domingo, fuimos yo y mi esposo a oír misa, y he mandado decir una misa por intención del alma de mi padre, y de mi madre, esto tendrá lugar el 29 de el A.

Y tengo además algo que escribir,
Faith and Family for Early Mexican Immigrants in Chicago: The Diary of Elidia Barroso

ENDNOTES

1 Mr. Wally Cabrera, Elidia’s nephew, and his wife Mrs. Alice Cabrera, generously loaned me their photocopy of the diary. Agradezco a don Mariano Salcedo Zaragoza, historiador y cronista michoacano, por su lectura profunda del diario.


4 A rich exception is the early twentieth-century Mexican “Diario de Doña Petrita,” <http://papelesdefamilia.mx/node/5#header-169>.


6 Ernesto Galarza also esteemed his family’s books as a young emigrant from Mexico. See his memoir, Barrio Boy (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991).


8 For example Sánchez asserts that “With so many other things to do in a metropolis such as Los Angeles, more and more Chicanos drifted from formal religious practices.” Becoming Mexican American, 165.


10 Matovina. Guadalupe and Her Faithful.


12 Young, “Cristero Diaspora.”


14 The first Spanish-language Mass was held at St. Francis of Assisi on January 19, 1926. McCarthy, 242–43. Thomas G. Kelliher, “Hispanic Catholics and


15 Elidia Barroso’s birthplace and date.

16 These dates all refer to saints’ days: St. John the Baptist, St. Peter & St. Paul, St. Nicholas Tolentino, and St. Francis of Assisi.

17 *A caballería* equals 43 hectares.

18 Given the parents’ burial location, it would seem that Elidia’s family moved to the city of Guanajuato.

19 Mexico was plagued by monetary problems during the Revolution. In May 1916, Venustiano Carranza issued bank notes, declared to be “forgery proof.” Barroso refers to the notes as “el Infalcificable de Carranza.” By the year’s end these devaluated bills were useless.


21 In Frio County, on the Missouri-Pacific Line. Between Laredo and San Antonio.

22 In Johnson County, just south of Ft. Worth.

23 Possibly a reference to the Mercer Colony, in north central Texas.

24 Several cigar factories operated in early twentieth-century San Antonio, including the Finck Cigar Company. On its history and photos of its workers, see: [http://www.finckcigarcompany.com/about/interview_with_henry_william_finck_ii/](http://www.finckcigarcompany.com/about/interview_with_henry_william_finck_ii/).

25 This is the only English word that appears in the entire diary.

26 Fr. Garcia C.M.F. was an exiled priest from Guadalajara, who oversaw the South Chicago parish from July–October 1924. McCarthy, p. 151.