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[The Biography of Guadalupe Lupita Gallegos]

Interview

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THE BIOGRAPHY OF GUADALUPE LUPITA GALLEGOS

by

Mary Elba C. De Baca

After Grandfather's death, grandmother went to live with her parents. Exactly one year after his death, Rosenda, her 18 year old daughter died of a heart attack.

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For six years grandmother and her parents lived at Los Alamos. Then her father was elected probate judge so they moved to Las Vegas. That year grandmother's daughter, Lele, twelve years old, died of heart trouble.

Her oldest son, Magin, married, and then her oldest daughter [Cleotide?], married and both left her. In 1917 great grandmother mortgaged the last of her land and all their money ended. They had little to live on except the pension which great grandmother received because her husband had fought in the Civil War.

In 1918 great grandmother loaned the Sisters of Mercy one thousand dollars to help build the St. Anthony's Mercy Hospital at Docatello, Idaho. Great grandmother, Mrs. Severo Baca, started going blind. Two years later she went completely blind and died. C18 - N. Mex.

Grandmother stayed with mother part of the time. The other part of the time she was in Denver with her grand-children. In 1928 grandmother's oldest daughter, Cleotilde, died. Grandmother took the death calmly. That spring she left for Pocatello, Idaho to visit with her daughter Sister M. Dolores. She stayed only a short time for she got homesick for her grandchildren in Las Vegas and returned.

That year she started receiving ten dollars a month from the sisters of Mercy who were paying back what her mother had loaned the Hospital in 1918.

Grandmother has always been a deeply religious woman. She has always been resigned to God's will and no matter what happens she is never unhappy. In 1934 her son, Magin, died and she took the news of his death calmly while the rest of us were having fits.

In 1935 her only remaining son, Ilario, died. Mother, grandmother, and I were present when he died. I saw her kneeling there, praying to God, offering Him the soul of her son. Not a tear did she shed. She comforted Mother and me and then left for church.

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After Ilario's death grandmother attended Mass ever single day and when she wasn't at home she would be in church praying. Her greatest affliction came when she fell sick a year ago and was no longer able to go to her God. She bears her cross with patience and resignation. I have never met a stronger, braver woman. She has lost everything now, but her great faith in God.

Today is her birthday. She is 86 years old and still as happy as she was when I first remember. About a year ago she became totally blind. She wouldn't admit it for the world, but we could see that she couldn't even find her spoon or anything. I have seen her at the point of death, smiling and even telling us that she was feeling better.

In October she received the last Sacraments. She 3 believed, as we did, that she was dying. But now she seems to be getting better and better. I saddens me to see her reduced to such a state — she who had been brought up like a princess, now dying like a pauper, with but a penny to her name, while tho'se relatives of her husband's are really wealthy.

She can bear anything herself but as soon as she sees her daughter or her grandchildren unhappy, she's unhappy too and does her utmost to cheer them. She has more life in her than all the rest of us put together. She really gives us strength when we are discouraged and feel like quitting.

She is the happiest woman I have ever known. The End