

July 5, 1988

Provincia Autonoma Di Trento
Ufficio Emigrazione
Piazza Dante, 15
38100 Trento, Italia

Re: Study of the experiences of emigrated Tridentine women

Name: Speranza (Mattarei)Pangrazi

Age: 90

Date and Place of Birth: December 6, 1897, Pracorno, Tyrol, Austria, Val di Rabbi
Youngest of 4 children

Present Address: Telluride, Colorado, United States of America

Name of Husband: Fiore Pangrazi

Date and Place of Birth: August 8, 1890, Pracorno, Tyrol, Austria, Val di Rabbi

Deceased: February 2, 1959

When I married Fiore Pangrazi on July 19, 1919 in Pracorno, he had been home one year from serving seven years in the Austrian Army, and there was no way to make a living other than living with parents and working on their land. He had asked his father for a parcel of land but due to there being seven brothers in the family the father felt he could not do this--he said, "If I do it for you I will have to do it for all my sons, and this I can not do." This prompted us to come to the United States of America.

I felt a sensation of happiness as my father, Silvio, had been in the U.S. twice, the second time my brother, Nicolo, accompanied him. His reason, too, was to make some money to pay off land and home he had purchased. My brother remained in the U.S. and I looked forward in seeing him as it had been 20 years. Through him we were able to come as he would see to it that we would be taken care of. With the money that I had inherited and money borrowed from Nicolo we were able to make the trip with our contents in one small wooden trunk which was made by one of our friends.

We looked forward in finding employment and a place to make our home and were very enthusiastic. We arrived in Telluride, Colorado on the 23 December 1920 and enjoyed a beautiful and happy Christmas with my brother, his wife and a sweet daughter. Our first home was a two room log cabin in the mining town of Matterhorn, Colorado and being a newlywed was very excited about it. I spent my time being a devoted wife and it was very hard meeting the natives and attending social activities due to my being very shy as I was unable to speak the English language; however, I met many very helpful and caring people, some of whom were Trentini and Italians, who gave me the encouragement to meet the challenges I was faced with. I learned the English language through my brother and friends and by reading the comics. When my oldest daughter started school I learned the language quite well and starting writing English at that time.

The real satisfaction was when we moved into a large home (which was to be our home for 25 years) in Ophir, Colorado, a mining town, and were raising our family. We were blessed with three daughters; the oldest, Sylvia born in 1922, Katherine in 1924 and Ida in 1931. Our daughters completed 8 years of grade school, 4 years of high school and went on to become a secretary, beautician (now is Deputy County Clerk in our county) and a teacher. From their marriages I have seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren. I participated strongly in school functions and also served as secretary-treasurer of a school board, which required keeping notes on the meeting and accurate accounting books.

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Re: Study of the experiences of emigrated Tridentine women

Name: Speranza (Mattarei) Pangrazi

I have enjoyed living in the United States and feel that the challenges and hardships have made me a better and more knowledgeable person. I completed the primary grades in a Catholic school in Pracorno and upon leaving Pracorno both of my parents were deceased and my childhood memories are filled with very hard work--climbing the hills with heavy loads on my back when haying and caring for cows, goats and pigs, and gathering wood for fuel which we carried down from the hills in bundles on our backs along with bundles of hay, cleaning stahls, churning butter and helping with the making of cheese, all without recompense and being strictly confined to my home. My life consisted of only work and I had no knowledge of other countries in our world other than the little I had heard from my father of the United States.

The beauty of Trentino has always remained in my thoughts (when arriving in Telluride, Colorado I was reminded of the country I had left--very much the same with the mountains reaching out for the sky) and have enjoyed keeping in contact with relatives and friends I left behind and with the family younger generations. I never returned and having lived in the United States for sixty-eight years am proud to be a citizen and of my Trentino heritage.
