

CHAPTER II

FAMILY ORIGINS

Chapter II explores the antecedents of the Longoria Family and addresses their social and national origins. It also settles the question of whether the family was made up of foreign born capitalists who came to Mexico for the purpose of exploitation after the Revolution. This chapter responds on a micro level to the theory raised by Mosk and Vernon, that pre-revolutionary money was chased out of agriculture or large haciendas during the Revolution, and reinvested in urban areas and manufacturing.

The branch of the Longoria family that is traced in this study is that of Juan Diego Longoria, who settled in Camargo, a town located not far from the Río Grande. The Camargo branch of the Longoria family began in 1720 when Juan Diego Longoria, his wife Maria Clara Chapa, and their five children immigrated to northern New Spain from the Spanish province of Asturias.¹ Juan Diego, a mining

¹ Longoria, Vidal. Longoria Family History. p.2. In his book Mil Familias de Tam., - N. Leon, Coah. y Texas, Rololfo Gonzalez de la Garza lists the Longorias as having arrived from Asturias in the 1590's. He notes that D. Lorenzo Suarez de Longoria Valdez was the alcalde mayor de Saltillo

engineer, was granted some land by the Spanish government in return for mining fifty-six fanegas (a fanega equals about 1.5 bushel) of silver from an area near Cerralvo in what today is the state of Nuevo León.² Unfortunately, the land granted to Juan Diego was fit neither for farming nor grazing. The family, along with several others, abandoned their land grants and continued north, finding more promising land near the Río Grande. They settled there in 1740 in an area south of the river and named it Santa Ana de Camargo.³

Juan Diego's children married and had children of their own. Some of his descendants moved east from Camargo to the town of Matamoros in what is now the state of Tamaulipas. Others moved west to the town of Mier. It is the Mier branch of Juan Diego Longoria's descendants that produced Chito Longoria.

Chito's grandfather, Octaviano Longoria y Longoria, was born in Matamoros in 1846. He moved to Mier from Matamoros and married Francisca Garcia in 1868. They had five children. All were girls except for a son, also named

in 1629. De la Garza's source is Municipal Archive of Monterrey, July 25, 1665. They are probably related but not of lineal descent.

² Ibid, p. 2.

³ Longoria, Vidal, p. 3.

Octaviano, who was born in 1871. Longoria y Longoria was a merchant, probably a grocer.⁴

With the death of Francisca García de Longoria in 1897, her twenty-six year old son Octaviano Longoria García moved to Nuevo Laredo.⁵ His father moved back to Camargo and remarried.

Young Octaviano Longoria García moved to Nuevo Laredo at a prosperous time for the town, which was now a major crossroad for four railroads. He found work as a clerk in one of the larger grocery stores at a salary of two pesos per week. He paid one peso twenty centavos for room and board, saving eighty centavos per week.⁶ After some years he had saved five hundred pesos, enough capital with which to open his own grocery store.⁷ In 1900, he courted and married Sara Hortencia Theriot.

Sara Hortencia Theriot's father Alcide, was of French descent and originally from New Orleans, Louisiana. He

⁴ Archivos del Estado de Tamaulipas. Fojas 182 V. Libro de Nacimientos, No. 1, 1871.

⁵ It is family lore that the son, Octaviano Longoria García was an orphan who could not get along with his new step mother, and therefore ran away to Nuevo Laredo, leaving his sisters behind. This does not take into account that Longoria at the time of his mother's death was 26. It is unlikely that he was a poor orphan.

⁶ O.L.L. Oral History, Tape 2.

⁷ It would have taken Longoria García twelve years to earn five hundred pesos. Perhaps this is more Longoria family lore.

fought on the Confederate side of the War Between the States. At the end of the war, Alcide moved from Louisiana to Texas. He settled in Liberty (close to Houston) and married Laura Carolina Shelby. Their daughter Sara Hortencia was born there in 1875. Alcide operated a pharmacy in Liberty, in partnership with his wife's father.

In the early part of the 1880's, the Theriots paid a visit to a friend in Nuevo Laredo named Francisco Viscaya. Alcide found that the dry climate of Nuevo Laredo was more suited to his health since he often suffered from severe bouts of asthma. Liberty, situated as it was on the Gulf Coast was too humid for his asthmatic condition. He mentioned to Viscaya how much he enjoyed Nuevo Laredo and Viscaya convinced Alcide that it would be a simple matter to settle there. In 1885, the Theriots moved to Nuevo Laredo, which at the time, was the larger of the towns, and Alcide opened the towns' first pharmacy.⁸ After five years of residency in Nuevo Laredo, Sara Hortencia, their daughter, married Octaviano Longoria Garcia in 1900.

Over a span of 15 years Sara and Octaviano had eight children. The children were named Laura, Octaviano Librado ("Chito"), Alcide Federico, Shelby, Hortencia, Lilia, Eduardo, and Alfredo.

⁸ Partlow, Miriam. Liberty, Liberty County. P. 270.

Their first son Octaviano Librado Longoria Theriot was born on March 23, 1905. His sister Laura two years older, gave him the name of "Chito" because she could not pronounce the longer word "Muchachito" which was what he was called by his mother. By the beginning of the Mexican Revolution in 1910, the Longorias had a new home in Nuevo Laredo, a growing family, and their own grocery store with three or four employees.⁹

Although the Mexican Revolution officially began in 1910 it affected little the daily life of Nuevo Laredo. It was, for a time, business as usual. But the inept leadership of Francisco I. Madero, who became President of Mexico in 1911, and was assassinated one year later by his own general, Victoriano Huerta, led to open rebellion. Madero's death provoked the caudillos, or local strong men, of Mexico into rebellion against the provisional government that Huerta had established. Venustiano Carranza, from the state of Coahuila, Emilio Zapata from Morelos, Pancho Villa from Chihuahua, and Alvaro Obregón from Sonora declared the Huerta government illegal and raised armies to remove him as acting president of Mexico. In 1914, Huerta resigned and fled to Europe, leaving Mexico in a state of chaos. It was now the caudillos' opportunity to fight over the

⁹ O.L.L. Oral History, Tape 2.

leadership of Mexico. There was no consensus as to who should be the next President.

After Venustiano Carranza emerged as a cohesive force in the Revolution, finding money to finance the war became a major obstacle to its successful conclusion. Metallic money was hidden and hoarded by the Mexican population and paper money was printed in large quantities by the generals of the various Revolutionary armies. As a result, paper money rapidly depreciated through inflation, falsification, and defaults by various Mexican private banks. The Mexican financial system had totally collapsed.¹⁰ The only hard currency to come into the hands of Carranza and his armies was that which came through the imposition of duties upon all exports and imports coming across the U.S.-Mexican border. Hard currency was used to pay for scarce guns and ammunition.

By 1914, as the various warring factions of the Revolution closed in, the town of Nuevo Laredo suffered a collective panic. It was not an unreasonable emotion especially for the males. Both the Federal and Revolutionary armies were in need of new recruits and fresh supplies. Neither side was prepared to rely on the nicety of requesting volunteers or donations. Any able bodied

¹⁰ Brothers, D. Solis, L. Mexican Financial Development. p.9.

male was fair game. Both armies were equally desperate for money.

For the townspeople of Nuevo Laredo, the war was a serious threat to their lives and livelihood. No one was able to passively accept involuntary conscription, confiscation of money and livestock. The prospect of a safe haven just across the Río Grande was a God-send of which the townspeople availed themselves freely when there was a sign of danger.

According to Longoria family lore, late one night in 1914, a friend of the Longorias appeared at their door to warn them that Nuevo Laredo would be attacked the next morning. The family, like most of the town, hastily fled across the river to the safety of Laredo. True to their friend's word, Nuevo Laredo was attacked. The rebels entered the town and burned the central area, including the Longoria grocery store. The population of Laredo, Texas, grew from 14,855 in 1910 to 22,710 in 1920.¹¹ This was obviously a reflection of what trouble the Revolution was causing on the Mexican side of the Río Grande.

The Longoria family moved for the duration of the Revolution to the U.S. side of the river, leaving their home and business to the mercy of the federal troops and the revolutionaries. To survive in Laredo, the Longorias

¹¹ Hinojosa, Gilberto M., p. 121.

took with them a substantial amount of gold coins. They had no choice. There was no stable Mexican currency, nor were there any banks in operation in Nuevo Laredo. The merchants of Laredo would not accept any form of Mexican currency unless it was gold or silver. Even then they discounted Mexican minted gold coins although the gold content was the same as that of the United States.

Through Sara Theriot de Longoria's family connections, her husband was able to join in partnership with the Volpe brothers in a wholesale grocery business. This was the business he knew best.

As the Mexican Revolution progressed, it became the fashion for Laredoans to stand on the roof tops of buildings and watch the pitched battles that were fought across the river in Nuevo Laredo. During one of these battles, a man who was watching from the Longoria's front porch, which overlooked the Río Grande, was grazed by a stray Mexican bullet.¹² With that turn of events, Chito's parents decided it would be best if their children continued their schooling at a safer distance from the Revolution.

Chito, his two brothers, Federico and Shelby and his older sister Laura, were sent to San Antonio, Texas, in order to attend public school and become fluent in English.

¹² O.L.L. Oral History, Tape 4, and Longoria family lore.

The children boarded with a family for two or three years. While living in San Antonio, Chito worked in a drug store after school and on weekends and saved his money.¹³ Public school was not a success. There were too many Spanish speaking children in the school and the Longoria children were not learning English as rapidly as their parents wished. The next school the children attended, also in San Antonio, was called the Peacock Military Academy. The boys boarded at the school while Laura lived with the Peacock family in their home on the campus.

The children returned home each summer and Chito, being the eldest boy, helped his father in the grocery store. As a hobby, Chito raised rabbits and pigeons which he sold at the Plaza in Nuevo Laredo on Sundays. Young as he was, he loved having his own money.

Although the hostilities of the Revolution had subsided by 1918, the central area of Nuevo Laredo was devastated. Everything had been burned to the ground. No industries, homes, or businesses remained standing. All supplies had to be purchased on the U.S. side of the river and the Laredo merchants would take only gold, silver or cattle in payment. Yet even in this sorry state, Nuevo Laredo began to prosper. All of Mexico was in the same

¹³ In all of the interviews, Chito was very proud of his ability to work hard and save money. He mentioned this subject often.

predicament as Nuevo Laredo. But, as Nuevo Laredo was at the border closest to the United States, people had to pass through Nuevo Laredo from as far away as Monterrey and Tampico on their way to buy goods in the U.S. This meant that people, on their way across the Río Grande, would spend money in the town and exchange pesos for dollars.¹⁴ Nuevo Laredo's proximity to the Paso Jacinto was at this moment an advantage.

In this same year, Chito's father decided it was safe enough to return to the Mexican side of the Río Grande. They rebuilt their home. On the site of their destroyed grocery store, they erected a large warehouse in which to store supplies and an office. Chito's father had changed his business from retail to wholesale. Turning the grocery business into a wholesale operation was lucrative because oil fields had been discovered off the coast of Tampico and the oil workers needed supplies. The geographic location of Nuevo Laredo put the senior Longoria in a position to import and ship the required supplies.¹⁵ Next to the warehouse, he built a small liquor store. The four eldest children remained in school in San Antonio.

In 1920 or early 1921, Chito returned to Laredo and attended high school for one year. At the age of sixteen,

¹⁴ OLL, Oral History, Tape 4.

¹⁵ Deposition, Shelby Longoria. Vol. I, p. 8.

he quit high school and took a job as a messenger for the Melmo National Bank in Laredo. After a few months of employment, the Bank Board, impressed with his industry, voted to buy him a bicycle to use on errands for the bank. Chito's job with the bank was varied. He counted money, delivered messages, and learned about banking.

In 1922 when Chito was 17, two cousins, Miguel and Ciro Leal, came to Nuevo Laredo to borrow money from the senior Longoria for expansion of their notions business in St. Louis, Missouri. While discussing the loan, the Leals praised the Pierce School of Business in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as an excellent school for students wishing to learn the principles of business. Chito's father was so impressed by the Leals' description of the school that young Chito was sent east the next February. He was meant to remain there for two years, and indeed, he had paid in advance for two years. But after six months, the boy was summoned home by his father, who had fired his employees once too often. This time the employees refused to return to work, so Chito was summoned home to become his father's full time assistant.¹⁶

Chito discovered that working for his father was arduous. The work day began at 7 a.m. and ended around 11 p.m. On Sundays, they only worked half a day. Other

¹⁶ OLL, Oral History, Tape 4.

employees worked shorter hours but, as the son of the owner, Chito had to set an example.

In 1924 Chito's father sold his wholesale grocery business and devoted his energies to the sale of liquor and beer. Some years before, Chito's father had acquired the distribution rights to sell Cuauhtemoc beer, which was brewed in Monterrey, Nuevo León, in Nuevo Laredo. The beer was wholesaled in kegs to local bars. As he was already dealing in beer, it was easy to sell liquor wholesale to the same bars. Undoubtedly, Chito's father chose the liquor business because of the profit potential due to Prohibition in the United States. Prohibition meant that the sale or consumption of any form of alcoholic beverage in the U.S was illegal. The laws of the state of Texas were especially harsh on people caught selling or drinking liquor. Since Nuevo Laredo was so close and so "wet", it was a natural opportunity. Many U.S. citizens were not in agreement with the Eighteenth Amendment, which forbade the sale of liquor. They flaunted the law and travelled to Nuevo Laredo to buy whatever they wished.

During the '20's the beer from Monterrey was delivered in refrigerated railroad cars. This meant that the Longorias had to keep the beer cold until it was delivered to the bars. There was no ice house on the Mexican side of the Río Grande, and they had to import their ice from

Laredo. This was an expensive operation which was remedied by the Chito's father when he built his own ice plant with refrigeration rooms for cold storage.

To build the ice plant, they needed more land, so Chito's father purchased a block of land close to the railroad depot and about a quarter of a mile from their home.¹⁷

Building an ice plant was tedious work. There were no concrete mixers or other machines to facilitate construction, only a plentiful supply of labor. It took a year and a half to complete the plant which was finished in 1926 and produced 15 tons of ice per day. While his father supervised the construction, Chito operated the wholesale liquor and beer businesses.¹⁸ He was 19.

Although he was in charge of the liquor operation, Chito did not think the returns were worth his time and effort. The beer business made a profit, but the liquor sales were barely breaking even. There were too many wholesalers in Nuevo Laredo and competition was fierce.

A solution to their problem appeared in the form of some men from Texas who approached Chito and asked him if he were interested in selling the liquor business. These

¹⁷ Traditionally, a block of land in Mexico is three hundred square meters.

¹⁸ O.L.L., Oral History, Tape 5.

men had been in Nuevo Laredo for several months trying to sell bonds. "They had been selling bonds here with gold seals, very pretty, these bonds."¹⁹ Chito mentioned the offer to his father, noting that the business was not very profitable, and his father told him to do with the liquor store as he wished. In 1926, Chito sold the liquor business to the men for more than three times its worth, and then rented the liquor store back to them at double the price. The liquor business was probably worth \$5,000, and he sold it to them for \$20,000. Rental on the store was worth \$20.00 per month, and he rented it to them for \$50.00. "And they did very well. They drank all the liquor, and they left."²⁰ His father was pleased.

One business opportunity that Chito and his father missed was that of becoming the Ford Motor Company agent for the Republic of Mexico. A man named Copeland, who represented Ford Motor Company of Mexico, offered the Ford agency franchise of Nuevo Laredo to the Longorias, but neither father nor son could see a future in Ford. No one in Nuevo Laredo had an automobile, and there were only one or two in Laredo. They decided that renting warehouse space to the Ford Agency was profit enough.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

As a sideline to the liquor and beer business, the Longorias were often asked to change pesos for U.S. dollars. In a border town it is a necessity to have enough cash to exchange pesos to dollars or vice-versa. The Longorias, because of the volume of their business, always had ready cash and became informal money exchangers. In the exchange of money, they made a cent or two on each transaction. At the beginning it was more of a courtesy than an actual business.

In the 1920's, Nuevo Laredo was still relatively small, perhaps it had a population of 15,000 by 1924.²¹ There were only a few banks. One was called the Comisión Monetario, which was a Federal Reserve Bank and did not deal in public transactions. This bank later evolved into Banco de México. There were two small banks whose main branches were in Monterrey. The two private banks went broke during a period of economic troubles in the United States in the early 20's.

The bank failures came about because of Nuevo Laredo's proximity to the United States. Most economic traumas are reflected on the Mexican side of the border, even though they are U.S. induced. The old saying is apt: when the United States has a cold, Mexico sneezes. This was true in the early 1920's, when the United States suffered a small

²¹ O.L.L. Oral History, Tape 5.

depression at the end of World War I. Northern Mexico also suffered a like depression.

Farm prices in the U.S., which had increased substantially before and during the war, suffered a severe set-back after the war's end in 1918, and the war boom was near collapse by 1920. Business slid at first gradually downhill, and by 1921 ended in one of the most violent crashes of prices that the U.S. had yet experienced. Raw materials and farm products dropped the most. The crash brought about more than one hundred thousand bankruptcies in the United States. Before the reckoning was over, 453,000 farmers had lost their farms.²²

These financial disasters were reflected in Nuevo Laredo by the closing of the two Monterrey banks which had gone broke extending too many loans to farmers along the border who could no longer get premium prices for their crops. It was easier for industry to cut production. A factory manager can simply make the decision not to produce as many units. For a farmer, the situation was not as fluid. Once a crop has been planted, there is no way to stop it from growing or recall the already expended financial resources. Things that did not sell at a good price in the U.S. would not have a market elsewhere. As

²² Soule, George. Prosperity Decade. P. 96.

Europe recovered from the effects of the war, the world became sated with excess farm goods.

As a result, after 1922 there were no public banks in Nuevo Laredo, only the casual money exchange that the Longorias were operating. That same year, the Banco Mercantil de Monterrey and the Banco Nacional de México contacted the Longorias and asked them if they would represent them when there was an occasion for bank business in Nuevo Laredo. To represent these banks meant that a person in Nuevo Laredo who had an account with either of the above banks drew a draft against the Longorias in the customer's favor. The Longorias were repaid by the two banks who deposited money in one of the Longoria accounts in Mexico or the United States.

As the Revolution had not been over for very long, many Mexican merchants were still traveling to Nuevo Laredo, Laredo, and San Antonio for supplies. This meant that they needed a bank to change their pesos to dollars, and because there was no official bank, the Longorias fell heir to the business. As this operation grew, often customers would not take the whole amount of their drafts with them, asking the Longorias to keep the remaining amount until the next time they returned to Nuevo Laredo.

There was still no paper currency in circulation, only gold and silver, which made banking coins a problem of

bulk. Often customers came into the warehouse loaded down with two or three money belts and rolled the gold coins out on the counter and requested that the gold be stored with the Longorias. Some customers used hand trucks to bring in forty or fifty bags of silver for safe keeping. The coins had to be examined in order to assure that the seal on the coins was issued by a solvent and reputable bank. Since they did not yet have counting machines, and it was too time consuming to count each coin individually, they used scales to weigh the coins. One thousand pesos had to weigh so many pounds. And so it went day after day until the early 1930's when paper money finally became acceptable.²³

To keep the money safe and separate, Chito put the coins in cotton bags for the customer and kept the bags in the vault at the warehouse. On each bag Chito placed a ticket indicating how many coins were in the bag and the owner's name. To the depositor, he gave an IOU which told the depositor exactly how many coins he had left with the Longorias. Eventually, the service became so complex that Chito printed deposit slips and checks. At this time, there was no official Mexican banking commission. The Longorias were operating like a bank even though they were not officially chartered.

²³ Deposition, Shelby Longoria, Vol I, p. 314.

Besides exchanging money in the warehouse, Chito found a means of making a personal income. As a sideline, he began to smuggle gold across the border from Mexico to the United States. Chito had never been paid a formal salary by his father and was uncomfortable asking him for money. To increase his income, he bought domestic gold coins at a discount and arranged to have them carried across the Río Grande to Texas, where he sold them for a profit. These actions came about through historical events and the fortuitous advantage of living on the border.

At the conclusion of World War I, the United States and the rest of Europe returned to the gold standard. The U.S. Treasury was determined to put an end to deficit spending and balance its books. Taxes were raised gold was encouraged for repayment of loans made by the United States to the Allies during the war, and once again the dollar was on a sound footing. Mexico, on the other hand, had forbidden the export of gold or silver. Chito saw this situation as the perfect opportunity to make some money for himself on the side.

The exchange rate between the peso and the U.S. dollar in the 1920's was still 2 to 1. In other words, 20 Mexican pesos were worth 10 U.S. dollars. Also, a 20 peso gold coin contained the same amount of gold as a U.S. 10 dollar gold coin, yet if one were to exchange a 20 peso gold coin

in a U.S. bank, the customer would be given only \$9.90. Discrimination and distrust of Mexico by U.S. bankers made the Mexican peso actually worth 49 1/2 cents. For Chito, this was opportunity knocking.

Since he was already in the exchange business, Chito bought for his own account gold pesos for 48 cents. The problem was then reduced to the question of how to get the gold pesos across the border to Laredo where he could sell them for 49 1/2 cents to the U.S. banks. This was solved by engaging men, often those that offered the gold for sale, to carry the coins across the river to Texas. These men delivered the gold coins to Chito on the Laredo side and he bought them from the men for 48 1/2 cents. The smugglers made a half cent on each peso and Chito made one cent. The U.S. banks, especially the Laredo National Bank, then sold the gold to the United States Mint for 49 6/10 cents, to be melted down and minted into a U.S. gold coin. Everyone was happy, and everyone had made a profit. Chito was dealing in thousands of gold pesos daily, and so the profits were very large. If he made 50 cents on the sale of one 100 peso coin, he was making hundreds of dollars per day. The gold coins were very small and easily hidden on a person and transported across the Rio Grande. The purchase of gold by U.S. banks was legal at this time. Chito never told his father of his smuggling operation, but between

1924 and 1932, when Mexico went off the gold standard, he made more money than his father did as a private banker.

At some point during the smuggling years, the Mexican government learned of the profitable smuggling operation and formally complained to the United States government. A compromise was reached in which the Mexican government consented to the export of gold to the United States, but only with a certificate stating the origin of the gold. The United States agreed to the compromise by making it illegal for a bank to buy gold unless it was accompanied by a certificate. For Chito, this made the gold smuggling operation easier than ever. He had the gold crossed to the U.S. side as usual, but instead of ending the operation there, the smugglers would turn right around with the gold and walk the gold back through the U.S. customs officers. The U.S. custom officers would then certify that the gold had come from the United States and was being transported back to Mexico. The smugglers now had a paper certifying that the gold was of U.S. origin. Then they would walk the gold with the certificates back through both customs houses and legally sell the gold to the U.S. banks. This new operation was so successful, that Chito was making a profit of over \$1,000.00 per day.²⁴ He was in his early twenties.

²⁴ Deposition, O.L.L. P. 47 - 60.

Chito kept his profits liquid in order to buy more gold at a moment's notice. What profits accrued in the regular money exchange office of the Longorias belonged to his father, but when Chito stepped out of the exchange office and dealt illegally for himself, the profit and risk was his alone. With some of his extra income Chito invested in cattle.

Cattlemen from the United States were still hesitant to go to the interior of Mexico to buy cattle so it became advantageous for Mexican cattlemen to ship their cattle to Laredo and sell them directly to U.S. cattle brokers.

Chito entered the cattle business by circumstances within his father's bank. Chito worked in the bank exchanging money and performing other banking duties such as making loans. Many ranchers applied to Longoria for loans to buy and fatten cattle in order to sell them to U.S. cattle brokers in Laredo. Yet making cattle loans was a risk for a banker. Natural catastrophes beyond the control of the rancher and banker made cattle loans unattractive. On one hand, Nuevo Laredo and northern Tamaulipas in general are drought areas, and often cattle die because of a lack of feed and water. An outbreak of disease may mean that an entire herd must be destroyed. On the other hand, the profits of a successful cattle venture could be enormous. Chito's father was determined not to

loan money for cattle as he viewed them as too precarious. Yet Chito knew the profit potential. He solved this quandary by loaning his own money to ranchers and made the cattle deals a joint venture.

Joint cattle ventures consisted of the rancher putting in his land and care of the cattle as his half of the obligation. Chito's half consisted of providing money for the feed and purchase of the cattle. When the cattle had gained a satisfactory amount of weight, it was up to either Chito or his partner to find the best possible price for the cattle and make arrangements for the sale. The profit from the cattle sale was split 50-50 between the rancher and Chito. He had as many as nine cattle partnerships going at one time.²⁵

As he became more successful, Chito's father bought more real property in the central area of Nuevo Laredo. He also bought a 5,000 hectare ranch on which he raised a few cattle.²⁶ Father and son entered into some cattle enterprises as partners but Chito's father, more cautious than his son, avoided the more risky deals that Chito pursued on the side.

Chito's father invested in commercial and agricultural land only after he became successful as a merchant. From

²⁵ O.L.L. Oral History, Tape 8.

²⁶ Deposition, Federico Longoria, Vol. I, Nov. 1977, p.16.

his youth until his death, he always considered himself a merchant. From the history of the Longoria family in the early twentieth century and examples cited by John Kicza and David Brading in the Mexican colonial period, merchants invested in land only after they had already amassed a substantial fortune and not the reverse. It was only after the senior Longoria had become successful with private banking and the ice plant that he began to invest in land in the late 1920's. This conclusion holds true from the start of Spanish settlement of the Americas to this very day, and appears to be no different than Anglo business traditions.

Chito's father removed his money from Mexico because his family and money were at risk because of the revolution. Contrary to the conclusions of Vernon, at least on the micro level, money that was chased out of Mexico by the Revolution was not money removed from agriculture by the hacendados, but merchant money that was taken to the United States for safety, and then returned to Mexico when the political situation was less volatile.

Because of the geographical location of Nuevo Laredo and from the history of the family it can be concluded that intermarriage with foreigners was the result of location rather than conspiracy. Non-Mexicans did not immigrate to gain from Porfirio Diaz' preference for foreign investors,

or to benefit from the chaos created by the Revolution. Foreigners who settled on the border did so for a variety of reasons, few if any of which were those of the "carpetbagger".

Chito's mother was originally from the United States, but there was not as sharp a delineation of nationality in the early part of the century. There was no formal border control or immigration authority until the late 20's. People crossed the border at the Rio Grande with relative ease. The rest of the early Longorias were at first Spanish born and then natives of Mexico. After the second decade of the 20th century, most of the Longorias married U.S. citizens, but the family still remains in Mexico and considers itself Mexican.