

## **THE EMIGRATION FROM JABALOYAS-ARROYOFRÍO TO THE EEUU AND MEXICO**

Jabaloyas is located 1.405 meters above sea level, is a locality that belongs to the region of Sierra Albarracín, in the province of Teruel. Whereas the small village of Arroyofrío is located 1.480 meters above sea level and belongs to the same council. Nowadays, Jabaloyas has 61 inhabitants (INE 2021) and Arroyofrío 8 inhabitants (INE 2021). Very far from the 959 inhabitants that the two localities had in the 1910 census.

The emigration of their residents, has been persistent since the beginning of the 20th century. The migratory flow of many people to North America and Mexico, arouse our curiosity and interest, due to the fact that the protagonists were our grandparents, uncles and fathers.



*(Fig. 1) Panoramic view of Jabaloyas  
Image provided by: patxidiazfotografia*



*(Fig. 2) Panoramic view of Arroyofrío  
Image provided by: Rosario Domingo Domingo*

Raúl Ibáñez Hervás started this research on the summer of 2016, then, he proposed a research about the emigration from our village to North America and Mexico since the beginning of the last century.

I hesitated, I knew it would be a difficult and laborious task. Being able to get information after so many years, could not be easy but I couldn't not refuse as it is very close to my heart. In the end, Teodoro Pradas and I decided to get involved in this research, as far as each one could.

After all this time, I can say that being able to contribute to this project, to give visibility and testimony to the lives of our emigrants, has been extremely rewarding.

And above all, so that this forgotten and almost lost period of our villages remains as a testimony for our children and future generations. We must never forget where we come from, nor forget those who preceded us!

This investigation has started late, what a shame! Thirty years ago, it would have been a success. Our parents and grandparents knew the whole story. But it has emerged by this way, if we took a little longer this would have been more difficult, historical memory leaves us with the loss of our elders.

For conducting this research, we started with a general list of Ellis Island, which is a small island located at the entrance to New York Harbor, and was the gateway for more than 12 million immigrants between 1892 and 1954.

From this list, we began researching the arrival of emigrants from our village, to the EEUU and Mexico, to identify many of them, to find out their two surnames, to know which family they descended from. From there, to find out if there were direct relatives, who they were, to consult the neighbors (without them I would not have been able to advance in this project), town halls, archives, council census, emigration centers in the EEUU... These have been some of the main sources of information that we have used for this research. The team that I formed together with Teodoro and Raúl worked perfectly, cross-checking the data that we were getting. And I would like to highlight the invaluable help and collaboration we have had from Raúl Ibáñez Hervás.

Currently, we have a list of about 133 emigrants from Jabaloyas and Arroyofrío, who emigrated from 1907 to 1949, to the EEUU and México.

The investigations have been focused on each one of them, making an individual card in which all the data found have been registered.

We have made numerous phone calls and sent many emails in order to gather as much information as possible. The biggest obstacle has been the fact that there are not many people left to remember them, and there are few documents attesting to their presence, as too many years have passed.

In spite of the difficulties, there are still some photographs in the possession of the descendants of our emigrants that have yet to be collected. Even so, boarding documents, photographs of the ocean liners on which they emigrated, birth and death certificates, marriage certificates, World War I and II registration cards while residing in the EEUU, and in some cases their home addresses have been obtained.

The emigration from Jabaloyas-Arroyofrío, to the EEUU and México, began at the beginnings of the XX Century with Donato Sánchez Martínez, who in March 1907, left the harbour of Liverpool (England) destination EEUU, landed in New York and headed to Boise (Idaho). Donato was the pioneer, although many of his neighbors, friends and relatives, later followed his footsteps.



*(Fig. 3) Symbol of the emigration of Jabaloyas-Arroyofrío  
Original suitcase with which Pedro Yagües Domingo returned to Spain in 1924, from his emigration to the EEUU  
Image provided by: Fermín Yagües Ferrer (grandson)*

It was in the EEUU (Idaho, Utah, California, Connecticut, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, New York) and Mexico (Baja California, Veracruz, Sonora), where our emigrants mainly worked. Many of them worked as miners in Bingham Canyon (Utah), others were in the vast plains and mountains of the states of Idaho, Wyoming and Utah, spending long periods outdoor, suffering the bad weather conditions, without a house in which to shelter, they barely had a tent or a sheep cart. They also worked as laborers in industry, in private and municipal companies, some were musicians and others created their own businesses, but all struggled to get ahead, thousands of miles away from their hometown.

Silicosis caused by working in the Bingham Canyon copper mine in Utah took its toll on many of them. Some not returned and died in the EEUU and Mexico. Whereas others returned sick to Jabaloyas and died here. A small number did not return, stayed to live in the States where they worked, and there they settled with their families, acquiring American or Mexican nationality.

But when they left Spain, all of them, had a common thought, to be able to help their families and offer them a better life. And when they could, they sent remittances of money to those wives, children, grandparents, siblings that they had left in their village with great poverty, and much need.

This article, from the Teruel press of the time, reflects the hardship in which our emigrants and their families lived:

*“... ¡Pobres serranos! En sus despensas no hay lo necesario para la vida; el complemento de su ángulo alimenticio, la ración de entretenimiento, tienen que buscarla, o en los cortijos andaluces o en las dilatadas planicies de la Mancha. Allá van los brazos robustos de las familias a ganar el irrisorio jornal de cinco reales, del que dada la sobriedad de los serranos, aún ahorran para sus “paguicos”, esto es, para calmar el insaciable apetito del fisco.*

*Aquí en la sierra, quedan sólo los seres débiles: mujeres, niños ancianos; quedan los desprovistos del rigor para el trabajo (...) Para su sostenimiento cuentan con las escasas viandas que almacenaron, como*

*saldo de liquidación con sus acreedores: algo de trigo, de patatas, de judías (...) Los más afortunados suelen hacer la “matanza”, aunque del cerdo sacrificado se vean obligados a enajenar los lomos, los jamones y las costillas para atender con su importe a otras apremiantes atenciones...”*

For a long time, the exodus of our emigrants has remained unknown, and the collective oblivion of our village, was barely a commentary to the use among his neighbors. Time has diluted this chapter in the history of Jabaloyas and Arroyofrío.

Now it is up to us, their descendants, to recover their life stories, and give them visibility.

The exodus of our emigrants has remained invisible during this long period of time.

At this point, I consider that we must return to the initial idea with which this project was conceived, which is nothing more nor less than the publication of a book about our emigrants, which could perfectly be called "The emigration from Jabaloyas and Arroyofrío to the EEUU and Mexico at the beginning of the 20th century", as this is the wish of their relatives and myself.

We know that the council of Jabaloyas, with the Center of Studies of Albarracin Community, are keeping close contacts with different organizations, to explore the chance to make twinning agreements with a related locality in EEUU or México.

Finally, we would like to express that all of us who have participated in this project want to request to the Council of Jabaloyas-Arroyofrío, to vote in the Municipal Council, to rename a street or square in the village, as a tribute and recognition to all our emigrants. As well as a "Sculpture to the Emigrant", where a plaque with the name of all of them will appear.

They deserve it!