

EVERETT BERNARDO
Background information on my family.

Most of the information about the Bernardo side of the family was given me by my Cousin (Pepe) Jose, the eldest surviving son of my Uncle Jose by his second wife. Uncle Jose was Papa's eldest living brother. Cousin Pepe has a special interest in the family history and has many of the original papers, wills, and family records he inherited from his dad.

On May 27, 1859, my paternal Great Granduncle, Juan Suarez Diez (Juan de Picoxo), a bachelor, 62 years old and ill at the time, made a testament or will leaving all of his possessions to his nephew, Manuel Bernardo Suarez, my paternal Grandfather. Juan was implored to do this by his sister, manuel's mother my paternal Great Grandmother, Olaya Suarez Diez, who took care of Juan during his last illness. Olaya's husband, Manuel's father, my paternal Great Grandfather, was named Jose Bernardo Diez. They were natives of Rubial, parish of Boriga, Consejo de Salas, Juan and Olaya's parents, my paternal Great, Great Grandparents, were Padro Suarez, native of Canedo, and Josefa Diez, native of Moutas.

Juan had inherited his property from an old, childless, aunt named Ramona Suarez, of Moutas, the widow of Ramon Fernandez. Juan had at least two other nephews, brothers of Manuel, named Juan and Faustino. Faustino had three children: Josefa, died in the middle 1960's; Juan married, died a widower November, 1968, after a long period of being bedridden as a result of a stroke; and Sabina, an approximately 78 year old spinster. The three lived together in the house at the foot of the widest cart path up to Moutas. Sabina gave me and confirmed some of the information contained herein. Although neither Cousin Pepe nor Sabina mentioned anything about Great Granduncle Juan having any children I hope to confirm this with them.

After the French-Spanish War, Manuel, then a youngster, found an unspent cartridge and in playing with it had it blow up in his face. He was blinded for a period of about two years, after which he regained his sight. While still a youngster, 11 years old, he was carrying a wooden plow on his shoulder when he tripped and fell. The plow landed on his leg, breaking it between the knee and the ankle. The leg healed on its own without medical attention and as a result he was left slightly crippled. His mother called him "Couchin". She used Manuel's impairment to influence her brother Juan to make him his heir.

My paternal Grandfather, Manuel Bernardo Suarez, died on April 8, 1898, in Moutas at the age of 74. It is thought that his death was connected with some type of infraction originating in his leg. My paternal Grandmother was Teresa Suarez Gonzalez, native of La Bariosa, San Antolin de la Rodriga, Salas. My paternal Grandparents had six children in the following order with

their children listed:

- 1) Juan - Died as child of Diptheria.
- 2) Jose - Died January 1, 1952, Moutas.
FIRST WIFE: Generosa
Inez, widow. Several children live in New York.
Alfredo; murdered, Cuba, 1965.
Ricardo; died, Cuba, 1964. Widow and children in Puerto Rico.
Nazarena; died, Gijon, 1962. Children in Paris.
Lisardo; married, no children, live in Cuba.
Jose Maria; married, no children, live in Cuba.

SECOND WIFE: Maria
Angel; died 1941.
Jose Antonio; (Cousin Pepe) married, two children, Llaranes.
Manuel, married, three children, Llaranes.
Marina, married, children, New York.
- 3) Ramon - My dad. Born 4/13/1871 (?), died 8/16/49, Tampa.
Nick; two children, Tampa.
Manuel; four children, Branford.
Anthony; three children, Tampa.
Ramon; three children, Tampa.
Jose; three children, Tampa.
Evaristo; two children, Tampa.
Inez Hunt; three children, Tampa.
- 4) Cesareo - Died Tampa. Born 12/26/1875.
Inez Bernardo de Alvarez, one child, Tampa.
- 5) Sabino - Died, Sestao, date unknown.
Two children, one boy and one girl.
- 6) Antonio - Died in Chicago, date unknown. Born 10/18/1878.
Married, no children.

Alfredo owned a large dairy farm in Cuba. In 1965, some thugs came to his farm and held him up. He had but very little money on hand, offered no resistance, but was shot and killed during the robbery.

Angel lost an arm during the Civil War. He contracted an infection as a result and died from lack of medicine and medical care in Spain in 1941.

Nick thinks that Uncle Sabino visited Papa and uncle Antonio in Tampa. Uncle Sabino was ill at the time and returned to Spain. According to Cousin Pepe, Uncle Sabino was 30 years old June 7, 1899, and at that time was living in Sestao, province of Viscaya. When he died is not known and it is not known whether he died in Sestao or Bilbao. It is known that he had tuberculosis and that

his wife had left him and taken their two children, a boy and a girl with her. Cousin Pepe said nothing more was ever heard from her or the two children. Nick says however, that he remembers the boy coming to Tampa to live with the family.

Arrangements to bring him over here had been made with his mother by Papa and Uncle Antonio. He came over from Vigo and Nick says that the boy was some three or four years older than him and that they all lived over the store. Nick recalls the store was not completed until 1914. Cousin Emilia came over in 1919, and she knows the boy was not here at that time. It is presumed, therefore, that he was here around 1915 to 1917. It is believed the boy was also named Sabino. He became an apprentice cigar maker. Nick recalls that the new apprentices had to stay after and clean up, and that there were two Cuban apprentices who were riding Sabino regularly until one day he beat them both up. He was arrested and fined \$21.00, which in those days was a tidy sum. Papa paid the fine. Some time later the boy disappeared and nothing more was ever heard from him. It is thought that he went to Southern California, close to the Mexican border. Inasmuch as he spoke but very little English, this seems logical. Nick subsequently heard from someone that said Sabino was involved in contraband and smuggling across the Mexican border, and says it fits because the boy was the tough type. Who knows but what there are Bernardos in Southern California today to whom we are related.

The youngest of my uncles was Antonio. According to Sabina, his first wife died in New York. He married her sister. He died in Chicago, apparently of tuberculosis as did both his wives. The date is not known. Sabina says his wife had written to Spain requesting money for a cemetery marker. His wife died shortly thereafter, also in Chicago. Apparently Antonio was Papa's favorite brother, I remember hearing that Papa became very withdrawn upon receiving news of Antonio's death and stayed to himself, talked very little, spending most of his time, over a period of two weeks, just rocking on the front porch over the old store.

It was my understanding that in my grandfather's day inheritance laws were such that the oldest boy received 1/3 plus a share of the estate upon the death of the father. This, I learned, was only a custom and primarily in the little country villages or "aldeas". It was, however, necessary for the father to make a will if he wanted to follow this custom. Without a will, the law provides that all the children share alike. I saw the will my grandfather left following the custom of leaving 1/3 plus a share to the oldest boy, Uncle Jose (Pepe). Uncle Jose's son, Cousin Pepe, showed me the will.

The total amount of the inheritance was quite large by their standards. It included a large amount of land in Moutas and down into Grado. Included was all the land on the left side of the

road, just past the bridge as you enter Grado coming from Oviedo. In addition, there was land and farms in other areas. In my grandfather's time only the largest landholders had a vote and in the Moutas area, his was the only vote. My great grandfather, together with a Marquis, were supposedly the only representatives from the area at the "Cortes".

There's no question but what Uncle Jose was left very well off indeed. The lands which he had inherited would today be worth quite a large amount. Cousin Pepe showed me papers where his dad actually deeded Papa the land in Moutas on which Papa built the house in which he and Mama lived.

I was under the impression that Uncle Jose's brothers had all left their shares of the estate in his trust to manage and that he mismanaged everything and the brothers never received any returns. I had the impression that this was the reason for Papa's ill feeling toward his oldest brother. That was not the case, however, Cousin Pepe showed me papers where his dad had purchased Uncle Sabino's share of the estate shortly after it was settled. He also had records showing that his dad also purchased Uncle Cesario's share later. The amount paid for each share was, I believe 2,600 pesetas, which in those days was a large sum. For example, in those days a worker received two pesetas a day and today he receives 300 pesetas a day; a box of matches cost .05 centimos and today they sell for one peseta (100 centimos per peseta). Pepe and I figured out that each of the younger brothers' share equaled 2/15 of the total and hence, his dad's total holdings would have been worth close to a million dollars by today's values.

I quickly learned that it was common knowledge and generally known throughout the area that Uncle Jose was quite a rounder, drinker, gambler, and chaser. The people in Moutas showed me the area in which he had a rather large building that was used as a drinking and gambling retreat by all the well known men of the area so inclined.

According to Cousin Pepe, when his dad was about 20 years old, he was seriously courting a young lady of the area. Unbeknown to him, however, his parents, especially his dad, were arranging a marriage with the daughter of a well to do family. This young lady was some 12 years older than Uncle Jose. Although he objected and cared nothing about the girl, he had no choice in the matter. Cousin Pepe says his dad in relating the story to him had said, "I did it but as far as loving her was concerned, I loved her like I loved one of my old shoes". They had five children. Cousin Pepe says, however, that he is sure it was the arranged marriage that led his dad on the road to chasing, drinking, and gambling, that resulted in the wife going to Cuba with her children and divorcing him. He then remarried and had four additional children.

According to Sabina, Papa's cousin, who tells everything she knows and then some, the above is essentially as it was except that Sabina says, however, that Uncle Jose openly chased from the very start and had different women in his house while his wife and children were there. Finally, he brought in a young girl and lived with her in the same house with his wife. The wife finally left with her children, went to Cuba but never divorced him. In the meantime Uncle Jose and the young girl had children before the wife died in Cuba and he married the young girl.

When Uncle Jose died in 1953, about all he had left was the house in Moutas called, "La Casa de Pepe Manolon". He had drunk, gambled and frittered away all the rest of his inheritance. I asked Cousin Pepe how his dad had been able to go through so much and he told me by living very high. For example, he said it was nothing for him to go to Puerto Rico, Cuba, South America and other Spanish speaking areas for a year or more at a time.

Cousins Pepe and Manuel left Moutas after they got older. They settled in a steel-mill town call Llarance, which is a suburb of Aviles, a town not too far from Gijon and Oviedo. Cousin Manuel vacations in Moutas every year and stays in the old family home, "Casa de Pepe Manolon", which is the largest house there and in its day, the best too. Their sister, Marino works and lives in New York. She married a South American and he recently opened a small jewelry store on Broadway. I talked to her over the phone during a visit there. Uncle Jose's second wife who is now dead, was named Suarez so the boys have the same full name as Papa and his brothers, that is Bernardo y Suarez.

The reason for Papa's feeling toward his oldest brother was Uncle Jose's general conduct. Cousin Pepe told me, however, that one day Papa wrote them a letter and enclosed \$10.00, telling them to have a drink on him. Shortly afterwards they heard from Nick that Papa had died. They figured it out and believe that they received Papa's letter at just about the same time he died. Cousin Pepe said they all felt, including Uncle Jose, that it was just as if Papa had written them "despidiendose".

Cousin Pepe and Manuel knew all about us from an old family friend named Manolon. He was a bachelor, native of Moutas, who lived in Tampa, and was always around our house and the store. While I was still very young, he retired and returned to Spain. He married his niece in Moutas and lived there until his death. We saw his house and met his niece, who wanted us to have cider with them. She gave us a bag of hazelnuts, (she did not want us to go away empty handed). She was so appreciative of Nick's handling Manolon's affairs through probate for them. Manolon used to tell the boys all about their uncle and aunt and cousins in Tampa. Cousin Manuel says he remembers as a small boy, frequently asking Manolon to tell him stories about his family in Tampa.

It is said that my Grandfather Bernardo had a terrible temper and was extremely mean. Also that my Grandmother Teresa was quite a woman, tall stately, strong, intelligent and really a very lovely person. Sabina says she is the one person she knew that no one could fault and coming from a busy-body like Sabina, that is quite a tribute. Cousin Pepe said that Teresa was a very highly regarded woman, not only in Moutas but also in the neighborhood in which she was reared. I heard an incident about her which cannot be fully appreciated without knowing about the paths to Moutas. Actually, there are several different narrow paths to Moutas, which is really nothing more than a cluster of houses on the side of a mountain, not far from the top which is not too high. A very narrow and steep path leads close to Grado, which is the city and market center for all "aldeas" such as Moutas in the area. There is another path not quite as narrow or steep that ends at the church at Pereda. This is the church where most of the weddings, baptisms, funerals and other important religious functions take place for the residents of Moutas. During the time we were there, one of the men had died in Moutas. For the funeral it was necessary for 12 men or so to go up to Moutas and take turns bringing the casket down the path on their shoulders to the church. This trip from Moutas took about 1 1/2 hours. The path with the lease grade and also the widest starts from Sabina's house, which is on a narrow, rough, paved road and some distance from Grado. This is the road that we went up the first time in a four wheel drive jeep after a very rough slow 30 minute journey. Coming down the same way was quite frightening as the path drops off in places very steeply and there are many turns which are sharper than the jeep could make with one continuous turn. This was also the path up which Diane, Tar, Bill and I went up on foot. Fortunately, we were accompanied by Manolo the son-in-law of Mama's niece, Balermína, who lives in Moutas. He had his horse along and good thing, too, or I would have never made it up the hill. As it was it took us about 1 1/2 hours to go up. We recently heard that a road up to Moutas will be constructed along the route of this path.

It was up one of these paths on day that Grandmother Teresa was returning after a shopping trip to Grado. She was heavily loaded down with supplies in each hand. On her head she had balanced a jug of fuel for their lamps. She was pregnant at the time, and part way up labor pains started. Right there on the path, she bore a son, Uncle Cesareo. She attended him and took care of herself as best she could. She wrapped him up in the apron she was wearing, suspended him from around her waist, pucked up her supplies and continued trudging up the path to home.

During her last winter or early spring, Grandma Teresa slipped on ice and fell from an "Orío" onto the stone steps. Apparently she broke some ribs which punctured her lungs or caused other internal injuries. She died in Moutas as a result of her injuries on June 24, 1897, at the age of 58. An "Orío" is a small building constructed off the ground and used for storing grain.

It is normally built on four pillars in such a way as to be rat-proof. It has a walk-way with a railing all around the building over which corn is hung to dry. Steep, stone steps lead up to the building but do not touch the walk way, necessitating a large step between the walk way and the top step. A similar building only larger and supported on six, eight or more pillars is called a "Paneda".

The house that Papa built when he married Mama is still there although not in too good of shape. I understand that he owned it until sometime after the end of their Civil War, during which time it was normally rented to the school teacher there in Moutas. During the war it was used as an infirmary or first aid station. Pape supposedly sold it to someone in Cuba who was from Moutas. The man who bought it sold it in turn to Alvaro Alvarez, Moutas, who is Mama's niece Balermina's husband. Lately the house is used for storing hay. Doris thought we should buy it and fix it up but this would be purely a sentimental gesture. When I mentioned this to Cousin Pepe he suggested we let him negotiate the deal. He was sure he could get it for a very reasonable price for us. In addition, he said he would have his sister in New York, Marina, give us a few meters of ground on the one side of the house and repay her by giving her an equal amount of property that he has there in another location. We expressed our appreciation but told him we were not going to pursue it.

I was disappointed to find that we could not find any records ourselves on the family. We thought that by checking cemeteries over there plus churches, and city recorder's offices we would be able to find something. The cemeteries are not like ours. They are very small. Few people buy cemetery lots as such; therefore, they do not own the plot in which they are buried. The bodies are not embalmed. As a consequence, after eight years there is nothing left but dust. If after that time the burial plot is needed for someone else, the family of the last interred is notified to come claim the ashes. If no one claims the ashes, which is the general rule, the few remains are dumped in a common gravesite. As a consequence nothing of interest can be found in most cemeteries.

As far as the city recorder's office is concerned, this is a fairly recent innovation and therefore any information dating back a ways is unavailable. That leaves the church as the only source of records. Unfortunately, the local Priest is apparently the only one that has access to the records so you must make any request you have for information through him and trust him to look it up for you. Getting the Priest to do this is not simple. Apparently the records are not in the best of shape or order; therefore, your request must be very simple, explicit and the time must be narrowed down to within just a few years; otherwise, it would be too time consuming for the Priest to look it up. The records for Moutas, for example, were kept in the church at Pereda. The Priest there lives in a little house by the church.

All he has to do is say Mass on Sundays and Holy Days, and to officiate at any special functions such as weddings and funerals. You would think that he would have time on his hands to look up information for you, especially if you make it clear that you would compensate him for his efforts and start by giving him a token down payment. Not so. He has a car and is too busy doing other things. In fact, all he has to do to be gone including a Sunday, is have a priest say Mass for him the Sunday he is gone. What he and so many thousands of others like him do with all their time while being away so much is anyone's guess. I have my own ideas; no doubt you will have yours.

Cousin Pepe tried and as far as I know is still in the process of trying to get data for me from church records. The following information was finally given to him by the Priest of Parroquia de Pereda, Grado, in response to my request.

"De los datos que me pide de sue familiares en su nota, solo le puedo facilitar los en siguientes, ya que del resto me es imposible porque faltan Libros y Folios del Archivo Parroquial a causa de la guerra pasada.

Parte de lo ue me pide seguramente lo encoutrara en la Parroquia de La Rodriga, por habor nacido y contraido matrimonio en dicha parroquia.

Del matrixm matrimonie de Manuel Bernardo Suarez y Teresa Suarez Gonzalez los hijos llamdos; Juan, Jose, Ramon, Cesareo - 26 de Diciembre de 1875, en Moutas, bautizado el 27 en la iglesia. Pereda - Sabino, y Antonio - que nacio en Moutas el 18 de Octubre de 1878, bautizado el 19 en Pereda.

Los padrinos de Cesareo fueron Jose Valles y Maria Alvarez; les de Antonio, D. Antonio Miranday Cesareo Fernandez.

Jose Bernardo Suarez, hijo de Manuel y Teresa, casado con Maria Suarez, fallecio en Moutas a los 82 anos el dia 1 de Enero de 1952.

Deja los hijos llamados: Jose, Manuel y Marian.

Ramon Bernardo Suarez, soltero, recien llegado do Cuba, hijo de manuel y Teresa, natural de Moutas, y Emilia Fernandez Lopez, soltera, hijo de Manuel y Manuela, natural de Moutas, contrajeron matrimonio en la iglesia de Pereda el 2 del sharo de 1903, ante el Sr. Cura Parroco Lic. D. Demetrio Alvarez Fernandez.

De este matrimonio nacio D. Nicaner Bernardo Fernandez ed 29 de Octubre de 1903 en Moutas, siendo bautizado en Pereda el 30 del mismo mes y ano.

Esto es to do lo que puede reuniv. Perdone per tardar en corressponderle. He mirado todo le que hay viejo por ai le podia dar mas detalles.

Atentamente le saluda, s.s
EL PARROCO"

As stated in the first paragraph of the above communication from the Priest, many of the books and folios of the parish archives were burned and destroyed during the Civil War. This was confirmed in visits to other parish churches trying to get other data. Therefore, it must be concluded that much of the information is lost forever. As the Priest says in the second paragraph, part of the information may be in the church of the parish of La Rodriga because that is where Papa's mother and dad were born and married. As you can see we did not learn Papa's birthdate and perhaps it is at the other parish church. Cousin Pepe told me he would contact the Priest there and try to get whatever other information was available.

As evident, we were not able to learn a great deal about Mama's ancestors. The reason being that I found no one on her side of the family that was as interested in their family background as Cousin Pepe was about his. The other reason being that Mama was the youngest in her family and a girl at that so she did not share in any inheritance that there may have been. I did collect some general information on her brothers and sisters and their children which I have shown separately. I believe that there is more information available about Mama's family in Pereda than even what I was able to put together on Papa's family. The reason being is that Mama was apparently from an old line of Moutas inhabitants and a large part of their records would be in the church at Pereda except for that which was lost or burned during the war, I hope to try to check this out in the future.

At present living in the house where Mama was born is her niece, my cousin, Balermína, with her husband Alvaro Alvarez. The house is called "Casa Clara", after Clara, Mama's Grandmother. It is also called "El Palacio". This may be that at one time a castle was located at this spot and the house is supposedly built on part of the foundation of the old castle. Also living in the house is Balermína's daughter, Mercedes, her husband Manuel Rodriquez Sierra and a 16 year old son. They are all exceptionally gracious people and very friendly.

All that I know about my maternal Great Grandmother is that her name was Clara. I do not know my maternal Great Grandfather's name. My maternal Grandparents were named Manuel and Manuela Fernandez Lopez. They had seven children as follows; with their children listed in turn:

- 1) Joaquin - Died approx. 1942, Spain
 - Mercedes; New York, single.
 - Baldomero; died.
 - Balermína; Moutas, one child.
 - Balbina; Tampa, two children.
 - Gumerindo; Grando, two children.
 - Evaristo; died.
 - Manuel; Trubia.

- 2) Evaristo - Died 1936, Cuba.
FIRST WIFE:
Evaristo; Lawyer, died 1947, one child.
Andres; Lawyer, living in Miami, four children.
Jose Antonio; single.
- SECOND WIFE:
Juan; Doctor, died 1950.
Isabel; single, Miami.
Carmen; married either Miami or California.
- 3) Dolores - Died April, 1950, Spain.
Antonio; Oviedo, one son.
Josefa; Mrs Sol.
Perfecta; Mira Sol, two children.
Manuela; died.
Emilia; Tampa, two children.
Cipriano; Oviedo, three children.
Evaristo; Grado, two children.
- 4) Marcelo - Died 1955, Spain
Jesusa; died.
Louis; died.
Emilia; Grado, single.
Juan; Cuba.
- 5) Andres - Died 1943, single.
- 6) Antonio - Died 11/4/49, Oviedo, Spain. 70 years old, no children, married 22 years. Widow, Violeta Garcia, now 62 years old.
- 7) Emilia - Mama. Born 4/13/1882 (?) Died 4/18/1959, Tampa.

Violeta told me something about the family in Cuba. Some of the incidents were added by others. Uncle Evaristo had numerous business enterprises in Sagua la Grande and was quite well to do. His first wife died, apparently in child birth. He married again and the girl was from a very wealthy family. Evaristo, therefore, ended up with interest in various type of businesses including sugar cane plantations, sugar mills, real estate, and various types of manufacturing and retail establishments. Cipriano says that he worked for Uncle Evaristo and at one time collected rents for him. He says that the main street was something comparable to what Ybor City would be from about 15th Street to 22nd Street, and that the majority of the stores on the main street, both sides, belonged to Uncle Evaristo and he, Cipriano, went along the street collecting the rents. Evaristo was supposedly very tight.

With the coming of Fidel Castro the family in Cuba lost practically everything. Violeta says that Andres and Carmen had come to the U.S. with nothing. She says the Andres ended up in

Miami doing menial tasks just to exist. Carmen and her family apparently agreed to be resettled and Violeta thinks they went to California. Violeta gave me the following name and address of the person whom she is sure can tell me the whereabouts of the family from Cuba and additional information about them.

Vitalia Roa vivda de Fernandez
807 Santiago Avenue
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

Which of the Fernandez' widows she is, I do not know.

Juan, the doctor, apparently lived high and spent large amounts of money all his life. He studied and spent time in Europe, New York and Miami. At the end he was a dope fiend.

Apparently Uncles Andres and Antonio had interest in some of the businesses with Uncle Evaristo. Uncle Andres was supposedly also quite frugal. When he died, Mama inherited her share of his estate, something less than \$5,000. She did not want it, saying she had not worked for it and wanted to give it to us, her children. We did not want it, saying it was her inheritance and she should keep and do with it what she pleased. Under the circumstances, she was sure no one would object if she put the bulk of it away for Jimmy Hunt's benefit, whom she was practically rearing at the time. She therefore put #3,000 into a savings account in the name of James Hunt with Inez Hunt as Guardian.

Uncle Antonio remained a bachelor until he was 48 years old, at which time he married Violeta, 20 years old. Her parents owned a small business establishment in Oviedo. Uncle Antonio was considered well to do. They returned to Cuba and lived a life of luxury there most of the time. Fidel Castro took all of Violeta's holdings in Cuba. She lives modestly on the limited investments they had transferred to Spain prior to returning just before Uncle Antonio's death. She now has him buried inside one of the large churches in Oviedo. To accomplish this requires a large contribution to the church or parish involved.