

The Rebecca Family



Guisseppa LaMarco was born March 4, 1880, in Sambuca, Sicily. Her American name was Josephine, but was called Subeda or Beda by most people. She was a very petite woman, 5'3" black hair, brown eyes, and mostly very small feet.

Her parents, Angelina and Anthony LaMarca had a bakery in Sicily. Josephine helped to bake the bread and deliver it. She had a sister named Appalongnia and a brother.

Josephine met Sam (Salvatore) Rebecca at church. He was very handsome, tall 6'2" with blue eyes and reddish hair. We don't know what happened to his parents, but he grew up being cared for by an aunt. He was a farmer, whatever kind of farming they did. His mother and father were Mamie and Peter Rebecca. He was born in June of 1865. Josephine and Sam courted and were married according to tradition, in the church they attended.

Her sister, Appalongnia, married Pepe LaSala. He was very good with finances, and knowing how to make and invest money. He came up with the idea to move to Louisiana to work at the sugar cane plantation. To work meant to be able to feed and clothe your family. Times were hard in Sicily, not a lot of work.

Sam, Pete, and I think Appolognia left for Louisiana. Josephine stayed behind due to ill health. It was a few years before she could join them, sailing from Palermo to the Port of New Orleans.

They lived and worked on the sugar cane plantation in Franklin, LA. in St. Mary's Parrish. Their first child, Mamie was born in 1900. Their little house was on stilts because of water, animals, and snakes. Before all the children they took in boarders, and she would cook, do laundry, and sew for them. Always baking 8 loaves of bread on Mondays and Fridays.

Their cousin, Tony Montelbano and his family had a grocery store in the French Quarters, and the family still resides there.

Four children, Mamie, Peter, Angelina, and Anthony, were born in LA. The family moved to Rockford for other work, but it didn't work out well. Their son Nick was born here, and then the family returned to the plantation to live and work. Al, Mary, and Rose were born there. The children had to work as soon as they could an education was not high on the list.

They returned to Rockford and bought a house at 1311 S. Church St. where their youngest daughter, Fannie was born in 1917. Sam worked for the railroad until his health started failing. He then became the custodian for the St. Mary's club, and the boys could help.

On Saturdays, friends and family came over, sitting under the grape arbor, playing cards, drinking homemade wine, eating homemade bread with cheeses and marinated olives.

Sam's asthma became worse, and he died in May, 1930. Al, Mary, Rose, and Fannie were still living with their mother. As the girls married. Al stayed. When Josephine's health was failing, they sold the house and she stayed with her daughters. In February 1957, she passed away at her daughter Angelina Turiciano's home.

We were told she was a mid-wife, delivering many children and when she died the older children in the neighborhood chipped in and bought a gold chalice for St. Anthony's church.

She had a good long life with her family. All the children remained in Rockford, working, raising their families. We all still gather for our annual Rebecca Reunion, as they did for the past seventy year.

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