The border crossed us. In 1848, the United States & Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. The treaty ended the U.S.–Mexican War. Mexico had to give up almost half of its territory: modern-day California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and parts of Colorado, Nevada, and Utah. There were around 80,000 of us living in these territories. They gave us the choice to relocate to what was now a much smaller Mexico, but few of us did. My family has farmed in Alta California for generations and we are a self-reliant, independent bunch.

I came to the U.S. because I knew there would be steady employment there. I didn’t make the trek north with the intention of becoming a permanent resident. I came *por solo un poquito tiempo* (for only a little while). I planned to go back once I’d saved up some money, but one thing led to another and I decided to stay.

I left Mexico after the Mexican Revolution broke out in 1910 because the political situation was awful and I could have been executed if I stayed. I had once supported Porfirio Díaz, the former President of Mexico who was ousted from power by the revolutionaries. I planned to return there once things had settled down and become safe, but the political situation remained unstable for almost 20 years!

I went to the U.S. with my three little children to join my husband in Virginia. A few years ago, he went there as a *solo*—a married man who came to the U.S. by himself—and has been working and saving money so we can join him. He sent me a letter that was supposed to guarantee my safe passage across the border.

I left Mexico after the Mexican Revolution began in 1910. It wasn’t long before civil war broke out. I am not interested in politics, but my city became extremely unsafe, so I and thousands of others fled across the border for safety, hoping things would soon die down, but I ended up staying in the U.S.
I left Mexico in the 1890s when Porfirio Díaz was president. Even though it was a peaceful time in our country, the rich were getting richer and many of us poor folks didn’t even have enough to feed ourselves. I was forced off my land and had to wander Mexico to find work. My wages were getting lower every day and food prices were rising like crazy. If I had stayed, my family and I would have starved, but I knew I could find a job doing farm work in Alta California.

I left Mexico for political reasons. I was a major political figure in Mexico and even served as interim president in 1920, but the rebellion I led against President Álvaro Obregón in 1923 was unsuccessful and I had to flee to the U.S. for my safety.

I am a devout Catholic and after the Mexican Revolution, the government and the church could not agree. Things got so bad that 25,000 Catholics fought the government in what became known as the Cristero War, and the government’s backlash was severe. I and many people from my region fled to the U.S. after our house was destroyed.

I work for Anaconda Copper, an American mining company in northern Mexico that also has a mine in Arizona. My boss needed more workers at his Arizona location, so he transported us across the border to work at his U.S. mine. I brought my wife, children, and parents with me.

I lived in northern Mexico near the border, and one day an enganchista—a free-lance labor contractor, literally “one who hooks you”—came to my city looking to hire Mexicans to work in the U.S. Technically, he violated the contract labor law of 1885. The idea of a secure job was worth the risk for me, even though he took a large cut out of my wages and made me pay for my own transportation north in a crowded, unsanitary boxcar.

By the time World War I broke out, the U.S. had severe laws against letting in immigrants from Europe or Asia. The American ranchers and growers were afraid all their sources of cheap labor would disappear, so they pleaded with their Congress to make a special exception for us Mexicans. I came to plant and harvest crops in the Central Valley of California because I knew there’d be no competition from other immigrant groups—I couldn’t say no to a guaranteed job!