

ARAGÓN, JESUSITA (19?-)

Aragón learned her trade as a *partera* (midwife), from her New Mexican grandmother, and went on to deliver more than 12,000 infants throughout her career. At the age of fourteen when she delivered her first baby, Aragón embarked on a life-long journey of helping ranch and subsistence farming women on the northern New Mexican frontier. Her two out of wedlock pregnancies caused a rupture with her immediate family, therefore she built her own a home providing for her children as a *partera*. Known far and wide for her skills, Aragón knew how to comfort women in labor reducing by their stress throughout their ordeal. Recalling her experiences, she remembered riding long distances on horseback, wagons, or cars to deliver babies. She believed her skills were a gift from God, and charged modest fees, or none at all. In time, Aragón obtained a practicing license and joined a midwives club. She baptized babies, helped with adoptions, and cared for children and mothers in difficult times. Eventually, with the rise of birth control and the spread of institutional medicine, fewer mothers needed her help.