

25 July 1973

Dear Mae,

I have gone once through all the written material I have to try to establish a chronology for Sam. What follows is a breakdown of that information. It does not include material from my tapes, and with a few exceptions I have left out speculations on the part of his relatives. Most of this is documentary evidence, and I will identify it if it is not.

Love, Sam

- 1897-1906 (and later, presumably; not checked after 1906) several Rodias living at various addresses in Seattle; mostly market gardeners (what I think would be called a truck farmer today, but that should be checked), and later laborers, etc., with various city departments
- prior to September 1902 Sam boarded with his future wife's mother, according to his older son, Frank
- 1899 Colacurcio came to U.S. at age of 14 to avoid military conscription/ 1905 returned to Italy and married Sam's sister, but Colacurcio had to leave again because the authorities still were after him; she remained in Italy and left for N.Y. on 7/31/06, when her first child, Sam, was only nine days old; Rodia sent the money for their passage to Oakland, and they arrived there in 1907; Nick Calicura was born in 1908 on Stannage Avenue in Oakland (all this from interview with Nick Calicura)
- 9/15/01 Sam erroneously gave this as the date of his marriage to Lucy Ucci
- 9/14/02 Sabato Rodia and Lucy Ucci married in Seattle; witnesses, Matteo Rodia and Giuseppe Defeo or Debeo; Sam's data: 23 yrs. old (correct, for once, apparently), resident of Seattle, farmer, father Francisco Rodia, mother Nicholotta (?) Celino; Lucy's data: 15 yrs. old, resident of Seattle, no occupation, father Sebastiano Ucci, mother Gratia Yagoel; according to one of her sons, Lucy was 77 at her death in 1964, and she was born in, or at least spoke the dialect of, Abruzzo
- 6/26/03 Frank Rodia born to Sam Rodio [sic], age 23, laborer, and Lucy Ucci, age 16, both living on Massachusetts Street, Seattle
- 1904 Seattle directory: Samuel Rodia, 1537 Valentine Place, laborer
- 1904 Frank Rodia said his parents moved to Oakland when he was 9 mos. old, e.g., Spring 1904
- 11/28/05 Alfred Rodia born in Oakland
- August 1907 Sam and Lucy lived at County Line, Contra Costa Co., now probably somewhere in Albany or Kensington, just north of Berkeley
- 4/14/08 Vera Rodia born in Oakland
- Oct. 1909 family lived on Bemis Street, Fruitvale, Alameda Co., now part of Oakland (?)
- 1910 Oakland City Directory: Rodia, ~~XXXX~~ Saml. lab, r 2916 Boehmer
- 2/4/10 Lucy left Sam, taking her daughter with her and leaving the boys with him
- 2/5/10 Complaint for divorce filed by Sabatino Rodia against Lucia Ucci Rodia: according to Sam's statement, resident of California nearly six years, Alameda Co. about 7 months; age 29 years (should be 30 or 31); gives wife's age as 24 (should be 22 or 23); Colacurcio testified that Sam made \$3.50-4.50/day; divorce proceedings never completed
- 4/19/10 date Sam and Lucy separated according to Lucy's later suit for divorce (perhaps she came back to him after leaving on 2/4/10 and then left again later)
- 8/22/10 Sam bought train ticket East for \$63.75; paid for care of sons to 9/1/10; after that time Lucy supported them
- March 1911 Associated Charities of Oakland helped Lucy swear out warrant for failure to provide; no results in collecting from March-Sept. 1911
- 7/4/11 Lucy last saw Sam

P.S. Concerning Seymour, if he should ask you directly about a book, I suppose you would have to tell him about our agreement, especially if the subject should come up later on, after we have actually gotten some more work done. That will have to be dealt with if the situation arises. For now I think our decision to work quietly and tell no one what we are doing is the correct one, and my wife agrees. I haven't even told the children yet. My other projects are coming along. I'll try to work it so I have some time to spend with you in August or early September. By the way, did I leave my pen at your place? I think I must have. It's a silver Mark Cross ballpoint, to which I am rather attached.

Sept 1911-1915/16 children lived in a charity home in Oakland, supported in part by their mother; she remarried and was able to take them back

11/11/12 testimony taken from Lucy for her suit for divorce: 25 years old, 4828 Webster St., Oakland, 8 yrs. res. of California and of Alameda County (latter is probably wrong, but she may not have remembered or realized that County Line was actually in Contra Costa Co.); says she ~~saw~~ ^{saw} him about a year earlier but didn't speak to him; gives Sam's age as 33 or 34, which is correct; "He was a cement worker while I was living with him"

11/26/12 interlocutory decree filed

2/29/12 S.F. Co. Sheriff and Alameda Co. Sheriff report that they are unable to locate Sam; Lucy understood that he was a member of Cement Workers Union in either Oakland or S.F.; Oakland union verifies that he had been a member but says on 3/4/12 that he has not been one for some months prior

12/1/13 final decree of divorce issued

ca. 1914-16(?) Ricardo Rodia (e.g. Dick Sullivan) killed in mine accident (this from his granddaughter, Nancy Ribak, whose mother, his daughter, was born in Oklahoma Territory ca. 1904; Nick Calicura's recollection bears out this approximate date for Ricardo's death)

ca. 1914-16????? Sam in Mexico during time of Villa; was managing a ranch but was let go because he was an American (this from Frank Rodia, Sam's older son)

9/16/17 Simon L. Rodia, born Italy 4/17/87, age 31, married to Benita Chacon, born in Chihuahua, Mexico, 3/21/99, age 18 (actually he was 38 and she was about 16)

11/22/19 Vera Rodia (Sam's daughter) died in Oakland of bronchial pneumonia

1920 Long Beach City Directory: Rodia Saml (Benita) lab h 1204 Redondo

6/19/20 letter of recommendation from Markwell Bldg. Co., Long Beach: "... employed in and about the building of this company about a year..."

1922 Long Beach City Directory: Rodia Saml (Benita) lab h 1117 Euclid Avenue

6/18/22 Benita tried to commit suicide by jumping off Pine Avenue pierk in Long Beach; no address given in newspaper story

1923 Long Beach city directory: Rodia Samuel (Benita) lab h 1117 Euclid Ave.

10/19/23 letter from Benita H. Rodia to Sam stating decision to leave him; addressed to 1117 Euclid Avenue, E. Long Beach; they were separated same day

11/30/23 complaint filed for divorce

11/2/25 final decree issued

1931-2 Nick Calicura visited Sam; says that at that time smaller tower was completed and S. working on larger ones; Nick visited Sam again in 1934

early 30's according to Nick C. Sam worked for either City or County of L.A.; believes that this was source of Sam's structural steel, all in short pieces that had to be wired together

4/14/32 letter of recommendation from Charles F. Plummer, architect, 1108-09 Story Bldg., L.A.: "... handling and placing of both plain and reinforced concrete..." "... has been known to me for over a year..." "... a very busy man and tireless worker..."

1933 reunion in Martinez with his sons and brother and sister

1921 Watts and Compton City Directory: 107th St. called Robin, with different addresses as follows:

Robin	147	152	206 (Sauceda)	210	239	246	250	305	} this address across tracks (1801)
107th	1702	1710	1722	1726	1769	1776			

1922 251 last number shown on block; 1925 same

1927-8 has 1761, 1763, 1767, 1769, 1776, 1778, 1782, 1784, 1801; this particularly puzzling, as 1765 is skipped, and two other numbers on the same or adjacent property are shown; Sam's name and address appear in none of these directories, but I hope to find a more complete file than the L.A. Pub. Lib. had; the 1932 directory completely omits the 1700 block, ~~that~~ but that must just be an error.