Excerpt from **“Greek Migration to Utah**” published in the Deseret News

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At the turn of the century, labor agents came to the villages of Greece looking for strong young men to go to America. The agents actually promised streets paved with gold. "It sounds like a fantasy," says Chris Metos, president of the museum's board of trustees. It was a fantasy the young men needed.

If they were to leave the poverty of their villages, to travel half a world away, they had to believe they could dramatically improve their lives and send money back home. Only later would they learn of the risks.

"For my father and uncles, it was a dreadful experience," says Metos. They came from an agricultural area of Greece. "They had a great apprehension about mining. They'd never put two electrical cords together" to set off a charge. The Metos brothers came to Carbon County to mine but took the first opportunity to begin raising sheep.

The discovery of the immense coal fields in eastern Utah and a new method to extract copper from the ores in Bingham Canyon required thousands of workers...Companies then began nationwide searches for labor. They realized, however, their greatest potential lay in immigrant laborers who would work for less than the English-speaking miners.

At first, the young miners talked of going home as soon as they were rich. Eventually, they realized they'd not be going back, and began to build a life in Utah. Some took a visit home to look for a bride. Others would see a photo of a friend's sister or niece and write to Greece to ask her family for her hand.

Such "picture brides" were not uncommon. If they didn't like each other when she got to Utah, he could send her home.

Con Skedros' mother was one such "picture bride," who settled in Utah and raised a family.

Skedros, a retired history teacher, is historian and archivist for the museum. It was Skedros who did the research for a memorial outside the museum, one remembering more than 200 Greek laborers who died in industrial accidents. The largest number of them, 49, died in the Castle Gate Mine explosion of 1924, which claimed 172 lives.

Andy Katsanevas' mother came from Greece with her first husband and three children. He died in a mine in Sunnydale. A marriage was arranged for her with Katsanevas' father. Andy was 15 months old and his brother was 5 days old when their father died at Castle Gate. Their father's brothers, also miners, helped support the widow and orphans.

His mother forbade her children to become miners. Katsanevas went to college and was a manager at Eimco before he retired. Today, he is the secretary-treasurer of the Hellenic Cultural Association.

These are the people whose fathers came to Utah to mine. They talked about how they've passed on the Greek culture to their children - sending them to Greek language classes, teaching them to make baklava, guiding them in the ways of their elders - except when it came to mining.

Louis Cononelos, manager of community relations for Kennecott Corp., says proudly, "I am a third generation miner." He is, he adds, an exception. Greeks, as other immigrants, came seeking a better life, took the jobs available, which were laboring jobs, and set about learning English and "making sure their children got an education and advanced in society."

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**“Greek Migration to Utah”** worksheet

1. This article mentions a Push Factor which caused Greek young men to leave their homeland. What was it?

2. What was the Pull Factor that brought Greek immigrants to Utah?

3. As the young men decided to permanently settle in Utah, how did they find a Greek bride to marry?

4. After reading this article, how would you describe working conditions in Utah coal mines?

Please provide two pieces of evidence from the article to support your claim:

5. Did the sacrifices made by first generation Greek immigrants lead to better opportunities for their children? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Provide evidence from this article to defend your answer.