Chapter Two

Coming From, Coming To

Italians Arriving in America at Ellis Island

Chapter 2 Guide

Chapter 2: Migration: Coming from, Coming to
Introduction

Americans born after 1930 can scarcely comprehend the magnitude of the flow of people from Italy to the United States that occurred before their births. Between 1820 and 1931, Italians constituted the second largest population group of immigrants (after Germans). During the peak years between 1890 and 1920 there were more than 4 million Italian immigrants. In the first half of those peak years, Italians represented 24 percent of all immigrants in America.

These numbers were high even though the Italian government sought to restrict emigration for most of the nineteenth century. In later years restrictions were even tighter. Relatively few people were allowed to emigrate during the years of the Fascist regime (1922–1945).[1]

The Risorgimento (Italian: "Rising Again"), was the 19th-century political movement for Italian unification that culminated in the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. Unfortunately, the unification would not solve the socioeconomic problems plaguing the country, especially the southern regions such as Campania and Molise, where the Montrone family lived. So in spite of Italy's Risorgimento, there was a flood of emigration to other countries in order to seek better lives.

Over 80 percent of Italians subsisted on agriculture; the Industrial Revolution had not yet come to the country. In many towns the soil had been exhausted, often as a result of the relatively large populations that the small agricultural communities were trying to support. However, soil depletion and a weak economy were only two of the reasons that many Italians began to look toward the United States for opportunities.

In addition, the Italian government, regardless of the political group in power, continued to impose a tax structure that favored the bourgeoisie (or middle class) over the poor. In addition to high rents and low wages, peasants bore the burden of unfair taxes on staples such as salt and grain.

In response, many rural Italians sought refuge in America, a country whose founders had rebelled against British taxation policy. The Risorgimento provided little opportunity for economic or social advancement and thus little reason for sharecroppers, or *contadini,* to remain in Italy. Sharecroppers were tenants who were allowed to use their landowner's land in return for a share of the crops they produced.

In America, work was reported to be plentiful and earnings much higher than in Italy. Those who had "made it" in the new land were not beholden to an overbearing landlord, nor restricted to living in the same town their whole lives. America was known as the land of liberty and freedom for

all. Many Italians wanted that freedom for themselves, for their families, and for their friends.[2]

[insert picture 2-1]

The port of Naples was the principal departure port for the Montrone and Giancini families. Its activity quadrupled between 1892 and 1908, despite the Italian Emigration Law of 1901, which restricted emigrant departures to the ports of Naples, Genoa, Palermo, and Messina. That same bill established the Commissariat of Emigration, an entity tasked with regulating the emigration process at all levels.[3]

Emigrants in those days were a kind of cargo. The shipping lines had to create manifests of passengers, pay taxes on each passenger, and even foot the bill for those not admitted and sent back from America (deportees). To ensure the fewest number of deportees, the shipping lines established certain departure procedures. Before even issuing someone a passport, Italian officials would perform a background check; former criminals would be unable to emigrate, as they were risks for deportation.

In accordance with the U.S. quarantine law of 1893, would-be emigrants had to spend at least five days quarantined at a "pest house" near the port before disembarking. There, they took antiseptic baths and had their scalps thoroughly washed with a mixture of chemicals designed to disinfect and delouse them. Then, after they had received medical examinations and vaccinations, they were escorted to their ships for their departure.

Restrictions established by the Italian and U.S. governments and the steamship companies required that U.S. Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service doctors check potential emigrants for known contagious and infectious diseases.[4] In 1906 alone, nearly 6 percent were turned away at Naples before departure.[5]

Eugene (G1 - M) Giancini first came to America on the S.S. *Regina Elena*. It left Naples, Italy, on March 5, 1903, and arrived at the Port of New York on March 22. [insert Pic

2.2] Although the ship's passenger list indicated that he was a married nineteen-year-old, he was actually still single. Under his guardianship was another fellow two years his junior, Lorenzo Liburdi, who, at that age, was too young to travel alone.[6] Eugene was detained at Ellis Island for not having a destination address but released the following day to take a train to his cousin Vincenzo Magi in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.[7] Eugene did get married in Italy in 1907 to Settimia D'Annibale. She emigrated to America with their children on the S.S. D'Italia in 1920 and went to meet her husband in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Antonio (G1 – M) Montrone first emigrated to the United States in 1901 against his parents' wishes. He returned to Italy only once , then sailed to America in 1907 with his new bride aboard the RMS Celtic.

Francesco (G1 - G) Gaudenzi originally came to America from the Port of Naples aboard the *Duca degli Abruzzi* in June 1908. His destination was Scranton, Pennsylvania,

home of his sister Giuseppa.[8] He became a coal miner like many immigrants in that area and married Mary (G2 - G) Cavagnaro who was born in Scranton.

Evidence suggests that Mary's father, Giovanni Silvestro Cavagnaro, who was from Genoa, immigrated to the U.S. between 1886 and 1890. Her mother Geronima (Bava) Cavagnaro followed, along with the couple's three Italian born children, sailing aboard the passenger liner, La Bourgogne, from Le Havre, France (Le Havre was often a departure port for Italian immigrants from northern Italy, where Genoa was located) arriving in New York on September 28, 1891.

Fortunately, Sandra's ancestors were not aboard the La Bourgogne seven years later, as on July 4, 1898, the ship sank following a collision with the British ship Cromartyshire, just off of Halifax, Nova Scotia as it headed from New York back to France. Over 500 passengers and crew of the La Bourgogne perished.

Sandra's maternal grandfather, Iginio Emiliani, came to America in 1901 aboard the S.S. La Champagne. Iginio did return to Sassoferrato to marry Giovanna Mercanti in September of 1909. A month after their marriage, the couple set sail back to America on the S.S. Romanic.

Hearing stories of others' success abroad, more Italians followed their compatriots' example by traveling to the regions reputed to have the greatest financial returns. In time, Pennsylvania—the eventual home of the Montrone, Giancini, Gaudenzi and Emiliani families— joined New York, Louisiana, California, and Illinois as the top five states attracting these migrant workers.[9]

Birds of Passage

The phrase "birds of passage" conjures images of swallows returning to Capistrano or Canadian geese returning north.

It might seem incongruous to apply it to Italian men who would travel across the Atlantic, work for a few months, return home to Italy to live for a while, and then repeat the trip. Yet this term was often used to describe these men. Between 1887 and 1907, over 40% of Italian emigrants returned to Italy,[10] and between 1907 and 1911, over 70% did. During this latter period, about 44% of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe returned home.[11]

Some Italian immigrants moved to the United States permanently, with the man going first, establishing a place to live, finding a job, and saving some money before sending for his family. Others were birds of passage with no intention of permanently settling in the United States. Birds of passage were primarily young single men. Most were unskilled; some did have a trade and hoped to find employment using their backgrounds and abilities as tailors, barbers, goldsmiths, or stonecutters. Men from other countries followed this pattern as well—working to acquire a sum of money that they could live off for a reasonable

time— but birds of passage were an especially Italian phenomenon.

The home region of the Montrone family, Molise, benefited from the money that early immigrants sent or brought home. Not only did it help poverty-stricken relatives (so that the government bore less responsibility for aiding them), but the money then recirculated, bolstering the region's economy. As of 1914, nearly $1 billion had been sent to Italy. This system was so successful that almost one-third of Molise's population became birds of passage between the years 1875 and 1925.

The home province of the paternal side of the Montrone family was Campobasso (in the region of Molise), one of the top four provinces with emigrants to countries outside Europe. About 35 percent of the roughly 55,000 people who left Molise between 1907 and 1911 returned.

The maternal side of the Montrone family were the Giancinis. Residents of the Giancini family's home region of Lazio (the region of Rome) first emigrated as laborers for factories in France before journeying to the United Kingdom and United States and eventually also to Switzerland and Canada. Although workers from Lazio continued emigrating once it proved worthwhile, more than half of the 687,000 emigrants who left the area between 1876 and 2005 eventually returned.

Many Italian birds of passage would return to their hometowns after they had earned enough money to buy property – including the fields and shops where they had worked before -- or get established in a chosen line of work. Once they resettled, some migrants would marry and live out the rest of their lives at home, their situations materially improved by the savings they accumulated while working abroad. Others would go back and forth a few times, before eventually deciding that they could build a better life for themselves and their families in the United States.

Upon returning to Italy to complete his compulsory two years of military service, Eugene Giancini married Settimia (G1 - M) D'Annibale in the town of Ceccano in the Lazio region on December 12, 1907.[12] Almost a year later, on November 10, 1908, their son, Diodato Giancini [David (G2 - M)], was born in Ceccano.[13] Only a few months after that, Eugene sailed on the S.S. *Verona* from Naples, Italy to New York, leaving on the 9th and arriving on the 23rd of February, 1909. According to this passenger manifest, he planned to remain in New York, New York, with his brother-in-law, Luigi Fratangeli.[14]

After living in the U.S. for a few years, when Eugene returned to Ceccano, he was a stranger to his son. As David's brother, Domenico Giancini [Dominick (G2 - M)], put it: "Dave [David] was old enough to watch him, and [David] was upset. He said to his mother, 'What is this strange man doing here in our house with you?'"

Eugene remained in Ceccano for the birth of his daughter, Bice Giancini [Beatrice (G2 - M)], on April 29, 1912,[15] but not for long. He sailed again from Naples, Italy, leaving aboard the S.S. *Hamburg* on June 5, 1912, and arriving in New York thirteen days later. His final destination in New York was once again the residence of his brother-in-law.[16]

Later, when he returned to Ceccano again, Beatrice had her own memories of their father's visit.

> **We didn't know our father 'cause he was always away . . . The only way we would know, my mother would say, "Tomorrow your father arrives." And we would come back from school, we'd find this man in the house, and we'd run and say, "Papa, papa, papa." Because it was our father. If we met him outside, we wouldn't know him. You see?**

Like Eugene, in some cases, men left their wives in their Italian hometown after siring offspring. When the wife immigrated, she typically came with one or more children. On December 2, 1920, Eugene's wife, Settimia, and three

children [Diodato (David), Bice (Beatrice) and Domenico (Dominick)] left Napoli, Italy, on the S.S. *Re D'Italia*. to join Eugene in Scranton, Pennsylvania.[17] Neither Eugene nor Settimia ever returned to their homeland.

Box 2.1: Eugenio Giancini [Eugene], the Bird of Passage

The Giancini's distant cousin, Bruno (G2 – M) Colapietro's father, Francesco Felice Colapietro, of Ceccano, was also a bird of passage, as Bruno describes:

> **My mother, father, and two sisters . . . were born in Italy. . . My father came originally in 1913. He worked in the Mucashel Steel Factories in Wisconsin. Then he went back and was in World War I. He was an infantry soldier. [He] married my mother in 1919, left her pregnant with my older sister, came to America and worked in the shoe factories. Went back to Italy again, left my mother pregnant with . . . my second sister. And she lost maybe one or two in between. . . My father was always here, but he went back [to bring] . . . my mother and two sisters to America in 1930. . . I was born in**

> **America in 1935. I'm very happy that I was born in America, because in Italy they were farmers. I'd make a lousy farmer. I had a chance to become a lawyer here, which is what I enjoy doing.[18]**

The Colapietros and Giancinis (and later Montrones) had similar pathways to American life and their families remained in close contact throughout their lives.

Antonio (G1 - M) Montrone returned to Italy in order to marry Maria (G1 - M) DeCristofaro in Boiano, in the province of Campobasso, region of Molise. He had known Maria most of his life. Antonio, with his bride-who is listed on the passenger list as Carmina Ventrone, arrived at Ellis Island, 26 February 1907 aboard the RMS *Celtic*. The passenger list shows that Antonio was re-entering the United States, having previously spent three years in the town of Bound Brook, Somerset County, New Jersey.[4]

Antonio came back into the United States with $80, much more than most of those who were arriving. Having that level of resources would seem to indicate that he had managed to save a considerable amount of money during his previous time in America. He indicated that he was heading for Scranton, Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania, where his "brother-in-law" Carmelo Silla (Carmelo was Maria's brother's wife's father) resided.[5]

The RMS *Celtic*, launched in 1901, was the first of a quartet of ships that were known as "The Big Four," along with the *Cedric* (1902), the *Baltic* (1903), and the *Adriatic* (1907). Owned by the White Star Line, these ships, each weighing more than 20,000 tons, were built by Harland and Wolff in Belfast, Ireland, the same company to build the White Star Line's even bigger ships, the *Olympic*, the *Titanic*, and the *Britannic*, in the 1910s.[7]

The year 1907 would go down in history as the peak immigration year for America, with more than one million

arrivals. When Antonio Montrone and his wife arrived in New York that year, they were two of 14,804 to leave the region of Molise. Of this total, 2,844 would ultimately return to Italy.[9] No doubt, Antonio's mother wished that number had included at least one more, her beloved son.

Box 2.2: Remembering Antonio Montrone's Immigration

Six years later, in 1913, at age 17, another De Cristofaro, Ernesto, the brother of Mary, took the S.S. *Napoli* from Naples to New York to meet up with their brother, Domenico.[19] The De Cristofaro siblings likely shared similar experiences from port to port.

As previously mentioned, Francesco (G1 – G) Gaudenzi came to America in 1908. Between 1915 and 1920, he and his American born wife, Mary, had three of their four children: Jerome (G2 - G), Clementine (G2 - G), and John (G2 - G) before returning to Italy.

In 1922, Francesco decided to bring his young family back to Gualdo Tadino, Italy, to visit his father and sisters. His youngest son, Frank (G2 - G), explained, "Before I was born, they went over to Italy and toured Italy, my mother and father and the rest of the kids."[20]

This decision to return to Italy prompted Francesco to first become a citizen of the United States and apply for a passport for the whole family. Perhaps motivated by the birth of their first child, Jerome, Francesco had much earlier declared "his intention to become a citizen of the United States" at the U.S. District Court of the Middle District of Pennsylvania in Scranton, and on March 23, 1921, he finally submitted his petition for naturalization. His naturalization was granted June 22, 1921.

Almost as soon as the Gaudenzi family became American citizens, Francesco applied for their passport and received it within the week. Their son Frank was not yet born, so he

was the only member of the family not featured, but he kept that family photograph from the document.[21]

According to the passport application, the family intended to depart for Italy, France, and Gibraltar on July 10, 1921. Frank's wife, Jean, did not think Francesco really wanted to return to the U.S. once he left for the Italian visit. She indicated,

> **"He had a lot of land and a lot of grapes [and] he wanted to stay there [and make something of it], because he was born there. But [his wife, Mary] was born here in the U.S., and she wanted her children born here. And she wanted them educated. Not the girls so much; like my father Francesco didn't think girls needed that much education. Or bicycles."[22]**

Francesco and his family remained abroad for over a year until his wife, Mary, was due to give birth to her youngest, Frank. He told the story he had heard: "She found out that

she was going to have me. . . She didn't want me born over there, so they got on the boat . . . and came back. I was born the 27th of December. I think it was November 22nd, they got on the boat backand [they] entered New York on the first of December 1922."[23]

Originally the family was recorded on the manifest like other immigrants, and it was noted that Mary's sister, Rose (Cavagnaro) Rossi, was waiting for them in Scranton. However, since they were officially Americans by that point, their names were crossed out and transferred to the list of citizens.[24] Therefore, it is likely that they skipped the Ellis Island experience.

The records of the town of Sassoferrato, where the Emiliani, Nataloni, and Mercanti families originated (Sandra's ancestors), show specifically what kind of work the birds of passage undertook, and where they located in the United States. In Pennsylvania, for example, those from the region of Marche worked as farmers, carpenters, tailors, and

shoemakers. Many also worked in the area's coal mines. The mines were viewed as a quick way to make money, thus allowing workers to return to Italy sooner.[25]

Iginio (G1 - G) Emiliani was one such bird of passage. His daughter, Olga (G2 - G), recalled, "He used to send money back . . . I think he was the one that bought the house [in] Coldellanoce."[26] Olga added:[27]

> **I don't know what he did before he came to [the United States], but they came at an early age, and they worked in the mines. That's why they came here … He got married. My father was nine years older than my mother. My mother was only 17 when she came here.**

Journey to America

Life aboard an emigrant ship much resembled life on land – full of class distinction. At the time of Antonio (G1 – M) Montrone's return to the United State in 1907, the RMS Celtic could hold a total of 2,857 passengers: approximately 347 First Class, 160 Second Class and 2,350 Third class, or Steerage.

When the members of the Montrone, Giancini, Gaudenzi, and Emiliani families steamed to America, transatlantic passage took approximately two weeks, and the conditions to which most Italians were subjected made those two weeks seem interminable. While passenger steamships offered a variety of amenities for those who booked first- and second-class cabins, most Italian emigrants could afford only third-class or steerage passage.

Below deck near the steering mechanism, steerage usually offered accommodations that were little more than a bunk with a canvas-covered straw or seaweed mattress, a blanket, and a life jacket for a pillow. The berth itself was the only place to keep one's belongings, without even a hook for clothing or a bin for refuse.

Hygiene was nearly impossible to maintain. Small basins set in two washrooms were the only facilities; often those two washrooms were not gender-segregated as required by law.

The passengers had little access to warm water and used cold sea water to wash. The denial of amenities for maintaining the emigrants' cleanliness seemed to negate the efforts to cleanse them before departure.

According to one of the reports of the Dillingham Commission, established by the U.S. government to investigate immigration issues:

> **Considering this old-type steerage as a whole, it is a congestion so intense, so injurious to health and morals that there is nothing on land to equal it. That people live in it only temporarily is no justification of its existence. The experience of a single crossing is enough to change bad standards of living to worse. It is abundant opportunity to weaken the body and emplant there germs of disease to develop later. It is more than a physical and moral test; it is a strain. And surely it is not the introduction to American institutions that will tend to make them respected.[28]**

The majority of the passengers were extremely seasick for most of the ocean crossing—something that did not

ameliorate hygienic shortcomings. For many, the illness overwhelmed any other memories of the journey. Two years after Antonio and Maria (De Cristofaro) Montrone made the passage, the Dillingham Commission reported the following:

> **A general aversion to using the [ship] hospitals freely is very apparent on some lines. Seasickness does not qualify for admittance. Since this is the most prevalent ailment among the passengers, and not one thing is done for either the comfort or convenience of those suffering from it and confined to their berths, and since the hospitals are included in the space allotted to the use of steerage passengers, this denial of the hospital to the seasick seems an injustice. On some lines the hospitals are freely used. A passenger ill in his berth receives only such attention as the mercy and sympathy of his fellow-travelers supplies.[29]**

To escape the sounds and smells of the sick, passengers could breathe slightly cleaner air on allotted decks, the same decks used by crew members. Leaving the poorly ventilated interior for the crowded outdoors, exposed to smokestack cinders, was often the only prescribed cure.

The ship's doctor and his assistant were supposed to examine each emigrant regularly but did so only when the ship first departed and when it was about to arrive. The exam was not in any means thorough: a line of passengers would file past while the assistant punched health inspection cards with the status of each.

Documenting the emigrant experience, journalist Kellogg Durland—known for his involvement in social work—traveled incognito from New York to Naples and then from Naples to New York. He reported:

> **The ship [to Europe] carried a large steerage, for mid-winter, and most of the passengers were Italians returning for a visit or to marry. The other nationalities altogether—the Austrians, the Hungarians, the Bohemians, the Croatians, the Dalmatians, the Greeks and all the others--did not number as many as the Italians.**

> **The vessel was of the Cunard Line, which in some respects is better than the German or Italian lines. We**

had tables to sit down to, for example, and we did not have to wash our own dishes as is usual on most other lines. There were however, some outrageous impositions. In our common dining room where more than 500 steerage passengers ate there were sixty occupied berths. When the ship is crowded, this number is often increased to more than 200. But take sixty. From New York to Naples is a trip of thirteen to fourteen days. On this particular trip storms raged for six days and nights. Many of the occupants of the sixty berths in the dining room were horribly seasick. I myself sat at a middle table in such close proximity to one tier of bunks that I had only to extend my arm to reach them.

We of the steerage were not being deadheaded to Europe. I had paid $30.00 for my ticket, and consequently I felt entitled to reasonably decent treatment. The grand people in the first cabin had paid only $90.00 and sometimes first-class passage can be bought for $75.00 yet the comforts and luxuries of the saloon are infinite compared to the steerage. Steerage conditions must be crude, of course, and plain.

[On the return from Naples] I found the conditions so much worse than anything going out. . . In the first place, the ships coming from Europe are more crowded. The passengers are for the most part densely ignorant of all ways of the world. . . As they cannot express their dissatisfaction in any tongue understood by English-speaking officers, they are forced to accept all manner of impositions.

The ship I sailed back from Naples on was a White Star steamer. I paid $36.00 for my ticket. There was no dining room at all provided, and we had to wash our own dishes—which were tin—and absolutely no other provision was made for this than a barrel of cold sea water! Sometimes I tried to scrape the greasy macaroni off my plate with my nails. Several times I was lucky enough to pick up a bit of newspaper somewhere for a dish cloth.

When we boarded the ship, we found our "gear" (as our dishes were called) reposing in our bunks. Each passenger's "gear" consisted of one tin saucepan, one tin

dipper, a tin spoon and a tin fork. Nothing else. Not even a knife. . . .

The entire steerage was divided into groups of four, six and eight each. Each of these groups appointed a captain to go to the galley at each meal to receive the dole of food for the entire group. These groups make themselves as comfortable as they can—anywhere. Sometimes on a hatch, sometimes on deck, sometimes in their bunks. The steerage is not provided with means for sitting down so usually the meals are eaten on the floor. After the food of each group has been apportioned every man shifts for himself—or goes without if he can't stand the filth and the smells and the discomforts.[30]

Durland's description of travel from Naples to New York could very well be similar to that of the Montrone and Gaudenzi families who traveled with the same steamship line.

Often harrowing, the journey from the old world to the new was made by determined people looking forward, not back. Outside of the seasickness and poor conditions, the passengers usually retained a hopefulness expressed through music, dancing, and shared stories. Even Anna Herkner, a commission agent inclined to focus on improvements necessary in steerage travel, noted that "during the evening there was considerable singing, dancing, walking, and merry-making generally."[31] An observer of the migration process from 1905 went into more detail about Italian entertainment in particular:

> **[W]e had a grand "Festa" to which the Slavs contributed some guttural songs and clumsy dances, and the Italians, sleight of hand performances which made them appear still more uncanny to the Slavs.**
>
> **They also supplied a Marionette theatre, of the Punch and Judy show variety, and "last but not least," music from a hurdy-gurdy which played the dulcet notes of "Cavalliero Rusticana" and a dashing tune about "Marghareta, Marghareta." "Signors and Signorinas"**

said Pietro, after he had played all the tunes of his limited repertoire, "I have the great honour of presenting to you the national anthem of the great American country to which we are travelling." He turned the crank, and out came, — the ragtime notes of "Ta — ra — ra — boom — de — a."

The Italians were from the South of Italy…. they quarreled somewhat loudly and gesticulated wildly; but were good neighbors during those sixteen days. They were shy and not easily lured into confidences by one who knew their language but poorly.

The average steerage passenger is not envious. His position is part of his lot in life; the ship is just like Russia, Austria, Poland or Italy. The cabin passengers are the lords and ladies, the sailors and officers are the police and the army, while the captain is the king or czar. So they are merry when the sun shines and the porpoises roll, when far away a sail shines white in the sunlight or the trailing smoke of a steamer tells of other wanderers over the deep.[32]

The Giancini family traveled on the *Re D'Italia*. It was of the Lloyd Sabaudo shipping line, and made transatlantic journeys from 1907 until 1923, before being scrapped in 1929. It had the capacity to accommodate 1,700 steerage passengers and 120 in the first class. On this particular trip carrying the family, the ship carried 1,555 steerage passengers, all but 44 of whom were from European countries, rather than Americans returning to the United States. The first-class cabins were only about half full, with 67 passengers, and it was even noted that there was one stowaway.[33]

When Eugene (G1 – M) Giancini beckoned to his family to join him in America, his wife, Settimia, left Italy with their three children: Diodato (David), 11 years old; Bice (Beatrice), 8; and Domenico (Dominick), 2. Aboard the *Re D'Italia*, they departed Napoli, Italy, on December 2, 1920, and arrived at the Port of New York sixteen days later.[34] All

the children recalled details of their voyage and later shared their stories with younger, American-born siblings.[35]

Although he seemed to enjoy his adventures, David (G2 – M) refused ever to go on another ocean voyage again. Years later, his youngest sister, Marie (G2 – M) (Giancini) Teot, tried to convince him to try a cruise vacation. She describes it:

> **For our thirtieth anniversary we (Marie and Roger) took a cruise to Bermuda. It was wonderful . . . So we tried to tell [David], "Why don't you and Marg [David's wife] take a cruise?" All he said he could have in his brain was that [earlier family trip]. . . . I tried to tell him, "Dave, it's nothing like the ship that you came over. Nothing!". . . But I couldn't get through to his head that it [the cruise] would be an entirely different thing.**

The stress of the whole voyage experience deterred Beatrice from, as an adult, sending in her name for addition to the American Immigrant Wall of Honor at Ellis Island.

> **I don't know. I didn't feel like sending them [our names] then. I'm thinking differently now. I said, "Who wants to remember that part of my life?" And I don't remember much of it neither.**

To this day, no one with the Giancini surname has participated in this official public memorial program.[36] Yet as David put it so well in his private recollection, there was relief and pride about this family's life-changing journey: "We were tired, you know, but, we made it."

Box 2.3: The Giancini Journey

Arrival in America

As the transatlantic journey ended, another adventure awaited the Italians arriving in America. Ellis Island was the point of entry for three-quarters of those arriving from 1892 until 1924.[37] It processed approximately 12 million immigrants. About 25 percent of Americans today can claim ancestors among them.[38] During Ellis Island's years of

operation (1892-1954), about 3.3 million southern Italians and 620,000 northern Italians passed through there.[39] The vast majority of the immigrant ancestors from the Montrone, Giancini, Gaudenzi, and Emiliani families came in through New York.

In New York Harbor, the seasick travelers finally reached the calmest waters of the entire journey.[40] A four-year-old girl from Ribera, Agrigento, Italy, arrived in 1928 and reminisced:

> **I remember New York Harbor. It was the most beautiful sight in the world because we didn't die in that storm. We were alive. We made it. We were in America, a free country. We would be reunited with our parents. . . I remember being disgusted by the water. We were used to the blue Mediterranean, and here I see this monkey green, dirty water, you know. "Where are we?" you know. It looked so dirty compared to the beautiful blue waters of Italy.[41]**

Steaming into the harbor, passengers glimpsed New York's three most famous islands: Bedloe's (now Liberty), Manhattan, and Ellis. Almost immediately, cries were raised in native languages for the Statue of Liberty as Bedloe's Island first came into view. In the words of a Sicilian who arrived at the age of 10 on the *Giuseppe Verdi,* just one year after Francesco's arrival on the same vessel, "Somebody yelled, 'The Statue of Liberty, the Statue of Liberty!' We all ran to the railing to see, and everybody was praying and kissing and happy that we were coming up the Hudson."[42]

In the distance, Manhattan's ever-growing skyline presented a shock to those who had never seen such tall buildings or electric lights. They could also see Ellis Island. Many had heard some stories from relatives who had already passed through there.

Natalie (G2 - G) Cavagnaro observed that her mother and grandparents emigrated from Genoa, Italy, "with a bag with their clothes in it on their backs. No suitcases." She recalled

in an interview, "They were just glad to get here, I guess. . . But all I can remember was my grandmother used to tell us that she didn't want to get off the boat. . . She fell in love with the captain. . . . I guess [she] was the only child there, and [he] took a liking to her. . . And she didn't want to get off the boat."[43]

Ellis Island Processing

As peoples from foreign lands continued to stream into the country, officials felt the strain of the large influx of newcomers and the U.S. government set about stemming the tide with laws restricting those allowed to stay. Many of these restrictions had more to do with health concerns and preventing a drain on American resources. Still others served to limit certain "less desirable" populations from overwhelming the status quo. The Immigrant Restriction Act of 1924 set a limited quota on these nationalities and substantiated this bias.

Head taxes were levied for every non-U.S. native, from fifty cents in 1882 to four dollars in 1907 and eight dollars in 1917. Laws also forbade certain undesirables: convicts, lunatics, "idiots," and—later, as laws became even more restrictive— anarchists, polygamists, epileptics, the feeble-minded, and those with tuberculosis. A literacy test was added in 1917.

By the 1930s and 1940s, U.S. quotas were unfilled, due to the Great Depression and World War II. After the war, laws were somewhat loosened to allow displaced or homeless war victims to enter the United States.

To enforce these restrictions, Ellis Island officials were tasked with examining all immigrants coming into New York. From the time a steamship docked in the harbor until its passengers were cleared to leave Ellis Island, the immigrants underwent a process designed to determine their admissibility.

As a preliminary step, each immigrant had to undergo an onboard inspection. Each person would then be issued a tag and transported from the ship to Ellis Island. Baggage would follow. One writer commented that the "ships seemed to pile on top of the other, many forced to dock for two or three days as their passengers remained on board while they awaited inspection." The ships let off their first- and second-class passengers, who went through customs. The steerage passengers were taken to Ellis via small barges and ferries.

Once on Ellis, immigrants anxiously waited in line for the rest of the process: in-line medical inspection, a "primary" inspection, a questionnaire and paperwork, then separation of genders. Physicians checked eyes for cataracts, conjunctivitis, and trachoma; checked for mental retardation, neurosis, and signs of insanity; checked for pregnancy; looked for physical deformities, for scalp disease, and even for goiter. Doctors would chalk the chest of anyone to be detained for further examination.

After that inline inspection, the immigrant would join another line for a review of documents (passports were not required until 1921) and for questioning by the immigration inspector, who asked a long list of basic questions.

Box 2.4: The Questions Asked of Immigrants at Ellis Island

Anyone detained for further medical exam or other questioning would be held right at Ellis for up to two weeks—or might be deported. Given that some ships carried more than 2000 passengers, the sheer volume of immigrants passing through this portal is astonishing. Between the years 1892 and 1924, nearly 20 percent were detained, but ultimately 98 percent were admitted, most within a single day.

By putting one foot in front of the other, moving through one line and then the next line, the immigrants finally entered America. Many found the process invasive, leaving

lasting memories. Horror stories made their way back to the old countries as words of warning.

An immigrant woman from Calabria, Italy, remembered:

> **They made us open the suitcase, the trunk to see what's what. Then we stand in line. Everybody. There was a woman, I never forget. She gave me a towel and says in Italian, "Take off your clothes. Take everything off. Socks, everything. You got to take a shower." I go take a shower. They fumigated the clothes. I feel ashamed. I feel bad. But we was all women. My husband was with the men. It was crowded.[44]**

Not all of the experiences and memories from Ellis Island presented such bleak images. Beatrice remembers learning about white bread for the first time. Other newcomers encountered "a stick of chewing gum; the wonder of toilets that flush, showers that gush, and 'those strange yellow things' called bananas sold from small boats in New York Harbor and raised in a basket on a rope to the steamship."[45]

Box 2.5: The Giancini Experience at Ellis Island

Eventually, the need for Ellis Island diminished and it closed in 1954. Fiorello La Guardia had been a U.S. consular official at Fiume (Rijeka), Croatia, in which role he inspected potential immigrants. Based on that experience, he agreed that the departure ports should bear that responsibility rather than allowing emigrants to spend the time and money on a wasted journey. Those allowed to depart were issued visas which ensured their entry into the new country.

From about 1907 until 1910, La Guardia served as an Ellis Island interpreter in Italian, Croatian, and Yiddish. Antonio Montrone and Maria spoke little English when they arrived in early 1907, so they could very well have received his assistance. He went on to further help those marked for deportation as a lawyer before becoming mayor of New York City. By the time the U.S. quota system was established

in the early 1920s, La Guardia sat in the U.S. House of Representatives, and he was not in favor of quotas.

U.S. Discrimination Against Italian Immigrants

In an attempt to stem the tide of immigrants from Southeast Europe, or what they considered inferior ethnic stock, U.S. politicians in Washington D.C. used eugenicists (those who study selective genes in human populations in order to improve genetic composition) as the basis for passing an act known as the Immigration Restriction Act of 1924.[46] This clearly discriminatory act considered Italians to have inferior genes, so it reduced the annual total allowable number of Italian immigrants to less than 6,000, a quota that was not abolished until 1965.[47]

Before this Act was passed, the annual immigration of Italians in the early twentieth century (1904-1916) was approx. 216,000.[48] Had the ancestors of Paul and Sandra not immigrated prior to 1924, it is likely there would be no descendants of theirs in the U.S. today. This Act applied the

same discriminatory restrictions to other groups like Jews and Asians, who were also considered to be genetically inferior.

Since Flo (G2 - M) Giancini married Tullio D'Annibale in Italy in 1950, he was subjected to the quota system and not allowed to join her in America until three years after their wedding. Their daughter Marisa explained:

> **It was kind of a difficulty. The immigration was rather strict in the United States at that time. . . So it took, at least close to three years. He never came until July of '53, into the country. . . [Aunt] Beatrice's husband Angelo was taking [my mother] here and there to [U.S.] representatives and to people like that, [who] came and helped out with the situation and all that. . . And finally my father was able to get clearance to come to here.[49]**

Settling In

Once given clearance to enter the country, new American residents usually had more travels to complete before settling in. These last parts of the journey began with a ferry

ride from Ellis Island to Manhattan or to a specific railway terminal. Since most of the Montrone, Giancini, Gaudenzi, and Emiliani immigrants intended to settle in upstate New York or in Pennsylvania, they almost certainly would have traveled by rail to their destination.

An immigrant girl who traveled aboard the same vessel as Francesco (G1 – G) Gaudenzi remembered taking a "ferry to New Jersey, and then the train to Lackawanna Station in Scranton."[50] Hoboken and Jersey City had special immigrant trains that typically departed at 9 p.m. In truth, these overnight trips would have been scarcely more comfortable than the steamship and, in some cases, less likely to carry the passengers to their intended destinations.

Miscommunication was not infrequent: train conductors had difficulty understanding passengers who did not know how to speak and/or write English well and were unable to direct them accordingly.[51]

Paul's mother, Beatrice (G2 – M), spoke of how her first cousin, Alessandro "Alex" Fratangeli reached the rest of the family. "He came to America, and . . . they didn't remember any of the English, and they said how did you talk to them? He said, "When I got to New York, I showed them Scranton and the address." And he went, "Cha cha cha choo!" [like] the train.[52]

His experience might have been like that of one young Sicilian traveling to western Pennsylvania, who recalled:

> **We left that night by train from Pennsylvania Station in New York. We went to Portage, Penn. . . .**
>
> **We didn't know where to go. None of us spoke English, and it was April, kind of cold. We had the Italian clothes on, very light, because Sicily's warm, like Florida.**
>
> **We see an old man inside the stationhouse. He was making a fire with coal to keep the station warm. He sees us with our suitcases. "Hey, where you going?" he asks us. We don't know what the hell he says. "Italiani?" Oh God, my heart went. He spoke Italian! We say, "Si, si!"**

Then he asked us where we supposed to go, and we give him the name of my sister and brother-in-law. He says, "Oh, yeah. I know them." He got in touch, and then my brother-in-law came, thanks to God.

This was the trip.[53]

We can only admire the migrant's fortitude, for having faced all of the trials of leaving a homeland for an unknown far-away place. Those who made the journey not only encouraged but helped friends and family members to emigrate as well. All of it was in pursuit of a better life in America and in the belief that a new country could gradually come to feel like home.

Chain Migration

When planning to resettle, immigrants typically thought about not only the place they were headed but the people they were headed toward. These new arrivals established themselves and then thought about who else would benefit from making the same move. In this way a chain was forged

between the new world and the old, encouraging others to also move to America.

In 1893, almost ten years before the first Emiliani immigrant journeyed from Italy to America, U.S. immigration law required that every ship manifest list "whether going to join a relative; and if so, what relative, and his name and address." At the behest of William Williams, the commissioner of immigration at the Port of New York, in 1902 the words were changed to "relative *or friend*" and "*complete* address." Statistics drawn from these records showed that about 99 percent of central and southern Italians coming into the United States from 1899 until 1910 named relatives and friends waiting for them.[54]

The Emiliani family seemed to exemplify this process, judging by the manifests from the ships on which the siblings traveled. Olga confirmed, "I think my father was the first, and then his brothers came after him."[55] It turned out that when her father, Iginio, first came to America in

November 1901 his passage was paid and his destination set by his uncle, Luigi Nataloni, who resided in Eynon, Pennsylvania.[56]

When Riccardo Emiliani (Sandra's maternal great uncle) took the S.S. *La Gascogne* in October 1903 and when his brother Giovanni Emiliani first came to the U.S. on the S.S. *La Betagne* half a year later, they were on their way to their brother (Sandra's maternal grandfather Iginio) "Esquino" or "Eginio" in Eynon, Pennsylvania.[57] Almost exactly three years later, in October 1906, Giovanni Emiliani (then accompanied by his wife) sailed on the S.S. *Philadelphia* with the intention of reaching Scranton, Pennsylvania[58] where his brother Riccardo was living.

Finally, aboard the S.S. *Moltke* at the end of 1913, Emilia Emiliani (Sandra's maternal great aunt) left her father Emiliano in Sassoferrato to join her brother Giovanni then living in Eynon, Pennsylvania.[59] All of the adult children of

Emiliano and Anna Nataloni Emiliani (but for Fabio) came to live in Pennsylvania by linking to each other.

Flo (G2 – M) described how her parents', Eugenio and Settimia (D'Annibale) Giancini's, support for other immigrants affected a wide range of Italian families.

> **My mother and father had a great deal of friends in Italy. And a lot of them, like Tony Pancaldi, wanted to better themselves. So they would come to America. And where would they go to live? With my parents. See, my father was [a] "no stuff and no-nonsense man" when they used to come there. They'd start to work. Payday. They'd come in with their pay. Pay for their board. You put, what is it? Fifty cents in the bank. For your savings. You send your mother and father two cents and a rusty collar button. And you keep for yourself two cents and a rusty collar button. And that was every payday.**
>
> **When I went to Italy . . . [Tony Pancaldi's mother] came to see me. She was about this high [gesturing with her hand to indicate short stature]. This was the wintertime. It was in December. She would come out from the country every**

morning and go to Mass. And when she would come out, she would bring me stuff. Sometimes it was a couple of eggs, two or three eggs. Christmas time she brought me raisins that she had made. They were about this big and so juicy [demonstrating how big the raisins were by making a ring with her index finger and thumb]. . . There's a traditional [food], we call it "pizza fritta." It's like a fritter. You make it with raisins . . . My mother-in-law said to me, "Why is she bringing you this stuff?" I said, "Because my mother and father treated their son like he was theirs."

In fact, when [Tony] got married [in Scranton], my mother sat at his table . . . representing his mother. They had invited me out to dinner when I was in Italy. They got a meal up in no time. . . When my mother died, another one of their former boarders went to get a Mass, and he was crying. He was in tears because my mother had been good to him.

When his wife came over [to America], until they found a house, they lived with us. We all doubled up. . . My mother would say, "Well, you're going have to leave now because the children are getting big. We need more room." But every Christmas and Easter, they came back. They would

see her. But they came back, what for? Their bag of Italian goodies.[60]

Flo and her sister, Marie (G2 – M) (Giancini) Teot, often reminisced about those holiday visits and the gifts that the young boarders made them at Christmastime. Some visited until they had their own homes and families and some until the very end of their lives. There is no doubt that a whole network of people felt and appreciated the positive impact of the Giancini family's helping hand. That meaningful assistance both reflected—and played an important role in sustaining—the lasting bonds of friendship among members of the community.

This pattern of American residents encouraging and assisting family and friends to immigrate came to be known as "chain migration." It was defined as "movement in which prospective migrants learn of opportunities, are provided with transportation, and have initial accommodation and

employment arranged *by means of primary social relationships with previous migrants*."

Chain migration typically began with young, single men seeking work and becoming birds of passage. When work was plentiful, these men recruited other men. Bringing over their wives solidified the link between the old and new countries. On both sides of the Atlantic, women played important roles in this regard, for example, by writing letters regularly to relatives and maintaining a strong network of family connections.

For those with little in the way of resources and unfamiliar with America and its language, transportation, and legal system, the support of compatriots was invaluable. Once in America, they remained close to each other to ensure some stability as they settled into new work and social worlds. Italians, such as the Montrone, Giancini, Gaudenzi, and Emiliani families, could not have immigrated in such numbers without the chain migration system.[61]

Contract Labor

In the early days of Italian migration, American labor "contractors" scouted workers in Italy and facilitated their move to American companies. These *padroni* took full control over the migrant as soon as passage was paid. "[A] *padrone* might act as banker, landlord, foreman, scribe, interpreter, legal adviser, or ward boss."[62] In order to make a profit, the *padroni* would typically overcharge the migrant, and this *bossatura* might be anywhere from $1 to $10 over the actual cost of relocation expenses and other services.

These practices did not sit well with immigration officials nor with the American public. An immigration protection act was passed on 26 February 1885, banning contract labor in the United States and specifying, in part, "that it shall be unlawful to prepay the transportation or in any way encourage or assist the importation or migration of any alien or foreigner into the United States under contract or

agreement, made previous to arrival, to perform any kind of service in the United States."

However, an exception specified that "Any person might assist any member of his family or any relative or personal friend to migrate to the United States for the purpose of settlement here."[63] Chain migration became the unofficial method for enabling Italian immigration, even though *padroni* continued to operate in secret.

The Endicott-Johnson Shoe Company in Endicott, New York, took advantage of this method of recruitment. Since founder George F. Johnson spoke up for the immigrant employees at his establishment and even provided similar services (at fair prices) as the *padroni*, the company could depend on its workers to send the word back home encouraging more workers to join them. When the Giancini's distant cousin, Francesco Felice Colapietro first listed Endicott as his destination upon his arrival in 1921, he may have asked the same question as many migrant

workers, "Which-a-way, E-J?"[64] Francesco worked as a tanner there, and his son Bruno (G2 – M) described the international quality of the surrounding area:

> **Matter of fact, I was in a neighborhood that was basically immigrant. Ukrainian, Russian, Slavic, Polish, Italian. They all came to work in the shoe factories. And they were fairly recent immigrants . . . You would go to one house, and they spoke Polish. [In] my house, we spoke only Italian . . . So I enjoyed that milieu . . . of different people.[65]**

Keeping in Touch

Separated by an ocean, the new immigrants and the families left behind worked to stay in touch.

Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi's parents [Iginio and Giovanna (Mercanti) Emiliani] had married in Sassoferrato and travelled back to America via Boston, Massachusetts, a month later in October 1909,[66] so their daughters were American-born. As a result, when Olga and her mother and

sister Velia (G2 – G) (Emiliani) Luciani returned to Italy years later, they were quite the sensation, as Olga remembered. "We brought clothes, naturally, from here, so my mother had us all dressed up. . . We were really the best dressed because we came from the United States, right, and we had the clothes."

Olga recalled visiting Coldellanoce with her mother and sister for about eight months when she was six or seven (1920). "Well, yes, we were travelling there, but I happened to see the sign. It said, 'Coldellanoce.' I said, 'That's where my father's people came from, Coldellanoce." She explained, "My mother went … there because she wasn't feeling well. My father thought, maybe with the climate it would do her well to go … there." While visiting Coldellanoce, Olga's mother experienced firsthand her hometown's reluctance to interact, but her former neighbors were eager to show the American-born sisters around. Olga remembered,

> **My mother was always very strict with us. She would always be afraid to let us go anyplace. Then the older**

> **people, they would take us, but then … my mother would get after us for going with them. But, gee, it wasn't our fault either because we weren't old enough to know better![67]**

After this visit, mother and daughters left Naples on 17 December 1920 aboard the S.S. *Pesaro*.[68] Olga recalled, "We were supposed to have been here (in the U.S.) for the holidays, and the trip was so bad, the weather was so bad, [that] I think we got here a week later. So you can imagine how long it took us." The *Pesaro* did not arrive in New York until 4 January 1921. When it did, Olga's father "came to New York to pick us up."[69]

Although most of the Giancini siblings would have liked to visit their parents' homeland in Ceccano, only Beatrice and Flo managed to travel there.

In 1974, as a fortieth anniversary gift, Beatrice and Angelo (G2-M) Montrone's three sons sent them to Italy as part of a tour. Beatrice visited her hometown of Ceccano, and found relatives ready and waiting, still thankful for the gifts that were sent to them by their American cousins during the World War II. Beatrice was surprised to find an elderly uncle still living. He cried at the sight of *little Bice*![70]

Flo travelled to Ceccano in 1951. and was able to reconnect with one of her father's adoptive sisters. Flo recalls:

> **When she saw me, she was so overcome, my God. Because she loved my father very much. And [during World War II] my mother used to send her packages from here [America]. In fact, when the war ended, before, even though we had lost [my brother] Mario (G2 - M), my mother [kept] sending packages because she felt they had lost everything . . . and they had. So, when she saw me, oh she was so overcome.**

Flo stayed in Italy with a relative for two or three weeks, in preparation for marrying her distant cousin, Tullio

D'Annibale, who had gained permission to correspond with her by letter. This was not an arranged marriage in the truest sense because it was Flo & Tullio's choice to continue writing to each other and to eventually marry. But in times past, an "arranged marriage," called an "a'mbasciata" by the southern Italians, was not unusual.

When Antonio (G1 – M) Montrone decided to stay in America (upon his arrival in 1907), his family gradually lost touch with the Montrone family in Boiano. Antonio's niece Anna (IT – M) Battista lamented, "From that time on, Antonio did not write home anymore and also did not come to visit any more." However, she felt that his grandson, Paul, made up for the severed ties, when he and Sandra visited her in Rome, where she and her family had relocated.

When Paul came to Italy a hundred years later, he did not succeed to find his roots anymore, because both my brother and my sister had been very little and did not remember anything. So I could step in. And he got in touch with me. From that time on, Paul has given us, after all that sorrow that my grandmother had with her lost son, the great joy to get to know him and Sandra.[71]

Paul and Sandra also visited Ceccano to meet various cousins of his mother, Beatrice. Welcoming as they were to the Americans, it took a while for them to recognize Paul as one of their own, due to the little matter of height. Sandra describes the scene:

> **We were outside, going into the apartment. . . many Italians are tiny people... Of course, I'm not so big. But, all these little people standing chitchatting. And the fellow who was helping us told them who we were. And they immediately went to me thinking I was the relative because I'm small. And, they said of Paul, "He's so tall. How could he be part of the family?" Actually, he looked like he didn't belong at all. I mean, obviously he did. But he must have eaten well when he was young, because he's heads above everybody else. They were all around me until our interpreter said, "No, this is the grandson. This is the cousin." It was funny, very funny.[72]**

Paul's brother Gene (G3 - M) also visited Italy.

> **When I was in Italy, although I visited several places there, I never just linked up with the family myself. . . [Nevertheless,] the first time that you went to Italy, it was like . . . I can't explain exactly the word that I want to put on it. I don't want to say homecoming, but it was familiar. It was like all the things I'd heard about--the traditions, the people, the food. It was comfortable. It was a fit.[73]**

Even separated by an ocean, members of many families maintained enough ties to visit Italy after having settled in America. Yet some family members lamented not knowing extended relatives as much as they would like and missed having the opportunity for keeping in touch. Regardless, the move to the new country from the old was not as permanent a disconnection as one might have thought. As Anna Battista penned, "For all of us, reconnecting and getting to know one another has been an immense joy. Our forebears would also be happy."[74]

Living Together

Transplanted couples sometimes set up boarding houses of sorts to help young men from their hometown get started in America. They welcomed unattached men into their homes and served them food from the old country. Sandra's mother Olga noted that when her family lived in Dawson, New Mexico (her father had found work in the mines there), from about 1914 until 1919:

> **My mother ran a boarding house. In Dawson, yes, because see a lot of men weren't married, or if they were married, they left their wives wherever, and they went there just to get a job. . . I can remember my mother had to cook and bake bread for a whole week. They really worked hard, I have to say.[75]**

Often, those running the boarding house offered advice on how to make, spend, and save money, and even found jobs for the boarders in the companies in which the host worked. In essence, the couple acted as surrogate parents to the newcomers.

Natalie (G2 – G) remembered that her father, Joseph Cavagnaro, started off by "living with [his cousin] Mary's mother and father...up on Prospect Avenue [in South Scranton]" before getting married. As a result, he used to think of Mary's mother as a "second mother."[76] Giovanni and Geronima (Sandra's paternal great grandparents) took in other boarders as well, as indicated in a 1900 Scranton census, which showed four boarders living with the Cavagnaro family, all from Italy and working in the mines. This maintained strong ties between the old and new communities and brought the pattern of migration full circle.

When Settimia (G1 – M) (D'Annibale) Giancini and her three children journeyed to America to join her husband Eugene Giancini in 1920, they assisted other immigrants. Once the family was settled in Pennsylvania, recalled Settimia's granddaughter-in-law Sylvia (Ware) Montrone, "They took in boarders, men from Ceccano, [who had] come to work in America. Eugene now worked for the

Lackawanna Railroad, and, unlike most of the boarders, he was literate. So he was paid to write the boarders' letters home."[77]

Dominick (G2 – M) Giancini provided details about the boarders who stayed with the family as he was growing up in West Scranton, Pennsylvania.

> **First of all, we had maybe anywhere from five, six, seven, eight--up to eight boarders. All the boarders [my mother, Settimia] took in had to be young men who came over to earn money to support their families in Italy that lived in our town that she knew. She wouldn't take any strangers in as boarders. . .**

[Boarders] came and went, and usually they only stayed for two or three years. Then they went back to Italy. Some would come back, but very few. And they'd have made a nice nest egg [so] that [when] they went to Italy, they lived pretty well. They bought some land. They bought some different things that they needed, and then they made a good living out there. See, they had to [come to America to] get the start.[78]

Subsequently, Italian neighborhoods or "Little Italies" formed when these Italian families congregated near their workplaces and provided lodgings for newly arrived Italian workers. These pockets of Italians in urban areas usually consisted of *paesani* (fellow countrymen) from the same region of Italy.

When Eugene Giancini left Ceccano for New York in 1909, about seventeen others from his hometown were listed on the same page of the ship's passenger manifest. Of them, Eugene and four others were destined for Bayard Street in New York City, and seven men intended to stop one street over on Mulberry Street.[79]

Movement within the country was also influenced by family and friends. Helen (G2-M) (Montrone) Mastro attributed her father Antonio Montrone's decision to move to Pennsylvania instead of Ohio to the presence of friends.

"The reason he moved to Scranton was he had friends from way back. . . They baptized two in our family, mother and dad baptized two in their family, and so forth and so on."

Most of Scranton's Italian population congregated in neighborhoods together (similar to other immigrant nationalities). These included sections in South Scranton, that were originally built up by those, like Francesco Gaudenzi, who came from Umbria.[80] On the other hand, the Giancinis lived in the predominantly Italian neighborhood in West Scranton; St. Lucy's parish located there was known as the Italian Catholic parish. These neighborhoods provided a support system that allowed immigrants to settle into the new country and their children to assimilate as Americans. Paul later described certain Scranton neighborhoods as Italian enclaves:

> **The Italian American sections [on the South Side and West Side of Scranton] remained highly ethnic at least well into my adult life. I don't know now whether they are**

> **still that way or not – but America as a melting pot has certainly diluted all the formerly ethnic neighborhoods at this point.[81]**

When he first traveled to Italy, as a third-generation Italian American, Paul noticed differences between the 1920s Italy that had been programmed in his mind by his parents and grandparents who emigrated to America at that time. They held the memory of their country as it was when they left it. But it had changed. He said,

> **Picture what life in Italy was like for the relatively low class Italian immigrants who came here [to America in the early 20th century. That's the Italian culture Sandra and I were taught when we grew up in Scranton. In other words, we were frozen in time. Meanwhile, Italy had moved on. When Sandra and I went to Italy for the first time in the 1960's, we found the people to be nothing like Italians that we knew. . . "Who are these people?" They were educated, modern, sophisticated - that was the biggest impression on both Sandra and me. [It] was like, we're more Italian than they are." Well, what it means is that we were raised in the old tradition, but meanwhile Italy had modernized and**

secularized. It was a lot different than we pictured. That was our first impression of Italy.[82]

Paul and Sandra then realized that Italy, despite its ancient and deep cultural history is not a petrified civilization, a still life to be examined and preserved. Notwithstanding the preservation of its ancient towns and artifacts, it is a nation whose various regions continue to change and thrive both separately and collectively, much like the evolution of their families here in America.

Overview of Immigration

As described above, like most Italian immigrants, Antonio Montrone came from Italy to America and brought his wife, Maria, during the peak immigration years, after 1880 and before 1920. Eugene Giancini immigrated for the first time in 1903. Typical of Italian men, he journeyed back and forth over the Atlantic multiple times to earn money in America for his family before sending for his wife Settimia and their children to join him.

Following the most common route of Italian emigrants, Francesco Gaudenzi departed from the Port of Naples in June 1908, and arrived at the Port of New York after approximately two weeks. He later returned to Italy, and at the request of his wife, returned to America. Iginio Emiliani first came to America in 1901 and later invited his wife Giovanna and others, including his siblings, to join him and share his home.

The conditions aboard the steamships they travelled were difficult, and the inspections at Ellis Island upon arrival were especially disconcerting. Having met the requirements for entry, all of them continued to the mainland and probably boarded trains for their final destinations in Pennsylvania and New York, as did many Italians who made a life for themselves in America. Although these immigrants had many similar experiences in the process of migrating, each took away their own memories and emotional responses.

Provide Feedback

Knowing both the broad sweep of the immigrant experience, and the distinctive personal stories of particular individuals reflected in this Chapter, allows both the general and the specific experiences to illuminate each other. This helps to set our family's heritage in a meaningful context.

In an even broader context, this illumination can be valuable as a key to our nation's past, present, and future. The history of immigration, both in terms of its giant trends and its minute particulars, could not be more relevant to debates taking place in the present day. As Paul said:

> **Sandra and I have** Provide Feedback **world, and I have to tell you that the difference between America and most other countries, as we know, is immigration. This fact has distinguished our country . . . I admire our ancestors who came from Italy because I'm confident that . . . they wanted to do better for their families . . . So when I look at today's discussions on immigration, and I hear "we want to cut back," to me it's like, "Hold everything. Don't send them back. They're the ones we want." The**

immigrants who chose to come here legally are self-selected and among the more ambitious people from their country of origin seeking freedom to let their talents thrive. This is quite different from illegal immigrants. I've been preaching this viewpoint to my Washington colleagues and representatives for a long time.[83]

Based on that viewpoint on current immigration, he also shared the personal story of his daughter-in-law, Elena (Sharafutdinova) Montrone.

She grew up in a part of Russia called Bashkortostan, which is a place where there are Tartars, as opposed to Russian, Russians. Her family moved to Moscow, so she spent her later youth in Moscow and went to school there. But she was determined to get to the United States of America. She came here on a work permit, and she then applied for political asylum. She received political asylum because she is Tartar, and those people are discriminated against in Russia. They have a difficult time. . . She's a wonderful girl, and a perfect example today of somebody who says, with strong determination, "I want to get to the United States of America." She's a determined,

intelligent, hardworking and respectful person who believes that this is where she wanted to be, so she got here. And we're lucky to have her in our family.[84]

Each individual's enterprise fits into the broad scope of the ongoing life of a nation. The personal experiences of Paul and Sandra , their predecessors, and new members of the family, such as Elena, will continue to be part of the overall story of America. This is captured in the powerful *Latin* words on the seal of the United States: *E Pluribus Unum*. Out of many, one.

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[1] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 4: Emigration Conditions in Europe (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 147.
[2] The following sources were the primary reference for this section and provided all of the statistics: Frank J. Coppa, "Those Who Followed Columbus: The Italian Migration to the United States of America," *The Immigrant Experience in America* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, a division of G.K. Hall & Co., 1976), 117-146; William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 4: Emigration Conditions in Europe (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 151-175.
[3] For more about Italian emigration laws, please see William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 4: Emigration Conditions in Europe (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 147-149.
[4] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 4: Emigration Conditions in Europe (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 75-80.
[5] Vincent J. Cannato, *American Passage: The History of Ellis Island* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, c2009), 221-222.
[6] Entry for Eugenio Giancini, 19, on S.S. *Regina Elena* manifest, 22 March 1903; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 331 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[7] Entry for Eugenio Giancini, 19, on S.S. *Regina Elena* record of detained alien passengers, 22 March 1903; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 331 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).

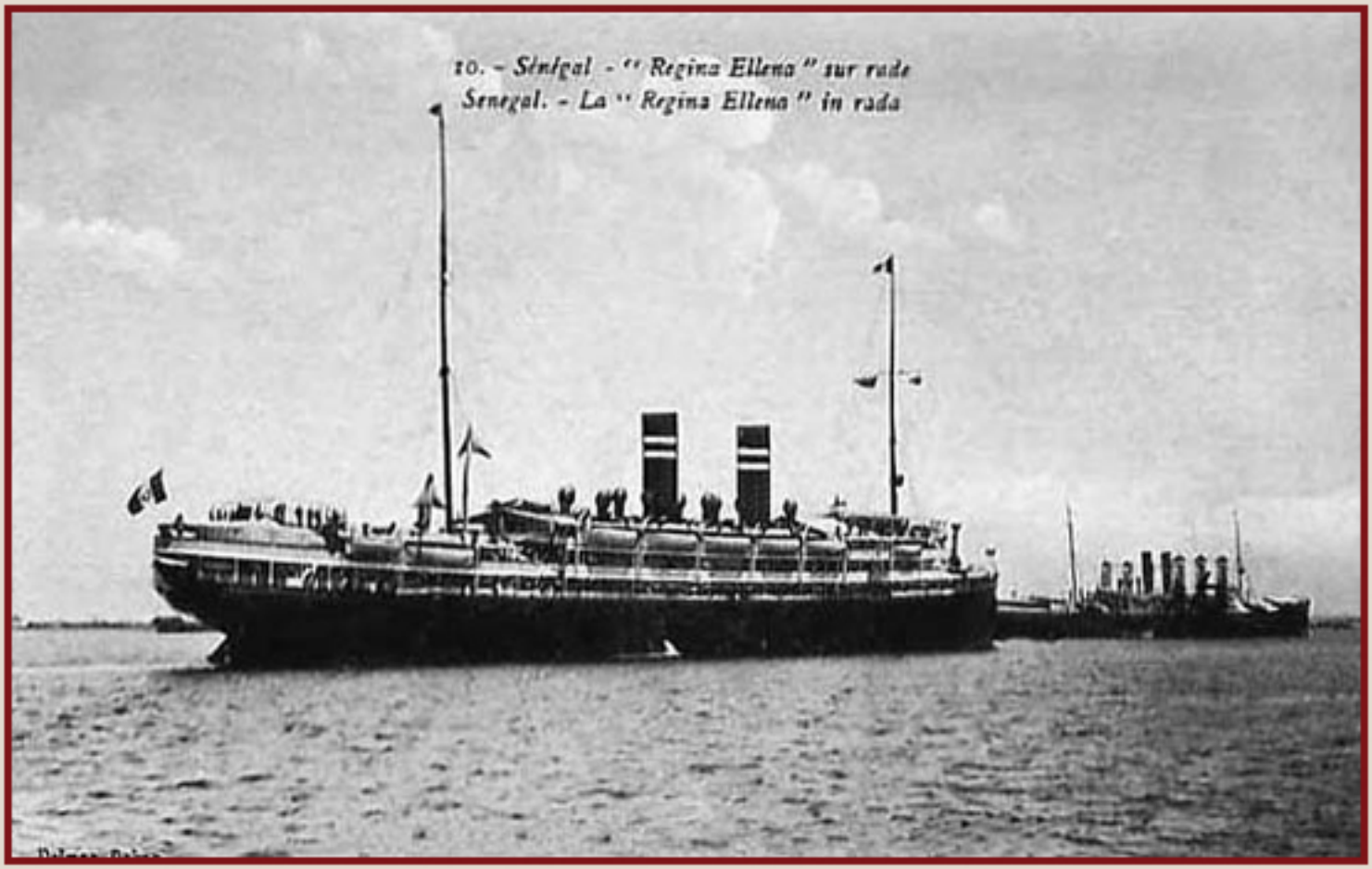
[8] Entry for Francesco Gaudenzi, 17, on S.S. *Duca degli Abruzzi,* 18 June 1908; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 1113 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[9]Luciano J. Iorizzo and Salvatore Mondello, *The Italian Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, G.K. Hall & Co., 1980), 64-66.
[10] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 4: Emigration Conditions in Europe (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 228.
[11] Birds of Passage, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/immigration-and-migration/timeline-terms/birds-passage>.
[12] Atto di matrimonio, Eugenio Giancini e Settimia D'Annibale, 1907, numero d'ordine 94, Comune di Ceccano.
[13] Information supplied in notes from original research compiled by Emma Urban, Lineages, Inc., 1985.
[14] Entry for Eugenio Giancini, 25, on S.S. *Verona* manifest, 23 February 1909; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 1204 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[15] Beatrice Montrone, *My Memories*, 1985.
[16] Entry for Eugenio Giancini, 28, on S.S. *Hamburg* manifest, 18 June 1912; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 1884 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives). [Both her father and godfather left Italy around that time so Beatrice had a proxy godfather for her baptism.]
[17] Entry for Settimia D'Annibale, 31, on S.S. *Re D'Italia* manifest, 19 December 1920; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 2894 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[18] It's uncertain what town Bruno means; perhaps Waukesha. Bruno Colapietro, son of Francesco Felice and Vincenza (Ricci) Colapietro, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[19] Ernesto De Cristofaro, SS *Napoli*, arriving 4 June 1913, list number 222, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 2094 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives), and Domenico De Cristofaro, SS Cincinnati, arriving 29 (?) April 1911, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 1669 (Washington D.C.: National Archives)
[20] Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, son of Francesco Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 5 August 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[21] Francesco Gaudenzi, naturalization petition, case 11398 (1921); Circuit Court of M.D. of Pennsylvania, Scranton, microfilm publication M1626, roll 73-74 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives); Francesco Gaudenzi, passport application (1921); Passport Applications, January 2, 1906 - March 31, 1925, microfilm publication M1490, roll 1673 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[22] Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi, daughter-in-law of Francesco Gaudenzi, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[23] Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, son of Francesco Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 5 August 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone. [In actuality, the Gaudenzi family boarded the *Giuseppe Verdi* in Genoa on November 15.]
[24] Entry for Francesco Gaudenzi and family, on S.S. *Giuseppe Verdi,* 1 December 1922; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 3225 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[25] References for this section include: Alessandro Nicosia and Lorenzo Prencipe, *Museo Nazionale Emigrazione Italiana* (Rome, Italy: Gangemi Editore, 2009); Matteo Pretelli, *L'emigrazione Italiana Negli Stati Uniti* (Bologna: Società Editrice il Mulino, 2011), pp. 7-10; William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 4: Emigration Conditions in Europe (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 228-234; Luciano J. Iorizzo and Salvatore Mondello, *The Italian Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, G.K. Hall & Co., 1980); Frank J. Coppa, "Those Who Followed Columbus: The Italian Migration to the United States of America," *The Immigrant Experience in America* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, a division of G.K. Hall & Co., 1976); and "Italians in Pennsylvania," Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/groups/4286/italians/471928>.

[26] Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, daughter of Iginio Emiliani, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone. Coldellanoce is in Sassoferrato, Ancona, Marche, Italy.
[27] Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, daughter of Iginio Emiliani, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[28] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 37: Steerage Conditions etc. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 10.
[29] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 37: Steerage Conditions etc. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 9.
[30] Kellogg Durland, "Urgency of Improved Steerage Conditions," *The Chautauguan*, November 1907 (vol. 48), pp. 383-391.
[31] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 37: Steerage Conditions etc. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 28.
[32] "The Immigrant Journey : The Fellowship of the Steerage (1905)," Gjenvick Archives <http://www.gjenvick.com/Steerage/1905-FellowshipOfTheSteerage/index.html#ixzz2lIHkUlNd>.
[33] *Re d'Italia*, *Passenger Ships and Images*, online database at Ancestry.com; S.S. *Re D'Italia* manifest, 19 December 1920; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 2894 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[34] Entry for Settimia D'Annibale, 31, on S.S. *Re D'Italia* manifest, 19 December 1920; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 2894 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[35] The following excerpts from the Giancini siblings were taken from the following interviews: Dominick Giancini, Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 30 September 1996; Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, interview by Brian O'Connell, undated; David/Diodato Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995; Fausta (Giancini) D'Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997. All interview transcripts held by Paul Montrone.
[36] The American Immigrant Wall of Honor, The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc. <http://www.wallofhonor.org/search.asp?find=0>.
[37] Virginia Yans-McLaughlin and Marjorie Lightman, *Ellis Island and the Peopling of America: The Official Guide* (New York: The New Press, 1997), 56-70.
[38] Barry Moreno, *Encyclopedia of Ellis Island* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2004), xi.
[39] Peter Morton Coan, *Ellis Island Interviews: In Their Own Words* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1997), 37 and 61.
[40] Vincent J. Cannato, *American Passage: The History of Ellis Island* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, c2009), 28.
[41] Peter Morton Coan, *Ellis Island Interviews: In Their Own Words* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1997), 55-56.
[42] Peter Morton Coan, *Ellis Island Interviews: In Their Own Words* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1997), 49.
[43] Natalie Ann Cavagnaro, daughter of Mary Ferretti, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[44] Peter Morton Coan, *Ellis Island Interviews: In Their Own Words* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1997), 51-54.
[45] Peter Morton Coan, *Ellis Island Interviews: In Their Own Words* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1997), xxvii.
[46] Eugenics, Race & Immigration Restriction, University of Minnesota <https://cla.umn.edu/ihrc/news-events/other/eugenics-race-immigration-restriction>
[47] Virginia Yans-McLaughlin and Marjorie Lightman, *Ellis Island and the Peopling of America: The Official Guide* (New York: The New Press, 1997), 71; Frank J. Coppa, "Those Who Followed Columbus: The Italian Migration to the United States of America," *The Immigrant Experience in America* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, a division of G.K. Hall & Co., 1976), 136.
[48] https://www.lagazzettaitaliana.com/history-culture/8343-the-u-s-italian-community-and-the-immigration-act-of-1924
[49] Fausta (Giancini) D'Annibale and Marie, wife of Tullio D'Annibale, interview by Rhonda McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[50] Peter Morton Coan, *Ellis Island Interviews: In Their Own Words* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1997), 49.
[51] Barry Moreno, *Encyclopedia of Ellis Island* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2004), xi-xvii.

[52] Dominick Giancini, Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 30 September 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[53] Peter Morton Coan, *Ellis Island Interviews: In Their Own Words* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1997), 43-46.
[54] U.S. Senate, Report of the Committee on Immigration, United States Senate: on the Bill (H.R. 12199) to regulate the immigration of aliens into the United States; with statements before the committee in the first and second sessions of the fifty-seventh congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902); Salvatore J. LaGumina, Frank J. Cavaioli, Salvatore Primeggia, Joseph A. Varacalli, editors, *Italian American Experience* (New York: Garland Pub. Inc., c2000). [no page numbers in preview on google]
[55] Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, daughter of Iginio Emiliani, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[56] Entry for Egedio Emiliani, 18, on S.S. *La Champagne,* 25 November 1901; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 239 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[57] Entry for Riccardo Emiliani, 18, on S.S. *La Gascogne,* 12 October 1903; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 403 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives); Entry for Giovanni Emiliano, 24, on S.S. *La Betagne,* 18 April 1904; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 448 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[58] Entry for Giovanni Emiliani, 26, on S.S. *Philadelphia,* 28 October 1906; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 788 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[59] Entry for Emilia Emiliani, 20, on S.S. *Moltke,* 13 November 1913; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 2220 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[60] Fausta (Giancini) D'Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[61] The following sources were the primary reference for this section: John S. MacDonald and Leatrice D. MacDonald , "Chain Migration Ethnic Neighborhood Formation and Social Networks," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* , Vol. 42, No. 1 (Jan., 1964): 82-97. Published by: Wiley on behalf of Milbank Memorial Fund ; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3348581>; Frank J. Coppa, "Those Who Followed Columbus: The Italian Migration to the United States of America," *The Immigrant Experience in America* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, a division of G.K. Hall & Co., 1976), 117-146; Luciano J. Iorizzo and Salvatore Mondello, *The Italian Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, G.K. Hall & Co., 1980).
[62] John S. MacDonald and Leatrice D. MacDonald , "Chain Migration Ethnic Neighborhood Formation and Social Networks," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* , Vol. 42, No. 1 (Jan., 1964): 86.
Published by: Wiley on behalf of Milbank Memorial Fund ; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3348581>.
[63] U.S. Senate, Report of the Committee on Immigration, United States Senate: on the Bill (H.R. 12199) to regulate the immigration of aliens into the United States; with statements before the committee in the first and second sessions of the fifty-seventh congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), 156.
[64] Entry for Francesco Colapietro, 30, on S.S. *Giuseppe Verdi,* 22 March 1921; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 2940 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives); Luciano J. Iorizzo and Salvatore Mondello, *The Italian Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, G.K. Hall & Co., 1980), 69.
[65] Bruno Colapietro, son of Francesco Felice and Vincenza (Ricci) Colapietro, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[66] Entry for Iginio and Giovanna Emiliani, on S.S. *Romanic,* 18 October 1909; Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at Boston, Massachusetts, 1917-1943, microfilm publication T843, roll 140 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[67] Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, daughter of Iginio and Giovanna (Mercanti) Emiliani, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[68] Entry for Giovanna Mercanti, Aurelia Emiliani, and Olga Emiliani, on S.S. *Pisaro,* 4 January 1921; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 2905 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[69] Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, daughter of Iginio Emiliani, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

[70] Sylvia (Ware) Montrone, Bea's History, written as Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone's introduction for the Elmcroft Staff.
[71] Anna (Buontempo) Battista, niece of Antonio Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 2 October 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[72] Paul and Sandra (Gaudenzi) Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 23 March 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[73] Eugene Montrone, brother of Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 13 January 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[74] Translation of handwritten narrative supplied by Anna (Buontempo) Battista to Rhonda McClure, during visit to Rome, October 2011.
[75] Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, daughter of Iginio Emiliani and Giovanna Mercanti, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[76] Natalie Ann Cavagnaro, daughter of Joseph Cavagnaro, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[77] Sylvia (Ware) Montrone, "Bea's History," written as Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone's introduction for the Elmcroft Staff.
[78] Dominick Giancini, Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 30 September 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[79] S.S. *Verona* manifest, 23 February 1909; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 1204 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[80] Stephanie Longo, *Italians of Northeastern Pennsylvania* (Arcadia Publishing, 2004).
[81] Paul and Sandra (Gaudenzi) Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, March 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[82] Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 22 May 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[83] Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 30 January 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone, and as further edited by Paul Montrone, 8 June 2020.
[84] As written by Paul Montrone, 8 June 2020

Box 2.1
Eugenio Giancini
Bird of Passage



Eugenio first came to America aboard the S. S. Regina Elena in 1903

Box 2.1

Eugenio Giancini -The Bird of Passage

Eugene (G1 - M) Giancini was perhaps the quintessential example of a bird of passage. Born in Rome, left at an orphanage soon after he was born, Eugenio was adopted by Luigi and Filomena Sebastianelli and brought to their home in Ceccano. Bestowed upon him by the nuns at the orphanage, he kept the surname of Giancini throughout his life.

As a young adult, Eugene built up his own family in Ceccano, Frosinone (province), and Lazio (region), Italy, between sojourns in America. His children collectively recalled his departures and infrequent appearances. They could not agree on how many times he traveled back and forth, but the trans-Atlantic crossings numbered at least seven and perhaps as many as nine.[1]

According to his son, David (G2 - M), Eugene first worked in Pennsylvania, building various railroads and sleeping in the

box cars. Between 1912 and 1915, while Eugene lived in America without the company of his family, he helped construct the Nicholson Bridge in Pennsylvania. His daughter, Flo (G2 - M), recalled:

> **When we were kids and we'd go to Endicott, New York, you had to go through Nicholson. And we'd see this old . . . barn-like structure [that] was falling apart. You could almost hear the wind whistling through the cracks. But he said to us, "That's where I used to live with the men." Or they would live in box cars . . . He'd wet his finger and stick his finger out the door, and he [would] say, "My dear friends, today is too cold. We are not going to work." And he wouldn't go to work. . . But he said the country people were very nice to them. They would give them pies and everything, you know? Because they knew that they were over here, and their families were in Italy.**

At the beginning of World War I, Eugene was again called on to serve in Italy's military. Dominick (G2 - M) related the story of his father's decision to fight for Italy.

> **They [the U.S. military] gave him the option. He said [they asked him], "Do you want to stay here? We'll fight with the American army, and we'll give you citizenship and all."**

And the biggest mistake he ever made in his life, which he didn't make too many, was he refused. "No," he says. "I want to go and fight with my patriots [in Italy]."

Considering that Dominick was born in Ceccano, February 6, 1917, this may have been the story of how he came to be.[2] Eugenio's daughter, Beatrice (G2 – M), picked up the tale of what happened after the war.

Well, you know what [the Italian government] gave them? . . . A suit and a free passage wherever they wanted to go. So he came back to America . . . no pension or anything . . . and that's why he didn't want to stay there.

The Italian government funded Eugene's final voyage to America aboard the S.S. *Henry Mallory*, which left Naples, Italy, on February 15, 1920, and arrived at the Port of New York on March 3. Leaving his wife, Settimia (G1 - M), in Ceccano, he journeyed to his cousin Diana Francesco in South Scranton, Pennsylvania.[3] Beatrice summarized this part of the story.

When he migrated from Italy, I guess it was he came about

six months before we were to arrive. He had rented a home. He had prepared it for us and furnished it to the best of his ability.

Upon establishing himself in Pennsylvania, later in 1920 he compelled his family to join him there. According to their children, Settimia was torn between her parents in Italy and her husband in America, until he issued an ultimatum. One daughter, Flo, described her mother's situation as follows:

Well, she was wet nurse for friends of the Marquise. . . See, a wet nurse isn't just where a person nurses a child. There's how she raises this child. When the child gets its first tooth, she gets a piece of gold. . . She had been wet nursing this child, and by the time she gave her back to her parents . . . the Marquesa said to my mother, "The King's daughter-in-law is pregnant. They saw what you did with Liliana, and they want you as wet nurse." Oh, my. She figured, "Gads! That's means a house of our own." That means this, that means that. So she wrote to my father and said, "I have this opportunity." He says, "If you're going to wet nurse anybody, you're going to wet nurse me. So she said to her mother, "Should I go?" Her mother said to her, "We're old.

What can we give you? That is your husband. And that's where you belong."

[Her parents] used to go to pilgrimages. They used to walk maybe one or two days each way. And it was the Feast of the Assumption, August 15. When they got to the place, my grandmother said, "Don't let me live to see the day she [Settimia] leaves Italy." And she died. Within five days, my grandmother was dead. So Settimia departed Italy to join her husband in America, leaving her father, Giovanni (IT – M), behind in their homeland.

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[1] Dominick Giancini, Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 30 September 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, daughter of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, undated, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
David/Diodato Giancini, son of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
Fausta (Giancini) D'Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
[2] Information supplied in notes from original research compiled by Emma Urban, Lineages, Inc., 1985.
[3] Entry for Eugenio Giancini, 35, on S.S. *Henry Mallory* manifest, 3 March 1920; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 2735 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).

Box 2.2

Antonio Montrone's Immigration

Antonio Montrone

Box 2.2

Remembering Antonio Montrone's Immigration

Antonio (G1 - M) Montrone's decision to spend his adult life in the United States was devastating to his mother, as his niece, Anna (IT – M) (Buontempo) Battista related:[1]

> **I am the last surviving member of the Montrone family, in that my mother, Filomena (Paul Montrone'paternal great aunt), was the daughter of Angelo (Paul Montrone's paternal great grandfather) and sister of Antonio… Everything went swimmingly for the Montrone family [in Italy]. They were tranquil and happy, even though they worked hard.**
>
> **But suddenly this wonderful equilibrium was shattered by the young scion, Antonio, who decided to go to the United States [in the first years of the twentieth century]. His parents' remonstrances and prohibitions were to no effect in opposing his decision. In their attempt to dissuade him, they told him in a thousand ways and with a thousand arguments that he was no poor boy and that those who emigrated did so only because they needed to earn money, change their lives, or find the**

Promised Land that at that time only America represented. Antonio did not accept their words nor counsels, and he even ignored his parents' pain. But it was agreed that he would stay in the States for only one year, after which he would return home to Italy.

With the ships that existed at that time, it took a month to cross the ocean. There was a person in Boiano who took care of documents, set the date of the voyage, and completely took care of everything. These people were called "sub-agents." Uncle Antonio departed as a young tourist, not as an emigrant.

Back then, letters were the only means of communication. My grandmother, Anna, lived in trepidation and anguish as the year went by, and she waited to embrace her son once again. The year passed, but Antonio made no mention of his return, whereupon his mother, after waiting for yet more time to pass and receiving no news, prevailed on her husband Angelo to go to the States and convince their son to return. Before her husband left, she said to him, "Do not come back alone – I could die from the grief."

Once he had met up with his son, Angelo realized that he [Antonio] had no intention of coming back to Italy. They remained together for all the time allowed by the Italian laws of that period. Antonio was kind and affectionate, but his father had to return alone. Means of communication then were few to nonexistent, so during the voyage, Angelo was unable to advise his wife of their son's refusal. My mother told me that her parents' meeting on the threshold of their house was extremely dramatic. She was a girl, but she told me that an air of mourning hung over the family. Her mother was inconsolable. At all hours of the day, she cried in secret.

Antonio got married, began a family, and called his first son Angelo (G2 - M) (Paul's father). His parents in Italy grew old, and his sisters got married. I was ten years old when Grandmother Anna Branco [Paul Montrone's paternal great grandmother] died. I remember her very well. She lived for us four grandchildren, one of whom was called Antonio like her son. The business closed when Grandfather Angelo died. Relations with Antonio grew ever less frequent. We knew we had this uncle in America, but we knew nothing of the evolution of his family.

Remembering it differently, Antonio's daughter, Helen (G2 – M), reported that he returned to Italy at least once:

> **He came to America when he was sixteen (1901). . . [The] Spicer Manufacturing Company was connected with Ford. And they were hiring a great deal of people that came from abroad. So he stayed here four years. In the meantime, he learned to speak the English language. So then when he was twenty, I think, or twenty-one, he went back to Europe and married my mother, [whom] he knew for a long time. . . And when he came back to America (1907), more and more immigrants were coming in, and they need an interpreter. . . He spoke Italian [and after] he had been here four years and learned the English language, they appointed him as an interpreter. And that's what he was for, oh I'd say, maybe ten, fifteen years.[2]**

[1] Translation of handwritten narrative supplied by Anna (Buontempo) Battista to Rhonda McClure, during visit to Rome, October 2011. Paragraph breaks have been added for ease of reading.
[2] Helen (Montrone) Mastro, daughter of Antonio Montrone, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

Box 2.3

The Giancini Journey

The SS Re D'Italia

Box 2.3

The Giancini Journey Aboard the Re D'Italia

Despite the rather harsh and rudimentary conditions in the steerage section of ships transporting the Italian immigrants, the younger kids found ways to adapt. Here are some recollections from the young Giancini's of their journey to America.

Paul's mother, Beatrice (G2 - M) (Giancini) Montrone, who was eight years old at the time she emigrated with her family recalled that she was not impressed with their on-board accommodations.

> **We came on a ship called *King of Italy*, but it left a lot of things to be desired as a "king," you know? It was not luxurious, but it was okay.**

Beatrice was "terribly seasick" the entire trip, whereas her brother Dominick (G2 - M) claimed, "I used to eat like a horse. . . I was waiting for the soup all the time." He also

related how he experienced at least one tantrum as he laid in his bunk.

> **We went through sort of a big storm, like a hurricane. The ship was nearly, they thought, going to capsize. I was making all [kinds of] noise there, and I was cursing at the ones above me. I thought it was them making the noise. Because I thought, in my sleep, I was back in Italy, and I used to speak fluently the cuss words in Italian. That's what . . . you learn faster.**

Both siblings recalled their elder brother David (G2 - M) roaming the ship because he did not succumb to the *mal de mer*. As Beatrice put it, "He was an explorer. We never knew where he was." David remembered his time aboard the ship, especially helping seasick ladies, exploring the ship, and watching as sailors made repairs. He recalled:

> **We had a little trouble coming here . . . I helped everybody. . . We got grounded on a sandbar in the middle of the ocean. . . All the ladies were [in a] panic. I used to take them to the bathroom. . . And the ship, I don't know how it was built, but it was [carrying] a couple of thousand people, one way or another. . . I used to go and get food. . . I used to go all over. There were**

sailors or whatever, like working on different things that were broken. I go right there and look at it.

I saw my first whale the first time in my life, going down there, going down. . . . I saw the first twister. They call it the tornado. . . It forms a funnel on the ocean, and you see the water just like bubblin' up, you know what I mean? I saw that. That's remarkable. I always remember it. And . . . all the ladies crying. I didn't know what the hell they were crying [about]. They were sick because they were seasick, and everything was bouncing around. But I saw all of these things. [It] was very good.

Beatrice had her own moment of childish amusement, which her daughter-in-law, Sylvia (Ware) Montrone, remembered hearing about more than once.

When the ship stopped at a port (probably Tangier) for supplies, Bice [Beatrice] stuck out her tongue at a boy on the docks, who threw a tangerine at her. His aim was good and so, she says, was the tangerine![1]

Tony (G3 - M) Montrone also recalls a story told by his mother, Beatrice. "Since the food in steerage was so poor,

she made friends with the workers in 2nd class and would go there to bring food back for her family on a regular basis."[2] When the *Re D'Italia* finally pulled into New York Harbor, the Giancini family found that their stay aboard the ship still had not ended. Beatrice described what happened when her father came to New York to collect his family.

> **He came to New York to pick us up. . . Because we didn't leave the ship for a while, he wondered what was detaining us, and he rented a motorboat. Of course, the man [who owned the boat] did the motoring. Our father came to the ship that we were on and wanted to know why they were keeping us. But we didn't know why they held the ship. Maybe there might have been an epidemic of some kind, and they had to be sure. But it was good to see him. All I remember is he was standing, it was winter, he had a black coat, and he was talking to us from the small motorboat below in the water. We were talking to him over the fence, looking down at him. And we thought it was pretty neat.**

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[1] Sylvia (Ware) Montrone, Bea's History, written as Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone's introduction for the Elmcroft Staff.
[2] Interview with Anthony Montrone on 14 June 2018, transcript held by Paul Montrone

Box 2.4

Ellis Island Questions

The Maze of Metal at Ellis Island

Box 2.4

The Questions Asked of Immigrants at Ellis Island[1]

Prospective immigrants were lined up through a maze of metal fences in the Great Hall at Ellis Island. During busy periods, as many as 5,000 people each day would be checked. Each, in turn, had to undergo both physical inspection and extensive questioning before they were released. For the majority of people, the procedure took between three and five hours. About two percent were denied entry and were sent back across the ocean at the steamship line's expense.

Here are the questions they were asked:

- **What is your name?**
- **How old are you?**
- **Are you male or female?**
- **Are you married or single?**
- **What is your occupation?**
- **Are you able to read and write?**
- **What country are you from?**
- **What is your race?**
- **What is the name and address of a relative from your native country?**
- **What is your final destination in America?**
- **Who paid for your passage?**

- **How much money do you have with you?**
- **Have you been to America before?**
- **Are you meeting a relative here in America? Who?**
- **Have you been in a prison, almshouse, or institution for care of the insane?**
- **Are you a polygamist? Are you an anarchist?**
- **Are you coming to America for a job? Where will you work?**
- **What is the condition of your health?**
- **Are you deformed or crippled?**
- **How tall are you?**
- **What color are your eyes/hair?**
- **Do you have any identifying marks? (scars, birthmarks, tattoos)**
- **Where were you born? (list country and city)**
- **Who was the first President of America?**
- **What are the colors of our flag?**
- **How many stripes are on our flag? How many stars?**
- **What is the 4th of July?**
- **What is the Constitution?**
- **What are the three branches in our government?**
- **Which President freed the slaves?**
- **Can you name the 13 original Colonies?**
- **Who signs bills into law?**
- **Who is the current President of the United States?**
- **What is America's national anthem called?**

[1] https://ntieva.unt.edu/pages/about/newsletters/vol_11/issue1/questions.htm

Box 2.5
The Giancini Experience

The Italians arriving at Ellis Island aboard the SS Re D'Italia

Box 2.5

The Giancini Experience at Ellis Island

After about four days waiting in the harbor, the Giancini family was held for special inquiry at Ellis Island because they were deemed likely to become a public charge (LPC), and Settimia (G1 - M) could not read. Upon meeting with Inspector Smith, they were finally admitted into the country on Christmas Eve.[1]

David (G2 - M) had already given his mother reason to worry that they would be deported back to Italy.

> **You know when we were younger, the soldiers used to train, and the trenches [where they trained] were near the town, five minutes from the house. And the kids met in the trenches there. Like gangs, you [fought to gain] control. They put a pile of rocks, and we start throwing rocks at each other. . . I say, three times they got my head, and where I got hit, the hair came out. So when we came here, my mother was panicked because she thought maybe they won't pass me on account [they might think]**

it was a disease or something. No, it was the stones. Because we used to fight with the stones. Kids! Over here, too. They had the same trouble here. You know, the same gangs at the same time.

According to Sylvia (Ware) Montrone (Paul's sister-in-law), it was actually Dominick (G2 - M) who caused the delay.[2] She told of the following setback experienced by the family.

After the immigration officer in New York Harbor had cleared all for entry, he stooped to pat little Dominick on the head, and he discovered an oozing lesion. Thus the family was detained overnight [The lesion was apparently the result of Dominick throwing a tantrum and hitting his head on a pipe]

Once inside Ellis Island, young David proceeded to "[get] lost there one night." As he recalled the experience, he linked it with his family's extreme exhaustion at this point in their journey.

My mother was going crazy. So two o'clock, three o'clock in the morning the guy found me. They looked all over

the place for me. I was sleeping. Tired. We came there from the other side two days before Christmas. So we stayed a day in New York. And then we came here at the Christmas Eve. We were tired, you know, but, we made it, and that's [what mattered]. I never went back. I wasn't going [to] go.

Finally set free by the immigration authorities on Christmas Eve, 1920, the Giancini family made their way across the harbor, into the city and stayed with a friend of the family. Sylvia recalled hearing the following account of how that first holiday in America was celebrated:

Christmas was spent with a host family on Mulberry St. in Brooklyn, New York, before moving on to Scranton. Beatrice's (G2 - M) gift was a dime, and her brother's a nickel. He somehow learned that her smaller coin was worth more and tried to trade. Suspicious of his motives she opted to keep her dime.[3]

[1] Entry for Settimia D'Annibale, 31, on S.S. *Re D'Italia* record of aliens held for special inquiry, 22 December 1920; Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, microfilm publication T715, roll 2894 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).
[2] Sylvia (Ware) Montrone, Bea's History, written as Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone's introduction for the Elmcroft Staff.
[3] Sylvia (Ware) Montrone, Bea's History, written as Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone's introduction for the Elmcroft Staff.

Frequently Used Names in Chapter 2

Code used in book	Birth Name	RELATIONSHIP
MONTRONE LINEAGE		
Angelo (G2 - M)	Angelo Henry Montrone	P. Montrone's father
Antonio (G1 - M)	Antonio Giuseppe Montrone	P. Montrone's paternal grandfather
Beatrice (G2 - M)	Bice Mary Giancini	P. Montrone's mother
Bruno (G2 - M)	Bruno ? Colapietro	P. Montrone's 3rd cousin once removed
David (G2 - M)	Diodato D. Giancini	P. Montrone's maternal uncle
Dominick (G2 - M)	Domenico Stanislous Giancini	P. Montrone's maternal uncle
Gene (G3 - M)	Eugene Dominic Montrone	P. Montrone's brother
Eugene (G1 - M)	Eugenio Alberto Giancini	P. Montrone's maternal grandfather
Flo (G2 - M)	Fausta Josephine Giancini	P. Montrone's maternal aunt
Helen (G2 - M)	Helen Montrone Mastro	P. Montrone's paternal aunt
Maria (G1 - M)	Maria Carmina DeCristofaro	P. Montrone's paternal grandmother
Mario (G2 - M)	Mario Joseph Giancini	P. Montrone's maternal uncle
Settimia (G1 - M)	Settimia D'Annibale Giancini	P. Montrone's maternal grandmother

Frequently Used Names in Chapter 2

Code used in book	Birth Name	RELATIONSHIP
GAUDENZI LINEAGE		
Clem (G2 - G)	Clementina Rose Gaudenzi	S. Montrone's paternal aunt
Francesco (G1 - G)	Franceso Ubaldo D Gaudenzi	S. Montrone's paternal grandfather
Frank (G2 - G)	Frank Thomas Gaudenzi	S. Montrone's paternal uncle
Giovanna (G1 - G)	Giovanna Maria Mercanti	S. Montrone's maternal grandmother
Iginio (G1 - G)	Iginio Gino Emiliani	S. Montrone's maternal grandfather
Jerome (G2 - G)	Jerome Francis Gaudenzi	S. Montrone's father
John (G2 - G)	John William Gaudenzi	S. Montrone's paternal uncle
Mary (G2 - G)	Mary M. (?) Cavagnaro	S. Montrone's paternal grandmother
Natalie (G2- G)	Natalie Ann Cavagnaro	S. Montrone's distant cousin
Olga (G2 - G)	Olga Ann Emiliani	S. Montrone's mother
Sandra (G3 - G)	Sandra Rosalie Gaudenzi	Paul's wife
Velia (G2 - G)	Velia ? Emiliani	S. Montrone's paternal aunt