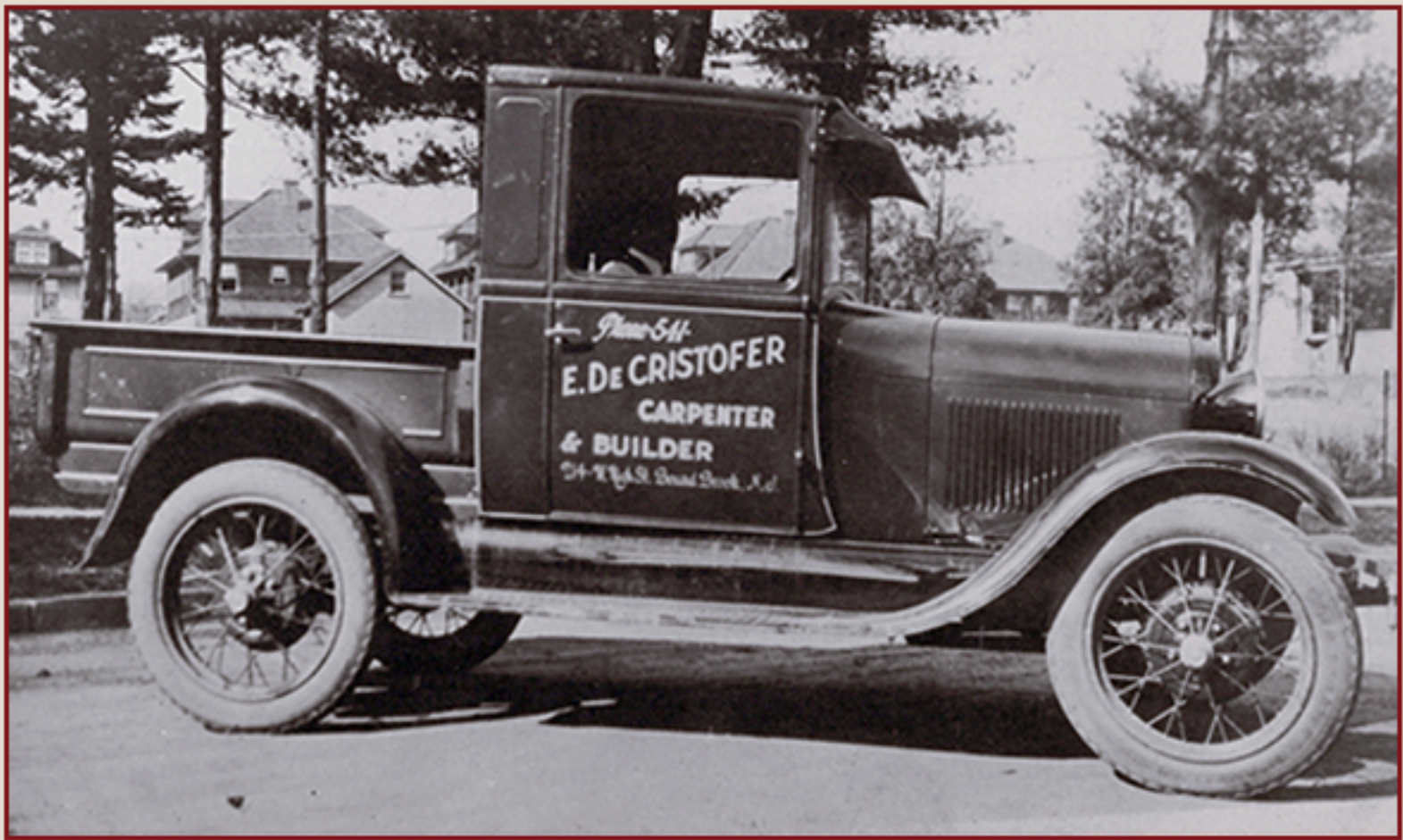


CHAPTER EIGHT

HARD WORK



ERNESTO DECRISTOFARO'S
WORK TRUCK

Chapter 8 Guide

Introduction.....2

La via vecchia (The Old Way)3

La via nuova (The New Way)11

First Generation11

Second Generation31

Box 8.1: Angelo and Beatrice Montrone’s Careers*ref* 34

Third Generation48

Box 8.2: Sandra and Paul Montrone’s Work.....*ref* 55

Trovare la via (Finding the Way).....55

Future Generations.....59

Chapter 8: Hard Work

Introduction

When Italian immigrants arrived in America, they faced many unfair stereotypes, including the misconception that they, as a people, were lazy. No notion could have been further from the truth. With a firm familial structure and strong work ethic, Italian Americans were steady, resourceful, and tireless in providing for their families and pursuing the employment opportunities that industrialization was creating.

Chances for relatively secure jobs and decent pay had not been features of the world they had left. In Italy, the *contadini* had often been peasant farmers and fishermen, struggling to bring in enough to support themselves and their families. No matter the trade, typically the wages in Italy were extremely low, jobs were few and marginal, and taxes high, all factors making it hard to earn a decent living or even to make ends meet.

These impoverished conditions led those “birds of passage” to travel across the Atlantic in search of wages sufficient to send home in support of the families left behind. To put up with the rigors of emigration, clearly the “birds” were the Italians that were most driven to advance, not to lay back and do nothing about their situation. In this sense, America benefited from a self-selected group, the best. For those that settled permanently in the United States with wives and children, often every person in the household eventually worked to advance the quality of living in their new homes.

La via vecchia (The Old Way)

The vast majority of the poor in Italy were farmers, working the land for a wealthy owner. For the most part, with implements not much changed since Roman times, they farmed land plagued by flooding, which washed away fertile topsoil. The landlords made money by paying little while charging the farmers high rents and taxes. Fluctuations in weather and international trade led to further uncertainties

about pricing, the market for crops grown, and the food that would be available for the farmers' own families.

Among the Italian farmers were Sandra's great grandparents: Tobia Gaudenzi of Gualdo Tadino, Giovanni Silvestro Cavagnaro of Bavastri, and Carlo Mercanti of Sassoferrato.

Given their hardships and deprivations, Tobia Gaudenzi's son Francesco and Giovanni Silvestro Cavagnaro migrated to America looking for a new start around the turn of the twentieth century.¹

Studies of emigrating Italians often focused on the occupation of the peasant farmer, with good reason, since a high percentage did come from that background. However, future emigrants also held a variety of other low-paying positions before leaving their country to seek better opportunities.

Sandra is a descendant of the aforementioned peasant farmers, but another maternal great-grandfather Emiliano Emiliani was a watch repairman in Sassoferrato. Sandra's mother, Olga (G2 - G), told of his occupation:

My grandfather [on] my father's side used to fix watches in Italy. . . That was his line of work. He fixed watches. As a child, I remember him. He knew his trade well, and he would work at it quite a bit. I'm saying this because it's funny: This one cousin, that was kind of fresh, he used to come up there to visit my grandparents, and every time he would come, my grandfather would put his things away because he [the cousin] would start touching everything. He used to have a funny name for him. He'd call him "sponteecha," a dialect word that means into everything or one who likes to touch everything.

All but one of Emiliano's children left Sassoferrato for America. According to Olga, the remaining son took up his father's trade. "They all came here [to America, but] one of them, Fabio, didn't come here. He stayed in Italy. . . I think he fixed watches and stuff like that too."²

Meanwhile, Emiliano's wife, Anna Felix Anastasia (Nataloni) Emiliani, "just worked in the house," Olga said. "I really don't even know how my grandparents lived. I have no idea. I can remember [my] parents always sending them money, but as far as trades, I don't know." Olga's other grandmother, Santa (Bernucci) Mercanti, was also a housewife, Olga recalled. "They all maybe raised chickens or whatever." However, her daughters worked for people in Rome. Olga says:

My mother's older sisters went to Rome, and they sent for my mother [Giovanna] and her younger sister. . . My mother went there at a very early age (perhaps 15) . . . I really don't know what she did at that time, if she took care of children. I don't remember. . . [The sisters] all worked for the same people [in someone's house]. They were, I guess, well-to-do people. They wouldn't have all this help if they didn't. There were three sisters, and they all eventually married men that they met in Rome, outside of my mother. My mother had met her husband in the small town.³

That husband, Iginio (G1 - G) Emiliani, was the man to bring Giovanna (G1 - G) to America to try a new way of life after their 1909 marriage.⁴

On the Montrone side, Angelo, Paul's paternal great grandfather, had a grain business in Boiano during the latter half of the nineteenth century before his son Antonio (G1 - M) Montrone decided to leave for America.⁵ When Angelo's son Antonio returned to Italy to marry a local girl, he chose Maria (G1 - M), the daughter of Cantina (similar to a tavern) owner Michele De Cristofaro.

The couple's daughter Helen (G2 – M) (Montrone) Mastro commented, “He was a businessman. He made his living doing the Cantina. He owned it, and he made his own wine. . . I think his whole life revolved around his wine and cantina. I think he had a lot of people coming and going. . . He had a full responsibility.”⁶

Beatrice (G2 - M) (Giancini) Montrone was the granddaughter of Giovanni (IT – M) D’Annibale, a fisherman from Ceccano. Beatrice recalled, “My grandfather was a fisherman by trade and a very good one at that. He sold the fish to restaurants and also had private customers.” She also noted that, like most Italian women, her grandmother was a housewife.⁷

Beatrice’s sister, Marie (G2 - M) (Giancini) Teot, listed the occupations of her grandfather and parents.

My father was a fisherman in the old country. So was my grandfather. That I knew. My mother was a fish monger. I hate that name, but she would sell the fish. I knew that. I also knew my mother was a cook in an asylum. And there were French nuns, I believe, running it. She knew some words in French.⁸

Marie’s mother, Settimia (G1 - M) (D’Annibale) Giancini, also held other jobs before joining her husband, Eugene (G1 - M), across the Atlantic. Marie’s sister Flo (G2 - M) related:

What they used to do in Italy as young girls and young men too, I guess, is to go out and they would clear up these areas. Clear the grounds. Clear the stones away, the branches. What she [my mother] would do with her branches is she would bundle them up and bring them home for firewood. At lunch hour, they were allowed a little bit of lunch. She would pick up wild greens because they would do the same thing as we do now with the broccoli. And she would always, before she went home, she would get an apron-full. This was the traditional measurement, an apron-full of the greens. And her mother would be waiting for it.

So the owner's son had his eye on her. . . And he used to have a horse. He would go riding around. "Oh," she [my mother] would say . . . "Get out. You wouldn't even look at that [handsome movie star] twice. This guy was handsome." And she said he'd always be riding around, and he would lend her his knife for her to pick the greens. When . . . her sister went home and said to her mother, "Do you know that the boss's son is showing an interest in her?" Well, my grandmother did flip-flops backwards. "No way! No way are you going to marry anybody with

money!” “Why? He’s got money; I’ll have it made.” “No way,” she says, “And quit the job. I don’t want you to go there no more.”⁹

Because Settimia’s grandfather, Perseo Leo (see Box 1.5: The Leo Family), lost his family’s great wealth and land from poor decision-making, the family retained a distrust and dislike for the wealthy. It was better to work hard and remain humble.

Instead of having it made, Settimia married Eugene Giancini who “was like a jack-of-all-trades,” good at “fishing and salesmanship.” His son, David (G2 - M) continued, “He did buying and selling stuff like that, and you know, whatever he came across that he could make a dollar, he grabbed, he bought.”¹⁰

Expanding on her brother’s account, Beatrice said of their father, “Well, he seemed to have quite a number of trades. I know he tried [a] barber shop. He tried to be a professional

fisherman. That was in Italy. He used to buy wholesale staples, like potatoes and whatever, and beans, dried beans, and would sell them privately or to stores.”¹¹ Not having found an occupation to settle into in Ceccano, Eugene emigrated and eventually remained in the United States and in 1920 brought Settimia and their children to Scranton, Pennsylvania.

La via nuova (The New Way)

First Generation

Like many immigrant ethnic groups, the Italians started off in America doing hard, manual labor and factory work, in jobs based on physical risks, strong muscles, and repetitious actions. With each successive generation, they attained more education and worked their way into more remunerative careers that could engage their true intellect and creativity.

For the newly arrived Italian Americans, however, their lack of formal education and imperfect English limited the types of occupations they could hold, especially given the nativism of employers and the many other people competing for good

jobs. Accustomed to hard work and glad to earn wages well above those offered in Italy, these immigrants usually took jobs working for mines, railroads, construction projects, factories, and food distributors.

In and around Scranton, Pennsylvania, a region known for mining and transportation of anthracite coal, most immigrants were employed by the mines or the railroads. In general, among miners in the area, immigrants made up 60 percent of miners, and the Italians were tied with the Austrians as the second largest ethnic group after the Polish. Having reached its peak production in 1917, anthracite coal mining declined, as oil replaced coal for home heating. Its decline accelerated after WWII with the miners' strike in 1946 and essentially died after the Knox Mine Disaster of 1959.¹²

Natalie (G2 - G) Cavagnaro's father, Joseph, worked in the coal mines near Scranton and Jessup, PA. "I think it was the Temple Coal Company. We knew it as Sterry Creek," she

recalled that he likely became a miner because the relatives he stayed with upon his arrival were miners. Giovanni Silvestro Cavagnaro (Sandra's paternal great grandfather), a Genovese peasant farmer, and at least one son, Felix, mined in Pennsylvania. Natalie and her cousins Frank (G2 – G) Gaudenzi and Teresa Perugini (Sandra's uncle's sister) compared memories:

Frank: [The mine] was close by.

Teresa: Did he [your father] walk to work then?

Frank: Oh, yeah. They were all mining towns. Then they have mining places where they live. You know?

Teresa: The camps. Yeah. Or tiny houses. Almost like the migrant workers have now. Sometimes a whole family, [sometimes] just like the migrant workers, you know. . . There would be maybe six, ten people in one, two-room house, you know? Years ago.

Natalie: They had their dinner pail.

Teresa: They brought their lunch pails.

Frank: Then the mines would always be dark.

Teresa: It was always dark in the mines.

Natalie: My father never had a jackhammer either. It was all on his stomach he used to work.

Teresa: For goodness' sake.

Frank: They worked on their stomachs.

Teresa: Probably with a pick.

Natalie: It was only that high, and they'd have to . . .

Teresa: Crawl.

Natalie: From the shaft to wherever. They would count [the distance to and from] the shaft. He used to crawl in.

Frank: And not only that. The water comes, seeps through down there. So you work down where it's wet and everything. . .

Teresa: Oh, you should see them when they came home. Black.

Natalie: [With] miners' asthma.

Teresa: If there wasn't a cave-in. . . . [Frank's] grandfather and Uncle Felix. He and his father . . .

Frank: My father's sister's husband.

Teresa: Killed in the mine. I think Felix was maybe nineteen, twenty years old.

Frank: They had a mine in the back of the yard.

**Monteucci. And what happened was, it caved-in on
'em.**

Natalie: This Felix . . . they used to call him Feliciano.

**Teresa: Yeah. That was Lida's brother and Mary's
brother. It was like we never really heard whether
his father was killed in the mines, and then he was
there when it happened. He was emotionally upset
about it. And whether he died from that or what. I
think he died. . .**

**Natalie: My father worked for eight dollars a week. And
we paid for this house.**

Teresa: It's amazing.

Frank: They did the most with what they had.¹³

**Regrettably, the elder “John Cavagnaro” was killed by
falling coal in No. 4 Tunnel in the 4th Anthracite Mine
District on October 23, 1903.¹⁴ He was one of many victims of
the dangerous working conditions.**

Francesco (G1 - G) Gaudenzi understood the dangers of the mining business and worked his way into safer positions.

According to his granddaughter Sandra:

He used to work in the mines originally. He was very smart. He did not want to go down in the mines, but he was one of the higher-ups. I don't know how often he did this, but he would hang his jacket wherever they hung them to show that they were in the mine, but then he didn't necessarily go down.¹⁵

Sandra's uncle Frank said of his father, Francesco, "[He was] more or less [a] supervisor in the mines. He wanted to get out of the mines because the mines were dangerous."

Eventually his father was successful in changing occupations, Frank said. "He opened the store."¹⁶

Miners often developed health issues resulting from the terrible conditions of their workplace. Usually, these were respiratory problems caused by continually inhaling coal dust and having it harden in the lungs. This condition was

what afflicted Iginio Emiliani, according to his daughter Olga.

My mother and father moved to Florida. Coral Gables. That was because my father's health was failing at the time. He was told if he went to Florida that he would live longer because of his breathing . . . the coal dust. My father died when he was only 70 or 72, something like that. You know, working in the mines took its toll on him.¹⁷

Iginio had spent most of his life in America mining, first in Eynon, Pennsylvania, then, when mining work dried up in Lackawanna County, he took his family to Dawson, New Mexico likely working for the Phelps Dodge Corporation, the company having turned Dawson into a mecca for miners from all over the world¹⁸.

Iginio's daughter, Olga, believed they moved to New Mexico about a year after she was born which would have been in 1914, ironically about a year after the 2nd worst mining disaster of the century had occurred at a Dawson mine.

While they were there, her mother Giovanna ran a boarding house for the coal workers.

When the economic situation in Pennsylvania rebounded, they returned to Lackawanna County. Olga recounts:

I would say my father was a good man. He was a hard worker. He really was. He worked hard. He always did well. That's why he was able to buy that house and send money to my grandparents. . . [Scranton was] building up at the time [we moved there, about 1920], but my father still worked in the mines. . . There were a lot of Polish people there and Russian people, and they all worked in the mines. . . They walked. My father worked at the Glen Alden Coal Co. He walked down to where they had the [mine] opening, I guess, the breaker. It was walking distance, but it wasn't close. But they did that because they had no other way of getting there.¹⁹

Eugene Giancini was another one of many Scranton-area immigrants who had mining-related health issues. His daughters Flo and Marie talked about the miner's life.

Marie: Well, I thought Dad worked in the mines for a short while.

Flo: For a short while, but for some reason, he didn't stay. He was sick, I think. Wasn't he? He couldn't handle it. All these young men that used to come from Italy, they worked in the mines. We would see them. Yeah, well, the ones who were boarders became close. Well, this one boarder nearly became part of the family. He died of TB because up in West Mountain in Scranton, they had a sanitorium. That's where they used to bring them.

Marie: He probably had black lung disease or something.

Flo: Oh, sure. You would see them when they came home. The only thing that would be white on them would be maybe [if] they gave them glasses to wear, around their eyes. That's all. They were black. See, later they would have showers and things.

Marie: They would wear those carbide lamps on their hats. Carbide. I remember the smell. Was a funny smell. I don't think Dad worked there very long. I think it's just that he found the work very distasteful. Supposedly. I don't think I'd like to

work two miles underground either. But that's where they worked.²⁰

Once mined, the coal was transported on the rail lines, making the railroad the next largest industry in the Scranton area. Eugene Giancini spent some time in this field. His daughter Beatrice recalled, “In [the] U.S.A, he worked for the D.L. & W. Railroad as a car inspector. . . In this capacity, he was able to secure railroad passes for the whole family. I guess it was part of the benefits given by the company to their employees. As a young child in our new country, our longest trip was to Endicott, N.Y.”²¹

Endicott, New York, was the place many immigrants first found work in factories, predominantly the Endicott-Johnson Shoe Company. In all of upstate New York during the first half of the twentieth century, it employed the most foreign-born workers. Among them were Francesco Felice Colapietro (Paul's 1st cousin twice removed) and his sister. His son Bruno (G2 - M) said, “Most of my family was in

Italy. Just my father and his sister came to America. . . But my aunt, my father's sister, was like my grandmother. . . She was another wonderful loving person. . . They also immigrated to Endicott. The shoe factories drew all these people in.”²²

The company's president, George F. Johnson, an early welfare capitalist, instituted policies that provided employees with a “Square Deal” as he called it: fair wages, profit sharing, and extensive medical benefits. He took good care of the needs of his workers, especially the immigrants who had left their homes and families behind. In turn, the workers were steadfast and loyal to the company.

Also in the Endicott area, the in-laws of Lydia (Colapietro) Paglia (Paul's 2nd cousin once removed) worked in construction, a field which also featured numerous Italians. Her daughter Camille, (Paul's 3rd cousin), celebrated her family's Italian heritage and its influence on their American life. Camille commented.

We have no snobbery about physical work; on the contrary, physical labor is considered ennobling. . . And I have this thing, this idea of a well-made driveway. I mean, my Uncle Albert can talk for twenty minutes about the proper way to pour concrete. . . The Romans are the ones who used concrete in a massive way for construction, it goes way back. It was the Romans who used concrete construction for baths, aqueducts, sewers. . . I can remember from my earliest childhood, and even to this day, in Endicott we pass a road in upstate New York where everyone points out the window, “There’s the curb your father laid in 1949.” . . . [T]o marshal all that material, to organize it in this over-arching pattern that goes from beginning to end, that's a practical engineering ability that I’m convinced is a genetic trait in Italians. . . People get so passionate about concrete in my family.²³

The Italians brought skills they learned in the old country, usually from work in their home region, and applied them to all levels of construction jobs, and in particular, public works projects.

Along the route between Endicott and Scranton, Eugene Giancini found work in construction during the 1910s. According to his granddaughter Marisa D’Annibale, he “had worked on the Nicholson Bridge in construction.”²⁴ His son David elaborated, “You know the Nicholson Bridge here that we got? The railroad goes on top. Well, they built that. . . He worked on that. . . He went as far as Pittsburgh, Greensburg, something like that, up here in Elmira and so on. They were building a lot of railroads, and they were sleeping in the boxcar. . . So it was rough. He had a lot of guts.”²⁵

Later, when Eugene was fully established in Scranton, he invited his out-of-work friends to help with minor construction projects in return for home cooked meals. His daughter Flo explained.

[My father] always looked-out for his friends and for fellow *paisani*. Because I can remember when there wasn’t much work, and the majority of them were out of work. They used to come to our house. He used to put them to work building that little wall in the yard. Maybe

that's when they did the garage. Maybe they did other things. And all that they would get, and I think it was understood, would be their meal.²⁶

Her younger sister Marie heard more about these gatherings from their brother Dominick (G2 - M) Giancini: “I remember Dom saying that these people used to come around. He just told us this last time; they're the ones who built the garage. And Dom said they weren't cement people, and they weren't carpenters. They were people who were out of work from some other trade. That he helped out by them doing this.”²⁷

Although he lived in Scranton, Pennsylvania, Antonio Montrone also travelled to Endicott, New York, solely to work for Endicott-Johnson. His daughter Helen (Montrone) Mastro spoke of how this move came about.

The Spicer Manufacturing Corporation [in New Jersey], where my father (Antonio) worked, decided to close down and move to Ohio. They asked him [to move there]. They

offered to sell his home and purchase a home for him there, but he was not interested in Ohio. That terminated his work with Spicer. So then he came here [to Scranton]. . . So that's when he became connected with Endicott. Because he also had a great deal of knowledge [in] shoe repair in Europe. And I understand in Endicott, they had [some] shoes that needed a little repair—seconds [they call them]. He would repair these, and then they would be able to sell them. That's what he did for Endicott. He was a very good shoe repairer.²⁸

Antonio's daughter-in-law, Beatrice, provided a few more details.

I heard my mother-in-law say that he was a very good shoemaker. And when I say shoemaker, it's not just repair. He could make a shoe, he did. He had a business. And if someone had a problem with their feet, he would do the whole shoe to fit comfortably. But at some point before he went back, when he came from Italy, and he went back to shoemaking, he was working with a bakery shop. And also what I have learned, being in the family, was that he worked with an automobile company and the

place they call Spicer. He had learned all the names of the different parts of the car, or whatever they needed, so he was head of that department. I guess he was good at it. He worked there until they moved out of South Plainfield . . . He chose not to go with the company. . .

So he went back to shoemaking, but being it was a bad time for the country, [during the] Depression, he wasn't doing very much business there. So they moved to Scranton, where they had come originally from Italy and knew people in the city. He then resumed his shoemaking but not his own business. He would work with someone. When that died down, he went to Endicott, and he worked for Endicott-Johnson. He said that he was the one to do the work that had to be done by hand.²⁹

In Bound Brook, New Jersey, Ernest DeCristofaro (Paul's paternal great uncle) “worked hard to establish his construction business and was quite successful,” recalled his proud daughter Grace (G2 – M) (De Christopher) Sferra. She proceeded to sketch the highlights of her father Ernest's

career and other details about the lives of her parents and her local uncle and aunt.

My father's construction business was listed in Dun & Bradstreet when D&B had some influence. He was very proud of his family. He treated his workers very well and believed in fair treatment of all his workers whether a laborer or skilled worker. He was a man to be loved and admired. When he retired, he sold his business. . . My mother [Mary Silla] never worked outside the home, but on Fridays, when I came home from school, she and Dad would be sitting at the kitchen table, making up the payroll envelopes for Dad's men. She'd lick the envelopes and then sit on them to be sure that they were sealed tightly. Later on, however, when Dad's business expanded, he would have a real office and office staff. . .

Dad had a brother Dominick who lived in Bound Brook. He was married to Nellie, but I don't remember her last name. Dominick was a tailor who lost his business in the Depression which triggered a depression from which he never recovered. . . I suspect Nellie was a good wife and mother, as she was a very kind person. I know Dad

helped her financially, but she was diligent in paying back the loan. [Dominick ultimately committed suicide.]³⁰

The first-generation women were expected to maintain the home, but when necessary, they too supplemented the family's income with outside work. Typically, this work came in the form of their own family-operated businesses, and for Italians, that included food distribution.

When Francesco Gaudenzi was looking for options outside of mining, he and his wife, Mary (G2 - G), chose to operate a grocery and butcher shop on the south side of Scranton. Their granddaughter Gerry (G3 - G) noted, "She and my grandfather owned a grocery store, which was located in the front part of their home. I remember her always having a white apron on – ready to work."³¹ Gerry's mother Olga also recalled the long work hours, "[My mother-in-law] was a housewife, and she worked in the store. It was a family business. That was it. That was her livelihood, and it was their Sunday and every day of the week."³²

By the time Olga knew her in-laws, running the store took up most of their time, so it had to have been running by 1936. The store remained open after Francesco Gaudenzi's death in 1950 because his son Frank would help his mother, the widowed Mary, at the store. Frank's wife Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi knew this arrangement was part of the reason they waited two years to marry. "He helped her with [the store]. He used to go and pick up orders. But she could handle a side of beef like that. And here she was like in her 70s. She'd get it out of the freezer and take it over and slam it on the chopping block to chop it up."³³

Frank himself spoke of his mother's routine.

"Well, she [my mother] worked in the store/butcher shop. She would lift the halves of beef just like nothing. She was a strong woman. . . She enjoyed her gardening, but like I say, she didn't have that much time. The store would be open seven o'clock in the morning until about ten o'clock at night."

With what they earned, Francesco and Mary could help their less fortunate neighbors. According to Frank, “He [my father] helped a lot of people out... in the store business, they mark it on the book, you know. Because a lot of miners weren’t working and stuff like that... he helped people out. That was the biggest thing.”³⁴

While Olga’s in-laws ran a grocery store, her parents owned a tavern. She said, “My parents had a tavern, and that’s where the bocce court [was], too. On Farr Street, where we live now. In the same building, in fact. My father was out of the mines then. . . the tavern became his living.”³⁵ Iginio Emiliani ended up selling the bar to his son-in-law Jerome (G2 - G) Gaudenzi, who kept it running.

Because of his brother Jerome’s connection, Frank Gaudenzi knew the Emiliani couple and commented on their friendliness. “In business, most of your businesspeople are very friendly, you know? You’ll find that.”³⁶

The first-generation Italian Americans had a challenging life, especially with these often-difficult occupations. As evidence of the heavy toll on the men, Paul observed that at his and Sandra’s wedding there were four aging Nonnas (grandmothers) in attendance and no Nonnos (grandfathers). These Nonnis were immigrants whose courage and hard work formed the foundation for all future generations of the family in the U.S.A. For these sacrifices Paul said, “We should not forget this, and all be eternally grateful to them.”³⁷

Second Generation

Passing down a profession from the first to the second generation surprisingly was not the norm for Italian Americans. Although there were instances of this continuity, the second generation was usually one in transition, pursuing new directions. On one hand, they often had to leave school to work in menial jobs, but on the other, they were eager and driven to get ahead for the sake of their offspring.

A 1950 chart comparing first- and second-generation Italian men and women in New York and New Jersey showed that the first-generation males were twice as likely to be laborers and service workers as opposed to the second generation, who had twice as many professionals and about three times more clerical and sales workers.³⁸

As Iorizzo and Mondello realized in their later study of Italian Americans, “By 1900, the Italian-born had provided the United States with a progeny that was to help fill the needs of an expanding America. The jobs they held were determined by the needs of the communities. The Italians had confirmed the fact that geographic and upward job mobility were attainable in one short generation in America.”³⁹

Because of the financial needs of their family, Angelo Montrone and Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone also had to drop out of school, but both developed successful careers

that supported their own family in a way their parents could not.

Although she desperately wanted to stay, Beatrice dropped out of high school after one year. She then started sewing and took a job in the Royal Miss Dress Factory. This later turned into a life-changing career choice since it was there that she met her future husband, Angelo Montrone.

After their marriage, Beatrice continued to work at the dress factory until the birth of her first child, Gene (G3 – M). She then continued to work from home sewing and selling dresses. At Angelo’s urging, after having three children, she later became a full-time mom. But after her kids left home, she picked her sewing career back up.

Angelo started his working life after dropping out of school while living in New Jersey. He would commute to New York City where he worked at a confectioner’s counter in a drugstore. After witnessing a horrible accident at a

construction site, he resolved from then on, he would only take a job that required him to wear a tie. Shortly thereafter, during prohibition, Angelo began working at a still in New Jersey.

When prohibition was repealed, Angelo moved to Scranton (his parents had relocated to Scranton from New Jersey) and began a career in the ladies' garment manufacturing business, first becoming a union worker (and union organizer) for the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), then he became a manager, and ultimately the owner of his own factory until he retired.

Box 8.1: Angelo and Beatrice Montrone's Careers

Beatrice's younger sister Flo (Giancini) D'Annibale also left school early and found employment sewing. She then married Italian tailor Tullio D'Annibale, her distant cousin. Flo went to Italy to marry him and they returned to America

where he opened his tailor shop, which became known for its high quality.

During this time, Flo continued to work. She and her daughter Marisa D’Annibale gave their impressions of Flo’s busy work life.

Flo: Then of course I was working because I started to work back then. . . I started this one place where my brother-in-law, Angelo, was the foreman of the whole place. Then I went to one or two others because sometimes you will find things that aren’t [right]. . . And I always worked sewing. . . [After marrying,] I continued to work, to sew. But I would go to my job. When I came home, I would take my husband’s cleaning back, go to the cleaner’s right in the back. I was also a part of that [tailor shop]. . .

Marisa: You helped out, too. That’s the thing, sometimes I would say to her—I remember Friday nights, she would be coming home—“Take a quick break, go up pick up the cleaning, bring it back to the tailor shop, go food shopping, come back from food shopping and make dinner.” Our apartment was right above

the tailor shop so we would have to go up. It was a separate entrance.⁴⁰

Marisa said of her mother, Flo,

“My mom worked until she was seventy-some years old. . . But she felt if she went [to work], she [stayed] young. She worked hard completing bundles of clothing for one particular operation and then became a sample maker. It was never easy. She would always come home exhausted.”⁴¹

As for David Giancini himself, he became a mechanic at an age when he should have been starting high school. He told the story of his working life.

I had to retire when I was sixty-two for the simple reason [that] I start working [with] automobiles [when] I was fourteen years old. . .

I started working with this Jew, David Quint, learning this business. . . We worked together from eight to six all the time, but now, because it was a busy time of year, we

had to work a little bit harder. David Quint said, “You need money?” Heck, I was only eighteen. “So here’s the first month”, ninety dollars at the time. Ninety dollars was a lot of money in ’31. I was [working] on Jackson Street, then the crash came, and I was let go.

Then I worked with a contractor building roads. The first thing they did, since I had been working around cars and so on, was to put me in charge of taking care of the compressor. I worked there for a year or so, but then David Quint called me back. So I was there from late ’29 to ’31. Well, then he moved out of there.

I was on salary. Then they wanted to give me so much an hour. And then if we worked ‘til three o’clock, then we [were] paid the full day. I work there [virtually] for nothing for two, three years... So I had a chance to move from the place, I says, “I’m going to give you two weeks’ notice.” He says, “You’re going to quit?” . . . [He looked] as if I stuck a knife into him here, he got so hurt. What the hell? He [only paid me a] buck an hour a week.

I built the garage [on St. Frances Cabrini] Avenue for myself, you know. I built this in '40, '41. . . I borrowed a lot from the bank and so on. I went looking, and we built.

My brother [Dominick], he learned the business too, with me, and he didn't want to stay here because he say, "I cannot control the people like you do. You can talk to the guys."

I done all right. I made a living at it. Not like became millionaire or anything, but I mean, we are still living and everything else. . . You know, [I'm] a guy that gives six cars to the family [over the years], six cars.

The garage was twenty by forty. The exhaust, carbon monoxide got the best of me, and I couldn't go no farther. I was waiting to get as much as I could from Social Security. I had to go to sixty-two. I have done pretty well because I would never have done [this well] if I was there [in Italy]. Never!

[Eventually my son] Gene got my shop that I had.⁴²

David's wife, Margaret (Corvelli) Giancini said of her husband's occupation and livelihood, "[He had a] radiator repair shop for cars. It was on Lackawanna and [St. Francis] Cabrini [Avenue] there. It was there for years. Now someone else took it over." According to their granddaughter Susan (Kidaloski) Johnston, he would have chosen a different career had he remained in school. She spoke of the positive influence he has had on her life.

He told me he wanted to be a doctor, but he settled for the mechanic because "the Jew" was going to train him. . . My grandfather wanted to be a doctor, and he knew a tremendous amount about alternative medicine. He taught me a great deal standing in [the] garden. I'm actually in the medical field. He really supported me. I'm a nurse. He really wanted me to do that. He really encouraged it. I have a tremendous interest in alternative medicine because of my grandfather, and because of that, my son with autism is making such a tremendous recovery. Actually, my grandfather and his brother Dominick became sales representatives for a national

supplement company. I have an article published on my grandfather, related to alternative medicine.⁴³

Paul further elaborated on this story:

David and Dom worked for El Rancho Adolphus Products in Pennsylvania, which manufactured health food products. It was founded by Adolphus Hohensee, who was an early advocate for natural supplements as cures for disease. Unfortunately, Mr. Hohensee was eventually indicted for misbranding his food products and spent a year in prison.⁴⁴

Although David never attained that dream of becoming a doctor, David went on to work his way up from uncertain labor opportunities to owning his own business by his early 30s.

Paul seemed to have inherited the Giancini gene that embraced alternative medicine and natural supplements as described in Box 8.2.

Some children of immigrants succeeded beyond expectations. In Endicott, New York, Paul’s distant cousin, Bruno Colapietro, had spent “fifty-two years practicing law” by the time he reached 75 and was “still doing it.” Unlike many in his generation, he not only finished high school but went on to Cornell University. Bruno spoke of how he chose to become a divorce lawyer and his approach to the profession.

I had a minor league baseball contract, which I turned down. I had just met my wife at Cornell, and I would have had to leave my first year of law school. And I said, “I think I’m going to be a better lawyer than a baseball player.” Couldn’t hit the fast ball. And I also discovered in chasing my wife, that I would have been chasing too many baseballs and not enough women. . .

[My sense of humor] keeps me going because I’m in a highly stressed occupation. If I keep my sense of humor, I can instill some sense of humor in my clients, [letting them know] that life is not over. . . Because some day . . .

**St. Peter's going to say, "What did you do for a living?"
"Oh, I divorced 9,000 people." Not a great credential.
He's going to say, "Well, that's not great." I'm going to
say, "Well, yeah, but each person I dealt with, I treated
like a human being [as my father taught me to do]"**

**I've had lots of good luck and lots of hard work. My
father gave me the hard work, and my mother gave me
the hard work ethic, and the good luck flows.⁴⁵**

**In New Jersey, Grace (Decristofaro) Sferra said of her
working life, "I retired from the corporate offices of
Federated Department Stores, Inc. (now called Macy's)
where I worked as a manager, and then worked as a director
of the Learn Program at the YWCA, from which I retired in
1981. Working in the non-profit field brought me the most
satisfaction. I hope I made a difference."⁴⁶**

**Sandra's father Jerome Gaudenzi left school before
graduating and delivered beer in the Scranton area before**

purchasing Iginio's tavern. His youngest brother, Frank, recalled this period in Jerome's life.

[My brother Jerome] drove a beer truck for a while. He was very mechanically inclined. He could [work] on cars or anything, he was very good. He didn't graduate high school. But when he was young, he got into the beer distributor business and did all right. He later bought the bar from his in-laws. He got into the bar business. He owned a beer garden. That was about it. ⁴⁷

Gerry (Gaudenzi) Colizzo, the elder daughter of Jerome and Olga, spoke of the times when they owned the tavern.

My mother actually was in the business with my father - a fifty/fifty deal. She opened the bar in the morning, took care of the customers, while also performing her daily household duties and in the evenings took care of the books. My father took over around 4:00PM until closing. . . My father ultimately had a stroke, which is when they decided to close down their business and sell the liquor license. . . My mom was a responsible woman with a hard work ethic and was very much under appreciated.⁴⁸

Jerome certainly did not let his lack of a diploma stand in his way of developing a business that supported and college educated his two daughters, Gerry and Sandra, a big achievement over the previous generations.

As a married couple, Jerome and Olga chose to live a frugal life together. As Olga related,

I can't really say [we traveled] too many times because my husband was a worker too, and I knew how to save. I knew how to save. I guess I took after my mother, right? But we always had the same idea. If we couldn't afford something, we never bought it. We waited until we had the money first, like a new car or whatever and buying new furniture or whatever. We never went overboard. And I think that was good for both of us because we both had the same ideas.⁴⁹

Frank Gaudenzi not only worked to pay the bills, but he had another talent. His son, Frank, Jr., relates his father's true passion:

When he came home [from the war] he went to Murray Art School. He was a talented artist who did caricatures and sketches; later he [even] did sketches at the local high school, the one that I coached at. He also did the local hall of fame sketches and he was inducted into the local hall of fame. He worked for a commercial art studio in Scranton but it wasn't really lucrative, so he had to start his career at making money.

So he started out as a wireman at Maxon Corporation. He was actually a member of one of the groups that were troubleshooting the different types of missile heads. One year the group went to the Philippines, Indonesia and Guam. And during the Vietnam War, I remember it was my 8th or 9th grade in high school, he went to Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand...Eventually the plant moved to Georgia and he wanted to stay in the area, so he took a position as a coordinator of the human development program for Lackawanna County and that's where he was until he retired.”⁵⁰

Frank's wife, Jean, lived through a time when she was supposed to remain home but ended up working and eventually becoming a certified nurse.

We were paying for the house, and when [my husband] started working, he was making a dollar an hour. I don't remember exactly what I made, but he didn't want me to work. He was that type of an Italian. In those days, they didn't want you to work; they wanted you to be home with the kids. . . I did piecework payroll in a dress factory. And I also sold Avon products. Later on, I went back to nursing because when I graduated high school I went into nursing. . . And later, after about fourteen years of piecework payroll at the dress factory, I decided to go back to nursing as a private duty Certified Nursing Assistant. That was in about '65.⁵¹

John Gaudenzi, Jr., with additions by his cousin Frank, enumerated on his father John's multi-faceted career:

My dad, he was always in business. He had a cabinet making business. He had a meat packing business, and then he left that and started teaching school. He had an education degree and taught at West Scranton High

School. He was also a head football coach and an assistant track coach. I remember most of that. He was a very, very good athlete when he was a kid.⁵²

Regardless of profession, the second-generation Italian Americans tended to make efforts to manage their money wisely. They learned from their parents' more hand-to-mouth existence and wanted to be able to put money aside for items beyond basic necessities and towards their children's futures.

Siblings Mario (G2 - M) Giancini and Flo learned how to save money at an early age. In addition to playing Santa Claus for their younger sister, they saved up for gifts for their mother, Settimia. Flo described it.

He [my brother] still has my picture of Mom and Dad on their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. . . It was as big as a postcard. My brother Mikey (Mario) and I took one, and we decided amongst ourselves that wouldn't it be great if we [enlarged] this for Mom. So at the time, the five and ten [cent stores] used to handle that. Every

Saturday we would walk downtown, and we'd go to this five and ten where we had gotten friendly with one of the woman in the photography department. We told her what we wanted. She says, "Well, save your money."

We used to go down there every Saturday. Maybe it would be a nickel. Maybe it would be a dime. We did that for months. Finally she said, "You have enough to make the picture big." Oh wow! We were excited. She made it big. Ma's dress had pink flowers. Mario said, "We got to get it painted." So we said to her, "How much for painting?" "Well, I could tint it for you for . . ." I don't know what [price] she said. "We'll do it. Could we do the same thing? Could we bring you down our money as we save it?" "Oh, yeah. I'll take care of it." So, another couple of months going down there, and she tinted it for us. We gave it to my mother for Mother's Day. My mother [was] hysterical screaming and crying. She said, "I must get this framed." And that's my picture, and I want it. It's in [Dom's] house.⁵³

Third Generation

By the third generation, Italian Americans had pursued higher education in order to work in specialized fields. In the U.S.A. homeland chosen by their grandparents, they took advantage of the opportunities that their parents had provided to them.

Gene Montrone obtained a master's degree in material sciences from M.I.T. in the 1960s before joining the workforce. He summarized his career, conveying how each step built on what had come before:

My career started where I worked in the research laboratory in welding research for . . . [the] Air Reduction Company. That didn't last very long, a couple of years. Then I joined an engineering, design, and construction firm, Foster Wheeler, which built refineries, chemical plants, power plants, all gigantic big complexes. I was the chief materials engineer for that company for ten years. . . I was looking at what my opportunities were there to move forward, and could I better be served by finding other opportunities that I possibly wasn't exploring.

So I changed jobs, and I got an opportunity to come back to the Scranton area. Scranton was just not a big area for professionals, unless you're doctor or a lawyer or a politician. A Swedish steel company (Sandvik) moved in here (the Scranton area). I interviewed them to see what was going on, and they made me a very good offer. So I shifted. That was after ten years at Foster Wheeler, where I was very happy, by the way. But, this [new job] looked like a better opportunity economically, so I shifted and joined them. I worked for them for ten years. At that point my ex-boss from Foster Wheeler was due to retire. He called me up. He was the chief metallurgist at the corporation. He said, "If you ever wanted to have my job . . . I'm retiring. If you want it, you can have it." So after ten years at Foster Wheeler, ten years at Sandvik, I went back to Foster Wheeler for another ten years. And then I retired.⁵⁴

Gene's youngest brother, Tony (G3 - M) Montrone, also made good use of his economics degree from Syracuse University and plays a valuable role in business.

When I came out of graduate school, I took a government job with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) doing economic analysis. That was in 1975. The EPA was only four years young when I started. I worked there for 15 years doing various jobs specializing in water and hazardous waste. By the late 80s, the environmental problems of the 70s had been resolved and everything had become routine, so I left. ⁵⁵

I went into environmental consulting and did that for 30 years, starting in Boston, MA, and ending up in Princeton, NJ. My degree is in economics. I do the business end of the environment. So I work with companies who are doing mergers and acquisitions to look at environment, the effects of the environmental issues on the deals, and work on the economic impact of complying with regulations.⁵⁶

Middle brother, Paul, sums up his successful career choices in similar terms, as an adventure that has unfolded.

There isn't one job that I've enjoyed the most, and the reason is because jobs go through phases. At a moment in

time, a job has got a phenomenal phase to it, and you really enjoy it for whatever reward you're getting, be it psychologically, educationally, financially, etc. Then something changes, and it is not the same — the momentum, the learning or whatever begins to slow down. That's when I move on. So I can't really describe a job where it's been like, "Oh, that's the top job I ever had because I did this or I accomplished this or that."

I worked in junior high, and throughout high school, college and graduate school. Then I worked in the Pentagon as a computer programmer while serving in the U.S. Army.

After the Pentagon I had a series of financial roles in the business world. I began with three relatively brief stints. First with a cement company, then I moved to a tech start-up, then a Wall Street firm. Then I joined an industrial company which became Wheelabrator-Frye as Chief Financial Officer. I remained in that company, and its later affiliates, for the rest of my business career

winding up as CEO of various entities in industrial, financial, and healthcare industries. ⁵⁷

But on the side, I also continued my entrepreneurial spirit by developing companies in a wide range of businesses like auto parts, sign supplies, chemicals, technology and even founded a New Hampshire trust company. Later in life I also fell into our Giancini family interest and entered the natural supplement business.

Women often had to approach the workforce differently than their male counterparts because of their familial responsibilities. Gerry (Gaudenzi) Colizzo exemplified this.

Basically, I had three different careers, not counting motherhood. I taught school for 3 ½ years in the Philadelphia suburbs and in Waverly, PA. Except for household responsibilities, caring for our children and many different volunteer duties, I wasn't employed until after my husband's death in 1976. The following year, I took a course for the travel industry and worked only part-time (two days) in New York City. While it wasn't a money maker, it provided wonderful traveling

opportunities and I did this for five years. A full-time job with salary became a necessity and I was hired as Director of Volunteer Services at our community hospital, which I did for 17 years. That was my longest and most fulfilling career⁵⁸

Her sister Sandra had similar work and home experiences.

I married Paul a week after graduating from Marywood College with a degree in elementary education, and we moved to New York City. He was going to graduate school and I was going to support us with a teaching job in first grade in Teaneck, New Jersey.

Well, I became pregnant and my teaching career was not long lived. From that point on, until today, my primary occupation has been taking care of my family, along with supporting Paul's career.

Along the way I also had many volunteer jobs, mostly in religious education and hospice. In fact, I was the founder of Seacoast Hospice in New Hampshire.

I was busy all the time, and it hasn't slowed down yet. ⁵⁹

Sandra and Gerry's aunt Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi pointed out the teaching trend in their family, starting with her brother-in-law, John (G2 - G):

John Gaudenzi was a schoolteacher. And his son John is a teacher, as are their wives. We had all schoolteachers. My son, Frank, is a schoolteacher. My daughter Cindi's a schoolteacher by education.⁶⁰

Box 8.2: Sandra and Paul Montrone's Work

Trovare la via (Finding the Way)

Relatives back in Italy experienced a similar change in occupations from generation to generation. Earlier generations were more likely to work with their hands. After Antonio Montrone left for America, his sister Filomena remained in Boiano and married Salvatore Buontempo, who

was in construction in Boiano, in a family business with his father, Raffaele Buontempo.

Michele Battista (IT – M), grandson of Salvatore, verbally translated his mother Anna’s recollections. “Her father had a very important construction company. And he died very young. He was only thirty-one years old. . . [Her] father’s brother, Francesco, worked in the same business with Salvatore. He died twenty years ago.” Michele’s mother, Anna (IT – M), elaborated in Italian, “He fell from a scaffolding when he was up there to control the cornice of a roof his workers had been working on. 1928. . . He died instantly.”

Even as a widow, Filomena (Montrone) Buontempo did not work outside the home. However, as Anna noted, “My mother was very active, very much alive, and caring. If it were not for her, we would have become farmhands. . . Because when Father died, the status of the family changed drastically from very well-to-do to great poverty.”⁶¹

Instead of farmhands, Anna and almost all her siblings became teachers. Of Filomena (Montrone) Buontempo's four children, only the youngest, Salvatore, chose a different profession, becoming a mechanic in Australia. "He was an excellent worker and owned a garage," Anna said. She gave additional credit to herself for maintaining the home while being a teacher. "I love to be a schoolteacher. But . . . I also was a housewife. I had to carry the family along, cooking, washing, cleaning." To which Michele replied, "She is a typical example of a woman of the economic miracle of Italy."⁶²

Anna may have enjoyed teaching, but she had bigger plans for her children. Her sacrifices for the sake of their education allowed Anna's two children, Michele Battista and Cleonice (IT – M), to pursue medical professions. Cleonice's children continued in her footsteps. Cleonice's daughter, Annamaria (IT – M) Altomare, commented:

My mother and my father are doctors. Like my mother is a gynecologist, and my father is a surgeon. And we are four children: I'm Annamaria, and I'm the first one, and I'm also a doctor. I'm doing my residence in gastroenterology. Then there is my first brother who is Carlo. He's studying in medical school, also. We are all doctors. He is twenty-eight. Then there is my sister who is twenty-five. She graduated last year from business school. Then there is my last brother who started medical school, too, last year. He's twenty-one. . .

I asked my mom, “Why did you choose medicine, both of you? Like you and my uncle?” My uncle started to choose this profession. Maybe he translates his specialty to my mother. So my mother, when she knew that they wanted to become doctors, she was really happy because for that time, the most important—like, *the* most important professions in the little town—were the doctor and the priest. So the doctor was really important. Maybe like they translate us a passion. For this reason we choose that [profession] because now, working as a doctor is not like the same as it was thirty years ago.⁶³

On both sides of the Atlantic, those of Italian heritage worked hard. At the age of 75, Flo commented, “Tony said to me, ‘Aunt Bob [Flo], are you still working full time?’ I said, ‘Yeah.’ He said, ‘How do you do it?’ I says, ‘I enjoy working. . . I don’t want to stay home.’”⁶⁴

Future Generations

Every generation has concerns about the next, hoping that a good path into the future will be forged. The elders worry for their descendants, as is natural and customary. Jean Gaudenzi said that, to her, the most difficult things about modern times “is politics and trying to get a job. I don’t know if that goes for all over. And the kids’ sense of entitlement. It’s pretty hard to get a good day’s work out of kids, the younger generation. They don’t have the work ethic that we had. But they have bigger desires.”⁶⁵

Tony Montrone agreed.

There’s an attitude of greed that’s developed. Princeton [where I live] is really a far suburb of New York, and I

see that a lot. And that sort of, “I want to have what they have, or why should they have it, if I don’t have it” type of thing. And “it’s okay for me to do things that might hurt other people because I deserve it.” That type of attitude.

At the company I worked for in Boston that was what was happening. It basically was a company that had been around for over a hundred years. In the dotcom boom of the nineties, everybody said, “Hey, why are these guys making millions, and we’re slugging out here in this consultant business? So we’re going to take these risks because we’re going to make our millions.” The answer was, “Well, some guys are making millions, but the vast majority of these new companies are in fact not going anywhere.” Yeah, we’re going to risk everything because we want to make our millions, because we deserve it. We work as hard as these guys do. It’s that type of thing. Ultimately, the company went bankrupt.⁶⁶

Many looked with hope and pride as the next generation found its footing. A mother of three, Sandra fondly recalled,

That it was important to Paul and I that our children continue the strong work ethic of our family, going back over the generations. So all three of them began working as soon as they came of age, well before starting their post college professional careers.

They worked hard every summer and learned about the pluses and minuses of various jobs as well as the satisfaction of having their own hard-earned money.

Michele volunteered at the Exeter Hospital, then worked as a mail teller in a bank in Exeter, a bank teller in Wolfeboro, as a waitress at Brewster Academy (also in Wolfeboro later), as a salesclerk and manager at Bloomingdales, and ultimately after college at an advertising agency, followed by becoming a manager at Macy's. Then she married and had a family and has been the head of our family charitable foundation since leaving Macy's.

Angelo and Jerome began their work life as the “grounds crew” on Great Hill (our home in Hampton Falls, NH) helping with gardening. Their first assignment was

moving manure from a truck bed into the garden. Paul said they could always say they started at the bottom ‘shoveling shit.’

Angelo went on to Applecrest Farm, then Bailey’s Dockside Restaurant in Wolfeboro. He then worked two factory jobs, (Erie Scientific and Ampex), then at Serendipity in Boston. During his high school and college years, the family music gene emerged. After studying at Berkeley College of Music, he went into the music world first at Atlantic Records, then at Or Music, then off on his own, where he remains today.

After yard work, Jerome did construction work (perhaps the seeds of his future career) at Phillips Exeter Academy, then as a busboy, cook, and bar helper at Aw Shucks. While in college he also worked at IBM and did internships at the Bank of Boston and Goldman Sachs. After college, he worked in industrial sales at Sinto Kogio in Nagoya, Japan. He then earned an MBA and went into finance and real estate.

Both Angelo and Jerome also held senate internships one summer in Washington, D.C. but fortunately neither of them caught the political bug.

All tallied, we are satisfied that we did our jobs in passing on our family heritage and educating our next generation on the value and satisfaction that comes from hard work, be it in careers, volunteer service, or family responsibilities.⁶⁷

¹ Tobia Gaudenzi marriage, Comune di Gualdo Tadino, 1877, numero d'ordine 27, photocopied from the Comune; Giovanni Silvestro Cavagnaro, 1848 Lista Leva (military record); Carlo Mercanti death, Comune di Sassoferrato, 1874, numero d'ordine 14, FHL microfilm 2221033; Iorizzo and Mondello, *The Italian Americans*, 56-61.

² Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³ Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁴ Atto di matrimonio, Iginio Emiliani e Giovanna Mercanti, 1909, numero d'ordine 70, Comune di Sassoferrato [FHL microfilm 2221032].

⁵ Michele Battista, great-grandson of Angelo Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 2 October 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁶ Helen (Montrone) Mastro, granddaughter of Michele De Cristofaro, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁷ *My Memories: A Written Record of My Life and Times to Hand Down to My Family* (Metropolitan Museum of Art); completed by Beatrice M. Giancini Montrone in 1985, held by Paul Montrone.

⁸ Marie (Giancini) Teot, daughter of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Rhonda McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁹ Fausta (Giancini) D'Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Settimie (D'Annibale) Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹⁰ David/Diodata Giancini, son of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹¹ Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, daughter of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, undated, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹² "History of the Pennsylvania Anthracite Region," website of the Mining History Association, online at <http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org/ScrantonHistory.htm>; Longo, *Italians of Northeastern Pennsylvania*, 25. Twelve miners died in the Knox Mine Disaster, which occurred January 22, 1959 in the River Slope Mine in

Pennsylvania, owned by the Knox Coal Company. The Susquehanna River flooded the mine following illegal digging under the river, ordered by company management.

¹³ Natalie Ann Cavagnaro, Frank T. Guadenzi, and Teresa Giovanni Perugini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹⁴ Jerry Sherard, "Registers of Mine Accidents for the Anthracite Districts, 1899-1913, 1917, 1918," website of the Pennsylvania State Archives, online at http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r45_MineAccidentRegisters/r45-14AccidentRegistersInterface.htm; citing microfilm no. 3586, card 142, p. 18. Young Felix Cavagnaro was not on the lists for anthracite or bituminous mining accidents occurring in 1899-1906 though he purportedly died soon after 1900.

¹⁵ Paul and Sandra (Gaudenzi) Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 23 March 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹⁶ Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, son of Francesco Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 5 August 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹⁷ Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, daughter of Iginio Emiliani, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹⁸ <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/nm-dawson.html>

¹⁹ Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, daughter of Iginio Emiliani, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

²⁰ 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.

²¹ *My Memories: A Written Record of My Life and Times to Hand Down to My Family* (Metropolitan Museum of Art); completed by Beatrice M. Giancini Montrone in 1985, held by Paul Montrone.

²² Bruno Colapietro, son of Francesco Felice Colapietro, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

²³ Christina Bevilacqua, "Interviews: Camille Paglia and Sandra Gilbert," *Italian Americana* 11.1 (Fall/Winter 1992): 80-82, online at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41330546>.

²⁴ Marie D'Annibale, granddaughter of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Rhonda McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

²⁵ David/Diodata Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

²⁶ 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.

²⁷ 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.

²⁸ Helen (Montrone) Mastro, daughter of Antonio Montrone, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

²⁹ Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, interview by Brian O'Connell, undated, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³⁰ Grace (DeCristofer) Sferra, "Family History DeCristofer Family," email message to Rhonda M. McClure, 19 Feb. 2013.

³¹ Geraldine (Gaudenzi) Colizzo, interview by Mary Tedesco, 12 February 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³² Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³³ Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi, daughter-in-law of Mary (Cavagnaro) Gaudenzi, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³⁴ Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, son of Francesco Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 5 August 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³⁵ Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, daughter of Iginio Emiliani, interview by Brian O'Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³⁶ Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 5 August 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³⁷ As added by Paul Montrone 18 November 2019.

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- ³⁸ Richard Alba and Nancy Foner, “The Second Generation from the Last Great Wave of Immigration: Setting the Record Straight,” *Migration Policy Institute*, 1 Oct. 2006, online at migrationpolicy.org; citing Miriam Cohen, *Workshop to Office* (Cornell University Press, 1992).
- ³⁹ Iorizzo and Mondello, *Italian Americans*, 70.
- ⁴⁰ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie D’Annibale, interview by Rhonda McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁴¹ As relayed by Marisa D’Annibale in an email dated 1 October 2022, held by Paul Montrone
- ⁴² David/Diodata Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone. David Giancini’s words have been reorganized for coherency.
- ⁴³ Margaret (Corvelli) Giancini and Susan (Kidaloski) Johnston, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁴⁴ As related by Paul Montrone 11 January 2022, and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolphus_Hohensee
- ⁴⁵ Bruno Colapietro, son of Francesco Felice and Vincenza (Ricci) Colapietro, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁴⁶ Grace (DeCristofer) Sferra, “Family History DeCristofer Family,” email message to Rhonda M. McClure, 19 Feb. 2013.
- ⁴⁷ Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, brother of Jerome Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed 5 August 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁴⁸ Geraldine (Gaudenzi) Colizzo, daughter of Jerome and Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, interview by Mary Tedesco, 12 February 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁴⁹ Olga (Emiliani) Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O’Connell, 21 August 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁵⁰ Frank Gaudenzi, Jr., interview with Karen Keyes, 1 September 2016.
- ⁵¹ Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁵² John Gaudenzi, Jr., interview with Karen Keyes, 27 September 2016 and Frank Gaudenzi, Jr., interview with Karen Keyes, 1 September 2016.
- ⁵³ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Settimia (D’Annibale) Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁵⁴ Eugene Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 12 January 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁵⁵ Tony Montrone, interview by Karen Keyes, 14 June 2018.
- ⁵⁶ Tony Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁵⁷ As related by Paul Montrone, 15 May 2019
- ⁵⁸ Geraldine (Gaudenzi) Colizzo, interview by Mary Tedesco, 12 February 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁵⁹ Sandra Montrone, interview by Paul Montrone, January 31, 2018, no transcript exists
- ⁶⁰ Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁶¹ Anna (Buontempo) Battista, daughter of Salvatore Buontempo, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 2 October 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁶² Anna (Buontempo) Battista, daughter of Filomena (Montrone) Buontempo, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 2 October 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁶³ Annamaria Altomare, granddaughter of Anna (Buontempo) Battista, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁶⁴ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁶⁵ Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁶⁶ Tony Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁶⁷ As related by Sandra (Gaudenzi) Montrone, 5 July 2021

Box 8.1

ANGELO AND BEATRICE MONTRONE'S CAREERS



Angelo Montrone
at the Royal Miss Fabric Shop

Box 8.1

Angelo and Beatrice Montrone's Careers

Angelo (G2 - M) Montrone epitomized the Italian American experience in the work force. From humble beginnings, he worked his way into the garment industry and grew from being a pin boy, to a “cutter”, to a manager, to having his own business.¹

Born in 1908, Angelo “left school when he was fifteen, so he didn’t finish very far,” his son Paul said. His brother Gene (G3 - M) related the story:

While walking to work one day, he passed a construction site where they were hauling up I-beams to build skyscrapers and one of the I-beams slipped and three guys below were having their lunch and it got one of them. He saw the guy get squashed. He decided right there and then that he was going to go home, and he was going to put a tie on, and he was never going to have another job that didn’t require him to wear a tie. That

was his distinguishing factor. He had to wear a suit and a tie. And he wore a suit and a tie his entire life.

Angelo's decision was made in the 1920s during Prohibition after which he started a new job as a taster in an illegal alcohol still in New Jersey. His role was to ultimately decide when the alcohol being produced was ready for bottling. Paul joked that his father must have worn a suit and tie when he worked there.

While in that job, one day Angelo received a call from his boss telling him not to come to work since they had received a tip that they were going to be raided by the state police. The raid did occur and the still was dismantled by the police.

As clear evidence of the depth of corruption during this period of U.S. history, a few weeks later Angelo's boss called again and said they were reassembling the still in Toledo, Ohio, and Angelo should report there if he wanted to continue his job. So Angelo moved to Ohio.

Tony (G3 - M) recalled his father's move back to Scranton after the end of prohibition. "While he was working in Ohio, his family moved from New Jersey to Scranton. So at some point or other prohibition was over. He was [then], what? Twenty-five years old? So he decided to come back to Scranton and start a new career."

Angelo then entered the garment industry, as his eldest son, Gene, related:

He needed a job. It was still the Depression. So after returning from Ohio, he got a job as a pin boy, picking up pins with a magnet on the floor of the Royal Miss Dress Factory for a nickel an hour and worked his way up to manager of the cutting department. He had no other reason to be in the garment industry. He didn't do that as a youth, and there was no tie-in with his family, or anything else. He was on his own, and that's what he found. And, like he said, "I found the place where I could move myself through the ranks and did it."

Well, the first thing he did was, from picking up pins, he noticed that people who are making the most money, other than the management, of course, were the guys who operated machinery, either spread the cloth or cut it. And the cutters were paid more than the spreaders. So he decided to learn how to use a cutting machine. . . They lay cloth, several inches thick on the table, then lay a pattern on top. And a guy with a machine that he's holding on the table with a razor blade that goes up and down, cuts the pattern out so that they have hundreds of pattern pieces that then the factory girls sew together to make a dress. So you have to follow the pattern with the cutting machine. Now, you know what a pattern of a dress is like, so you know how intricate some of those pieces are. Well, my father was ambidextrous. So as he was cutting he would go to a point, and when he got there, he would shift hands and go the other way. He became one of the most effective cutters they had.

Now, of course, [in] those days . . . they used to call them sweatshops. He never really worked in a sweatshop, but the unions were rampant anyway because they characterized the garment industry and mining in

Scranton as sweatshop operations. So he became active in the union. He was one of the guys who went around, and like he said, “We’d go into a shop that wasn’t union or not thinking about it. We would pull the plug to stop the work, then I’d jump up on the table and roust them all to become union members.” He was a union rabble-rouser, if you will. It was just his personality. He was very effective, so a lot of shops started to go union. In fact, he later became one of the founders of the Scranton local of the International Ladies Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU).

But in the Royal Miss Dress Factory, the management said, “Hmm, this could get problematic.” So they took him aside and said, “How would you like to manage the cutting department?” If he was management, he couldn’t be in the union. That’s how my father went forward. So, he said, “I’ll take it.”

Angelo obtained a management position, but that’s not all: that’s where he met Beatrice (G2 - M) Giancini, as their youngest son, Tony, recalled.

He came back to Scranton, and he went to work at the Royal Miss. He was working in the cutting room. That's where he met my mother. She was working as a sewer. He worked there until that plant went out of business.

The two met because Angelo's "brothers and sisters were there." His sister, Anna (G2 – M), was credited with introducing Beatrice to Angelo in 1933. After their marriage, Beatrice left the Royal Miss, but didn't stop working. As the head of the cutting department, her clever husband knew how to adjust the cutting patterns he was given to produce cutting for more potential dresses than he was assigned to produce. He would bring this excess fabric (called 'overcuts') home for Beatrice to make into dresses and sell. The birth of their first child, Gene, in 1938 disrupted the couple's working relationship.

Gene recalls:

[My mother] worked until I was born. After they got married, she continued working but then once I was

born, he didn't want her to work anymore. He said, "Your job is to take care of the baby. My job is to earn the money." So what she did for a while after I was born was she would fit garments to women and make specialized dresses for them [at home]. Then as I got older, she didn't have the time to do that anymore. Then she didn't work. [She] had Paul three years later and Tony thirteen years later. She didn't work [outside the home] again until Tony left for college. Then there was nobody left at home, so she went back to work in the garment industry.

Another example of Angelo's personality was relayed by his youngest son Tony, who rounded out the family in 1951.

My father was one of these typical Italian men. My mother did everything, the cooking, the cleaning, and all of that. He had a job; he 'worked and came home' kind of thing. But I remember one day we were getting ready to leave, and he said, "Wait, I've got to clean the bathroom" in the plant where we worked. And I said, "Look, Dad, what's wrong?" He says, "I've got to clean the bathroom. You know, you're the boss, you've got to make sure

you’ve got a nice, clean bathroom for the employees.” In a million years, I’ve never seen him clean the bathroom at home. But that was the thing, as I said. And he says, “There’s no job that’s beneath you. You know, you do it, any work is good work.” So that was my father.

Angelo continued in management, but times and the industry changed. His son Paul described how that change affected his family.

He was managing a segment of a large factory, the Royal Miss, that was owned by New York partners, a private company, but it was the big ladies’ dress manufacturing operation in Scranton. Eventually they closed that factory, and they moved it to the South. That was part of the general trend in the U.S., to lower labor costs. My father then took a job as a manager at Leslie Fay, a large women’s clothing manufacturing plant in Kingston, PA, which involved a rather long commute for him. Rather than move his family from their lifelong home in Scranton and tired of commuting, he left that job after a year or two.

Then he set up his own company to do cutting, and he would do contract work cutting. . . Eventually his sister, Anna, who also worked at the Royal Miss Dress Factory . . . she was a really good sewer . . . set up a sewing business. Then they got together, and he had the cutting department, and she had the sewing department. They had this factory called Ann's Fashions in Old Forge, Pennsylvania. They became contractors to dress companies in the garment district in New York City. His whole family was tied up in this same factory, by the way.

Then, for whatever reason, my father began to have mental problems, and he eventually had what was called in those days a nervous breakdown, which I think today would be called a depression. And the doctors would give him these treatments that they no longer do for people like that, to try to bring them out of it. They were like electric shock treatments. . . They basically numb your brain in a way. They get you out of your depression, but on the other hand, they damage your brain and you're not the same person when you emerge. So my father, who was this aggressive tough business guy up to this point in his life, was transformed into a person who was much

more mild-mannered. He was also aging a little more, so that came with it too.

After that, he had a lot of trouble with his business, which was probably the root cause of his depression in the first place. All of a sudden, we had financial troubles, and he couldn't really afford to send me away to college. He would do what he could, but I was going to have to pay for a lot of my college myself. Obviously, by going to our local University of Scranton, and living at home and working, I could go to college. That was kind of the logical path and easiest path. Tony was ten years younger, so he was still really young. My older brother, Gene, was off at college, and so that also kind of put me in a position where I felt I should stay around since my father wasn't well. I went to the University of Scranton. I was very lucky, because it was an excellent education.

As the youngest, Tony still lived at home when his parents reached the end of their careers.

My father went into business with his sister, and they opened their own much smaller dress factory. They had

that until my aunt Anna died. I believe that was in 1969. Then they sold that, and he then just ran cutting rooms for small factories. Because at that point, the garment [business] in this area [kept] shrinking, but there were still some small plants around doing more specialty stuff. He ran those on a contract basis for companies that were feeding other small dress factories around. I was working for him, [when I] was between high school and college. The industry became more disaggregated. Say, for example, you had a company in New York, working for J. C. Penney. We would cut the material, then it would get shipped off to different sewing plants that put it together, and the dresses would go to Penney's. It was specialty type stuff because the mass-market stuff was now being done overseas.

When I got into high school . . . my mother decided to work at one of the dress factories. I guess it was the family factory. While I was in high school, she worked with my father. That's what she had done earlier. Then she worked at another factory for a while, for another four years, I guess. But when [my father] retired, he said she was retiring, too.

I think that about the time he retired, I graduated from college. I think that was the last thing he did. Then he decided he needed to do something part-time, so he got a job as a security guard. Which I think [was] more because he and my mother were finding [that] being together full-time, they needed breaks. He took this job as a security guard. He would work from, like, three to eleven, checking trucks in at one of the manufacturing plants around here. He did that until he got tired of that. Then he said, “I don’t want to do that anymore.” By that time, then they adjusted to both being retired and started going to Florida in the winter.

Although mostly successful in his career, Angelo did not want his sons to join him in the garment industry. Tony very briefly worked for his father.

I worked for him one summer . . . He had a small company at that point because he was sort of winding down. And he ended up laying me off because he wanted to hire somebody because that person needed a job. He said, “You know, you could . . . relax, but here’s

somebody who [really] needs a job, and that's what you got to do. Every person is entitled to a job."

Paul heard warnings about the garment industry from his father.

We could have joined him in the business when he set his own business up. I actually worked in the factory for a while. He said, "We're Italians. This is a Jewish business. . . Go do something else." Picture that, a reflection of a whole ethnic era. Anyway, he wouldn't let us go in the business. . . So the answer is, other than his generation, nobody from our generation in our family went into the garment business.

Despite Angelo's discouragement to follow his path, his sons definitely admired his work ethic and ambition. Paul neatly summarized his father's roles in his life: "I have lasting and fond memories of my dad being a very sharp, highly driven business guy, who also was a dutiful family man and father."

¹ Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 30 January 2014; Tony Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24/25 July 2011; Eugene Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 13 January 2013, Eugene

Montrone, interview by Karen Keyes, 5 June 2016, transcripts held by Paul Montrone. In some cases, the order of quotes has been rearranged for cohesiveness and Paul Montrone has added additional anecdotes to his passages

Box 8.2

SANDRA AND PAUL MONTRONE'S WORK



Paul and Sandra Montrone
receiving the Presidential Medal
from Sister Ann at
University of Maryland

Box 8.2

Sandra and Paul Montrone's Work

Both Sandra and Paul Montrone inherited the hard work ethos of their forebears. From their youth until their old age, relaxing and taking it easy was not their way of life. Perhaps they are workaholics.

Paul revealed his business leaning gene when he was quite young, starting in 8th grade:

I guess my entrepreneurial business side came out early. . . I used to have these little gambling games on the back porch, with the local kids . . . I remember I had received a roulette game as a gift. And our group would get together, and we'd play with our little pennies or whatever. I was always the banker. . . Early clue as to business and finance, it was coming out in [these activities]. . . I never got heavily into gambling, but I wanted to be the house. That's what I wanted to be, the house banker.¹

Later, his first business was selling worms (meal worms, red worms and night crawlers) to fishermen from his family's summer cottage at Newton Lake. His Uncle Dom was growing the meal worms and red worms, and Paul hunted up the night crawlers himself in his yard after dark.

Paul bought a car when he was in high school at age sixteen (borrowing the down payment from his dad). He then began taking his friends to Central High and charging them a 25 cent fee, which was better for them than hitchhiking or taking the bus. But his main job at that time was in his father and Aunt Anna Montrone's (G2 – M) dress factory (Ann's Fashions in Old Forge, PA) as a sorter to pay off the car debt and his personal expenses. In addition to his pay, he sold the factory's fabric scraps to earn a few more bucks.

He continued this job through his first two years of college at the University of Scranton until his junior year when he entered an accounting trainee job at the Sears Roebuck store in Scranton. The job was intended to prepare him for

joining Sears accounting department after graduation, which he elected not to pursue. While in college, Paul also became a door-to-door salesman, selling Great Books of the Western World, a volume of books which caught his interest but was very expensive. After selling 10 sets to customers, he was entitled to a free set for himself, which was his goal.

Selling books door to door was a remarkable experience for him. One big takeaway was how people can be managed psychologically. He observed “I guess this is how advertising and brainwashing works. I memorized the sales pitch word for word. My manager told me where to stop the pitch and wait for a question. He predicted the various questions that would be asked and made me memorize the proper response – and he was right. The questions asked by potential customers were right as predicted and the answers were right on target. I was shocked by how successful I was as a salesperson working strictly on a commission basis.”

“I also learned how humans can be rather narrow minded. We got a new regional manager, and he fired me because I was part-time and he only wanted full-time workers. But I was commission only, so I was costing the company nothing and was the best salesperson on the team.”

“So I concluded that if business people were that dense, I should have no problem competing in business. And that proved correct over my decades in the business world.”

While in college, Paul also set up a tutoring service, matching University of Scranton students as tutors with local high school students needing academic help. He also started a laundry service in the University of Scranton dormitories. He paid students to package and document laundry for cleaning, made a deal with a local laundry service to pick up the laundry, clean it, and deliver it back to his student helpers in each dormitory. Looking back, Paul now realizes he was what is now called an entrepreneur, a skill that has served him well throughout his life.

Upon graduation from the University of Scranton, Paul continued his various jobs for a year while attending graduate school there (waiting for Sandra to graduate so they could marry). During that year, he also began teaching undergraduate accounting courses.

From there, after marriage in 1963, he and Sandra moved on to Columbia Business School to pursue his Ph.D. Paul went directly for a Ph.D. degree and never received a Master's degree. That was thanks to John Gavigan, a family friend at the University of Scranton, who was the V.P. of Student Affairs at the time. He put Paul in touch with Clarence Walton at Columbia. Clarence was the head of the Ph.D. program and he arranged for Paul to have fellowship funding in that program. This was an early clue to Paul of the value of relationships.

Meanwhile, Sandra also found time to work. While in high school she worked as a salesperson at Doletsky's, a high-end retail store for women's clothing. Mr. Doletsky hired Sandra

after meeting her when she was with her mother shopping for clothes. This experience is what stimulated her interest in merchandising.

While studying business merchandising and education in college, she worked at the Globe Store, the “big department store” in downtown Scranton. She recalls,

At the Globe store, in the junior department, there was a group of kids who were taking a charm course. There was a woman who was in charge of it, but she was getting a divorce; the woman in charge of juniors, she liked me. She was a tough old cookie. . . She said that she would like me to be her assistant at the Globe Store, junior dress department. She put me together with this woman who was doing the charm course. As I said, she was getting a divorce. This [job] was all new for me so I had to put it all together. By the end, I was a basket case trying to get all this stuff together, not knowing a hundred percent what I was doing. I said to myself, if this is the charm, this is not the good stuff, I don't want it.²

One week after graduating from Marywood College, Sandra married Paul and they moved to New York City. She enjoyed a brief teaching career, teaching first grade in Teaneck, New Jersey. She observed,

I always considered my first-grade students like little blossoms, and by the end of the first year they are developed and bloomed. They're flowers.

Then things changed. I graduated on Monday, got married on [the next] Saturday. And I was supposed to teach and help put Paul through graduate school. We were good Catholics. I became pregnant right away. And that was the end of my formal teaching career. . .

Paul recalled that they were living in New York City at the time. I had a bit of luck;

They were deducting the teachers' union pension fund from her pay, in addition to taxes. So when she left, we got a pension refund check. That was a great piece of income that we could use. We never forgot the pension because I was able to buy an eight-millimeter movie

camera with the refund, and now we have films of Michele from when she was born. So we owe that to the teachers union.³

After completing his course work and testing for his Ph.D., Paul began working on his dissertation and became a teaching assistant, giving instructions in night school to Columbia undergraduate business students.

After completing his dissertation in 1965, he, Sandra and baby Michele moved to the Washington, D.C. area where he worked in the Pentagon in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (McNamara) as a junior person under the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis (Alain Enthoven). He worked on military logistics. He observed:

My first job when I came out of graduate school was in the military. I had a military obligation having been in the Army ROTC in college. I wound up with the McNamara “whiz kids” because one of my Columbia professors knew Alain Enthoven. Another important step in my life resulting from a relationship. In that job, I was

programming computer simulation models of war games and logistics having to do with potential wars. I spent endless hours in the basement of the Pentagon programming the most powerful computers of that era – the IBM 7094s.

When I started, the computers were programmed in assembly language, an arduous task, and later we were relieved to use Fortran, a big step up in programming. I really loved it, and I probably should have stayed in that field. I could have become a techy geek.

My work primarily involved building simulation models to determine the least cost logistics systems needed by the military for possible future wars. Our work saved taxpayers billions of dollars but often resulted in solutions, although less costly than alternatives, the military folks did not like. As a result, after Secretary McNamara stepped down, the Systems Analysis office was closed. The military won.⁴

After leaving the Pentagon he toyed with being a professor, and received an appointment at his alma mater, the Columbia Business School. But he later declined the position in favor of a business opportunity as assistant to the President of Penn Dixie Cement Company. The company had been taken over in a proxy fight and the new CEO, Jerome (Jerry) Castle, hired him as his assistant. Paul described it:

I was referred to Jerry by a mutual friend, George Fattell, who had been a classmate of mine at the University of Scranton. At that time, at age 31, Jerry was the youngest CEO of a NY Stock Exchange company. At age 26, I was his assistant.⁵

After just over a year, Paul left Penn Dixie to become the Chief Financial Officer of a small start-up company in New Jersey called Radiation Machinery Corp., a new public company that applied nuclear technology to industrial uses. That job also lasted only a little over a year.

Paul departed both of these initial jobs after a relatively short run because of integrity problems observed in the CEOs of both companies, his bosses. The values imbedded in him since childhood could not accept these conditions.

Both of these CEOs eventually paid the consequences for their improper acts, one ultimately serving time in jail. Jerry completely reformed himself later in life and became an honest and even religious individual. Paul became and remains one of his close friends.

Paul then decided to try a Wall Street job and went to work for a small firm, Graham Loving and Company, led by the company's namesake, who was a technical trader. Paul also secured this job as a result of a relationship. He was brought in to help build an investment banking advisory business. Very quickly he learned that he would rather operate businesses than advise others on how to do it.

After a short time, he was offered a job as the Chief Financial Officer of The Equity Corporation, which had been recently taken over by a small Wall Street team led by Michael Dingman. By coincidence, the recruiter for Mike was Gerry Roche, an old Scranton crony of Paul's at grade school and college. Gerry was the head of Heidrick and Struggles, a national recruiting firm. Once again, a "contact" made the difference. As a footnote, in 1999, Gerry was named "Best Recruiter of the 20th Century" in a poll of several thousand of his peers.

Paul took the job in 1971. Equity Corporation was a closed-end investment company that controlled three public companies (Wheelabrator, Frye and Bell Intercontinental). Within a year, under Mike Dingman's leadership, there was a four-way merger of these three companies and Equity Corp. forming Wheelabrator-Frye, an industrial company. It was (and Paul believes still is) the only four-way merger of public companies in U.S. history. Unlike his quick departure from his earlier jobs, Paul continued to work and later

partner with Mike Dingman (until Mike's death in 2017), and help run the many companies that were spawned by and from Equity Corp. and its affiliates over 46 years.

In an unusual step, driven by the Arab oil embargo in the 1970s and related terrorist threats, in 1975, Wheelabrator-Frye moved its headquarters from New York City to Hampton, New Hampshire. Paul and Sandra built a home in Hampton Falls, NH and moved there with their three young children. It has been their primary residence ever since.

At the same time, Sandra managed the family household, raising three children, and helping her husband's career along, through endless entertaining. Sandra also renewed her teaching career in NH as a volunteer teacher at Lincoln Ackerman School, which the couple's three children attended. She also taught religious instruction (CCD) at St. Michael's Church, the family's parish.

Later Sandra also took up volunteer work in hospice care.

I got involved with hospice early, as a volunteer, because my dad died of cancer. My sister's husband also died of cancer. I felt drawn to it. While still caring for patients, I was kicked upstairs. I became a founder of Seacoast Hospice and a member of the board. Then the woman who was running it became ill. They asked me to run it, so I became President. I did it with the idea that the other people who were on the board were there to help me. Because I said, “This is not a one-person job. This is for all of us to work together to pull it all together.” Given that there were a hundred volunteers, there were many problems in the President’s office, so I had to clean it up. That's my style, working together to get things organized and move on.⁶

The evolution of the Equity Corp took many twists and turns engineered by Mike Dingman, Paul and a few other key managers. There were literally a hundred or more mergers, acquisitions, sales and spin-offs of companies in a variety of industries. These ranged from companies in biotech, financial services, auto parts, sign supplies,

chemicals and technology, as well as real estate projects. Paul's responsibilities kept growing and eventually he became chairman and CEO of some of the family of companies.

In looking at his career as a whole, Paul observed:

I can look at my career and the different jobs that I've had, and they've had all kinds of ups and downs. They then get to a point where I feel I've finished and I move on. I actively ended every job that I've ever had, including Fisher [Scientific], where I was CEO for 15 years. We merged, and I departed. Why? Because the job wasn't as satisfying in the later years as it was earlier. For my particular temperament and the way I like to build business, Fisher was basically getting too big. It was successful and big and getting bigger and bigger, and I didn't enjoy it as much. It became more about administration rather than business, and I didn't feel I could make maximum use of my business skills and talents. And life is short. I want every minute to count. I move on to the next challenge⁷

Beyond Paul's career as an officer and director of various public companies, he also pursued partnerships and investments in private entities in which he was involved. Many of these helped him exercise his entrepreneurial skills. Not all of Paul's companies were successful. In fact, there were even a few bankruptcies. But on balance, his successes exceeded his losses.

After stepping down as an officer of all public companies, Paul led the effort in New Hampshire to change its trust laws to make it the best state in the U.S. for trusts. His goal was to help the state create jobs – a way of showing his appreciation to the state for providing him and his family with such a satisfying place to live and work for decades.

In 2006, Paul's goal was achieved. The New Hampshire trust laws were modified in a major way, making it one of the best states in the U.S. for trusts. Then, Paul's entrepreneurial spirit once again emerged. Together with his partner, Paul Meister, he formed Perspecta Trust company in 2007. After

years of growth, with his usual desire to move on after a dynamic period, the company merged with Jordan Park in 2021.

At the same time, the Giancini gene that was evident in his uncles David (G2 - M) and Dominick (G2 - M) in the pursuit of alternative healthcare, showed up in Paul. He had an interest in vitamins and other natural supplements for many years.

So in 2008, after searching for a supplement company, he jumped at the opportunity to be an owner of Emerson Ecologics, that coincidentally was headquartered in Manchester, NH. It became the largest distributor of nutraceuticals to professionals – like naturopaths and chiropractors. The company did not produce these products, but distributed over 200 professional brands. As usual, Emerson eventually merged with Fullscript, a technological competitor, and in 2022, Paul once again stepped out of his active management leadership role.

Satisfaction in a job well done, as well as the capacity to learn and grow, mattered in ways the first generation of Italian immigrants may not have been able to understand, because of the pressures of their day-to-day concerns. In looking back at his career, Paul came to understand himself, and the importance of human psychology in managing and dealing with people.

I would say the biggest impact on me throughout my career was an appreciation for how important human psychology is. It's only as time went on that I finally began to realize this, and its effect in how you look at people and deal with them. When you approach them from a psychological point of view, you wind up treating people differently. . . . So I transformed from a person who was a tough, hard-driving businessman -- and if somebody wasn't doing their job, let's get somebody else. But then what happens is that the somebody else you get is not perfect either. Sooner or later, you begin to figure out another way to do it. Then you start thinking, "Okay, I need to understand more about this person to determine really what job they should be in."

So later in my life, in terms of nurturing people or placing people in jobs, it has been more about understanding them rather than about how are they performing at that moment. If they're not performing well now, I say, "Okay, that's me. That's not them." That is a huge transformation. That means I have got to figure out . . . what should that person be doing? And can we get that person into a position where they're productive? It's called fit the job to the person, don't force the person to fit the job. This jibes with the old saying –don't try to fit a square peg in a round hole. This is also why I am not big on formal job descriptions. You have to be able to adjust a person's job to their evolving talents.

Where the biggest management problems arise in this approach is when the other person doesn't have a good appreciation or understanding of themselves, which is often the case. They have a vision of what they're good at and you and others have a different vision, and they don't mesh up (the current "360" assessment will tell this). When they mesh up, life is easy. You get them into the right job. When they don't mesh up, life is trouble. . . I put that all in the package of human psychology. So I'd

say that's been the biggest impact of my life experience on my behavior.⁸

The other important aspect of psychology is learning to take responsibility. I have found that when something goes wrong – which is inevitable – there are two categories of people. There are mirror people and finger people.

The mirror people look in the mirror and say, what did I do wrong, or what could I have done to have prevented the problem. The finger people point fingers at others and blame them for the problem.

I'm a mirror person and want to work with similar minded people. They are the most effective.

The same holds true not just in the workplace but in one's personal life. It is a good lesson for all of us to learn on our life's journey – learn to take responsibility.⁹

As a final thought, a successful leader doesn't just lead --- my success is based on being part of the right team. As described above, I left my first three jobs in the business world after a year or so, because I was not on the right team. The leadership CEOs were not great, and more important, lacked integrity.

That changed when I joined Mike Dingman, a talented man with fine integrity. Mike's talents were quite different than mine, and very complementary. As a result, we built a very successful team over the decades.

What Mike and I shared in common was realizing the importance of relationships. We both developed deep relationships in businesses around the world, and in politics, science, academics, arts and other fields.

But for me, the other key player on my team, and the foundation of my successful career, was Sandra. Beyond her carrying the major responsibility for raising, educating and caring for our three children, as well as pursuing her own work and charitable interests, she was

the solid anchor that I could count on to help foster that key to my success – relationships.

As an intelligent, charming and caring person, Sandra was always there alongside me as a co-host for business and social events, both in the U.S., and around the world, and most important to organize dinners and social functions in our beautiful home and elsewhere.

Our two longest running business/social events were our annual Bocce tournament weekend (described in Chapter 3) that went on for 25 years, and endless entertaining in our Parterre Box at the Met Opera, encompassing 10-20 performances per year for over 30 years.

I was blessed to have Sandra by my side throughout my life beginning in high school. Be it in family life, or work life, we have truly lived up to our marriage covenant – the two shall become one.

¹ Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 30 January 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

² Paul and Sandra (Gaudenzi) Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 12 October 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³ Paul and Sandra (Gaudenzi) Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 23 March 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁴ Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 30 January 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone and as relayed by Paul Montrone in writing on 2-4-18.

⁵ Paul and Sandra (Gaudenzi) Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 12 October 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁶ Paul and Sandra (Gaudenzi) Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 12 October 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁷ Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 30 January 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone. With further commentary added by Paul Montrone 23 March 2018.

⁸ Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 30 January 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁹ As related by Paul Montrone, 15 July 2021