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Of the original 252 audio-recordings in this collection, 212 of these tapes were transcribed around the time of the original recordings (between 1966 and 1978). In 2012, Cabbage Tree Solutions was contracted to create transcriptions for the remaining tapes. Corrections to and clarifications for all transcriptions are welcome, especially for names and places. Please contact Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, for questions. askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu

Throughout the transcript, all references to *Castell' Marrone* should be *Castel Morrone*. Thanks to Davide Bernardo and Mariano Villano, RcmLive (<http://www.radiorcmlive.it/>), for the corrections.

TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW WITH

John Sparco

832 Woodlawn Ave.

Wilmington, Delaware

Interviewed by
Francis J. Fierro
Jan. 29, 1968

Transcribed by
Irene H. Long
Winter, 1969

All right, now. Where were you born?

Italy.

In Italy?

Yeh, five miles a from Naples.

Five miles from Naples?

Yeh.

What was the name of the town where you were born?

Caserta.

Caserta?

Yeh.

Now, were you born in the city?

Uh, wait a minute, Castell'Marrone that's a five miles
from Naples.

Castell' Marrnone?

Yes.

Oh, this is a village in the mountains?

Yeh.

That a is near Caserta?

Yeh, near Caserta, yeh.

And this in turn is near Naples, right?

Yeh, yeh.

O.K. What year were you born?

Why...a...1891.

1891?

Yeh.

O.K. Now, how old were you when you decided to leave
Italy?

Why.....a.....1907, I was, I was a fifteen years old.

You were fifteen years old?

Yeh.

All right. Now, what did you do when you were in Italy as a boy? Did you work anywhere?

Yes, I did work.

What kind of work did you do?

Well, I tell a what I did. I went a pick a lot of wild grass in the corn field.

What did you pick the wild grass for?

Well...a...long side the corn field...corn you see there was plenty of corn, there was wild grass, grass; and my uncle say go pick that. See?

In other words just to pick the weeds out?

Pick a weeds, yeh.

Oh, O.K. Then you worked on a farm?

Yeh, that's a farm, like a farm -----.

Now, did you work there until you came to the United States?

Yes.

Did you ever go to school in Italy?

No.

Did you ever start to learn a trade in Italy?

No.

What made you want to come to the United States?

My father and my brother was here.

Your father and your brother were here?

Yeh.

A...was your....they were, was your brother older than you were?

Yes.

What was your brother's name?

Joe.

Joseph, O.K. Now, did your father stay in this country?

He stood here for...with me, then he went back.

Then he went back to Italy?

Yeh, he went back.

And he stayed in Italy?

Yeh, he stayed in Italy.

All right, so the reason you came to the United States then is because your father and your brother were here.

Yeh, that's a right.

All right now, where were they staying? Were they staying in Wilmington?

They stay down a.....815 Lincoln Street here.

Eighth and Lincoln?

Eighth and Lincoln, yeh, in a that little a short street, you know. There - a little short hand (?) street, they call it.

Ah, yes.

It's 815 Lincoln over there.

I see. All right. Now, how did you leave Castellammare to go to Naples? Now, I assume you went to Naples.

Yeh.

You left Italy from Naples to come to the United States?

Yeh, yeh with a.....buggy and a horse.

Horse and buggy?

Yeh, horse and buggy.

O.K., you left Castellammare in a horse and buggy?

Yeh, yeh.

And you went to Caserta?

Yes.

Now, did you catch a train in Caserta?

Yes, we catch a train go to Naples.

And you went to Naples?

Yes.

Now, when you got to Naples was the ship waiting?

Yes.

Did you just get aboard ship?

Yeh, ship wait.....right a....I went a right on a the
ship.

You went right aboard the ship?

Yeh.

Do you remember the name of the ship?

Yeh, Antonio della Bazza cause see I call.

Antonio de la.....

Basso.

Della Bazza?

Yeh.

Was it an Italian ship then?

Yeh, yeh.

It was an Italian ship.

Yeh, yes.

O.K. Now, when you left Italy, was it summer or winter
or what time of year was it?

Well, it was a winter. See, I, I land a here Twenty
of April. See, when I got a here was snow 'bout that.....'bout three
feet snow on the ground.

In April?

In April, yeh.

Tell me now, how long did it take to get from Naples?

Well, where did you land in the United States anyhow?

I land in New York.

How long did it take you to get from Naples to New York?

Twenty-one days.

Twenty-one days.

Yeh.

Now, you left Italy....

Yeh.

In March or did you....

In March, yeh.

And you got here in April?

Yeh.

And there was s....

The third of March I left over there and I come here
twenty-first ...a...a...twenty-first, yeh, twenty-first....

Twenty-first of April.

April.

And there was snow on the ground?

Snow on the ground.

I see.

'bout two, three feet snow on the ground.

Now, when you got to New York...

Yeh?

How were you met? Were, did your brother and father
meet you in New York?

No, I had address where I come from.

Uh huh.

I got in the stationthe...see, I had somebody,
you know, I had a fellow, you know. You had to have somebody come
here cause we weren't old enough.

Yes.

And he took me to station. I got on train. Then he went one way, I went other way.

In other words once you got on the train, you were on your own?

Yeh, that's right.

How did you know where to get off?

Well, I, I had address of people.

I see you just.....

I show conductor everything.

And...

I had address.

O.K. Now, I want to ask you another question about what happened before you got on the train.

Yeh?

Now, when you got off the boat, did the customs inspector stop you or anything?

No.

What did you do, just come off the boat and go right straight?

Just came off.....

Didn't they give you a health examination or anything?

No, nothing, no.

Nothing?

No, not that I remember of.

I see. You just got off and went right to the train station?

Yes, I just got off, yes.

And got on the train. How did you buy your ticket.... for the train?

The train? Well...a...I tell you ...I...wonder if I could remember I hada pass come a straight to a Wilmington, you know.

In other owrds in Italy you had the boat ticket and train ticket and everything?

Yeh, yeh, train a ticket go right straight a Wilmington.

O.K. Now, once you got to Wilmington, what train station did you stop? What, what train a station did you get off?

Oh, I can't remember that.

You don't remember if it was Pennsylvania or B.&O.?

Oh, Pennsylvania.

It was Pennsylvania Station then?

Yeh, it was Pennsylvania down there. I know. I took a...a buggy and horse. I took me right down Eighth and Lincoln.

Oh?

815 Lincoln.

In other words you got off at Front Street?

Yeh.

And you got a horse and buggy?

Yeh, and it come a right straight to here. I took out address, show him address where I have to come and he took me right over here.

Uh huh. How long did it take to get from the train station to Eighth and Lincoln by horse and buggy?

Took about an hour.

Took about an hour.

That's all.

Uh huh. Now, when, when you got to Eighth and Lincoln, did you have a job waiting for you or anything?

No.

What did you do when you got here?

Well...after one week I stay with my uncle. My uncle he give me orders what to do. He says, "I want you wash a floor three times a week, chop a woods and a polish the stove." We had black stove, you know.

Uh huh.

That's all.

And this is what you did for a your room and board?

Yeh.

In other words you took care of the house?

Yeh, I took care the floor, you know, wash floor, you know, chop woods, anda...and a polish a stove, keep a clean, you know.

I see.

I done that for three years.

And then after three years what did you do?

Well, I had an uncle over New Jersey in a farm. He took me over the farm. I done farm a work over there. And a pick a pick a strawberry, peas, lima beans, and a all fruits over there I was pickin'. Then I learn a how a milk a cow. I start, I got up four o'clock in the morning and milk a cow every morning.

Uh huh.

I done that about a I think about a two years and a half. I got a there in the farm.

I see. Then you left the farm?

And then a left the farm and come back and then a my uncle got me a job in a shop.

Which shop was this?

This a shop used to be fiber work down a Tenth and Union here.

Tenth and Union, there was a fiber mill there?

Yeh, fiber mill was a....

Do you remember the name of the fiber mill?

Delaware Hard Fiber Company.

Delaware Hard Fiber Company?

Yeh.

I see. Now, you've been a now, when you got to the point where you got this job with Delaware Hard Fiber Company.....

Yeh.

You had already been in this country then for about five years right?

Oh yes, sure.

You had been here about five years?

Well....a...let see, let me figure out, I done that three years.

Three years?

Three years I stood with my uncle work around the home over there, chop woods, scrub a floor.

Uh huh.

A three years did that. Then he, then my uncle he find out I was do nothing. He has a farm; he took me over there. Then I stood about two years and a half over in that farm.

All right now, that was a different uncle, right?

Oh yeh, that was two brothers, see.

Oh?

Two brothers, two brothers, you know it was.

Yes, what was their name?

Caserta, one name Tony Casert, the other name Frank Casert.

I see now. Frank Caserta was the farmer?

Yeh, he was the New Jersey.

I see. All right. Now, during this time, this a five years....

Five years and a half.

Five and one half years, did you ever go to night school or anything?

Yes.

You did go to night school?

Yeh, I went a six months a, a night school a here.

What did they teach you in night school?

Well, they a teach me how to read and write. See, you know, I learn a"ABC." And they teach me all....read and write.

Did you get your citizenship papers then, too?

Yeh, yes sir, yes sir.

During that first five years?

Yeh.

Oh, good. Now, what did you do when you weren't working?

Oh.....

For example, did you go out anywhere? Did you do anything?

When I work you mean?

No, a after you finsihed working.

Finished working?

Did you go to the movies, dances, or anything?

Oh yeh, sure. Me ----young boys, you know.

Uh huh.

I didn't drink too much anyhow, never go beer gardens them times. I didn't drink much. .

I see. Now a during this time, a how, what was life like in Wilmington during those first.....

Oh, it was all woods over here.

In other words this area that....

Yeh.

Was all woods.

Was all woods. See all the boys, we stand down the corner.

Uh huh. Now, where was this now? The corner of Eighth and Lincoln?

Down there, Eighth and Lincoln, Seventh and Lincoln and Sixth and Lincoln. All boys's. We got together, stand a on the corner. Then we, then a see used to be gang. You say, "Brown town Gang can't come here."

The Browntown?

Browntown. .

This is Browntown, use.

And, and the Hillside and they call it Hillside, we couldn't go down there. Be fight all the time.

Oh, really?

Yahhhhhhhh. (Laughs) Yahhh,

O.K. Now, while you were at Delaware Hard Fiber Company, what kind of work did you do there?

You know the, you know what the fiber is?

Yes.

Ever see that ----- . I used to work a, they call it ----- . You know what the ----- is?

Yes.

See, see, I used to make that ----- a----- . See the six feet long, yeh. Cut 'em in square on old saw. They call 'em

bench saw.

A bench saw?

Yeh, bench saw. They cut 'em in square. I used to make all kind of size.

Uh huh.

One sixteen go in up two inch and a half.

From one sixteenth of an inch to two and one half inches?

Yeh.

The.....

All a size, yeh.

I see.

Yeh.

Now a, how long did you run this a machine? How long did you ...a...

How long I stay there?

Yes.

Well, a, I think a altogether thirty years.

You stayed there thirty years?

Yeh, oh yeh.

You stayed there a till....let's see...you came here in 1907, right?

Right. Nineteen seven.

And you went to work there 1912?

Yeh.

So you stayed there till about 1942.

Yeh, see I work, I work a different place too, you know, down a American Vulcanized Fiber, too, you know.

I see.

All, all, all 'bout, 'bout, 'bout a forty years alto-

together, I guess.

Well, how long did you stay with the Delaware Hard Fiber Company?

Why a I stood there about a thirty-five years.

You stayed about thirty-five years?

Yeh, over here, and down a American Vulcanized I work five years there.

I see. Now....

That's a forty years.

Delaware, Delaware Hard Fiber used to be right on, on Union Street?

Over here used to be, and then they moved to Marshallton.

They, they moved to Marshallton and....

Marshallton.

And you moved to Marshallton?

Yeh, I went to Marshallton.

Now, didn't they close the plant at Marshallton, too?

No, they didn't a close it. They sold out.

They sold out?

They sold out. Continental Fiber got it.

Right, in Newark?

Newark.

Continental Fiber in Newark?

Yeh, yeh.

Now, did you still stay with Contiental Fiber after they sold out?

They want take me over here. I was buying this home. My wife she, she won't go.

Uh huh.

On account of she had mother, father living over there, Tenth Street.

Yes.

And a, and I got a job. I got a job. My a, my brother-in-law, he was a work, was, was a building that duPont Building a Sixth and Shipley. I got a job over there, help a stone, stone mason.

Uh huh.

He set the stones.

Yes.

He was setting stone, you know, I used to help him help a...set stone. I work a job 'bout three months; and then a, then a, then a work there three months, I turn around, there was a ----- ---- when I quit.. See, my brother-in-law didn't want me to quit. He say we got another job. Well, then I got job down a Bancroft's to here, see.

Bancroft?

Yeh, I work thirty years over there.

O.K., thirty years at Bancroft.

Yeh, yeh.

Uh....well...look when did you stop working for the fiber company, do you remember?

Why a.....let's see, I think it was a 1916, something like that.

Oh, in 1916 you stopped working for the fiber company?

Yeh.

And then is when you went to work for your brother-in-law down Sixth and Shipley?

Yeh. No, no, when that a plant sold out. It was 1929 when I went a work with my brother-in-law.

Oh, in other words, you worked in the fiber mill till 1929.

Yeh.

I see. Now, you worked with your brother-in-law till what?

I work about a, I think, I work about, about six months, I think.

About six months?

Yeh.

And then you went to work for Bancroft?

Yeh.

And you worked there until when, about 1959?

Yeh, that's right.

So there at Bancroft you stayed thirty years?

Thirty years.

A long time. Tell me something, when a, during the years that you spent here, did you ever notice that maybe you were treated maybe differently than other people? Did you find that Italians were discriminated against in any way?

Oh, you mean how they treat the Italian, you mean?

Yes, how did they treat Italians?

Oh man, that's a terrible.

Really?

They call me "Guinea," "Wop," all the time; and, and a, and a lot of Italians killed them Irish a people.

Really?

Yahhhhhhhh, lot of them.

It, it was the Irishman that treated the Italians badly?

Yah! Them Irish call it "Guinea," "Wop," all the time.

I see. Well, what did the Italians do when they called them these names?

Don't do anything cause a, you know, sometime you take a bunch of them Irishmen, you by yourself, what can you say?

Uh huh.

You say anything. If you say anything, they kill you. See?

Yes.

Like I was walking a, I walk down in town lot of times when I was a young a boy, you know, walk in town. "Here the Guinea, Wop a coming." (Laughs) What can you do? Oh, you see eight or ten Irishmen stand on the corner. You can't say nothing.

O.K. Now, during those early years when you were here, you came to this country before World War One started, right?

Yeh, yeh, sure. I was here World War.

Did you go in the army during World War One?

No, I was exempt on the war on the job.

Oh.

I was a, I was a First Class A, they exempted me on the job. I was a doing government work.

Oh, really. What kind of work was this?

Oh the, the fiber they use them fibers.

Fibers, really?

Yeh.

So you were exempted from the draft and you never went in?

Never went in. I was ex.....

Could you notice any changes taking place in the community where you lived in Wilmington here? Could you notice any changes during World War One?

Yes, there change, big change.

What a, how would you characterize the change? What would you say, what kind of a change was it?

Well, see you take a First World War. When it began, we were...a...miserable. You know, when I started to work, I was making three dollars a week. See?

Where's this, at the fiber mill?

Fiber mill, yeh! Three dollars a week! After while it went up four, than a five, then a First World War come. Wages goin' up little by little all the time. See?

Uh huh.

See?

Yes.

Then a, when a 1917, December the sixth, I got married I was a making, I was a making twenty-one dollars a week. See they went up, see?

Was, was that considered a good wage in those days?

Oh, that was good wages then.

It was good wages.

Oh well, for me it is.

Yes.

You know, for me it was.

O.K. Now, when a, when World War One ended, what happened in general? Did the economy keep going? Was work still plentiful? Was there still alot of work after World War One?

Well, there was still plenty of work. After while then start to drop all - all - all once. The 'pression came, see.

This was in the twenties the Depression came?

Yeh, yeh.

Now before the Depression came or even simultaneously

with it, did you find Italians were being treated better after World War One?

Oh yeh, they treat me better ----- you know, you know. If he was an Italian, he treat 'em better every year.

In other words things were getting better for you, right?

Yes.

O.K. Now, in the early nineteen twenties, Mussolini started to come to power in Italy.

Yeh.

Right. What was it like over here when he started to come to power? How were the people? How did the people react?

Oh, talking about a all the time about a him.

They thought he was great, he was a good - that he.....

Yeh, he was a good man.

They did? They thought he was such a great man?

Well...he...he made a lot of new...new...he renewed a lot of things new over there, see.

In other words he did a lot of building over there, is that right?

And he put, he put everybody out to school, you know. You know he take a people and make 'em learn.

All right. In other words he a was making one get an education?

'body learn how to read and write and a..... Yeh, and they was here, it was different. They, you know. When Mussolini came in anybody got to know how to read and write over there.

I see.

Yeh.

Now what did people over here do to support Mussolini?

For example, when he invaded Ethiopia?

Yeh.

Now, take the American government took a position against this. How about the Italians here? How did they feel about it?

Well, a talkin' about it, but they couldn't do anything.

Yeh, well, I know; but did the, were the Italians in favor of his invading Ethiopia?

Oh, Italians was favor of Mussolini, but they couldn't do anything.

Yeh, well, they were; the Italians were in favor of Mussolini?

Yeh, yeh.

Whatever he did was all right?

Yeh, yeh.

I mean this was a general feeling?

Yeh, yeh.

Tell me, were there any fascists clubs that were formed here in Wilmington?

Oh yeh, at the club, yeh. You know, all there were all kind of clubs. Was, was that building down a Lincoln Street called Mister Weaver's.

Oh, the Neighborhood House.

Yeh, the Neighborhood House. Oh boy, that was a club.

What club was that? Was that the Democratic Club?

It's a, it's a after the Democrat Club.

Uh huh. Now, what did they do in the Democratic Club?

Play a cards. Drink 'n eat. Fight all the time.

Really?

Oh yeh, yes, yes sir. (Laughter)

Used to have a good time, huh?

Yeh. (Laughing)

Well, what else did they do besides play cards, drink and eat and fight?

Uh?

Did they, did they a political, was it a real political organization there?

Oh yeh, when they had meetings they did, yeh.

When, did you belong to the Democratic Club?

No, I didn't belong. I was too small to get in there. I was, I was afraid. Sure there was a people, there.....was swords that big over there.

Really?

Yeh.

Used to carry knives?

Knives and guns, everything.

Well....

I join Eagles, see. I was an Eagle.

You joined the Eagles.

Yeh, I'm in the Eagles all the time. I never go fool around them Italian Clubs. They fight too much.

Is that.....(Laughter)

Yeh.

How about the Republican Club? That was on Sixth Street between Lincoln and Union. Did you ever go to the Republican Club?

Uh, I used to go in there once in awhile, but....

Was that, was that anything like the Democratic Club?

I was too young. They fight in there just the same.

Same thing, huh?

Yehhhhhh!

No difference?

You ought to see them Italian people, the old Italian, fights.....oh my, terrible!

The old Italians used to fight bad, huh?

Oh, they kill one another.

Really?

Yehhhhhh!

What did they do, fight with knives?

Knife, gun, anything. They didn't fight with them fists. If they fight with fists, it's all right. Used to fight with a gun and a knife.

Did you ever belong to the Sons of Italy?

No.

You never, you never joined the Sons of Italy?

I joined the Eagles; that's all I had.

You just joined the Eagle, Eagle Club?

That's all.

Now I asked you if there was ever fascists clubs. Did you ever hear of the Fascist League of North America?

What you mean? I don't know what you mean.

Well, Fascisti.

Fascisti, noooo.

Did they have a very strong club in Wilmington, Little Italy here?

A, that I couldn't tell you, to tell you the truth.

Did they ever have any parades or anything? Do you remember?

Not a, not a, not a Fascisti parade, no sir.

They never, never had one.

I never remember if they did.

Uh huh. O.K. I was just wondering to see, you know, what kind of support the people gave to a, a Mussolini. Now, I do remember when I was a boy they used to have rallies at Sons of Columbus Hall.

Eh, yeh, they still have Sons of Columbus Hall.

Yes, they still have Sons of Columbus, but they used to have fascist rallies there where they had fascists coming from all over to make speeches and people gave their rings and everything. Do you remember that?

No, I don't.

You don't remember any of that?

No.

O.K.....now, you already told me that for recreational activities you used to a maybe go to movies with some of the young fellows or a just walk. Stay on a corner, things like that?

Yeh, yeh.

Ever go to any dances or anything?

Oh yeh, sure.

Where did they hold their dances around here?

Well, you ever seen that, that butcher shop over here on aMessina.

Messina's, yeh.

That was be a dancing hall over there.

Was that a dance hall?

Dancing hall -----.

Let's see. That's Seventh and Lincoln, right?

Yeh, Seventh and Lincoln -----.

What was it called, do you remember?

That was ----- Hall. Not a hall over here,
over Sixth Street. (name called in background) Yeh, the Fierro.
Republican Club?

Yeh, yeh.

It was the Republican Club?

Yeh, yeh.

Well, what was the hall, the dance hall called on
Seventh and Lincoln.

Oh, over here Seventh and Lincoln?

Where Savery and Cooke is now.

I think it was, it was a Democratic Hall too.

Oh, was that a Democratic Club too?

Yeh, I think it so.

All right. Now, when you worked at the fiber mill,
how did you get to work every day?

Oh, I get trolley car.

Take the trolley car?

Yes, trolley car. We use to have trolley car. Get
'em Sixth and Lincoln. Take you right down Marshallton.

It'd take you right to Marshallton?

Yeh.

O.K. What would you say was the center of your life?
Around what did your life revolve? For example, right for myself
I could say my life mainly revolves around my family and my job,
you know. Uh, this I'd say is probably the center of my life.
What would you say the center of your life in those early days?

Oh, we livin' in heaven now, that what you mean?

No, what a, what were the most important things for
you when you were a young man growing up? Would you say.....

(Voice in background says, "Working.") Working was the center of

your life then. Working probably took up most of your time.

Yeh, I used to work day and night when I worked down Bancroft's.

Really? About how many hours did you work?

Yeh, I worked as high as thirty.....thirty-three hours ...a....a lot of weeks all right - straight.

Thirty-three hours straight?

Straight, yeh!

Straight through, without a break?

(Chuckles) We, see, we work in there. See, workin' four, workin' there, We give a break maybe two tend the machine, the other one, two go sleep for hour, you know.

Uh huh.

Then, then they wake up, we get the break. Go sleep for hour.

But you'd still be staying right there on the job?

Oh yeh, sure.

Well.

Yeh.

All right. O.K. Now, uh, what was the life here like for most Italians between the end of World War One and the beginning of the Depression? How would you say it was? Would you say life was O.K.?

Oh yeh, it was O.K. Me, I tell you the truth, I always had a job work, see.

Yes.

See, for me at least it was all right.

Now, between this time, between the end of the First World War and the start of the Depression....

Uh huh.

Prohibition was passed. The Prohibition Law was passed..

Yes.

What would you say the passing of that Prohibition Law did to Little Italy here? Would you say it affected it in any way at all?

It didn't affect me. I tell you the truth. I always.....

No, but I mean did it affect the community in general?

Oh, it affect lot of people, yes sir.

How would you say it affected them?

They, they, they didn't work. They can't get money.

Eh, nothing.

No, eh, I'm talking about Depression, not Depression now, I'm talking about Prohibition.

Prohibition.

Yeh, you know, when they, they made the sale or purchase of alcoholic beverages illegal. In other words you couldn't

You mean when the country went dry? What?

Yes, when the whole country went dry.

Yeh.

How did it affect Little Italy here?

They used to be lot of bootleggers.

They just bootleg?

Yeh, bootleggers.

In other words.....

Make a their own liquor in a the house.

Uh huh. Did they sell it?

Sure sell it.

Uh huh.

Sure.

Would you say there were more people who drank after Prohibition than there were before Prohibition?

I say a more them drink after Prohibition.

(Laughter) You say.....

Yeh, more them drink after.

In other words, what that law did was make a lot of drinkers out of.....

The law knew all about it. They see that like. They turn the country wet again.

Yes.

See? Practically everybody was making alcohol that time.

Uh huh.

I made myself for some, too. I no even drink. Couldn't buy it.

Couldn't buy it. You had to make your own, huh?

Yeh, I got, I got couple boxes raisin over there, put little water, boil a little, more sugar in, let it ferment for awhile then, then a strain 'em, then a distill 'em.

Then distill it?

'istill, you know -----pot. I turn the lid a upside down, the air tight, and a I had a twenty-five minutes on that stove over there. I got a quart alcohol. (Laughs)

I guess everybody was making it in those days.

I learn a next door. Man next door used to make it.

Uh huh.

Then I see the way they make it, I make it myself.

(Laughs)

O.K. Now, when the Depression hit, when the Depression started.....

Yeh.

A lot of people were affected by this, right?

Oh yeh, yes.

I mean a lot of people were out of work.

Yes.

Did this effect you in any way?

No, long's I know, I was working pretty steady; but I always a did haveyou know...always had a little change come in.

Uh huh.

I always was a workin'.

O.K. Well, fine. Now, when did you notice the next big change...a...I suppose the next big change was when Roosevelt came to office, right?

Yes, yes, when Roosevelt....put the country wet.

Yes.

And eh.....make a big change. Everybody was a workin' everything. You know the breweries start to working and every other thing here.

So this in effect caused jobs, a lot more jobs than had existed before, right?

Yeh, sure.

O.K., fine. Now, when a World War Two was about to start - you remember when World War Two started, huh?

I guess. World War Two started.....

In 1941?

I think, I think it was in 1941. Yeh, I think it was 1941.

Now, when the United States went to war with Italy, a did this naturally affect a the people in the Italian community?

Not that I know of.

Did it make life any rougher for people in the Italian community to.....

No, I don't think so. I don't think so.

You don't think it affected anybody at all?

No, have just a good time.

O.K.

Yeh.

What would you say is the greatest change that you've seen in the United States since you first came over here?

....My oh my, I tell you what a big change. We're a living in a heaven now. We was a living in a hell when I came from the old country.

Uh huh.

Oh man! I want, I tell you the truth, I want go back with my father. I didn't like it here.

You didn't like it here?

Nooooooo, didn't like it! I was living better in the old country.

Well, what was there about it that you didn't like when you first came here?

Well, couldn't get what I want.

What do you mean?

Well, well, I work in the house over there and then get little cup coffee in it, little bit milk and a piece of bread. That's all I eat.

That's all you had to eat?

That's all.

Was it that way because your uncle didn't give your any more or because a

Ah that's all he had. He wasn't - he had - no, no.
That's all he had. He just didn't have any more to
give you?

He had noting, nothing, nothing else. See?

I see.

Well, I ...a....I....it was pretty near about, about
two years I, I, I eat coffee and piece bread.

Really?

Oh yes, yes.

Was that your only food during the whole day?

That's all I had. He, he didn't have no money.

That's all you had to eat for the whole day, is that
it?

I have. I don't know what they have.

I see. Now..... now, what difference do you see in
the treatment of Italian ...a...between now and how you were treated
when you first came here?

By, I'm, we're living in a heaven.

In other words it's a lot better now?

Yehhhhhhhh. They're living in heaven. I'm just a
like these fellows come from the old country, the old country now.
Let's see, they got a automobile over here. They got their own
home, own home. Oh, ...a... they're in heaven.

Yes, now, when your children first started to go to
public school, now did your children always go to public school
here?

Yeh.

How were they treated as being children of Italians?
Did they treat them all right?

Yeh, they treat them all right.

Or were they treated badly or discriminated against in any way?

Yeh, I think they treat them all right. I never a complained.

Uh huh. Never had any, anything?

I never had any complaints about it.

O.K. Fine. Well, do you have anything more you'd like to add to what we've gone through here?

No, that's all. That's all I can tell you. (Laughs)

O.K. Have you ever felt like you'd want to go back to Italy outside of the when, outside of when you first came here, when you didn't feel that life was too good?

Oh no.. I never felt like a...

Never felt like you wanted to go back?

No.

No desire at all to go back?

No. I...see...a...tell you the truth, my father, I don't....one sister over there and a my mother, father and if I could a go back when a they was a living, I would but at that time when they were living I, I couldn't 'ford to go back. Had small kids.

Yes.

I had tend my kids and my wife. I couldn't go back. If they were living now, I would go back any time. (sad laughter)

O.K.