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Mrs. Marie Alvini

[0:00:00]

Interviewer: Okay. What year were you born?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: 1901.

Interviewer: 1901? Where were you born?

Mrs. Alvini: Giulianova.

Interviewer: Giulianova? Where is Giulianova? Where is Giulianova located?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: Province of Teramo.

Mrs. Alvini: Teramo.

Interviewer: Teramo. In Teramo?

Mrs. Alvini: Uh-hmmm.

Interviewer: And Teramo is in Abruzzo, right?

Mrs. Alvini: Abruzzo, yes.

Interviewer: What did your father do in Italy?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: He was a farmer?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did he own his own farm?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: He own his own farm?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: He was a tenant farmer.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: What were conditions like in Italy on the farm?

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: The conditions are rather poor?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, poor.

Interviewer: In what way?

Mrs. Alvini: What way? Because I don't know, it might be, I wasn't brave enough.

Interviewer: But you produce enough to eat.

Mrs. Alvini: Produce, produce.

Interviewer: You couldn't produce enough.

Mrs. Alvini: No, no, no.

Interviewer: How did you split whatever you produced with the owner of the land.

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: You had split everything, 50-50, half and half?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: What sort of things that you grow in the farm?

Mrs. Alvini: Corn, wheat, anything.

Interviewer: Tomatoes?

Mrs. Alvini: Tomatoes, peppers...

Interviewer: Potatoes.

Mrs. Alvini: Potatoes, grape.

Interviewer: A little bit of everything.

Mrs. Alvini: Everything, everything. Beans.

Interviewer: Did you do this by hand or did you have machinery?

Mrs. Alvini: I have by hands, and a machine...

Interviewer: So everything by hand?

Mrs. Alvini: Everything by hands.

Interviewer: How much land had you work?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: Forty acres.

Interviewer: About 40 acres of land all work by hand?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, by hand.

Interviewer: How many people working with 40 acres?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: Your father?

Mrs. Alvini: Wait, after one have come in *[inaudible] [0:02:35]*. Another one died and

have the new one. He has three brothers.

Interviewer: So your father and three brothers really worked in 40 acres.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. [Foreign language] My brother went to war.

Interviewer: Your brother went to war?

Mrs. Alvini: With for four years.

Interviewer: Four years.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: He was wounded twice at the back?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. I have to come home. It's still far.

Interviewer: He still works in the farm?

Mrs. Alvini: Yes.

Interviewer: Did you go to school in Italy?

Mrs. Alvini: No, I didn't go to school because [inaudible] [0:03:18]. My father wants to

send me this school. My mother died. I have to work at home.

Interviewer: How old were you when your mother died?

Mrs. Alvini: I think I was seven or eight.

Interviewer: About seven or eight years old?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: And so, your father didn't want to send you to school?

Mrs. Alvini: No, no.

Interviewer: Okay. Now...

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: Your brother did go to school then?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, all the boys were sent to school. The woman was not sent to school.

They said they work at home.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, you said the land was rather hard to work and you didn't get

too much from it.

Mrs. Alvini: No.

Interviewer: Did you use fertilizers on the land or anything?

Mrs. Alvini: We didn't use a lot of it, that's why.

Interviewer: You didn't use too much fertilizer?

Mrs. Alvini: No.

Interviewer: How did you plow the land? Did they use a horse?

Mrs. Alvini: A horse, a cow, we have a cow...

Unidentified voice: Oxen.

Interviewer: Oxen.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: The [inaudible] [0:04:22] from the oxen was used for the...

Interviewer: And that was the only fertilizer you used?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. And they used [inaudible] [0:04:29].

Interviewer: How many oxen did you have?

Mrs. Alvini: What?

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: Oh, I think we have six or seven. I don't know. At that time, I think we had

10.

Interviewer: Anywhere from six to ten oxen then.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Did you sell the young oxen or did you grow then?

Mrs. Alvini: Some are grown, some [inaudible] [0:04:51].

Interviewer: Did you ever sell any of them?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

[0:05:02]

Interviewer: But did you kill any to eat?

Mrs. Alvini: No, we don't kill it.

Interviewer: You have to use them for work so you...?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, work [inaudible] [0:05:11].

Interviewer: All right. How did you make money? Did you -- what about extra

money?Did you...?

Mrs. Alvini: Extra money? Extra money. My extra money -- we sell some cow, we sell

some lamb, eggs, chicken.

Interviewer: What else? Did you sell some land and some cow to make money?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Supposed you want a dress, did you ask your father for some money?

Mrs. Alvini: My father has some money, he give it to me, he give it to me. I have one

[inaudible] [0:05:52].

Interviewer: You went down to the river and got rocks? Now, what did you do with the

rocks?

Mrs. Alvini: Rocks to make for different -- for the war *[inaudible] [0:06:09]*.

Interviewer: Yes, but did you sell the rocks?

Mrs. Alvini: No, the...

Interviewer: Did you sell them to the contractor to get...?

Mrs. Alvini: No, [Foreign language].

Interviewer: The contractor [inaudible] [0:06:24].

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: The owner of the land. So they went down by the river stream which

flowed behind their farm and they got these rocks, stones and they would give them to the owner, sell them to the owner. And he in the turn would

sell them to the contractors for building purposes.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: They used to pay them 10 cents a day for [inaudible] [0:06:48].

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Would they carry one stone at a time?

Mrs. Alvini: One stone. They have...

Interviewer: Basket?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: They still have weaker basket up the stones and put it on their heads and

carry it to the owner's house for sale.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: Yeah. In other words, sometimes your bother used to sell the stones in the

town to sell them.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, the sand...

Interviewer: And he would -- the sand from the riverbed?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, he sell it too [inaudible] [0:07:37] to buy something for the young

people.

Interviewer: What were your duties around the house?

Mrs. Alvini: Everything.

Interviewer: Okay. Well...

Mrs. Alvini: Cook, cleaner, work in the farm, everything.

Interviewer: What about the sheep, do they run by themselves?

Mrs. Alvini: Sheep, I have to go watch if sheep [inaudible] [0:07:54].

Interviewer: You have to do, in other words, the cooking, the cleaning?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: And watch the sheep?

Mrs. Alvini: I work in the farm.

Interviewer: And work the farm?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, I have [Foreign Language]. Corn. They have to go by hands

[inaudible] [0:08:11].

Interviewer: You have to hold it by hand. Cultivate it by hand.

Mrs. Alvini: *[inaudible] [0:08:14]*.

Interviewer: You have the -- you have about five blocks long in the land.

Mrs. Alvini: I have [inaudible] [0:08:33].

Interviewer: Hold them together one man and one woman would haul the ground.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: One row at a time, they would have partners. One man and one woman,

the man would break the ground and the woman would come afterwards...

Mrs. Alvini: I have to [Foreign language].

Interviewer: The man would break and then initially the woman come along and

chops them in smaller pieces.

Mrs. Alvini: Not smaller piece [inaudible] [0:09:04].

Interviewer: Oh, in other words, each person [inaudible] [0:09:12].

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Oh, I see. Did you ever travel anywhere when you were younger? Did you

leave your hometown?

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: I went to Saint Gabriel's shrine.

Interviewer: Which is 12 hours, which is equivalent.

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:09:39].

Interviewer: Coste Lamar?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: You went there too?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, I see some of the [inaudible] [0:09:58].

Interviewer: How long did it take to go up there? In Coste Lamar, how long?

[0:10:06]

Mrs. Alvini: Oh, *[inaudible] [0:10:07]*.

Interviewer: In other words you went there [inaudible] [0:10:18] horse and wagon?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long did it take to get there in the horse and wagon?

Mrs. Alvini: I think it would take four hours.

Interviewer: Four to five hours?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: In horse and wagon?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: Ancona.

Interviewer: Ancona?

Mrs. Alvini: Ancona.

Unidentified voice: [inaudible] [0:10:39].

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: Why did you go there?

Mrs. Alvini: I used to see some friends.

Interviewer: Just to visit some friends?

Mrs. Alvini: *[inaudible] [0:10:50]*.

Interviewer: And you visit shrines?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. [Foreign language]

Interviewer: [inaudible] [0:11:00]?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: What is that?

Mrs. Alvini: It used to be a convent.

Interviewer: Oh, convent.

Mrs. Alvini: Convent.

Unidentified voice: *[inaudible] [0:11:11]*.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: She has -- there's a shrine there for our Lady of Sorrows. Is that it? You

went there to visit that?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. [Foreign language]

Interviewer: You went to Rome too?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, I visited Rome.

Interviewer: Why did you go to Rome? Did you go there to visit...?

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:11:44].

Interviewer: Did you visit the *[inaudible] [0:11:46]*?

Mrs. Alvini: Three times. One time [inaudible] [0:11:50].

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Alvini: And other time when [inaudible] [0:11:57].

Interviewer: When did you first meet your husband?

Mrs. Alvini: Oh, he lives close at my house.

Interviewer: Oh, he live close to your house?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, [inaudible] [0:12:18].

Interviewer: He was at the next farm. In other words...

Mrs. Alvini: They have a nice farm.

Interviewer: There were neighbors then.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. My father wants to give it to me.

Interviewer: Your father? They want you to get married?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, yea.

Interviewer: Tell me. When World War I started, how old were you?

Mrs. Alvini: I think 13, 14, I don't know.

Interviewer: About 13 or 14?

Mrs. Alvini: I guess.

Interviewer: Do you remember what it was like in Italy during that time?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Could you tell me a little bit of...?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: All the men...

Mrs. Alvini: All the men were going to war.

Interviewer: So you have to do all the work?

Mrs. Alvini: I have to do all the work and the [inaudible] [0:13:14], anything, the noise.

Interviewer: You have to...

Unidentified voice: [inaudible] [0:13:23].

Interviewer: Everything.

Unidentified voice: [inaudible] [0:13:27] all the harvest.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: So, I want to ask -- I want to ask you one more question about the corn. You

said you raised corn. What did you use the corn for?

Mrs. Alvini: Eat.

Interviewer: Did you eat the corn?

Mrs. Alvini: We sure eat it.

Interviewer: I thought that...

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: I thought that you don't eat corn. I thought that...

Mrs. Alvini: And I have enough -- I have enough. Many people [inaudible] [0:13:51].

Unidentified voice: [inaudible] [0:13:56].

Mrs. Alvini: Before, we eat.

Interviewer: What did you eat, the kernel corn?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: You grind it.

Mrs. Alvini: Grind and [Foreign language].

Interviewer: You make a corn flour.

Mrs. Alvini: Corn flour, make bread, they make everything and eat.

Interviewer: But you didn't eat the corn.

Mrs. Alvini: Oh, we eat sometimes.

Interviewer: Did you eat the corn sometimes?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Oh...

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:14:20]

Interviewer: Oh, this is surprising. I was wondering -- because I know that in Europe, in

Spain for example, they don't eat corn.

Mrs. Alvini: Why?

Interviewer: Well, they feed it the stock.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah...

Interviewer: They feed it to the animals. And I know speaking to my uncle in [inaudible]

[0:14:40] and he said they only use the corn there to feed the stock. I'm just

wondering about that.

Mrs. Alvini: I eat the corn. I eat a lot of *[inaudible] [0:14:46]*.

Interviewer: During the war, you know, since you had to work at the farm, what were

the conditions like since all the boys were away at war. Did the war come down by you? Did you feel the effects on the war? [Foreign language]

[0:15:06]

Mrs. Alvini: No.

Interviewer: The war did not come to your...

Mrs. Alvini: No, [Foreign language]. The war was far away.

Interviewer: The war was far away from you, so you never were affected.

Mrs. Alvini: I have my [inaudible] [0:15:22].

Interviewer: Your aunt went to the farm [inaudible] [0:00:00].

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. Of course, I have a shot in the back.

Interviewer: Because he was really -- was this a common practice?

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: Oh no, [inaudible] [0:15:41] I have married to the one man who have

[inaudible] [0:15:45]. [Foreign language]

Interviewer: Oh, you had an uncle...

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Your uncle worked in the railroad.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. [Foreign language]

Interviewer: So he had a free pass [inaudible] [0:16:03].

Mrs. Alvini: I can go.

Interviewer: So, he went to your -- you aunt went...

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: And she got your...

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, my brother.

Interviewer: Who was wounded on the front and brought him home.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did he come home or did he...?

Mrs. Alvini: *[inaudible] [0:16:16]*.

Interviewer: What year was that?

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: I don't know [inaudible] [0:16:25].

Interviewer: You don't remember the year?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long did he stay at home?

Mrs. Alvini: I think a couple of months.

Interviewer: Two or three months?

Mrs. Alvini: Not that long.

Interviewer: And then what did he do, back to the front?

Mrs. Alvini: Yes. Again.

Interviewer: What were conditions in general that you know? Of course, on the farm,

you didn't run to the same problems you ran into the city.

Mrs. Alvini: Yes.

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: But even on the farm, you have rationing.

Mrs. Alvini: Yes, [Foreign language].

Interviewer: In other words, the government would take everything you produced and...

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: And just leave you. That's it?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. That's all. They didn't give enough.

Interviewer: They didn't give you enough?

Mrs. Alvini: No, [Foreign language].

Interviewer: You always hide somewhere. Is that it?

Mrs. Alvini: That's what I was saying. Yeah.

Unidentified voice: [inaudible] [0:17:44].

Interviewer: You hide it so that you would have enough to eat.

Mrs. Alvini: Uh-huh.

Interviewer: What would have happen to you if they have found that?

Mrs. Alvini: Well, if the [inaudible] [0:17:52].

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: Oh, they [inaudible] [0:18:01].

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, put in jail.

Interviewer: Did that happen to many people where you live?

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:18:07].

Interviewer: How long did they put you in jail for?

Mrs. Alvini: I don't know. I mean, [inaudible] [0:18:16].

Interviewer: I see.

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:18:23].

Interviewer: How are things after the war ended?

Mrs. Alvini: It's a lot pretty good. It started pretty good.

Interviewer: Now, while [inaudible] [0:18:39].

Mrs. Alvini: He started [Foreign language].

Interviewer: In other words, when he came to power, he started to build streets and

cleared the swamps in the area and he put all the young people to work. Is

that it?

Mrs. Alvini: Sure. Yeah.

Interviewer: How did the people like him in Italy? What do they take of him.

Mrs. Alvini: Everybody like him.

Interviewer: Everybody like him?

Mrs. Alvini: Sure.

Interviewer: What do they like him?

Mrs. Alvini: They like him because he give something to eat.

Interviewer: He gave you more to eat.

Mrs. Alvini: Eat, more work and things...

Interviewer: More work and eat?

Mrs. Alvini: I have somewhat money in my pocket.

Interviewer: You have more money in your pocket. Life was better.

Mrs. Alvini: Sure.

Interviewer: What about conditions on the farm? Did they improve [inaudible]

[0:19:26]?

Mrs. Alvini: After the war [inaudible] [0:19:30].

Interviewer: Okay. Now, before Mussolini came to power, you say that you have to give

the owner of the land, so many eggs...

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Chickens, land at Easter time.

Mrs. Alvini: Turkey.

Interviewer: Turkey, when?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: At Christmas time.

[0:20:00]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: How many eggs did you have to give the land owner every month?

Mrs. Alvini: Every month, I think, 24 eggs every month I guess.

Interviewer: You have to give him 24 eggs a month?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: How did you give these eggs to him? Did you give him, say, four eggs a

week or six eggs a week?

Mrs. Alvini: No, [inaudible] [0:20:20].

Interviewer: So, at the end of the month you bring 2 dozen eggs.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, [inaudible] [0:20:32].

Interviewer: You bring a pair of chicken, two chickens and two dozen eggs every month.

Mrs. Alvini: More than that [inaudible] [0:20:38].

Interviewer: No, when Mussolini came in...

Mrs. Alvini: Mussolini [inaudible] [0:20:46].

Interviewer: He stopped all this.

Mrs. Alvini: Stop.

Interviewer: And he said, the share is -- the person who is sharing the land, who is

working the land for a land owner, they didn't have to give these gifts to

land owner anymore.

Mrs. Alvini: No, no, no.

Interviewer: Did it stop...?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, it stopped.

Interviewer: It did stop?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, it stopped.

Interviewer: One more question, you mentioned that you got 50 percent. But some

people got only 25 percent prior to Mussolini.

Mrs. Alvini: When Mussolini [inaudible] [0:21:16].

Interviewer: Then Mussolini came, he equalized everything so that -- everyone got 15

percent of the harvest.

Mrs. Alvini: Yes.

Interviewer: And the owner got 50 percent.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, Mussolini came in the power in the early 20s.

Mrs. Alvini: Uh-hmmm.

Interviewer: When did you get married?

Mrs. Alvini: I married 1928.

Interviewer: In 1928?

Mrs. Alvini: 1928.

Interviewer: In 1928. All right. Now, after you got married, did you still live on your

father's farm?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, I stayed for four years. My husband came back.

Interviewer: Your husband came to the United States.

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:21:56].

Interviewer: Well, did your husband come from the United States...?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long had he been in the United States before he came back?

Mrs. Alvini: Before...

Unidentified voice: Since 1921 we came first to United States in 1921.

Mrs. Alvini: 1921, the first time.

Unidentified voice: And then he returned in 1925...

Mrs. Alvini: '28.

Unidentified voice: '28.

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:22:22].

Interviewer: All right. Now, why did your husband come to United States in the first

place?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: Oh, he came to United States because he didn't have enough money to

marry. So, he came here to make some money in order to get married?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, when he first came to United States, were you engaged with...?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: You were engaged?

Mrs. Alvini: Uh-huh.

Interviewer: So he came here and he stayed seven years working?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, [inaudible] [0:23:10].

Unidentified voice: He sent her 7,000 lira to keep her happy so that she would remain

engage to him for fear that she may marry someone else.

Interviewer: That's why he was in United States.

Unidentified voice: That's right. Yes.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: How much was 7,000 lira worth in those days?

Mrs. Alvini: I don't know [inaudible] [0:23:42].

Interviewer: Well, they weren't much now.

Unidentified voice: They were pretty part that time. I would say close to maybe...

Mrs. Alvini: Before the war.

Unidentified voice: A thousand dollars.

Interviewer: It's about thousand dollars.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Unidentified voice: I think 55, 100, to a thousand.

Interviewer: And with this money, what did you do with his money at that time?

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:24:01].

Interviewer: Oh, you saved it until he came back? Yeah. All right. Now, after he came

back and you got married, he came to the United States again.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Had he decided about that time that he wanted to stay here? I supposed he

did.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, [inaudible] [0:24:18].

Interviewer: Oh, in other words, he came back here. And then after four years he came

back then to get your -- bring you here.

Mrs. Alvini: Yes, all together.

Interviewer: And that was 1932?

Mrs. Alvini: Uh-huh.

Interviewer: Did you have any children then?

Mrs. Alvini: No. I have this one that *[inaudible] [0:24:38]*.

Unidentified voice: I would say she was pregnant when she came in 1932.

Interviewer: And so, you are born when...

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:24:48].

Interviewer: In 29th of September?

Mrs. Alvini: Uh-hmmm.

Interviewer: All right. Now, how did you come to United States? Where did you get your

ship, in Naples?

[0:25:00]

Mrs. Alvini: In Naples.

Interviewer: Do you remember what the name of the ship was?

Mrs. Alvini: I don't know. No.

Interviewer: Was it an Italian ship?

Mrs. Alvini: Ship, yeah.

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: What were the condition -- it was an Italian shipping.

Mrs. Alvini: Okay.

Interviewer: What were the conditions like aboard the ship?

Mrs. Alvini: Pretty good.

Interviewer: Everybody have his own cabin?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long did it take to come here?

Mrs. Alvini: Eight days.

Interviewer: Eight days? Does the ship stop anywhere?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah. No, no. I don't think it stops.

Interviewer: It didn't stop anywhere?

Mrs. Alvini: No, no.

Interviewer: It just came straight to -- well, where did you land? In New York?

Mrs. Alvini: New York.

Interviewer: What happened when you got to New York?

Mrs. Alvini: Well, when I got in New York, I have no friends in New York [inaudible]

[0:25:54].

Interviewer: Yeah. But what happened before you saw, did they give you a physical

examination of everything else?

Unidentified voice: When we got off the boat.

Mrs. Alvini: Oh yeah. No [inaudible] [0:26:03].

Unidentified voice: We examined before we went in the boat...

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:26:07].

Interviewer: Oh, Rome, you got there.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did they give you an examination again when you got here to New York

state?

Mrs. Alvini: Oh yeah.

Interviewer: Did you give you an examination in New York?

Mrs. Alvini: New York too.

Interviewer: New York too.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long did you wait before you could get out of the port?

Mrs. Alvini: I think [inaudible] [0:26:27] off in the morning.

Interviewer: You got off in the morning, got up in the morning.

Mrs. Alvini: Ten o'clock, I guess.

Interviewer: And you got out of the port at night.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: They kept you waiting...

Mrs. Alvini: I reached through the net and stayed for the board all night.

Interviewer: Oh.

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:26:49].

Interviewer: And you left the port right there?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: I see. You said you had a friend in New York?

Mrs. Alvini: I have Michael Austria have friend in New York.

Interviewer: Is that what your husband was staying before he came to Italy again and

New York?

Mrs. Alvini: Well, I've stayed a lot -- lots of place to stay, Baltimore, New York

[inaudible] [0:27:12].

Interviewer: When my father came to this country, his home base was New Castle since

he had a sister here. But he went where the labor was needed.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: And sometimes he would go at Baltimore sometimes and have raise

other types [inaudible] [0:27:28] different places in New York state.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: What kind of work did he do?

Mrs. Alvini: Labor, I don't know.

Unidentified voice: Mostly construction labor gang on making the -- constructing the

highways.

Interviewer: I see. Now, when you came here, where did you stay, in New York?

Mrs. Alvini: No, I stayed 17 days in New York because I have a sister in New Castle.

Interviewer: You have a sister in New Castle?

Mrs. Alvini: My husband's sister.

Interviewer: Oh, your husband's sister.

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:27:56].

Interviewer: Okay. Now, when you stayed 17 days in New York, with whom did you stay?

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: Well, her name really isn't important, but was she a friend of yours from

Italy?

Mrs. Alvini: No, my husband's friend.

Interviewer: Oh, friend of your husband's.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you have to pay board when you stayed there in New York?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: In New York for 17 days.

Mrs. Alvini: In New York [inaudible] [0:28:23].

Unidentified voice: In other words...

Interviewer: Go ahead.

Unidentified voice: This person owed my father money, so therefore they've stayed 17 days

since the person didn't have the money to give back to my father because they both stay here a while and I'll keep you to work off the money I owe you. So therefore, they stayed 17 days and then they came to New Castle to

his sister's house.

Interviewer: That's it. How long did you live with your sister-in-law?

Mrs. Alvini: Well, I stayed with my sister in law, it's a long story [inaudible] [0:29:09].

Interviewer: How long did you stay?

Mrs. Alvini: I stayed for, I think, a couple of years.

Interviewer: At least one year.

Mrs. Alvini: One year, more than one year.

Interviewer: All right, a couple of years. Now, what were the conditions like when you

were boarding with your sister?

Mrs. Alvini: I don't want to step [inaudible] [0:29:26].

Interviewer: Why?

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:29:27].

In other words then, your movements were restricted and you were not

allowed to touch anything because your sister- in-law stated that it cost

money.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: And she was more or less fearful that you would waste the stuff, waste the

water or waste the electricity or waste the gas, and therefore costing her

money.

[0:30:00]

But did your husband pay board while he was there?

Mrs. Alvini: He paid the board and [inaudible] [0:30:07].

Unidentified voice: He paid board.

Mrs. Alvini: A strict woman.

Unidentified voice: He paid board and you still were restricted from touching anything. Did he

have to give any other money? Did he help her children? Did he help her

children while you were boarding there?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: Not only did he pay it forward, but he also cloth the children and help pay

for the food that was consumed by all the family.

Mrs. Alvini: Her husband died before.

Unidentified voice: Her husband, the sister who lost her husband had died living her a

reward.

Mrs. Alvini: My husband have paid the house, they pay the eat, they pay everything.

Unidentified voice: Not only did he paid for it but he also paid all her expenses and still my

mother Mrs. Alvini was restricted in her movements.

Mrs. Alvini: After the move, I've got the last money for 11 months.

Interviewer: So you left there and you went to stay in someone else's?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, for 11 months. After 11 months, I buy a little house and stayed there

by myself.

Unidentified voice: Did you buy the house first or did you rent the house?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, I rented for, I think for seven to eight months, I don't know [Foreign

language].

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]?

Mrs. Alvini: No.

Unidentified voice: No. So she was renting for a number of – she left the Manneti house after

11 months and rented a house several doors up.

Interviewer: Okay, this bring us into – so let's see it here, she got here 1932 and she

stayed with her sister off for what, two years?

Unidentified voice: Yes.

Interviewer: That makes it 1934 and then at '35, she went to own a house, right?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, tell me something was your husband working during all of these years

because this is right in the middle of depression?

Unidentified voice: Yes, was pop working during the depression? When you first come to the

United States?

Mrs. Alvini: He worked in the city, \$8 a week.

Interviewer: He worked for the city making \$8 a week.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]. After that I get a job in the American Manganese.

Unidentified voice: He got a job in the American Manganese.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, yeah, that's making a lot of money. [inaudible] [0:32:30].

Interviewer: Yeah. What sort of work did he do for the city?

Mrs. Alvini: I don't know, for the state.

Unidentified voice: Is that the WPA?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, I think.

Unidentified voice: He worked on the WPA, not for the state, but the WPA in the state.

Interviewer: I see making \$8 a week, \$8 a week.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, after that I started to go to work myself.

Unidentified voice: And prior to that first, let's come back a little bit. You rented your house,

how long did you rent the house for?

Mrs. Alvini: I think I don't know, maybe I think seven to eight months. I'm not that sure.

Unidentified voice: And then what did you do, buy your own house?

Mrs. Alvini: My [inaudible] [0:33:04] by myself, the same nothing, nobody.

Unidentified voice: From there, after eight months rental, they bought – they managed to buy

their own home which was in poor condition. And they live there. And under what conditions did you live there prior to the Second World War? What were the conditions like when you lived in this house by yourself? Did

you have running water in the house that you bought?

Mrs. Alvini: Well I don't have a heater, I don't have nothing. I used to have a stove that

has [inaudible] [0:33:50] and that froze my leg.

Unidentified voice: We didn't have no heater, but you had what you call maybe a cooler heater,

one heater in the middle of the house and that was cool stove which has to

be used for heating the whole house.

Interviewer: But it didn't have ducks going to the various rooms.

Unidentified voice: No.

Mrs. Alvini: No.

Interviewer: It's just in the center of one room.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: And you went to work. And where did you go to work?

Mrs. Alvini: For September I worked down the Delaware Ryan.

Unidentified voice: The Delaware Ryan which was the former Bethlehem Steel and which today

is the Avison Plant in New Castle.

Interviewer: That was Ryan.

Unidentified voice: An old Ryan plant, yes.

Mrs. Alvini: I work at three years down there, the three years I guess. I don't know for

sure after gone defensive plane.

Interviewer: Then you went to defense plane.

Mrs. Alvini: Defense plane and I made large money. I have worked 16 hours hard days.

Interviewer: She works 16 hours a day.

[0:34:55]

Unidentified voice: When the war came, she got a job at the New Castle Defense Plant which

was the old former bolt steel mill.

Interviewer: What were they making in this plant?

Mrs. Alvini: Shells.

Interviewer: What's kind of shells?

Mrs. Alvini: Shells for the war like everyone.

Unidentified voice: So a canon shells or a riffle shells.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Interviewer: A canon shell.

Unidentified voice: A canon shell.

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: How much did you make a week at the New Castle defense plant during the

war?

Mrs. Alvini: Well, I can't remember enough. I can't remember. I have 80 cents an hour.

Unidentified voice: 80 cents an hour.

Mrs. Alvini: An hour I worked 16 hours and I have bonds.

Unidentified voice: Did you work shift work?

Mrs. Alvini: Shift work?

Unidentified voice: Work shift work?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: Then after you work 16 hours a day and then you came home...

Mrs. Alvini: No, not every day. Not every day, once in a while.

Interviewer: Once in a while and then after you got hungry, you clean the house and

take care of everything.

Mrs. Alvini: Sure, that came, I have one [inaudible] [0:36:06] the one who got to school.

I have the lesser one have the use [inaudible] [0:36:14].

Interviewer: How many children did you have then?

Mrs. Alvini: Three.

Interviewer: Three?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Unidentified voice: Then while you were working, one of the neighbors took care of your

children.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Unidentified voice: Now, when you came home from work, you took a rest for a while and then

you would get us and do all the house work.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, I work all my life hard. Nobody worked harder like me.

Unidentified voice: But when did you sleep since you work 10 hours, 15 hours a day.

Mrs. Alvini: I sleep. I just take a light sleep. Then I start to work again.

Unidentified voice: Then you would only get a couple hours sleep, get some black coffee and

then begin to do your house work and then at later when it was time to go to work, you would go to work then with only a couple of hours sleep two

to three hours?

Mrs. Alvini: Do you remember it?

Interviewer: Okay. Now, what did you do in your leisure hours if you have anything?

Unidentified voice: Did you have any free time?

Mrs. Alvini: I don't have a free time.

Interviewer: Did you ever go out to movies or anything?

Mrs. Alvini: No. I can't go on movies. If I go on movies then I got sleepy.

Interviewer: You're just too tired to go to movies.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah, too tired.

Interviewer: Did you ever to any place with a family like...

Mrs. Alvini: Sometime, sometimes. Some, I got some time.

Unidentified voice: Did you go on picnics with the family.

Mrs. Alvini: No.

Unidentified voice: For example...

Mrs. Alvini: I never go a picnic?

Unidentified voice: What about Deemers Beach? Deemers Beach was active at that time. Did

you ever go to Deemers Beach?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah and I don't have enough time to go.

Unidentified voice: No time to go to Deemers Beach.

Mrs. Alvini: No.

Unidentified voice: What about [inaudible] [0:37:45] Beach?

Mrs. Alvini: Any beach, before I go to work, I go sometime [inaudible] [0:37:51].

Unidentified voice: Well prior to starting to work, you would go through them, you go to beach

once in a while.

Mrs. Alvini: Suddenly once in a while. So sometimes you want to go and you want to go.

Interviewer: Okay now, where did you go to church?

Mrs. Alvini: I go church every Sunday.

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language].

Mrs. Alvini: St. Peter.

Interviewer: At St. Peter near in New Castle. Did you always go to St. Peters here?

Mrs. Alvini: Some time ago in Wellington?

Interviewer: Where would go to church in Wellington?

Mrs. Alvini: St. Anthony.

Interviewer: St. Anthony.

Mrs. Alvini: Sometime, not all the time.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mrs. Alvini: I never miss a church.

Interviewer: Now, during these years your children were going to school right? How

were they treated in school?

Mrs. Alvini: Good.

Interviewer: They're treated good? How were you treated where you worked?

Mrs. Alvini: They used to call me.

Unidentified voice: No, where you worked, how did they treat you? Did they treat you hard or

did they drove all the work on you?

Mrs. Alvini: I have a hard job all the time.

Interviewer: Well when the World War II started and the United States and Italy were

fighting against one another in World War II, how did people treat you

because you're an Italian?

Mrs. Alvini: I've been treated just the same anybody.

Interviewer: Just the same as anybody else. So nobody said anything to you?

Mrs. Alvini: Just the same.

Interviewer: How did people over here talked about Mussolini before the war started?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]?

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Interviewer: The Italians thought he was a pretty good man.

Mrs. Alvini: Sure, sure.

Interviewer: When the war came, how did they speak of Mussolini?

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language]?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]?

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language].

[0:40:00]

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language].

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language].

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language].

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]

Unidentified voice: In other words [Foreign language].

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language].

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: [Foreign language].

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: In this locality, my mother claimed that the Italians have thought well of

Mussolini even though he was on German side fighting against the United States. They felt – because they felt he had the war one. But because they felt that the king has sold out – Mussolini sold out to the United States giving away the secrets of the war to the American Allied Forces, they condemned the king for being a traitor and not going along with the policy

was.

Interviewer: I see. This brings us pretty much to date. Do you think there's anything else

we can add to this?

Unidentified voice: No, I'm trying to think of some things. Well in your life when you – if you

were – you and your husband were making little money prior and during the war were you happy with what you made? Were you able to live on the

money that you made?

Mrs. Alvini: Well I make a lot of money.

Unidentified voice: You make some money, but were you – did you spend it all? Did – were you

able to put some money in the bank or were you having such a hard time

that you are frustrated?

Mrs. Alvini: Well I put in the bank some [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: In other words then even though they made little money, they still

managed to put some money in the bank. They had no conveniences but they worked hard. And the money that they made also they poured into the

home, repairing the home.

When the World War II came they began to make money. And with that money, they put so much in the bank and the rest they repaired the home which was in pretty bad shape when they bought it, they had installed electricity and installed an inside bath. They added another room to the house. They repaired the basement. They repaired the outside and put the house in very good condition. Beside that they had enough money in the bank saved up to be able to take a trip back to Italy in 1948 and again in 1963. Plus putting money to their children through college and the other

three were high school.

Interviewer: Okay, fine. These ones are fine. Okay. Is there anything else that you'd like

to add to this now?

Unidentified voice: I want to say one more thing. Well what about – did you have a garden?

Mrs. Alvini: What?

Unidentified voice: Did you have a garden?

Mrs. Alvini: Sure I have a garden?

Unidentified voice: Why did you have a garden?

Mrs. Alvini: Because I like it. I like a garden.

Unidentified voice: But did you...

Mrs. Alvini: [inaudible] [0:44:24] to make the place to have at night that [inaudible]

[0:44:30] before cook, fix at the nets, pull the stove and pull the bath.

Unidentified voice: And after work, you have the garden to help out for family needs, to make

- to mend the pace and to can different types of vegetables for the winter

to help out the famine.

[0:45:00]

And you did this after working hours. Even though you worked the hours at the plant and you had to do the house work, you also managed the can all

these different foods for the – for the winter?

What about – now, when you came to this country, it seems to me that we

had a dry state, maybe the prohibition was on. Did you make whiskey

during prohibition?

Mrs. Alvini: Oh [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: Yeah. You needed money and what did you do? You made whiskey?

Mrs. Alvini: I have nothing and everybody like whiskey after [inaudible] [0:45:53]. My

husband go to work at the night and make some whiskey. My husband will

sit with me.

Unidentified voice: Then you bought a steel and at night time, you would make the whiskey

and your husband then when the whiskey was aged properly would sell it to

others and then make some money because times were very hard and you

needed the extra money.

Mrs. Alvini: The first day, say the year when we come in here.

Unidentified voice: Then about 1934.

Mrs. Alvini: When you go to work, I don't make them no more.

Unidentified voice: Then when you went to work, you didn't make any more?

Mrs. Alvini: No, no.

Unidentified voice: But did you ever get caught? [Foreign language]?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]. Next door, I call the police and then they would pick it

up.

Unidentified voice: Then somewhat one of your neighbors squealed on you and the police

came and found the whiskey and arrested you?

Mrs. Alvini: No, I take it outside, I picked it up.

Unidentified voice: No, they did not arrest you. When you're seeing a police, you threw the

bottle out the window and broke on the pavement. Then what happened?

Mrs. Alvini: I was arrested.

Unidentified voice: They arrested you?

Mrs. Alvini: Did nothing.

Unidentified voice: But they did not convict you?

Mrs. Alvini: No. That's all.

Unidentified voice: After the war, how was life after World War II? How did it change?

Mrs. Alvini: It changed because I have some money then Mike is going to school, all the

three are all right. That's making me happy.

Unidentified voice: Did your children work at part time jobs?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language]. It is the same, [inaudible] [0:47:53].

Interviewer: The kids went to school and they worked part time, the youngsters?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Unidentified voice: And that way after the war you were able to afford some of the luxuries, for

example, you were able to buy a radio after the war and the fact that you bought a radio during the war with short wave. When the war came in 1941, prior to the war, they brought a radio with short wave. When the war came, they had to get the radio and take the short wave out of it for fear

that they could be accused of being spies.

Interviewer: The people who are not citizens, who are not familiar *[inaudible]*

[0:48:36] during World War II.

Unidentified voice: And during World War II was not a citizen, but my father was. Now, when

did you get your citizen papers? What happened? What were the reasons

for it?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: Then the authorities, the government came up to you and says, "You are an

alien and do you wish to become a citizen."

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Unidentified voice: And you said yes. And therefore you went to the school and required

schooling and to go ahead.

Interviewer: Is that the first time that you went to school here in the United States?

Mrs. Alvini: Yes.

Interviewer: So you did go to school to become a citizen?

Mrs. Alvini: For the citizen, that's all. I didn't go to school to learn.

Interviewer: Where did they hold the classes?

Mrs. Alvini: [Foreign language].

Unidentified voice: At the St. Anthony in New Castle which was a former two-room school

house built in about 1878. And in 1932 it was discontinued because of the

new school that was built at that time. Now, you worked first in the

Delaware Ryan, you worked in New Castle defense plant. After the war when the New Castle defense plant closed down, what did you do?

Mrs. Alvini: Well after the close – the defense plant closed down, the woman then Top

Kiss Shop.

[0:50:02]

Unidentified voice: Top Kiss.

Mrs. Alvini: Top Kiss and I worked there for six months, seven months I think.

Unidentified voice: And how much did you make there?

Mrs. Alvini: I make 59 cents a day.

Unidentified voice: 59 cents a day or 59 cents an hour?

Mrs. Alvini: 59 cents an hour.

Unidentified voice: 59 cents an hour. And you've made stockings there?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Unidentified voice: And you worked there for six months.

Mrs. Alvini: And after that, I've gone to a fiber mill, they gave me a job.

Interviewer: Fiber mill, which fiber mill was this?

Mrs. Alvini: New Castle.

Unidentified voice: Wellington Special Fiber Company in New Castle.

Mrs. Alvini: I worked for 23 years now.

Unidentified voice: And what did you do?

Interviewer: You worked there for 23 years?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Unidentified voice: What did you do at the fiber mill?

Mrs. Alvini: Operate machine.

Unidentified voice: You were a machine operator?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Unidentified voice: A woman operating a machine.

Mrs. Alvini: Yes a woman.

Unidentified voice: And was that an easy job?

Mrs. Alvini: No.

Unidentified voice: In which way was it hard?

Mrs. Alvini: Well because the machines are [inaudible] [0:51:04]. Sometime they hit me

big. Sometime the job

Unidentified voice: Don't you think it was a hard work for a woman?

Mrs. Alvini: That's a man job.

Unidentified voice: It was a man's job.

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Unidentified voice: How did the boss treat you?

Mrs. Alvini: He treats me very good, well.

Unidentified voice: Well. Did you expect you to get the work out just like a man or did he take it

easy on you?

Mrs. Alvini: I don't have to take it easy. I have to keep it going.

Unidentified voice: In other words, you have to keep up with the man.

Mrs. Alvini: You got to get it going. So it's a *[inaudible] [0:51:33]*.

In other words, there's no distinction between you and the man except as

far as job is concerned.

Mrs. Alvini: Sure [inaudible] [0:51:47].

Unidentified voice: And now...

Mrs. Alvini: Some I fear [inaudible] [0:51:52] to stand up all day. When I come home, I

couldn't see the sticker on the walk.

Interviewer: Yeah, it's probably hard.

Mrs. Alvini: Oh dear god.

Unidentified voice: And how much did you make at the fiber mill when you first started?

Mrs. Alvini: I think at the fiber mill, I start 59 cents an hour. After [0:52:15] [Inaudible].

Unidentified voice: And then you started there at 59 cents an hour, but over the years, the

salary had improved.

Mrs. Alvini: And I now have \$1.84 – 94, 93.

Unidentified voice: In 1968, you are now making \$1.93 an hour, still operating the machine?

Interviewer: Still the same machine, right?

Mrs. Alvini: Yeah.

Interviewer: Well that's pretty...

[0:52:46] End of Audio