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MSS 179 Robert H. Richards, Jr., Delaware oral history collection, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware

## **Contact:**

Special Collections, University of Delaware Library  
181 South College Avenue  
Newark, DE 19717-5267  
302.831.2229 / 302.831.1046 (fax)  
<http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec>  
[askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu](mailto:askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu)

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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](mailto:askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu)

## Mr. & Mrs. Dominic Giansanti

[0:00:00]

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: No, I don't think so. Mr. Giansanti, where were you born?

Mr. Giansanti: In Italy.

Interviewer: In Italy. What part of Italy were you born?

Mr. Giansanti: In the center of Italy.

Interviewer: In the center?

Mr. Giansanti: Center.

Interviewer: In what part?

Mrs. Giansanti: That's...

Mr. Giansanti: Trisongo.

Mrs. Giansanti: Trisongo in La Marche.

Mr. Giansanti: La Marche

Mrs. Giansanti: La Marche, yeah.

**[Cross talk]**

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]** Trisongo La Marche

Interviewer: Tris...

Mrs. Giansanti: Trisongo.

Interviewer: Trisongo.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: That's the town. Italy Trisongo. What year were you born?

Mr. Giansanti: 09/17/94.

Interviewer: 09/17/1894.

Mr. Giansanti: 1894.

Interviewer: Okay. Now...

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: It's Trisongo then, right? Okay.

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Mr. Giansanti: No, that's yours.

Mrs. Giansanti: That's mine?

Mr. Giansanti: That's yours, yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. You were born in 1894 then?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, 1894.

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]** . That's yours.

Interviewer: Okay. Yes. I can see in there. Trisongo, right.

Mr. Giansanti: Trisongo.

Interviewer: Trisongo, right. I see. Now, what did you do in Italy?

Mrs. Giansanti: **[inaudible] [0:01:25]** when he was a young boy.

Mr. Giansanti: I worked in the farm.

Interviewer: You worked on the farm then, right?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, he went to America when he was only 17.

Interviewer: He came to this country when he was 17?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. And don't even go back.

Interviewer: Not even back. Yes. But I mean, but up until the time he was 17, he worked on a farm. He did this?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, he worked on the farm.

Interviewer: He worked on the farm. What did your father do? Did you father worked on the farm *[inaudible] [0:01:44]*?

Mr. Giansanti: Worked in the farm, yeah.

Interviewer: Did he own his own land?

Mrs. Giansanti: His father was – yeah.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, on his own.

Mrs. Giansanti: *[inaudible] [0:01:50]* his father died when he was a little boy.

Interviewer: His father died when he was a little his boy.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. How old were you when your father die.

Mr. Giansanti: I was nine years.

Interviewer: Nine years old?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you ever go to school in Italy, yeah?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Mrs. Giansanti: Oh, **[Foreign language]**

Mr. Giansanti: Go to class, go to *[inaudible] [0:02:08]* class.

Interviewer: Okay. In other words, two years of...

Mrs. Giansanti: *[inaudible] [0:02:12]* the second grade, at the second grade is all.

Interviewer: Okay. And then two years of schooling.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. And he *[inaudible]* [0:02:17].

Interviewer: Okay. Now, you worked then as – at the farm, worked until the time you're 17 years old, right?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Seventeen, right. It's just on. Okay. Now, when you decided to come to the United States, what made you decide to come to United States? What made you decided to leave Italy?

Mr. Giansanti: Well, my brother was over here. And then he sent for me. Send him in **[Foreign language]** .

Interviewer: Yes. He sent a certificate and he sent the papers for you to come to United States.

Mr. Giansanti: To come to United States.

Interviewer: How long had your brother been in the United States?

Mr. Giansanti: He was about here for three years.

Interviewer: About three years?

Mrs. Giansanti: Before he came.

Mr. Giansanti: Before I come.

Mrs. Giansanti: Before him, before he came here.

Interviewer: I see. Now, why did your brother come here?

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]** .

Interviewer: Go ahead talk. It's all right.

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

**[Cross talk]**

Mr. Giansanti: My brother come over here and said he had a friend over here.

Interviewer: Oh, your brother had a friend over here.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, he had a friend.

Interviewer: Was...

Mr. Giansanti: And send him here.

Interviewer: And he sent for your brother. Now, was this friend from Trisongo also?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. *[inaudible] [0:03:29]* the same town.

Mr. Giansanti: The same town.

Interviewer: And he came to United States and he liked it here.

Mr. Giansanti: He was a kumpare.

Interviewer: He was a kumpare, okay. So he wrote to your brother and asked him to come over to United States, too?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, to come over here.

Interviewer: What year was that? Do you remember?

Mr. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Mr. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: Born in 1894, you're here when 17.

Mr. Giansanti: 1912. I come in 1912.

Interviewer: You came in 1912. Then your brother came here about 1909.

Mr. Giansanti: 1909, yes.

Interviewer: All right. Now, while your brother was here, what kind of work was he doing?

Mr. Giansanti: He used to work in the quarry stone.

Interviewer: Work in the quarry? Kind of...

Mr. Giansanti: Quarry stone.

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: Yes. In the stone quarry.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, when you decided to come to the United States, how did you leave Trisongo to go to wherever the boat was to come to United States? Okay.

Mrs. Giansanti **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: **[Foreign language]**

Mr. Giansanti: Naples.

Interviewer: You went to Naples to get to the ship.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: How? **[Foreign language]**

Mr. Giansanti: Train.

Interviewer: Oh, in train. Was there a train station in Trisongo?

Mr. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: No.

Mr. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: Oh, you took a bus from Trisongo.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, to San Benedict.

**[0:05:02]**

Interviewer: To San Benedict.

Mr. Giansanti: That's how I get the train to San Benedict to Napoli.

Interviewer: Now, when you got to Naples, to Napoli, was the boat in the port?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you go right directly to the boat?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, when the boat left, when it left Naples, did it stop anywhere else before it reached to United States?

Mr. Giansanti: No, **[Foreign language]** .

Interviewer: It just came straight.

Mr. Giansanti: Came straight.

Interviewer: Where did it come to New York?

Mr. Giansanti: In New York.

Interviewer: How many days did it take?

Mr. Giansanti: Twelve day.

Interviewer: Twelve days?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: When you got to New York, was your brother there to meet you?

Mr. Giansanti: No. **[inaudible]** **[0:05:42]**. I get the train, I go there.

Interviewer: Okay, now. How did you leave? Did you have to go customs or anything? Did you have to go through customs, **[Foreign language]** ?

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**



Mr. Giansanti: Oh, yeah. **[Foreign language]** in New York.

Interviewer: Yeah. So you go to customs in New York?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Well, what did they do? They gave you a physical examination and checking bags or anything?

Mr. Giansanti: Just examine the suitcases and see what I got and that's it.

Interviewer: They just examined your suitcase and that was it. Okay. Now, when you got on the train, did you have a tag on your trunk?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Havre de Grace, right?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. And then you went straight to Havre de Grace, right?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: You didn't have to change trains anymore?

Mr. Giansanti: No, no.

Interviewer: Did your brother...

Mr. Giansanti: **[inaudible] [0:06:30]** the conductor says, get off.

Interviewer: That's what he said.

Mr. Giansanti: So there's cops over there and now I came and the cop take them all in at the time **[inaudible] [0:06:40]** about me.

Interviewer: And so when you got in...

Mr. Giansanti: My brother come over and come to get me.

Interviewer: Oh, in other words, at the train station, there was a policeman.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: And when you saw him, did you go up to the policeman?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: And he brought you to an Italian family that's sitting near there?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: And your brother came there later on to get you.

Mr. Giansanti: Come to get me.

Interviewer: Now, when you first arrived in 1912, did you find a job right away?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah. I had a job at a quarry stone.

Interviewer: You're working with your brother then?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: In the stone quarry.

Mr. Giansanti: I drive a horse.

Interviewer: You drove a horse in carrying the stone?

Mr. Giansanti: Carry the stone.

Interviewer: Now, what was the pay like in those days?

Mr. Giansanti: 15 cents an hour.

Interviewer: 15 cents an hour. How many hours a day did you work?

Mr. Giansanti: Ten hour.

Interviewer: Ten hours a day? Did that include an hour for lunch or a half hour for lunch?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: How many days a week did you work?

Mr. Giansanti: Six days.

Interviewer: Six days a week. Did you work 10 hours everyday?

Mr. Giansanti: Ten hours a day.

Interviewer: Okay, now, when you were in Havre de Grace, was there a church that you went to down there?

Mr. Giansanti: Oh, there wasn't a church.

Mrs. Giansanti: It was there.

Mr. Giansanti: **[inaudible] [0:07:57].**

Interviewer: Oh, you're out in the woods there, you were not in a town, not even real close to town.

Mr. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: I see. So you never really went to church while you're down there?

Mr. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: All right. Now, how long did you work in the quarry?

Mr. Giansanti: More than three years.

Interviewer: Three years? Now, during these three years, did you live right back there where the quarry was? Did they have...

Mr. Giansanti: No.

Mrs. Giansanti: No, not for years. He go back **[inaudible] [0:08:24].**

Interviewer: Did they have worker's houses for you or tents or something out?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah. I live on a shack.

Interviewer: You – right out there in the quarry, is that it?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, and I have all the shack and I'm on a shack and the room I live is with four man over there.

Interviewer: And so a little shacks and they have four men to a shack, is that it?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, four men to a shack.

Interviewer: Were all the men worked there Italian?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah. Some are Italian almost.

Interviewer: Almost. So were the bosses Italian, too?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Everybody.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, you say it was for years that he worked there, Mrs. Giansanti?

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: Yeah, it's okay. Go ahead.

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]** First World War.

Interviewer: And so 1914.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. **[Foreign language]**

Mr. Giansanti: '15 and I **[inaudible]** **[0:09:25]** three years...

Interviewer: Till 1915?

Mr. Giansanti: '13, '14, '15.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Giansanti: '15, I go to '15 and back in Italy.

Interviewer: In 1915 you were back in Italy.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Why did you go back to Italy?

Mr. Giansanti: The First World War.

Interviewer: While the First World War start, but why did you go back to Italy?

Mr. Giansanti: I need to go to war and I couldn't catch them over here. You thought want to go in Italy, you want to go in American army, I said I want to go to Italy. I go free.

Interviewer: Oh, they said you were free?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Who sent you over?

Mr. Giansanti: The Italian council.

Interviewer: The Italian council?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

**[0:10:02]**

Interviewer: Oh, then the Italian council came after you and asked you if you want to go into the Italian army?

Mr. Giansanti: Yes.

Interviewer: And you said yes?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, *[inaudible]* **[0:10:09]**.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Mrs. Giansanti: You got – he got – he got sent in. He want to go back in Italy. That's the way it is.

Interviewer: Then relative...

Mrs. Giansanti: Well, **[Foreign language]** .

Mr. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]** an American army. I want to go to Italy.

Interviewer: Right. They asked you...

Mr. Giansanti: : ***[inaudible] [0:10:31].***

Interviewer: Who is this the American council or the Italian council?

Mr. Giansanti: Italian council.

Interviewer: So you said you want to go to the American army, you want to go back to Italy and fight.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you said you want to go back to Italy and fight.

Mr. Giansanti: I want to go back. I know I can't go back ***[inaudible] [0:10:41].***

Interviewer: So you went back to Italy and went into the army.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: This was in 1915.

Mr. Giansanti: 1915.

Interviewer: What ranks in the army did you go into?

Mr. Giansanti: 13th Infantry.

Interviewer: The 13th Infantry?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Where were you stationed in Italy while you were there?

Mr. Giansanti: Agerola.

Interviewer: Agerola?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Where is that in the north of Italy?

Mr. Giansanti: Amorosi ***[phonetic] [0:11:05].***

Interviewer: Amorosi *[phonetic]* [0:11:06]. Did you ever get to the front lines?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long did you stay in the – on the front?

Mr. Giansanti: In the front line...

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Mr. Giansanti: Well, it's only – stayed one month in there in Italy and I got in front of the line.

Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Giansanti: And then I stayed by for three years, three and a half.

Interviewer: About three and a half years on the front?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: What happened to you when you were fighting the war on the front?

Mr. Giansanti: I think.

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Mr. Giansanti: I've been in prison then.

Interviewer: You were captured. Whereabouts were you captured and what fighting on the front?

Mr. Giansanti: Catch in the Caporetto.

Interviewer: In Caporetto?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. That's was probably one of the worst defeats Italy suffered in World War I.

Mr. Giansanti: October 17 – October 16 and 17. I don't remember now.

Interviewer: I see. Now, it was in Caporetto where you were captured?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, I got into prison there.

Interviewer: Could you tell me a little bit of what happened there in Caporetto? Could you tell **[Foreign language]** ?

Mr. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: In other words, the German forces were concentrated at that point and it's – you were told, you don't *[inaudible]* **[0:12:57]** that some of the Italian generals sold out...

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: ...sold out to the Germans.

Mr. Giansanti: General Capella *[phonetic]* **[0:13:04]**.

Interviewer: General Capella *[phonetic]* **[0:13:05]**. And he's the one who's supposed to have – went over to the German side, is that it?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: And Italian forces are starting to retreat at that point and that's why you were captured. Now, after you were captured, what happened to you?

Mr. Giansanti: I don't know. They took me to prison there and, I don't know, for 34 day. *[inaudible]* **[0:13:31]** all wet, no eat. After the 34 days, they started giving a piece of bread. One bread and a four men, person.

Interviewer: One piece of bread for four soldiers?

Mrs. Giansanti: No, one loaf *[inaudible]* **[0:13:44]**.

Mr. Giansanti: No, one loaf of bread.

Interviewer: A small loaf.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, four piece.

Mr. Giansanti: And four soldiers.

Mrs. Giansanti: Cut in four piece, four men.



Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Giansanti: And they put too many work in the *[inaudible]* [0:13:53], a couple of months, he come in and said, "Who's vacant men over here **[Foreign language]** ? "

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mr. Giansanti: And nobody said.

Interviewer: What kind – what kind of work did they had you doing after you're captured? What kind of work did you do?

Mr. Giansanti: Oh, fix the road.

Interviewer: Fix the roads, pick and shovel.

Mr. Giansanti: Pick and shovel.

Interviewer: So after a few days, one of the Austrians came and said, who's a baker here and everybody set forward and say he was a baker.

Mr. Giansanti: We got somebody *[inaudible]* [0:14:24]. I don't know who *[inaudible]* [0:14:27] **[Foreign language]** .

Interviewer: They had the ovens on wagons?

Mr. Giansanti: And wagons.

Interviewer: Or they have ovens on *[inaudible]* [0:14:45].

Mr. Giansanti: Stayed and made bread one week over here and one week another prison and said move the ovens there.

Interviewer: Oh, they moved the ovens around, is that it? So they baked bread to one batch of prisons and move the ovens somewhere else and baked more bread and so – I see. And did you move with the ovens?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: You were a baker and you were a bread man.

**[0:15:03]**

Mr. Giansanti: I eat bread.

Interviewer: And – well, I guess you got plenty to eat then, didn't you? Now, how long were you in prison, how many years?

Mr. Giansanti: Thirteen months.

Interviewer: Thirteen months. And after 13 months when you were released, was that – that was at the end of the war?

Mr. Giansanti: When the war is over and **[Foreign language]** .

Interviewer: Or in other words, when the war ended, they just let you go, were they?

Mr. Giansanti: Let you go and so everybody go.

Interviewer: And everybody just left?

Mr. Giansanti: Just left.

Interviewer: I see. Now, what – where did you go when you were released like that? Where did you go? Did you go back to La Marche?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah. And I go back to Italy.

Interviewer: You went back in Italy.

Mr. Giansanti: And then taking in the **[inaudible] [0:15:50]** let you go home because **[inaudible] [0:15:55]**.

Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Giansanti: Say go home and then change your clothes, had everything and they send you...

Interviewer: In other words, you were held in a concentration camp in Italy so that you might take a bath, you might be **[inaudible] [0:16:13]**...

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, take a bath.

Interviewer: ...get clean clothes and have injections against any diseases you might have contacted or **[inaudible] [0:16:20]** any disease and so forth. And this is what they did for you, right?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: All right. And after that they sent you back to your home.

Mr. Giansanti: Send us back for 15 day.

Interviewer: You went back to La Marche then for 15 days.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, then I go back to the army again.

Interviewer: And what did you do when you went back in army then?

Mr. Giansanti: They send me *[inaudible]* **[0:16:43]**.

Interviewer: Was the war still – the war was over then though, wasn't it?

Mr. Giansanti: *[inaudible]* **[0:16:48]** regiment *[inaudible]* **[0:16:50]** destroyed. One regiment was destroyed.

Interviewer: A whole regiment was destroyed.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah. All that's in prison that gone back form a regiment.

Interviewer: Oh, so all those in prisons have to form this new regiment over again.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Giansanti: From *[inaudible]* **[0:17:12]** then after *[inaudible]* **[0:17:15]** Foggia.

Interviewer: Then they were – they were – they sent you in Foggia.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: And how long did you stay in Foggia?

Mr. Giansanti: Six months.

Interviewer: Six months? And from there, what...

Mr. Giansanti: Then I get discharged.

Interviewer: And then you were discharged. Okay. Now, when you were discharged, where did you go, back to La Marche?

Mr. Giansanti: Back to La Marche.

Interviewer: Okay. Did you stay there very long?

Mr. Giansanti: Stay September, October, November, December, January, February, March, six months.

Interviewer: You stayed six months?

Mr. Giansanti: And then came back in this land.

Interviewer: And you came back to the United States and that was when in 1919?

Mr. Giansanti: 1920.

Interviewer: In 1920, you came to the United States. Okay. Now, how did you get back that time? Did you go to Naples again?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, I go to Naples. I come free, too.

Interviewer: You came free.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: The Italian government paid your way back?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, when you came...

Mr. Giansanti: Going back in Naples and Naples *[inaudible] [0:18:16]* boat.

Interviewer: In Naples, you got to ship and came right back to this country. What was it like aboard ship? Was it real crowded?

Mr. Giansanti: Oh, yeah. So *[inaudible] [0:18:27]*.

Interviewer: Oh, really?

Mr. Giansanti: All has *[inaudible] [0:18:30]* what do you call it, *[inaudible] [0:18:34]* going back when I was over and going in Italy...

Interviewer: In other words everybody who was aboard the ship were all the young men who were in the United States who went back to Italy to fight...

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: ...and they were going back to United States again.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, I see. Were there any women aboard ship?

Mrs. Giansanti: *[inaudible] [0:18:51]*.

Interviewer: Yea. *[inaudible] [0:18:52]*. Were there no women aboard ship, just the men? Okay. Now, when you landed in New York, did you land in New York again?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: The same thing as before?

Mr. Giansanti: Same thing as before. No, no, no. Just to get off, get to train and go to Wilmington.

Interviewer: Oh, you came to Wilmington this time.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: You didn't go to Havre de Grace.

Mr. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: Why did you come to Wilmington the second time?

Mr. Giansanti: Because my brother has moved here.

Interviewer: Because your brother had moved from Havre de Grace, he came to Wilmington.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah. It was another brother.

Interviewer: Oh, you had another brother here.

Mr. Giansanti: Another brother was over here.

Mrs. Giansanti: He came after you and Louie came after you.

Mr. Giansanti: Louie, yeah. But he didn't come back in Italy. *[inaudible]* **[0:19:30]** going back in Italy though before me.

Interviewer: Oh, really?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: And did he stay over in Italy?

Mr. Giansanti: He stayed in Italy and then go back in America *[inaudible]* **[0:19:42]**.

Interviewer: Now, you had another brother who was here in Wilmington then?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: What kind of work was he doing?

Mr. Giansanti: My brother?

Interviewer: Yes.

Mr. Giansanti: Same work I do.

Interviewer: Stone *[inaudible]* **[0:19:53]**?

Mr. Giansanti: No, I work in the fiber mill.

Interviewer: Oh, in a fiber mill. He worked in the fiber mill, too?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Where was the fiber mill located?

**[0:20:03]**

Mr. Giansanti: New Castle.

Interviewer: In New Castle. What was the name of the fiber mill?

Mr. Giansanti: The Wilmington Fiber Specialty Company.

Interviewer: The Wilmington Fiber Specialty Company. Your brother was working for them at that time in 1920. And you went to work for them, too?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Where did you live at this time?

Mr. Giansanti: In the *[inaudible] [0:20:20]*. I live over here all the time.

Interviewer: You live in New Castle here?

Mr. Giansanti: Since 1927.

Interviewer: Now, did you board with somebody or did you have your own place?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, I was boarding here with my brother.

Interviewer: Oh, your brother is here in New Castle.

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah. He's also here over here *[inaudible] [0:20:38]*.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Mr. Giansanti: Then he go back *[inaudible] [0:20:40]*.

Interviewer: Oh, I see. Your brother was here then?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, how long did you stay with the fiber company?

Mr. Giansanti: Twenty-nine years.

Mrs. Giansanti: Thirty-nine.

Mr. Giansanti: Thirty-nine years.

Interviewer: Thirty-nine years. Wow. Now, then let's start talking about something else now. Did you stay – did you stay with the fiber company until you retired, right?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. When you came to the United States the first time and you were working in Havre de Grace, how were you treated? How were the Italians treated?

Mr. Giansanti: Now I work in *[inaudible]* **[0:21:18]** quarry stone...

Interviewer: Yeah, I know, but how...

Mr. Giansanti: ...ride a horse.

Interviewer: Right, I know. You drove a horse, but you didn't drive a horse 24 hours a day. I mean, there were times when you weren't working that maybe you went into town, maybe you went to a movie.

Mr. Giansanti: From the time we're going to *[inaudible]* **[0:21:36]** from the time we're going to fish. Almost *[inaudible]* **[0:21:39]**.

Interviewer: Yes. But when you went into town, how did the people treat you?

Mr. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Mr. Giansanti: We are treated good all the time.

Interviewer: In other words, they treat you all right when you were a young man, when you were young in the town down in Havre de Grace and so forth, right?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, when you came back again the second time and you were living here in New Castle, were there many Italians who lived in New Castle then?

Mr. Giansanti: Oh, yeah. There's a lot.

Interviewer: There were a lot of Italians here?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you have any sort of social clubs and Italians clubs or anything?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah. Sometime in the club.



Interviewer: Some ethnic club?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you have a church here, too?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you have a church back in 1920 in...

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see. Now...

Mr. Giansanti: Made a church.

Interviewer: St. Peters, was that an Italian parish or was it just...

Mrs. Giansanti: No, it's an Italian *[inaudible]* **[0:22:38]** church.

Interviewer: I see. Now, how were you treated in church? Was everything all right? Did you go to any mass you wanted or – and – on a Sunday?

Mr. Giansanti: Oh, yeah.

Interviewer: It didn't make you any difference while you went to those 7 o'clock, 8 o'clock, 9 o'clock mass?

Mr. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: Now, there is St. Peters in New Castle, right?

Mr. Giansanti: Yes, I'm *[inaudible]* **[0:22:57]**.

Interviewer: Did you ever go to church in Wilmington?

Mr. Giansanti: St. Anthony Church.

Interviewer: You used to go to St. Anthony's in Wilmington? That was after St. Anthony's was *[inaudible]* **[0:23:05]**.

Mr. Giansanti: That's where I get married, St. Anthony Church.

Interviewer: Oh, did you get married in St. Anthony's in Wilmington?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, *[inaudible]* [0:23:11]. I was just coming in Italy *[inaudible]* [0:23:14] not being, you know, so again *[inaudible]* [0:23:17].

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Giansanti: In California.

Interviewer: To California where *[inaudible]* [0:23:22]. What year did you come to the United States, Mrs. Giansanti?

Mrs. Giansanti: *[inaudible]* [0:23:27].

Interviewer: Why didn't you go together?

Mrs. Giansanti: That's 1928.

Interviewer: You came in 1928?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, March 18, I was here.

Interviewer: March 18. Now, what made you come to the United States?

Mrs. Giansanti: Well, I have my mother and father here.

Interviewer: Oh, your mother and father were here.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: What was your name before you got married?

Mrs. Giansanti: Celi. Celi Italian.

Interviewer: C-E-L-I – C-E-L-I-I?

Mrs. Giansanti: *[inaudible]* [0:23:56].

Interviewer: C-E-L-I-I. Okay. Okay. C-E-L-I-I. Okay, then. If your parents were over in this country, who did you live with in Italy before you came here?

Mrs. Giansanti: I live with my grandma, my grandpa and my uncle.

Interviewer: Now, when your parents came to this country, did they have anybody over here already?

Mrs. Giansanti: Well, my father came first, yes. When my mother came – when my father came, my mother was carrying me.

Interviewer: I see.

Mrs. Giansanti: So I was born here.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Mrs. Giansanti: And if my mother – when my mother came, I was three years old.

Interviewer: So when your mother came here, you were three years old.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. And my father wants – with sisters, the one she's older than me. And my father wants my mother being the one *[inaudible]* **[0:25:03]** two years and go back in Italy and come back over there.

**[0:25:07]**

And he wants me because, you know – well, when he came, I was born here. I came – well, he wants me. And then he had – my sister was big and she understand more was more at my mother, you know. So – and *[inaudible]* **[0:25:24]**, you know.

Interviewer: Yes. I see.

Mrs. Giansanti: So he left me there. My mother don't want to leave, don't want *[inaudible]* **[0:25:31]** and no one come. My father was so *[inaudible]* **[0:25:34]** come.

Interviewer: Yes. So your mother came over with your older sister and left you in Italy with your grandparents and the aunt and uncle.

Mrs. Giansanti: My grandfather and my uncle.

Interviewer: I see. Now, you were – how old were you when you came to this country?

Mrs. Giansanti: Twenty-one.

Interviewer: You're 21. Now, when you were in Italy, did you go to school?

Mrs. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: They didn't believe too much in ladies going to school, is that it?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, I didn't go to school.

Interviewer: Yeah?

Mrs. Giansanti: And like any time *[inaudible]* [0:25:59].

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Giansanti: I think *[inaudible]* [0:26:02] from the school, some *[inaudible]* [0:26:03].

Interviewer: That's right. But in Italy, they didn't put too much – they didn't give too much importance to – school for women especially, is that right?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, nothing changed.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mrs. Giansanti: *[inaudible]* [0:26:14] live in the farm.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Giansanti: And when I was a little girl, I live in the farm. We're far away from the city. It was – it was far away, you know.

Interviewer: Where...

Mrs. Giansanti: The school is right there.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Giansanti: It was *[inaudible]* [0:26:26].

Interviewer: Yeah. And tell me where were you born, in what part of Italy?

Mrs. Giansanti: Well, I born in Guilianova I say. I born...

Interviewer: Guilianova?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. I was born *[inaudible]* [0:26:35].

Mr. Giansanti: Abruzzo.

Interviewer: That's in Abruzzo.

Mrs. Giansanti: Abruzzo, yes.

Interviewer: Is that in Teramo, too?

Mrs. Giansanti: Teramo.

Interviewer: Guilianova is in Teramo, too?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: It seems all the Abruzzo came from Teramo.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. That's Abruzzo, Teramo is Abruzzo.

Interviewer: Yes, yeah.

Mrs. Giansanti: So I born in Guilianova, **[Foreign language]** Guilianova, that's it. He takes – the *[inaudible] [0:26:54]* why we leave, takes *[inaudible] [0:26:56]* to go in Guilianova, you know. And after when I was about 14, we moved. We got – we lived in a city.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Giansanti: Well, it was – it was right in the city and it's just was a city. We didn't like the city anyway and so *[inaudible] [0:27:11]*. My grandmother died when I was 13 years old. And my grandfather still lives when I came over here.

Interviewer: I see.

Mrs. Giansanti: He died about four years when I was here. And we live in the city, you know. It was a little different, you know.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mrs. Giansanti: And when I was living in the farm, so – but what are we talking about, I forget all the...

Interviewer: Okay. No, that's where we're going. Now, when you first came to this country, in 1928, what did you do? Did you work anywhere? Did you stay home?

Mrs. Giansanti: Well, when I came over here, I go work. My mother was working in fiber mill. I go with my mother.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Mrs. Giansanti: After four months, I got married.

Interviewer: After four months?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: What fiber mill – in what fiber mill...

Mrs. Giansanti: It's the same with *[inaudible] [0:28:10]*.

Interviewer: Is that where you met your husband then?

Mrs. Giansanti: *[inaudible] [0:28:10]* across street. We – I mean, I don't meet him there. I meet him here because I also live in another street here and my husband live across it.

Interviewer: Or in other words, you were living in New Castle, you both – and you...

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, we live across, yeah.

Interviewer: I see. And you got married in St. Anthony's in Wilmington, the Italian Parish?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, fine. Now, did you have –ever had many friends who are not Italians? Did you know many people who are not Italians or did you just associate with Italians?

Mrs. Giansanti: Well, almost was Italian people.

Mr. Giansanti: Lots of Italians over here.

Mrs. Giansanti: Lots of – almost Italian people around here, it was just Italian friends. And so we only – when I come in Italy, I came here so I was living in another

street *[inaudible]* **[0:28:58]** that's not friendship. We live here for 28 years.

Interviewer: And now you've been living practically in the same block...

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: ...since you've been in this country.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yes, that's right, yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, Mr. Giansanti, I want to ask you a couple more questions. When you first came to this country, there wasn't any Italian parish here in Wilmington.

Mr. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: There wasn't any.

Mr. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: All right. The Italians in Wilmington didn't have a church of their own and they had to go to somebody else's church you might say.

Mr. Giansanti: That's right.

Interviewer: And, you know that St. Peters is in Wilmington. They had a 9 o'clock mass there and that was the Italian mass for a long time and that was the only mass the Italian can go to.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: For a long while. And if you went to another mass, they'd asked you to leave?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. This is – this is so. Now, I want to – did you ever experience anything like that these often in the early years when you first came here?

Mrs. Giansanti: Did you understand what he was saying?

**[0:30:00]**

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Giansanti: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mrs. Giansanti: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mr. Giansanti: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mr. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: No. [Foreign language]

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: [Foreign language]

Mr. Giansanti: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: In other words, when you were still living in Havre de Grace, you can go to mass you want to go and never had any problem, right? Well, yes, do you understand what I said and – or rather, I understood what you said. At Havre de Grace [Foreign language] .

Mr. Giansanti: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. You could go to any mass, right? All right now. When – after you got married, did you ever belong to any other clubs of any sort, the Eagles – ever joined a club of the Eagles?

Mr. Giansanti: I was belong to most of the club in *[inaudible]* [0:31:33].

Interviewer: And then you drop that.

Mr. Giansanti: [Foreign language]

Interviewer: You go to St. Gabriel and the Sons of Italy then. I see. Okay, fine. Now, when you came back the second time from Italy, after you were here in a



short while around 1923, Mussolini was starting to become very popular in Italy. Do you remember this?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: And everybody seemed to like him. What did you think of Mussolini in those days when he started to...?

Mr. Giansanti: I think *[inaudible] [0:32:12]*. I think he was a good man.

Interviewer: Right. This seems to be the feeling of most people that he was a good man.

Mrs. Giansanti: He did good to people.

Interviewer: Yeah. Mrs. – right.

Mr. Giansanti: He wants to go *[inaudible] [0:32:21]*.

Interviewer: Mrs. Giansanti, you were in Italy when he came in town.

Mrs. Giansanti: Uh-huh.

Interviewer: What do have to say about Mussolini? What did the people in Abruzzo think of him?

Mrs. Giansanti: Well, I think he was good because, you know, we rent, you know, the farm, that was us. And we *[inaudible] [0:32:41]* and we rent. So we got to give...

Interviewer: A shared profit.

Mrs. Giansanti: We got to give our patron, you know.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: In other words, you're shared cropping on the land while you were – and the owner of the land took two-thirds – two-thirds of everything that you produced and left you with one-third.

Mrs. Giansanti: And not everything. **[Foreign language]** little corn and little wheat.

Interviewer: Oh, he took half of the corn and wheat.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, he take half of that. The **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: **[Foreign language]**

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: He would take – or he used to get two-third.

Mrs. Giansanti **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: You got one-third and the other got two-thirds.

Mrs. Giansanti: And a break.

Interviewer: And break.

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: You got one-third and he got two-thirds.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yes. So and another thing, just we get half of the corn and the wheat. And if we take – he give us a third.

Interviewer: In other words, you got half of the corn and wheat and a third of everything else?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. We raised chickens. This one I was – before I was 14 years old, everyone know that **[inaudible] [0:33:45]** and it was this. So we raised chicken and we got to do so much I think.

Interviewer: Now, you raised chickens...

Mrs. Giansanti: If we **[inaudible] [0:33:56]** for one, we can't eat.

Interviewer: You raised chickens and you weren't even allowed to eat one.

Mrs. Giansanti: **[Foreign language]** in three months, there had been so much eggs, so much.

Interviewer: Every month you had so many eggs, right.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. And you got to get so much chicken here while *[inaudible]* **[0:34:24]** he got by the **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: Lamb.

Mrs. Giansanti: Lamb. So **[Foreign language]**

Interviewer: Every Easter you – yeah. Every Easter you have to buy lamb for the owner?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. At Christmas, you got to buy him turkey.

Interviewer: At Christmas you have to buy him a turkey. You couldn't eat but you have to buy for him.

Mrs. Giansanti: That's right. So he had money, buy one for you and one for the - *[inaudible]* **[0:34:44]**. So – and we buy the lamb dish, so we have money, we buy one of us and *[inaudible]* **[0:34:52]**. So when moving again, all is finished. You want to give us some, you give. You want to give, you give nothing.

Interviewer: In other words, when Mussolini came, these all end. In other words...

**[0:35:03]**

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Interviewer: ...if you rented the land, you pay him so much for renting the land...

Mrs. Giansanti: No, no. The **[Foreign language]** .

Interviewer: In other words, you just split everything 50-50.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah. My chicken, you got to get so much chicken in a year. **[Foreign language]** . So the lamb and chicken I have to give, the turkey, I have to give. So much eggs in a month. You don't have to give.

Interviewer: In other words, you didn't have – you no longer had to give him the eggs, you no longer have to buy him a gift at Easter, that gift of a lamb. And in Christmas time, you no longer have to buy the owner the turkeys, is that right?

Mrs. Giansanti: He did it to us.

Interviewer: So Mussolini did the poor man a lot of good.

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, he did good to poor people.

Interviewer: Right.

Mrs. Giansanti: So all the people say, just that man Mussolini, he did good. I was a little girl and I was – I mean, I was young but I remember.

Interviewer: But you remember that *[inaudible]* [0:35:47].

Mrs. Giansanti: I remember this.

Interviewer: So Mr. Giansanti, do you remember whether or not there were ever any rallies held here for – by the fascist? Do you remember that at all?

Mrs. Giansanti: No, he was over here.

Interviewer: Yeah, I know. He was running right here in Wilmington. Do you remember that – if there ever had any say **[Foreign language]** in Wilmington? You don't remember?

Mr. Giansanti: No, I don't remember.

Interviewer: You don't remember that.

Mrs. Giansanti: I remember that the Italians was talking about when he came – when he came, so.

Interviewer: It was bad.

Mrs. Giansanti: *[inaudible]* [0:36:24] when he came.

Interviewer: When you came.

Mrs. Giansanti: When the fascist came, when the fascist came, that was bad.

Interviewer: What was bad when the fascist came?

Mrs. Giansanti: It was bad because, you know, it's – it was hard *[inaudible]* [0:36:37]. And they did mock the people and everything.

Interviewer: The fascist then, they beat up – what did they beat up people?

Interviewer: They're colonist.

Interviewer: Oh, they're colonist.

Mrs. Giansanti: Colonist.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, I think we've covered pretty much all that you've gone through since you've been here. Did you have any children, Mrs. Giansanti and Mr. Giansanti?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah, four daughters.

Interviewer: Four daughters and they – are they all married now?

Mrs. Giansanti: Yeah.

Mr. Giansanti: All married.

Interviewer: Okay. When you think of you life the way it is now, the way it used to be, do you ever feel that you would like to be living today like you lived maybe 20, 30, 40 years ago?

Mrs. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: No.

Mrs. Giansanti: And you know what I like, I like to go back to Italy for visit. I like *[inaudible]* [0:37:32].

Interviewer: You like it, and you like to go back to Italy for a visit maybe but...

Mrs. Giansanti: Not to stay there.

Interviewer: ...not to stay.

Mrs. Giansanti: No.

Interviewer: You prefer living here.

Mrs. Giansanti: I like this kind of life in here.

Interviewer: Yeah. You go along with that, Mr. Giansanti?

Mr. Giansanti: Yeah, I like *[inaudible]* [0:37:45].

Mrs. Giansanti: No, you like it here **[Foreign language]** .

Mr. Giansanti: I like over here.

Interviewer: Okay, fine.

Mrs. Giansanti: You like to **[0:37:52] [Inaudible]** just lied to me.

Interviewer: I don't – I don't have anything else to ask unless you have something more you like to add to what we've already said.

Mrs. Giansanti: That's all.

Interviewer: What do you think? Is there anything that you could think of?

**[0:38:04] End of Audio**