

# GENEALOGY

by WILLARD HEISS

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## AN ITALIAN IMMIGRANT ANCESTOR

by Eugene Michael Vazzana

**Tomaso Angelo Lamanna**

On 1 September 1896, my grandfather's brother, Tomaso Angelo Lamanna (b. 14 April 1874), occupation millwright, arrived at the Port of New York on the vessel *Patria*. He ended up in Pittsburgh, finding work around the state and in West Virginia, for his children were born in five different cities. His naturalization papers state that he resided in Pennsylvania continuously from 1 July 1905. He petitioned for naturalization on 13 November 1908, and my maternal greatgrandfather, Vito Donato Iannetta, then residing at 1012 Wheeler Street, signed an affidavit for Tomaso, whose naturalization was granted on 20 November 1914.<sup>1</sup>

The cognomen of *Lamanna* never established itself permanently in my family, for the name in Tomaso's case became "Laman," while it was altered to "Lamonna" in the case of Pietro Lamanna. In the first instance, the change undoubtedly offered the advantage of lessening the rampant ethnic discrimination leveled against immigrant Italians during their early years here, while in the second instance, the change of a vowel occurred in the grade school years of the Lamanna children and was never corrected. While the names may be misspelled on some legal documents (such as church marriage records), the naturalization papers of both men record the name correctly.

The *City Directory* for 1909 lists two (unknown) Lamans—Anton and Frank, residing at 1074 Wheeler Street; in 1917 there is Peter Lamanna at 1012 Wheeler; in 1921, Peter Lamman [sic] at 1011 Wheeler; and in 1922, Thomas Laman resided at 1011 Wheeler Street with his brother.<sup>2</sup>

Tomaso Angelo Lamanna married Margaret Rebecca Van Tassel (b. 25 September 1883; d. ca. 28 March 1926), of Irish/Dutch descent, on 19 July 1900, and they settled at Ambridge PA. They had five children:

1. Clarence, b. 1 May 1899 [1901?] in Carnegie PA; d. 17 April 1970, Tarpon Springs FL.
2. Clyde, b. 29 July 1902 in Wheeling WV.
3. Lester, b. 22 April 1905 in Claysville PA; d. 15 August 1975 in Ambridge PA.
4. Peter, b. 29 July 1907 in Pittsburgh PA; d. 27 January 1931.
5. Margaret, b. 18 June 1910 in Beaver Falls PA; d. ca. 1933 in McKeesport PA.

Clarence Laman married Janet V. Knapp, they had two children, and he is interred at Meadowland Memorial Gardens, New Port Richey FL.<sup>3</sup>

Clyde Louis Thomas Laman married Theresa Mutcheller in Beaver Falls PA on 27

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December 1923. They had three children (Robert Francis, Audrey Clare, and Clyde Dennis).<sup>4</sup>

Lester Louis Francis Joseph Laman married Angeline Elizabeth Solomon on 6 December 1929, and they had two daughters (Joan and Barbara). Mrs. Angeline Laman supplied this brief account of her husband:

Lester spent the greatest part of his working life working in the steel mills in Ambridge PA. First at American Bridge—a company famous for building bridges, and then at J&L Steel Co. In 1949 he bought and operated an upholstering co. and in 1959, after having suffered a heart attack, he bought a wallpaper and paint company which he operated with his wife until six months before he died. He was an avid reader—interested in current events and a very kind man.<sup>5</sup>

Peter Laman died as a young man on 27 January 1931; interred at Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Margaret Laman married, dying ca. 1933 in McKeesport PA.

These five Lamans had about 17 children among them.

Tomaso resided for a time (in 1922) with his brother on Wheeler Street, but they had a falling-out and lost contact with each other. Thus, although my family knew that there were relatives by the name of Laman (especially those in Ambridge PA), they never socialized with them. It was only in 1982 that I wrote Clyde Laman in Aliquippa PA. He knew nothing of his father's brother's family. In a telephone conversation, he told me that he never had a family. I was on my own at 13, and I missed a lot as far as family, but I have made up for that with my own family. . . .

See, we were put in an orphanage, me and Lester and Pete. . . Well, my mother left my father about 1910, and she didn't bother him. But I'll say this for him—every Sunday, that man came and brought us fruit and everything. . . .

When I came home from the service, my dad and I had a fall-out; I came home on a furlough one time, and he got all mad. When I came back, I didn't go back to my Dad, you see, and I went to my older brother, and that's when I met my mother again. I only stayed there about two or three months, and I couldn't take that at all. I didn't want no part of her family.<sup>6</sup>

The altercation between Tomaso and Pietro illustrates a continuing behavioral pattern of the first-generation Lamannas: explosive temperaments and long-lasting feuds, something people readily associate with Italians (*Cf.* the 1949 film, *House of Strangers*, with Edward G. Robinson.). And Clyde's having to be independent at age 13 epitomizes the plight of many first-generation Italian-Americans: life was one of bare existence—one had to learn how to assimilate into a new culture, suppressing one's own background if at all possible, or at least incorporating it into a new lifestyle.

### Pietro Lamanna

Tomaso's brother, Pietro Lamanna (b. 25 December 1876; d. 17 March 1958),<sup>7</sup> emigrated from Nicastro, province of Cantanzaro, Calabria, Italy. On 12 November 1907 he left the Port of Naples on the *SS Republic*, arriving at the Port of New York on 24 November.<sup>8</sup> A copy of the ship manifest states that he was aged 31, single, a shoemaker, and destined for Scranton PA, where his brother-in-law lived ("Pomentale, Francesco, 49 Nian Avenue").

Now, Tomaso and Pietro had a sister, Anna, but as far as anyone in the family knows, no siblings of the Lamanna brothers emigrated, so that this "brother-in-law" remains a genealogical puzzlement. Pietro Lamanna (orphaned as a child) emigrated alone, and he declared his purpose in coming and length of intended stay as "Does not indicate coming here 'perm[anently]'."<sup>9</sup>

The name "Francesco Pomentale" means nothing to me—I never heard it, ever.

Grandpap always fixed our shoes, so maybe he was a shoemaker. We thought he did it to save

money. I never heard him mention his sister was over here. Too bad we didn't get him to talk about his family. He probably thought we weren't interested.<sup>10</sup>

On 14 August 1910, Michele Gianmatteo and Luigi Fazio signed affidavits of Petitioner as witnesses. Pietro Lamanna signed a Declaration of Intention to become a citizen on 11 August 1914, residing at 1079 Wheeler Street. He was granted a Certificate of Naturalization #17524 on 24 November 1916, then residing at 1012 Wheeler Street (the abode of his father-in-law, Vito Donato Iannetta).<sup>11</sup> Thus, the Lamanna brothers lived in Pittsburgh at the height of the development of Brushton, and my grandfather left his mark on the area as much as any of the other immigrants there.

### **Wheeler Street: Tutto il Mondo e' Paese**

Brushton, and particularly Wheeler Street, developed rapidly after 1900. The street originally had gas lights and a cobblestone street which helped horses to climb it. In deeds relating to my grandfather's house at 1011 Wheeler, a survey of the land directly pinpoints his home geographically:<sup>12</sup>

This house still stands, and the occupants keep it well-maintained. It falls almost directly in the middle of the street; the configuration of Wheeler Street itself makes the block unique. Wheeler Street begins at Frankstown Avenue, continues up a hill past what was called "Home Hill" on the left, intersects with Mohler Street on the left, extends forward to 1011 Wheeler, and continues slightly to the left to Ferndale Street. It was, in a way, set apart from the rest of Brushton, enabling its occupants, almost all of whom were Italian, to formulate tightly knit family groups and a sense of community. As a matter of fact, "Pittsburgh's unique topography [of valleys and plains] facilitated the division of residential areas along social, racial and ethnic lines."<sup>13</sup> These organic relationships were intact throughout the first and second generations to live there.

### **Kin and Community**

Glazer and Moynihan contend that the "two keys to understanding the role of Italians in America are the Italian neighborhood and the Italian family."<sup>14</sup> Before further discussing the Lamonnas, it is of interest to know what Wheeler Street was like in those early days. Time was when Wheeler Street fairly bristled with life! In the 1890s, there were only a handful of homes on the street, but the ensuing emigrations of the next decade brought immigrants to Brushton who decided to stay. The best proof of this lay in the fact that as they became economically successful, they became homeowners. An early resident of Mason Street (up to about 1925) gives charming reminiscences from the perspective of a non-Italian of the turmoil and communal life which she witnessed as a young girl:

Our family has long known that Wheeler Street is full of stories. . . .

I well remember the open-hearth breadbaking. The children would come home from school for lunch, grab a hunk of fresh-baked bread, a tomato, and a green pepper and run back to school, eating as they ran.

The teachers at Bennett School were harsh with the Italian children. . . . You didn't mention the grapes which were used for home-made wine, the women crushing the grapes in their bare feet, swishing their many petticoats and skirts about as they danced about. Then, when the men had made the wine, there were big times—accordion-playing, singing and merriment on Sundays and holidays. . . .

The weddings lasted several days—until all of the dancers were exhausted. The groom paid the bride's father a dowry.

Lice were common—the girls had beautiful, long hair. Spring brought sore throats and the local priest walked up and down Wheeler Street tossing holy water right and left from some kind of cannister to cure sore throats.

Columbus Day on a hill behind Wheeler Street was a great event, the day closing with magnificent fireworks. On some religious holiday, four men would carry a cloth of some kind by its four corners and people would toss coins into it. I think that it was in connection with Columbus Day that there was a parade on Wheeler Street and covered almonds were thrown to the watchers.

You mention gun shots. What terrified us most was the knives, called stiletos. We called Wheeler Street "Little Italy" . . .

The street was patrolled by an Irish policeman. A beer wagon came up the street on Saturday nights, I believe, selling beer in large quantities. We also bought concord grapes from horse-drawn wagons, although many of the Italians grew their own grapes.

You mention *dago* wine. I recall that non-Italians called the men *dagoes* because they were day laborers. They dug ditches and did masonry work. . . .

Did your grandmother ever feed you a dandelion dish? The women scouted the surrounding hills in the spring, collecting dandelions in their voluminous aprons. Did you grandmother wear a babushka? They wore them when we lived there. . . .

Bologna was commonly used for meat. . . .

Following are some random recollections: home-made spaghetti and tomato paste, dried in the sun. Limburger cheese. Straw ticks piled in the front room of the house which were used by immigrant men to sleep on at night. Many of them came without wives and most of them boarded in private homes. Men wore black sleeve-bands when participating in a funeral procession. Some of the non-Italian children called the boys "wullios" [From Italian *uomo* ("man"); colloquially, "kid," "fellow"]. At the spot at the foot of Wheeler Street, the Baptists tried to convert the Italian children by holding a summer Bible school in a tabernacle. . . .

Italian men used to play a game with smooth stones on the road in front of our house. The boys got head lice, too, and their heads were shaved. . . .

I was surprised that at least one black family had preceded Italians on Wheeler Street. There was one black family on our section of Wheeler Street and, I think, a Neville black family on your section of Wheeler Street. The 1900 and 1910 censuses will help with details like this.

I have been recalling other details: women carrying loads on their heads and in their upturned, street-length dresses; weddings with hard candy tossed to children in the street; wedding receptions were held in the bride's home; women walked to the end of our section of Wheeler Street to Blackadore's farm at the opposite end of the street and bought vegetables and fruit which they carried home in their upturned skirts; mothers sitting out of doors combing their daughters' hair, removing lice and killing them with their bare hands. . . . Women tearing each other's hair when quarrelling. . . .

You had delightful Christmases, but that was not the case with most of Wheeler Street. I do not recall feasts, Christmas trees or gifts. The day was a bleak one to the children. . . .

When the men had their wine-accordion parties, they sang songs in Italian.

One Italian woman near our end of Wheeler Street tried to do something about [overpopulation]. She breast-fed a daughter until she was four or five years old in the belief that that would prevent another pregnancy. Many non-Italian women believed the same thing. . . .

There was a stone quarry on land below the intersection of Frankstown Road and Blackadore Avenue. I think that many of the Wheeler Street men worked there. I recall the men's hands covered with the powder of cement and stones. . . .

Death due to TB was common. I recall two such deaths on Mason Street. I worked for eight years at the Veterans Hospital when it was a tuberculosis hospital and located in Aspinwall PA. The clinical director there told me that people who emigrate are subject to tuberculosis. Those whom you mention may also have been undernourished, a principal cause of tbc. . . .

There were many sumac trees in the area. . . .

I remember young Italian girls with their ears pierced and a piece of string or thread drawn through the hole and tied to keep the opening ready for the day when they would get earrings. Earrings and fancy hair combs were more popular among the Italians than among the other "American" women. . . .

I recall that many uneducated U.S. citizens referred to Italians as "Eyetalians". . . . There was a period when the broken English of Italians was something to poke fun at. Victrola records and radio programs featured this.<sup>15</sup>

All of this—and more—transpired on Wheeler Street, on the street at the top of the hill, and in its midst arrived my grandfather.

### "Il Calabrese"

A family legend has it that Pietro Lamanna had had an altercation with a family in Calabria which refused to let him marry their daughter, so he burned their house down! He fled the Republic of Italy on to Argentina, then to Los Angeles CA. Our family has several duplicate original photographs of him taken in Los Angeles at the studio of "F. Borgia, 674 San Francisco Street," in which he is very nattily dressed. Did he wear rented clothes for this photograph, as many immigrants did (including Valentino in his early days here), to reassure his family and friends? I am told that he worked as a chef there, but *most* of this legend is thus far totally unsubstantiated.

A *compare* of Pietro, Luigi Fazio (who later witnessed his friend's naturalization in 1910), allegedly wrote to my grandfather in California, informing him that he could arrange for him to marry a young widow (with three children). To tempt him further, he made it clear that this widow had received \$1300.00 from an insurance policy covering her husband's death in a fire on 12 August 1912.<sup>16</sup> Soon, Pietro Lamanna was in Pittsburgh. The "*mashad*" (from Italian *ambasciatore*, "ambassador, messenger") was made at Luigi Fazio's home on Wheeler.

In this way, my grandmother, Filomena Iannetta (Mrs. Donato Austerlitz), again went the way of her female ancestors by the expected behavior of acceding to the ritual of match-making. My grandfather married her on 29 October 1914 at Mother of Good Counsel Church.<sup>17</sup>

Six years earlier, Father Florindo DeFrancesco had celebrated the first mass in his new parish in an old, vacant storeroom on Oakwood Street. The first church was dedicated on 20 December 1908, construction having begun in May, 1908; my grandmother married her first husband there on 27 September 1908.<sup>18</sup>

More and more Italians settled in Brushton, displacing its German, Irish, and English occupants, and by "April, 1915, the congregation had grown so rapidly that it became necessary to enlarge the building to twice its original size." In 1928, a school was erected on the corner of Bennett Street and Brushton Avenue. Mother of Good Counsel Church, in a new building dedicated on 25 September 1955, is now situated on Bennett Street, still within easy walking distance from Wheeler Street. This church provided the immigrant Italians and their families with the religious comfort and succor they needed, helping to stabilize the community to a great extent. And so, "[f]rom a humble beginning when the first Mass was celebrated in a little storeroom before a handful of Italian parishioners, the parish and grown to proportions which necessitated the creation of a new church."<sup>19</sup> The parish celebrated its 50th Golden Jubilee Anniversary in 1958, at approximately that point in Brushton's history when Italian communal life there had all but deteriorated.

Married in his mid-30s, my grandfather immediately began raising a family. Approximately every year and a half there was a new son or daughter born on Wheeler Street, all of them delivered by a mid-wife:

Gianina Dolores ("Jenny," "Jay"), b. 13 August 1915

Nicholas Anthony ("Skeevie"), b. 21 March 1917  
 Carmela Constance ("Millie"), b. 14 January 1919  
 Anna Therese, b. 21 January 1921  
 Angelo Michele ("Gumps"), b. 16 September 1922  
 Vito Raymond ("Chubby"), b. 21 April 1924  
 Antonio Frederick ("Babe"), b. 1 January 1926  
 Giuseppe William ("Ookie"), b. 16? July 1927  
 Pietro Michael ("Petey"), b. 7 November 1929

All but the first married, eventually giving issue to seventeen cousins—german, making a total of twenty cousins in all from my grandmother's two marriages.

It was in 1917 that "Pietro Lamanno [sic] Ex Ux" put up \$2750.00 for the house at 1011 Wheeler Street.<sup>20</sup> Ten years after emigrating, my grandfather had become a settled, stable occupant of Pittsburgh. Yet it was in the mid-teens that Brushton began its slow decay, for the Brushton Station of the railroad was closed in 1914, adversely affecting Brushton Avenue commerce. Although in nearby Homewood the Tudor Carnegie Library (1910), the Catholic Church of the Holy Rosary (1919), and the George Westinghouse High School (1922) were built, falsely suggesting prosperity, the Homewood-Brushton area of Pittsburgh was doomed. The clearing of the downtown Lower Hill district in the 1950s accelerated the move to the suburbs. Again, the topographical diversity of the city dictated ethnic and racial "boundaries." Blacks displaced whites in Homewood-Brushton.<sup>21</sup>

Many other Italian immigrants also became stable occupants of Brushton. My mother and aunts and uncles remember many of their parents' neighbors on Wheeler Street from their childhood. Many of the stories concerning these people appear to be humorous now, in retrospect, and some are decidedly tragic, but they all surely suggest a way of life gone forever, never to recur. Wheeler Street is only one block of Brushton, so one can imagine what was happening in all of Brushton from a sample of reminiscences about the street.

There was *Maggie Sofia* and two brothers: she used to put flour on her face instead of powder! *Donato* ("Chick-Chuck") and *Rachel DiBattiste*: They had nine children, most of whom died of tuberculosis. Rachel was always dressed in funeral black, and she threw curses on the kids if they played in front of her house. *Canio* and *Rose Grieco*: my aunts played with their kids and received olives and cheese as a treat. The family was nicknamed "*la trotzel*." Next to them, lived the *Lamanna's*: he was called "*il calabrese*," suggesting that there were few Calabrians in the area; she was called "*Filomena buffaletta*." Their house originally lacked electricity, hot water and tubs, and the kids had to fill "*la cong*" with water heated from a pot-bellied stove. *Matilde* and *Tomaso Valenza*: he beat up his wife when he was drunk, so she was often at my grandmother's. *William* and *Marie Grieco*: very pleasant people, whose sons Billy and John married two girls from Mason Street, Elvira Mazzei and Elda Nardini, respectively. *Mike* and *Carmela Cecere*: she was a real cutup and danced the *tarantella* on July 16th celebrations. She used to say "stip-a-lick" for lipstick. Her bachelor brother lived with her and they fought like cats and dogs, for he drank; his nickname was "*Patuch*." The *Abriola's*: the wife had a tooth pulled and then died from this. The *Grasso's*: Mrs. Grasso was having babies contemporaneously with her daughters! *Luigi* and *Saveria Fazio* (the latter somehow related to Pietro Lamanna): they spoke a curious Calabrian dialect; instead of saying, "una tazza di caffè," they said, "ca hay ca hook"! *Emanuela Lauletta*: she married *John Mosco* at age 14; when widowed, she married *Mike Calabrese*. Her father allegedly cut off his wife's leg (presumably, he was maniacal)! The Black Hands attempted to bribe her, but when John Mosco pulled a gun on them, they left her alone. Her brother lived at the top of Wheeler Street on the right; one day he walked out of the house, abandoning his wife and eleven children! Establishments in the area included the Kekelty Funeral Home; the Morasco Funeral Home; the Schwartz Feed Store (oats for horses);

“Skippy” Jeannette’s pool hall; Patsy’s Barber Shop; Scott’s Ice House; the Reliable Drug Store (located directly at the foot of Wheeler Street); Schultz’s Real Estate; and the “Hole,” a pool hall on Frankstown Avenue where my uncles and grandfather drank and gambled.

Glazer and Moynihan explain:

Powerful as the Italian village culture was, however, it could not, when transferred to the United States, sustain the absolute power of the father and the unquestioning humility of the children. Instead, the children, finding a serious gap between themselves and their parents, tended to create groups of their own, with something of their own values, code and morality. Thus, to the structure of the Italian-American neighborhood was added a group known variously as the “boys,” the “fellows,” the “club,” the “gang.” In it boys gathered around the corner store, outside of the crowded tenements, and horsed around, talked, and whistled at girls. This phenomenon was not confined among immigrant groups to Italians, but it seems to have been especially characteristic of them. W.F. Whyte’s vivid description in *Street Corner Society* of the life of these corner boys is drawn from an Italian slum. A possible explanation is that in Italian culture there is a strong emphasis on male exhibitionism, strength, and sexual potency. The exhibition needs a proper audience, which might be found among the circle of family and relatives who gather daily or at least on Sunday, and among the street corner boys who gather nightly. The boys would withdraw from this society at marriage, almost embarrassed to be deserting the gang even for so compelling a reason. (A very few deserted the boys to train for careers.) But a little while after marriage they would be back among their old friends. Then the nightly gatherings might be moved to an apartment, where the women could talk separately in another room. In older age, the group might organize a club. Every Italian neighborhood is marked by storefronts behind which men chat, play cards, and drink coffee, free from intrusion by strangers.<sup>22</sup>

This was Brushton at its apex.

I remember my grandfather as mild-mannered, witty, and taciturn. I still retain the memory of the smell of cigarettes and wine on his breath. He used to greet me with, “Hi, Gene!” and that was all—a man of few words. When I was a child, he used to amuse himself by letting me taste his homemade *dago* red wine which he had made himself.

He used to march in the July 16th parades honoring Our Lady of Mount Carmel, a custom originating in Naples after 1647, walking through Homewood and Brushton. When we heard the band playing, my mother would send me up to Homewood Avenue and Hermitage Street, where I could see him march by. It was exciting to a young boy, and I was proud of my grandfather when I saw him carrying a banner of Santa Maria to which dollar bills had been pinned.

During the evening of that day, we would visit Frankstown Avenue, just below Wheeler Street, where hundreds of people celebrated in the streets. There were spaghetti- and pie-eating contests; Italian foods were sold; and a greased pole was erected with food and money on top of it, enticing the youngsters to climb the pole, retrieve the goods, and provide much amusement for the bystanders. I remember seeing my grandmother dancing the *tarantella* below the bandstand to the great entertainment of everyone nearby. I was awestruck that my grandmother could dance! And the smell of spilled soda emanating from the sidewalks and streets. And the jocular, relaxed horde of people enjoying the feast, which gave a hard-working people respite from daily care as well as a continuation of a custom practiced in their *paese di origine*.<sup>23</sup>

In the early days of Brushton, preparation for this feast started a week in advance with the erection of tents in which fireworks were set up. During the day of the feast, a priest and his attendants would offer prayers and collect money on Wheeler Street. Later on, the Italians would start arriving *en masse*.

You'd see them walking by our house. It didn't matter which hill you were on—you were going to have a good vantage point, as long as you got up real high. They would be carrying a watermelon; they liked to carry—I suppose it was breads and cheeses and things like that, wrapped in newspaper—I can see them walking by with that, and fruit—they were great fruit lovers. And they'd walk up there and just sort of picnic—sit on the ground as families, and enjoy the day. Well, the people who were not Italian looked forward to this day as much or even more than the Italians did.

Just about dusk, great throngs of people would start coming up Blackadore Avenue, coming up Wheeler Street, climbing Blackadore Hill. . . beyond Willing Street. . . They came from miles around! Of course, this was before people had automobiles, and very few people could afford a horse and carriage or anything like that, but they all came on shanksmares. And they would climb the hills and most of them would be carrying a little piece of carpeting. They liked to get there a little early because they would seat themselves on the ground to get a good vantage point on the hill opposite where the fireworks had been set up. Nobody ever wanted to go up the hill where the fireworks were, because you couldn't see them near as well as if you were on an adjoining hill. Besides which, I don't think it was very safe because these were tremendous pieces that they set up [probably hand-made], and, of course, they spewed—it looked like fire and all when they'd set them off. Oh! and those fireworks were just something marvelous! Great big set pieces and big stars; rockets would fly up in the air. I'm sure you've seen similar things put on like on the 4th of July. They're not so common anymore as they used to be, but the Italian's were far superior to any other sort of fireworks that were ever set off anywhere. And their last piece would always be a big goodnight! Well, that was a day to look forward to!<sup>24</sup>

My grandfather mellowed a great deal during his last years, but he was known for the virulent ire and angry temperament he had in reserve. For example, once he missed a cigar, so he lined up his sons and whacked each one of them in turn to make the culprit speak up. He finally exhausted himself and never did find out who took the cigar. Another time, my mother came home from a date just at 9 p.m., her curfew. The house was dark. When she opened the door and walked in, she felt her father's hand crack her face. (She was in her late teens.) My grandfather was a *capitosto* at will, however, I personally do not recall this side of his character at all. In this connection, I only remember that my mother used to put out her cigarette when my grandfather entered the room. She did this, she said, because he did not like women smoking, especially his daughters.

He and Luigi Fazio used to quarter peaches and drink them in wine. He smoked *DeNobli* cigars and used *Five Brothers* tobacco in his corncob pipe. On Sunday afternoons, he played cards with his friends, serving a sheep's head dinner. He was a member of the ICNA (Italian Citizens National Association) Club and the Lapace Lodge of the Order of Italian Sons and Daughters of America. The Italian version of bowling, *boccie*, was another pastime of his, a game the old men of Italy still play in the *piazas* there. He named his dog "Skippy" after his brother-in-law, and fed it spaghetti; the sauce was so spicy that it eventually killed the dog and his guts fell out!

My grandfather used the "Home Hill" to plant a garden of tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, beans, mint, and grapes. His sons were given the chore of pressing the grapes in the cellar. The liquid was put into barrels, and my grandfather would tap the keg to see if the wine was



ready. Homemade sausage hung upstairs. Part of it was put into lard to give it a certain flavor. He sewed hot peppers together and hung them to dry out. He made root beer at home with an extract and yeast. He was his children's barber (using a bowl over their heads), and he pierced all his daughters' ears; a string was left in the hole until it healed.

At age 69 (ca. 1945), Pietro Lamanna retired from the City Sanitation Department with a pension of \$74.00 a month, after working a few extra years because he did not have enough time there to get a decent pension if he retired earlier. In the city's sewers, he used to find watches, guns, and even dead babies! He led a long, raucous life, dying on 14 March 1958,<sup>25</sup> in the arms of his youngest son, Peter. His wife died on 17 August 1969.<sup>26</sup>

### Endnote

The foregoing family history supports many theses propounded in research of Italian immigrants and their offspring. Although three out of five Italian immigrants repatriated,<sup>27</sup> it is clear that kin and community concretely eased the painful process of assimilation for the Lamannas, allowing them to make the decision to settle in Pittsburgh (it will be remembered that originally Pietro Lamanna did *not* intend to stay). The persuasiveness of family duplicated their premigration experiences; it was more desirable to settle in Brushton, where family and former compatriots resided than in another strange, lonely city.

Pietro Lamanna settled in Brushton during its peak commercial years, so the promise of economic success—by his standards—was not out of reach. Many Italians on Wheeler Street (including Vito Donato Iannetta) took in boarders to supplement their income, raised fowl and rabbits, planted gardens and grew grapes, made wine and put up food, especially after they had purchased a home.

Pietro married at age 36, at which time in his life cycle he probably desired a more sedentary existence. Thus, homeownership (a sure mark of community status), kinship ties, and neighborhood development encouraged ethnic conclaves to arise, as in the Brushton, East Liberty, and Bloomfield areas of Pittsburgh.

Rather than stay here five years and then repatriate, Pietro probably realized that the community would satisfy all of his expectations for living a better life, for in Brushton there were fraternal associations, churches, social organizations, ethnic newspapers, ethnic businesses (such as Ferroconio's grocery store on Wheeler), and schools. Mrs. Ferroconio marked her accounts with X's and O's, letting her customers buy on credit. So the community *in toto* gave Pietro a breathtaking sense of belonging.

The key to "success" centered upon *work*. In 1917 he worked for the Pittsburgh Asphalt Plant; later, for the city, so he survived without having to rely on any premigration skills.

The newly arrived immigrant. . . had no recourse but to accept what he was offered, at least until he could find his feet in the new environment. If it killed him, what of it? There were thousands and hundreds of thousands of his like crowding in behind him. He was expendable—and was expended, ruthlessly.<sup>28</sup>

The 1910 Census shows that many Italian male boarders on Wheeler Street worked as plasterers, drivers, laborers for the mills, Water Department, or Pennsylvania Railroad Company, or as general day laborers. Pietro Lamanna made a successful adjustment to a harsh environment even though one may look upon his early married years as ones permeated by poverty (my mother recalls getting an orange and walnuts for Christmas).

His descendants, armed with fluent English, found assimilation easier despite their background experience, for "[m]aking it in America promises the unmaking of ethnicity."<sup>29</sup> The Italians "continued to be the most widely distributed and the most successful of all three groups [of blacks, Italians and Poles]"<sup>30</sup> in Pittsburgh. Caught between two worlds, his descendants encountered less economic stress, prospered, and gave Pietro's grandchildren a

standard of living undreamed of in 1907 when Pietro Lamanna emigrated on the *SS Republic*.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> "Declaration of Intention, No. 7845," 13 November 1908, "Petition for Naturalization, No. 12047," 16 June 1914, and "Certificate of Naturalization, No. 529405," 20 November 1914, from Federal Archives and Records Center, 5000 Wissahickon Avenue, Philadelphia PA 19144. Record Group 021, dated 19 October 1981. Photocopy in possession of author, as are copies of all documents hereinafter referred to in this paper.

<sup>2</sup> *Pittsburgh Directory* (Pittsburgh: R.L. Polk & Co. and R.L. Dudley, 1909-1922).

<sup>3</sup> "Death Certificate of Clarence N. Laman," 17 April 1970, State File No. 70-027653. Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Vital Statistics, PO Box 210, Jacksonville FL 32231. (Gives birth date as 1 May 1901, while his father's naturalization papers give the year as 1899.)

<sup>4</sup> "Application for Marriage License" (states his age as 22), and "Marriage Certificate," 27 December 1923, No. 10796, Series N. Rev. L. Norman Tucker, 7507 Kelly Street, Pittsburgh PA.

<sup>5</sup> Letter received from Mrs. Angeline Laman, 15 April 1982.

<sup>6</sup> Telephone interview with Clyde Laman, 28 February 1982.

<sup>7</sup> "Estratto dell'Atto di Nascita," No. 50, Part I, Ufficio 3°, L'Ufficiale dello Stato Civile, Comune di Lamezia Terme, Provincia di Cantanzaro. (He is listed as the son of Nicola and Giovanna Gigliotti; born at 8:30 on 25 December 1876. *Certificato* dated 19 November 1981. An attachment indicates that the surname *Lamanna* is common in the nearby town of Pianopoli.)

<sup>8</sup> *Morton Allan Directory of European Passenger Steamship Arrivals* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1980), p. 125. This source indicates that the *SS Republic* sailed into the Port of New York on 24 November 1907. Cf. *The New York Times*, Vol. LVII (25 November 1907), p. 14, col. 7: the *SS Republic* arrived from Naples.

<sup>9</sup> "Copy of Ship Manifest No. 2309-6-7 *SS Republic*," 12 August 1982. Correspondence No. NYC 76/95.2-C, United States Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 26 Federal Plaza, New York NY 10278.

<sup>10</sup> Letter received from Mrs. Ann Vazzana, 2 September 1982.

<sup>11</sup> "Declaration of Intention and Petition for Naturalization No. 17524," issued 24 November 1916 at the U.S. District Court for the Western District of PA. Photostated copies dated 9 July 1981, District Director, New York District, U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service. (The surname Iannetta was later altered to "Jeannette.") Vito Donato Iannetta sailed from Genoa on the *Princess Irene*: cf. *The New York Times*, Vol. LIII (21 January 1904), p. 11, col. 5. The vessel "passed in Sandy Hook at 7:52 p.m."

<sup>12</sup> "Deed of Sale of I. Leonard Aronson et ux. to Pietro Lamanno et ux.," *Deed Book Volume 1903*, 26 June 1917, pp. 186-87. Office of Recorder of Deeds, County of Allegheny, 101 County Office Building, Pittsburgh PA 15219.

<sup>13</sup> John Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber, *Lives of Their Own: Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900-1960* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), p. 22.

<sup>14</sup> Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "The Italians," in *Beyond the Melting Pot* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1963), p. 186.

<sup>15</sup> Excerpted from letters received from Grace G. Stewart, 2 October 1981; 25 October 1981; 23 November 1981; 6 December 1981; 15 December 1981; and, 11 February 1982.

<sup>16</sup> "Two Men Meet Death When Gas Explodes," *The Pittsburgh Press*, 13 August 1912, p. 1. Cf. "Two Die of Injuries," *The Pittsburgh Press*, 13 August 1912, p. 3, col. 8; and "Gas Explosion Kills Two," *The Pittsburgh Gazette Times*, 13 August 1912, p. 5, col. 3. (My grandmother's first husband, Donato Austerlitz, was born 29 December 1882.)

<sup>17</sup> "Marriage Record of Pietro Lamanna and Filomena Lamanna," No. 3764, Series J, Register of Wills, Court of Common Pleas, City County Building, Pittsburgh PA 15219; "Church Record," 29 October 1914, Mother of Good Counsel Church, 7705 Bennett Street, Pittsburgh PA 15208. On 29 March 1982, while on a visit to Italy, I obtained a copy of her birth certificate from the *municipio* in Rionero: "Certificato di Nascita di Filomena Iannetta," 5 June 1891, Birth Records of Rionero in Vulture, Basilicata, Provincia di Potenza, Italia, of 1891, No. 243, Part I, Series A.

<sup>18</sup> "Church Record of Marriage Between Donato Austerlitz and Filomena Iannetta," 27 September 1908, Mother of Good Counsel Church. (A witness to the marriage was one "Leonardo Lamonna," whose relationship to Pietro Lamanna is unknown.)

<sup>19</sup> *50th Anniversary Brochure of Mother of Good Counsel Church, 4 May 1958* (Pittsburgh: n.p., 1958), n. pag.

<sup>20</sup> "Deed of Sale of I. Leonard Aronson et ux to Pietro Lamanno et ux.," pp. 186-87; "Deed of Sale from I. Leonard Aronson et ux et al to Pietro Lamanna et ux.," No. 23745, *Deed Book Volume 1929*, 29 July 1918, pp. 301-3.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. "Valley of Memory and Decision; Homewood-Brushton Past and Beginning," *Carnegie Magazine*, Vol. XLVII, No. 6 (June, 1973), 244-45; cf. Bodnar, Simon, and Weber, pp. 223-24.

<sup>22</sup> Glazer and Moynihan, pp. 188-89.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Pistella, Domenico, *La Madonna del Carmine e gli italiani d'America; storia del Santuario della Madonna del Carmine* (New York: Eugene Printing Service, 1954), p. 37.

<sup>24</sup> Mrs. Ruth Israel (nee Stewart), Account of Wheeler Street, taped 12 October 1981, transcribed by author. (The fireworks ending the celebration simulated the burning of the church tower in Naples in 1647 during the Neapolitan revolution led by Masaniello.)

<sup>25</sup> "Death Certificate of Pietro Lamanna," File No. 20936, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Vital Statistics, PO Box 1528, New Castle PA 16103; "Obituary," *The Pittsburgh Press*, 16 March 1958, Section 3, p. 10, col. 2.

<sup>26</sup> "Death Certificate of Filomena Lamanna," File No. 75577, PA Vital Statistics; "Obituary," *The Pittsburgh Press*, 18 August 1969, p. 38, col. 3.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Glazer and Moynihan, p. 185: "The Italian migration. . . had one of the highest proportions of returning immigrants."

<sup>28</sup> Stefan Lorant, *Pittsburgh; The Story of an American City* (Lenox, Mass.: Author's Edition, Inc., 1975), p. 290.

<sup>29</sup> William Robbins, "'Making It in America' Forum Hears of Risk in Blending of Ethnic Groups," *The New York Times*, Vol. CXXXII (23 April 1983), p. 6, col. 1.

<sup>30</sup> Bodnar, Simon and Weber, p. 243.

## QUERIES

JANE E. DARLINGTON - Editor

Queries are reserved for members of The Indiana Historical Society and should be kept within a 50-word limit. Members are limited to 2 queries per year.

Searching for ancestors (including European) of John HELMS, Sr. b. KY d. bef. 1842 Fountain Co., IN; 11 ch. included Geo. W. (d. 1847 July 25), Wm., John, James, Elisha, Thompson, Sanford.—Doan Helms, Jr., 850 Santa Maria Dr., Naperville, IL 60540

Seeking info on Alfred PEARCE b. England, in Boone Co., IN 1880; what happened to him? m. Elizabeth (RECORD? b. IN); will exchange.—Mrs. Diane Kirkland, 7500 Haynes Rd. So., Beulah, CO 81023

Would like to correspond with persons interested in NICHOLSON, IRELAND, MIDDLETON, QUINN, SHEA and GODFREY.—Marie C. Nicholson, P.O. Box 10492GSS, Springfield, MO 65808

Need info on Paris Benoni STINSON b. ca. 1852 IN; m. Marion Co. Anna DAUER 1880 Apr. 28; maybe son of Benoni STINSON, General Baptist preacher; will exchange on any branch of STINSON family.—Mrs. J.R. Lane, 5125 Roberts Dr., Fort Worth, TX 76118

Seek immigrant ancestor of Nathaniel GRIFFY b. 1828 Shenandoah Co., VA; d. Richmond, Wayne Co., IN 1891.—Wm. H. Griffy, 550 Castano Ave., Pasadena, CA 91107

Data needed on parents of Alexander C. CRAIGMILES (b. 1774) and wife, Rachel (b. 1784 Ireland of Scottish parents); in Butler Co., OH and Franklin Co., IN; known ch.: Samuel, Rachael and Lydia (b. ca. 1810 Butler Co., OH; m. 1831 Mar. 31 Andrew MONTGOMERY; d. 1851 July 6; bd. Asberry, Franklin Co., IN).—Virginia S. Foster, P.O. Box 756, Alliance, NE 69301

Want info on James M. BEARDSLEY b. ca. 1829/30 in Warrick Co., IN; m. 1853 Lucy Ann DUTTON; ch.: John D., Aaron Hansel, Geo. W., Ann, Lawrence H., Louis M., Elizabeth, Sarah E. and Nellie.—Clara M. Drysdale, 14561 Gatemont Dr., Chesterfield, MO 63017

Seek info on Elizabeth, widow of Jeremiah WILLSON; Wm. FOSTER appointed guardian of minor ch.: Aaron, Reuben, Samuel and Miles WILLSON; m. 2nd) Joshua CROW 1829 May 18, Vigo Co., IN; to Marshall, Clark Co., IL; Quakers.—Carol Gaiser, 14620 N.E. 13th Pl., Bellevue, WA 98007.

Researching ancestors of (Franklin Co. IN) John Scott GLISSON m. Mary CASE 1841, Alexander HILL m. Rachel Ann STANT 1862, Samuel E. BALL m. Minerva McFARLAND 1847, Loranze Dow HALL m. Mary Ann WYATT 1870, Wm. H. ALFRED m. Eviah WILEY 1864.—Phillip L. Glisson, 1730 Mills Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45212.

Searching for parents/relatives of John T. BASEY b. 1812 Aug. 16; m. Rachel TURPEN 1838 Mar. 4 Greensburg, IN; Rachel b. 1819 Jan. 23; lived Tipton Co., IN.—Melvin L. Griggs, 63 N. Sheridan Av., Indianapolis, IN 46219

Need parents of John S. SCOFIELD b. 1830 OH or IN? m. 1851 Oct. 20 Switzerland Co., IN Christina T. COTTON dau. of Nathaniel; who were Hannah REED's parents?—Mrs. Lynn Livenick, 8517 W. 91st St., Hickory Hills, IL 60457

Will exchange info on these IN families: BROWN, BURNSIDE, GLIDEWELL—Union, Franklin, Shelby Cos.; BRUMAGE—Union, Fayette Cos.; COWGER, GARVER—Rush Co.; McCREERY—Marion Co.; WEBB—Madison, Rush Cos.—Wilson Brown, 581 Taurus, Rexburg, ID 83440

Seeking info on parents/spouse of Nathan HASKETT; his will written 1832 Perquimans Co., N.C.; ch.: Jordan, Nathan, Robertson, Daniel, Joseph, Rebeckah, Silas and John settled in Hancock Co., IN in 1830s.—Catherine A. Roney, R#10, Box 154, Greenfield, IN 46140

Need data on Philo Almond HEATH, farmer & cooper; wife, Mary SURBER, & 11 children living Cotton Twp., Switzerland Co., IN 1880.—Sue Springer, 5105 Roberts Rd., Muncie, IN 47303

Want info/obituary for Sterrett McCLELLAND who d. 1846 Dec. 22 Sullivan or Knox Co., IN or his wife, Margaret HOGG, who d. 1837 May 17, Sullivan or Knox Co., IN.—Orella Holloway Chadwick, 7765 Fairview Rd., Tillamook, OR 97141

Researching Ryal SIMMONS b. 1755 VA, d. bef. 1840 Decatur Co., IN; Joseph JAMES b. 1756 VA, d. aft. 1838 Greene Co., IN; Thomas PATTON b. 1755 N.J.? d. 1834 Fayette Co., IN; John ESSLEY b. 1765 N.J.? d. 1834 Delaware Co., IN; Geo. HAMILTON 1820 Owen Co., IN.—Gwen Boyer Bjorkman, 4425—132nd Ave., S.E., Bellevue, WA 98006

Need ancestors of Wm. H. and Samuel BRAMBLE who m. sisters, Anna and Amanda SLAYBACK 1840 Tippecanoe Co., IN; want correspondence with BRAMBLE researchers.—F.W. Farnsworth, 6034 Country Club Dr., Victoria, TX 77904

Searching for descendants of Samuel HIBBS, Drucilla DOWNS, Nancy WILLIS, Israel BUKER, John CARVER, Bathsheba EDSON, Godfrey BAINTER, Philip SHROYER, Philip DARNER and Rebecca WINN.—Delores Williams-Merkley, 1542 S. 27 St., Omaha, NEB. 68105

Seeking data about Robert ROSS, Saltcreek Twp., Decatur Co., IN; b. 1784/87; service with the British in War of 1812.—Mrs. Marilyn Thackery, R.R. #7, Box 284, Greensburg, IN 47240

Need info on Ella Bell TALBOTT (Elizabeth Ann); b. 1854 Oct. 15 Peppertown, IN; mo. d.



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# Ancestors from Italy?

by John W. Heisey

America has been described as a melting pot, and if food is any criterion, it's true. Do you like spaghetti or other kinds of pasta? Who doesn't? Regardless of whether you do or don't, it doesn't mean you are or are not Italian.

This brings up an interesting note. According to a short article in the *Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine* (Volume XXXIV, No. 3, 1986, page 229) it has been estimated that over 12 million Americans have Italian ancestors. Maybe that estimate is conservative. Anyway, some of you may be trying to make the big ge-

At present, Italy is divided into 92-94 provinces and each province is subdivided into communes. (Don't equate that term with the name communism.) The end result is that there are now over 8,000 communes, and each is further broken down into hamlets (Frezioni). Ready to find the right hamlet from all those thousands?

As I said, it's a big task, especially since there is no centralized place in Italy for genealogical records. But don't stop, there is a ray of hope.

Enter a surprising hero The "Certificate of Family Genealogy." This unique project was begun in 1869, but it doesn't cover everybody in the nation. However, where they are extant, these documents show names, relationships, dates and places of birth for all living family members at the time the certificate was prepared. Ask about ones for your family in Italy from the Ufficio Anagrafe in the appropriate municipality.

Earlier, I mentioned the provinces of Italy. Although they are separate entities, they are grouped into 19 regions. Throughout the entire country are scattered at least 60 state archives, plus a central or national archives in Rome.

In the National Archives many records from across the nation have been gathered and kept. Among these are parish and civil registers, national census counts, communal and family archives, tax lists, and many more records, including some relating to professions and trade guilds. While there are many documents, they are not complete, nor do they cover the entire country.

The address for the Archivio Centrale dello Stato (Central State Archives) is Pizzalle degli Archivi 610, Roma. Don't confuse it with the Archivio de Stato de Roma (State Archives of Rome) at Corso Rinascimento 40, Roma, which is one of the provincial archives.

If you're trying to trace your Italian ancestors back to Italy, sooner or later you'll discover immigrant ancestors. That will probably be in the late 19th or early 20th centuries, as that's when most of the Italians arrived in America. That being the case, immigration records of the U.S. and passenger ship lists should help.

**GENEALOGY WEEK**  
Edited by Elsie Kilmer  
c. Oct 1986

## Your Ancestors ...and how to find them

neological jump from the United States to Italy

Italy today is a far cry from what it was in previous centuries. We're all familiar with stories about the Roman Empire and many of us labored long over high school Latin. But this is not the place to go too deeply into Italian history.

As far back as AD 1600, the Italian peninsula was divided into a number of little states or principalities. By the mid-18th century, Italy was mostly under the control of Spain and Austria. The exceptions were the independent little states of Venice, Genoa, Lucia, Sardinia and the Papal State.

Napoleon stuck his finger into the pie and in 1796 conquered Italy, setting up a puppet kingdom in part of it. The rest of the country was incorporated into France. This has had a bearing on genealogy insofar as it concerns language in records, law and archives.

The Congress of Vienna, which unraveled the Napoleonic mess in 1815, worked on Italy too. Most of the former states were restored, but Venice and Lombardy were given to Austria.

Relative quiet covered Italy until 1848 when a revolution broke out and continued until 1861. The resulting shakeup established the Kingdom of Italy. That kingdom, however, didn't include all the little states.

Finally in 1870, all of Italy was unified into one kingdom which lasted until the fascist dictatorship of Benito Mussolini (1922-1943). Then in 1946 the Republic of Italy was established.

All the above points to some genealogical sad facts — lots of changes took place in the country. Records were lost, stored in obscure archives or maintained by other nations. The big task now is to find records when you need them.



On the Italian side, it might be good to begin with passport and emigration records. As passports are such a necessity, check in the appropriate state archives for those issued between 1800 and the end of World War I. Until 1869 the states issued passports, but local police had issuing authority after that. For post World War I information, check with the appropriate local police headquarters. I can't promise success, but you can try.

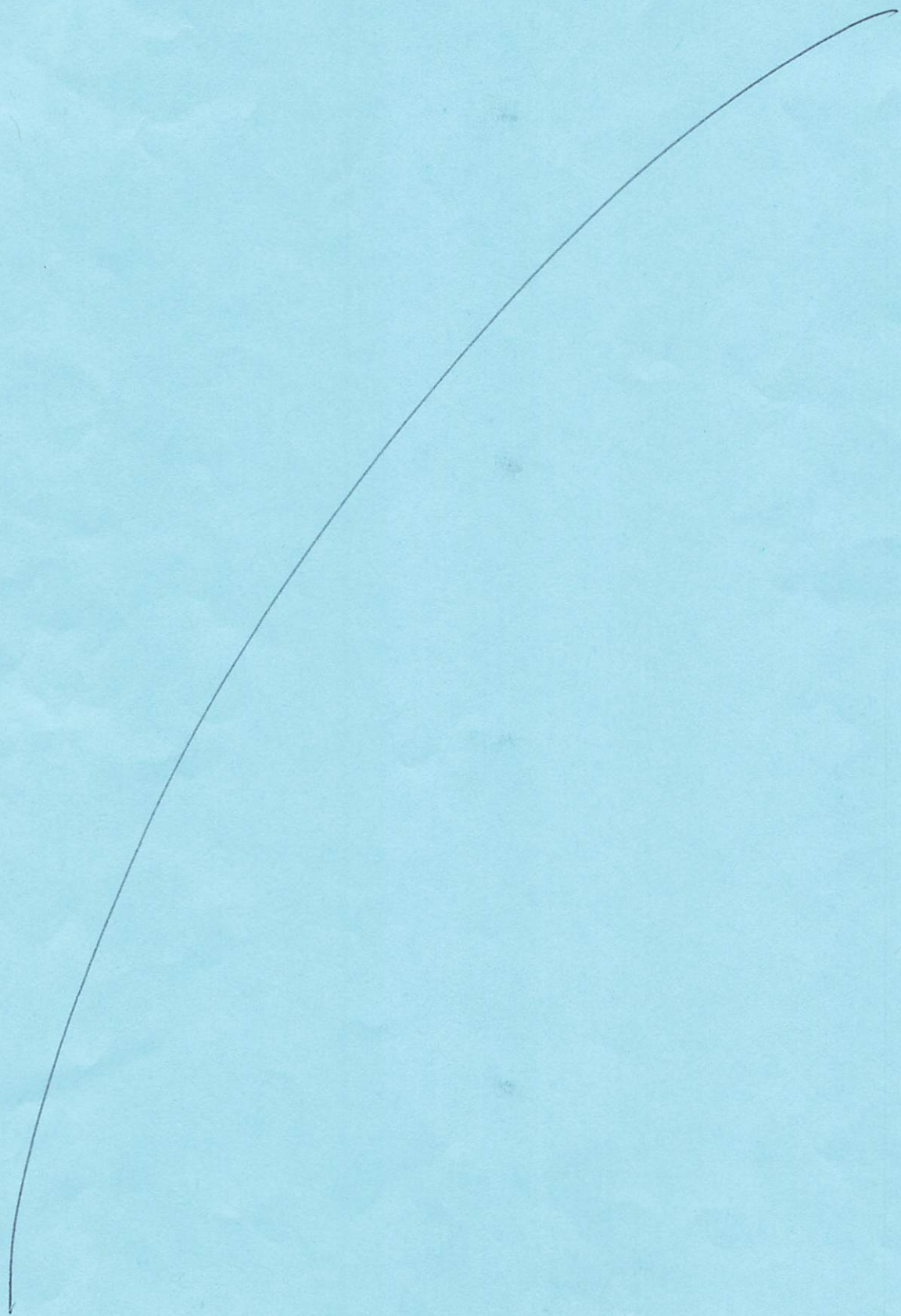
Emigration records for Italy have been kept by the Ministry of the Interior since 1869, but that information is not open to researchers. However, the office might relent and give appropriate genealogical data they find in the records. For example, if a request clearly shows the relationship of the requestor and the emigrant, and/or the reason for the information is deemed satisfactory, the data may be released.

While Genoa wasn't the most important port in Italy for emigration to America, you may wish to check some of their archives. Surprisingly, the University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706, has in their library microfilm copies of many records from the Genoa state archives. Checking for some Italian data there is much closer and easier than going to Italy for it.

The same is true of the huge accumulation of Italian records held by the Genealogical Society of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT. It's relatively simple to use that data through the branch or "stake" libraries of the society, which are found all over America, at or near Mormon (Latter-Day Saints) churches.

To Be Continued

1986 John W. Heisey





# Census Lists of Italy Limited by Scope, Access

by John W. Heisey

## Part II

Very often censuses can help locate ancestors in Italy. However, don't look for them too early in time. The first known census for all of Italy was taken in 1861 and enumerations were taken at 10 year intervals since then until 1931. For some reason another census was taken in 1936. The next one was in 1951 and others are dated 1961, 1971 and 1981.

As might be expected, the census lists are not all open to the public. For more

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detailed information on which ones can be checked, contact the Direzione Generale del Servizi Trenici, Istituto Centrale di Statistici, Via Cesare Balbo 16, Roma.

By the way, censuses were taken on the island of Sardinia in 1848 and 1857. No other censuses for the entire nation or parts of it in modern times are known than those mentioned.

Another research source, which might be one of the best, is that of civil registration. This began for all of Italy in 1869 and gets right down to village level. Contact the Ufficio de Stato Civile (Civil Registry Office) in the commune (town) where the birth, marriage or death took place. You must know this information if the data is to be looked for, and you should ask for a full certificate showing all the information available.

Some parts of Italy had civil registration as early as 1803. About all you can do is search, write or visit the appropriate town to determine when registration began there. If you have difficulty finding the desired information locally, contact the Istituto Centrale de Statistica, Via Cesare Balbo 16, Roma.

Just to let you know how helpful these certificates can be, look at what information is contained in birth certificates: name of child, date and place of birth, father's and mother's names (with mother's maiden name), and father's occupation. Since 1900 some marriage and death data may also be found on birth registration documents. Marriage certificates list names of both bride and groom, their parents' names, witnesses' names, marital status and place of birth of the bridal couple, and occupations and addresses of all persons mentioned in the certificates.

Death records give places and dates of birth and death of the decedent, name of the deceased and his or her parents, as well as addresses and occupations. What more could one ask for?

While probably the majority of people will be found in these certificates, the documents themselves are usually difficult to find. For one thing, they are not well indexed, and, the ravages of wars, weather, time and human carelessness have resulted in some gaps in records. Additionally, think of people themselves. Some local officials may not want to help you (unless a special "fee" is paid), and others may not really understand what you want. This is especially true if you and the official concerned cannot communicate in the same language. Remember that in many of the smaller and rural areas there may not be anyone available to translate for you.

This reminds me of an Italian-American under whom I served in the U.S. Army. He spoke Italian fluently and insisted it was easy, claiming that if you could pronounce the words you could read Italian and understand it. Don't believe it. No language is that simple, and you can't rely on knowing the meaning of words found. Be sure of what you are reading, and if you don't know, have it translated.

Now we come to another important point. Here in America we're used to copying documents and expect to find copy machines nearby. This isn't the case in Italy, or in most other nations. Any documents you find and wish to have reproduced may need to be copied by hand. Again, if you're not sure of the language or the style of handwriting, don't guess. Have someone fluent in that language (and English) copy the data for you. Then, when you get to some large Italian city or even back home, you can have the information translated.

From vital records it's only a step to local church or parish registers. Normally, in Italy there is a bishop in each provincial capital city, and under him are the local parishes. There are one or more parishes in each commune, and even a hamlet or village can constitute a parish.

How many parishes in the whole of Italy? The best estimate is around 25,000 in almost 300 dioceses. If you are interested in finding out when a particular parish was formed, they are all listed in the *Annuario delle Diocesi d'Italia* (Turin: Editore Marietti, 1951). This can be an extremely helpful book, as you must contact the individual parish for

parish was formed, they are all listed in the *Annuario delle Diocesi d'Italia* (Turin: Editore Marietti, 1951). This can be an extremely helpful book, as you must contact the individual parish for data from the parish register.

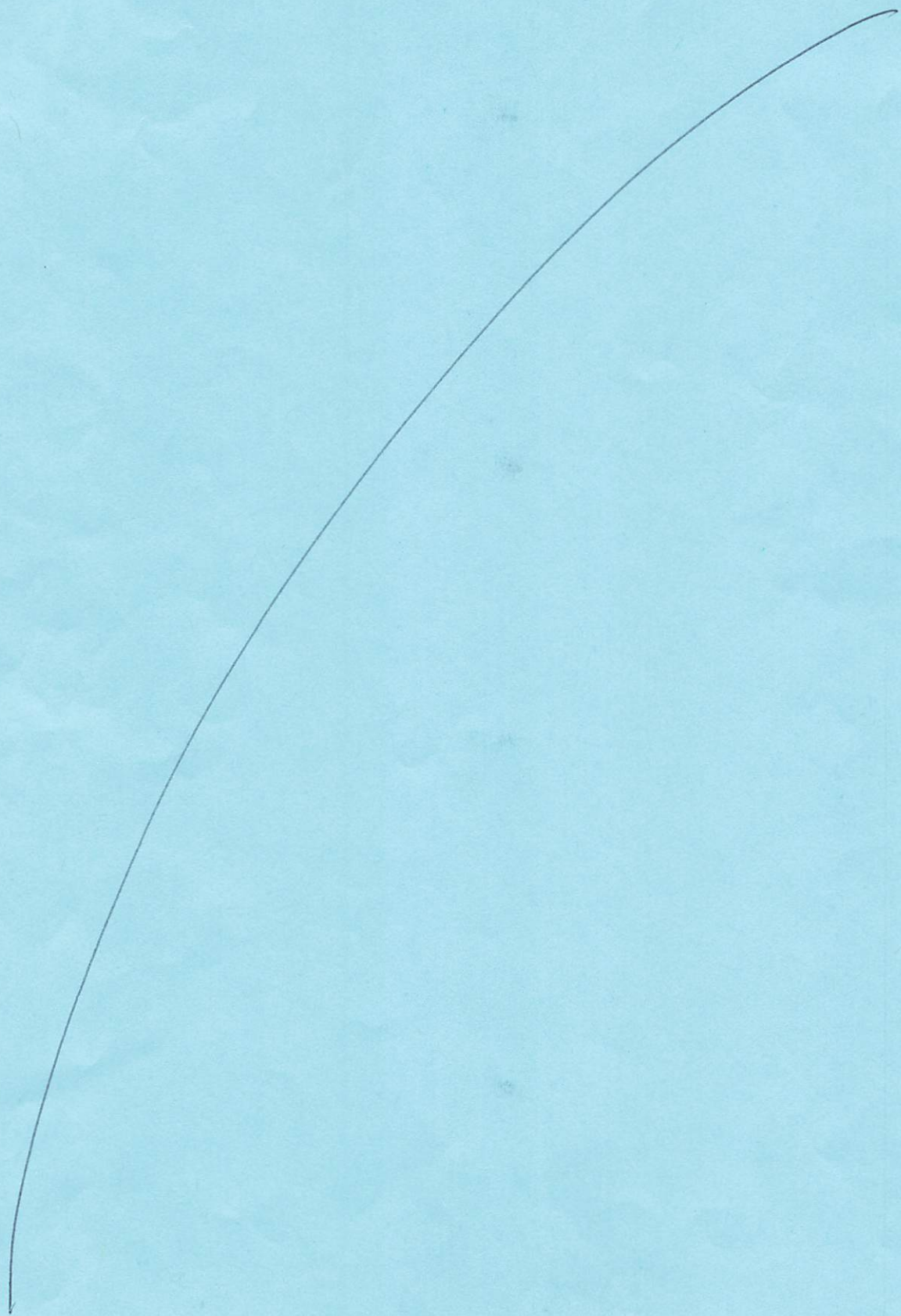
Keep in mind that many of the older parish registers have been transferred to diocesan archives, therefore, the book mentioned here might help establish the appropriate diocese for the parish you seek. Even if your parish is quite old, there are few surviving church registers before the early 17th century. To make it even more difficult, there is no central repository in Italy for church records, old or new.

Until the French Revolution and the subsequent occupation and reorganization of Italy by France, the local parish priest kept the parish records. After that the commune took control and parish records were to be reported to that authority.

Another interesting and sometimes helpful record often found is the clerical survey. This record dates from the early 18th to the mid 19th century but is usually far from complete. Many of these records have been destroyed. Some parishes never made such a survey, but where they were made, the records list all the people in the parish. As almost everyone belonged to the Catholic church, very few residents of the parish would have been overlooked.

To Be Continued

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# GENEALOGY WEEK®

1986 Recipient of National Genealogical Society Award of Merit  
for Distinguished Work in American Genealogy

27 Oct. 1986 Edited by Elsie Kilmer

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## Tax Records of Italy Among Most Comprehensive

by John W. Heisey  
Part III

A previous column on records of Italy ended on the subject of church registers but that isn't the end. Let's look at parish records a little more closely. In fact, we'll look at three separate types of books — baptismal, marriage and death registers.

Records were kept in Latin and the books bear Latin names: *Liber Baptizatorum* — for the baptismal record. The information in this book can be quite

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extensive, listing the name of the child and dates and places of birth and baptism. The name of the father is also shown (if the child was born legitimately), and usually the names of the baptismal sponsors or godparents are shown. Frequently the relationship of godparents to the child is shown.

The marriage record bears the inscription *Liber Matrimoniorum* and provides the usual data: place of residence of the bridal couple, their names, ages and sometimes occupations.

The death record, or *Liber Defunctorum*, gives lots of data on the deceased. Most of the information is the same as that found in the civil registration record of deaths, so you have a cross-check of information.

A fourth type of church record that can be of value is the confirmation record. In this you will find the complete name of the confirmer and data on the parents, as well as the name of the parish — of the parents that is. An excellent way to trace back a family's movements.

While deeds and wills are useful, don't put much hope in finding them for everyone. Many people didn't have enough property to make a will or a deed necessary. If you do want to search for these records, contact the Ufficio del Registro (Registration Office) in the appropriate town.

Notarial records (which include wills and deeds) begin as early as the 13th century, but these early ones are relatively scarce. Remember that only land-owning and other well-to-do families had need for such documents.

Tax records, on the other hand, concern almost every family in every generation. While such documents may cover hundreds of years, they are extremely difficult to use. There are no indexes. Look for tax records in the local municipal office, but if you can't find them there, perhaps the records were transferred to the appropriate state archives.

While death and taxes seem to hit everyone, for adult males the same seems to be true of military conscription records. These began for all of Italy in 1869 and may furnish some useful data, if permission to release the information is given by the government. Among the items found in these papers are the full name, date and place of birth, residence and occupation of the individual conscripted. There may also be information as to the status of the man (whether he served, didn't serve, or emigrated before reaching age 18). The Italian Consulate in the United States can supply you with the appropriate address in Italy where you can write for details.

As part of your researching process, you'll likely need or want to check books on Italian families and related subjects. The following, while not the only source books, may be of the most use:

a. *Dizionario Biografico* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1960-1976). This is a set of about 20 volumes by now, dealing with Italian families, but unless you understand Italian, it may not be of much help. However, you might come across an ancestral name or family that may be worth having translated.

b. *Our Italian Surnames*, by Joseph Fusilla (Evanston, IL: Chandlers, 1949). It's always good to read up on background data. This work might steer you to the right area of the country for your family research.

c. *In Search of Your European Roots*, by Angus Baxter (Baltimore: The Genealogical Publishing Company Inc., 1985) has a good section on Italian research — in English.

If you can, check current and back issues of *The Italian Genealogist*, published at 1510 Craven Ave., Torrance, CA 90501. Possibly a query to this publication will bring you some information on an ancestor, or put you in touch with some previously-unknown relative who is researching the same line.

Contacting genealogical societies in this country and in Italy may also help. Genealogical groups in Italy should be able to find you a reputable genealogist to work with, or steer you to the right area of the country or an office where you may find the data you seek. The following agencies (organizations) may be places to start:

- a. *Genealogico Italiano*, Castelli 19, Firenze, Italy.
- b. *Istituto di Genealogia e Araldica*, Via Antonio Cesari 5a, Rome, Italy.
- c. *Istituto Genealogico Italiano*, Via Torta 14, Firenze, Italy.

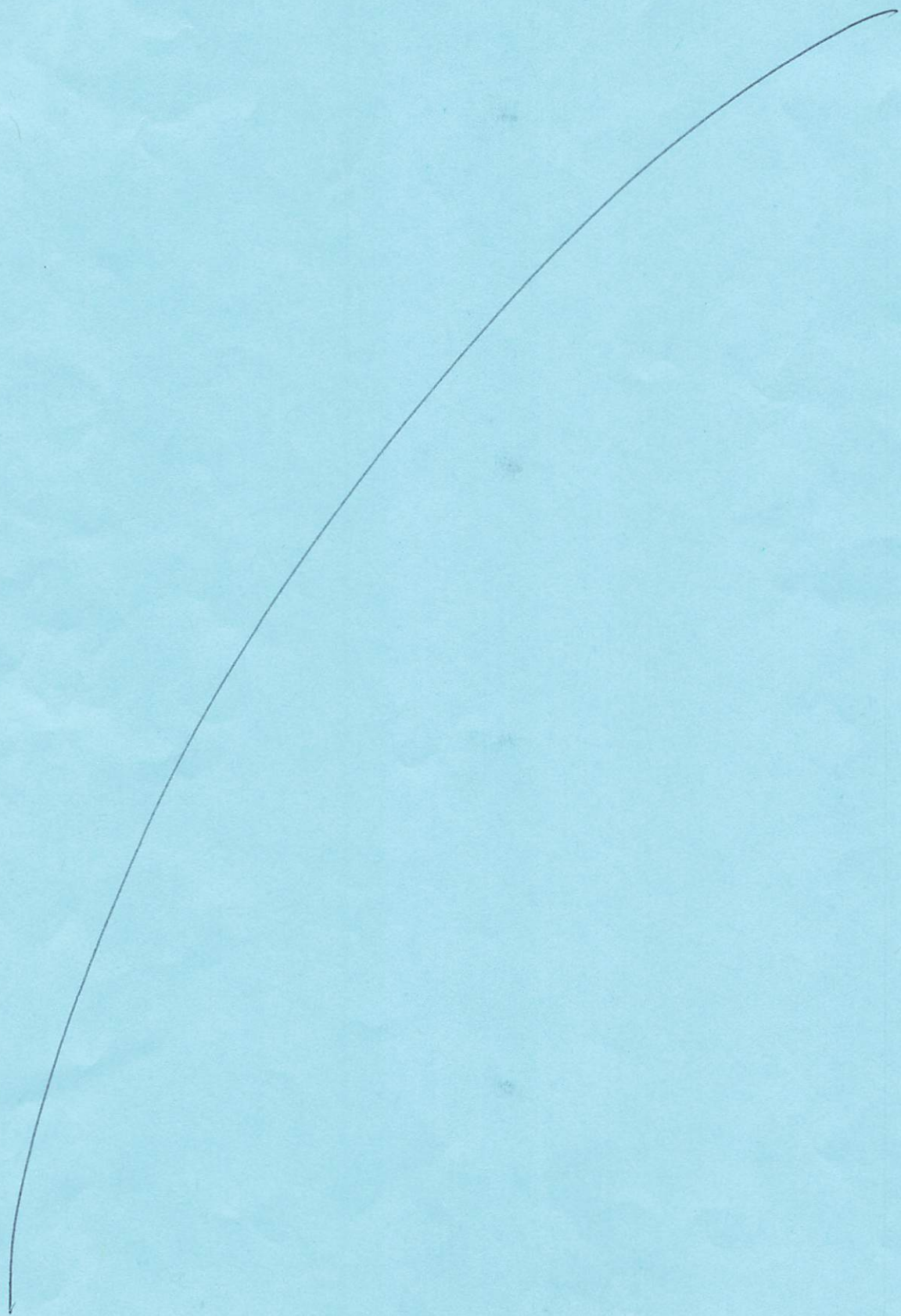
You should be able to write to these places in English and get a reply. However, the answer may be in Italian. (Be sure to include a SASE and two International Reply Coupons.) If you know someone who is fluent in Italian, have your letters translated before sending them. Results from the recipient may be better.

Just a few bits of miscellaneous information now. Until the 1880s, not many Italians had immigrated to the United States, and most of them came from northern Italy. Here in America then congregated mostly in the North and Midwest.

Economic troubles in Italy in the 1880s set off mass migrations. This brought thousands upon thousands of Italians each year into the U.S. Most of these later immigrants came from the southern part of Italy and from the island of Sicily. By the way, most Italians looked down on Sicilians and Italians would not often intermarry with the islanders.

Don't ever be ashamed of your Italian ancestors, even if they were Sicilian. And, don't be embarrassed of Italian ancestors being very poor. They couldn't help their situation in Italy or in America. Most did their best wherever they were, so don't be afraid to trace your Latin families. You'll find a long and treasured heritage.

\* \* \* \* \*



# Italian Genealogical Record Sources

By Trafford R. Cole, Accredited Genealogist  
Via Zais 6, 35100 Padova, Italy

Italians, possibly more than any other people, have emigrated to all parts of the world, and in particular to North and South America. This can be easily explained by examining the geographical conditions of the country. Italy has a land surface of 300,000 km<sup>2</sup>, about one thirtieth of that of the United States, with a population of over 58 million inhabitants. Almost two thirds of this land surface is mountainous area, with the Appennine mountains running north-south, and the Alps in the north running east-west. With just a small area suitable for agriculture, and with few natural resources for industry, Italians have been forced to emigrate to more prosperous countries for more than a century, enhancing these new cultures with their industriousness and traditions.

The most well known characteristics of the Italians are their strong family ties and their sentimental attachment to their homeland and in particular to their village of origin. Almost everyone in Italy has a brother, cousin, or friend who has emigrated, and many still keep in touch by correspondence. This fact is very important to whoever is about to begin their Italian genealogy, because the first source of records are those documents, or letters to relatives, or even family stories about the "homeland", that can trace their ancestor to his original village in Italy. This preliminary research, particularly when the town of origin can be determined, will later save much time and effort in continuing the genealogical research in Italy.

Once one's ancestors have been traced to Italy, either through their family documents or through U.S. immigration, naturalization or passport records, the most rewarding part of the research can begin. To better understand how to proceed, it is necessary to understand the political breakdown of the country as this influences the source of records.

Italy is divided into twenty regions, namely: Piemonte, Valle

d'Aosta, Lombardia, Trentino-Alto Adige, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, Liguria, Emilia-Romagna, Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Abruzzi, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, and Sardegna. In turn, each region is divided into provinces, for a total of 95 provinces in Italy. Each province then contains many towns called "comuni" which may include several villages called "frazioni" under the town's political jurisdiction. This political division exists since the unification of Italy and its beginning as an independent country in 1865. Each "comune" keeps its own records and those for the "frazione" under its jurisdiction, and there are no general indexes for the province or the region; for this reason it is important to find out the exact "comune" from which one's ancestors emigrated. Besides the vital records (birth, marriage and death records) the town archives also contain other useful records, such as the "certificato di residenza" and the "certificato di stato di famiglia". The first document is a record of where each family lived in the town, and of any changes in residency, including emigration to another town or country. This record may state exactly when one's ancestry emigrated from this town.

The first major census in Italy was held in 1911, and was made by family unit. Each family was listed with the birth and marriage dates of each member of the family, and the records were afterwards updated with the death or burial date of each family member. All of this information may be obtained by writing to the "Ufficio di Stato Civile" of the "comune" requesting "il certificato di stato di famiglia originario." In the bigger towns and cities normally it is required to state the exact name and birthdate of the person one seeks to obtain any certificate, because otherwise it takes too much time for them to search for the necessary record; however in the smaller towns often the officials will help with the research, search-

ing out the names and dates that are desired.

Since the vital records in the town archives only date back to 1865, the most available source of records prior to this date is the parish registers. Italy has a very strong Catholic tradition, and every town and village, no matter how small, has its own church. The parish priests, ever since the sixteenth century, have been scrupulously keeping record of their flock. The records that most commonly were kept are the baptismal, marriage and burial records. Since it is part of the Catholic faith to baptize each infant that is born, this register contains the name and surname of the child, and of his parents, the date of baptism, the name of the Godparents, and often the date of birth. The information given in all of these records varies greatly with the antiquity of the document and from one region to another. As can be seen, in the recent records (19th & 20th century) more complete information is supplied in each annotation, giving not only the name of the parents but also of the parental grandfathers, and also in this case the family nickname, whereas in the older records the grandparents' names are omitted, the Godparents are often omitted, and often not even the surname of the wife is given. Often, in older marriage records the only information given is the name and surname of the spouses and the date. It was an Italian tradition that the groom was married in the parish of the bride, even if afterwards they lived in his parish. When the bride was from another village, therefore, the marriage will not appear in the groom's parish register.

The death record contains the name, age, and parents' name of those buried in the parish cemetery. Often, in the more antique register, only the name and surname of the husband is given for their wives, with no mention of her parents or of her maiden surname. This means that at a certain point in the records (usually towards the

17th century) it becomes difficult to trace the female lines unless their marriage record is found as their surname does not appear on any of the other parish records.

Another important parish record that can often be found is the "stato delle anime" or "Status Animarum." In many areas of Italy, the priest took a regular survey of all his flock, listing the names of all of the people living in each household, with their parentage and their age. At times other information was added, like emigration information, or date of death, etc. This record is similar to the "stato di famiglia" of the civil records, and can be very valuable for genealogical research since usually the entire family is listed, and often several generations appear together. Nevertheless, some caution should be used with this record. First of all, it does not list those children who were not living in the household, that is, who had died before the survey was made, or who had moved away from home. Also, as is often the case, the ages listed were not always very accurate, as seemingly, some priests did not have a very good eye for judging ages. In the photograph of this record, two generations of children are shown for one family, with birth dates for all the children, and marriage and death dates for several.

The baptismal, marriage and death records in the parishes can be found as early as 1520, but normally started from 1595 or from when the parish was established. The Status Animarum records are of more recent date, the earliest of which the author has found dating from 1690. It is obvious that in the course of time many of these records have been lost or destroyed. When one thinks of the fires, floods, invasions and wars that have occurred, it is surprising how well kept most of these records are. In almost all cases these registers are still found in the parish archives of the village or town of origin. However, in some cases (Arezzo, Catania, Valdi, Lucerna) these records can be found preserved in the archive of the "Curia Vescovile" for each diocesan. These parish records are normally handwritten in Latin or Italian, although in some areas like Veneto they can also be found in dia-

lect. The handwriting and the poor quality of paper and ink used many times render the more ancient records all but illegible. Due to this problem and the scarce information supplied in these earlier records, research becomes very difficult and time consuming.

The civil vital records and the parish records are the primary sources of genealogical information but when these records are not available they can be supplemented or substituted by other record sources.

When Napoleon came to power in France, much of Italy was already under French influence, and within a few years he managed to expand his power to almost all of Italy. One of the many important innovations which Napoleon initiated in Italy was that of civil record keeping. Therefore varying from 1809 to 1812, each town in Italy began to keep vital records. In the regions that remained under French influence (most of Southern and Central Italy) this practice was continued up to the unification of Italy. These vital records from 1809 to 1865 are not kept in the town archive, but rather in the state archive in each province. In much of Northern Italy these records only date from 1812 to 1817 and then were discontinued. The data from these vital records in many provinces has started to be microfilmed by the LDS Church and is available on file.

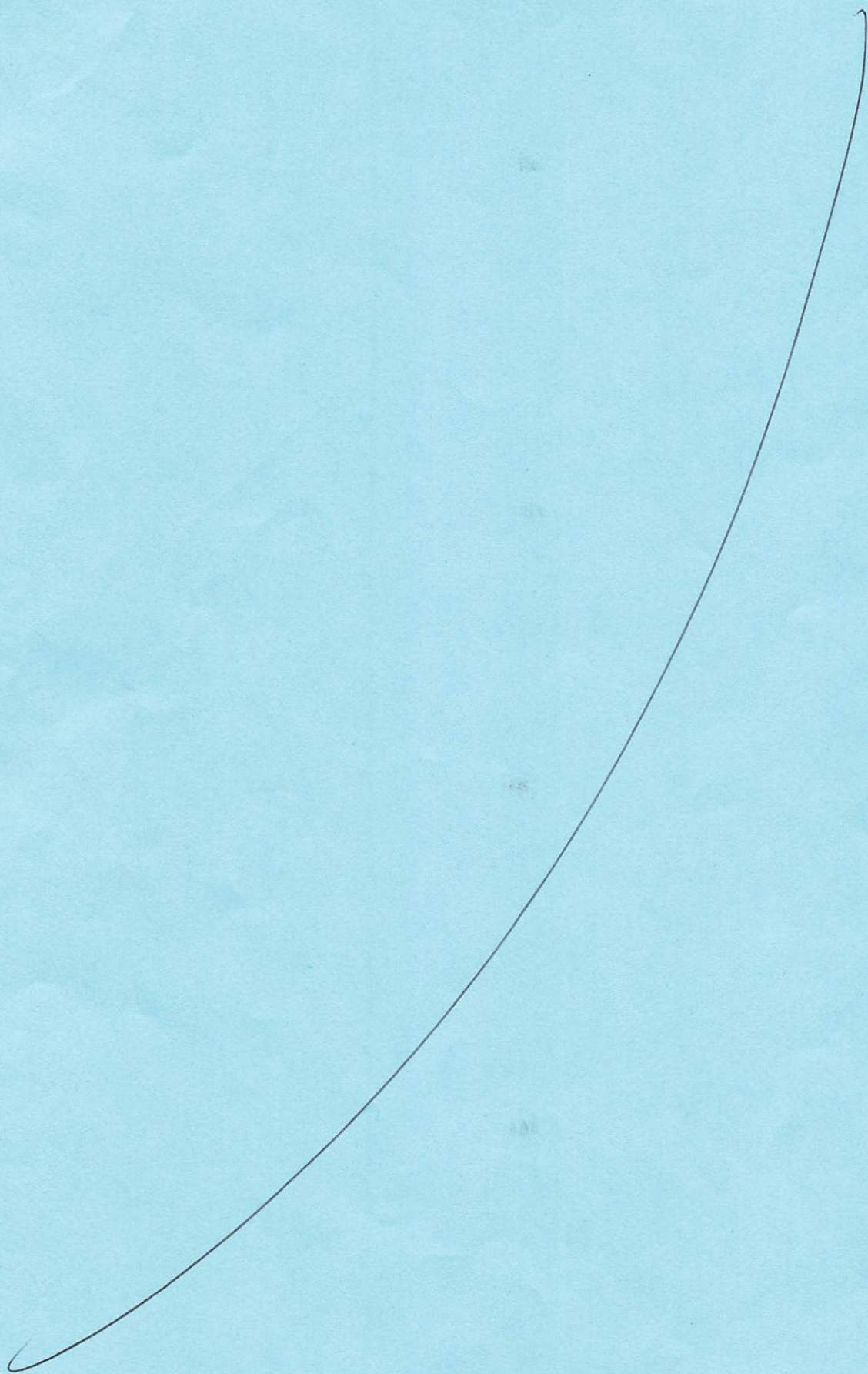
If one is unable to trace his ancestor to the exact town of origin, but it is known that he was from a certain province, it is still possible to find him. In Italy, since its unification, there has been a draft obligation for all males. Each young man at 18 years of age had to appear before a council to determine if he was fit to serve a two year military service. The name of the person, his birth date, his parents' name and the town of origin were all listed. These lists are indexed by the year of birth of the drafted. Therefore, if the name and approximate birth date of one's ancestor is known, his town of origin and other useful information can be obtained using the draft records at the state archive. If instead one only knows that his ancestor was Sicilian, or as one patron wrote me, "He must have been from

Northern Italy because he had blue eyes," this is not sufficient to begin research in Italy, and more preliminary searching should be done. There are no records kept on a regional basis.

Before 1865 there are no draft records; however, in most provinces records of those who served military service can be found dating back to 1780 circa. In some regions like Tuscany there were many who engaged in military service and much the same information can be gathered for them, as found on the draft records.

The notary records, which include wills, land and property transactions and dowries for marriages can also become an excellent source for genealogical research. These records, normally found at the state archive, often date back to 1480 or even earlier. All property sales and transactions had to be registered by law by a notary. Each notary then maintained a record of the transaction, and a copy of the same was registered and filed in the district notary office. These records prior to 1905 have been gathered at the state archive where they are catalogued. The indexing of these records reflects the two registration procedures; there is a collection of all the transactions, wills, etc. made by each notary, which is indexed by the surname of the notary, but without an index of the contents. A second collection of the acts is catalogued in the chronological order of the registration at the district office and includes the acts registered by all the notaries in that district (usually from 50 to 80), again without an index of contents. This chronological order does not correspond to the date of the act itself but rather to the date it was registered at the district, with sometimes several years difference.

Since at one time many Italians were property owners of some type, it is probable that valuable information can be obtained through the use of these records. Also, in some areas it was tradition that a dowry accompanied the marriage of a daughter and at times this consisted of property donations, so some marriage dates can be obtained by this means. At the death of the family





head, legal heredity of the property was often determined by a written will, again registered by the notary. This often gives the names and family connections for an entire generation or more. Therefore through the notary records, deaths, marriages and family groupings can be obtained, and in the lack of the primary source of records, these are a valuable substitute. The difficulty in researching these records consists in the fact that it is necessary to know the name of the notary engaged by the ancestors, or otherwise one has to research all the notaries in a given area in each period of time, which is very time consuming.

Other records that at times can prove useful are probate records, records of land disputes, minutes of city council meetings, and historical records. These records may be preserved in the state archive, in libraries or in private collections. For example, many noble families had political jurisdiction over several villages and were the law makers and judges for that area. Their acts and judgment are often found in private or civil libraries and can offer both historical background information and at times genealogical dates and names. There are some parchments that date back to the 11th and 12th centuries.

Another useful source of information found at the state archive is the census, and tax records. The dates of these records vary wide-

ly from one region to another, however generally they do not date before 1700. In some areas the parish tithing records date much farther back, even until the early 1500's. These records contain the names of the property owners (sometimes listing the entire family) with a list of all their property and how much they were taxed. This type of record is very valuable in those areas where there were many small property owners, however in much of Southern Italy where large parts of the land was owned by a few noble families, there is little to be gained.

One of the most ancient sources of records is the university records. Italy is privileged to have two of the oldest universities in the world at Padova and Bologna, both of which date back to the 1200's. Each university contains a list of the students who were enrolled, the name of their parents, their age, and their place of origin. Since, in earlier years, the university was restricted to the well-to-do families, this source of data will not be helpful in many researches. On the other hand, if it is found that an ancestor attended university, this can become a very valuable source of information, as it is probable that other members of his family will have likewise studied. Also, other sources, such as scientific and literary publications can be consulted.

A last important source of data

is the archive of nobility. In Italy, at one time, there were several thousands of noble or distinguished families. The history and genealogical data of most of these families have already been gathered and published, and are easily obtained. A word of caution, however, just because one has the same surname as a noble family does not mean that they are from the same branch of the family, or even distantly related. For example, one of the most distinguished noble families in Italy is the Rossi family from Florence. However the surname Rossi is diffused in all of Italy, and is one of the most common surnames, and in most cases there is absolutely no relationship to the Rossi of Florence.

Italy is a land of history and of tradition; in each small village there are centuries of history in the old stone houses, and cobblestone streets. The families in these towns have lived there and intermarried there for centuries. They have herded their flocks on the mountain slopes and tilled their fields and grown their grape vines and olive trees since the time of Christ and before. This is what genealogical research tries to recreate, not just names and dates but people and traditions, and to do this there are the many record sources than have been stated. We hope that you will want to discover your Italian heritage and that this article may be of help.

The civil vital records (birth, 'certificato di nascita'; marriage, 'certificato di matrimonio'; death, 'certificato di morte'), and the record of the family, 'certificato di stato di famiglia', that date after 1865, are found in the individual town archives. Extracts of these records may be obtained by writing to the 'Ufficio di Stato Civile' of the town, 'Comune', of origin of your ancestor, using the following sample letter as a guide:

Ufficio di Stato Civile  
Comune di .....  
(name of town and province)  
Egregi signori,

scrivo per ottenere i dati relativi al mio antenato ..... nato il ..... a .....  
In particolare desidero l'estratto dell'atto di nascita integrale e lo stato di famiglia.  
Vi ringrazio anticipatamente per la vostra cortese collaborazione.

Distinti saluti,

**TRANSLATION**

Dear sirs:

I am writing to obtain information about my ancestor ..... (name) born ..... (date) in ..... (Place). In particular I would like his birth certificate and his family certificate.  
Thanking you in advance for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Before 1865 in some regions there are vital records kept at the State Archive and not the town archive, however, normally the easiest and most complete record source before this date is the parish archive. Each parish kept the records of christening, 'battesimo', marriage, 'matrimonio', and death 'morte', for all the members of the parish. The information from these records, at times, may be obtained by writing directly to the parish of the town of origin of your ancestor, using the following sample letter as a guide:

Reverendo Parroco  
Parrocchia di .....  
(name of town and province)

Reverendo parroco,

le scrivo per ottenere tutti i dati possibili relativi al mio antenato ..... nato (verso) il .....  
a ..... In particolare desidero conoscere la data di nascita esatta, il nome dei genitori, e la data di  
matrimonio e morte. La ringrazio molto per la sua cortese collaborazione e allego 10 dollari per coprire  
le spese postali e il suo disturbo.

In fede,

TRANSLATION

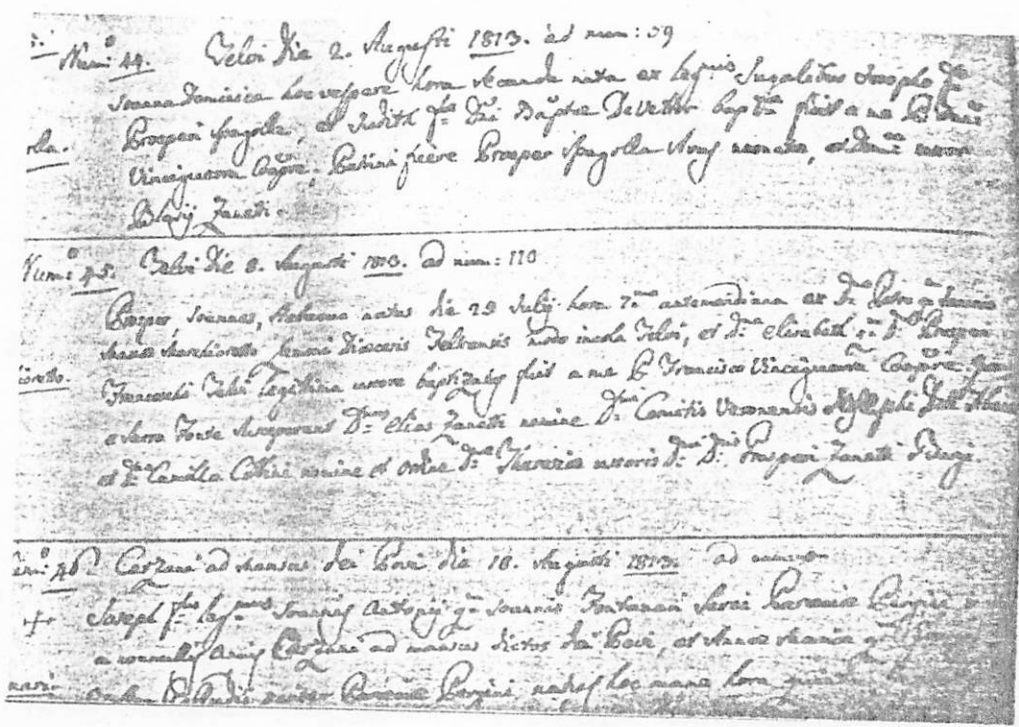
Reverend parish priest,

I am writing to obtain all the possible information about my ancestor ..... (name) ..... (born)  
(about) ..... (date) in ..... (place) In particular I would like to know his exact birthdate,  
the name of his parents, and the date of his marriage and death. I am very thankful for your kind collabora-  
tion and I am enclosing ten dollars for your trouble and to cover postal expenses.

Faithfully yours,

Photograph I (Doc. 24) is a copy of a parish christening record of 1813, and since it is of fairly recent date it gives a wealth of information.

It states the place, Telvi (a small town in Valsugana in the province of Trento) and the date of christening, 8 August 1813. It also gives the address of the family, house number 110. The name of the baby is given, Prosper Joannes Habacue, with the exact date of birth, at 7 AM on July 25th. The name and surname and place of origin of both parents is given, father - Petro MARCHIORETTO from the town of Lamoni in the diocesan of Feltre, mother - Elizabeth FRANCESCHI from Telvi. Also the name of both grandfathers are given and it is indicated that both are deceased, Joannis Maria MARCHIORETTO and Prosperi FRANCESCHI. The name of the priest who baptized the baby is stated, Francisco VINCIGUERRA; and finally the name of the godfather and godmother, who held the baby at the holy baptismal font are given: Elias ZANETTI and Camilla CIBBINI.



Photograph 2 (Doc. 8-25) is a copy of a parish christening record of earlier date, and therefore gives a much scarcer quantity of information. In fact, the only data shown is the date of christening, 10 December 1647, the name of the child, Simeon, the name and surname of the father Tomas TALLAMINI, and the name of the mother Cattarina, and finally the name of the godfather Leonardus TALLAMINI:

10 Dec 1647 Simeon filius naturalis Joannis Tallamini.

Simeon mensis Decbris 1647.

Simeon filius naturalis et naturalis Joannis Tallamini et  
 Cattarinae uxoris suae baptizatus a me supra dicto  
 Pastore Leonar. Tallamini

---

10 Dec 1647.

Co. Maria filia legitima et naturalis Joannis de ...  
 et uxoris suae ...  
 Curator huius Joannes ...  
 Cori ...

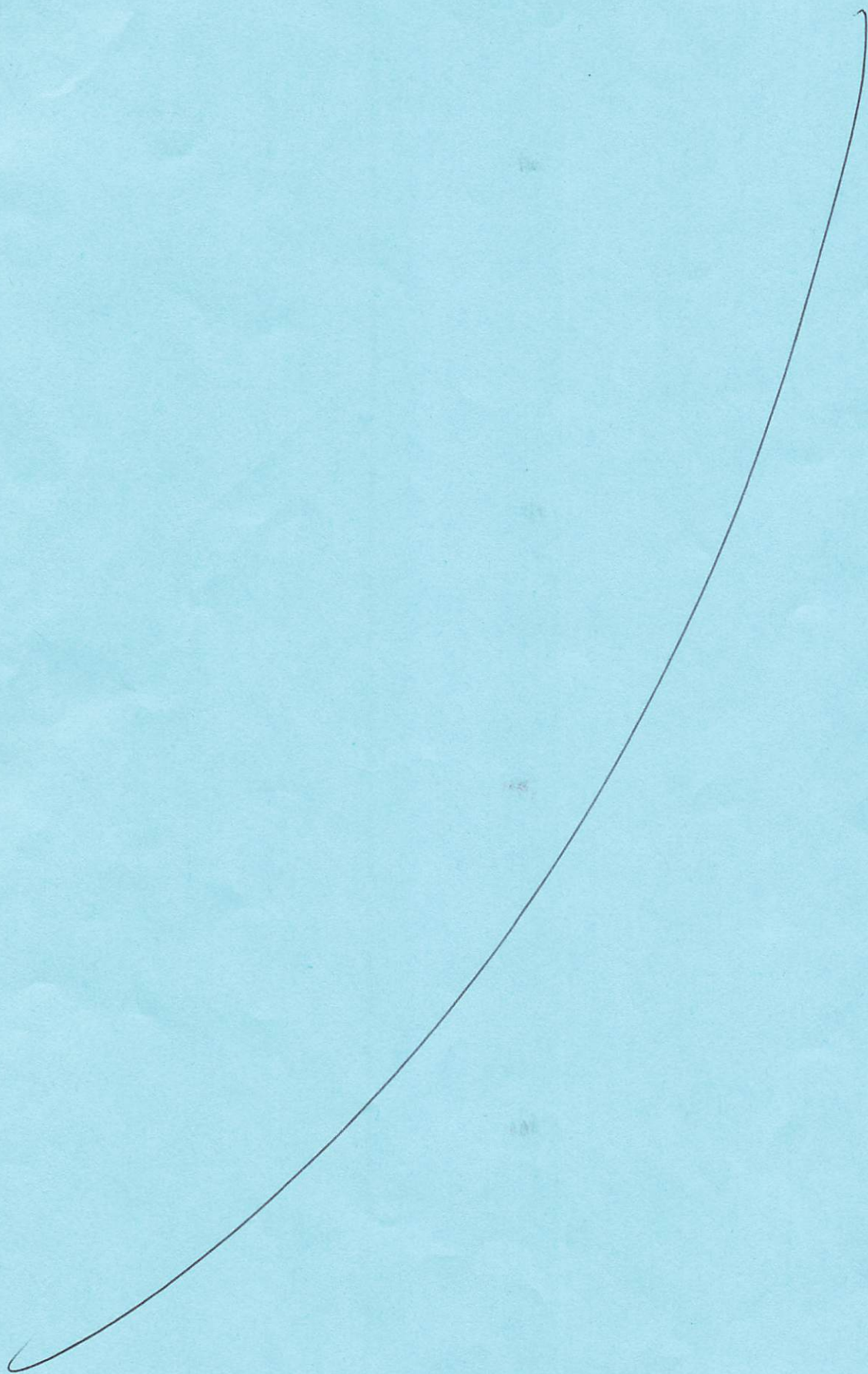
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10 Dec 1647.

Maria filia legitima et naturalis Joannis de ...

Photograph 3 instead is a copy of a 'Stato delle Anime' of the parish of Telve, showing three generations of the same family BALDI. The name and surname of the father is given Giovanni BALDI, Stating his occupation, weaver (tessitore), and the place and date of birth, 27 December 1816. The same information is given for his wife and for each of their children. Then for Alessandro son of Giovanni, his wife is named and also their children, and the record continues with the names and birthdates of the children of the other sons of Giovanni. As can be seen this is a very useful document.

COGNOME	NOME	PROFESSIONE	LUOGO	DATA
Baldi	Giovanni	Tessitore	Telve	27 Dic 1816
	Anna		Spera	1817
	Edoardo		Telve	1818
	Clementina		"	1819
	Ferdinando		"	1820
Alessandro	Alessandro	Coltello	"	1821
	Elisabetta		Senna	1822
	Arclino		"	1823
	Arcalida		"	1824
	Raffaella		"	1825
	...			...



## Interestd In Italy?

By  
Ann Kezeli

Italy has an advantage most other countries do not have. Except for the Piedmont area in the north which is Protestant, most Italians are Catholics. This means uniform church records for nearly the entire country. Between the use of church records and civil records, persons can trace Italian ancestors back to the 1500's. With the aid of additional records, a pedigree can go back even farther.

Civil Registration began in 1869 in most parts of Italy, with some areas beginning earlier. These records are kept in the town where the event (birth, marriage or death) took place.

Birth records usually give the name of the child, date of birth, place of birth, and the names of the parents (mother's maiden name included).

RINSCIAT AI SENSI DELL'ART. 3  
N. L. GUE 2 MAGGIO 1957 N. 432

**COMUNE DI BAGHERIA**  
PROVINCIA DI PALERMO

UFFICIO DELLO STATO CIVILE

Provincia	L. 10
Stampato	L. 10
T.B.C.	L. 10
Totale	L. 50

ESTRATTO PER SUNTO DAI REGISTRI DEGLI ATTI DI  
**NASCITA**

dell'anno 1879 Parte I Serie --- N. 170

Dal registri degli Atti di Nascita in questo Comune anno, parte, serie e numero sopra indicati risulta che La Tona Francesco, Paolo di Giovanni e di Bartolone Domenica

nacque in Bagheria il giorno 28  
(Ventotto) del mese di Marzo  
dell'anno 1879 (Milleottocettantatanne)

\_\_\_\_\_ esiste annotazione marginale relativa a  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In carta libera, per uso che la legge consente sul bollo.

Bagheria, li 9 AGO 1974

L'IMPIEGATO RESPONSABILE \_\_\_\_\_ UFFICIALE DELLO STATO CIVILE  
Marianna Beltramo

SAMPLE ITALIAN BIRTH CERTIFICATE

## CITTA' DI TERMINI IMERESE

UFFICIO DELLO STATO CIVILE

## CERTIFICATO DI MATRIMONIO

L'Ufficiale dello Stato Civile del Comune suddetto

## CERTIFICA

che nel giorno nove del mese di dicembre  
 dell'anno 1890 sette  
 contrasseo matrimonio in questo Comune Catalano  
Mariano figlio di \_\_\_\_\_  
 e di \_\_\_\_\_ nato in Termini di anni 45  
 e Longo Antonino  
 figlia di \_\_\_\_\_ e di \_\_\_\_\_  
 nata in Termini dicembre 30  
 come risulta dal relativo registro degli atti di matrimonio dell'anno 1897  
 al N. 155 P. 2

Si rilascia il presente per uso

consentitoTermini Imerese, li 25-11-1974

L'UFFICIALE DELLO STATO CIVILE

*[Signature]*

L'UFFICIALE DELLO STATO CIVILE

*[Signature]*

ATTI CIVILI A PALERMO - PALERMO

## SAMPLE ITALIAN MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

Marriage records give the bride and groom's names and ages, the date and place of marriage, and usually the names of their parents. Additional information can include the places of birth of the bride and groom, occupations, residences, and the names of the witnesses.

Death records give the name of the deceased, date of death, age at time of death, place of birth, names of parents and spouse (if living), occupation and residence.

To request these records address your letter to the "Ufficio di Stato Civile," name of town, name of province, Italy. "Favorisca inviare estratti con nomi dei genitori" translates, "Please send extracts with names of parents." It has been my experience to have International Postal Exchange Coupons accepted to cover any fee, with Italian stamps being received as change.

If necessary, Italian lira can be purchased from a large bank - 500 lira for less than \$1.00.

Catholic Parish registers begin in the mid-1500's, and are kept in the original parish. Priests are too busy as a rule to do any research and therefore it is necessary to hire a record searcher in Italy. Names of qualified researchers can be obtained from the Genealogical Society in Salt Lake City, Utah, or from any of the Italian Societies mentioned elsewhere in this article.

Church records are similar to the civil records, baptism, marriage and burials, and include the same type of information. Confirmation records are kept in Diocesan Archives. To learn the name of a town's churches consult a World Gazetteer, which often mentions churches as part of a town's history.

## PROTESTANT RECORDS

Protestant (Waldensian) records begin in the late 1600's and are also kept in local custody. The types and information are the same as the Catholic records. Some of these parish records have been microfilmed by the Genealogical Society, and can be ordered for viewing at any LDS Branch Library.

## TAX - CENSUS RECORDS

Tax or census records cover various areas for various time periods, beginning anywhere from the 1300's to the late 1800's. These records are kept in the State Archives.

## NOTARIAL RECORDS

Notarial Records, which begin circa 1340 or later, include marriage contracts, wills, orphan records, land records, etc., are kept at the State Archives or Regional Notarial Archives. For help with older wills contact:

The Archivio Notarile  
Ispettatore Generale  
via Flaminia 160, Roma

## FAMILY GENEALOGIES

The Ufficio anagrafe of the town of residence has certificates of family genealogy (certificato di Stato de Famiglia). These begin about 1900 (some earlier). They include the names, relationships, birth dates and birth places of all family members alive at the time of recording.

## EMIGRATION RECORDS

Emigration records began circa 1869, with some earlier in different regions. These are available from the Prefecture of either the Province of departure, or the Province of origin. These give name, age, birth place, port of departure, destination and the date of the permit (or application for permit) to leave Italy.

## ITALIAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES

Istituto Genealogico Italiano  
Count Guelfo Guelfi Comajani  
via Torta 14, 50122 Firenze

Centra Genealogico Italiano  
C.I. 16109907  
Fermoposta 95100 Catania

Istituto Genealogico Italiano  
Largo Chigi 19, 00187 Roma

Istituto di Genealogia e Araldico  
via Antonio Cerasi 5-A, Roma

Istituto Araldico Coccia  
Borgo Santa Croce 6, 50122 Firenze

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Archivio Central della Stato  
Corso Rinascimento 40, Roma

## STATE ARCHIVES

There are ninety-two State Archives (Archivi di Stato); the major ones being in Apuania, Bologna, Bolzano, Brescia, Cagliari, Florence (Firenze); Fiume, Genoa, Lucca, Mantova, Milano, Modena, Naples (Napoli), Palermo, Parma, Pisa, Reggio Emilia, Roma, Siena, Torino, Trento, Trieste, Turin, Venice and Zara.

For information about these State Archives see *Gli Archivi di Stato Italiani*, published, in 1944 by the Ministero Dell' Interno, Ufficio Centrale Degli Archivi di Stato.

## TERMINOLOGY

The following words are given in Italian and Latin:

<u>WORD</u>	<u>ITALIAN-LATIN</u>
One	uno; unus
Two	due; duo
Three	tre; tres
Four	quattro; quattuor
Five	cinque; quinque
Six	sei; sex
Seven	sette; septem
Eight	otto; octo
Nine	nove; novem
Ten	dieci; decem
Eleven	undici; undecim
Twelve	dodici; duodecim
Thirteen	tredecim; tredici
Fourteen	quattordici; quattuordecim
Fifteen	quindici; quindecim
Sixteen	sedici; sedecim
Seventeen	diciassette; septendecim
Eighteen	diciotto; duodeviginti
Nineteen	diciannova; undeviginti
Twenty	venti; viginti
Twenty-one	ventuno; vigintiunus
Thirty	trenta; triginta
Thirty-one	trentuno; trigintaunus
Forty	quaranta; quadraginta
Fifty	cinquanta; quinquaginta
Sixty	sessanta; sexaginta

Seventy	settanta; septuaginta	Daughter	figlio; filus
Eighty	ottanta; octoginta	Death	morte defunto; mortuus, obitus
Ninety	novanta; nonaginta	Parents	genitore; parentes
Hundred	cento; centum	Born	nato, nata; natus, nata
January	gennaio; Januarius	Widow	vedova; vidus
February	febbraio; Februarius	Widower	vedovo; viduus
March	marzo; Martius	Citizen	cittadino; civis
April	aprile; Aprilis	Sponsor	mallevadore; -----
May	maggio; Maius	Witness	testimone; -----
June	giugno; Junius	Married	matrimonio, sposare; nuptae
July	luglio; Julius	Male	maschio; virilis
August	agosto; Augustus	Female	femmina; femineus
September	settembre; September	Page	pagina; pagina
October	ottobre; October	Volume	volume; volumen, liber
November	novembre; November	Child	bambino, bambina; filius, liberi
December	dicembre; December	Sister	sorella; soro
Day	giorno; dies	Brother	fratello; frater
Month	mese; mensis	Town	citta; -----
Year	anno; annus	Church	chiesa; -----
Father	padre; pater	Husband	marito; maritus
Mother	madre; mater	Wife	moglie; conjunx

*Please Favoris ea*





## ITALY'S REGIONS AND PROVINCES

In addition to the northern portion, Italy includes a peninsula about 760 miles long and from 100 to 150 miles wide; two large islands, Sicily and Sardinia; and the smaller islands of Capraia, Capri, Elba, Ischia, Lipari, and Pintine.

The following Regions and Provinces are numbered to correspond with those on the map of Italy:

PIEDMONT: Alessandria, 1; Asti, 2; Cuneo, 3; Novara, 4; Torino, 5; Vercelli, 6.

VALLEY OF AOSTA: Aosta, 7.

LIGURIA: Genova, 8; Imperia, 9; LaSpezia, 10; Savona, 11.

LOMBARDIA: Bergamo, 12; Brescia, 13; Como, 14; Cremona, 15; Mantova, 16; Milano, 17; Pavia, 18; Sondrio, 19; Verese, 20.

TRENTINO-ALTA ADIGE: Bolzano, 21; Trento, 22.

VENETO: Belluno, 23; Padova, 24; Rovigo, 25; Treviso, 26; Venezia, 27; Verona, 28; Vicenza, 29.

FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA: Udine, 30; Gorizia, 31.

EMILIA-ROMAGNA: Bologna, 32; Ferrara, 33; Forli, 34; Modena, 35; Parma, 36; Piacenza, 37; Ravenna, 38; Reggio Emilia, 39.

TOSCANA: Massa Carrara (formerly Apuania), 40; Arezza, 41; Firenze (Florence), 42; Grosseto, 43; Livorno, 44; Lucca, 45; Pisa, 46; Pistola, 47; Siena, 48.

MARCHE: Ancona, 49; Ascolia Piceno, 50; Macerata, 51; Pesaro-Urbino, 52.

UMBRIA: Perugia, 53; Terni, 54.

LAZIO: Frosinone, 55; Latina (formerly Littoria), 56; Rieta, 57; Roma, 58; Viterbo, 59.

ABRUZZI E MOLISE: Campobasso, 60; Chieti, 61; L'Aquila, 62; Pescara, 63; Teramo, 64.

CAMPANIA: Avelino, 65; Benevento, 66; Caserta, 67; Napoli (Naples), 69; Salerno, 69.

PUGLIE: Bari, 70; Brindisi, 71; Foggia, 72; Lecce, 73; Taranto (formerly Ionio), 74.

BASILICATA (formerly LUCANIA): Matera, 75; Potenza, 76.

CALABRIA: Catanzaro, 77; Cosenza, 78; Reggio Calabria, 79.

SICILIA: Agrigento, 80; Caltanissetta, 81; Catania, 82; Enna, 83; Messina, 84; Palermo, 85; Ragusa, 86; Siracusa, 87; Trapani, 88.

SARDEGNA (SARDINIA): Cagliari, 89; Nuoro, 90; Sassari, 91.

Italians had a strong sense of their homeland, and often registered the birth of children born in America in the parent's hometown. Some Italian immigrants returned to Italy and married and brought their new spouse to America.

The fact that families lived in the same town for several generations makes Italian research easier.

If research is conducted by mail (always use Air Mail), it may take time to receive all the records needed, but the results are usually worth the wait.

*"Out of monuments, names, words, proverbs, traditions, private records and evidences, fragments of stories, passages of books, and the like, we do save and recover somewhat from the deluge of time."*

Bacon

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ITALY

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PREPARED BY

Charles E. ...

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