

EI-522

VINCENT DORIA

BIRTHDATE: JANUARY 8, 1902

INTERVIEW DATE: AUGUST 5, 1994

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INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE, Ph.D.

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JANET LEVINE

ITALY, 1923

AGE 21

PORT: NAPLES

PASSAGE ON the "CONTE VERDE"

RESIDENCES: ITALY: CORATO, PROVINCE OF BARI & LACEDONIA,
PROVINCE OF AVELLINO

US: NYC & VALLEY STREAM, LI, NY

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service.
I'm here in Valley Stream, Long Island, New York,
with Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Doria. Mr. Doria came from
Italy in 1923 when he was twenty-one years old. So,
that makes you ninety-two years old at the time of
this interview.

DORIA: Yes.

LEVINE: Okay, well I'm very happy to be here, and I look
forward to hearing what you remember. Let's start at

the beginning by your saying your birth date.

DORIA: I was born January the 8th, 1902.

LEVINE: And where...

DORIA: I was born in Corato, Province de Bari, Italy.

LEVINE: Can you, can you spell that?

DORIA: Italy? Bari? Corato? Corato, C-O-R-A-T-O. Province of Bari, Italy.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: And then my father and my mother dislocate, uh, uh...

LEVINE: Re-...

DORIA: ...relocate, relocate in Lacedonia, Provincia Avellino, near Naples.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: And then from there I went to school. I frequented

the second normal school, which for one more year I would become a teacher, but due to consequence, I have a brother die in the First World War, which my family suffered very much. And my father sacrificed himself to ser...to maintain two of my sisters to become teachers. And then I was coming myself. On the second year we had a little discussion, family affair, not my family, the girlfriend that I was going out with was not comfortable for me or I was not comfortable for her family, so I decide to come in America.

LEVINE: Okay, let's first talk about your life in Italy before you decided to come, just in the beginning.

DORIA: Uh, uh, from Italy?

LEVINE: When you were still living in Italy, up until the time you decided to come here.

DORIA: Oh, yes.

LEVINE: What do you, now, so, you were in...When you were growing up...

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DORIA: Yes.

LEVINE: ...what town were you living in?

DORIA: In Lacedonia. I moved from Corato when I was eight months old.

LEVINE: Oh, okay.

DORIA: And I live in Lacedonia the rest of the twenty-one years that I moved here.

LEVINE: Okay, so we'll talk about life in Lacedonia...

DORIA: Yeah.

LEVINE: ...first. Do you remember the house you lived in?

DORIA: Yes, I was living in a beautiful house with a beautiful balcony. My father and my mother had their own room, and, uh, another room, I was, had to divide with my two sisters [laughs]. You know, because I was a kid and they were younger, older than I am, so they put me there. And, uh...

LEVINE: What was your father's name?

DORIA: Nunzio, N-U-N-Z-I-O.

LEVINE: And your mother's name?

DORIA: Lucia, L-U-C-I-A, Lucia.

LEVINE: Do you remember your mother's maiden name?

DORIA: Mininni, M-I-N-N, no, no, uh, M-I-N-I-double-N-I.

LEVINE: And your sisters' names?

DORIA: I had three sisters and one brother. The brother, as I say, died in the First World War, was one of the first to die in that war. In fact, the government give to my brother, the silver medal of his heroism. Uh... now, uh...

LEVINE: His name.

DORIA: The name was Luigi Doria, died at the age of twenty-one. And then I had two sisters, Angela Doria and Maria, Rosa Doria, the other one, Rosa Doria. Angela

seconda, and terza, Maria Doria. I had them in this country in 1969. I let her come to this country to visit us.

LEVINE: Oh, okay. So, what...Did you have grandparents?

DORIA: Yes.

LEVINE: Do you remember...

DORIA: Yes, yes, I had the grandparents. I only remember my father's grandmother and grandfather.

LEVINE: Your father's *mother* and father?

DORIA: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: No, no, my father's mother and father. [wipes nose]

LEVINE: Yes.

DORIA: My mother's mother, I was younger when I went to see her in Corato, but I was too young to remember. But,

the, on my father's side, I was twelve years old where I, uh, I stay one year with them.

LEVINE: Oh, good. Now tell me about them. What, what were they like?

DORIA: Well...

LEVINE: What did they do?

DORIA: My father believed to give us an education. In Corato, they had the technical school to be, uh, to go from the elementary school to the, uh, high school, which in Lacedonia, the naval school. And, uh, in Corato I stay with my grandfather and grandmother...Then...

MRS.DORIA: Juarius.

LEVINE: Why, why was it that you stayed with them?

DORIA: Because there was, I had a cousin there, but they didn't want me to stay with the boys, they want me to study, so that I could graduate with the technical school that which, that they prefer.

LEVINE: I see. Tell me, do you remember anything that you did with your grandmother or grandfather, any experiences, or any...

DORIA: Well, there...

LEVINE: ...activities you had with them...

DORIA: The experience I can remember that I love them, and they love me. That's the only thing because I was eleven years old, twelve years old when I was with them.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: And that's all. Then back, I went back to Lacedonia. Lacedonia, my father didn't believe to stay in Lacedonia for the high school. They send me to Saint Angelo de Lombardia in Provincia Avellino near Naples. And there I there I got my graduation, high school graduation, through that school.

LEVINE: Did you stay at the school?

DORIA: No, I stay, yes, I was boarding somebody's house that I stay, uh, there for the whole period of the school, uh, scholastic year.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And what was school like there in...

DORIA: Very good, very good schools in Los Angelo. I've made first and second there and the third year there.

LEVINE: Um, did your sisters go to high school, too?

DORIA: My s-, the second daughter, my second sister, she graduated with, with a teacher's diploma from Lacedonia Normal School. That's where I had to go, go myself. And the other one that the, uh, she marry the husband, want her not to get, graduate from teacher's school. She marry a rich man, says our property, our money, don't need you to be, uh, teacher. So, she stopped at the second year or the third year before the end, before she graduation.
Be-,uh, will be done. [Mrs. Doria: "That is Maria."]

DORIA: That's Maria. [Mrs. Doria: "Mmm-hmm."]

LEVINE: So, did you, did you finish then, did you finish...

DORIA: No.

LEVINE: ...the long...

DORIA: I, I didn't finish the second year. [Mrs. Doria agreeing in the background.] I didn't even finish my second year that I, I apply for the passport to come to America.

LEVINE: I see.

DORIA: And...

LEVINE: Okay, but before we leave, now, was your family a religious family when you...

DORIA: Very much, very much.

LEVINE: Do you remember any observances, any religious occasions, and how they were observed when you were little?

DORIA: Well, the only religion that, uh, can remember when I was confirmed.

LEVINE: And what was that like, the ceremony of it?

DORIA: The ceremony of the Catholic ceremony, that, you know, when the, the priest confirm you to be a complete Christian, that's all.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. And was there celebration at that time?

DORIA: Well, a little celebration with just the family, uh, a group of six people we were, my father, my mother, my sister, my brother, before sh- he die, and the man that was my godfather on that Confirmation.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Do you remember your godfather?

DORIA: Oh, yes, yes. I even wrote him from here. I had his picture up to a couple of years ago that I wrote, he never answer me back, so I, I, I, I tore it.

LEVINE: What was his name?

DORIA: John, uh, John, John, John...I know, I remember John, the first name was a very short name, but I couldn't

remember.

LEVINE: Well, how was he chosen? What, was he a friend of the family?

DORIA: Because he was a salesman, no, no, no, he was a salesman. And being from the same province, what I mean, my hometown was Corato, and he came from another little town nearby, so became friendly with my family. And my father and my mother choose this man to be my, uh, sponsor on the, uh, uh, what do you call it, crea-... [Mrs. Doria in the background: "Confirmation."]

DORIA: Confirmation. [Mrs. Doria: "Uh-huh."] Yeah.

LEVINE: So, what did he have to do as a sponsor?

DORIA: Well, accept what the Catholic religion ask him to do. And when I had finish the ceremony, he presented me a beautiful watch, clock, watch. SO this will be my present. But somehow my brother [Mrs. Doria interrupts] somehow my brother, got a hold of the watch. [Doria laughs and then Mrs. Doria laughs.] And he was a teacher already, my brother was a teacher,

was teaching in Sulmona, in, uh, Abruzzi, Sulmona in Abruzzi. [Mrs. Doria agrees in the background.] He taught one year and then join the army for six months, and the war came, and he was the first one to die on the First World War.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. How about, um, food? Do you remember any food that your grandmother or mother made...

DORIA: My grandmother...

LEVINE: ...that you liked when you were young?

DORIA: My grandmother, the, the main, uh, was the regular spaghetti and meat ball and the vegetable, every vegetable, but she liked to have, uh, some, uh, leguma, they call "fava." I don't know if you know if you that, the legume. It's a legume about this size here. [Mrs. Doria in the background: "A bean! Bean!"] A bean, let's see, it's a bean.

LEVINE: And what's, how, can you spell it?

DORIA: Fava?

LEVINE: Yeah.

DORIA: F-A-V-A.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh, sure, okay. And she liked to cook that...

DORIA: She liked...

LEVINE: How did she do, how did she do it?

DORIA: She cook, she cook on the, uh, with the escarole, she cook with spaghetti, with spaghetti, let it overcook, and becomes, like mushy...

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: ...you know, very soft that the, uh, you'll enjoy the, to eat them. [Mrs. Doria: "A puree."] A puree, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And, um, let's see. Uh, what was your father doing for work?

DORIA: Uh, first of all he was a commercial wine seller. He sold wine to a little town nearby and to the station

nearby, the railroad station nearby, and then if whoever want to buy wine, uh, at, uh, wholesale.

LEVINE: So, did he buy the wine from the growers?

DORIA: We, we used to go buy the wine from the other town because our section where we were living would not produce the kind that my father like. And we used to, uh, for overnight and come back the third day, the second day or the third day, home with the, uh, cask of, uh, maybe twelve-hundred, uh, qu-, uh, gallon of wine, two cask of twelve-hundred gallon of wine in each one.

LEVINE: Did you, you went with your father?

DORIA: Twice I went, then. One time, my, my father trust me, says, "You go by self." [chuckles]

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: And...

LEVINE: Now, what, what were you carrying these casks of wine in?

DORIA: Those big bottle that they have, uh, wooded bo-, a wooded cask, you know?

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: Not the metal. [distant voices in the background]

LEVINE: But were you using a horse and wagon?

DORIA: Yes, horse and wagon. We used to leave at two, three o'clock in the morning and get there by eight o'clock, nine o'clock, then we start to load up, and before night, before when I, when I used to go with my father, before he, he start to load, he want to see what he's *gettin'*, what he was *gettin'* (tapping sound in the background, like someone moving a chair around). If he like, he would load up. If he didn't like, he wouldn't take it. So, (tapping sound) uh tapping sound), and then after we loaded, we start to go home, start we go home, it's about four, five at night, in the afternoon. So, we had overnight, and another little town, halfway from the one where we bought the wine to where we going to go home in Lacedonia.

LEVINE: And where would you stay that night?

DORIA: Well, there, a tavern, a tavern. They will take care the horse, the, in fact there were mule that I used to have, [bumps microphone] and we used to have a little room, me and my father, nearby, but when, uh, two, three o- three o'clock in the morning were immedia-, the guy that used to be the owner of the mule is the knock of the door we ready to leave. So, we get up and start the road again, and we get home in Lacedonia around twelve, twelve-thirty, one o'clock, con, with, was, uh, noon.

LEVINE: And was there anything else about staying at a tavern, uh, in other words, is there anything else you remember as a little boy from those, uh, trips with your father?

DORIA: Well, that's only twice I went with him...

LEVINE: Yeah.

DORIA: And the, the one time he, he trust me, he says go ahead because he knew the guy that, uh, was dealing

with the middleman. The middleman says, "Send him over, and don't worry about it. I know what kind of wine you want, and that's what I'm going to send to you." And I went, then. I was carrying with me, uh, five, six thousand lira. At that time it was a lot of money. And believe me, was just like walk a from one room to another. Nobody would bother us, and nobody would approach us. In fact, even when I was going with my father, my father, with, with the money in, in himself will climb, we will go with the road that would take about fifteen, twenty minutes to get there. It would get there, a shortcut, and climb and he was at that time, I would say about, uh, about, uh, in his sixty, in his sixty [swallows loudly] he will climb to go to this little town by the name of Calibrito and wait for us when we got there.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh. I see. Okay, so, um...Is there...W- Was there any other, uh, kind of chores or any other ways that you helped your father when you were 1-, you know...

DORIA: Well, I used to carry, y, my father, I would say, was not, not an alphabet. He knew that write, read, read or write, you know, the numbers, you know, the thing.

But sometime he, he requires somebody to, to do the, uh, writing, to whom I would sell the wine, how much did he buy, if he pay or he didn't pay, it just depend on one of us that we went to school.

LEVINE: Ah. Do you remember any attitudes or values that your father had that he tried to pass on to you?

DORIA: The value that he believe in education. He will send my first brother to school from Corato. He graduate from Corato with a high school diploma. He came to Lacedonia. He graduated with honor. In fact, he, he won a scholarship of five-hundred lira, at that time was a lot of money [laughing], uh, by a test, a contest with another two guys, and he was the first one to enter, uh, and he won the contest. My father, as I was saying, he believe in education. Says whatever I didn't do, I want them to do it. I want them to get there and, uh, be in public life with an education.

LEVINE: I see. And your father, uh, did your grandfather also, uh, deal with wine, or your father's father...

DORIA: Uh, well he was a, a middle man of a, uh, of buying

oil [car alarm goes off in background], almonds, uh, buy and sell.

LEVINE: Your grandfather?

DORIA: My grandfather.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. Uh...

DORIA: Yeah. He had this uh, ability to buy and sell.

LEVINE: I see. Uh, how about your mother, what kind of a person was she?

DORIA: A lovely person [sobs a little and swallows]. She, she was the mother of some, uh, two or three guys in Lacedonia that were a little retarded, she would get them and fed, feed them. Yeah.

LEVINE: Do you think there were any values that she had that she tried to pass on to her children?

DORIA: Well, especially to my daughter, uh, to my sisters. And the value that, my mother had, I saw in my sister. My Rosa, my sister, Rosa, die, uh, she was

about seventy or seventy-five, something like that. Angelina die right, one year after she, uh, got the teacher diploma [car alarm goes off in background]. My sister, the other, that's Angelina. Maria die, uh, in, uh, [Mrs. Doria in background: "Got married."] was marry and die in, uh...How many years was that, uh, doll [Natal PH]? [Mrs. Doria in background: "Didn't you say she got married and she lived happily?"] Ah, she lived happily with his, her husband. She raised, she was unfortunate with the family. She would have eight children, my sister, one girl, but seven boys. And three boys die, and so remain with, uh, one daughter, one daughter and four boys.

LEVINE: Um, so, uh, let's see...Is there anything else about, um...Italy, that when you think back to your childhood, you, you have in your mind, a picture in your mind. Is there anything, when you...

DORIA: Well, the only thing, when I was young, I was like one of them here, boys around here go play ball, play, uh, any, uh, child game that is, uh, that is in vogue.

LEVINE: Do you remember any of the games that you played when you were young?

DORIA: Well, the...I don't know how you call, I forgot the
[Mrs. Doria in the background: "Soccer."]

LEVINE: Soccer?

DORIA: Soccer, yes, when I was in high school, yes. That I played in high school. Um...You know when you stay like this that people jump, what they call, uh, they jump on the top of you, uh, wha-...[calls to his wife] Maybe, [Natal PH], you reme-, you know the name of that, uh, [car alarm] when you bend down and somebody jump on the top of you. [Mrs. Doria: "High jumping or something?"]

LEVINE: I know what you mean, too, I can't think of it...

DORIA: Yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah.

DORIA: Well, anyway, we were in that game. In fact, one of the stupid guy instead he jump, he push, and he push

me against the rail [car alarm] of the, uh, normal school, and broke my tooth. [laughs]

LEVINE: Ah.

DORIA: Broke my tooth. And I took it out when I came into this country because she didn't like it, half a tooth. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Tell me about medical care. Do you remember anybody being sick when you were a little boy, and what kind of treatment they got?

DORIA: I remember only that sometime, I, very sick? No. But the one time I ehr a young woman that, for some reason, I don't know, I could not understand, she used to press me here, uh, so I could move my bowels. Excuse my impress-, expression.

LEVINE: Oh...

DORIA: So, uh, and I did...

LEVINE: ...it's like a massage...

DORIA: Like a massage, no, she was pressing, pressing, pressing, and I would move my bowels, and then, she gave me some kind of a, uh, the drugstore's got. I went to the drugstore. I bought whatever she told me to buy because I don't know the name, and then I felt good. That's my little sickness. [rubs face] That's my little sickness.

LEVINE: Okay, um, well, now, tell me, um, about what you experienced of the First World War when you were still in Italy.

DORIA: Well, you want know the truth? Uh, after that, Italy promoted the submarine, and ask for volunteer, and I was fifteen years old. I volunteer, but my mother stop me, and even the government stop me. Say no, we don't take when there's only one boy in the family. We wa-, yes. I did volunteer to go for the submarine. That's the only thing I could remember that the-, of the war, then this usual story, you wins, lose, lose. Sorry that Italy had to retreat, and the Austrian people advance in the Venetian territory, and then they were pushing back with the help of the American people. That's, uh, the only thing that I could remember, you know. Same thing, young boys, they're

not interested like, uh, like, at twenty-one or twenty-two years or businessmen that, that expect to make business out of that war.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Okay, so, tell me then, ho-, why you decided that you wanted to come to America.

DORIA: Well, I, I told you before. It was a little difference in the family stature that, that she maybe thought that I was not good enough for her, the mother, the family, and my family thought that she was not good enough for, uh...

LEVINE: You.

DORIA: ...for me. [swallows] And I decided, that's why I apply in June for the passport before I finish the second year of college, that I will call "college" as you will call here.

LEVINE: Yes, uh-huh.

DORIA: I applied for the passport and I was called in July.

LEVINE: *Hmm*, fast, huh?

DORIA: I was called in July, yes, and that, that's why I came in the, the month of August. I precisely prepare all my paper, and nothing was, uh...The end of July, I, uh, I embark. [single knocking sound]

LEVINE: Yes, yeah.

DORIA: I just lost the passport, would you believe...

LEVINE: July, you say, July, yeah, yeah.

DORIA: Yeah. I had the passport up to two years ago. I had some Italian books, remains, histories, things that, so I went down the cellar started discard. I must put that passport in one of those book I was throwing away.

LEVINE: Hmm...So, in other words, would it be fair to say that you, you were leaving because you, you couldn't marry the girlfriend that you had, and...

DORIA: Well, we could not get together with the old girl.
(blows nose)

LEVINE: Yeah, uh-huh. So, so you, so you were leaving thinking you just wanted to get away?

DORIA: I just got away, before, because I was in a, a mood that sometimes that, that happens like they happen here. The girls are, doesn't want to get married. He gets shot, she gets shot. I was in, was an attempt to, (?) my, my big brother had a gun, a little gun just as security. [swallows] So, I took the gun we had in the library over the house. He had everything, all the books he had. I took the gun and I went to look for her one day because, you know, uh, busybody people men- mu- me- mendle [mettle sic.] with us. They came to tell me that so-and-so went with your girlfriend. I went home and got the gun. And God wanted that I didn't see them. God wanted that I say, so my father and my mother, before something happens, says, "Get out of there."

LEVINE: Mm-hmm.

DORIA: And I came to the United States.

LEVINE: Okay. Do you remember leaving town?

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DORIA: Oh, yes, yes. It was a beautiful day. [swallows twice] My mother-- [chokes and begins sobbing]

LEVINE: It's okay. Take your time.

DORIA: [deep breath, sobbing while he is talking] I remember all that my used to say. I lost to her and ... [sobbing]

LEVINE: Who took you to the port on location?

DORIA: Mike. Little Mike, my two brother-in-law. [swallows] But when I left Lacedonia there was a, a boss that take all the passengers to the station. So, my mother says, "I lost one...the other one [starts sobbing uncontrollably]." I never saw her... [sobbing]

LEVINE: Wow...So, when you left the town, how were you traveling?

DORIA: [sniffs, voice is still shaky] Uh, by train to Naples. We went by bus from the Lacedonia to the station. We took the train, me and my brother-in-law. My brother-in-law wouldn't allow me to... [sobbing]

LEVINE: Wait, what...

DORIA: They would not leave me until they put me on the boat.

LEVINE: I see.

DORIA: We got to Naples. We got, uh, one of those, uh, tourist home, uh, motel, whatever it was, and says well, we'll see, we'll stay here till...until you leave. So, when I went aboard, they saw me on the top of the Conte Verde

LEVINE: Conte Verde? Uh-huh.

DORIA: Conte Verde, it says well, we'll see you when you come back. My brother-in-law.

LEVINE: Were you thinking you would come to America for a short time and then come back to Italy?

DORIA: My, my people...in Italy, wondered at it. I had the same idea, but when I came here, I saw the life here, I decided that way to apply for a citizen paper. Because I happened to be working the National

Biscuit, and they only want [single knocking sound] people with the citizen paper. They got me the first half-paper, uh, to apply for the half-paper.

LEVINE: I see. Well, first, let's talk about the voyage. What was it like on the Conte Verde? Was it...

DORIA: What a, a, beautiful, uh, voyage. The Conte Verde, uh, was the second trip that was making to USA. At that time, there was a dispute who will make in less time from Gibraltar to New York between England, and Italy, and France. Italy won. Won the, uh, what they called, the, there's a name for it, uh...Nas-, I can't remember, maybe I forget...

LEVINE: It was, no, uh, it was a conte-, oh, you, you said it...

DORIA: There was a co-...

LEVINE: ...the Conte Verde broke the record.

DORIA: Yeah, broke the record.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: Los- England lost because England was broadcasted, uh, [sniffs] that she had the primary of the ocean [clanging sound in the background] because she made from Gibraltar to New York in four days. And the Conte Verde beat England for about forty-five minutes or an hour or maybe a little more. So, for, she beat England. [clears throat]

LEVINE: So, it was your voyage that was the, the, the voyage that broke the record?

DORIA: Yeah, the voyage that broke the re'd of the speed from Gibraltar to, to New York. So, we had a wonderful voyage from Naples to, up to, two da-, two day before reach to United State. The oceans was nice and calm. But then, uh, before we reach here, two days before, we got a little storm, but it didn't upset me too much. I did have a little upset stomach. I had throw up a little bit. But, after that, we reach Ellis Island.

LEVINE: Um, tell me, were you in the steerage?

DORIA: I was in the steerage.

LEVINE: And...

DORIA: I came in the third class.

END OF SIDE A. BEGIN SIDE B

LEVINE: And could you describe what that was like?

DORIA: Well, it was like a, like a...where people...

LEVINE: A dormitory?

DORIA: A big dormitory, yeah, a big dormitory, but we were twelve people in each, uh, room. Twelve people, fourteen people, I don't remember exact, but I know we were a lot in one little room. And has a little army cot. Uh...and that's all what I could say about it. But the voyage was beautiful.

LEVINE: Did you know anyone else traveling on the ship?

DORIA: No, no, no, no, no, no. I don't know nobody there.

LEVINE: Do you remember your feelings about...

DORIA: Well, the feeling of travel or the feeling of leaving Italy?

LEVINE: Leaving Italy, coming...

DORIA: The feeling to leave Italy, yes. I had that feeling that, that I will come back. Because as I said to you, my mother... [pauses, takes a breath] I still remember the, her words, so I come back...But then as, as I said, the life in the United State and the job I got with the...with the National Bis-. But, before I got the National Biscuit, I had a, a rough job.

LEVINE: Oh, okay. Well, first tell me about when the ship came into the New York harbor. What do you remember about that?

DORIA: Well, as I was saying to you before...I think I'm getting a cold. [sniffs] I'm, I'm sorry...

LEVINE: That's okay.

DORIA: As we reach the harbor, people start to see the Statue of Liberty, and they started to holler, "The Statue of Liberty! The Statue of Liberty!" I was someplace else, uh, I don't remember what I was do-, because I used to play the mandolin. I used to play with somebody there with the guitar, and we had a little music among ourself.

LEVINE: You mean, on the ship?

DORIA: On the ship. I used to play the mandolin in Italy. Uh...When I, we heard, "The Statue of Liberty, the Statue of Liberty," so we run! And we saw the Statue of Liberty, and said, "Oh, that's the Statue of Liberty." I, that give me a little feeling that I arrive, maybe I'll settle down for a while and see what happen here, in this country. That's the feeling I got.

LEVINE: Now, did you then go right to Ellis Island when you pulled in, when the ship pulled in to...

DORIA: Uh, no, uh, the ship, uh, dock on Fifty-nine Street, I think was at that time. I don't know if it's still

the same thing; on Fifty-ninth Street. Uh... And they used to take us with the little boat from the, from the, uh, our boat to Ellis Island. And when we got there, they putting the, us in the big room, the whole Italian people, all in a big room. We were about four, four-hundred, five-hundred people there, maybe more...And then, all of a sudden...We has to stay, we going to stay on the boat! *Why?* Somebody die. Somebody die? Well, what do we have to do? We don't know. Then they told us that the President of United State, Harding, die. And the place will be close for two days. For two days, so, for two days, we had remain on the boat. Like today and tomorrow. Then the next day, then they, they start to, they goes and registers us, uh, passenger of the boat.

LEVINE: How did you feel about that, when you...

DORIA: Well, [laughs as he talks] I just say they took two days, I didn't like. I didn't like because as good as the food was good, but still I say, "What the devil that, that, we have to stay here just because the president die?" I didn't realize that the whole United State goes [laughs]...[Mrs. Doria: "Was mourning."]

LEVINE: Yes.

DORIA: [stops laughing] Mourning...[starts laughing again as he talks] We didn't know this, you know, being on, coming out a different land.

LEVINE: Well, tell me your impression. What did Ellis Island look like, and what was your...

DORIA: Well, we didn't see much at the beginning.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: And we didn't see much at the beginning, but, before, uh, before, uh, we, uh, uh, dock, before they bring us on, uh, Ellis Island, they made us walk around. And say, "Take a walk because you can't go no place. You can't swim here. The distance is too much." Uh, that made us, uh, freedom, liberty, liberty to do whatever we want to do.

LEVINE: You mean, on the boat...

DORIA: No, no...

LEVINE: ...or on the island?

DORIA: On the, on the island.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: They made us walk for a bit. And then, on the third day, we start to register as a passenger.

LEVINE: Do you remember what Ellis Island looked like?

DORIA: Well, I, I think I saw at the harbor, a big a hold that we were, and the barricade, that we were, uh, line up, and, and the, the inspection that they were having.

LEVINE: What was your inspection like?

DORIA: We, they want to know if we had, uh, uh, first, if we were sick because, uh, even with the red hive they will send you back...Uh, for somebody, maybe if you, uh, TB, they will send you back to-, a disease that you could, be trans-...tra-...transpasses, mm?

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: They will send you back. So, they find us, you, that all, all those that pass, that pass were free that all those things here. And that's the only thing that inspection they did because they couldn't search my package. I had a little package with a, a, another pair of pants and couple pair of underwears [laughs], and...and, what else...

LEVINE: Do you remember what your, uh, little satchel looked like?

DORIA: Yeah. Yeah, I remember that because was small, was so much small. [Mrs. Doria in the background: "He had a blanket."] Uh, uh, I had a blanket. Oh, the...My big sister was here in this country in nineteen-uh...twelve, eleven, and she remembers how cold it was here. She says, well, when you go to your rent, when we go to your rent, or your cousin, whatever you're going to go, uh...you, here's a blanket that you could cover because in the winter, it's very cold.

LEVINE: Oh.

DORIA: [Mrs. Doria commenting softly in the background:
"That's how come you brought a blanket."] Yeah,
that's why I brought a blanket.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. So, um, uh, did someone meet you?

DORIA: Yes, a cousin of mine, two of them, two cousin of
mine.

LEVINE: And you knew them? You knew those cousins?

DORIA: Well, one I knew, one because he was in Italy and
then he came to America. So I knew him, I knew him,
and I recognize him, and, and his little brother.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm. So when they, did they come and meet you at
Ellis Island?

DORIA: Yes, they meet me in Ellis Island, and they vouch for
me...because they want to know who's going to take
care of you, and that's why they say, we are taking
care of him.

LEVINE: Okay. So, then where did you with your cousins?

DORIA: Well, I went to Twenty-seventh Street, New York City. But... [Mrs. Doria: "That's where they lived."] Yeah, that's where they lived, the two of them. Well, the, the big brother had an extra room, but I couldn't stay there because she, uh, they had young girls, uh, twelve, thirteen years old and nine years old. Says, you gotta do something. Fine...but he made me stay there one month. Says, don't worry about it. So, I stay there with him one month, then I loo-, I find a three-room, uh, no, then a friend of his had a three-room for him, just for himself. He says, why don't you take my cousin in until he finds something. So, he takes, he took me in. Then about a year later, or maybe less than that, I find my own three rooms on Twenty-eighth and Ninth Avenue.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: Uh...

LEVINE: Mm-hmm. So, what, did, tell me, when you were first in this country, uh, were there any things about it that...

DORIA: Impre-...

LEVINE: ... struck you as very, very...

DORIA: Well, from, from the island, from across, from, uh
[single knocking sound]... the i-...

LEVINE: Ellis Island?

DORIA: ...across the island, E-s Island, Ellis Island, we
saw the big buildings, that's the impression we got,
most big impression that got everybody, the
tremendous buildings. So, my sister was tell me,
you'll see big thing, they used to call the
gratticire. *Gratticire* means, uh, sky-high... [Mrs.
Doria in the background: "Skyscraper."] [*sic*.
Grattacielo means skyscraper]. And [clanging sound]
you'll be impressed for that. And everybody was
impressed with...but then, when we landed, we start
to see...[laughs] with our own eyes and our own feet,
when, when, they took me a couple of place to see in
New York...

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: Yeah, that, they took the Mulberry Street, which they never like Mulberry Street.

LEVINE: They didn't?

DORIA: No, no. They weren't the class of people to stay in Mulberry Street.

LEVINE: Oh. Mm-hmm.

DORIA: Yeah.

LEVINE: So, um, anything else about your first experiences in the, in this country that you remember?

DORIA: Well, uh, I start to get, I...The first experience? The first experience I got, I had to go shovel, they were fixing, uh, Park Avenue. They were fixing Park Avenue, the island on Park Avenue, they used to plant the, uh, plants, flowers, so, and the, the foreman was a German fellow. And they were digging so they could put a, uh... [Mrs. Doria: "Trees."]...trees and, uh, topsoil. When he saw me digging, and, uh I was shovel this dirt, I was about three feet, uh...

LEVINE: Down?

DORIA: ...down. I didn't shovel the, the dirt... [laughs].
So, the, the foreman called my friend that introduce
me to him, he says, "That man is not for this job
here." Yeah. So...

LEVINE: Wait. He said you weren't for the job because why?

DORIA: [Mrs. Doria: "He said he was a student."] I was a
student. [Mrs. Doria: "He was not a labor man"] I...

LEVINE: Not, you didn't shovel dirt.

DORIA: I didn't shovel dirt. [The women laugh.] I didn't
shovel dirt. [Doria laughs.]

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: I didn't shovel...So, he says to me, he said to my
friend, says, "Here's the money." Uh, was six dollar
check he gave me to...and, says "Let him look
someplace else. Is not for digging. This man is not
for digging." And then I went to work at the National
Biscuit.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And how did you get that job?

DORIA: Through another cousin of mine.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: He was working with the National Biscuit, and that's where I got the job.

LEVINE: And, um, so did you stay there very long?

DORIA: About two years. Then after two years, another cousin of mine was, I, uh, loading...I was making good money, to tell you true, thirty-two dollars a week, at that time was money. [car horn in background] Plus, I was working a little overtime, too, which would come thirty-eight or forty-uh dollars, up to forty-two dollars.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm. What were you doing for the National Biscuit Company?

DORIA: Well, at the beginning, uh, they put me on the, wash windows. But, the foreman... [Mrs. Doria: "That's

right."]. . .uh, I met the foreman that was from a Provincia Avellino, in a little town near where I was, uh, raised. And he gave me a, a break. A break, and then, uh, I decide to work on loading and unloading the train that the, used to come into the factory to be shipped out of New York. And [clattering sound in background] that's what I do.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And so after two years, then, what...

DORIA: My cousin says, "What are you doing there for, tw-
twenty-two dollars a week?! Come, uh..." He learned to be a tile-setter. Said, at the beginning, says "The boss will give you fifty, sixty dollars, and then when you learn the trade, you'll go to seventy-two, eighty dollars a week." Me stupid--thinking that seventy-two dollars would be more than thirty, thirty-two dollars--I left the National Biscuit, and I went to the [car breaks screech in the background], but I didn't realize that the, the tile-layer...works...while...the sun is up, when it rains, snow, or, uh, family in the same trade, they work, and I would be left out...I didn't realize that day. And I was, more awful work than to make, uh, more than the seventy-two dollars a week [two soft tapping

sounds in background] or thirty, fifty-eight dollars a week, uh, I was...So, I said to myself, "What did I do?" First of all the National Biscuit had already, in two years that I work there, I had five years life guarantee. They give to me five years, uh, life, life guarantee, five thousand li-, uh, dollar [two beeps in background, phone ringing in the distance]. [Mrs. Doria:"...this thing in there? Looks like a policy, or something..."]

LEVINE: You, yeah...

DORIA: Policy...

LEVINE: ...uh, life insurance...

DORIA: Life *insurance*, yeah, insurance [Mrs. Doria: "Benefits, yeah...What did you do with your money? That is important..."] Well, the money... ["...she may want to know that."...]...the money, I sent to my father and my mother. [Mrs. Doria chuckles.] All my money I sent. I only left a little money so I could pay the rent. I had a cousin of mine, a spinster, here in America, uh, she was here with her father, mother, sister, brother-in-law, brothers, anyway,

about fourteen, fifteen, for the family, and, uh, my aunt and my uncle, my aunt was my father's little sister.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm.

DORIA: And she took care of me for the first two, three weeks. Says, "You bring the wash here, eat here Saturday or Sunday, and then you, you go about your bu-, uh, whatever you live, your work. [Mrs. Doria: "Mm-hmm."] So...

LEVINE: How about learning English, how was that for you?

DORIA: Well, English, I start to go to school. I went to the school, I got a diplo-, a [?] diploma. And I went to one year, a year-and-a-half, uh, at Tom Jefferson High School [Mrs. Doria: "In Brooklyn."] In Brooklyn. [Mrs. Doria: "Mm-hmm."]

LEVINE: And, and, uh, the National Biscuit had pu-, had started the papers for you to become a citizen?

DORIA: Yeah, they start, they give me the first half papers, at that time you got to take, the first paper or, uh,

after two years, you, in case you decide to go back to Italy, you go back. Uh, after two years, they, I got the paper, uh, the month of August, [tapping sound] now...I think it's the...uh...the twenty-nine of this month, I be just seventy-one years in the United State with my paper.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Do you remember when you became a citizen?

DORIA: Yes, uh, I just told you, uh, at the Brooklyn Supreme Court.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

DORIA: Yeah.

LEVINE: Was that a big event for you, to become a citizen?

DORIA: Well, I beg pardon...

LEVINE: Was that, was that an important, uh...

DORIA: Well, I want to become a citizen, and the National Biscuit says you got to be a citizen...

LEVINE: Oh.

DORIA: ...see?

LEVINE: Uh-huh...Do you remember when you realized you weren't going to go back, but you would stay...

DORIA: Well, I start to realize that I won't go back. Then, after a few years more, my mother die, and then I say forget about it.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Okay, uh, then, uh, you...went to work for the tile-setter. Did you stay there very long?

DORIA: Uh...until, from the...twenty-six, nineteen twenty-six or twenty-seven. Until nineteen, uh, uh, twenty-nine. Thirty, thirty, nineteen thirty. Uh, there was no work in New York, so, there was a guy that was taking people from New York to Washington, D.C., to, they were, they were building, a lot of building in Washington. In fact, I did work there, in the Ambassador Hotel and the, another hotel, and then the hou-, a couple house there. But...

LEVINE: You mean, in construction?

DORIA: In construction, as a tile-setter.

LEVINE: Oh.

DORIA: As a tile-setter. Uh...But the guy, at the beginning, gave us all the benefit, [makes popping sound with lips] travel, bo-, room and board, and the pay was good, ten dollars a day. But then he got wise. He took the room and board, he took the food, and he took the travel, e- expense to go and come back. [faint voices in the background] And reduce from ten dollars to eight dollars...

LEVINE: Mm-hmm.

DORIA: ...because you know why? He got the people from there, that the learn to be, set- tile-setter, and they hire them for less money than they were paying us. And plus, less benefit than, no benefit at all for them, they were living there.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm. So, uh, when did you meet your wife?

DORIA: [to Mrs. Doria] When did I meet you? In 1929?
Twenty-nine. [Mrs. Doria: "Twenty-nine, thirty, du-
du- du- du- during the crisis..."] Nineteen twenty-
nine. ["...bad times. It was bad times..."] Yeah,
1929, yeah. [Mrs. Doria talking at the same time in
the background, indiscernible.] In 1929, because in
thirty, I went to Washington, 1930 I went to
Washington to work, and I used to come every week.
Uh, and I couldn't save no money. The living in
Washington was high. I had to pay twenty dollars a
week, just for the room, twenty dollars a week. The
food, uh...

LEVINE: Expensive.

DORIA: I beg par-? [Mrs. Doria: "It was expensive enough,
yeah..."] Uh... ["Hurry."]

LEVINE: Nah, the details are good. This is good.

DORIA: So, the, uh, ham and eggs [Mrs. Doria mumbling in
background.] two dollars and change. A roll with the
piece of, uh, ham, two-fifty.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm.

DORIA: Was, the cost of living, is, was tre- tremendous, so, when I used to come here, she says, "Where's the money?" [laughs] Where's the money, I just got, I just got the money to come back and go. But still I brought about a hundred dollars back or something. [Mrs. Doria commenting in the background.] Yeah, something like that.

LEVINE: So then what, then what did you do then?

DORIA: Oh, then...[Mrs. Doria: "Left."] Uh, then I left to the tile-setter. Through a friend mine, I already got married with my wife, you see, even the tile-setter come in, in the dress line, I'll teach you how to press, and then, look, whatever you make, you, you make. It's your own. And I did. So, I learn how to press. I became a presser. And that's what I stay, so many years, since nineteen twuh- twuh- thirty? [Mrs. Doria: "Thirty-three."] Until...thirty-three? Since 1933, that's right, since 1933 [Mrs. Doria mumbling in background.] to...until I retire in 1969.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So you worked for, uh, in, like, like in the

garment center?

DORIA: In the garment ce-, yeah. With the local eighty-nine...

LEVINE: Uh, what is your wife's name and maiden name?

DORIA: The wife name is Carmela Tosca, uh, Godino.

LEVINE: Okay, and, whe-, how did you meet?

DORIA: I met through a Jewish girl, which, I was infatuated with her, too. [Mrs. Doria sputters and laughs and comments indiscernibly in the background..."spread the joy?"] A good friend of hers. And...[Mrs. Doria: "We're still good friends..."] still friends, yeah, we ["...still alive, and we still communicate."] We still go see her. We saw, uh, ["That's true."] two years ago, the husband die, we went to the, uh, burial. Uh, she was a good girl, and, uh, why should break the ["Good friends."]...

LEVINE: Good friends.

DORIA: Yeah, good friend.

LEVINE: So, you knew this girl...

DORIA: The Jewish girl...I used to, I used to go to my cousin's house, pass the time at night w- with the, the chil-, not the children, [Mrs. Doria: "With the family."] the brother and the family. And there was a Jewish fa-, uh, people that owned that house, that had three girls. And two, these three girls, we used to dance at night. The mother was there, the father was there, my cousin upstairs. And the, then they used to come, the Jewish girl, her, and another one, Rose. [Mrs. Doria: "Friends, yeah."] Yeah, all those friends, Jewish friends...So, I got a little infatuated with her, the Jewish girl...but the fa-, the girl says, "I can't get married with you. [Mrs. Doria chuckles.] My father and mother'll die if I marry you [Doria laughs as he talks.] [Mrs. Doria: "Frustrated...frustrated."] So ["He had to wind up with me."] So, then I says to--maybe we call her "Tosca," the second name...

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DORIA: ...but her name is Carmela. So, she's alright. So, I

start to go out with her, until, uh, she *hook me up*.
[Mrs. Doria laughs.]

LEVINE: What did you like about her?

DORIA: Well, I didn't know, uh, [Mrs. Doria: "I still don't know."] I don't know myself! [Doria laughs as he talks. The women start laughing together.] An attraction, uh...that but, maybe that talking from her to her, pass from her to her [Mrs. Doria: "Which is better? (claps her hands together, laughing)...Oh, this is crazy."] I just, well, we been living, [Mrs. Doria mumbles in the background.] w- we been living now together since nineteen thir- thirty-three. Now, it's ninety-four. It's sixty-one years...

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh. [Mrs. Doria mumbles in the background, and Levine chuckles.] Okay, so, um, when you think back about starting your life in Italy and coming here as a young man, what effect do you think growing up in Italy had on your life here later? [Car horn beeps twice in background.]

DORIA: Well, then I got married in thirty-four, 1934. [Mrs. Doria: "Thirty-three, we were married."]

LEVINE: Oh.

DORIA: Yeah, we got married in thirty-three, but in thirty-four, I took my wife to Italy, and she met my father, and, because my mother had just died in thirty-one, and my sisters and my brother-in-law, and we stayed there three months. She used to had a good job at that time. They promised to come, when she come back, she get the job. She used to work with Charles, the Ritz, one of those perfume house, and I, I had, uh, no job at that time, in 1934. Only, uh, time that I, I got the job when I come back from there, and I start to learn as a press- presser.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Did you know you were going to learn the pressing when you went to Italy...

DORIA: No, no, I didn't know, I didn't know. I was going to go look for something be-, uh, something else, someplace else, but friend says, "Come with me. You'll learn this good trade."

LEVINE: Mm-hmm.

DORIA: And then the, uh, the garment industry start to go up. Everybody was making money.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm.

DORIA: Everybody was making money at that time. Uh, says, "It will be alright for you, too." I, she had a job, and we, uh, whatever I start to make at the beginning, I was making forty, fifty, sixty dollars, whatever I could make because I was a beginner, was uh, I didn't have the trick. I didn't know the tricks how to s- jump, how to skip.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Okay, so, then did you have children?

DORIA: Well, we wait five years for the, for this child. [tap] Because...she, I took them to a lot of doctors to see what was the matter, but didn't, her and me. And the doctor found out that she was too high, and could not get...and you don't, the job, the Jewish jo- do- doctor, at the...[calls to Mrs. Doria] What was the name of the hospital, the...[clanging sound] I think it was, Bat- in Brooklyn, one of those big hospital in Brooklyn. [Mrs. Doria, as if re-entering the room: "What about the hospital? I didn't hear

the..."] The one where the, the doctor that took you, uh, to have, uh, for the first... ["Oh, at the Lutheran hospital in Brooklyn..."] No, that's where the bo- ba- boy ["Boys were born."] was born. When I took to the doctor to, uh, took that, uh, drew the, the [?] down, the [?]... ["Oh, well...was a female problem"] [Levine and Mrs. Doria begin mumbling to each other, with Mr. Doria interjecting every so often] ...female troubles...well...well, at the hospital, he done a good job, and as, after six, uh, five months, she got pregnant. And that is after five years, we got the first boy.

LEVINE: And what are your children's names?

DORIA: F- the one is first is, uh, Nuncio Anthony Doria.

LEVINE: Mm-hmm.

DORIA: And the second, Peter Ange- our father, Peter Angelo Doria, and the other one, Vincent *Louis*--my name and my brother's name--Doria.

LEVINE: And do you have grandchildren?

DORIA: Yes, I have ei- eight grandchildren, eight. You want their name, too? [Mrs. Doria: "Four boys."] Four boys and four girls. The first boy's got two girls and two boy. Uh, James Anthony Doria, Anna Marie Doria, Steven Andrew Doria, Patricia Andrea Doria. That's from the first boy. The second boy has, uh, Lisa Maria Doria and John Michael Doria. That's the second boy. The third boy has, uh, Vincent Louis Doria and Kim Edith Doria.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. What do you feel most proud of having done in your lifetime?

DORIA: The first thing, proud, that we tried, both of us to give my kids an education, like my father. I, I, like him, he was very much for education, so that I had not give...The first boy became a teacher, and just retire. The second boy, he went to college in Detroit [beep in the background], and he didn't graduate as a mechanical engineer, but he got a good job as a builder, first as a, uh, sa- office sales, salesman the real estate. Then he got wise and he went in business himself and is doing tremendous. Buy land, build a house, and sell. [Mrs. Doria: "That's in Detroit..."] That's Detroit. He lives in Detroit.

And Vincent, now, he's the superintendent of the builder in New York...w-...

LEVINE: Okay, is the-, we just have about a minute left. Is there, is there anything else, uh, that you would say, um, about...starting out in Italy, coming to this country, and living out your life here?

DORIA: Well, I say that I made my life in New York, especially in Valley Stream, fifty years in Valley Stream. This, uh, has been my pleasure: to own a house, give them an education for my kids, um, living here, comfortable, there's nothing to worry about. And the, the other thing is my health is in good health. Uh, as an old man, I'm ninety-two years old, I suffer the arthritis, like anybody else suffers, and I can't complain the rest of the world. Uni-United State gave me a, a life to live, and...a piece of land to love. [Mrs. Doria: "God bless America."] God bless America! [Mrs. Doria chuckles softly.]

LEVINE: Okay, well, thank you very much. I've been speaking with [Mrs. Doria again chuckles softly] Vincent Doria. It's August 5, 1994. Mr. Doria is ninety-two years old, and, um, this is Janet Levine for the

National Park Service, and I'm signing off. Thank
you.

DORIA: Uh, you're welcome, dear.

END OF INTERVIEW