

EI-890

ANTHONY FABRIZI

BIRTHDATE: FEBRUARY 23, 1906

INTERVIEW DATE: MAY 24, 1997

AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 91

RUNNING TIME: 2:02:23

INTERVIEWER: PAUL SIGRIST

RECORDING ENGINEER: PAUL SIGRIST

INTERVIEW LOCATION: GLASTONBURY, CONNECTICUT

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: TAPESCRIBE

TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY:

ITALY, 1916, 1923

AGE: 10, 17

SHIP: DANTE ALEGARE [PH]

PORT: NAPLES

RESIDENCES:

SIGRIST: Good afternoon. This is Paul Sigrist for the National Park Service. Today is Saturday, May 24th, 1997. I'm in Glastonbury, Connecticut with Mr. Anthony Dimiano [PH] Fabrizi. Mr. Fabrizi came from Italy. He came the first time in 1916 when he was 10.

FABRIZI: No—November.

SIGRIST: November of 1916.

FABRIZI: Cold, was cold that time.

SIGRIST: Okay. The first time he came it was November of 1916.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: He was 10.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: The second time he came was in 1923.

FABRIZI: Right.

SIGRIST: Right.

FABRIZI: That was Aug—August.

SIGRIST: In August.

FABRIZI: The month of August.

SIGRIST: So it was warmer that time.

FABRIZI: Yeah. Oh, nice.

SIGRIST: [chuckles]

FABRIZI: Nice, yeah.

SIGRIST: I should also say for the sake of the tape that—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —there's a fire alarm that will beep on and off while—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —we're doing the interview.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Mr. Fabrizi, can we begin by you giving me your birth date?

FABRIZI: Yes, February—February 23rd, 1906.

SIGRIST: And what town in Italy were you born?

FABRIZI: Pratola Peligna [PH]. You want me to write down?

SIGRIST: Um—

FABRIZI: Pratola Peligna.

SIGRIST: Pr—Pratola—P—is that how you spell it? P-R—

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: —A-T-O-L-A.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: And there—Peligna—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —is P-E-L-I-G-N-A.

FABRIZI: Right.

SIGRIST: That's correct.

FABRIZI: Right.

SIGRIST: Where is that in Italy?

FABRIZI: Is in Abbruci [PH], the state of Abbruci, is between, like, middle of Italy, is the other state you go to near La Toscani [PH], Toscani.

SIGRIST: Toscani.

FABRIZI: Toscani. And then from my hometown to Rome, only take a six-hour train, and to Naple take eight hours train. Naple is this way; Rome is over here. Me, I'm over here. Like, I had a map here. I should—can I get that?

SIGRIST: I—I understand.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: So you were a little bit closer to Rome—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —than you were to Naples.

FABRIZI: Right.

SIGRIST: Yes.

FABRIZI: Right.

SIGRIST: Can you describe what your town looks like?

FABRIZI: My town was a lot a farm, you know, most. Oh, in a—in the center of town was a big church—church and then the square, the town and the water in the front of the—way in the mi—middle of the square, the fountain. You know, a—

SIGRIST: Fountain?

FABRIZI: M—my time, you know. I don't know now.

SIGRIST: [chuckles]

FABRIZI: I've been—a long time, I didn't go.

SIGRIST: What—what did people do at the fountain?

FABRIZI: The fountain. They go get the water to bring home much good drinking water. And they got—on the bottom, the—the—on top of the—the water is [unclear]. And there were three faucets, you know, the water come down. And they filled a bucket. They filled a gallon, whatever the containers have. And they bring it home to use for drinking, cooking, good water. And then the animal on the—on the bottom of this, kind of like a tub—the—the animal could drink, like the horse, the cow. In my time, my father had two cow. You know, he—for work to plow, to plow his land. And they used to go there to drink.

SIGRIST: Can you describe your house that you lived in?

FABRIZI: I live right there in—right, this side—this side, this is a square, the square, you know.

SIGRIST: Yes—

FABRIZI: My house was here. The square—the—the fountain was over—and the church was over here, the church.

SIGRIST: So you lived—you lived kind of across the—the—the—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Across the—

FABRIZI: On the—on the side of the square.

SIGRIST: On the side of the square.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And the fountain was in the middle.

FABRIZI: In the middle.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: And then there was a two road over near the church, two road on the square. One go this way and this road go over here, go that side. And the church divided those two roads.

SIGRIST: So the roads went around the church.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah. One—one go the other way towards many house. And then a lot of open land and then the cemetery, the old cemetery. And this one go to [unclear] towards other land, open farm. And then you could go towards another city where my mother born. My mother come from Predza [PH]. Predza is a small town [unclear] Pratola. So my father marry a woman from Predza, another town, is up in the mountain.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Let—can you describe what your house was made out of?

FABRIZI: My—the house was made of brick, solid. You know, we used to live in the middle. Upstairs, used to live, not the family. We used to live on the middle, on the—you could go out. This was the—the opening. You could step out with a nice balcony, you know. And you could look. You could look everything, where anything that goes by you could see to—to this balcony. And then there was the kitchen. There was the other room, another room there. You know, the house made of solid stone, brick, you know.

SIGRIST: I—I wish that we were recording with videotape—

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: —because you're so excited about telling me.

FABRIZI: Yeah. Well—

SIGRIST: And you're acting it out as you're telling me.

FABRIZI: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah. I didn't see that town now since 19—when we came back, 1923. We came back. I didn't see no more. Look how many years, '23 to '97.

SIGRIST: S—so your house had balconies on it.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: And how did you—how did you light the inside of the house? What did you use for light in the house?

FABRIZI: L—light, we used to use the fireplace. Oh, the fireplace used to go all the time. You put a big old piece of wood, the log of a tree, you know. And that—that l—last for hours and hours. Then you put more wood. That's how they used to. At that time, they didn't have no gas when I lived there. We had to cook everything by wood. You know, by fireplace.

SIGRIST: Well, what kind of food did you eat back then?

FABRIZI: Well, we—we used to eat, like, we used to make macaroni, spaghetti, any kind of macaroni, make a sauce, make minestrone. Used to cook the beans and then mix those beans with a vegetable, you know, like dandelions or other vegetable, make some beans or that. And you could put olive oil or fry with the garlic mix. Or you could put a sauce, make a sauce, tomato. And you could mix that, some of that to give it a taste. We—and you could cook baked potatoes.

SIGRIST: What about meat? Did you eat any meat?

FABRIZI: Oh, meat.

SIGRIST: What kind of meat did you eat?

FABRIZI: U—used to eat—most was beef. And then we used to eat lamb, lamb meat. We used to—my father used to kill a pig every November or October, the month of the cooler time, you know. October, it start to get cold. And we used to kill a pig, used to get a little pig in the spring.

SIGRIST: And how did you kill the pig?

FABRIZI: Well, there used to be two, three men. I was a kid at that time. [chuckles] I used to see everything. They're two, three men. They get a tub. They get a big tub, solid tub, you know. And they put him—you

know, turn him around, not to the open, the top, and three or four strong men, they—they kill the pig. They grab him by the leg, boom! They put him on top of the tub. You know, you wasn't lying about those guys were strong and they knew what to do. And another guy get the knife and stab him and the—the blood—they save that blood because that blood, they're going to do something with it. They used to make, like, mix with nuts, that blood, pig blood. And they used to put a bottle of wine—you take wine early in, when you splash—when you crush, you know, in September [unclear] harvest for the wine. You get some of the wine, like a gallon or two. You make 'em boil for hour or hour until that wine becomes like a gallon or two, becomes like a—one quart left. And then you save that and you could use that to put the blood and the nuts, the—every other thing inside. And then you should mix 'em, cook 'em and become something good to eat.

SIGRIST: Now, after they stabbed the pig—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —the blood came out.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Then what did they do?

FABRIZI: There a—there a little tub for save that blood, you know. Yeah. After they do that, they bring 'em on the fire. They [unclear] fire that and they make—burn all those hair, you know.

SIGRIST: The hair.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Hair.

FABRIZI: Because some pig had a lot of hair. But that's not too much to burn, just take those hair off. And then this—the butcher and he cut that pig in half. And he get the—the bacon. He get the lard and they make, with some meat over there, they make salami. They make sausage. They could make a lot of thing out of the pig. You know, these guys were—knew what to do.

SIGRIST: Who—who did the cooking in your family?

FABRIZI: My mother, my late mother.

SIGRIST: And what was—when you were a kid—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —what was your favorite thing that she would make?

FABRIZI: A favorite thing was when she—comes the holiday. She make, like, big pie with the eggs and everything. And then she used to make something for the kids [unclear], you know. She could make so many things, you know.

SIGRIST: Where did you get your vegetables from?

FABRIZI: From our—our land, our farm. Yeah, we had a—my father one time was a proprietor. He was—he had a lot of land. He had a lot of land, any part of the city where he could plant. He had a—a [unclear] vineyard where there used to be the grape. And he had other land where he could plant the wheat, the corn. And we used to make our own bread, the wheat. When—in July, you harvest the wheat and then you take all that out of the—the machine. It came, a big machine, and they saved the—the little wheat, the, you know—

SIGRIST: The little kernels.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah. The li—that. They saved that. Sometime, you used to fill three or four, five, six, seven bushel. Big bag. And then we used to take home—my father, the [unclear] he used to make—some, he used to save for us for to—to live all the year around. And some, he used to sell, you know, and the same in wine. Used to have an—cellar, a contina [PH], they call them over there, contina, big barrel made of wood.

SIGRIST: Can you—can you explain to me the whole process of how wine is made?

FABRIZI: The wine, the first thing, they—you have help to go pick the grapes.

SIGRIST: Was there a certain kind of grape that your father grew?

FABRIZI: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. The—like, my father land, one place they call the La Vie de Paintema [PH]. Vie de Paintema. That means the—the streets of another city, Paint—they call, like the road to Paintema. We—over there, they say la via [PH]. Via means the road from Paintema. And over there, used to have land. You used to have a lot of [unclear]. And then there was another road. They call it San Martino [PH], go up in the [unclear]. Over there, the grape is better. They are up there [unclear], then down and then [unclear]—

SIGRIST: Why were the grapes better up on that road?

FABRIZI: Because was the—the [unclear] and the sun, it more, you know. The grape there used to be sweeter. Like the white grape, oh, used to make a different wine because where the wine, it's a little sour. Something like that, we'd make [unclear] quality. Over there, you'd make a special. That wine is better.

SIGRIST: Now, did you help your father make the wine?

FABRIZI: Oh, I—I use—

SIGRIST: So the—the wi—the grapes were picked?

FABRIZI: Yes.

SIGRIST: Then what happens?

FABRIZI: When everything is made, they go, they splash in a big tub. And this—people, good young men, you know. They wash their feet good, very good, and then they'd jump in there. They'd splash while the—they'd throw the—the—like a bushel of grape and they splash. In the meantime, they used to come out from holes. They were—they'd go on another container.

SIGRIST: So there was a hole in the tub.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And the—the—and then the juice came out of [unclear].

FABRIZI: Yeah, it came out on the side and come—you put 'em on the—the container, you know, like a big jug, a five-gallon, 10-gallon. Yeah, over there it was all the work you do. After you filled that, you go put in a—in a barrel, a barrel, you know. And this—and then you open a barrel, got to stay open about—many days, you know, until the—till men—

SIGRIST: The top of the barrel?

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: The barrel stays open?

FABRIZI: The barrel. And sometime, there used to be a—open the barrel. You come, ta—take juice. You know, [unclear] come out. You put 'em on.

They open the barrel. And you—you could do two ways. You could put 'em on—on a closed barrel. It just open on the top. You know, you ever see hundred—hundred-gallon barrel?

SIGRIST: Big. They're big.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah. Hundred-gallon and sometime smaller. Sometime 50 gallon. You fill them but you got to leave the top open for many days because it got to ferment. If you close it right away, not so good. You got—takes time, you know. And then used to fill this container and then when everything was all right they used to put them on the big barrel, big, this container. Men used to go there and before, clean, see, if it smell nice, because the barrel got to have the right odor. If you got a bad—something different [unclear]. If they got an odor, they got to do something. They got to put some chemical, you know, to make that disappear.

SIGRIST: And you're talking about the inside of the barrel.

FABRIZI: Inside the barrel. Inside.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

FABRIZI: And then when everything—the barrel, this big barrel, my father [unclear] huge one, like the container was high like this. And th—those barrels were tall, the—taller than the men.

SIGRIST: As—as big as a room?

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah. Two barrel. The container about, I should say, some container 500-gallon, some even a thousand gallon. And before you put that in, there was a [unclear]. There was an expert. He used to go in there. You know, he squeeze, go see if everything is all right. When he come out, everything is all right. They—so, you know, wash them good and everything. And they're—and then he put it—a—a door. He fix a door. He—he got to make sure there no leak. They were really good at it, their job. So—

SIGRIST: And how long would it stay in the big barrel?

FABRIZI: In the big barrel, stay about five months, six months and then you—when you got to sell 'em—you know, you got to sell 'em—they come. My father used to call two, three guys. They used to know wine, you know, taste, because him alone, say—he drink—"Oh, this is okay." No, you want to make sure because he used to sell it. So they used to come, those guy and make a little hole on the barrel. There was a little place

where you could make hole and then you close 'em, a small hole like a pencil. When draw some wine and my father's—taste first and then another guy taste. Another guy, taste a few second, you know, and clo—[chuckles] and cover their lips. And then, after they finish, say, "What do you think?" "Oh, it's all right. It's all right. It's good." If it's good they could tell you right away. If it's—but was young wine, you got to stay yet. You know, you got to stay yet inside that barrel. When it's time to sell, then they sell.

SIGRIST: Now, when they sold the wine—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —how did they sell it? What—in what kind of container did they sell it?

FABRIZI: They used to put that—a small barrel. Small barrel, I should say, contain about 25, 30 gallon, 50 gallon—fill them up and sell them. Those day, they don't use much on the bottle, like today. Today, everything is in a bottle. But those day, they depend on a container. You know, a small barrel that cou—you could—strong guy could roll no—could do.

SIGRIST: And what would you sell a barrel for? How much? How—how many lira [PH] would you sell a barrel for?

FABRIZI: Well, those day—those day, was everything low, like the—they could sell barrel like that for 50 lira, and the lira was sound. It isn't like today. Today, like it takes a penny 18—1,800 lira to make one dollar. I remember myself, was 16 lira for one American dollar. Sixteen lira. Now, 18. That means—

SIGRIST: Eighteen hundred.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

FABRIZI: And so he sell the wine and everything that he had extra.

SIGRIST: Did your family drink the wine that your father made?

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: How often would you drink wine?

FABRIZI: Well, we used to drink wine and sometime I take my father. He used to love wine. He used to drink wine every time he eat and then he used to

go out, meet the friends, social club. They used to go, like, contina. You know, like a bar, a tavern all—all over.

SIGRIST: What was the name in Ital—

FABRIZI: Contina.

SIGRIST: Contina.

FABRIZI: Like contina. They used to go there and they used to meet the friends. “Come on, Giuseppe.” [PH] My father n—was named Giuseppe. So, “Come on. Have a glass.” They used to drink and before you know, a couple of quarts and then they were—but they were used—you know, they were not—if they really get a little drunk, they never bother nobody. They go home and sleep.

SIGRIST: How—what about children? Could children drink wine?

FABRIZI: Well, those days, they—they allow you so much. Like, take me. Until I was 20, I no want no wine.. You know, my father, no problem with me. My brother, he was five years older than me; he’s dead now. He—he don’t want wine. But some kids, they like wine. Their parents had to control them. You know, say, “A little bit. That’s enough.” Give them half a glass. “No more. You’re done for today.” You know, encourage them not to get a habit. You know.

SIGRIST: Right.

FABRIZI: But he was lucky, my father, that to me, I don’t want wine until I start to drink after I got married.

SIGRIST: [chuckles] Well, let’s talk about your father. You said his name was Giuseppe.

FABRIZI: Giuseppe Fabrizi.

SIGRIST: What do you know about his family background and his growing up?

FABRIZI: My father was—his father, Pelino [PH], was my grandfather, my father—father.

SIGRIST: What was his name?

FABRIZI: Pelino. Pelin—

SIGRIST: Pelino.

FABRIZI: Yeah. P—P-E—Peli—P-E-I-N-O.

SIGRIST: P-E-I—

FABRIZI: I better write.

SIGRIST: Yeah, here. I'll give you [unclear].

FABRIZI: Yeah, I will write it so I know better, you know.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

FABRIZI: Because sometime I—because I can't hear—

SIGRIST: That's fine. That's fine.

FABRIZI: I can't concentrate.

SIGRIST: Right. [pause] So his name was Pelino.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: And you just spelled it. It's P-E-L—

FABRIZI: P-E-L-I-N-O.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: Pelino. So his father was a big provider. He—

SIGRIST: He had land also or—

FABRIZI: He had a lot of land. He had two, three house. He had a stable for the animal. He used to have a cow, a horse and all the animal. And they kill their own pig so, you know, he was well off. But the only thing is in that country that time—I don't know now—but my grandfather happened to have four daughters.

SIGRIST: Four daughters?

FABRIZI: Four daughters. My father was almost the last. He used to have two son and four daughters. So this is the—the way done the day, that when a father marries daughter, the father of the daughter got to give a dowtry—dow—

SIGRIST: A dowry.

FABRIZI: Dowry.

SIGRIST: Dowry, yes.

FABRIZI: Got to give 'em that. Got to give 'em a piece of land or some other thing, or you think you don't want to give that, you got to give cash. So my grandfather started to give—he had a lot of things. After he marry [unclear] he got done. And then he marry his two son. The—his two son divide whatever is left. So he had four daughter and he—they were all fixed. They all marry good guys and they made it.

SIGRIST: Do you know what year your father was born?

FABRIZI: 1872.

SIGRIST: He was born in 1872.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And was he born in this town that you were born in?

FABRIZI: Pratola, yeah.

SIGRIST: In Pratola, he was born.

FABRIZI: Pratola.

SIGRIST: Tell me how—tell me how your father owned his land. How did he get that land?

FABRIZI: Well, mo—that land, he got some from his—his father. A lot of land he got from my—my mother side. My mother, she was from Predza. From Pratola, Predza is about eight mile. And the city is on top of the hill, on top of the mountain. So my grandfather, Mother's side, he was a big man there. He was a mayor. He was a big man and he used to have a lot of property. So him, he give a lot to my grandma—to my grand—my mother when she married my father. And land from near Predz—land from another city he owned, he give it to my father. So that's how we—

SIGRIST: How did your father meet your mother?

FABRIZI: Well, he meet by friends that introduce, you know. My father was from Pratola. And he went to Predza. He could have got to marry before that. You know what they used to call my father? Bell Peppo [PH].

SIGRIST: Bell Peppo?

FABRIZI: Yeah, he was good looking man, good—good [unclear] guy, you know. Now, everybody love him.

SIGRIST: Well, what does Bell Peppo mean?

FABRIZI: Beautiful, handsome.

SIGRIST: [chuckles]

FABRIZI: Handsome guy, [chuckles] you know. Beautiful—bello [PH]. Beautiful; that means bello. He was a [unclear] guy, got marry in his own time. But he was looking for something and he met my mother. My mother, she was the only daughter over there in Predza. She was a beautiful woman too, not because I want to say, but the people tell me—me when I was young. I didn't realize all this. My mother was a beautiful woman.

SIGRIST: What was her name?

FABRIZI: Agata Frattorali.

SIGRIST: Can you spell that?

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Mr. Fabrizi is spelling things. [pause] All right. So spell it with me here.

FABRIZI: Yeah. A—

SIGRIST: A—

FABRIZI: G—

SIGRIST: G—

FABRIZI: A—

SIGRIST: A—

FABRIZI: T—

SIGRIST: T—

FABRIZI: A—

SIGRIST: A—

FABRIZI: A—

SIGRIST: Now, that's her first name.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Agata?

FABRIZI: Agata.

SIGRIST: Agata.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And then capital F—

FABRIZI: F.

SIGRIST: R-O?

FABRIZI: A.

SIGRIST: F-R-A—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —T-T—

FABRIZI: T-T-O—

SIGRIST: —O—

FABRIZI: —L-E. Frattorali. Frattorali. No, T-O-R—

SIGRIST: A—

FABRIZI: —A-L-I.

SIGRIST: —L-I.

FABRIZI: Frattorali, Frattorali.

SIGRIST: F-R-A-T-T—

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: —O-R-A-L-I.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Fratto—

FABRIZI: Yeah. Sure.

SIGRIST: Tell me—tell me a little bit about your mother's personality. What was she like as a person?

FABRIZI: Personality, my—my mother was not made to be farm. She was more, you know, what—what I should say. She was more like a rich person, you know, educate. You know, she was very—you know, she loved my father. That's why she marry him from Predza. She met my father. Right away, she fell for my father. B—but she could have done better because she had a—she was a beautiful woman and back up by the family were more rich than my father family.

SIGRIST: What was your father's personality like?

FABRIZI: My father was a very sociable guy. Practically everybody love him and said he—you know, one time he—he—in Pratola, after 1920, was a kind of political chaos, like you could say, in Pratola, 1920. So he had been there on the big square, because they had a two square—piazza. They call it square. Piazza, where the square and the church and then you go down. There's two—two—go half a mile down, there's another square, big square over there where everybody get together when there's holiday. The band play there. You know, they make any kind of the—the gathering there. So my father had been there one time. It was a Sunday. A lot of people were there. And he said he w—he was told by a couple [unclear] guy, "You say something. Tell these people, you know, when the condition—what Italy, this city's going on." You know. So he say—he get on—on—on the table. They ma—make a little platform. And he stand up there and he called the attention of—of everybody. And he start to talk. He tell about the condition. The—the city was getting bad—bad. He said, "We need over here a new leader. We need somebody's good for the city," and everything. So he talk about 20 minutes. After he finish that speech he came down. [unclear]. There was coffee with a—they call [unclear]—[unclear]. That means all of these [unclear] people, you know, professional people.

SIGRIST: Like noble in English.

FABRIZI: Yeah, doctor, lawyer, [unclear] educated people. They used to go there. They came out. They heard that speech and everybody want to shake hands with my father. [chuckles] The lawyers told me no more—there was a lawyer and my father—you do business with [unclear]. “But how do you do it? Me, I’m a lawyer. I’m not able to do what you did.” My father only had a grammar school. He didn’t have a—because he was farm all his life, farming. He went into the army and he was a sergeant major, field artillery. He come back home, you know, the 22 Regiment. And everybody nickname him 22. Twenty-two, they called him, [chuckles] because he was 22 Regiment in the army. He came home, you know, nice looking man. And we were—until I saw him the last 19—1927 when he was [unclear], the last time I saw him. He—on his age, at that time, he was over 50, he looked good.

[END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A]

[BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE B]

FABRIZI: Nice. I wish I could show you the picture but—

SIGRIST: But when you were a little boy—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —in Italy, what did you enjoy doing with your father? How—was there something that you enjoyed, something that you would spend time doing with him?

FABRIZI: Well, yes. I used to—he used to take me all over. If you to go in another city would, used to go sometime with the car, the wagon, you know, pull by a cow or pull by horse. He used to do business. I used to go with him. And then he give me some responsibility a lot of time. I was at that time eight years old. He—we used to have two cows. They used to—to work, for work, a plow. You know, pull the plow. My father will make a—a—they used to call him a—to pay him to do plowing land. So there—before they plant, you know, in the spring, used to go and plow an acre, sometime more than an acre. And he used to, you know, make it as a line. I used to watch him. He used to do perfect. And then he—he do a lot of thing, you know. And then when sometime come the—the big machine to cut the—to separate the wheat from the—the other ends, you know. And the—the company used to tell my father, “You in charge. You take care of this. Do—they—they used to be just for the month of July. He used to do a lot of thing. But most, it was his farming, take care of his land. That’s all.

SIGRIST: When you were a little boy in Italy, what did you do for fun?

FABRIZI: For fun, we—we used to play, other kids. You know, we used to jump around, go all over and then used to come every—there used to be three big holiday over there in Pratola. The first one was La Madonna del Libera [PH]. You know, the bridge. You know, del L—the—Libera, freedom. You know, there used to be the bridge.

SIGRIST: Was that—was that a religious holiday?

FABRIZI: Yeah, relig—

SIGRIST: And—and what was the religion?

FABRIZI: The religion, Catholic.

SIGRIST: Catholic.

FABRIZI: Catholic, you know.

SIGRIST: And—and how did you celebrate La Madonna del—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —Libera?

FABRIZI: They—they used to come fr—from all around the other small town. They used to come because they used to be—they three band. One time, I remember—I remember four bands. They came from other city, far, you know. They used to come [unclear] of Lanchiano [PH] to city—one band, but 30, 40 guys on the band. They were a good band. They used to come, a band from Parchanzero [PH], another city. And band from Pretora [PH], another city, and then they used to have a—our own band, Pratola. But the band, it don't last long. They used to organize a band. By a year or two, they give up. I don't know why, be it financially or whatever it was. I was too young to realize. But I remember Pratola used to produce a decent band. But the other band was good. [unclear] had a uniform. They come from—with a train. And then the first thing they do, they settle down and they start the first at nine o'clock in the morning, three days holiday, Fridays, Saturday and Sunday. Nine o'clock in the morning, the first of band start to go around the town. And the kids followed the band. [chuckles] And then after a while another band do the same thing. Oh, big holiday. That's the first Sunday of May.

SIGRIST: And—and was there a—wa—were there special church services that you attended?

FABRIZI: Oh, yeah. Good. I [unclear] del Madonna del Libera right near my house. [chuckles] I look at it, the church, and the [unclear] Madonna del Libera, there was on—you know, on their place covered. And when it comes the holiday, they opened the door. She come out. You know, everybody there.

SIGRIST: Wh—what—when you say, “She come out,” what was she? What were they carrying out?

FABRIZI: Well, there was a machine there underneath. They push, you know, those—the—the [unclear] and the other. They knew—they pushed that and she come out from the—well, the big [unclear], you know, clothes [unclear].

SIGRIST: Well, what was it that was coming out?

FABRIZI: Coming out, we saw everybody could see the statue right out, you know. It start to be inside of the—the closet. How do you say that when inside of the—

SIGRIST: Like a niche or—

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah. Inside.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: Be—because the—they—you could see the sand everyday, everyday. After the holiday, they covered that.

SIGRIST: Oh, I see. So—so it’s a statue and it’s covered.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: And then for the holiday—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —they open it.

FABRIZI: Oh, yeah. They open it and she come around like—

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: —she was walking towards. And everybody those day, oh. They holler. They cry. They’re very happy. And dur—and then the nighttime, those

band play the opera in the square. Not the square, the small square near my house. The other square. They used to build a big place, you know, a stage way on—on middle of the square. And the people are 10, 15,000 people. They're all watching it.

SIGRIST: Did you like opera when you were a little kid?

FABRIZI: Yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah. That's where I got—my daughter remember. She got to me Cavalaria, Rusticana [PH]. She got to me Traviota [PH]. She got to me [unclear]. I got a—I got a [unclear] Paiacci. [chuckles] I got all of them there.

SIGRIST: All the Italian operas, huh?

FABRIZI: Yeah. Special now, I'm all alone over—because my wife had died two years ago. We were living in Hartford. That's where she died. She's gone two years that we live here. And she got to me all those opera. You know, she's a good woman. She take care of me. She—

SIGRIST: Can—can you tell me a little bit about when you were growing up in Italy how you practiced your religion at home?

FABRIZI: Well, religion at home—we had to go to church. You know what I mean. And the priest would tell us, "You have got to learn that catechisma," [PH], everything, you know, come and everything, go to church.

SIGRIST: What about at home? Was there a certain way that you practiced religion at home?

FABRIZI: Well, at home, not much because I used to be busy all the time. My father used to tell me to go there—go there. I used to always—busy. You know. But—

SIGRIST: Did you have any religious objects at home?

FABRIZI: Oh, yeah. Yeah. We used to have figurine. It's the same, everything. [unclear] my father—we believe in a—the religion, Catholicism [PH]. My father really Catholic.

SIGRIST: Do you remember a prayer that you learned as a child that you still remember?

FABRIZI: Well, so many. My—not now. I can't think right now, you know.

SIGRIST: Okay. Tell me about school. Did you go to school in—

FABRIZI: Well—

SIGRIST: —in Italy?

FABRIZI: Yeah. You see, when I came here—

SIGRIST: The first time.

FABRIZI: I came here—

SIGRIST: 1916.

FABRIZI: —10 years old. I was going on first or second grade in Italy. Then we came here. And as soon we came over here in America, Hartford, I start in a school. I—in Hartford, Brown School was—

SIGRIST: In Hartford, Connecticut?

FABRIZI: Yeah, Hartford, Connecticut. I started in the Brown School.

SIGRIST: Brown?

FABRIZI: Brown School.

SIGRIST: Brown School?

FABRIZI: It is called. That used to be near where they got Columbus Boulevard now. Yeah, in my time, when we came to America, there was old Front Street, they call it.

SIGRIST: Front Street.

FABRIZI: But now, they—we got a big building, big skyscape there. Got a [unclear]. And they made the street wider. Before, used to be Front Street. I used to live there when we come to America.

SIGRIST: Now, was that a special neighborhood in—in Hartford?

FABRIZI: Well—

SIGRIST: Who—who lived on Front Street?

FABRIZI: Most were all Italian. There were some, like other nationality. But most was Italian. When we got here, we—all the family that I was around, I got a—I—to know them, they were all Italian. But there were a lot of business. The—the Jew people used to own them, you know.

Haberdashery store. That's what we buy when we reach here. It was so cold. We were dress in the Old Country. Over there, it was warmer when we left Naple. We had a regular jacket. We reach over here in Hartford, was so cold in November. I never forget. My father, first thing he did, "Let's go to store." He went on two place at a store on Front Street. And he bought a coat for himself, coat for my bro—[chuckles] and coat for me. And—

SIGRIST: Well, le—let's get you to America the first time.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: In 1916—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —why did your—why did you come to America?

FABRIZI: We came to America because Italy was in war and Italy was allies with the United States. And over—my cousin, who came a year before we came, he wrote my father, "Come over here. Lots of work." He—"Lots of work, a lot of business. You get a job." So my father, when he heard that, he wasn't doing nothing in Italy, November. Until the spring, you can't do nothing to farm. So he said, "Let's go to America." But happened that my poor mother, she got sick, very bad sick. And she want to go back to her hometown to live, you know, because she had a [unclear] thing, a [unclear] and relative, you know. She wanted to go live. So she w—she—I had a sister three years younger than me. So they went back there to Predza to live. And then my father—I couldn't go with them. He wanted me with him because wherever he went, I—he take me all the time. "So let's go to America." My brother, that time he was in college in Sumone [PH]. Sumone is about 10 mile away on the right, like up that way. Like Predza is over here, Sumone's over there.

SIGRIST: That's a big city.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

FABRIZI: Sumone, they got a big office over there, a garment office, like Pratola was small city. So he was in Sumone going in the first year in the college. My father went to Sumone and tol—told the professor, you know, the one in charge of the school, that he had to take him away because we were going to America. The professor told him—the teacher, you know, the one in charge—told my father, "You make a

mistake, this boy got a head. He—he going to become somebody.” Because he knew the way he handled thing, the rye, the wheat, he knew how to talk French already. They used to teach French on the—on that school, on the college. So he told my father he make a mistake. So my father said, “I got to go to America. I don’t know how long I going to be there.” So he took—he took me from the school and took my brother from it. So when we came here my brother went to work. [chuckles] He took any kind of rough job, you know. And me, I start on second grade in America.

SIGRIST: So—so name—your—your brother is the oldest of the children.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: What was his name?

FABRIZI: Alfonzo [PH].

SIGRIST: Alfonzo. And how much—do you know when he was born or how much—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What year was he—

FABRIZI: He was born, 1901. 1901.

SIGRIST: He was born in 1901.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Then who’s next?

FABRIZI: The next was another boy. I had me—Cosimo [PH].

SIGRIST: Cosimo.

FABRIZI: He die. He die four years, four years. When he was four years, he died.

SIGRIST: Do you remember that?

FABRIZI: No, I don’t remember because I was, at that time, very young.

SIGRIST: Okay.

FABRIZI: Because he was the second, Cosimo. And then came me.

SIGRIST: You.

FABRIZI: The third.

SIGRIST: Yes, Anthony.

FABRIZI: And then—and then my sister, Sylvia.

SIGRIST: Sylvia.

FABRIZI: My s—sister.

SIGRIST: And how much younger is Sylvia than you?

FABRIZI: Sylvia was about three years—no, two years younger.

SIGRIST: Two years younger. So your mother's very ill. She takes Sylvia back—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —to her hometown.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What was your mother ill with?

FABRIZI: Oh, it was a bad sickness. I don't remember [unclear] because she didn't live long—two years after that.

SIGRIST: Do you remember her being sick when you were a kid?

FABRIZI: W—well, I remember she used to say, "I don't feel good." But when you kid, you young, you don't pay much attention. Like my br—my brother knew because he was sad every time. He was really depress. But me, I used to go with the kids and play, forget, you know.

SIGRIST: It didn't mean so much to you.

FABRIZI: Yeah, don't mean. But then I realize when we came in this country I miss my mother.

SIGRIST: And you said she died.

FABRIZI: Yeah, she died in 1918—

SIGRIST: 1918.

FABRIZI: —while we were over here. In 1919, we went back to get my sister bec—

SIGRIST: Before you left in 1916—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —World War I has already started.

FABRIZI: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: How did the war affect your family?

FABRIZI: Well, the war affected it because everything start to get short on things, you know.

SIGRIST: Short, like what? What was—

FABRIZI: Like the—the item of the thing, the food.

SIGRIST: Food.

FABRIZI: Food, not much, did not affect much like my father because he had wine on the cellar, but affect other people, like the shoemaker, the guy who make a living doing barbering, affect him, affect a lot. But the farmer, they do—they only buy on the store only salt—salt and tobacco. The rest they produce themself. They got wine. The got flour to make bread. They got olive. My father had land up on the [unclear] where my mother came from. He used to have 20, 30 tree of olive. U—every November he used to pick the olive and he make olive oil. He used to make 10 gallon olive oil. He used to make a lot of things. So one time, I remember [unclear] nine years old, eight, I thought I was sitting in the world of good. Everything looked good in my family. But after we came over—

SIGRIST: What—what—when you were—before you got to America, what did you know about America? How did you think about America when you were a little kid in Italy?

FABRIZI: Well, we only think about America when some—some person [chuckles] was in America, came home. And they say, “Oh, you come back from America [unclear].” The people, they shake hands, “How is in America?” “Oh,” he say, “is good. The [unclear] different.” [chuckles] Then when he left—when he came back he—he look prosperous, you know.

Everything—[unclear] he came back from America. He was a tailor. He went in America and he stay about three or four years. He came back. He was so prosperous. Y—you know what he had? He had the records of the great singer, Camilo [PH].

SIGRIST: Caruso.

FABRIZI: I mean Enrico Caruso.

SIGRIST: Enrico Caruso.

FABRIZI: He had his records and he get a table outside. He call up five, six friends and a jug of wine. [chuckles] They drink it. They listen to Caruso record when he sing, you know. So y—they think America the beautiful. Everybody love America. Oh.

SIGRIST: Now, you said you had a—was it a cousin who was in America? Who was here before you got here?

FABRIZI: My—my father cousin.

SIGRIST: Your father's cousin. Where—where was he living?

FABRIZI: He live in Hartford, usually.

SIGRIST: In Hartford, Connecticut.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And what was he doing for a living?

FABRIZI: He used to work—he got a job on the factory. He was a farm—soon he came in America and he got this job on the factory. So one word spread—no, my father came and then my father brother came too. Well, one year later he came, him and his son. His—name of his son was John. John Fabrizi died five years ago.

SIGRIST: Do you—do you remember what you had to do to get ready to leave Italy?

FABRIZI: Well, you had to get ready. You had to make sure that your hair—your hair was good, clean, no li—lice.

SIGRIST: Did you have to go to a doctor?

FABRIZI: Oh, you—you go to an expert. Another thing, you had to see your eyes were good. You know, ev—everything—everything in the body. You got to be perfect.

SIGRIST: Had you ever been to a doctor before that?

FABRIZI: Well, only when I was really sick. But I don't remember. When you're [chuckles] very young, I—I must have been about [unclear], whatever it was. So that time—and then we had to go to Rome, talk with the American Consul, the ambassador. You know, he's got to talk there. You got to make everything in order. They got to find out what kind of character he was, if my father was bad or good, you know. Those three thing important, especially when you bring a young woman. They want her head to be clean. They want to check because when my sister came, 1923, came back with us with the American, they found something like dust—oh, like dander. Oh, the—my father right away took the—to an expert barber. She—every hair wash and everything. So he make sure when he came to Ellis Island [chuckles] we were ready.

SIGRIST: Do you remember what you packed to take with you to America in 1916?

FABRIZI: Well—

SIGRIST: What—what did you have to take with you?

FABRIZI: Well, we had to take with us some clothes. But we didn't know that we were so cold. We didn't take heavy clothes. We take, like—most we took, my aunt bake a lot of bagel, homemade bagel. Good. They were really tasty. She make them. They could last about a week or two. They taste good. She made a big sack, you know, with a cloth. Didn't have no paper bag [chuckles] over there.

SIGRIST: Mm-hmm.

FABRIZI: So she filled that sack and she made it and to give out to eat on the boat.

SIGRIST: So—so you took clothing and you took food.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Did you take anything that was yours? Some object that was yours that you took?

FABRIZI: Well, we took some medal, some thing across, you know.

SIGRIST: Like a medal of some sort?

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Cr—

FABRIZI: [unclear] cross with a saint that you wear inside. And that—that thing, the most I remember. Clothing, like underwear, but we made—then take—we really—stuff we need, overcoats.

SIGRIST: Did you—had your mother already gone?

FABRIZI: Yeah, she—

SIGRIST: She—she was already gone.

FABRIZI: She'd gone two months before. She was really sick.

SIGRIST: I see.

FABRIZI: She was—nervous breakdown and other complications. That's too bad, you know.

SIGRIST: With—with whom did she live when she went to her hometown?

FABRIZI: She live—her—her brother.

SIGRIST: She lived with her brother.

FABRIZI: Her brother. He had a house there. Her father was dead. Her father, yeah.

SIGRIST: So it was her brother that was taking care of her—

FABRIZI: Yeah, he was take care.

SIGRIST: —and—and—and Sylvia.

FABRIZI: Yeah, her—her brother and his wife. You know, he—he was married. So a relative, but today there were not good relatives at the end because they make my sister starve. My father didn't know. He sent them money. He sent the money over there to take care of her. So she got—got the consumption.

SIGRIST: Consumption.

FABRIZI: Yeah, malnutrition. That's what kill her, malnutrition.

SIGRIST: When—when—when you were leaving to go to America—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —did—how did you—did you understand that your mother would not be coming with you? Did you understand how serious the situation was?

FABRIZI: Yeah. But me, on me you couldn't notice because I was a kid. I didn't realize the consequence. But my brother notice. My brother was so sad. He was not like the young man he used to be. He change, my brother. Oh.

SIGRIST: He did? He understood?

FABRIZI: He understood, especially when he took him out of the college because he w—he wanted to become somebody.

SIGRIST: Sure. His whole life is changing and—

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah. He wanted to become a lawyer or doctor or anything. The professor told my father, "You make a mistake. This boy is number one in my class, because he want to do. He want to accomplish something." So my father, he didn't have no choice. He had to go to America because over there a way was to make some money. [chuckles] Over there, he be—stay in—living in a cantina [PH], drinking all the winter while in America he make some money.

SIGRIST: Now, where did you go to get on the ship?

FABRIZI: What?

SIGRIST: Where did you go to get on the ship?

FABRIZI: On the ship, we go to Naples.

SIGRIST: To Naples. So how did you get from your town to Naples?

FABRIZI: We—we took a train.

SIGRIST: Does anything stick out in your mind about that train trip to Naples?

FABRIZI: Oh, we look forward with the train ride. We don't take a train ride often. But this was special because Naples. We in Naple. I never been in Naples. My father was in Naple once before, you know, trip. So we take a train and the train take about eight hours from Pratola, you know. I

don't know, today probably they make it in short time because that time, you know—

SIGRIST: Did you sleep on the train?

FABRIZI: Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: Do you remember how you slept on the train?

FABRIZI: Yeah, I slept on the train. [unclear] I sit down and slept and then you wake up you walk around in the car. Yeah. We went to Naples and then in Naples we went to the dock as soon we arrive in Naples. We want to see our boat.

SIGRIST: What was the name of the ship?

FABRIZI: Dante Alegare.

SIGRIST: Dante Aleger—don't have to write it down. I know how to spell it.

FABRIZI: [unclear]. No, [unclear]. I—I got [unclear].

SIGRIST: Oh. Oh, good. All right.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Great.

FABRIZI: The first—the first—

SIGRIST: The first with the Dante, yeah.

FABRIZI: Dante Alegare.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

FABRIZI: It's a great [unclear]. There were two boats almost the same, Dante Alegare and Giuseppe Verdi [PH]. Dante Alegare come up and we went back with the Giuseppe Verdi.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh. What did you think—as a little kid, what did you think when you saw that big boat?

FABRIZI: Oh, I was so excited. I don't know what to say. [chuckles] I was overcome. I—you know. But we didn't see the boat. We went on the dock. The boat wasn't there. So my father ask one of the—the dock

worker. He said, “The Dante Alegare over here yet?” He said, “No, it’s coming. It should be here tomorrow,” he said. And there was another—a little way down there was another big boat, white, all white. Its name was San Guelmo [PH], the name of that boat. He was taking off—the work were taking off a lot of wheat from South America, bring the wheat to Italy. So that boat, he sail one day before us. Next day, came Dante Alegare [unclear]—we go on the dock. We see Dante Alegare. Old black boat, you know. It was huge but not big like the other boat that I saw. It was about 20,000 ton. I see other boat, the 30,000, 50,000 [chuckles], like a—Conte Rosa [PH] is about over 30,000 ton and Conte Verdi [PH], another 30,000 ton. And then they built other big boat, like Dukes [PH], Rex [PH].

SIGRIST: Yeah, those—those are later. Those—

FABRIZI: Oh, later. Much later.

SIGRIST: Well, now, how long did you have to stay in Naples before you could get on the ship?

FABRIZI: Well, we stay about two days. Two days. The important thing was to—you know, I mean the second time my father want to check my—my sister here. We—you know, with two days.

SIGRIST: This is 1923, [unclear]?

FABRIZI: Yeah, two days. We took that boat, Dante Alegare. And he sail for the rocks, Gibeltar [PH]. Gibeltar.

SIGRIST: Gibraltar, yeah.

FABRIZI: Yeah, Gibraltar.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

FABRIZI: He sailed that but the captain, a friend of ours, was on Guelmo. He tried to pass the—the rock to Gibraltar and he was torpedoed by u-boats. So my—the captain where we were got a telegraph from the—the admiral, you know, say, “Watch out. San Guelmo’s going down.” He said, “Torpedo.” So the captain, he took the way north near the coast, the coast of Sardinia to near the coast of Spain. And that’s why he took long. When he reach—he reached the rock and he stay about two, three hour. The British admiral come up, talk with the captain. I don’t know but I heard my father say—because my father used to be all over. [chuckles] He used to hear everything, you know. He was really one—notice everything was going on. So he said that the San Guelmo was

torpedo. So [unclear] say, "Watch out when you get out of the—the strait. Watch out." So that w—my father knew but he—I hear him talk. He prayed of the U-boats around. Everybody was [chuckles] on lookout, you know. So as the boat was going, he reach about one day after he left the strait. My father, that morning, when we get to—we were on the third class downstairs, down, because the second class where the rich people go was over us. So he went to get the food, coffee and the breakfast. So you—as he was coming back he had to go, make a little three or four step to come on the floor. A woman was on the deck. She said, "Submarine! Submarine!" Loud. And they look. Everybody look. Wasn't a submarine. Was a whale. He was going up and down. [unclear] submarine. My father drop that tray [chuckles] to come and get us, go on lifeboat. [laughs] That's what I remember so plainly that morning.

SIGRIST: Mr. Fabrizi, we're going to stop just for a minute—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —so I can put in another tape.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And we'll get you to America.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: This is Paul Sigrist ending tape one—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —with Anthony Fabrizi.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

[END OF TAPE 1, SIDE B]

[BEGIN TAPE 2, SIDE A]

SIGRIST: Okay. We're now beginning tape two with Anthony Fabrizi, who came to America the first time in 1916 when he was 10 and went back to Italy in 1919, and they came back to America—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —in 1923.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Mr. Fabrizi, you just told us that great story about the woman thinking that the whale was a submarine.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Let's talk a little more about being on the Dante Alegare. Can you describe where you slept on the ship for me, please?

FABRIZI: We—we slept on a cot. There was some little cot, you know. You—like a small mattress and you sleep. It wasn't a—nothing very good. You know what I mean. But we take anything [chuckles] those day.

SIGRIST: What did the room look like?

FABRIZI: There—there was a big open—they—many people altogether, one day, one day. You know, was like a big space from—they much longer than that, you know. They—

SIGRIST: So lots of people [unclear].

FABRIZI: A lot of people on that section, you know.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: And then other section somewhere else. And then up the stairs was the second class. But all—were all the big people, you know.

SIGRIST: Now, downstairs where you slept—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —were there bathrooms down there and—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —running water? That kind of thing?

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah. There was some. There was some, really were not good like the other boat. The other boat, you were in a hotel. [chuckles] You know. Yeah.

SIGRIST: What about eating? Where did you eat on the ship?

FABRIZI: Well, we—my father used to go get a tray on the kitchen and bring it over. We stayed down and he bring the food.

SIGRIST: And what—what did you see when you went—as a little boy, 10 years old, walking around on the ship, what were some of the things that you saw?

FABRIZI: We saw that the icy water, water all over. [chuckles] The sky and the water. And I get the kind of little fear inside me to see so much water. And they both go—go day—day in and day out, 18 days, you know. I—I began to be a little timid. I wasn't not—be like I used [chuckles] to be when I got in, you know, because s—so much. And then you were a lot of—a lot of people, you know. They were sad, you know. The long trip like that get you down some.

SIGRIST: What about being on deck? Did you—did—did anything interesting happen when you were up on deck?

FABRIZI: Y—one thing interesting that sometime to see the—the ship start to go like this. Zhoom, zhoom. Look like want to break. You—make some kind of noise. Doo, doo, doo, doo, doo. Every time, we used to go to this and this, make some kind of noise. [sentence unclear]. [chuckles] This going to break—break in two, you know. That's what came in mind. So you [unclear] drop, drop one—there was section, the Gulf Stream. There was some part in it where the—they called the Gulf Stream. You know, some day or two that really rough, the water, like a mountain. And the boat go like this and then look like want to go on the side a little bit and go, you know. With a small boat you—you see more, feel more than a bigger boat. But that's—that's what—we were waiting to get to America, to get to the land. [chuckles] We used to—when we start to see the birds, the big white birds, you know. The—what do you call that? The sea hawk or—

SIGRIST: The seagulls.

FABRIZI: Seagulls.

SIGRIST: Seagulls.

FABRIZI: When—when you got to see them then you say the land it stays in there. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Did—did you have any other experiences with the German U-boats at all?

FABRIZI: No.

SIGRIST: Did—you didn't—

FABRIZI: No, no.

SIGRIST: Once you got through the straits—

FABRIZI: Oh, no. When we hear—we hear the San Guelmo was torpedoed, everybody—we had the fear inside them, especially all the people. Me, I—I get—I forget it. Young, you know. We're—but my brother and my father were sad, you know. They didn't look so happy. [chuckles] You know, they used to go up and my father used to talk a lot with a sailor. And he made a big friend, one guy. He—he was from Chic—from Sicily and he was going to America. He took the boat then, the [unclear], and then my father became a friend to him. He was almost the same age as my father. He was that time, 44, my father. So they became friends and they used to talk. They used to walk and they used to find out things, you know. And they—then, I tell you when this guy left my—my father, his valise. They call him in, you know. We were all—when we got to Ellis Island—we were all in. They put the bag on top of the big long bench. That time, I—Ellis Island don't look like this today.

SIGRIST: No, it doesn't. [chuckles]

FABRIZI: No. [laughs]

SIGRIST: That's right.

FABRIZI: No, look like at old warehouse, lot of people, lot of sad face, you know. And you put your—what you got, your bag, your trunk in the g—the guard want to take a look at it. So this guy, friend with my father—he told my father, "Take care of this valise." You know, leather valise bag. "Take care. They calling me o—on that room." So my father said—he thought it wouldn't take long. So he—he watch over that. He had to do his—his—take care of his stuff too. So that guy went in there. He didn't come out for hours and hours. So was the time for us five hours later. They told us to go. We free now after they finish everything with us. Nothing wrong. The health was all right. The thing—we were everything all right, say you could go. So my father got stuck with that val—valise. He was waiting for him. And the guy, he took a look and no—no sight of him. So he took it with him to Hartford and always trying to locate this guy. But after about two months, he find out he was in Chicago. They sent that bag. He had in that bag all about the shaving because he was a barber, a lot of stuff about the barbershop. He sent 'em to him.

SIGRIST: [chuckles]

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: That's a good story.

FABRIZI: After two months.

SIGRIST: [chuckles] Do you remember—we'll just backtrack a little bit here. Do you remember when the ship came into New York? Do you remember when you saw when the ship first arrived in New York?

FABRIZI: Oh, we saw just like another world, not—not—never see thing like that before, beautiful building, tall and a lot of boats, a lot of big boats on the dock. There was a French boat, England boat, other—or that Dante Alegare on the spot. He went right in. Oh. We were—we couldn't describe how good it look. You know.

SIGRIST: Did you—do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty?

FABRIZI: Yeah, we saw it. We saw that; we coming. And then we saw it again when we get on the ferry to go Ellis Island. We saw it again. Oh, the Statue, beautiful. You know.

SIGRIST: Now, you told me the story about your father having a valise—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —that belonged to the other man. What happened to you at Ellis Island? What—what did they do when you got there?

FABRIZI: We—we went there. We went on a room. They—all right. He was a doctor, I think, because he ask you—he look at you, look your eyes, look a—he said, "Okay. You're right." And didn't do much to us. But some people, like the—the guy with the valise, they took him hours, hours, hours. Something wrong because there's a chance if you're not right they send you back. So we were lucky, you know. My father—about the only thing [unclear] wait. You got to declare all—everything you got and everything and this or that, takes hours and hours before you finish.

SIGRIST: So how long were you there?

FABRIZI: We were there—I should say we—we were about there from up to pert-near nine—nine—one o'clock, we were free. We were in Grand Central Station.

SIGRIST: So you got there about nine o'clock in the morning and you left—

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: —in the—in the afternoon.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And—and where did—once you left, where did you go?

FABRIZI: Grand Central Station.

SIGRIST: And then when you got on the train, where did you go?

FABRIZI: Hartford, Connecticut, straight to my cousin. He was living in Hartford.

SIGRIST: Do you remember anything about the train ride to Hartford? Did anything stick out in your mind about that train ride?

FABRIZI: Well, the train—you—you fin—you—I see a lot of good people over there. I mean, happy people. [unclear] [chuckles] like in a boat. The people were happy, you know, seems good. And every time the—the train is stop under the stage and people are coming in, and seems cheerful. And then we were—you know, the train was going about four hours, it took. When it reach one o'clock, after one o'clock we left New York. We reach Hartford about after four o'clock, five o'clock, it was, because it was dark. November, you know, dark. November 22. And when we got to—got out of the—the train, we went downstairs, you know, to sidewalk. And we got to Asylum Street.

SIGRIST: What street?

FABRIZI: Asylum Street.

SIGRIST: Asylum Street?

FABRIZI: Yeah, Asylum Street. You go all the way through to Main Street. In meantime, the Asylum Street, the lights were all going to store, hotel. Everything beautiful. You know, I never see such—so many lights at those store, a clothing store, a bar, hotel, all the shiny lights. [chuckles] Oh, all in and out, you know. Everything beautiful from the—the—the railroad station to Main Street, beautiful. And then beau—when we reach Main Street, oh, big building. Everything. There—there was three big store, Brown Thomas [PH], a Wise Smith [PH] and a G. Fox. There were four and not one—Allan—Allan [PH].

SIGRIST: Allan?

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Oh, uh, Sage Allan.

FABRIZI: Sage Allan.

SIGRIST: Sage Allan.

FABRIZI: Yeah. Those store, they make always lights and everything. And then we took Campbell [PH] Street—no, was State Street—

SIGRIST: State Street.

FABRIZI: —to go down to Front Street.

SIGRIST: Front Street.

FABRIZI: You—from State Street you go down and then you turn a left. From the street, you go left and right. We took a left and we went—the house where my cousin was. We got there and my cousin introduced my father to the—the board and where we going to be board and live there.

SIGRIST: Like a—was it a boarding house?

FABRIZI: A boarding house, yeah.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: Because the—the lady and husband and a wife and she had a—a two daughter. They happened—those two little girl yet to be one year older than me. I was 10 the time and they were 11, two. One was name Christina and one was name, oh, Sophie, you know. Two—and they became friend to me right away. So they introduce my father and [unclear] on a big room. We used to be four people besides me. Four people used to li—s—sleep there. They had four bed. [chuckles] So we stayed there pert-near six, seven, eight months. And my father found another place, not—

SIGRIST: Tell me, when you first got to the boarding house, okay—tell me what—ah, I lost my train of thought. Tell me—excuse me.

FABRIZI: Yeah, that's okay.

SIGRIST: My mind just went—

FABRIZI: Oh, well. Well.

SIGRIST: —completely blank.

FABRIZI: Too much. Take—take your time.

SIGRIST: When you first got to the boarding house, you're talking about the—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —little girls—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —and how they sort of befriended you.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: How long was it before you were put into school?

FABRIZI: I was putting in the school in about less than two weeks, I should say. Less two weeks and they put to Brown School, not far away.

SIGRIST: To Brown School?

FABRIZI: Yeah, not Brown away—not far away. Today, the old Brown School, they made a police station, a sub police station.

SIGRIST: Can you tell me, now, you were in America three years be—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Your mother died in 1918.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: You went back in 1919.

FABRIZI: 1919.

SIGRIST: So let's talk about those three years a little bit.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Talk to me about school. Tell me about the experience of being put into American school and how you adjusted to that.

FABRIZI: Well, I adjusted pretty quick because I—I make friends with the kids, go to school, you know. And we used to walk all the time to school, never ride. Like today, no matter how far it is to school you used to walk in the morning. I see the milkman. [chuckles] You know, the wintertime would sled, would deliver milk, you know, on the wintertime, a lot of snow.

SIGRIST: But how did you, for instance, learn English? Did you attempt to learn English at that time?

FABRIZI: Yeah. I was coming pretty good, pretty good because you make—you start going on Italian school, learn about the Italian language, the Italian writing, read. And then all a sudden, you stop that, forget and then you start in—in American. So I was coming along fine. And then—

SIGRIST: Do you remember some of the first words that you learned in English?

FABRIZI: Yeah. I learned, like cat, rat and dog, all about these animal, you know. The first words that come on, you know, and then start to spell little by little and everything. I was coming along fine. And then I start to play and then one time my father told me, “From now on”—because I used to go play—play after school and go home a hour or two, three. You know, I forget about to go home because when you got a mother, somebody supervise you, then you know. But me, I was born today—they like me and everything but they, then watch over you. You know what I mean?

SIGRIST: Right.

FABRIZI: So my father told me—he find out that I go out late—“From now on, I got to make—the least, you got to cook. You got to prepare some”— [chuckles] because he—he don’t like the old lady to cook because he saw—he saw she was not—not because I want to offend. She didn’t look like very clean and neat. And he told me, “You cook like—cook me this. Cook me all that.” He teach me. You know, on a Sunday, he teach me. And so I had to go home. Many time, I didn’t go home in time, like make this, cook this. I went late. I forgot. I was playing ball with the kids, my kid. So he told me, “Keep—you got to come.” I—then I kept it up.

SIGRIST: [chuckles]

FABRIZI: Yeah, a lot of things.

SIGRIST: Tell me about what happened to your father when you first got to the United States. How did he get a job?

FABRIZI: He get a job where his friends. He had three job. He just arrived. They offer him a job in a gas—gashouse. At that time, the gas—they used to make a gas room, you know, with the coal. They got a job there. Another guy want him to get a job on the screw shop where they make a screw. Another guy found him a job down [unclear] small tool. That time, there used to be in Capitol Avenue. The small tool, even the aircraft used to be in Capitol Avenue. And then they move. They build down there where East Hartford—

SIGRIST: This is Capitol Avenue in Hartford?

FABRIZI: Hartford, Hartford.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh, yeah.

FABRIZI: So he just arrive; they offer him. So he said, “I—I try the gashouse.” So he went on a gashouse, you know, two, three days later. And we arrive, wasn’t long before it was Thanksgiving that his friends [unclear], true friends, one want him and the other one wanted my father, who then knew him in the Old Country. And these people were married already. They had a family. They had their house. So they wanted my father to go. So he pick one. He couldn’t go to two. So he went with one. So—

SIGRIST: So how—so did he—how long did he stay at the gashouse?

FABRIZI: At the gas, he stay about three or four months and then he went on a factory.

SIGRIST: The screw? Making the screws?

FABRIZI: No, he went on—on [unclear] small tool, Capitol Avenue.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh, on—the—the small screw.

FABRIZI: Yeah, he was like a trucker, bring the—the material, you know, and then take care of the garbage and every—he was a—like, you know, do everything in there. Yeah.

SIGRIST: How did you find out that your mother had died?

FABRIZI: Well, my father, one—one Saturday, used to go to the bank near where we lived. Used to be Temple [PH] Street on—right on the corner between Temple and Front Street. Used to be the bank, Laria [PH]. Call it a name, Laria.

SIGRIST: La—Laria.

FABRIZI: Laria. The name of the owner of the bank. So used to go there, used to do business with that bank, deposit, withdrawal and get his mail. Whatever he used to do, you know. So he went and he got the mail. He got a letter from Italy. So he open it, read it, find out—

SIGRIST: Did it—did it h—

FABRIZI: —that my mother had pass away. [voice breaking] Then he came home. He call my brother. My brother, the time, was 17. He understood a lot. When my father told that my mother was dead, my brother went to piece, start to cry. [voice breaking] He couldn't control—I—like me—me, I didn't realize. I was a stone. I didn't realize what—no. I felt very sad but I—I became like a statue but my brother break away. You know, he was so sad because he knew my mother more than me, you know, on his age. He love her. So took my father 10 minutes to calm him down. Yeah, that's bad. Now, that time I won't cry like this that time. I didn't know [voice breaking] any better. On my age, I didn't know. But I was stone. But what I saw what my brother, I never forget.

SIGRIST: W—why did your father decide to go back to Italy?

FABRIZI: To pick up my sister because if—he didn't know that my sister was that bad. She got—so he wanted—right away, he want to go even before. But he—he had to wait for the end of the war, you know. He couldn't go during the war, 19—so sooner—

SIGRIST: When your mother died, the war was still on—

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: World War I.

FABRIZI: 1918, in November. She die—she must have die in—during the summer, in the summer. Then November, it came the Armistice. So—

SIGRIST: So how—so how—what do you remember about—how did you feel about having to go back to Italy?

FABRIZI: Well, one way, I liked it because I go see my sister. Another way, I wasn't so happy because I gonna miss my friends, see, my schooling. You know, my—and then I got to go there. I don't know what's going to happen. But my father insist because, on my age, I—you know, what I—he might need somebody to supervise, you know.

SIGRIST: How did your brother feel about having to go back to Italy?

FABRIZI: My brother, he—he felt good for my father to go, pick up my sister, find out what thing go on. Him, he don't mind much because he could say he had a job then. He was working, you know. So he told—see, how's everything there. And he told my father, "If everything don't look so good, sell everything and come over. Come over and finish." So that's what he—he had to—

SIGRIST: That did your father and your brother do about their jobs before—did they just quit or how did they—

FABRIZI: Well, my father gave a notice. "I'm going back to the Old Country. I'm—I go back to the Old Country so for—I don't know how long. But I'm going to go back." He give notice to the—to the worker. Me, that time, when he give notice, I was working on tobac—no, one year ago, when we were leave, I was picking the leaves down there.

SIGRIST: The tobacco leaves.

FABRIZI: Yeah, in Windsor. Windsor, not far away from me.

SIGRIST: In Windsor, Connecticut.

FABRIZI: Yeah, Windsor, Connecticut. We used to pick leave under that net, you know. Big field and we used to pick the leaves and big basket, we used to put 'em there, nice.

SIGRIST: And how much did you get paid for it?

FABRIZI: We used to get about \$2—\$2 a day. \$2.50. So I—I quit right away. I couldn't even tell the boss, you know. I told the—the kids, "I'm going."

SIGRIST: What do you remember about—what was the name of the ship that you took back?

FABRIZI: Back?

SIGRIST: Back to Italy.

FABRIZI: Dante Alegare—no.

SIGRIST: Oh.

FABRIZI: Giuseppe Verdi.

SIGRIST: You went back on the Giuseppe Verdi.

FABRIZI: Giuseppe Verdi.

SIGRIST: Yes.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And—and does anything stick out in your mind about the trip back to Italy?

FABRIZI: Well, Giuseppe Verdi was a pretty good, pleasant. We stop [unclear]. The—the ship stop [unclear] for about four, five hours, getting refuel, coal or whatever. And they told the people to go out. Me and my father went out. We went by the fruits, you know. Pineapple, there were—they—there were all kinds of pigs and everything, you know. We stayed there a few hours and then we got in and proceeded to Naples.

SIGRIST: Did—did—did the Giuseppe Verdi look the same on the inside that—

FABRIZI: Yeah, look something like the Dante Alegare.

SIGRIST: A big room with everybody?

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah. They were made almost the same, the same time, you know. Yeah, they were like twins.

SIGRIST: Well, tell me what happened when you and your brother and your father arrived in Naples, I assume, is where you—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —went into—

FABRIZI: No, me—me and my father when we went back.

SIGRIST: Oh, your f—

FABRIZI: My brother remain here.

SIGRIST: Oh, your brother stayed here?

FABRIZI: Stay here in America.

SIGRIST: Oh.

FABRIZI: He was working then. He was over—let's see. I was 12 then and he was about 17. So he stayed, remain, my brother remain. He was working and he—he was working. You know, he got a job on the big place, a big—Underwood Typewrite.

SIGRIST: Underwood Typewriters, uh-huh.

FABRIZI: Yeah, that time the—Underwood used to be good. He was working.

SIGRIST: So he stayed in the United States. You and dad went back to Italy.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What happened when you arrived in Italy?

FABRIZI: We were in Italy. Italy, the train was like chaos today. The train took three days to get to Pratola, 80 hours straight. Took three days. Why? The—the people who work on the train, the engineer, the firemen, you know, the guy who put the coal to—to start—the one who started the train and bricklayer. I mean, the [unclear], the guy run the brakes, you know.

SIGRIST: [unclear].

FABRIZI: There were four guys on the train, like the engineer, the fireman, the—to start and [unclear], they work on the train. We—we left to Naples with the train. We thought we were going to go straight to Pratola. You know, stop for 10 minutes in each station. We stop on one station and they—they just walk out. We see—we were on a train and we could see them, the engineer, the fireman, the [unclear] and the other one, they walk—walk towards the city. So my father, after a while, got out and went and see the headmaster of the station, said, “Wh—what's the matter? Why—why those guys left the train?” “Oh,” he said. “Forget about today. You'd better find a room [unclear]. They ain't gonna come back until tomorrow.” [chuckles] And that's—was true. Next morning, that train is start again. And then he did the same thing, four or five hours, stop. In other words, took three days to get to Pratola. When we were in Pratola, was chaos. Italy had won the war. The war was won. Why was so bad? Bad, the leader. They were fighting, communist, socialist, [unclear]—[unclear] Catholic. They were fighting each other and they don't take care of the things. So chaos. My father went to the store, grocery store to get some grocery. There was a big line on—there were two store there in the city. One was near ours; another one was way down. When they—line—10, 20 people were in a line. When he got to me, the—the last near the door. The clerk come out. He said, “Sorry, I got to close the door. I run out of everything. You got to come

back tomorrow.” Oh, this—you feel bad. You need something. You need it right away. Oh, Italy was chaos.

SIGRIST: Where did you live? You were in Pratola but—but where did you live in—whose house did you live when you got there?

FABRIZI: We got there on our own house.

SIGRIST: In our own house?

FABRIZI: In our own house. My father still owned the house. We were in there. We live on the same place.

[END OF TAPE 2, SIDE A]

[BEGIN TAPE 2, SIDE B]

SIGRIST: And tell me how your father took care of—of your mother’s affairs and—and got your sister back.

FABRIZI: Well, he went—he went to Predza, my father. I didn’t go with him that time. He went to Predza. And he saw—he didn’t like what he saw. My—my sister look—look really thin, pale and everything. She—he didn’t expect to see that. He expect to see a young kid that time when she was—like I was 12; she was 10. You know, I expect to see her healthy. She was not. He find out later on that she had consumption, that malnutrition. They didn’t feed her well. And so we came back to America, 1923.

SIGRIST: So—so you—

FABRIZI: You want to know about the Pratola?

SIGRIST: Well, wait. You were in Italy for four years.

FABRIZI: Four years.

SIGRIST: Four years.

FABRIZI: 1923.

SIGRIST: And you said that the—the situation was very bad.

FABRIZI: Very bad, yeah.

SIGRIST: Wh—you said you couldn’t get any food.

FABRIZI: No.

SIGRIST: It was difficult to get food.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What—were there any other ways that that life was difficult for you in those four years while you were there?

FABRIZI: Well, was difficult because we lost my aunt—was a great helper for us before—

SIGRIST: Was that the woman who made the bagels for you?

FABRIZI: Yeah, the one before we came to America. She—every time my late mother is feeling sick—for a week or two she was sick—my aunt, my s—sister, my father—my father—

SIGRIST: Father's sister.

FABRIZI: Her name was Petronina [PH].

SIGRIST: Petronina.

FABRIZI: Petronina was her name. God bless her. She was a beautiful woman. And she walk a mile, come over our house, make bread for us, clean the house, make the cooking and then she leave. She go back home. And she had to walk a mile. So we miss her very much because—

SIGRIST: She died during those four—

FABRIZI: Yeah, she died. Yeah.

SIGRIST: —years. Why—

FABRIZI: She was—

SIGRIST: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

FABRIZI: She was my father third—third sister because—

SIGRIST: Why did you stay in Italy for four years? Why so long?

FABRIZI: Well, my—my father, he couldn't make up his mind because he had property. He didn't know if he had to work out this. And then he had a

beautiful piece of land near [unclear]. But it was leased to him. And the guy, the rich, very rich guy of the city of the—of the town, promise my father, “This land is yours as long”—he don’t want to sell—my father, but he could use—do, plant—do whatever he wanted with that land. So my father plowed that land, made a nice place to—for the—used to plant the—the red turnips, big one, used to make in the front. On the back, he used to plant land—I mean, grass for the animal, you know. He love that land. So my father want to talk with the—the—the proprietor. He told, “Sorry, Giuseppe. The land—you’re out. I don’t want you—I don’t—I don’t want to give it to you no more.” You know, he told him bluntly. He didn’t even say this because, three years, my father didn’t have it. So he must have g—give it to somebody else. So my father got a little disturbed. He lost—he loved that land, was near [unclear] was really [unclear] that—that stopped—the harvest come good all the time. So he got a little depress and then, you know, he despair. He change his mind, “Yeah, I want to go back to America.”

SIGRIST: What did you do for those four years?

FABRIZI: Well, I—I went in the school. I went in a—I started with the—the late grade. You know, I went in elementary school.

SIGRIST: But of course, you had already been in America in school.

FABRIZI: Yeah, and I started—

SIGRIST: So what was it like to go back to Italy in school?

FABRIZI: Well, it was kind of tough for me because I find out now in the later years when I got older, older that I lost on the boat. Because when you started school, you got to keep it up, one language. No two, three language. Then take something out of you. So—

SIGRIST: Had you already learned a lot of English by the time you got back to Italy?

FABRIZI: Well, the English, I didn’t learn enough. That’s the trouble. Two, three years, you don’t learn enough. You’re not completed a course. You know, the—and the same in Italy. When I was going in Italy I was very young. Nine, ten years old I was going to school. Eight—you know, you—you don’t learn much. And now, [unclear] I didn’t learn much either because you got to—if I finish all the grammar, then all right. I finish ‘em all. Then you know something. You don’t know much, like you got to go to college no more. But you know much. But if you don’t [unclear] or not so good.

SIGRIST: So tell me how your father went about getting you and your sister and himself back to America.

FABRIZI: Well, he got to apply again. Even, he's been there before, he got to apply again to go on—in America. But he's be much easy when—then all you—you was there. You was good, everything. They—the only thing, he had a—you got to watch your [unclear].

SIGRIST: I was—that was going to be my next question because you—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —had said that your sister was quite sickly.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: What precautions did your father take to make sure that she would get through the whole process?

FABRIZI: When—he went and see a doctor. The doctor said, “She—she's young and she could ge—get better with a good—take care. Take care of her in everything, good food, good every—everything. She—she could ge—get better.” And there, the—the guy took care, you know, the [unclear] said, “He—everything okay.” So he was [unclear]. Her eyes were good, yeah. So three thing is very important, your character, your eyes, your hair, your health. You know.

SIGRIST: What—what did you think about having a little sister around all of a sudden?

FABRIZI: Oh, I was happy. I was happy. You know, my sister, we were all the time together.

SIGRIST: You remembered her from Italy—

FABRIZI: Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah. The only thing, we used to m—miss our mother. That's what is special, my sister.

SIGRIST: Did she used to talk about your mother? Your sister?

FABRIZI: Oh, yeah. Once in a while, but every time we—we talk, we'd cry. So we try not to think too much. So was a—a tough time for us because when kids, young kids lose their mother, they m—lose everything unless they're lucky to have a good relative that really is good, give you a hand, you know, help or some. Then if you don't have that, it's a difficult time.

SIGRIST: Were you or your father communicating with your brother in America?

FABRIZI: Oh, yeah. Yeah. My brother used to send the money back to my father, give—take care of my bro—take care of my sister. Yeah. He w—he was a lonesome too over—you know, he miss us when we left, me and my father left. My brother was—but one thing, he didn't—he was young. He didn't get married. [chuckles] He stayed single yet.

SIGRIST: Tell me about how you felt about being away from America.

FABRIZI: Well, I start to realize [unclear] was a lot of great opportunity in America. In America, special in house, you have a lot of convenience. Over there, you don't have. Convenience in America, toilet. [chuckles] Over there, they ain't got no toilet. They got to go outside.

SIGRIST: You take all that for granted—

FABRIZI: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

SIGRIST: —until you don't have it.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: When—when you don't have it you don't think. What are you—what are you—you don't have—nothing hurt you. But once you see the other side, that all clean, everything. You know, street, bigger store. America was beautiful. Yeah.

SIGRIST: So in 1923—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —your father finally brought you back.

FABRIZI: Yeah. We came then with the Conte Rosa. Now, I got to tell you this. When we started from Naples—

SIGRIST: You left from Naples again.

FABRIZI: —the boat was going good, you know. We got—after you pass Gibraltar—

SIGRIST: Gibraltar.

FABRIZI: —about two—two days on open ocean. And was August, August the 22, 23, something like that. And all a sudden on day 12, at one o'clock, we just had our—our lunch. One o'clock, oh, big storm. The—the sky was so dark you couldn't even see 50 yard away from you. All a sudden, an hour or two, after all this and all this—about 1:30, all a sudden, we heard the—the loud foghorn. Whooo! Whooo! Repeat foghorn. My father got up right away, went on deck. The first sailor he met, he said, "What happen over here? Is fire or something?" Because look like everybody start to get nervous, you know. The—the sailor said, "Don't—don't be excited. Stay quiet." He said, "Conte Verdi's coming. Conte Verdi is going to Naples. Conte Verdi [several words unclear]. Conte Verdi's around." I hope they don't crash, you know. [chuckles] The fear [unclear]. Oh, it pass about half an hour and the sky clear. Clear. And then all a sudden, we see Conte Verdi right there. He was going down about a hundred yards away from us. [chuckles] He was going down. Oh, they wave. The people wave at each other. What a good captain. You know, they knew. They knew really where they were. You know what I mean? That foghorn and everything help a lot. Jeez, that was really great because I remember what happened to boat after many years later, they—the—the Andrea Doria and the Swedish boat, they crash. That was a stupid—you—you got a good captain, good mind.

SIGRIST: What class did you travel on?

FABRIZI: Second class.

SIGRIST: Second class.

FABRIZI: Oh, we were [chuckles]—we were—sit down on a table and they serve us everything. Yeah, it was great.

SIGRIST: That's right. The first time, you could only watch the second class.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. And the Conte Rosa, you could walk around, is very good size. Compared to Dante Alegare, it was a good boat. No, we walk around. We sit down on the deck. Nice and—

SIGRIST: How long did that trip take?

FABRIZI: Eight days.

SIGRIST: So it was a lot faster.

FABRIZI: Oh!

SIGRIST: [chuckles]

FABRIZI: [chuckles] It—from 18 to 8 days. We got to New York. Oh, nice.

SIGRIST: So did you have to go to Ellis Island again?

FABRIZI: No.

SIGRIST: No.

FABRIZI: We never went this time. No. We dock and we went—we went to New York to [unclear] and we went to Grand Central.

SIGRIST: What did your sister think about all this?

FABRIZI: Oh, she was so excited. She don't know if she was [unclear] to see everything, you know. And then my—my father knew something about New York. He knew his way around. When we get to Hartford, we knew we could take a trolley car or then trolley car or when—those days.

SIGRIST: Talk about seeing your brother again.

FABRIZI: Oh, my brother was so excited. He saw my sister. He love my sister because then my sister die a few years later. And my father came back here again.

SIGRIST: Of the consumption, did she die?

FABRIZI: No, she had—she die. She—she was sick over in Hartford [unclear]. They—1923. Happened in 1925, she got sick. There's [unclear]. She was getting worse all the time. My father took her to the doctor. Doctor told her—told her, "No, I don't like this." So my father say, "I come and take her to Rome. I—you know—you know, some specialists over there in Rome." Say, "I take her to Rome." So 1926, they took her back to Rome.

SIGRIST: Just your father and Sylvia, huh?

FABRIZI: Yeah, and my—my sis—and after took him to Rome, the doctors, specialists said, "Let her remain over here in the hospital." So [unclear] she die. She was [voice breaking] 18.

SIGRIST: How—how long did your father stay over in Italy when that happened?

FABRIZI: So after she die, he took her back to Pratola from Rome. He took her back to Pratola. On Pratola, they gave her beautiful funeral with a band, full band, march, you know. Funeral march. Took all over the city

[several words unclear]. They [unclear]. She's—put her on the [unclear]. [several words unclear] already call the [several words unclear]. You know, what they call it? [sentence unclear]. They put her in the cemetery, you know. Nice, with the picture out. You know, a picture, like—

SIGRIST: A picture?

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: So my father, after she die, he took her so hard. He was like, "Why?" So we receive a letter, say [unclear] write much. So one day, we see him in Hartford [chuckles] about a few months later after we receive that letter. He came to Hartford. He was working, Hartford. I—I saw him. "Dad!" I said. I brought him where we live, me and my brother used to be [unclear] and we [unclear]. So I took him here. My brother was working or something. I happen to go working on the street the day—that time. And I see my father. I couldn't believe my eyes. Jeez, is that my father or somebody else? So I went there. Oh, I recognize him. We are [unclear] and everything. He was a really change man. He—he lost—he love my sister so much, he figure someday he marry her and he live over there, you know. But couldn't be so he stay. I took him over where we live. He saw the room where me and my brother live. He said, "You two boys live over here?" "Yeah." "Ah, that's no good for you," he said. [chuckles] "I got to find a house for you. I want you to have your own house." You know, so he look around. [sentence unclear]. He look around, look around. Finally, he find one on—on Beton Street in Hartford.

SIGRIST: What is the name of the street?

FABRIZI: Beton.

SIGRIST: Bandon?

FABRIZI: Ben—Beton.

SIGRIST: Bantom?

FABRIZI: B-E-T-O-N. Beton. Then—then this was Beton Street. Beton Street. He find a house on the second floor. Nice. Nice, three room. Oh, so everything—he bought some furniture. He bought some things that I wanted you to buy, so live there, be free. Be so—you're not be feeling like [unclear]. We were—we brought up to be, you know, I—lil—what he

said lily bashful, you know, because we realize, you know that, you know, we were not one of those rough and tumble, being [unclear]. So he know—my father know this way they don't enjoy their home, because you always feel embarrass. You know, feel scared or something, [chuckles] you know. You're not yourself. You're not—make yourself at home. So—

SIGRIST: More privacy and—

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah. Over there, he knew—he—he knew what [unclear]. That was a great thing. And before he went home he made wine for us. He make a barrel of wine, like the 50 gallon. He brought the grape and he'd crush. You know, he know how to do. He was good for that. He was a really good farmer. He knew everything about farming. So he make out 50 gallon wine. And he fix the house and then he said, "I'm going to go back and I'm going to try to"—you know, [unclear] want a yard, or I don't know what his mind was. We told him, "Go back. Sell. Come back." So we—

SIGRIST: The property.

FABRIZI: Yeah, we leave because he had some property left. We leave [unclear]. What he do, he went back home and he never came back. He got married a year later, year later after he left. He was all alone. A butcher woman [several words unclear]—

SIGRIST: A butcher woman?

FABRIZI: No, I mean she used to be—her husband used to be—

SIGRIST: The wife of a butcher.

FABRIZI: Take—take care of butcher. He used to kill a live animal and a lamb. Used to—big in the city. So her husband died and this woman fell for my father. [chuckles] He marry her. My father, the property at a stable where he could put animal. He had a house. He had a—two piece of land [unclear]. And they were living good and I was happy for that. I was unhappy because I said, "Why didn't he tell us?" And another thing I said to myself, "He's getting [unclear]. He met a companion, [unclear] people in." So my—my brother felt the same. So few years, they were doing well. They were doing very good. And then one—one time, I hear that they were going to separate, divorce. And then the war came. We never heard no more. So—

SIGRIST: The Second World War.

FABRIZI: Yeah. And then when I—my brother find out—my brother find out he was [unclear]. He find out that the [unclear]—the Red Cross, they official, find out my father was dead. He die in 1944. One day, a big [unclear] of a British plane, they sm—bombard Sumone. They smash Sumone. They hit some of Pratola too. I don't know if they reach Pratola but Sumone was hit very bad, because Sumone was the center railroad station, was in every way. They concentrate and then after that my father died. We find out he was dead and—and before he die, he almost sold everything. Everything was sold. I didn't get nothing. I suppose his—but I—I didn't get much.

SIGRIST: We—we have just a couple minutes left and I want to ask a couple questions about you.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Did you become an American citizen?

FABRIZI: Yeah, you want to see my paper?

SIGRIST: Well, no, not yet. But tell me about what you had to go through to become a citizen.

FABRIZI: Well, you had to go to the judge—judge. You had to bring a witness, somebody who really knew you, everything. We went on a court. At that time, the court was 1929 when I got my full paper.

SIGRIST: And who went with you as a witness?

FABRIZI: Well, then is my—my friend of my brother, nice young man. He was that time, good educate. He was a, what do you call, a [unclear] in Italian. In American, they call them the public accountant. He came over to me. He was here about five, six years older than me. He was same age my brother, friend of my brother. He came over to me, then was [unclear] like this and he gave me that paper. I got the paper [unclear] today.

SIGRIST: And how did you feel when you became a citizen?

FABRIZI: Oh, I feel good, proud. [chuckles] I'm American. I—I didn't wait like somebody. They come over here 20, 30 years and they had a property, they say, "I want to be citizen," for some reason. But me, I got it right away while I was young. At that time, when I got the paper, 1929, I was—I was 23; 23, I got my paper.

SIGRIST: What about your brother? Did he become a citizen?

FABRIZI: Oh, he got it before me. Yeah, yeah. Good American, yeah.

SIGRIST: Well, and—and—and also, I want to find out when you got married. What year did you get married?

FABRIZI: I got marry, 1930.

SIGRIST: And what was the name of the woman that you married?

FABRIZI: I marry—the name was Anna D'Ambrosio.

SIGRIST: Oh, my goodness. Can you spell D'Ambrosio, please?

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Going to spell this out here. Or you can do it right here if you want.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: And her first name was Anna, you said.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Yeah. Mr. Fabrizio's just spelling this out. Okay. So that's—

FABRIZI: And—

SIGRIST: Her maiden name was—her first name was Anna, you said.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And—

FABRIZI: D'Ambrosio. There's—

SIGRIST: And that's capital D—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —apostrophe, capital A-M-B-R-O-S-I-O—

FABRIZI: Oh, right.

SIGRIST: —was her maiden name.

FABRIZI: D'Ambrosio, yeah.

SIGRIST: And you said you were married in 1930.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Where did you get married?

FABRIZI: We get married San [unclear] Church.

SIGRIST: In—

FABRIZI: Uh—

SIGRIST: Hartford?

FABRIZI: In Hartford.

SIGRIST: In Hartford.

FABRIZI: Hartford.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

FABRIZI: Santa—Santa [unclear] Church.

SIGRIST: And—no, that's okay. You don't have to spell that one.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And how many children did you have?

FABRIZI: I had two boys.

SIGRIST: And what were their names?

FABRIZI: One, his name is Robert Fabrizi. And the other one, Joseph Fabrizi, name of my father, I named.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: He's the old—Joseph is the oldest.

SIGRIST: Did your father ever get to see your children?

FABRIZI: No.

SIGRIST: No, he was in Italy.

FABRIZI: No, he die—he died.

SIGRIST: Oh, he died later—

FABRIZI: He died during the war.

SIGRIST: During the war.

FABRIZI: But the—the time when I had the kids and then another thing came bad for me. That was the Depression. I got to marry. This guy—the—my wife—at that time, my wife father—“Oh, you are so happy.” His daughter got married. He liked me very much, you know. He would make a big gala, big wedding, you know. Cook chicken, a half a chicken each. [unclear] a lot of wine, happy. And then what happened? The Depression struck. Depression, you know, 1930, '31, '32. I was laid off. I was working in the Underwood Typewrite.

SIGRIST: Oh, the—like your brother had.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: The Underwood Typewriter [unclear].

FABRIZI: I went work there. I got laid off. They laid off because of lack of work, Depression, not because I was in [unclear] or anything. So I got laid off and we struggle. Then 19—1934, came the new administration. Business pick up, start [unclear] recall people to work. And my poor wife, she got sick. And after a few years later, they discover that she had the—that sickness where—Lou Gehrig's sickness.

SIGRIST: Lou Gehrig's Disease?

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: Strike on the back. They discover she had that. She had—the first boy, she was not so bad, you know. She still could do the work and she used to go work—she used to work on tobacc warehouse where they sorted the leaves.

SIGRIST: The tobacco leaves.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

FABRIZI: Yeah, the leaves, all the women. And she was [unclear]. She was—one morning, she—she got up. I got up. I had to go to work. She had to go to work. So she was drinking her water, glass of water. While she was drinking, boom! The—the glass smash. So me, I was on—on the other side. I turned around. I said, “What’s the matter, Anna?” She said, “I was drinking this glass. All a sudden, the finger and the—the glass went down.” I said, “Be careful.” So to make sure, that day I call the doctor—Dr. Paladino [PH], an Italian doctor. He live on Franklin Avenue in Hartford. Paladino. I knew him so I said, “Dr. Paladino. Will you please come over?” At that time, the doctor came. They—the come in the house. Today, you got to go in emergency. [chuckles] So he came. He took her in a room that night and evening. He took her in a room. He checked her, everything. And then when he came out he called me inside. He said, “I don’t like this. I want her to see a big—[unclear] doctor. Because I don’t—what I see, I don’t like.” I was surprise. I say, “What’s the matter, Doctor?” “Don’t look right.” He wouldn’t tell me. He told me those words. I’ll never forget. And I like when a doctor tell you the truth, you know. I don’t want—he said—this doctor said, “You all right,” and the next day you dead.

SIGRIST: We have just two minutes so—

FABRIZI: Yeah, okay. Okay, so—

SIGRIST: [unclear].

FABRIZI: She see more doctor. In meantime, the other boy born, Robert. And he was a little baby and she got really bad. That was 1939. Really bad. Until come 1940, she passed away and it was over. That sickness. You know, the—multiple sclerosis, they call that disease.

SIGRIST: And then did you remarry?

FABRIZI: Yeah. I marry—

SIGRIST: [unclear].

FABRIZI: —my second wife, a beautiful woman.

SIGRIST: What was her name?

FABRIZI: Her name was Madeline—Madeline Schiovone, her father name.

SIGRIST: Okay. Spell it quickly for me.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Okay. Okay, now spell it with me. Her first name is—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —Madeline.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And that's S—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —C—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —H—

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: —I—

FABRIZI: I.

SIGRIST: —A—

FABRIZI: O.

SIGRIST: Oh, O.

FABRIZI: O.

SIGRIST: I-O-V-O—

FABRIZI: O—

SIGRIST: —N-E.

FABRIZI: —N-E. Yeah.

SIGRIST: And did you have children?

FABRIZI: Two, two beautiful [chuckles]—

SIGRIST: And—

FABRIZI: This one. [chuckles]

SIGRIST: Yes.

FABRIZI: And the other one is Sylvia.

SIGRIST: Yes.

FABRIZI: Sylvia is the name.

SIGRIST: And—and say your daughter's name for me on tape.

FABRIZI: Is—her name is Anna Marie Fabrizi.

SIGRIST: And that's Anne Mary. Correct? As you had said to me on the phone?

WOMAN: Yeah, [unclear].

SIGRIST: [unclear] And Arthur?

FABRIZI: Arthur. Arthur, yeah.

SIGRIST: Great. One more question for you. When you think of yourself in terms of nationality, how do you think of yourself? American, Italian? How do you think of yourself?

FABRIZI: Well, I think of myself, Italian, just like—Italian is just like you honor your father. An American is the same. You know, American too. Yeah.

SIGRIST: So a little bit of both?

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah, yeah. But I'm not saying I forgot. If you say that, you forgot your—your father, mother, then you're [unclear] everything. Italy, I still respect Columbus, all the great men. [unclear], all the great people.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh. Mr. Fabrizi, thank you very much.

FABRIZI: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: This has been an excellent interview. I suspect we could probably go for two more hours too.

FABRIZI: Yeah.

SIGRIST: But this is Paul—

[END OF INTERVIEW]