

KM-79/CATALINO

KM-79

ANTHONY CATALINO (ANTONIO CATALANO)

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ITALY, 1920 and 1924

AGE 7 (2nd trip)

SHIP NAME NOT RECALLED

MOORE: Good afternoon. This is Kate Moore for the National Park Service, and today is the 31st of July 1994, and I'm on Columbus, Ohio at the home of Anthony Catalino, who came to the United States from Italy in 1920 at the age of four and returned to Italy in 1923 for a year, and came back to the U.S. in 1924. Why don't you begin by giving us your full name and date of birth, please?

CATALINO: My name is Anthony Catalino and I was born July 13, 1916 in Italy, the southern part, outside of Reggio, the city of Reggio.

MOORE: And what size town was Reggio?

CATALINO: Reggio was a relatively large town, but my family resided in the country. In fact, my grandfather, I think, ran a farm.

MOORE: Okay. And what was the town known for, Reggio?

CATALINO: Reggio probably didn't have any distinguishing characteristics that I'm aware of, excepting that it was a city, and people went there to do their shopping, that is, people from the countryside. And they had most of the services that cities usually have.

MOORE: And the town that your family lived in outside of Reggio, what was that known for?

CATALINO: Mostly they were farmers, peasants, simple folks.

MOORE: What was your father's name?

CATALINO: My father's name was Rocco Catalano. The name was changed somewhere after I came to America when I went to school. Apparently somebody either misread the writing. In any case, they gave me a name of Catalino, and I've retained that name ever since.

MOORE: How do you spell your father's full name, please?

CATALINO: His first name is R-O-C-C-O. Last name was C-A-T-A-L-A-N-O.

MOORE: And how would you describe his occupation? What was his occupation?

CATALINO: As I indicated, my father was a relatively simple man. He had no skills. He eventually became employed in this country as a piano polisher. He used to polish pianos. He worked at that for a very long time.

MOORE: How would you describe what your father looked like?

CATALINO: He was short. (he laughs) He was rather homely, had a big nose, but he was more of an introvert than an extrovert. He was rather quiet, non-possessive kind of person. He didn't make too much of an impression on anybody. My mother, by contrast, was just the reverse. She was beautiful, she had a small nose, and she was very vivacious and very outgoing.

MOORE: And is there a story about your father that you associate with your childhood?

CATALINO: Not so much in my childhood, but as I was growing older he contracted a disease called silicosis. And I remember that he was failing in health daily. It took him approximately thirteen years to die, and that was very impressive to me because I felt there was nothing I could do and he was failing day by day.

MOORE: Now, you mentioned your mother. What was your mother's maiden name?

CATALINO: Her maiden name was Angelina Gallo. She was, again, a simple person, worked in the olive groves, and she told me once that when she, when I was just a baby she would put me under the tree, the olive trees, and she would pick olives.

MOORE: And what did she look like?

CATALINO: Well, to me, I'm sure I'm idealizing her, but she was a beautiful woman with a small pug nose and very bright and lively face, a wonderful personality.

MOORE: And is there a story about your mother that you associate with your childhood?

CATALINO: Again, the memories I have are probably a little older. We were rather poor, like most families

coming to this country in those days, and she was a very, very strong individual. When people, I remember when somebody came to the house to collect some money for the washing machine, or they were going to take it away, and they told her that they were going to take it away. And she looked around, and she saw a pipe, and she picked up the pipe and threatened the man that if he came any closer she would crack his head. Obviously the person responded, he left, and the washing machine was still there.

MOORE: What about brothers and sisters, siblings?

CATALINO: I am the oldest of four children. I had a brother who was also born in Italy, but he has since died. I have still a younger brother that lives in San Diego, and a sister who lives in East Rochester, New York.

MOORE: Your two brothers' names were?

CATALINO: My brother's name was Peter, and the youngest was Joseph.

MOORE: And your sister's name?

CATALINO: Josephine.

MOORE: Josephine. Do you remember anything about your house in Italy, where you came from?

CATALINO: Yes, I do. I remember we went there when I was almost seven years old, and it had no plumbing and I noticed, and the heat, they would fix up a little charcoal burner at night, and then as we went to sleep they put it in the house, and that was our heat. They also had goats, chickens and pigs that came into the house with us, and we all stayed in that house for the evening. And in the morning they would all leave.

MOORE: And what about, what kind of furniture, how big was the house?

CATALINO: The house was a small house, maybe three rooms or so. And the furniture, as I recall, was just a bed and maybe a table and a couple of chairs. Along with that I might add that my mother going, she was living with her sister, living with her sister at the time. They thought she was wealthy because she came from America, and they called her "the wealthy Americano." And we were not wealthy, but she had enough money to install a kind of primitive toilet in the house, and

that was the one big improvement that everybody liked, even the water, we had to get our water at the community fountain downtown, but that was, that was, as I say, a very simple home. And in the evenings I remember that almost every family would take a pot, kind of a charcoal pot that they would kindle, and you could see the sparks at night in the twilight. It was a rather nice sight to see these sparks. And then, as everybody entered their homes, it became completely dark. There was no electricity, of course.

MOORE: And then how did they light the house?

CATALINO: They had candles.

MOORE: Candles. And what was the house made of itself, what materials?

CATALINO: Probably wood and some kind of cement.

MOORE: Now, who did the cooking in the family?

CATALINO: The women were all pretty good cooks, including my mother, so they did the cooking. Strange you should ask that question, because I never remember seeing a man in the house, even my uncles and so on. I never

saw a man in the house, now that you ask.

MOORE: What was your favorite food as a child?

CATALINO: I liked beans and (he laughs) it's not spinach, it was a form of escarole. We call it today rabe. That was my favorite food in those days.

MOORE: And did you help cook, ever?

CATALINO: Never, as a child, because I never really learned. My mother was such a good cook that I just relied on her, and everybody was happy.

MOORE: And do you remember the kitchen at all? What was the kitchen like?

CATALINO: The kitchen probably was just a small burner with a kind of iron grate over it. It was not a formalized kitchen as we would know of it today.

MOORE: And you mentioned that you, who was living in this house when you were seven years old? It was you . . .

CATALINO: Uh, my two aunts and, one was married but the other one was single. And we had to share, I think, two beds. I shared a bed with other people. They

changed. I never knew who was going to be in the same bed. (he laughs)

MOORE: And how many children of you were there?

CATALINO: Uh, my brother and myself, and also the second time my sister and my younger brother, so there were four children there at that time.

MOORE: Now, do you remember your grandparents at all?

CATALINO: I remember my grandfather very slightly because we went to visit him from the little town we lived in near Reggio, and what was fascinating about that was that we went in stagecoach. It was early morning at dark, and I could hear this stagecoach person snap his whip, and it sounded like a gun going off. And I was very impressed with that.

MOORE: And what age was that, about?

CATALINO: I was probably seven, close to seven.

MOORE: Now, did you often see your grandparents?

CATALINO: No.

MOORE: Now, whose parents, you said your grandfather, whose

parents were they?

CATALINO: I never remember, my grandmother died young. My mother used to say that she died of a broken heart because of two male children had left the country. They went to Argentina.

MOORE: And the grandfather that you went to visit by stagecoach was whose father?

CATALINO: He was my mother's father.

MOORE: Now, what about religious life? Were you religious?

CATALINO: The family is Catholic, and they went through the, all of the rituals and so on. I'm not sure how deeply religious they were, but we were supposed to go to church on Sundays and abide by the other rules, such as not eating meat on Friday, going to Communion and so on. But I wouldn't say we were very, very strict Catholics.

MOORE: And where was the church that you would attend?

CATALINO: The church was in the center of town, and that was probably the most beautiful building in the area. I remember that. I don't remember hardly any other

building but the church. It was a huge edifice at that time.

MOORE: And this was in which town?

CATALINO: Again, it was outside of Reggio.

MOORE: Okay. And the name of that small town?

CATALINO: It was called Dericena, which I later learned was changed, somebody changed the name, maybe it was Mussolini. Anyway, then it was called Terranova, which means "new land."

MOORE: How do you spell the original name you just said?

CATALINO: Uh, I'm guessing at this, because I haven't seen it on the map, Dericena I guess was D-E-R-I-C-E-N-A.

MOORE: All right. And did you ever experience any religious persecution of any sort?

CATALINO: Never that I was aware of, no. Persecution, religiously, never entered in.

MOORE: How about holiday celebrations? What was your favorite holiday to celebrate?

CATALINO: Well, my mother used to say that she liked

St. Anthony's holiday, because she named me after him. My real name, actually, is Antonio, but when we came to this country my mother used to call me Nino.

Nino is a diminutive of Antonio. It would be, like Tony is for Anthony. And the kids really Anglicized it and called it Nin, so that to this day, seventy-eight years old people call me Nin, and those were my close friends and relatives.

MOORE: And, so like what did you do on Antonio's day?

CATALINO: Well, in those days I was interested in playing little games such as marbles, trying to learn the English language, or the American language in school, and I don't remember many other games that we engaged in.

MOORE: But on that special day that you liked, that your mother named you after, what did the town do then?

CATALINO: Well, just in the family the town probably celebrated most religious holidays including St. Anthony. But my mother would make, of course, meals, almost with a religious kind of tint. We had a lot of fish, and on Christmas, for example, we would eat thirteen kinds of fish.

MOORE: Thirteen kinds of fish.

CATALINO: Yeah. Twelve for the apostles, one each for the apostles, the other one for good luck or something.

MOORE: (she laughs) And what about school? Did you attend school at all in Italy?

CATALINO: I did attend school in Italy, and I was the only so-called Americano there, and the kids thought I was the cat's meow, they thought I was really something merely because I came from America. And they, I think they really catered to me. And I am sorry to say that all I remember learning in that school was how to make kites. I didn't learn much about writing and even learning the Italian language. They, there was very little paper to begin with. Paper was expensive in Italy at that time. And no one had any money to buy papers and pencils and pens, and so on. It was a one school, a one-room schoolhouse, one teacher. And we had maybe six or eight students.

MOORE: Now, you mentioned that you were an Americano at seven. Tell me a little bit about what happened, about how your family came to America, and how you

ended up returning back to Italy.

CATALINO: Well, my parents came to America because they wanted, obviously, a better life for themselves and their children, and they settled up in East Rochester, New York, which is upstate New York. And my brother, my youngest brother, had contracted some kind of disease, and the doctor suggested that we go to a warm climate, such as California. My parents, of course, couldn't afford that, but my mother asked, "What about Italy?" And the doctor said, "Fine, that has a good climate." So that's how we went back to Italy at that time.

MOORE: Now, who came first to the States, in the first voyage, who came over first? Did you come together as a family, or did you come separately?

CATALINO: We came together as a family. My father and mother and two children, at that time.

MOORE: And why did your parents leave, did they know someone in the States?

CATALINO: Yes. I had an uncle who lived in East Rochester, and that was the connection.

MOORE: And what was your uncle doing at that time?

CATALINO: He also worked, he had a big piano works there at that time, and he helped get his brother, my father, a job there.

MOORE: And so what year was it when he originally came over? Do you remember anything about that, the first move?

CATALINO: I was four years old. I don't remember anything of the trip, no.

MOORE: Do you know what your parents brought with you? Do they ever mention, do you have anything left over from that voyage when you came over that you brought from Italy, any artifacts, or . . .

CATALINO: No. We had nothing. But my mother did tell me that when I was a baby she put me in these swaddling clothes where they covered your feet so that you couldn't walk. I guess the theory was that they didn't want you to have bent feet or something. I never saw myself in that position, but she told me that, and that's the only thing that seems to have made an impression on me.

MOORE: And did they mention about the first voyage over,

what it was like? Did they ever talk about it?

CATALINO: No. They said the first voyage was more or less uneventful. The second voyage, which I remembered and experienced, was, in comparison, almost horrendous. Because everybody, it seemed, everybody on the ship was sick because of the storms and so on.

MOORE: What port did you leave from?

CATALINO: Probably, I honestly don't remember the port we came from. My guess would be Naples.

MOORE: How did you get from home to the port?

CATALINO: We probably had friends who took us there by coach.

MOORE: Do you remember leaving your grandmother and grandfather, or your aunts?

CATALINO: I do when I was seven years old, but not when I was four.

MOORE: And what was that scene like then in terms of, did they have a dinner?

CATALINO: Well, they cried, of course, and they thought they would never see each other again, which proved to be

the case. We never, I never did see my relatives after that.

MOORE: Now, did your mother want to leave to go back to the United States? Why did she only stay a year?

CATALINO: Well, my brother, who was sick at the time, recovered, and her husband stayed behind, my father stayed behind, so she went back to, she came back to this country to be with him.

MOORE: So you mentioned that you don't know what port it was, but you remembered the boat. Do you remember the boat's name?

CATALINO: No. (he laughs) I don't remember the boat's name, no.

MOORE: And what are the, do you remember seeing the boat for the first time?

CATALINO: Well, the boat was an excitement for a child of seven. I just loved it. It went all around, and got involved with these little safety boats that they have, trying to hide in them, and I did that. There were other children, played games around those boats.

MOORE: And you said people, were you sick at all?

CATALINO: I don't remember being sick, but everybody said everybody else seemed to be sick.

MOORE: What class did you travel?

CATALINO: It was the poorest class they had on the ship, I assure you.

MOORE: And do you remember the food?

CATALINO: The food, I don't remember much of the food, but I don't think too much was eaten at the time anyway.

MOORE: And did you ever see anything new on the boat that you'd never seen before, any food or any fish or any . . .

CATALINO: I liked the idea of seeing these fish in the ocean. I would look at them for a long time, long periods of time, and they kept bobbing up and down and following the ship as though they were going to go all the way to America with us. I think they liked what people threw overboard, uh . . .

MOORE: What type of fish were they?

CATALINO: They were, they weren't sharks. They were these other . . .

MOORE: Dolphins?

CATALINO: That's it, dolphins. They were dolphins. And they were pretty to watch.

MOORE: And, let me think. So the voyage was how long? Do you remember?

CATALINO: The voyage back was probably at least ten days, if not longer, if my recollections are on that period of time.

MOORE: And do you remember seeing land for the first time?

CATALINO: The first image of America, of course, that I can remember, is to see the outline of the shoreline. And then you did see the Statue of Liberty, and that is terribly impressive, especially if you see it for the first time, and see it away from a distance out in the ocean. And I can understand why people are struck when they come to America. They see this wonderful image.

MOORE: What was the atmosphere in the boat when you're

nearing land?

CATALINO: Well, everybody was excited, even the kids. We all got on the railside looking towards land and wondered what was going to happen. And we, of course, we didn't know that we were going to be placed in Ellis Island. To me we were just going to land until we got there.

MOORE: How did you get from the boat to Ellis Island? Do you remember that?

CATALINO: I don't remember how we disembarked from the ship, but I do remember staying at Ellis Island for about a week or so because my brother had contracted an eye infection, and we were held back. So we stayed at Ellis Island for that period of time until he recovered.

MOORE: Did you have a physical exam before you left Italy?

CATALINO: I don't remember that, but we were examined at Ellis Island.

MOORE: What did they do?

CATALINO: Well, you just followed the person ahead of you.

There were lines all over the place, and you were more or less directed because hardly anybody spoke much English. But you were directed in the right direction and so on. And the only examination I can remember is somebody looking in my eyes, and that is about all.

MOORE: Now, describe the accommodations at Ellis. What do you remember about Ellis Island? What memories do you have at all about the accommodations, the food, anything?

CATALINO: The food I don't recall very much about, and the bed was rather simple, just a cot. One little incident occurred which I still recall. Since we were there a week or longer I had nothing to do but just walk around the place. And one day I encountered another boy about my size, and he asked me, after we got to talking, "Do you want to box?" And I thought he meant a small cardboard box. And I said, "Yes." And suddenly he went around me with his fists up as though he was going to hit me. That was what you call a problem with language or something.

(they laugh)

MOORE: Yeah. Now, when you'd been, when you were in Italy

especially, did you have any problems with, what did you speak at home?

CATALINO: We spoke Italian, mostly. It was a dialect, a Calabrian dialect, and that's what we spoke.

MOORE: And so when you were in the United States and you went to kindergarten between these two voyages, did you, what did you speak?

CATALINO: At home we spoke mostly Italian, again a dialect. But I was somehow so imbued in the idea of becoming an American that I wanted to learn as much American as I could. And consequently I didn't speak very much Italian while I was home and, in fact, I tried to encourage my parents not to speak Italian but to learn English, or American. And that was a mistake, as I have come to learn, because since then I regret very much having lost my Italian, my ability to speak Italian the way I would like it. And I think that a lot of us who came to this country made that mistake.

MOORE: On Ellis Island, you said you were there for a week, what were you waiting for?

CATALINO: We were waiting for my brother to recover from his

eye infection.

MOORE: And what was your mother's attitude? Was your mother surprised by this when you got there?

CATALINO: I don't know whether she was surprised, but she certainly was irritated because she wanted to get back with her husband, because she had no alternative but to stay.

MOORE: And you traveled, how many people together, then? Your mother, you . . .

CATALINO: My mother went to Italy with four children, by herself, and came back with four children, by herself. Her husband stayed behind.

MOORE: And so the four of you were on Ellis Island with her.

CATALINO: Yes.

MOORE: Were you together?

CATALINO: Yes, we were always together.

MOORE: Was your brother put in the hospital?

CATALINO: He was put in the hospital. I say together, we were together on Ellis Island, but we didn't see my

brother for the period of time he spent in the ward,
some ward he was in.

MOORE: And were you bilingual by that point?

CATALINO: Uh, slightly, very little. We could barely get by.
I probably could speak better English than my mother.
My mother never learned to speak English well.

MOORE: Okay. So your brother then did recover, because
you're here. (she laughs)

CATALINO: Yes.

MOORE: And so what happened after that?

CATALINO: Well, we went back to East Rochester, and we went on,
carried on with our lives. I went to school, all of
us went to school.

MOORE: What about the home in East Rochester? Could you
describe that, where you lived, where your father set
up.

CATALINO: Uh, in those days we lived in mostly apartments, not
homes, because they were beyond our reach
financially. And they were simple, not much
furniture. We moved a lot until we became settled

more or less.

MOORE: Did you have indoor plumbing?

CATALINO: Oh, yes. Americans were far in advance in plumbing. We always had plumbing. Only once do I remember when we went to visit friends out in the country, and they had no plumbing.

MOORE: What about lighting?

CATALINO: There was gaslight in those days.

MOORE: And how big was the apartment, then? How many rooms?

CATALINO: Probably three or four at the most, a kitchen and maybe two bedrooms.

MOORE: So would you say in terms of conveniences that your life in the United States was a step up from what . . .

CATALINO: Oh, yes, yes. In conveniences, I would say that, yes.

MOORE: Now, your father worked in a piano factory, right. Did your mother seek work outside the house?

CATALINO: Not until he became sick, because I said I think to

you earlier my father later contracted silicosis, and then my mother went to work. By that time she was able to speak a little English, and she worked the rest of her life.

MOORE: And doing, what was she doing?

CATALINO: She worked mostly in canning factories. She canned tomatoes, mostly canned tomatoes, beans, and that sort of thing.

MOORE: And in the neighborhood that you lived in East Rochester, was it an Italian neighborhood, or was it . . .

CATALINO: There was mostly Italian at first. As we grew up, as we grew older we moved to a purpomixed neighborhood.

MOORE: And when you came back from Ellis Island, the trip to Italy through Ellis Island, when you went back to school, were you identified or singled out for being Italian?

CATALINO: Not as being Italian, but at that time, East Rochester being a small town, there was obvious prejudice. I could sense it, and I felt it, and it made a rather lasting impression on me, to this day I

sometimes recall those early days. I was very impressionable in my formative years and hearing people say, "Oh, he's just a WOP. What can you expect from those degos." That hurt. And it was only later on when I finally married an Irish girl by chance, and she said, "You have very poor self-esteem. You shouldn't feel that way. You come from a great heritage," and blah, blah blah. And only I went on to school, secondary school, I realized hey, I do come from a wonderful heritage. And now prejudice doesn't bother me as much as it used to.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

MOORE: Now, do you think that they were prejudiced against just Italians, or other children of other . . .

CATALINO: Well, probably others too, but I, being of Italian extraction, I thought they just hated Italians, that's all. I never heard much about the Irish, the Germans, or even Jewish people. Only later did I hear a little of that.

MOORE: Did anyone help you in your education early on?

CATALINO: I had very good luck in that first of all, I had an uncle who believed very much in an education. He's the one that inspired me to go to school and get an education. I also had a schoolteacher when I was in the second grade who encouraged me to learn more about the English language customs, so I got an education. So I did have some help along the way.

MOORE: Do you remember any fellow classmates or children that you played with, the names of these people?

CATALINO: Well, it was only later when I was probably close to being a teenager I remember all kinds of nicknames, and all neighborhoods have them. They probably just reflect the kind of thing kids go through, like Mad Dog, for instance, or Wacko, Jake, things like that.

MOORE: Now, was learning English difficult for you, or how did you, what was the process there?

CATALINO: Learning English was, I don't think it was difficult for me because I wanted to learn very much, to become an American. And so I really worked at it, and I liked school, I enjoyed school.

MOORE: What was your favorite subject?

CATALINO: It was history and English. I loved both.

MOORE: What about your religious life, then? You mentioned that you were practicing . . .

CATALINO: Yeah, I was a practicing Catholic in those days, and I tried to abide by the rules and so on. But as I got increasingly older I drifted away, and I eventually lost that, and it's a strange feeling.

MOORE: How about your parents? Did your parents maintain their religious . . .

CATALINO: Well, my father was not a particularly religious man. My mother had a kind of paradoxical way of looking at religion. She would say the rosary. I remember my mother frequently saying the rosary at night. But she practiced birth control, she married a second time, she married a man that had no religion to speak of, she was a very modernistic looking and thinking person. As she was saying her religion sometimes she swear at me because I was doing something wrong, "Get over here you, don't do that, you knit-wit!" That sort of thing, and she's saying her rosary. (they laugh) It didn't connect with her that she was doing something paradoxical.

MOORE: Now, did you stay at the same address in East Rochester the whole time?

CATALINO: No. We moved frequently, but we stayed in and around East Rochester, always.

MOORE: That first apartment you had, did you own it or . . .

CATALINO: We didn't own the house at all while I was with my parents.

MOORE: Now, describe a bit the course of your life then. You went through school, you were encouraged for education.

CATALINO: I also liked sports. I think sports helped me really to stay away from getting into trouble, because all my colleagues and friends, they were engaged in all kinds of activities. But I loved sports so much that I even liked sports better than I liked girls. That, of course, changed later on, but in those days . . .

MOORE: What sports did you like?

CATALINO: I liked all sports, but in high school, it may be hard to believe by looking at me, but I was captain of my football team, quarterback, I was captain of my

track team, had some records and all that. For a small person, I liked sports. And then I also knew how to play golf, and that's the only thing I can do today is play golf.

MOORE: Now, what about your education? Did you go on to college?

CATALINO: Yes. I went to, I went through high school. And then I went through a, I went through a community college where I met my wife, but that was only for two years. Then the war came along, and I enlisted volunteer because I wanted to get my year in and come out and get a job. But after I was in nine months the Second World War broke out, and that was the end of my early years, so I was in the service about four-and-a-half years. I went to Africa and Italy. And after I came back home, I wanted to be a postman. And my wife says, "A postman? Why do you want to be a postman?" "I like it because I can walk and think and not worry about what I'm doing and still get paid as a working person." She said, "You'd better go back to school." So I took her advice, and I did go to school, finished college. Then I went to graduate school and finished two more years of graduate school

and got a degree, a Master's degree in social work, and worked for about ten years. Then I thought I want to get out of institutions, which you don't do, (?) institutions. So I accepted a scholarship to go to the University of California at Berkley for a third year in public health social work. So we moved lock, stock and barrel all the way to the west coast and I went Berkeley.

MOORE: Did you have children in the meantime, at all?

CATALINO: Yes, I had two, a boy and a girl.

MOORE: And did they learn any Italian at all?

CATALINO: Unfortunately not, my son did take Italian in school, and he actually also went to Italy on a summer vacation with his classmates and so on. But no one in my family today speaks Italian, unfortunately.

MOORE: How would you describe your parents' adjustment to life here? Did they ever want to go back?

CATALINO: Not to my knowledge. They did miss their relatives and so on, but they never spoke of going back to Italy and live there permanently. Just to visit. In fact, my mother did go back a third time to visit her

family, and she was treated like royalty. Americano again. The rich Americano, that sort of thing. She stayed only about a month. She went there with her second husband, and they literally tore the sleeves off his shirt because they wanted, here's an American, rich and so on. They were treated very, very well, but they never stayed.

MOORE: Did you yourself ever think of going back to live?

CATALINO: I would love to go to Italy for about a year, to live there about a year. I did go back during the Second World War, and in 1977 we went there on a trip with two friends of ours, my wife and I. We stayed in Italy for about two or three weeks. It was a gorgeous trip, lovely. My wife loved Italy, but would like to go back, but not to live permanently because we don't speak the language, and we're too old now, I think.

MOORE: When you think about your parents' original decision, how did they do it, do you think, of their decision to come to this country? Was it a good idea?

CATALINO: Oh, yes. They looked at it as a good idea. They said they were simple folks, hardworking. They

worked hard all their lives, and they were loving people.

MOORE: And how do you view that decision?

CATALINO: I thought it was one of the best decisions they ever made.

MOORE: When you view yourself now, what have you retained that is Italian by tradition? Any of the old ways?

CATALINO: I think what I still have in me is this pride of coming from a heritage that is a wonderful heritage, throughout world history. There are so many great, wonderful people in the past who were of Italian extraction. And I feel proud, not that I had anything to do with their talents, but to be somehow associated with that kind of background.

MOORE: And if you were to say what your parents were most proud of themselves, what would you say, what was that? What did they feel that had achieved?

CATALINO: I think they had great pride in their children. They loved their children, and it showed. We, I've said this before, oftentimes we had very little to eat, but whenever you entered their home, love permeated

the entire household. That I never lost. And that I think is, you know, carried me on, carried me through this.

MOORE: And were there any personal tragedies that happened since coming to this country in the family that may have had to do with immigrating, or . . .

CATALINO: I don't, I don't think any tragedies from that, my father died young, he was only forty-two. That was hard. But then the fact that I lost touch with my background, I lost the Italian language, and I have regretted that ever since.

MOORE: Well, I'd like to thank you, on behalf of Ellis Island, for sharing this story with us, and we'll send you a copy as well at the end.

CATALINO: Thank you very much. Thank you.

MOORE: This is Kate Moore in Columbus, Ohio in the Catalino family home on July 31, 1994 signing off with the Ellis Island Oral History project.