



## **Citation for this collection:**

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

## **Contact:**

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

## **Terms governing use and reproduction:**

Use of materials from this collection beyond the exceptions provided for in the Fair Use and Educational Use clauses of the U.S. Copyright Law may violate federal law.

Permission to publish or reproduce is required from the copyright holder. Please contact Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, for questions. [askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu](mailto:askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu)

## **A note about transcriptions:**

Of the original 252 audio-recordings in this collection, 212 of these tapes were transcribed around the time of the original recordings (between 1966 and 1978). In 2012, Cabbage Tree Solutions was contracted to create transcriptions for the remaining tapes. Corrections to and clarifications for all transcriptions are welcome, especially for names and places. Please contact Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, for questions. [askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu](mailto:askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu)

## Mr. Emnilia Panariello

[0:00:00]

Interviewer: We can start now then. Mr. Panariello, where in Wilmington where you born?

Mr. Panariello: On Scott Street.

Interviewer: On Scott Street?

Mr. Panariello: 602 Scott Street.

Interviewer: Right. That's between 6th and 7th.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, where did your father come from?

Mr. Panariello: Come from Italy, San Gregorio.

Interviewer: San Gregorio, in Italy. Do you remember where?

Mr. Panariello: Caserta.

Interviewer: It is Caserta.

Mr. Panariello: Provincia di Caserta.

Interviewer: Provincia di Caserta. Was he in the city, was he from the city, or from one of the villages nearby?

Mr. Panariello: ***[inaudible] [0:00:31]***

Interviewer: From one of the villages?

Mr. Panariello: Today, it's a summer resort.

Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Panariello: And he had a mill there.

Interviewer: He did have a mill?

Mr. Panariello: A flour mill.

Interviewer: For grinding flour. Now, what year did he come to the United States?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I guess he came in 1892.

Interviewer: In 1892?

Mr. Panariello: I guess '92 or '91. I'm not...

Interviewer: Now, according *[inaudible]* **[0:00:55]** '92, you were born then.

Mr. Panariello: No, I was born '93.

Interviewer: Do you know why he came to this country?

Mr. Panariello: Well, they came to better their self.

Interviewer: To better themselves. All right. Well, now, do you know how he...

Mr. Panariello: Got here?

Interviewer: Well, not only how he get here, but how he arrived at the decision to come to United States rather than to go to anywhere else.

Mr. Panariello: Well, they were going to go to South America, but then they came here it was closer. It took longer time to go to South America.

Interviewer: So the time element had something to do with it.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, I would suppose that he left Italy from the Port of Naples.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: You have no idea what the ship he came on, do you?

Mr. Panariello: No, I don't.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you have any ideas to how long it took him to get here from...

Mr. Panariello: It took him about 22 or 25 days, something like that.

Interviewer: Now, where did he land when got here?

Mr. Panariello: New York.

Interviewer: In New York. Did he ever mention to you what it was like when he landed at New York?

Mr. Panariello: No. But it's just how the bad time coming over *[inaudible]* **[0:02:02]**.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, when he got in New York, what did he do, come directly to Wilmington?

Mr. Panariello: Well, my uncle met him in New York and brought him to Wilmington.

Interviewer: Then your uncle lived in Wilmington.

Mr. Panariello: Lived here, yeah. He was one of the pioneers of Wilmington.

Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Panariello: He was a first builder, a *[inaudible]* **[0:02:20]** young builder in Wilmington.

Interviewer: So this is the reason your father came to Wilmington because his cousin was here.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah. And he worked...

**[Cross talk]**

Mr. Panariello: He had a baker shop and he worked with him in the baker shop.

Interviewer: I see. Now, your father worked in a bakery shop when he first came here.

Mr. Panariello: With Mr. Fidans, yes.

Interviewer: With Mr. Fidans. Now, did he remain in the bakery business long?

Mr. Panariello: Well, he remained, well, I guess, for four, five years.

Interviewer: And after that, what did he do?

Mr. Panariello: Then, by then, he didn't have the bakery felt no more and it was sold to another man, and my father and his friend went in partnership.

Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Panariello: But my father didn't know how to read or write, be just words. Another man took everything. He didn't know.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mr. Panariello: Then they broke up and they moved to Mountshannon for one month. And then, he came back again and my father went to work again as a baker by the same man, but then finally broke up and he went work with the railroad.

Interviewer: I see. Did he work for the railroad until his retirement?

Mr. Panariello: No, not. He worked a few years for the railroad and I don't know which **[inaudible] [0:03:36]** I don't know which. And then he worked at Marshallton. There was a factory that made tubes for the stove and pots and pans.

Interviewer: Was it a fiber mill?

Mr. Panariello: No, not fiber mill. It may just be utensils, I don't know.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Panariello: It was pans, it was stove pipes.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mr. Panariello: He worked there for about a year. And then he went to work for **[inaudible] [0:04:10]**. And he worked there for good many years at the **[inaudible] [0:04:20]** World War I, his company was.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mr. Panariello: It was a factory used to clean the hair of the **[inaudible] [0:04:30]**. That's what he's done.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* **[0:04:31]** who started a leather tanning.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, yeah. He worked in that place for good many years. I was a young girl when he went to work with DuPont, and he worked with DuPont up until his death.

Interviewer: What sort of *[inaudible]* **[0:04:47]**?

Mr. Panariello: He was a laborer. They used to build what they call a dry wall. Just a stone, make those stones around their property.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: And they worked all year round.

**[0:05:02]**

Mr. Panariello: And they didn't get much, but they worked all year round.

Interviewer: I see. All right. Now that we've settled the matter back in *[inaudible]* **[0:05:10]** let's start with you. Now, what are your earliest recollections of the Italian community in Wilmington?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I saw the Italian community grow. When I was a kid, there were very few Italian families. In fact, one of the streets where we lived, there were only three Italian families.

Interviewer: Right. Now, this was on Scott Street.

Mr. Panariello: Right on Scott Street.

Interviewer: On 6th and 7th.

Mr. Panariello: And there were only the buildings where we lived and there were only three or four Italian families. It was the Fidans family, our family, and the Montague family. They used to call him a tailor. He was a tailor by trade and he was the only one on Scott Street. When I was a girl, this was -- about four or five years old.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mr. Panariello: Then when I was about five or six years old, they built the first houses on Scott Street between 6th and 7th, was from 6th, 10 up, from the 6th, 14 up to 7th they built houses. And the Italian families moved in from the

Bradywine. They worked at Bradywine *[inaudible]* **[0:06:28]**. All those people moved on to Scott Street, all Italian people there.

Interviewer: Do you remember who the builder was of these houses?

Mr. Panariello: Fidans.

Interviewer: Fidans.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Panariello: And he built the *[inaudible]* **[0:06:41]** factories and on 7th for houses and were all built with Italian people. Then, when I was a little girl, they built the other house on Scott Street, between 6th and 7th and with whole row houses.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mr. Panariello: But the Italian people were there and two or three colored families, but then the colored families moved out and finally it was all Italian. And then he built a row down 6th Street, from 6th to Lincoln, all the houses, and they roll through *[inaudible]* **[0:07:16]**. Then after that, he built on 7th Street, from Scott to Lincoln, and they were all Italians.

And as new families moved on, naturally, everybody knows everybody else. You knew everybody, when you walk the street, you knew everybody. Then they built on the other side of 7th Street, from Scott to Lincoln. They build. Then up Lincoln...

Interviewer: Who were all these immigrants?

Mr. Panariello: Well, the neighborhood has this, *[inaudible]* **[0:07:48]** has this.

Interviewer: Where were these people coming from, all these Italians, from Italy?

Mr. Panariello: Well, no, they didn't all come from Italy. Some came from Italy and some came from the Bradywine. They lived at -- they wanted to work on the quarry.

Interviewer: Do you remember what area on the Brandywine they came from?

Mr. Panariello: They used to work with the Brandywine Quarry.

Interviewer: I see. But do you know where they lived?

Mr. Panariello: They used to live *[inaudible]* **[0:08:12]**. They had the shanties.

Interviewer: Really?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah. And there were houses there. And some people came from Wooddale, the quarry at Wooddale, and a lot of times came from there. And then people, the *[inaudible]* **[0:08:29]** for their families, they came from *[inaudible]* **[0:08:32]**.

Interviewer: All right. Now, how old were you when you started school here?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I was six years old.

Interviewer: Where did you start school?

Mr. Panariello: At the Number 25 School?

Interviewer: And where was that located?

Mr. Panariello: *[inaudible]* **[0:08:48]** school it is.

Interviewer: It was a different school at that time.

Mr. Panariello: A different school, it was called Number 25.

Interviewer: And that was torn down and Lower School was later built?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Is that it?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: And how long did you go to school, do you remember?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I went there, I started in kindergarten. No, I think before I was six years old. I had started in September and I was six years old in February, then I went *[inaudible]* **[0:09:15]**. Then we got promoted twice the year.

Interviewer: Yeah.



Mr. Panariello: And I went there for about three years and then I went to St. Paul's School for a year.

Interviewer: How were you treated as a little girl in school?

Mr. Panariello: Fine.

Interviewer: Did they treat the same as they treat the other children?

Mr. Panariello: Very good, yes, very good.

Interviewer: Were there many Italians in school?

Mr. Panariello: They were quite a few Italian people. You want to know who are they?

Interviewer: If you remember anything.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah. I know all that want to used to go to school who were there, the Mikos, Alders, and Brank, and the Boti, the Tali Boti sisters *[phonetic]* **[0:09:54]**. She just died a couple of weeks ago.

Interviewer: I didn't know.

**[0:10:00]**

Mr. Panariello: Sylvester and the Angelos *[phonetic]* **[0:10:05]**. They lived out over the bridge.

Interviewer: They weren't too many others there.

Mr. Panariello: But they were all *[inaudible]* **[0:10:13]** in school. I could tell you the teachers were wonderful, and especially I remember my kindergarten teacher. She loved us. And our parents totally came when they had something in school. Even though they didn't understand, they came in when they had to, entertainment, Christmas plays, Halloween plays, our parents were always there. Dances, there were three, five dances.

Interviewer: I guess you could say then that the Italian parents were very interested in the education.

Mr. Panariello: They learned *[inaudible]* **[0:10:46]** yes. Even though they didn't know how to read or write, but they wanted their children to...

Interviewer: They did have an appreciation for education.

Mr. Panariello: They did. My mother always attended when they had anything in school.

Interviewer: All right. The fact that they were illiterate, it was not through any fault of their own.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: But through lack of opportunity.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, tried.

Interviewer: And this is what we consider.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: It is not because they're going to take advantage of an opportunity that existed. One never existed for them.

Mr. Panariello: No.

Interviewer: Okay. All right. Now, you said after the third grade you went to St. Paul's School.

Mr. Panariello: St. Paul's School for one year.

Interviewer: Why did you leave the public school, do you remember?

Mr. Panariello: Well, they had a mission, Italian mission, and the missionaries stressed that you should have a Catholic education. But we have Catholic teachers over there. In fact, the principal was Catholic and her brother was a priest. Father Brady and Mr. Brady was a principal. And then, after the **[inaudible] [0:11:43]** school, I liked the public school better. I don't know why, but it seems I like it better. And I went back in September.

I went to **[inaudible] [0:11:55]** to St. Paul's School, just **[inaudible] [0:11:59]**. But when I went back to the public school, they put me back in the same grade I had left.

Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Panariello: But then I went there for a year and then we went to Number 11 School, because it was closer.

Interviewer: How was it in St. Paul's School when you went there?

Mr. Panariello: It was nice.

Interviewer: Who taught there?

Mr. Panariello: It was the sisters.

Interviewer: The sisters, did they treat you nice there?

Mr. Panariello: Yes, they were very nice.

Interviewer: All right. Would you continue with what you told me about your education, where you went to school?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I kept on going to school. Then after a year, I went to Number 25, and then my mother said, why go there *[inaudible]* **[0:12:42]**. The winters were very cold and she said go to Number 11 School, it's close.

Interviewer: And where was Number 11 School?

Mr. Panariello: Up there, 19th Scott.

Interviewer: 19th Scott.

Mr. Panariello: But we didn't want to go there, because Number 25 was a newer school in those days and we all want to go there.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* **[0:12:59]**.

Mr. Panariello: So then I went to Number 11 School and three or four grades. I had the two teachers up there. Each teacher taught two grades. And I was in 10th grade when I went there.

**[Cross talk]**

Mr. Panariello: That's why I met Noli Goddard *[phonetic]* **[0:13:24]** and the discount. They all *[inaudible]* **[0:13:29]**. They all used to go to Number 11. And from Number 11, I went to Number 13 School.

Interviewer: And where was Number 13 School?

Mr. Panariello: At the 17th and Union, the opportunity school now *[inaudible]* **[0:13:46]** or something.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Panariello: I went there for -- well, I quit school when I was 12 years old. So I was in what they call the *[inaudible]* **[0:13:57]** then.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, what would you say was the *[inaudible]* **[0:14:02]** social and economic position in Wilmington back in the early 1900s?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I don't know. We were always treated nice wherever we went.

Interviewer: Tell him where *[inaudible]* **[0:14:15]** after work? What we just do for entertainment?

Mr. Panariello: We did have no entertainment. We just have our Italian *[inaudible]* **[0:14:23]**.

Interviewer: And this was the extent of it?

Mr. Panariello: I even had no social life at all.

Interviewer: Yeah, but you had dances. You just said that you used to go to dances, that's where you met Bob *[phonetic]* **[0:14:34]**.

Mr. Panariello: No, Bob was *[inaudible]* **[0:14:35]** when I was a young girl. *[inaudible]* **[0:14:38]** a kid.

Interviewer: Okay, right. Let's say when you were 12 years old then, and during the time that you went to school.

Mr. Panariello: After I went to school?

Interviewer: After school, did you ever do anything?

Mr. Panariello: No, just played jacks or rope or whatever the children did.

Interviewer: Yeah, just played children's games.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, after you left school -- well, first of all, why did you leave school?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I went to work.

**[0:15:00]**

Mr. Panariello: You know in those days, when you were 12 years old, you were supposed to be big. We all went to work. And I went to work on a candy factory. It was situated where the Rialto is now. It was a big candy store and they used to make candy up there and I used to work in those *[inaudible]* **[0:15:21]** candy. And I worked there for about two years. It was called the Reynolds Candy Company.

Interviewer: All right. And after you left the candy factory?

Mr. Panariello: I went to work in Morocco factory.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, when you were working, what did you do when you were not working, during the time that you didn't work in the evenings, for example, or on weekends?

Mr. Panariello: Well, we never done nothing. Maybe take a walk, read around a book.

Interviewer: Yes. But what sort of work day that you have? How many hours did they...

Mr. Panariello: We work 10 hours a day.

Interviewer: And how many days a week?

Mr. Panariello: From 7 to 6.

Interviewer: And how many days a week?

Mr. Panariello: Six days a week.

Interviewer: Six days a week.

Mr. Panariello: On a Saturday we work until 4 o'clock.

Interviewer: How did you get to work? Now, if you work downtown on Market Street and you lived up on Scott Street...

Mr. Panariello: Well, we used to ride. The tickets were 25.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* **[0:16:12]** these were tickets for the trolley car, right?

Mr. Panariello: Trolley car. But we all used to ride when it rained or snow, we use the bulk.

Interviewer: Most of the time. Okay. What sort of pay did they gave you?

Mr. Panariello: Pay?

Interviewer: Yes. For six days a week?

Mr. Panariello: When I started working, we used to get \$2 a week.

Interviewer: \$2 a week.

Mr. Panariello: And time *[inaudible]* **[0:16:29]** I was making \$3 a week at the candy store. Then at the Morocco factory, I was making \$5 a week.

Interviewer: For the same sort of a work week?

Mr. Panariello: With the same hours of work.

Interviewer: Same hours of work, six days a week.

Mr. Panariello: From 7 to 6.

Interviewer: Well, I'm going to ask you this question again. After you got out of school and when you were working, you undoubtedly became more of aware of what the Italian's position in the community was in relation to other people in the community.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Thus when you were going to school, you always see Italian people, you never saw other people.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: But when you went to work, you certainly...

Mr. Panariello: I saw Polish people, American people.

Interviewer: Well, what did they think of Italians?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I don't know. They were good. But the Italian people always kept to their selves. We never visited the America people.

Interviewer: All right, now...

Mr. Panariello: We spoke to them, but we never mingled.

Interviewer: I mean, you were always strangers, you never became friends?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah. There was one on Scott Street that was *[inaudible]* [0:17:42] and I didn't -- and where all three were *[inaudible]* [0:17:46] with the people in the neighborhood.

Interviewer: Yes. All right, now, I asked you what the social and economic position *[inaudible]* [0:17:55]. Now, what was your position in the community as an individual? Were there Italians who have the positions of public responsibility?

Mr. Panariello: No, not that I know of then. When it was election time, the Fidans used to be active.

Interviewer: But they never held office, did they?

Mr. Panariello: Cremento, Bernardo *[phonetic]* [0:18:19], they were active.

Interviewer: They were active, but they never held any office.

Mr. Panariello: Never held in the office.

Interviewer: And they get *[inaudible]* [0:18:25] people out to vote.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Who did you vote for? Do you have any idea? Who were these people who came after your vote to represent you?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I couldn't tell you. They were not the Italian people.

Interviewer: Now, the ones who ran for office were not Italian people.

Mr. Panariello: No, there was no one in office. There was only one Italian cop in those days, and his name was Carmen del Mar *[phonetic]* [0:18:46].

Interviewer: How about John *[phonetic]* [0:18:48]? Was John Testo...

Mr. Panariello: That was later years.

Interviewer: That was later. Okay, now...

Mr. Panariello: But when I was a kid, there was only one man that held this position. It was Carmen del Mar.

Interviewer: Now, in so far as these politicians are concerned who got you at the vote around election time whenever they came around, did you ever see them at any time other than election time?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, we used to see them all the time. There was people in the neighborhood.

Interviewer: No, I don't mean...

**[Cross talk]**

Mr. Panariello: No, we didn't know nothing about that.

Interviewer: **[inaudible] [0:19:20]**. So you just voted for whoever Cremento, who was a Republican coming to vote for, Bernardo who was a Democrat coming to vote for right?

**[Cross talk]**

Interviewer: Right. If you like Cremento better than Bernardo, you voted Republicans, right?

Mr. Panariello: Yes, that's right.

Interviewer: And vice-versa.

Interviewer: And the ballots were always marked.

Interviewer: And the ballots were always marked?

Mr. Panariello: Uh-huh.

Interviewer: They always count them until they came out right. [Laughter] Okay. How did the Italian express himself to the community? Now, when I say how they express themselves to the community, how did he make his needs and wants made known?

**[0:20:03]**



Mr. Panariello: Well, in those days, they never meet any needs done. They've worked and that was all.

Interviewer: In other words, if a man was out of work, he couldn't find a job, instead of eating pasta, then he ate *[inaudible]* **[0:20:14]**.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah. Well, one thing, Italian people were thirsty. They always had a cell full of groceries for the wintertime they just hoarded in the summer. It was potatoes, with *[inaudible]* **[0:20:29]** of potatoes in these cells, bell, peppers and vinegar, tomatoes, and pears, and my mother used to put up tomatoes and the made ketchup. We always had enough to eat. Yeah.

Interviewer: All right. So you really didn't have to depend upon...

Mr. Panariello: No.

Interviewer: ...the community in general.

Mr. Panariello: No, no, we never got to depend on anybody. And we always had the cell full. We used to buy egg by the *[inaudible]* **[0:20:59]** in the spring and we used to have...

Interviewer: Would you say Italian was satisfied with his status in the community?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I couldn't say. I know we were all right. We just pass by...

Interviewer: Well, the people seemed to be pretty well satisfied.

Mr. Panariello: We were all happy, and everybody had a \$5. I don't say a whole lot, but they never were needed for anything.

Interviewer: When I speak to the community now, I'm speaking about Wilmington. Did the official community in Wilmington, did the people in the city of Wilmington ever demonstrate any sort of a concern for the Italian or about the Italians?

Mr. Panariello: No, not that I know, until St. Anthony's Church was built. Father Tucker took *[inaudible]* **[0:21:44]** Italian people.

Interviewer: How did the people live? Now, in the early days, there's a lot of men here and very few women.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah. Well, they used to board. They used to have borders and they used to pay *[inaudible]* **[0:22:00]**. And some, they boarded. They gave them their food and lodging for about \$10 a month. That's all we used to get. And some people, they didn't want to board. They would buy their own food and they used to have their own bed and they used to pay down a quarter a month.

Interviewer: Just for bed?

Mr. Panariello: Just for the sleep, just for sleep and accommodation. And my mother had a cook, whatever they bought. We had boarders and she had a cook for them.

Interviewer: Now, I'm sure you would remember that situation where people have boarders. Could you make any comments about that as to how you...

**[Cross talk]**

Interviewer: All right. You were telling me about the people and the boarders in the houses and how they lived.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah. They pay \$10 a month for it, board, and sort of...

Interviewer: And this was it. Now, I started to ask you how you felt about this sort of thing. As a boarder, what were your views about this? Do you feel this was a good thing, it was convenient, inconvenient?

Mr. Panariello: Well, they used to try to help out, the families out, the boarders to help pay the rent.

Interviewer: And now, this was a way of life and you didn't think too much about it, because this was normal...

Mr. Panariello: No, everybody had it, because there are two people that had the family, there were a lot of men and there were few women.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Panariello: And that they had to board some place.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, many of the Italians who came here from Italy, did many of them return to Italy?

Mr. Panariello: In those days, very few.

Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Panariello: I remember very few going back. Maybe some men would go back in the winter time because they wouldn't work *[inaudible]* **[0:24:04]**. And they used to work in the summer time and they used to go back for the winter and come back in the spring, do it again.

Interviewer: And this was it. And a lot of them would go back to Italy and get married in Italy and they bring their wives back.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, and their wives back. They would get a house for *[inaudible]* **[0:24:23]** and they would come here.

Interviewer: Would you say that very few people went back to Italy to stay?

Mr. Panariello: Yes, very few.

Interviewer: Very few. Did many people leave Wilmington to go to other parts of the United States?

Mr. Panariello: Well, not many, but some of them, they leave to go different places.

Interviewer: Do you have any idea as to why they would leave?

Mr. Panariello: Well, some people had relatives in New York or New Haven or in Pennsylvania, some place they were getting a better job and then would go over there.

Interviewer: I see, okay. What sort of work did most of the men as a rule do?

**[0:25:04]**

Mr. Panariello: Well, most of them were laborers and they worked in the quarries or railroad or factories., and a lot of the brick layers and others, stone masons. In the early days, *[inaudible]* **[0:25:17]** built all those houses. He had boarders for stone masons and brick layers. He was a carpenter by trade and he built all the -- that is called *[inaudible]* **[0:25:30]**.

He'd call all the houses on 6th Street, Lincoln and Union and 5th Street, and the *[inaudible]* **[0:25:37]** built on Lincoln Street and 5th Street.

Interviewer: What would you say were the chances for the advancement of the Italian in this country in the early days?

Mr. Panariello: Well, the one major event is where we want to stick the work that they were doing and they had rents.

Interviewer: In other words, the ones who were able to stick it out regardless of how difficult...

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Rather than hop from one thing to another?

Mr. Panariello: That's right.

Interviewer: And in so far, the chances for advancement work at this time, would you say that the chances for advancement of the Italian lay mostly in the construction business?

Mr. Panariello: Most.

Interviewer: Those days?

Mr. Panariello: Yes, yes. There were a lot of carpenters and brick layers and stone masons.

Interviewer: What would you say was the average educational level of most of these people?

Mr. Panariello: Well, most of the people, some of them were well educated and most of them didn't know how to read or write.

Interviewer: You said the ones who were well educated were in a minority.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, very few, yeah.

Interviewer: Back in the early 1900s, were there ever any well-educated people or professional people who came from Italy to the United States? Do you remember?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I remember one man that came, who was supposed to be a doctor, a good Italian doctor, and a doctor when he came here.

Interviewer: Did he come from Italy?

Mr. Panariello: No, I don't know if he came from Italy, but he came to Wilmington. He was the first Italian doctor here.

Interviewer: The first Italian doctor?

Mr. Panariello: Yes.

Interviewer: You don't know whether he went to medical school in Italy or here, do you?

Mr. Panariello: No, I think he went here to school.

Interviewer: He went here to school?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Panariello: And then there was another Italian doctor. His name was Dr. Rickalo *[phonetic]* [0:27:30]. He came in the 19 -- when it was the first year of *[inaudible]* [0:27:36].

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Panariello: But never any well-educated people. They might had little education, but not...

Interviewer: But not much.

Mr. Panariello: Not much.

Interviewer: But how did most of the people get here? Did they all come directly from Italy?

Mr. Panariello: As far as I know, yes.

Interviewer: And then they would come directly here because of relatives?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: You'd say that most of the people who came here had relatives here.

Mr. Panariello: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, when we speak of this great migration, there are a lot of people who came here. When we speak of them, we seem to concentrate on men.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Because mostly, it was the men who came here.

Mr. Panariello: They came first.

Interviewer: And it was mostly the men who went out of the Italian community and made contacts with other people and so forth. What was the role of the woman in the Italian community?

Mr. Panariello: Well, she just came and just stayed here.

Interviewer: Now, she just stayed in the house?

Mr. Panariello: In the hosue, yes.

Interviewer: This was it.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: And her role was that of a housewife.

Mr. Panariello: Just housewife, yeah.

Interviewer: Would you say her life was a hard life here?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I guess it was, because of the work with the children and the boarders, everything had to be done by hand.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mr. Panariello: It was no convenient, like just today.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mr. Panariello: And we had lamps, no electricity and no gas, just the coal fire, winter and summer.

Interviewer: And there was no heating the house?

Mr. Panariello: No, no heat, no.

Interviewer: When the men and when the people were not working, how did the Italians entertain themselves? What do they bring up?

Mr. Panariello: Well, they stayed in the house *[inaudible]* **[0:29:16]**.

Interviewer: And this is it, mostly conversation, is that it?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Or perhaps a card game?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah. When it was winter time, they would *[inaudible]* **[0:29:26]** under the kitchen because that is where the stove was.

Interviewer: That was the warmest part of the place, right? Now, in those early days, on Lincoln Street, you had the neighborhood house, which is also a, what, the Democratic Club, right?

Mr. Panariello: The club before the neighborhood house.

Interviewer: Right. And on the 6th Street, you had the Republican Club?

Mr. Panariello: Yes. That wasn't on 6th Street, it was on Lincoln Street too.

Interviewer: Oh, was it on Lincoln Street too?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, between 6th and 7th. It was a Republican *[inaudible]* **[0:29:54]**.

Interviewer: All right.

Mr. Panariello: And back then, that was entertainment for the men. They *[inaudible]* **[0:29:58]** about picnic twice a year, once a year on 5th and DuPont. There was a big building.

**[0:30:06]**

Interviewer: Was that a brewery up there? Was it the brewery?

Mr. Panariello: It was across the street from the brewery. I will tell you where it was at. You know that swing on the corner.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mr. Panariello: Then back up *[inaudible]* **[0:30:19]**.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mr. Panariello: And you just come all the way near to Scott Street. And they used to have picnic down there and try to *[inaudible]* **[0:30:27]** these lodges, St. Anthony's lodge to St. Michael's, the *[inaudible]* **[0:30:33]** and all those lodges, they had a picnic once a year, each for one of them. So that will be four, five picnics during the summer. And that was our recreation. They sold ice cream and sandwiches, and they had the dances and they drank beer and had a bowling alley along the steps in DuPont.

Interviewer: Were there ever any Italian stage productions?

Mr. Panariello: What?

Interviewer: Any Italian stage productions, any plays?

Mr. Panariello: Well, that was later when I was a young girl, about 17 or 18. They used to come from Philadelphia.

Interviewer: So that was 1910 maybe?

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, about 1910. They used to come from Philadelphia. They just rent the hall down on Lincoln Street and they used to have these Italian plays.

Interviewer: All right. Now, when you spoke of Italian clubs, there was the Democratic Club, Republican Club. What other clubs were around *[inaudible]* **[0:31:35]**?

Mr. Panariello: Well, there used to be a club on 7th Street, it was a Democratic Club, it was called. That was years ago when I was a little girl.

Interviewer: What was the punch of these clubs?

Mr. Panariello: They used to sell beer.

Interviewer: It was just a social club?

Mr. Panariello: A social club for the men.

Interviewer: Right.



Mr. Panariello: And maybe once a year, they would have a dance.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewer: Any body built by the Italians?

Interviewer: No body was built by the Italians, is that it? Just the dance.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, when World War I started, what changes did you notice?

Mr. Panariello: What?

Interviewer: What changes did you notice when World War I started, say, in 1914?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I couldn't *[inaudible]* **[0:32:20]**.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mr. Panariello: And my husband came from New York and we were pretty well -- I don't say people had the good life.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, how about the community in general with the start of World War I. Now Italy got into the war before United States then.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did many people go back to Italy to...

**[Cross talk]**

Mr. Panariello: Well, some of them did. Some were young then and went back to fight for Italy, because over there, it was compulsory. They had to go.

Interviewer: Well, what did they say? Do you remember what they were saying about the war in those days?

Mr. Panariello: Well, no, I can't tell you what they said because I don't know.

Interviewer: Okay. How about television? How did television affect your time to move?

Mr. Panariello: Nobody liked it. It was repealed *[inaudible]* **[0:33:16]**. Nobody liked it, because Italian people liked their wine.

Interviewer: Yes. What effect did it have on the Italian community in general? Would you say that prior to television, you never saw a junk *[phonetic]* **[0:33:29]** and after television, you saw a lot of junks they were at the time, from all over the city.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah. In fact, they sell more junk during television than then there was.

Interviewer: I see.

Mr. Panariello: Because *[inaudible]* **[0:33:43]** and there's more. Maybe some people never drank. And they saw the drink when they know they couldn't get it.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, during this period, would you say the educational opportunities for Italians got better?

Mr. Panariello: Oh yes, it got better for the time.

Interviewer: And what was the Italians' attitude towards education? Did they want education...

Mr. Panariello: They want it. Sure, they wanted it.

Interviewer: Were there many Italians who went to high school between World War I.

Mr. Panariello: Very few.

Interviewer: Very few.

Mr. Panariello: In fact, the first Italian graduate from high school was my cousin, Dr. Fidans *[inaudible]* **[0:34:26]** who died last year.

Interviewer: What was his name again?

Mr. Panariello: Anthony Fidans.

Interviewer: Anthony Fidans?

Mr. Panariello: Yes. He was the first graduate, Italian graduate from Wilmington High.

Interviewer: Okay. When the Italians went to high school, would you say that they ever encountered any discrimination?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I couldn't tell you because I never went to high school.

Interviewer: Did you ever hear anybody talk about it?

Mr. Panariello: My cousins went and your cousin went, Nelly, and *[inaudible]* **[0:34:57]**.

**[0:35:00]**

Interviewer: Right. Did you ever hear any of them say that...

Mr. Panariello: No, I've not heard, no, no. But they were getting better education, because they went longer to school. Before, they didn't go to school that long.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, did you notice any particular change after the end of World War I in the Italian community?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I think everything was better.

Interviewer: And could you point out...?

Mr. Panariello: The way we lived and the way -- well, *[inaudible]* **[0:35:37]** I think it was better after World War I.

Interviewer: There were better job opportunities.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, better job opportunities, but then it came the depression.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mr. Panariello: That was bad that happened after World War I.

Interviewer: Yes. Could you describe the depression and how it affected the Italian community?

Mr. Panariello: Well, there wasn't much contracting going on, then, during the depression, and I know because it was hard. You couldn't get work no place.

Interviewer: Yes, there was no work to be had.

Mr. Panariello: No.

Interviewer: Ok. What was the atmosphere in the Italian community when Mussolini started to *[inaudible]* **[0:36:13]**.

Mr. Panariello: Well, the people that came from Italy, they all felt good of Mussolini. He had done good. That's all I could tell you. They all felt good of him.

Interviewer: How about the people here, did they ever...?

Mr. Panariello: Well, they didn't know. The people that came over, they all felt good of Mussolini. They said he made Italy better. He's cleared up marshes and gave people better education and there was no more -- everybody had to go to school. At least that's what they said, the people that came over.

Interviewer: Yes. Did the Italian community here do anything to support Mussolini?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I don't know whether they support him or not.

Interviewer: Did they have any rallies, say, Sons of Columbus?

Mr. Panariello: Well, they used to have -- they had one *[inaudible]* **[0:37:05]** one time to get the goal, to help *[inaudible]* **[0:37:06]** for something. But I don't know just what it's for.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, when World War II broke out, the United States and Italy were on different sides, in World War II. What was the reaction in the Italian community for this? How does the Italian community...

Mr. Panariello: Well, like the Italian natives, the ones that came from over there, they took up for Italy. And the ones that were born here, like myself, we took up for America. Well, we wanted Hitler to win because we're Italian, but we were *[inaudible]* **[0:37:49]** to win because it was our country.

Interviewer: Yes. But there was any problem...

Mr. Panariello: No, no.

Interviewer: In so far the Italian activities were concerned.

Mr. Panariello: I'll explain myself better. People had somebody over there, I mean, Italian, they would all talk well of them and talk well of us. But the ones that had people fighting for here, they would take up this country.

Interviewer: Yes. When you look back to the way things have changed from the time you were child to the present...

Mr. Panariello: Lot of changes.

Interviewer: Yes, would you say there's any comparison between what life is like in the Italian community today and what it was like in the past?

Mr. Panariello: No. The people of today will not realize -- can't understand how we lived in those days. When I talk about a cook stove and we had no heat, we had no water, we had to *[inaudible]* **[0:38:57]** they don't know how we got along without it.

Interviewer: Right, they find difficult to comprehend. Okay. Would you ever feel that you would like to go back to the, say, good old day? People talk about the good old days.

Mr. Panariello: I could *[inaudible]* **[0:39:18]** everybody knew everybody else and everybody was friendly. For instance, if somebody were sick, we would think of having a lady come in to do their work than *[inaudible]* **[0:39:32]** we used to do it, to take care of the children and the family, they would help one another.

Interviewer: Yeah. So people are more genuinely interested of one another then.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, I got to find that and they would go visit one another, but not for anything, but for the goodness of heart, because now you see your neighbor, you don't know your neighbor. You've never been in your neighbor's house. Things were different then. People were more friendly.

**[0:40:04]**

Interviewer: Would you say that you preferred the old days to the...

Mr. Panariello: Well, in some ways. But in other ways, I like it better what it is now.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Panariello: I like to befriend *[inaudible]* **[0:40:15]** it's better.

Interviewer: Right. Now, I want to ask you a couple of more questions and then we'll be about finished up, and this is about the religion and going to church and so forth. Where did you go to church as a girl?

Mr. Panariello: Well, when I was a girl, I used to go to St. Paul's.

Interviewer: Now, could you go to any mass you wanted to go to at St. Paul's?

Mr. Panariello: I don't know. We had a children's mass early.

Interviewer: Did they ever have an Italian mass there?

Mr. Panariello: No.

Interviewer: They didn't an Italian mass.

Mr. Panariello: Then my mother always used to go to the early masses. These were 6 o'clock or 7 o'clock.

Interviewer: Now, were you ever turned away from church because you were an Italian and you were...

Mr. Panariello: No, no.

Interviewer: Did you ever go to St. Peter's Church?

Mr. Panariello: Yes, I went there. I was confirmed over there. I used to go to *[inaudible]* **[0:41:04]** because St. Peter's Church had a priest that spoke Italian.

Interviewer: Who was that priest? Do you remember?

Mr. Panariello: Father Dorothy.

Interviewer: Father Dorothy.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah, and they used to have an Italian lesson every year, I know everybody used to go.

Interviewer: Could the Italians go to any mass they wanted to at St. Peter's?

Mr. Panariello: Well, mostly, they used to go to the 9 o'clock mass because that was an Italian mass.

Interviewer: Were Italians allowed to go to any other mass then?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I couldn't say. I imagine they were.

Interviewer: How about St. Thomas', did you ever go to St. Thomas Church?

Mr. Panariello: Yes, after St. Thomas *[inaudible]* **[0:41:38]** we used to go to St. Thomas.

Interviewer: Were there any restrictions there as to which mass you could go to?

Mr. Panariello: No.

Interviewer: There were no restrictions?

Mr. Panariello: No, we went there *[inaudible]* [0:41:44].

Interviewer: Did you ever go to St. Anne's Church?

Mr. Panariello: Well, I was baptized at St. Anne's Church but I never went to mass there. It was too far.

Interviewer: It's too far away. I see. Now, did the Italians want their own church very badly?

Mr. Panariello: They did, yes.

Interviewer: How did they feel when Father Tucker *[phonetic]* [0:42:02] was assigned to start?

Mr. Panariello: They felt good about it.

Interviewer: What do they think of Father Tucker?

Mr. Panariello: Everybody likes Father Tucker and they still do.

Interviewer: And they still do.

Mr. Panariello: Could you make any comments about the change in the Italian community when the church was built, when St. Anthony was founded and built? Could you tell me what effect it had on the Italian?

Interviewer: Well, it has affected everybody used to go to church. Well, before they didn't -- they need to go, but not always.

Mr. Panariello: Wouldn't go always.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mr. Panariello: Would you say that before St. Anthony's was built that there were some Italians who left the church, became Protestants maybe?

Interviewer: Well, I'll tell you. When I was a girl, they started the Protestant Church on Scott Street, but anybody that rent there, they went there for what they could get.

Mr. Panariello: I see.

Interviewer: It was to get the family use the flour, coal, and the *[inaudible]* **[0:43:00]**. But most of the people that went was there for a reason. And everyone that went there, they all went back to the Catholic Church.

Mr. Panariello: Would you say that the founding of St. Anthony's gave the Italian people and this area a very definite pride that they didn't have before.

Interviewer: They did. I think so, yes.

Mr. Panariello: Do you have anything Ms. Panariello? Would you like to add to what we've already covered? Is there anything else you'd like to this?

Interviewer: Well, I know *[inaudible]* **[0:43:31]** many things until I was girl. I saw St. Anthony's Church built, I saw St. Thomas' Church built, I saw new schools, and new houses were built. I used to go to this Lower School, it was number 25, we cut through lots.

Mr. Panariello: Yeah.

Interviewer: You could say then that you saw the Italian rise in this community.

Mr. Panariello: They did. They made a very definite stride. **[Cross talk]**

Mr. Panariello: Yes. And everybody...

**[0:44:02]** **End of Audio**